

Michigan Lifers Association, Inc. and National Lifers of America, Inc.

Michigan

Lifers Report

MAY 2022

Newsletter

SEXUAL OFFENDERS, CORRECTIONAL EMPLOYEES, VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ASSAULTS, PARENTS WITH SEXUALLY ABUSED CHILDREN, AND CONCERNED CITIZENS NATIONWIDE WANT TO KNOW THE CAUSES OF SUCH BEHAVIOR AND WHY, NOW, ANIMALS ARE BEING SEXUALLY ABUSED?

(Part 1 of 2)

Willis X. Harris

The Michigan Lifers Association, Inc. has been contacted and asked the above questions. Because I am not qualified to answer these questions, I consulted with two psychologists, Richard Althouse, Ph.D. and Ronald Mellen, Ph.D., both of whom are members of the International Association of Correctional and Forensic Psychologists (IACFP).

I wrote both of them and asked the same carefully worded questions listed here:

- a) When and where did sexual deviancy start?
- b) What was the purpose?
- c) Why are children, especially boys, targeted?
- d) What do we call predators who rape animals, i.e., sheep, cows, pigs, dogs, and horses?
- e) Are there any cures or treatments to reverse these perversions? If so, what?
- f) Lately, Catholic priests and Catholic sports doctors and leaders are being arrested and charged with sexually molesting young girls and boys. What roles, if any, does religion play in sexual deviancy and paraphilia?

Each psychologist will express his own professional experience and understanding of the six asked questions, starting with Richard Althouse, Ph.D.

(Althouse) In my opinion, anyone who studies genetics would likely agree that ... (Cont. on p. 3)

Highlights

Second Look.....	p. 2
Unintended Consequences...	p. 4
The Time Has Come.....	p. 5
Second Chance.....	p. 6
What Are You Doing.....	p. 6
Book Review.....	p. 7
Life Without PREA.....	p. 7
Mail Policy.....	p. 10

**MICHIGANS LIFERS REPORT
NEWSLETTER**

Michigan Lifers Association, Inc.
4417 2nd Ave., Ste. 211
Detroit, MI 48201-1214

National Lifers of America, Inc.
P.O. Box 18023
River Rouge, MI 48218

Willis X. Harris
President
Michigan Lifers Association, Inc.

Gina DeAngelo
Executive Assistant
Michigan Lifers Association, Inc.

Carlton Banks
Chairman, National Board
National Lifers of America, Inc.

Constance Garner
Vice-Chairwoman, State Board
National Lifers of America, Inc.

Jamie Meade
Editor

Writers

Mario Cavin
Michael Fletcher
Dwight Henley
Richard Kilbourn
Jerry Metcalf
Bruce Micheals
Bryan Noonan
Sybil Padgett
Scott Wynne

Cartoonist

Terry Young

Send articles to:

Michigan Lifers Association, Inc.
Attention: Willis X. Harris
4417 2nd Ave., Ste. 211
Detroit, MI 48201-1214
(Limit articles to 600 words)

SECOND LOOK SENTENCING LEGISLATION

Dwight Henley, M.B.A.

Second look sentencing (SLS) legislation has become the new criminal justice trend across the United States, and it has recently caught the attention of Michigan reformists, legislatures, and criminal justice proponents. In fact, SLS has garnered the support of Michigan legislatures from both sides of the political isle. However, many people lack a true understanding of second look legislation, and it is this understanding that draws the support of its proponents, whether liberal or conservative.

For those unfamiliar with second look legislation, these laws seek to provide incarcerated people the opportunity, not the right, for release. This release derives from the ability for a person to petition his or her sentencing court for a resentencing. Each state, via the SLS laws it adopts, sets the amount of time a person must serve before becoming eligible for resentencing and defines the class of criminal convictions that are effected by the law. In its entirety, or in its most liberal form, second look legislation allows all incarcerated people who serve the designated amount of time to petition for resentencing, but some states impose less comprehensive SLS laws. Washington D.C. has enacted SLS in its entirety, and this approach is being pushed in Michigan, spearheaded by The Sentencing Project and Alexandra Bailey.

