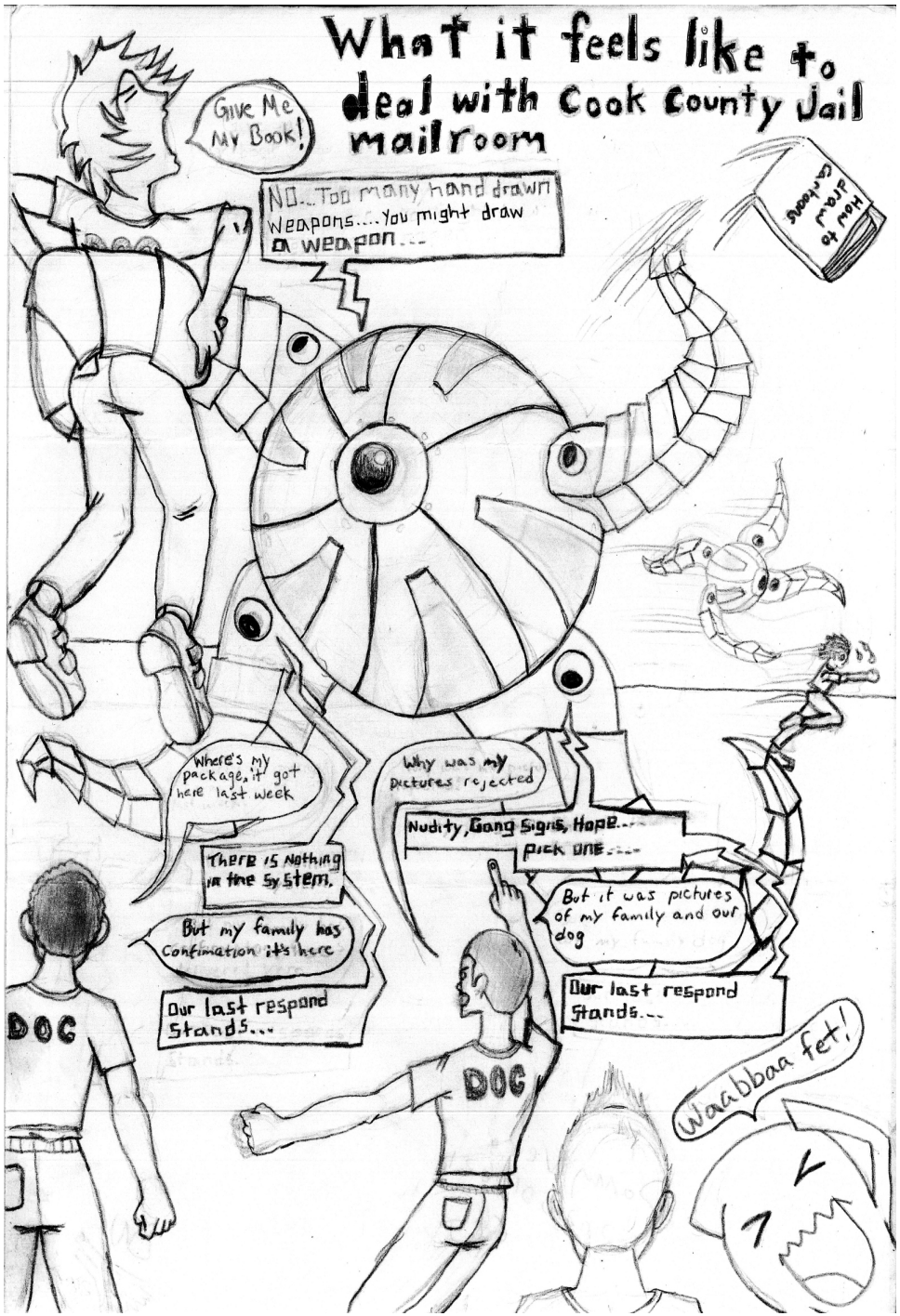


Danny Neira

END BOOK BANS & MAIL CENSORSHIP at COOK COUNTY JAIL

Midwest Books to Prisoners

NO LIBRARY AT COOK COUNTY JAIL!!!

Nope -not even a law library. Our FOIA requests show they spent a total of $0 this year on Books and Law Library materials!

- CCJ **FAILED** American Library Association's "Library Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions":

  "Day, evening and weekend hours to provide at least five (5) hours per inmate per week in a professionally staffed library" with "greater of 5000 titles or 15 titles per inmate up to maximum of 2,500 inmate"

- CCJ **FAILED** UN Standard Minimum Rules for Treatment of Prisoners (Mandela Rules):

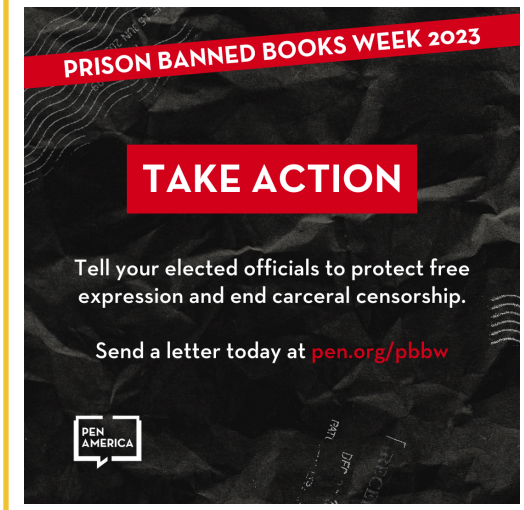
  "Every prison shall have a library for the use of all categories of prisoners, adequately stocked with both recreational and instructional books, and prisoners shall be encouraged to make full use of it."

- CCJ **FAILED** CILIP Prison Library Group standards:

  "A properly designed and equipped prison library will provide a warm and welcoming space where prisoners can feel safe... All prisoners should have weekly timetabled access to the library ... access to the full range of resources"

- CCJ **FAILED** PEN America's "best practices" for tablets:

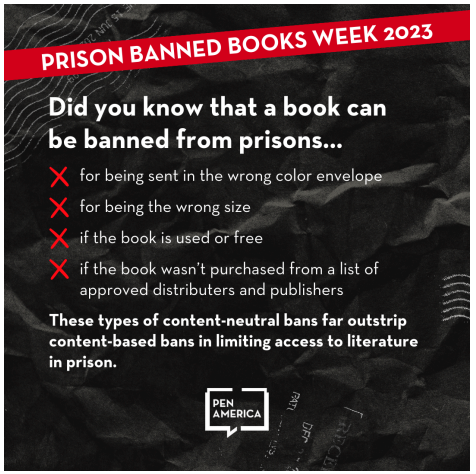
  "E-readers are often costly and should be offered free of charge" "Access to digital books must not be revoked as a disciplinary measure" "Access to e-readers must never justify reductions in access to physical books and other physical literary materials ... Books ordered through or donated by prison book organizations and outside book, vendors must also remain accessible or available"

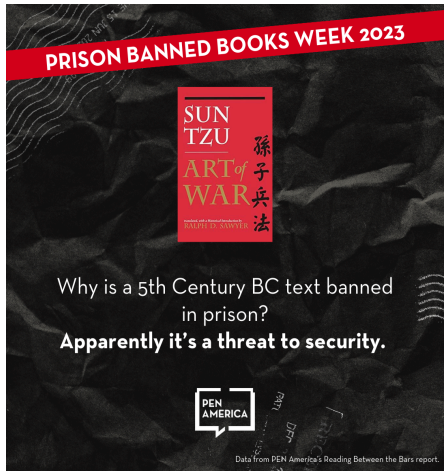


Did you know Florida prisons ban over 22,000 books and incarcerated people in Missouri can't get books as gifts?

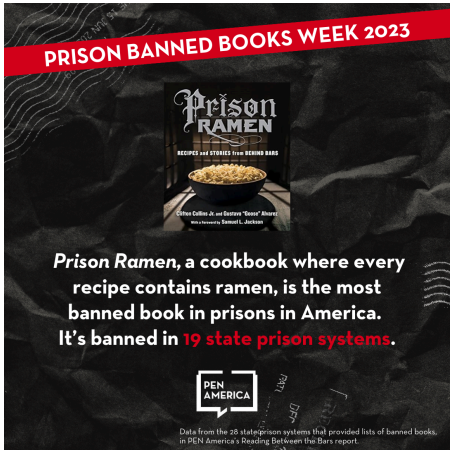
This #PrisonBannedBooksWeek, urge your legislators to support legislation that increases access to literature and learning in prisons.

#BooksNotBans !











The Biggest Ban on Books is Behind Bars.

Single state prison systems censor more books than all state schools and libraries combined. Literature gets banned by prison mailroom staff quickly flipping through books as they inspect the mail. These cursory judgments sweep up medical books, drawing and art books, popular magazines, history books and literature of all kinds. Prison censorship prevents people in jails and prisons from reading.

Recently, prisons and jails have been contracting with private telecom companies to provide tablets to detained and incarcerated people. While tablets offer unprecedented access to loved ones and outside allies, they have also been used to curtail paper literature under specious claims that mail is the primary conduit of contraband.

Content on tablets is also highly limited–with titles largely in the public domain whose copyright has lapsed because they were published in the nineteenth century. Despite obtaining these works for free, many prisons and jails charge incarcerated people to access this content. This inaccessible and outdated reading material is used to justify the denial of paper literature, including health and legal news.

San Francisco Public Library recently extended their catalog to local jails. This Prison Banned Books Week we are calling for public library catalogs to be made available on all prison and jail tablets. Library content is for community use and detained and incarcerated people are part of our communities. We are asking tablet companies to partner with our already funded library systems to extend access to ALL our community members.

Demand Department of Corrections, the Federal Bureau of Prisons and Sheriffs ensure that people held in carceral facilities have equal access to both paper literature and tablets. *Reading should not be restricted.*

PrisonBannedBooksWeek.org

CCJ Captives Speak Out on Censorship

Despite Illinois being the first state to "ban book bans", the largest book ban continues behind bars. We sent surveys out to ask people how they feel about censorship in CCJ?

