

CLASS ACTION! NEWS

Tears, come.

Tears, come

I won't hold you back anymore

I'll allow you to flow & accompany my solitude,

Tears of Joy, sadness, guilt, happiness.

Tears, come

you are real;

a tangible representation of what's happening
in my heart.

helping to purify me.

I won't be shamed or embarrassed to allow my
true emotions ~~to~~ materialize into the liquid.....

..... that will help ~~to~~ cleanse...

the impurities of my soul.

—Feb. 8th, 2018



ISSUE #13 - SPRING 2019

< Editor's Note >

It is Spring & Issue #13 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 – Yes, 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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Canadian Charter of Rights & Freedoms

- The right of life, liberty and security of person (Section 7).
- The right not to be arbitrarily detained (Section 9).
- The right not to be subjected to cruel and unusual punishment (Section 12).
- The right to be equal before and under the law (Section 15).

Prison is, simply put, the bottom rung of the welfare ladder.
- Stephen Reid

Do not judge me by my successes,
judge me by how many times I fell down & got back up again.
- Nelson Mandela

< News >

Were You Incarcerated in a Provincial Jail or Prison Between May 30, 2009 and Nov 27, 2017?

A lawsuit may affect you. Please read this carefully.

The Ontario Superior Court of Justice decided that a class action on behalf of people who were prisoners in Provincial jails from May 30, 2009 to November 27, 2017 (with some exclusions) (the "Class") can proceed. You have a choice of whether or not to stay in the Class.

To stay in the Class, you do not have to do anything. If money or benefits are obtained, you will be notified about how to make a claim. You will be legally bound by all orders and judgments, and you will not be able to sue Ontario about the legal claims in this case.

If you want to remove yourself from the class action, you must submit an opt out form. Opt out forms are available. If you remove yourself, you cannot get money or benefits from this lawsuit if any are awarded.

The Court has appointed Koskie Minsky LLP and McKenzie Lake LLP ("Class Counsel") to represent the Class. You don't have to pay Class Counsel to participate. If they get money or benefits for the Class, they may ask for lawyers' fees and costs which would be deducted from any money obtained or would be paid separately by Ontario.

Read the Long Form Notice, which provides more information about your rights. You can also call the toll-free information line at 1-877-453-8714 (TTY: 1-877-627-7027), email Jaillockdown@crawco.ca or write to:

Jail Lockdown Class Action
3-505 133 Weber St N
Waterloo, ON, N2J 3G9

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

Inmates kept in prison too long for lack of halfway houses

Canada's auditor general says hundreds of federal prisoners are having their parole delayed only because the Correctional Service of Canada doesn't have halfway houses for them to live in. In a new report Tuesday, Michael Ferguson says staying in prison, sometimes for months longer than they're supposed to, hurts offenders' rehabilitation and prospects for success when they're released.

He says the backlog of prisoners waiting more than two months for parole increased tenfold over the last three years, from 25 to almost 260.

And the shortage of spaces means parolees are increasingly sent to communities where they have no family or supports, and no intention of staying.

The audit says parole officers often do not get important information about the parolees they are supposed to monitor and help, such as details about health conditions that could affect their ability to live and work on the outside.

A spot check of 50 cases found that nearly half of the time, parole officers didn't see their parolees on the right schedule or didn't check to make sure they were following special parole conditions.

The Canadian Press
Nov 20, 2018

Prison is the only form of public housing that the government has truly invested in over the past 50 years.

- Marc Lamont Hill

No matter how well meaning and astute the investigators are or how well-researched, witnessed and documented the incidents of cruelty are, a prison is a prison.

The structure of authority that produces the oppressed and the oppressor alike is the key to understanding the problem.

Contained within this structure is the authoritative power to agendize language, which is simply another control mechanism.

- Gayle K. Horii

End solitary confinement, says Ontario human rights commissioner in wake of Adam Capay case

Solitary confinement continues to be overused in Ontario correctional facilities and should be phased out entirely, says one of the central figures responsible for drawing attention to the plight of Adam Capay, the 26-year-old Indigenous man who spent more than four years in isolation.

