

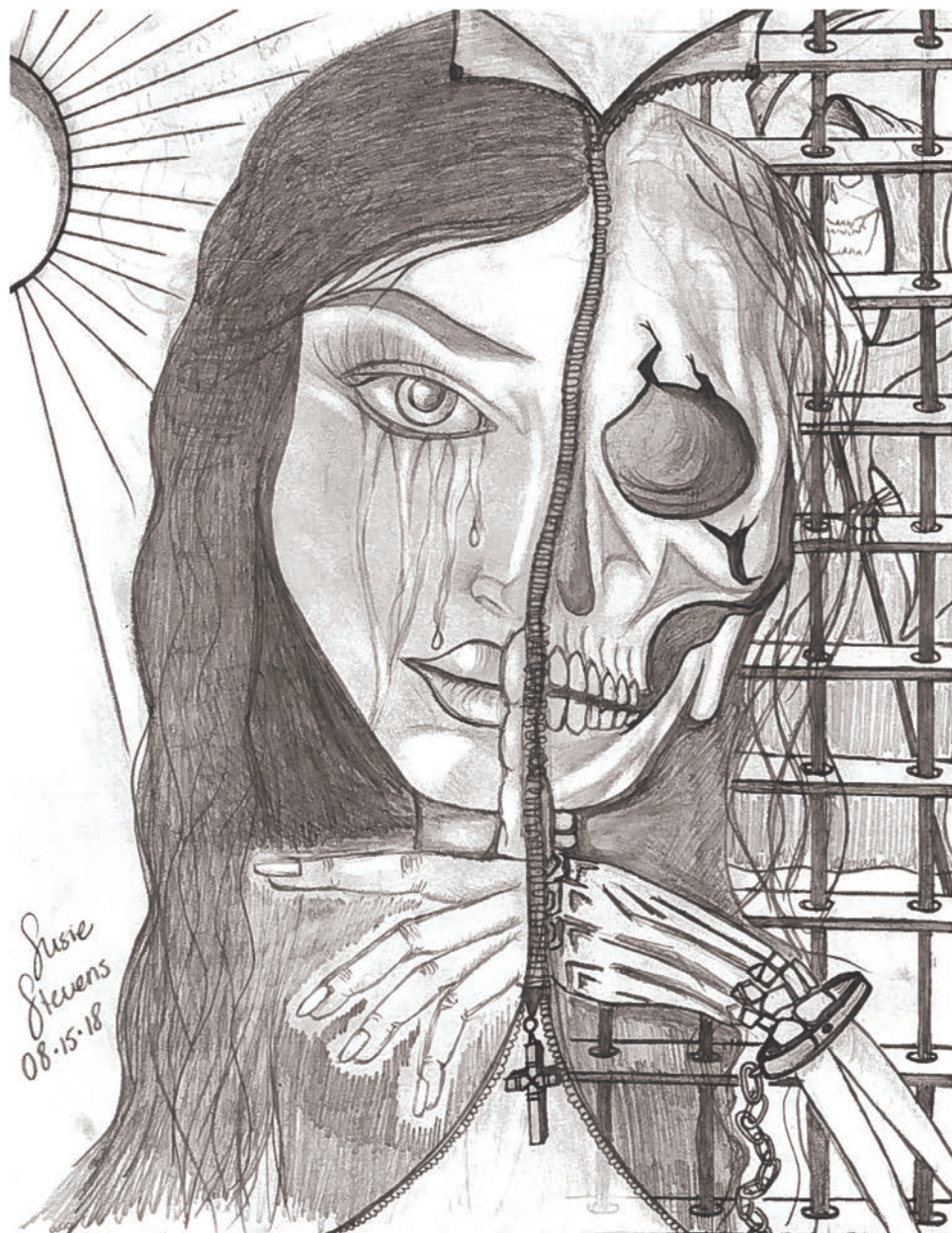
CELL COUNT



YOUR PRISON HEALTH RESOURCE SINCE 1995

FREE FOR PRISONERS, EX-PRISONERS & THEIR FAMILIES

THE COURAGE ISSUE - #87



"The print that I'm sending for your review and approval was drawn at a provincial women's institution with limited resources and a pencil that I had to try and sharpen by picking off the sides with my nails and I used the corner of the sole of my shoe as an eraser." - **Susie Stevens**

I fight for me, I fight for us

By Moka Dawkins

My fight began on August 3rd, 2015 and is still ongoing 3 years later, the day today is November 15th, 2018. My name is Moka Dawkins and this struggle of a story is still current and ongoing in my life that I'm about to share. What I first want to let you know is that I am a transgender woman, meaning I was born male externally but born with a female spirit/soul internally. Others may object to how I explain being transgender, saying that 'it's a choice one makes in life', but I can assure you that's not the case for me, I was straight up born this way, baby. Going back to making life choices, I'll be the first to admit that I made some bad choices in my life, and the worst choice I made landed me in the situation in which I am in now; but, before I tell you

what the choice was, first let me tell you what the best choice I made was. It was not giving up. I didn't give up on me, I didn't give up on my faith (Christianity), and I didn't give up for my future brothers and sisters, or LGBTQ+ members who may find themselves in a similar situation that I am in now. I fight for you, for us, because too many of our community members have taken their lives because they weren't free to be who they felt on the inside, and other countless reasons. It's time for the world to recognize not what we are, but who we are. Not where we come from, but who we're aspiring to become in the world. I don't know how much merit my voice or story is going to have in this world, but I'll be damned if I don't try to be heard.

On August 3rd, 2015 I was living in the shelter for females in the city of Toronto, Ontario. Fun fact: I'm originally from Montreal, Quebec, born and raised. On August 3rd, 2015, I was working as a sex worker both online and on the street corner. The weekend of August 3rd, 2015 there was a big celebration in the city of Toronto called Caribana, one of the biggest Caribbean festivals. Another fun fact: I'm half Jamaican and half Nova Scotian, and that night I keep referring to, August 3rd, 2015, was the closing celebrations of Caribana, and was supposed to be a night of celebration.

It actually turned into the most horrific and traumatic experience of my life. In the evening hours of August 2nd, 2015, I was getting ready to go meet my friends who flew in from New York for Caribana at the club. As I was getting ready, my friends and I were messaging each other over Facebook. My friend had informed me that he would be at the club around 1:30am and asked me if I could get some weed. I told my friend that I will see what I can do about the weed and that I would be at the club for 12:30am because in Toronto, the bars/clubs stop serving alcohol at 2am, and I'm the type of girl that likes to get turned up when I go out. I was getting ready for the club when I received a call from a client of mine, whom I've had previous sexual encounters within which I provided a service, asking to see me. His name was Jay. I told Jay that I already had plans for this evening, but I could see him after I'm done with my friends at the club. Jay then informed me that he had some weed and lines of coke and we can have fun. I informed Jay that I needed some weed for my friend who's visiting and asked if I could get some off of him. Of course, I was trying to see if I could get some free weed, but I was more than willing to pay for it, if need be. At this point, Jay then informed me that he wasn't home, but to call him when I was leaving to see where he was so that I could meet up with him to grab some weed. When I did call, as I left the shelter, I didn't get an answer, so I thought something came up for him, or whatever, so it's a flop. I went straight to the club, bought my drink, and was sipping on it when my phone started to ring.

It was Jay calling me back, "Hello, hey! Where you at?" Jay asked.

"I'm at the club," I replied.

"Sounds live," he said.

"Yeah, you should come," I told him.

That's what I remember fully of one of the many phone conversations I had with Jay that night. I remember him being persistent about me coming to see him, and me refusing. There was a point where I even hung up on him and he called me right back. After a bit of going back and forth on me coming to see him, I finally gave in. I took a look at the time and said I have a few minutes to spare until my friends get here, and Jay doesn't live far from the club. Okay, maybe I can

make everybody happy: I can leave now, meet Jay quickly, let him see me for a quick minute, I could grab the weed, set up an appointment for after the club, if anything. So I told him that I could only come for a few minutes to pick up the weed. He agreed and told me to come pick him up. He was down the street from where I was, so I went to pick him up. To make a long story shorter I'm going to be skipping over a few parts.

We got to Jay's apartment and we started making out and fooling around in the bedroom. I should mention that Jay was drunk when we met. Some time passes by and I'm like okay, I have to go. Jay was already naked on the bed with me, but I didn't take off my clothes cuz that's not what I was there for. I was trying to get up off the bed to leave. Jay tackled me to the ground to keep me there with him. I was able to get him off me and get back to my feet and out the bedroom. Now here's where the worst mistake I made comes in. Working as a sex worker you know (or learn to know) that no matter what room you go into from the living room to bathroom, or bedroom to kitchen, and you're with a client, you always carry your purse with you. See, what I did was leave my purse in the living room when I first got there, because I thought I could start to trust Jay. We connected so well in our past encounters and I wanted to show him that I trust him and that's why I left my purse in the living room. Worst mistake ever!! Why, you say, is that the worst mistake I made? Because when I got out the bedroom, ran to the front door and put on my shoes, I didn't have my purse with me. If I did, I would have been out that front door. I had to turn back around and go into the living room, passing by Jay as he stood there mumbling something to himself. I got my purse and started going through it to start making sure my money and everything was there, and checking my phone to see if I had any missed calls or text messages. I noticed on my phone that it was 1:28am.

At this point, Jay had started yelling at me, saying he didn't want me to leave, along with a bunch of other stuff. I continued to go through my purse to gather whatever items I needed, such as perfume and so on, to the top of my purse so it would be accessible for me to use as I'm rushing out the door. I also wanted Jay to let out whatever he has to say so he can calm down, after all, I knew he was already drunk and it was the alcohol talking. But Jay just kept going on and on so I offered Jay to come to the club with me, after all, I was already going to be popping a bottle, so free drinks for him, no issue. But he said no. I told him I would pay for him to get into the club, again he said no. Mind you in between me trying to calm him down, he was still ranting on. I even offered to come back to see him after the club if he wanted to spend time with me, and again he said

Continued on page 10

INSIDE THE
COURAGE
ISSUE

2
BULLETIN
BOARD

3
HEALTH &
HARM
REDUCTION

4-5
NEWS
ON THE
BLOCK

6-10
WRITINGS
ON THE
WALL

11-12
FROM
INSIDE

13-15
ART

16
RESOURCES
& ABOUT
PASAN

Outreach & Support Schedule

If you want to see a worker or attend a program put in a request to the Volunteer Coordinator, the Social Work Dept, or call us toll-free at 1-866-224-9978

Ontario Provincial institutions:

CECC: monthly visits, phone to request 1-1 visit, sign up sheet for workshops

CNCC: Phone to request 1-1 visit, sign up sheet for workshops

HWDC & Maplehurst: Groups/1on1: Call PASAN

TEDC & TSDC: Groups/1on1: Call for a program on your unit or a 1on1 educational

Ontario Provincial & Federal institutions for women:

VCW & GVI: Call PASAN (no regular programming)

Ontario Federal institutions for men:

We try to visit each prison at least 3 times a year. We visit: Bath, Beaver Creek, Collins Bay, Joyceville, Millhaven, Pittsburgh & Warkworth. We see people individually or in group settings and talk about health, harm reduction and other topics you might request. If you wish to know more or are living with HIV/HCV, please contact us to find out when we will be at your facility.

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 peacefully 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 – 1st & 3rd Thursday 1:00-2:00 every month - for everyone.
- 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 86th 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 re-

porting 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

Inmate Ink: "Help us bring Hope to a prisoner one letter at a time. Offers memberships from \$20 - \$40. Your completed ad will be published on our website for anyone in the general public to view and contact you directly. For an application or more info, please contact Tasha Brown at: P.O. Box 53222 Marlborough CRO, Calgary AB. T2A 7L9 or www.InmateInk.ca"
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 the consideration.

CALLING ALL ARTISTS, WRITERS (FICTION, NON-FICTION, SHORT STORIES, ETC), 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!

We're especially looking for submissions from women-identified folks! 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 - in the meantime, check out Concrete Blossoms on page 5.

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

NEXT DEADLINE & NEW ISSUE FORMAT!

Firstly, we want to thank everyone who sent us submissions for this issue of Cell Count! We are excited to present to our readership all of the thought-provoking submissions we received for this issue.

Submissions for the next issue of Cell Count will be due **May 15th**, 2019. We are also scrapping using seasons to mark each new issue (ie winter issue, spring issue, etc.), in favour of themed issue. As you can see, this issue's theme is courage. The themes will be determined based on the content we receive. For example, quite a few pieces in this issue touched on courage, so that is why we chose it as the theme for this issue.

OBITUARY SECTION

With this section, we hope to give you an outlet to express your grief so you don't have to experience it alone. You can send in an obituary about someone you may have lost in prison or on the outside. We will start with a limit of 125 words per obituary and expand based on your feedback.

BRING PASAN TO YOUR GROUP

Are you a PEC/APEC worker or part of a Prisoner run group? PASAN regularly visits and holds workshops at prisons, if you would like to request us to come and be a part of your work give us a call at 1-866-224-9978. It is a free call from any phone and we would love to hear from you!

CONTACT NUMBERS

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

CELL COUNT FEEDBACK

Many of our subscribers ask us if there's a way they can donate money to Cell Count, and since we want the newspaper to remain free for people inside, we are so grateful for the offers, but we don't think you should have to pay to get it. A way you can help us out though is by giving us your feedback about Cell Count!

Cell Count is partially funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), and part of receiving this funding involves evaluating the effectiveness of Cell Count. If you could take a minute after reading this issue to let us know: 1) How did you hear about Cell Count? 2) Why did you subscribe to Cell Count? 3) Is Cell Count an important resource for you and if so, why? If not, why? 4) In what ways has reading Cell Count affected you? Mentally? Emotionally? Please elaborate. 5) If you have submitted work to Cell Count, what has that meant to you?

You can call or write to us with answers to these questions, which we will then forward to PHAC! You can ask to remain anonymous as well. Thank you! We really appreciate your help with this :)

CALLING ANY AND ALL TRANS-IDENTIFIED PEOPLE

Some of you might know or have spoken to Aanya Wood already. She is one of the Federal Coordinators at PASAN since June, 2018. She's been connecting with other trans women inside and is interested in hearing from more.

While trans people make up a significant proportion of the prison population, most people describe being isolated, mistreated or having gaps in knowledge around trans health care and general rights inside.

Aanya would love to connect with you if you: have any questions; have insight or are interested in sharing your experiences navigating the prison system while trans; or are looking to connect. If you identify as transgender and are interested in connecting with Aanya feel free to reach her toll-free at 1-866-224-9978 ext 234 or write her a letter!"

CSC'S NEW PRISON NEEDLE EXCHANGE PROGRAM (PNEP)

We want to hear from you! After refusing for more than 20 years, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) announced last year the introduction of its "prison needle exchange program" or PNEP in federal prisons. This is the result of an ongoing court case by the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network, PASAN and others. The PNEP began in Summer 2018 at two prisons: Grand Valley Institution for Women in Kitchener, Ontario and Atlantic Institution in Renou, New Brunswick. Beginning in January 2019, CSC has said it will start phasing in PNEP across the federal prison system. The Legal Network and PASAN are continuing with our legal case to make sure all prisoners who need it can access the PNEP, and we want to hear from you. If you are in a prison with a PNEP, we are interested in learning about your observations and experiences of the PNEP: * Are people using the program? * Do you think the program works? * Are there any problems for those who wish to participate? If you are able to share your thoughts with us, please contact: Zachary Grant or Aanya Wood at PASAN (toll free: 1-866-224-9978) or Sandra Chu at the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network at 416-595-1666 ext. 232. Both PASAN and the Legal Network accept collect calls from prisoners.

NEW WOMEN'S COMMUNITY PROGRAM COORDINATOR!

Hello! I am Amina Mohamed the new Women's Community Program Coordinator at PASAN. I am the co-founder of Rafaad! a Somali Youth Collective working to strengthen our community's capacity to support youth navigating the Criminal Justice system. If you are a Somali person that is incarcerated in Canada, I would love to get in touch with you. In addition, I am a lead artist-facilitator with Confluence Arts, a multidisciplinary collective of artists who aim to open up humanizing spaces to explore and articulate who we all are outside of, and because of, criminal convictions, social marginalizations, and situations of incarceration. With Confluence, Amina facilitates artistic creation programs in prisons and transitional residences. My orientation towards centering inclusivity and spaces that promote resiliency and healing is grounded in my experiences of marginalization, poverty, erasure and occupying a disposable body. My work is rooted in an intersectional framework with the intention of creating best practices and informing policies that challenge systemic oppression and transform communities.

C-PTSD: a New Way to Understand Trauma

By Fiona Bennell

An expansion of the understanding and definition of PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) has been gaining popularity in survivor communities and global health organizations. PTSD may result following exposure to an extremely threatening/horrific event or series of events. It's characterized by re-experiencing the trauma through vivid memories, flashbacks and/or nightmares; strong avoidance surrounding the events; and ongoing feelings of heightened threat through hypervigilance and/or severe startling. These symptoms persist for at least several weeks and can cause significant impairment. Survivors and people working in the mental health field have found that the definition and symptoms of PTSD can't fully account for many experiences of people living with traumatic events. **Complex PTSD (C-PTSD)** has arisen to fill these gaps. C-PTSD may develop from exposure to an event or series of events which are threatening/horrific and are most commonly prolonged or repetitive, where escape is difficult or impossible. Some examples include: child abuse/neglect, sexual/interpersonal abuse, severe bullying, extreme poverty, neighbourhood violence, torture, incarceration, political upheaval, circumstances of inequality and discrimination etc. In addition to the symptoms of PTSD, C-PTSD symptoms may include: problems with emotional regulation; beliefs about oneself as diminished/defeated/worthless and feelings of shame/guilt/failure around the trauma; and difficulty sustaining relationships or feeling close to others. This diagnosis would also line up with the growing evidence that trauma experiences, especially those that happen during development or over long periods of time, can impact body and brain development.