"Censorship policies are vague, not properly applied, or applied by the whim of whoever is looking at the items. There are no proper standards across the board. Education is poor. There are not enough activities to keep busy." - Anonymous, CCJ

"Prisons censor the materials we can get as a form of control and punishment to keep us uninformed and ignorant. The less we know, the more they can manipulate us and abuse us." - Anonymous, CCJ

"We don't get to have books from the law library. We fill out a form to get a copy of what she wants us to have on whatever we request. So if it's 30 pages, she might give us 5." - Anonymous, CCJ

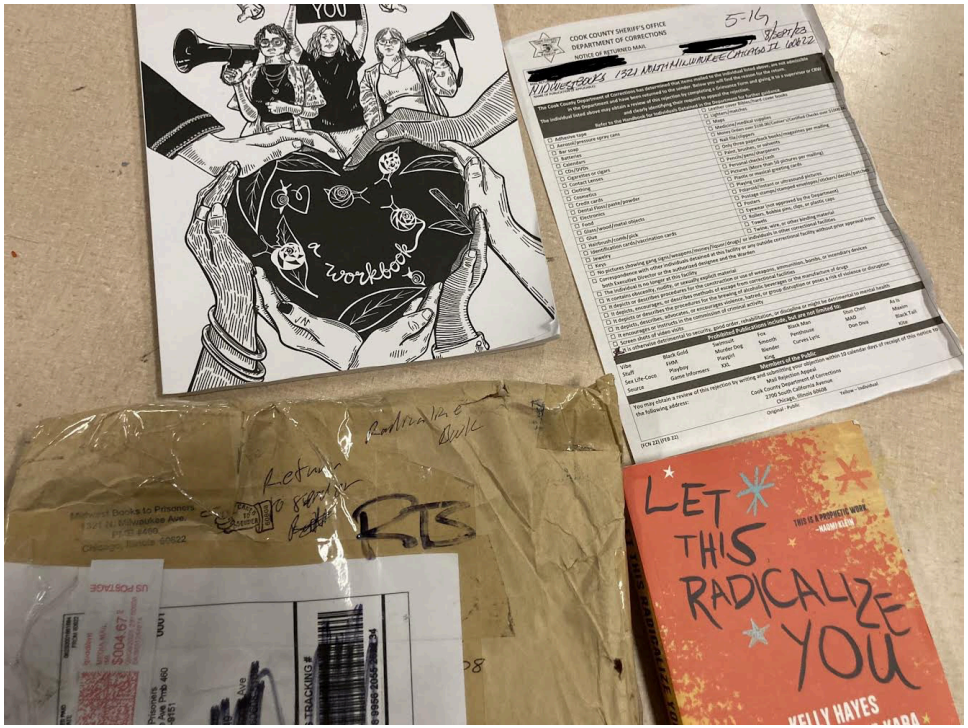
"I'm writing my 7th chapter of my book, but they won't let me make copies so I can send out" - Anonymous, CCJ

"I have had blank cards and holiday cards blocked because they stopped allowing them in .... after a shake down, I noticed that my book "Unlocking the Dream vision" was missing once and I had to replace it. I never found out what happened to it." - Anonymous, CCJ

"Economic Books, Legal Mail, Education Material. Confiscated for suspicion of drug trafficking." - Anonymous, CCJ

"48 Laws of Power. It was blocked/confiscated and I had to destroy it or send it home. The reason it was taken was because prison officials don't want us as prisoners to broaden our knowledge or be educated on things." - Anonymous, CCJ

"I am an avid reader, so I've had several dozen books and other materials blocked or confiscated. Most recently, I had a graphic novel blocked: I grieved it and won, but never received the book. Denying me my book after the Director approved me to have it felt like they wanted to send me a message, that no matter what, Menard can do as they please, they can break the law and get away with it." - Anonymous, Menard IDOC



"Let This Radicalize You" by Mariame Kaba and Kelly Hayes
Banned from CCJ for being "otherwise detrimental to security, good order, rehabilitation, or discipline or might be detrimental to mental health".

"The virus had spread through the jail, infecting more than 350 people. On April 23, 2020, the New York Times reported that Cook County Jail has become the "nation's largest-known source of coronavirus infections"... "So many people [in Little Village] had family members who were incarcerated at the time," Pino told us. "People were fighting desperately to make sure that their family members survived, and some of them didn't due to the country's negligence and complex lack of care for people in the jail as community members".

"[Stevie] Wilson also stressed that reading is a subversive act in prison, and passing around large numbers of books might result in the confiscation of those texts, in addition to harassment or punishment of those circulating them. Zines can also be shared in a more clandestine manner. "If I went to the yard and tried to give out ten books, I wouldn't make it. But if I have ten zines there, I can give them out, you see? So part of it also is knowing the inside of here because, remember this much: learned prisoners are an affront to the [prison-industrial complex]."

- *36 DEADLY BUBISHI POINTS*
- *365 SEX POSITIONS*
- *501 UNARMED SELF-DEFENSE SKILLS*
- *ABSOLUTE DUO: VOLUME 4*
- *ADVANCED KALI LINUX TOOLS*
- *ADVANCED PERSISTENT THREAT HACKING*
- *ARMCHAIR CHEMISTRY*
- *ASIAN MARTIAL ARTS*
- *BASIC FUNDAMENTALS OF MODERN TATTOO*
- *BOOK OF GLOCK*
- *CANNABIBLE, THE*
- *CANNABIS GROW BIBLE 3RD EDITION THE*
- *CANNABIS REGENERATION A MULTIPLE HARVES METH*
- *CHICA*
- *CINEMA SEWER*
- *CLITOLOGY*
- *COMPLETE BOXING HANDBOOK, THE*
- *COMPLETE IDIOTS'S: PRIVATE INVESTIGATING*
- *CONDITIONS OF PARADISE, THE*
- *CREATIVE SNACKS, MEALS, BEVERAGES, AND DESSEF*
- *CUSTOM TATTOO 101*
- *DIY FOR PRISONERS*
- *ESSENTIAL KNOTS: THE POCKET GUDIE TO*
- *EXPLOSIVE SEX*
- *EXTREME UNARMED COMBAT*
- *FANTASY BOUND*
- *FIGHT WRITE*
- *FINISH A FIGHT IN ONE MOVE WITHOUT ANY TRAINING*
- *FOA, THE FIGHTING OF ALLAH*
- *GOAT MAGAZINE*
- *GODS OF THE BLOOD*
- *GROWING MARIJUANA FOR BEGINNERS*
- *GROWING WEED IN THE GARDEN*
- *GUERRILLA WARFARE*
- *HER AND HER UNIFORM*
- *HIDE YOUR A$$ET$ AND DISAPPEAR*
- *HISTORY OF SEXUAL PUNISHMENT IN PICTURES*
- *HOMEGROWN CANNABIS*
- *HOW TO BUILD A DUNGEON: BOOK OF THE DEMON Kit*
- *HOWTO DISAPPEAR AND NEVER BE FOUND*
- *HOW TO HUSTLE AND WIN: SEX, MONEY, AND MURDER*
- *HOW TO MAKE MONEY LIKE A PORN STAR*
- *ID MASTER: LITTLE KNOWN TACTICS OF IDENTITY CH/*
- *IDOLHOUSE*
- *KAMA SUTRA - A POSITION A DAY 365 DAYS A YEAR*
- *KATLICK SCHOOL*
- *KNOTTING AND SPLICIN*
- *KRAV MAGA FOR BEGINNERS*
- *MAGENTA: DROP DEAD GORGEOUS*
- *MAGENTA: THE COLOR OF SEX*
- *MAGENTA: THE POWER OF PINK*
- *MAO TSE-TUNG ON GUERILLA WARFARE*
- *MARIJUANA GROWER'S HANDBOOK*
- *MARIJUANA HORTICULTURE: THE INDOOR/OUTDOOR 1**
- *MEIN KEMPT*
- *MY FIRST BOOK OF KNOTS*
- *NEW KAMA SUTRA, THE*
- *NINE HALLS OF DEATH• OTHER PLACE THE*
- *PAJAMA PARTY*
- *PARACORD*
- *PICS OR IT DIDN'T HAPPEN*
- *PIMPS: THE RAW TRUTH*
- *PLANTS THAT CAN KILL*
- *POSITION OF THE DAY SEX EVERY DAY IN EVERY WAY*
- *PRISON RAMEN*
- *PSILOCYBIN MUSHROOM BIBLE, THE*
- *RANGE OF LOVE*
- *RAYFUL EDMOND*
- *RENAISSANCE SWORDSMANSHIP• RESISTANCE BEHIND BARS*
- *SARI THE SUCCUBUS*
- *SECRET TECHNIQUES OF WING CHUN RUNG FU*
- *SENSUAL DISTRESS*
- *SEX OFFENDER, THE*
- *SEX-ED 101*
- *SEXUAL SECRETS*
- *SEXY CHEERS*
- *SHAOLIN RUNG FU*
- *SHE COMES FIRST*
- *SHIORIS DIARY*
- *SIMPLIFIED TAI CHI CHUAN*
- *SMOOTHIES BIBLE, THE• SPYCRAFT*
- *SUPREMEM TEAM THE*
- *SURVIVAL HACKS*
- *SURVIVAL WISDOM AND KNOW-HOW*
- *TAI CHI FA JIN*
- *TAO OF JEET KUNE DO*
- *TEACH ME 3*
- *TEACH ME TOO*
- *TEMPLE WOTAN*
- *TESTAMENT OF SISTER NEW DEVIL STORM, THE*
- *TO LOVE RU DARKNESS*
- *U.S. ARMY GUIDE TO BOOBYTRAPS*
- *U.S. ARMY RANGER HANDBOOK*
- *ULTIMATE GUIDE TO HOME BUTCHERING, THE*
- *UNKNOWN*
- *VOICE OF OUR FOREFATHERS*
- *WHO ARE YOU: THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF PERSONAL*
- *WIFE IN SHORT SHORTS*
- *WORLD'S END HAREM*

subjected to group punishment, typically a 24 hour lockdown on the unit, regardless if it's a single person charged with a minor misconduct.

The health care request forms we fill out and hand in to medical and mental health assistance go unanswered despite the filling out of several requests. Prisoners are told to sign for inmate handbooks that we don't receive after we're processed. Retaliations for written requests.

Our basic rights for grooming and hygiene supplies are also being violated. On page 18 of the CCDOC handbook, it clearly articulates that "an individual will be issued razors and allow us to shave at certain times". Here in Division 5 we haven't had access to a razor for months, neither do we have mirrors to observe with our eyes how our faces physically look like. Appearing before judges unshaved is an unnecessary reality, that we, particularly on Division 5 think on a professional basis, and is not a reflection of our character as a human being who want to make the best impression in general as well as before the courts.

These inhumane conditions and violations are our basic rights, and we want everyone fighting against human rights violations to know.

3. The CCDOC information handbook for individuals in custody states in Chapter 3 Notice of Rights Under Arrest, in no ambiguous terms, that "every Sheriff, every Police or other persons who is in charge of any jail, police station, or other criminal proceedings, be posted every room other than cells of such buildings where persons are held in custody, in in conspicuous places – I repeat, in conspicuous place, where it may be read and seen by persons in custody, a poster printed in large containing a verbatim copy in the English language of the provisions in Section 103-2 103-3".

Section 103-2 just listed particularly emphasizes: "A. being taken into custody, every person shall have the right to remain silent. B. no unlawful means of any kind shall be used to obtain a statement, admission, or confession from any person in custody. C. Persons in custody shall be treated humanely and provided with proper food, shelter, and the required medical treatment without unreasonable delay if the need for treatment is apparent".

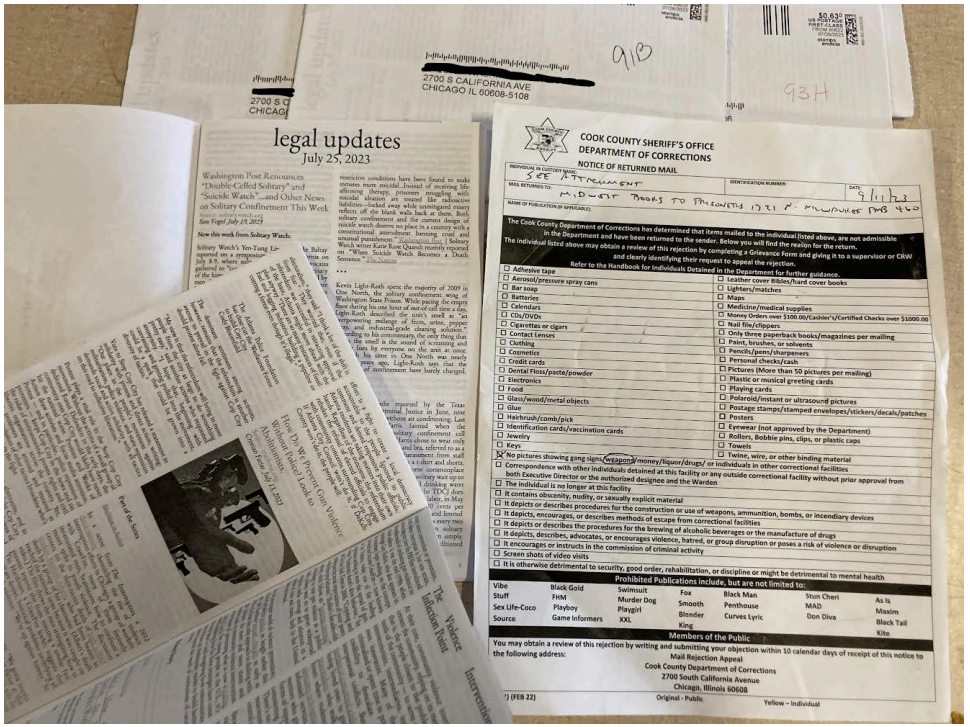
None of these rights are posted anywhere on Division 5 1-A.

