



**Voices**  
magazine

BE AN ALLY

ISSUE # 3

**Voices Magazine Issue 3**  
**Copyright 2025**

**Publisher:** Beaconsfield High School, LBPSB  
**Editor-in-Chief:** Carmen Rebecca Levitt and  
Emma McRobbie  
**Editors:** Addison Mirijello-Bergnach,  
Sofia Mazzarello, Anndrea Nicholas  
**Youtube tech:** Eliza Tagg  
**Cover Artist:** Albert Castillo  
**Graphic Design:** Elizabeth Ferriera  
**Photography:** individual credits within the  
magazine  
**Writers:** Community, grade 11, grade 10, grade  
9 students  
**ISSN:** 2818-7539



All rights reserved by Beaconsfield High School. No reproduction, transmission in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, or storage in a retrieval system, of any part of this publication without the prior written consent of the publisher.

COPYRIGHT 2025

# EDITOR-IN-CHIEF LETTER!

Welcome to the 3rd Issue of Voices Magazine!

The Voices Magazine team has worked very hard to create this space to showcase the talented writers at BHS high school, and empower the community.

Special thanks to Ms Cochrane, everyone who contributed, and the entire Voices team. Without all of you, this magazine would never have happened. We're so proud of all your efforts, in and outside of meetings, and had such an incredible time working alongside all of you creating this project! We thank you for your impressive work ethic and outstanding writing abilities

Creating this issue of the Voices Magazine was such an amazing experience that helped us develop leadership skills, and allowed us to better understand our writing, as well as ourselves as a people. It also taught us how to involve ourselves within the communities around us, and to help bring awareness to the struggles of others. To all those reading, we hope you take away the message, that change will happen if we bring our voices together! Enjoy the magazine and visuals.

Sincerely,

Co-Chief Editors Emma McRobbie and Carmen Rebecca Levitt



# Table of Contents

## Voices Magazine

---

<u>Love by Allisaon Saunders.....</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Your Voices Will Be Heard by Carmen Rebecca Levitt.....</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>Never Enough by Emma McRobbie.....</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>Change Yourself by Elizabeth Ferriera.....</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>The Restrictions of Information by Addison Mirijello- Bergnach.....</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>Education By Sofia Mazzarello.....</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>Courageous Conversations by Mathieu Canavan.....</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>What Exactly Is Social Justice? By Juan Vargas Gonzalez.....</u>	<u>18</u>
<u>Weaponized Language In The Province Of Quebec By Jack Wetmore.....</u>	<u>19</u>
<u>Help Wanted: Givers By Amanda Skalkos.....</u>	<u>21</u>
<u>One Street, Many Voices By Robb Jutrus.....</u>	<u>22</u>
<u>Does Canada’s Legal System Have Issues of Classism and Racism By Elijah Shapiro.....</u>	<u>23</u>
<u>Paying Homage To Those Who Always Check In By Rachel Chua Wilson.....</u>	<u>25</u>
<u>Social Justice In Our Modern Society By Maeve Hackett.....</u>	<u>26</u>
<u>What Is Social Justice By Anthony Quinnett.....</u>	<u>27</u>
<u>Prices of Menstrual Products in Quebec By Carmen Rebecca Levitt..</u>	<u>28</u>
<u>Power and Rights By Jack Bernard.....</u>	<u>29</u>
<u>Someone’s Kid is Dead By Liam D’Angelo.....</u>	<u>30</u>
<u>The Dark Side of the Legal System By Sofia Mazzarello.....</u>	<u>31</u>
<u>Your Body, Our Choice By Kaydence Caro.....</u>	<u>33</u>
<u>Poverty Problems By Massimo Pompizzi.....</u>	<u>35</u>
<u>Our Health By Melinda Cochrane.....</u>	<u>37</u>

---

---

<u>Crime of The Century By Kayden Mayoff.....</u>	<u>38</u>
<u>Abandoned Futures By Danica Lowry.....</u>	<u>39</u>
<u>Social Justice in Relation To The Legal System By Micheal Ghantous.....</u>	<u>40</u>
<u>Social Justice By Ashleen Saini.....</u>	<u>41</u>
<u>Poverty and Access To Necessities By Erica Beaudry.....</u>	<u>42</u>
<u>The Meaning Of Justice By Eliza Tagg.....</u>	<u>44</u>
<u>Social Justice By Josh Mc Caig.....</u>	<u>45</u>
<u>Social Justice By Deandra Robillard.....</u>	<u>46</u>
<u>Distribution Of Legal Knowledge and Its Significance By Ethan Rieder.....</u>	<u>47</u>
<u>Social Justice and The Heart of Our Institutions By Zander Prefetti Lefebvre.....</u>	<u>48</u>
<u>The Faces Of Social Justice By Emelia Lautman .....</u>	<u>49</u>
<u>Nio Money, No Defense By Julian Harr.....</u>	<u>50</u>
<u>Why Do I Need Social Justice By Addison Mirijello Bernach.....</u>	<u>52</u>
<u>Social Justice By Tristan Garbutt.....</u>	<u>53</u>
<u>Social Justice By Zoltan Ketseti.....</u>	<u>54</u>
<u>The Pay Gap By Evan Alexander.....</u>	<u>55</u>
<u>Poverty VS The Justice System By Rayan Stanfl.....</u>	<u>56</u>
<u>Passion Meets Risk By Elizabeth Roy.....</u>	<u>58</u>
<u>The Stain On The Canvas Of ManKind By Emma McRobbie.....</u>	<u>59</u>
<u>Poverty In The Legal System By Mia Kerr.....</u>	<u>60</u>
<u>A True Story By Guerlyne Mercier.....</u>	<u>62</u>
<u>Social Injustice of Salary by William Rose-lefebvre.....</u>	<u>64</u>
<u>Environmental and Societal Problems By Jacob Reid.....</u>	<u>65</u>
<u>Equal Respect Equal Opportunity By Ava Kang.....</u>	<u>66</u>
<u>The Change That is Needed By Jack Tapin.....</u>	<u>67</u>
<u>Issues In The Legal System By Lauren Wiseman.....</u>	<u>68</u>
<u>The Effect of Poverty By Vérona Dupré.....</u>	<u>69</u>
<u>RACISM AS A SOCIAL JUSTICIE ISSUE By Hailey Coveduck.....</u>	<u>70</u>

---

---

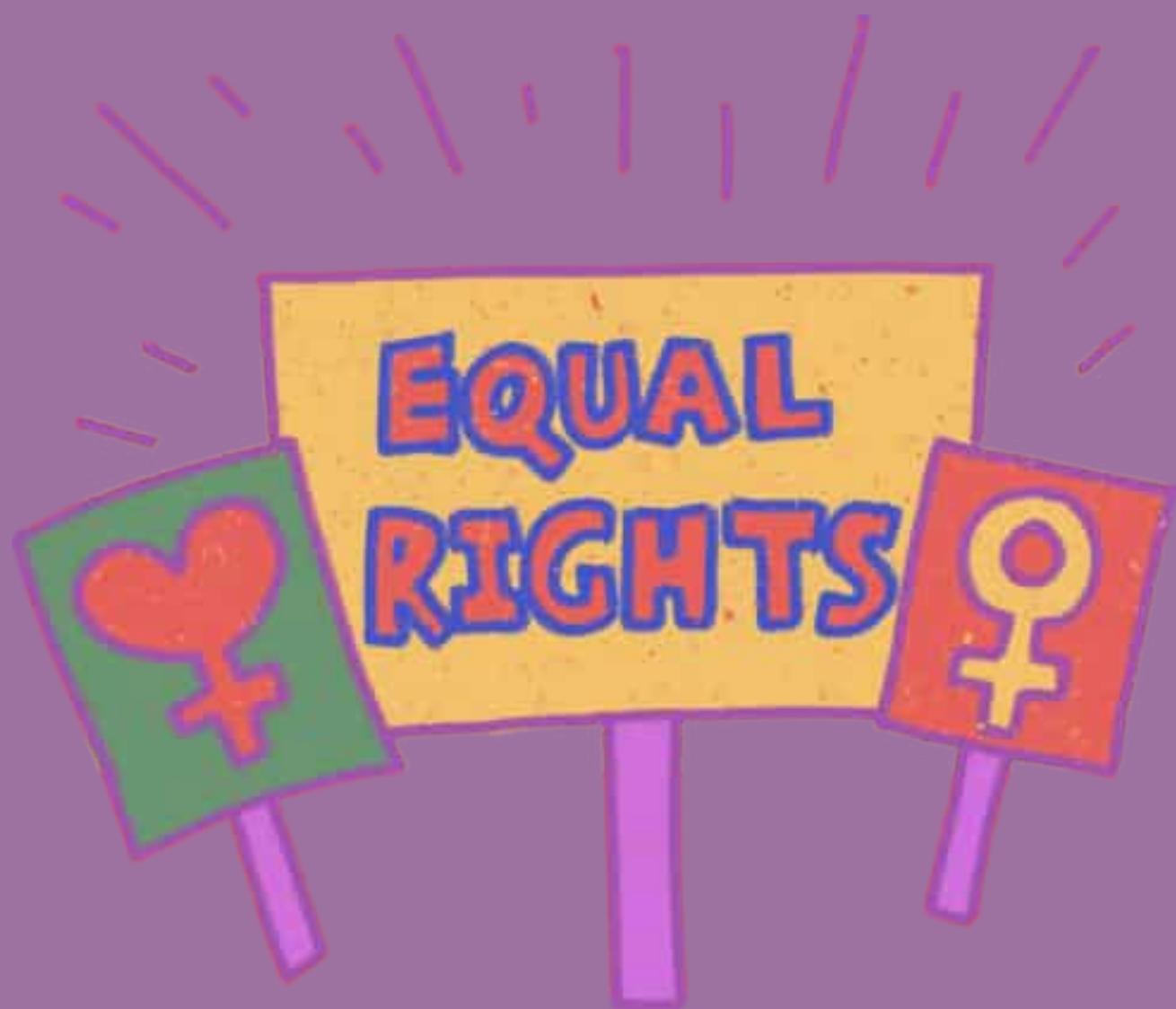
<u>Why High School Education Should Inform Us of Our Legal Rights By Serena Zapata.....</u>	<u>72</u>
<u>Poems about change; By Eva Martinez, Heidi Mitchell, Aidan Lemieux, Lily Brown.....</u>	<u>74</u>
<u>Breaking The Cycle By Elizabeth Morrison.....</u>	<u>75</u>
<u>Poems about change; By Emily Lamb, Samuel Bates, Darcy Robillard, Shawn Cariglia, Ryan Gasoi.....</u>	<u>77</u>
<u>Women’s Rights: The Global Fight Against Oppresion, Emma Sky Cartile.....</u>	<u>78</u>
<u>Poems about change; By Brooke Vathis, Xavier, Colton, Gia, Jad.....</u>	<u>81</u>
<u>Sexism In Our Society By Elizabeth Ferriera.....</u>	<u>82</u>
<u>The Accuracy of Crime Statistics in Regards to Minorities By Sophia Kyriakatos.....</u>	<u>84</u>
<u>Poems about change; By Elie Ghafari, Ella Desrosiers Oosterban, Eva, Mason.....</u>	<u>87</u>
<u>Racism and it’s Societal Effects By Julian Coache.....</u>	<u>88</u>
<u>Poems about change; By Lola Moosz, Alison Spicer, Malaya Villaruel.....</u>	<u>90</u>
<u>Pro Life or Pro Men By Emma McRobbie.....</u>	<u>91</u>
<u>Humanity’s Scale By Liam Cameron.....</u>	<u>94</u>
<u>Melting Field By Tray Marsh.....</u>	<u>95</u>
<u>The Effects of Poverty in The Judiciary System By Taylor Broodney.....</u>	<u>96</u>
<u>Poems about Change By Matthew Darby, Gabriel Millroy, Hailey Porath Alana Sullivan.....</u>	<u>98</u>
<u>Our Inadequate Legal Education By Noah Gilbert.....</u>	<u>99</u>
<u>Poems about Change; By Mateo, Frederick Desouza, Rachel Rubin.....</u>	<u>101</u>
<u>Social Justice Tree By Tian Campos.....</u>	<u>102</u>
<u>Poems about Change; By Maya, Dylan Kopal, Charlotte Austin.....</u>	<u>103</u>
<u>Classism and Racism in Our Society By Madelyn Van Reese.....</u>	<u>104</u>
<u>Poems about Change; BY Tristan, Blake Choptain, Charles Antoine Tuite, Skyla, Gael Santana.....</u>	<u>106</u>
<u>Social Justice By Lucas Broadbridge.....</u>	<u>107</u>
<u>Different Sides By Ella Robins.....</u>	<u>108</u>
<u>Legal System and Poverty By Ava Massouras.....</u>	<u>109</u>
<u>Rich Privilege in the Courtroom By Luca Lord.....</u>	<u>111</u>
<u>Poverty and it’s Effect on Legal Rights By Jakob Demueles.....</u>	<u>113</u>

---

---

<u>Poverty Hardships By Gianna D’Amico.....</u>	<u>115</u>
<u>Justice Unbalanced By Julianne Walsh.....</u>	<u>117</u>
<u>The Importance of Education By Samuel Labar.....</u>	<u>119</u>
<u>Poems about Change; By Annika Chuprun, Owen Stewart,.....</u>	<u>121</u>
<u>Legal Education and Its Importance By Indiana</u>	
<u>Hackel.....</u>	<u>122</u>
<u>Ladder of Oppurtunity By Penelope Orozco.....</u>	<u>124</u>
<u>Equilibrium Within Our World By Melina Silva.....</u>	<u>125</u>
<u>Students Legal Rights By Xavier Lapointe.....</u>	<u>126</u>
<u>The Effect of Poverty By Jackson Macnab.....</u>	<u>128</u>
<u>The Price of Being a Woman By Gabrielle Jansen.....</u>	<u>130</u>
<u>The Affects of Poverty and Classism By Alexia</u>	
<u>Spetsieris.....</u>	<u>132</u>
<u>Leak By Emma McRobbie.....</u>	<u>134</u>
<u>Clay By Anonymous.....</u>	<u>135</u>
<u>I want to be a lawyer by Addison Amelia</u>	
<u>Martin,.....</u>	<u>136</u>
<u>Liberty by Ryan Gasoi.....</u>	<u>138</u>
<u>Letter From Supervising Teacher By Melinda</u>	
<u>Cochrane.....</u>	<u>140</u>

---



Love  
by Allison Saunders

Wisdom often comes from unexpected places. One evening, my youngest child, not yet three years old, taught me a lesson I'll never forget. As I sat at the dining room table with my two kids, the youngest one asked a question that caught me off guard.

"Mommy? Who do you love the most in this house?"

Not a question I expected from an almost three-year-old.

"Well Julian, I love your dad because without him, I wouldn't have you and I wouldn't have your brother. I love your brother, Ben. I love you of course and I love me. I don't think I'm so bad!"

"What about you, Ben? Who do you love the most in this house?" he asked.

"I love Mommy AND I love Daddy AND that's IT!" was his brother's snappy answer.

"What about you, Julian?" I ask. "Who do you love the most in this house?"

"I love my brother Ben. Even though he says he doesn't love me. He's my brother and the only one I have. I love Daddy, and of course I love you, Mommy. But I love myself the most! If you don't love yourself, how do you know how to love someone else? If you don't show people that you love yourself, why would they love you? You have to love you!"

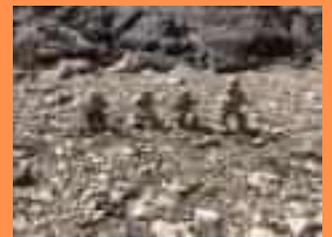
Julian's words stopped me in my tracks. For a moment, I just stared, amazed that such wisdom could come from someone so young. He reminded me of me when I was younger—curious, thoughtful, and unafraid to express deep truths. I said, "I don't want you to ever forget what you just said. You are absolutely right. And many people spend a lot of time and a lot of money on all kinds of things, some good, some not so good, to figure that out. The fact that you already know this—something many of us forget—is amazing."

That moment changed my life. It reminded me of a truth I had known as a child: that I was great—not perfect, but worthy of love. Over time, the world had tried to convince me otherwise. Julian's words reignited my promise to ensure he never doubted his own worth. And I stopped questioning mine.

It's quite baffling to see all the ways the world tries to make you doubt that love for yourself. I saw it growing up. I see it as Julian and Ben are growing up. There are reasons why it happens. But it's amazing when you are the reason that it doesn't. So, who do I love the most in this house? Me—because Julian is right. And why would you not? You're amazing.