While C-PTSD has recently been added to the ICD 11 (the World Health Organization's international health classification manual), it is not included in the DSM 5 (the American mental health diagnostic classification manual). Canada uses the DSM 5 for its mental health service provision, so C-PTSD's exclusion holds consequences for the recognition and treatment of C-PTSD by mental health workers and health insurance providers. Many people who identify as having C-PTSD have serious difficulties with accessing health services that holistically address their symptoms and needs. There are a few different reasons behind why a diagnosis might not make it into the DSM. They may not believe there is enough evidence to support the diagnosis, they may not consider a creation of new terms will benefit the field, or the political landscape of the time may have impacted the decision. There are two major political spaces that may have influenced the decision. Many of the possible causes of C-PTSD are systemic in nature and may be connected to unequal government policies and practices. A recognition of C-PTSD could open governments up to civil liability for the health consequences of these symptoms of social inequality. A shift in the definition will likely bring in a flood of new applicants for mental health services and benefits under the C-PTSD label because of how broad the possible circumstances are. This is especially relevant to the American context, where the DSM is written, due to their privatized health care.

Here is a list of symptoms as compiled by r/CPTSD:

Interpersonal/Social

- Difficulty describing feelings
- Restricted range of affect
- Trust Issues
- Hates crowds
- Proud of ability to not show emotion

- Proud of self reliance
- Prefers to be alone when stressed
- Difficulties interpreting body language of others
- Feels need to please everyone
- Can't say no
- Fear that others are talking about you
- Fear that others don't like you
- Feeling that others cannot be trusted
- Periods of inability to feel close to other people
- Feeling that people will take advantage of you if you do not protect yourself
- Preoccupation with acceptance or approval
- Anti-social or disconnected behavior
- No or limited interest in peers
- Withdraws under stress
- Selective mutism

Cognitive

- Memory issues
- Difficulty making decisions
- Poor concentration
- Difficulty starting or completing tasks and projects
- Episodes of disassociation (severe daydreaming or 'zoning out')
- Sudden blankness of the mind
- Forgetfulness/memory loss
- Memory loss surrounding the trauma
- Periods of disconnection from reality
- Stutter or other speech impediment

Emotional

- Reactive depression
- Stresses out in normal situations
- Sudden feelings of sadness, anger, or fear with or without provocation
- Distressing feelings of loneliness
- Feeling that there is no future, you have no future, your life/future will be prematurely cut off
- Argumentativeness/aggression/irritability
- Feelings of Guilt or Shame
- Feeling that you deserve to be punished
- Lack of emotions - feeling neutral/numb

Physical

- Sudden or frequent nausea/dizziness/faintness
- Pain in the chest/heart
- Poor appetite
- Rapid breathing
- Rapid heart rate
- Inability to catch breath
- Muscle jerks, especially in limbs
- Fatigue
- Headaches
- Weakness
- Hyper/hypo-sensitivity: extremely sensitive to touch or insensitive to pain
- Self-abandonment/self-harm
- Difficulty identifying or understanding feelings
- Does not believe self body language means anything
- Difficulty taking care of physical or emotional needs
- Self harm/self punishing eg cutting
- Seeks high risk activities
- Cavalier attitude toward death
- Failures of self-protection
- Hypervigilance/hyperarousal
- Difficulty relaxing - always being alert
- Periods of restlessness - just wanting to move around or frequent fidgeting
- Difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep
- Jumpiness/Exaggerated startle reflex
- Nervousness when left alone

Other

- Loss of interest
- Loss of ambition
- Anhedonia
- Low self-esteem/confidence
- An overwhelming sense of injustice and a strong desire to do something about it

Here are some grounding and containment exercises you can use if you are feeling 'out of your body' from r/CPTSD:

Quick Physical Grounding Exercises

These are designed to help re-establish that feeling of being back in your body, in the present by connecting your brain back to physical

sensations. Some of these can be done anywhere, some require a little set up in advance to be ready when you need them. Some can be done alone or with a partner. You can also try testing them for effectiveness with your therapist as a way to check to see they are working still, when you need them. Introducing and testing new grounding and containment tools is part of a trauma informed approach to therapy.

The Mammalian Dive Reflex & Variations:

Splash Cold Water on Your face
Holding an ice cube in your hand until it melts.

Finding 5 colors, 4 sounds, 3 tactile sensations, 2 smells, and 1 taste.

Screaming into and hitting a pillow until exhausted.

Breath Work: A favorite is square breathing. 4 counts inhale, 4 counts hold, 4 counts exhale, 4 counts hold. Repeat. (There's more breathwork below in it's own section. This is the easiest one to remember for emergencies)

Quick Mental & Emotional Distraction Exercises

Visualizing what my body would be made of if it were my emotions at that moment. For example, is it sweet wispy pink cotton candy, bundles of slick wriggling worms, or thick tacky black tar?

Gratitude Game: Take turns naming things you are grateful for with a partner. This feels so stupid when starting so feel free to be snarky. "I'm grateful for the hair that I want to pull out of my head right now." After a few rounds it can soften into genuine gratitude work. Even if it doesn't, maybe you'll get a good laugh out of it with your partner.

Gratitude variation: you have to name something you're grateful for starting with one letter of the alphabet. How many things are you thankful for that start with the letter "w"? Are you really grateful for whales? *Freewriting anything (or the nothing) that is in my head. Write write write until the anger melts into what emotion is really underneath.

A Quick Coherence Technique

- Create a coherent state by using the power of your heart to balance thoughts and emotions.

Step 1: Focus your attention in the area of the heart. Imagine your breath is flowing in and out of your heart or chest area, breathing a little slower and deeper than usual. First few times you can place your hand on your heart.

Step 2: As you maintain your heart focus and breathing, activate a positive feeling, think of a time you felt good and re-experience it. Easiest is to remember a special place, feel love or appreciation for a loved one or pet.

Instant calming effect!

Quick Breathwork Exercises and Variations

When you're super panicked, you can count up (Square Breathing). So you do 1x1x1x1 (Breath in for Once Second, Held for One Second, Released in One Second, One Time.) Or, until it feels ok, progress to: 2x2x2x2 (2 seconds in x Held for 2 seconds x released for two Seconds x Applied 2 times), and up in sequence until you get to 4s or 5s.

Many Different cultures and religions have breath work exercises rooted to specific meditations or patterns of worship. A common one uses the square technique described above but force-starts the count at 4x4x4x4. This requires you to consciously manage attaining the four count, a good idea if you are experiencing run-away panic or anxiety. From there the count jumps to 6x6x6x6. Focus on maintaining the count and pacing your breath to maintain the count. Jump to 8x8x8x8.

Variations of this include trading the 6 count step for 7 counts, or adding count steps in the category of multiples of two, to either side of the exercise to step up from more erratic and panicked breathing and transition into longer breath meditations.

DO NOT attempt to hold your breath for longer than a 10 count until you are certain your panic or anxiety attack has 100% passed and you are in a state of relaxation that would allow you to approach a longer term meditation exercise.

A variation of this is used in athletics to jump into states of arousal to prepare for a sprint or burst of explosive activity. We can use this technique to dislodge a friend, or in time with practice-ourselves, from a mild disassociation. Do NOT use this technique if you are experiencing an active panic attack or extreme anxiety. Read the whole exercise out loud to yourself or your friend 1st. Start the 1st count at 3 breaths in, held for 2 counts, exhaled in 1 count, 3 Times. Go to 2 Breaths in, held for 1 count, exhaled immediately. 1 Breath in, do not hold, exhale immediately.

Breath to stimulate vagus nerve
Deep inhale - joyful smile - serene eyes - long pleasurable exhale. All these little tweaks stimulate vagus nerve which runs through these areas

Containment Exercises

The Container Exercise - An Introduction

It's a visualization exercise. You visualize a container in which you can temporarily put your stressors, or whatever emotion is being problematic for you at the time. You can have different visualizations, there will be usually a chance to open it at least partially to release some stress or to let parts of you flow as needed, but you also have the power to keep it tight and contain your emotions. Great when your panicky thoughts keep you up at night.

Awareness Exercises

These exercises can be used as "First-Aid," if you have a little longer than 5 minutes to dedicate to them. As part of a regular or even daily practice, they can serve to ground you in the present and strengthen your rate of success at attempts to "talk yourself down" from anxiety related symptoms. Some of us see them as a type of "small talk" exercise that allows you to open a dialogue with yourself that can lead to greater gains in over-all self awareness and the ability to control hypersensitivity and reactionary behaviors. At times these practices will feel absurd and you will get frustrated with yourself and the exercise. Give yourself the grace to fail at completing the activity, make sure you have some water to drink nearby, and feel free to put it down and keep trying some other time.

Seven Step De-Stress Exercise

1. Pause. 2. Feel it. 3. Notice any sensations in the body. 4. Be Self aware. 5. Notice Breath. 6. Pause Again. 7. Engage.

Mindful Walking

It's a technique used to foster a sense of presence in the self, focus, and reduce stress levels. It's helpful not just for PTSD and C-PTSD but for a number of other conditions. You can do it for 5 minutes daily to see positive effects. It's especially good for those of us on the dissociative spectrum, because some people with traumatic backgrounds benefit a lot more from mindful action than meditation per se -- meditation can easily trigger dangerous states for us. The following instructions come from Stop Think Breathe:

As you walk, notice how your body feels.

Pay attention to how your legs, feet and arms feel with each step you take.

Feel the contact of your foot as it touches the ground, and the movement of your body as you move into your next step.

If you become lost in thought as you continue to walk, use the next step as an opportunity to start over.

Now using your sense of sight, look around and try to notice every detail. Using your sense of smell, notice any aromas or scents.

Are you able to notice any tastes as you walk? Can you taste the air?

Now using your sense of touch, notice the solidity of the earth beneath your feet.

With openness and curiosity, notice any sensations, thoughts or feelings that arise, without lingering on anything in particular.

Body scan

This is a technique often used in yoga and meditation, used to release stress that is building up and is stored in your body. Kymerlee Roth also recommends it as a way to assess where your anger is stored in the body. The following explanation is cited from her book, Surviving a Borderline Parent:

Sit or lie down so you're comfortable. Pay attention to your feet and legs. Wiggle your toes, then rotate your feet and relax them. Note any tension in your calves. Let go of it if it's there.

Focus on your lower torso. Do you feel any tension or pain in your lower back? Relax and take a deep breath. Notice any tension in your hips, pelvic area, or buttocks. Consciously relax those areas.

Now focus on your diaphragm and stomach. Take two or three slow, deep breaths. Feel yourself relaxing and note any tension you still feel in this area.

Note your lungs and chest cavity. Is there tension there? Take a couple of deep breaths and envision the air filling these areas. Relax more deeply. Key into your shoulders, neck, and throat. Swallow a couple of times and notice any tension or soreness in your throat and neck. Roll your head clockwise, then counter clockwise. Shrug your shoulders and notice any tension. Relax.

Starting at the top of your head, notice any tension or pain. Scan down to your forehead and relax it. Note any tension behind your eyes, your ears, in your cheeks, in your jaw. Relax your mouth, lips, tongue, and chin.

Go back and scan your body for any remaining tension. Breathe deeply and relax.

(Extra step:) Note in your journal where you were holding tension. (Roth 2009, Surviving a Borderline Parent).

Safe place exercise.

It's a visualization exercise. It's part of foundational work for EMDR, but once you create your imagery, you can recall it on your own (for instance, if you are having trouble sleeping). You mentally visualize the image of your personal "safe place", which can be a really existing space or an imaginary one, gradually adding details and other sensorial elements, and then scan your body for the positive sensations this visualization evokes. Like all meditations, it starts and ends with deep breathing. Radical Acts of Self Care Quick & Revolutionary

- Gift yourself a glass of water and a 5 minute break, from whatever it was you were doing.

- Make a date to do something for yourself you have always wanted to do.

- Write a compassionately hopeful letter to your future self

- Write a compassionate letter to your younger self

- Pick a thing you have always wanted to learn how to do. Make a date for later to plan how you are going to make it happen. Keep the date.

Pre-Meditated Acts of Self Care - Gifts to Future You

- Create A Grounding & Self Care Box: the idea is to include items that tap into each of the senses as a way of pulling yourself back into the present moment, so:

- Touch, taste (usually something with a strong flavor or really spicy), sight, sound, smell

Sources:

Is It Better to Create This New Psychiatric Diagnosis or Not? Jordan Bray. 2015. Medium. <https://medium.com/mentality-transformed/is-it-better-to-create-this-new-psychiatric-diagnosis-or-not-6deabf90cb43>
ICD-11. WHO. 2019
[reddit.com/r/CPTSD](https://www.reddit.com/r/CPTSD)

JAIL HORRORS ARE ONLY JUSTIFIED BECAUSE THEY'RE HIDDEN

By Desmond Cole - National Observer, Feb 1, 2019

I've often thought of the superjail in Lindsay, Ont. as one of the most miserable places in Canada. The hell space that is the Central East Correctional Centre, a medium and maximum security provincial jail, is by many accounts a place of degradation and cruelty, of humiliation and torture and death. Since jail is designed to be miserable, we might say the Lindsay superjail is one of the most effective jails in the country. It churns out punishment and suffering efficiently, and keeps most of its publicly-funded crimes against humanity out of sight.

In the rare moments we are forced to see the horrors of our jails, we find it harder to pretend their purpose is safety or self-reflection or rehabilitation. Soleiman Faqiri died while imprisoned inside the Lindsay superjail over two years ago after being attacked and beaten by numerous guards. To date, no one has been charged in Faqiri's death. However, the recent reopening of a criminal investigation by the Ontario Provincial Police, and a lawsuit by his family, have turned the public spotlight back on.

We are so desperate to punish those in jail that we ignore the long-term harm we are causing them and ourselves. #Faqiri #onpoli During the two years since Faqiri's death, public officials inside and outside the jail have, unsurprisingly, said next to nothing. While jail staff, police, and government officials regularly say they cannot discuss Faqiri's specific case, they face an existential problem with every new revelation about the Lindsay superjail. While most of the public supports jail, almost none of us want to know what actually happens there. Since jail thrives on exactly the kind of violence we claim to abhor, its day-to-day realities aren't fit for public consumption. It's easier to justify the violence that is jail when we don't actually have to deal with it.

From a deterrence perspective, jail is supposed to be a disgusting and scary place. We pay a ridiculous sum in taxes to keep people in jail as far away from us as possible—\$78,4755 per inmate in Ontario in 2015/16, according to this report. This money is not for the welfare of prisoners; it is for a system of punishment meant to discipline prisoners and instill fear, and everyone knows it. The less we have to see or think about this terror system, the more easily Canadians can manage the costs, in taxes and in human suffering. When the violence of jail is accidentally laid bare, as it was with Faqiri, jail loses its legitimacy.

Although he was charged with a violent crime, Faqiri should never have been sent to the Lindsay superjail in December, 2016. He had been living with schizophrenia for several years, and required a level of care and support that our jails are specifically designed to deny prisoners. As revealed in a CBC investigation into Faqiri's death, fellow prisoners and even many jail staff believed he was too ill for his surroundings. But a doctor refused to transfer Faqiri to a health care facility, and guards ultimately placed him in solitary confinement as his condition deteriorated. Eyewitness says he was beaten to death.

On Dec. 15, 2016 a paramedic was called to the jail, where he found Faqiri dead. The 30-year-old man had over 50 trauma impact wounds all over his body, including his neck. Guards, who later reported that Faqiri was "exhibiting assaultive and resistive behaviour," had used handcuffs and leg irons to restrain him, and had placed a spit hood over his head. The paramedic also reported seeing three unknown pills on the floor of Faqiri's cell. When this first

responder asked the jail staff what had happened, he says he received several contradictory stories. However, a fellow prisoner in the cell across from Faqiri that night has come forward with his eyewitness account. "They viciously beat him to death," the witness told CBC investigative reporters.

Of course the guards told stories that didn't add up. Of course the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, which has video of the entire incident, has never released it to the public or Faqiri's family, who have been campaigning tirelessly for answers and accountability. Of course the Kawartha Lakes police service that investigated Faqiri's death didn't lay a single charge. What good is a jail that can't keep its violence under wraps? How do you punish presumed criminals when your crimes are seen to be worse than theirs?

Of course Faqiri, a Muslim immigrant from Afghanistan with a mental health diagnosis, was placed in solitary confinement and denied multiple visits from his family in the 11 days he was detained. We should expect such outcomes for vulnerable people in any Canadian jail, but here Lindsay distinguishes itself: the jail is notorious for holding and abusing immigration detainees, many of whom have never been charged with a crime. Its immigration detainees have engaged in multiple hunger strikes in recent years to demand more humane conditions. The Lindsay jail has been cited for its rampant use of solitary confinement, particularly against prisoners living with mental health issues (such practice in Lindsay and elsewhere has led to a \$600 million class action lawsuit against the Ontario government). In some cases, men in detention in Lindsay cannot escape punishment even when inhumane jail conditions finally force them into the health care system. Abdurahman Ibrahim Hassan was detained at the Lindsay jail in 2012 and served four months for assault charges. At the end of his sentence, officials cited their wish to deport Hassan, and simply kept him in the jail, where he languished for the next three years. Hassan was accepted to Canada as a refugee from Somalia in 1993, and his family says he never obtained citizenship because of his mental health issues. In June of 2015 Hassan, who had been diagnosed with bipolar disorder and diabetes, became so ill that he was transferred from the Lindsay jail to a local hospital. After hospital staff complained about his behaviour, two police officers restrained Hassan, with one repeatedly pinning down his head with a towel. Hassan died in his hospital room, and provincial investigators cleared the police of any wrongdoing a year later.

