

# CLASS ACTION! NEWS

To: Whomever May Concern;

Hello my name is Christopher Sutton, I am

June 25, 2018

Currently incarcerated at Her Majesty's Penitentiary. I am writing you today to seek information about my Human Rights. I would like for you to send me a copy of all the guidelines that fall under your department. I want to know specifically about the Cruel and Unusual punishment act, I would like to know about our rights to fresh air, and what the minimum requirement of fresh air a person should receive per day when inside an institution. Also along with the amount of exercise per day. I like to know how long a person can be confined to a cell that has 24 hour lighting or if that's even allowed at all? I just recently received a copy of the "United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the treatment of prisoners" It's the "Nelson Mandela Rules". With that I noticed some standards and guidelines that are supposed to be mandatory while incarcerated, and here at Her Majesty's Pen. a lot of guidelines are badly broken. I write you in hopes you can provide me with most all of the Human Rights guidelines, especially ones that would reflect towards rules and guidelines while inside a prison or institution. I'm hoping you may have something about Segregation Policy. Segregation being a huge topic across Canada and the high rate of suicide committed while being placed in Segregation. Here at Hmp, Segregation is like no other, it's by far the worst punishment a person can endure in a Canadian facility. I'm seeking change, a change for the people in the future who may be placed in such a tough situation. Please help me, and send me whatever information possible upon reply could you address it to me, Christopher Sutton at Hmp. And please stick a note of private mail on it, this would be greatly appreciated;

Respectfully; Christopher Sutton  
June 25, 2018



ISSUE #11 - FALL 2018

< Editor's Note >

It is Fall & Issue #11 of 'Class Action News'.

This magazine is by & for the Prisoner Class in Canada.

In every Issue we provide a safe space for creative expression and literacy development. These zines feature art, poetry, stories, news, observations, concerns, and anything of interest to share.

Health & Harm Reduction info will always be provided – Be Safe!



Quality & Quantity:

Items printed are those that are common for diverse readers, so no religious items please.

Artwork: Black pen (tat-style) works the best. Cover Artist will receive a \$25 donation.

Writings: only short poems, news, stories, ... Items selected are those that fit nicely & allow space for others (1/2 page = 325 words max).

For author protection, letters & story credits will all be 'Anonymous'.

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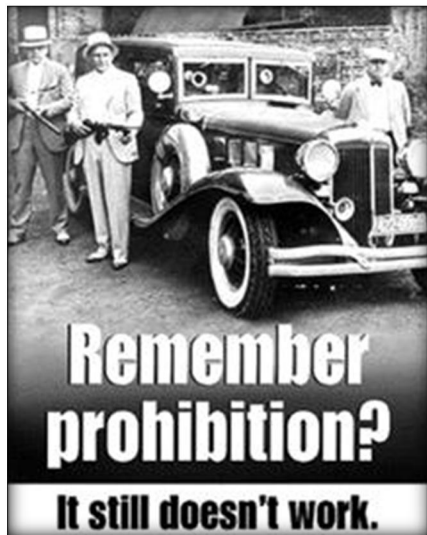
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Cover: Christopher Sutton (Deceased)

Page 12: Abigail Larson (Skelemoon)



There are two ways of meeting difficulties. You alter the difficulties or you alter yourself to meet them.  
- Phyllis Bottome

The reward for conformity is everyone likes you but yourself.  
- Rita Mae Brown

< *Letters* >**Advocates for Remand Custody**

I strongly believe that we as inmates need advocacy from outside advocate groups.

Three years as a Tier Rep & I've not been able to change one thing. We keep having our stuff taken away and free time lost without management getting us involved in the discussion.

Inmates can be punished with moves and job loss for advocating for inmates. Four times I've lost my jobs and have been moved to different Centres for trying to make positive changes.

We've lost fridges, vending machines, open visits, face-to-face visits, and the right to see your newborn baby!

We pay corner store prices but only get paid \$1.50 a day.

Now we've even lost the right to cook our own foods in microwaves.

Corrections doesn't want to help us. They don't even want to work with us on any level.

We need advocates that can make real change. People who understand what inmates are asking for and help them get it.

But who are these people and how do we find them?

< *News* >**'You go slowly crazy': Inmate suing Alberta jails over segregation policy speaks out**

For two years, Harley Lay spent 23 hours each day alone in the Edmonton Remand Centre, hope gradually ebbing away that he'd ever be moved to a general unit.

Alberta Justice rules say segregation cases are to be reviewed twice a week.

Speaking to Postmedia from the Edmonton Institution maximum security prison Thursday night, where he is currently serving a sentence, Lay said that was never the case for him. At one point, he said, he went five months without a review.

Lay's name is front and centre in a class-action lawsuit against Alberta correctional services over the way administrative segregation is handled "secretly and idiosyncratically" in provincial jails.

Damage to inmates' mental and physical health are the crux of the suit filed this week by lawyer Tony Merchant.

Those allegations have not been proven in court. The justice department won't comment on the case directly.

Ultimately, Lay wants Alberta to change its rules. "I want to see some sort of legislation so they can't keep doing this to people," he said.

Lay said he was given little explanation as to why he was locked in segregation at the remand centre as he awaited sentencing.

He said he was not in a gang and, despite being in and out of jail for most of his life, said he has only been in one fight inside.

It could have been because of the charges against him - he later received close to seven years for extortion with a firearm, assaulting a peace officer and escaping custody from a Peace River hospital - but he was never told that.

