Out of Bounds Magazine

Volume 33 No. 2

Sentiments

Our Mission:

Out of Bounds Magazine (OBM) is a quarterly publication produced and distributed by prisoners, currently Jack Yu & E.D. Wolf, at William Head Institution. Its purpose is mainly to provide an avenue for contributors to express their views, opinions and experiences about prison, and to give prisoners a creative outlet to express their art. It is our hope that although our contributors may be physically confined, their ideas will transcend in both time and space.

VOLUME 33 NUMBER 2
SUMMER 2016

Submissions: We welcome any original prisoner-generated writings and artwork. We also appreciate prison-related statistics, news, legislation, politics, stories, and opinions from the community members. Also, we love to hear our contributors' story relating to volunteers, Prisoner Justice Day, and Christmas holiday.

Any and all rights to articles appearing in OBM remain solely with the authors unless otherwise stated. Permission to reprint any article may be requested from the author in the care of Out of Bounds Magazine.

Editorial decisions on matters of content are made by the magazine's staff. In no way should this be deemed to mean that Correctional Service of Canada or any affiliated branch of the criminal justice system supports these decisions. Furthermore, publication of submissions and/or advertisements means OBM neither opposes nor endorses the opinions expressed, advertised products and services. The views expressed in the articles appearing in OBM are those of the authors.

Submission Standard (for paper submission only) requires, written on the piece of paper that your submission is on, (i) contact info, (ii) date, (iii) whether you authorize us to edit and other publications to reprint, (iv) if your work has already been published, please detail the publication. If permission is not given (to reprint or to edit), please state how long you expect to be at the given address, so we can contact you, and (v) if you want us to print your full name, please explicitly state so on your submission.

Furthermore, if you include a cover letter and you do not want us to print the entire letter, the entire page, or just the paragraph, please write Do Not Publish (or DNP) by the salutation, the top margin, or the paragraph respectively to signify such intention. Otherwise, you are giving us permission to print that letter.

For more information on Subscription, Submission, and All other Correspondence, please address to:

Out of Bounds Magazine, 6000 William Head Road, Victoria, B.C., V9C 0B5

How to get on our mailing list:

Subscribe: For people who reside in Canada, a subscription to OBM is $18.00 per year or $32.00 for 2 years. An additional postage surcharge of $20.00 per year applies to anyone outside of Canada (If you have Internet access, I recommend reading this publication from www.penalpress.com). You can send your cheque or money order (include your name, address and postal code on a separate sheet of paper) to Out of Bounds Magazine via mail.

Contribute: If you are currently in prison and OBM chooses to publish your submission, we will send you the issue your work is in. Please note that our publication is now posted on Penalpress.com. By submitting your work to us, you are giving us permission to not only put it in this magazine, but also on the web-site. We will contact you at your last known address if permission is requested for reprint. If you do not respond or do not notify us when you move (or do not explicitly tell us not to give permission to reprint), you are giving permission to reprint.

One time promotion (OTP): If funding permits, a one time promotional issue may be sent to those who express interest. However, we strongly suggest that any interested party subscribe or contribute.

Cross Promotion: If your business is willing to promote this publication, to assist prisoners, or to encourage or recruit volunteers to assist prisoners, we will gladly put your business on our list. Better yet, e-mail us your business logo so we can put it in our magazine. We will also send a copy to those who advertise with us.

Out of Bounds Magazine, 2016. Printed and Bound in a Canadian prison.
ISSN 1195-9142. Please feel free to copy and redistribute this magazine in its entirety within prison.

Contents

Cover Artist's Bio:

Title: Summer Breeze (2005)

By: Dean Roberts

Dean Roberts is a self-taught artisan with over two decades inside. He only discovered art as an expression after coming to prison, and he since found safety, healing, expression, and salvation in the many "voices" of the artwork he created.

A passionate champion in the transformative power in art, a member of Advocacy for Art in Prison. Some of his work can be viewed at ArtInPrison.com.

An Up front Note from the Editor ---------- 6

Opinion ---------- 7

The Twin Spirits in Thomas King's The Back of the Turtle 7
Jurassic World: An Apocalyptic Film Review 9
Distracted No More 10
When Technology Strikes 12
Thank Gosh for Capitalism! 14
Land of the Beautiful 15

Continual Coverage ---------- 18

Office Inquiry 18
Unsatisfying Response 20

Prison Culture ---------- 21

Not So Single National Supplier 21

Peace and Non-Violence ---------- 22

My Little Dylan 22

Around the Peninsula ---------- 27

Appreciating No More 27
A History Nearly Forgotten 28
Dispersing the Fog of Biases 29
Wind of Changes 30
A Road Less Travelled 30
Fearless Writer in prison 32
Proud to be Metis: 34

People We Miss ---------- 36

A Eulogy for Somebody 36
The Greatest Hero I've Ever Known 37

Fiction ---------- 38

The Witch and The Outlaw 38

Creative Non-Fiction ---------- 42

Speaking Truth to Power 42

This Just In ---------- 45

CSC Technology hits OBM 45

Poetry ---------- 46

Time Is Love 46
The Yard 46
UNTITLED 46
Doing Time 47
My Love, My Love 47
Best Friend 47

What's Happenin' Next? ---------- 48

Editor's Note

AN UP FRONT NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

As promised in the last issue, here is Volume 33 Issue 2 of William Head's finest inmate published magazine *Out of Bounds*! This is one packed issue. It couldn't get any more packed! It's like a gladiator coliseum, boxing event, Broadway rendition of *The Lion King*, or Superbowl Sunday. There's so much excitement, action, emotion, and drama coming your way!

The focus of this issue was everyone's stinky butthole…I mean *Opinion*…Jack and I (with some help from Vernon) have loaded this section with the "straight goods" just for our lovely readers. We will be sharing Vernon's critiques on Thomas King's *The Back of the Turtle* and the recent installment of the Jurassic Park saga, *Jurassic World.* Now, I can't say I agree with his *Jurassic World* rating, but I constantly remind myself that it is an opinion piece! Anyway, I'll also be calling it like I see it on distracted driving, cyber-bullying, and capitalism's shenanigans (try spotting the satirical pieces).

Jack will be throwing javelins with his continual coverage. He will be continuing his monologue about digital camera usage, magazine subscriptions, and the like. Then, Jack will touch on his unsatisfying grievance response. Our *Prison Culture* section will also include Jack's research on the switch to centralized purchasing.

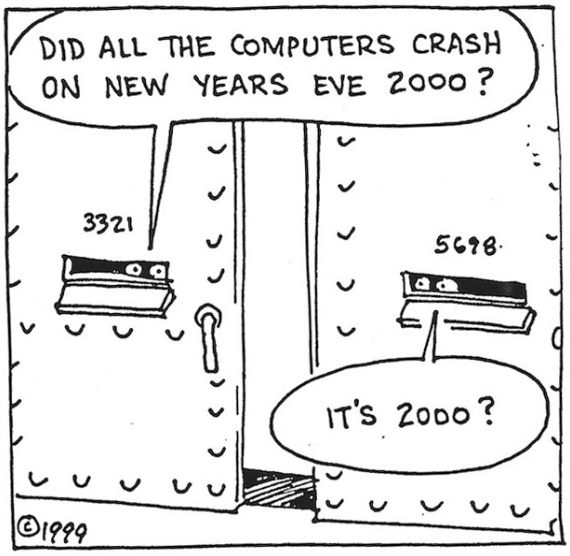
For *Peace and Non-Violence*, I'll be bringing tears to the reader's eyes with a quick straight with a story called *My Little Dylan* about a boy's struggle with a family member's passing.

Then, in *Around the Peninsula*, I retract what was said about the Music Appreciation Club and give a little insight to one of the UVic Speaker's Bureau lectures. Then, Vernon will be giving some play-by-plays with his articles on this year's last two UVic Speaker's Bureau lectures. Jack hasn't thrown in the towel just yet, because he finishes off this section with some William Head history, the volunteer appreciation event, and the Book Club's latest read, *Innocence on Trial: The Framing of Ivan Henry* by Joan McEwen.

In this issue, we will still be including Matt Matteo's cartoons "The In Side" and a new section entitled *People We Miss*. This section will be dedicated to the late Ed Griffin. *People We Miss* will include the heart touching works of Vernon and Damien.

Then, the circle of life is completed with a fiction piece (crafted by yours truly), some poetry, and a look into the next issue.

So, practice your *Do-Re-Mi*'s, sharpen your sword, or bob and weave your way into the phenomena that is *Out of Bounds* Volume 33 Issue 2. LET'S GET READY TO RUMBLE… I mean… READ!



The Twin Spirits in Thomas King's *The Back of the Turtle*

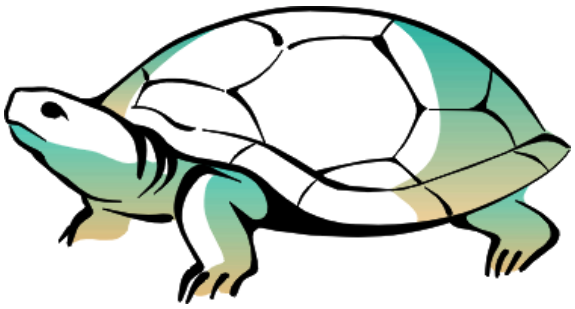
Publisher: Harper Collins

Year: 2014

Pages: 518

Price: $24.99

Ahhh, the joy of book clubs and the surprising way they can shape and expand our understanding of texts through lively discussions that invite people to share their ideas, feelings, and personal experiences evoked by their own unique readings. I had such a surprise this past March when the "Book Club for Inmates" group met at Arlon Maxfield Place to talk about Tom King's Governor General award-winning novel, *The Back of the Turtle* (2014). King's fable is set in the not-too-distant future where an eco-disaster has ruined the Kali Creek Reserve located near Terrace on the Northwest coast of British Columbia. The story follows Dr. Gabriel Quinn, a light complexioned Indigenous scientist employed by the Toronto-based agro-corporation "Domidion," who returns home to the Kali Creek Reserve to witness the devastating aftermath caused by his designer bacterium known as GreenSweep. While Dr. Quinn despairs over the disappearance of his family and community and flirts with the idea of committing suicide by drowning at sea, he soon discovers a grassroots gathering forming around him, made-up of diverse characters who also call the Kali Creek Reserve and the local town of Samaritan Bay home. Together, these characters teach Gabriel the power of a loving and forgiving community. Three of these magical-realist characters – the little boy named Sonny, his absentee Dad, and the ever-present and festive Nicholas Crisp – remain in my imagination well after our book club discussion, and so what is offered to you here are my musings on this dynamic triad.



A key to understanding Dad and Nicholas Crisp as a spiritual duo is the Indigenous creation story that King's novel centers around. In *The Woman Who Fell from the Sky* – as narrated at Crisp's birthday party by Gabriel, Mara (Gabriel's sister's best friend) and Crisp himself as they freely swim in the Beatrice Hot Springs – we learn that the First Woman landed on the back of the turtle and gave birth to twins, a left-handed boy and a right-handed boy (232). The twins go to work on the ball of mud that would soon become the world as we know it today. While the right-handed twin makes the mountains "nice and low with easy slopes" and "smoothes out the valleys, so all are broad and flat," his left-handed brother "comes along and grabs those mountains with his hands and pulls them into the sky, chips off the sides, makes them craggy and inhospitable" and "stomps on the valleys, so some be deep and narrow and trapped by the terrain" (236). In other words, the right-handed twin is intent on devising a world of "ease and convenience" while the left-handed twin focuses on "complicating the parts, until the world were complete and perfect" (236). As they feast, Crisp then shares with Gabriel and Mara that he is Sonny's uncle and that Dad is his twin brother "just like in the story" (238). "We weren't always from the Bay, ye know," Crisp goes on, "In another time, Dad and me were loose in the world, astride the universe with grand designs, him with his assurances and admonishments, me with my appetites and adventures. We believed we was elemental and everlasting" (239).

But, the twins washed ashore after "rough seas" thwarted their work, and they found their home in The Ocean Star Motel where Dad arrogantly took Room 1, Crisp humbly took Room 3, and Sonny stayed in the room in-between (239). After this arrangement failed, Crisp shares how he eventually made his home by the Beatrice Hot Springs. Although we learn that Dad left *before* the Kali Creek Disaster, Crisp never discloses the circumstances surrounding Dad's mysterious absence.

My own speculation is that King is up to something more here than simply crafting fresh characters informed by an ancient creation story rooted in the land. With Dad and Nicholas Crisp, I think King is attempting to provide a suggestive socio-political commentary on Canada. Dad, the right-handed twin fixed on creating order, has historically manifested in Canada's dark legacy of attempting to create civilized order on Turtle Island through government policies like the Residential School systems that abducted over 150,000 Indigenous children from their homes and communities, punished them for speaking their languages, and forcefully indoctrinated them into Christianity. The absence of Dad in King's story subsequently reflects a loss of faith in a monotheistic, patriarchal God who desires such order at the expense of devaluing and destroying cultural differences. In stark contrast, the adventurous Nicholas Crisp, the left-handed twin committed to "complicating the parts, until the world were complete and perfect," reflects the re-emerging spirit of generosity and festive hospitality that is beginning to animate Canada in a post-Truth and Reconciliation Commission Era. So while Crisp states it is no longer possible to reconcile with his right-handed twin, he remains dedicated to reconciling the Indigenous people of Kali Creek Reserve and the non-Indigenous locals of Samaritan Bay in order to complete and perfect a resilient community tasked with re-building life on the land after The Ruin.

On this interpretation, the rambunctious boy named Sonny represents our childlike faith that constantly seeks spiritual guidance in the world. At the beginning of the novel, despite strong evidence to the contrary, Sonny still believes his Dad remains in Room 1 of the Ocean Star Motel. It is only after he breaks the door open and sees a cob-webbed room that Sonny fully explores the world outside of the abandoned Motel. Spotting pieces of "salvage" along the beach, from a hand drum to little sea people, Sonny begins to believe that the animals and people will return home. Acting on his newfound faith, Sonny begins building a light tower to help the turtles and the people find their way back. It is during his light tower construction that Sonny reunites with his uncle Nicholas Crisp, and welcomes back the community that comes together in time to climactically push away the *Anguis* vessel, a symbol of the threat posed by transnational corporations and their slimy trail of environmental contamination.

If King's novel is a fable for our times, I think one of its central moral messages is that we do not allow our childlike faith to be restricted to an inhospitable space where others are interpreted in black and white terms (Dad's favourite colours, 379). Instead of allowing our childlike faith to wander aimlessly in a post-modern culture without God, morality, or order, what King invites us to do is trust in the adventurous ethos of the land that is intent on bringing together diverse human and more than human beings to co-sustain peaceful communities, a creative ethos that allows us to see vibrant shades of red (Crisp's favourite colour), and celebrate the miracle of landing together on the back of the turtle that is our home even after The Ruin created by settler-colonialism. This message should not come as a surprise, for in the words of Nicholas Crisp himself, "Tragedy has a trick of bringing folks together" (226). For brilliantly highlighting this moral message, I give *The Back of the Turtle* four out of five stars, and thank the folks of the Book Club for sharing their insights and bringing together our own post-tragedy grassroots community resurgence by the sea.

