

Cell Count's 100th Issue



Your trusted source for prison health & harm reduction info since 1995
Free for Prisoners, ex-Prisoners & their families



RIGHTEOUSNESS ALWAYS PREVAILS

By Nolan R. Turcotte

I nearly burst into tears when I read Zakaria Amara's words stating how he was granted parole. He deserves it more than anyone I know, because his intentions are pure, and he's capable of changing the world. Just give him some time and you'll see what I mean.

Zak and I crossed paths in the Special Handling Unit (SHU) back in 2010, but

we never familiarized ourselves with one another. In 2013, I returned to the SHU on a rampage. Then, I was spiritually conflicted, due to abandoning my Indigenous culture out of hurt & rage. I was also an established gang member with enough clout and too much pride, which had me on a deep trip into the mind of a maniac. Zak's kindness towards me nurtured my spirit & heart – Ultimately, saving my life in that specific moment and time – when I needed Brotherly Love the most. He

was with me through some of my hardest days & years, which I'm grateful for. Our discussions and letters fed my hunger for knowledge, and blessed me with the gentle guidance I needed. The love was, and always is, unconditional & genuine.

Although I am no longer a practicing Muslim, due to re-connecting with my Indigenous roots in 2017, Islam will forever hold a very special place in my heart & soul. The Islamic teachings are quite similar to the Seven Sacred teachings, which

piqued my interest as I continued to learn with sincere intention. As I studied and practiced what I read in the Qu'ran, and reflected on Zak's careful answers to each and every question I'd ask, the change in my thinking and behaviour was fruitful. It's a long story I won't get into right now, but the Struggle was real and Zak was there for me. Without him, I truly believe I wouldn't have had the courage, or the humility, to take that initial step towards

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Cell Count readers,
I am so proud and excited to bring you the 100th issue of Cell Count! Cell Count started at PASAN in 1995 by Zolton Lugosi as a newsletter by and for prisoners, ex-prisoners and others concerned with the HIV crisis in prisons. During this time, people in prisons living with HIV were not given equal access to health care, and treated with cruelty and isolated due to misinformation and stigma from those running the prisons, which carried over to other prisoners. Cell Count was a platform that prisoners living with HIV used to counter this misinformation through articles, poetry, artwork and other contributions.

Today, Cell Count is a popular publication inside among many prisoners, regardless of health status. There is still focus on HIV and HCV, and in the context of the current overdose crisis, it has grown to encapsulate experiences related to the crisis inside. Beyond that, Cell Count is also a space for people to express frustration and anger towards the general experience of being incarcerated, as well as philosophical, emotional, spiritual and artistic pieces.

To help commemorate our 100th issue, page 3 includes a collage of the last 99 covers of Cell Count, and submissions about it from people inside and those who are formerly incarcerated.

Below is an excerpt from Cell Count's first editor, Zolton Lugosi, from issue #1: "Welcome to the first issue of Cell Count. It took some doing, but here it is. This is a newsletter by and for prisoners, ex prisoners and others concerned with crisis of HIV in the prisons. We plan to publish an issue every three months, so we ask that anyone wishing to send articles, stories, information or art-work, kindly don't put things off to the last minute.

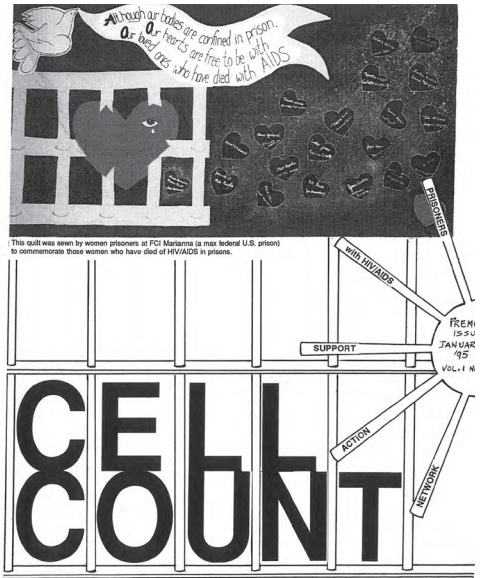
Being the first issue, there is nothing

much more to say than a lot of thanks. To Monica, who was able to withstand the madness of our PASAN office as it is during stressful times, and who did an excellent job on lay-out, key-punching and inspiration. To the (ex)prisoners who came out about their disease, and wrote their stories, which will hopefully encourage others to write something for the next issue. Thanks is also due to the PASAN staff, Board of Directors and members who relentlessly give of their time and efforts towards the struggle to break down the walls that keep people in but not safe from discrimination, human rights violations, criminal neglect nor HIV.

Next issue, there will be more legal stuff, hopefully some letters from readers, treatment issues for prisoners with HIV, as well as the usual profiles, HIV education and more. If you want to see something in the next issue, write it, draw it or give us a suggestion, and we'll do our best. I must emphasize that whatever you contribute, we will not publish material that is racist, sexist, homophobic or is detrimental to anyone's person, dignity, self-determination and human and civil rights. If you wish to continue receiving Cell Count, drop us a line, and make a donation for costs if you can. Otherwise, it will remain free to prisoners and people living with HIV. As Amber continually reminds me, "Here's something to think about. If you're not infected, you're affected. HIV does not discriminate."

This is the 21st issue of Cell Count that I have been the editor of. I feel blessed and lucky to be part of a publication that has meant so much to so many people who have been affected by incarceration and your families and loved ones. I thank all of the contributors who have made Cell Count what it is over the last 28 years. The courage and strength it takes to express yourselves with the vulnerability and raw honesty that you do, while experiencing the kind of oppression that you do, is commendable. Know that others being

able to relate to your art and writing has helped many people survive their incarceration and shone a light for those who have no idea what goes on behind the walls. A big shoutout to all of the past editors of Cell Count: Zolton Lugosi, Tracy Ribble, Trish Noordstra, Tania Smith, David Plumley, Harley Baird, and my predecessor, Tom Jackson, who worked on a whopping 52 issues of Cell Count! Pen Pals also played a huge role in connecting people inside, and ran for 19 years.



If you don't like the news, make some of your own.

Cover of issue #1 of Cell Count

STIGMA AND HEPATITIS C

By Daphne Rose, with supervision from Olivia Gemma

Stigma refers to the negative attitudes, beliefs, and stereotypes that society or individuals hold towards a particular group or individual. It can lead to discrimination, marginalization, and negative social and health consequences. Hepatitis C (HCV) is a viral infection that affects the liver and is often associated with a profound social

stigma, particularly for vulnerable populations such as people who use drugs, prisoners, and Indigenous communities.

People who use drugs, particularly through injection, are at a higher risk of contracting HCV due to the sharing of needles and other equipment. However, the stigma associated with substance use often creates barriers to testing, treatment, and support for those living with HCV. Similarly, HCV is a serious health concern in the Canadian prison system, with a prevalence rate among prisoners of up to 40 times higher than the general population. The stigma associated with imprisonment can create greater barriers to diagnosis, treatment, and support for those living with HCV. Indigenous communities are also disproportionately affected by HCV due to a range of social, economic, and environmental factors, including the impact of colonialism and residential schools, poverty, and inadequate access to healthcare services.

Stigma associated with HCV can have an impact on the physical and mental health of individuals. Shame, fear, and isolation can intensify the negative health impacts of the virus, including liver damage, fatigue, and other symptoms. Additionally, individuals may experience mental health challenges such as depression, anxiety, and PTSD due to the stigma and discrimination they face. The social and economic impacts of stigma can also be significant, with individuals experiencing discrimination in areas such as employment, housing, and healthcare.

Addressing stigma requires a multi-faceted approach that includes increased education and awareness, access to harm reduction services and medical care, and efforts to reduce discrimination and promote acceptance and support for those living with HCV. By addressing the stigma associated with HCV, we can improve the health and well-being of all individuals, particularly those who are most vulnerable.



PASAN is a community-based harm reduction/HIV/HCV organization that provides support, education and advocacy to prisoners and ex-prisoners. PASAN formed in 1991 as a grassroots response to the HIV crisis in the Canadian prison system. We strive to provide community development, education and support to prisoners and ex-prisoners in Ontario on HIV, Hepatitis C (HCV), overdose prevention and other harm reduction issues. Today, PASAN is the only community-based organization in Canada exclusively providing HIV and HCV prevention, education and support services to prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families.

SUPPORT SERVICES

- Individual support, informal coun-

selling, case management, pre-release planning, and referrals for those in custody living with HIV and/or HCV

- We assist our clients in accessing adequate medical care and support while incarcerated
- You can reach us via our toll free number at 1-866-224-9978. If you can't get through to us from our toll-free number, we also accept collect calls from prisoners across Canada at 416-920-9567, but we prefer people use our toll-free number
- Provide ongoing support, community development, resources and training for community groups across Ontario.

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

- Conducts HIV/HCV and harm reduction workshops inside many of the provincial and federal adult institutions in Ontario
- Produces a newsletter, Cell Count, which contains article, poetry and art produced by current and ex-prisoners
- Facilitates HIV/HCV prevention and

harm reduction/overdose prevention trainings for agencies working with prison populations

- Assist agencies to start prison in-reach and support and act as a referral "hub" for HIV/HCV positive prisoners who are transferred from one region to another, to ensure continuity of support
- Peer health/harm reduction workers where ex-prisoners assist those who are currently incarcerated, about to be released, or already released to get medical and health needs met.

CONTACT INFO

526 Richmond St E,
Toronto, ON M5A 1R3
Call us toll free at:
1-866-224-9978

CURRENT STAFF AT PASAN

Eveline Allen x235
Regional Prison In-Reach Coordinator
Sena Hussain x234
Communications & Resource Dev Coord-

inator
Olivia Gemma x230
Provincial HepC Program Coordinator
Trevor Gray x232
Community Programs Coordinator
Kavita Maharaj x239
Harm Reduction Program Coordinator
Anton McCloskey x236
Federal In-Reach Community Development Coordinator
Claudia Medina x227
Program Manager
Amina Mohamed x231
Women's Community Program Coordinator
Jennifer Porter x238
Harm Reduction, Hep C, and Community Programs Manager
Janet Rowe x225
Executive Director
Cherisa Shivcharran x233
Provincial Community Development Coordinator
Claudia Vergara x222
Federal In-Reach Community Development Coordinator
TBA
POWER Project Coordinator

Lead Editor
Sena Hussain
Student Editor
Ryan Horychuk
Supervisors
Janet Rowe & Claudia Medina
Cell Count Contributors to this issue
(in order of appearance):
Cell Count masthead: Jeremy Hall
Cover Art: Joey Toutsaint
Nolan Turcotte
Sena Hussain
Daphne Rose
Mark 'South Side' Zammit
Steven Steacy
Karissa Radcliffe
Rowan Savoy
Bobby Kitchkeesic
Rhiannon Thomas & Ann De Shallt
Zakaria Amara
Chris R.
George Fraser
Brian G. Kerr
Kelly Sokolosky
AW
K. Hunter
S.R. Othman
Quinn
Transcription team: Sena Hussain,
Ryan Horychuk

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MARK 'SOUTH SIDE' ZAMMIT

Happy 100th Issue Cell Count!

So finally, the 100th issue of Cell Count magazine. What a long and wonderful time coming for some, but a long and painful time for others.

I say both of those because PASAN, Convicts, and community have accomplished so much for prison reform, harm reduction, and the LGBTQ2s Community behind the wall. But on the same note and on the same page it's been an uphill battle riddled with pain and we have lost many in the process.

With all that being said, there has been one organization who has fought these battles with us every step of the way, and that has been PASAN, and with PASAN comes our very own newspaper, or magazine if you will, called "Cell Count".

Like us [convicts/ex-convicts], Cell Count has been battered around, banned from certain jails and prisons, threatened, wrongfully accused, and left for dead. But Cell Count's lead editor, Sena Hussain, won't have it and she continues to fight for us, write for us and do whatever it takes to get the word out that we, as convicts, need to be treated better and the jails and prison administrators as a whole must keep their word and promises and give us the opportunities to do better and/or save ourselves. PASAN and Cell Count came into my life 15 years ago, at a time when rock-bottom would've been a wet dream come true, suicide was most definitely on the table and would've been a gift-wrapped kiss.

PASAN and Cell Count gave me an outlet, and as an organization, took me under their wing and taught me things about myself, my life, and the world as a whole, and gave me a purpose and a reason. They gave me an outlet for my poetry, to tell my story, and all my anger and confusion. I was able to write about the terror and the nightmare that was my childhood and Cell Count magazine would put it into print. It was then that other convicts would reach out to me, for the first time ever in my horrendous life, I found out and felt that I was not alone. Cell Count magazine and PASAN gave me a family.

From there, I found a love for advocacy and started to write in the defence of others, prison reform, as well as harm reduction, and anti-racism, not to mention the LGBTQ2s community. My poetry finally found an audience and I actually accumulated somewhat of a twisted little fan base.

From there I began doing public speaking outside of the wall, radio interviews, TV interviews, Facebook pages and charitable events. I got the "PREP" Drug approved and introduced to the penitentiaries all across Canada, helped trans women get to the female penitentiaries and the list goes on.

All of this happened hands down because of one organization, one publication, and four people. That organization is PASAN: it saved and changed my life. The publication, Cell Count magazine, gave me a love for advocacy, other people and doing the right thing. The four people, all of which worked for that same organization at the same time: Sena Hussain, Zachary Grant, Lindsay Jennings, and Aanya Wood. Sena is the sole Survivor at PASAN and to this very day, I look to her for guidance, direction, and love, and she is always there to deliver.

In closing, Cell Count magazine is an important staple in my life and without it's four seasonal issues a year, I would be lost. It is an avenue out of self for some and a road to goodness for others. To me it is both and at this time I take great pride in being part of it, and being included in wishing Cell Count magazine a happy 100th issue birthday. Here's to 100

100 ISSUES OF CELL COUNT



more.