The nature of second look legislation is why legislatures from across the isle and criminal justice proponents have embraced the idea. SLS does not give a person the right, or even any presumption, for release. It simply provides a mechanism for review of a person's sentence. In this sense, second look legislation is completely different than good time; it is more akin to a commutation request. Equally alluring to criminal justice proponents, second look legislation provides a review process that involves all participants in the criminal justice system. The prosecutor has an opportunity to speak and the judge determines--without any presumption to do anything--whether or not to reduce a person's sentence. And once a sentence is reduced, the parole board still determines whether or not to parole the person. This comprehensive process ensures convicted criminals do not slip through the crack, so to speak.

For incarcerated people, SLS means what they do in prison actually matters. In deciding whether or not to grant a resentence, a judge will look to a person's misconduct history and his or her program participation while in prison. Basically, the judge will focus on whether a person poses a risk to society, the judge may even require society ... (Cont. on p. 8)

(Sexual Offenders, from p. 1) ... sexual behavior among animal life forms is the result of only three things: genetics, brain function, and the environment, all collaborating to ensure one goal: The perpetuation of their species. To accomplish that, one needs to be genetically programmed to be sexually attracted to the appropriate opposite-sex mate and engaged in mating activity that leads to reproduction. That's the easiest way to understand sexual normalcy.

Sexual desire and activity in response to stimuli other than what our genetic evolution intended to perpetuate our species is generally considered a sexual deviance. However, the roles of genetics, brain function, and environmental influences remain the same. So sexual deviance may be the result of genetic or brain function errors that contribute to a deviant sexual urge.

Since humans (and our precursors) have been propagating for millions of years, it is quite likely that sexual deviancies have also been around for a long time, and in modern times have been defined differently by different cultures, societies, tribes, religions, and professions.

Today, there seems to be two basic categories of definitions of sexual deviance that have evolved in modern times: cultural/religious deviancies (e.g., forced sex, extra marital affairs, incest, homosexuality) and deviancies identified and diagnosed by mental health professionals (e.g., paraphilia, voyeurism, exhibitionism, frotteurism, sexual masochism/sadism, and being attracted to objects, children, or different animal species, among others). Sexual deviancies that involve non-consenting others often result in legal penalties, those that involve objects do not.

Because "humans" have been around

for so long, the definitions of sexual deviancy have changed through the years so there is no way to definitely determine when and where the concept of "sexual deviancy" emerged. Regardless of the category, however, the origins of a deviance involve the interacting influences of genetics, brain functions, and the environment.

That said, it's my opinion that while we may have voluntary control over our sexual behaviors, we generally cannot explain why we are sexually attracted to what we are attracted, have no voluntary control over our sexual urges and to what they become attached--deviant or not. In that respect, we are at the mercy of the genetic determinants of how our brains and neural networks work in the interest of procreation and the environment in which we have procreative opportunity.

Second, the fundamental purpose of sexual deviance is to bring pleasure to the participant(s) by whatever sexual means they prefer. This pleasure is usually experienced as enjoyment, a byproduct of specific neurotransmitters in our brains (e.g., serotonin, dopamine, noradrenaline, oxytocin) that is often accompanied by an erection and/or orgasm. Just as in normal sex (or any other pleasurable activity), this brain-based biochemical pleasure response ensures an interest in its frequent repetition.

Exactly why individuals come to prefer their particular sexual deviance has been the subject of many studies, articles, and discussions over the years that have entertained genetic, brain function, and environmental explanations. However, because of the biological complexity of our sexual response, there has been no definitive answer that has clearly explained why and when a specific sexual deviance develops. This lack of clarity often makes the focus and effectiveness of specific treatment intervention more difficult.

