

Our Day-To-Day: Stories of Labelled Men



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Social distance breeds indifference.

Cultural symbols can only be understood in a context of shared experience.

- Nils Christie (2017)

A rational assessment of prisons would recognize that they cost an immense amount, fail to deter wrongdoers and often make their inmates more desperate and dangerous than they were when committed.

- David Cayley (1998)

Reality is a process undergoing constant transformation.

- Susan Neiman (2015)

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Introduction

“First impressions often end up defining something/someone. When you look at the photos taken, what do you see? What does the image say to you, make you feel or think? Do you see the message intended to be shared through an image or do you need to look beyond the initial impression?”

Photovoice is a type of research that is done with communities instead of on or about them. The three main goals of Photovoice are to: empower community members to share their story, have in-depth discussions about important issues displayed in the photographs and to involve community stakeholders to create social change. Photographs represent a person’s experience and are arranged to tell a collective story.

As co-researchers in a Photovoice group, we met weekly for 10 weeks to discuss the meaning and importance behind pictures we took. In-depth discussions led to debate, learning and common understanding about our shared experiences. Through this process, challenges and issues in our day-to-day lives became clear and informed potential actions for social change.

The Daily Life ...

“You are under arrest for...”, welcome to the first step of a long journey.

The steps you take from the moment you hear those words will not be of your own volition. You will quickly realize the emptiness of human rights. The quicker you learn not to resist your oppression, the smoother the rest of your journey will be. These first steps become a permanent change to which you can never recover. Welcome to the beginning of your new life.

“Unofficial” Quick Facts That Are Based on Lived Experience

- Ranges hold about 30 cells (provincial) with up to 3 inmates housed to an 8X10 foot cell (90 inmates per range) – 1 shower per 45 inmates
- Ranges hold about 20 cells (federal) with 2 inmates per cell (30 inmates per range) – 1 shower per 20 inmates. Single occupant cells are available to longer sentenced inmates *How big is a cell? Think of an average home bathroom; the tub is the bed, the sink is the desk and the toilet is the toilet. Voila! Home to 3 people!*
- **All phone calls are recorded. All mail is photocopied**
 - Provincial Phones:
 - On paper, calls are free to make. However, inmate monopoly tightly controls access. Inmates using the phone often have to pay for the usage via canteen, meal trays or other services to the inmates who have created a business out of managing the ‘free’ phones.
 - Federal Phones;
 - Phones are controlled by the guards. Inmates pay using phone cards.
 - 3 phones service 120 inmates. Calls are restricted to 20 minutes.
- All inmates can be confined to their cells for 23 hours a day with a maximum of 1-hour free time; the minutes do not need to be consecutive.
- “Lockdown” confines inmates for 24 hours/day with a “10 minute” shower, per 72 hours. All rights and privileges are removed; including visits, privacy and belongings.
- Health care falls under the duties of the facility, not the Ministry. The standard practice is minimal treatment; just enough to keep the inmate alive and nothing more.
- 1000 cal/day for food; Health Canada states 2000 cal/day needed for men. Actual caloric intake is roughly 700 cal/day. Food is sub-standard, unfit for market or sale. All meals are re-used such as soups/stews; food poisoning is undocumented and if treatment is needed, symptoms are recorded as being a result of anything but food poisoning...

Arrest

When you are arrested, your first stop will be the basement of your local police station. You will spend about a day in these cells. The quicker you sleep, the quicker you can move to jail. Why would you want to hurry to jail? Why sleep? The police will not process you until you have slept so when they wake you, just shortly after you’ve dozed off, they take your picture. Your disheveled appearance turns the public against you when displayed in the news. A mugshot is never a glamorous image, would you turn on beautiful, respectable looking people? So, when you look into that camera; look your best because the mugshot is designed to

make you look your worst! Why hurry to jail? You will be fed and escape the solid concrete cells. Is food and a thin (1”) mattress not reason enough to want to go to jail?

Jail

Morning meals are meagre making and you must get used to hunger in addition to everything else. As a “fish” (new inmate), you will forgo the first few meals of unappetizing slop. Your societal expectations of better treatment will make you hope the meals will improve if you just wait. As time passes, hunger grows and that disgusting slop that you once snubbed begins to look very satisfying. Eat quick! Trays are taken once everyone is served. If you were the last served, you may not eat.

So, it’s your first arrest you are not a convicted criminal. Because you have the right to a fair trial, this treatment shouldn’t apply to you. Innocent until proven guilty right? Wrong inmate! The moment you are arrested you’re scrutinized under the eyes of the law. There is no such thing as innocent once charges are laid. Once you are gripped by the judicial system, no matter how brief, it will be a stain on your life that you can never remove – the arrest is now part of your record.

Watching fellow inmate trials, we see 99.9% of those up for trial are convicted. The “fair trial” is flawed. All the evidence is held by the authorities, their funds are unlimited, their experts are free, they control the media and public bias and the funneling of resources into your conviction is relentless. All possible evidence that you have is destroyed or discredited throughout the process, all support structures you have in place are broken. Would you stand behind a loved one if the police or courts threatened you?