We find these denials of basic rights and building code violations reason enough for our release, and to shut down Cook County Jail, unfit for human habitation, worthy of nothing short of a red X spraypainted in a square or nailed to it's wall.

In solidarity with the repressed,

United on Division 5

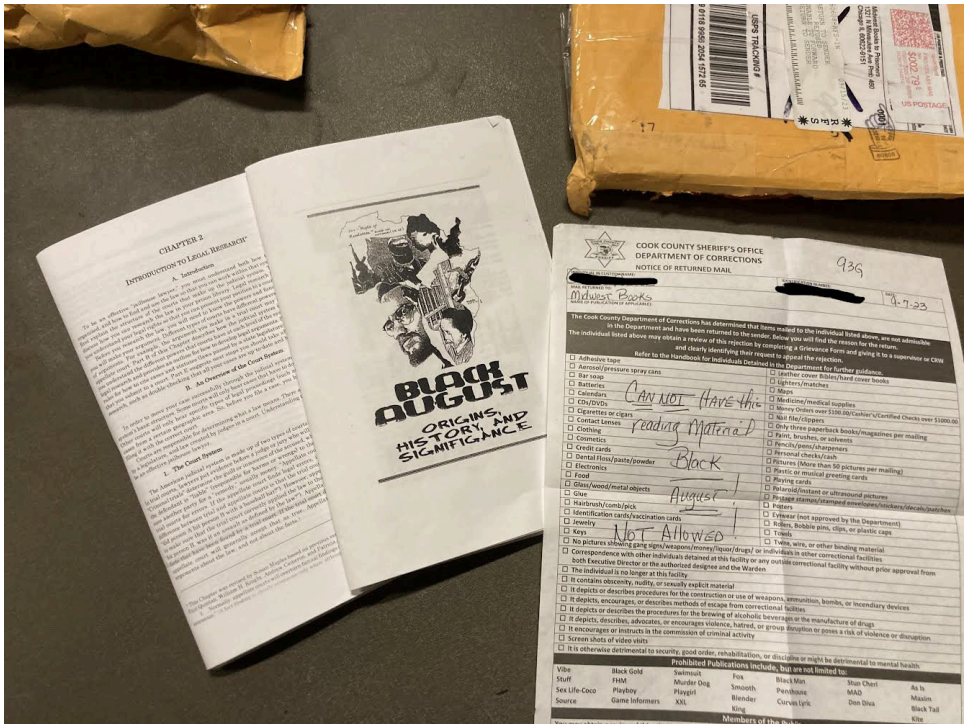
More of Hybachi LeMar's writings are available on request or can be found on his website https://www.helpacompacontinuehismission.com



Legal Newsletter

Dozens at CCJ receive our regular legal internet newsletter: this issue was rejected because it contained a Truthout printout "**How Do We Prevent Gun Violence Without Police**" by Cristian Farias, due to a small depiction of a gun.

> **"Yet a closer look at some of these awards shows that not all conceptions of gun violence prevention are created equal — with some localities using the funding to boost police programs and yet others relying on a combination of law enforcement and academic research to do the work. Roca Inc., a DOJ awardee, runs a violence intervention model that has gained prominence in Massachusetts and Baltimore; it relies on "relentless" outreach and case management to effect behavioral change among a carefully selected cohort of young people. Roca is quite open about its work with police and probation departments to ensure that program participants — who range from 16 to 24 years old and often have had contact with the criminal legal system — stay on the straight and narrow. Meanwhile, groups like the Newark Community Street Team, another DOJ award recipient, expressly note that they only interact with law enforcement "so that we can intervene and mediate in disputes," but that they otherwise do not share information about their work with the police. "We believe that arrest and incarceration represent a failure of many systems that led to the person becoming a criminal and we believe that the prison syste[m] is a form of torture that causes greater harm," reads the group's website."**



"Black August: Origins, History and Significance"

zine rejected from Cook County Jail: no checkbox indicating any perceived security risk, they just "CAN NOT" with the double underline emphasizing white supremacist censorship:

> **"Most standard history books tend to either play down or ignore New African resistance as a factor in the destruction in the slave economy. On the other hand, when one understands New Africans are still an oppressed nation, the reason for such deception becomes clear. Black August contends that not only was such resistance a factor in the destruction of the slave economy, but New African resistance to slavery continues to inspire New African resistance to national oppression. Herbert Aptheker (the author of "American Negro Slave Revolts") recounts the personal remark of one New African involved in the civil rights struggle: "From personal experience I can testify that American Negro Slave Revolts made a tremendous impact on those of us in the civil rights and Black Liberation movement. It was the single most effective antidote to the poisonous ideals that blacks had not a history of struggle or that such struggle took the form of non-violent protest. Understanding people like Denmark Vessey, Nat Turner, William Lloyd Garrison etc. provided us with that link to our past that few ever thought existed." - Doc Holliday**

Concerning our basic rights on larger procedures: The Cook County DOC handbook clearly states: "The CCDOC provides you a clean uniform twice per week, fresh linen once per week, and a clean blanket once per month. In addition, laundry service for clothing purchased on commissary is regularly provided".

We're currently being denied ALL of these basic rights, and have been for months. When we're able, we only have access to one clean shirt and one pair of clean pants per week, with the only pants size offered to us is size 4X, equivalent to about the size 52 waist.

We haven't received any clean blankets for months, with the exception about two days ago, following the demonstration outside of Cook County Jail, which is acknowledged as "victory blankets".

We don't have access to a clean laundry service for clothes purchased on commissary at all. In fact, when we resort to using our sheets as clothes-lines in our cells, they are routinely ripped down by corrections staff, depriving us of the ability to do our laundry ourselves, and are threatened with disciplinary sanctions if our sheets are ripped as clothes lines.

We're never allowed to exchange our towels for clean ones. Our requests to have them washed by the "laundry service" is always adamantly denied.

Many people confined at Cook County Jail, thousands out of the approximately 10,000 people inside these walls are wearing walking shoes that are 3-5 sizes larger or smaller than our actual foot sizes. At the time of this message, only sizes 8 and 14 are being given to people coming in through intake upon reception by the administration.

We're only allowed 3 books per person.

We're not prewarned of attorney visits, which leads to an inability to prepare as effectively as we could if we were given at least a five minute warning. Last of access to our case summary which show what charges we been charged with – many of us don't know the charges we're charged with before arriving in court, be it zoom or in person, making fighting our cases feel like going into a boxing ring blindfolded.

We're subjected to obscene commissary prices – for example, one square pack of ramen noodles costs $1.02 – the price of five at the Family Dollar. We're deprived access to contact visits, despite the fact that the COVID pandemic is obviously not a word of concern at Cook County Jail, being that face masks aren't offered in the unit we're confined on in Division 5, and when asked, we've been told, "We don't give out masks anymore" by corrections staff. Hand sanitizer is not provided on the unit, or commissary, or at all.

Lack of access to recreation, as well as the law library to legally defend ourselves as effectively as we could if we had such access. No posting of new rules in the unit, nor memos concerning new rules that we end up getting "punished" for breaking. We're

Uninhabitable Living Conditions At CCJ Division 5

by Hybachi LeMar

"Revolutionary greetings,

The following are clear violations of our rights, privileges, and services according to the Cook County Department of Corrections Handbook.

Lack of access to a clean and sanitary living environment: the foundational structure of Cook County Jail is falling apart. Water floods by leaking through the cracked perimeters which connect the walls to the floors. Water comes into the cells when it rains. as well as from cell to cell, and also drips from cell vents onto the toilet beneath them on occasion due to plumbing and other maintenance issues. We're subjected to leaking toilets, plaster and paint peeling and falling off the walls.

Black mold in the unit washroom, particular here in Division 5, a division that was condemned over five years and was reopened amidst the pandemic. Cell vents that haven't been cleaned for months, possibly even years, and darkened by filth. Bad water that dries the skin.

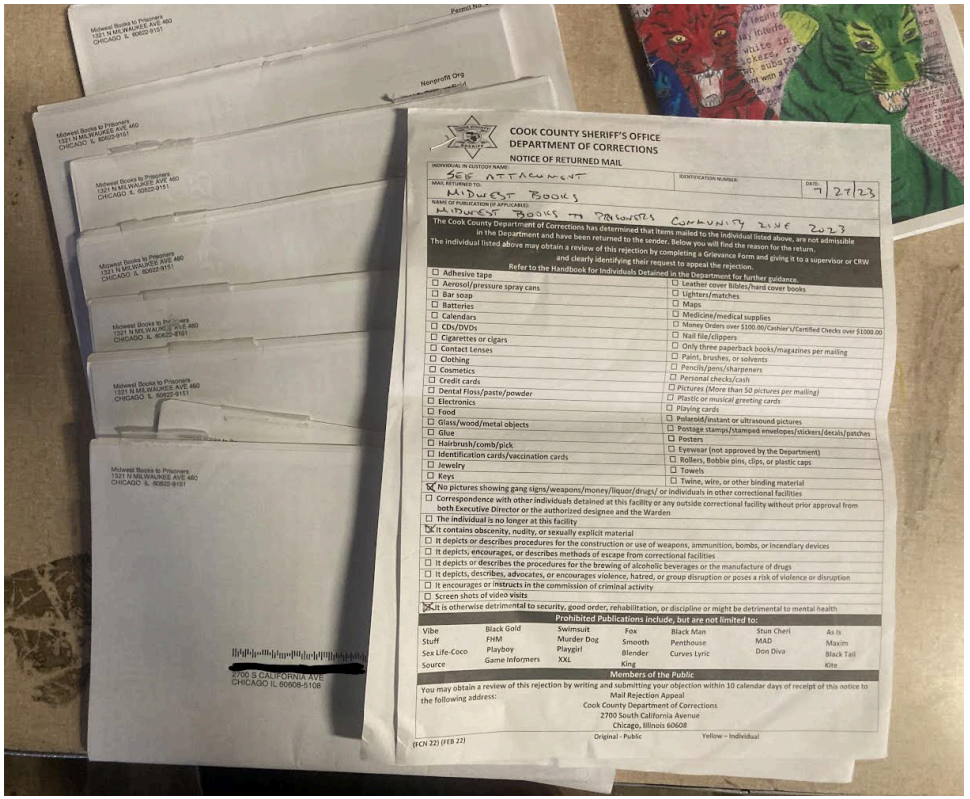
Infestations of nats and ants in our cells and in the food that we're served. Infestations of water bugs and roaches – a dead roach was just found on it's back on the dayroom dining table this very minute as violations were being written. Dead, dying, and living roaches and water bugs infest the shower area and units in general, including the corridors leading to the cell blocks. Lack of access to disinfectant to clean our living environment. Shower areas unable to be cleaned on a regular basis. No change of linens for weeks.

Denial of mental health assistance despite requests for detainees mentioning suicide to correctional staff. Lack of immediate and adequate medical attention. Lack of access to grievance forms for days on end.

Unknown black substances repeatedly being discharged from cell sinks, knobs and faucets. No soap accessible on the units. Food with mold, rotten are often served for breakfast. No privacy curtains for doors for the dayroom toilets, which are infected with water bugs, roaches and nats, as well as the bolder stench of nat-ridden urinals attached to the walls. Unclean tablets and telephones due to lack of disinfectant.