THE UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES OF VICTIMS' RIGHTS (Part 1 of 2)

Mick Fletcher, J.D.

In this first installment of a two-part article, it is my intent to draw focus on the evils intrinsic to our modern conception and implementation of "victims' rights." I address this subject in the belief that these issues have been largely ignored, whether owing to their inherently sensitive nature or the political implications attached thereto. I am convinced, however, of their far-reaching and deleterious effect, both as to our criminal justice system itself, as well as to the victims and the accused in their individual capacities.

And by way of introduction, please note my emphatic preface: In this article I cast blame on no one. On the contrary, I am certain the majority of victims' rights proponents are well-intentioned. Nevertheless, for those crushed beneath the weight of ill-conceived policies, I hope to demonstrate that good intentions are a poor consolation.

Unlike our civil courts, where private persons may seek remedy for wrongs brought upon them by others, our system of criminal justice was designed to serve the whole of society by promoting social order through a fair and dispassionate application of our laws. When a statute of our penal code is violated under such a system, the aggrieved party is The People (of the State of Michigan), never an individual nor even a class of individuals. It is rather The People, society as a whole, who allege wrongdoing in every criminal case, from the grossest felony to the lowest misdemeanor. Given this, I believe the current concept of "victims' rights" does violence not only to the purpose and function of our criminal justice system, but further multiplies the harm done to the victims themselves.

Defining the scope of victims' rights is problematic, and as such it is the subject of much debate. One point generally agreed upon, however, is that our criminal justice system should serve the interests of aggrieved individuals. While the minutiae of these "services" are necessarily vague, they are, at a minimum, included in the rote and familiar declaration made by every county prosecutor: "We are seeking justice for the family of John Doe."

In other words, even in advance of the trial, the family of John Doe are convinced that the accused is guilty of harming them (and perhaps only because he or she stands accused), which at the very least implies that "justice" can only be served by way of conviction. This of course stands in stark contrast where The People are not only the alleging party, but are also representative of the accused and those who stand with them, where either a conviction or acquittal would represent a just outcome. (As an aside, and further owing to this mode of thinking, we are now faced with the idea of so-called "victimless crimes," a misguided sentiment which is conceivable only where we fail to recognize The People as the party wronged through the violation of her laws).

While the modern view of victims' rights appeals to us conceptually, attempting to reconcile wrongs against individuals within the structure of our criminal justice system is akin to fitting a square peg in a round hole. For when a prosecutor claims to represent the "victims," she is, in effect, renouncing her representation of The People. And further, when a public display is made of the victims to incite anger and public indignation in advance of a trial, we are no longer seeking a dispassionate application of our laws, but promoting instead an attitude of personal vengeance.

The same can be said of judges who campaigns are founded on promises to support such ideals (never mind those who seek to earn the endorsements of prosecutors and police organizations). How can one creditably claim to serve as ... (Cont. on p. 8)

THE TIME HAS COME TO REVISE THE MDOC'S 5-YEAR REVIEW POLICY (Part 1 of 3)

Scott Wynne

This is the first of a series of 3 articles about the deficient and defective Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) policy governing the Parole Board's 5-year reviews, and what needs to be done to fix it.

In MCL 791.244, from which the MDOC's 'Parole Process' Policy Directive (PD) 06.05.104 is promulgated, all prisoners serving life without the possibility of parole (LWOP) sentences are granted the right to a Parole Board review "every 5 years after the initial (10 year) interview to determine if an interview should be scheduled until the prisoner is granted a reprieve, commutation, pardon, or, if applicable, parole." Unfortunately, these 5-year reviews have long been exercises in futility for staff and prisoners alike. They expend considerable time and effort collecting and compiling the information required for the Lifer Review Reports and COMPAS Assessments; the latter do the same to provide the necessary parole plans, relapse prevention plans, parole placement options, and job offers. Yet, virtually every review results in a denial of interview.