Renu Mandhane, chief commissioner of the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC), sent a letter to Correctional Services Minister Sylvia Jones last week calling details emerging from the Capay case “extremely troubling” and urging the government to end the practice of isolating prisoners for 22 or more hours a day.

“I think there are likely other people in somewhat similar circumstances,” says Ms. Mandhane, who first brought the Capay case to public attention in 2016. “I really hope this government takes this as an opportunity to start to implement the necessary changes.”

Last month, Justice John Fregeau issued a stay of proceedings in the first-degree murder case against Mr. Capay. On Monday, the Crown declared it would not appeal the stay decision, bringing an end to the 6½-year proceeding and lifting a publication ban on details of the case.

Court records show Mr. Capay fatally stabbed 35-year-old Sherman Quisses on June 3, 2012, and then spent a total of 1,647 days in solitary confinement, much of that behind Plexiglas and beneath round-the-clock lighting.

His deterioration became public knowledge after Ms. Mandhane visited him during a tour of Thunder Bay District Jail and disclosed the grim details of her encounter to the media.

Mr. Capay told her his prolonged segregation had impaired his ability to speak and discern day from night. The Globe and Mail published the first in a series of stories about Mr. Capay and the officials responsible for his prolonged isolation on Oct. 18, 2016. Ministry officials would keep him in solitary confinement for another seven weeks, after which a court ordered his transfer to undergo a psychiatric evaluation.

Justice Fregeau’s 126-page decision outlined how the Thunder Bay jail failed to hold legally mandated reviews of Mr. Capay’s segregation status, advised staff to avoid talking to the

inmate and neglected his declining mental health - among other misconducts that amounted to “prolonged, abhorrent, egregious and intolerable” breaches of his Charter rights.

“We respect the court’s decision,” Ms. Jones said in an e-mailed statement. “This situation began in 2012. We must prevent a similar case from happening again. Today our thoughts are with the family of Sherman Quisses. Ensuring justice for the victims of crime underlies our government’s approach to community safety.”

In her letter to Ms. Jones, Ms. Mandhane recommends the government launch an urgent action plan consisting of fifteen-day limits on segregation placements, judicial reviews of isolation decisions and bans on the segregation of pregnant, suicidal, mentally ill and physically disabled inmates.

In addition, she says the Capay case justifies calls to end the practice of solitary confinement in Ontario altogether.

“For many years, the OHRC warned the previous government that it was not placing sufficient emphasis on protecting the human rights of prisoners,” Ms. Mandhane states in her letter. “Adam Capay’s treatment shows starkly that the failure to heed the OHRC’s repeated warnings has had a devastating impact on prisoners, victims of crime and the administration of justice.”

While solitary confinement of inmates in the federal corrections system has dropped significantly in recent years, figures in Ontario remain largely unchanged since Mr. Capay’s story came to light. Numbers released last year show that between 6 per cent and 8 per cent of the provincial system’s total population of around 7,000 inmates are segregated at any one time. Around 20% of segregated inmates are held in isolation beyond 15 days.

The previous Liberal government passed a bill incorporating a number of Ms. Mandhane’s recommendations shortly before last year’s election. It has yet to be proclaimed by the Lieutenant-Governor and the new Progressive Conservative government has given little indication of their plans for the legislation.

“Not a lot has changed since Adam Capay was admitted to segregation,” Ms. Mandhane said. “The legislative regime remains largely the same.”

Patrick White

Globe and Mail - Feb 26, 2019

Half of Canada's prisoners were abused as children, McMaster study suggests

About half of Canada's inmates were abused as children, suggests a new study out of McMaster University.

Medical student Claire Bodkin led a team that studied data from 30 years of research into Canadian inmates. Their work was published in the March issue of the American Journal of Public Health (AJPH).

The researchers found 65 per cent of female inmates experienced abuse in general, and half of them were sexually abused.

Bodkin said only one study in the data evaluated reported the prevalence of abuse among men. The researchers found abuse rates involving male inmates were at 35.5 per cent, with 21.9 per cent of them having experienced sexual abuse.

The team did a statistical analysis of the results to reach the conclusion that half of inmates had been abused, Bodkin said.