Spiders that hang from webs and ceiling corners of our cells we can't reach with a broom cause none are provided except for 'cell cleaning day'. Many prisoners in here have rashes and show each other insect bites, wondering where they came from.

We eat bread that comes from loaves in the kitchen that are eaten through by mice – instead of throwing the loaves away, the authorities in Cook County Jail kitchen ensure only the bitten bread from the violated bag is tossed out.

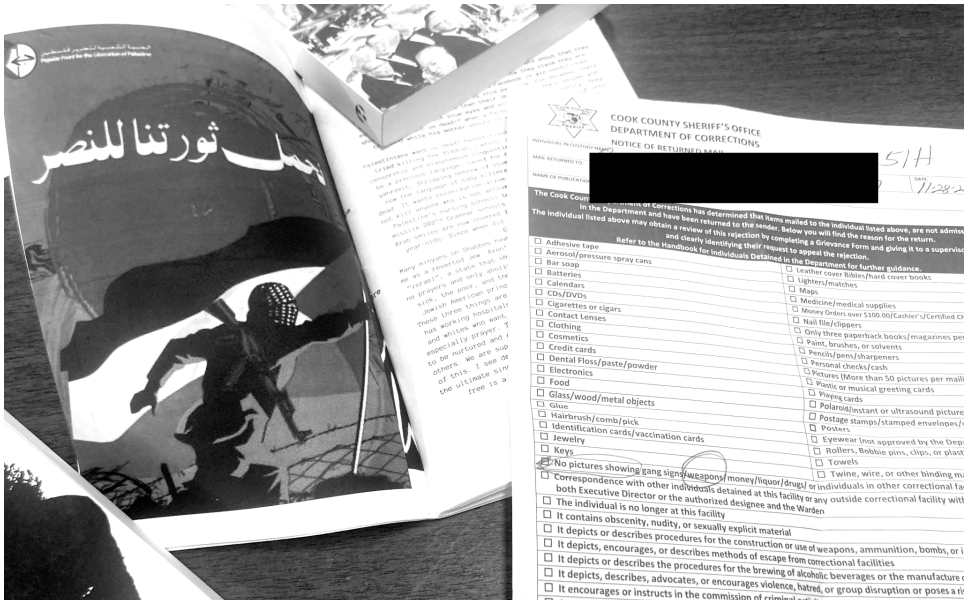


Midwest Books Community Zine 2023

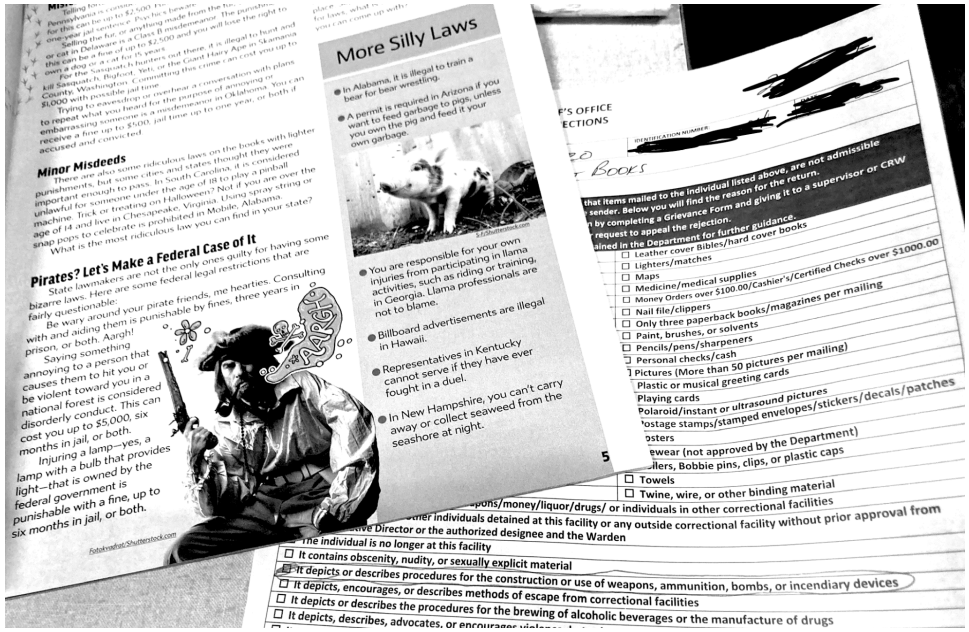
Our zine features submissions from incarcerated artists and authors, including several people at Cook County Jail: we've sent hundreds to people incarcerated there, but they've begun to repeatedly reject it for "nudity", "pictures showing gang signs/weapons/money/liquor/drugs or individuals in other correctional facilities", and "otherwise detrimental to security, good order, rehabilitation, or discipline or might be detrimental to mental health".

"In the twenty years that I have been a captive of the IDOC, the corrupt administration pretty much censors any literature that they know could have a beneficial effect on the way we think or act. The policies they use to enforce these censorships are so vague, it is impossible to combat them.

Anything that promotes unity, free thinking, personal development, or non-mainstream literature can easily be turned around by them simply saying there is a marker or high- lighter mark in it, it has a sticker or tape on it, there is a white-out on it or a many of the other fabricated excuse they want. ... They know the pen is mightier than the sword. Even though they hold the sword to our neck, our eyes are opened as we read books about our past, our heroes, our future." - Dennis Rogers, Jr.



A zine about Palestine is censored because of a drawing of a resistance fighter with a gun. Meanwhile CPD trains with Israeli Occupation Forces



A magazine is rejected because of a cartoon pirate holding a gun. The article itself is about frivolous silly laws, such as insulting a pirate.

f. All divisions should have functioning and freely accessible libraries. Those libraries should have the same diverse collection of materials as outside libraries.
g. Funding for library services come out of the Sheriff's existing budget, which has continued to grow substantially even as the number of people incarcerated in Cook County Jail has sharply decreased in recent years.

3. **All incarcerated people should have access to medical services and public health measures to ensure that they are able to meet their most basic physical and mental health needs.**
   a. Incarcerated people must have consistent access to healthy meals and clean drinking water.
   b. Soap, frequent laundry, fresh and nutritious food, and other basic necessities should be provided at no cost.
   c. Medical services, including substance use disorder and mental health treatment, should be provided efficiently, with care, and without risk of retribution.

4. **Cook County Jail's facilities should be high-quality, comfortable, and sanitary.**
   a. Spaces where incarcerated people live should be held to the same workplace safety heating and cooling standards as OSHA and tenant requirements.
   b. Spaces should be free of environmental hazards including mold, pests and particulate matter.
   c. Improving the facilities inside Cook County Jail should come out of the Sheriff's existing budget which has continued to grow substantially even as the number of people incarcerated in Cook County Jail has sharply decreased in recent years.

5. **People incarcerated in Cook County Jail should have greater life-saving contact with the non-incarcerated community.**
   a. Virtual visitation cannot replace in person contact with loved ones, faith leaders, or lawyers.
   b. In person visits should be accessible and the default option and virtual visits should be used to increase accessibility to community contact and not be used as a tool of surveillance and exploitation.
   c. People who express concerns about their mental health should be given evidence-based care and contact with loved ones rather than forced into further isolation within the facility.

6. **The Cook County Sheriff's Office should be transparent and accountable to the public about all policies, processes, and conditions happening inside the jail.**
   a. The Sheriff's Office should promptly and privately notify families anytime someone dies in custody.
   b. The Sheriff should publicly announce every death in custody by posting information in a central location on the Sheriff's Office website. Information about the cause of death should be shared as soon as available. These announcements should center the dignity of the individual who has died.
   c. Cook County Jail should be regularly and independently audited and inspected for conditions. Detailed reports should be released publicly.

Stopping the Loss of Life in Cook County Jail

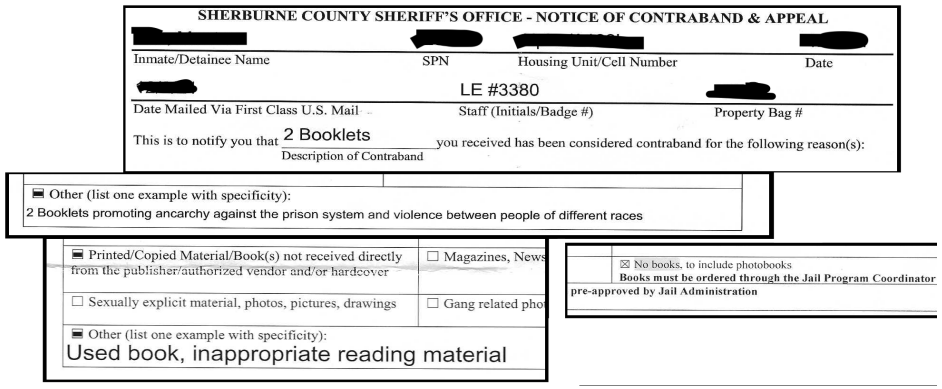
Since January 1st, 14 people have died while incarcerated in Cook County Jail. We mourn the loss of these lives and our hearts go out to their families. As community organizations representing thousands of Cook County residents, we are concerned that the Cook County Sheriff's Office has been unable to keep the people in their custody safe and that their response to the loss of lives has been to cover up these deaths and implement punitive measures that have further worsened the quality of life of people incarcerated in the jail.

We are calling for all Cook County stakeholders to work together to reduce the number of people incarcerated in the jail and for the Sheriff's Office to meet the following demands without retaliation against those courageous enough to bring attention to the jail's life-threatening mishandling of resources.

Tell your friends, family, and loved ones on the outside to Sign The Petition in support of these demands - more information at EndMoneyBond.org QR for petition —->

1. **Life-saving care, particularly regarding overdose, must be available and provided for everyone incarcerated in Cook County Jail.**
   a. No procedures or protocol should delay the administration of Naloxone by officers or people incarcerated in Cook County Jail.
   b. Every incarcerated individual and staff person should be trained and required to use Naloxone in the event of a suspected overdose.
   c. Naloxone and test strips for adulterants are evidence-based harm reduction tools and should be freely available without consequence.

2. **Incarcerated people should have free access to paper and the Sheriff's Office should cease undue confiscation of paper materials. Access to educational materials, programming, and libraries should be universal within Cook County Jail.**
   a. End the paper ban. Stop preventing lawyers, program facilitators, and visitors from bringing paper into the jail.
   b. People should have access to all kinds of reading materials, including legal documents, books, and paper on which to write and draw.
   c. Tablets should not be the only access people have to books, documents, and educational materials.
   d. Books and mail should not be rejected without verified proof that each specific rejected item contains illegal substances.
   e. Any items rejected by the jail without verified proof that the item contains contraband should be returned to the sender rather than confiscated by the jail.