The Parole Board has available many substantial and compelling reasons for denying LWOP interviews. These include: disciplinary problems, unfulfilled programming requirements, ongoing substance abuse issues, previous parole violations, real or perceived threats to public safety, and so on. While it is undeniable these can be legitimately employed in many instances, it is equally true that there exists a large number of worthy LWOP prisoners to whom none of these types of reasons can be objectively applied. And it is this latter group that the currently employed deficient and defective 5-year review process has been failing for decades. Regardless of how good their incarcerated behavior has been, and no matter how much they accomplish in the areas of education, rehabilitation, personal growth and improvement, and making amends, these lifers know they will still be denied interviews for non-germane, erroneous, unreasonable, and illogical reasons, or simply for no stated reason(s) at all.

This intolerable situation not only constitutes a denial of due process, and is thus an injustice for those LWOP prisoners worthy of interviews, it is also a financial tragedy for taxpayers. Michigan law requires all LWOP prisoners to undergo public hearings before a reprieve, commutation, or pardon can be recommended by the Parole Board and granted by the governor. But the decisions to grant public hearings and issue favorable recommendations flow out of the interviews. So no interviews mean no chance of receiving leniency.

It is not uncommon in today's MDOC to find worthy LWOP prisoners having served 30, 40, and even 50 years with records so remarkable that virtually every other state would have commuted and paroled them decades ago. But they are condemned to continue growing older in Michigan's prisons, taking up expensive bed space, and running up increasingly large health care expenses. Accordingly, the denial of LWOP interviews can thus be attributed as one of the primary factors behind the MDOC's budget continuing to hover around 2 billion dollars annually despite the fact its prisoner population has declined by more than 30% over the past decade.

Perhaps recognizing these horrible injustices for the first time, the MDOC appears to have made 3 separate attempts to correct this problem in 2021. On March 15th, June 21st, and October 4th, the language of the 'Lifer Interview' section (paragraphs M, N, and O) of PD 06.05.104 was amended to encourage the Parole Board to provide LWOP prisoners greater consideration during their 5-year reviews. The text of paragraph M has long required that "All relevant written documents ... (Cont. on p. 8)

DESERVING OF A SECOND CHANCE

THIS ISSUES FEATURED LIFER: SYBIL PADGETT

Sybil Padgett (Prison No. 325532) was born on November 26, 1962, in Tampa, Florida. Sybil received her LPN degree in 1998 from Douglas McArthur College in Opp, Alabama. In 2001 Sybil was sentenced to life without the possibility of parole (LWOP), also known as Death-By-Incarceration, in Michigan, for aiding and abetting first degree murder and conspiracy to commit murder.

In 2002 Sybil joined the National Lifers of America, Inc. (NLA) Chapter 1014. Presently, she holds two positions in the NLA: External State Director on the National Board and Chairwoman for the Lifer Commutation and Prison Health Committee. Sybil also volunteers for The Adolescent Redemption Project, Inc. Sybil has received various certificates, completed numerous college classes, established Moms In Touch Program, initiated Guard Shacks for the Yard Officers at the Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility (WHV), is a pioneer in the Inside-Out College Program, and is a peer educator in Judaism. In addition, Sybil was actively involved in the passing of House Bills for Medical Releases and changes in the Immigration laws in Michigan.

Sybil is a phenomenal speaker, leader, and volunteer in different settings. She uses her medical knowledge to assist female prisoners with their medical issues by using the grievance process. Sybil writes articles concerning criminal justice reform and shares her experiences in day-to-day issues at WHV with organizations and on podcasts.

For 12 years, Sybil has maintained a flower garden behind her housing unit, providing the opportunity for other female prisoners to learn horticulture skills. Sybil uses the flowers to participate in the Prisoner Creative Arts Program (PCAP) at the University of Michigan every year with dried flower arrangements.