'You go slowly crazy'

Lay summed up his time in segregation as "horrible."

For two years, he couldn't go outside, his only fresh air coming from a breeze straying through a barred window in his cell. Each day, he had two half-hour blocks in which he could eat, shower and use the phone.

There was no programming, no distractions.

"You exercise as much as you possibly can and come out for your half-hour, and the rest of time you slowly go crazy," he said.

Lay is well aware the general public has limited sympathy for a convicted criminal.

"People can say I deserve what I get, but shouldn't I also deserve an opportunity to be offered programming so I can try and change my life? So I don't do that again? Or put in a normal unit where I can work toward getting schooling?" he said.

"All segregation does, for people in there for a long time, is it makes them paranoid, it makes them very angry, and then they lose their minds. It becomes a mental health issue at a certain point."

Emma Graney  
Edmonton Journal  
Jun 22, 2018

## **Christopher Sutton, N.L. inmate, begged for help in letter days before his death**

ST. JOHN'S, NL - An inmate who died in a Newfoundland and Labrador prison last weekend wrote a letter to the province's Human Rights Commission days before his death, appealing for help in confronting abuses he says were taking place.

In a letter dated June 25, Christopher Sutton asked about prisoners' rights to fresh air and exercise, legal limits on segregation, and described being held in a room with lighting for 24 hours straight at Her Majesty's Penitentiary in St. John's.

"Here at HMP, segregation is like no other, it's by far the worst punishment a person can endure in a Canadian facility," Sutton wrote.

"I'm seeking change, a change for the people in the future who may be placed in such a [tough] situation. Please help me, and send me whatever information possible."

Sutton's death at the aging penitentiary was the fourth fatality in a provincial prison since last August, and the third since April of this year.

Kim Mackay, vice-chair of the province's Human Rights Commission, was given Sutton's note and said the recent spate of inmate deaths shows there is a need for better administrative processes to ensure the humane treatment of prisoners, and that inmates with mental health issues are receiving appropriate care.

The Department of Health announced yesterday that it plans to take on oversight of health care for prisoners by the end of next year. Mackay says the current system under the Department of Justice allows prisoners' medical needs to slip through the cracks, like placing inmates who are mentally ill in segregation.

"The issue I have is that if somebody had cancer and we locked them up, we would not deprive them of treatment," Mackay said.

Mackay says Sutton's letter is consistent with comments she's heard from other inmates, and he demonstrated an understanding of the international laws protecting his rights.

Sutton referenced the United Nations' Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners - also known as the Nelson Mandela rules - that lay out limitations on the amount of time a prisoner can spend in segregation.

Mackay says she brought concerns over the "grey areas" of segregation policies to provincial Justice Minister Andrew Parsons' attention over a year ago.

While Mackay says small steps have been made to improve policy, such as limiting the time an inmate can spend in segregation to 10 days, she adds that she has heard complaints about the loopholes in these policies. For example, an inmate can be taken out of segregation after one day, then put back in.

Justice Minister Andrew Parsons has ordered an independent review into the four deaths.

Retired police Supt. Marlene Jesso will examine policies, procedures and how corrections staff have responded to the deaths.

Parsons said in an interview Jesso has control over the timeline of the investigation, but he's open to hearing any of her recommendations as the work continues.

"I'm certainly not going to rush her. I'd rather something done well than done fast and that's incomplete," said Parsons.

While the investigation is underway, Mackay says the Human Rights Commission is encouraging others to follow in Sutton's footsteps and contact her organization with concerns about their treatment in the province's prisons.

"I would encourage anybody who has a human rights complaint to come forward," said Mackay.

"We are very interested in hearing from prisoners or their families who have concerns."

Jessica Chin  
HuffPost Canada  
Jul 05, 2018

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The human eye is a wonderful device.  
With a little effort, it can fail to see even the most glaring injustice  
- Richard K. Morgan

I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change.  
I am changing the things I cannot accept.  
- Angela Davis

There is a saying in prison that prisoners are the cousins of death because family and society forgets about them.  
- Unknown

## Clarenville prison problems are longstanding, women's advocate says

Problems reported by former inmates at the Clarenville women's prison are not new, says the director of the St. John's Status of Women's Council - and the province's independent investigation isn't enough to address them.

"It's absolutely not enough. We need to have some immediate accountability here from our government," Jenny Wright, the council's executive director, told the St. John's Morning Show.

"We have two women that have died in a state institution, and I've yet to hear any accountability coming from anyone."

Three former inmates have told CBC News that the Newfoundland and Labrador Correctional Centre for Women in Clarenville, where two inmates died this spring, is overcrowded and inadequately staffed to deal with the mental health and addiction issues many inmates face.

Those accounts match up with what the St. John's Women's Centre sees in their own work at that prison as well as at Her Majesty's Penitentiary in St. John's.

"I think we need to listen to these women," Wright said.

"I think we need to hear their voices, and I think their voices are often ignored."

'We've known this for a really long time'

In 2008 the province's prison system was reviewed. The resulting report - *Decades of darkness, moving toward the light: a review of the prison system in Newfoundland and Labrador* - found problems including overcrowding, inadequate health care, lack of outdoor recreational space and a high number of prisoners with psychiatric issues.

The current independent investigation of the two deaths - plus the death of a male inmate at HMP last August - requires transparency and oversight about what the eventual recommendations are, and what will be done to implement them, Wright said.

"Who is going to be told of what happened to those women? Because what we do know is many of the recommendations that came out of the 2008 review were never employed," she said.