A common, and effective, tactic is known as shakedown; a consequence you face if you are supportive of a jailed individual. If your support is seen as a threat, the police will show up at your work. Word spreads about your private issue. How quickly can you quell the rumors? Can you save your reputation? No one wants to be affiliated with a criminal; so how long until your performance review?? It’s common to abandon support to save your own skin.

Trials are the modernization of ancient humiliation. Rather than drag you through the streets, they now open the doors to the public. You are slandered, threatened, beaten, dehumanized and left to the dungeon of the criminal justice system. You believed your lawyer at the beginning: “It’s a misunderstanding;” “I’ll get you off;” “You won’t serve time” or your family: “I’ll support you.” “I’ll fight for you.” “We will get you out.”

Broken promises resonate in your mind as the judge begins reading your verdict. Ever pay attention to the article where “the offender stared blankly while the judge read....” Are you so surprised when you hear the words: “I find you guilty in....”? Welcome to conviction – criminal! It does not matter what you did with your life. All the good deeds, your contribution/position to society, your hard work at maintaining a good, wholesome and moral life. It’s gone! There are no words to describe who you used to be. That person is gone. No matter how much you believe yourself to be who you were; no matter how much you feel you are the same – your former self has been effectively slain.

Incarceration

There is a difference between jail and incarceration. Prior to sentencing, you are remanded in custody (jail); held behind bars before your trial. Once arrested, you are labelled a criminal and find yourself in jail. Is this what innocent before being proven guilty looks like?

The type (summary or indictable) and number of charges, how many charges you were convicted for and your existing criminal record determines where you will be staying for the next...how long was your sentence? If you are sentenced to two years less a day (729 days or less), you will be sentenced to a provincial jail near your former home. If you are sentenced to two years plus a day (731 days or more), you will be residing in federal custody. Typically, you will be placed near your former home for the first 3 months. However, you now belong to the state and they will put you anywhere they please and can move you as often as they would like.

Routine

The daily life of an inmate is a routine predetermined by the institution. Each institution offers different programs but the hours are the same. Whether it is federal, provincial or psychiatric, breakfast is at 7am, morning lock up at 8am. Lunch is at 12 sharp and afternoon lock up is at 1pm. Be quick 'cause the other inmates can't get their door open until yours closes. If you're responsible for prolonging their hunger, you may find prison consequences become reality. If today is your day in court, you have far less time. Today, you will be lined up at the range door, escorted to the basement for "processing" (paperwork, physical searches, being chained, shackled) and placed in transport by 8 am bound for court. If you were lucky enough to not have court, after breakfast you get to return to your locked cell to sleep until lunch – that is unless "free time" falls on the morning rotation. Dinner varies between 4-7pm. Evening lock up starts within the hour of dinner being served.

Federal inmates have slightly more freedom with internal employment opportunities, mandatory programming, education or "evening activities" in which free time begins just after the last unit/range has eaten their meal until mandatory evening lock up, varies per facility, just prior to 11pm.

Removal of Rights

The Charter of Canadian Rights & Freedoms has the strength of the paper it's written on. The rights and freedoms our soldiers have "fought and died for" hold no value under the tyranny of the criminal justice system. Western media demonizes Hitler, Stalin and other historical villains as evil and need to be rid of yet, our entire judicial process, it's members and laws that separate Corrections Canada from accountability rival the worst of human rights violators. How so?

The veil of secrecy that encompasses penal institutions in Canada protects the illegality of its practices. Stories of prison are used to frighten citizens into maintaining a moral life but stories begin with truth. Citizens remain uninformed, the convicted are dehumanized. The very crimes that put people behind bars are not considered crimes inside. Theft, rape, murder – all heinous crimes to mainstream society without consequence inside. However, standing up for your chartered human rights is considered an offence so severe that it can cost you your life.

Prisoner's Justice Day (August 10) was the voice of inmates. In 2012, Prime Minister Harper abolished the day of protest in an attempt to silence the voices of inmates. August 10th is the equivalent of November 11 where people who have perished are remembered. Inmates die behind bars at the hands of correctional officers, inmates are blamed when news reaches the media. Official stories are cover stories and nothing more. The notorious case of Ashley Smith, a convicted Canadian who's only "crime" was throwing crab apples at a mailman ended up dead while incarcerated under the care of the government. By labelling her with "mental health issues", this public relations tactic discredited her and empowered the "untrained" guards. She had no mental health concerns but did protest the conditions of her incarceration. Protesting cost her, her life.

These guards, literally, watched her strangle herself and did nothing. In any other situation, watching someone kill themselves would be unthinkable; it is even a chargeable offense. So why weren't these guards charged with murder? Charges were warranted against the guards but law protects judges and Corrections Canada from legal liability (Mulholland, 2013; Vincent & Zlomislic, 2013). These guards are still employed without murder charges being pursued because "charges jeopardize the security of the institution." Guards merely have to give a "lawful order"; a triviality such as "tie your shoelace" and if you disobey, they have every right to beat you senseless so long as they utter the words "stop resisting". Sound familiar?? If not, watch some videos of police conduct. Police are now being caught frequently abusing their position; being charged and released. Citizens are becoming distrustful and angry at the authoritative abuse of the police. Police videos are made and broadcasted to publicize the abuse delivered by the officers, whereas, the only video permitted within an institution is in the hands of prison officials. Incident tapes that fault guards are conveniently recorded over (funny, in a digital age with digital recording), misplaced (again, digital file with the date and time not being found with a search scan) or under review (equivalent to classified).