"That's an alarmingly high number."

These are the other researchers involved in the work, which included going over 34 studies from territorial, federal and provincial prisons and jails:

- Fiona Kouyoumdjian and Lucie Pivnick, both McMaster.
- Susan Bondy of the University of Toronto.
- Carolyn Ziegler of Toronto's St. Michael's Hospital.
- Ruth Elwood Martin of the University of British Columbia.

Bodkin said understanding people who have been incarcerated - including reoffenders - will go a long way in helping prevent crime.

Prisons need to take trauma into account in how they deal with inmates, Bodkin said.

"Regardless of where you stand politically, I think everyone can agree that prison is not a healthy place for people, and that it's a symptom of multiple other things that have gone wrong."

So "how do we need to think about the impact of childhood trauma? How do we prevent childhood abuse from happening in the first place?"

The findings aren't surprising to Ruth Greenspan, executive director of the John

Howard Society of Hamilton, Burlington and area in Ontario.

"Many resort to their own abuse of themselves," she said. "There's a lot of addiction, self-mutilation, self-harm, and suicide, which again, are all indications of having suffered a lot of trauma. PTSD is something you see when you work with this population."

There have been some great programs over the years to address trauma among people who commit crimes, she said. But the funding comes and goes.

On the whole, there aren't enough free resources for individuals - before, during or after prison, said Greenspan.

Prevention 'would just save so much money'

"If we had more resources at the preventative level, before people got in conflict with the law, that would be really amazing," she said.

"If we prevented it, we would just save so much money in the criminal justice system. And I don't think we're there yet."

For her part, Bodkin has done some clinical training with men during and after prison. Some have "really expansive trauma histories," including severe abuse as children, she said.

"We suspected it was high, but there wasn't good research out there that led to a national perspective in Canada."

As for what constitutes abuse, Bodkin and her team used a World Health Organization definition, which means attendance at a residential school wasn't considered, although that research would be useful too, Bodkin said.

At any given time, 41,000 people are incarcerated in Canada, and a disproportionate number are Indigenous.

Samantha Craggs
CBC News
Feb 20, 2019

The thinking it took to get us into this mess is not the same thinking that is going to get us out of it.

- Albert Einstein

Action is the antidote to despair.

- Joan Baez

Rebranding solitary confinement doesn't change what it is

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. CCLA 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.

Noa Mendelsohn Aviv
Globe and Mail
Jan 21, 2019

Alberta judge grants inmate 3.75 credit days for each day spent in ‘cruel’ solitary confinement

An Alberta judge has given an inmate 3.75 days credit for each day he served in solitary confinement, calling it a form of cruel and unusual punishment prohibited by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

“Segregation ravages the body and the mind,” Justice Dawn Pentelchuk of the Alberta Court of Queen’s Bench said in written reasons released last week for sentencing Ryan Prystay to time served, plus 77 days, on multiple charges, including possession of methamphetamine and a loaded firearm.

Mr. Prystay, 36, spent more than 400 consecutive days in solitary in the Edmonton Remand Centre, after assaulting another inmate. It was not until nine months after his placement in solitary that he was told in a review what he needed to do to be released into the general population. He was charged in August, 2016, and pleaded guilty in October, 2018.

Canadian law generally allows judges to give 1.5 days credit for each served in pretrial custody. Justice Pentelchuk said she gave the heightened credit because of the length of time Mr. Prystay spent in solitary, the effects on his psychological

and physical health (he suffered from anxiety and hopelessness, insomnia, auditory hallucinations and anti-social feelings), and a lack of “ascertainable standards” in the remand centre’s use of indefinite solitary.

Alberta’s Justice and Solicitor-General’s department said the Edmonton Remand Centre uses administrative segregation for inmates whose safety may be at risk or who pose a safety risk to others. It said the Crown Prosecution Service is reviewing the Prystay decision and will decide whether it will appeal.

Administrative segregation, the term used by correctional authorities for solitary confinement, is being used at “an alarming rate and for alarming lengths of time” in Canadian correctional institutions, she wrote. “It is a powerfully tempting way for institutions contending with inadequate funding and staffing shortages to address challenging circumstances within inmate populations. It is often used as a punitive measure to circumvent the more onerous due process requirements of disciplinary segregation.”