"What we don't want is another investigation that happens where nothing comes of it,

because we're definitely at a crisis for incarcerated women."

The information from the three former inmates interviewed by CBC News indicates that the problems remain, Wright said.

"We've known this for a really long time," she said of the problems in the prison system, "and we called for changes even two years ago in March, because of overcrowding when they moved women down to HMP."

Issues of overcrowding, lack of medical care. There was a 64 per cent increase in incarcerated women in the province from 2008 to 2016, she said, with many of the women in prison in the province there on remand. That means they have been charged of a crime but not yet convicted and are being held in prison because of a lack of financial resources or because a judge thinks they will not appear for trial - for example, because they have addiction or mental health issues.

"This is one of the main reasons for overcrowding, and this is one of the main reasons why we have so many women within the prisons with untreated mental health and addictions," Wright said.

The St. John's Status of Women's Council has staffers who visit the Clarenville prison every three weeks to offer housing programming, services with other local organizations, music therapy, and other supports.

Wright acknowledges that prison by its nature is difficult, but said that inmates are still entitled to basic health care, adequate space and help to transition into post-prison life.

"Even within prisons we are entitled to basic human rights," she said.

"Essentially, we're not even at this point meeting the basic requirements that are deserving for people within prisons."

Terri Coles  
CBC News  
Jun 07, 2018

Adulthood was invented to repair the wounds of childhood.

- Joy Browne

Action is the antidote to despair.

- Joan Baez

## Canada is Sending a Generation of Indigenous Children to Jail

Not long ago, First Nations people "caught" leaving their reserve would be arrested and thrown in jail. Even more recently, Indigenous children were stolen from their parents by the Canadian government, to attend Residential Schools, in what has been described as cultural genocide. A justice system that targets Indigenous peoples with impunity is nothing new in Canada. But for many Canadians, this is just history, contrasted with a supposedly more enlightened present.

Canadians, then, should be shocked to learn that nearly 50 per cent of youth in Canadian jails are Indigenous. We should be gobsmacked to learn that 98 per cent (no, that is not a typo) of girls in Saskatchewan jails are Indigenous. In Manitoba, approximately 80 per cent of both girls and boys in custody are Indigenous.

The situation is no less alarming with adults. Forty-three per cent of all adult women in Canadian jails are Indigenous, yet Indigenous people make up only 5 per cent of Canada's overall population.

Given where Canada started, with policies of extermination and assimilation, we have made important strides in recent years, educating citizens about the effects of colonialism and the cultural genocide on Indigenous peoples. Canada has learned about the residential schools and the mass graves where Indigenous children were buried.

Canada has learned about the Sixties Scoop, when school buses pulled up to First Nation communities, loaded the children on board, only to deliver them, often for a fee, to settler families in the south for adoption.

Canada has known about the substandard housing, the boil-water advisories, and so many other harms arising out of decades of discriminatory abuse by settler governments.

Yet despite knowing all this, Canadian governments have continued to allow the operation of a justice system constructed on a foundation of systemic racism that has not changed much.

Some of the right things are being said. Chief Justice Richard Wagner has called the situation "unacceptable." Attorney General Jody Wilson-Raybould acknowledges that the causes of the

overrepresentation can be traced back to the damage done by colonialism.

Words aren't enough. Concrete steps must be taken to rectify the issues.

Properly funding and rigorously applying restorative justice programs, rather than making them subject to the whims of government cuts, is an essential part of the solution.

But more importantly, provinces need to start properly applying the Supreme Court's 2017 decision in *R v Antic*, which repeated and clarified the rules for bail, including the presumption that a person not convicted of a crime shouldn't be in jail. That is no small matter in a province, like Manitoba, where more than 70 per cent of inmates are in "pre-trial detention," awaiting trial, not proved guilty of a crime.

In Ontario, former-Attorney General Yasir Naqvi announced in November changes to the bail policy in that province which would have the effect of reducing the jail population during the pre-trial period. All provinces ought to follow Ontario's lead.

Sometimes the solutions may be deceptively straightforward.

Ending the practice of requiring cash or a promise of payment (a surety) in exchange for bail - a practice which has the effect of criminalizing poverty - would make a substantial difference.

Holding Crown Attorneys and Judges accountable to only demand the fewest necessary conditions on a bail order would also make a difference. That means not telling an alcoholic that in order to stay out of jail, they need to abstain from alcohol, and not telling a person with a minimum-wage job who relies on public transit that they need to report to an office on the other side of the city within two days of getting bail.

These aren't glamorous, reputation-defining solutions, but they're solutions which will have a positive impact on a problem which must be solved.

To call these numbers of incarcerated people a crisis would be the understatement of the century. A country in which half of the incarcerated youth population comes from one group making up less than 10 per cent of the population can't possibly be a just society.

We can't as a society be okay with this, and we can't be okay with moving on from this, as we

do with so many other headlines, without real action being taken.

The Sixties Scoop never ended - only the destination changed. Instead of sending Indigenous children to settler families, the government has sent a generation of Indigenous children to jail.

Corey Shefman

EvidenceNetwork.ca

Jul 23, 2018

## **Indigenous man testifies he was 'treated like an animal' in prison**

John Clarence Kawapit says he's been treated "like an animal" by the Quebec judicial system, and things are getting worse for Indigenous inmates.