Federal institutions have a mandatory "savings" account you must fill prior to being able to spend any money (e.g. canteen, stamps). The "official" answer to "why is there a mandatory savings account?" is: "so the offender has some means of finance upon leaving the institution." However, inmates refer to it as our body bag account, a savings towards cremation. Most of us are abandoned and forgotten. Some of us are unclaimed when we die so the institution takes care of us via the "body bag account". Oddly enough, the minimum savings amount equals and rises with the cost of a basic cremation. Funny how coincidental that happens to be, every time!

Understanding

Is it really so hard to wonder why people who have been through the justice system are violent or unstable? Many "criminals" are not criminals to begin with and the majority of people in remand do not need to be there. The longer they are exposed to the conditions of incarceration, the more likely they are to adapt to the survival culture. Some institutions are referred to as "Gladiator Schools." Here, you fight often and fight relentlessly. Guards intentionally place two or more incompatible inmates in a confined space and watch the situation unfold. Human cockfights. Then, upon release without finances or supports, both of which were eliminated during the trial process, 'criminals' are expected to accommodate to a sensitive and easily offended culture instantaneously without difficulty?

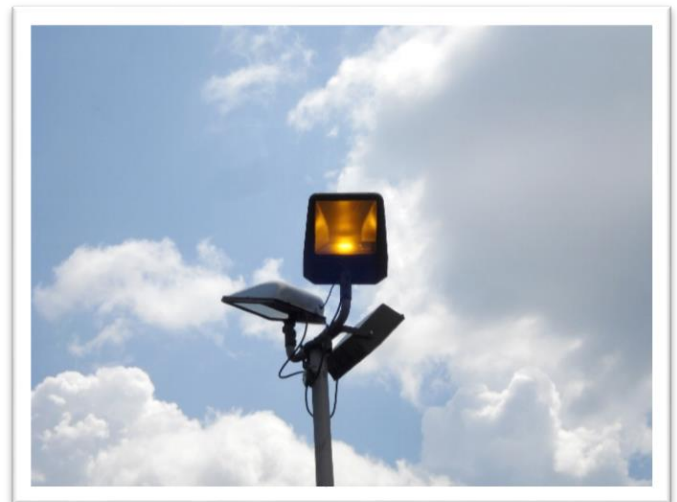
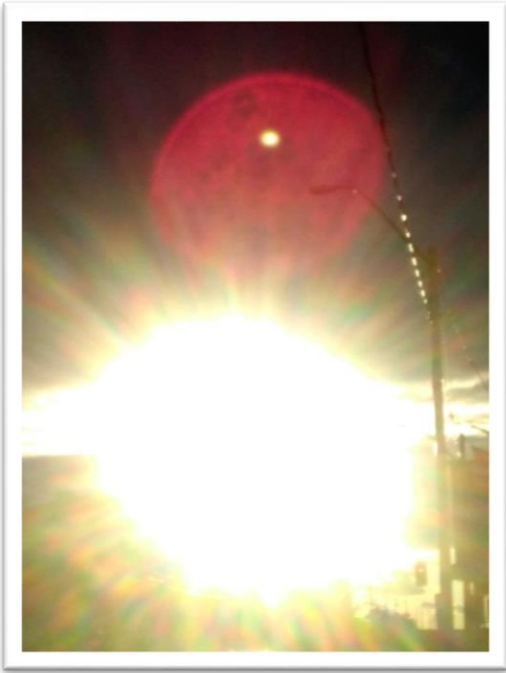
There is no criminal who has been, or is being released that wants to return to jail. Everyone wants their freedom. There is confusion by the general public by statements made by offenders who say they want to go back inside. This is not a statement of desire but of fear. Fear of failure, of ridicule, of cold nights without a shelter, of starvation, of not being able to survive, of having no future. This is institutionalization.

Criminals are portrayed and viewed negatively. A released convict is alone. The list of barriers is daunting with little to zero support, more often the latter. They have no identification or money and obtaining employment with a record is often unheard of. A lack of income makes finding housing challenging and without money, they are unable to pay for communication resources (phone, internet, computer) to begin finding and obtaining employment. Without identification, a library card to access free internet is out of reach. The obstacles are huge, the challenges are terrifying and tasks are almost impossible so what is a released individual left to choose from? Re-offend, pick up a new charge and return to where they are accepted and “belong.” - better known as the revolving-door system. Tracking recidivism rates without context perpetuates the justification for longer sentencing for repeat offenders. The issue of zero support is not acknowledged nor addressed in the quest for zero tolerance.