The only surprise in stories like those of Hassan and Faqiri is that we occasionally find out about them; fatality is usually a prerequisite for media attention. Indeed, the fact that Ontario refuses to officially document the number of people who die in its jails tells us the violence is intentional. The real shock is not what we do to prisoners, but that we occasionally have to admit what we do. Jail is an inherently abusive place; it contrasts complete accountability for prisoners with an absence of accountability for staff; it is particularly dangerous for people who already experience systemic discrimination in society. This knowledge is supposed to live in the back of our collective psyches, and to particularly remind those of us society fears most that if we step out of line, this awful place is reserved for us.

Calls for reform are ultimately futile. Since jail is supposed to be nasty, calls for reform, while life-saving and necessary in this moment, are ultimately futile. Our white supremacist, ableist, and patriarchal culture fears incarceration that is too kind and accommodating, that attempts

to care for people instead of teaching them a lesson. This is where jail comes from, and reformers shame all of us with the idea we can design a humane form of incarceration for thousands of civilians. We can either get rid of jail and replace it with a more humane system, or we can expect the suffering jail produces to continue.

It's important to remember that jail is not prison, the institution reserved for people convicted of the most serious criminal offences. In Canada, people go to jail either because they've been convicted of a crime that carries a sentence of two years or less, or because they are awaiting trial or immigration proceedings, and have thus not been convicted of anything. Places like the Lindsay superjail often house people accused or convicted of relatively minor crimes, people who are meant to be released relatively soon into the public. Still, we are desperate to punish these prisoners, so desperate that we ignore the long-term harm we are causing them and ourselves.

The high walls, barbed wire, and paramilitary feel of the Lindsay superjail are as much for the public as for the prisoners. Just as prisoners must be kept in, we must be kept out. The seclusion of jail means jail officials can do anything to the prisoners—it's the perfect site of pure deterrence, the ideal stage for abuse, torture, and ultimately death. Few of us really want to see or know what goes on inside a jail, which is why it can never be a safe, just, rehabilitative, or restorative place.

REBRANDING SOLITARY CONFINEMENT DOESN'T CHANGE WHAT IT IS

By Noa Mendelsohn Aviv, Globe and Mail, Jan 21, 2019

Noa Mendelsohn Aviv is director of the equality program at the Canadian Civil Liberties Association.

There was a time when an unconstitutional government policy was not something lamented then simply rebranded. Once a court found it unconstitutional, the practice just ... ended, especially when politicians had campaigned against it. Not so solitary confinement – an old practice that today's Parliament loves to hate, hates to love, but just keeps on doing.

Reading the latest court decision on solitary confinement (R v. Prystay, from Alberta), one doesn't know whether to sigh with relief that another court got it so right, or cry over what took place. How could it be that a person in our country was held for 400 days in the deplorable conditions and extreme isolation that make up solitary confinement?

Justice Dawn Pentelchuk held that placing an inmate in solitary confinement for 400 days – where he suffered physical and psychological harms – was cruel and unusual punishment in violation of Section 12 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. She wrote:

"Societal views on what is acceptable treatment or punishment evolve over time. Forced sterilization, residential schools, lobotomies to treat mental disorders, corporal punishment in schools and the death penalty are all examples of treatment once considered acceptable. Segregation ravages the body and the mind. There is growing discomfort over its continued use as a quick solution to complex problems."

And yet our federal government intends to maintain the practice of solitary confinement – now rebranded as "administrative segregation." While the recently introduced Bill C-83 declares that it would "eliminate the use of administrative segregation," the actual provisions of the bill would do no such thing. It is true that Bill C-83 would change the name of the "segregation unit" to the "structured intervention unit." It would add a few daily hours out of cell for some inmates. And it would offer most inmates a shower and a few other

minor improvements. However, Bill C-83 also would allow our penitentiaries to keep people in conditions of extreme isolation for at least 22 hours a day for undefined, perhaps indefinite periods.

But Bill C-83 has not yet been passed. The government can amend it, or better yet, introduce a new bill that truly eliminates solitary confinement. In doing so, the government could still seek to include any exceptions it thought necessary. If the government had evidence to support specific, rare, and very brief situations of isolation, this is something reasonable people could discuss. Instead, unfathomably, Parliament is doubling down on Bill C-83 and fussing over what kind of independent review process is needed to keep someone in the newly named structured intervention units. To be sure, the concern about independent review is important, and is no doubt the government's response to court decisions that struck down the administrative segregation regime in two recent constitutional challenges by the Canadian Civil Liberties Association and the B.C. Civil Liberties Association, respectively. The courts in Ontario and B.C. took issue with the lack of an independent review process when determining if someone should stay in solitary. However, this was not the only constitutional issue before the courts. CCCLA and BCCLA also challenged the long, indefinite durations, segregation of people with mental illness, youth and those who simply asked to be safe, and the discriminatory use of segregation against Indigenous people. Many of these issues were accepted by the B.C. court. Most are back before the courts on appeal.

In striking down the administrative segregation regimes, the Ontario and B.C. rulings spend pages detailing the many harms, sometimes irreversible and permanent. These include hallucinations, depression, anxiety, loss of control, paranoia, self-mutilation and suicidal thoughts. These harms were researched and established by doctors and psychologists over many years.

Justice Pentelchuk's recent Alberta decision attributes these harms to the extreme isolation faced by people in solitary. She wrote:

"Arguably, it is the lack of meaningful human contact that is the most pernicious consequence of placement in segregation. Human beings are not meant to be isolated, particularly not for extended periods. The longer a person is isolated, the more challenging it is to relate to others in an acceptable way."

In her view: "Informed Canadians also realize that indefinite placement in segregation thwarts an inmate's chance of successfully re-integrating into society."

After all, as the Ontario court found, inmates leave solitary confinement deeply traumatized and socially disabled. Since most return to society, how can a practice that disables them in this manner be justified on the basis of safety?

Courts in Alberta, Ontario and B.C. have all found Charter breaches in relation to segregation, and all expressed grave concern over the harms associated with keeping people in extreme isolation. Even our federal government appears to concede these harms and recognize the need to eliminate this practice. Why else change the name of the unit? Why else would the government announce that its new bill will "eliminate the use of administrative segregation"? All we need now is for the government to keep this promise in a meaningful way.

SPRATT AND McALEESE: CANADA'S RECORD SUSPENSION SYSTEM IS PUNITIVE AND MUST BE FIXED

By Michael Spratt & Samantha McAleese, Updated March 4, 2019

It's been more than 200 years since a hot iron was used to mark perma-

nent letters on the bodies of people convicted of crimes in courtrooms across England – the birthplace of Canada's common law system of justice. 'T' for theft, 'F' for felon, and 'M' for murder. Though this violent branding no longer occurs, we still mark people through the imposition of a criminal record that is often just as damning.

A criminal record is almost as visible a brand as the hot iron markings. An increasing number of organizations, employers, volunteer managers, landlords, educational institutions and government departments insist on criminal background checks as part of their hiring and management practices. This means even those with minor records cannot fully participate in society after they've completed their sentence.

Canada's pardon system, as it existed prior to 2012, provided some relief from the stigma associated with the criminal mark. People could apply to have their record sealed and set aside in order to find employment, return to school, volunteer in their communities or secure housing. This was not only a benefit to the individual with a criminal record, it was good for our communities too. The research is clear: Pro-social community engagement results in decreased recidivism and increased public safety.

But unfortunately, instead of moving forward on even more progressive pardon laws, the Harper government chose to use the file to further its law and order agenda. Changes made by the Conservatives eliminated pardons in favour of "record suspensions" and made necessary relief harder to come by – especially for those who are already poor and marginalized.

The current 10-step record suspension application is needlessly complex and burdensome. It is a procedural quagmire that is almost un navigable for lawyers, let alone the general public. The wait times to apply are unnecessarily long: 10 years for indictable offences and five years for the most minor of offences. And then there is the cost of well over \$600 to even apply for a record suspension. Bottom line: this two-tiered system means if you are poor, you are branded for life.

The simple truth is that Canada's record suspension system is punitive and it must be fixed.

Those aren't our words. They were spoken by Minister of Public Safety Ralph Goodale in January 2016 when he vowed to overhaul Canada's punitive pardon system. Well, it's been more than three years and Goodale's own record has been one of shameful inaction. He has done nothing to overhaul the Criminal Records Act, even after aspects of it were found unconstitutional by courts in Ontario and British Columbia.

Advocates and people with criminal records have grown frustrated by the lack of initiative, but recently we were provided with a glimmer of hope by Sen. Kim Pate, who introduced Bill S-258, An Act to amend the Criminal Records Act. Bill S-258 builds on decades of research and public consultation to do the work Goodale refuses to do. The legislation would allow criminal records to expire after a set time period without a complicated application process and with no fee. If passed, this bill would also automatically grant pardons to people convicted of acts that are no longer illegal. For example, the convictions for historic offences based on discriminatory laws or records for non-violent cannabis offences would not be a lasting mark of shame and oppression. Like all legislation in its early stages, Sen. Pate's bill can be improved upon through parliamentary committee study, but it represents a monumental step forward for fairness, public safety and evidence-based justice policy.

While the previous federal government offloaded the costs of pardons completely onto people with criminal

records, in reality we all pay the price for this broken system. It is in the public interest to have a robust system of pardons, not only because of piles of research that demonstrate sealing criminal records supports reintegration but also because we all benefit from a system that allows for restoration.

The Liberal government seems content with the status quo, but just as we look back on the hot iron with disgust and revulsion, it should remember that future generations will view its inaction in the same way.

Michael Spratt is an advocate for progressive criminal justice reform and a partner at the Ottawa criminal law firm Abergel Goldstein & Partners.

Samantha McAleese is a social justice advocate, PhD Candidate in sociology at Carleton, and a member of the Criminalization and Punishment Education Project.

HUNDREDS OF NONVIOLENT IMMIGRATION DETAINEES SENT TO MAX-SECURITY JAILS AS PART OF 'ABHORRENT' GOVERNMENT PROGRAM

By Brendan Kennedy Jan. 24, 2019

Canada's immigration authorities locked up nearly 1,500 nonviolent immigration detainees in maximum-security jails last year, the Star has found.

While they may have criminal records, the detainees were not considered dangerous by the Immigration and Refugee Board. Almost all were detained solely on the grounds that they were unlikely to appear for their immigration hearing.

A Star analysis of government statistics from April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018, found that 80 per cent of immigration detainees held in provincial jails — rather than less restrictive immigration holding centres — were not detained on the grounds that they were dangers to the public. Data from the months since then shows the rate is unchanged. All provincial jails are maximum security.

"It's abhorrent for the government to be placing people in maximum-security jails that it acknowledges are not a danger," said Subodh Bharati, an immigration lawyer at the Community and Legal Aid Services Program at Osgoode Hall Law School. Bharati said that by the government's own description, immigration detention is explicitly administrative and not punitive. "But incarceration in a maximum-security jail is punitive by its very nature."

While the Liberals have reduced the use of jails — roughly one-third of all immigration detainees were sent to provincial jails under Stephen Harper's Conservative government, compared to 20 per cent last year — the latest statistics show that more than three years after Goodale's Liberals took power, Canada continues to routinely use them for nonviolent detainees.

The use of jails and the "co-mingling" of immigration detainees with criminal detainees has been repeatedly cited by human rights groups, detainee advocates and the United Nations as a major problem with Canada's immigration detention system.

Immigration detention in Canada occurs in two types of facilities: federal immigration holding centres, of which there are three across the country, and provincial jails. Immigration detainees are not criminally charged, but when they are sent to a provincial jail they are treated the same as any other prisoner.

Immigration holding centres are medium-security facilities exclusively for immigration detainees. Detainees are not locked in their rooms, are able to move much more freely within the facility and have easier access to phones and visitors. None of the immigration holding centres are at or near capacity.

The Canada Border Services Agency has the power to indefinitely detain

non-citizens on one, or a combination, of the following three grounds: They are a danger to the public; they are unlikely to appear for their deportation or other immigration matters (what officials call "flight risk"); or their identity is in doubt. After a person is detained, they have a quasi-judicial hearing at the Immigration and Refugee Board, where the CBSA makes its arguments and a government-appointed adjudicator decides whether detention should continue. Some detainees have lawyers, but many represent themselves at the hearings, which occur after the first 48 hours, seven days and then every 30 days thereafter.

What is not discussed at the hearing is in what kind of facility the detainee will be held. That decision is made solely by the CBSA and is not subject to any external oversight. This aspect of the system was criticized by Justice O'Marra, who said the current system "contains no mechanism to ensure proportionality between the flight risk which he has been found to be and the actual conditions of his detention."

To determine where a detainee will be placed, a CBSA officer fills out a form known as a National Risk Assessment for Detention, which was revised last year. The Star revealed problems with the risk assessment forms in 2017, including officers leaving key areas blank and, in one instance, an officer admitting on the form that they had not been trained to fill it out. The new form has been in place since last February.

One of the most confusing explanations the government has given for why it has relied so heavily on provincial jails for immigration detention is that its own immigration holding centres were not equipped to handle the kinds of detainees its policies said they should. Toronto's Immigration Holding Centre needed to be renovated so they could accommodate such detainees. The new facilities, which will replace existing ones, will allow the CBSA to make them the "default detention location for most detainees," Bardsley said. The government says provincial jails will still be used for the "highest risk" detainees and in parts of the country where there is no immigration holding centre.

PROTESTERS CALL ON BELL TO FIX PHONE SYSTEM FOR INMATES

Robyn Miller · CBC News · Posted: Jan 30, 2019 3:32 PM ET | Last Updated: January 30

Critics are calling on Bell Canada to fix its phones inside Ontario's jails, a system they say is contributing to feelings of isolation and despair among inmates.

Protesters stood outside Place Bell in downtown Ottawa on Wednesday, coinciding with Bell Let's Talk Day, the company's annual campaign to raise awareness of mental health struggles.

About 50 people braved the cold to demand the telecommunications giant lower the cost of outgoing phone calls for inmates in the province's jails, and allow inmates to dial out to cell phones. Right now, inmates can only make collect calls to landlines, preventing many from connecting with loved ones.

That issue came under the spotlight last year during an inquest into the death of Cleve Geddes, a mentally ill inmate whose family said was unable to reach them because they only had cell phones. Geddes died after trying to hang himself while in a segregated cell.

The inquest jury also called for an end to the landline-only phone restriction.

Here's what some of the protesters

had to say.

Souheil Benslimane spent time behind bars from 2013 to 2018 for gun-related crimes. Benslimane said contacting his family during that time was costly, and worrying about that affected his mental health.

"I think [Bell] might care about mental health of some people, but they don't care about the mental health of people that are incarcerated, people that are isolated, people who are often, you know, put away, far from sight.

I think that they have to address it, and if they do then I'll say that they care about mental health for everyone. For now, they're selective about their care."

Farhat Rehman is the mother of an inmate and a member of Mothers Offering Mutual Support (MOMS), a group that helps mothers whose loved ones are behind bars. Her son was deemed unfit to stand trial owing to mental illness for four years before he was found guilty of second-degree murder in the stabbing death of a friend and mentor.

"It does take a toll, because if I don't keep in touch with him then he has a tendency to fear the worst has come to me because he does suffer from this sort of hallucinatory idea that I'm not well.... So that reassurance and that communication with him is so essential.

There are some voices that have been left out of the conversation, and there is a huge segment of society that is very vulnerable and very dependent on the service that [Bell] provides."

Sarah Speight is a volunteer with the Jail Accountability and Information Line, a hotline for inmates at the Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre (OCDC). She said she gets calls every day from prisoners who've been unable to pass on essential information to their families.

"To tell them that they're in jail, that they have a court date, that they need bail. They can't contact their families to let them know that they're not missing. And so we see every day the challenges experienced by prisoners.

It's an immediate thing that we know is causing serious harm to prisoners' mental health, to their well-being, and it's harming their families as well. Could you imagine sitting outside, wondering [where your] kid is because you don't know they're in jail?"

In a statement, Bell Canada said that "rates for operator-assisted collect calls from Ontario correctional facilities are the same as Bell's public rates."

HOMELESSNESS AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE NON-PROFIT/VOLUNTARY SECTOR

By Samantha McAleese

There is an ongoing cycle between incarceration and homelessness experienced around the world. In Australia, for example, almost 25% of prisoners in New South Wales experience housing instability prior to incarceration and "thousands of people [are] released from prison into homelessness in the community each year." We see similar occurrences in the United States and in England, where the 'revolving door' between incarceration and homelessness is propelled by a lack of community-based supports for mental health and addiction, a scarcity of affordable housing, and poverty. In Canada, approximately 35,000 people are homeless on any given night, and at least 235,000 Canadians experience housing insecurity over the course of a year. Ending this homelessness crisis is a priority for cities across the country. While some

cities have made progress in this area by decreasing reliance on emergency shelters through a Housing First approach, other cities are still struggling to find shelter space for individuals and families experiencing poverty and displacement. Promising news came in 2018 when the federal government announced a new National Housing Strategy: a 10-year, \$40-billion plan that promotes a human rights-based approach to 'address the needs of people across the whole spectrum of Canadian society'.

Some "unique challenges" encountered by people with criminal records, such as "legal discrimination by landlords", which effectively eliminates them from many safe and desirable rental housing options. In Ottawa, this discrimination is manifested through the Crime Free Multi-Housing program that is facilitated through the Ottawa Police Service and encourages landlords to conduct criminal background checks as part of their rental application process. Apart from this program, people with criminal records are often excluded from rental housing options due to a lack of prior landlord references or because they simply cannot afford market rent prices. These obstacles, amongst others, often push people back into homelessness and leave them (once again) at the mercy of bad public policy that criminalizes poverty — such as Ontario's Safe Streets Act.