Kawapit, from the Cree community of Whapmagoostui, in northern Quebec, was one of four Indigenous inmates who testified Monday before the Viens Commission, a provincial inquiry into relations between Indigenous peoples and certain public services in Québec.

In 'the hole' for six days

Kawapit told the inquiry Indigenous inmates need more respect, particularly from inexperienced guards, as well as access to traditional food and medicines.

"There are many things I've seen," he said, adding he has spent more than half his life in prison. He described an incident in September 2017 when he was put in a room with no toilet and no sink - the "hole" - for six days because he was considered a suicide risk. He wasn't allowed to go outside and was only allowed one shower over that period. He said he has often been forced to sleep on the floor.

"Nobody deserves to be treated like an animal," said Kawapit. "They put me in that hole and they made fun of me. I felt like I was nothing at all."

He also told retired Superior Court Justice Jacques Viens, who is presiding over the inquiry, about a healing journey he went on in the winter of 2016. Kawapit walked roughly 1,000 kilometres to 13 communities between Whapmagoostui and Iqviq, Nunavik's most northern village. Kawapit said the walk was part of his efforts to heal from childhood sexual

abuse at the hands of his father, which began at the age of five and has led to a lifetime of substance abuse and anger.

Kawapit said he is currently serving a 16-month sentence at a detention centre in Amos, Quebec, and would like to continue his healing there. But he said he has been denied access to his traditional medicines, such as an eagle feather and sweetgrass.

"[It's] my medicine. I need it," said Kawapit, adding during past prison stays he was allowed to smudge himself in his cell. He said when he was released from one prison stay in 2014, those sacred items were never returned to him.

Viens Commission comes out of Val d'Or allegations

The commission began its work in December 2016, focusing on how Indigenous communities across the province are treated by various public services, including the police, justice and correctional services, youth protection and the health-care system.

It was set up in the aftermath of allegations of mistreatment made by several Indigenous women against police officers in Val d'Or.

Kawapit said the conditions for First Nations inmates are worse now than in the past, according to what he has seen.

"I hardly [saw] anyone sleep on the floor 20 years ago," said Kawapit, who added he would like to see Indigenous inmates across Quebec have access to traditional food and activities, as well as visits from elders. He also said the younger guards lack an understanding of First Nations history and culture.

"Every time you go to jail, you build your anger there," said Kawapit. "It's not going to change unless you do something about it."

Susan Bell

CBC News

Apr 11, 2018

Society is, always has been and always will be a structure for the exploitation and oppression of the majority through systems of political force dictated by an élite, enforced by thugs, uniformed or not, and upheld by a wilful ignorance and stupidity on the part of the very majority whom the system oppresses.

- Richard K. Morgan

< *Poems* >**Patience**

As I sit here and wait  
 I must contemplate  
 My next mistake  
 Will it be right from wrong  
 Or am I just gonna be another stupid con  
 This life that I live  
 Has done nothing but give  
 To the wrong people, places & things  
 And now I'm faced once again  
 I have to leave the human race  
 Into a place where there is no second place  
 No rules to live by but brute strength  
 Only the strong and smart survive  
 In a game of life and death  
 Where the weak are our prey  
 Next time you're out in society  
 Remember one thing  
 Patience is a virtue  
 And any man's best friend!

Ron Finnigan

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**Untitled**

My release date is quite a distance  
 I start to question my existence  
 They say that everyone has a purpose  
 Sometimes I disagree & feel worthless  
 I could end it all now, I have the power  
 But to take yourself out is that of a coward  
 I try to better myself for the sake of my  
 daughter  
 But feel I'm not quite doing the job of a father  
 Unlike my dad I will continue to strive  
 My daughter's the one thing that keeps me alive  
 I feel & I know I disappointed my mother  
 I'm no role model, I look up to my little brother  
 I don't know how I could ever set an example  
 My life turned out to be more than I could  
 handle  
 But I ain't giving up, I will continue to try  
 To be the best I can be, till the day that I die

Ryan Doucette

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If you are selling security, you have to make  
 sure people feel insecure. - Spun

**I'm Still Locked Up  
 They Won't Let Me Out**

Who's up against me?  
 The crown attorney  
 They tryna say I'm fuck'n guilty  
 To sentence me & 4get my plea  
 Keep me locked up cuz  
 I'll probably rob their jewelry

Stephini Ranger

---

**Truly Free**

You can lock a person up in an institution  
 physically  
 But mentally & spiritually it is ourselves that  
 holds this key  
 To this fine line of sanity or insanity!  
 To let them control this would be a loss  
 But when you are in control, it is a victory  
 Because within us is a vault containing our  
 greatest memories  
 And it is these memories that can get us  
 through even our darkest of days

Patrick JM Dowdell

---

**Bucket**

Up in this cell, the Bucket from hell  
 I'll finish my time, & I'll be just fine  
 Fuck the phone call, don't need fuck all  
 Fuck the letter, I'll make myself better

In my cell alone, every day just one  
 Me, myself & I, is all I need to get by  
 Man-up, buck-up, solid & straight up  
 I'll do my own shit, & finish this bit

Then when I walk, people gonna talk  
 But I got my bros, & everyone knows  
 It's all good, just as it should  
 Life goes on, the same old song