Sybil's quest is finding good in others so she can achieve her aspiration of making positive changes in the world. Sybil Padgett is deserving of a second chance.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH YOUR TIME?

Bruce Micheals

Whether you subscribe to Eastern or Western philosophies, people are commonly viewed as possessing both positive and negative traits or characteristics. American society accepts a certain amount of negativity from each of us, but if we go beyond a certain threshold, society will penalize us. Prison, for example, is a penalty. We failed to manage the good and bad within us, and society intervened when our bad affected or could have affected others. Learning to control our thinking patterns is a survival skill that will help us get out and stay out of prison.

Before I learned to control my thinking patterns, I killed people, used drugs, lied, cheated, stole, and a host of other crimes. While you may or may not have committed the kind of crimes that I have, I hope you can relate to my point: I was selfish, fearful, and stubborn. I was selfish because I was harming others as a means to get what I wanted. I was fearful because I didn't want to face the consequences of living an honest, peaceful life. And I was stubborn because I refused to change for the better. Once I did change though, my life became radically different: I earned college degrees, wrote books, and exchanged life sentences for an outdate.

So what are you doing with what YOU have? As I mentioned in my previous article, "What Do You Want?", my friends and I have a subculture, resources, and system that you can access as you learn to do more with what you have; however, our community is tightly woven on principles that do not agree with prison culture. Below are some examples of what we have come to believe. ... (Cont. on p. 8)

BOOK REVIEW

SUCCESS IN PRISON SECOND EDITION

By Bruce Micheals (2021) 106pp. (ISBN 978-1-6390-1819-2) \$14.95

Reviewed by Jamie Meade

You need to read this book! Success in Prison Second Edition will show you how Bruce Micheals was able to (1) publish books, (2) earn college degrees, (3) build a large support network, (4) earn money, and (5) achieve success in prison. These accomplishments--all blessings from God--helped Bruce avoid being resentenced to life in 2021. He now has an earliest release date, and he wants to help you get one too. In 15 chapters, Bruce shares the steps to success that he took. Every chapter is filled with clear explanations of what the problems are and how you can solve them.

Have you ever heard that prison is a safe? To get out, you have to learn the combination. Some people think that they can simply take a few classes and the parole board or governor is going to let them out. That combination may have worked for someone, somewhere, but it won't work for most of us. Success in Prison Second Edition provides information on several of the combinations that work best. These are the combinations that Bruce used personally, and he is explaining exactly how they can be used to help us too.

Recently, I received four of Bruce's books, and I selected this one because it is a blueprint for doing the most with time in prison. That is "code" for how to get out (and stay out) of prison. Bruce has many books, but they all say the same thing in many different ways: Go Home! I enjoy reading his material because it is encouraging, relatable, and informative. He is one of us, with 32 years of experience in the MDOC. If you have life or any term of years, I highly recommend Success in Prison Second Edition because it provides advice that can increase your odds of gaining a parole or commutation. This is just my opinion, of course, but it really is a good book, with life changing information that has proven to be helpful to many prisoners who are trying to get out of prison.

LWOP = LIFE WITHOUT PREA SCORES

Mario Cavin

The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) [42 U.S.C. 15601(2)] is a Federal law recently adopted by multiple state prisons to avoid financial penalties. This law was designed to ensure the safety of those considered "vulnerable" by separating them from prisoners with a propensity for violence or a history of assaultive behavior. This gave birth to PREA assessments (or PREA scores): Potential Aggressor, Potential Victim, and No Score. These classifications are outlined in the Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) - PREA Manual (April 24, 2017) on pg. 13.

Did you know that PREA assessments can, and likely have, been used as disciplinary or discriminatory tactics?