SHERBURNE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE - NOTICE OF CONTRABAND & APPEAL

[redacted] | [redacted] | [redacted] | [redacted]

Inmate/Detainee Name | SPN | Housing Unit/Cell Number | Date

[redacted] | LE #3380 | [redacted]

Date Mailed Via First Class U.S. Mail | Staff (Initials/Badge #) | Property Bag #

This is to notify you that 2 Booklets (Description of Contraband) you received has been considered contraband for the following reason(s):

☒ Other (list one example with specificity):
2 Booklets promoting ancarchy against the prison system and violence between people of different races

☐ Printed/Copied Material/Book(s) not received directly from the publisher/authorized vendor and/or hardcover

☐ Magazines, News

☐ Sexually explicit material, photos, pictures, drawings

☐ Gang related pho

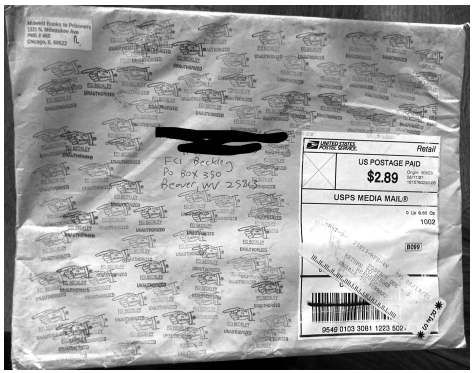
☒ Other (list one example with specificity):
Used book, inappropriate reading material

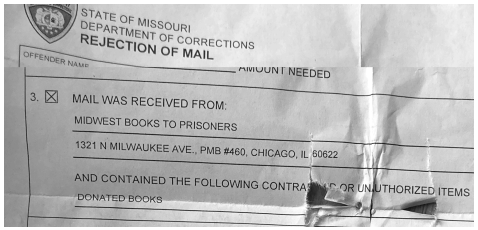
☒ No books, to include photobooks
Books must be ordered through the Jail Program Coordinator pre-approved by Jail Administration

Sherbourne County, MN: banning political books, misspelling "ancarchy"

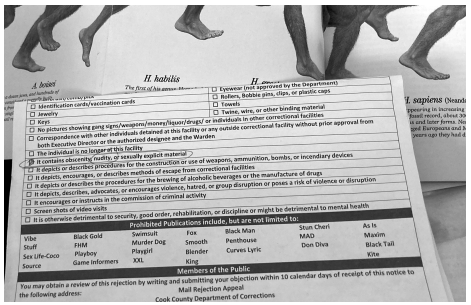


FCI Hazelton, WV: no "incoming publications" rejection which ordinarily requires a signature by The Warden and allows possibility of appeals by both prisoner and publisher. Just wrote in sharpie, "RTS non profit unauthorized". Same for FCI Beckley, also in WV, going a little overboard on the rejection stamps





Missouri DOC says that "donated books" are considered "contraband" despite official policy allowing incoming publications from "bona fide publishers"



Cook County Jail banning National Geographic Magazine for "nudity" because of scientific and artistic depiction of human evolution

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

NOTICE OF REJECTION OR IMPOUNDMENT OF PUBLICATIONS

Date: [redacted]

Inmate: [redacted] DC# [redacted]

Institution: Florida State Prison

This is notice that the following publication:

Title: Black Liberation and the Abolition of the Prison Industrial Complex

Volume/Issue/Edition:

Which was received on the following date: [redacted]

From: Midwest Books to Prisoners 1321 N. Milwaukee Ave. PMB #460 Chicago, IL 60622

☑ (15)(i) is dangerously inflammatory in that it advocates or encourages riot, insurrection, rebellion, organized prison protest, disruption of the institution, or the violation of the federal law, state law, or Department rules;

☑ (15)(p) otherwise presents a threat to the security, order, or rehabilitative objectives of the correctional system or the safety of any person.

PGS: No page numbers indicated – Pamphlet advocates rebellion

☑ IS IMPOUNDED pending review by the Department's Literature Review Committee, because the Warden or designee believes the publication contains subject matter that is inadmissible per Section (15) of Rule 33-501.401, F.A.C.

This is notice that the following publication:

Title: Program of the Black Autonomy Prison Federation

Florida banning Black Liberation literature

STATE OF MISSOURI
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
CENSORSHIP NOTIFICATION

INSTITUTION: **Northeast Correctional Center**

OFFENDER NAME & DOC NUMBER: [redacted]

HOUSING UNIT:

The Missouri Department of Corrections has reviewed materials sent to you. Pursuant to our review of this material, we conclude that the security of this institution will be at risk if the material is delivered to you within this institution because the material:

1. constitutes a threat to the security, good order or discipline of the institution;
2. may facilitate or encourage criminal activity; or
3. may interfere with the rehabilitation of an offender.

THIS CONCLUSION IS BASED UPON THE FACT THAT THE MATERIAL: (SELECT ALL REASONS THAT MAY APPLY)

provides information on how to obtain prohibited publications or provides information on how to order unauthorized items or contraband

TITLE
Prison Activist Resource Center

Missouri censoring the PARC National Resource Directory

South Dakota Department of Corrections Policy
Distribution: Public

Attachment 7: Mailroom Correspondence Rejection Notice-Sender
Please refer to DOC policy 1.5.D.3
Inmate Correspondence

CORRESPONDENCE REJECTION NOTICE-SENDER

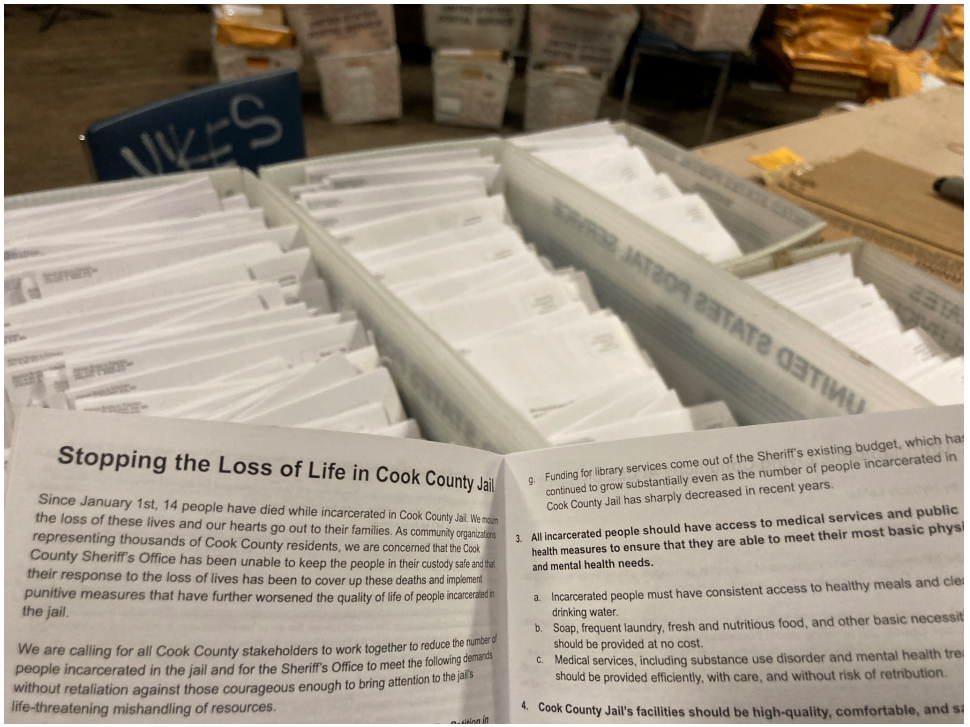
To: **Midwest books to prisoners**
Sender

Description of rejected item/correspondence: **1 book creator- owned heroes comic book issue 5 depicting violence with people being shot in the head**

☐ The correspondence contains contraband or unauthorized items that must be removed to facilitate delivery.

☒ The correspondence violates a Prohibited Act or any other rule, regulation, policy, operational memorandum or directive governing the DOC or this facility.

South Dakota State Penitentiary hating on graphic novels



CCJ Rejects Bulk Mailing of Information on Pretrial Fairness Act and Demands to Stop the Loss of Life at CCJ

Now that the Pretrial Fairness Act is in effect, people who have been held at Cook County Jail and throughout Illinois for simply being unable to afford the cash bail are now entitled to new hearings to reconsider their continued incarceration pending trial. People often spend years pretrial without having access to attorneys or a proper law library. To make sure people at CCJ knew their full rights, we sent zines to 200 of our people there with information on: (1) the complete IL Supreme Court transcript finding that the PFA and abolishing cash bail is in fact constitutional: (2) PFA Implementation Taskforce flowcharts for applicability to people detained prior to PFA; (3) An article "Stopping the Loss of Life in Cook County Jail", including coalition demands to improve conditions; (4) An article by Hybachi LeMar 'Uninhabitable Living Conditions in Division 5".

CCJ has not delivered the zine or issued any rejection slip - blatant censorship without even the pretense of providing justification or allowing grievances or appeals. It's utterly reprehensible that CCJ would deliberately withhold information that could set people free and save lives.

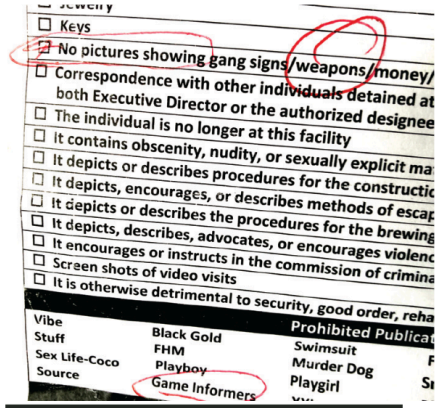
period of seven years from the time the message was sent. SmartInmate has many built-in investigative features that make the system an invaluable intelligence-gathering, crime solving and powerful crime prevention tool. For example, SmartInmate can automatically monitor and send instant notifications when messages containing investigator-defined keywords or names are transmitted, or inmates being shadowed under investigation send or receive messages or connect with a new public user. Furthermore, SmartInmate messages are fully keyword searchable. Keywords are highlighted in the search results to allow investigators to quickly locate content of interest. SmartInmate also collects statistics, data and information on public users in the community that are in communication with inmates at your agency. Information such as connected inmates, phone numbers, IP-addresses, email addresses, credit card and bank information, GPS locations, devices used and more".

GTL is also spying on people who dare use their app to communicate with loved ones:

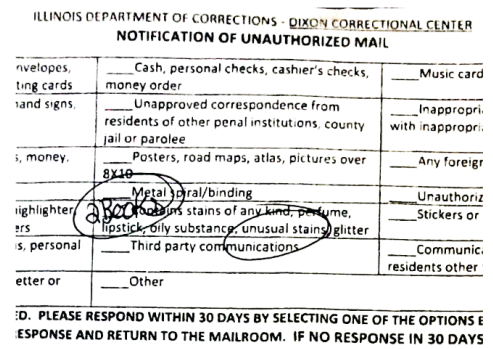
"Call IQ application will alert you via email if a peron utter a specific phrase or mentions a certain topic during a call... Calls with greater fluctuation in sentiment or emotion can lead investigators to calls where the inmate or called party shows signs of stress. .. Location IQ uses powerful and accurate Carrier Tower and GPS location based services to access a called party's location using GPS, offering both latitude/longitude coordinates and proximity to the given facility... "

Rather than stopping the flow of contraband, these prison administrators are conspiring with third party profiteers to monitor, censor, slow and obstruct the mail, narrowing the form and content of communications allowed to only these dystopian corporate sandboxes. Instead of addressing the root causes of addiction, poverty and criminalization, they're accusing the entire planet of being a criminal entity trying to smuggle drugs into prison, blaming mail, books and everyone else except for the people profiting from the cycle of incarceration. We're not going for it! Sheriff Tom Dart, leave the mail alone!