The ongoing exclusion and discrimination faced by people with criminal records in the community calls for additional advocacy, targeting individual and structural changes. As Canada and other countries (such as England, Scotland, and Wales) continue to work towards ending homelessness through the adoption of rights-based housing policies, the criminal justice voluntary sector must remain active and vocal to ensure that people with criminal records are not left behind.

DIVEST FROM POLICE TO RE-INVEST IN COMMUNITIES

Feb. 19, 2019 by Anthony Morgan
For Black History Month, the Institute launched a policy series highlighting bold policy solutions in order to tackle anti-Black racism, focusing on the need for intergovernmental action. Each submission proposes a plan for governments to work together to tackle a problem; while serving as a guide for advocates working towards [what should be] our collective effort to eradicate anti-Black racism. Gun violence continues to be a chronic social cancer festering in the margins of municipal metropolises across Canada. Impoverished and under-resourced Indigenous, Black and racially disadvantaged communities bear the brunt of the burden of our country's gun violence problems. So, when the CBC reports that, "Shootings have been on the rise for the past few years," we cannot view these facts with a colourblind public and collective conscience. When examining gun violence, it's important to remember that inter-civilian and state-civilian gun violence are not morally or structurally equivalent. The state has a monopoly on the legitimate use of lethal force. So, when police shoot or kill a civilian, due to the profound power imbalance between police and civilians, police-involved gun violence always triggers a deep tear in the social contract that governs our communities. Both inter-civilian and police-involved gun violence have different but still disastrous impacts on communities, especially on Black, Indigenous and racially disadvantaged communities most commonly affected.

Considering the above, in support of Canada's Black communities and the pressing need to eliminate the devastating impacts of gun violence, my proposal is that Canada adopt an intergovernmental Gun Violence Prevention Strategy. This Strategy would seek to address the causes and consequences of this violence by centering the impact gun violence has in communities, instead of over-emphasizing a focus on the individuals responsible for the violence. Addressing the impact of gun violence requires comprehensive and coordinated interventions from all three levels of government. This is because in most major Canadian cities Canadians rely on municipally-directed police services that are empowered by provincial legislation and dependent on various Canadian border protection services to keep illegal guns out of Canada. Moreover, access and availability to health and community services for communities impacted by gun violence is a multi-level government affair. Our health and social services are public health institutions that are heavily reliant on federal transfer payments — and are simultaneously implicated in mending the physical and social fissures that are a cause and consequence of eruptions of gun violence in communities across Canada. While the government of Canada has endeavoured to initiate an intergovernmental approach to gun violence already, this effort fails to adequately address the root causes of this violence. The current approach is overly reliant on policing and prisons as the solution. For instance, in November 2018, the federal government announced an \$85 million commitment to law enforcement to address gun and gang violence, while committing \$7 million to Toronto for a community healing program to prevent and assess this issue. This lopsided funding ignores decades of literature that shows that creating inclusive community economic development and social well-being in communities is the best public safety measure we have against gun crime and associated violence in communities. As such, the new strategy I propose here, would be focused on creating robust education, jobs and training opportunities, and by doing so, prioritize cutting at the roots of this problem. Recognizing that guns are tools of the trades in profit-driven worlds of crime, this Strategy would focus on aggressively supporting and facilitating full and effective participation of Black and other at-risk racialized young people in the formal economy, including, in the areas of tech, construction and the trades. The aim of the proposed Strategy would be to create more viable economic options to compete with illegitimate trades in drug, sex and merchandise that drive much of gun violence in communities. In sum, this new Strategy would focus on creating conditions of economic safety and well-being in impoverished communities through intergovernmental policy, planning and service delivery. A national anti-gun violence strategy, focused on community development and safety would also likely lead to community well-being improvements: access to social well-being services, such as counselling and other mental health services, would gradually increase. Finally, this proposed approach to gun violence offers immense opportunities for innovations in socio-economic policy and programming development across Canada. These innovations would not only improve the lives of members of Canada's Black communities, but the lives of all Canadians.

The Merman



By Mary Ellen Young

There was a lady that was so sad. She went from one man to another and couldn't find love. No man wanted her. She even made it clear she was seeking love and companionship, and still no one, no man wanted her. The woman had a nice heart, a lot to give and lots of love. She could clean, cook, make love, had the most gorgeous eyes and nice full lips. She had such a pretty face, she had it all. She lived up in the Arctic Ocean area, where polar bears dwelled, seals lingered and balugas swam near. One day she went to the waters, sat so lonely and looked out into the ocean, wondering to herself, what could be so wrong with me? Why does no man want me?

What did I do so wrong? Then she began to cry into the Arctic Ocean, her tears ran down into the ocean. Continuous tears, she was so hurt and brokenhearted. Then, out of nowhere, a handsome man swam up from beneath the ocean! She stopped crying. He was the most beautiful man she had ever seen! He climbed up and sat with her. He held her and asked her why she was so sad and heartbroken to the point of crying. She looked tearfully into his eyes and replied, "No man wants to love me or be with me, I don't know what I did wrong. I know that I'm pretty, I can cook and clean, make love, I have it all." The woman looked down to where the man's legs would be and said, "You have a fishtail!" He replied, "Yes I do, I'm half-man, half-fish. I came for you, I'm here to love you and to be with you if you wish." The woman nods yes. The merman then lifted his fishtail out of the water and it turned into legs! He tells her, "I can be on land with you for 8 years, have a baby with you, then the 3 of us will have to come back to live in the water." The woman agrees, so they walk back together to her house. They live together, have a baby, and 8 years later, they go back to the same spot. The woman, merman, and child all happily go into the ocean together.



Hey y'all this is your girl Moka, and welcome to the first edition of my column, *Girl Talk*. What you can expect from me in this and future columns to come is to touch on topics that are very alive and real in today's world. I will be talking on subjects such as human rights issues, policies and politics, lifestyle, perseverance and much more.

In this cell count issue #87, I am honored by being the "cover girl", along with my story of what I had experienced in my life and how my fight lead me here in my cell writing this column for PASAN and you. This column is meant to bring awareness and reality to real issues happening inside and outside of prison walls, as well as a sense of accomplishment for all those fighting for change and the right to be heard.

I welcome all feedback and suggestions about and for topics that I write about. My contact information will be provided at the end of each column, so please don't be afraid to reach out and let me know what you think.

Now with that being said let's move on to the subject of interest: LGBTQ+ Rights.

Are you a LGBTQ+ person or do you know someone who is? Did you know in Canada it was once illegal to identify as LGBTQ+ and if caught you would be thrown in jail and left with a criminal record? This prevented a lot of people from getting work.

If the community you lived in found out, they would shun you and throw you out of their places of business. Imagine going to your local corner store to buy a loaf of bread and the owner of that store refusing to sell it to you just because you got arrested under suspicion of being a LGBTQ+ person. Imagine it being like that everywhere you went in your community. That you were left with no choice but to move somewhere far just so you could buy food to eat. And still had to live in fear and hoped that a potential employer didn't run your name for a police background check.

This was the lives of many of my brothers and sisters, and the daily discrimination and ridicule that they had to endure. This is how the right for self expression was born. It wasn't until May 14, 1969 that it became legal to identify as an LGBTQ+ person, but even with legislation passed the LGBTQ+ community still faced horrific discrimination.

In 1981 the police decided to conduct a raid on gay bathhouses (in Toronto), arresting a ton of gay men and throwing them in jail. The police raid subjected these men to violent assaults and getting raped behind prison walls. Once released it was difficult for these men to find a place to live and work because landlords and employers still had the right to refuse to rent or hire an LGBTQ+ person.

In the summer of 1981 the LGBTQ+ commu-

nity got together to protest for their rights and those who were affected by the raid. This march of courage, determination, and fearlessness formed what we know today as the pride parade. That protest lead to the Dec. 2, 1986 ruling that it would be against the law not to hire or rent to persons who identify as LGBTQ+. Before that ruling came about in Ontario even the government could refuse a LGBTQ+ person certain services.

You know sometimes I wonder if that raid had never happened, would that 1986 ruling have ever happened? Even though it was a very negative traumatic event that happened to those men, what they endured during those times made a positive change and a brighter future for the community. I consider those men to be unknown heroes. They were literally on the front line of the battle and because of them our war for rights was won. They're our unknown village soldiers.

Because of them the next war against gay marriage was won, that was another 20 year battle. In 2003 the first gay marriage happened, it was accepted provincially but it didn't become fully accepted throughout Canada federally until 2005.

Looking back at the history of the community I am apart of, I do nothing but feel proud and wonder what can I do in and with my lifetime to make a difference in a positive recognition for my current and future brothers and sisters. Then it dawned on me, an LGBTQ+ unit here at the Toronto South Detention Center. This unit can start to send a message of awareness as well as acceptance towards the community inside prison walls.

So I put together a proposal and submitted it to the Superintendent, which I am still awaiting a reply on. I then went and spoke to some individuals who identify as LGBTQ+ and asked them a series of questions, and I have to say I was surprised by some of their answers.

I would just like to say at this point to ensure the privacy of the two individuals I interviewed, I will be using alias names. And I would also like to thank them for being honest and taking the time to sit and speak with me, your participation is greatly appreciated.

The first person I spoke with, we'll call him "Arrows", is in his mid-20s and I have to say his point of view on things definitely shocked me. As he and I are close in age, myself being a few years older, we see certain things in completely different lights. Here are the questions I asked Arrows and the responses he gave me.

Q: Why do you try to suppress your identity to other individuals?

A: Cause I'm scared of getting beat up and made fun of.

GirlTalk



By Moka Dawkins

A: NO

Q: What do you feel the institution can do to better the protection for community members?

A: Make things more known like advertising that there are LGBTQ+ members in jail.

Q: What about an LGBTQ+ range?

A: I don't think that would be appropriate.

Q: Why?

A: A lot of sexual acts may happen.

Q: What about federal prisons?

A: People are more in and out in provincial rather than federal.

Q: Why support the stigma against your own community?

A: Because I don't think it's a good idea. I think the risk for HIV is higher in prison.

Q: The people who got arrested in the 70s and 80s and fought for the liberations we have today, what would you say to them who experienced jail in those days?

A: If they said it was appropriate I would think they're crazy, if the law changes again and they jail you, you would be put on a list in orientation and once on that list you're on that list and that scares me about the government.

Q: Why is your fear more in jail than outside?

A: Because violence is more frequent in jail than outside.

Q: Do you live in fear when you're openly out on road walking around?

A: No

Q: Have you ever been gay bashed outside?

A: Yes, and those type of people are in jail. They might not be able to shoot me but they can still beat me up or stab me.

Q: So that's what makes it scary for you to be open about your identity in jail?

A: Yes

Q: Going back to what you said about being scared that the government could change the law and criminalize people for being openly LGBTQ+ persons again. Please tell me why do you think Canada would reverse a law back to its old way when Canada is known and also promotes to be a country of freedom and diversity?

A: Who knows.

You know the funny thing about doing that interview with Arrows is that I've known Arrows for years on road and he is one of the biggest Queens I know out there. So to hear those responses really caught me off guard coming from him, but whatever. I appreciate his input and I'm going to leave that conversation with a #SheWeird #KnowYourself.

The next individual I spoke with I will refer to him as "Silver Coin". Silver Coin is in his late 50s

Q: Do you feel that the institution offers proper protection for LGBTQ+ members?

and was around in 1981 when the bathhouse raids took place and the protest which lead to the pride parade.

Q: Please tell me what you can remember of what happened back in 1981 when the gay bathhouse got raided?

A: I remember seeing the busted down doors. Q: Were you apart of that raid?

A: No thank god

Q: Were any of your friends arrested in that raid?

A: No

Q: How did you hear about what happened?

A: I went to the bathhouse *Club Toronto* a few days later and found out from an employee there. He told me that they put everyone in handcuffs naked and even one officer took a piss in the frozen pool that was outside. They had people in handcuffs naked in the cold, this happened in the month of February.

Q: That summer of 1981 when the community took to the streets to protest, were you apart of it?

A: Yes, even the police were there but to only keep peace.

Q: Have you ever been gay bashed during those times?

A: I've experienced discrimination in passing, like people making remarks to me.

Q: What about your family did they accept you?

A: Yes

Q: When did you come out to yourself?

A: I came out to myself in 1976 and to everyone else in 1980 when I moved to Toronto.

Q: Do you think it would be beneficial to have a LGBTQ+ range in jail?

A: Of course I'm 100% behind that.

Q: My last question for you is what do you think about the police being part of the pride parade after everything?

A: I don't think it would be beneficial to have them there.

This was a great learning opportunity for myself to sit down with these two brave men and learn insight on this subject to help me prepare for whatever objections may arise in my fight for this LGBTQ+ range.

I also want to take a moment to acknowledge all those men who got arrested and for all the community members who got together during those times and stood up for themselves to make this country a more united place to live. Your courageous bravery will never be forgotten. Thank you PASAN for allowing me to share this with everyone and thank you for taking the time to read *Girl Talk*.

If you have any suggestions, opinions, or ideas you would like to share please write to me, addressed to Girl Talk at 526 Richmond St E, Toronto, Ontario, M5A 1R3.

The Girl with The Tattered Crimson Dress



Photo by Hernan Sanchez from Unsplash.

By Zakaria Amara

We could escape from prison, but we can never escape from ourselves. We can try to distract ourselves from ourselves by flooding our lives with every luxury our hearts desire. We could try to fulfill every fantasy our minds can imagine. We could do all of this and may even feel “happy” for a while, but soon, that hollow feeling, that sharp painful angst, returns.

Almost everything we do in life, we do in order to feel “happy”, yet most of us, including myself, have never taken a moment to ponder over what this seemingly simple word actually means (please forgive me if I sound like a douche bag in the first half of this essay; it was one of the side effects of researching what armchair intellectuals had to say on the subject).

My search for the meaning of “happiness” began in a mundane fashion in the prison library. I picked up books like ‘Stumbling Upon Happiness’, ‘Happier’, ‘The Happiness Project’, and ‘The Happiness Equation’. Those were just the titles available. Apparently, many other books have been written on the subject, such as: ‘The Art of Happiness’, ‘The Conquest of Happiness’, ‘The Psychology of Happiness’, ‘The How of Happiness’, and on, and on, and on...

In one of the books, I found a reference to a psychological study that cited 15 different academic definitions of happiness! People have been so fascinated by this topic that scholars as ancient as Aristotle have written about it.

Not being one to be satisfied by mere reading, I hosted a mini conference in the prison yard with three learned cons. As I walked away dissatisfied with their answers, a short Indonesian man with balding gray hair, thick glasses, and a big, semi-permanent smile greeted me and shook my hand. I immediately asked him about his opinion on happiness, and he answered me with an even wider grin, that ‘happiness is happiness!’

Technically, he was right. Or, rather, he was not wrong. No one can deny that a soccer ball is a soccer ball... But that’s not a real answer, is it? Disqualification was the Indonesian man’s fate, and the search continued.

In ‘Happier’, Tal Ben-Shahar’s equation for happiness is: “Meaningful life + present pleasure = happiness.” He writes: “We need the experience of meaning and the experience of positive emotions; we need the present and future benefit. My theory of happiness draws on the works of Freud as well as Frankel. Freud’s pleasure principle says that we are fundamentally driven by the instinctual need for pleasure. Frankel argues that we are motivated by a will to meaning rather than by a will to pleasure - he says that, “Striving for meaning in one’s life is the primary motivational force in man.” In the context of finding happiness, there is some truth in both Freud’s and Frankel’s theories. We need to gratify both the will for pleasure and the will for meaning if we are to lead a fulfilling, happy life.”

I was temporarily convinced by Ben-Shahar until he mentioned that people in difficult circumstances, due to the absence of pleasure, could NOT be happy (hold this thought in your right pocket for a moment because I will return to it). When I read this I thought to myself: “If such people could not be happy then what could they be?”

Beautiful.

There is something incredibly beautiful about a human being who strives to be as positive and good as they can be despite the harshness of their lives. Though their backs are on the verge of collapse from all the burdens they must carry, they somehow find the strength to hold on to their values and dignity. Such people never blame their Creator for their misfortunes, but surprisingly, thank him. They never backstab those around them, but instead heal them and uplift them. A person who chooses to behave in this manner in such circumstances displays the epitome of human beauty.

Omar bin Al Khattab once said: “We found the best moments of our lives were those lived in patience”. Sigmund Freud echoed his sentiment 1300 years later when he wrote, “One day in retrospect, the years of struggle will strike you as the most beautiful.”

So, people living in hardship could achieve beauty, but I still wondered whether Ben-Shahar was right about happiness being beyond their reach. This question nagged at me for some time until I remembered the words of ex-Soviet prison camp survivor Alexander Solzhenitsyn, who wrote:

“If a miracle happens (in prison) and I get a quiet Sunday off, and in the course of the day my soul thaws out and is at ease, there may not have been any change for the better in my objective situation, but the prison yoke lies more lightly on me. And then suppose I have a really satisfying conversation or read an honest page - there I am, on the crest of a wave! I’ve had no real life for many years, but I forget it! I’m weightless, I’m suspended in space, I am disembodied, I lie there on top of my bunk, I look at the ceiling just above me, it’s bare, the plaster’s peeling, but I shudder with the sheer bliss of being! I fall asleep on the wings of happiness! No president or prime minister can go to sleep as content with the Sunday behind him.”