LIFER

Cell Count's 100th Issue

I would first like to start with a big thanks to all the staff and other people that help out at PASAN to make Cell Count what it is today. I have been reading Cell Count since 1997 and it's gotten me through some rough times, always putting a smile on my face; the poems, art and what other inmates have to say about what has happened to them. I like Cell Count because it's for inmates and the articles are about inmates who have dealt with some really hard times and come out on top. They're not actors or TV show people, but inmates, just like me. I have written many articles over the years for PASAN. Seth Clarke was the first person I met that worked for PASAN and he gave me my first copy of Cell Count. They got me to write an article about my PTSD and the problems I was having with it in a jail setting and also with my ADHD and my OCD too. I know Cell Count has been there and helped many inmates through a lot. They may not even realize just how many inmate's lives they have changed and gave them a new outlook on life, who were ready to give up because CSC had kept beating down and they just couldn't take it anymore. But Cell Count was there to help yet another inmate once again. I myself have felt that way too many times

because of CSC, until you have done 10 years or more you can't say you know what inmates with long sentences go through. I have always found all the staff at PASAN never say things like, "Oh, we know what you have gone through" and they're always very understanding and easy to talk with. I know when I get out, I may volunteer at PASAN to help other inmates just like I have been helped. Once again, I want to give a big thanks to all the people at PASAN who put a lot of time into making Cell Count what it is. Please keep up the great work.

STEVE STEACY

What has Cell Count meant to you over the years?

It's something that prisoners look forward to receiving because it's directly related to prisoner information, gives us a platform to express ourselves that makes us feel like our voice is getting somewhere. You can put in a grievance at the prisons where it usually ends up going nowhere, but with Cell Count you actually feel like your voice is being heard and words being read. It gives people inside a way of expressing ourselves.

Why do you think Cell Count is an important publication?

Because CSC is mandated to be transparent, due to the very nature of how the system is designed, transparency is

actually very limited. Cell Count brings transparency to a world that isn't very transparent, and it helps with holding accountability because it's a public and published newspaper because people can read it and it gets things out there.

What do you hope for the future of Cell Count?

I hope that it continues to grow and that there are other papers that get written. I hope the stigma around prisoners' voices and experiences changes and that public opinion changes about prisoners. I would like to see it become less judged. Like if you were to put a stack of Cell Counts at a conservative convention, I'd want people to pick it up and read it with an open mind and would help broaden their perspective.

KARISSA RADCLIFFE

I've gotten to know so many of you, and you are an avenue of support and encouragement and peace. Sometimes it's a friend, cure for loneliness and a ray of sunshine in a dark cell. It's a forum to express ourselves and our struggles, where we're not feeling like outsiders, and we can read about others who are going through similar situations. When people need something to get through the day, there's Cell Count. There's some people who have no one to call, but there's people at PASAN we can speak to. There's

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NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US: HARM REDUCTION, INSIDE AND OUT

Experiences of needle exchange in Canada's prisons echo what people who use drugs have been saying for years

By Rhiannon Thomas and Ann De Shalit

Harm Reduction has long been a grass roots, and later, public health approach to drug use. It's both a human rights-based philosophy about how we think about drugs and a set of practical strategies to use drugs more safely and effectively. The human rights philosophy is centred around the idea that all people have a right to self-determination and that drugs are value-neutral – which means that drugs aren't bad or good, nor are the people who use them. However, because many drugs are criminalized, their use often comes with judgment and exclusion. In harm reduction approaches, we share practical strategies based on ideas that come from people who use drugs – things like how to get drugs and avoid cops, how different drugs make us feel, and how we can maximize pleasure from drugs and avoid withdrawal, stay safe, not lose our kids, and take care of our communities.

In the everyday world outside of prisons, if we're lucky enough to live somewhere with harm reduction services, we might be able to access needle and syringe distribution programs for supplies and information, or talk to workers and others who use drugs who could, for example, teach us how to pack a really good pipe or avoid missing a shot.

Inside prisons, however, is a different story.

Lots of people inside use drugs, but most don't have access to harm reduction supplies, drug-positive supports, or safer drug use information. Drugs are more expensive, and the penalties for getting caught with drugs are harsh. There are high rates of hep C, HIV, and other infections from sharing drug use equipment.

Because of this, and the Correctional Service Canada's (CSC) responsibility to protect the health of people who are incarcerated, there has been a great deal of advocacy for syringe distribution in Canada's federal prisons. But since CSC

was not willing to implement a program, in 2012, the HIV Legal Network, PASAN (a prisoner justice organization), CATIE (Canada's source for HIV and hepatitis C information), CAAN (formerly, the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network and now Communities, Alliances & Networks), and Steve Simons, a man who was incarcerated in a federal prison, launched a constitutional challenge against CSC, calling for access to sterile injection equipment inside.

As the case was making its way through the courts, research was also being undertaken by the HIV Legal Network, PASAN, and Professor Emily van der Meulen from Toronto Metropolitan University on what former prisoners, harm reduction workers, and prison health care providers thought about introducing prison-based syringe program.

In 2018, following years of advocacy and research, the federal government finally announced that it would roll out a Prison Needle Exchange Program (PNEP), and that it would eventually expand the program to all of its institutions. Currently, there is a PNEP in nine of the 43 federal prisons.

A few years later, in 2021, the researchers from the HIV Legal Network, PASAN, and Toronto Metropolitan University who had worked together before launched a new study to learn about the experiences and knowledge of formerly incarcerated people of the PNEP in its current form. We were hired as the two Research Coordinators to facilitate recruitment, conduct and transcribe the interviews, and support the analysis.

For recruitment, we emailed the study poster to halfway house operators as well as harm reduction, human rights, HIV, health, and Indigenous organizations in cities that were close to a prison with a PNEP. In total, we interviewed 30 eligible former prisoners. They shared information about drug use in prisons, how people who used drugs or who accessed the PNEP were treated by prison staff, what they knew about how the PNEP worked, and their thoughts on how to improve the program.

The current model used in the nine federal institutions functions like this: people apply for the program through health care, where they undergo an initial as-

essment. Their application then goes to the warden, who does a "Threat Risk Assessment", and then returns the decision to health care. If they're approved, the person then signs a behaviour contract and gets a kit with one syringe, one cooker, three waters, one vitamin C, and filters. The kits are exchanged at health care on a 1 for 1 basis, and it has to be visible in the cell when not in use because it is checked by guards daily.

Those who participated in our research discussed many challenges to accessing the

PNEP. The biggest issues were around confidentiality, privacy, and surveillance; punishment and having privileges removed; and a lack of knowledge about the program in general.

Most people noted that guards knew who was on the program, and sometimes got their information from health care, though the process was meant to be confidential. Just like on the outside, being able to access harm reduction confidentially was identified as crucial to feeling comfortable in using the service. On top of that, once guards knew that someone applied or used the program, they would have their cells flipped. Having cameras everywhere and urine screens were also recognized as tools used by prison authorities to surveil people – there are very few places where there is privacy from cameras, and if you request needles, people believed you are more likely to have to do urine screens. Even just lack of privacy from other people in prison was mentioned as a barrier to accessing the program because of stigma attached to being an injection drug user.

Many study participants also connected the core problem of zero tolerance of drugs inside being at odds with accessing the program. Punishments and removal of privileges associated with drug possession (and potential institutional charges) made it difficult for people to trust that applying for the PNEP was not going to automatically out them as drug users or make them targets for extra surveillance. Because the guards seemed to be able to access information about who was on the program, many were concerned about further harassment from guards. Some feared that participation in the PNEP would affect access to other support programs or parole. Ultimately, this meant that people who would have benefitted from the PNEP didn't use it; some sent another person to get needles for them, but most continued to share syringes with other people inside.

Another common point discussed was about lack of knowledge about the program – while most people knew the program existed at their institution, often they didn't know how it worked. Some learned about it from nurses or a poster

at health care, and a few people heard about it from other prisoners. This led to both misconceptions about how it worked, and furthered fear of accessing the program.

Just as people who use drugs in the community have shared their key expertise about how to successfully connect harm reduction programs and the people who need them, people in prison who used drugs had informed suggestions on how to improve the PNEP.

Number one was ensuring that accessing the program was confidential. Training staff on how the PNEP improves safety for everyone, as well as on how to understand trauma and offer compassion for people who inject drugs, was also suggested as a way to improve the program. Many people also thought that better education about the program would increase the number of people accessing it – either by having nurses or external organizations come in and explain the program to everyone, or giving everyone a kit or at least information about the program during prison in-take. Some of the participants in our study even suggested expanding the program by having supervised injection rooms or additional types of harm reduction equipment – like crack pipes or straws for snorting. When asked about other PNEP models used around the world, most preferred an automatic dispensing machine in an area without cameras because it could provide the most anonymity. Many supported the idea of external agency workers coming in to distribute supplies and info, allowing for more confidentiality, but also recognized that there are often restrictions for visitors, especially lockdowns. And many liked the idea of peers doing distribution and education, since people are much more likely to trust other people in prison, and because it could be an extension of other peer support models within the system.

Among many conclusions that came out of this study, one thing is clear: to have a successful PNEP in Canada's federal prisons, people who use drugs inside must be consulted at all stages and on an ongoing basis. Prisoners know the ins and outs of daily life inside, and prisoners who inject drugs know what it will take to trust a program and the people who administer it. As one study participant said, "it's very important that CSC or whoever's running it talks to the people who are going to use it... [that] it's not dictated to us." Just like it is on the outside, the best way to offer a meaningful and effective program for people who use drugs inside is by involving them in program roll out before it even starts and consistently along the way.

If you are interested in learning more about this study, or about the importance of having drug users lead harm reduction work, check out:

The HIV Legal Network and Toronto Metropolitan University's full report on this study: <https://www.hivlegallnetwork.ca/site/points-of-perspective-research-report-on-the-federal-prison-needle-exchange-program-in-canada/?lang=en>

Criminologist Emily van der Meulen's site: <https://www.torontomu.ca/criminology/people/faculty-directory/van-der-meulen-emily/>

International Network of People who Use Drugs Manifesto: <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/uploads/b4f8fd79-25a5-46d7-99ab-b51b4563f980/nothing-about-us-without-us-manifesto-20080501.pdf>

HIV Legal Network on including drug users in work about drug users: <http://www.hivlegallnetwork.ca/site/wp-content/up->

BLACK HISTORY, BOTH PERSONAL AND COMMUNAL, NOW A FACTOR IN NOVA SCOTIA SENTENCING

By Michael Tutton, The Canadian Press, Feb 3, 2022

Jason Middleton says the inclusion of Black history in his sentencing — both personal tragedy and communal struggle — set a new path for his troubled life.

A cultural assessment completed in October 2016 led to a sentence of house arrest and probation rather than a lengthy jail term after he was convicted for a series of scuffles with police during arrests for probation violations and an assault at the lockup.

"I knew from that moment people weren't just seeing through me, but rather they were trying to see me through. It humanized me," Middleton said in a recent interview from his home in Yarmouth, N.S.

The 49-year-old African Nova Scotian — who also has Indigenous ancestry — grew up amid abuse and poverty and says he has frequently been sentenced to prison by the province's predominantly white judiciary.

However, in the summer of 2016, a document prepared for provincial court known as an Impact of Race and Culture Assessment took a different approach — outlining how historic neglect of Black communities led to disproportionate levels of imprisonment and telling the accused's story of his suffering as a child.

The assessments were pioneered by Halifax social worker Robert Wright in a landmark 2014 case. The provincial Justice Department says that since 2018, 147 such reports have been written. Middleton's report was the first paid for by the court system.

Wright says he and other assessors normally spend hours talking with the accused and then set their stories into the wider context of the Black experience. The reports, running to 20 pages, sometimes describe a mix of multi-generational poverty and the lack of access to treatment for childhood traumas.

Figures from the Justice Department indicate about 11 per cent of provincially sentenced inmates last year were African Nova Scotian, almost five times higher than the Black proportion of the population.

Wright, 55, said in a recent interview there's a shortage of assessors, and some accused choose to skip the reports because they take too long. However, he's noting that Nova Scotia's judges are coming up with "innovative sentences" that avoid jail time in an increasing number of cases, even some involving weapons and drug trafficking.

For example, an Appeal Court decision last year upheld the conditional sentence of Rakeem Anderson for possession of a loaded .22 calibre gun. It concluded that ignoring the cultural reports "may amount to an error of law" for a sentencing judge.

Darren Tynes, a 50-year-old Halifax man facing a theft charge, said in a recent interview that he told Wright about experiences of racism that damaged his trust in white people. He said the resulting report improved the judge's understanding of his story, and he's now optimistic about getting a conditional sentence.

Tynes has vivid memories of the father of a white school friend chasing him out of his friend's house and hurling racist insults at him. He also recounted a violent attack by a group of white men against him when he was just 10 years old, walking home in his downtown Halifax neighbourhood.

Poverty can set the stage for bad decisions, said Tynes. "I wanted nice things

but never had nice things. There were times I didn't go to school because my sneakers had holes in them and other kids would make fun of me," he said.

Wright's assessments sometimes extend back for generations, and the one in Middleton's case noted how the historic Black communities in southwestern Nova Scotia faced segregation and subsistence economies, along with poor access to education.

Middleton was born to a 14-year-old single mother, and was raised under the strict discipline of his grandmother, who at times had to leave the home for mental health treatment, the report says. It also describes Middleton's accounts of mistreatment in his home, and physical and sexual abuse at the Nova Scotia School for Boys in Shelburne, N.S., and also at the Nova Scotia Home for Colored Children in Halifax.

Wright then makes links to the role race plays in recovering from childhood traumas.

"Persons of African descent... are less likely to seek help, are less likely to find appropriate help when they seek it, and are less likely to benefit from the help they seek and find," he wrote in Middleton's report, citing a provincial advisory committee's findings in 2012 that confirmed the gaps in service to Black citizens.

How far other judiciaries in Canada will go in following the Nova Scotia system remains unclear.

The Ontario Court of Appeal noted in a decision last Oct. 8 that while the cultural reports can "sometimes be an important consideration on sentencing, the trial judge's task is not primarily aimed at holding the criminal justice system accountable for systemic failures." The ruling on a Crown appeal of the case of Kevin Morris of Toronto, a 22-year-old man convicted on four charges, including possession of a loaded gun, saw his one-year sentence doubled to two years, less a day.

David Curry, the lawyer who represented Middleton, said white judges are trying to rule on a historical issue they often have very little personal knowledge about. "They're struggling to reconcile that with their understanding of the law," he said.

In time, though, he believes the Nova Scotia system will influence legal decisions across the country.

Middleton, meanwhile, has been making presentations about his case to Dalhousie University law students and said he has been working to create a support group that would include Black and Indigenous men. He says the 2016 report helped him shift his life towards these projects.

"It connected the dots," he said. "It let me know not just what I was doing, but why I was doing what I was doing."