Mr. Prystay had pre-existing mental-health issues, has been a drug addict since the age of 13 and has a long criminal record. He was usually confined for 23 hours a day, with access twice a day to a “fresh-air room” - though its windows were mostly kept closed in winter.

Justice Pentelchuk said his placement in solitary was “devoid of procedural fairness and appropriate oversight.” She noted that a government expert in a B.C. constitutional challenge to the federal practice of administrative segregation testified that the time limit should be 60 days.

She could have gone further, by dismissing the charges against Mr. Prystay, but she said it was “not the clearest of cases” as to justify such an extreme move.

Sean Fine
Globe and Mail
Jan 08, 2019

Prison is a second by second assault on the soul, a day to day degradation of the self, an oppressive steel and brick umbrella that transforms seconds into hours and hours into days.

- Mumia Abu-Jamal

< *Poems* >**Untitled**

Prison. Cage. Steel sticks.
Four walls built of bricks.
No entry & no exit.
No window & no door.

Pressure threads down it.
No candle could be lit.
Air thickens. No more breath.
Body sickens. Comes the death.

Open Eyes. Empty glare.
No single thought there.
No tear drop to fall.
No voice, no word, no row.

- Selene

Someone

There's someone somewhere
Who thinks of you smile
Who finds in your presence
That life is worthwhile
So when you're alone
Remember it's true
There's someone somewhere
Who's thinking of you!
We all have our hard times

- Kayla Marr

Purpose

In life you will realize that
There is a purpose for everyone you meet
Some will test you
Some will use you
And some will teach you
But most important are the ones
Who bring out the best in you,
Respect you & accept you
For who you are
Those are the ones
Worth keeping around

- Allana Custer

My Cell

Day after day.
Hour after hour.
I sit in my cell.
Beyond my power.
My emotions running.
I feel like collapsing.
The fear within.
Not knowing what tomorrow will bring.
The sentence that lies before me
Brings many tears, sorrow, tremendous
mourning.
Of the time that lies ahead.
Within four walls of the cell that I sit in.

- Melissa

Untitled

Today I am feeling sad & blue.
I am unsure of what to do
I am stuck here behind prison walls
Footfalls echo in the halls

The food looks bad, so hard to eat
When I don't eat, I'll feel so weak
Sometimes I cry, & I can't stop my tears
It's a relief at times, lets go my fears
So here I sit & watch time go past
Wondering how long hardship will last

- Anny Oyster

Shadows After 10pm

Barred shadows on my book at night
I read the shadows too
The words change with each printed line
The shadows never do

The words you read are soon forgot
But what the shades impart
Remain, because you can't forget
The things you've learned by heart

- J.I.C.
'Transition' 1952 (BC Pen)

Penitentiary: 1952

*I'll speak again:
This lonely tier's great silence frightens me
Like some dread spectres
These cells of men who know that notion's
name
Cannot be understood
Yet still acclaim its virtues & venerate its lies
While the night looks on with a thousand eyes
And every sense aches from its depth with
hunger
The pulse of time has stopped & night's blind
sun
Beams its black light on this concreted horror
But now across the sea of quiet
The slender shadows flicker & bring
The basilisk's wink of reality
The weary procession of empty days
And futile ways
And a penance that is merely a gesture*

- Jim Ripley
'Transition' 1952 (BC Pen)

Serenade to a Finger

*The finger is an awful man
He fingers everyone he can
Whether they be big or small
He put the finger on them all*

*To me he is a nasty cuss
And that is why I make this fuss
A spy inside these walls I say
The Finger Man of Collin's Bay*

*I've talked to Oh ... so many men
Who think he has an evil trend
And I'm persuaded to agree
It's plain for one & all to see*

*I hope you like this little verse
I've tried hard to make it worse
In closing now I loudly say
Drop Dead Finger! Save the Bay!*

- J. Leslie
'C.B. Diamond' 1953 (Collin's Bay)

