

WOMEN'S PRISON NETWORK



Michelle Latham

ISSUE 12 - FALL 2018

Editor's Note:

Welcome to Issue #12 of Women's Prison Network, a magazine by and for women, trans and youth prisoners in Canada.

This is a safe space to share art, poetry, news, thoughts, conversation, connections ...

We send copies into all Women & Youth prisons in Canada.

Send your art, poems, short stories, comments, articles, etc, to Women's Prison Network if you would like to be a part of the next Issue. – Thanks!

Women's Prison Network
PO Box 39, Stn P
Toronto, ON, M5S 2S6

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Cover Artwork:

Michelle Autumn-Colasimone
(*The True Meaning of CSC*)

Artists:

Cover Artists will receive a \$25.00 donation. Thank you so much for your work!
 Let us know how & where you would like the donation sent to & where you would like your art returned to.
 Please note: this magazine is for women, trans and youth from all cultures, so please do not send religious imagery.
Thank you for your art!

Writers:

One column is only 300 words, so do choose your words carefully.
 It must be short & to the point.
 Poems that are tight & give space for others are the first in.
Thank you for your words!

*If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time.
 But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.*
 - Lilla Watson w/ Aboriginal activist group, Queensland, AU

Life is either a daring adventure or nothing at all. Security is mostly a superstition. It does not exist in nature.
 - Helen Keller

Likely as not, the child you can do the least with will do the most to make you proud.
 - Mignon McLaughlin

'Women's Prison Network' is produced 4 times per year.
 It is sent out for free to Women, Trans & Youth in Prisons in Canada.

If you are on the outside or part of an organization, please consider a donation!!!

Editor: aliyah
Publication: Women's Prison Network
Publisher: PrisonFreePress.org
 PO Box 39, Stn P
 Toronto, ON, M5S 2S6

Circulation: 350+
Recirculation: ?..???

info@WomensPrisonNetwork.org

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LETTERSLETTERSLETTERSLETTERSLETTERS

Punishment: CSC's Answer to Bill C16

I am a Transgender inmate who played a major role in the amendment of the Canadian Human Rights Act in regards to gender identity/ expression (Bill C16).

As a way to 'thank' me for my efforts, I have been disregarded by CSC.

When inquiring to a CSC officer as to why they turned a blind eye when another inmate attacked me they responded, "The onus does not fall on us to do something about it, it's on you to do something about it".

So I informed them that "Actually, it is your job as you are a law enforcement organization of whom is sworn to uphold the law and since you won't do something about it, you've made it to be deemed acceptable behaviour to treat Transgender people with violence so I'll simply seek legal action against CSC".

So they threw me into Seg, separating me from my fiancé who is another inmate in the same prison, then Max me out and Involuntary Transfer me.

The reason given: I'm a major problem who causes serious institutional adjustment.

The definition to this reason: CSC does not like me since I helped to change a law that tells them what to do!

Now for further punishment they've isolated me on an empty range so they don't need to justify their 'Isolation Punishment' with Seg Reviews!

So this is my reward for helping to change the world.

Thank you CSC.

Michelle Autumn-Colasimone

Accelerated Parole Review

Prime Minister Trudeau needs to bring back Accelerated Parole Review, which was eliminated by the previous federal government.

This is a very important law and policy that must be in place to allow certain first-time federal prisoners to re-enter society at one-sixth of their sentences so that they can avoid the damage of incarceration, which undermines community safety.

The harsh punishments and mandatory minimum sentences also need to be changed, with sentencing based on an individual's offences, as well as a close examination of the conditions that contributed to their acts where relevant, including childhood abuse and suffering.

These individuals need love, self-care and inner healing.

FVIW

With many changes over the last decade, I have come to notice the following:

- The staff are more distant and not as encouraging;*
 - We have on paper, but really do not have in practice, a case management "team" to discuss where we are, what is expected and where we are going;*
 - We have lost our town hall meetings, which were our chance to interact with and ask questions to the warden;*
 - We have lost our voice and are warned that filing a grievance can have repercussions;*
 - We have lost triplicate request form, which we once used for our protection;*
 - We have lost everything positive for Lifers (e.g. meetings in the community on Friday nights, links with folks who would come in to assist us with any information we needed information on, support groups, monthly meetings for Lifers, and access to newsletters like Out of Bounds magazine or Cell Count);*
 - We have lost recognition and ability to engage in fundraising to support different committees;*
 - We have lost the incentive to work and work for higher pay;*
 - We have lost access to regular and proper dental care, to see a psychologist, and to be able to work full-time;*
 - We have lost the ability to shop from a retailer and purchase magazine subscriptions;*
 - Work release is rare now due to (un)availability of staff;*
 - ETAs (escorted temporary absences) are being cut back; and*
 - We have lost funding for programs, recreation opportunities and staff to help with positive hobbies, a full-time librarian, and updated software on the computers.*
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NEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWS

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

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.