While these scores were intended to affect housing, bed, work, education, and program assignments as set forth in the National PREA Resource Center (pg. 2; MDOC - PREA Manual, pg. 13-14), the MDOC has been using these scores to limit the availability of jobs or denying prisoners jobs altogether. This means that some prisoners classified as Potential Aggressors can never work as Prisoner Observation Aides, Clerks, Law Library Aides, Photographers or Certified Peer Recovery Coaches. Even being a handicap aide requires a PREA "No Score" designation...although not all prisons enforce this rule. ... (Cont. on p. 9)

(Second Look, from p. 2) ... benefit from the person's release. This places a significant onus on incarcerated people. To a judge, misconducts show a person potentially poses a risk to society. If a person is unable or unwilling to follow the rules in prison, how can a judge conclude the person will abide by the laws in society? As for program participation, developing marketable skills shows a person can benefit society, and participating in programs, at minimum, demonstrates the person has an interest in self-improvement; it may even show he or she possess a desire for helping others.

In Michigan, second look legislation is in the early stages. Advocates are shaping a bill that more legislatures will support. Although legislatures across the isle do support such a bill, more support is still needed. As more support is garnered and SLS works its way into and potentially through the legislation process, those serving a life and long-indeterminant sentence may want to start taking actions that will help them make the case as to why a judge should consider imposing a lesser sentence. Incarcerated people shouldn't squander their freedom away--again!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Dwight Henley (Prison No. 246521) is serving a LWOP sentence at Macomb Correctional Facility, 34625 26 Mile Rd., Lenox Twp., MI 48048. While incarcerated Dwight earned a MBA from Adams State University and become educationally eligible to take the CPA exam.

(Unintended Consequences, from p. 4) ... an unbiased arbiter while supporting practices which strip our Lady Justice of her blindfold and scales, and leave her to brandish the sword alone, and that to swing only for retribution of a few?

Nor does the conceptual influence of victims' rights and with the trial's conclusion: How many board members have declined to parole someone, not because of an articulable danger to society, but rather in answer to the letters of aggrieved individuals?

In this first installment, I hope to have demonstrated how the modern conception of victims' rights is incompatible with the design of our criminal justice system, and is indeed injurious to its function. In the concluding segment, I mean to focus not

only on the harm to the accused, but especially to the victims themselves.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Michael (Mick) Fletcher (Prison No. 315903) is a recovering lawyer. He is currently enjoying the hospitality of Thumb Correctional Facility (3225 John Conley Drive, Lapeer, MI 48446-2987).

(The Time Has Come, from p. 5) ... received by the parole Board shall be retained in the prisoner's Central Office File" and that "the board shall review each prisoner's file." But the amended language of paragraph O now requires the Parole Board, when interviews are denied, to "set forth the factors considered for that decision and what corrective action the prisoner may take in the future." The definite article (i.e. the) is necessarily inclusive, so the factors "set forth" are to be accepted as an exhaustive listing of what the Parole Board did, in fact, consider.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Scott Wynne #247226 is serving a LWOP sentence at the Thumb Correctional Facility, 3225 John Conley Drive, Lapeer, MI 48446-2987. Scott is a 2017 graduate of Adams State University's Distance Degree Program in the field of business.

- (What Are You Doing, from p. 6) ...
1. Criminal thinking and behavior developed in us over time, not all at once.
 2. Criminal thinking and behavior were the most important things to us at some point.
 3. Criminal thinking and behavior are disgusting because they are both selfish and self-destructive.
 4. Criminal thinking and behavior are physically, mentally, and socially addicting.
 5. Criminal thinking and behavior are extremely challenging to successfully treat.

These basic beliefs about criminal thinking and behavior are often rejected by prisoners who are not eradicating their criminal thinking and behavior. They are usually rejected because accepting them invites change, and criminal minded people do not want to change. I didn't, nor did my friends. We enjoyed living as savages. Eventually, we perceived reality, the drug and adrenaline haze cleared, and we saw the obvious truth: we ... (Cont. on p. 9)

(What Are You Doing, from p. 8) ... severely harmed others and ourselves. Some criminals remain stubborn, but some of us change. What is it going to be with you?