WATCHDOGS, MPs SLAM CANADA'S PRISON OFFICIALS ON TREATMENT OF BLACK, INDIGENOUS INMATES

By David Fraser, The Canadian Press, February 11, 2023

Federal watchdogs and members of Parliament are pressing Canada's top corrections officials to improve conditions for Black and Indigenous offenders who are serving time in federal prisons.

Two House of Commons committees honed in on the state of Canadian prisons this week, with MPs from all parties offering a scathing rebuke of the prison system.

During one of the hearings, New Democrat MP Blake Desjarlais accused Correctional Service Canada officials of allowing systems to fail.

"The auditor general is yelling at the top of her lungs about the conditions that are

often facing Indigenous and Black people in Canada," he said at a Thursday meeting of the public accounts committee, wiping away tears as he spoke.

"And the systems continuously stay the same."

Auditor general Karen Hogan, who also appeared at the committee, found in a report earlier this year that the service "failed to identify and eliminate systemic barriers that persistently disadvantaged certain groups of offenders."

"The over-representation of Indigenous and Black offenders in custody has worsened with higher security classifications, the late delivery of correctional programs and the delayed access to release on parole," her May report said.

Hogan's office had raised similar issues in reports delivered in 2015, 2016 and 2017.

The latest annual report from the Office of the Correctional Investigator of Canada also found — and not for the first time — that Canada was failing its Black and Indigenous prison populations.

Ivan Zinger testified at the House public safety committee on Friday that such prisoners are subject to discrimination, biases and racism.

He added that the broader inmate population is being left in a "state of destitution" with no way to get ahead. Inmates who work in prison haven't had a pay raise since 1981, he said, when wages were set at \$6.90 a day. It's hardly enough to pay for items such as toothpaste and soap, which are not provided for free.

Zinger said that the Correctional Service Canada is "very good at producing a lot of corporate documents" — but that work "doesn't filter down to the penitentiary floor."

Commissioner Anne Kelly acknowledged there are systemic barriers and racism within the criminal justice system.

"While CSC cannot influence the decisions that bring offenders into our custody, it is our responsibility to improve outcomes for offenders by providing them opportunities for effective rehabilitation," she said at the Thursday committee hearing.

Hogan's report had found that Indigenous and Black men were placed in maximum security prisons at twice the rate of other offenders.

It also called into question the quality of the custody rating scale, a framework used to determine the level of security an inmate will be placed in. The scale had not been reviewed by experts since 2012, the report said, and an additional set of criteria used to determine where to place Black offenders had never been validated at all.

Moreover, officers didn't always follow the provisions they were supposed to, Hogan said.

"We found that corrections staff frequently overrode the scale security rating to place Indigenous offenders at higher security levels, with little consideration of culturally appropriate and restorative options," she told MPs at the committee.

Kelly said the rating scale is only one component in a comprehensive process to determine the security level of federally sentenced offenders.

But she said the federal agency has ramped up its efforts to ensure what it is doing is "reliable and valid."

She said that process includes conducting "extensive" work on the way it classifies Black offenders, and partnering with the University of Regina to develop an "Indigenous and gender-informed security classification process."

The service is trying to improve conditions in other ways, too, Kelly and other officials said — such as creating more

digital programming and setting up Indigenous intervention centres intended to help offenders access and finish programming.

The correctional service also says it is in the process of hiring a deputy commissioner for Indigenous corrections and is developing strategies to help it better serve the needs of Black offenders.

At the committee hearing, Desjarlais pressed the officials on their knowledge of the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, and expressed disappointment when they could not name calls to action that apply to their work.

He suggested that the state of prisons should trouble all Canadians.

"This is not an Indigenous and Black issue," he said. "This is a Canadian justice issue. It's an issue of our justice system, not the individuals (whom) they fail."

'CLEARLY, SOMETHING IS WRONG': CORRECTIONAL SERVICE TO REVIEW ELDER PROGRAMS IN PRISONS

An internal audit concluded elder services are unable to meet Indigenous offenders' needs

By Olivia Stefanovich, CBC News, Feb 04, 2023

An Indigenous human rights activist says he hopes an upcoming Correctional Service Canada (CSC) review of elder services at prisons will lead to meaningful change for the Indigenous inmates who make up 32 per cent of the prison population.

"We all have a stake in how people are treated in prison because it could be one of our loved ones someday," said Albert Dumont, a spiritual adviser and human rights activist from Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation in western Quebec. He worked as an elder at the Millhaven Institution in Bath, Ont. for three years.

Elders are employed by CSC to conduct faith-based ceremonies and offer spiritual counselling to Indigenous inmates. CSC's review, which has not yet begun, is being launched in the wake of an internal audit that found elder services aren't keeping up with inmates' needs.

The audit also found flaws in the way CSC selects its elders.

Marty Maltby, acting director general for Indigenous initiatives with the Correctional Service of Canada, told CBC News the agency wants to work on recruiting and retaining elders as demand for their services continues to grow.

"We see a lot more competition," Maltby said, referring to other government departments that hire elders for media events and conferences.

"It's an unusual place to be, to try to contract for spiritual services."

Almost half of the elders interviewed for the internal audit reported being exhausted and overworked. Many of them also said too much of their time is being swallowed up by administrative tasks.

CSC employs anywhere from 120 to 140 elders, said Maltby, who suggested that number might increase.

"It might mean that we need to look at different resources in addition to elders, but not with a reduction," he said.

Maltby said CSC might increase the number of Indigenous spiritual advisers it employs by recruiting people who are still working toward becoming an elder. He also suggested a pay increase might be coming.

A man with grey hair and glasses sits next to a sign that says 'healing together' in French and English.

Retired Justice Harry LaForme from the Mississaugas of the New Credit First

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Nation in Ontario is urging the Correctional Service of Canada to reform elder services. (Sean Kilpatrick/Canadian Press)

Harry LaForme, a retired judge from the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, said a big part of the problem is that CSC doesn't understand the work of elders.

"I blame the corrections system because they don't know how to measure the effectiveness," he said. "They don't even know what elders do in the community or in the prisons."

LaForme, now senior counsel at Olthuis Kleer Townshend LLP in Toronto, said CSC should view elders as community representatives who can help offenders reconnect with their culture.

He said the impact of elders can be measured by early releases — and he's disturbed by the fact that the elder program doesn't appear to be affecting the overrepresentation of Indigenous people behind bars.

"Clearly, something is wrong," LaForme said.

Indigenous inmates continue to serve larger portions of their sentences than non-Indigenous offenders before release on day or full parole, according to the latest data from the correctional investigator's office.

Indigenous men have the highest rate of recidivism of any inmate group: 65 per cent.

Beverly Jacobs, a former member of the national Indigenous advisory committee at the Correctional Service of Canada, said it's up to CSC to bring the focus of the elder program back to healing and wellness.

Jacobs, who is also a lawyer at Six Nations of the Grand River in Ontario, said the agency should make sure elders maintain connections with offenders after they're released.

"It's corrections that's causing the barriers more than anything," said Jacobs, a senior adviser to the president of the University of Windsor on Indigenous relations and outreach.

Independent Sen. Kim Pate, who advocates for the rights of prisoners, said elders offer Indigenous inmates a support system that otherwise wouldn't exist.

"I've seen individuals who've gone from segregation, literally losing their minds in terms of mental health issues, work with an elder and start to move through the process and ultimately [into] the community," Pate said.

CSC should be calling on Indigenous community leaders for advice on recruiting elders, Pate said.

"Too often, corrections is deciding who is an elder, is contracting those individuals and is dictating what they can and cannot do," she said.

Dumont said he's alarmed by reports of people posing as elders and non-Indigenous prisoners taking advantage of elder services.

"It's like a plague," Dumont said.

Most elders vetted by the Correctional Service of Canada come to the agency through outside recommendations, the internal audit said.

As part of that vetting process, Maltby said, elders must identify themselves as First Nations, Inuit or Métis and have a letter of support from their community recognizing them as an elder. He said CSC is not going to attempt to identify people falsely posing as elders in the corrections system.

"I don't think it's something, as a federal department, we're going to be telling elders, if they are or aren't elders," he said.

A feast for a slain inmate The upcoming review is behind schedule, Maltby said, because CSC is still looking for an organization that can conduct it from an Indigenous perspective.

He said he thinks the work will be done within the next few months. The goal is to implement any changes next year, he said.

Dumont said that, despite the concerns about the program, elders do good work in Canada's prisons.

He said that during his time at Millhaven, he brought together leaders of the various Indigenous cultural groups in the prison to reduce the level of violence through dialogue.

"They started to respect one another so the violence went down," Dumont said.

Albert Dumont is an Elder from the Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation in Western Quebec.

Dumont said he confronted the agency in 2011 following the death of Jordan Trudeau, a 29-year-old inmate from Wikwe-mikong First Nation on Ontario's Manitoulin Island who was shot and killed by Millhaven guard.

Prison officials feared a riot would break out, he said, and he was given carte blanche to stop it.

"They wanted to kill a guard," Dumont said.

"I told them if they tried to do that, that the only thing that was going to happen is that they were going to get killed too."

Dumont said he reminded the inmates that Trudeau wouldn't have wanted violent retaliation. He convinced them instead to take part in a feast to honour his memory.

"Some of the staff in the prison didn't like it," Dumont said. "They were angry that an inmate was celebrated or feasted. But it happened."

DOUBLING OF INMATE DEATHS IN ONTARIO PROMPTS CALL FOR CORRECTIONAL OVERSIGHT BODY

Clara Pasieka, CBC, Jan 28, 2023

A spike in inmate deaths in Ontario has prompted dozens of advocacy groups, academics and others to send an open letter to the province's solicitor general calling for an "independent oversight body for correctional

institutions."

A report from Tracking (In)Justice, a law enforcement and criminal justice transparency project says a total of 41 people died in the custody of Ontario correctional institutions in 2021, almost double the number in 2020. Deaths have been largely on the rise since 2015, the project says. Between 2010 and 2021, more than 280 people have died in custody in Ontario.

"When someone loses their life, what do you say to the mother and to the brother to the sister, to the father? Well, here they are in a body bag. And that's your problem now?" said Yusuf Faqiri, whose late brother Soleiman was pepper-sprayed, shackled and held down by guards in an Ontario jail before his death. Faqiri's organization, Justice For Soli, is one of the signatories to the letter, which was sent this week.

"Corrections cannot transform itself, we need a civilian oversight ... external partners to transform the system," he told CBC Toronto Monday in an interview.

In the federal system, the Office of the Correctional Investigator hears complaints about mistreatment, raises systemic issues and makes recommendations. Ontario has no equivalent and advocates, academics and families of those incarcerated say a similar provincial entity could help bring accountability and transparency when deaths occur.

Inmate deaths 'a concern for everybody'

The open letter to Solicitor General Michael Kerzner was signed by more than 40 organizations and many more individuals.

"The Ministry of the Solicitor General must address preventable deaths in provincial jails and prisons by taking immediate action to improve oversight, transparency, and accountability," the letter reads.

The signatories say the ministry should create a "dedicated independent oversight body to help ensure timely reporting on deaths in custody and assist in taking urgent action to increase the safety of the people who are being detained in Ontario institutions."

The Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies is one of the signatories to the letter.

"We don't have a death sentence in this country. And yet, to have people dying in our jails and our prisons, and to not have answers as to why they died should be a concern for everybody," said Emilie Coyle, the association's executive director.

Each day, many people are incarcerated in Ontario institutions who have not yet had a trial, some of whom may never be convicted of a crime, Coyle said.

"Whether you're on remand, or whether you're not, whether you're serving a sentence that has been delivered by the courts, or whether you're still awaiting trial ... a person deserves to be treated with dignity, and to have their human rights upheld and to

not go to prison to die," she said.

"The correctional system counts on the general public not to care about the treatment of people in prisons and jails. And so because of that, we have very little data around what happens in those prisons and jails," Coyle added.

Lindsay Jennings, a researcher with Tracking (In)Justice, says from her personal experience being incarcerated, she believes that "the increase in deaths is due to declining mental health, inhumane conditions inside correctional institutions, lack of compliance from correctional officers and staff and inadequate health care.

Some experts have also speculated some cases are linked to COVID-19 in some way, between infection and increased isolation. Advocates agree they don't fully know why some of these deaths are happening without more information and that's the crux of the issue.

In the current system, families are "waiting five, 10 years for an inquest to actually find out the truth," said Jennings. "It's just not fair for anybody involved, including the person that passed."

Justin Piché, a criminology professor at the University of Ottawa and a researcher with the Criminalization and Punishment Education Project, which signed the letter, said while this week's request for an oversight body won't solve everything, it would be "a step in the right direction." "It would shine a greater light on ... longstanding and emerging issues that exist," he said. But he also stressed that making sure such a body "has teeth" is essential.

Piché said the Office of the Correctional Investigator has been important in shedding light on systemic issues in those federal prisons, but recommendations can be largely ignored.

He says Ontario can look to the federal model, as well as the provincial history with Community Advisory Boards, volunteer bodies who were appointed by the solicitor general. They had access to and provided feedback about issues at particular correctional facilities but the province disbanded them in June of 2021. Health and safety 'paramount,' province says

So far, the provincial government isn't saying what it will do with the call for action.

Andrew Morrison, a spokesperson for the Office of the Solicitor General, said in a statement that the ministry had received the letter and considers the health and safety of those in Ontario's correctional facilities to be "paramount."

"Ministry officials have been working closely with the chief coroner and his team in support of the Correctional Services Death Review," he said, referring to an investigation launched last year by Dr. Dirk Huyer, Ontario's chief coroner, into inmate deaths going back seven years.

Morrison added the ministry is committed to working with

its partners to prevent inmate deaths.

But Piché said getting it right would certainly involve stakeholders and also ensuring recommendations become reality. "I'm hopeful, but pessimistic."

NEW KENORA JUSTICE CENTRE AIMS TO ADDRESS OVERREPRESENTATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

The Canadian Press · Posted: Feb 07, 2023

Indigenous leaders and the provincial government have opened a centre in northwest Ontario aimed at addressing the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the justice system.

Attorney General Doug Downey says the new justice centre in Kenora, Ont., will hold individuals accountable while providing wraparound supports for health care, education, housing and other social services.

The centre itself is in a building owned by the Kenora Chiefs Advisory and not in a courthouse. The goal is to reduce future contact with the justice system.

The centre will work with elders and local community organizations to provide Indigenous-led programs and help people heal from trauma.