Laws and the Aftermath

Campaign promises of being harsh on offenders hurts the public long term. Increasing mandatory minimums, removing of statutory release & other alternative sentences means incarcerated people are exposed to norms of violence and aggression inside correctional facilities for longer periods of time. The public is outraged at how such a “violent” person could have been released from jail yet fail to question the role of the criminal justice system in creating the violence. Minimum sentences introduced by Prime Minister Harper means that because these people have not been released yet, Canadian society has not yet been exposed to the consequences of longer prison sentences. Watch the news for crimes. Pay attention to the crime of first conviction and also the crimes committed after release. Which one was more severe? Political decisions made regarding criminal justice often fall on the shoulders of the next politician, making the treatment of people who are locked up a political tool for votes. We struggle. We do what we can daily to overcome the challenges imposed upon us. This is us. This is our voice.

Lights



I have 3 differing sets of lights. I have taken the 3 types to set the theme for: Energy, Discharge & Waste.

The sun is abundant in energy; generating 1000kwh/sq. m. What that means is that in a few square meters, the sun produces enough energy to power the city for the day. The energy produced by the sun is enough to generate powerful storms, storms that have an awesome discharge called lightning. Discharges are brief and very powerful.

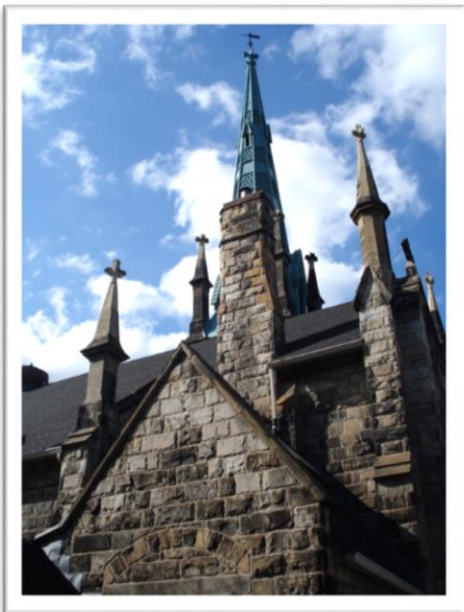
The image I captured shows one powerful discharge followed by several bolts that naturally balances the atmosphere. In nature, there is balance. Mankind is the imbalance that upsets the natural order. The idea that mankind can match nature is shown in the wasteful use of power, light and energy. A high energy, halogen bulb is turned on mid-day and is dimmed by the power of the sun's light. The contrast exists everywhere mankind has attempted to overcome nature.

Perspective



A fearless mouse posed for my camera, why? What was his message to me? Is he risking his life, possibly being food, in begging for food? Why not run? Mice are known to scatter yet he came to me, stayed still long enough for a photo and willingly took my food. Maybe mice are just as individual as the rest of us and shouldn't be paint-brushed to fit the perception of the rest!

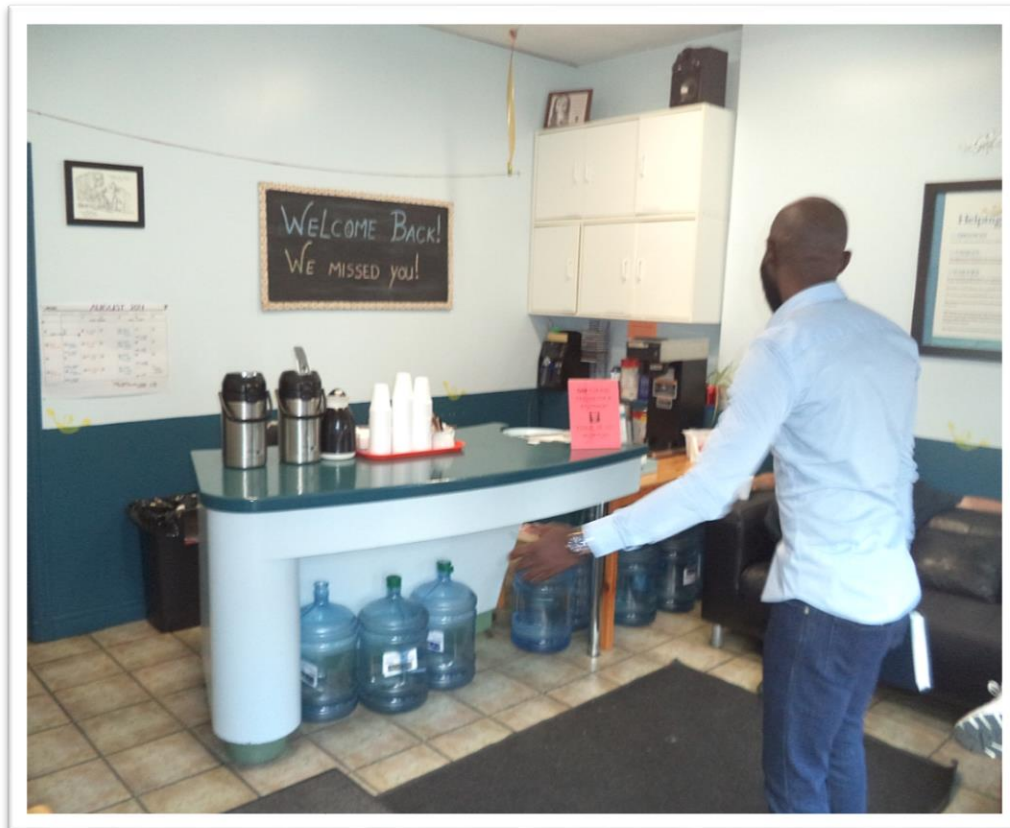
This picture is also wrought with symbolism. The picture itself looks as if it were placed several feet above ground when it was merely inches. If you were to look at the actual sticker, its slightly above one's ankle. So why this image? We are so often entrenched in our own matters that other's matters don't matter, and they only seem to matter once they are no longer matter. I took the image because someone took the time to post that sticker for me to take the photo. If one person makes a step, so will another and as it continues, people become aware. Lives matter!