Angela Duchene

---

If I don't speak, this silence is also going to  
 kill me. - Rehana Hashmi



**Suicide**

I just can't hide this pain inside  
 That's causing me to want suicide  
 They put me in a dress  
 And stick me in a hole like this  
 Then they say, 'Hey you freaking weirdo  
 Have some pride, get a hold, get some control'  
 It's not that I want to die  
 Or even that I'm going to try  
 I can't take this pain no more  
 So much has gone so wrong  
 It seems like the same old song  
 In this game of life, I can't score  
 Going backward not forwards  
 Trying to talk, can't find the words  
 To express this mess, how I feel inside  
 Going 'round & 'round  
 Leading back to suicide  
 Not to be rude, but they give you finger-food  
 Carrots & celery to choke on  
 And hot soup with no spoon  
 And while saying, 'It's for your own good'  
 They lock you up in a 5 by 8 room  
 And every third day,  
 They trust you to clean with the broom  
 Ten minutes a check, which it's supposed to be  
 But it depends on the guard  
 Or if they feel the need  
 You might choke on their finger-food  
 But they won't give you a book to read  
 You can't use the phone  
 So long as you're alone  
 And inmates look at you  
 As you walk down the hall  
 Then you go see the shrink  
 To see what he thinks  
 He gives you more to connect the links  
 Now your body's numb  
 And your brain is fried  
 Can't decide if you want to go or come  
 And still inside that roller coaster ride  
 That leads you right back to suicide  
 No, they don't know what makes me tick  
 Emotions or the thoughts making me want to  
 quit  
 No matter what pills  
 Or contract deals my sickness kills  
 My mind feels, I can't get over it  
 I hide myself well, they will never know  
 When I pretend I'm not sick  
 They say I've lied  
 But really deep in my mind

I think of suicide

Suicide.

Suicide.

Forever standing

In my mind

Then they put you 3 per cell

And they want you to keep sane

Well let me tell you

It's enough to drive you insane

So in the meantime,

I can't wait till the end ...

Which might be again

Suicide.

Suicide.

Suicide.

H.W. Best

---

**The Joint**

Freedom, oh sweet freedom has been a long  
 time coming  
 And I am held prisoner against my will  
 And it seems all my life I've been running  
 And now time's standing still  
 I hear the echo of steel doors slamming on the  
 tiers  
 And men crying all alone in their cells  
 And I'm not ashamed as I myself have shed  
 tears  
 For we're all human beings inside this man-  
 made hell  
 1 3/2: twelve jurors, one judge & half a chance  
 And this judicial system is corrupt & cruel  
 The puppet master pulls the strings to make us  
 dance  
 And here we are students in this criminal school  
 Tied to the whipping post with shackles 'n  
 chains  
 We bear the burden & expect no mercy  
 As the whip finds its mark again & again  
 And the sweat pours & we bleed

Gary Cormier

---

Don't agonize. Organize.

- Florynce Kennedy

The way I see it, anyone who's proud of  
 their country is either a thug or just hasn't  
 read enough history yet.

- Richard K. Morgan

## **'It means everything to me': Rideshare that connects inmates with loved ones struggles to meet demand**

Sitting in the back seat of a car just within sight of the minimum security unit of Stony Mountain Institution, north of Winnipeg, Paulette Daignault said she was anxious to get inside.

The Winnipeg great-grandmother can't drive, but she tries to get to the prison every two weeks or so to visit her son, Marc. They play cards - he always wins - and share updates on family, his kids and his new baby granddaughter. The two have always been close, she said.

"It's definitely not the same, not the same as if he was at home or in the city," Daignault said last week, during the roughly half-hour drive from Winnipeg to the prison.

"We do the best with what we have. That's about what we can say."

Daignault is one of dozens of Winnipeggers who rely on a free prison rideshare program to visit loved ones in Manitoba prisons and jails - but a group organizer says they're struggling to meet the demand.

"We had 75 [requests for] rides that went unfilled just in May alone," said Owen Toews. He's a co-ordinator with Bar None, a prison abolitionist group that runs the rideshare, and the driver who took Daignault to Stony Mountain for her latest visit.

The group had 99 ride requests in total last month, he says, meaning they were unable to fulfil three-quarters of all bookings.

### **'Huge demand' for service**

"At this point, we are just getting so many more requests for rides than we're able to give," Toews said. "That's our biggest practical challenge in operating the rideshare these days, is meeting the huge demand."

Stony Mountain isn't far from Winnipeg - only about 25 kilometres. But there's no bus service to the institution, meaning it's difficult for those who don't have access to a car to see loved ones inside.

Daignault first started using the program a few months ago, after learning about it through her daughter-in-law. Before that, she'd gotten rides from her brother, but he hasn't been well lately and she worries about bothering him too much.

"It means everything to me that I can get a ride," she said.

It's been more difficult to book rides lately, she said. She was anxious to get to Stony the morning of her latest visit with Marc because she hadn't been able to make it to the prison for more than a month, and because it was nice out she was pretty sure they'd be able to sit outside.

Since the service started in fall 2015, Toews says demand for rides has grown thanks to word-of-mouth in the city and in the institutions themselves.

"It means a lot to the people I've talked to and given rides to. I think it's very, very, very stressful - and stressful is much too light a word - to have a loved one locked up," he said.

"I think - I hope - that by giving rides we can take one miniscule part of the stress of that away."

### **Drivers wanted**

The service is in need of more drivers, but Toews said it also needs more commitment from the drivers it has. Some people who signed up to volunteer for the group have never actually given a ride.

"I think it's just something that's unknown so people, they just don't know how it will work," he said.

Toews said for some, visiting a prison may feel intimidating or unwelcoming. The organization is working on finding a way to "demystify" the process, he said, so drivers will feel more confident.