Grand Council Treaty 3's grand chief says it is critical the criminal justice system addresses the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in jails and prisons.

"The Kenora Justice Centre has been created in collaboration with elders and community to prioritize Indigenous-led healing and wellness for youth, young adults and their families," Francis Kavanaugh wrote in a statement.

Nishnawbe Aski Nation Grand Chief Derek Fox said the centre will allow Indigenous people to access the justice system in a culturally inclusive way that is trauma-informed.

"There are many barriers limiting access to justice for First Nations in the North," Fox said.

"We need new, innovative approaches for our disadvantaged citizens that find themselves in the correctional system."

Indigenous Affairs Minister Greg Rickford said the new centre will enhance public safety.

"By shifting parts of our justice system into a community-based setting, we are confident that healing will be front and centre while ensuring that individuals are held accountable for their crimes," Rickford said.

The centre will include a courtroom that is designed to support rehabilitation and better communication between individuals, judges, prosecutors and others involved in the justice system.

There will be on-site elders who will help create healing plans, on-site social services, and a primary health-care room to support Indigenous-led health and treatment services. This is the fourth such centre in the province with two in Toronto and one in London.

TURK CONT'D FROM COVER STORY

becoming the man I am today. I could say great things about Zak all day, but the one thing I admire him most for is mustering up the courage to challenge his radical ideologies, which led to his incarceration. Young, impressionable and misguided – he made his fair share of mistakes. Along his journey he was able and willing to acknowledge the impact his choices and actions have had on society & his loved ones. With all the work he put into himself, it was only a matter of time until his day would arrive.

Eight years out of the 17 he did were with me in multiple institutions like the SHU, Millhaven and Warkworth from 2013 – 2022. With all the time we spent together, I was given the opportunity to not only learn and grow, but to see my friend – my brother – change his ways & his world through a form of wisdom, which can only be acquired through deep faith & love for Humanity. You have no idea how beautiful his heart truly is.

I will always love Zak like family, and I'm beyond proud of his accomplishments. I believe in him, and I continue to pray for his happiness & health.

Life is an uphill battle – especially a life sentence – but if you can find the courage to overcome the overwhelming obstacles that get thrown at you, like Zak did, you'll eventually experience a miracle. I hope we all discover our true selves & I pray we receive love & guidance from the ones we love, the kindest strangers and, of course, our Creator.

NOT "SAVAGES"

By Zakaria Amara

I wrote this poem for my friend Nolan Turcotte. He's been incarcerated since the age of 16. He is 31 years old now. That's a long time.

Maybe I am too spiritual,
Maybe my thinking is too magical,
but what by my recital of this poem,
and by your listening to it,
this entire gathering turns into a sublime prayer that sets him free again?

NOT "SAVAGES"

Nolan,
Sitting here before dawn prayer,
Thinking of you,
Wherever you maybe,
I pray you'll be free.
One day at a time,
Sublime,
Divine,
These words are not mine.

Remember...
Remember when we first met,
No, it was no movie set,
I bet,
You remember
December,
In the lion's den,
First days in the Pen,

Young cub,
SHU club,
Now look at you!

You're closer than you think,
Don't blink,
Or sink,
Just follow the traces of my ink,
And we'll meet again,
And again,
Somewhere between these lines,
Are signs,
For those who see,
BREAK FREE!
With your kindness,
With your manners,
With your words,
With your prayers,
With every ounce of goodness in you,
With everything you got!
Because We. All. Need. You,

Until then,
Remind them,
Again and again,
THAT WE
ARE
NOT
"SAVAGES"!

BLACK HISTORY MONTH EVENTS INSIDE

By Chris R.

In the past we've experienced challenges organizing Black History month events inside. There has been a lack of understanding and knowledge about Black culture which has led to misunderstandings regarding organizing events. In my experience, from 2015-2019, I was on the BIFA (Black Inmates and Friends Association) executive. In the beginning, there was a lot of resistance with planning (such as providing food and beverages), to contact our community volunteers and to organize the event. If we started planning on November, it could go very smoothly in February, if we can get the Social Programs Officer to oversee the event and help us with ordering, bringing in community orgs, etc.

Every fiscal year, we would be asked to provide a constitution from the BIFA group and a yearly plan of action. We could do a monthly break down of the activities we were planning to initiate. When it came to the planning of the Black History Month event in October/November, we would submit the plan, they'd accept it and say they'd get back to us. But there was no follow-up until the middle to ending of January, so there was very little time to plan the event. We would contact certain community organizations directly since CSC staff weren't doing it, and they would get upset because we went around them.

The first year went well because we were able to connect in advance to community organizations; but, the food and beverages were a difficulty because we had to find Auntie Anne's ourselves, which was difficult considering we do not have access to the internet. They provided CSC with Black culturally-specific supplies and foods for Black History Month events, in years prior, CSC staff said not to contact outside organizations

or volunteers, so we didn't and by January, we'd found out that none of them had been contacted by CSC. We were so frustrated by their inaction that we almost boycotted the event. They ended up contacting them all last minute and the food they were supposed to purchase from Auntie Anne's wasn't purchased.

There was some sort of a budget (around \$2500-\$5000) from NHQ to RHQ. We spent that on a guest speaker, posters, and DVDs – when we asked about how much money was allocated to the events, and if they were going to spend the money to get these items, we weren't given a straight answer, or we were told they would buy those things, which only ended up being broken promises.

Once February is over, we don't hear anything about it again. We put in a complaint about the Social Programs Officer, and the deputy warden intervened, and assigned a new person to oversee the event, and everything went smooth after that. As you can see, it has been difficult and frustrating to organize Black History Month events inside. I want to see this event prioritized because it's very important to Black prisoners to feel represented because our history and culture matter.

HOW CSC HANDLES GRIEF AND LOSS INSIDE

By Anonymous

Anyone who works for CSC/SCC (Correctional Services Canada/Service Correctionnel Canada) needs to take a good look at his or her own personal moral compass. How much pain and suffering can you watch before you say anything? Just ask Ashley Smith! I realize you need a job, and you do not want to cross the "Blue Line", but others do it and they survive. Even when you call them "Con-Lovers" or "Rats".

Sometimes I hope these things happen to you and your family, but I am not like you. You probably do not even believe in Karma, or would not make the correlation anyways, and would

go on walking past my pain and suffering. My friend's mom died yesterday, and not just some "prison buddy", a good friend. They offered him a phone call. Where is mental health? Where is our Elder or anyone from our Indigenous team? I guess the overtime on a weekend was too much. Another good friend of ours killed himself on October 20, 2022; his daughter's birthday. I requested to see someone, it has been 18 days, and no one has reached out. I would say they care about us killing ourselves, but 18 days should be enough time for me to plan it out. I guess the Elder on site only deals with "certain offenders", and/or "was eating her lunch".

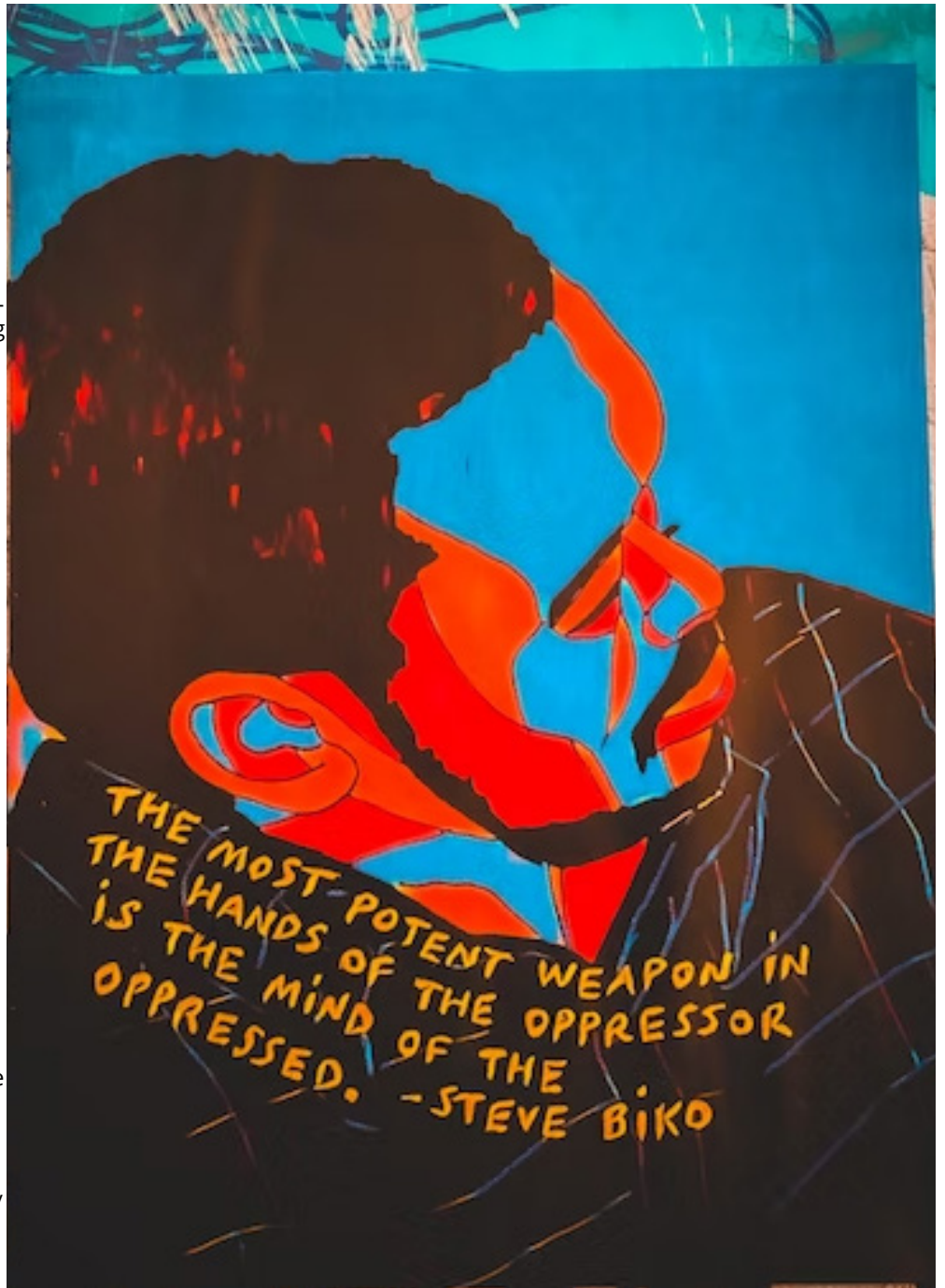
16 years ago, my best friend's mom died; she visited him every weekend, and did private family visits every 4 months. She only lived 45 minutes away from the prison and despite two CSC staff willing to take him, and him being in medium security, they denied him her funeral because it was too early in his sentence, and they thought he was going to escape. No evidence to claim such outrageousness and clearly no faith in the two armed and trained CSC employees, or the RCMP, the local police, and the

list goes on. Do not forget the belly chains, leg irons, and handcuffs that are attached to the belly chains.

In late September of this year, my own father passed. I got my phone call, and their kind words were, "Are you doing alright?", "You're not going to hurt yourself?" Why say that? I was not thinking about that until now. I love my dad, and was trying to keep out the negative thoughts, think good stuff, you know! But now I start to think about my situation, my problems, my pain, my suffering, and now hurting myself isn't the only thing I am thinking about. Killing myself is at the top of the list. Moreover, I have at least 18 days to plan it.

Two months before he died, he had major surgery to try to have esophageal cancer removed. Because he was not truthful with his doctors about his other health issues, he had a massive heart attack, died on the table, and was put on life support. I got the call; same BS from staff, "Are you doing alright?", "You're not going to hurt yourself?" I asked for an ETA, (Escorted Temporary Absence) but my heartless goof of a parole officer did not support it, and this goofy insti-

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tution did not forward my ETA to the National Parole Board as policy states; grievance pending. Her reason for no support was because during the "process" he had gotten better, (taken off life support). She disregarded all the information I gave her about his deteriorating health, as "conjecture"; which I got from his doctor. However, I do not get along with that side of the family. She did not believe me, and going off the only piece of information she wanted, and that was the doctor said he was off life support. She even stated "limited urgency" because I used the approved method of communication in the institution and not the banging on door, acting like a loon method. Additionally, she was dumb enough to put all that on paper, so now I use it in every complaint/grievance that applies.

An ETA, like the compassionate one I asked for, is granted to "visit a person, as described above, who had been declared by a medical practitioner to be in an advanced stage of a terminal condition resulting from illness or injury." If she had listened to the conjecture part, she would have heard he was going to die, and two months later, he did. Without having seen his first-born. Which could have happened if she actually had compassion or knew what that word meant. And they wonder why we hate them! CSC does not have to be so cruel. What's worse, they are willing to listen, but only to gather more information about you, your family, childhood, friends, etc. Then they use it against us in the future. I know they would love to know why I do not care about my step-mother, the woman who raised me. The problems I have with my younger brother, a childhood of manipulation and pain. Nevertheless, fuck them.

I know you need a job, and I know you have your own personal views, opinions, and politics; but you are dealing with people, actual human beings. I would stand up for your family if they were being treated, as you treat me. I wonder how your partner and loved ones would feel about you torturing people. How would your children respond? Then I wonder; if you were going to hurt yourself? Funny how that works! I have seen some horrible shit in my small time on this earth, but nothing compares to how my fellow offenders and I are treated.

I was recently asked to describe my incarceration. 'Have you ever seen SPCA commercials?', I asked. The pictures and footage of abused animals, and the looks on their faces. That's how I feel, especially when they do tours. I want to scream and tell them to, 'Fuck off; this is where I live you scum bags. Do I come to your house, tour around, point and stare?' However, that would only end in more pain and suffering for me. Brutally dehumanizing, is more like it. I hope they and/or their families never have to experience what I go through

every day, and I hope one day someone will say enough.

Lastly, I know what you are thinking: "I do not get mental health services, grief counselling, paid-for escorted trips to see your loved ones." However, you have your friends and family; brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, cousins, even your neighbours. You can hug them, cry on their shoulders, and deal together. If I start relying on my "prison buddies" more than the "man" (CSC), they think we're up to something, inciting each other. In addition, they tell us that our friendships are not real. Like I am some filthy criminal incapable of making friends. Is this really part of my rehabilitation? Does CSC think this will help? I do not know about you, but I would like to get out of prison with a positive outlook on life.