This photo is representative of perspectives. Few people could take a photo from above showing an "upper class" perspective so in representing the 'masses', a lower perspective is taken. We each live our lives looking upwards in trying to achieve our favored spire: (career, family, education etcetera). Each spire looks close enough to reach but far enough to keep us humble. We look up at the towers of oppression for much of human existence: power, control, influence.

Spirituality and Community

A storefront called Helping Hands Street Mission gives out free clothing and also has a men's night on Mondays. This group of men each hold accountability for one another we support each other and pray for each other. It is located in a poor part of the neighbourhood where men need the most support. It is a non-judgemental and violence free group. It is free to anyone. I personally will continue to use the clothing bank and attend men's group.



Pay It Forward

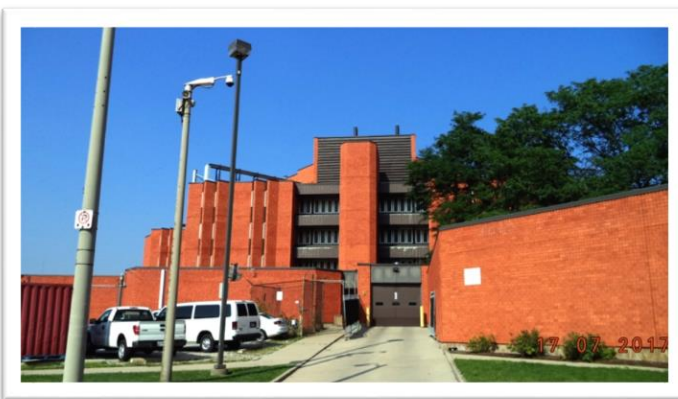


This quaint looking café is actually a soup kitchen that practices the “pay it forward” program where you donate wooden buttons worth a dollar. It provides fresh food and produce in my neighbourhood. I live in a poor area of the city that needs inexpensive food. People see the signs in the storefront and “word of mouth” gets around letting others know about the program.

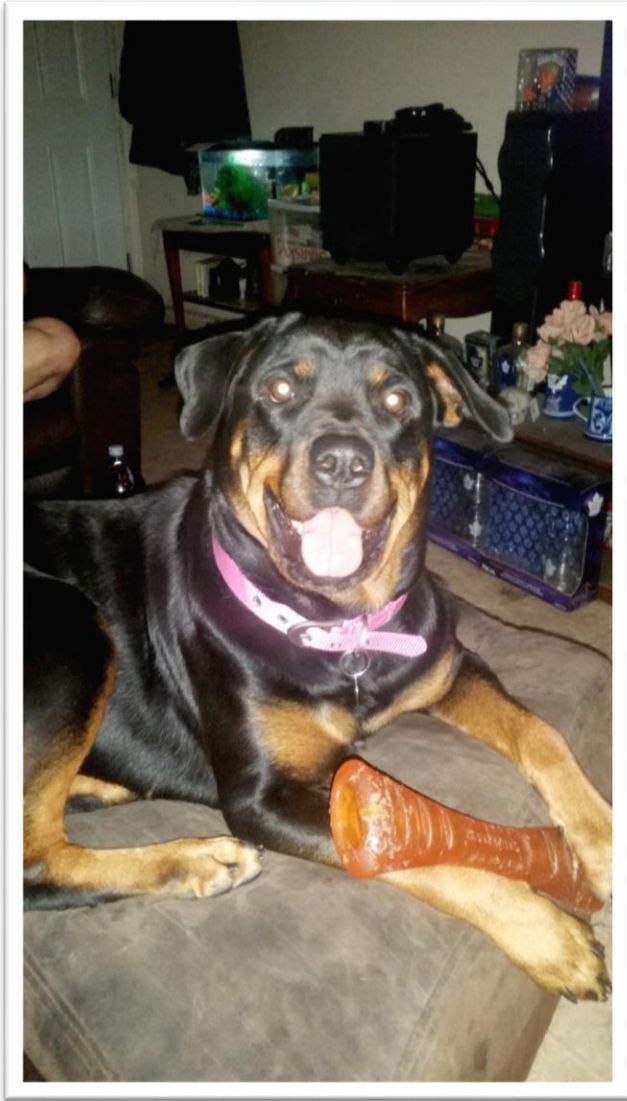


Admitting and Discharge

This is A+D**. Admitting to the Hamilton jail. It is a very upsetting feeling of reality in knowing that AGAIN the BAD mistakes that I make have led to this end of the road has led to here. **A+D = Admitting and Discharge