"Look what I did with the counting rods Mommy. I made our names. You like it?" - Julian, June 2012.



Julian's representation of our family left behind on the shoreline of the Galena Bay ferry dock on the way to Revelstoke. May 2016



Allison Saunders is Digital Content Strategist at Concordia University. I work on the university's website and social media strategy. I am also a Commissioner at the Lester B Pearson School Board and was elected Vice-Chair of the Lester B Pearson School Board in November 2024. I am a member of the Board of Directors of as Overture with the Arts (OWTA) and a former board member of the Black Academic Scholarship fund (BASf). Recognizing the need for change in my community, I also co-founded West Island Take A Knee, an annual protest bringing the community together to raise awareness of social justice issues in the West Island. I use my voice to work towards a diverse and inclusive community in which all people feel welcome.

EQUAL

RIGHTS

FOR ALL

# **Your voices will be heard**

**Carmen Rebecca Levit**

**We must pay respect to those who were treated in an unhuman way,  
We remember the ones that were lost, that were hit, that were enslaved.**

**The ones that fought to have their voices heard,  
The ones that fell, and fell, like wingless birds.**

**They fell, and fell but then they flapped,  
Their wings re-established, they were no longer entrapped.**

**From Clodet Colvin and Rosa Parks,  
To Martin Luther King's embarks.**

**I pay my respects to them and to all the others,  
May your voices be heard my sisters and brothers.**

**Your voices will be heard one way or another!  
They will be heard from yourselves, or even from others.**

**Your voices will be heard! And they will be remembered.  
You will be accepted for who you are, no longer dismembered.**

**The world has been a truly cruel place.  
But you stood up against it and your knots were unlaced.**

**Your voices will be heard, and we will respond.  
Your voices will be heard, and we will right our wrongs.**

**Your voices have been heard**

Carmen Rebeca Levitt, a Hispanic Jewish 16 year old highschool student at Beconsfield Highschool, is a dedicated poet, sister, daughter and friend. She has kept her position on the honour role since first term of Secondary 1 and plans to be a top neurosurgeon. Carmen finds comfort and truth when she writes, compartmentalizing her thoughts in her rhythmic and vivid poetry.

# NEVER ENOUGH

Growing up as a girl means  
Knowing not to walk at night alone before knowing how to tie  
my shoes  
Growing up as a girl means  
Having men define my clothes and the reasons I wear them  
Growing up as a girl means  
Shedding feminine traits so men will hear my words and not my  
gender  
Growing up as a girl means  
Being labelled 'easy' for having a boyfriend  
Growing up as a girl means  
Liking pink makes me dumb  
Growing up as a girl means  
Love, friendship and strength  
Growing up as a girl means  
That is never enough.  
-Emma McRobbie



Emma is co chief and editor of Voices Magazine, she is a member of BHS encore and an avid reader. She enjoys sports and the dramatic arts.

# CHANGE YOURSELF

“You’re too loud.”

Okay, I’ll keep my thoughts to myself.

“You’re too fat.”

Okay, I’ll eat less.

“Your skin isn’t perfect.”

Okay, I’ll wear more makeup.

“You wear such baggy clothes.”

Okay, I’ll wear tighter clothes.”

Then suddenly I look in the mirror and I don’t see myself, but instead I see a girl she swore she would never be. A girl who simply wanted to fit in, but instead isn’t herself anymore.

-Elizabeth Ferriera



Elizabeth is the Graphic Designer of Voices magazine, member of the BHS badminton team and Bison News alike, and enjoys spending time with family and friends.

# The Restriction of Information

by Addison Mirinello-Bergnach

Books have existed before all of us. They carry knowledge, and we read to absorb it. However, they also tell stories—stories of princesses and dragons, time travel, and robots. They also carry truth. A lot of the stories written are not completely fictional. Books are an outlet that allows the writer to put their thoughts onto paper and tell the stories of people who are unable to do it themselves.

In America, these stories are being censored, not because they are gruesome and violent, but because they include topics that are considered taboo. Around 350 BC, the philosopher Aristotle was censored for his taboo beliefs. His words were muffled because he believed that the earth was round.

Books are being banned because they spread ideas that the government considers inappropriate. These books include: The diary of Anne Frank, Animal Farm, The colour purple, and the Handmaid's tale. They depict essential and relevant problems, and the voices of people trying to communicate about them are being erased. America is supposed to be a country of freedom. It is supposed to nurture the voices of its people so they can achieve the American dream. But if that is the case, then why are their ideas and works being restricted? Censorship is not a thing of the past, it is alive and present today. It is not some evil organization that is trying to control you, it is our society.

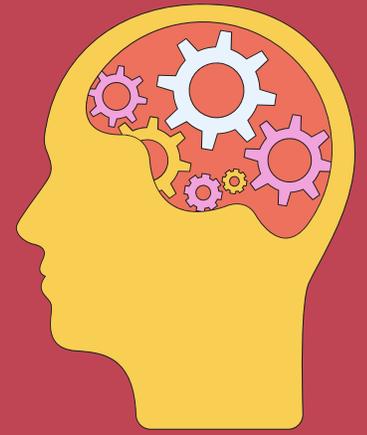


Addison is a part of the voices editorial team. She loves any and all types of animals, but in has a special interest in sharks. Her favorite are thresher sharks. They enjoy reading and starting TV shows but forgetting about them and starting another.



# Education

Sofia Mazzarello



They say that knowledge is power. From a young age most of us are encouraged to pursue school and find a reputable job to make something of ourselves. In Canada we are lucky. We are lucky to be able to have access to a good education system. We are lucky to have options. Whether that's to go into the sciences or maths, arts or other courses.

As teenagers we often take these resources for granted. I can say this from experience, because while yes it is sometimes annoying having to wake up and trek to school or have a test first period, we really don't know what we have until it's gone.

For many across the globe they never got access to education, or it was stolen from them, or they never got the opportunity due to their gender.

This crisis needs to be dealt with.

# Courageous Conversations: A Framework for Conversations About Race

By Mathieu Canavan (Mathieu Canavan is the Director of Educational Services at the LBPSB. He has also served as Principal, Vice-Principal and teacher at Beaconsfield High School. Mathieu is currently leading an initiative at the schoolboard to train administrators on the use of the Courageous Conversations About Race Framework.)

I would like to start this article by introducing myself. My name is Mathieu Canavan. I am the Director of Educational Services at the Lester B. Pearson School Board. I am also a former teacher, vice principal, and for a brief time principal of Beaconsfield High School. I am a white male in a position of power at the Lester B. Pearson School Board. On my father's side I am a first generation Canadian of Irish Catholic origin. My ancestors were mostly composed of working-class families. On my mother's side I am French, living in Quebec since shortly after Samuel de Champlain made his first trip to New France. My ancestors include Louis Hebert Abraham Martin (Plains of Abraham) and Guillaume Couture.

*I share this information with you so you can see that where I come from influences who I am.*

A few years ago, in conversation with an elder from the community of Kahnawà:ke, I was told that there was a time when two people in an Indigenous community would have a conflict, they would wear the clothing representing their families and ancestors, so that they could both understand where the other was coming from. Upon hearing this I could not help but ask myself, 'put in that situation, what would a person originating from New France, or more specifically from France and from Ireland wear?' This question led to many others in my own ongoing journey to understanding race, privilege, and equity.

And so, this journey led me to *Courageous Conversations About Race*, a book written by Glenn E. Singleton. Singleton has been a leader in advancing racial equity for over 30 years. He is the creator of a protocol for deep interracial dialogue. By means of his curriculum, *Beyond Diversity™*, he has educated hundreds of thousands on addressing racial disparities. As the founder and president of Pacific Educational Group, Inc. (PEG), Singleton has trained leaders in education, government, business, and law enforcement worldwide.

( continued on the next page )

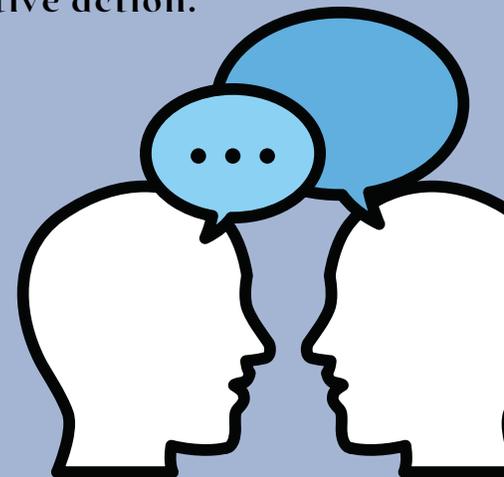


**Courageous Conversations About Race** provides a framework for addressing racial inequities through honest and sustained dialogue. The book introduces a protocol designed to help individuals and organizations engage in sensitive conversations about race with clarity and purpose. Singleton emphasizes that these discussions require courage, vulnerability, and a commitment to examining one's own biases and privileges.

The book outlines four agreements to guide conversations: stay engaged, experience discomfort, speak your truth, and expect and accept non-closure. These agreements are accompanied by six conditions that allow for sustained difficult conversations about race. This paradigm is a practical guide to facilitating authentic conversations. The purpose of **Courageous Conversations** is to empower all of us to have conversations that will allow us to understand each other and work towards dismantling systemic racism and furthering equity.

I want to share this book with you because it continues to play a significant role in my personal development as well as our school board's strategy to fight racial inequity. I have had the privilege of participating in a book study animated by Mr. Singleton along with three colleagues from the Educational Services Department. In the new year, 80 Administrators and consultants from our board will receive a copy of the book and participate in a book study animated by Mr. Singleton and designed specifically for the LBPSB.

I would like to invite you, administrator, staff member, parent, student, to pick up a copy of **Courageous Conversations about Race** by Glenn E. Singleton; might you find it to be not only greatly inspiring, but also deeply empowering, as you develop the courage to apply a sound structure from whence essential and necessary conversations can result in transformative action.



# What exactly is Social Justice?

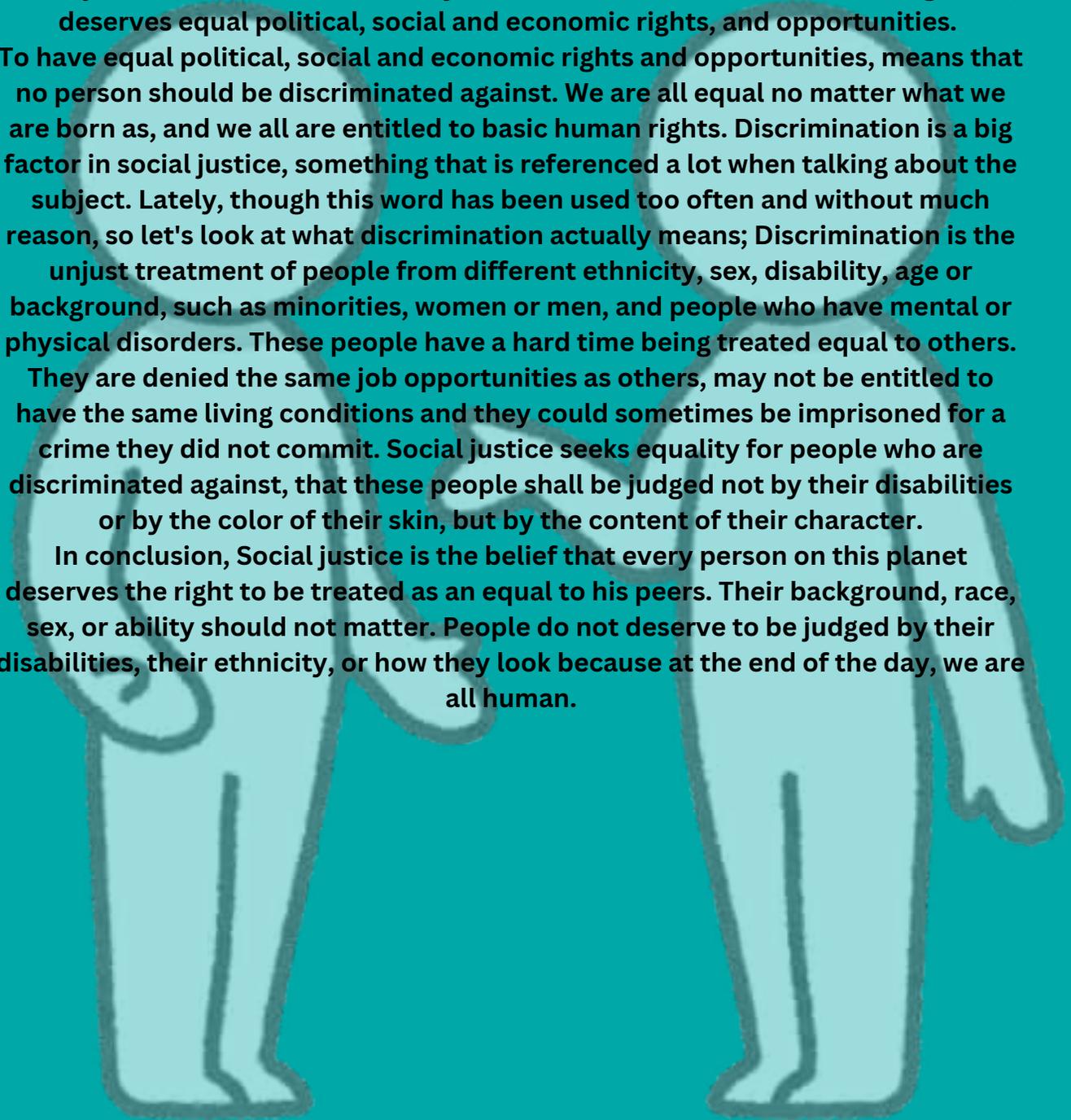
Juan Vargas Gonzalez

Social justice is something that has been discussed more often lately. You might have heard this term before, on the internet, at school, or elsewhere, but there is a high chance you know something about it. But what exactly is social justice? Social justice is the belief that everyone, no matter the race, sex, or background, deserves equal political, social and economic rights, and opportunities.

To have equal political, social and economic rights and opportunities, means that no person should be discriminated against. We are all equal no matter what we are born as, and we all are entitled to basic human rights. Discrimination is a big factor in social justice, something that is referenced a lot when talking about the subject. Lately, though this word has been used too often and without much reason, so let's look at what discrimination actually means; Discrimination is the unjust treatment of people from different ethnicity, sex, disability, age or background, such as minorities, women or men, and people who have mental or physical disorders. These people have a hard time being treated equal to others.

They are denied the same job opportunities as others, may not be entitled to have the same living conditions and they could sometimes be imprisoned for a crime they did not commit. Social justice seeks equality for people who are discriminated against, that these people shall be judged not by their disabilities or by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.

In conclusion, Social justice is the belief that every person on this planet deserves the right to be treated as an equal to his peers. Their background, race, sex, or ability should not matter. People do not deserve to be judged by their disabilities, their ethnicity, or how they look because at the end of the day, we are all human.



## **Weaponized Language In The Province Of Quebec**

**Jack Wetmore**

Since July 1st, 1867, Quebec has been a member of the country of Canada, which, since July 1st, 1867, has been bilingual. With significant concentrations of both Anglophones and Francophones, Quebec should be a leader in bilingualism. However, as of Bill 22, passed in 1974, the province has rapidly degenerated into linguistic chaos, with oppressive language laws discriminating against the English and promoting only the French. Therefore, the government of Quebec is unjustified to discriminate and weaponize language because it is a violation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, it weakens the economy and limits access to basic services.