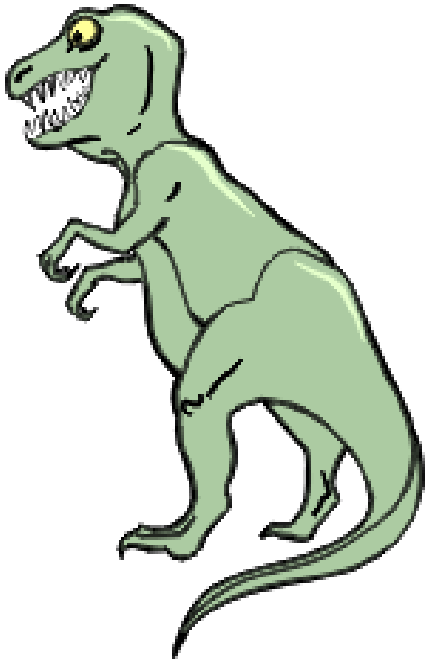
Jurassic World: An Apocalyptic Film Review

Directed by Colin Trevorrow

Executive Producer: Steven Spielberg

Starring: Chris Pratt, Bryce Dallas Howard, Judy Greer

[Spoiler Alert! What follows is a summary of the film's main plotline followed by my observations of the movie's apocalyptic content. Read at your own dino-discretion.]



In the newest film rendition of the American writer Michael Crichton's characters, two adolescent boys named Zach and Gray are sent to a week-long vacation to visit their Aunt Clare (played by Bryce Dallas Howard) in Central America where she helps run Jurassic World, a theme park showcasing the latest designer dinosaurs (hereafter designer-saurs). When the boys arrive, however, their red-headed Aunt Clare is so preoccupied with her corporate responsibilities that she neglects her nephews, handing them all-access wristbands and assigning her British assistant Zara to babysit them. For what is really on Aunt Clare's agenda is pleasing her executive boss, Mr. Misrani, with the newest genetically modified creature known as Indominus Rex (hereafter I-Rex), a creature cooked up in the lab in order to meet consumer demands for greater "wow" factor at Jurassic World. Taking its genes from cattlefish, tree frogs, and raptors, among others, this frightening hybrid mix is able to camouflage at will and hide from thermo-detection technology, a trait that allows it to eventually escape from its paddock and terrorize the staff, consumers, and the obedient designer-saurs of Jurassic World.

The action that ensues centres around military veteran and raptor trainer, Owen Grady (played by Chris Pratt), who helps Aunt Clare search and rescue her nephews in the valley. The boys, showing a sense of entitlement with their wristbands, ignore the park's closing announcements and remain in their gyrosphere, travelling further down the valley until their futuristic automobile is crushed by I-Rex. Ejecting themselves just in time, the boys jump off a cliff into the bottom of a picturesque waterfall and luckily happen upon an old-school red and yellow Jurassic Park Jeep (a nice homage to the Jurassic Park film trilogy).

Once Clare and Grady reunite with the boys, the film focuses on its central issue: how to kill I-Rex so that the capitalist enterprise that is Jurassic World can be re-opened as soon as possible. After Mr. Misrani's bold attempt to fly a helicopter and shoot down the monster creature with the help of two military veterans (who, before their quick deaths, tell Mr. Misrani that they served in Afghanistan), the war-hungry Hoskins and his InGen military corporation are brought in to kill I-Rex with the aid of the raptors that Grady has been training. It is here the film foregrounds its attempt to appear progressive on animal rights by creatively raising anew the ethical issue, such as, do extinct, genetically modified dinosaurs have "rights", or are they merely corporate "assets" to be used for profit? While Grady protests Hoskin's plans, he quickly concedes and leads his raptors – Charlie, Echo, Delta, and Blue – into the valley as mobilized dino-soldiers. Unfortunately for Grady and the human soldiers, I-Rex possesses raptor genes and turns the raptors against Grady and the soldiers. Thus, the story shifts to a battle between Grady and his InGen counterparts and I-Rex and his raptor relatives. That is until Aunt

Clare calls on the control centre to open up Tyrannosaurus Rex's cage and we are treated to a showdown between T-Rex and I-Rex, with the raptors (who, in the end, remain loyal to Grady as their alpha trainer) and Mosasaurus (a Leviathan-like sea-dwelling dinosaur with 88 teeth that has an equivalent entertainment value at Jurassic World as a captive killer whale does at Marine Land) entering the scene to help T-Rex finish off I-Rex.

After the climactic dinosaur brawl, the story concludes with Zach and Gray reuniting with their (soon to be divorced) parents, and Aunt Clare establishing a romance with Grady. The closing dialogue has Clare asking Grady, "So what do we do now?" To which, Grady confidently replies, "Probably stick together, for survival." And so the audience can rest assured that capitalism will not experience any more threats so long as corporate darlings and patriarchal military men remain romantically involved.

Despite the film's superficial attempts at appearing progressive, with its metacommentary on how corporations like Verizon Wireless shamelessly sponsor designer-saurs, and its social commentary on the rising divorce rates in America (i.e. Zach confides in Gray that most of his friends' parents are getting divorced so he should just accept it), *Jurassic World* falls into what the film critic David Christopher calls the "apocalyptic" genre. That is to say, its plot structure boils down to a threat to the capitalist status quo (viz. the escape of I-Rex and the inconvenience this poses to the Jurassic World business), resolved by docile proletariats (genetically modified, exploited, and ultimately obedient designer-saurs like the T-Rex, raptors, and Mosasaurus), with the status quo finally re-established so that divorce-ridden families and heterosexual couples can carry on with their self-absorbed corporate-consumer lifestyles at Jurassic World and beyond. I give the film two solid stars for its computer graphic animations, sound effects, and for its odd humorous scene (i.e. the control man being shut down by his colleague). But the all-around weak acting performances coupled with the story's pretentious attempts at championing animal rights within a capitalist frame leaves the audience wishing the Jurassic film franchise would itself explode into extinction.

Distracted No More

In the palms of our hands, we hold the whole world. With the touch of a button, I can talk to someone on the other side of the planet, surf the web, and watch videos. Soon enough, our cell phones will more than likely have the capability to feed us and wipe our behinds, too.

Each day, the human populace walks around like zombies. Regardless of age, the infection spreads and turns smart people into complete idiots. A group of friends will sit in the same room and won't say a word. Some guy will walk right into oncoming traffic. The oncoming traffic will not even notice the guy. This is because the human race is way too mesmerized by their phones.

Believe it or not, this idiocy has been running rampant. Watching the news, I've noticed a lot of hype over 'distracted driving.' There is one case in particular that gets talked about repeatedly.

Somewhere in British Columbia, some lady in particular has no less than 14 distracted driving charges because she used her cellular device. It's as if the commercials about preventing injury and

distracted driving are useless. It's also as if the age-old technique of hiring celebrities like Demi Lovato to say, "Hey, quit texting and driving," is becoming inadequate.

So, I decided to come up with my own ideas. At first, a couple of concepts came to mind. I thought, "maybe, the police could bump up the fine to, like, $1000, and double it for each re-offence." That seemed pretty reasonable. First charge is $1000, then $2000, then $4000. Since I still have a few years to go before my money tree sprouts, I wouldn't want to drive distracted. Then, I thought, "Nah, that won't work." So, I came up with a different idea. "Maybe, the police could confiscate the offender's phone. Then, they would have to purchase a new one or pay a fine to get the phone back." Or better yet, just revoke the person's license. Again, my thought was "nah, none of these ideas sound good."

Then one day, there was one news segment that said somewhere in Canada, a meeting would be held to think up ideas on how to put a stop to distracted driving. That was when it hit me. Personally, they can hold as many meetings as they want, but I feel that I've come up with a crystal clear, perfect plan that'll help end distracted driving.

Now, being an American in Canada, I also see a lot of hype about the beloved baseball team, the Toronto Blue Jays.

"E, what does baseball have to do with your alleged perfect plan to end distracted driving?"

It has everything to do with my plan. Baseball has a three-strike rule. Three strikes and 'yeeerrrrrr outta here!" I believe the police should implement the same rule, but with dire consequences. Allow me to elaborate with a story.

Timmy is driving and looking at his crotch, clearly not paying attention. Yet, Officer Jenkins was paying attention and on goes the "cherries and berries." Jenkins writes up a ticket for whatever amount he feels is appropriate and hands it to Timmy. The ticket also says in big red letters, "STRIKE ONE." At this point, Officer Jenkins already had punched in Timmy's license plate number into a worldwide database accessible for any cop. So, Timmy pays the fine after getting his paycheck and goes about his life.

After a couple of months, Timmy is in the next province being a bad boy and looking at his crotch yet again. Officer Leroy catches Timmy this time. Timmy has his window rolled down and his license and registration ready. Officer Leroy doesn't need to see Timmy's identification. He knows what he needed to know already. Officer Leroy casually walks up to the driver's side window and doesn't say a word. All Officer Leroy was told to do is hold up two fingers and walk away, no ticket necessary. So, he did and a confunsed Timmy goes about his business.

Six months down the road, Timmy goes on a road trip with a couple of friends. Thinking that the three-strike rule is just a joke and that he won't lose his license, he looks at his crotch one last time. Lo and behold, Officer Barbrady catches Timmy's third offence…

In the driver's seat, Timmy is kicking back, ID at the ready. His boys are chilling while they laugh at Timmy. In the mirrors, they all can see Officer Barbrady opening the trunk of his squad car. After a few minutes, he casually strolls up to the window. The boys are still laughing away as Barbrady whips out a double barrel. BAM! Timmy's head explodes as the laughing stops abruptly. In the front seat, Timmy's

"homeboy" is covered in brains and blood as Officer Barbrady rests the shotgun on his shoulder and says, "Okay, drive safe now! Have a great day!"

Most people have to learn the hard way and I believe this three-strike rule is the way to go. This lady with the 14 violations is getting away with way too much. It's setting a very poor example. Frankly, it's making a mockery of the RCMP and cops everywhere. With this three-strike rule, we all can act like Americans and shoot first and ask questions later.

When the word spreads that distracted driving can be dangerous, people will wise up and the number of offences will decrease drastically. So, drive safe and remember crotch kills!

When Technology Strikes

My grandpa used to tell me, "Back in my day, we'd walk five miles uphill both ways just to get to school!" Then I would ask, "Was it in the snow with no shoes on too?" He'd say, "Yup!"

Back in my grandpa's day, people would also get bullied in person. Being only 21, even I can remember a time when that happened. People used to get their faces dunked into snow (I was one of them), their bodies pushed into the mud, and spat on. People would do all of their "shit talking" to that person's face. Now, strangers from afar through Facebook, Twitter, and through text bully. Bullying has evolved to fit into our technological world.

"This is Michelle!" as Jenny posts a picture of a cow.

"Danny is a total fag!" – "Dude, totally!" – "What a fucking queer!" They comment as Danny posts that he and his girlfriend watched *The Notebook* over the weekend.

"#Hillary4Prez" – "@CarmenHottie23 you're a stupid Mexican bitch" @JessSoccerGurl tweets because she's a Trump supporter.

Nowadays, kids as young as 12 have become cyber bullies. Pardon my French, but it's fucking absurd. The cyber victims become so distraught because these 'trolls' have nothing better to do that they kill themselves. Which is just as fucking stupid, again, pardon my French.

"E, suicide is serious. Quite joking around like that. C'mon now."

Sure, suicide is serious. This is something I won't deny. What's pathetic is cyber bullying, the cyber bullies, and their "victims." Bullies have become such cowards that they can't even bully their victims in person. It's much easier to be a complete dick when you're 10, 50, or thousands of miles away. What's just as cowardly is feeling like killing yourself is the only solution.

So often, I see commercials that say, "Stop cyber bullying." What makes me want to kill myself is seeing these commercials. Let me demonstrate how easy it is to end cyber bullying.

"This guy in Germany, I don't even know him, called me a piece of shit! It's, like, the fourth time this week! I'm going to kill myself now!"

"Well…Are you a piece of shit?"

"No?"

"Then why do you care?"

"I…I…"

"How about you log off of Facebook? Or, or, better yet, block the asshole, delete his comment, or fuck with him back?"

"That would never work!"

"You may not be a piece of shit, but you're an idiot."

Ending cyber bullying is so easy, even a caveman could do it. These websites and apps have the capability to end such conversations, but people get so damn emotional that they become stupid and overreact.

People, Americans especially, like to take the easy way out. Yet, when it comes to stupid things, like cyber bullying, it's like trying to cure cancer. So, I'll let the cyber victims in on a juicy secret and I'll "cure cancer" for them.

Since blocking and deleting are waaaaaaaaaaaay too difficult to comprehend, I think the easiest solution would be to get rid of technology as a whole and go back to the Stone Age.

We could use fire to fight fire. The scientists of the world could develop a way to use technology to destroy technology. It would be quite simple. When the new computers, televisions, phones, and other such devices with WIFI capability (including cars) are put into production, each should be fitted with a small explosive chip. Nothing too serious that could take out the whole house, but something small to take care of just the device. The chip would have the capability to sense when cyber bullying happens, on both the bully and the victim's end. The chip would then be activated and BOOM! The device is rendered useless.

With all of the technology gone, the world's cyber bullies would have nothing to do. Since they are too cowardly to do anything in person, they would wither away without their technology. The victims would get the change to be with the bully in person, get to know each other, and possibly strike up a friendship. If letting bygones be bygones isn't in the cards, the victims could go outside and work on a Zen garden, take hikes, or go for a swim without having to hide their tears. The suicide rates would drop and people could go about their lives without the torture of having to learn how to press a button with the big bold

words "delete," "block," or "off."

With all of the technology gone, the human populace can finally stop giving a damn about what someone else thinks and carry on stress-free. Michelle can look at cows in a different, more positive light. Danny and his girlfriend can enjoy *The Notebook* without all the haters hating. @CarmenHottie23 can show all of the support in the world for Hillary Clinton and not live in fear of the ignorant Trump supporters. Life can carry on and we all can go back to worrying about walking to school five miles uphill both ways in the snow with no shoes on.

Thank Gosh for Capitalism!

Most people sit in front of a screen, pop their popcorn, crack open their Cokes, and take a movie at face value. On March 10th, UVic speaker of Art History and Visual Studies, David Christopher, changed the way inmates at William Head Institution view films. For roughly an hour and a half, Christopher revealed the inner workings of three types of film and their relationship with capitalism.