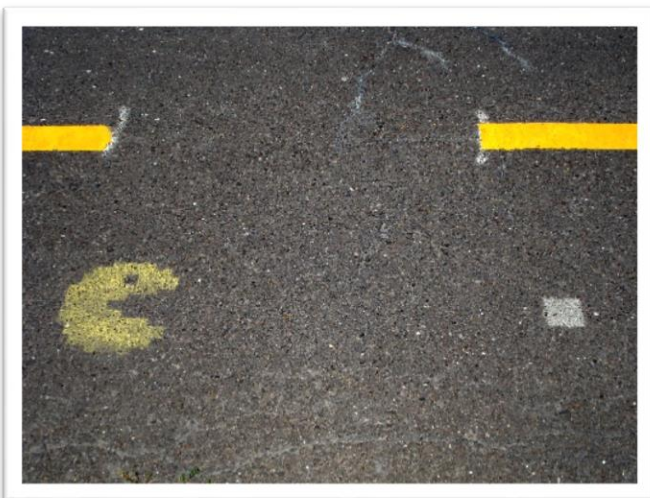


Hope

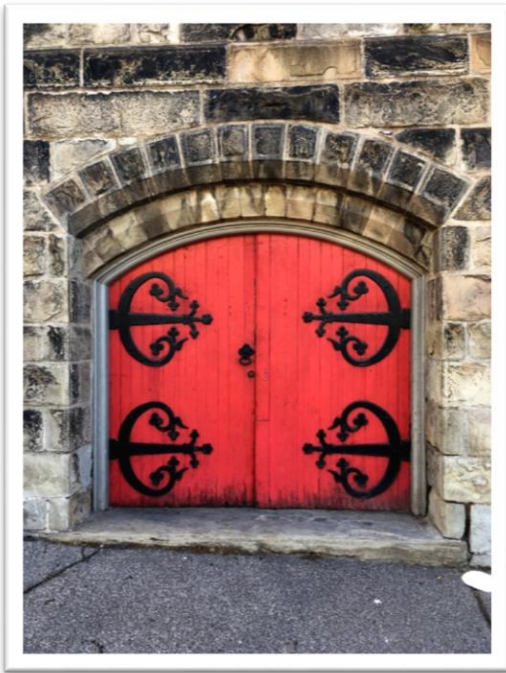


This is a picture of my puppy. She was the runt of the litter who no one wanted but we bonded instantly and I knew we were soul-mates. When I got her, I was in a dark place and needed something to love and be loved by. She is my life motivation to stay alive and sober and her smile keeps me positive when I'm grumpy or down and out. I care a lot about her but when she gets sick, paying vet bills is a challenge and sometimes I give up on feeding myself to make sure she gets her medicine. My puppy helped me overcome feeling really down by forcing me to get out of bed in the morning and socialize with other people. Taking her for multiple daily walks also helps me get the exercise I need to stay healthy and manage my diabetes. This picture represents a need for compassion and acceptance for people as they are. I may have a criminal record but I am capable of loving and deserve to be loved.

Collective Curations

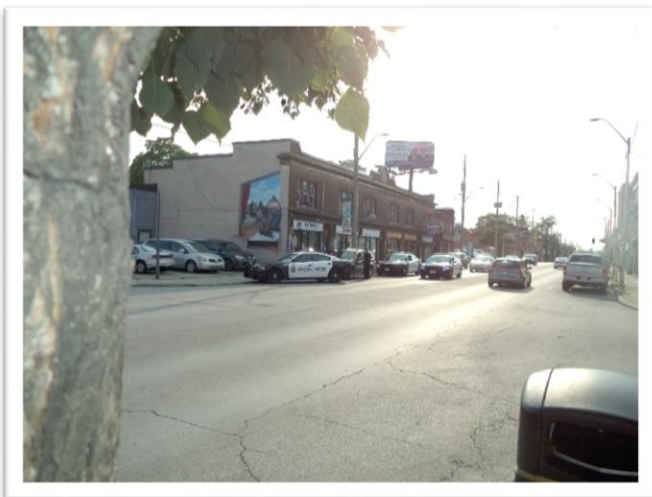


Are you a simple character in a pre-set maze chasing a morsel of a pellet? Pacman is symbolic of conformity and society. Each person is Pacman who must chase morsels to survive and advance. Ghosts can be symbolic of the institutions that deny advancement and reduce the ability to survive.



The door itself is archaic, similar to a lot of social systems that are in place today. The paint job represents a noticeable yet superficial change that modernizes the door – a symbol for social systems. Real change is hard to implement. It takes resources, shifting attitudes and collective efforts. However, superficial changes are still changes. What would it take to paint it black?

This is a picture of a person pushing against red tape. The red tape represents bureaucracy that stands in the way of real systemic change.