To begin, Quebec should not be allowed to have linguistic biases because it violates the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In this document it states “The Charter establishes that English and French are the official languages of the country and have equality of status and equal rights and privileges” (Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms). This explicitly states the rights Anglophones have in Quebec: “equality of status and equal rights and privileges”. Yet, in Quebec, English-speakers cannot easily access healthcare, or certain job opportunities, or even financial aid because of their mother tongue. Another important element to discuss is the health of English education. Technically, based on the Charter of Rights, the English in Quebec are given education opportunities. Unfortunately, the schools lack funding compared to their Francophone counterparts, which in turn does violate the rights of Anglophones. Many English-speakers live under a watchdog specifically built for discriminating against them- The OQLF. This targets only Anglophones and operates in accordance with the complaints of Francophones. Unfortunately, there is no English language watchdog to protect their rights. That is an inequality. Some might argue that Quebec is a majority French province and therefore is justified in prioritizing the larger group. Although accurate, Quebec should take into account the majority of Anglophones concentrated in the Island of Montreal, where their oppressive policies only protect the minority French. ( continued on the next page )

Secondly, the Quebec government's actions are unjustified because it harms the economy. Between 2023 and 2024, the OQLF received 9125 complaints. Most of these are destined for companies that help drive Quebec's economy. If fined, a business could lose a lot of money, inhibiting them from further investing in the financial system. Yet, this is not the only problem the province's language laws cause for the economy. Bill 96, forcing stricter language on signage, caused a plethora of difficulties for businesses across the province. The sheer cost of new signs would surely run many businesses aground, just because they are not "French enough". Lastly, 94 of the world's countries speak English. Due to this, business interactions are primarily in English. With a province limiting the use of Earth's most widely spoken economic language, it clearly will incite numerous shortcomings. Many companies will simply avoid Quebec because it becomes more expensive to do business with them than to avoid them. Needless to say, there are plenty of french-speaking countries that are economically prosperous. Moreover, English greatly supersedes French not only in business, but also as a second tongue, allowing an even larger group of individuals to communicate effectively with that particular language. Therefore, English's economic power must be fully accepted.

Finally, Quebec's language laws are unjust because they restrict access to basic services. As mentioned before, Bill 96 causes enormous harm to Anglophones in the province. In this case, it forces English-speakers to require documentation and proof of their mother tongue to receive healthcare in English. Therefore, Anglophones who don't have the proper papers must hear crucial information in a language they might not understand. This could lead to accidental overdose, improper treatment and even death. Another service compromised by these restrictions is the English education system. Often, French schools receive better funding and more renovations than their Anglophone counterparts. This could lead to English people lacking the same improved education experience as Francophones. Lastly, in Quebec, all road signs are in French. Many Anglophones who have trouble with the Francophone language could easily run into an accident or danger because they are unable to understand the information. Once again, people can see how Quebec prioritizes the majority, which is justified. Unfortunately, when it comes to one's health, education or safety, it is their right to receive the help they need in the language they desire.

In conclusion, the government of Quebec is unjustified in its weaponization and discrimination of language. This is because it directly violates Canadian rights, it is devastating for the province's economy and disregards people's rights to access certain services. Henceforth, Quebec must halt its fallacious and completely irrational language policies to bring the province into a future where all people, English or French, are treated with dignity and equality.

#### Works Cited

- Cabrera, Holly. "Quebec to replace directive on language in health care after original sparked confusion." CBC, 13 August 2024, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/roberge-french-language-minister-health-care-directive-meeting-english-groups-1.7293317>. Accessed 6 December 2024.
- "Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms." The Canadian Encyclopedia, 26 February 2018, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/canadian-charter-of-rights-and-freedoms>. Accessed 6 December 2024.
- Gagnon, Jean, and Camille Laurin. "Bill 101 (Charter of the French Language)." The Canadian Encyclopedia, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/bill-101>. Accessed 6 December 2024.
- "9 Top Languages To Learn for International Business." Rosetta Stone Enterprise Blog, 16 May 2024, <https://enterpriseblog.rosstattstone.com/top-languages-for-international-business/>. Accessed 9 December 2024.
- "Number of complaints to the OQLF on the rise." CityNews Montreal, 13 November 2024, <https://montreal.citynews.ca/2024/11/13/number-complaints-oqlf-rise-quebec/>. Accessed 6 December 2024.
- "Quebec businesses frustrated at cost and logistics of French-language law rules." CTV Montreal, 30 June 2024, <https://montreal.ctvnews.ca/quebec-businesses-frustrated-at-cost-and-logistics-of-french-language-law-rules-1.6946819>. Accessed 6 December 2024.

# Help Wanted: Givers

## Amanda Skalkos

Christmas is a special day for kids.

Unfortunately, some parents struggling with poverty don't have the money to give toys to their kids, ruining that special moment for them.

Many organisations are trying their best to donate toys or different foods to struggling families who need them.

The sad thing about this situation is that barely anyone is trying to donate to these organisations, which is what this image represents. Because donations are not reaching their demand, more and more families are suffering from starvation and lack of necessities more than ever.

Social justice for poverty not only requires spreading awareness of it, but actually taking action.

The number of people affected by poverty is already high and is only increasing. If we don't take action, this crisis is only going to get worse.

If you have toys or extra non-perishable food products that are just lying around, don't just leave them there or throw them out. Give them to the people who need it most and take action.



**One Street, Many Voices**  
By Robb Jutras

**Mouths open wide, hearts cracked open like untamed windows.  
We're all just shouting in the same wild city,  
on a street that doesn't care  
who you are, where you've been—  
it's just the beat, man, the wild thrum of being here.  
Breathe in, breathe out.  
We're all one,  
whether you're tired, broken,  
or dancing in the rain.**

**They call it equality, but it's more like  
the sun kissing everybody's skin.  
No matter how dark or light  
we think we are,  
we're all just travelers  
on the same road  
that keeps on twisting,  
keeps on rolling  
until we stop trying to divide it,  
stop trying to say  
who belongs.**

**We belong.  
Every last  
one of us.  
Just here,  
just now,  
just breathing in  
the same city  
of dreams  
and misfits  
that don't ever  
give up  
on the  
road.**



Robb Jutras is a senior English teacher at Beaconsfield High School. He was deeply inspired to pursue a career as an English teacher by his mentors and acclaimed authors, Sae Hoon Stan Chung and Barry McKinnon. Having grown up in Ontario and British Columbia, he now calls Montreal home, relishing in reading, occasional writing, and embarking on adventures with his wife and two lovely children.



**Does Canada's legal system have issues of classism and racism?**

**Elijah Shapiro**

**Our legal system is a bizarre and complex thing. It has the power to pardon a murderer, to imprison an innocent teenager, or even to utterly destroy corporations. Many people believe that Canada's legal system has various issues related to classism and racism within it. They are fully correct. People need to be informed that all people are equal, and that Canada's legal system is full of classism due to the rich being able to buy their way out of justice, and full of racism due to white privilege and systemic racism.**

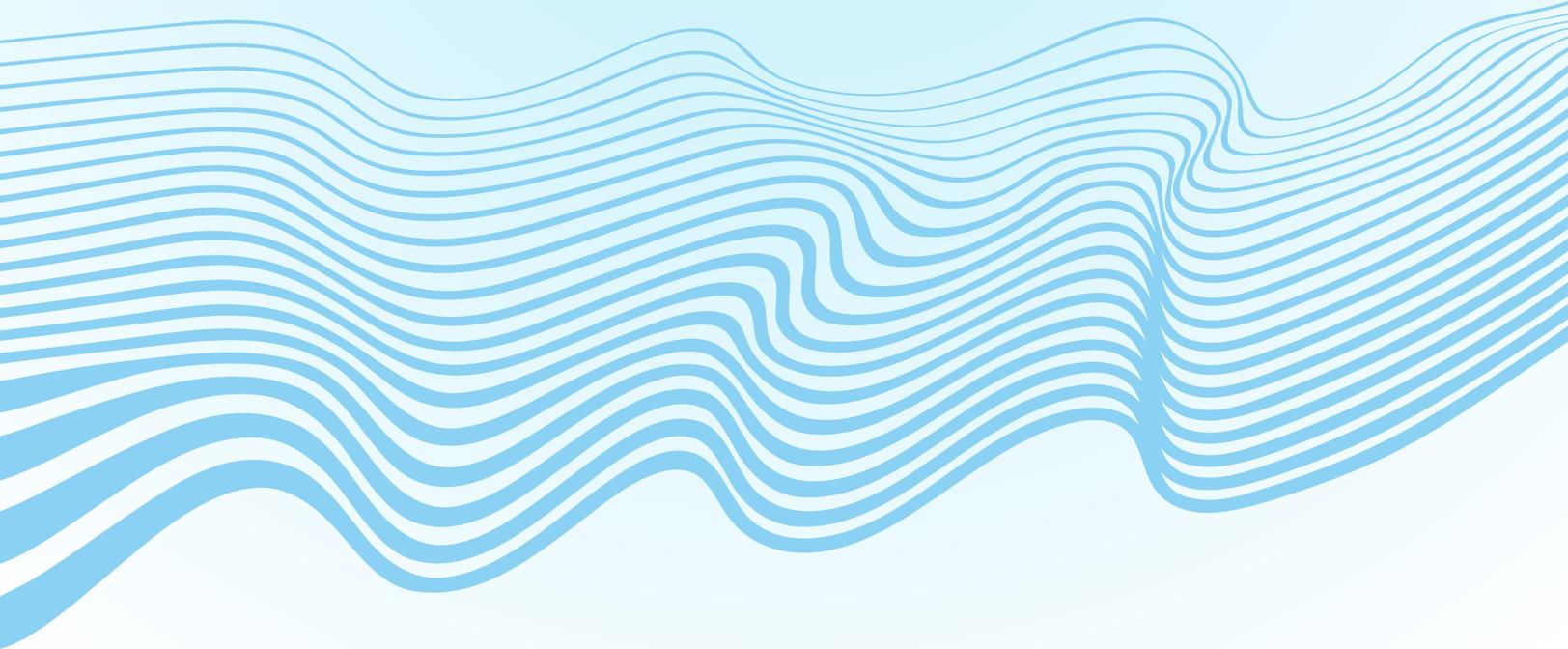
**Classism is weaved into the legal system. In our society, money equals power. Power equals influence, and influence allows for favours, bribery, and threats to be made within the legal world. In simple terms, having lots of money allows you to become well known by the elite and influential personas of society. This puts pressure on the judges and juries of courts to judge you innocent in order to protect their reputations. This is corruption. Another way this can occur is through favours or bribery: a wealthy individual promises money or another reward to the notaries of a court if they get judged innocent. This is also corruption. Another benefit of being of the upper class when it comes to judicial matters is the ability to make threats to the judge and/or jury. Threats can range from bankrupting a business to killing a person. These threats generally work, due to the wealthy having the manpower to actually do so. Classism therefore is a huge issue in the legal system. In Canada's legal system someone's social class can determine whether or not they are found guilty of a crime. Racism is found in the legal system. This racism can be against anyone who isn't considered purely "white". What this means is that certain races are thought to be more susceptible to committing a crime than others in the eyes of racist judges and juries. This results in people of certain races being pretty much automatically found guilty, whereas people of the "white" race are presumed innocent before guilty. Because of this systemic racism, people are presumed guilty or innocent depending on skin colour. This systemic racism originated in the time of slavery, and strongly continued up until the 1960s. Unfortunately, there is still systemic racism ingrained into our society. Many judges and juries in Canada subconsciously have racist feelings towards people of color, whereas "white" people get special treatment due to their skin colour. This is called white privilege: the phenomenon of getting special treatment due to having "white" skin. White privilege is wrong, it categorizes people based on their skin colour, and creates the illusion that some "types" of people are better than others. Sadly, the justice system of Canada has not even come close to completely stopping white privilege and systemic racism from unfairly imprisoning and/or pardoning people.**

**The only way for this to change is for people to get inspired by reading articles like this one and stand up for what's right.**

**It is so sad to live in one of the most advanced countries in the world, and to still have such malicious problems with our judicial system. It is unfair to award or penalise someone because of any characteristic they may or may not have. We are all human: we are all homo sapiens: we are all people. Each and every one of us lives on the same planet, breathes the same air, drinks the same water, and is an awesome individual. Whilst it is true that there aren't even close to any identical people on this planet, we all belong to the only human race in the entire universe. There is no reason for some people to get better/worse treatment than others.**

**While some people may say that the legal system's classism issues are just the way society works, they are wrong. These people use the idea that if a person happens to have more money, or more influence than another person, then they have worked harder, and are entitled to being treated with more privileges in regards to the legal system. They are wrong, because one person being richer than the other doesn't mean one person worked harder than the other and should get a bigger chance of escaping justice. The unfortunate truth is that the legal system is corrupt with classism. Similarly, other people may argue that some judges and juries are racist towards people of color, whereas others may be racist towards "whites", and that there is a fifty/fifty chance of getting a lawyer racist to "whites" or people of color. This isn't true, because there is a history of people of color being targets of racism to a much greater extent than that of "white" people being targeted. People cannot truly believe our judicial system is anywhere near perfect.**

**In conclusion, the justice system is composed of classism and racism. Skin colour and financial position shouldn't allow for special treatment to occur in the legal system, as it is a place of justice, and yet it does. Class and race shouldn't make some people better than others: we are all human, none of us should be thought to have a bigger or smaller chance of committing a crime. The unfortunate reality is that Canada's legal system is full of classism and racism. The only way for this to change is for people to get inspired by reading articles like this one and stand up for what's right.**



## Paying Homage to Those Who Always Check In

We have been doing so much work with inclusivity as a society, and the growth that I have seen in the community, especially from the students, has been unbelievable! We tend to focus on what we can do to be more accepting, less judgemental and kinder, however we sometimes forget to express our gratitude to those who consistently “show up” for us.

I want to thank those who have made the effort to make a difference in someone else’s life. The high school years can be quite difficult, and as I looked back through my adolescent journals and books of poetry, I realized that I was no different. I went through some very sad times, struggling with how to be happy, struggling inwardly with who I wanted to be, but outwardly trying to show strength and resilience. Sadness creeps up on us, and being sad was not a popular trait.

I had a friend who managed to see through my facade when all I wanted to do was sleep. She reminded me of my strengths, my goals and that each day begins with a clean slate. So I dug up this poem that I had written when I was 16 years old, for all of you who have that special someone that you are lucky enough to call a friend, someone who is an ally through thick and thin.

THANK YOU, MY FRIEND

Written in 1985

Just when I think that life’s not worth  
all the hassle when the outcome seems to always be pain,  
I receive a letter of encouragement from you.  
The words you speak and write,  
are more comforting than having a thousand friends.  
There’s something very deep,  
and so very beautiful in all that you say.  
Your words of wisdom make me realize  
that happiness is worth fighting for,  
and that love is worth taking chances for.  
I thank you, my friend,  
for giving me the will to fight through the loneliness,  
and to never surrender to my pain.



Rachel Chua Wilson  
BHS Principal January 2020 - June 2024

Photo Credit: Julie Miller

friendship

## Social Justice in our Modern Society.

Social justice is the ideal that all people should have access to the same resources, opportunities, and privileges as everyone else. It emphasizes the importance of equality among all, and is especially significant in the legal system. The bones of social justice is to create an inclusive society where all people have access to their basic human rights and everyone is given a chance to succeed. The push toward social justice includes not only recognizing the mistakes of our past, but making an effort to right our wrongs. We seek to advocate for those who have been discriminated against or treated unfairly because of their race, gender, sexuality, and other factors that make them different in order to continue to work towards a more just society. By acknowledging their struggles, we continue to foster a more equal society. In a perfect world, no one would have to worry about the things many take for granted everyday, like access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities. However, our world is anything but perfect, and many endure significant hardships throughout their lives due to systemic inequalities and the lack of support that they face. An example of this is in the legal system, many Indigenous individuals and people of colour are discriminated against. There have been stats taken, and it's been proven that Indigenous people or people of colour are four times more likely to be pulled over by police. This demonstrates blatant racial profiling and anything but equality, which is a crucial point of social justice. As we continue our journey to obtain a society in which all are equal we will face obstacles. However, we must work together to overcome them, and strive for a better, more equal world for all. The day that we are a perfect world won't come swiftly, however, with perseverance we can get as close to it as possible

Maeve Hackett



---

## What is Social Justice

Anthony Quinnett

Watching the documentary about the “Central Park Five” made me think a lot about the racism on people of colour that happened during that time and still happens now. It shows how the lack of social justice in our society promoted hate and discrimination towards minorities. This explains why the five boys were mistreated and accused of doing something they didn't do. But what is social justice and what does it mean towards the legal system?

Social justice is a movement that aims to give equal economic, political and social rights to everyone. Even though it has gotten better, there isn't always as much opportunity with different ethnic groups other than white. In the documentary we watched, we saw a group of boys who happened to be a person of color, get accused of something they haven't done because they were at the wrong place at the wrong time. Even though the evidence says otherwise. This is a prime example of why social justice is fought for, because without it, people would be treated poorly and unfairly. This is why in the legal system, you can not assume or accuse someone just off their skin colour. It is unjust and doesn't give them their human right of a fair trial in court. That's why you have to follow social justice in the legal system.