Untitled

*But the joint's buzzing. The hep-cats and swing-
dings have taken over.
Louie Rainone's Disk Jockey Show is on the air.
Spin 'em, maestro, spin 'em!
Give us something hot; now something sweet
and low.
Jump and jive, that's the drive!
It's got me swinging; my toes are cringing.
Hey, neighbour!
Can I borrow your form for this struggle?
But you ain't heard nothing yet.
Louie - if you ever get an old record of Frankie
Layne singing 'Mule Train', just punch a hole off-
center, set the gimmick at full speed and
dedicate the number to me.*

- Byron
'Mountain Echoes' 1951 (Manitoba Pen)

Little Shadow

*Little Shadow on the wall
Don't you go to sleep at all?
Dancing, flickering up & down
Making motions like a clown
Dancing, flickering on the wall
Oh! You have an awful gall!*

*Little Shadow, won't you move?
I'm so sleepy, I disapprove
Of your foolish, one, two-step
That you know I can't accept
Little Shadow, I suggest
That you go & have a rest*

*Little Shadow, go to sleep
Can't you see I'm counting sheep
How am I to count them too
While I'm busy watching you?
Little Shadow, go to sleep
All your antics, they will keep*

- Sonny Mitchell
'Mountain Echoes' 1951 (Manitoba Pen)

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

'The prices are outrageous': Concerns raised over monopoly on ordered goods in federal prisons

Prisoners at federal penitentiaries are being forced to buy goods and personal effects at prices inflated above what the public pays, an inmate and advocates say.

Federal inmates are allowed to order goods and personal effects through a single catalogue. It's provided by Prototype Integrated Solutions, a Langley, B.C.-based company that has a monopoly on the prison market. It also provides goods to several other federal departments, including the Department of National Defence and the CBSA.

Hundreds of items are available in the catalogue, everything from clothing, electronics, health and personal hygiene items to sporting equipment, religious goods and hobby supplies. However, the inmate, who resides in a Quebec prison, says the catalogue falls short both in terms of price and quality.

"The prices are outrageous ... There's a guy, he bought a stapler, first time he goes to staple with it, it just falls apart into pieces in his hands," he told CBC News in an interview from prison.

His identity is being withheld because he is a whistleblower.

Before the catalogue, which was brought in under the previous Conservative government, the inmate said prisoners were able to buy items by placing an order with an institutional staff member. They would then go to the nearest town or make an order through the mail.

According to Corrections Canada, the catalogue was intended to standardize what was available to inmates, as well as reduce the amount of time staff would spend processing orders and shipping for items.

'Covers all costs'

In an interview, Ghislain Sauvé, director general of technical services and facilities at the federal agency, said the catalogue brings consistency between penitentiaries across the country, so that inmates in B.C., for instance, can buy and pay the same amount for goods as inmates in Newfoundland.

"It covers all costs, so when you pay for an item it covers everything, delivery, any handling," said Sauvé

A representative of Prototype Integrated Solutions declined an interview request.

In an email, the company referred questions to Corrections Canada, adding that the contract is the "result of a fair public procurement process." Prototype Integrated Solutions takes all the profits on sales, according to Corrections Canada.

Dozens of items more expensive

CBC News obtained a copy of the catalogue that is in effect until the end of March, 2019.

In at least two dozen cases CBC found items in the catalogue that were more expensive for inmates compared to the price the public would pay.

The items include:

- A Levi's "trucker" jean jacket was priced at \$153.38 plus tax for inmates. A similar styled "trucker" jacket could be purchased online at Levi's Canadian store for \$108.
- A pair of men's Run Supreme Reebok shoes is being sold for \$136.74 plus tax in the catalogue. A similar pair of "Run Supreme" shoes are available for \$90 on Reebok Canada's website.
- An Under Armour shower shoe would cost an inmate \$67.19 plus tax. On Under Armour's Canadian website the same shower shoe is being sold for \$39.99.
- A 19-inch LED television is being sold for \$237.03 plus tax. A similar television could be bought at Walmart Canada for \$103.50.

In comparing the items, CBC attempted to find the exact item described or the most similar item that was available to the public. Many of the items in the catalogue are no longer sold in retail stores.