Alarming, 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

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

Memorial Garden at former Women's Prison takes Root

Former inmates of the shuttered Prison for Women in Kingston, Ont., are pushing for a memorial garden at the site, where a developer is planning to construct a new mixed-use building.

The former inmates say the garden is important to honour the checkered history of the prison and the women who took their own lives there while it operated from the mid-1930s to 2000. Seven women died over a two-year period from December 1988 to February 1991, and six of them were Indigenous.

A task force was appointed in 1989 to look into the prison's operations - it was then the only federal correctional facility for women - and in 1990 a report was released calling for sweeping changes and more facilities. In 1996, one year after a strip search video from P4W, as the prison became known, was made public, an inquiry by Madam Justice Louise Arbour again called for substantive change.

Four years later, the last of P4W's prisoners were transferred to new facilities.

Honouring 'fallen sisters'

Ann Hansen, 64, was incarcerated at the prison for participating in bombings in the 1980s while a member of The Squamish Five, also known as Direct Action, a group of activists who believed non-violent resistance was ineffective.

Hansen was sentenced to life and served seven years at Kingston's P4W. She was released in the early 1990s and has kept in touch with other former inmates, including Fran Chaisson.

Together they helped found the P4W Memorial Collective in 2015, and alongside others

petitioned the prison site's former owner, Queen's University, to build a small memorial garden in front of the prison.

Chaisson - who served two stints at P4W, first for assaulting police and later for attempted murder - is the driving force behind the garden, and feels it's necessary to honour her "fallen sisters."

An open letter and petition by the collective calls for a memorial garden on a plot of land in front of the former administration building. A proposal is still being worked out, but could include a couple of benches, a small monument created by an Indigenous person, and the names of the women who died at the prison, Hansen said.

Developer seems open to idea

Hansen said they're not opposed to the commercialization of the valuable parcel of land in downtown Kingston, saying it would be a "monumental struggle to prevent that from happening." But they're hoping the prison's heritage will be maintained and its history "will not be completely erased."

ABNA Investments Ltd., based in Odessa, Ont., recently stepped forward with a plan to buy the prison from Queen's and redevelop it.

Company owner Hank Doornekamp said the plans are also preliminary, but include a new mixed residential and commercial building that will "complement" the architectural and historical character of the prison. Possible uses for the actual prison building, which has heritage protections both inside and out, include a possible student residence and hotel in the summer months.

The garden collective has met with Nate Doornekamp, who is spearheading the prison redevelopment project, and Hansen said he seemed open to the idea.

"We were impressed with his sincerity about being supportive of putting up a memorial," she said. "He seemed like he was willing to cooperate with us."

Doornekamp did not immediately respond to a request for comment last week.

The collective is planning a healing circle at the prison site on Aug. 10.

Kristy Nease
CBC News
Jul 06, 2018

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Honest Mistakes

I'm sorry for locking my keys in my room
 Once
 I'm sorry for falling asleep without my clothes in
 40° heat
 Twice
 I'm sorry for going outside during count
 It was my first week
 I'm sorry my mother set off the ion scanner like
 the 4th of July
 She's a good woman
 I'm sorry for trying to smuggle pillows across the
 hall
 I've never been good at smuggling
 I'm sorry for talking out the window
 Twice
 I'm sorry for asking you to call god for me
 But not really
 I'm sorry for putting money in the vending
 machine
 I've never been trusted with it before
 I'm sorry for all these honest mistakes
 I don't live here
 And I'm not staying long

- Emily O'Brien

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

- Allara Custer

Bitterness is like cancer. It eats upon the host.
 But anger is like fire. It burns all clean.

- Maya Angelou

Here is My Heart

Here is my heart, broken & beaten
 Never cherished or loved at all
 Awaiting the day to be held with care
 Bruised & torn, who can fix it?