And that’s when it hit me, and I begin to write:

The Girl With the Tattered Crimson Dress

Everyone wants to be happy
But no one knows what it means
I asked one hundred wise men
One thousand answers I received
With absolute disappointment
Empty handed I returned
On a path through a dark forest
A little girl passed me by
With hair as dark as charcoal
And a tattered crimson dress
Wearing dirt upon her cheeks
Walking softly upon bare feet
Her face was full of innocence
And her smile was a source of light
As she vanished in the distance
I heard the echo of her song:

Most people wish to be happy
Yet in darkness they choose to hide
Happiness is a blessing
That rises like the Sun
If the skies are clear and blue
And the night has come and gone
And you happen to be out there somewhere
With a heart that’s open wide
Then you shall have your share of it
And you’ll feel it deep inside
Happiness is like a little girl
In a tattered crimson dress
You won’t realize she passed you by
If you’re head-deep in a mess

A Case for Cultural Consideration

By Horaine Bennett

Contents

- Preface
- My History
- Culture Shock
- Culture Clash
- Conclusion
- Postlude

PREFACE
Some years ago a professor at Cambridge University* deduced that all human beings are much more closely related than once thought. The prevailing theory was that we are 99.9% the same in terms of biological make-up. He deduced that in fact, we are less than point-one percent biologically different. His position is that it is that slight variation in genetics that differentiates us and imparts our parents’ physical attributes (i.e. eye colour, skin tone).

However, even this slight *deviation* is not uniform as is evident in the case of an albino. One can have dark-skinned parents and still produce a pale skin child with blue eyes and straight blonde hair. In an ideal world we would all be treated with the same degree of respect, dignity, and humanity, but this utopia only existed conceptually in the form of Christian virtue. My reality is much different, and though we are similar, we are **not** the same. This is how and when I was forced to realize that.

MY HISTORY

On September 24, 1987 in (redacted), Horaine Bennett was born in Kingston, Jamaica. As the last born (the “wash belly”), it was a difficult birth that almost cost my mother her life. The decision was made that I would stay in the hospital with her during her extended period of treatment and recovery. Admirably, even in her moment of debilitating weakness, she mustered the strength to nurture me. Undoubtedly, this event cultivated a deep-rooted bond that would be the only thing that tethered me to humanity.

During the first four years of my life that I lived in Jamaica, I experienced sights and sounds that result in some soldiers suffering from PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). Despite the constant scenes of horror, the fact that I was raised in a God-fearing household in a community (and country) steeped in culture, I was whole.

I was often considered and referred to as “bright,” “a boy with promise,” and there was a basis for it. A glaring example was my ability to find a local shop-some distance away-and purchase a specific item for whomever at the age of 3+. I would find out later on in life after some testing at a lab, this was possible “due to photographic memory.” However, almost as a prelude, the tears streaming down my cheeks captured in my Passport photo, would summarize my experience when I immigrated to Canada with my family

CULTURE SHOCK

Almost immediately upon arrival, I was terrified when I saw “aliens.” I remember being glued to just behind my mother’s right leg seeking shelter and protection. I vividly remember the feelings of powerlessness and terror as I saw these aliens streaming by me with their pale skins, light coloured eyes, pointed noses, and thin lips. Eventually after powering our way through the throngs of aliens and getting into my sister’s vehicle, I asked my “mummie,” “why we come yaw (why did we come here)?” and “who ah dee alien dem (who are these aliens)?” “Dem ah white people,” she responded curtly. I also remember trying to avoid the snow as it was falling because I thought it would harm me. When I couldn’t, I just froze and cried.

It is well-documented how my scholastic endeavour unfolded (albeit an extremely subjective chronicling), however, like everything left open to interpretation, context matters. I did adjust to this new country, way of life, and “societal norms” poorly, in large part because not everyone does everything identically. It is also fair to say that not everyone experiences the same thing in the same way, hence different responses/reactions. From the tender age of four, even growing up in the “hood,” I knew and **felt** that I was different, and also viewed and treated that way. Transplant anything with life, be it a flower, insect, animal, or human from a dissimilar environment to another, and chances are their characteristics and/or physiology would change.

As I progressed through adolescence, I would notice subtle (and not-so-subtle) episodes of conscious or subconscious bias. For instance,

I remember on occasions when I would go to the store with a relative, an employee would drop whatever they were doing to ask us if they “could help us with something” (this was on the rare occasion when they would not just outright shadow us). This would seem altruistic if not for the fact that some of these stores had dozens if not hundreds of shoppers, they were in the middle of something, and customer service was not in their job description. This however was not even the tip of the iceberg. From berating reprimands when gentle reminders were warranted, to stiff penalties in place of peremptory cautioning, one could argue that I was not often given the benefit-of-the-doubt or much discretion. That would be well within the authorities’ right if not for the fact that these events would be coupled with clear abuses of power. From attempting to plant drugs on me, numerous vicious beatings that started at 8 years old, to laying serious criminal charges that I had no knowledge about or participation in. Yet, whenever I would broach these factual events and my thoughts and feelings about them, I would instantly be shut down or worse. I would be called everything from a liar, anti-authority, delusional, to racist. That last one was always quizzical because oppression is colour-blind and can be carried out by someone, or entity of the same ethnicity.

CULTURE CLASH

CONCLUSION

POSTLUDE

I am not of European descent. The ICPM program is based on a pool of middle-class, white, relatively young, Eurocentric test subjects. Very little to no thought was given to cultural differences, distinctions, practices, and traditions. At no point have I, or am I, trying to suggest that because I grew up in a different environment than most Caucasians, that my crimes should be critiqued or viewed differently than anyone else who committed similar crimes. What I am suggesting though is, that the underlying factors when considered in terms of the cumulative impact in distorting my thinking and rationality, cannot be divorced from all the other factors that were, and still are, opined as crucial components.

My reality was, and will continue to be different than each and every Caucasian. Even if all things were created equal and we lived identical lives, the x-factor is that I am consciously or subconsciously counted as a beast of burden due to my darker pigmentation. I could live with that though. What is much more difficult to live with, is the fact that it is not just a view, but a belief. Racism, racial prejudice or bias, however one wants to categorize it, cannot be very impactful unless it is coupled with the ability to exercise exclusive power and authority. In order for one’s power to reign supreme, that individual or entity must deprive and suppress contrasting people, groups, or entities.

Correcting Yourself

By Michael G. Brown

I want to focus on you and your time right now. Forget everyone else, their time and everything outside of you. Forget about “why” you are here, whether justifiable or not. Forget about your rights, the subculture and who is in here with you. You are here and that is a fact. Right now, I want to talk about you and what you are doing while you are here. Anyone can watch TV and work out but what else? You are here for correcting, and with or without programs, correcting yourself is your choice alone. Programs will most likely not make you better but you can.

First and foremost, your attitude will dictate how your stay will be, how you will perceive the actions and words of others and ultimately, how you will react. Will you become (or remain) a repeat offender? This is the question that you truly need to ask yourself. Unfortunately or perhaps fortunately, you have the time to consider this. If a situation is not acceptable to you, you must either remove yourself from it or change your mindset towards it. Here there is not much wiggle room for movement so I suggest a change of mindset.

I have discovered peace. Whether you are spiritual or not, I have learned that forgiveness is the start towards peace. Each and everyday, I forgive those who have wronged me, who have hurt me, and all those who have betrayed me. I do not forgive them for their benefit, but rather for mine. Holding others responsible for their wrongs is keeping track of debts owed to you which creates resentment and residual

Cont’d on page 12

Thank you, Cell Count



Photo by Sena Hussain

By Nick Paccione

I've been writing regularly for Cell Count for close to a couple of years now, beginning with my article "Meditation--or 'Lighting up' Your Mind" in the Spring 2017 issue. I didn't realize then just how important Cell Count would become for me, and what a huge part it would play in my turn towards positive change.

I came across my first copy of Cell Count some time in 2013 or 2014, when a buddy passed me his copy. Back then, Cell Count was issued in a black-and-white, 8.5"x 11" format. I found the pieces inside really interesting and thought-provoking and would come to hugely appreciate and be moved by all the great work done by Cell Count's parent publisher, PASAN. However, at that time what interested me most were the personal ads at the very back of Cell Count. I then still felt utterly powerless against my sex addiction, and, to put it bluntly, I just wanted to get my rocks off.

I would reply to a number of ads and submit a few of my own for publication. I took advantage of the anonymity afforded by the "coded" ad system by placing very "piggish" ads, myself responding to more or less the same. Despite the fact that all the ads had to pass through Cell Count staff, not once was I reprimanded or judged for anything I had written. This made me feel accepted for exactly who I was, "piggishness" and all. This consistent and continued acceptance of and nonjudgmental attitude towards me on the part of the good folks at Cell Count would, with time, result in my becoming a little more accepting and nonjudgmental towards myself. In fact, it may possibly have even helped to set the stage for my decision in early November 2016 to take up meditation & Buddhism and to earnestly commit myself to self transformation & positive change. Thus, if nothing else than for helping to inspire me to kickstart my life in a new and positive direction, I will forever be grateful to Cell Count.

But it was really with Cell Count's return in 2016, after a year's hiatus, with a whole new look and a newly-inspired commitment to making a positive difference, that I myself "returned" with a similar commitment towards a similar end. Indeed, from my very first aforementioned article, it has been in the hope of trying to make a positive difference in whatever little way I could that I've consistently written about positive change, whether at the personal or at the social level--the two, of course, being inextricably linked and mutually reinforcing. Come think of it, my own positive transformation over the last couple of years or so has been very tightly linked with my written work for Cell Count, with each reinforcing the other.

Contributing to Cell Count has made me feel like I'm doing something useful, helpful, constructive. It's given me purpose and helped me to feel more positive about myself, and this in turn has made me want to even more

determinedly continue to work towards personal and social positive change. Writing for Cell Count, then, has come with its own positive feedback loop.

Crucially, too, writing for and even merely reading Cell Count has made me feel engaged and connected, like I'm "in it together" with others and part of something bigger than myself. Having spent most of my life in isolation and disconnected from others, stepping outside of my own little egotistical self and connecting with others in a kind and positive way is essential to my recovery and self-transformation. Cell Count has helped me to do this.

Cell Count has also helped me to stay the course. How? Well, for one, it has forced me to put my money where my mouth is. If I write about kindness and positive change on the one hand and then on the other hand conduct myself in a manner diametrically opposite, then my credibility is shot; and once that's gone, it's game over. Therefore, writing for Cell Count and knowing that other prisoners are reading my stuff puts a healthy pressure on me to be true to my words.

Another way that Cell Count has helped me to stay the course is through the support and positive feedback of others, including fellow prisoners. Even a few guys on my range have very kindly let me know that they liked or were inspired by my stuff. I can't tell you how much this has meant to me. One guy in particular, Luka (hi Luka!), was even inspired to submit his own article!

Cell Count's lead editor herself, Sena Hussain, has been especially helpful and supportive through her kindness and generosity. In fact, she's so nice and friendly that I've actually developed a bit of a "phone crush" on her. Just don't tell her, okay?

And then there are the other Cell Count contributors. Whether through their articles, poetry, or artwork, they've moved me (sometimes to tears) and inspired me and taught me a great deal. Pete Collins, Zakaria Amara, T. Felfoldi, Jennifer Bird, Emily O'Brien, Mr. Valley, Jesse Belanger, Dawna Brown, Nolan R. Turcotte; Michael Hector, Dakota Rain Manitowabi, my special friend Mary Ellen Young, and so many others--each has in his or her own way been a Buddha for me.

I, they, you the readers--Cell Count has allowed all of us to come together as one in spirit, each connected to the other through our mutual experiences our common humanity, our shared aspirations, and our collective desire for a more just and humane world in which to live. Every time I open the pages of Cell Count, it's a stark reminder that much work needs to be done; but it's an even starker reminder that I'm not alone, that none of us are alone, and that together, with each one of us doing our part, we can make a positive difference. Peace and love to all. And to Cell Count, a very special...thank you.

The Censorship Service of Canada



Photo by Sena Hussain

By Nolan R. Turcotte

It took me a couple months to draw up my next contribution for the winter issue of Cell Count, where I am advocating danger pay for convicts. The article in itself is a branching off of *Dehumanization Over Rehabilitation* and I continue on with the raw reality of what takes place behind these walls, in regards to the inhumane treatment we sadly receive. I knew that what I was formulating would ruffle some feathers with Management, so I was very protective of my work after it was printed. When I would leave my cell during the weekday, I would hide it just to keep it safe in case the correctional officers executed a "routine" search. On top of that, I refused to mail it to PASAN because I knew that if I took the risk of allowing it to be handled by the Visits and Correspondence Department it would be a waste of a stamp and an even bigger target would be put on my back. I was forced to wait impatiently for the Health Fair on November 21, 2018, so I could hand it directly over to our dear friends at PASAN. I was honestly stressing out over this predicament I was in because the Health Fair wasn't guaranteed and I wanted *Danger Pay for Cons* to be published in the winter issue for the sole purpose of spreading awareness to you.

Approximately, one week after I hung out with Sena, Aanya and Fiona at the Health Fair I decided to call them to see what they thought about the article. Sena explained to me that she enjoyed reading it and wanted to publish it, but there were concerns on her end with how raw and detailed the article is, which could potentially preclude the newspaper from making it into our possession. She considered making some minor changes to the article, so CSC wouldn't ban it from any of the institutions, but I expressed to her that I wouldn't want it to be published unless it was to be done in its original format. I respect where she's coming from because I wouldn't want to be the reason why you weren't able to receive your copy of Cell Count. At this point, as I am writing this, I am unsure if she is going to publish it, or not, but I can only encourage her to assert our rights with no fear in her heart, because that is what we are all about.

After I got off the phone with Sena and went back to my cell all I could think was, "What happened to Freedom of Speech? What happened to Freedom of the Press? Why is this country built on the foundation of lies and broken promises?"

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms Being Part 1 of the Constitution Act, 1982 Guarantee of Rights and Freedoms RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS IN CANADA.

1. *The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* guarantees the rights and freedoms set out in it subject only to such reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic Society Fundamental freedoms

FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS.

2. Everyone has the following fundamental freedoms:

- (a) freedom of conscience and religion;
- (b) freedom of thought, belief, opinion, and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication;
- (c) freedom of peaceful assembly; and
- (d) freedom of association

Section 2(b): Freedom of expression/interpretation

Section 2(b) protects all forms of expression, whether oral, written, pictorial, sculpture, music, dance or film...Freedom of expression was entrenched in the Charter to ensure that everyone can manifest thoughts, opinions, beliefs and indeed all expressions of the heart and mind however unpopular, distasteful or contrary to the mainstream.

By CSC unjustifiably banning Cell Count to prisoners across Canada, when they dislike the content, they are violating our Fundamental Freedoms, which are "guaranteed" under the Constitution Act. I'm curious to know, is there a section of the Charter that has been "mistakenly" left out of the Martin's Annual Criminal Code, which explains how upon imprisonment convicts, such as ourselves, are presumed to have willfully waived their rights as human beings?

I honestly don't give a reliable rat's ass if my thoughts, opinions and beliefs offend individuals who have no compassion for my fellow prisoners and I. My views may be distasteful or contrary to the mainstream, but I speak the undeniable truth and we all know the truth cuts like a razor. Come to think of it, are my thoughts, opinions and beliefs really that unpopular? I refuse to believe so. Especially, when every prisoner can generally relate to what I am experiencing on a daily basis, as well as the fact there are numerous organizations designed for the purpose of helping prisoners and ex-prisoners adapt to and succeed in society.

We shouldn't be bullied into silence, nor should Cell Count be withheld from us as a form of punishment for enforcing our rights. Clearly, it's against the Charter, so if CSC wants to continue with their weak-ass attempt at sweeping their dirt under the rug, PASAN needs to rise up and take them to court, because it will make a difference and more proof of corruption will be documented, which will ultimately benefit every prisoner across the country.

I used to bang out correctional officers and cut their faces, but I have come to the realization that I can hurt them more by using my voice in a positive way. Whoever coined the phrase, "The pen is mightier than the sword", is a fucking genius. In conclusion, I will leave you with another thought of mine CSC can hate on ... "If they really want me to stop speaking from the heart, they better shoot me in the head and hope that I'm dead the next time I step out my cell."



Illustration by the late Pete Collins

Danger Pay for Cons

By Nolan R. Turcotte

I find it ironic how correctional officers are receiving danger pay when they are the ones who make their work environment dangerous. That may seem hard to believe to a straight John due to prison having the stigma of being extremely violent, but for all of us who are incarcerated know it's the truth. Not all of us are violent offenders, but a lot of us are and the ones who aren't are sometimes forced to become violent, whether it's based on principle or survival.

Let's all forget about con-on-con violence and focus on why convicts are verbally aggressive and/or physically violent towards officers. To the majority of correctional officers, we convicts are nothing but little pieces of shit moulded into the shapes of people. In their eyes we shouldn't be classified as human beings and as far as they're concerned we have no rights; therefore, we shouldn't even receive privileges.

On a daily basis, correctional officers disregard the Commissioner's Directives and legislation that has been put in place for the employees of the judicial system to follow. (i.e. CCRA, Section 69: No person shall administer, instigate, consent to or acquiesce in any cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment of an offender).

I'm willing to bet that every single convict reading this has been a victim of cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment or punishment sometime throughout their bit. Just because a person puts on a CSC uniform doesn't mean their sins have been washed away. They are still humans who possess free will and are susceptible to being racist, prejudicial, antagonistic, as well as having feelings of superiority. So, why pay them for something they are the cause of?

We should be the ones receiving danger pay since living in this hostile environment is way worse than working here. There's the rivalry of gangs, sleeping with our blades for comfort, the clashing of Alpha Males, the gossip which leads to war, the beefs over phone time, the young kids too eager to prove themselves, the presence of mentally unstable convicts, etc. The list can go on and on, but what inflicts the most pain on us is the treatment we receive by the correctional officers. Many may not look at it the way I do, but if we are constantly being antagonized by the correctional officers on a daily basis it creates the most dangerous environment due to us becoming stressed, frustrated and enraged and not having a positive outlet, so we bottle up those emotions until we fucking explode.