They're also hoping to find a more organized process to schedule rides and drivers, he said, and are looking at putting in minimum availability requirements for new volunteers.

In the car with Toews, Daignault said she was nervous about her first ride, too. She didn't know the driver, and she felt bad about making the person wait as she had her visit.

But when she met Toews, she said she felt she could talk to him almost like he was another of her grandsons.

"Maybe I talk his ears out, I don't know," Daignault said. "But I enjoy the ride because he's very pleasant."

Aidan Geary  
CBC News  
Jun 24, 2018

## End knee-jerk detentions

Two years ago, Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale issued a directive that people should only be locked up pending refugee and immigration hearings as a “last resort.” He even set aside \$5 million to spend on alternatives, such as electronic monitoring devices, for those considered a flight risk.

To some extent his edict was effective. The number of individuals held in detention in Canada while awaiting hearings or deportation dropped to 3,557 last year, down from 10,088 five years ago under the Harper government.

Still, a first-ever audit into the way the Immigration and Refugee Board conducts hearings reveals ongoing problems and a culture that continues to favour incarceration over the alternatives.

This should be a wake-up call for Goodale. More must be done to change the culture of a system that falls back on the easiest solution rather than the best one.

Canada’s immigration detention system should not incarcerate people unnecessarily. But the audit paints a troubling picture of a system that unfairly and inhumanely keeps people behind bars for months - or even years - at great expense to their mental, emotional and physical well-being. The cost to the government is also significant, totalling about \$90,000 a year to keep someone in detention.

Alarmingly, the audit lays the blame for this on ill-informed adjudicators who often decide the fate of these cases based on misleading information - and sometimes intimidation - from Canada Border Services Agency officers. That has spurred a group of lawyers to demand the resignation of the entire board of adjudicators who preside over detention cases at the Immigration and Refugee Board.

According to the audit, detainees were often unrepresented, particularly in Ontario where detainees represented themselves in 62 per cent of the cases last year. Yet, despite not having anyone in their corner, adjudicators did not bother to vigorously question border officials who were recommending detention.

“It appeared that the onus of proof had slipped to the detained person who was almost always unrepresented and powerless to articulate a fresh argument for release,” the audit’s author, Katherine Laird, cautioned.

What’s worse is that these findings follow several earlier warnings from respected human rights organizations, such as the United Nations and the Geneva-based Global Detention Project, of abuses within Canada’s refugee hearing system. The government should have responded then. It must make sure it doesn’t let this latest warning go unheeded.

Further, the audit echoes last year’s Star investigation, which revealed a “Kafkaesque” immigration detention system that indefinitely warehouses non-citizens away from public scrutiny and in conditions intended to punish criminals.

Appallingly, among the detainees are children who are held in immigration holding centres along with their parents, or even on their own.

People should be detained if they present a real danger to the public. But the audit found that 77 per cent of individuals were detained simply because officials feared - in some cases based on questionable information - that they were a flight risk.

Surely, the majority of those people should qualify for alternatives to detention, such as electronic monitoring.

Thankfully, that may now happen. On Tuesday, the Canada Border Services Agency made a welcome, if belated, announcement that it is finally introducing several new “alternatives to detention,” including those Goodale directed two years ago.

Laird makes several other sensible recommendations that Goodale should also pursue. There should be increased oversight of immigration detention cases, all current long-term detention files should immediately be reviewed, and hearing protocols and policies on bonds and terms of release should be updated.

Further, as the Star has argued previously, staffing at the Immigration and Refugee Board must be increased to get rid of the massive backlog and ensure all claims are settled more quickly.

It does no one any good to have people waiting in limbo, whether it’s in a shelter in Toronto or a federal detention facility, for months or even years before their cases are settled.

Editorial Board  
Toronto Star  
Jul 24, 2018

**'Prisoner' is the Only Correct Word****Cell**

A prisoner exists in a cell.

A prisoner does not 'live' in one's 'house, home or room' - one always has the key to one's house and has the freedom to enter and leave at will, the right to refuse entry to anyone and the reasonable expectation that it is at all times a safe place.

Use: Imprisoned, Incarcerated, Jailed

Not 'Managed'.

Use: Jail, Lock-Up, Prison (Provincial);

Penitentiary, Prison (Federal):

Not: 'Institution', 'Correctional Center'

This attempts to 'civilize' the penitentiary since it brings to mind other familiar institutions like hospitals, the family, marriage, etc. 'Institution' is used to normalize and sanitize the experiences of imprisonment, clearly not 'normal' at all.

Tragically, many prisoners internalize this fake normalcy and become totally 'manageable' (institutionalized).

After years inside, many are completely 'programmed' (debilitated), are unable to apply critical thinking, and have no understanding of 'real world' inter-relationships between work, family and community.

When released, many 'good inmates' fail at 'reintegration,' returning to prison (their 'normal' 'homes') over and over and over again.

Prison 'treatment and programs' produce good 'recidivists' not good citizens.

Not: 'Reformatory'

Prisons do not 'reform' the individual.

Not: 'Corrections'

Prisons do not 'correct'.

'Prisoner' - is the only correct word

This describes a person locked into a cage or cell within a facility not of one's choice and whose quality of existence therein depends upon the keeper(s).

Not: 'Inmate'

This is an inpatient of a mental hospital that may or may not have voluntarily entered the 'institution'.

Not: 'Client'

A person who has purchased the services of a chosen deliverer, is a patron of the one hired and/ or is an outpatient - someone who chooses to be a client. The term 'resident' is also an obvious corruption.