This is a picture of a vehicle surrounded by police cars. The swift action of the police force works well to hammer down authority. If only it were the same for compassion and second chances.

This is a picture of a rainbow. It represents hope. Hope for the future and for change. It also represents moments of clarity, peace and happiness but like all rainbows, you're never really sure where they end.





This is a picture of train tracks. It is also a metaphor for tracks on arms due to injection drug use. The picture represents a path that is unknown with an unclear destination; one that may lead to a way out but the length of time spent on the ride is unknown.

This is a friend who has over-indulged. It represents the role that drugs play in our every-day, how addiction can run our lives and how easy it can be to exceed our own limits.



The Cards You Are Dealt

Life is random. We live our day-to-day with an illusion of control. That we can make plans and that is how our life will unfold. It is accepted that no one person has a life like any other individual who is alive, has lived or will live. It is a “fact” that we are all different and unique. Ask yourself: “How different are we really from one another?”

On the grander scale of life, we are all born, live and eventually expire. We all require the same resources to survive such as shelter, food, water and air. The country you’re born in, your race, ethnicity, gender, sex, neighbourhood, social class, disability, etcetera have different impacts on your path in life. However, a person has no control over which of these factors they start life with. These are simply the cards you were dealt.

Every person has their own hand to deal with; each person who had lived, is alive or will live has a metaphorical hand in the “game of life.” Think about how each “card” in your hand affects your life to this very moment in which you are now reading this very article. I played my hand to bring you into reading this, you played your hand into reading it. I am trying to deliver something; you are trying to receive something. We are influencing each other.

Think about events that have happened in your life. The A+ you got on a school assignment, or the F. The first person you chose to kiss, you did something for that kiss to happen; or the person you didn’t pursue and the regret you now carry. These events were influenced by the cards you were dealt; how you played your hand affected the outcome. By doing your work

how the teacher wanted, you earn a good grade. Doing a poor job, you receive a poor grade. In both cases, you made the choice that affected the outcome. In every situation you find yourself in, your action or inaction has the potential to affect the outcome.

We all need to breathe, to eat, we all experience emotions, have relationships and are faced with difficult choices. Although life places similar demands on everyone of us, circumstances vary according to the hand we were dealt. What and how we perceive the circumstances of our daily life becomes the source of variety, difference and individuality.

What did you see when you explored the photos in this book and read the accompanying captions? Did you see what the photographer saw? How much did your own experience and life history influence your perception of the images in this book? Were you able to relate to the views of the photographer? Can you imagine a time in your life when your hand felt similar to the hand of the photographer? Was this similarity surprising? How does knowing that the photographer has a criminal record impact the way you think about their message?

People who have been to jail are still people. Humans with their own hand to play. They were put into a situation in which they lost to a stronger hand and ended up losing a crucial round. Like any card game, players can choose to draw another card, fold, bluff, cheat, take a gamble or go all in. However, the move you choose will differ based on what you stand to lose. It is whether you choose to walk away or play that card. Most people learn to play the game of life modestly so as to not arouse suspicion. Stealing office supplies, cheating on a romantic partner or looking for a new job while still employed at your old one are a gamble that may not always work out in your favour.

People who commit crimes should not necessarily be excused or deemed helpless because of the cards they were dealt. They remain accountable for how they played their hand. However, is a focus on the fact that a person ended up arrested, charged, convicted and sentenced without considering the social context fair? Crimes occur every second throughout the day, throughout the world. It is the desperate crimes of survival that make the news and not crimes committed by people quietly, behind closed doors. At some point you would have encountered conflict that could have ended badly. Prior to incarceration, I can think of a few scenarios in which things could have gone wrong. Did you almost agree to helping a friend shoplift as a teen? Did you want to try drugs but decided not to? Did you almost give into pressure at some point that could have gotten you into a lot of trouble? Think about the card you played in that situation, what choice did you make? How did your own skills, experiences and knowledge of what you were risking play into that choice? Did you have anything to lose? Did consequences seem real? What types of support could you draw on to help with your decision-making? Were all options available to you? What could have happened if you did help your friend steal, if you did try drugs or give in to another type of pressure? If your friend had run and you got caught? What is it that makes you a criminal? The fact that you were caught. Nothing else matters.

While the play you make is your choice, the reality that not all plays are available to everyone when they need opportunities is often not acknowledged. Attributing the outcome of a situation to being the result of an individual's choice ignores the factors that contributed to crime even being an option, a potential card in a hand. In the end, its not really worth the trade off. An easy thing to say when looking back or thinking hypothetically about the future.

Laws and crimes are part of everyone's daily life. Some crimes are punished with a slap on the wrist, demerits or a fine. People who have never been in a position faced with a decision to act in a way that could lead to a criminal conviction speaks more about their social location than about who you are as a person. You could take any 10 people, give each of them the exact same cards and depending on any number of environmental factors, each person will likely respond to the same exact situation in 10 different ways.

Anything you do, you are sitting at the card table of life. Each person in each interaction are also playing their hand at the game of life with the cards they were dealt at birth. Same deck, different cards. How you "play your hand" affects the outcome.

In An Ideal World...