CSC's No Air Conditioning Policy is Obscene

By George Fraser

CSC has an archaic 20th Century policy of no air conditioning for prisoners. In reference to CSC 2014 Accommodations Guidelines Sc. 4.2.5 (i) that states "staff areas only will be air conditioned"

Abhorrent and outrageous standard

Everybody understands the need for thermostatically controlled indoor heating during the seasonally colder winter months for healthy living reasons; the same logic based on the scientific evidence, dictates that for the hotter summer months there be thermostatically controlled cooling for healthy living reasons. The CSC policy of 'No Air Conditioning for Prisoners' is obscene. The problem is that the failure of CSC to provide institutional air conditioning accommodations is so grossly abhorrent as to outrage standards of decency when compared to community standards.

Air conditioning is not a luxury

Central air conditioning for seniors is not a luxury or a convenience but rather a necessity for medical reasons! Elevated ambient heat is deleterious to seniors' health due to the loss of body coping mechanisms to regulate body health in the normal aging process. One important purpose of the skin is to help regulate body temperature. It does this partly through contraction and expansion of blood vessels. These reactions occur more slowly in the elderly, and heat regulation is less effective. Also, to be considered is that, older individuals lose sweat glands; this in turn reduces sweat proficiency making it difficult to tolerate hot weather. With this understanding that an elderly person's body heat regulation deteriorates over time, it should be entirely understandable that both air temperature extremes at either end of the spectrum make it more difficult to maintain normal body temperature

at 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit or 37 degrees Celsius.

Unregulated Heat Illnesses

Heat Cramps are painful spasms caused by the loss of body salt through profuse and prolonged sweating.

Heat Exhaustion occurs because body fluids and the salts that they contain have been passed off from the body. The individual may exhibit nausea, scant urine, dizziness and may faint.

Heatstroke can be fatal. The victim will have elevated body temperature, exhibit weakness, dizziness, rapid breathing, nausea, unconsciousness, and mental confusion.

Fainting is usually caused by temporary insufficiency of the blood supply to the brain.

Excessive or prolonged exposure to seasonally hot temperatures can cause fainting. The loss of consciousness without cold compress revival measures then quickly leads to heat stroke, that can be fatal.

Times have changed in the 21st Century

Extreme heat alert days with high relative humidity are the new normal with global warming. Seasonal temperatures are on the rise to where the year 2022 would be the hottest on record.

Air conditioning is not considered a luxury but rather a healthy living necessity

News clips regularly report that seniors are a heat stroke vulnerable demographic and deaths regularly occur when they do not have air conditioning in their living accommodations

Provincial and municipal building codes are now being upgraded to reflect citizens' accommodations rights to humane temperature control not just for the colder seasons but also for the hotter seasons.

There is now stricter legislation i.e. Humans Rights and Charter Rights to recognize and protect all Canadian citizens' rights that would include prisoners in the federal prisons. This legislation is being strictly enforced by the SCC.

Even the CCRA that guides CSC policy and practices under Sc. 3(b) calls for "carrying out sentences... through the *safe and humane custody*". "*Safe and humane custody*", in the 21st Century, infers thermostatically controlled indoor temperatures for all seasons, ostensibly for healthy living reasons.

Policy and Legislation Violations:

Corrections and Conditional Release Act

I'll start with the CCRA because this is the legislation that guides the Service.

Sc. 3(a) calls for calls for "carrying out sentences imposed by courts through the *safe and humane custody*". "*Safe and humane custody*" for any prisoner suffering physiological and physical disability does not include brutal and barbaric exposure to high heat and humidity for days on



end in our living quarters.

Sc 4(d) "offenders retain the rights of all members of society except those that are, as a consequence of the sentence, lawfully and necessarily removed or restricted". There was nothing in any prisoner's sentence by the Courts that said they would or should receive living accommodations that would put their life in danger due to exposure to high ambient temperatures and humidity for days on end with the very great possibility of death due to heat stroke.

Sc. 86(d) of the CCRA states that CSC must provide federally sentenced persons with "*essential*" health care. CSC's failure to provide living accommodation to prisoners suffering health issues that are well recognized to be exacerbated by a lack of air conditioning is a failure to provide "*essential*" health care.

Based on the foregoing violations of the CCRA legislation that guides the Service, CSC's 'No Air

Conditioning Policy for Prisoners' constitutes cruel and unusual treatment or punishment that definitely is not in accordance with "*safe and humane custody*" and "*essential*" health care

CD 001 --- Mission, Values and Ethics Framework of CSC

"The Correctional Service of Canada's Values and Ethics Framework provides a common understanding of CSC's shared beliefs and expected standards of behaviour in achieving its Mission". This CSC Mission Statement calls for "exercising reasonable, safe, secure and humane control" of prisoners. Under the values tenets of 'respect' and 'fairness' there is the civility requirement of "treating others as we would like to be treated".>

Considering the key words: - "reasonable
- "safe"
- "humane"
- "treating others as we would like to be treated"

cont'd on pg 9

cont'd from pg 8

I can't imagine subjecting seniors and those with physiological or psychological disability to debilitating summer temperature extremes to be compatible with these key word custody requirements.

It's abundantly obvious that there is some hypocrisy going on here!

The highest levels of CSC to continue to deny prisoners with known health issues AC accommodations, knowing full well the deleterious effects that a high temperature has on a person's health. This denial is beyond the pale when you consider the whining that would ensue, if the air conditioning at the National Headquarters office complex were ever to fail, even for a day. Drilling deeper into the CSC psyche, imagine what these hypocrites would say if their geriatric family members were historically denied an air conditioned living environment.

The motherhood code of conduct policy statement, "treating others as we would like to be treated" is total BS when one relates this statement to the brutal and barbaric way prisoners are treated and perceived.

In reality, the historical 'No Air Conditioning Policy for Prisoners' is indicative of the correctional culture's perception that prisoners are "not real people" / "less than human" and "unworthy" of healthy living accommodations.

(R. Clark, former Deputy Warden at the Bath Institution, from his book 'Down Inside - Thirty Years in Canada's Prison Service, 2017)

This is the real reason as to why CSC has a historical 'No Air Conditioning Policy for Prisoners'.

Canadian Human Rights Act

Sc. 3 of the CHRA lists the prohibited grounds of discrimination that are applicable to senior prisoners and those with physiological and psychological disability. They are 'age' and 'disability'.

CSC's one-size-fits-all policy of 'No Air Conditioning for Prisoners' appears to be neutral and level handed until one considers the discrimination *by effect* on older prisoners and for creating disproportionate hardship on this group, compared to younger prisoners who are less likely to encounter the same rates of chronic illnesses and disability.

This harsher *effect* on older prisoners constitutes discrimination *by effect*.

Preventing discrimination *by effect* requires addressing differences rather than treating people the same. Some groups of individuals i.e. 'age' and 'disability' who have special needs require policy and practices that addresses those special needs.

Discrimination prohibited under the Act is not just for direct discrimination but also indirect and systemic.

Direct discrimination is the term used to describe what

happens when an individual or group is treated differently in an adverse way based on characteristics that are related to the prohibited grounds of discrimination including 'age' and 'disability'.

Indirect discrimination occurs even when there is no intention to treat an individual or group differently. In the case of this Grievance, indirect discrimination occurs with the blanket one-size-fits-all policy of 'No Air Conditioning for Prisoners'.

Systemic discrimination is the creation, perpetuation or reinforcement of persistence discrimination historically among disadvantaged groups.

In the case of no AC for prisoners, the discrimination is systemic.

This is because the policy is historically deliberate and persistent

The no AC policy for prisoner's creation, perpetuation and reinforcement is a violation of CSC's fiduciary trust and responsibility. It is also negligence due to CSC's failure to exercise the standard of care that a reasonable prudent person would have exercised in a similar situation in the community.

Sc. 5 of the CHRA provides a broad definition of discrimination, "it is discriminatory practice in the provision of goods, services, facilities or accommodations customarily available to the general public... by a denial or to differentiate adversely.

In my words, Sc. 5 prohibits direct, indirect and systemic 'age' and 'disability' discrimination to individuals (and prisoners are real persons / individuals) in the provision of thermostatically controlled indoor ambient temperature accommodations in both the winter and the summer months.

Nowhere in the CHRA (or the CCRA) is there wording that defines individuals in the Canadian prison system as 2nd tier individuals who are undeserving of both 'age' and 'disability' protection(s) that are offered to the Canadian public at large.

Yet in reference to the CSC Accommodations Guidelines Sc. 4.2.5 (i) "Staff areas only to be air conditioned". Stated another way, 'No Air Conditioning for Prisoners' infers that prisoners are 2nd tier individuals unworthy of the healthy ambient environmental benefits of air conditioning that are provided to staff at all levels of the CSC organization.

Charter of Rights and Freedoms

The Charter of Rights and Freedoms is federally incarcerated prisoners' best friend.

This is because the Charter is part of the Canadian Constitution and compliance with the Constitution is mandatory for all legislation and federal policy... by extension that means the CCRA and all Commissioner's Directives (CDs) policy.

Three Charter sections come specifically to mind when considering the outrageously obscene CSC policy of 'No Air Conditioning

for Prisoners'.

SC. 7 "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of the person and the right not to be deprived thereof except in accordance with the principles of fundamental justice."

Security of the person is generally given a broad interpretation and has both a physical and psychological aspect. Security of the person includes a person's right to control his/her own bodily integrity. Sc. 7 of the Charter will be engaged, where the state interferes with personal autonomy and a person's ability to control his or her own physical or psychological integrity.

Analysis by the court under section 7 is qualitative - in the sense that an arbitrary, over-broad or grossly disproportionate impact on one person is sufficient to establish a breach - and measures the effect of the impugned law against the law's purpose without regard to the law's efficacy.

As a prisoner, I have to depend entirely on my keeper CSC to provide whatever I need to survive. In this regard, I lack any

control over the ambient temperature environment in the prison residential unit where I reside.

In the same way that there is central heating during the winter months there, needs to be central cooling during the summer months in order to protect my et. Al. Sc. 7 "rights to life, liberty and security". In other words, CSC has a constitutional obligation not to confine and subject myself and other prisoners to conditions that are scientifically recognized to create short and long-term health issues and to even endanger life.

Charter Sc. 12

"Everyone has the right not to be subjected to any cruel and unusual treatment or punishment."

Charter Sc. 12 prohibits the imposition of certain treatments or punishments, through a contextual assessment of the effect that the [treatment or] punishment may have on the person on whom it is imposed balanced against the objective for that treatment or punishment. Section 12 prohibits treatment or punishment that is grossly disproportionate in the circumstances; in other words, one that would outrage our society's sense of decency such that Canadians would find it abhorrent or intolerable

To be cruel and unusual the treatment or punishment must be "grossly disproportionate": in other words, "so excessive as to outrage standards of decency", and be "abhorrent or intolerable to society".

Charter Sc. 15

"(1) Every individual is equal before and under the law and

has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

(2) Section (1) does not preclude any law, program or activity that has as its object the amelioration of conditions of disadvantaged individuals or groups including those that are disadvantaged because of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical ability."

The Supreme Court has consistently characterized the guarantee of equality as substantive. That is, the SCC has underscored that the concept of equality does not necessarily mean identical treatment and that the formal 'like treatment' (same-size-fits-all) model of discrimination may in fact produce inequality.

Low Hanging Fruit

George Fraser an octogenarian at the Bath Institution is challenging CSC Neanderthal policy of no air conditioning for prison-

cont'd on pg 10

Bellconcalls.com

What does Bellconcalls.com provide?

Simply go to Bellconcalls.com and get a number that an inmate puts on their pin# list that is local to the institution that they are in.

What does that mean?

When that number is forwarded to where you choose, the cost of the call that the inmate makes is now only \$0.57 for: 1 WHOLE HOUR.

What's the difference?

The prisons ITS(inmate telephone system)charges inmates \$0.05/min. That's \$0.50 for 10 minutes and; \$3.00 for 1 whole hour. Bellconcalls.com is ONLY \$0.57/hour.

**DO THE MATH!!!
SAVE OVER 60%**

If you make a call once a day for 1 hr, that would cost you \$3.00 Times that by 30 days(1 month), it would cost \$90.00 per month Even if you make a call once a day for just a ½ hr, that would cost you \$1.50 Times that by 30 days(1 month), it would cost \$45.00 per month With BELLCONCALLS.COM Calling Card Basic Plan 2: for just \$24.99 per month, you can make a 1 hr phone call for only \$0.57. AND you can call as many times a day as you wish.

IT'S ONLY \$0.57 per call for 1 hour!!!

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ers. In reference to CSC 201 4> Accommodations Guidelines Sc. 4.2.5 (i) that states "staff areas only will be air conditioned".

This is a winnable grievance once it gets into the Courts.

No Court would allow this obscene abuse of senior prisoners with physiological and psychological disabilities to continue because it is so grossly abhorrent as to outrage standards of decency when compared to community standards.

Everything considered... the ultimate decision is that all senior prisoners and those suffering physiological and psychological disability to be provided living accommodations with central air conditioning in the same way that there is thermostatically controlled central heating provided.

AC For All Prisoners

Now understanding full well that there could be no CSC mandated involuntary segregation of senior prisoners, or those suffering physiological or psychological disability, from the general population in order to selectively provide only these individuals with AC because that would constitute as discrimination under CHRA legislation. Any judicial decision to provide one segment of the prison population with AC would then be the lead in for all prisoners in all federal prisons to receive air conditioned accommodation.

On a personal note:

I don't want to leave anyone with the impression that it will be easy and AC for prisoners is imminent. It is to be expected that CSC will fight tooth and nail to continue the abusive policy of 'No Air Conditioning for Prisoners'.

Like with CSC's legal defense of solitary confinement, it is to be expected that they will defend their 'No Air Conditioning for Prisoners' because they consider themselves to be a state unto themselves; their mentality is that the CHRA and the Charter does not apply to them! Then there is the correctional culture mentality that has historically reinforced the 'No Air Conditioning for Prisoners' because prisoners are "not real people" / "less than human" / "unworthy" of the civility of air conditioning. (R. Clark, former Deputy Warden at the Bath Institution, from his book 'Down Inside - Thirty Years in Canada's Prison Service, 2017)

IS THIS JUSTICE?

By Brian G. Kerr

When the police intentionally withhold certain pertinent information in order to obtain from an honorable Justice a warrant which otherwise would never be issued, I ask you, is this justice?