Never: 'Offender'

The continual use of the term 'offender' justifies everything done to 'an inmate in the name of the law.' Yet 'offender' describes a person who commits an offence - a current transgression, one that is occurring at a specific time.

Charged with an offence, the person is tried, and if convicted becomes a prisoner.

The offence has already happened. It is in the past. The prisoner in prison is not offending. S/he has already offended.

S/he may have 'offended' once and may never 'offend' again, but utilizing the label, 'offender' permits an ongoing and static reference justifying brutalization and degradation (euphemistically referred to as 'treatment of the offender') and enables the continuum of power distinctions.

Punishment - can never be 'Treatment'

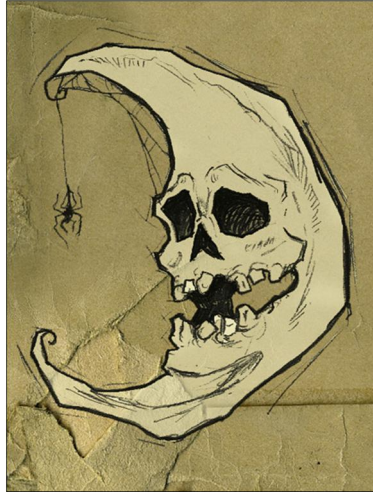
It is not 'treatment' that is administered in 'enhanced security and/or special

needs units.'

It is punishment to be held under segregated or solitary confinement conditions within fortified sensory-deprivation cells.

'Programs' clearly cannot be delivered in segregation.

Prisons and penitentiaries are not objective medical or psychiatric facilities.



Gayle K. Horii

Strength In Sisterhood (SIS) Society

Oct 2000 (Excerpt)



## End Immigrant Detention Network

We are an organization of volunteers working towards justice for those incarcerated. Many of us are women and trans people of colour. Our main focus has been on immigration detainees. However, we want build relationships with ALL inmates.

We run two phone lines in Ontario:

- If you are in a facility with a 705 area code, call us collect at 705-340-4432 on Wed, Thurs, Fri, or Sun from 2-4.
- If you are in a facility with a 905 or 416 area code, call us collect at 416-775-0242 any day.
- If we do not pick up the first time, keep trying - sometimes we can't answer.

Not in Ontario? Need a listener or pen pal? Write us here:

The Centre for Women & Trans People  
U of T, North Borden Bldg  
563 Spadina Ave, Room 100  
Toronto, ON, M5S 2J7



## Penpal Program for Gay, Queer, Trans Prisoners

The Prisoner Correspondence Project runs a penpal program for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, and queer prisoners in Canada, pairing them up with gay and queer and trans people outside of prison for friendship and support. We also coordinate a resource library of information and resources related to health, sexuality, and prisons - get in touch with us for a list of resources we have, or for details.

If you want to be paired up with a penpal, please send a short description of yourself & interests to:

Prisoner Correspondence Project  
c/o QPIRG Concordia  
1455 de Maisonneuve W.  
Montreal, QC, H3G 1M8

Please indicate French or in English. Veuillez svp nous indiquer anglais ou en français.



## PRISONERS JUSTICE DAY

☞ In Remembrance ☜

- August 10 -

There are more than 200 Unnatural  
Prisoner Deaths in Canada.

- Each and Every Year -

We maintain a PJD 'In Remembrance' page on our website for Prisoners who have died in Federal and Provincial Prisons, Remands, Lock-ups and Parole in Canada.

If you wish to have someone remembered there, send us a note or email and we will honour your request.

[PJD@PrisonFreePress.org](mailto:PJD@PrisonFreePress.org)

## Important Hep C Update!

New treatments with excellent success rates are now available!

*These are in pill form and have little or no side effects. The downside is the cost of course: \$1000+ per pill.*

Vosevi is a combination of sofosbuvir, velpatasvir and voxilaprevir. These three drugs are combined into one tablet. It is taken once a day with food for 12 weeks.

Federal Prisoners: *Great news, now you can start your treatment while inside!*

Provincial/Territorial Prisoners: *Only BC & ON provide treatment. Elsewhere, you will have to wait till you get out.*

- When released, get right on welfare or disability.
- Federal health care programs like NIHB & IFH may cover costs.
- Go to a Clinic and get your blood test done so you can get into a Treatment Program at no cost to you.

There are 2,700 with chronic hep C in Federal prisons.

There are 4,380 with chronic hep C in Prov/Terr prisons.

All Federal prisoners with hep C are now eligible for treatment.

BC & ON Prov prisoners with hep C are now eligible for treatment.

HEP C = 18-30% in prison

HIV = 1-5% in prison

Do Not Share or Re-Use:  
needles, ink, ink holders, rigs, ...  
... well, anything in contact  
with blood !!!