According to the inmate, one of the worst items to order through the catalogue is music on compact disc. Prototype Integrated Solutions charges a rate of \$27.56 plus tax for any music CD.

The inmate says most often a relative can purchase the same CD for half the price, and not have to wait up to six months for delivery. Public Services and Procurement Canada reviewed the catalogue before it was awarded, he said.

"They did a cost analysis to confirm that the items were competitive, or were appropriate for the Canadian retail market," said Sauvé.

High prices, low pay

Many of the inmates struggle to save up to buy items in the catalogue, the inmate said.

Inmates earn between \$5.25 to \$6.90 a day working in the institution. However, those wages are subject to a 30 per cent deduction to pay for room and board and the inmate phone system.

Jarrod Shook, a former prisoner who now works as an editor for the Ottawa-based *Journal of Prisoners on Prisons*, said that inmates are well aware of the monopoly in place and their limited wages put many items out of reach.

"The wages have never increased since the 1980s, and furthermore with inflation, access to products now are a lot more, and prohibitively expensive," said Shook.

Corrections Canada allows for inmates to receive up to \$750 a year from family or others outside of the institution.

Maintaining sense of identity

The items in the catalogue also provide inmates an opportunity to wear clothing outside of what they are issued by Corrections Canada upon arrival at an institution.

When not working or during free time, inmates can change into casual clothing.

"You feel a little less human," the inmate said, about wearing Corrections Canada clothing.

"It's a matter of personal pride, where even if it's not the best looking T-shirt or the nicest pair of shoes, at least you're wearing something that belongs to you."

Shook said the *Journal of Prisoners on Prison* has also heard how important it is for inmates to be able to have their own clothes and personal items.

In a 2017 issue, the journal asked inmates to write about reforms of the prison system under the former Conservative government. Many identified the purchasing process as an issue and spoke about losing their sense of self-esteem.

"When you're able to access basic things, like maybe a pair of earrings that you used to wear or a particular style of clothing, it does help you maintain a sense of your identity," said Shook.

Why more?

Both the inmate and Shook say that Corrections Canada should return to the former system and

allow prisoners to order through a staff member who can get the best price.

"Why should we have to pay ... more? Every little piece, article of clothing, why do we have to pay ... more just because we're inmates?" the inmate said.

Another change both would like to see is prisoner's wages adjusted to give inmates more purchasing power.

Corrections Canada said the contract with Prototype Integrated Solutions has been extended another year, meaning it will be in place until March 2020.

Sauvé said they are exploring options for what to do after the contract runs out, that includes looking for an alternative to the current catalogue.

In at least two dozen cases, CBC News found items in the catalogue, provided by Prototype Integrated Solutions, that were more expensive for inmates compared to the price the public would pay. (CBC)

Sauvé said pricing is Prototype Integrated Solutions responsibility. He added that he has heard concerns about the cost of goods from not only inmate committees, but also Corrections Canada staff.

Brennan Neill

CBC News

Dec 19, 2018

Prisons are hate factories, Pastor, and society wants more and more of them.

- John Grisham

Being in prison for seven years was like being in an army that never drilled, never deployed, and only fought itself.

- Raegan Butcher

Government is powerless to protect you, not powerless to punish you.

- Chief Wiggum

Prison has taught me that there is a part of you that no one can ever take from you, and that is your heart.

- Babar Ahmad

Children of Inmates Reading Program (ChIRP)

“Reading aloud is the single most important thing a parent or caregiver can do to help a child prepare for reading and learning”

“Reading is the gateway to future success in life and in school”

BCFI's commitment to the successful reintegration of inmates and to stronger, healthier communities includes the development of Children of Inmates Reading Program (ChIRP). The mandate of ChIRP is to build and enhance a healthier parent/child relationship, develop literacy and listening skills, increase vocabulary and attention spans for children and promote a love of learning in children through the consistent presence of a parent and books.