Without social justice, the world would be a much worse and discriminative place. The “Central Park Five ” shows this and why we need social justice implemented in the legal system and our lives. If social justice wasn't around, what do you think would happen to the lives of us and others?

---

## Prices of menstrual products in Quebec



Pads vary from \$10- \$15 for a pack of 20-30, when it should be FREE. Menstrual products are a need among over 70% of women in Canada, but to cost us for living is wrong. To charge women for something we can't control is like installing a firewall that extorts money from our bodies.

**JUST LET US BLEED!**

- Carmen Rebecca Levitt

# Power and Rights

by Jack Benard

People are arrested and even imprisoned all the time because of a simple lack of knowledge. Should our legal rights be taught to us during high school? Yes! They are such an important part of everybody's lives that it should be a mandatory course in high schools all around the world. Without knowledge of these rights, people can face many issues, but with this understanding, they can achieve great feats. "Education is the most powerful weapon [...]" -Nelson Mandela.

False imprisonment is a reality many people face due to lack of education. The case of The Central Park Five is one of the most famous examples of this. While these young boys were under interrogation, they made false confessions because they were told they'd be let go if they did so. They were later imprisoned because of these confessions. If they had a better understanding of their rights, they would have asked for an attorney, and the attorney would have advised them not to confess to anything they didn't do. Some people may argue that it should've been common sense not to confess to crimes they didn't commit. The fact is, they didn't know any better, they were tired and they wanted to go home, but with a more complete understanding of their rights, they would have known.

A ruined reputation is also something many people have to put a lot of effort into fixing because of misunderstandings or false accusations. In 1996, Richard Jewell, a security guard at the Olympic Games, was accused of bombing the event because, shortly after the bomb went off, he reported a suspicious backpack. His quick thinking may have prevented a larger tragedy, but that didn't matter to the media. To clear his name, he used his quick thinking to prove there was no evidence he was involved in the tragedy. People might argue that it didn't matter that he cleared his name, as his reputation had already been ruined. However, this is disagreeable; Jewell proved his innocence and did whatever he could to fix his reputation, which he largely succeeded in doing.

Knowing your legal rights allows you to stand up and advocate for what you think is right. Knowledge of your rights, such as freedom of speech, protection from discrimination, and knowing what to say when speaking to police, gives you the power you need to defend what you believe in. An example of this is the famous Rosa Parks case. She used her rights to challenge discriminatory laws on buses. She stood her ground and used her freedom of speech and expression to help sculpt the world we live in today. A common counterargument is that what she did was against the law, and she shouldn't have done so. This may be true, but one of the only ways to change something is by breaking boundaries. In short, people can use their legal rights to protect themselves from false charges or even imprisonment, defend their reputations, and advocate for what they believe in. A legal rights course should be implemented in high schools across the globe to help people stay out of trouble and stand up for themselves. Go out and don't let anyone tear you down if you're not doing anything wrong!

#### Works Cited:

- Nagpal, Anshul. "Education Is the Most Powerful Weapon Which You Can Use to Change the World" - Nelson Mandela." LinkedIn, 16 July 2023, [www.linkedin.com/pulse/education-most-powerful-weapon-which-you-can-use-change-anshul-nagpal#:~:text=%E2%80%9CEducation%20is%20the%20most%20powerful,change%20the%20world%E2%80%9D%20%E2%80%93%20Nelson%20Mandela.](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/education-most-powerful-weapon-which-you-can-use-change-anshul-nagpal#:~:text=%E2%80%9CEducation%20is%20the%20most%20powerful,change%20the%20world%E2%80%9D%20%E2%80%93%20Nelson%20Mandela.)
- Armstrong, Kerry. "The 5 Most Famous Wrongful Conviction Cases in U.S. History." Law Offices of Kerry L. Armstrong, APLC, 24 June 2024, [sddefenseattorneys.com/blog/famous-wrongful-conviction-cases/](https://sddefenseattorneys.com/blog/famous-wrongful-conviction-cases/).
- "Richard Jewell." Encyclopædia Britannica, Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., 30 Oct. 2024, [www.britannica.com/biography/Richard-Jewell](https://www.britannica.com/biography/Richard-Jewell).
- "Rosa Parks." NAACP, 11 May 2021, [naacp.org/find-resources/history-explained/civil-rights-leaders/rosa-parks#:~:text=In%201955%2C%20Parks%20rejected%20a,to%20board%20the%20city's%20buses.](https://naacp.org/find-resources/history-explained/civil-rights-leaders/rosa-parks#:~:text=In%201955%2C%20Parks%20rejected%20a,to%20board%20the%20city's%20buses.)

# Someone's Kid

Liam D'Angelo

Everyday people are faced with adversity and discrimination. While their lives are being tainted, possibly forever, many perpetrators get to run free.

Transgender individuals are subject to four times higher chances of being assaulted or hate-crimed.

Trans-identified individuals are more likely to end up homeless. Constant abuse in public spaces, and lack of employment opportunities due to prejudice, will cause a lot of these individuals to turn to drug involvement or prostitution. As well as the fact that many teenagers that identify as trans, are more likely to drop out of school from the harassment they receive there. These two factors can directly relate to why the rates for transgender individuals being incarcerated is extremely disproportionate, 16% transgender individuals compared to the mere 2.9% of cisgender people. The physical, sexual and mental harassment that they face everyday is reflected in statistics. This is something that is clearly not talked about enough, and there have not been enough measures to allow transgender individuals to have a bright future without having to fear for their lives.

Why is it that transgender individuals are only seen in the news when they are murdered? Trans children are being robbed of a future and they only get recognition after they are dead. Statistics say that transgender murders have almost doubled in four years. In 2021, fifty six transgender individuals were murdered in the United States. That's fifty six too many. These people's lives have just been turned into a sad statistic while the government isn't doing anything to prevent these crimes. The justice system is failing these individuals. To conclude, while society is continuing to live like normal there are problems that aren't talked about enough. Transgender hate crimes are on the rise while the perpetrators are running free. No one should have to lose their child in the face of discrimination.

## Bibliography

Suicide and Suicidal Behavior among Transgender Persons, <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC5178031/>. Accessed 21 November 2024.

Editor. "you're an Unconventional Hire." - Trans Visibility in the Workplace." *Pride At Work* Canada, 28 Mar. 2024, [prideatwork.ca/trans-visibility-in-the-workplace/](https://prideatwork.ca/trans-visibility-in-the-workplace/).

Flores, Andrew R., et al. "Transgender people over four times more likely than cisgender people to be victims of violent crime." *Williams Institute*, <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/press/ncvs-trans-press-release/>. Accessed 21 November 2024.

Merchan, Davi. "Community mourns trans teen murdered, dismembered during Pride month." *ABC News*, 8 July 2024, <https://abcnews.go.com/US/community-mourns-trans-teen-murdered-dismembered-pride-month/story?id=111746292>. Accessed 21 November 2024.

# THE DARK SIDE OF THE LEGAL SYSTEM

**Sofia Mazzarello**

Imagine sitting in a courtroom knowing that you've already lost your case, based on the colour of your skin and the amount of money in your bank account. Unfortunately, our legal system has been known to have these discriminatory issues regarding classism and racism. It has been proven time and time again, that the legal system has wrongfully accused and convicted people based on their race, social and economic status. As a society, we also depend on the bureaucracy of our legal system, which has been shown to have inherent flaws and discrepancies, which leads to false convictions. Our legal system has to do better, before even stepping in court, there should be no prejudice, bias or discriminatory measures.

bit of body text



The legal system is in the client's favour, if they are from a high social and economic status. By reason, these types of people have the financial resources to help defend themselves properly in the courtroom. Although, if client's are from a lower social and economic status, finding reputable and inexpensive lawyers, or even lawyers willing to do pro-bono cases may be difficult. For instance, in British Columbia there was a father who lost custody of his children because he couldn't afford a lawyer, didn't qualify for legal aid, and no one wanted to take his case on a pro-bono. Eventually he secured counsel for his pro-bono case and got custody of his kids back, but that only happened five years later. To summarize, a father lost custody over his children for close to 5 years and then, only after all that time and hardship did the legal system decide to give him a fair trial. This case is a clear example of how classism is portrayed in the legal system. He didn't have a high enough economic status to defend himself, resulting in the loss of five years with his own children. Although couldn't it be possible that his economic status wasn't the only dealbreaker for this case? There could have been other factors that played a role in him losing custody of his children. While this is a very possible statement, it's simply not the reason why the father lost his kids. With evidence it was shown that "The B.C. Court of Appeal found that a Supreme Court judge's decision was influenced by a fraudulent expert witness, despite the fact that she lacked credentials and never actually interviewed the father or the children." This is why the father lost his children. It was based on a fraudulent expert witness and the Judge's failure to identify the issue.

The legal system doesn't just discriminate based on social class, but it has portrayed bias towards minorities as well. For instance, Brian Anderson and Allan Woodhouse, were two young indigenous men who were wrongly convicted of murder and were forced to sign false confessions. This led to Anderson serving 11 years in prison and Woodhouse serving 23 years in prison. This false conviction is a clear example of racial discrimination and systemic racism. As well as the two men receiving a biased decision and sentencing from an all-white male jury, white police officers, and a white judge. Even though this mistake was an awful accident, why should the legal system be viewed negatively over a misunderstanding that happened in the past? Even the smallest mistakes can ruin lives. It has been proven with facts that "Indigenous offenders are more likely to receive jail sentences if convicted of a crime and are currently the most over-represented group in the Canadian criminal justice system." So yes, the system may be portrayed in more of a negative light, but there's a reason behind it. This example proves that the legal system doesn't view indigenous people as individuals, instead they view them as a generalized group of people who are more likely to commit crime because of these statistics. These generalized statistics and assumptions are a completely unfair representation of them as individuals.

The legal system isn't a perfect institution, it has been proven to have inherent flaws internally. An example of an individual who worked in the legal system that made life altering mistakes, is Charles Smith. Charles Randal Smith, was formerly a pathologist for the Canadian legal system. His false statements and accusations were the reason why many were falsely convicted and sentenced to years in prison. These unfortunate events could have been prevented, if the legal system were to have had a more distinct background check on its top pathologist. If they did, then they wouldn't have had to compensate many for the wrongful convictions that happened under their own roof. Sadly, it is true that there have been and will be mistakes made in the legal system, although every institution that is run by humans is bound to have mistakes here and there. It's human nature. While yes, it is true that humans are destined to make mistakes, that shouldn't have to be someone else's punishment. Even if Charles Smith was the top pathologist, that doesn't mean that he's the only source to take the information from, there should have been multiple opinions, and multiple fact checks. Even the world's greatest author needs editors, to catch even the most subtle mistakes. In conclusion, there are many reasons as to why the legal system is classist, racist and is not a reliable form of justice. They have portrayed biased and discriminatory measures towards marginalized groups, as well as favouring the higher class citizens, and unfortunately having a track record of convicting innocent people, for simply not paying not attention to the workers that they hire. Our justice system has done us wrong again and again, but instead of complaining and not getting anything done, let's take a stance and stand up for all of those who have been wronged!

#### Works Cited

"Allan Woodhouse." Innocence Canada, 7 Oct. 2024, [www.innocencecanada.com/the-latest/exoneration/allan-woodhouse/](http://www.innocencecanada.com/the-latest/exoneration/allan-woodhouse/).

The National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health (NCCIH). "Anti-Indigenous Racism in Canada." NCCIH, [www.nccih.ca/28/Social\\_Determinants\\_of\\_Health.nccih?id=337#:~:text=Indigenous%20offenders%20are%20more%20likely,fewer%20referrals%2C%20and%20disrespectful%20treatment](http://www.nccih.ca/28/Social_Determinants_of_Health.nccih?id=337#:~:text=Indigenous%20offenders%20are%20more%20likely,fewer%20referrals%2C%20and%20disrespectful%20treatment). Accessed 8 Dec. 2024.

"A B.C. Dad Who Couldn't Afford a Lawyer or Get Legal Aid Lost Access to His Kids." Global News, <https://medium.com/@globalnews/by-charmaine-de-silva-and-estefania-duran-cknw-56d0a61a75d8>.

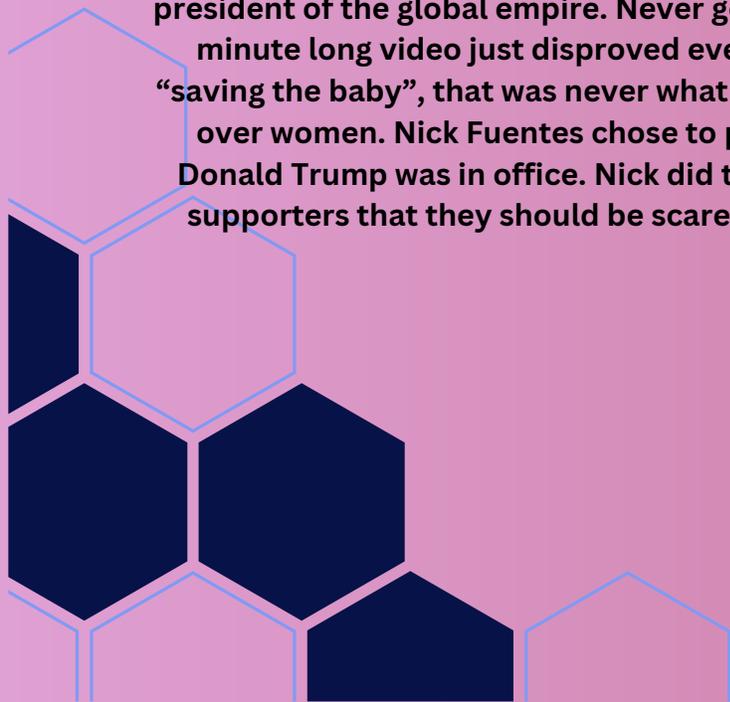
## **“Your Body, Our Choice”**

**Kaydence Caro**

**During the recent elections that took place in the USA, Donald Trump was put back in office. During many of his press conferences, he mentions banning abortion laws because he claims that it's taking a life when in reality it's just our bodies he wants to control, as proven by Nick Fuentes. Why should a man dictate what women do with their bodies and why have they always been so obsessed with micro-managing every aspect of our lives? Before the elections even took place a video went viral on the channel Jubilee about one conservative debating against 25 liberal college students. The conservative man's name is Charlie Kirk, the first 30 minutes of the video were about abortion laws and if they should be banned or not. Charlie Kirk rambled on about how abortion is basically taking a life. In technicality babies aren't babies until they're born, until then they are parasites, scientifically speaking. He even spoke about how he would choose to save an unborn baby over a woman who wouldn't survive childbirth, even if the fetus was less than 24 weeks old.**

**In that same video, a young woman brought up the possibility of getting pregnant after being raped. She asked him what he would do if his hypothetical 10 year old daughter were to be raped and get pregnant. She then went on to explain the baggage his hypothetical daughter would have to carry knowing that she's losing the best years of her life to take care of her rapist's baby. Having to look the baby in its eyes and remember the trauma she was put through, every day of her life. Even after all of that he still said “She would deliver the baby”. He currently has a two year old daughter.**

**Right after the 2024 American elections took place and Donald Trump was re-elected, a man by the name of Nick Fuentes made a video commenting on how excited he was to be able to control women's bodies. He says “Hey @\$%^, we control your bodies. Guess what, guys win again. Okay, men win again and yes we control your bodies. Hi! I'm your republican congressman \*laughs\* It's your body, MY choice!” “There will never ever be a female president EVER! It's over, glass ceiling? Dude it's a ceiling made of %&%#@\$\$^ bricks, you will never break it. Your stupid face keeps hitting the brick ceiling, we will keep you down forever. You will NEVER control your own bodies. You will NEVER be the president of the global empire. Never gonna happen sweetie, your body, our choice.” This minute long video just disproved everything that Charlie Kirk said, how it's all about “saving the baby”, that was never what it was about. It was only ever about taking control over women. Nick Fuentes chose to post this right after the votes were counted and Donald Trump was in office. Nick did this purposely to show women and Kamala Harris supporters that they should be scared to be living in America for the next four years.**



The song “Labour” written and sung by Paris Paloma demonstrates how men pretend to care for women and then reveal that they tricked them right as they have trapped them, sound familiar? If not, read that previous paragraph again. The lyrics touch every woman in one way or another. I took this passage from the song just to show how this song describes many women in the world at this very moment.