Over time and as the abuse continues we become angrier and angrier, but we hold it in, which can cause us to one day snap on one another for the smallest thing. If the correctional officers who are safe in the control tower get on the Public Address System every shift and swear at us, call us names and fuck with our routine, which is all we have, it is going to have a mental and emotional effect on us. Every word they say and every action they get away with sinks deep into our subconscious and forms into trauma. Not only can it cause us to inflict pain on each other, but it can cause us to become suicidal. I explained this to my parole officer and I made it very clear that what these

correctional officers are doing is dangerous. We teach children not to bully other children because for one, it is wrong and secondly, it can cause major harm to the victim and potentially the abuser.

I had a little cousin who was bullied in elementary, but she never told anybody. She committed suicide when she was 13 and her mother never knew how much pain and torment her daughter was going through until she opened up her diary.

Now, put a convict in the same situation. When somebody gets belittled regularly they begin to feel as if they are worthless, if they don't already. They have no outlet, so they are forced to go back to their cell where they have nothing but time to think about everything that is being said and done to them.

Hopelessness is the most dangerous feeling there is, so what else is left for that suffering convict to do? That's when the bright idea of offing themselves pops into their head. Then they start to consider how to do it. "Should I string up? Slash up? Overdose?" What does anybody expect a convict to do when they are constantly being abused? We have already suffered enough trauma in our lives, which ultimately led us to the cells we are in today. Besides, correctional officers are supposed to respect the rule of law, contribute to public safety by encouraging and assisting offenders to become law-abiding citizens while they exercise reasonable, safe, secure and humane control, as their Mission Statement claims. So, why aren't they conforming to what they pledged to do?

Since I am on the topic of suicide it leads me to another point I would like to make in regards to convicts receiving danger pay. When I was in Kent Institution from 2011-2013 the inmate population was placed on lockdown on two separate occasions due to the correctional officers taking the day off to attend their co-workers' funerals. How did both of those correctional officers die? Suicide!

Now, think about what that truly means. Correctional officers can become suicidal just like anybody else in this world, so what if one day there was a suicidal correctional officer in the control tower plotting on all of us? If they were really adamant on killing themselves that day, they could take out a number of clueless convicts before turning the rifle on themselves. So, who's really in danger?

Another route we convicts can go, if we don't desire death, is plot revenge. Fortunately, I am able to share my first-hand experience with you because there was a moment in my life where I thought these fuckers were going to murder me.

When I was 23 years-old I was sent to the SHU for the second time. My time in the population wasn't that bad when it came to my interactions with the correctional officers. The only time I really spoke to them was when I needed a request form, laundry detergent, and my nail clippers. In February 2014 I attempted to murder another convict which left me in segregation for a couple months. During my stay in segregation I, along with the rest of the cons, were subjected to cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment by being deprived of yard, showers, personal/legal calls and food. There were also days where it took approximately five

hours just to get a roll of toilet paper because the correctional officers refused to acknowledge us when they did their hourly walks and when they did decide to acknowledge us they just spit the most famous line that all of us have heard too many times..."Next walk!"

Personally, I never received yard, showers, phone calls and toilet paper on multiple occasions, which frustrated me enough to react in a negative way from behind a door. What bothered me the most was hearing other convicts kick their doors and scream for their meals. Some may look at that as them trying to intimidate and bark orders at the correctional officers, but the way I see it is that they were begging for their food like dogs. I don't mean any disrespect to anybody who has been in that position by putting it in those terms, but I have to keep it real for the readers who aren't convicts so they can truly grasp how we are being mistreated. The correctional officers are the most sadistic individuals I have ever met in my entire life and because of how our rights were being violated I silently made a promise to the population that I would attack a correctional officer in the name of Inmate Rights. I just had to patiently wait to be released from segregation so I could be handcuffed from the front rather than the back.

When I went to my Segregation Review Board I expressed good intentions to make it seem like I wanted to refrain from violence and continue with the Violence Prevention Program-Maintenance, so I could be released from the SHU and move forward with my life. They released me from segregation as I expected they would and then 23 hours later I cut one of the biggest correctional officer's face twice.

That was when I received the dirtiest beat down of my life. For approximately six minutes I had about eight correctional officers eating my food. I was being strangled, stomped on, and punched. They were trying to break my fingers, ribs and ankles while they smashed my face against the floor. They also sprayed two cans of pepper spray right in my mouth and then wrapped the spit mask around my face and pulled my head back so I couldn't breathe. I was taken to Health Care where the nurse determined that I have to go to the outside hospital, due to the fact I may have had internal bleeding in my torso and when he checked inside my ear he saw blood. Honestly, I was refusing to go at first because I thought I was going to get killed by the Emergency Response Team on the way to the hospital, but when I seen the sincerity on the nurses face I realized my injuries could be serious. Therefore, I received approximately 15 x-rays on my jaw, wrists and ribs. Fortunately, they weren't able to break a single bone in my body or chip any of my pretty boy teeth. It must've been from all the milk I drank as a kid?

Unfortunately, I received the Dangerous Offender designation in 2015 even though I have already been serving a Life sentence since 2006. I screwed my life up even more with my decision of assaulting that correctional officer, but the fact of the matter is that I have contemplated suicide and I have executed revenge. These correctional officers don't even truly understand what they put us through and when we do decide to attack them they always play the duck by acting like they don't know why they are getting the business. They always want us to take responsibility for our actions, but they never seem to do so for theirs.

This is a little off topic, but I feel the need to share this with you. When I was meeting with the psychologist for my Dangerous Offender assessment, we spoke about the incident and the emotions that led up to it. Without justifying or minimizing my actions I simply explained to her how the correctional officers are mistreating the convicts on a daily basis and how I have been mentally, emotionally and physically affected by it. After her report was translated from French to English I received a copy. I was labelled as an individual with psychopath-like traits and she diagnosed me with Paranoid Personality Disorder. Apparently, the mistreatment we all have been receiving is nothing but a figment of my imagination.

I have this theory about correctional officers who act like bullies. I feel as if they were picked on in elementary and high school, so they took this job so they could take out all of their hurt and pain on us. It is a proven fact that hurt people tend to hurt others, whether it is verbally or physically. I can speak from experience because I was picked on in elementary and nobody was ever there to help me. I had to hold my own,

but because I was constantly being bullied. I brought a knife to school in grade eight and made it very clear that they were going to stop their shit. It worked, which caused me to adopt intimidation and violence as my defense mechanism. I became the bully and took on the persona of an Alpha Male because I recognized what power could do. These correctional officers feel powerful when they can control our routine, turn off the phones, destroy our property, fuck with our visits/mail, etc. I can't even tell you what pisses me off the most, but I despise when they talk all the maddest shit when they are in a group or hiding in the control tower. We all know that 99.99% of these correctional officers would never step into a cell for a one on one, nor would any of them talk stupid if they saw us in the community, so why do they continue to run their mouths like they can't get touched? Tupac said it best, "You ain't shit without your homeboys!"

I firmly believe that if CSC upheld their Morals, Values and Ethics, which are stated in Commissioner's Directive 001, prison would run a lot smoother and be a lot safer for both sides. Obviously, we still have to factor in that prison will always remain dangerous due to the fact there is so much politics among us convicts, but at the very least the tension between us and them would have a chance to die down. I'm sure that if they didn't treat us like shit we wouldn't react the way we do. They are supposed to be the law-abiding citizens, but they're breaking the law. They are supposed to be our role models, but they aren't playing a positive role in our lives. CSC is supposed to be protecting Canadians, but I don't feel as if I'm being protected when I am a victim of a hate crime every day of my life. Do you? Just look at how many convicts have passed away by the hands of correctional officers. I feel like I belong to an endangered species. With that said, I want some fucking danger pay.

Forgotten Thank You



By Mark Zammit

I feel the need to say something. Surprise, right? I got a big mouth, so some of you may think I have a big mouth, but I don't sign my rants "anonymous" and I back my words up, so I hope that lots of you listen... Anyways, please? Walk with me.

Whether we're doing a long stretch or a short one, if our families ride with us, we are thankful. Our boyfriends or girlfriends, we appreciate the visits, the pictures, etc. Our friends, we feel we owe them for their loyalty. From all convicts, I hope I can speak for all - "we thank & appreciate you"

But something, someone is missing. In 21 years of federal time, there has only been one organization that I have seen that has been constant and consistent in the fight for our rights and our safety. They, like us, have been kicked down by CSC, barred from institutions, but still fought for us, changed protocols and saved some of us against CSC's ridiculous ridicule and centering out. That organization is PASAN/Cell Count. I personally owe them my life, and I am sure that I speak for many when I say, "Thank you for never giving up on us, you just don't see the devil in us, and I/we love you and all you do."

Now moving on...

My stat is very soon and by the time you read this I should be out, so check this out.

The fight begins now.. I do not & never will forget where I come from. I will be running & starting Facebook pages & YouTube videos, etc to fight for prisoners (our) rights. Things like health care, organizations that help cons who have no one or no support. My warrant on 14 is so close & I will not let you disappear. Friends and enemies, I will continue or start, whatever, the fight for things you (we've) lost. Anyone who truly knows me, knows my hustle & that I am a pain in the ass. The world will never see another crazy motherfucker like me. I will die fighting for cons... PEACE.

'My second fight behind these prison walls'

M. Dawkins cont'd from cover story

no. I tried to switch the conversation and ask him if I could get some weed, even if I have to pay for it, but still Jay kept on saying things like 'I told you, you could live with me and that I'm not going nowhere.'

As I went into my purse to make sure everything was ready to go, I heard something that sounded like metal forks, spoons and knives moving around in a cupboard, but I didn't think nothing of it, cuz when I picked up Jay he had come with some takeout food in his hand. I thought he was going to eat something, which would be good for him to calm him down and maybe he would change his mind and come to the club with me. But boy oh boy, was I ever wrong. The next thing I knew, he was standing right beside me, and he says in a tone, which caused me to look up, "you're not going anywhere." He stabbed me in the face. He put the knife through my face under, my left eye and then pulled it back out. I backed up, screaming in a fearful manner for my life, and that's when Jay launched the knife back at me again, trying to cut me open from my stomach. Just writing this alone still gives me the shakes, and tears come to my eyes. I'm still in shock. I can't believe Jay did that to me. I have so much respect for him, you know, I even confided personal details about my life to him, and how my ex-boyfriend, who I was living with, treated me, and the things he has done to me. Jay in return shared personal information and struggles he was having in his life with me as well. My heart is so broken and hurt over this. No one will ever understand the full extent of the traumatic impact this has had on me. Three years later I still get jumpy and scared when people move a certain way around me.

I can't remember much of what happened after he came at me and stabbed me in the stomach. All I remember was putting my hands up to grab him so he would stop stabbing me. There was so much blood coming out of me, my eyes were blinded cuz blood was in them. At that point I didn't even know if my eye was in my head. There was a great struggle in that living room cuz Jay was super strong. He had a great shape body cuz he worked out a lot. I don't know how I was able to get the knife from him, honest to God, but I did. When I had the knife, Jay continued attacking me by kicking and punching me, so I swung back in self-defense. I remember every time I felt a hit from him, I fought back, trying to protect myself from him. I didn't even know, when I was swinging back, if I was making contact, cuz Jay wasn't saying 'ouch' or anything. He kept hitting me. He was doing everything to get that knife back from me. He was so drunk and angry. It was so scary. I never had to defend myself like this before.

I'm skipping over some parts now cuz it's just hard to keep reliving. What ended up happening is I called 911 to get help for the both of us. When the police arrived, they pepper sprayed me in the face for

Illustration by Steve Zehr



no reason, after I told them I was the one that called the police, and that my attacker, Jay, is still inside. You don't even want me to get started on police conduct towards me and the way they treated me because I'm transgender. Moving on, when the police got to Jay he was bleeding and had lost a lot of blood, but when they identified themselves to him, he ran away from them and try to hide himself in the garbage chute that was in the building. What I learned later on during my prelim, is that Jay had only been out of jail for nine months for, again, unprovokedly stabbing someone, which explained why he ran away from the police. But by him running away, and it taking them a bit more time to find him, Jay ended up bleeding out and dying, leaving the police to charge me with murder in the 2nd degree.

Now this brings me to my second fight behind these prison walls. I was the first transgender person to be held here in the Toronto South Detention Center. I can't begin to explain how hard it is to be stripped of your hair, makeup and clothes, to look in the mirror and not be able to recognize yourself. It hurts so bad. I cried every night my first few months here when I first came in.

They put me in segregation for the first few weeks and left me there. It wasn't until my third or fourth week, until a social worker came to see me and told me that if I wanted to get out of seg I would have to sign into protective custody, and if I didn't sign in I would be left in segregation. So I checked in cuz I wanted to get out of seg. When you're in seg, the only mirror there is in the shower room, you don't have one in your cell, so when I got on the range and they put me in my cell, that's when my mental health really started to go down.

I hated who I was seeing in the mirror every time I went to wash my hands, or brush my teeth. On top of that, they only gave me razors twice a week, every Wednesday and Sunday, and most times they would only give it once a week despite my request for them. My facial hair drove me crazy. I was used to shaving my face every day, sometimes twice a day. I started wrapping up a t-shirt around my head to imitate a wig cuz I felt so naked. Doing that became a grave problem for me. Guards were locking me up for the day, calling me hateful names, because I refused to take off the head wrap. The guards got tired of me refusing and then

locking me up, so they put me on misconduct and sent me back to seg again. Every time it was my turn to shower, on days they let us have one, I would wrap my hair and go out, and the guards would give me hell. They would push me and yell spit into my face. They would go into my cell and throw out whatever stuff I would have in there. They would even take my mattress and give me this doggy pad type thing to sleep on. They did everything they could to me, except try to understand me and what I was going through. With the guards doing all those things to me, inmates would join in the hateful bashing, yell ignorance at me and throw things at me from their hatch.

I was so broken on the inside it hurt, I couldn't understand and still don't, why this happened to me. Why did Jay do this to me? What did I do to deserve this? My pain has pain, even my tears would hurt coming out of my eyes and streaming down my face. It wasn't fair, I'm human also. Why did I deserve this type of treatment? Just because I'm a trans woman? You don't know how many times that I wish I would have just allowed Jay to kill me that night, or how many times I thought about killing myself but couldn't bring myself to inflicting more pain upon myself. There is so much more difficulties and hardships that I face, but if I was to write it all out, it would take a good month to finish. Plus, it hurts to relive all of this so the less pain the better. Let's fast forward to where I am today in my fight, first I want to let you know what I was able to accomplish from those times I was telling you about. The first thing that I was able to accomplish was graduating and getting my GED during all of that. I moved on to doing post-secondary education, I completed a business fundamentals course with Centennial, I completed the abnormal psychology course through Northern College and I'm currently doing a principles of psychology course through Centennial College, in which I just got back my first assignment, and I got a 26 out of 28 so I'm feeling proud of myself. I was able to accomplish getting Stacy Love Jolie Coeur in to this institution to have LGBTQ+ programming and support needed for our community members and myself. My fight for her was a two-year long fight along with being allowed to have a wig and order makeup off the female institution canteen list. It was emotionally distressing going through all of it but I must say it was a positive step forward in recognition for our community behind these Walls.

Now going back to my fight in which I'm facing now. So I had my trial and I was acquitted of second-degree murder, but found guilty of manslaughter, which, frankly I shouldn't have been found guilty of anything. But I had Justice Robert Clark as my trial judge and anyone who has experienced this man for themselves knows he's a hot-headed mean judge. He excluded more than half of Jays criminal records which involves a series of attacks on people for no reason, and of course,

his weapon of choice was a knife in previous incidents. The judge also didn't allow me to have an expert testify who specializes in violence against the LGBTQ+ community and sex workers. The jury wasn't provided with the whole truth of everything and that's not fair to me. My sentencing was November 6th, 2018 and I got sentenced to a total of 8 years, but only have 18 more months left, which leaves me in the provincial system. I had 3 years and 3 months in on sentencing day and the judge gave me two for one on my time which added up to 6.6 years and gave me 18 more months, to add up to 8 years. People keep telling me that I'm lucky but I don't feel it, I feel hurt and broken, I feel like when Jay said, "You're not going nowhere," he meant it with his life. He still has me captive, he's still taking shots at me, and won't let me go. I just want to be free from him, free from all of this, and sometimes I feel like death is my only way out to be free from him. But someone told me that if I kill myself I would only be joining him instead of getting free from him, so here I am still fighting him.

I applied for my appeal and here I am fighting with the institution again, to keep me here. They want to ship me out to Penetang, where I would be stripped of the wig and makeup I fought so hard to obtain. I would be forced to wear orange, and not green, what female inmates wear. Most importantly, I would not be able to connect with a lot of my mental health and community workers such as 519 Church, Maggie's, Cota, Stacey and PASAN, as well as my CAMH workers, because most of them informed me that they don't go out there. My school wouldn't be able to be continued out there cuz the organization in which I'm doing my education with, doesn't go out to Penetanguishine. My family and friends who come see me here won't be able to travel out so far to come visit me. There's a lot for me to lose, which could affect my rehabilitation back into the community once I get released. On top of all that I would have to deal with a whole new set of inmates and guards.

I'm tired you guys, but I'm not giving up, because of all your love and support and with that said I would like to end this by thanking Rosa and Jay from 519, Melissa from Cota for all your hard work and assisting me reaching out to everyone, Ellie, Micah, Monica and Aanya and everyone from Maggie's. Stacy Love Jolie Coeur and everyone who doesn't even know me, but heard my story and came out and protested and showed support for me during my trial. Thank you so much from the bottom of my heart, it's your Love which gives me strength to carry on. I also want to thank Eveline, Aanya and Sena and everyone at PASAN for allowing me to share my story, and thank you readers for taking the time to read my story, and I pray that it may be a source of strength for you and whatever life trials you may be going through.