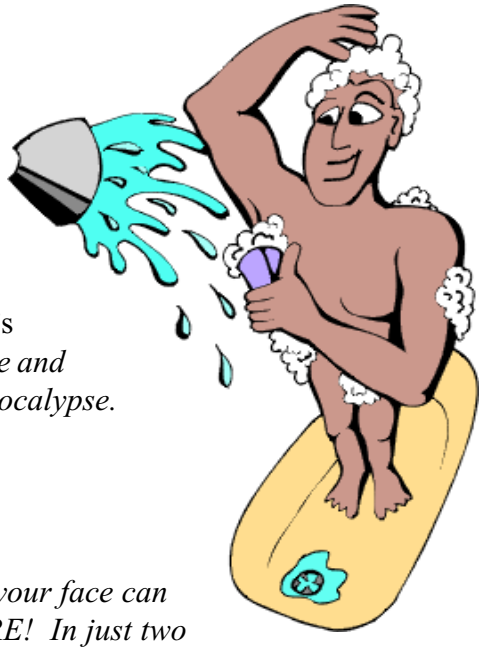
Using a slide show presentation and video clips, Christopher touched upon apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic films, with a heavy focus on the dystopic film genre. We all are aware that apocalyptic films show us a world where the end is upon us (whether it is aliens, asteroids, or some act of God). Then there's the aftermath, the post-apocalyptic world. Finally, you have the "illusion of perfect," the dystopic film genre.

"How do these relate to capitalism?" you may ask. Before I start, let me warn you that I am in no way, shape, or form, an academic. It may be hard to tell, but I am quite "unedumacated." So, I will paraphrase Mr. Christopher's words to the best of my ability. I shall start with the apocalyptic film genre. As previously stated, apocalyptic films show some disaster that threatens the world. Then, by some kind of luck, the disaster is averted. What does this have to do with capitalism? Well, can you (the reader) imagine a world where the next iPhone isn't just around the corner? Or, a world where you can't go to a shopping mall, look at all the cute boys or scantily dressed girls, and buy everything with a little piece of plastic? I don't think many people would be okay with that…In modern times, more people would rather see the world end as a whole than have to be without the latest trends and a steady cash flow. The Hollywood "fat cats" know this. So, apocalyptic movies are made to show the end of capitalism (via earth ending disaster) and how a patriarchal hero uses capitalist technologies to save the day. A couple examples would include *Independence Day* and *Armageddon.*

Next, I'll very quickly glance at post-apocalyptic films. If apocalyptic films show the aversion of capitalism's demise, post-apocalyptic films show the world after the disaster. The post-apocalyptic genre does what it can to portray the rebuilding of the patriarchal capitalism that we've come to know and love. Examples would include *Dawn of the Dead*, *The Matrix*, and *Mad Max: Road Warrior*.

Now, I will do my best to delve into the world of dystopic films. A utopia is a place of true perfection where nothing can go wrong. A dystopia is quite the opposite; it is an illusion of perfection. When you (the reader) watch a film where you go, "Oh my gawsh! That is horrible! Praise be that we live in the world we live in!" that's when you know you are watching a dystopic film. A dystopic film also shows capitalism at its peak and a sense of hyper-capitalism, where everything is a commodity. Not only do these films expose contradictions of capitalism, but they also drop you right into the story

with no knowledge as to how that world came to be like it was because *it just is that way*. Some good examples would include *Blade Runner*, *In Time*, and *The Purge*.



I'm a non-academic with a selective short attention span that isn't good at taking legible cohesive notes. So, if watching movies is you're thing and you (the reader) want to take the blue pill and view those movies in a different light, check out Mr. Christopher's work for yourself. *"The Capitalist and Cultural Work of Apocalypse and Dystopia Film"- CineAction 95- Global Nightmare: Horror and Apocalypse. Jan. 2015, 56-65.*

Land of the Beautiful

For $19.95, you can lose 20lbs in just two weeks! For $29.95, your face can be clear and beautiful in just 3 days! BUT WAIT! THERE'S MORE! In just two seconds, I'm going to slap the back of your head because you're an idiot! are what the commercials should say. Everyday, commercials barrage the public with the message of "pay me and take the easy way out." In a matter of days, the commercials promise awesomely fantastic results. Everyday, I watch these commercials, get pissed off and grow sick to my stomach. Everyday, stupidity takes control and those lazy bastards empty their pockets.

"E, isn't that a little harsh? Stupidity? 'Lazy bastards'? C'mon now." It's not harsh at all. I'm merely calling it like I see it.

Let's use the weight loss pills as our first example. The commercials say things like, "In a matter of days you can lose up to so and so pounds! Just look at Tina here. Look at her results in these before and after pictures!" Then Tina's dumb ass speaks up and says something insanely corny like, "I feel so much better. I can fit into my jeans from middle school!" Excuse me while I vomit.

Taking pills is taking the easy way out. I did that once and found myself in prison. No, taking a weight loss pill isn't going to get someone a one-way ticket to prison. It's the "easy way out" attitude that does. Many people would rather spend money and get the "quick fix" instead of actually working for it. Popping a pill has become the norm. People all over the world have become junkies and what they don't realize is that such addiction isn't healthy.

So, what happens after the honeymoon stage? The weight has been lost but the person's diet hasn't changed or that person hasn't changed anything with their life at all. That person goes back to eating at McDonald's or injecting themselves with Snickers, Kit Kats, or some other form of sugary crap. That person still goes to work and sits down all day then goes home to resume sitting down but with the television on. A few days pass and that person starts to feel a familiar feeling. That person doesn't feel as light as before. Oh no! The weight is back! Surprise, sur-fricken-prise. That's no problem, though. The solution is simple, pop another pill, ya junkie. The weight is gone after another day or two and the cycle continues.

The person now decides that he don't want to eat as much. *Maybe this other pill will solve my problem!* So, a hunger suppressant is purchased for another $19.95 and another pill is popped. One drug has been replaced with another. No diet changes have been made. No healthy changes have been made at all.

Now, let's use another hypothetical situation. The pill popper has no money to afford his bad habit. With no hunger suppressant or weight loss pills, the person eats because they have been unknowingly starving themselves. Since his food intake has been reduced, his metabolism turns to shit and they have gained more weight than they would have before. *Wait! Payday is only a day or two away! Hallelujah!* The junkie waits until payday and goes right back to popping pill after pill. The cycle becomes more and more vicious. Addiction's a bitch, eh?

Instead of exercising and eating right, this person decided to waste his money and become addicted to weight loss in all of the wrong ways. Losing weight is actually quite simple. Lay off the junk, do some sit ups, and go for a run. Which brings me to another problem - excuses.

All of that exercise and watching what I eat is too much for me. I just don't have the time in my day! Let me bang my head against the wall real quick… Dieting isn't as complicated as people make it seem. Jenny Craig, Atkins, and all of that other crap aren't necessary. Counting calories is a sure-fire way to starving oneself. It's boils down to eating healthier. Instead of shooting up with a bag of fun-sized Hershey bars, how about a handful of dates? What about eating a banana? Instead of a double cheeseburger from McDonald's, why not a salad from Subway?

Hours of the day do not need to be spent running or exercising. On the Internet, there are plenty of great programs to utilize. For example, T-25 is a cardio program that lasts only 25 minutes. 25 minutes out of one's day is nothing. If there's a show on at 7:30pm that just cannot be missed, why not do some ab work during the show? In the grand scheme of the day, these things take virtually zero time.

So many people are more inclined to finding the quick fix instead of working for what they have. So many people are more inclined to be lazy instead of working hard for once. Suck it up and grow a pair.

Brace yourself because here is example two. This example dwells more on stupidity than laziness. The commercials in question are the facial cleaners and teeth whitening products.

Commercials like *Proactive* and *Clean and Clear* are useless. Reason one, celebrities like Maroon 5's Adam Levine are the spokespeople. *I use Proactive everyday and my face is clean and I don't feel gross!* Then pictures of his high school days pop up and he states *It was so embarrassing to have all that acne! People made fun of me!* Boo-fricken-hoo. In high school, you're supposed to have acne. It's a normal thing. It's biology. Some people get lucky; some people don't. Don't go crying about it.

Reason two, other commercials for facial cleaners like *Proactive* have these 13-year-old girls as spokespeople. That is pure stupidity. These girls are saying things like, *I'm hiding like 'can you not'! I get acne here and here on my face. It's gross.* Blah blah blah blah. Why is this useless? 13-year-old girls are supposed to have acne! This is when puberty happens for some people! One of the "changes" that

happens to the growing body is acne! The time to be worried about acne is when someone is 35 years old and being called "pizza face."

When one is well past puberty and is still getting acne, there is a reason for it. It could be what that person eats, it could be from working in a dirty environment, or it could be stress. Eat right and wash your face. It's that simple.

Then there are the teeth whiteners. I'm sure the products work, but maybe not as well as the commercial would have you seem. Yet, I'll refer back to the actors in the commercials. *Ugh, my teeth are so yellow*. *Well, maybe you should try Crest this or that.* The kicker is that both actors have snow-white teeth. Even in the 'before' photos, their teeth were still beautifully white. I've even used the Crest 3-D white gel and the mouthwash for weeks and there have been minimal changes. Nothing significant has happened.

Yet, how do I know that this works and why should I spend six dollars on toothpaste that probably won't whiten my teeth? My response is that it's low self-esteem (and a little stupidity) from the consumer. It's also partly due to some false idea that we as humans have to be perfect in every way because if someone is ugly or different then they aren't worth our time. *If a celebrity uses it, then it's definitely worth using it! My teeth aren't as snow white as they could be; maybe I should buy this toothpaste instead! I want to be accepted so I need snow-white teeth, washboard abs, and a face so clean someone could eat off of it!* Anyone else want to vomit yet?

It's insane to me that self-esteem can be so low for so many. It's time for a change. I wanted to be accepted too. I did whatever I could to be accepted. Whether it was this drug or that drug, this product or that product, or this style of clothes or that style. *Wanna do this? What about that? Can you help me with this? That looks stupid, wear this instead!* You bet I will and after 20 years, I found myself at William Head Institution.

Stupidity and laziness run rampant and it's like no one cares. The world needs an attitude change and people have to accept themselves for who they are. It's time to look in a mirror and say, "I'm not that bad. I've got qualities I like and some that I don't, but that's okay. I'm going to be the best me that I can be and tell the world that I just don't care what they think." ☯

John Howard

The John Howard Society of Victoria

Involving the Community in Criminal Justice since 1935

John Howard Society of Victoria
2675 Bridge Street
Victoria, BC
Phone: 250-386-3428

John Howard Society
Manchester House
540 Manchester Road
Victoria, BC

Offered Programs include:

- BladeRunners Program,
- KidStart Mentoring Program,
- WHI Visitor Group Program,
- Community Justice Initiatives,
- Community Garden Program,
- Community Employment Program,
- Manchester House,
- Gelling Manor and Maxfield House.

For more information. Please visit

www.johnhoward.victoria.bc.ca

Office Inquiry

In January, this office formally questioned established rules like, (1) prohibited use of the digital camera technology, (2) seizure of photographs containing hand gestures, (3) disallowing magazine subscriptions, and (4) software limitation. By May, we have only received one document titled, "Inmate use of Image Recording System (IRS) within CSC – Guidelines."

This five-page document is written like a Standing Order, but without the usual header, the date of origin, or the designator's name. What it does have is the verbatim statement like the William Head's Standing Order, "The use of digital cameras by inmate photographers is prohibited."

This also directs the SIO and the designated staff member to closely review the photos, and contains a guideline I didn't know existed. It states, "As per these guidelines, any inappropriate photographs shall be seized and the inmate requesting the photograph and the Inmate Photographer shall be advised in writing or verbally of the seizure. The concerned inmate(s) has five (5) working days to provide written or verbal representations to the Institutional Head to demonstrate why the photographs were not in contravention of the established guidelines."

Two things pop out from reviewing the above guideline: (1) inmate photographers can take "inappropriate" pictures, CSC just has directions to seize them, and (2) there is a rebuttal process.

This guideline does not go into details as to what could be deemed "inappropriate"; however, it does contain a Restrictions section prohibiting the taking of certain content. Most of the listed restrictions are reasonable, like security installations and equipment (e.g. towers, main entrance, locks, barriers, etc.), restricted areas, and depictions of nudity. But what is with the "close-up of tattoos," and general statements like, "gang-related paraphernalia, obscene or inappropriate behaviour, and elements that have the potential to adversely affect the rehabilitation of the offender, or adversely affect the victim(s) of his/her criminal offence(s)"?

Why are "close-ups of tattoos" that are neither gang-related, contain nudity, nor obscene not allowed? What is the reason behind this principle? How does one judge what behaviour is "obscene or inappropriate"? Which moral standard does CSC use? And this wording, "elements that have the potential to … adversely affect the victim(s)…" is, in my opinion, too broad. Anyone can make an argument that seeing his/her assailant(s) face has the "potential" to "adversely affect" the said victim. Does this means that anything which could identify any inmate be restricted?

If this document contains a hyperlink for questions like other directives or bulletins written after 2014, this office could post our questions to them. However, no one seems to care where or how this guideline originated.

For those who wish to review the entire guideline, its file name is IRS Guidelines.doc.

...↗

Victoria Addictions & Rehabilitation Centre

525 Johnson Street
Victoria, British Columbia, V8W 1M2
Tel: 250-384-3396
Fax: 250-384-9412

Community Residential Facility

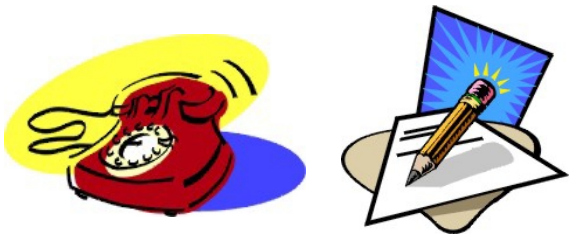
The Salvation Army Community Residential Facility (CRF) is situated in the heart of downtown Victoria, British Columbia, with its unique location in the downtown core allowing for easy access to many services and amenities in the community. The CRF offers residential based programs for a maximum of 43 people, all single occupancy rooms. The Salvation Army strongly believes in a holistic approach to helping our residents to restore their self-belief, allowing them to realize their potential and once again become a part of the community.

Skills for Recovery Program

The Salvation Army's Skills for Recovery Program is an intensive 8-week residential program intended for those with a history of substance abuse. This intensive residential program is skill based and holistic, utilizing established substance abuse strategies such as:

- Motivational Interviewing
- CBT
- DBT
- Stages of Change
- Marlatt's Relapse Prevention Model
- Therapeutic Community Approach Components

The program intends to provide participants with the skills they need to make a smooth transition from a life dominated by substance abuse, crime and incarceration, to a healthy life in the community. We believe that every client has unique needs and issues, beliefs and values, strengths and learning styles. We therefore use a variety of strategies and practical tools to nurture the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual elements in each individual. We will help you develop coping skills, self-esteem, impulse control, distress tolerance, empathy, awareness, and resilience, and achieve an increase sense of belonging, hope, purpose, meaning, humour, joy and gratitude. Participants of this full-time residential program live together on the fourth floor of the Salvation Army CRF. Great emphasis is placed on group cohesion, mutual support, and the creation of a safe and supportive environment where participants can learn, explore, and experiment with new ideas, beliefs, values, emotions, behaviours, goals, and identities. The Skills for Recovery Program can be used as a stepping stone for Day Parole when completed during an Unescorted Temporary Absence (UTA).