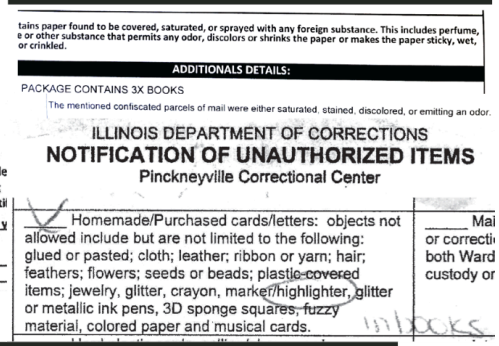


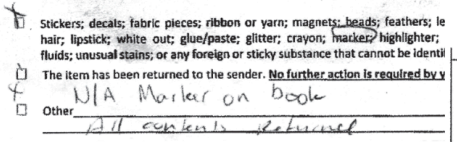


Cook County Jail rejecting a Call of Duty book for "weapons". Game Informers are explicitly banned

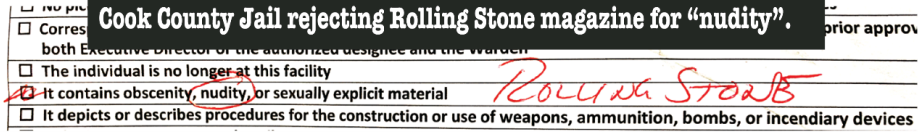


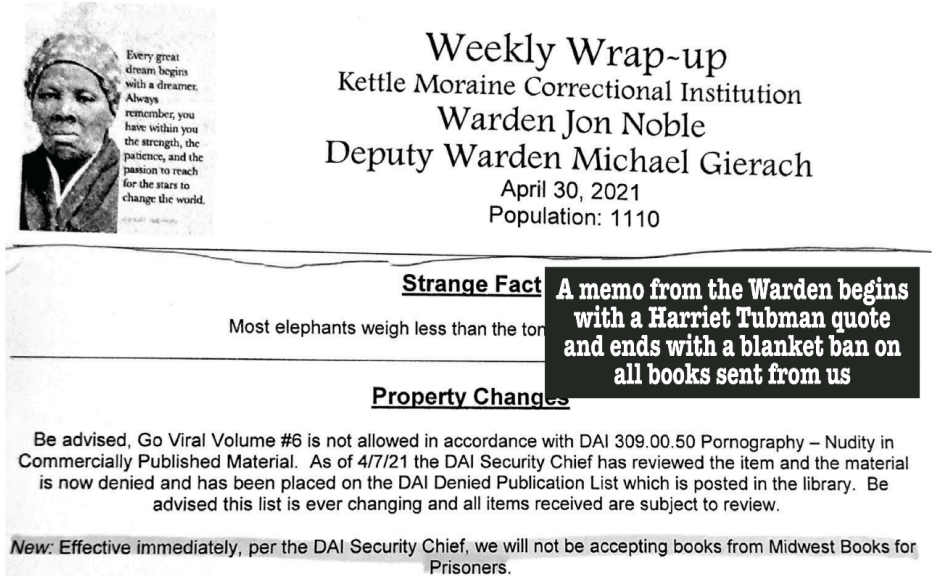
Petty rejections for "unusual stains", "saturated", "crinkled", ad infinitum



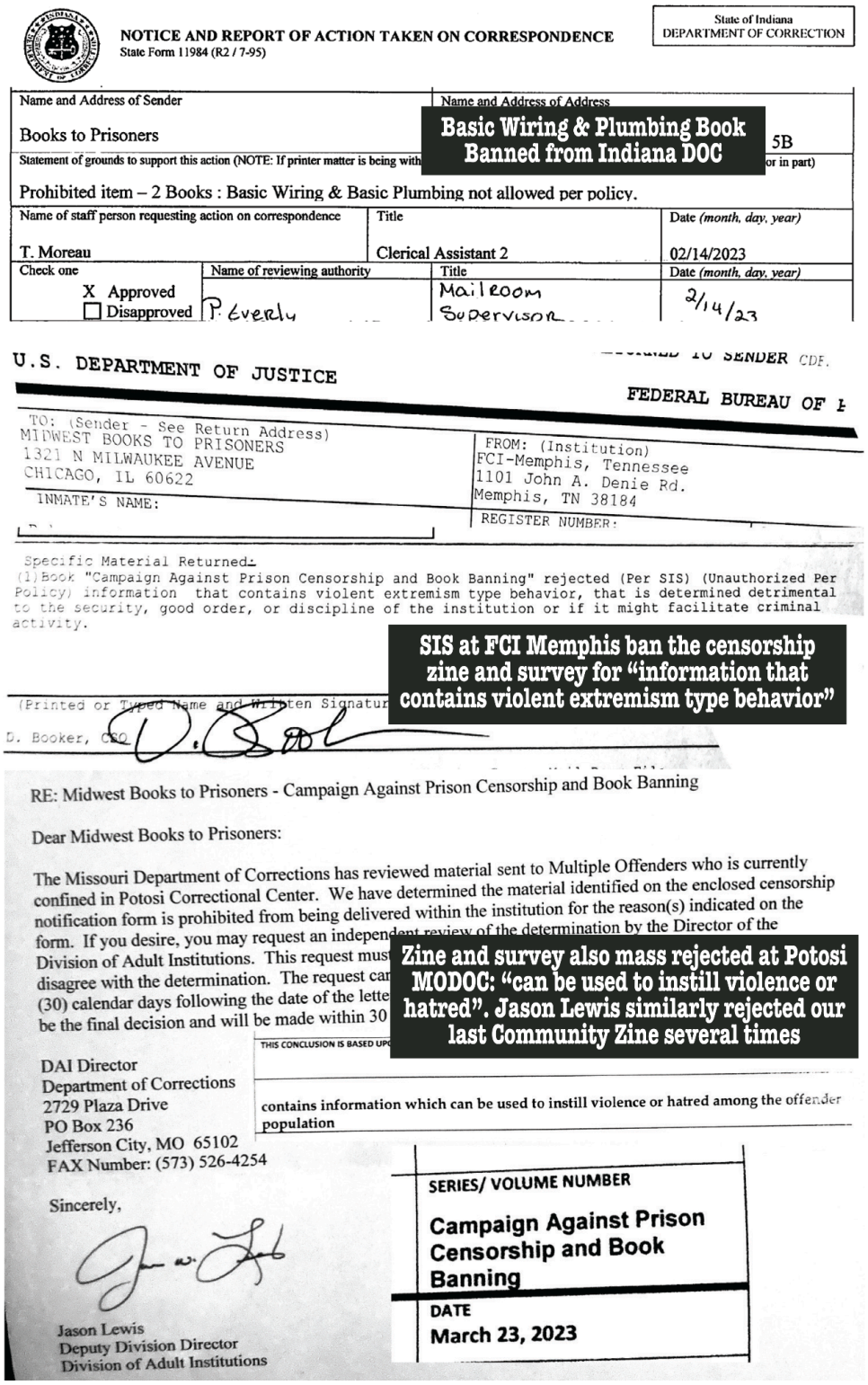


Cook County Jail rejecting Rolling Stone magazine for "nudity".





A memo from the Warden begins with a Harriet Tubman quote and ends with a blanket ban on all books sent from us



NOTICE AND REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN ON CORRESPONDENCE
State Form 11984 (R2 / 7-95)

State of Indiana
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

Name and Address of Sender	Name and Address of Address
Books to Prisoners	5B

Basic Wiring & Plumbing Book Banned from Indiana DOC

Statement of grounds to support this action (NOTE: If printer matter is being with or in part)

Prohibited item – 2 Books : Basic Wiring & Basic Plumbing not allowed per policy.

Name of staff person requesting action on correspondence	Title	Date (month, day, year)
T. Moreau	Clerical Assistant 2	02/14/2023

Check one	Name of reviewing authority	Title	Date (month, day, year)
X Approved ☐ Disapproved	P. Everly	Mailroom Supervisor	2/14/23

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF P

TO: (Sender - See Return Address)
MIDWEST BOOKS TO PRISONERS
1321 N MILWAUKEE AVENUE
CHICAGO, IL 60622

FROM: (Institution)
FCI-Memphis, Tennessee
1101 John A. Denie Rd.
Memphis, TN 38184

INMATE'S NAME:

REGISTER NUMBER:

Specific Material Returned:
(1)Book "Campaign Against Prison Censorship and Book Banning" rejected (Per SIS) (Unauthorized Per Policy) information that contains violent extremism type behavior, that is determined detrimental to the security, good order, or discipline of the institution or if it might facilitate criminal activity.

SIS at FCI Memphis ban the censorship zine and survey for "information that contains violent extremism type behavior"

(Printed or Typed Name and Written Signatur

D. Booker, CCO

RE: Midwest Books to Prisoners - Campaign Against Prison Censorship and Book Banning

Dear Midwest Books to Prisoners:

The Missouri Department of Corrections has reviewed material sent to Multiple Offenders who is currently confined in Potosi Correctional Center. We have determined the material identified on the enclosed censorship notification form is prohibited from being delivered within the institution for the reason(s) indicated on the form. If you desire, you may request an independent review of the determination by the Director of the Division of Adult Institutions. This request must disagree with the determination. The request ca (30) calendar days following the date of the lette be the final decision and will be made within 30

Zine and survey also mass rejected at Potosi MODOC: "can be used to instill violence or hatred". Jason Lewis similarly rejected our last Community Zine several times

THIS CONCLUSION IS BASED UP

contains information which can be used to instill violence or hatred among the offender population

DAI Director
Department of Corrections
2729 Plaza Drive
PO Box 236
Jefferson City, MO 65102
FAX Number: (573) 526-4254

Sincerely,

Jason Lewis
Deputy Division Director
Division of Adult Institutions

SERIES/ VOLUME NUMBER
Campaign Against Prison Censorship and Book Banning

DATE
March 23, 2023

comment. It happened in half the state prison systems, several federal prisons, and hundreds of local jails.

Authorities claim these outsourced mail security services are necessary to prevent drugs from being sent in, but are unable to show evidence it works (ie reports after five years of SmartCommunications digitizing the entire PA DOC's mail, drugs still proliferate).

While people need unrestricted access to technology and the internet, this ain't it. All kinds of problems with these tablets replacing physical mail. The costs: they're nickel and diming the incarcerated for basic text and phone services that would otherwise be nearly free if it weren't run by profiteering contractors. The quality is trash: margins clipped, pages out of order, limits on quantity or sizes, etc. Unlike physical mail, if you ever get transferred to another institution you may lose all your mail stored on the tablets. Availability is also an issue, equipment breaks, is often unavailable during lockdowns, and access can be revoked for discipline as if communication is a privilege not a right.

Expanding the Panopticon: There are other selling points that make it attractive to prison administrators: surveillance and data collection - not only storing all communications in searchable databases for police, but they also spy on contacts they correspond with - expanding the carceral panopticon not only to those captive in their dungeons, but to the rest of us in the so-called free world!

CIDNET, a "communications company" similar to Securus, Smart Communications, and GTL, describes themselves as "a social platform, an investigative monitoring tool, and a communications infrastructure, depending on who you are". In CIDNETs 2021 catalog, they advertise their "features" for staff as revenue and monitoring:

> *"Mail cues are monetized by many of our clients, and they can be a significant source of additional funding for your facility. Monitoring tools: The Cidnet Intelligence Suite is a treasure trove of tools that help facilities solve more cases and prevent future crimes. These tools are designed to continuously monitor large amounts of inmate communications data, so corrections staff don't have to. Time previously spent randomly monitoring inmate communications will transition to time spent analyzing actionable intelligence that the system provides. "*

Smart Communications highlighting their surveillance capabilities:

> *"authorized staff with the ability to monitor and review all electronic messages and attachments sent through the system, except those items that are deemed privileged under law (i.e. attorney/client confidentiality). We will maintain a record of all electronic messages sent through the SmartInmate system for a*



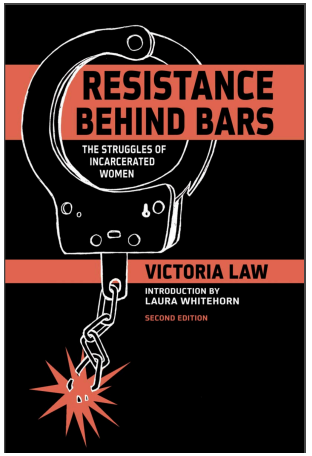
Are there alternative means to receive enough reading materials in CCJ? Absolutely not. Our recent FOIA request shows that there was $0 spending on library and law library reading materials at Cook County Jail in the year 2022. All books were sent in "by donation", so from family members and groups like ours. As for access to the "law library", you have to fill out a request form specifying your query, and hope that a few weeks later the five pages of printouts you get back will be enough to prepare your case.