ZAKARIA AMARA

Gentle River

My body dwells within a hopeless tomb
While my spirit soars beyond the fullest moon
Where my journey takes me I shall go
Like a peaceful gentle river I do flow
My heart is free of any expectations
No room remains for plans or reservations
The rhythm of my hope beats like a drum
For I believe the best is yet to come

MONIQUE RAYMOND

The Dawn of the Sun

I listen to my heart beat
I listen to my heart
I listen to my heart beat
I listen to my heart

I used to be angry,
Real sad,
Suffering and pain,
Good girl gone bad.

Everything taken from me
Was never put back.
Suffering and in pain,
Good girl gone mad

My God's saying forgiveness,
I ask - "How?"
If I want healing,
The hurt must bow

So I lay my strife down,
My burden and my woe.
I found peace, the hour I let go.

I thought it wouldn't happen
The anguish wouldn't part
But I listened to my heart beat
And this is where I start.
No longer taking from me,
Peace had begun.
Darkness fades
With the dawn of the sun.

I listen to my heart beat
I listen to my heart
I listen to my heart beat
I listen to my heart
Thank you for listening too. Peace!

GARY "GWISZY"

It's always about timing

Time makes the world go around.
Living in a life of seclusion.
This is what I found.
Numbers of the days.
Eyes staring at the ground.
All the time I've walked alone.
And never made a sound.
Sympathizing yesterdays.
Well working with today.
May all the clouds above my head.
Slowly drift away.
Look at all the time I've wasted.
With nothing much to say.
Trying to find reasons
Things standing in my way.
Got to start a new life.
As my old life fades away.
Coming to conclusions
My time is here to stay.
Now all I know for certain.
Is I won't go home today.
It's always about timing.

A Thought

Sitting here. The views.
Eyes focused on visions.
Still I stay calm.
Evening sounds from what ever.
Night.
So fast over.
How time goes by.
Some time has gone by now.
Such value in time
Sitting here.

JAMES BRADFIELD

Behind the Walls

Locked up with nowhere to go,
With no chance of full parole,

Illustration by Gerry Saulnier



No friends who I can trust as my own,
I feel like I'm a rolling stone,
These bars have me trapped inside,
I'm hopeless and all I have is my pride,
Praying to God on my knees,
One day I know I will be free,
Free of all the care of this world,
All by myself not even a girl,
Stuck inside this living hell,
Now I'm writing you my life from a cell,
Doing my time like a man,
Back with a master plan,
A plan to stay free and never come back again,
In a system that is insane,
Overcoming my problems rising to the top,
This time I know I can't be stopped

C RUPERT

A Warrior

Oh Canada, you stole our homes and Native land
True patriots love, in all of us command
You took our children, you killed our parents,
You stole our lands.
You tried to kill off the Bison
You called us savages
You treated us like animals
You introduced us to your treaty plans
You tried to kill off our ways
But here we are today our culture still stands!

Listen Oh Canada to this Nishnabeg man
The Creator, created me like him;
I am who I am
I'm going to say to you, what was said
To me
Oh Canada,
I forgive thee...

BRIAN G KERR

Send

Sitting here in my humble abode
Kicking it up at 55 Civic Rd
But it's not that hard for sho
I mean after all; I'm in Scarborough
Not too sure exactly what that means
Cause I'm just doing time at M1L-2K9
Looking for a pen pal, maybe even a friend
So come on girl...
What are you waiting for?
"Send, send send."

I Looked Up!

I looked up to the heavens and what did I see?
Three mighty angels staring back at me.

I was so taken aback I didn't know what to do.
I got down on my knees and said a prayer or two.
I said thank you Lord for all the things that you have done.
Thank you for the heavens
Thank you for the Sun.
You'll never know Lord how much I care,
How much I love you, how much I bare.
Just the other day Lord you came too me,
You said I'd be happy
You said I'd be free
Now I just sit here so patiently,
I wait on your word and soon I shall see.
All the mighty wonders that you have done.
"Oh Lord you are the one!"

Saligia

Genesis 6: 1-4
From above
I'm about to make yall fall in love
What made you fall for a devil like me?
Saligia I be
How I be so superbly
I sin with the greed
I lust alluringly
I invade your envy
Hourda and Gula one in gluttony
Taking wrath out the trash
Sloth the acid: burns the masses
Love me the flower: Eden
Horn of treason
Born Holy Demon
Die to survive
Post Traumatic Stress
Death in your eyes
How I've made blood rain from the sky
It's the love pouring
Fall as you bow in the blood of Allah

MARY ELLEN YOUNG

Shot caholla

That I'm a shot caholla I tell
Runner hundred thousand all
Ya'll run nun ya'll ain't
Gotta count give it bring it
Respect give it all ya'll don't
Beef too busy respecting
Me babysitin ya'll money ya'll
Dope hope I don't show up
All ya'll don't baskets of
Money to babysit for me
ALL YA'LL
That yo! Boy tell you I
Want some more!
I want some more!
Big Thomas Young Thomas
Maryillin on this trap
Pullin up to the spot taken your
Door man takin him up to the

Top as I pay him more than
You do as I do things I do
Making him real like things real
I be that hollacalla putting
It on ya sayin doin it livin it
Right sexy anything baby
Come when I crash all ya'll
Here thought you new all
I wear is new

Cat Box Sound

Soundin with you crew
All screw
Ya'll screwd
This cat in his raps all
Talkin hard
All scraps
Ya'll think you got the
Best of me
Get next to me
All vex ya'll see
This cat thinks he soundin
All dope
He hope
She be copy catty my flow
But she be
Too slow
This cat be copy catty
This catty
This Batty!!

Legendary we be me
I'm pisces no one see how
Deep we be in the sea no one me
Ever be deep deeper than any other
sign we be pretty dangerous
fish we go where no other
being has ever went I'm a
beast bitch I pull you under
I'm legendary I show you a
Feeling that you haven't felt
Before your heart I stole
You feelin felt attraction
Strong wild everything you
Ever wish for granted right
Here one woman has it yeah
Me one woman man you'll be
smiling ear to ear happy yeah
You'll be sex made money
Made respect made loyal made
Nothing not a problem we
Be having it made deep like
The sea yeah you'll see no one
Mention pisces I be the
Deepest from the zodiac we
Don't fuck around we
Legendary beast like I
Say from the paradise sea deepest felt

MICHAEL HECTOR

At last an answer to the age old question: Who is Jack Schitt?

The lineage is finally revealed!
Many people are often at a loss for a response to, "You don't know Jack Schitt!" Now, after reading this, you will be able to answer in the affirma-

tive.
Jack is the only son of Awe Schitt and O Schitt. Awe Schitt, the Fertilizer Magnate, married O Schitt, a partner of Knee-deep and Schitt Inc.
In turn, Jack Schitt married Noe Schitt, and as a deeply religious couple produced 6 children: Holie Schitt, Fulla Schitt, Giva Schitt, Bull Schitt and the twins Deep Schitt and Dip Schitt.
Against her parents' objections, Deep Schitt married Dumb Schitt the high school drop-out.
After fifteen years of marriage, Jack Schitt and Noe Schitt divorced.
Noe Schitt later married Mr. Sherlock, and because their kids were living with them, she wanted to keep her previous name. She was then known as Noe Schitt-Sherlock.
Dip Schitt married Loda Schitt and they had a very nervous son, Chicken Schitt.
Fulla Schitt and Giva Schitt were inseparable throughout childhood and subsequently married the Happens brothers in a dual ceremony. The wedding announcement in the paper announced the Schitt-Happens wedding.
Of the two Schitt-Happens couples there are three kids; Dawg, Byrd, and Hoarse.
Bull Schitt, the prodigal son, left home to tour the world. He recently returned from Italy with his new wife, Piza Schitt.
There you have it. Should anyone every say to you that "You don't know Jack Schitt", you can correct them. You can even say that you know the whole family!!!
Please enjoy and always remember...
Be Well & Be Safe

HORAINÉ BENNETT

WAR

Since you started the war
Then tell me what we fighting for
You beat the drums
You cock your guns
Then call us scums
And search our bums
Bad versus good
They rob our hood
You ask me why?
Because they could!
Cops and crowns
They hunt us down
Conspire with that sash and gown
We catch a case
They say we're waste
Then lock us in this dreadful place
Then ask us how justice taste...

Life's Lesson

Times can be cold
An old life's lesson
A curse that's the worst
The devil's blessing
Hell on earth
Endless struggles since birth
Life ain't priceless
So what the f-k is mine worth
Pain in my eyes so severe it cripples my mind
Eclipse on my future I'm clinically blind
Emotionally drained, misled, and misused
Confused and unbalanced like a kid that's abused
Despair and regret
This lesson I've learned, I'll never forget
This event now a memory
Forever engraved
Surrender to fate
White flag in a wave
Bombarded by thoughts
None that is pleasant
Oppressive depression my life in the present
Logic presently absent
Missing in action
Downward traction, a spiral reaction
Feelings in a faction even Jesus would sanction
But life goes on
A lesson we learn
As quick as we turn
Another to earn.

Cont'd from page 11

HORAINA BENNETT

Past

The past is a thing Etched in our minds
A historic moment or event
Captured by time
The elapse of the present
Another moment that's gone
With a future to behold
Time will always go on
Time is something we take for granted
A commodity that we waste
Yet when we make a mistake
It's something we'd wish to embrace
But you can't change the past
It's like a never-ending chase
You can thrust all you want
The past will keep pace
The only way to move on
Is to embrace and except
Because memories aren't something
You can simply reject
Once you have done that
You've learnt from your past
Then you can put your mind to rest
And have peace at last.

MARC CARUN

Untitled

Not guilty is how I pleaded
On every bitch I've cheated
Don't know why you're so shocked
My past is what I've been trying to block
Who said life ain't fair
It's because of you I don't care
I wish you were fucking dead
Can't stop the silent scream in my head
Hating you is all I know
You're as cold as the winter snow

SEAN C. MOLYNEAUX

To the cons that are no longer there
To the cons that still do and no longer care
To the families that lay alone late at night
To the cons that get up every morning to fight
This one goes out to you and this one goes out to them
Especially to the families we will never see again
We have made our beds and now we must sleep
But there's someone somewhere that cares when we speak

MARK ZAMMIT

False Judgement

Time is perfectly endless, but life is never forever
Why do the cowards hate because my heart beats to a different drum

Kindness is far from weakness, and one should never change
The immoral will never feel true satisfaction that a good deed can give a soul

The world is full of hate, but words are simple and childish.
The ones who have felt discrimination should be the last to ever judge a fellow being.

Have the strength to stand up if necessary, as the naive hide behind one another. Strength comes in peaceful numbers if poised and shown like a Family photo.



FORGOTTEN WARRIOR

She says she only wants me to be at peace well yes and there is nothing so peaceful as the grave now is there?

Good words do not last long until they amount to something
Take only memories leave nothing but foot prints

What was done to me is what created me
Everyday becomes today when you get there
Tomorrow is another day until it's here
There's a crack in everything that's how the light gets in

The game now changed on the streets
Shit be in this savage style
It's a straight up body thing nows, fuck love, give me some pussy
Take a bite out of them streets 'cuz I be getting hungry!
Gotta eat-n-fuck now
Savage style
Savage style

Is it possible that I am so weary of anger and bitterness that I let it slip away for a wife? So just give me this moment alone? I do not feel emptiness, I do not feel loneliness I do not feel my hurt, my mind is just empty and I feel peace within, which is so beautiful and I wish I could feel it all the time and for the moment, let go!

BILLY WHITEDEER

- Logic is the battlefield of all adulthood
- If you label me, you negate me
- In a world of followers, dare to be a leader

It's your future

M.G. Brown cont'd from page 7

that festers inside of you. Releasing them of their debts does not absolve them of their crimes against us but it releases us of that anger so we can find peace. Harboring resentment and anger towards others is like drinking poison and hoping that others get sick.

The chapels have programs that help deal with anger and loss which you may benefit from. Talk to your Chaplain to see what programs are available to you. No matter your spiritual beliefs, if you have any or not, the chapel is a great place to find well being. There is mass and prayer as well as other programs for physical health like yoga for mental well being too like meditation. You can also find religious based correspondence courses that may help you spiritually, academically and with your inner peace.

The prison system may be flawed but the institution offers you many opportunities to better yourself and help yourself survive. Ask to see mental health and ask for puzzles, colouring picture, word searches etc., speak to counselors. You can ask to see a doctor for health concerns, a dentist to get expensive work done for free, and a psychiatrist if you need help coping. There are AA and NA groups to help you stay focused on your goals of a better life. Take advantage of the education they are willing to give you and the training or certifications available. If you lack your secondary education, now is the time to get it. An education can open so many doors that were previously closed to you. The libraries and book clubs are not just for fun. They are open doors to learning that you can benefit from. There are programs for WHMIS certification as well as workplace safety, and proper tool safety, food health and safety, and CPR/first aid just to name a few. You can get trained in trades, forklifts and industrial equipment. Take advantage of all that is offered.

The point is simply this: you should leave this system as a better person than when you entered it by your own doing. Ask what the institution can do for you. Heal yourself, better yourself and please, never come back. You have a future.

More on health & harm reduction

DENIED ACCESS TO TREATMENT

By Adam Lock

In the end of 1992, I was transferred to Millhaven reception to be assessed to go to another institution, and they chose Collins Bay. I appealed and asked for Joyceville, but they told me that I required a 'wall-setting institution.' In May 1993 I went to Collins Bay and was listed for all the regular programs that they offer: cognitive skills, OSAP, anger management, etc, but they told me because I was only doing 20 months of a 30 month sentence that there were other people who would be a higher priority on the waitlist, and that I probably wouldn't get into the programs before I got out. I ended up getting transferred to Warkworth, Kingston, and then Millhaven. I spent 18 Months in segregation until my release with no TV in my cell.

Once I was released I breached my stat release 3 times and as soon as that sentence was finished, 19 days later I picked up 3 more bank robberies by using a note, because I needed money to give to my girl and sister for Christmas, and I needed money for myself to finance my drug habit. On January 6, 1996 I was arrested for 3 bank robberies and got 8 years. In July 2006 I was shipped back to Millhaven and then sent to Kingston. During the next 20 years I was transferred to Quebec, BC, and Winnipeg. While I was in each of these 4 provinces the closest I got was in Quebec where my parole officer put in some papers to try to get me into the Borderline Personality Disorder program, because I've

been diagnosed with it. I was denied for some reason that they wouldn't give me, something about a language barrier.

By the time my sentence was over I'd only completed the normal programs and I got a lack of participation because I was addicted to heroin and couldn't get on the methadone program until just before I got out. I wanted to do programs in a treatment facility where I'm around everyone who wants help and isn't there by force.

I got out in 2015, to a halfway house (Keele CCC). I had 10 months to do there until the end of my sentence. When I got out I had been in jail for 20 years, I was not prepared for the streets and I had no clothing or anything. I tried to get welfare and they told me no because I was in a halfway house. The jail gave me no clothes except for the outfit I was wearing, I had to take my \$85 that the halfway house gave me for food and hygiene and spend it on a cheap outfit. I was lucky to get out in the summer. I had no knowledge of where to get help for things. I needed help when my sentence was finished and my wife gave birth to my "still born son". I had no knowledge where to turn to get help. I ended up turning to the bottle then to drugs after being out clean for 15 months. Then the one funny thing is when I came back to jail I saw a John Howard worker with a "Welcome Home Guide Book" that has all the info that I would have needed when I got out, so why didn't the halfway house have that at their house? Also I called the DMV when I was out and asked them and a lady at Service Canada if there is anyway for my wife to get her licence back right away without paying

every cent of what she owes and they said no, but I found out since I've been in here that she could have gotten her licence back by going to driving court and making a monthly payment plan with the judge until her tickets are all payed off.