My friends and I have extremely strong ties to our families and to one another. We have highly respected mentors, sponsors, and supporters. We have these because people in society respect us now. These people have watched us work for many years on projects that require great effort and perseverance. We have earned admiration and loyalty from people who have strong values and no tolerance for deceit. Some of us have had judges speak up on our behalf. A former police chief spoke up for me personally when I went back to court for resentencing. But to gain a quality support network like that requires honesty and diligence. Some people try to gain temporary support by ratting out other prisoners or nonsense like that, but they are just continuing in the selfish criminal mentality that looks for a quick fix to long-standing problems. My friends and I are focusing on genuine change that lasts a lifetime.

So what are you doing with what you have? If you don't know what to do, that is okay. You can learn. But if you know what to do and you are simply being stubborn, save your self: let go of the illusion and join us in reality. The criminal lifestyle promises so much, but look at what it actually delivers. You are here, with me, right now. This is reality, not a fake video or song that somebody is trying to get you to buy. I watched the videos and bought the songs, and then I came to prison with 6 non-parolable life sentences. After I got my head screwed on straight, I rejected that fake Hollywood garbage, and I got to work on building a real life. Now I have an outdate, formal education, and career, among many other things that you too can have. To get started, make a list of what you want, what you have, and what you need to work on. We'll talk more in the next issue of the Michigan Lifers Report.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Bruce Micheals #208666, a former lifer, is author of several books such as Rehabilitation In Prison, How To Write A Parole Plan, and Success In Prison 2ed. Bruce was awarded a master's degree from California State University in

2021, and he is housed at the Muskegon Correctional Facility (2400 S. Sheridan Dr., Muskegon, MI 49442).

(LWOP = Life Without PREA, from p. 7) ...

Two people at the Macomb Correctional Facility had their PREA scores changed without reason, after being transferred from another facility. These prisoners were never informed that their scores changed, and were therefore unable to question why or challenge the change. Due to their designation and staff's unwillingness to admit or correct the error, they can no longer access prestigious work assignments.

According to the Department of Justice, while it may be necessary to separate or segregate potential aggressors from potential victims, it should not be the default course of action. "Instead, facilities should determine how best to protect ALL inmates' access to programming and work assignments while keeping people safe. [See 77 Fed. Reg. 115.43.] "For example, the [MDOC] could make changes to staffing patterns or ratios during certain shifts or improve monitoring technology in facility blind spots." [National PREA Resource Center, pg. 8.]

So, how do you know your score or what criteria were considered?

As set forth by the National Resource Center, a risk assessment must include criteria such as the inmates mental, physical, or developmental disability; age; physical build; previous incarceration; prior sex offenses; perceived sexuality and gender, etc. [pg. 4]. This list is not exhaustive.

Because there was the obvious risk over-reliance or over-classification, PREA assessments must be done at least once a year to determine whether the previous score is still valid. Yet, you would think any decision affecting your housing or employment options would require notice and the right to ensure accurate information is used.

Sadly, these rights appear nonexistent in the MDOC. Being unable to earn adequate income or develop marketable skills for future release, what is a prisoner to do? I believe your Assistant Residential Unit Supervisor (ARUS) or Prisoner Counselor (PC) have a lot of explaining to do.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Mario Cavin ... (Cont. on p. 10)

(LWOP = Life Without PREA, from p. 7) ... #326204 is serving a 37-year sentence in the MDOC and is housed at the Macomb Correctional Facility, 34625 26 Mile Rd., Lenox Twp., MI 48048. Mario is a board member with the National Lifer of America and an active member of The Adolescent Redemption Project.

MAY OUR SISTERS REST IN PEACE

Sybil Padgett

On April 22, 2022, a vigil was held outside and inside of the Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility in Ypsilanti, Michigan, for those women who passed away on the inside. Outside the facility advocacy groups, family members, and members of the community spoke on those women who had passed away alone on the inside away from the comfort of family and friends during their last moments.