The irrational stripping away of the possessions of community members locked up has caused a huge divide amongst guards and the people they harm. Reading materials encourage a healthier environment and book programs like Midwest Books To Prisoners give indigent people inside the ability to obtain reading materials free of charge, removing some financial burden put on the individuals detained in CCJ as well as the burden put on their families who are trying to help maintain the mental health of people living in uninhabitable living conditions.

The Digitization Creep: After just a few months of CCJ distributing over 3000 tablets, they enabled the GTL "Telmate Getting Out" app with electronic "email" functionality. When these prison profiteers come around, often physical mail and visits are phased out and replaced with these heavily restricted, and expensive texting services.

Smart Communications, Securus, TextBehind, Pigeonly, Global Tel-Link and more: the lucrative business of mail scanning is spreading rampantly often without constitutional considerations, congressional oversight, or public

Banned in IDOC: "Resistance Behind Bars" by Victoria Law



"I'm stumped. I don't actually know how a child's paper swan threatens the safety and security of the prison.

"Why can't she get origami?" my daughter repeats.

"I dunno. 'Cuz it's prison," I mumble and turn back to my own paper.

Less than two minutes later, she has taped the edges of the paper together to form a pentagon. She has written a short note on the front. Proudly she hands it to me.

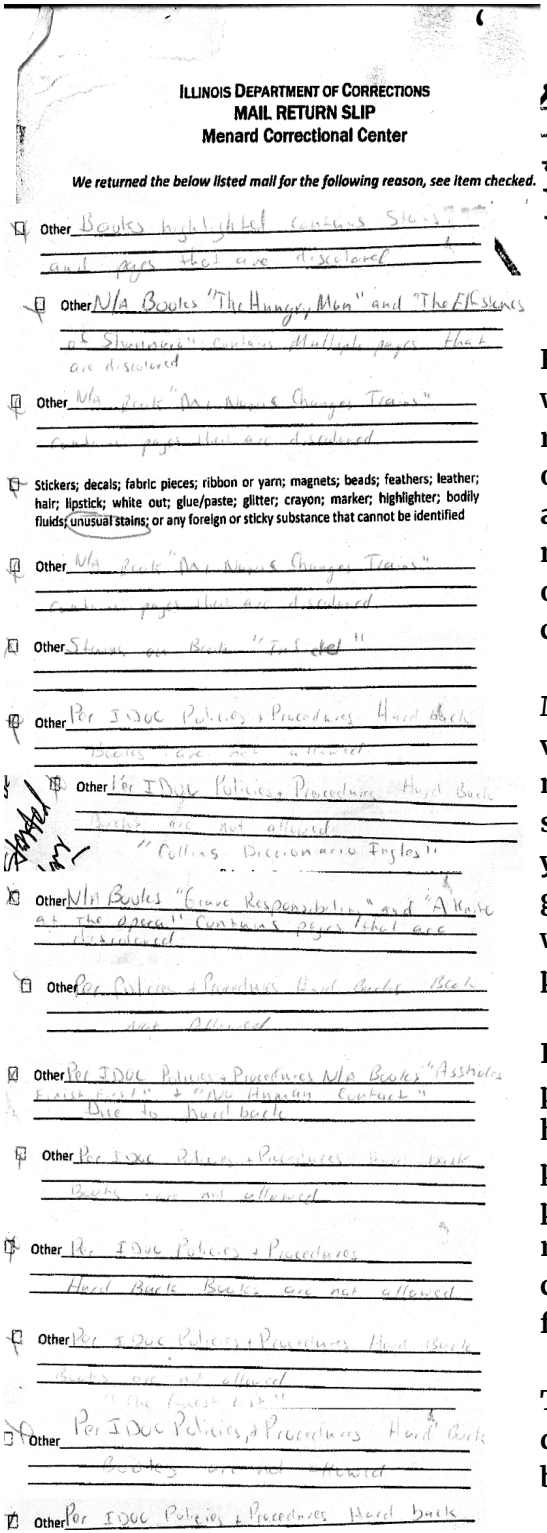
"I don't think she can get things that have tape," I say, handing it back to her. Her smile disappears and I contemplate including it anyway, even if it means the entire envelope will be returned.

My daughter finds scissors and cuts everything except the front of the pentagon, which she hands to me.

"There," she says.

Our five-minute exchange reminds me of why we need to aim for a world without prisons and its senseless rules and restrictions, a world in which no small child has to comprehend why she cannot send a simple folded giraffe to her mother's friend. Or why her own mother cannot receive her homemade Valentine's Day card because she drew it in crayon.3 "Or why her mother has to spend her birthday—and every other day—locked far away from her.

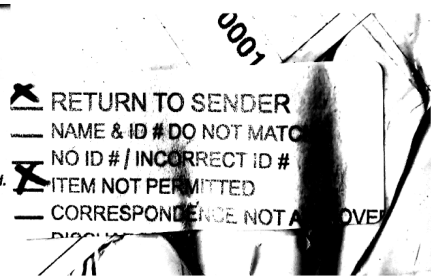
But while striving for that world, we need to also reach in, make contact with those who have been isolated by prison walls and societal indifference and listen to those who are speaking out, like many of the women who have shared their stories within this book. Because abolishing prisons will not happen tomorrow, next week or even next year, we need to break through these barriers, communicate, work with and support women who are in resistance today."



ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
MAIL RETURN SLIP
Menard Correctional Center

We returned the below listed mail for the following reason, see item checked.

- Other Books highlighted contains Stickers and pages that are discolored
- Other N/A Books "The Hunger Man" and "The Fifth Stones of Strength" contain Multiple pages that are discolored
- Other N/A Book "Dark Nights & Changes Trains" Contains pages that are discolored
- Stickers; decals; fabric pieces; ribbon or yarn; magnets; beads; feathers; leather; hair; lipstick; white out; glue/paste; glitter; crayon; marker; highlighter; bodily fluids; unusual stains; or any foreign or sticky substance that cannot be identified
- Other N/A Book "Dark Nights & Changes Trains" Contains pages that are discolored
- Other Shows on Book "Tuesday"
- Other Per IDOC Policies & Procedures Hard Back Books are not allowed
- Other Per IDOC Policies & Procedures Hard Back Books are not allowed "Collins Diccionario Ingles"
- Other N/A Books "Grave Responsibility" and "A Knife at the Opera" Contains pages that are discolored
- Other Per Policies & Procedures Hard Backs Book Not Allowed
- Other Per IDOC Policies & Procedures N/A Books "Assholes Bank Robbers" & "No Hugging Contact" Due to hard back
- Other Per IDOC Policies & Procedures Hard Back Books are not allowed
- Other Per IDOC Policies & Procedures Hard Back Books are not allowed
- Other Per IDOC Policies & Procedures Hard Back Books are not allowed "Spanish Dictionary"
- Other Per IDOC Policies & Procedures Hard Backs Books are not allowed
- Other Per IDOC Policies & Procedures Hard Backs



0001

RETURN TO SENDER
NAME & ID # DO NOT MATC
NO ID # / INCORRECT ID #
ITEM NOT PERMITTED
CORRESPOND NOT A OVE

For years, Illinois DOC prisons were perhaps the least restrictive we regularly sent to, one of the only states that allow hardcover books - but now they appear to be jumping on the "content-neutral" censorship bandwagon.

Menard had always been vicious on incoming mail - a new scanning pilot program, so many petty rejections. Last year they tried banning our group altogether saying we weren't an "authorized publisher".

In May 2024, IDOC quietly posted on their website "no hardback books"- with no published policies or procedures. Menard now rejects all hardcovers; it's not clear if other prisons will follow, but we have to stop it.

This is a fight we are determined to win -the book bans end here in Illinois!

books: guards tossed Koger's books without options to send home or choose which books they took. CCJ intentionally repeated this disrespect during the recent shakedowns. Part of the punishment is psychological - they want people to feel the fear and uncertainty that at any given moment, books or anything else you might have can be arbitrarily stolen. But it also prevents people who often spend months or years in pretrial confinement from preparing a legal defense against one of the most corrupt police and court systems in the country.

How does taking away one's reading materials contribute to the "safety and security" or "legitimate penological interests"? Cook County Sheriff says forget what you heard about education and rehabilitation : they argued in Court that that books *"can be used to set fires, as weapons or makeshift body armor, hide contraband, send coded messages between inmates, jam cell doors or locks, cover windows, clog toilets and ventilation systems, cluttering and tripping hazards, and cause disputes between inmates over books".*

These restrictions violate constitutional rights, have no reasonable penological interest, and fail basic standards of common sense and human decency. Nevertheless, the Courts always seem to find a way to twist legal interpretations when it suits the ends of the prison system. The four factor test of Turner v. Safley, 482 U.S. 78 (1987) to determine whether a prison restriction should be allowed to override constitutional rights:

> *1. Whether there is a "valid, rational connection" between the regulation and the legitimate governmental interest used to justify it;*
> *2. Whether there are alternative means for the prisoner to exercise the right at issue;*
> *3. The impact that the desired accommodation will have on guards, other inmates, and prison resources ;*
> *4. The presence or absence of "ready alternatives," where the presence of ready alternatives make it more likely that a regulation is unreasonable, while the absence make it less likely that the regulation is unreasonable.*

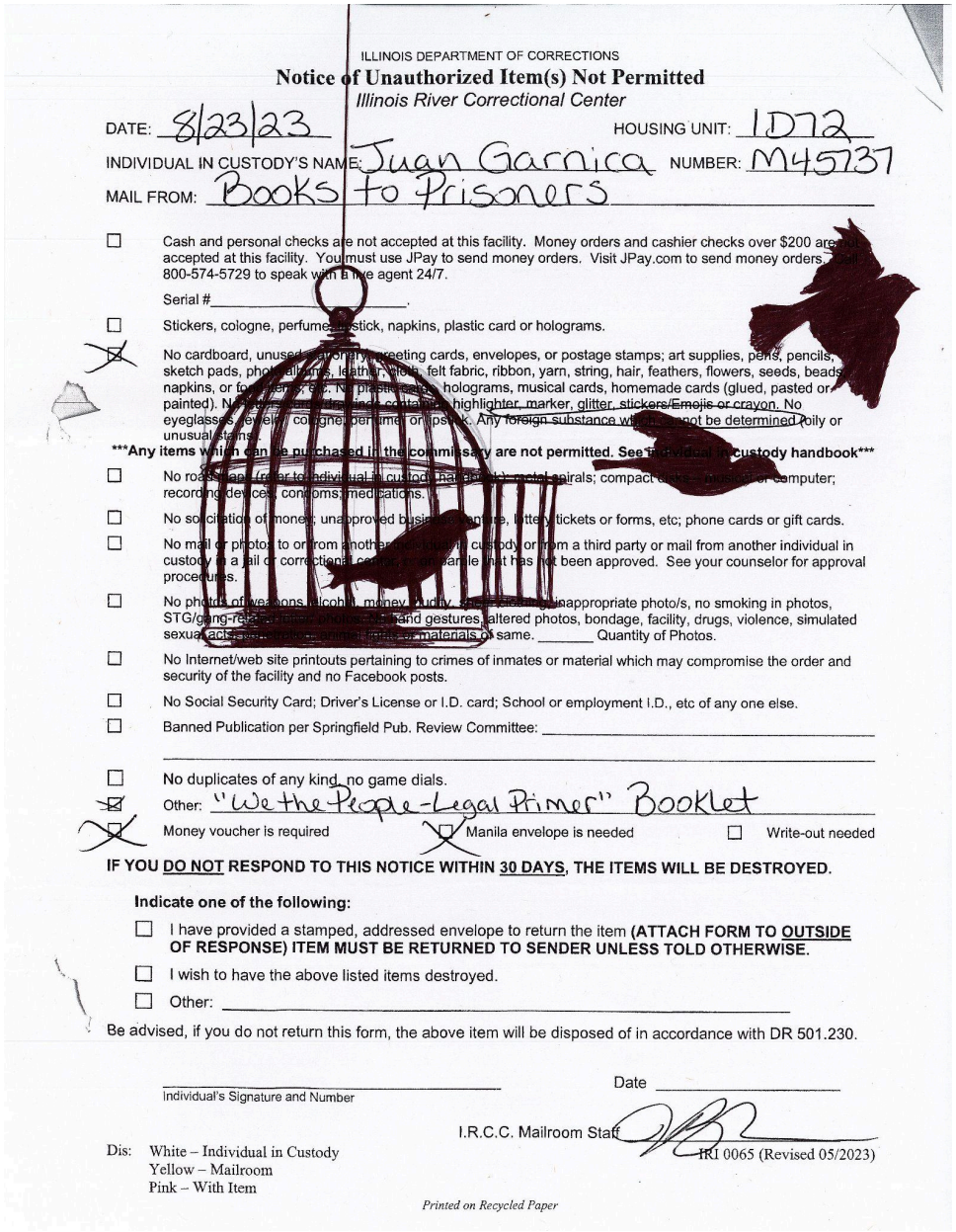
CCJ did not ban religious materials because that would be an infringement on a person's religious rights, fought in cases like Cooper v. Pate, 378 U.S. 546 (1964), Cruz v. Beto, 405 U.S. 319 (1972), and Sostre v. McGinnis. A prison regulation that infringes on inmates' constitutional rights therefore is valid only if it is "reasonably related to legitimate penological interests." Turner, 482 U.S. at 88, 107 S.Ct. 2254. "[A] regulation cannot be sustained where the logical connection between the regulation and the asserted goal is so remote as to render the policy arbitrary or irrational." Id. at 89, 107 S.Ct. 2254. What is the valid rationality of the book policy when religious books can be unlimited but other materials are severely constricted? Do we have to declare a new religion that worships the law so individuals can have materials to prepare their cases?