How to contact the Salvation Army

The Salvation Army will consider all referrals from Federal Institutions and Parole Officers on behalf of inmates scheduled for conditional release or offenders who have already achieved a conditional release or Unescorted Temporary Absence (UTA). The Salvation Army does not preclude residency due to mental or physical impairments. However, as there are facility limitations, decisions will be made on a case by case basis.

We encourage inmates to contact us through your Case Management Team. Alternatively, we can be contacted by mail at:

525 Johnson Street,
Victoria, British Columbia,
V8W 1M2
Attn: Community Residential Facility
Or by calling: (250) 384-3396 EXT 231.

Unsatisfying Response

After eight long months, my grievance, reference number V80R00020849, has finally been given a response.

In its submission summary, it correctly summarized most of my issues, including this one, "[OMS] states that the corrective action has been completed when you have not received the assessment." For this issue, its response was, "Please note that the corrective action did not indicate that the assessment had taken place, but rather, it indicated your position on the waiting list had been changed in order to provide you with a Psychiatric Assessment at the earliest possible date, in accordance with the corrective action stipulated in your grievance response." I accept this rationale. I just wish I would have received this reasoning: (a) on my previous grievance or some kind of written response soon after, (b) when I called the Offender Redress Division two months after I received the previous grievance decision, or (c) without the need of me filing a grievance to get it.

As good as this response was, the respondent neither acknowledged nor addressed my concern regarding to the bias of CD81, par. 43, where the directive only requires the person responsible for implementing the corrective action to "provide written confirmation and documentation to the decision maker…" but not to the griever. I guess CSC believes that the griever does not want or need to know how the corrective action will affect him/her. Why else would they bother not writing it into the directive?

What is the alternative for a successful griever to know more about his/her case? Calling the Offender Redress Division surely did not help in my case. It was this department who initially advised me to write a grievance to find out more. I just don't see how the Commissioner's decision to exclude notifying the griever would satisfy the legal obligation of "forthright and fair," emphasis on the word "fair." But hey, I am talking about CSC. It claims whatever it wants.

PRISON CULTURE

Not So Single National Supplier

As of April 1, 2016, CSC started to enforce centralized purchasing. CSC is doing this because, according to the memo it handed out, "all inmates across Canada will have access to the same list of approved items at the same prices." The memo went on to say, "the new catalogue will offer a similar selection and variety of items that have been previously available. The prices of the items are competitive within the Canadian retail market…"

First of all, let me talk about its nonsense claim on "similar selection and variety of items." The catalogue only has one TV, an RCA 19", that this national corporation is selling for double the price that is currently in the Canadian market. It also only has four pairs of men's shoes to choose from. Then, there are only three types of baseball/trucker caps. Its claim about similar selection and variety is hogwash; if one would list out all the items and variety that are restricted, this list would be at least 1000 times bigger than the list CSC provided. The easiest way to illustrate is from the music CD collection in the catalogue. There are only five CDs available. Are they seriously suggesting that inmates could only select from five varieties before? Inmates used to be allowed to buy any music CDs in any of the world's languages as long as they are sold in an open market. Now, there are less CD options available than foreign countries which produce music. Does CSC expect people to buy into their pitch? What type of mental illness do they think inmates possess?

The upper management's directions seemingly has bedazzled ISS (department responsible for inmate purchasing). Conflicting messages continue to pour out from that department. Before April, they were telling inmates that this new supplier is the only approved vendor for inmate purchasing. By the first week of April, they were saying that if the vendor does not carry items of our size, we could order off the catalogue. Two weeks into the new system, they were saying that inmates can order the same types of items that we were allowed in the past off catalogue if it does not carry the items. For example, inmates can still order books, video games, water filters, watch batteries, etc. off catalogue. However, in the first week of May, when asked whether inmates can still buy indoor soccer shoes and hand wraps for boxing (which used to be allowed to purchase), ISS told us that we can no longer buy them if the catalogue does not carry them.

Under this new system, CSC is not saving any resources. They still need to spend resources to hold ITF board (to approve items that are off catalogue), to process the money, to place the order, etc.

The only impact seems to be the exact opposite as the claimed purpose. Inmates can no longer purchase the selections and variety of items they notice on TV, magazines, or flyers. Consequently, local vendors will now do less business with the offender population.

The shared memo states that CSC had shared its intention with various inmate committees in 2013. Okay, so it claims that it complied with procedure fairness. But the real question is, does providing "all inmates across Canada [to] have access to the same list of approved items at the same prices" justify spending our taxpayers money to plan this since 2013*?

** CSC might have been spending taxpayer's money for this since 2010. Policy Bulletin Issue 528 published that "The National Committee on Inmate Purchasing and Procurement was established in 2010 to develop a national strategy to standardize inmate purchasing, and identify efficiencies in the procurement process."*

☯

PEACE & NON-VIOLENCE

My Little Dylan

By E.D. Wolf

"Happy birthday." His mom told him after their conversation started.

"Thanks," the boy started. "How's grandpa?"

"He," his mom paused for a moment, "passed away this afternoon." The boy didn't respond. He felt a tsunami of emotions wash over him as he started to bawl. Guilt and anger consumed the boy. He had wanted to be with his grandfather before he passed, but instead, he was placed behind a fence. Tears continued to pour down his face as he choked out a few sobs, unable to say any words.

"He didn't suffer." His mother continued. "We were surprised he lasted as long as he did. Randy and I didn't know why he was holding on for so long. We figured he was waiting for you to come home." The boy buried his face in his hands as he continued sobbing. His guilt continued to grow as the conversation proceeded. "There was one day that Zachary walked into the room and grandpa said, 'There's my little Dylan!'"

"I hate myself so much right now." The boy managed to say. "I wanted to be there before he passed away, instead, I'm here in jail. I thought he was doing better…" The boy and his mother cried together as the conversation continued, consisting mainly of silence.

Earlier, that day had been a day of celebration for the boy. Now, he sat by the phone crying and thinking about the day's events.

In the afternoon, his workout partner Al kidnapped the boy and dragged him to Al's house.

"Now, let's see how good of a blowjob you really give." Al had said to the boy as the door opened. Rob and Pete were sitting at the table with a white birthday cake decorated with candles spelling out '21'. They had all sat around the table, ate cake, drank coffee, and laughed. His first prison birthday had a great start.

A couple hours later, the boy and his housemate Jay had went to the chapel to watch a Catholicism video series with the Chaplains, John and Dana. Dana had brought out a plate filled with cookies. The cookies had made a circular shape with a heart-shaped cookie in the middle.

"Happy birthday to you." Dana had started to sing and

the others joined her. The boy had felt his cheeks burning with embarrassment as a smile had crossed his face. She had approached him with the cookies and said 'happy birthday' once more. The boy had reached for one of the cookies and she stopped him saying, "The one in the middle is yours."

That evening, before the boy had called his mother, Jay and James had joined him for pizza and cake. It wasn't any ordinary pizza, like pepperoni, sausage, or cheese, but it was pineapple, the boy's favorite next to shrimp. The cake was his favorite cake: carrot. Topping it off, Jay covered the cake with pineapple frosting. James also presented the boy with a card signed by Jay and a couple others. Jay had written, "Learn how to cook, bruh. BEWM."

The boy had felt so blessed that whole day. He may have been in prison but he was happy that he wasn't completely alone. The loneliness hadn't set in until after the phone call. The only person he told at the time was Jay. They took a walk after the phone call concluded.

"Everything happens for a reason, bro." Jay told him. The boy felt like he had known the reason.

"If I was at home," the boy started, "I know what I would've done. I'm old enough to drink in the states. My mom told me that grandpa passed away at 12:40pm. I was already planning on having a bottle of Jameson and some kind of vodka just for myself. I would've drank, done any kind of drug I could get my hands on, and done something really stupid. There could've been two members of my family dead today. I could've gotten insanely drunk and driven or drank myself to death. I know that I wouldn't have handled this as well as I am now."

"See, bro, everything happens for a reason."

No one else found out until the following Sunday at Church.

"How was your week?" Dana asked the boy.

"Uh… It was alright." He said hesitantly.

"Only alright?"

"Yeah…I found out my grandpa died on Thursday…."

"Oh, Dylan. I'm so sorry." She started as the boy's head dropped. "What kind of man was he?"

As the tears rolled down his cheeks, the boy responded without skipping a beat, "A great one." The boy continued, "He always smiled. Even when we were all arguing, he'd make some kind of smart-ass joke to lighten the tension. When we were younger, he and grandma would make us chicken noodle soup and scoop us ice cream…" The boy's mind continued to flash memories of his grandfather as if he were watching movie. "It just sucks… I wanted to be home and see him before he passed. By the time I get home, it would have been a year since I saw him. Now, I won't be able to see him again."

"Dylan, don't say that. You'll see him again. He'll be in heaven waiting for you with your grandma." She reassured the boy.

"I guess… I mean, I'm glad he's not suffering and I'm glad he's reunited with grandma. It just sucks…" He continued on, "They were wondering why he was holding on for so long. My mom told me that they thought he was waiting for me to come home. She told me that one day, my nephew walked into the room and he said, 'There's my little Dylan!'" He continued to sob as the tears flowed down his cheeks.

Dana continued to reassure the boy that his grandfather was safe. The boy went to blow his nose as Doreen, one of the church's volunteers, confronted him.

"You look so sad," she said to him as she walked the boy out of the room to talk. He shared with her the news he had received. Doreen then took the boy to her husband, Fred. Fred was standing with their grandson and a Vince and Jason, a couple of the inmates.

Shortly after, mass commenced as usual. The boy sat with his head down and hands clasped together as he prayed and prayed.

"Now, we come to offer our prayers and thoughts." John voiced out.

The boy was one of the first to speak. "I'd like to offer a prayer of thanks to you, Lord, for all of the great people that you've brought into my life and I pray that you continue to give them the strength to be as great as they are. For this I pray to the Lord."

The group spoke in unison, "Lord, hear our prayers."

Then, Doreen spoke. "Lord, I pray that you look after Dylan's family and help them to stay strong after suffering the loss of a loved one. For this I pray to the Lord."

The group spoke in unison again, "Lord, hear our prayers." The boy excused himself to the bathroom to gather himself. He did what he could to hold back the tears. Blowing his nose, he went to rejoin the group.

"Dylan, you've been give a special blessing." John announced to the boy with a smile as he had resumed his seat. As he sat down, the song played for blessings began.

"May the spirit of the Lord be upon you, we bless you in the name of the Lord," the group sang as everyone stood and approached the boy. Placing their hands upon the boy, the group continued singing. "May the spirit of the Lord be upon you, we bless you in the name of the Lord." Through the tears, the boy smiled. The boy could feel the loneliness and depression retreating from his body. He felt as if his grandparents were with him, letting him know that they would never leave him. He had greatly missed his grandmother and was still absorbing the loss of his grandfather. Yet, he felt more at peace with past events.

Soon after, mass ended and the boy returned to his house to grab his phone card. The boy searched for an available phone and made a call home, but this time; it was to his brother, Cody. The boy heard nothing too positive.

"The funeral is Tuesday and I guess Meghan and Kayla aren't coming to the funeral." Cody shared.

"What? Why the fuck not?"

"I don't know. That's just what Aunt Toni said. But, I guess Meghan actually is coming. I don't know. Bradlee told me that she had a dream that she punched Meghan in the face at the funeral."

"Good. Fucking bitch deserves to get punched out." The boy laughed.

"Then I told her that I heard Meghan was already in Wisconsin and all she said was, 'Damn.'"

"Well, if it happens, let me know. I mean, out of respect for grandpa, I hope it doesn't, but if it does, then I want to know about it. I'd pay to see that shit. Bitch deserves it."

"Yeah." Then Cody continued, "And the rest of the family is pissing me off too. Uncle Jason was going through all of grandpa's stuff and saying shit like, 'Well, this could go for this much, this is worth this much,' and pricing everything."

The boy's anger grew. He hoped that his family would come together instead of explode apart. Disgust towards the rest of his family grew as his brother told him about the insolence they had been showing toward his grandfather. Yet, the boy was powerless. He knew that he was the only one with the gall to speak his mind. All of the conversations he had with his brother or mother after that heavily included dissuasion against taking action.

"They will get theirs," his mother started, "We won't talk to them again." Yet, that didn't seem good enough. He had so much on his mind and the boy told his mother and his brother how he felt.

"Was that all grandpa meant to them? In the end, all he was worth was their 'cut'? What the fuck? I can't believe what I'm hearing. They were practically never around. It was always you and Cody. Even Randy was around more. I've been in prison for the last…almost a year now and I've probably still talked to grandpa more than any of them."

"Yeah, you're right. Just leave them alone. Don't worry about them. God knows what they did." He knew she was right and he pitied them. The boy felt sorry for anyone that had to suffer that wrath. In his mind, he envisioned the golden gates of Heaven shining brightly. He could see grandpa holding hands with grandma as they walked behind the gates. Though it wasn't his place to condemn others, he enjoyed thinking that when judgement day arrives, he, his mother, brother and sisters, nephews and nieces, and stepfather will be reunited with them and the rest will be left behind. He could imagine what they would say. "We miss you! We miss you! We miss you! Please forgive us!" Yet, the daydream still didn't feel good enough, as if something was missing. He wanted to write letters and make phone calls telling them all off. Being in prison made the boy think that he was the perfect candidate for such a task.

His brother had given him his Uncle Jason's address. Now, a letter could have been written at any time. A greater pleasure arose, though. In a few months, the boy will have a parole hearing. In his mind, he calculated his chance of being approved as great. He figured he'd be out a little more than a year after the cop arrested him. The boy could also guess what he would hear from most of those he knew.

"Dylan, we missed you so much! It's so great to see you! I'm glad you're back!" His response was still a blueprint, though.

"I'm sorry, but I don't see your name in this stack of letters I've received. I don't remember talking to you on the phone either. A year may not be that long of a time, but it was a year that I needed you the most and you were nowhere to be found. So, in other words, please go fuck yourself and don't crack to me. Don't even crack to mom, Randy, Cody, Bradlee, Randi, or any of us for that matter. Oh, and have a great day. Drive safe!"

There was also the just as pleasurable response of, "I see how you operate. 'Asleep for the action, awake for the cash.'"

Choice three was, "They say, 'A good captain goes down with his ship.' In your case, a good captain says, 'Fuck the women and children, I gotta get outta this bitch!'"