When a crown attorney includes a key witness's home address in the accused disclosure, particularly a witness who is testifying against the accused and is arguing that the accused is a danger-

ous offender to society, aka a dangerous offender designation. And the accused in no way utilizes this information in order to bring harm to the witness, contrary to the accusations in which were originally being alleged by the witness. Again I ask you, is this justice?

I have been raised in a Christian home and I learned how to play chess when I was perhaps 15 years old and I have always had a reasonable amount of street smarts. Howbeit, I have never been very good at poker. Moreover, I am by no means a lawyer, but I have brushed up on certain litigative knowledges. In addition, I can tell you, which I am sure you might agree, when one shows his cards or mutters his next move in advance, it is generally not a good result or effective strategy in which to hold your pieces.

If I were to bait a hook with the intent of catching a decent sized fish, yet no fish is responding to my allurements, how is it I can say that the fish is hungry?

Or that they are biting well?

Assuming for a minute I am a lawyer or a crown attorney, and I were attempting to provide and show cause that a particular opponent were a "dangerous offender". It probably would not be too wise for me to provide my key witness' home address of where he is currently residing in the accused's disclosure. I mean what would be the purpose of this? Even if it were an accident, there are various significant problems with this. One, that I would be considered irresponsible as I am (quote) "responsible" for the vetting of such material prior to release and two, that I'm either a very lousy lawyer or that I am an extremely cunning one! Suggesting I had an alternative motive. None the less, should the respondent not respond as I have anticipated, this would likely only leave the probability that I am a (quote) "very lousy lawyer!"

Sure, I could always try to attempt to suggest that this information was in fact reciprocated or somehow acted upon. However, again, if I am unsuccessful, this would only confirm that I am in fact a lousy, cunning and "corrupt" lawyer.

Moreover, I am sure this reputation would follow me the entire duration and remainder of my career.

You see, as a crown attorney, it would be my job to prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that my opponent is in fact a dangerous offender. Nevertheless, if circumstances had it that my client - aka key witness who has alleged that the defendant counselled my client to commit murder and that a) no murder was in fact committed, and b), that the allegations in which my witness makes his allegations were in no way committed upon himself in the same manner or similar manner as to which he had alleged (despite ample opportunity on behalf of the accused to do so - via the haphazardly vetted material.) I would hence, essentially fail to uphold my obligation, and



the benefit of the doubt would still be present. This is all without mentioning the simple fact that I did include such detrimental information - suggests that I don't, or in any way felt that the defendant/accused was much of a threat to begin with, let alone a "dangerous offender".

Am I an asshole for pointing it out? I suppose I am, but at least I have the courage to admit it! I did not hide behind my disappointment or sit behind the stench of an ill begotten demeanour. (I mean, assuming that the crown attorney is corrupt in his ways, I would not necessarily presume otherwise). However, as I said previously, if he were to in any way fail in his attempts, as I believe he did in his entirety, he would look awfully silly and such course of actions ought to be carefully reviewed and reconsidered, especially should a decision be rendered for an appeal, a possible dismissal or a retrial.

Perhaps, it would be better for both the crown attorney and the defendant's sake if one were not aware of such implications. Howbeit, we all have our own angles of which to contend. Question is, is the degree of corruption so prevalent that one may be willing to chance their ways, career, and reputation, despite knowing the truth and accuracy of their executions? Perhaps... but then again, only one's true colours and actions can speak to this direction. Perhaps this is a question, only the crown attorney himself can answer.

INSTITUTIONALLY NEGLECTED

By Brian G Kerr

destroy each other for the space, food and necessities.

Some fear we will kill everything leaving only ourselves and then we will cease to exist in any meaningful or productive way!

Listen its clear our way is not working. We need to give it all back over to our creator. We can do this by mimicking nature's example. Help nature do what its already doing. Our goal however, in the end is to maintain a balance. We need to be more responsible in everything we do. How we grow food, have children develop wealth, consume, attribute..., everything!

We must remember, Newton's third law, "for every action (force) in nature there is an equal and opposite reaction", there is a consequence to everything we do. We need to consider these things before we do the things we set our minds out to do. In addition, we need to consider doing things a little differently, before we do them.

This is management.

It works with anger and it works with the environment as well. Howbeit, some refer to it as regulation.

If we choose, we can change the way in which we treat each other, live and enjoy the many gifts and blessings we have received.

If we do not - these blessings can turn into curses. Moreover, curses are only good for one thing, nothing! They rot the very foundation from which they stem and give nourishment to further iniquity and impurity. "Hence the term, you reap what you sow!"

If we are going to institute something, let us make sure it is truly for the good of all things - make sure there is an equal balance of honour in our decisions, actions and words.

We as a society tend to categorize things, people and places without considering how our associations or categorizations and opinions affect the matter being discussed, or that is at hand.

Remember the term "if walls could talk, or had eyes?" Well this would not only give you an insight into a whole world of shame, but would likely remind you that you are not much different from anyone else.

Sometimes we need to be reminded of our hypocrisy. Sometimes this is what it takes to really cause us to take a good, thorough look at ourselves. It is so easy to point fingers at people, but it takes attentive concentration and alertfulness (mindfulness) to consider how many fingers are actually pointing back at us.

Some of us do not care..., but my second point is that we should!

"We only get what we put into it!" This is the analogy that I am trying to get across. We need to be more cautious of the type of energy we are putting back into society. Particularly, should you expect something beneficial to become of it, or expect anything of equal values in return.

cont'd on pg 11

cont'd from pg 11

Life/nature knows this fundamental law of reality. We on the other hand are a little reluctant to grasp this concept.

Therefore, I encourage you to learn a lesson from nature, spend some mindful time with it and try to retrieve some insight from its teachings.

Try not to be institutionally neglected by the hurtful, negative narratives our society and colonial dispositions have inflicted upon us.

Take a stance and rise above these deteriorating circumstances. Refuse to let these influences determine your future thoughts.

Your thoughts attribute to your beliefs, and your beliefs are a result of your experiences – but it all starts with your original thought, what you told yourself about the experience.

Be mindful of these things and perhaps together we can help promote the proper correlative change needed to stem and break the cycle of negligent institutionalization.

FOR FUTURE THOUGHT

By Brian G. Kerr

Have you ever really thought what it would be like if we were actually advanced enough to be exploring and encountering other worlds, planetary civilizations and unearthly life forms?

What would be the governing rules in which we were to comply?

Would our initiatives and exploratory intentions for such purposes be organized?

What, could it perhaps be called?

Well, here is a possible hypothesis, I refer to as:

Planetary Nations

Moreover, here are the possible universal laws I have devised.

Are inhabitants capable of communicating with any degree of intelligence or sophistication?

How are inhabitants corresponsive, responsive and/or dependent upon the solar-celestial confines in which they are located?

Are there environmental factors, which may interfere with the crew, it's method of transportation, communications, functions and operations.

Is there any indication of bio-mental or physiological threat should contact be initiated?

Can initial contact be made without revealing origin or identity of the examiners?

Consider all life forms & how interactive presence would or could affect their civilization.

Could Human contact interfere with the inhabitants bio-mental or physiological abilities?

These things are definitely something to consider... end of text.

*Dedicated to Tommy C/O
Your local space cadet*

**CONT'D FROM CELL COUNT 100TH
ISSUE PAGE 3**

who will accept us regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, etc. I have yet to meet someone at PASAN who doesn't have compassion. Cell Count is like family.

ROWAN SAVOY

What has Cell Count meant to you over the years?

I wrote to Cell Count many times while I was incarcerated in a really dark and lonely time.

Why do you think Cell Count is an important publication?

It reaches out to the entire jail system and

in that darkness and loneliness it can be there to help people find some light.

What do you hope for the future of Cell Count?

I hope that Cell Count will be used to encourage, to strengthen and to give the good news.

BOBBY K.

What has Cell Count meant to you over the years?

It cleared the road for me of living with HIV, made me feel part of something again and that I'm not alone in this city.

Why do you think Cell Count is an important publication?

If it wasn't for Cell Count, there would be nobody to hear the stories of my life and the help that it offers. I feel secure with you guys.

FROM INSIDE

KELLY SOKOLOSKY

"New Directions"

Another day, a new wound to heal,
Another excuse, my pain is very real.
I've searched for answers from my highs and my lows,
I struggle to my feet from constant blows.
My escapes have turned me prisoner within,
I keep praying for a clean life to begin.

Another day, a new scar in the mirror,
Another attempt to get my head focused and clear.
Fentanyl arrived fueling my highs and my lows,
Vicious, ruthless, the drug the devil chose.
Through the carnage, sadness, overdoses, death and pain,
The drug game's officially gone insane.

Another day, another brother and sister victimized by the drug,
Another attempt to put down the drug we choose to love.
How are we ever going to win if we keep choosing to lose;
Help me educate, prevent, and stop the use.
My experiences have shed light on my prisoner within,
Today I will focus so a clean life can begin.

Another day, another cloudless dream,
Another attempt of being drug free and remaining clean.
Sisters, brothers, it's not too late to stop your pain,
Clear your head so you can dream again.
For if it means to take it one day at a time,
Take it from me, I thank God I'm still alive.

K. HUNTER

2B – QUARANTINE

I wake up; my heart starts to race,
Forgot I'm back locked in this place.
Dark thoughts, they pollute my

mind
As I'm searching for answers I'll never find.
The day starts, yet we stay stuck,
No one around here seems to give a fuck.
We slowly go insane.
Wish we could just detach our brains.
Our minds slowly waste away,
But for our crimes we have to pay.
We have no say in what we do,
No that is why they hire "you".
"Get back in line you nameless pawn!"
"I said get back, you're Satan's Spawn!"
We must empty out our minds,
In "them" there is no friend to find.
Your mind is the only thing you own,
But oh, how I wish that it were the phone.
Loneliness starts creeping in,
Did this day really only just begin?
Our fears leave us feeling cold,
It's so sad when the weak ones fold.
Better to die than live this way,
They don't care to see another day.
Very few show empathy,
"They" aren't allowed, "they" hold the key.
I can see "you" trying not to care,
When "you" and I both know this shit's not fair.
No change can come around,
Until "your" voices make a sound.
Our broken souls what pays "your" bill,
So keep breaking us, "you" know "you" will.
It seems to matter so much less,
When "you're" out there buying that new dress.
If "you" tell "yourselves" we are nothing but our crime,
Then to our pain, "you" can stay blind.

AW

Too Square To Dance

It was dubbed the Vingt Vingt dance club,
pick-up hub
For losers, boozers and cougars.

No doseydoe there, older women primp their hair,
Sneaking rails on the back of the flush, my what a rush.

They'd say I could dance, all spinning and hands, not caring

Either way if I got laid, I always stayed for last call.

I was like a spy in a B-rated flick, shooting sneaky
Peeks left and right, wanting yet not wanting to get busted.

Then there was the hilltop, free popcorn so salty, was
Guaranteed you'd stay malty, spitting out kernels on the way home.

Always the same fast, last dance, odd choice because I
Was already awake, never whined as George Michael was divine.

On better days I'd wake up filling my cup with a Keurig option before
Kissing my wife, then I'd go-go to the golf course.

The cosmo was the spot, the ladies were hot, also great for
A bi-sexual male, flip a coin heads I give head, tails I get tail!

Vaguely remember that last night in December, awoke beside
My soccer coach in school, wrong or cool never decided.

So back to the 20-20 where pussy was plentiful, lower
Standards with each Jack & Coke, comparing notes with my blokes.

Tear In My Beer

I grew up liking old country, Merle Haggard, Patsy Cline
Not a huge Hank Williams fan, but you are on my lonely mind.

Sixty three days no coke, can't recall feeling this good, wish
I could've escaped its vice-like grip, so hard for so long.
No thoughts of booze, no cravings, life in jail is actually
Saving my life, albeit with an unhealthy

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dose of regret.

Had a brief psych session, told me my head is okay,
Didn't know he was also a neurologist as well, how can he tell.

Ex-wife rules my thoughts, have and have nots, analyzing
Rethinking, digging deeper, who'll be my next keeper.

Back to the tunes, a brief reprieve from myself, Metallica
Would be cool, I'm not fool enough to dream that big.

I'm crazy, just not beautifully so, a little insanity,
Checked my vanity at the door, nothing less nothing more.

'twas a jukebox at the legion, Elvis minus the pelvis,
The irony of Jailhouse Rock, I'd never mock The King.

An Okee from Muskogie, I'd dig a big Hoagie, or an ice
Cream truck in December, just a whim as I'm a branded man.

There's been an abundance of tears, no beer in
Detention, no mention of lagers or ales.

Yellow Hued Angels

Rainbows and penny candy, memories from a childhood
That seems like yesterday, tooth decay, and sunshine.

Always our dainty friends would stop in, post rain,
Flittering, fluttering from rosebushes to azaleas.

Inexplicably mostly yellow little angels from
Which dreams and drama of loved ones since passed.

Orange butterfly saunters by, knowing full well he's
Outnumbered, but no less important to the mom lost a son.

Not sure where or when they became dream catchers
Yet most every one smiles for awhile, ever get stung by a butterfly!

Was never convinced of their power, but for hours the
Yellow mellow one would be in my wife's ear, whispering.

Shade sitting just reading, there it would be on her knee
Struggling with the afternoon breeze to stay out.

Visit for a minute, just touching base, hello then
Goodbye, c'ya soon, he's off to see the puppy next door.

Freewheeling and flightful, always delightful, seems
They have a knack for allowing others to stare in their optimism.

I too like the dragonfly, yet it pales in comparison, everyone
Wishes for their loved one's return, when the yellow hued angel floats by.

Head Games Funny Names

Trying to get my brain near sane is like feeding
Captain Crunch Wheaties, he'll eat but won't be happy.

Look up look way up and I'll call a cab, tell dispatch I'm
Off to the theatre to drop off some tissue for Pee Wee Herman's issues.

Big Bird, Bert and Ernie, Sesame Street was a staple, Super Mario
Scary-Os for lunch, pasta in a can for the Mr. Dressup fan.

Howdy Doodie, Tutti Frutti ice cream or bubble gum, Chiclets
And Dentyne, scheming with Shaggy missing Scooby Doo.

Looking to find a 3X for my zed, missing Scrabble the back and
Forth babble with Kate and I, fuck I knew I was going to cry.

Rubik's Cube, Monopoly, Crazy Eights, Poker in the shack
Doubt I'll ever get back, it's Solitaire and Big Bang re-runs.