“The capillaries in my eyes (all day, every day)  
Are bursting (therapist, mother, maid)  
If our love died (nymph then virgin)  
Would that be the worst thing? (Nurse then a servant)  
For somebody (just an appendage)  
I thought was my saviour (live to attend him)  
You sure make me do (so that)  
A whole lot of labour (he never lifts a finger)  
The calloused skin on my hands (24/7)  
Is cracking (baby machine)  
If our love ends (so he can live out)  
Would that be a bad thing? (His picket fence dreams)  
And the silence (it's not an act of love)  
Haunts our bed chamber (if you make her)  
You make me do too much labour”

“It’s not an act of love if you make her” basically sums up everything women have been fighting for since July 1848 when the first ever feminist movement took place.

You say it's because you love her, when in reality all those men are doing is guilt tripping and gaslighting her into staying because you “love her”. The only thing they truly love is being able to control her.

I’m not saying every man treats women in this manner, many men support feminism and will openly fight for us to prove so.

In conclusion, many women are scared for their lives after the recent elections. This text was only about America nevermind everything else going on in the world such as the feminist 4B movement originating in South Korea and the regressive gender norms in Afghanistan. The only thing the world fears more than a problematic man making decisions is a woman trying to help.

#### Sources

Afghanistan, [www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-06/Gender-country-profile-Afghanistan-Executive-summary-en.pdf](http://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-06/Gender-country-profile-Afghanistan-Executive-summary-en.pdf), Accessed 14 Dec. 2024.  
“As 4B Takes the World by Storm, South Korea Is Grappling with a Backlash against Feminism.” The Guardian, Guardian News and Media, 15 Nov. 2024, [www.theguardian.com/world/2024/nov/15/4b-south-korea-feminist-movement-donald-trump-election-backlash](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/nov/15/4b-south-korea-feminist-movement-donald-trump-election-backlash).  
“Paris Paloma – Labour.” Genius, [genius.com/Paris-paloma-labour-lyrics](http://genius.com/Paris-paloma-labour-lyrics). Accessed 14 Dec. 2024.  
YouTube, YouTube, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=WV29R1M25n8&t=2s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WV29R1M25n8&t=2s). Accessed 14 Dec. 2024.  
YouTube, YouTube, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=d8NJZAUZ\\_Sw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d8NJZAUZ_Sw). Accessed 14 Dec. 2024.

## Poverty Problems Massimo Pompizzi

Have you realized that our economy is growing at a faster rate than people can keep up with? Poverty sometimes affects people when they are in uncomfortable situations because they cannot afford the proper things to help them. When they can't afford the proper necessities, people just ignore them and think of them as less than because they don't have the proper funds but they are still people, and they deserve a chance. I think that poverty has a big effect on preventing people from having equal access to resources. As people we should recognize that everyone deserves a chance, despite their financial situations.

A major part that prevents people from getting the proper resources is inflation. Prices keep rising, and some people can't keep up with those prices, and they end up not having enough money. An example of this is gas prices. Gas prices have risen a lot since the Covid 19 pandemic and with those rising prices are more people that can't afford it. Their wages are not rising at the same rate as the prices of goods and services. They start to fall behind and eventually they can't afford basic necessities. While people that are wealthier, they can keep up with the moving prices and they get wealthier because the prices and inflation are going higher. This issue shows that poverty prevents people from getting what they need because they can't afford the inflation and unreasonable prices of goods. Some people may look at poor people and say that they deserve it but I think that those people worked just as hard to get to where they were and their employers just weren't paying enough, so they couldn't keep up with the moving society.

Another reason poor people don't have the proper access to resources is because they can't afford proper healthcare and insurance causing them to be less fortunate. In today's world, approximately 44% of the individuals are poor and they live on \$6.85 per day or less. This shows that almost half of the world's population is living in poverty and therefore can't afford to take care of themselves or get the proper necessities to help them and or their families. Also the people that aren't making enough money can't afford to get the proper education and send their kids to school. It takes a big part of the kids' life away and also their knowledge. While these people are poor, there are always non-profit organizations and various low-cost places that these people could go to if they need help financially. Even though there are these places, some people can't even get to them because they could be far to travel without a car or money to pay for public transport.

A massive part of individuals' inability to get proper representation in legal matters is why many poor people struggle so much. An example of not being able to afford legal representation is when people with rough backgrounds and upbringings are facing criminal charges and they or their parents can't afford to get the representation they need to help them get out of a sticky situation. Lawyers can be very expensive and a lot of the time people can't afford to get the best lawyer to give them the best chance at getting the charges dropped.

Some people may also say that the defendants don't deserve the same representation as the innocent people because they are bad people and they should be served justice. While this may be true, in some cases the defendant is actually innocent and with the wrong type of help, an innocent person will take the fall for the actual bad people in the world.

To sum up, not everyone on Earth is able to keep up with the stuff around them and they fall into a dark place and it is very hard to get out. Once those people fall into the dark place, they start losing things that they could do and makes it very hard for them to last in our rising economy. I think that we should help these people and give them a chance because nobody likes to see someone in pain for no reason. We should help these people because in all, they are just like us just they were giving a different life path. As a population, we should work to help these people and get them back on their feet because if that were someone you knew, you would help them right?

-Massimo Pompizzi



Our Health by Melinda Cochrane

As we journey through the discussion on social justice it is important to also reflect on what it means to have access to healthcare as more and more are turning to private healthcare for services. Services that not all have access to. This poem is for those who are waiting for services and to those who provide us care.

“The right to health and other health-related human rights are legally binding commitments enshrined in international human rights instruments. WHO’s Constitution also recognizes the right to health.” World Health Organization

Yesterday the bluebird left my chest  
and stopped singing aloud for all to hear  
the same bluebird Bukowski hid  
behind his toughness

I wandered through the hospital  
waiting for the next test,  
and it all seemed so fieldless – no sky anywhere  
the doctors, interns, rushed up  
one set of stairs as the others went another way  
it reminded me of a flock without a destination  
and I asked myself, “how did I end up here?”  
“how did I end up here?”  
no one answered me, not the nurses  
not the doctors who rushed about  
but I didn’t hear a whisper

I didn’t really want them to tell me how  
nor where it was I’d be going  
Sitting in the cafeteria, a woman  
in a blue hospital gown  
seemed far away  
maybe we were somewhere together  
a place we both knew but never spoke about  
to anyone but God  
maybe the bluebird in her chest went there too

Then, as if its wings of flight caught my soul  
I felt a flutter in my chest again  
for no apparent reason  
just the sight of sky and snow  
falling over city buildings  
I asked myself again, “how did I end up here?”  
this time the bluebird answered  
“to understand the way it feels when the bluebird leaves”

( first published in Life as a Human Magazine )

Melinda Cochrane is an educator, mother, poet, and fiction author. She received a certificate for leadership from the local CO-OP foundation in Newfoundland. She also received the Mary Belle Campbell Scholarship for poetry and teaching from the North Carolina Writers’ Network. Her first YA novel, *Desperate Freedom*, was nominated for best book of the year in 2013 by the Quebec Writers’ Federation. She was the 2012 winner of Malahat Review’s Twitter Monostich Contest and has been shortlisted for the Fermoy International Poetry Contest in Ireland. She is a certified voice of Les Brown training. In Montreal, she spoke at Dawson College’s Anti-Violence Conference in 2011 and at the Bronfman Jewish Education Centre in 2018.

Note: Charles Bukowski was an American poet who wrote a famous poem called Bluebird.



# CRIME OF THE CENTURY

## KAYDEN MAYOFF



**This picture is a statement on the unavailability of clean drinking water in the world.**

**One in three people on Earth do not have access to clean drinking water, which is a major social justice issue in our society.**

**This is especially prominent in Canada where there is a movement to provide indigenous peoples with clean drinking water that they did not all have access to previously.**

**So far, the government of Canada has lifted 83% of long-term drinking water advisories in indigenous communities.**

**Yet the global water crisis has not been fixed in the slightest.**

**This photo is meant to show a person watering their driveway instead of watering the plant or drinking it.**

**This is an exaggerated example of how people in first world countries will waste water unnecessarily while a large percentage of people even in their own country do not have any water to drink.**

**It also represents the waste of water by large corporations that create products such as beef, that require thousands of liters of water for a small product, thereby overusing the scarce resource that is water.**

# **Abandoned Futures**

## **Danica lowry**



**Even today, millions of children around the world still don't have access to proper education. In many countries, both developing and developed, children and teenagers who come from marginalized backgrounds or who are living in poverty do not have the same access to education as others. In areas such as South and Central Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, female children have less access to education than male children. In addition to this, oftentimes children here, in North America, cannot have a proper education due to the necessity of dropping out of school in order to work and provide support for their family.**

# **Social Justice in Relation to the Legal System**

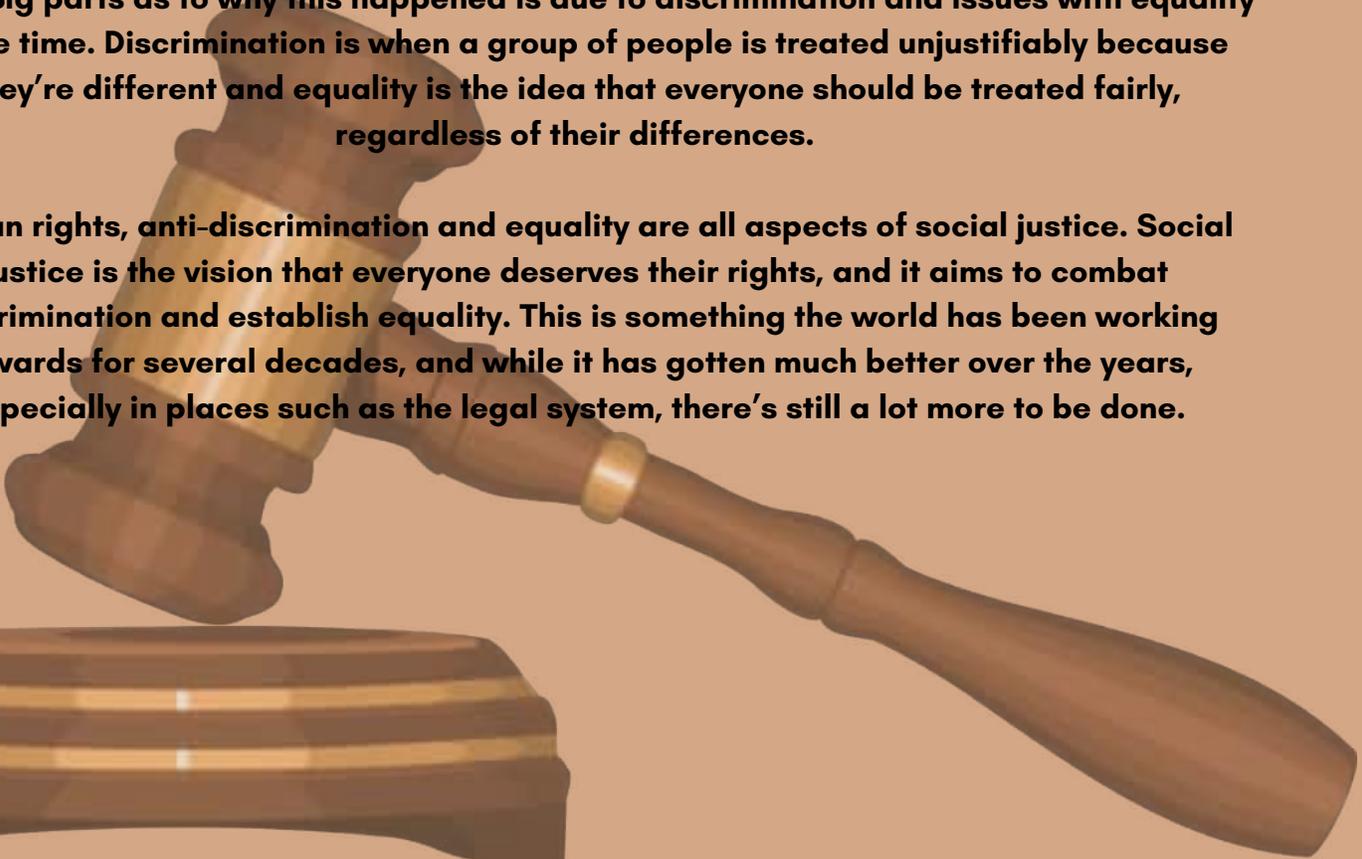
**Michael Ghantous**

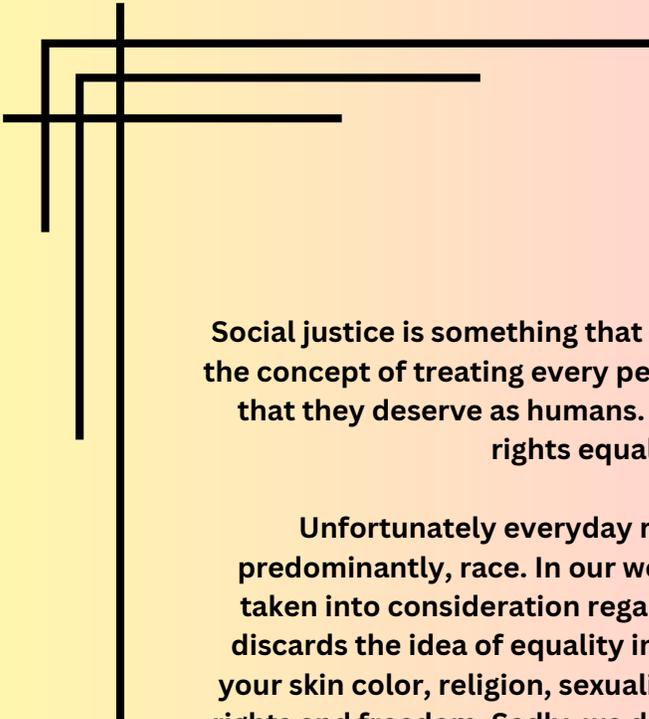
**Social justice as a whole is the concept that everyone within society, regardless of their cultural background, should have the same rights and opportunities. It ensures that everyone has the right to health, education, work and much more. Social justice promotes fairness and equality, especially in fields like the legal system.**

**The legal system is the system that is responsible for carrying out laws. This is done through a whole process in court. When it comes to social justice in regards to the legal system, this means that there is no bias at all. This means that the justice system won't favor or discredit a group of people just because of factors like their wealthiness or race. Social justice in the legal system ensures that everyone is able to advocate for what they believe and plead their case. Unfortunately this was not the case with the Central Park Five.**

**Today, the Central Park Five incident is a prominent example of racial discrimination and inequality in the legal system. The five defendants were essentially stripped of their human rights, which are basic freedoms every individual should have, and in this case the five lost their freedom of speech, being disregarded whenever they tried to plead their case. Big parts as to why this happened is due to discrimination and issues with equality at the time. Discrimination is when a group of people is treated unjustifiably because they're different and equality is the idea that everyone should be treated fairly, regardless of their differences.**

**Human rights, anti-discrimination and equality are all aspects of social justice. Social justice is the vision that everyone deserves their rights, and it aims to combat discrimination and establish equality. This is something the world has been working towards for several decades, and while it has gotten much better over the years, especially in places such as the legal system, there's still a lot more to be done.**





**Social Justice  
Ashleen Saini**

**Social justice is something that we sadly don't have all the time in our world. This is the concept of treating every person equally by providing everyone with their rights that they deserve as humans. We, as people, should be entitled to these human rights equally and fairly as anyone should.**

**Unfortunately everyday rights get manipulated with many aspects but predominantly, race. In our world, how dark your skin color is can be negatively taken into consideration regarding views on people and crime. This completely discards the idea of equality in our society. Equality is when everyone no matter your skin color, religion, sexuality, beliefs and much more are entitled to the same rights and freedom. Sadly, we don't see this in the Central Park Five, where kids are accused of a crime they didn't commit because of their darker skin color which completely erases the idea of equality between one another. Those five young boys went through something no child or human in general should ever endure in their life and the feeling that they had was probably so hard to endure at their age. I could just imagine how they felt because there was a time I was put in a situation like that but to a lesser degree. I was at the mall with my friends one time and we were in a store, ready to checkout. As we went through the self checkout, there was an issue with the machine so I asked an employee and immediately I got accused of trying to steal when that's something I would never do. In the end I had to pay twice for one product because the employee didn't even try to hear my side. That situation made me feel really upset especially since I was the only one who got called out. I can also understand how the five teenagers admitted to something they didn't do because just like them, I also wanted to get out of the situation I was in by giving in to the employee, even though I shouldn't have. The feeling of discrimination from skin color is a horrible sentiment that people shouldn't go through even as our world advances technologically. What I mean by that is our society is so caught up with AI and new technologies but we are still stuck in the past by people still experiencing inequality.**

**Social justice is something that together as a society we need to improve on because it's so important. We see inequality in the world like George Floyd's case, Malala Yousafzai story and the Central Park Five and with all of that people still aren't treated the same. We need to better our world by starting off with making sure everyone has the same rights and are equal no matter what they look like.**

**Works Cited**

**"The Central Park Five." PBS, Public Broadcasting Service, [www.pbs.org/kenburns/the-central-park-five](http://www.pbs.org/kenburns/the-central-park-five). Accessed 22 Nov. 2024.**



## Poverty & Access to Necessities

Erica Beaudry

Canada's official definition of poverty is "the condition of a person who is deprived of the resources, means, choices and power necessary to acquire and maintain a basic level of living standards and to facilitate integration and participation in society." In 2021, 7.4% of the Canadian population was reported to be living in poverty, with 1.7% in deep poverty and 5.7% in shallow poverty. Poverty restricts people from accessing basic necessities and resources, and prevents them from exercising their rights when needed. With a total of 14.3% of our population living in or at risk of living in poverty, many are faced with challenges and unjust disadvantages due to poverty.