As the days passed, he pondered what his response would actually be. As more days continued to pass, he pondered it less and less. He found the bitterness slowly fading away. The boy prayed each night for just that and he found his prayers being answered. It was if he could hear the Beatles singing 'Let it Be'. So, the boy continued his routine. In the weight pit, he worked out his frustrations. He still called home regularly, wrote letters home, and went to church on Sundays. As he tried to avoid the anger, he wanted to believe there was still hope for his family. Yet, the more time that passed, the more that hope vanished. It continually broke his heart to think that as close as they all were, that they could give up on each other so easily. What hurt worse, was that he was practically told to give up on them.

His mind was conflicted. The boy wanted to say, "Fuuuuuuuuuuck you all," but his heart was saying, "You can fix this. I know you can." However, he knew he wasn't Spider-Man. He wasn't some superhero that can fix the world's problems or the villain that wants to watch the world burn.

"Ugh. What do I do? What can I do?" The boy continually asked himself. He wanted to give up and at the same time, he didn't want to. He was a prisoner, both physically and mentally.

One rainy day, the boy sat in his office listening to the radio. The blank Word document opened up on the computer's screen stared at him as he stared back. Even if any sort of inspiration had come to him, he was not motivated to type. Yet, the cursor flashed as if to say, "type anything, I'm waiting." As he lay back in his chair with his eyes closed, the radio spoke to him. It was Kendrick Lamar's voice saying, "If God got us, then we gon' be alright." With a perplexed look on his face, his eyes opened. *How had I not thought of that? Paul's letter to the Romans, "Nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Trials build endurance and endurance builds good character."* He knew at that moment what he had to do.

With the blank Word document still opened, the boy sat up and began to type. In the back of his mind, the words were already there. There was no thinking about it; the boy just did it. His story started with the words, "Happy Birthday."

☯

Canadian Friends Service Committee (Quakers)

The Religious Society of Friends, also known as the Quakers, sponsor this regularly featured column. Contributors are invited to write on issues of Peace, Non-Violence, Forgiveness and Reconciliation.

Appreciating No More

In the last issue, I wrote a short little ditty on William Head's Music Appreciation Club. I had mentioned that on February 10th the club had been approved, but the National Headquarters (NHQ) derailed the project before it could even leave the station.

On Friday, March 18th, 2016, an Inmate Committee Newsletter was sent out (as it is every Friday) saying that "NHQ blocked our new club, citing policy CD 566-12 Personal Property of Offenders Paragraph 20." The CD states, "Inmates are not permitted to give, trade, loan, rent or sell personal or other property to other inmates directly or indirectly. Unauthorized exchange of property between inmates may result in a disciplinary charge."

One of our Inmate Committee members stated in a letter to the warden saying, "The Personal Property directive cited by NHQ is not applicable to club property under program management." He also went on to say that the idea of the Music Appreciation club is similar to that of the sports/recreation club. "Offenders may contribute money for the purchase of, and to share among the population, items like recreational

equipment (e.g. hockey, soccer, baseball gear etc)…Music material is stored in the club office and signed in/out by club members. Music material is purchased by the group using inmate contributions and revenue generated from an annual fundraiser with no personal property contributions of any sort." The letter also asked to restructure the Music Appreciation Club Constitution in order to meet the policy requirements.

Yet, no word has been received on the matter. For now, Soul-ville's population will remain at zero and no one will be playing that funky music.

A History Nearly Forgotten

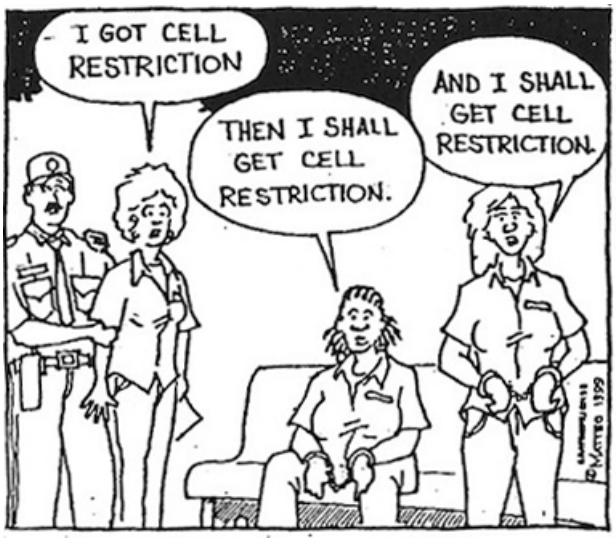
While working as the House Manager at the WHoS's play last year, a few patrons have asked me, "How did William Head get its name?" At the time, I was ill prepared for the answer. So, after the play, my travel to Ontario, and the two publication deadlines later, I finally ran into Kim, our retired librarian, on one of his visits. While no one I had asked could answer how William Head got its name, Kim quickly replied, "It was named after William Parry." Then I asked, "Is the name Parry spelled with a 'e' or an 'a'?" He replied, "Check the map, Parry Bay was named after him." Parry Bay spells Parry with an 'a'. Yet, that was all the information I could acquire since our new librarian has been busy getting the hang of things. But luck would have it, it was as if the truth really does come to those who seek. While I was reading past issues of OBM, I found a more comprehensive answer in Issue 10, January 1981, on an article titled, "Ms. Weir's Memoir." It reads,

> William Head – so named by Capt. Henry Kellet in 1846 after Rear Admiral Sir William Edward Parry, and after whom he also named Parry Bay.
>
> Originally William Head was part of Section 56, Metchosin Land District, which was registered in (the name) of Robert Weir on Nov. 22, 1854, and Crown granted to him on Dec. 7, 1871.
>
> A home was soon erected, known as Selsea, but following the purchase of Section 32 in 1859, a new home "Gordon Bush" was built at the end of what is now know as Swanwick Road. Selsea became the house of John Weir until the property was sold to Dr. Alfred O. Watt, head Medical Officer at William Head Quarantine Station. Just prior to World War II it was taken over by the Department of National Defense and during the war it was used as living quarters for Headquarters staff of the 5th BC Coast Regiment, R.C.A. A few years after the war the house was demolished to prevent further vandalism. Gordon Bush was destroyed by fire in August 1923.
>
> At first, most communication between the main home on Section 32 and William Head was by boat, or on foot through the woods. In the winter of 1868-69 however, the Weirs constructed a road between the two houses capable of wheeled traffic and Robert Weir drove over it the first time on Feb. 1st, 1869. Several portions of this road are still discernible.
>
> During the years the property operated as a farm it was used mainly for grazing purposes – the Weirs had over 800 head of sheep and 200 head of cattle. Considerable grain was also grown in the fields on the Pedder Bay side, outside the present prison fence. In 1865, Robert Weir formed a partnership with his four sons, William, John, Hugh James and Adam to jointly operate the farm consisting of Sections 31 (now Pearson College), 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, and 56 Metchosin District and Section 13, Sooke District. In 1887 the Department

of Indian Affairs negotiated for the purchase of the farm for an Indian Reserve. The matter was not concluded and in January 1888 the partnership between Robert Weir and his two remaining sons, John and Adam was dissolved and the property divided. John Weir became the owner of Section 56 and in 1892 the Federal Government expropriated 36 acres on William Head for Quarantine purposes. This was registered as Section 38 and the sum of $3,800 paid as settlement in full. The operation of William Head as Quarantine Station and later as a prison is a matter of record. Two events are of some interest:

The first occurred during the World War I, when Chinese Labour Battalions heading for France to dig trenches, were held at William Head to await train transport across Canada. Thousands passed through, as many as 10,000 being housed at one time in long rows of bell tents, 14 men to a tent. The same happened after the war whilst they awaited ship transport back to China.

The second was a prize fight, the first in what is now Western Canada, as prize fights were illegal at the time. Arrangements were secret and it was believed that the fight would take place on one of the American Islands in the San Juan group. The steamer 'Emily Harris' was chartered and scheduled to leave Broderick's wharf in Victoria a 6:00 am on February 23rd, 1866. The contestants and about 130 people boarded the steamer, which after several delays headed not for the San Juans but for Race Rocks. A further delay ensued when timber near the funnel caught fire – it was soon extinguished with a few buckets of water. The ship anchored in Pedder Bay opposite the Weir farm; the party came ashore and were led to a large natural amphitheater just west of the house. The fight commenced at 11:00 am between a Canadian George Baker, 5'10" and 154 lbs, and an Englishman Joe Eden, 6' 165 lbs, and a former policeman. Eden won by a knockout in the 128th round, the fight having lasted 1 hour and 52 minutes. It was fought according to the rules of the P.R. for $500.00 a side!



Dispersing the Fog of Biases

On March 30th, the Ethno-cultural group hosted special guest lecturer Dr. Lisa Gunderson, a clinical psychologist renowned for her engaging workshop addressing issues related to stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination.

Dr. Gunderson used concrete examples, like abortion, to enlighten her audience that people on both sides of the debate share similar traits. For instance, both pro-life and pro-choice defenders equally feel passionate about their views, justified in holding them, frustrated by the opposing view, and debate their opponents to promote their position. The primary difference was their beliefs.

These beliefs came from the messages people heard from the media, parents, or their friends as well as their own personal experiences. For example, if we encountered a few co-workers who had not pulled their weight that caused us to endure hardship and these co-workers happened to be overweight, a generalized belief or opinion about their characteristics, attributes, or behaviors might form. If we observe their physical attributes and associate it with their poor work ethic, we may form a stereotype like *Fat people are lazy* based on this one unpleasant experience.

Feelings like fear, dread, or hatred trigger physical responses, a sort of knee-jerk reaction, to distance ourselves from further possible harm. These types of unfavorable, and often favorable, feelings or attitudes towards individuals or an entire group are prejudices.

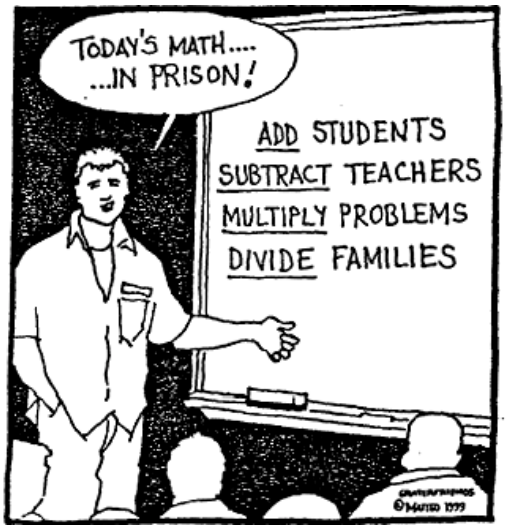
When we choose to act on these thoughts and feelings, we discriminate. For example, those that experienced efficient co-operation with similar attributes might choose to work more frequently with them and reward them higher wages. For those who have had negative experiences, they might label a specific type to verbalize their hatred.

Institutionalized–ism – like racism, sexism, heterosexism, and disableism – is a form of bias in a broader sense, like "Asian people are good at mathematics or they are into computers." These are not bad things to say about people *per se*, but these preconceived notions may be viewed as racist.

So, what can we do about it? Dr. Gunderson suggested that being aware of our own prejudices is a good start. Better yet, make positive contact with the other groups to reduce both implicit and conscious biases. Find some common goals, and make repeated contacts in an informal, interpersonal setting. Then challenge your thinking, appreciate the individual or groups, and try not to judge them based on a singular attribute.

For clearing us of our smoggy lenses, the William Head residents thank Dr. Gunderson for her sunny presentation.

Wind of Changes



Changes of 2016 continue with designating librarians and teachers as CSC employees. These valuable scholars and educators have always been contracted by other entities. In BC, New Castle College had been the contract holder. After them, it was Cascade College. This year, CSC decided to eliminate the intermediary and hired the librarians and teachers directly. CSC has scheduled to train them the CSC way and started their salaries at the bottom of the pay scale.

How will it impact the inmate population? For starters, beginning on April 4th, the William Head librarian's hour has been reduced by 6 hours to 20 hours a week.

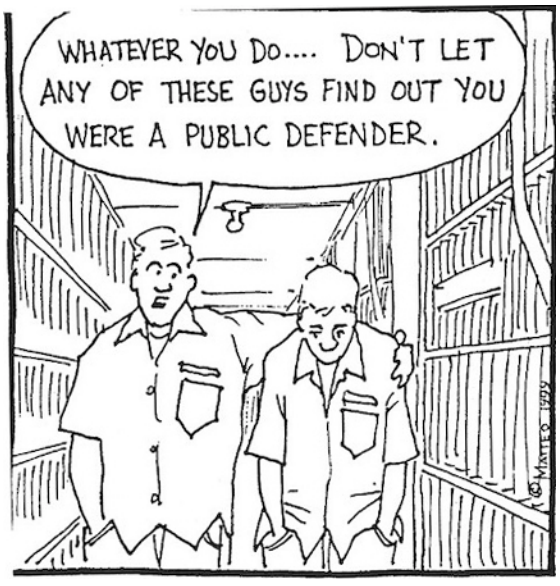
A Road Less Travelled

On Wednesday, April 13, William Head Institution hosted the annual volunteer appreciation event. Amongst all the activities, the Warden and Vernon, the MC for the evening, each gave an impressive speech; and, Matt and Johnny, the singers who respectively opened and closed the ceremony, moved the audience with their musical talents.

Our Warden, Trent Mitchell, spoke on change. He acknowledged that in the past five years, priorities and emphases within the penal policies have changed. With budget cuts and constant policy changes, the business of corrections has been a challenge. However, there were numerous improvements in William Head, especially the increased number of ETAs and the higher rate of successful parole applications. With the new majority government, he sees that a change towards a more pro-rehabilitation approach will emerge. For starters, the new government recognizes the importance in transparency, where he can now talk to the media. In closing, he thanked the volunteers for making a difference, "exchanging ideas on a real human level,… provide support, and a different perspective." Addressing the audience, "we are in the change business," said Trent Mitchell, and "we can't do this without you."