Dr. Zhivago, Love and Intrigue, the A-Team in fatigues,
They kicked ass and took names, I loved it when a plan came together.

Build it and they will come, he did, they did from a dank cell my
Head is unwell, but I still dream of a field, with sand, a flag in a cup.

The Fonz was the dude, brylcream, white t-shirt, I give him
2 thumbs up. Richie Cunningham, Uncle Sam, Happy Days indeed.

Spongebob, Simpsons, give me The Flintstones, yabba dabba doo,
C'mon you liked it too, I'd go to the pub with Barney Rubble I'll have a double.

In For A Penny In For A Pound

Started with a paper route, my fondness for money
I could buy anything and save my allowance

I wasn't a miser, just wiser, which ended quickly
At 19, beer with no instruction manual.

Trouble found me at every turn, my house did
I burn. Tough times in the neighbourhood.

I wish jail was worse the first time, lifting
Weights boosted my self esteem, bullied no more.

The coke has ended and taken everything my
Heart had left, I'll most certainly fail in jail.

A pound of flesh I'll take, I'm not going down
Easy, I better understand there's no turning back.

Where's Colonel Sanders, greasy messy, 4 napkins
Worth, 5 with a poutine. Mary Brown puts him down.

A pound of wings bottle of Corona, honey and hot, talking
About my sauce, not the server, a little kick is nice.
Penny for your thoughts, haves and have nots
Eager beaver, cinnamon and icing, tail for sale.
Happy wife, happy life, explain why I'm now
The unhappy one, cheating ex put a hex on my life.

Retribution, spite, payback is a bitch, fuck
With the bull get the horns, I will be reborn.

ANONYMOUS

Vow(s) Like Confessions

I never deadline time
Slots Tik-Toking inexorably
Toward midnight
Back

beat dance-
Mine anomaly.
If I were Saint no longer
Suffering fools, could I still
Sacrifice for the cruel chicks
Juss cous they can
Fuck so deliciously obscene?
Could empathy cry out
In limitless crazy/lonely
And suspicious; or, is
Unconditional pedestal

Fallen Angels?
Patience vast
As wind-storm nebula
Ripped the rags from
My nakedness hanging
On the balance
Where you left me
On your way to the top.

Of everything you said
You would do, but never did.
I never said never
Cause I am Saint who gave you
The benefit, when no one else did-
Be c a u s e,
You never followed through,
Never kept a promise, nor
Honored a deal.... Not cause
You're an asshole, or cause
All you ever did was take

Butt because.....
No! Wait. That ain't quite true.
I seen you give em hell.
I experienced you sharing your pills.
I heard about you
Pumpin back on so much "dick";
Not cous you're so giving
Butt cuz you can take it!

In the best sense of The Word
You have always been *Miss Understood. Miss Fuck Em If They Can't Take A Joke.*

I get you.

I believed in you
When no one else did.
That's you sayin everything
You're all *cracked up* to be.
Everything you say
I already did. You know Why?
Because the definition of Saint is:
Redemption Believes.
(when no one else did)

"I Do."

Long-Gone Babylon Babe

She journeys on celestial zephyrs.
The pristine lines of her vessel
Coruscating with the crispness
of a shooting star.
Through the silent freshness
Of milky clusters and iri
Descent veils of stardust;
Sax power-drives shot
Sparkx in the jet-stream
Of a silky jazz solo.
Bypassing Horse Head Nebula-
Over super nova utopia....
For a space-truck stop
On the outskirts of a bustling galaxy.
Digitally re-mastered synapses
And shower fresh on velvet dais.
Long sculptured leggz encased
In chrome bionics; as infrared

Bedroom eyes-

Study the *Infinity Detectors*
With the calm conscious
Of hedonistic Goddess
Travelling faster than
The digits can keep.

Wild Blue Angel

He took left-hand axe
And made blade.
He dug grooves
Like graves for the brave-
Struck feedback thunder
On lightning riff.

He smoke spliff like
Drifter sage, cleansing
Camel bones in the desert.

He ride Corvette 4-wheel drive
With Dakaran rode crew,
Clear through to Johannesblue.
Crossed the ocean
And died in the backseat
Of a taxi.

S.R. OTHMAN

Broken Wings

The captain of this ship,
That wrecked in the mud, dreamless night
Looking for the light
In the Darkness, starless sky

All had fled, without a trace
Loosen like show without a lace
Tighten up the pace
Can't get far

A dream of bright horizon,
The wings broken by surrounding thorns
If you could fly
They will follow the trail
Of your scattered feathers

There is no escape,
The rays of the sun
Will brighten your steps
Even in the night
The moon will highlight your steps
Only in the darkness
You can hide your madness.

QUINN

INSANE

My life's fucked up please don't pray for me
While I make up this shot I'm not playing see
Cuz my fam & friends say I'm fucked up
They're the one's playing me, so I cook it up
My shots should be just enough to fuck me up
And shut them up, yeah you heard me shut them up
The screams of pain deep in my brain my only relief
Is in my vein so please recognize that I'm insane
Insane from my pain and these shots in my vein
But we all know it's a vicious action taken in vain
Do you see what I've explained?
Why I get so lost in a spoon or a deep ass dish
No love no fam no one close so here I go again
Another trip on the drug me go round
Will it ever stop I think not cause I'm insane

FORGOTTEN WARRIOR

- PRISON TIME -

All u have is time!
Great yawning maws of hours
That perpetually chew on u w/
Dull teeth
Eating u alive, as u remain unconsumed!!
--

"PRISON IS WHAT YOU MAKE IT, THOUGH PHYSICALLY CONFINED.... I WAS ABLE TO FREE MY MIND. THOUGH FOUR WALLS SURROUNDED ME, NOTHING HELD THE FLIGHT AND LIBERTY OF MY SOUL." - LISA HUTCHINSON



ARTIST: JEREMY HALL

ARTIST: JEREMY HALL



Outreach & Support Schedule

Currently, as places are opening up slowly, we are also starting to do some one-on-one visits and limited capacity programs at a small number of provincial and federal institutions. Please keep an eye out for posters or call us at: **1-866-224-9978 for up-to-date information about when and where we are coming in.**

As things open back up in Ontario on the outside, we are increasing the number of days we are in the office. We are available Mon - Fri 9am - 5pm EST (to reach a specific staff member please dial **1-866-224-9978** followed by the extension):
Eveline Allen x235
Regional Prison In-Reach Coordinator
Sena Hussain x234
Communications & Resource Dev Coordinator
Olivia Gemma x230
Provincial HepC Program Coordinator

Trevor Gray x232
Community Programs Coordinator
Kavita Maharaj x239
Harm Reduction Program Coordinator
Anton McCloskey x236
Federal In-Reach Community Development Coordinator
Claudia Medina x227
Program Manager
Amina Mohamed x231
Women's Community Program Coordinator
Jennifer Porter x238
Harm Reduction, Hep C, and Community Programs Manager

Janet Rowe x225
Executive Director
Cherisa Shivcharran x233
Provincial Community Development Coordinator
Claudia Vergara x222
Federal In-Reach Community Development Coordinator
TBA
POWER Project Coordinator

You can reach us by mail at: PASAN, 526 Richmond St E, Toronto, ON M5A 1R3

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

PASAN's office, where we publish Cell Count, is on the historical territory of the Huron-Wendat, Petun, Seneca and, most recently, the Mississaugas of the New Credit Indigenous peoples. This territory is covered by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Haudenosaunee and the Ojibwe and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the lands and resources around the Great Lakes.

HIV+ CLIENT SERVICES

In order to be a client & access these services you need to have confirmed HIV+ status and be a prisoner or ex-prisoner (all times Eastern Standard time)

- Phone Hours: Mon – Fri from 9-5, except Tuesday mornings
- Workshops and Programming - Scheduled usually on Mondays or Thursdays, give us a call or check out our website for a complete list of events we have scheduled.
- ID Clinic – cancelled for now
- Release Funds - \$50 (twice a year max)
- TTC Tokens – 2 each for clients who attend workshops
- Harm Reduction Materials – Mon – Fri from 9-5, except Tuesday AM (Safer-Crack-Use-Kits, Safer-Needle-Use-Kits, Piercing Needles, Condoms, etc.) - for everyone.

Sometimes we and the phones are very busy so please keep trying!

ABOUT CELL COUNT

PASAN publishes 'Cell Count', a minimum of 4 issues per year. We are based in Toronto on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of New Credit First Nation, the Haudenosaunee, the Huron-Wendat and home to many diverse Indigenous peoples. It is sent out for **FREE** to Clients & Prisoners in Canada. If you are on the outside or part of an organization, please consider a donation @ \$20 per year. We are proud to release our 100th issue to you. We are also grateful for all the wonderful feedback we have been receiving from our readers, and encourage you to keep putting your two cents in. Our goal is to have most of our content written and produced by prisoners and ex-prisoners, so we highly encourage you to get in touch with us if you're interested in

being part of the Cell Count team. Publisher: PASAN
526 Richmond St E, Toronto, ON M5A 1R3
Circulation: 700+ - Recirculation: ???
All original artwork, poems and writings are the sole/soul property of the artist and author.
Fair Dealing in the Canadian Copyright Act:
Sections 29, 29.1, 29.2: "Fair dealing for the purpose of research, private study, education, parody, satire, criticism, review, and news reporting does not infringe copyright."

A NOTE ABOUT PEN PALS:

Here is a list of correspondence services for people inside (alternatives to pen pals, which is, sadly, no longer a part of Cell Count):
Canadian Inmates Connect: Currently, there is a \$35/year subscription. Your ad will be placed on a website, and people with internet access browse through to decide who to connect with. A point of caution: you are asked to say what you have been convicted for, and your full name will be published online. Melissa is the person to contact for more information. Write or call her at: Canadian Inmates Connect Inc. 3085 Kingston Rd, Suite 267, Toronto, Ontario, M1M 1P1 - (647) 344-3404
Black and Pink: Specifically for queer and trans prisoners. They are based in the United States, it does not cost anything to be part of the list, and you don't have to tell them your conviction. Here is how to reach them: Black and Pink National Office, 614 Columbia Rd, Dorchester, MA 02125 617.519.4387
Prison Fellowship Canada: This is a faith-based, Christian organization that connects prisoners with volunteers of either the same gender, or where there is a 15-20 year age difference. The point is for you to have an outlet to express yourself to someone who will listen. If you are of the Christian faith, this may be a great option for you. You can reach them for more info at: Prison Fellowship Canada - National Office, 5945 Airport Road, Suite 144, Mississauga, ON L4V 1R9 905.673.5867
Prisoner Correspondence Project: "...a solidarity project for gay, lesbian, transsexual, transgender, gendervariant, two-spirit, intersex, bisexual and queer prisoners in Canada and the United

States, linking them with people who are part of these same communities outside of prison." - From their website. Write to them here: QPIRG Concordia c/o Concordia University 1455 de Maisonneuve Ouest, Montreal, QC H3G 1M8
If you have had success using a pen pal service (other than ours) and would like to share it with other Cell Count subscribers, please write to us or call. We can list it in a future issue.

MOVING?

We were getting about 75 Cell Counts sent back to us each mail-out labelled, 'Not Here'. Please help us reduce our mailing expenses by letting us know of any address change, ASAP! Thank you for taking care with this.

CALLING ALL ARTISTS, WRITERS (FICTION, NON-FICTION), ILLUSTRATORS, CARTOONISTS, POETS, JOURNALISTS (ASPIRING OR OTHERWISE), AND OTHER CREATIVE TYPES:

We want your submissions! We get lots of letters from our readers telling us how much they love seeing all your work and they're hungry for more. Send us your stuff and get published in Cell Count. When you send us stuff, please make sure you write a line in that gives us permission to publish your work. Also, let us know if you would like your work returned to you or sent on to someone else! Please also type your work or write clearly if you can!
Writers: We get a lot of great work sent in that we are unable to use because of very limited space. Apologies. Please consider the column width & keep articles/poems tight & to the point. Honestly, the first items to go in are the ones that fit nicely and leave space for others – quality and quantity! Also, let us know in writing if it's ok to edit your work for grammar, spelling and so we can fit it in.
Please note: If you do send something to us, please give us a call if you can so we can look out for it in the mail. Also, call us again at least a week after you send it to make sure we got it. If not, if you're sending in a piece of writing, we can transcribe it over the phone for you, so keep a copy of everything you send us!

Women are the fastest-growing prisoner population in Canada, but often their experiences are marginalized in conversations about the prison system. We want to hear your take on prison, life, family, or anything else you're interested in writing about. We can guarantee confidentiality, and can publish your pieces under a pseudonym if you want! Please submit your articles, poetry, art, or letters to the Cell Count editor at 526 Richmond St E, Toronto, ON M5A 1R3.

WHEN SUBSCRIBING TO CELL COUNT

We have been notified by a few different institutions that if you'd like your subscription of Cell Count to make it into your hands, you have to register at the library to receive it first. Please do this before requesting a subscription from us just to make

sure! Also, if you are interested in subscribing please contact: Cell Count, 526 Richmond St E, Toronto, ON, M5A 1R3 or call Sena at: 1-866-224-9978 ext 228

CONTACT NUMBERS

If you are in any Federal/Provincial Institution or Detention Centre call us only with this #: Toll-free 1-866-224-9978

PHONE SYSTEM TROUBLES

We want to share our sincerest apologies for our current phone system. We are aware that many of you have had problems getting a hold of us. We apologize for this, our phone system has never been the same since COVID. Many of you have said you can't leave messages for staff. We're getting a new provider and phone system installed with it. We hope this process will take no more than a month (until late April - early May 2023). Please don't stop trying to get a hold of us in the meantime you're all important to us and we want to hear from you. If you can't leave a voicemail and you're trying to get a hold of someone specific, feel free to leave a message with whoever answers the call instead. We will make sure we pass along messages to whoever you are trying to reach!