Here is my heart, weak & sore
 Never been cared for
 Still standing, waiting for love
 Shattered & torn, it still hurts

Here is my heart, stitched together
 Ready to take another battle
 Every beat, hurt twice more & more

Here is my heart, take it with pride
 It can love more than you know
 Cherish my love & my heart
 Promise me so I'll promise you
 One day I'll say 'I love you'

- Kayla Fiddler

Break Free

So much pain
 So much sorrow
 I don't want to live to see tomorrow
 They say it gets better as the days pass by
 But I don't want to hurt no more
 Just wanna curl up & die
 I'm ashamed because of what I've done
 I don't even know this girl of who I've become
 The drugs & the lies took over my life
 Won't someone plz save me with a knife
 I'm changing my life, starting with today
 I'm going to find my god, bow my head & pray
 Today's the day I hold my head up high
 And all thanks to the man sitting in the sky
 No more lies, hurt & or pain
 It feels so good finally being consumed with
 shame
 I'm finally able to move on
 My feelings are oh so strong
 I'm stronger now than I'd ever thought I'd be
 Guess what?
 Today's the day I'm finally breaking free

- Emma Brown

POEMSP0EMSP0EMSP0EMSP0EMSP0EMSP0

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Done with This

*I 2 years old when I left home
A life out on the streets
Grew up fast, forgetting the past
Nothing ventured, nothing gained
Did my first bit when I was 13
I took the wrong turn in the road
Tryin' to change but it ain't easy
Sometimes, that's how it goes
This is my story & how it goes*

*20 long years of staring out my window
Thinking of the things I have missed
Nothing ever changes but the weather
But 2 more months & I'll be done with this*

*I'm older now & hit rock bottom somehow
I know I've got what it takes
My lovely family, a better story
My biggest reasons for changing
'One day at a time' is a famous line
And I'll make it work for me
What I've been through, no one really knows
But I'm wiser & it's starting to show
This is my story & how it goes*

*Everyone makes mistakes
Love & then heartbreaks
Remember, it's never too late
If you want to get what you want, you can take*

- Anne Boardmore

Untitled

*Lonely tears, lonely cries
Too many 'hellos', too many 'goodbyes'
Broken promises, broken hearts
Lost ideas, lost smarts
Fellow convicts, fellow inmates
No more love, no more hates
Stolen memories, stolen youth
Untrue stories, untrue truth
Time wears out, time decays
Lonely nights, lonely days*

- Angie D.

A Helping Hand

*So here I am again
Nothing changed, still the same
An empty cold cell, all alone
My built up tears bleed my pain
From time to time, down this face of stone
My life's fucked, it's a joke, a game
Where's my haven? Where's my home?
My hands are covered in red
From all the love we bled
I just need some warmth, I need a heart
I need some worth to go back to the start
My eyes are tired from trauma & hurt
Please pull me up from this dirt
Save me from my inevitable fate
Please pull me up before it's too late*

- Sarah Jane Posthumus

My Second Chance

*Before I didn't even know me
Always drunk & too blind to see
Now here I sit in a cell
A prisoner of my own hell
I was full of anger & denial
The judge of my own trial
Didn't realize all the hurts I had
I thought, fuck it & stayed mad
Here I sit at GVI pen
Looking at women who will sit here for the next
ten
I realized I had changes to make
I now see the new road of life I have to take
This would be my ultimate test
See if I can put those hurts to rest
I'm determined & very prepared
All my life I didn't realize that people really cared
Family, staff, inmates & friends
All helping my heart slowly mend
I'm glad I opened my eyes & seen
How deep, broken & confused I had been
I finally have the ability to go forward
A future to which I look toward
Today I can proudly say
From here on out, nothing will stand in my way*

- Michelle Richer

NEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWS

'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

Reduce the Poverty-to-Prison Pipeline for Women

Over the last decade, the number of women in Canada's jails has spiked 30 per cent.

Even more troubling, after a 60 per cent increase over the same period, Indigenous female prisoners now account for 37 per cent of all incarcerated women, and 50 per cent of women in maximum security.

According to the 2017 correctional investigator report, there is no evidence of increased female criminality. Women in custody are in fact more likely to be victims of physical (90 per cent) and sexual (67 per cent) abuse themselves, with addiction issues and children relying on them.

At a recent Senate Open Caucus meeting, a panel of experts laid out the factors at play in the recent increases:

- Poverty leading to crime and violence through a social pipeline of historic racism and intergenerational trauma, combined with limited access to social services
- The last decade's tough-on-crime agenda that emphasizes public safety, with less attention paid to reintegration, retraining and prevention services
- Outdated, male-based security classification assessment tools that overestimate risk and place women unnecessarily in maximum security and segregation, where access to programs is limited and isolation worsens their mental state.

"The consequences of imprisonment are compounded for women, who are often the sole caregiver for children and parents," said Howard Sapers, independent corrections reform adviser to the Ontario government during the Open Caucus session.

What should Canada do?

Our panel offered three main recommendations on how to keep women out of jail while finding ways to successfully reintegrate offenders back into their communities.

1. Strengthen community programs that alleviate poverty and prevent crime

"Canadian statistics paint a shameful pipeline - from poverty, racism, low education, wage gaps, violence and addiction - to crime and incarceration," said Dr. Pam Palmater, Mi'kmaq lawyer and Associate Professor in the Dept. of Politics and Public Administration at Ryerson

University. "We need to address these social conditions if we want to stem the flow of indigenous women into prison."