As encouraging as the Warden's speech was, Vernon's speech was the talk of that evening. Part of Vernon's speech goes like this,

> Our Coast Salish Elder who works at William Head, Small'thin (Thomas George), recently shared with me the teaching known as "kwum-kwum'then skwalowintz." Translated in English, the Coast Salish teaching is an encouraging reminder "to nourish and feed our spirits with good things." I felt this would be a suitable teaching to share with you all today because by feeding our spirits with an abundance of good things like hope, friendship, and well-being your volunteer work honours the people and culture of this land. So in the language of the land, we express our gratitude to you by saying, "Hitchka."
>
> I personally say "hitckha" to you for it has been your presence that has enriched the quality of my life at William Head. Whether it's in the WHoS workshops facilitated by Kathleen, Anne, Erin and their theatre troupe, or the restorative justice dialogues moderated by Dave and friends, or the Book Club organized by Heather and other book enthusiasts, or the socials and game nights with Matriarch Maxfield and her John Howard tribe, among so many other important volunteer groups represented here tonight – it has been your welcoming and friendly smiles, your encouraging words, your peaceful handshakes of goodwill that have worked to make my time here meaningful and redeeming. And so, I would like to take this brief moment to share how you all, each in your own unique ways, have taught me three things about the character of a prison volunteer.
>
> First, you, the prison volunteer, are by nature a world-traveller. You travel from your familiar and comfortable world in the community to the foreign world we inhabit here at William Head. Where many citizens would cringe at even the thought of stepping foot in a federal penitentiary, you have chosen to bravely travel to this unventured land. The world of the incarcerated is one with a foreign language, different norms and values, with different people you may not have come across in your worlds outside. So when it comes to volunteering your time in prison, you are, as a divine book aptly puts it, "in the world, but not of it." And yet you enter, and engage us with ease, trusting that somewhere in our broken worlds, there is something redeemable. With this core conviction, you relate to us in a way that opens up another world, a world inhabited by caring community members who have not forgotten us nor our place in the community. Our horizons are



broadened every time we encounter you, the world-travellers you are.

The second thing I have learned about your character is that, by virtue of being world-travellers, you are also risk-takers. Now, the word 'risk' is a loaded one as it is typically used in corrections to refer to the factors that led us to prison. In this regard, correctional programs are designed to identify our risk factors and help us learn the skills needed to address and manage them. And so I need to clarify what I mean when I say you are risk-takers. By volunteering at William Head, you take a risk that we are worth the time and energy you sacrifice. You risk getting close to us, listening to our stories, hearing our wavering voices, believing that we can walk the path of self-discovery and growth. And, most importantly, you risk walking beside us. In this way, you show us what it means to be risk-taking in creative, life-affirming ways. As pro-social risk-takers, you teach us that it's okay to take chances in relationships when what is on the line is the possible betterment of the other.

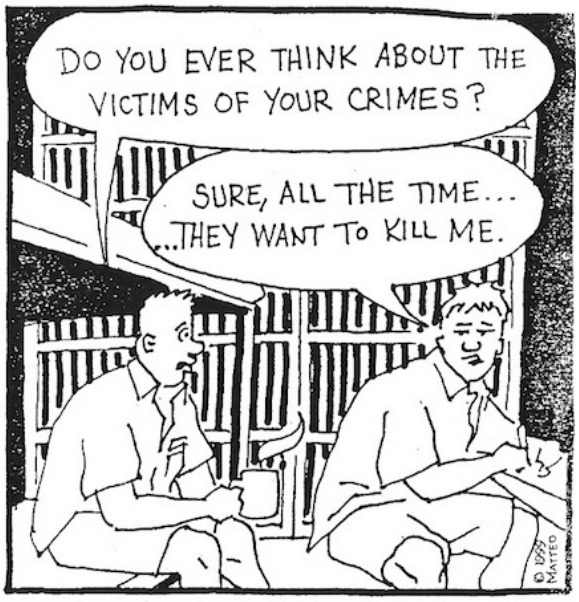
The third thing I have learned about your character is that you are sensitive and insightful spectators. As I'm sure my peers will agree, the experience of incarceration develops a heightened sense of being seen. Daily exposure to surveillance cameras and correctional officers conducting patrols around the site leaves us with a constant feeling of being watched. Your eyes also observe the prison environment, but rather than strictly seeing from a security lens, you generously choose to see us through the lens of compassion. With your expansive empathy and imagination, you see us from our own perspective. You see our own sense of ourselves from within our own life worlds. You see how we create meaningful narratives out of the fragments of our experience. Your field of vision bears witness to our humanity, our strengths and weaknesses, our joys and pains, our accomplishments and shortcomings. You are a committed and engaged audience, rooting for us to re-author our lives and share a different, more wholesome and forgiving story of who we *were*, who we *are*, and who we can *become*.

And so, tonight, we celebrate you – the prison volunteers of William Head Institution – for being the world-travelling, risk-taking, spectacular people that you are. For walking beside us and inspiring us to honour the Coast Salish teaching of kwum-kwum'then skwalowintz, we sincerely thank you and again say hitchka!

Fearless Writer in prison

On April 25, lawyer, labour arbitrator, and writer Joan McEwen shared her experience in writing her first published work of non-fiction, *Innocence on Trial: The Framing of Ivan Henry*.

In her brief introduction, Ms. McEwen, barely 5'5" tall, said that she is "really not afraid of anything." "Fear has never entered my mind, … except for prison." After a short pause, she elaborated that she fears "not the inmates, but the loss of freedom." That was the reason she chose to enter labor law, because "it is safer." "I couldn't bear the thought of my clients going to jail," Ms. McEwen confessed.



In 2006, after attending the Writer's Studio, she became fascinated with writing. In writing her second novel, a story about a white male prisoner and a female Indo-Canadian parole officer, she started researching prison culture. In the span of three years, she toured federal prisons in BC, invited parolees to her house, worked with LINC, and hosted creative writing workshops with Ed Griffin. As time passed, she broke down her fear of prison.

In 2010, Ms. McEwen was intrigued by Ivan Henry's story when she saw him on television on the day of his acquittal. She was amazed by his composure. "How can a man, after serving 27 years for multiple convictions of sexual assaults, appear to be so calm?" she recalls pondering. After that, she reached out to him. A summary of what happened next is written in the book's prologue.

Sitting among a few of Ivan's ex-prison mates, Ms. McEwen was very candid about her impression of Ivan. Four years of her life she spent writing *Innocence on Trial*. "Ivan was the biggest obstacle…. He was very wary," Ms. McEwen recounted. "He thought I was an undercover agent...trying to set him up and send him back to jail." At one point, Mr. Henry thought that Ms. McEwen was after his settlement money. Mr. Henry would not allow recording of their conversation, making note-taking difficult. But "he is intelligent, funny, and kind," Ms. McEwen ended. A cellmate of five years shared, "Ivan was obnoxious and irritating, … he took over the Law Library [in Mountain], … talked about his innocent story over and over again, … obsessed with getting out of prison…" Summing up their impression of Mr. Henry, another inmate who did 13 years with Mr. Henry said, "Ivan is his own worst enemy." That is the gist of the protagonist's character.

Innocence on Trial is an account of an unlikable character suffering discrimination and injustice in the hands of the criminal justice system. Writer Joan McEwen successfully captured her protagonist's essence, and skillfully guided her readers through Ivan Henry's trials and tribulations in the justice system. From tunnel vision cops, a seemingly useless public defender, cunning prosecutor, reckless judge, to the exaggerating nature of CSC writings, writer Joan McEwen shed light on a side of the Canadian justice system that is rarely written. Furthermore, staying true to her promise on proofing Ivan Henry's innocence, Ms. McEwen devoted a hundred pages on proving her protagonist's innocence and exposing the systemic bias against him. She pointed out judicial errors and flaws in the Canadian legal system and she quoted jurors, retired court clerk, judges, and cops in relation to Ivan's case. As stated on the back cover, this book "uncovered a multilayered story of corruption, injustice, and one man's three-decade quest to clear his name. *Innocence on Trial* is a Kafkaesque legal thriller, a scathing condemnation of our justice system, and a rallying cry for the wrongfully convicted."

For her next project, Ms. McEwen is looking for a female hero. She wants to write a story about a 1st nation female residential school survivor. "I'm interested in the aboriginal community…. I like learning new stuff,…and that's what I get out of it."

Proud to be Metis:

Metis Elders Mark and Fern Perkins Share their Journeys of Self-Discovery

On April 28, librarian Jeff Strain hosted the last *Speaker's Bureau* event of the year in the Salmon House with Metis Elders Mark and Fern Perkins as the guest speakers. Mark and Fern discussed the topic of Metis identity and history. The Metis people, known as the "children of the fur trade," trace their origins to the 1600s when European men involved in the fur trade met and had children with Indigenous women.

"Once a Metis, forever a Metis," said Fern who proudly wore a Metis sash over her left shoulder. Mark, casually dressed in a navy blue collared shirt and black pants, confidently tied his traditional sash around his waist.

Creating an interactive learning experience, Mark and Fern had various historical artefacts on display. On top of one table, covered in a beige HBC wool blanket, rested a tan deer hide jacket, a pair of snowshoes from Quebec City, a flute, hats of mink, muskrat and beaver fur, an otter scarf, a miniature wooden model of a Red River cart, and a few sets of moccasins with beaded flower designs. "The Metis loved beading flowers so much that they were called the 'flower beadwork people.' When beading our moccasins, we always leave one mistake as we believe only the Creator is perfect," shared Mark.

After teaching residents about the vintage Metis items, Fern and Mark created a sharing circle and went on to talk about their life histories. They both grew up in the Victoria area and knew each other as young children. At twenty-one, they married on July 8, 1971. Mark earned a baseball scholarship in the United States and returned to Victoria to work in the local fire department, while Fern finished her education degree at the University of Victoria and worked as a teacher. They went on to have three children and are now proud grandparents to three little ones.

Although Fern knew she had First Nations heritage as a young girl, after her father published an article about one of her forefathers in the *Time Colonist* in 1961, it was only in retirement that they discovered their Metis roots. After watching the CBC documentary *8th Fire* hosted by Wab Kinew—a recent series that focuses on Indigenous people in Canada—Fern and Mark were inspired to research their genealogies. Mark found out that his mother lived on a First Nation reserve near Prince Rupert and Fern learned that she was a descendant of the first Metis Family in Fort Victoria.

Their discovery revolutionized their self-understanding. Mark described growing up with "white privilege" and having to work through many stereotypes about Indigenous people. He now embraces and celebrates his Metis heritage along with Fern who has come out of retirement to instruct students at the University of Victoria as a Metis educator.

> *"Your DNA recognizes your homelands because you're actually seeing what your ancestors saw."*
>
> *-Metis Elder Fern Perkins*

As there were a few residents with Metis heritage in the sharing circle, Mark and Fern provided encouragement and wise advice on how to pursue the journey of self-discovery. They both suggested the public library as an excellent resource for genealogical research. Fern also shared how they found travelling to their homelands to be a spiritual experience. "Your DNA recognizes your homelands because you're actually seeing what your ancestors saw," Fern said.

At the University of Victoria, Fern enjoys working with mainly non-Indigenous students. "After I teach them about the colonial history of Canada, they always ask me, 'What can we do?' I advise them

to tell the truth and build allies with the local Indigenous people who live near the schools and will work as teachers. I encourage them to invite the Elders into the classroom to teach about the culture, history, and people."

Practicing what they teach, Mark and Fern respectfully acknowledged that William Head Institution is located on Indigenous land. "We are on the shared territories of the Coast Salish peoples, specially Scian'new, T'Souke and the Nuu-chah-nulth communities. Our Ross and Ogden families have been grateful visitors to this land from our homelands of the Anishinabe and Cree."

Inspired by their teachings, resident Vernon Wilson closed the sharing circle with a song he learned from a local Coast Salish Elder George Harris. "Although I am far away from my Gitxsan homelands in northwest B.C., I was helped by this local Elder in my healing journey just as you have helped some of the men here tonight continue with their Metis journeys," Vernon shared with Mark and Fern.

The residents of William Head thank librarian Jeff Strain for organizing three *Speaker's Bureau* events in partnership with the University of Victoria, and look forward to next year's guest speakers.

Prison Letters

Department of Sociology / Département de sociologie
Bishop's University / Université Bishop's
2600 rue Collège, Sherbrooke QC J1M 1Z7
Email: vicki.chartrand@gmail.com
Website: http://prisonletters.info

The Prison Letters group is a collective of academics and students who seek to promote prisoners' and former prisoners' access to information and resources, by responding to a variety of written information requests from prisoners. Requests can include anything from information on prison release, print-based distance education, employment, community resources, and anything in between. As we learn more about penal and carceral systems, the group also acts as a voice in the community to raise awareness of the issues and challenges faced by those in and out of prison.

The Prison Letters group provides information and support to:

1) enhance prisoner awareness and knowledge that supports prisoners on the inside and in their transition to the outside;
2) raise awareness of the struggles and challenges of people in and out of prison and others who are coming from social disadvantage that includes issues of race, gender, sexuality and poverty; and
3) demystify some of the associated stigma and myths.

Prison systems are not only designed to keep people in, but also to keep the community out. Without access or contact, prisoners are isolated from the supports and information needed to increase the quality of life and reduce the potential for conflicts to arise. Academics and students have significant access to information and resources and the Prison Letters group seeks to utilize and share these resources for those who have little or no access at all.

While the Prison Letters group does not offer legal or business advice or correspond with prisoners as pen pals, we can offer information on organizations that do. For more information, or if you are interested in joining, contact Dr. Vicki Chartrand at vicki.chartrand@gmail.com.

Prison Letters greatly appreciates donations at http://ubishops.ca/gift Other - Prison Letters, Account #2-00-000000-70232. A Charitable Tax receipt will be provided.

PEOPLE WE MISS

A Tribute to Ed Griffin

A Eulogy for Somebody

By Vernon Wilson

When I learned that my friend and mentor Ed Griffin passed away last summer, my intuition told me that Ed would want me to channel my feelings of grief into creative prose. Here, then, is my poetic eulogy dedicated to my creative writing teacher and delivered in Ed's brash spirit as an honour to him...

First, let's get something straight: Ed was a somebody.

Ed was somebody who was once a priest and who once marched for justice with Martin Luther King Jr.

Ed was also somebody with a strong desire for meaning and truth and who ultimately found nourishment in a loving family, social work, and art.

Ed was somebody who believed in the power of creative writing to transform lives – his own and the many lives he empowered while he marched the living earth.

Ed was somebody with a passion for making the world a better place and who daringly entered the dystopias of our society – the prisons – to share and realize his vision.

Ed was somebody who volunteered to encourage the most hardened and unreachable men behind bars to unclench their fists and pick up a pen to free their hearts and minds.

Ed was somebody who forgave the worst of crimes.

Ed was somebody who corrected authorities on behalf of the powerless. Yes, Ed was somebody who fearlessly spoke truth to power, even if it meant risking his own beloved vocation.

And let it be known and celebrated today, that Ed Griffin was somebody who did not go gently into that good night. For he was too invested in sharing his light with those of us living here in dark places.

Ed Griffin – though you are now with the stars – your legacy shines here on earth among your incarcerated friends. A legacy of rekindling our downtrodden spirits by reminding us that we too are Somebodies. Yes, we are somebodies. We are somebodies. We are somebodies!

And so, my fellow somebodies, the next time we look up, from whichever prison yard we may be wandering, and spy a burning star lighting up the dark sky, let us honour our mentor and roar:

"That star is a somebody!"

The Greatest Hero I've Ever Known

By Damien Arnaout

I honestly don't know how to do this. How does one write about a real-life hero when none, if any, exist in today's crazy world? But, here it goes.