1. A person's criminal record would be sealed upon release or after a probation period is complete, which ever is later. Criminal records would only show up on "the system" if a warrant is ever out for a person's arrest or if children/youth could be at risk.
2. The experience of going to prison or jail would not be sensationalized. Being incarcerated or through the criminal justice system is not romantic. It is not cool. It is not a novelty. It derails your life. Pop-culture twists the savage reality of life behind bars, creating inaccurate social perceptions of what life with a criminal record means.
3. Remand wouldn't exist. 60% of people currently in Canadian Correctional facilities are on remand (Statistics Canada, 2017). Therefore, the majority of people who find themselves behind bars in Canada have not been convicted. Without being convicted you can spend anywhere from 2 days to 2 years behind bars awaiting trial.
4. Crime would not be used as a political tool. What the news, media and government officials communicate about people arrested, convicted or incarcerated is often not accurate. Mug-shots are used as propaganda, "rehab" programs are forced without flexibility to meet the needs of people with a criminal record and people in the criminal justice system are 'guilty until proven otherwise' as demonstrated by high remand rates.
5. Society would understand that:
 - Labeling our life histories and personal experiences as 'criminal behaviour' ignores all of the social conditions that lead to crime and makes it impossible for us to feel accepted in society. Similarly, labels such as 'ex-offender' focuses on negative aspects of our past making it hard to not be associated with crime.
 - People with a criminal record do not use social conditions as an excuse for crime. We seek an opportunity to have a real second chance. This means access to housing, employment, leisure and volunteer opportunities and the removal of institutional barriers such as criminal records.
 - Drugs do play a role but are not the cause of root societal issues leading to their use. All other activity related to acquiring drugs, such as "crime" is often the only resource people have to self-medicate or get through the day. Crime and drug use becomes a means to survive and are not part of a pre-meditated, deviant plan.

- Long lines at food banks, reporting requirements to social assistance programs and probation or parole officers, looking for work, re-building resumes, learning how to navigate healthcare systems, finding a family doctor, getting our identification back (including birth certificate) and other tasks keep us busy. Our lives may not be balanced, but they are full. People with a criminal record are not lazy or deviant. Sometimes they don't know where to start due to limited social resources, finances and mentorship.
6. There would be programs and services that provide affordable access to vet care for our personal support animals. Sometimes they're all we've got.
 7. People with a criminal record or who have been through the justice system would be consulted in shaping policies that govern how correctional facilities are run and how related services are structured. Lived experience is valued for people with mental health concerns or substance use issues in the Peer Support movement however people with a criminal record have been left on the sidelines. This book is an effort to fill that gap.
 8. Officials employed in different aspects of the criminal justice system would demonstrate compassion and understanding at all levels; from arrest to post-incarceration, in an effort to provide care/services/programs/resources that help people with a criminal record get back on their feet and avoid crime in the future.

Glossary – As Defined by The Participants

Bail: Its become synonymous with surety; basically it's a price on freedom. Having the money to pay it can stop you from having to spend time in remand. If you can afford it.

Canteen: The convenience store managed by the correctional facility. Goods are sold by large corporations. Prices are marked up 10% from street value.

Cockfight: Fights between inmates that are staged by employees of correctional institutions.

Employment: Slave labour. No income is received while working at the Provincial level with a maximum of \$6.00/day (average \$2/day) before deductions at the Federal level.

Evening Activities: Privileged free movement within the institution for Federal inmates.

Fish: A new inmate status you have until you are placed at where you will serve out the rest of your sentence.

Free Speech: Anything you say can and will be used against you ...

Gladiator Schools: Institutions where Cockfights are rampant. Fighting is a means of survival.

Healthcare: What needs to be done to keep inmates alive.

Indictable Offense: Criminal offense that results in a two years plus a day sentence (731 days).

Institutionalization: A fear of society. The idea of incarceration is comforting because at least on the inside, you know what to expect. Life on the outside is a struggle for survival in a sea of stigma and barriers.

Lockdown: Temporary but total cell confinement for a suspicion of a security breach.

Mental Health: Mental what?? Signs and symptoms of mental health concerns sends you straight to the Regional Psychiatric Centre. You have even less rights here. You can't even deny your medications.

Parole: The institutional release plan for failure. Things that were not laws before now become reasons for you to be thrown back inside (e.g. having a beer).

Probation: see Parole.

Programming: Mandatory tools administered by institutions based on your length and type of sentence. The tools include invasive questions. Inmates never receive a follow-up but programming is evidence that the institution "did their part."

Ranges: Sections of institutions where inmates are housed based on a number of criteria such as type of offense, length of sentence, level of threat, need for protection from other inmates.

Remand: Also known as "dead time" where you are held behind bars without even having a sentence because a charge alone is enough to make everyone distrust you.

Statutory Release: After serving 2/3 of your sentence, inmates can serve the last 1/3 in the community while under probation or parole supervision.

Summary Offense: Criminal offense that results in a two years less a day sentence (729).

Surety: A person who can pay what the Judge wants so you can avoid remand. The Surety gets their money back if whoever was arrested doesn't "screw up."

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