**BLEACH DOES NOT KILL HEP C**

## Facts about HIV and HCV

*With some exceptions, HIV and HCV infection is generally more prevalent among women than men in prison, particularly among those who have a history of injection drug use.*

*In a study of provincial prisons in Quebec, the HIV and HCV rate among incarcerated women was, respectively, 8.8 and 29.2 percent, compared to 2.4 and 16.6 percent among male prisoners.*

*In a study of female prisoners in British Columbia (B.C.), self-reported rates of HIV and HCV were 8 percent and 52 percent, respectively.*

*In a 2007 nationwide survey by CSC, the HIV and HCV rate among federally incarcerated women was 5.5 and 30.3 percent, compared to 4.5 and 30.8 percent among federally incarcerated men. Aboriginal women reported the highest rates of HIV and HCV, at 11.7 and 49.1 percent, respectively.*

*While the majority of women in prison are voluntarily tested for both HIV and HCV, the provision of pre- and post-test counselling has been reported to be poor, and in some cases, non-existent.*

*Women in prison are more likely than women in the general population to have faced violence and abuse; therefore, counselling accompanying HIV diagnosis is particularly important. Women in prison have concerns about the privacy and confidentiality of their HIV status.*

*Women have reported being forced to draw unwanted attention. Women (37.0%) reported being HCV-positive. Aboriginal women were identified as a particularly high-risk group because they reported the highest rates of HIV (11.7%) and HCV infections (49.1%).*

*These data highlight the need to ensure that culturally appropriate, effective interventions that decrease risk-behaviours and increase utilization of harm-reduction measures are offered to meet the needs of Aboriginal women.*

## A Child of an Incarcerated Parent

### The Reality

- Every year over 150,000 adults are remanded into custody which results in approximately 180,000 innocent children who suffer from the traumatic effect of parental incarceration in Canada
- Over 5000 children are impacted by parental imprisonment in the GTA
- The number of children affected by parental incarceration only increases with the passing of the Crime Bill C-10

### The Need

- Despite the growing prevalence of these innocent victims the resources available are minimal
- The cost and lack of accessibility to correctional facilities restrict child-parent visits. Consequently, some children can never visit their incarcerated parents

### The Impact

- Children of incarcerated parents grieve the loss of their parent
- These children are four times more likely to be in conflict with the law
- Social stigma of incarceration causes some families to avoid discussing the absence of a parent

Research suggests that parental incarceration has a detrimental impact on children. These innocent children suffer the traumatic experience of being separated from their parent. Following parental imprisonment, children are faced with a myriad of challenges including:

- feelings of shame, grief, guilt, abandonment, anger
- lowered self-esteem
- economic instability
- social stigma and isolation
- disconnection from parent
- insecurity in familial and peer relationships
- school absenteeism, poor school performance
- difficulty in coping with future stress/ trauma
- compromised trust in others including law enforcement



### F.E.A.T. - Family Visitation

F.E.A.T. for Children of Incarcerated Parents was founded in 2011 to support the needs of the over 15,000 children in the Greater Toronto Area that have a parent in the criminal justice system.

F.E.A.T.'s Family Visitation Program provides weekend transportation from Toronto to correctional facilities in Southern Ontario for children and families to visit imprisoned loved ones.

During our trips, F.E.A.T provides free snacks and refreshments, offers a variety of games and activities, and plays movies.

Our bus is a place where youth and families have a chance to talk about their experiences of having a loved one inside and receive support from mentors and other riders.

Our Family Visitation Program is free for anyone 18 years old and younger. If you are interested in participating in our program, please call or email F.E.A.T. to register today.

For more information or to book a seat on the bus please contact Jessica or Derek Reid by email at:

[info@featforchildren.org](mailto:info@featforchildren.org)  
or by phone at: 416-505-5333



## PRISON RADIO

- Guelph - CFRU 93.3 FM  
*Prison Radio - Thurs 10-11 am*  
*Call-in 519-837-2378*
- Halifax - CKDU 88.1 FM  
*Black Power Hour - Fri 1:30-3 pm*  
*Youth Now! - Mon 5-6:30 pm*
- Kingston - CFRC 101.9 FM  
*CPR: Prison Radio - Wed 7-8 pm*
- Montreal - CKUT 90.3 FM  
*PRS - 2nd Thurs 5-6 pm & 4th Fri 11-noon*
- Vancouver - CFRO 100.5 FM  
*Stark Raven - 1st Mon 7-8 pm*

*CPR: This program features content produced by CFRC volunteers and by other campus and community radio broadcasters, including CKUT Montreal's Prison Radio & Vancouver Co-op Radio's Stark Raven programs.*

*The last Wednesday of each month, CPR features 'Calls From Home', sharing letters, emails, voice messages and music requests by and for prisoners and their loved ones.*

*Prisoners and their loved ones are invited to contribute music requests, messages and suggestions for the program.*

*Write: CPR c/o CFRC, Lwr Carruthers Hall,  
Queen's University,  
Kingston, ON, K7L 3N6*

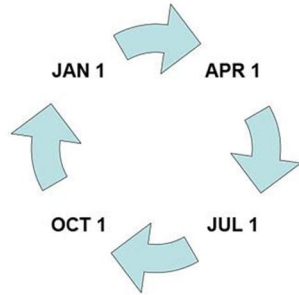
*Email: [CFRCprisonradio@riseup.net](mailto:CFRCprisonradio@riseup.net)  
Call: 613-329-2693 to record a message or  
music request to be broadcast on-air.*

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**Prisoners Justice Day is August 10**

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- CLASS ACTION! NEWS -



- MAILOUT DATES -

➤ **Issue #11 - Fall 2018** ➤

**Class Action News**  
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[www.ClassActionNews.org](http://www.ClassActionNews.org)

*Next Issue: #12 - Winter 2018*  
*Deadline: Dec 1, 2018*  
*Mail-out: Jan 1, 2019*

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If you don't like the news ...

... make some of your own !!!

*Whatcha got in there that's gotta get out?*

... Hmm ... ?

*Art, Poems, Stories, News, Whatever !*

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