"Policy decisions to provide housing, social services, education, health - especially mental health care and guaranteed liveable incomes to all Canadians - would be the most effective way to prevent victimization and reduce the human, social and fiscal costs of crime and imprisonment," said Senator Kim Pate, Former Executive Director of the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies.

2. Reform sentencing, classification and segregation

"Instead of mandatory minimum sentences, we should have mandatory alternative sentences," said Dr. Palmater. Most agree that education works against the poverty cycle. "If we sentenced people to a high school diploma or a university degree instead of prison," said Senator Terry Mercer, "we'd find the cost much lower and the social return much greater."

For inmates, the isolation and idleness of maximum security and segregation actively work against rehabilitation and contribute to deteriorating mental health.

Dr. Jennifer Kilty, Associate Professor in the Department of Criminology at University of Ottawa, echoed Moira Law's and the Task Force on Federally Sentenced Women: "All women should begin their incarceration with a minimum-security classification that is only escalated to medium or maximum security if their behaviour warrants it. And we should abolish segregation for women."

3. Make the prison system more transparent and accountable

With prisoners and staff unable to talk to outsiders, what happens inside prisons often stays in prisons. "Crimes carried out by staff like sexual assault and excessive use of force are treated as a human resources issue," said Dr. Palmater. "Transparency and accountability - and zero tolerance - can only be assured through access, communication and regular, external oversight."

Intake should also include a fuller triage of individual health issues like addiction and self-harm. Staff training, beyond the mandatory cultural sensitivity, could help reduce racism and harassment (including unnecessary strip

searches), and ensure inmates get the services they need.

Leadership and vision needed

"Most women prisoners do not pose a risk to public safety," said Senator Pate. "If they do pose a risk, it's greatest to themselves." Senator Pate added that when Nelson Mandela became president, he released all mothers with young children from prison. "Canadians, too, have suggested many enlightened reforms, too seldom put in place."

These include the efforts of the Elizabeth Fry Society and Aboriginal justice practices that reintegrate rather than isolate community members who commit crimes.

The right leadership and a many-layered vision will be critical to reversing these alarming trends.

Raymonde Saint-Germain, Art Eggleton
Huffington Post, May 28, 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. She has already offended.

She 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)



✎ PEN PALS ✎

Send in your ad: 25 Words or Less.
 We use Code #'s for Personal Safety.
 When mail contact has been made, it is up to you to exchange your name & address, ... but only, if that is what you choose to do.

Please Print Your Name & Address on All Letters and Photos.
 All Envelopes are Destroyed !!!

Participants agree that by using this service, it is at their own risk, and by accessing this service all users agree that WPN is not to be held liable in any way for harms suffered as a result of this service.

This magazine is only sent into women's prisons. (ads are not on web version)

NOT
 AVAILABLE
 ONLINE !

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.

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% of prisoners
HIV = 1-5% of prisoners

Do Not Share or Re-Use:
needles, ink, ink holders, rigs,
- 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.



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:

info@featforchildren.org

416-505-5333

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*
- *Over 5,000 children are impacted by parental imprisonment in the GTA*
- *The number of children affected by parental incarceration only increased 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*

featforchildren.org ~ 416-505-5333

Prison Radio

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

This program features content produced by CFRC volunteers and by other campus and community radio broadcasters, including CKUT Montreal's Prison Radio and 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, Lower 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

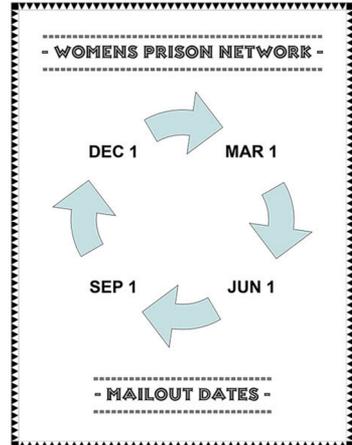
☞ In Remembrance ☜
- August 10 -

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



Women's Prison Network Fall 2018 - Issue #12

PO Box 39, Stn P
Toronto, ON, M5S 2S6

info@WomensPrisonNetwork.org

visit, download, print, donate!
WomensPrisonNetwork.org

Send in your work
before Nov 1, 2018
Winter Issue #13 is sent
out Dec 1, 2018

Women, Trans & Youth Prisoners:
Wish to receive 'Women's Prison Network'?
Contact us & we will add you to the mailing list!
Please let us know if you move.
This magazine is by and for you.
Thank you for sharing!