First and foremost, poverty can limit access to proper housing. While it is difficult to determine the exact number of homeless people due to hidden homelessness (living temporarily in squats or at a friend/relative's house), an estimate of 250 000 Canadians live without a permanent home, and another 1.5 million live in insecure housing. In 2016, 1 693 775 households were spending over 30% of their income on housing. There are multiple factors that add to the high costs of housing, including the ever-growing Canadian population, labour shortages and housing development charges. As housing is in high demand, it's difficult to satisfy everyone's needs. In order to battle homelessness, shelters have been created to give people a place to stay. While this is beneficial, not everyone can be accommodated. The number of homeless people in Toronto, Ontario is the highest in all of Canada, with over 12 000 people living without a home. Because of this, as much as 40 people on average are turned away each night at these shelters due to a lack of space. Those living in poverty do not have equal access to permanent housing, as opposed to those living under more stable conditions.

Secondly, poverty has a big impact on one's health and access to healthcare. According to the World Health Association, there is a "social gradient" in health, meaning that the poorer one is, the more at risk they are for health problems. The mortality rate amongst the poor is significantly higher than that of the wealthy. You would think that the poverty-stricken would be a priority. This is not the case, as they have more difficulty in getting access to medical attention than most. Limited financial resources, lack of comprehensive health care coverage, and lack of affordable transportation are all barriers that low-income Canadians face in regards to accessing healthcare. Canadians experiencing low-income are more likely to have not received needed healthcare in the past 12 months, and are 60% less likely to have been able to get needed tests due to costs. Living in poverty makes it significantly harder to get the care one needs.

As well as it being difficult to receive medical attention when experiencing low wealth, the justice and legal system is not of benefit to vulnerable groups. Many people who experience legal problems do not reach out for help, especially those who experience debt problems and poverty issues. The challenges that these people face causes insecurity, when they should be feeling empowered and assisted. The criminal justice system creates debt through the intensification of fees and fines. These charges cannot be reduced even after a declaration of bankruptcy. This imposes a stressful and hopeless challenge on those who are already experiencing poverty. When it comes to seeking legal help, many Canadians find themselves stuck in the middle: too poor to afford a lawyer, but not poor enough to qualify for legal aid. Moreover, criminal records create a notable barrier for basic necessities such as housing and employment. Those who hold a criminal record and are found to be a part of a marginalized community, such as the Indigenous community, struggle even more than other populations in accessing basic services. Consequently, this has a serious negative impact on social reintegration. These flaws in the criminal justice system create more problems than solutions for those who are in need of help.

In conclusion, basic necessities are restricted for the poor, making it difficult for them to exercise their rights when necessary. This can be recognized by the housing crisis, the struggles within our healthcare system and injustice within the legal system. Changes must be made in our systems and society so that those living in these unfavorable circumstances can have equal access to necessary resources and aid.

Sources

Blair, Nicole. "Homelessness Statistics in Canada." Made in CA, Made in CA, 16 Oct. 2024, [madeinca.ca/homelessness-statistics-canada/](http://madeinca.ca/homelessness-statistics-canada/).  
Canada, Employment and Social Development. "Government of Canada." Canada.Ca, Gouvernement du Canada, 20 Apr. 2022, [www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/poverty-reduction/reports/strategy.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/poverty-reduction/reports/strategy.html).  
Dreger, Nanci. "Backgrounder: The Impact of Poverty on Health." Evidence Network, 23 Jan. 2018, [evidencenetwork.ca/backgrounder-the-impact-of-poverty-on-health](http://evidencenetwork.ca/backgrounder-the-impact-of-poverty-on-health).  
"Guide to Health Insurance and Healthcare System in Canada." InterNations, 5 Dec. 2024, [www.internations.org/canada-expats/guide/healthcare](http://www.internations.org/canada-expats/guide/healthcare).  
Inc, Massive Media, and Marcella. "Poverty and Access to Justice." ICCLR, 4 Feb. 2022, [icclr.org/2022/02/03/poverty-and-access-to-justice/](http://icclr.org/2022/02/03/poverty-and-access-to-justice/).  
"Poverty and International Law." Canada Without Poverty, 30 Apr. 2020, [cwp-csp.ca/poverty/human-rights-violation/poverty-and-international-law/](http://cwp-csp.ca/poverty/human-rights-violation/poverty-and-international-law/).  
"Poverty in Canada." Canadian Poverty Institute, The Canadian Poverty Institute, [www.povertyinstitute.ca/poverty-canada](http://www.povertyinstitute.ca/poverty-canada). Accessed 8 Dec. 2024.  
"Social Determinants of Health: Key Concepts." World Health Organization, World Health Organization, [www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/social-determinants-of-health-key-concepts](http://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/social-determinants-of-health-key-concepts). Accessed 8 Dec. 2024.  
"Why Only the Rich and the Poor Can Afford a Lawyer." The Canadian Encyclopedia, 14 Nov. 2007, [www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/why-only-the-rich-and-the-poor-can-afford-a-lawyer](http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/why-only-the-rich-and-the-poor-can-afford-a-lawyer).



# THE MEANING OF JUSTICE

## Coffee Remnants

ELIZA TAGG



Pollution and global warming are deeply tied to other social justice issues like racism and class-based divides. Natural disasters disproportionately affect marginalized communities both in the western world and internationally.

It's a brutal system, where already oppressed groups are hurt both physically and financially by the effects of climate change and pollution, which further marginalizes them. For example, people living in poverty can only afford lower quality food, which is more likely to be contaminated by harmful pesticides or contain microplastics.

Additionally, pollution can directly contribute to climate change, leading to severe weather events. For example, hurricanes and sudden snowstorms. Someone in poor financial circumstances will be deeply affected by a hurricane and its effect, which include massive amounts of property damage. Snowstorms and cold temperatures, which are particularly prevalent in Canada, causes hypothermia for homeless people and can lead to death very often.



# THE INCARCERATION OF INNOCENT PEOPLE

Joshua Mc Caig

The name Central Park Five is given to a group of black and hispanic men who were convicted of a crime they didn't commit and spent a range of 7-13 years in jail. Imagine you were 14 years old, hanging out after school at the park with your friends and you find out you're going to pretty much lose the rest of your life because of something you had no part in.

The central park five is a sad story because it really shows how in this world and on this earth racism plays out in so many ways including systemic. This story shows exactly that, they were put into a position of helplessness and did everything they could to get out of that position but the system was against them and so many people of power came with it like Donald Trump as the most powerful name from the list. They were all good, innocent kids that were taken advantage.

It goes to show how the system was incredibly racist making a group of African-American kids take the fall and in so many other cases it is what happened too, people being falsely accused for crimes, and taking the blame. It is very sad because there is still so many cases that have not been taken care of and people are still in jail for what they did not do.



# The Disrespect of Minorities

DEANDRA ROBILLARD

Social justice is essentially the concept of a society where everyone is treated in an equal manner and has equal access to opportunities, status and identity. It is to ensure fairness and maintain peace within a community. It addresses economic, societal and political unfairness and injustice to insure all of humanity is content and treated with decency.

The legal system is always attempting to provide social justice to all those affected by the law. Once a law is broken or disrespected, all those punishable by law will be given a sentence of worthy discipline to ensure safety and fairness to the victims affected by the wrongdoings of the perpetrators. For example, a homicide taken place within the city of Montreal. To provide solace to the family of the victim, to ensure safety to the habitants of Montreal, and to punish the murderer, justice will be served and the guilty will be punished. Social justice's purpose is to provide justice and equality to improve the living conditions and lifestyle of all of humanity, however, many societal issues can come in the way of this ideal concept. Many things like racism, homophobia and sexism, ableism and misogyny can be certain aspects which may prevent certain victims of receiving fair treatment or compensation, or even cause those who fall under that criteria to be affected by the law despite any being broken. It is our right to be treated with dignity and the utmost respect.

We should all have access to this form of fairness, and although it is in the constitution, there will always be some form of discrimination from others, without any consequences or perhaps repercussions given to those who have done nothing wrong, all because of the way someone may look or act. Social justice is a very important concept which needs to be present in a community, to allow for fairness and equality, however it must be taken seriously by everyone, or else it will not work, and justice will never truly be served.



## Distribution of Legal Knowledge and its Significance

Ethan Rieder

Did you know? Up to 10,000 people in the United States may be wrongfully convicted of serious crimes annually. Compared to the total number of arrests, this number is so insignificant that the justice system tends to ignore these cases. Now, picture that same “small” number being reduced to very few. If the education system in countries around the world provided the proper means and mediums to learn basic legal rights and possibly offered it for free in high schools, this would surely reduce the level of wrongful convictions and severity of sentences for teens significantly.

Firstly, we must discuss the mass distribution of legal rights education, and how it can empower individuals by providing them with the knowledge and tools to protect themselves from exploitation, discrimination, and abuse in the justice system. This may seem like a hassle, and a long shot to some people. I understand that it will not be an effortless and unchallenging process to simply insert this level of education into every single school curriculum. However, this is achievable with the combined effort and participation of many. When people begin to understand their rights, they are more likely to stand up for themselves and others. This can lead to a more just and equitable society where everyone has the opportunity to thrive, essentially making the whole process a lot easier.

Furthermore, knowledge of legal rights is essential for active and informed citizenship. It enables individuals to participate meaningfully in democratic processes, hold governments and institutions accountable for their mistakes, call them out, and advocate for policies that reflect their needs and values. An informed and engaged citizenry is crucial for a healthy democracy and the world. Some may argue that legal rights education can be too complex for the average citizen to comprehend, which could lead to confusion and misunderstanding, but this can easily be taken care of by tailoring the education to different audiences, similar to how math, science, and English become more complex as you progress through each grade in school. There are also websites and public resources that will have you covered if need be. Lastly, and most importantly, understanding legal rights can help people avoid legal problems in the first place. For example, knowing about contract law can help individuals avoid entering into agreements that are unfair or unfavourable. Additionally, legal rights education can promote peaceful conflict resolution by providing people with the knowledge and skills to resolve disputes without resorting to violence or other methods. While it's true that other factors may influence legal outcomes, legal rights education can still be used as a powerful tool for preventing legal problems, which brings me to my final point. If we taught people about their rights early in life, we would see a large diminish in crime among teenagers, fewer reports of misbehaviour in schools, and children and young adults would go into their lives knowing the responsibility they have as citizens, and the knowledge of what is just and what isn't.

In conclusion, legal rights education is a formidable device that empowers citizens, promotes social justice, and encourages informed and engaged citizens. By understanding their rights, people can protect themselves from exploitation, discrimination, and abuse. Allowing everyone to participate in democratic affairs and resolve disputes peacefully, with a new, positive, outlook on life. While there may be a few counterarguments to its importance, the benefits of legal rights education far outweigh the potential drawbacks of it.

# **Social Justice in the Heart of our Institutions**

## **Zander Perfetti Lefebvre**

Still today, many places around the world lack what we may know as “social justice”. It’s something that would be able to make a difference in the societies we know so well. Without social justice, the world would be infested with criminals that got away due to social status as well as innocent people being locked away for crimes they have not committed. Discrimination and inequality would flourish under these conditions.

Social justice is about building a world not only free of these injustices but also centered on fairness and equal opportunity for everyone. In a perfect world where social justice is very prominent, courtrooms and police would not be prejudiced or biased based on the person's social identity. Everyone would get the same treatment and punishment no matter the situation but especially when it comes to the legal system.

The Exonerated Five (Central Park Five) experienced firsthand the effects of social injustice within the legal system. In 1989, five black and latino teenagers were wrongfully accused and convicted of a horrific crime. After many long hours of aggressive interogation, these young men were coerced by prejudiced and racist detectives into confessing for the the brutal assault and rape of a jogger in New York City’s Central Park. These accusations were made despite a great lack of evidence towards the teenagers, along with a desire to conclude the case and claim the assailants were caught.

Years later the true criminal was caught and the Exonerated Five’s names were cleared, however the damage on their lives and reputation still stands. Their story represents the damage that can be caused when social justice is not present. It teaches us that having social justice is not just about undoing the damage but about preventing it. This is done by ensuring it is at the core of every institution, especially the legal system. This will help create a better future where everyone is treated as equals. No matter who you are, justice shall be served equally.

# The Faces of Social Justice

## Emelia Lautman

As we talk about social inequalities in class, my eyes have opened and I've started to gain insight on the topic. What I have learnt is that there really isn't one way to describe social justice. There are so many different aspects. There's financial, racial, cultural and gender aspects to it. To me it's about how individuals and groups are treated by society.

When talking about social justice in regards to the legal system, justice refers to the human right to advocate for oneself and one's interests. When a legal system fails to protect fundamental freedoms, marginalized populations are most vulnerable and face most roadblocks in exercising their rights. In the story of the Central Park Five, the individuals who were framed for the crime, were victims of exactly this. They were victims of being treated unfairly by the legal system. This creates social injustice, because of their race, these boys were targeted because they were seemingly easy to blame. The police officers and investigators treated them horrifically, they would make up parts to the story and so many other violent things due to the fact that they were people of color .

To me, that is discrimination. Taking someone's race, and using it against them, diminishing someone because of their skin colour. When there is prejudicial and unjust treatment against a category of people, I see it as discrimination. To me equality and human rights go hand in hand. I think that equality is a human right. It's about having the same rights and opportunities.

Social justice and inequalities can sometimes be a touchy subject, but I think that it is really important to talk about because we have to be aware of what's still going on in the world. Life is never fair, but it's important for us as a society to do the best we can to make it as equal as possible.

# No Money, No Defense

Julian Harr

One of the biggest problems of our lives is poverty. Being poor means that they don't have enough money to support or fulfill their basic needs. Living like this is hard enough on its own, as these people are also at high risk of catching diseases, going hungry or experiencing mental health disorders. Unfortunately the legal system is doing homeless people no favors. Some people believe that they should just get jobs, but it is not that simple. The justice system must change to accommodate these people as poverty prevents them from getting bail, makes it harder for them to get a good lawyer and makes life after leaving prison extremely rough should homeless people find themselves there.

First, it is very hard for people to pay a bail. The exact amount that is required to get a bail varies on a lot of factors, like the severity of the crime or any criminal history, but bails cost on average five thousand to fifteen thousand dollars in the United States. Also in the United States, someone who is considered to be in poverty has only around thirteen thousand dollars. If a poor person is put to trial, they either will not be able to pay the bail and will be put in prison until their court day, or they will pay, but it will have taken a huge amount of their money. Regardless of if they are guilty or not, poor people are affected extremely negatively by this part of the legal system. They are, however, found guilty more often than not because their lack of money makes them unable to get a good lawyer.

People in poverty are not able to hire a good lawyer when the time comes to go to trial. Lawyers are extremely expensive, especially good ones as they cost around two-hundred fifty dollars an hour. This is usually not possible for poor people to pay, so the government will give them a lawyer for free. This is a good idea in theory, but it has some problems. For example, the reason that these lawyers are free is because most of the time they perform poorly and could lack proper skill. For example some of them have been reported to be drunk, or asleep. These free lawyers are also very overworked and have many clients at the same time, meaning it is more likely that they will make mistakes in a case or will not have the time to defend some of their clients. Even if people in poverty are innocent, they could still end up in jail easily due to a lack of money to hire a good lawyer. Some people think that these people could solve all of their problems by just getting a job to earn money.