On the inside, prisoners supporting the vigil paused from 7 pm to 8 pm in memory of those sisters they lost who didn't receive a timely medical release or granted a medical commutation or received inadequate and untimely medical services.

Clearly, the health and well-being of incarcerated women and men in the Michigan Department of Corrections is not at the top of any priority list of corrections officials. COVID-19 has really exposed this reality.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Sybil Padgett #325532 is serving a LWOP sentence in the MDOC and housed at the Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility, 3201 Bemis Rd., Ypsilanti, MI 48197. Sybil is the External State Director on the National Board of the NLA. She is also an advocate for criminal justice reform and social justice inside and outside of prison.

EDITOR'S NOTE: We have lost way too many women and men inside the MDOC since COVID-19 swept across the state over 2 years ago. Michigan is one of a few states that has not released any prisoners through emergency powers. COVID-19 is here to stay and our elected officials need to act to reduce the prison population and close prisons. Keeping people in prison is a potential death penalty.

CORRECTIONS "MAY CAUSE" ASSUMPTIONS (MAIL POLICY)

Angelina DeAngelo

Some mailroom personnel in MDOC facilities are "crying wolf" that exist only in their minds, and have been functioning on assumptions the Cure Life-Long and Michigan Lifers Report Newsletters may (not will) pose a threat to security, staff, prisoners programming, academic and vocational training, and other preposterous assumptions to deny uplifting and informative literature to prisoners. Our Newsletters do pose a threat to ignorance, but enhance reform and rehabilitation.

One facility in particular, Gus Harrison Correctional Facility in Adrian, Michigan, has repeatedly sent us Notice of Rejections for both Newsletters saying an article (no name given) "may [not will] pose a threat" which has no foundation in fact nor what the threat may be, could be, or will be. In fact, there is no threat on any front to prisons, staff, programs, nor prisoners.

If our director of corrections, Heidi Washington, a former prison warden, finds our Newsletters pose no threats to anyone or anything, then how do corrections officials at the facility level find a threat?

Our Newsletters are sent to all correctional facilities in Michigan. We also send a complimentary copy to Heidi Washington, the Parole Board, Governor Gretchen Whitmer, and selected legislators. In addition, we mail over 300 copies of each Newsletter to other states, including Alaska, Hawaii, and The United Kingdom. No rejections anywhere, only new subscribers.

The MDOC leadership needs to stop these asinine rejections of our Newsletter which, in reality, serves as an educational tool of prisoners and enhances their rehabilitation. Our Newsletter also serves as a teaching tool for correctional staff.

EID MUBARAK!

FELIZ CINCO DE MAYO!

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!

HAPPY ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER MONTH!

HAPPY MEMORIAL DAY!

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

The expressed purposes of the Michigan Lifers Association, Inc. and the National Lifers of America, Inc. to publish the "Michigan Lifers Report Newsletter" are to educate and uplift the lifer population, to seek changes in laws that restrict clemency and parole, to educate the general public, and to encourage criminal justice reform, especially in corrections.

PRISONERS

PRISONER'S FULL NAME: _____ Number: _____

NAME OF CORRECTIONAL FACILITY: _____

COMPLETE MAILING ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ Zip Code: _____

CIVILIANS

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____ APT. _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ Zip Code: _____

PHONE NO. () _____

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

(Yearly Subscription 10 to 12 Issues)

PRISONERS: _____ \$15 Yearly CIVILIANS: _____ \$20 Yearly

ORGANIZATIONS: _____ \$25 Yearly LIFE MEMBERS: _____ \$100

DONATIONS: _____

SEND SUBSCRIPTION PAYMENTS & DONATIONS TO:

Michigan Lifers Association
4417 Second Ave.
Suite 211
Detroit, MI 48201-1214