The greatest hero I have ever known is Ed Griffin – a man I nicknamed, "The Saint." I had the honor and privilege to meet Ed and his partner-in-crime Michelle in January of 2010. While I was walking back to my unit, a flyer promoting a Friday morning creative writing class caught my eye. That split second would spark my future change.

Walking into Ed's class for the first time, I was struck by the atmosphere. In prison, tension and negativity prevail; yet in this classroom, they did not. As each of us shared throughout the class, people listened, responded, and encouraged each other. Ed had a magical way of giving everyone confidence. He pushed everyone to challenge themselves as he inspired us. Time and time again, he proved that through optimism and creativity, the best in people would overcome the worst. Ed has invoked change in countless lives. He has touched everyone he knew in a wonderful and personal way that left you knowing he cared deeply.

For the amazing life he had lived and for the love that helped lead him, Ed Griffin is the true architect of greatness. From serving in priesthood to marching with Dr. King, Ed was always a fighter for humanity. From gardening to teaching, he selflessly served making all around him great. It is because of this man I chose a new path in entertainment. From acting to music and continued work on my first novel, I owe all I am now to creative writing and the hero who believed in me.

Ed Griffin is not only the greatest hero I have ever known but the greatest hero this world has ever known. Rest easy my friend knowing that this world, thanks to your tireless crusades, is left far greater than when you arrived. You will always be missed and remain forever in our hearts.

R.I.P. My Friend.

☯

Over the Wall

Over the Wall is a twice-annual newsletter about strikes, actions and struggles going on inside or around Ontario prisons. It is published by End the Prison Industrial Complex (EPIC), a collective in Kingston who believe in and work towards a world without prisons.

If you have a story or article that you'd like them to contribute, if you'd like to receive the newsletter, or just want to correspond, contact us at:

EPIC, 427 Princess Street, Suite 409,
Kingston, ON K7L 5S9

epic@riseup.net, www.epic.noblogs.org

The Witch and The Outlaw

By E.D. Wolf

In the Wild West, myths, legends, and tall tales come about from every small deed that gets blown out of proportion. No device existed to capture what had actually happened, it was all word of mouth and word of mouth spreads like wildfire. One fool tells another fool and that fool tells two more. As the story continues to spread, the memory of it changes. Some would say the man who returned Farmer Dave's sheep all of a sudden saved a group of children from a ten-foot monster. Though one tale has always rung true: the tale of the witch and the outlaw.

As it goes, nestled in a small clearing, there was a small town named Paygoe. Paygoe was as normal as the sun setting after each day. The townsfolk were just as normal. Wake up, do chores or work, eat, go to the saloon, and go to sleep. The townsfolk lived simply and didn't have too many worries, until Dermot Smith stumbled into town.

As the story goes, Dermot Smith had arrived in Paygoe around midnight one summer night. It was on that day livestock became sick and children turned up missing. Of course, the stranger was blamed. The townsfolk called him a bad omen, but he wasn't the brunt of their misfortune…

"I haven't seen you around before, stranger." The bartender told Smith.

"That's because I haven't been around." Smith responded.

"What's your name, stranger?"

"Does it even matter? I ain't fixin' to stay long anyhow. Just here on business. Whisky, please."

"You know, stranger, we don't get many visitors our way. How do we know you're not fixin' to do us harm?" The bartender cocked his head as he asked.

"Simple, you'd already be dead." Smith said bluntly. "Whisky, please." The bartender uneasily grabbed a bottle of whisky and poured Smith a shot. As the bartender turned around, Smith added, "Leave the bottle. I'm gonna need it."

With his wits still about him, Smith walked out of the saloon after finishing the bottle. After what he had seen in his time, his tolerance had become high. He could drink like a horse and leave a pile of bodies underneath the table, but in his line of business, not many were left.

Paygoe had built itself a new chapel. The old one was left in ruins after a fire had broke out a few years earlier. It was in the abandoned chapel that Smith hung his hat for the night. No one stepped foot into that chapel and Smith was the type of man who preferred to disappear until needed. It's said that Paygoe's troubles started when that following morning .

"Oh, c'mon now, Bess." Farmer John coerced the cow. "What's wrong? Never have you not given milk." Bessie mooed as if to respond to her owner. "C'mon now. Don't break my heart like this, Bess." As blood started to trickle out from her mouth, Bessie mooed a little louder. Terrified, Farmer John stepped away from Bessie. His head turned as a horrifying shriek pierced through the quiet town.

"Tim!? Where's Tim? Where's my baby?" Miss Ann continued to shriek.

"My Rachel's missing too! Where is my girl?!" Another lady joined in and shared the terror. The bartender ran outside and shed some light on the subject.

"I bet it was that stranger! He said he was here on 'business.' Then, he drank a whole bottle of whisky and said he'd kill us all!" Meanwhile, Smith was in the abandoned chapel watching the commotion take place.

"He's probably half way to Staton by now!" One of the townsfolk chimed in. Smith looked down at the crystal amulet he wore around his neck. The clear crystal had turned to a solid black. Smith then looked up and saw the blue skies turn sanguine as the thunder roared. As lightning bolts surrounded the town, the townsfolk's angry horror turned into paralyzed fear.

"So it begins…" Smith whispered to himself. He threw on his vest and grabbed his pistols as he pulled out his map. Running his finger across the map he muttered, "If I were a witch, where would I hide?" Then, he spotted two caves North of the town. "50/50 shot," he paused as he looked back over to the town, "I've got time." Smith marked the locations of both caves, grabbed his hat, and left the abandoned chapel.

Absent of fear, Smith headed North. He had seen unspeakable terrors that would cause a lesser man to end it all. He had lost count of how many witches, vampires, and werewolves he had vanquished. Noticing the signs of what monster was where had become a second nature to him.

He knew that werewolves were sloppy creatures, they can't control themselves. Werewolves leave a trail of blood and guts, leaving nothing intact, and almost all of their victims died throughout the conversion. Vampires, on the other hand, were notably meticulous. Being creatures of the night, they can use shadows better than a thief could. If they didn't die, the victims usually looked sick. Some of them survived the conversion while others burst into flames, leaving scorch marks or a field of ashes. Witches were the most dangerous of all. The traces of a witch's presence vary on their practices, but almost every witch loves the flesh of children. A witch's spell book also varies from witch to witch, but with the use of a talisman, their magic can affect a person, place, or thing from almost any distance without the spell book. A werewolf can only be killed with silver; a vampire's heart needs to be destroyed, but a witch can be burned, hanged, decapitated, or shot, it doesn't matter.

The thing that these monsters had in common: dwelling in dark secluded spaces. Caves, dungeons, and nightmares are where they can be found. In search of the next witch to be removed from Earth, he continued North to Coal Miner's Cave.

As Smith approached the mouth of the cave, the light of day seemed to have almost completely vanished. Not wanting to waste his matches, he gently placed his steps as he waited for his eyes to adjust. As his world became more abysmal, Smith could feel the icy air envelop him. He could feel a pernicious presence prowling before him. How close it was, he couldn't tell. How deeply he delved thus far, he didn't know. Yet he decided to tiptoe forward as he slowly drew his pistol.

As the icy air grew even colder, a shiver shot sharply up Smith's spine. He knew he had to be close. Continuing to tiptoe, he heard footsteps matching his own. When he stopped, the footsteps stopped. When he tiptoed, the footsteps tiptoed with him. At that moment, he wasn't prepared to strike a match and be face to face with the hag. Yet, he struck the match anyway. With the lit match in hand, he slowly turned around. He could only see for a couple of feet, and in that couple of feet, there was nothing other than rocks and dirt. As Smith continued to turn, he concluded that no one was around. Yet, he remained vigilant and ready to pull the trigger.

Suddenly, the match went out. It was if someone had blown out a candle on a birthday cake. Smith became a juicy steak in the lion's den. Except, this steak was of a different breed.

An insidious force threw Smith against the wall. In the distance, he could hear his pistol skidding across the cave floor. His vision blurred as he tried to regain his breath. Trying to refocus his vision, all he could see was the glow of candles slowly fading into existence. The light of the flames intensified and blinded Smith. It was like looking into the sun. With the little strength that he had, Smith managed to raise a hand to cover his eyes.

As the light died down, he was kneeling in a stone room surrounded by candles and children's bones. His vision became clear and he noticed the blood stained dirt below him. Following the blood trail with his eyes, he realized he was inside the witch's pentagram.

The steak had finally landed in the lion's sleeping chamber.

Trying to make his way to his feet, he was pushed back down to his knees. "So, this is what it feels like…" Smith whispered to himself. He could feel the witch's cold presence behind him, adding, "You're making this too easy for me," as she stood silent. "We both know how this will end, witch. There's no place for you here. Why don't you leave now while I'm still feeling generous?"

"Your confidence is amusing." With a coarse voice, the witch responded coldly.

"Well, then at least you'll get a good laugh 'fore you die. Ain't that sweet of me?" Smith smirked as he instinctively reached for his pistol, but all he grabbed was an empty holster. Remembering that he had dropped his gun, he kept his composure as he devised a new plan.

"No weapon? Pity…" The witch laughed. "How do you feel about your confidence now?"

"You're still gonna die."

"I don't see h-" Smith interrupted her with a small knife to her shoulder. In agony, the witch screamed as the room disappeared. Smith felt the violent pain of an intense ringing in his ears as he reappeared at the mouth of the cave. Looking up at the dark sky, he realized that he had not finished the job.

"Fuck…" He whispered as the screams of the townsfolk echoed throughout the valley.

Smith ran back to Paygoe hurt and weaponless. He was lucky that the thrashing had not broken his back, but his pistol was still lost and the witch had made off with his knife. Regardless, Smith still had work to do.

The skies were dark, the thunder was loud, and the wind was blowing harder than a whore would on a Friday. In the center of town, the witch floated as she cast her magic spells at the townsfolk. Smith had to act fast. As he knelt behind a rock, Smith looked upon the inflamed town. Chaos ran rampant. The townspeople had nowhere to run and nowhere to hide.

Smith crept down to the back of the general store. As he peered around the corner, he saw that the witch's back was to him. All it would take was two well-placed shots, one to the spine and one to the back of the head. Being weaponless, he'd have to find another way.

Then, a twinkle of hope caught Smith's eye. He saw a little talisman dangled from the witch's ankle. With the witch's back still turned to him, with all of his might, Smith sprinted over and leapt. He grabbed the talisman with one hand and the witch's ankle with the other. The witch's spell was stopped mid-cast as she collided with the ground below. Smith took the talisman and ran for the gunsmith's shop across the road.

As the witch regained her footing, she saw the door of the gunsmith's shop close.

"You cannot hide from me!" The witch yelled as she pulled out her spell book. "Revealous Incantantum!" With a wave of her hand, it was if the shop had been blown over by a hurricane. Shards of wood were sent flying, crashing into other buildings and piercing through townsfolk like a hot knife through butter. Disintegrating the wreckage of the gunsmith shop, the witch called out, "Timberus Seari," as she slowly formed a fist. As the smoke cleared, Smith was nowhere to be found. "Im-impossible…" She muttered.

Then, a voice spoke behind her, "In my line of business, I'd like to think anything is possible. Improbable, yes. Impossible? Not a chance in hell. But, I guess you'll find out when you get there, though." The witch only had enough time to turn around and face the bullets Smith had sent her way. He shot one to the chest and one right between her eyes.

Yet, the witch stood perfectly still. It was if the impact of the bullets had no affect. As he kept his pistol fixed on the witch, Smith's expression shifted to disbelief. Slowly raising her head, her eyes had become as black as night. Her mouth started to spew black smoke as she emitted an earsplitting screech. Covering his ears, Smith howled as if he was being tortured as he dropped his gun and to his knees. "This is new!" Smith yelled amid the pain as his ears started to bleed.

Struggling to keep his eyes open, Smith's disbelief turned to shock. The black smoke continued to billow and the screech intensified as the witch's body slowly started to expand. Smith fought the pain and reached for the pistol with his bloody hand. With one swift move, Smith grabbed the gun and delivered one final shot to the witch's overblown body.

The witch's body exploded leaving behind traces of black smoke. Waves of energy pulsated from the black smoke throwing Smith off of his feet and destroying the town. Smith crashed landed on a rock and saw the world through blurry eyes. Before Smith's world went dark, he saw a dark shadow idling above him. Then, his eyes closed softly.

Bloodied and broken, Smith witnessed the town and its people implode into the smoke, leaving only bits and pieces of Paygoe behind. What happened to Smith after that is a mystery. Some say he died in the wreck, others believe he crawled his way to the next town over to disappear like he usually did. All we know for sure is that in the Wild West, sometimes the myths, legends, and tall tales are just that.

☯

Speaking Truth to Power

By Vernon Wilson

Previously published in Briarpatch Magazine *(January 2013 Issue), winner of the Creative Non-Fiction Contest.*

May 18, 2008

George was a short, stocky, whisker-faced, 48-year-old Cree man who covered his long black hair with a purple "Native Pride" trucker hat. He spent his entire life incarcerated – in residential schools, foster homes, mental wards, provincial jails, and federal prisons – and learned one thing: how to fight. So I was thankful my encounters with him were non-existent. That is until he came to me with an issue too traumatic for him to deal with, let alone spell out. Having seen me work as a tutor in the prison's school, I guess George thought I could offer some help.

"Hey-uh...I have something here for yah," he said as he looked down at the white paper in his hand.

"What's that?"

"It's a…well…come over here and I'll tell yah."

I cautiously walked over to his cell, not knowing what he was up to.

"See, the staff, well, they tellin' me I can't do my Pathways program. Says I gotta do their school. Just like that damn reza-dental school told me I couldn't speak my own language."

George went on trying to explain his problem to me. As I looked him in the eyes, I did not see a hardened convict. Instead, I saw a helpless man-child desperately attempting to articulate himself. After asking a few questions, I had the gist of the issue.

George was suspended from school for absenteeism and low grades. His teacher, Ms. Campbell-Scott, told him he could not particular in his Indigenous cultural program, Pathways, since it was in his correctional plan to be in school. George was below a grade 10 educational level and so school was made mandatory for him.

He went on to tell me that the had spoken with Ms. Campbell-Scott a few weeks ago and told her he was going to dedicate himself full-time to the Pathways lifestyle and planned to complete his education in his community upon release. Since Ms. Campbell-Scott did not mention that there would be any problem with his plans, he was under the impression that he had successfully transferred from school to Pathways.

Something about the whole thing made me suspicious. Bet seeing how distraught this made George, an otherwise hard-hearted man, I agreed to help him write a complaint that made clear his position and that would request his suspension be overturned.

Later in the day, as I sat in my cell searching for the right words to defend George's position, I heard a knock at my door. I turned to my left and saw the upper part of George's face poking up into the door window. "But when you fight the prison system, it's like an old reserve dog chasing its tail!" he said as he chuckled and walked down the corridor.