Although it is never that simple.

Many believe that people who are struggling financially should just get a job, and then with that money the legal system would not be so hard on them. Whereas if these people did get a job it would help them with their legal problems, getting a job can be challenging for them for a multitude of reasons. People who live in poverty often lack education (but not always), especially at the college/cegep level and up, as they do not have the money to afford it. This immediately makes it near impossible for them to get any high paying jobs that require an education. They also don't have the money to get many basic things that are needed for most jobs, like proper clothing, access to a form of transportation to get to a work site, or even simply a proper living space.

Their lack of money makes it hard for them to get a job that can earn them some money, making them end up in jail much more often. However, going to jail is not the only problem for these people. Life after being released from jail can also be very challenging.

After being released from jail, it is hard for anyone to continue their lives, but it is significantly worse for poor people. They will have even less than they did before going to jail because a lot of the time they will have spent a huge portion of their money on their court case. They will also often have no family that can lend them money, so they are on their own. It is even harder for them to get a job after being in prison than it already was because they will now have a criminal record. Sometimes they will get so desperate for money that they will commit a crime to get that money. This could lead to them going back to jail, defeating the purpose of their jail time with the goal to change them. Even after they did their time, needy people are still being punished and are forced to live miserable lives. This is a huge problem with the justice system.

In conclusion, the legal system is extremely hard for people who live in poverty, as it is very easy for them to end up in prison because they don't have money to pay a bail, they struggle to hire a good lawyer and life after prison is horrible for them. Despite what people think, it is very hard for them to just get a job and fix all of these problems. All of these reasons are why I believe that the justice system must be changed drastically to accommodate these people. The governments of countries all around the world must take action to solve this problem immediately.

#### Work Cited

- Blair, Nicole. "Homelessness Statistics in Canada." Made in CA, 16 Oct. 2024, [madeinca.ca/homelessness-statistics-canada/](https://madeinca.ca/homelessness-statistics-canada/).  
"Connections among Poverty, Incarceration, and Inequality." INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH ON POVERTY, 27 Feb. 2024, [www.irp.wisc.edu/resource/connections-among-poverty-incarceration-and-inequality/](https://www.irp.wisc.edu/resource/connections-among-poverty-incarceration-and-inequality/).
- Flater, Amy, and Upper Room Mission. "Why Don't Homeless People 'Just Get a Job'?" The Upper Room Mission, 27 June 2023, [upperroommission.ca/why-dont-homeless-people-just-get-a-job/#:~:text=Additionally%2C%20they%20may%20lack%20access,Physical%20disability.](https://upperroommission.ca/why-dont-homeless-people-just-get-a-job/#:~:text=Additionally%2C%20they%20may%20lack%20access,Physical%20disability.)
- "How Much Does It Cost to Bail Someone out of Jail?" Connecticut Bail Bonds Group, 29 Jan. 2024, [www.connecticut-bailbonds.com/blog/how-much-to-bail-someone-out-of-jail/#:~:text=Generally%2C%20the%20average%20bail%20amount,discussed%20later%20in%20this%20post.](https://www.connecticut-bailbonds.com/blog/how-much-to-bail-someone-out-of-jail/#:~:text=Generally%2C%20the%20average%20bail%20amount,discussed%20later%20in%20this%20post.)
- Justice and the Poor - Oaith, [www.oaith.ca/assets/files/Publications/justice\\_andthe\\_poor.pdf](https://www.oaith.ca/assets/files/Publications/justice_andthe_poor.pdf). Accessed 9 Dec. 2024.
- "MLA Formatting and Style Guide." MLA Formatting and Style Guide - Purdue OWL® - Purdue University, [owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/mla\\_style/mla\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/mla\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html). Accessed 9 Dec. 2024.
- "Poverty and Poor Legal Defense." Equal Justice USA, 14 Jan. 2020, [ejusa.org/resource/poverty-and-poor-legal-defense/](https://ejusa.org/resource/poverty-and-poor-legal-defense/).
- "What Does Living at the Poverty Line Look like in the US?" USAFacts, USAFacts, 18 Sept. 2023, [usafacts.org/articles/what-does-living-at-the-poverty-line-look-like/](https://usafacts.org/articles/what-does-living-at-the-poverty-line-look-like/).

# Why Do I Need Social Justice?

Addison Mirijello-Bergnach

As a society, we've done a moderately good job at promoting social justice and equal rights. However, these past few weeks are demonstrating that those rights might be revoked. As of right now, so many American lives are in jeopardy because of the election of Donald J Trump, a convicted felon and a fascist.

Social justice promises the idea that society will move forward, and people will become more accepting. Unfortunately, it has not been enough. On November 3rd, a man who has been openly discriminatory and hostile towards anyone he perceives to be in his way, was elected to run such a diverse country. It seems as though instead of moving forward, we are hurtling back. Books are being banned, healthcare services are being removed, and immigrants are being forcefully deported from their home in a country that was supposed to be free. Social justice is so important to me, because although there are people in this world threatening to take away my bodily autonomy, it is working to protect it. Through protest and petitions, social justice is trying to fight back on the inequality minorities are being subjected to.

I grew up watching CNN and MSNBC, it was a part of my childhood. I remember the morning when I found out that Hilary had lost the election, and I was disappointed, but not to the same extent that I am now. Right now, we are still recovering from Trump's first term. Right now, I am more aware of the impact he has, not only in the US, but everywhere.

Today, I am not only sad that Kamala Harris didn't win, I am scared for my future and the futures of so many others. Forget about the economy, human rights are being destroyed. Donald Trump promotes hate by utilizing fear. I am sufficiently scared, but I will not bow my head and accept the hate in this world. I will fight it because that is what a decent human being does.



# The Need for Freedom

By: Tristan Garbutt

Social justice is an idea that is widely spread. This idea comes from the principle that everyone deserves equal opportunities and rights. Social injustice is very common in our world. No matter how hard we work to change this there is still injustice everywhere. One of the main culprits of social injustice is often the law.

The police and the law are very important figures in our society and they are what keeps our world from falling apart. Although they are meant to keep everyone equal, they don't always work perfectly. Wrongful accusation and imprisonment of people can cause immense mental and physical suffering and can have lasting effects on the victims. It can ruin their entire lives forever. Many of these wrong accusations are done purposefully and are often racially motivated. These wrongful imprisonment defeats the idea of social justice and proves that our world today is not equal or safe. Equality should mean that everyone has their own rights and freedoms, where no one has control over another person. Society has tried its best to make everyone equal but discrimination and racism from many people has made this goal an almost impossible task.

Discrimination of others is when an individual is judged and treated differently because of their appearance or culture. This discrimination is found often in the justice system. Police and the justice system sometimes become corrupt and have taken advantage of their powers. An example of this was with the Central Park Five case, where young people of color were taken into custody and were forced to say that they had committed a crime that they had not committed. This ruined their reputation and caused people to hate them and even threaten their lives. They were immediately put in jail for many years, stripping them of their youth. This devastating act of discrimination against these young boys will never be forgotten and shows us the dark side of our justice system. How easily they can strip away your rights and our freedom. Even though they were eventually let out of prison and people found out that they were innocent, the time they spent in prison and all the mental damage that had been done to them will stay with them forever. These acts against these young boys took many of their human rights, and put them in inhospitable environments. Human rights are an individual's freedom, opinions, expressions and their voice. These boys lost many of these human rights during this court case and for many years were trapped, unable to speak their truth and express themselves. Every person's personality and identity is formed because of their basic human rights, and stripping these boys of their rights is practically stripping them of their identity.

Our society is built off of fake equality formed in consequence to the discrimination and racism that is hidden from the public. We like to believe that we're all equal, but this is not the truth. We have to realize that discrimination is all around us and we have to work together to be able to eliminate discrimination and give everyone an equal chance at life, no matter who they are.



# Equity is a Human Right

Zolton Ketseti

**Social justice is nondiscriminatory justice; it is justice which does not discriminate against race, age, culture, class, political status or any other factor of bias. In this nondiscriminatory justice no one is guilty until proven innocent no matter their race or any other factor that is used to discriminate against them. Unfortunately, social justice is often not applied in the legal system.**

**Social justice, which at this point should be a human right, is still somehow not implemented in many parts of the legal system both in Canada and other parts of the world. Human rights are the basic needs, respects and dignities that all people should be given. If human rights include the right to equality and the right to live free from all forms of discrimination, then why is social justice not considered as either of these things by so many parts of the legal system? Equality seems to be deemed as unimportant to those people or institutions who have power in society, such as political or economic groups.**

**This is most likely because they fear it will take power away from them. Equality is equal treatment of all people; equal treatment requires a lack of discrimination. Equity is treating people fairly. Discrimination is the unfair judgment of others based on biases of factors such as race or class.**

**The lack of social justice in so much of our legal system is truly a violation of human rights. Thankfully society has gotten better and better at calling out these injustices. With time, these injustices will hopefully be ironed out of the legal systems of the world and when this happens the world will truly be an equal and just world.**



# THE PAY GAP



Evan Alexander

The picture was one that I took two years ago at an NBA game. It depicts the excitement on and around the court, but the image also conveys information about a popular social justice issue: the pay gap. On the court are players who all worked very hard to get to the point where they play professionally, but some guys get paid more than others. The pay gap is more visible when comparing women to men. WNBA players are paid fair less, despite the fact they put in similar amounts of work. This wage disparity reflects issues of gender inequality. Female athletes work harder than the players in my picture just to gain less recognition and support. All of this is a clear example of how gender discrimination can persist in areas like sports, especially in the region of pay.

# Poverty vs The Justice System

Rayan Stanfl

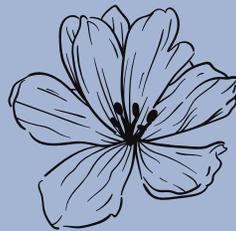
Could you imagine having to go to prison for over two months because you were unable to pay your one measly ticket. This is what happened to Samantha Jenkins in 2018, she was arrested and jailed nearly 20 times and had to pay roughly 15000\$ to the court. You can fly from Boston to Vegas 60 times with that money. Unfortunately, stories like these have happened to 20% of all incarcerated prisoners in the USA right now and are continuing to increase. Poverty does prevent people from having equal access to resources when it comes to exercising their rights when needed.

In the USA there are millions of people living in poverty. Most of which only make a salary of only 15000. Then having to pay for a criminal defense lawyer is nearly impossible. A lawyer could range from 100 to 300 dollars an hour. It is nearly impossible for them to escape incarceration because 10 hours, they'll lose about a month's pay just for a lawyer. It's impossible for them to express themselves because it is just so expensive. Although there are free lawyers, they are usually severely overworked, tired and underpaid making it much harder for them to work on their case.

Lawyers aren't the only thing the accused criminals have to pay for. A lot of them have to pay for fees to prove their innocence. According to American Action Forum the court forces the defendant to pay for court clerk fees, filing fees, DNA database fees, jury fees, crime lab fees, and late fees. A clerk fee is 50 bucks, for an average person 50 bucks is nothing but a minimum wage worker that's a full day pay. A basic filing fee is over 200\$, this does not include examination fees, or patent search fees which can range anywhere from 300\$ to 700\$. Adding all these fees up can give a total price of over 1000\$ maybe even 2000\$. They cannot afford any of this, increasing their chance of being convicted. Although the prosecutor is usually supposed to pay for these fees to prove the guiltiness of the criminal, they usually don't. This causes the defendant to pay the fines, to prove their innocence.

Last but not least, bail. Bail allows for the release of an accused person from serving time in jail, while they await trial. According to the Bail Agent Network the cost for bail could range from roughly 10000\$ to 200000\$. Of course two hundred thousand dollars is for a very large and serious crime but this range is to display how expensive it really is. Bail allows for more time with the criminal defence lawyer and the accused to discuss the crime. Also bail allows the criminal to be physically and mentally healthy. It has been reported that 64% of the criminals that stay in jail have some sort of mental illness; such as sleep deprivation or anxiety. These problems will affect them during trial, and it's very hurtful to see them struggle in the face of the law because they could not afford bail. Even though many states are lowering the price of bail, it is still too much for the poor.

In conclusion, poverty will have a negative effect on preventing people from having equal access to resources when it comes to exercising their rights when needed. Due to the fact that resources such as lawyers, bail and fees are way too expensive for minimum wage workers. It is important that the USA fixes this injustice.



#### Bibliography:

- Peeler, Travis. "Criminal Defense Attorney Fees." LegalMatch Law Library, 11 Aug. 2014, [www.legalmatch.com/law-library/article/how-much-will-a-criminal-defense-lawyer-cost.html](http://www.legalmatch.com/law-library/article/how-much-will-a-criminal-defense-lawyer-cost.html).
- "A Debtor's Prison: Fines and Fees Create Debilitating Cycle of Incarceration." Fines and Fees Justice Center, [finesandfeesjusticecenter.org/articles/debtors-prison-court-fees/](http://finesandfeesjusticecenter.org/articles/debtors-prison-court-fees/). Accessed 10 Dec. 2022.
- "Why Bail Is Important for Defendants and the Criminal Justice System." [www.krisorlaw.com](http://www.krisorlaw.com), 26 Sept. 2017, [www.krisorlaw.com/why-bail-is-important-for-defendants-and-the-criminal-justice-system](http://www.krisorlaw.com/why-bail-is-important-for-defendants-and-the-criminal-justice-system).
- Morin, Amy. "How Being in Prison Might Affect Your Mental Health." Verywell Mind, 21 Nov. 2022, [www.verywellmind.com/menta-health-effects-of-prison-5071300](http://www.verywellmind.com/menta-health-effects-of-prison-5071300).
- Johnson, Deborah. "Connections among Poverty, Incarceration, and Inequality." [www.irp.wisc.edu](http://www.irp.wisc.edu), INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH ON POVERTY, May 2020, [www.irp.wisc.edu/resource/connections-among-poverty-incarceration-and-inequality/](http://www.irp.wisc.edu/resource/connections-among-poverty-incarceration-and-inequality/).



## Passion meets Risk

My love for travelling has made me truly love and appreciate the planet. From the lush rain forests in Hawaii to one of the most remarkable coral reef systems in Turks and Caicos. The magnificent wildlife in Costa Rica like sloths and monkeys. The beauty of so many wonders in different places that I haven't yet seen. To me the planet is magical and must be protected for the future generations. This has turned climate change into a pressing and serious topic for me.

Can I help even if it is a small contribution?

I honed in on single-use plastic items, and more specifically, plastic dermaplaning razors that are single use. I hated throwing them away and noticed I didn't have any other options when purchasing them. I decided to take my 20 plus years of sales experience having worked in many positions to create a company that would sell dermaplane razors made of Wheat straw plastic and Swedish stainless steel . Wheat Straw is sustainable, biodegradable, durable and has minimum environmental impact.

That was when my company Organic Luxury was born. During this process people's opinions were thrown at me. They were advising me to exercise caution, they were doubting me and my abilities. They would ask me how certain I was that I would succeed. I didn't know. I couldn't say for certain. Nothing is guaranteed in life and it was after all a huge risk. I had loved ones excited for me and cheering me on but there was always one voice that was the loudest.

You can do it! Problems will come and you will be able to solve them. You will make mistakes and you will learn and do better. Do not give up because not trying would be the worst thing that could happen to you. That voice was my own. My voice, my gut, my instincts and wisdom from so much hard work has allowed me to believe in myself.

Was it a financial risk to create a company with a focus on climate awareness? Yes absolutely! Will I crumble if I fail? Absolutely not! I will be so proud of all my hard work and efforts no matter the outcome. And that to me is what life is all about. To me risk, passion and hard work equals a life worth living!