For the past 10 years, Carla Veitch, a children's educator, has been successfully developing and operating a parent/child reading initiative. Twice a month, Carla, along with another volunteer, enter the institution and offer men the opportunity to select a book for their child and then read that book into a recording device. The book and recording are then mailed to the child. This initiative provides a direct connection for the child with his or her incarcerated parent. In addition to the opportunity of hearing a parent's voice, the reading initiative underscores the value of reading and the importance of books. For a number of the participants, reading aloud to their child has not been part of their pattern of parenting, nor was it modeled for them as part of their early childhood years.

Children are never responsible for their parents' choices. At the same time, they are the hidden victims not only in the justice and correctional system, but also within our larger community.

I am in a beautiful prison from which I can only escape by writing.

- Anais Nin

I have often reflected upon the new vistas that reading has opened to me.

I knew right there in prison that reading had changed forever the course of my life.

As I see it today, the ability to read awoke inside me some long dormant craving to be mentally alive.

- Malcolm X

Book Clubs for Inmates (BCFI)

Book Clubs for Inmates (BCFI) is a registered charity that organizes volunteer-led book clubs within federal penitentiaries across Canada. Currently, BCFI is facilitating 30 book clubs from Nova Scotia to British Columbia.

BCFI runs French and English language book clubs for men and women incarcerated in minimum, medium, and maximum security facilities. Book clubs are usually made up of 10-18 members who meet once a month to discuss books, both fiction and non-fiction of literary merit.

Every month, hundreds of inmates participate in book clubs across the country and each year thousands of brand new books are purchased, read, and discussed.

Book Clubs for Inmates

720 Bathurst St.

Toronto, ON, M5S 2R4

www.BookClubsForInmates.com



I pity the person who is in solitary who cannot read.

There is no other real stimulation.

- Holbrook

The more that you read,
the more things you will know.

The more that you learn,
the more places you'll go.

- Dr. Seuss

Prison always has been a good place for writers, killing, as it does, the twin demons of mobility and diversion.

- Dan Simmons

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.

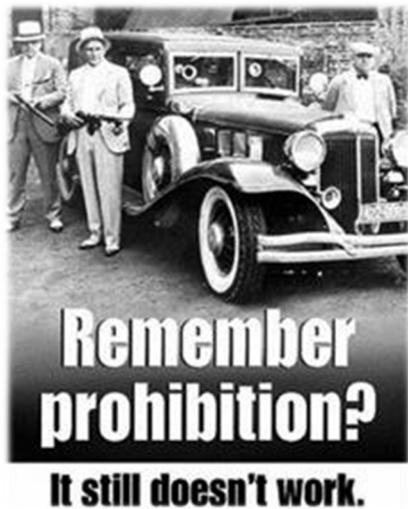


Nov 20 is Transgender Day of Remembrance

November 20 marks Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDoR), an international event commemorating people killed due to anti-trans violence. In the last year, 369 trans or non-binary people have been killed globally.

And it's a Canadian problem too: 74 % of trans youth in Canada have been harassed at school, and 37 % have experienced physical violence.

☞ **Respect** ☞



It is dangerous to be right when the government is wrong.

- Voltaire

Prisons do not disappear social problems, they disappear human beings.

Homelessness, unemployment, drug addiction, mental illness, and illiteracy are only a few of the problems that disappear from public view when the human beings contending with them are relegated to cages.

- Angela Davis

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

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.

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

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

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.

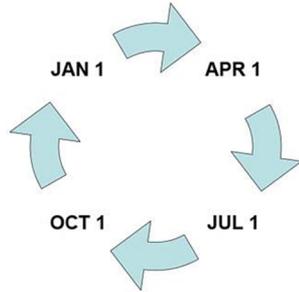
Prisoners and their loved ones are invited to contribute music requests, messages and suggestions for the program.

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

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

☞ **Prisoners Justice Day is Aug 10** ☞

- CLASS ACTION! NEWS -



- MAILOUT DATES -

☞ **Issue #13 - Spring 2019** ☞

Class Action News
PO Box 39, Stn P
Toronto, ON, M5S 2S6

download, print, contact:
www.ClassActionNews.org

Next Issue: #14 - Summer 2019
Deadline: Jun 1, 2019
Mail-out: Jul 1, 2019

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 !