"How true," I muttered as I clutched a fist around my pen and began to scribble down a few notes. I moved on to George's educational history and the similarities he perceived between residential and correctional schools, mainly how he thought government agents were punishing him for practicing his culture and forcing him to learn their forms of knowledge on their legislated terms and timeframes.

Here I was reading and referencing correctional laws and policies for a man two decades my elder.

I was "educated" and he was not. But we were both affected by settler-colonialism, just differently.

Soon after graduating from high school, my Uncle Mel suggested I pursue Indigenous Studies at the University of Northern British Columbia. If I had followed his advice, I would have learned that Indigenous peoples had a dysfunctional relationship with what Western society calls "literacy." I would have learned that, prior to contact, there were no written language systems in North America, that Indigenous peoples lived in oral societies and were forced to be "literate" by the federal government's residential school system. These institutions, however, were based on cultural illiteracy and control. According to George's complaint, the prison school system was based on the same model.

But I didn't value my Uncle Mel's advice. For one, I thought the university was too close to my reserve. Secondly, I thought that such a field of study was somehow illegitimate and inferior. So I never pursued it. Instead I studied Western Philosophy at my Trinity Western University, a Christian liberal arts institution located over 1,000 kilometres away from my village.

As I concluded George's complaint, I reflected: Am I the ultimate product of a successful assimilation policy, where Indigenous peoples no longer need to by physically forced to attend a Christian-based school but disconnect from their communities and go on their own volition? Was I an accomplished undergraduate, or was I incarcerated in settler-colonial ideology, trapped in the thought that Western intellectual culture was superior to my Indigenous traditions? Had l lost my indigeneity by saturating my mind with European thought – Socrates, Aristotle, Aquinas, and Descartes?

Sure I learned how to read and write, but I never learned how to live. George didn't know how to read and write, true. But at least he was trying to learn how to live right by following the Red Road in his Pathways program. Why would the prison system not allow him this opportunity? I thought to myself. By the time I sifted through my own thoughts and George's complaint, it was about two in the morning. I went to bed for the night in a state of confusion and wondered if this was how George felt on his first night in residential school.

May 19, 2008

In the morning, I typed up George's complaint and handed him a fresh copy at lunch. He looked it over and even attempted to read out some of the words.

"I am..dis...sat.is...fied...with the... foll…ow…ing…desish….uns," he sounded out like a focused kindergartner.

He approved of my work and quickly handed it into the correctional officers on duty. Ten minutes later, George again poked his head into my cell window. This time he had something with him.

"Hey, check this out," he said through the crack between the door and wall. In that small piece of window I saw vibrant shades of red, black, and white painted into drawn ovoids and u-forms, arranged and shaped to create the crest of a wolf.

"Man, that's beautiful, George."

"You like it? Well, that's good, cuz it's yours!"

"What? No, I can't take that from you."

"Don't be like that. It my gift to you. For helping me."

"Well, if you made it for me as a gift, then…"

"Sure, well-uh, it's what brothers do for each other."

"Thanks George. That's the clan I'm a member of too. Wolf."

"I know."

As my cell door unlocked for count, George handed me the canvas painting and walked off to his cell before I could say a word. Then I asked myself: Did he draw and paint this the same night I wrote his complaint? Was he using his drawing and painting skills to honour and represent me the way I was trying to do with my reading and writing skills for

him? And how did he know I was member of the wolf clan? I never found the answers to these questions, but I like to think George was gifted with a spiritual understanding that no philosophical treatise could ever expound.

Late that day, the correctional officers on duty approached me.

"Nice writing."

"What are you talking about?"

"C'mon, we know you wrote that complaint. We're not idiots, like some people."

I became irate. I stared him down, straight into his blue eyes and found nothing but cold indifference.

"Well how long will it take to be processed?" I played along with their charade.

"No idea. Thought it wasn't yours."

"It's not, but while you're bringing up the topic, I might as well solicit some information on the complaint process."

They laughed, did their rounds, and as they left the range, the other officer said, "Clever, real clever."

I returned to my cell, lit some sage in my abalone shell, and prayer for George's truth to be heard.

June 11, 2008

Weeks passed, and nothing happened on an institutional level. I didn't expect there to be a quick response. There never is. But something did happen on a national level – Prime Minister Stephen Harper's apology to residential school survivors. As I came back from my morning class, I turned on my 13-inch television and laid there on my bunk bed, listening to this long overdue political oration:

"For more than a century, Indian Residential Schools separated over 150,000 Aboriginal children from their families and communities…Two primary objectives of the Residential Schools system were to remove and isolate children from the influence of their homes, families, traditions, and cultures, and to assimilate them into the dominant culture…Indeed, some sought, as it was infamously said, 'to kill the Indian in the child.' Today…I stand before you, in this Chamber so central to our life as a country, to apologize to Aboriginal peoples for Canada's role in the Indian Residential Schools system."

I muted the volume, ready to holler for George to tune in, when I heard a quiet sobbing coming from a distant cell. It was George. This man, still isolated from his family, still punished for living his culture, still having western education imposed on him by the federal government, this vulnerable child, was finally vindicated from that dark chapter of Canadian history. Tears ran down my cheeks as a solemn thought entered my consciousness: He may be locked up, but the Indian and child in him have not been killed. I lay back down on my bed, unmuted the volume and listened.

When our cells unlocked for lunch feeding, I found George walking by.

"So what did you think of the apology?"

"It was…" he coughed, trying to clear his throat. His eyes were bloodshot.

"It was…good," he said, with a simple smile of gratitude. Nothing more. What more could I expect? A doctoral dissertation for a response?

George was a survivor, and that, in and of itself, was more impressive than any sophisticated speech or literary discourse. George was alive to listen and receive those historical sound waves so many of his peers did not live to experience. I patted him on the shoulder. Then, breaking convict etiquette, I hugged him. I hugged George, the lonely child in an Indigenous man's body, right in front of the two correctional officers to whom he had submitted his complaint. And for a brief moment in prison time and space, I swear, those two officers for once saw beyond the "Aboriginal offender"

label and witness two resilient human beings consoling each other, appreciating the other's survival. At least that's what their looks of epiphany told me, right before they ordered us to take our lunches back to our cells and lock up.

As I peeled an orange in my cell, listened to our national chief, Phil Fontaine, response to Harper's apology. What resonated with me was his talk about the "irresistibility of speaking truth to power." I felt privileged for having done this in writing for George, articulating his human right to practice his culture and spirituality to the prison system, an institutional microcosm of Indigenous-Canadian relations, if you will. The only exception: George is still waiting for a response. It, too, is long overdue.

THIS JUST IN

CSC Technology hits OBM

On May 13, IT dropped off a computer with the CSC restricted version of Windows 7 and Office 2013. Three days of testing convinces me that this machine, with its current configuration, can neither produce equivalent quality nor enhance productivity in our endeavour to create an exalting product.

First, Microsoft Publisher, without (a) connection to the Internet, (b) access to the core program's folder, or (c) links to external programs, is less useful in producing publications than Microsoft Word. It cannot generate a Table of Content or customize 'style'. It does not have a 'ClipArt Gallery'/'Picture Library', and CSC locks out the ability to make hyperlinks. Microsoft's 'building blocks' system would have been useful if not for the restrictions to its folder location. And these are just the layout/design part of publishing! Printing part of it cannot be tested until IT installs the printer driver.

Second, CSC locks out customization features and perfunctorily set up the programs. Our 15 year old Adobe PageMaker has shortcut keys for every function it has. Microsoft Publisher does not even have a shortcut key for the Style Gallery. There is nothing professional about this software. No wonder my predecessor threw away the Publisher 97 CD OBM purchased years ago. This Windows installation was poorly thought out. Both the'Document' folder and default browse location are linked to a restricted part of the hard drive. On top of that, the Desktop is write-protected. So, the first time 'save as' or 'insert picture' is used in any Office product, an alert message will pop up. Unique to this machine, the spell check and thesaurus features do not even work. The only silver lining is that the IT had set the date and time right.

Windows restriction is worse than before. Prohibiting the 'search' function for 2 Gig of data sucks. If CSC doesn't open this function for us, someone will have to manually document every article in our published work and log every entry of our business letters onto a file. Otherwise, when there is an inquiry with only a reference to the article (which happens often), we will not be able to process such inquiry. No access to the context menu (aka right-click) will take some time to get used to, but no access to the 'folder tree' (aka 'navigation pane' or 'folder view')? Are they f#@king serious? What kind of security issue would this limitation solve? Are these f*!kers preparing us for Windows 3.1? Come to think of it, even Windows 3.1, an operation system that is more than 20 years old, has 'file manager' which has a folder tree. What kind of upgrade is this? As if it is a cruel joke, CSC disabled the 'open each folder in the same window' feature causing new windows to open and disabled the 'up'

Continued on page 47

Poetry

Time Is Love

By JD

Just being with you
has really helped me grow.

What you mean to me
is something you'll never know.

To lose a feeling like this
is really hard to shake.

I care even more
with every breath that I take.

I want your love
and will fight to have it all.

I would give you mine
and never let you fall.

All I got to do now
is just wait for the night.

I could look you in the face -
such a beautiful sight.

Just not knowing what the lord has in store,
makes me so excited and makes me want you more.

What if it goes all wrong,
or maybe even right?

Will we fall in love,
or always want to fight?

But one thing is for sure,
I will love you everyday.

Till death do us part,
is something I want to say.

The Yard

By Jarrod G. Shook

The yard
Is where I walk
Stride for stride, lap for lap
Around, around, around this track
Heeding, heeding, heeding these views
Thought for thought, muse for muse
Is where I think
The yard

The yard
Is where I feel
Love for love, hate for hate
Poignant, poignant, poignant this fate
Request, request, request to learn
Grace for grace, yearn for yearn
Is where I pray
The yard

UNTITLED

By Brian J. Doyle ©2015-02-05

How easy it is to say
How easy it is to walk away
When it comes to saying the words
that you really want to hear
It's so easy to say…
I love you my dear.
For the days that pass away
for the sunshine that lights your day
it always seems to be
when it comes to you and me
There is always that light of hope
remember that tire swing hanging from that rope
over that little crystal pond
we spend hours each day that are now gone
And the love we hold for each other
is one that will last forever,
and it's like no-other…

Doing Time

By Rick Vandale

What has life become for me,
a testament of ways to cope,
determined to just persevere,
from an illness that taken hope.

At times I am not certain,
What's real or what is not,
I seem to waste away the years,
doing time, thinking a lot.

Once in a while, inspiration comes.
I find a purpose to my means,
but this is always just short lived.
I lose the hope it brings.

So I do time from a life of crime,
I fight my way for peace,
this is it a world of shit,
my torment I guess I keep.

Best Friend

By T Stermotic

Death is always near.
She sits by my bed,
caressing my hair;
humming tunes in my ear.
Why is she feared?

Death is always on my mind.
Regardless of when I'm sad and afraid,
when I'm happy and content,
I take comfort in knowing
she is always near.

Death is my dear;
she is always here.
She sits by my side.
She asks with her eyes.
Lies never pass her lips,
longing for the kiss goodbye.

My Love, My Love

By E.D. Wolf

True love never dies.
As the human body expires, the soul is still alive.
Their heart is always yours and their spirit stays by your side.
When you are awake and when you are asleep, that love will always keep.
Your love will always watch over you no matter where you go.
Your love will always hear you when you are down and feeling low.
Do not be sad but rejoice, for you will never be alone.

☯

Continued from page 45

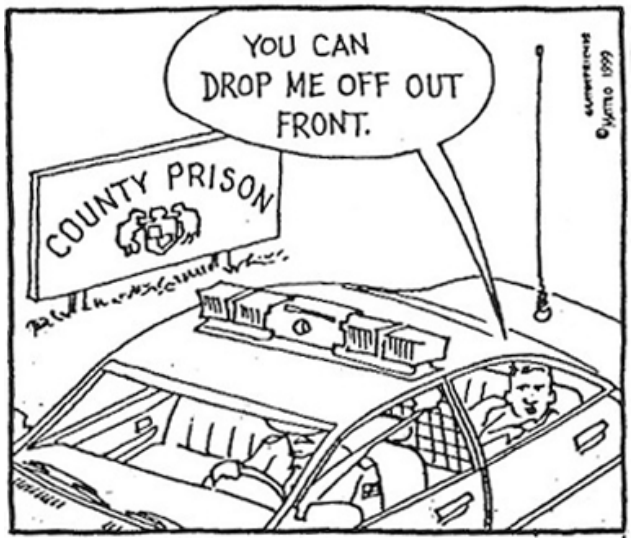
button so inmates need to learn to use the address bar or the taskbar to navigate. However, this workaround still leads to numerous windows left unclosed.

Because this system is so 'advanced', most of OBM's existing software does not work with the new system. Aside from our publishing software, our label making software will not work with the new system. Before we received this machine, I naively suggested downloading an application from Avery (a company that makes our mailing labels) thinking that Avery would provide support for its products. The trouble is, CSC disabled the micro feature to the point that Avery's add-on does not work. Now, every time Word initiates, two pop-up messages appear instructing to enable the micro. I never received this many alerts in my life. Can't wait for IT to remove this add-on…

There you have it, another downgrade-attempt disguised as an upgrade.

☯

What's Happenin' Next?



Unfortunately, next issue will probably be my last. In August, I hope to be heading home. Now, I'm not sure how anyone else is feeling, but I feel that it was a good run. The spearhead of our little operation will change and we all shall move on to bigger and better things. So, the question is, 'how do I plan to pop off my last issue?' Well, so far, we've touched on creativity and opinion. So, if you're not sitting, I'd recommend finding a chair, because I'm about to do something crazy. The focus will be on a new, special edition, limited-time-only section called, *Ahh, Good Times.*

Ahh, Good Times will be a section reserved for just that. It'll be a section specially tailored for your hearts and mine. It's for all those memories that make you smile, cry, or whatever else you feel. Remember that time your buddy chased you with the largest spider you've ever seen and you ran away faster than a cat being chased by a dog because spiders are devil spawn straight from hell? Or, what about the time it was your birthday and that same buddy had a cake made for you and asked what kind of blowjobs you gave? Oh, and don't forget the time you were tripping on shrooms and you were laughing so hard you couldn't breathe because your friend was throwing up and it was hilarious for some reason.

Either way, what I'm trying to say is that whatever memory you want to share with us here at *OBM*, keep a twinkle in your eye and share away. We've had some good times here at *OBM* and I'm sad to resign, but it's time to go home to make more good times.

SUBSCRIPTION INFO

To subscribe, send us the name, address, and postal code (or zip code) on a separate piece of paper and send along the appropriate amount indicated on the right.

**American Subscribers would require an additional $5.00 CDN per issue to cover the current postage cost.*

Thank you for your support!

ONE YEAR
FOR $18.00*

TWO YEARS
FOR $32.00*

Make cheque or money order to:

OUT OF BOUNDS MAGAZINE
6000 William Head Rd
Victoria BC V9C 0B5
Canada