The Lingering Mail Banning Threat At CCJ: A Predatory Tool Of Surveillance and Profit that Must Be Stopped

In recent months, Administrators at Cook County Jail have escalated their repressive campaign against free speech and due process rights by enforcing extreme limitations on the amounts of information and reading materials our community members locked inside can have in their possession. Attorneys are now prohibited from bringing in any papers whatsoever during legal visits, denying people access to the evidence they need to fight their case. Guards are going cell to cell stealing people's reading materials enforcing a harsh 3 book limit while cracking down in the mailroom with an increase of petty rejections for books with "stains", "saturation", "crinkled pages", etc. There are no libraries at CCJ and no budget for books or legal materials, but they're pumping millions into restrictive tablets with expensive "email" functionality. These alarm bells demonstrate how they're following the shameful nationwide trend of censorship, privatization and digitization.

In February 2023, Sheriff Tom Dart worked with WGN9 to release a five minute copaganda video showing mail guards inspecting stacks of letters, blaming mail and books for the rise in overdose deaths. Beginning with the headline "it's a new war on drugs inside Cook County Jail", it's more of the same failed fear and misinfo pushing criminalization and restrictions when what is actually needed is resources, treatment, and freedom. In the video, Tom Dart pledged that "we will never get rid of mail altogether", but they are already doing way too much: it's bad enough you already can't get newspapers or hardcover books, and the petty rejections are only increasing. In many jails and prisons where tablets are introduced with alternative electronic messaging and visits, prison systems end up terminating physical mail and visits: but this is Chicago, and we aren't going for that here without a fight. Action needs to be taken to defend this ongoing destruction of rights, and prevent CCJ from a blanket ban on physical mail or books.

"3 Book Rule "and Massive Book Shakedowns: After the Kroger v. Dart lawsuit challenging the 3-book rule was denied by the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals last April, CCJ administrators wasted no time in enforcing this draconian limit by going cell to cell to steal "extra" books. Many legal books have been confiscated or destroyed, as well as other personal possessions such as family photos and artwork. Supposedly religious books aren't counted towards the limit, and people in Division 6 were told legal books don't count as well. But this is all subject to the personal whims of whatever guard wants to enforce and interpret the rules, with no safeguards protecting legal books and no due process to appeal the confiscation or to send the materials home. The Koger lawsuit was not just a challenge of the 3-book limitation itself, but also the handling of the confiscated



ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Notice of Unauthorized Item(s) Not Permitted

Illinois River Correctional Center

DATE: 8/23/23 HOUSING UNIT: ID72

INDIVIDUAL IN CUSTODY'S NAME: Juan Garnica NUMBER: M45737

MAIL FROM: Books to Prisoners

☐ Cash and personal checks are not accepted at this facility. Money orders and cashier checks over $200 are not accepted at this facility. You must use JPay to send money orders. Visit JPay.com to send money orders. Call 800-574-5729 to speak with a live agent 24/7.

Serial #_____.

☐ Stickers, cologne, perfume, lipstick, napkins, plastic card or holograms.

☒ No cardboard, unused stationary, greeting cards, envelopes, or postage stamps; art supplies, pens, pencils, sketch pads, photo albums, leather, cloth, felt fabric, ribbon, yarn, string, hair, feathers, flowers, seeds, beads, napkins, or food. No plastic cards, holograms, musical cards, homemade cards (glued, pasted or painted). No [illegible] highlighter, marker, glitter, stickers/Emojis or crayon. No eyeglasses, jewelry, cologne, perfume or lipstick. Any foreign substance which cannot be determined oily or unusual stains.

Any items which can be purchased in the commissary are not permitted. See individual in custody handbook

☐ No road atlas (map) or to individual in custody that contains metal spirals; compact disc, [illegible] or computer; recording devices; condoms; medications.

☐ No solicitation of money; unapproved business [illegible]; lottery tickets or forms, etc; phone cards or gift cards.

☐ No mail or photos to or from another [illegible] custody or from a third party or mail from another individual in custody to a jail or correctional [illegible] that has not been approved. See your counselor for approval procedures.

☐ No photos of weapons, alcohol, money, nudity, [illegible] inappropriate photo/s, no smoking in photos, STG/gang-related [illegible] and gestures, altered photos, bondage, facility, drugs, violence, simulated sexual acts [illegible] materials of same. _____ Quantity of Photos.

☐ No Internet/web site printouts pertaining to crimes of inmates or material which may compromise the order and security of the facility and no Facebook posts.

☐ No Social Security Card; Driver's License or I.D. card; School or employment I.D., etc of any one else.

☐ Banned Publication per Springfield Pub. Review Committee: _____

_____

☐ No duplicates of any kind, no game dials.

☒ Other: "We the People-Legal Primer" Booklet

☒ Money voucher is required ☒ Manila envelope is needed ☐ Write-out needed

IF YOU DO NOT RESPOND TO THIS NOTICE WITHIN 30 DAYS, THE ITEMS WILL BE DESTROYED.

Indicate one of the following:

☐ I have provided a stamped, addressed envelope to return the item **(ATTACH FORM TO OUTSIDE OF RESPONSE) ITEM MUST BE RETURNED TO SENDER UNLESS TOLD OTHERWISE.**

☐ I wish to have the above listed items destroyed.

☐ Other: _____

Be advised, if you do not return this form, the above item will be disposed of in accordance with DR 501.230.

_____ Date _____

Individual's Signature and Number

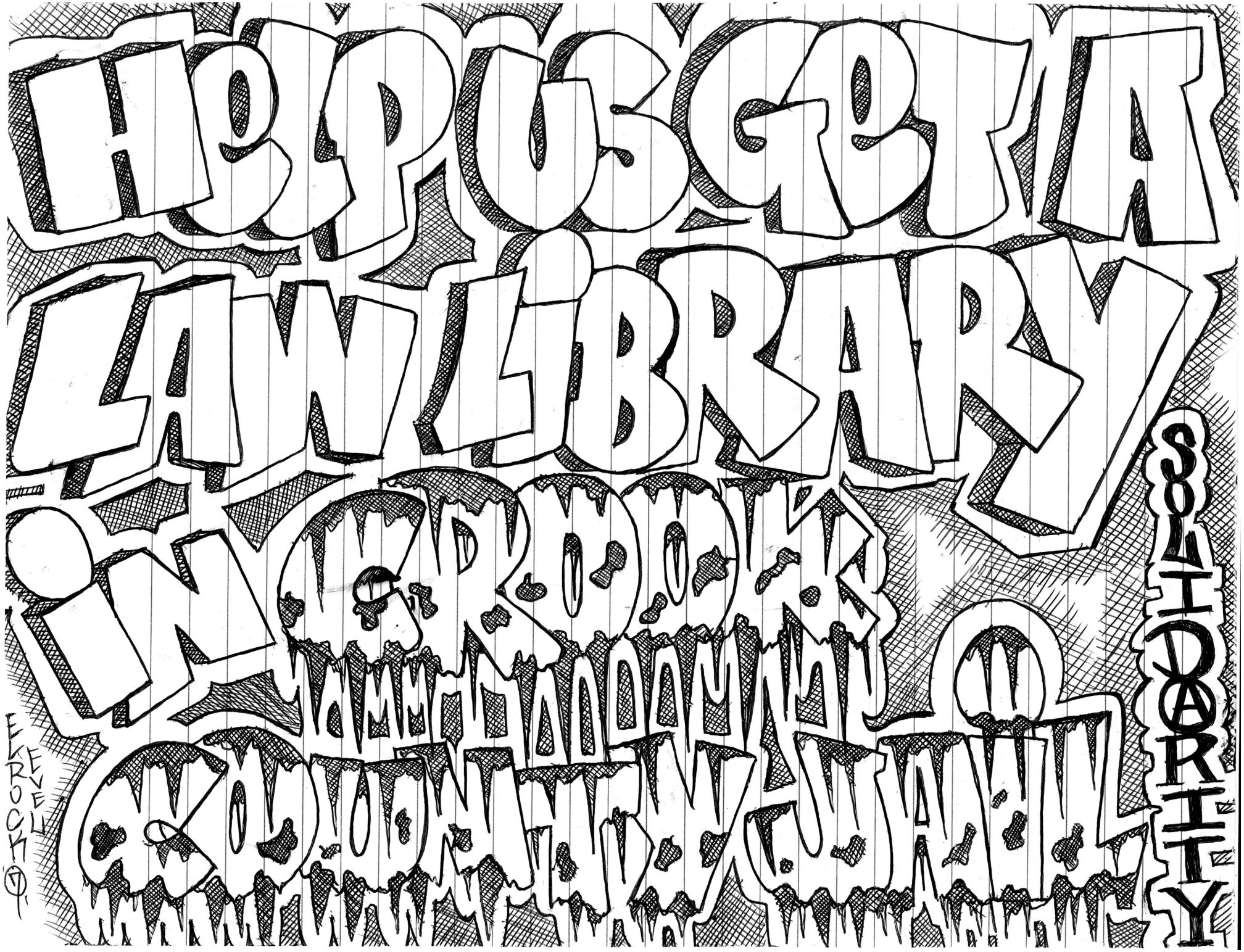
I.R.C.C. Mailroom Staff

Dis: White – Individual in Custody
Yellow – Mailroom
Pink – With Item

IRI 0065 (Revised 05/2023)

Printed on Recycled Paper

A "We The People" legal primer booklet - rejected ostensibly because of a "foreign substance that cannot be determined (oily or unusual stains)


HOPUSGOTA
LAW LIBRARY
IN
SHORTY