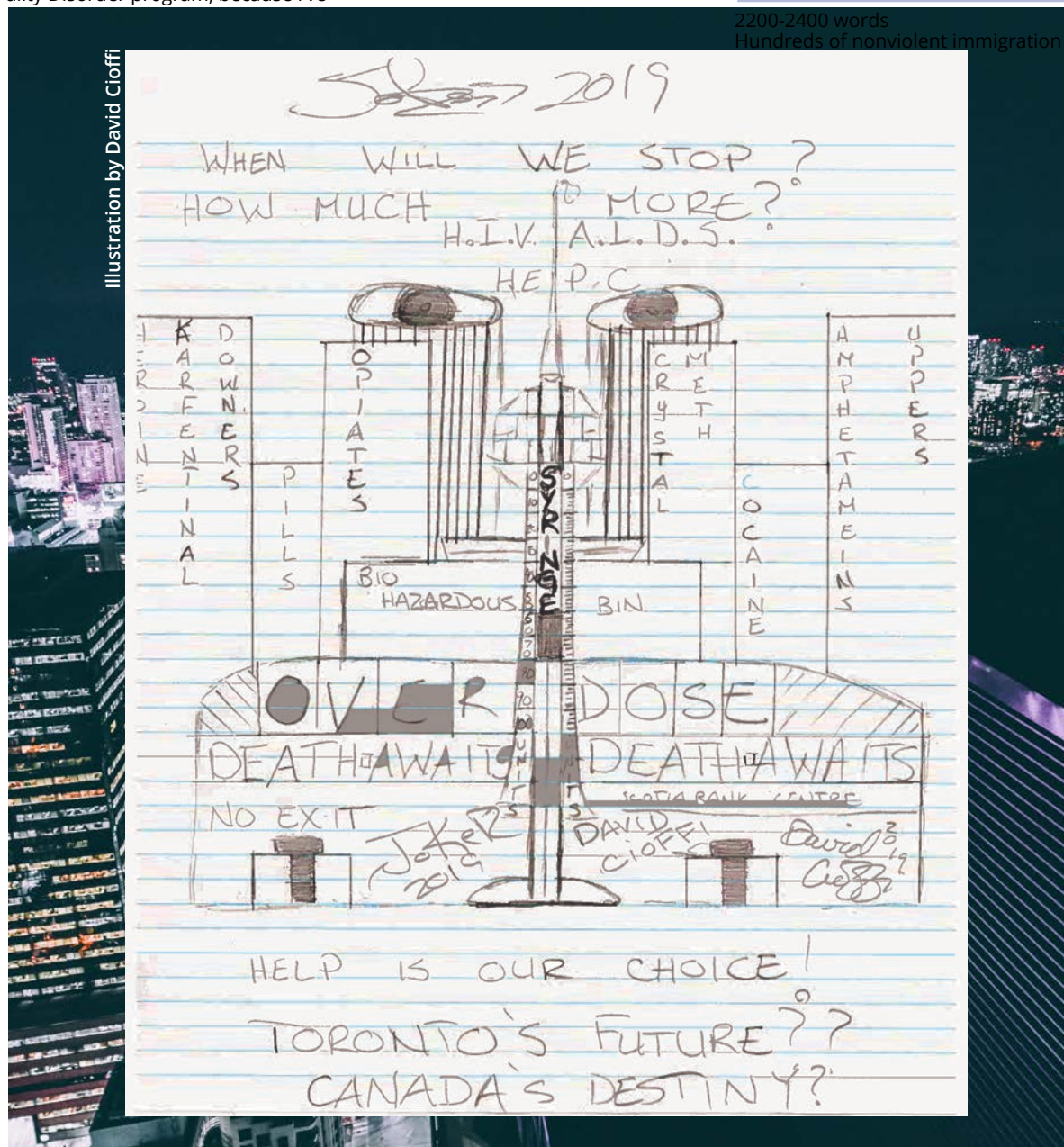
And now I sit here in a cell where I've been for 21 months now and they want to ask for a Dangerous Offender for another 3 bank robberies with a note trying to get money to get a place to live and get my dog back from the pound. I've been trying to get treatment since I came in. I've done some programs, done a bunch of bible studies, tried to order a business university course but have to do my bankruptcy first.

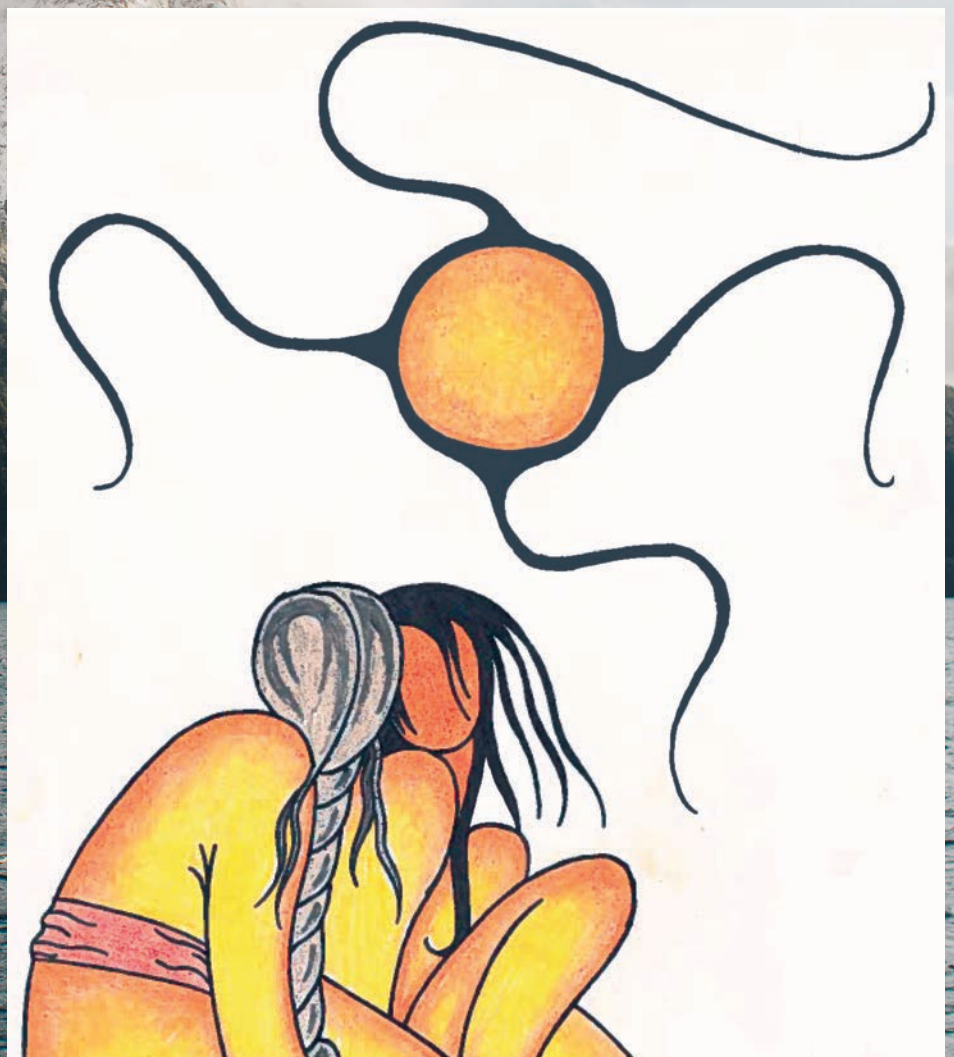
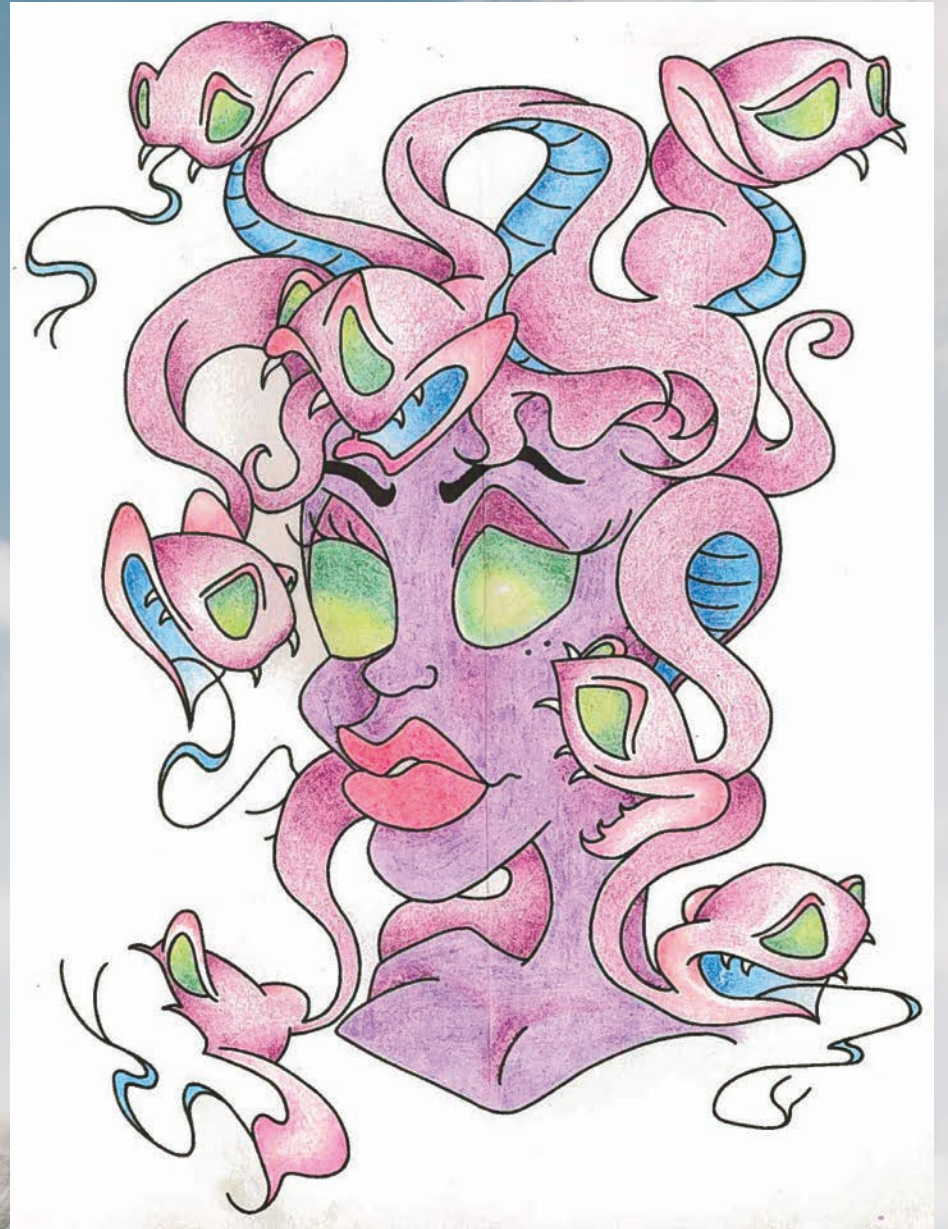
SAFE INJECTION SITES IN PRISON

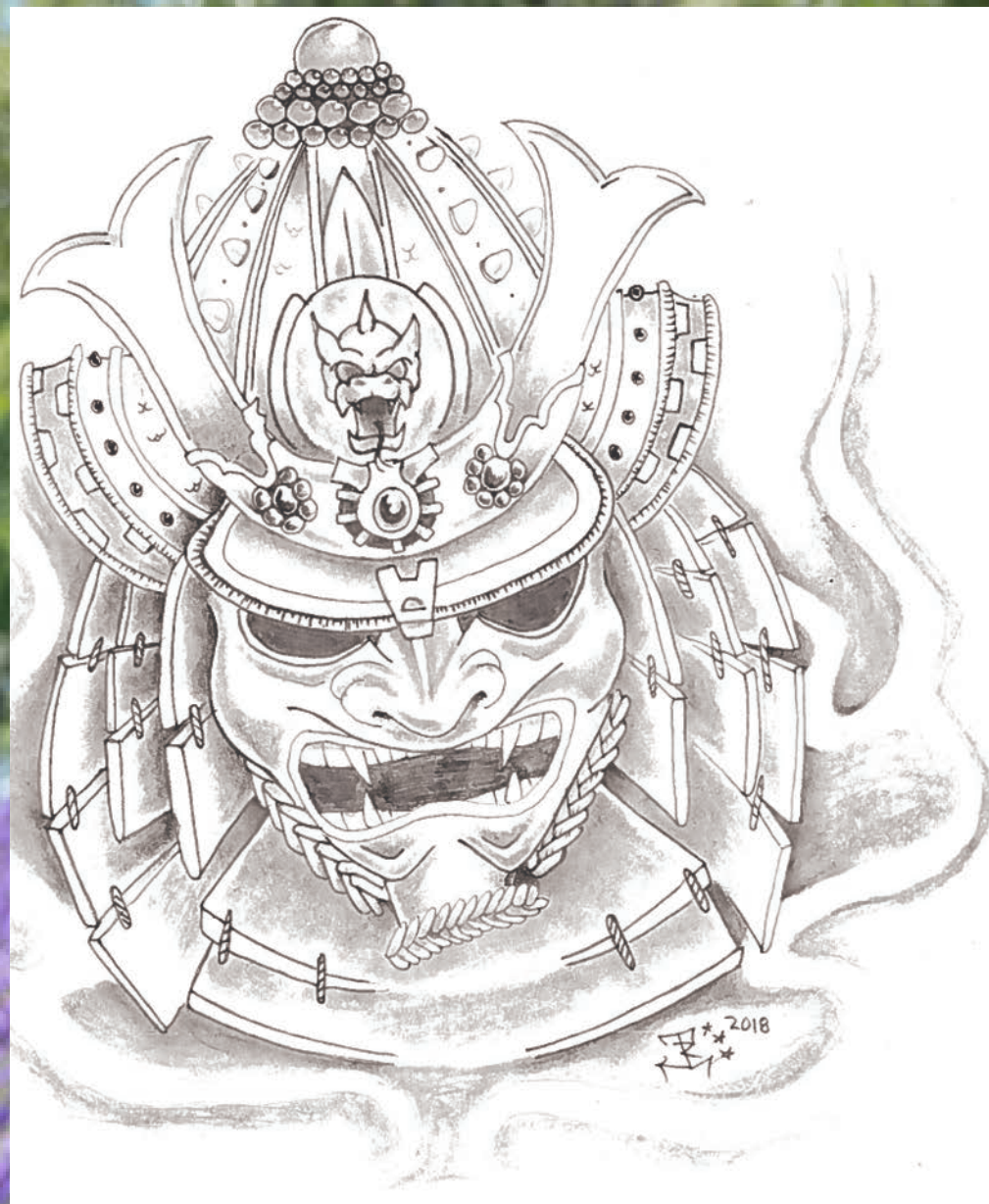
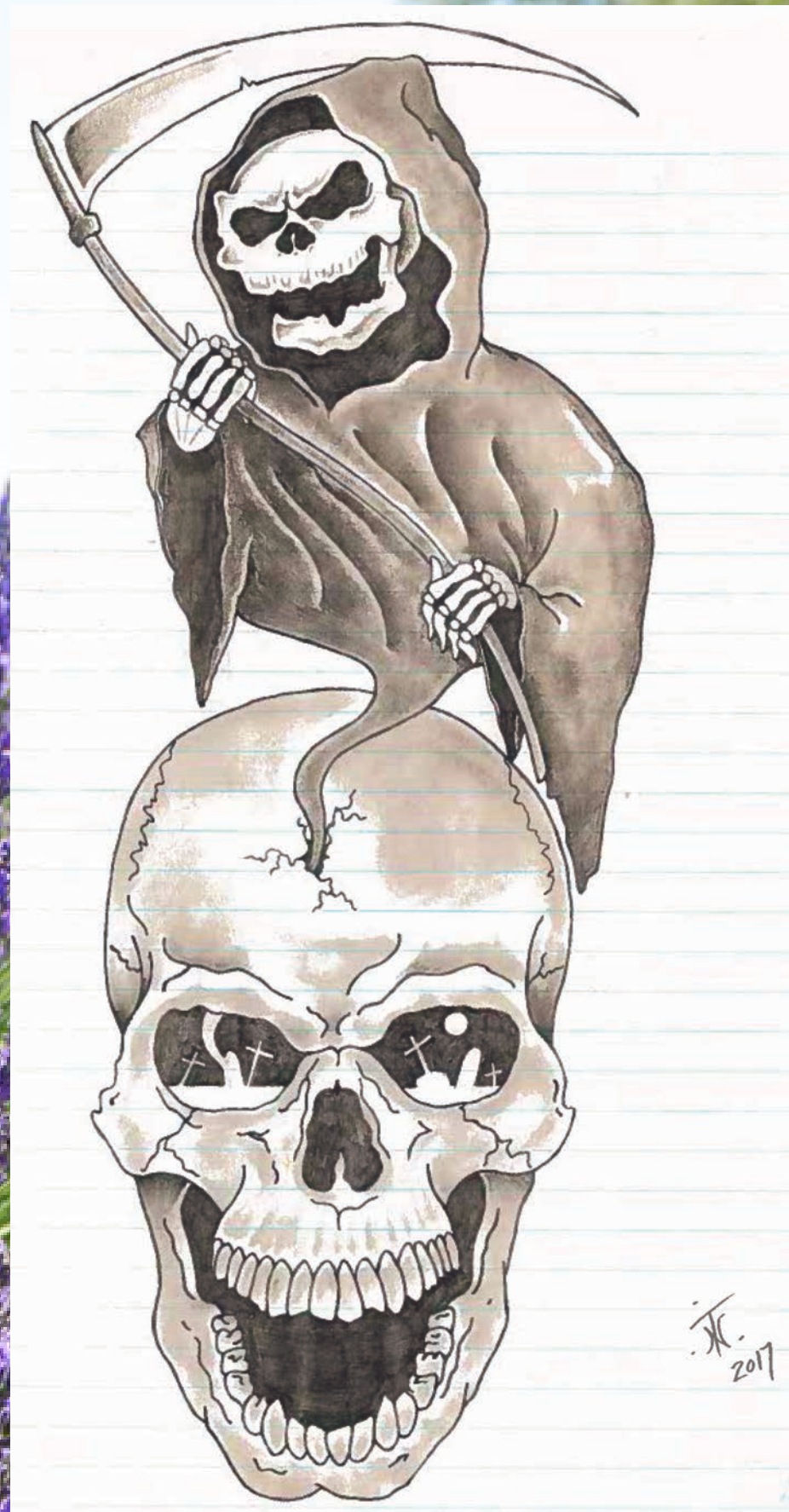
By Jason Bevan

In our prison system we need safe injection sites as well, we already have good healthcare in the prisons so why not use these resources to help save more convicts! This will help other people from losing anymore loved ones, the spread of Hep C and HIV could be stopped right in its tracks. The spread of illness will come to a screeching halt :). The healthcare can check our vitals, make sure no one ODs so there is some one there to help and once you are ok and ready to go back to your unit you'll give back your used works needle and then go back to your living unit. BC has this in place and it's saving lives everyday so why not Ontario? People are going to use dope with or without the help of health care so why not save a life instead of losing a life? There is no reason why this would not work.

2200-2400 words
Hundreds of nonviolent immigration







Artists

Page 13 clockwise
ChinkoPettzz, Nolan Turcotte, Nolan Turcotte
Page 14 clockwise
Nolan Turcotte, James Martineau, George Fobert
Page 15
Sonny Cook