CELL COUNT EVALUATIONS

Please take a few minutes to complete the evaluation form we've included with this issue and mail it back to us. We use these evaluations to make sure that Cell Count is useful to you and so our funders know we're on the right track. Call us if you would like to do your evaluation over the phone instead! **1-866-224-9978**

CELL COUNT PEER LIAISONS

Cell Count is looking for peer liaisons who are currently incarcerated to be a representative for Cell Count inside. You would be responsible for gathering subscribers, letting us know when subscribers have moved, encouraging people to submit their work, helping with evaluations, and answering general questions.
Call Sena if you're interested! 1-866-224-9978 x234



Cell Count Deadline: April 15th, 2023

The theme of Issue #101 is: Changes I Want to See. Share your stories and art with this theme in mind or about any other topic! If you need someone to bounce ideas off of, call Sena at 1-866-224-9978 x234 from Mon - Thurs 10am - 5pm

EAST COAST

ALLY CENTRE
Take collect calls
150 Bentinck St, Sydney, NS, B1P
1G6 902-567-1766

AIDS COALITION of NOVA SCOTIA
Accept collect calls
1675 Bedford Row, Halifax, NS, B3J
1T11-800-566-2437, 902-425-4882

**AIDS COMMITTEE of NEWFOUND-
LAND & LABRADOR**
Take collect calls
47 Janeway Place, St. John's, NL, A1A
1R7 1-800-563-1575

AIDS NEW BRUNSWICK
65 Brunswick St, Fredericton, NB, E3B
1G51-800-561-4009, 506-459-7518

AIDS PEI
Take collect calls
2-375 University Ave, Charlottetown,
PE, C1A 4N4 902-566-2437

AIDS SAINT JOHN
Don't accept collect calls
115 Hazen St, NB, E2L 3L3 506-652-
2437

BOOKS BEYOND BARS
P.O. Box 33129
Halifax, NS
B3L 4T6

HEALING OUR NATIONS:
1-800 565 4255
3-15 Alderney Dr, Dartmouth, NS,
B2Y 2N21-800-565-4255, 902-492-4255

MAINLINE NEEDLE EXCHANGE
Calls from within Nova Scotia are free
Don't accept collect calls
5511 Cornwallis St, Halifax, NS, B3K
1B3 902-423-9991

SHARP ADVICE NEEDLE EXCHANGE
Accept collect calls
150 Bentnick St, Sydney, NS, B1P
6H1 902-539-5556 (Collect)

SIDA/AIDS MONCTON
Accept collect calls as long as they're
HIV related
80 Weldon St, Moncton, NB, E1C
5V8 506-859-9616

QUEBEC

CACTUS
Accept collect calls
1300 rue Sanguinet, Montreal, H2X
3E7 514-847-0067

**CENTRE for AIDS SERVICES MON-
TREAL (Women)**
Accept collect calls
1750 Rue Saint-Andre, 3rd Flr, Mon-
treal, H2L 3T81-877-847-3636, 514-495-
0990

**COALITION des ORGANISMESCOM-
MUNAUTAIRES QUEBECOIS de
LUTTECONTRE le SIDA (COCQSIDA)**
Accept collect calls
1 est, rue Sherbrooke, Montréal, H2X
3V8 514-844-2477

**COMITÉ des PERSONNES ATTEINTES
du VIH du QUEBEC (CPAVIH)**
1-800-927-2844
2075 rue Plessis bureau 310, Montre-
al, H2L 2Y4 1-800-927-2844

ONTARIO

**2-SPIRITED PEOPLE of the 1ST
NATIONS**
Accept collect calls
145 Front Street East Suite 105
Toronto, Ontario M5A 1E3 416-944-

9300

**AFRICANS in PARTNERSHIP
AGAINST AIDS**
No collect calls, call PASAN
526 Richmond St E, Toronto, M5A
1R3 416-924-5256

**AIDS COMMITTEE of CAMBRIDGE,
KITCHENER, WATERLOO & AREA**
Accept collect calls
Have a toll-free number
2B-625 King St E, Kitchener, N2G
4V4 519-570-3687 (Collect), 1-877-
770-3687

AIDS COMMITTEE OF GUELPH
Accept collect calls, prefer that peo-
ple use their
89 Dawson Rd, Unit 113, Guelph,
N1H 3X2 1-800-282-4505; 519-763-
2255 (Collect)

**AIDS COMMITTEE of NORTH BAY
and AREA**
Accept collect calls
201-269 Main St W, North Bay, P1B
2T8 705-497-3560 (Collect)

AIDS COMMITTEE of OTTAWA
700-251 Bank St, Ottawa, K2P
1X3 613-238-5014 (Collect) or Toll
Free (ON & QC only) 1-800-461-2182

AIDS COMMITTEE of THUNDER BAY
574 Memorial Ave, Thunder Bay,
P7B 3Z2 1-800-488-5840, 807-345-
1516 (Collect)

POSITIVE LIVING NIAGARA
Accept collect calls from registered
clients
(Recommend that you get a case
manager to get registered with them)
111 Church St, St Catharines, L2R
3C9 905-984-8684 or toll free 1-800-
773-9843

**ANISHNAWBE HEALTH AIDS PRO-
GRAM**
No collect calls
255 Queen St E, Toronto, M5A
1S4 416-360-0486

ASIAN COMMUNITY AIDS SERVICE
When prisoners call, they offer them
small bursaries to cover their calling
fees
107-33 Isabella St, Toronto, M4Y
2P7 416-963-4300 (Collect)

**BLACK COALITION for AIDS PRE-
VENTION**
Accept collect calls
20 Victoria St, 4th Flr, Toronto, M5C
2N8 416-977-9955 (Collect)

**CANADIAN HIV/AIDS LEGAL NET-
WORK**
Accept collect calls
1240 Bay St #600, Toronto, M5R 2A7 416-
595-1666 (Collect)

FIFE HOUSE
Accepts collect calls
490 Sherbourne St, 2nd Flr, Toronto,
M4X 1K9
416-205-9888

**HIV & AIDS LEGAL CLINIC OF ON.
(HALCO)**
Accept collect calls
55 University Avenue, Suite 1400
Toronto, ON, M5J 2H7 1-888-705-
8889

**HIV/AIDS REGIONAL SERVICES
(HARS)**
Accept collect calls
844-A Princess St, Kingston, K7L
1G5 613-545-3698 (Collect)

ONTARIO ABORIGINAL HIV/AIDS

STRATEGY
Accept collect calls
844-A Princess St, Kingston, K7L
1G5 613-549-7540 (Collect)

PEEL HIV/AIDS NETWORK
Accept collect calls
160 Traders Blvd, Unit 1, Mississauga,
L4Z 3K7
1-866-896-8700, 905-361-0523 (Col-
lect)

**PETERBOROUGH AIDS RESOURCE
NETWORK (PARN)**
Accept collect calls
302-159 King St, Peterborough,
K9J 2R81-800-361-2895, 705-932-
9110 (Collect)

STREET HEALTH CENTRE
Accept collect calls
Hepatitis C Treatment Program 235
Wellington St, Kingston, K7K 0B5 613-
549-1440 (Collect)

THE AIDS NETWORK (TAN)
Don't accept collect calls
101-140 King St E, Hamilton, L8N
1B2 905-528-0854 toll free 1-866-
563-0563

THE WORKS
Accept collect calls
277 Victoria St, Toronto, 416-392-
0520 (Collect)

TORONTO PWA FOUNDATION
Accept collect calls from clients
200 Gerrard St E, 2nd Flr, Toronto,
M5A 2E6 416-506-1400

**Toronto Community Hep C Pro-
gram**
Accept collect calls
955 Queen Street East, Toronto, M4M
3P3
416-461-1925 (Collect only on Tues-
day & Friday, 11am-5pm)
Once out, please call 416-417-6135

John Howard Society of Toronto
1-866-265-4434

Black Legal Action
720 Spadina Ave. #221, Toronto, ON
M5S 2T9 (416) 597-5831

PRAIRIES

HIV COMMUNITY LINK
Accept collect calls
110-1603 10th Ave SW, Calgary, AB,
T3C 0J7 403-508-2500

AIDS SASKATOON
1143 Ave F N, Saskatoon, SK, S7L 1X1306-
242-5005 1-800-667-6876

**CENTRAL ALBERTA AIDS NET-
WORK SOCIETY**
No collect calls
4611 50th Ave, Red Deer, AB, T4N
3Z9 403-346-8858

HIV EDMONTON
9702 111 Ave NW, Edmonton, AB,
T5G 0B1 1-877-388-5742

**KIMAMOW ATOSKANOW FOUNDA-
TION**
Accept collect calls
RR 1, Site 1, Box 133, Onoway, AB,
T0E 1V01-866-971-7233, 780-913-9036

**NINE CIRCLES COMMUNITY
HEALTH CENTRE**
705 Broadway, Winnipeg, MB, R3G
0X2 1-888-305-8647

**PLWA NETWORK OF SASKATCHE-
WAN**
No collect calls
Box 7123, Saskatoon, SK, S7K
411 306-373-7766

OUT SASKATOON
213 Avenue C S, Saskatoon, SK S7M
1N3
306-665-1224

**PRINCE ALBERT METIS WOMEN'S
ASSOC.**
No collect calls
54 10th St E, Prince Albert, SK, S6V
0Y5 306-763-5356

**RED RIBBON PLACE
(ALL NATIONS HOPE AIDS NET-
WORK)**
2735 5th Ave, Regina, SK, S4T
0L2 1-877-210-7622

STREET CONNECTIONS

No collect calls
705 Broadway Ave, Winnipeg, MB,
R3G 0X2 204-940-2504 WOMEN: 50
Argyle, Winnipeg, MB, R3B 0H6 204-
943-6379

WEST COAST

AIDS VANCOUVER ISLAND
Accepts collect calls. 713 Johnson
St, 3rd Flr, Victoria, V8W 1M8 250-
384-2366 or 1-800-665-2437

LINC
33270 14th Ave, Mission, BC, V2V 4Z7
1-877-424-4242 (BC only)

CAAN
6520 Salish Dr, Vancouver, BC V6N
2C7 (604) 266-7616

NATIONAL

**CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF ELIZA-
BETH FRY SOCIETIES (Women)**
701-151 Slater St.
Ottawa, ON
K1P 5H3
(613) 238-2422

BRAIN INJURY ASSOC OF CANADA
440 Laurier Ave. West, Suite 200
Ottawa, ON K1R 7X6 Toll-free: 1-866-
977-2492

CATIE
1-800-263-1638
555 Richmond St W #505, Toronto,
ON M5V 3B1

NEW LIFE PRISON MINISTRIES
P.O. Box 123
Arva, ON
N0M 1C0
Aftercare support: 1-888-842-6898

PRISONER-SPECIFIC

**TORONTO PRISONERS' RIGHTS
PROJECT** (Runs the Prisoner Emer-
gency Support Fund)
PO Box 291 Toronto P Toronto, ON
M5S 2S8

**PRISONERS UNITED ORGANIZA-
TION**
PO Box 30009, Greenbank North PO,
Ottawa, ON, K2H 1A3

**BLACK INMATES & FRIENDS ASSEM-
BLY**
2518 Eglinton Avenue W, Toronto,
ON, M6M 1T1 ph (416) 652-3131

SMAAC.org
The Saskatchewan-Manitoba-Alberta
Abolition Coalition is an alliance of
groups from across the prairie prov-
inces who collaborate and organize
together on issues of prison and
police abolition.

**EAST COAST PRISON JUSTICE SO-
CIETY**
6061 University Ave, PO Box 15000
Halifax, NS, B3H 4R2
www.eastcoastprisonjustice.ca

**West Coast Prison
Justice Society/
Prisoners' Legal Services**
302-7818 6th Street
Burnaby, BC
604-636-0470

OTHER SUBSCRIPTIONS

OUT OF BOUNDS MAGAZINE
6000 William Head Rd, Victoria, BC
V9C 0B5

**JOURNAL OF PRISONERS ON PRIS-
ONS**
c/o Justin Piché, PhD, Dept of Crimi-
nology University of Ottawa, Ottawa,
ON, K1N 6N5

PRISON FREE PRESS
POBox 39 Strn P Toronto ON M5S 2S6

**HOMINUM (newsletter for gay,
bisexual & questioning men)**
#7—11438 Best Street
Maple Ridge, BC V2X 0V1
Art - 604-477-9553

PRISON BOOK PROGRAMS

**Books To
Prisoners
OPIRG-Car-
leton**
326 UniCen-
ter
Carleton
University
Ottawa, ON.
K1S 5B6
(613) 520-
2757

**Books 2
Prisoners**
PO Box
78005, 1755
East Broad-
way
Vancouver,
BC
V5N 5W1
604-682-3269
x3019

**Books Be-
yond Bars**
PO Box
33129
Halifax NS
B3L 4T6
902-446-1788

**Open Door
Books (ODB)**
c/o QPIRG
Concordia
Concordia
University
1455 de Mai-
sonneuve O
Montreal,
Quebec
H3G 1M8
514-848-7585

Who are we?
We are a group of
community volunteers who
help to support prisoners
in having platonic, safe,
and meaningful pen pal
connections.

Pacific & Prairie Region
Penn2Paper
104-1015 Columbia St.
Box 873
New Westminster, BC
V3M 6V3

write to us!
**A FREE, PLATONIC
PEN PAL PROGRAM FOR
FEDERAL PRISONERS**

(((PENN2PAPER)))

*send us a note to one of
these addresses depending on
your location*

We are dedicated to
social justice, anti-racism,
and freedom. We believe
in the right to dignity
and humanity for all.

Ontario & Atlantic Region
Penn2Paper
455 Danforth Ave
Box 429
Toronto, ON
M4K 1P1

Write ON!
Supporting prisoners through correspondence

**INCARCERATED IN CANADA?
NEED INFORMATION?**

WE CAN:
Research general information
you need, such as:
• general legal information
• info on prison rules and
policies
• info on resources,
programs and services
• and possibly other kinds of
information you need.

WE CANNOT:
• Give any kind of
professional advice, legal or
otherwise.
• be a pen-pal service
(though we could refer you
to one)
• promise to adequately
respond to all requests for
information.

WRITE ON! is an all-volunteer group whose goal
is to help and support prisoners in Canada,
through correspondence.

CONTACT US:
Write ON!
Suite # 234
110 Cumberland Street
Toronto, On M5R 3V5

TPRP JAIL HOTLINE
(416) 775-9239

MONDAY, WEDNESDAY,
FRIDAY, + SATURDAY
9-11 AM + 2-4 PM

NOW TAKING CALLS FROM:
TORONTO SOUTH DETENTION CTR.
VANIER CENTRE FOR WOMEN
MAPLEHURST CORRECTIONAL
COMPLEX

THE JAIL HOTLINE IS FREE!
FOR PRISONERS SEEKING
ADVOCACY, REFERRALS,
INFORMATION + SUPPORT!