Elizabeth Roy  
CEO/Founder  
Organic Luxury





## **The Stain on the Canvas of ManKind**

**By: Emma McRobbie**

**Humanity and the acts of which define it remain the messiest aspect of our world. While we as a society continue our attempts to paint a picture of empathy and kindness, there are crimes, discrimination and hatred that stain the canvas.**

**The fight for social justice and equality has persisted through every stage of evolution. Yet the very definition of social justice remains under debate. Social justice means fairness and equality in regards to quality of life. The most common area of which social justice fights to be served is the legal system. Laws are created for the safety and contentment of the people, and the legal system's job is to enforce these laws. However, discrimination and racism hinder this.**

**One example of this being the Central Park Five who were 5 young teenage boys who were wrongly accused of a heinous crime and spent their formative years behind bars. Their false accusations primarily taking place due to the color of their skin, provoking the ignorant officers on the case to treat their word with skepticism and forcing the boys to admit to a crime they did not commit.**

**Discrimination is sadly a huge factor in life, the very definition of the word being treating someone unfairly or performing acts or speeches against them with mal intent because of race, gender or sexuality. In order to truly maintain social justice in the legal system, we need to view everyone equally regardless of race or culture. In the simplest of terms, equality means treating everyone fairly and with the same respect no matter their appearance or background. This is a fundamental human right. Human rights are the backbones of society. Basic human rights such as freedom of opinion and the right to life are directly dependent on social justice and equality.**

**Therefore as a society, we need to take initiative and fight for social justice to prevent more situations like the Central Park Five case in the future. It is never too late to better ourselves, and fighting against discrimination is a huge step in the right direction.**

# Poverty in the Legal System

Mia Kerr

Imagine a justice system where your bank account balance determines the weight of your rights. Poverty in the legal system refers to significant challenges individuals face while living in poverty when maneuvering through the legal system to pursue fairness. Poverty has an effect in preventing people from having equal access to resources when it comes to exercising their rights when needed. The reality of day to day life of those who struggle with poverty is that their rights are negatively affected. An effect preventing people from having equal access is that people most of the time are choosing to represent themselves due to cost savings. "68% of self-represented defendants retained a lawyer to advise on their justice pathway then pulled away due to lack of finances". This quote taken from page 11 in the ICCLR shows the readers that the defendants would rather self-represent with no knowledge whatsoever than not spend their little to no money on a lawyer that has a broad amount of knowledge. Some people could argue that there are free resources that can help defend instead of people defending themselves. These free resources are not always fully committed and are handling many other pro bono cases. Also there are not many sources that will do it for free and that are known to the public.

Another effect that is hindering individuals from attaining equitable opportunities is plea bargains and reintegration. "Decision-making by accused individuals regarding how to plead (guilty or not) is often conceptualized as a rational process involving a cost-benefit analysis". This quote from page 19 in the ICCLR states that the people involved in a case are willing to spend time in jail then continue to spend money on their case all because they want to stop spending their money or don't have money to spend. Many people are reintroduced into the same level of poverty once their sentences are finished. Some may argue that there are many free programs and resources that will help with getting back on their feet once they get out and will help the people while they are pleading. All of the programs and sources are failing once again at providing information for these people which is causing them to end up in the same situations all over again and causing them to still spend time in jail.

Another effect that is causing people to suffer in the legal system is them not having enough legal knowledge. According to Legal Aid BC's census, many people had no clue what they were doing and had no help when doing so, 43% of the people didn't take action because they "didn't know what to do", 23% had insufficient knowledge of what to do, etc. Some may argue that the people could ask for help and ask questions if they didn't know anything. These people have been let down one to many times that is why they don't want to ask for help and or ask questions.

**Self representation, plea bargaining, reintegration and legal knowledge are all effects that prevent people in poverty from equal access to resources. Poverty indeed hinders individuals' resources equally when exercising their rights, thereby contributing to the continuation of systemic injustices and inequalities in societies. Given the obvious imbalance, small changes in how information can be made available would benefit those in need.**

#### Works Cited

Inc, Massive Media, and Marcella. "Poverty and Access to Justice." ICCLR, 4 Feb. 2022, [icclr.org/2022/02/03/poverty-and-access-to-justice/](https://icclr.org/2022/02/03/poverty-and-access-to-justice/).



A TRUE STORY  
By Guerlyne Mercier

I was screaming, in pain and sweating. I had to push one last time.

Boom!



She finally came out. It was like, I was running a 9 month marathon and finally I crossed the finishing line. My prize, Deymi, my first born. I was excited to meet and greet this precious being, a mini me. My husband and I were blessed with a baby girl. She was perfect. I realized at this moment that I was a mom and life would never be the same for me and my husband. I must admit that the honeymoon stage disappeared as soon as Deymi came home. Feeding, changing diapers, bathing and sleep deprivation was our new reality. We had a great support system, family and friends, who helped in many meaningful ways. Deymi was now 5 months old, so I introduced her to my colleagues at school on a ped day. As a new time mom, you always want to showcase your baby around. She was wearing her best pink outfit. I was chit chatting with Kim, the secretary in a classroom, about life and suddenly who shows up, Shauna, the phys ed teacher. We both acknowledged her presence and greeted her with a smile. It did not take 10 minutes before Shauna opened up her mouth to say something outrageous.

*“Your baby is pretty but you are lucky that she is not that black” .*

Basically she was commenting that her skin complexion was not dark. This statement was like a bomb that hit the floor. I was speechless and I had to contain myself in order not to sound like the angry black woman, which often the media portrays us when we speak with boldness and purpose. We both stopped talking and the silence overwhelmed the room. I believe that Shauna realized that she messed up. At this instant Kim called her out. I did not expect this to happen because I had a preconceived notion about her. She was a beautiful blonde, blue-eyed and wealthy white woman who had it all. I really thought that she would be another bystander. Surprisingly she stood up and called her out.

*“Her statement is racist” .*

Shauna claimed that we misunderstood her, she was trying to explain herself but it made it worse. She sounded unintelligent and clueless. She was convincing nobody. Kim took her to task and schooled her regarding the statement. Shauna walked away quickly, embarrassed and unapologetic.

At this moment, I knew that Kim was a true friend, a sister, an ally. She had my back and I had hers.

Kim turned to me and asked, “Why did you not say something?”

My answer to her was that it should not always fall on my shoulders to educate these ignorant people, the universe will do it. The fact that I only gave birth 5 months ago, the energy that I was left with was to be put on Deymi. It’s called self-preservation. This incident happened 19 years ago yet it feels like it was yesterday.

Yes Kim is still in my life.

This is the message to take away, before you speak think of the consequences of your words. Words have an everlasting effect.

# Social Injustice of Salary

by: William Rose-lefevre



In this image you see a group of small fish

and a group of big fish. The big fish represents large companies' CEOs and the small fish represents the workers. When I feed them the larger fish eats almost all the food and gives the scraps to the smaller fish.

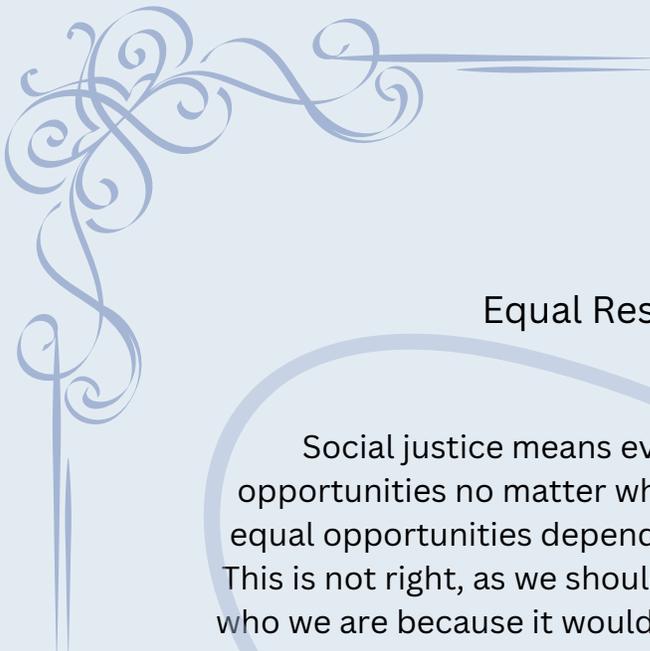
In the real world the owners of these large companies get all the profit and underpay all their employees. This is a large issue in our world as living costs soar and companies and CEOs are making record profits. People get a small increase in pay but it's still not enough. The company corporations have so much money they won't even be able to spend it in a lifetime while their workers are just staying afloat and trying to survive and provide for their families.



## Environmental and Societal Problems

Jacob Reid

For me, as someone who walks to and from school everyday, this is something that I feel I see way too much of. Everywhere I look on the sidewalks and in the grass there is always garbage and litter everywhere, and it's sad to see. These are examples of lazy behavior from the people of our neighborhood and it really goes to show that not all examples of social injustice are right in front of your face. For this one, we have to think a little. The reason why I find this to be very socially unjust is because when you throw your garbage on the ground, it stays there until someone picks it up or worse, an animal eats it. In doing this, you're basically forcing someone else to pick up your trash that you chose to leave there, and there is nothing fair about that. There are people in our community who feel inclined to keep it safe for us humans but also for the animals as well, and so they aren't able to walk by trash on the ground and not pick it up. However, they shouldn't be the ones who end up needing to clean up after the whole neighborhood.



## Equal Respect Equal Opportunity

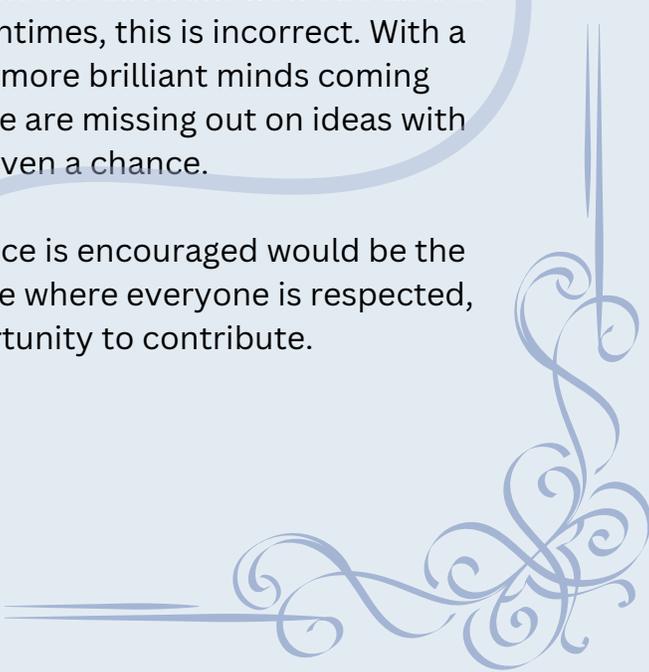
Ava Kang

Social justice means everyone should have access to the same opportunities no matter who they are. Sometimes people are not given equal opportunities depending on their race, gender, religion, or wealth. This is not right, as we should all be given a chance to succeed no matter who we are because it would provide respect for all, and allow everyone a fair opportunity.

Firstly, having social justice provides respect for all. There are people in this world who are not respected by those around them for simple and uncontrollable qualities such as disability, or race. These people are not given the respect they deserve. With social justice, all people can be respected and be recognized for the good they can bring to our society. If everyone had freedom to express their ideas and beliefs, this would provide a society where human rights are also respected. Human rights and social justice are like subjects because they both can provide us equal rights and opportunities.

Secondly, having social justice provides us a fair opportunity for all. As mentioned earlier, people with disabilities, or different races may sometimes be given unfair chances in our society. This is because of discrimination where people think that someone different won't be able to succeed just like the rest of society. Oftentimes, this is incorrect. With a fair opportunity for all, we would have more brilliant minds coming together to make our society better, as we are missing out on ideas with every person who isn't given a chance.

In conclusion, a society where social justice is encouraged would be the start of a better world for all to live in. One where everyone is respected, and everyone is given an opportunity to contribute.



## The Change That is Needed

Jack Tapin

In my opinion, social justice involves the fairness and rights that the entire population in society have the right to. The Central Park Five got in the situation they got in was because they were not treated fairly and weren't allowed nor encouraged to utilize their rights they were authorized to. As we know from The Central Park Five, without social justice, it can cause problems in the legal system like putting the wrong people behind bars and ruining innocent people's lives.

A big reason there wasn't social justice in the time of the jogger case, was due to the discrimination happening against people of color during that time period. Discrimination is when a certain group of a population is treated unfairly compared to the rest. These groups can consist of a certain race, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, etc. Discrimination will also affect the legal system as we know from The Central Park Five's case considering they probably wouldn't have gotten into the situation they got in if it wasn't for the discrimination against African Americans.

Equality is a big aspect of social justice. Equality is the idea that everyone, no matter what, is treated equally. Discrimination is quite the opposite to equality meaning if there was equality, the police of New York probably would've fought harder and made sure they got the right person who actually committed the crime instead of using the kids skin color and age to make them seem guilty as opposed to using actual evidence in the case of the Central Park Five.

Finally, human rights are a big aspect of the justice system, and the kids didn't have the opportunity to use their rights during this case as we saw when they were being interrogated and were forced to confess, with no lawyer nor freedom of speech. The kids said they felt the need to confess to a crime they didn't commit at the fear of their own lives. If the kids were given the opportunity to utilize their rights, the police would've realized that they weren't guilty. Which then wouldn't have ruined their lives and would've punished the actual person responsible.

To conclude, Discrimination was a big reason the kids got into the situation they got into, and wasn't fair for any African American at the time. This case was a good example of why equality is important for the justice system and society so situations like this can be avoided. Human rights are to protect people and avoid things like this case from happening and we saw why they're important in the justice system and social justices considering the kids rights weren't respected and it ended up with them confessing to something they didn't do. What happened to these kids isn't right and the time and things they went through in prison will never be compensated with any amount of money.

# Issues in the legal system

Lauren Wiseman

Does the legal system also have issues of classism as well as racism? Through time people have been misrepresented in court or put in jail even if they're not guilty. Is it because of their class? Yes. Class does have an effect on charges people receive in court.

Class helps in the legal system. Classism is shown when a person living in poverty, and a wealthy person commit the same crime. Most often you won't see them both with the same punishment. This is because the wealthy person will be able to afford a better lawyer and get a less intense sentencing. Wealthy people are shown more mercy than less wealthy people because of their connections which help to get them better court results. According to "National Council of Welfare", in 1995, reports of thousands of low-income Canadians are imprisoned routinely because they are unable to pay fines.

This was because they could not find the right legal representation. The National Council of Welfare also sent out a survey and two-thirds of the respondents said they found the Canadian justice system to be unfair because it gave better treatment to the wealthy and was too harsh toward the poor. However it is still up to the wealthy person to find a reliable lawyer to be represented by who will get them a good sentencing right? This is wrong. Many wealthy people have lawyers jumping at them to help with their case. Such as O.J Simpson's case where Robert Kardashian actually asked to be his lawyer because he felt it would be a good opportunity for his appearance.

The lack of resources in the legal system also plays a part in classism. Many times people living in poverty will need legal aid. Legal aid is a right given to people because of the laws under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This allows everyone access to legal aid. However, since many people need it, there are very long wait times to get a call back from a lawyer in legal aid, causing some people to feel like they can't be represented. In some cases, people ask for legal aid and don't even receive it.

According to National magazine, 71% of the 5,4 million people who answered their survey, are not getting the professional legal assistance they need from their lawyers.

It is classist because you're placing peoples problems on a list from most severe to least, but what if the idea of severe is different to everyone? It's not fair to those who might need representation right away. Legal aid has limited resources, so it helps the most urgent cases first. The problem is that there aren't enough resources. However, how can one person choose what rank people's problems are on? Everyone deserves their rights and for people to try their hardest to help those in need.

Many people, especially those living in poverty who feel they cannot be represented properly, are scared to present a case because they feel that they have no chance of winning. Nearly 1 in every 4 women have experienced domestic violence at the hands of their partner and about ½ of those cases go unreported because the victim feels that they won't be able to get representation because of their class. These victims feel there's nothing the legal system can do for them and they'll just have to go back home to an angrier partner after they lose the case. This proves that classism doesn't just mean amount of money but also gender. If a man comes forward to say he's being abused people may view him as a man who can't take a punch or that he's weak, and if a woman comes forward saying they're being abused, they could be viewed as an instigator and that they deserved it. Classism should not depend on gender and shouldn't even be a thing that is brought into the courts.

Classism does affect the legal system with wealthy people getting better treatment in court, while people in poverty are struggling. Legal aid is unreliable due to its long periods of not hearing back from lawyers and limited resources leaving people struggling. The unequal treatment in the legal system leaves people scared to come forward about their domestic violence stories because they feel that no one will help them. The legal system should have equal rights for everyone and shouldn't depend on their class. So yes, a person's class does influence what happens to them in the legal system. So now it is up to us to demand a fair system in hopes that everyone will get better and more fair treatment.

#### Works Cited

Justice and the Poor - Oaith, [www.oaith.ca/assets/files/Publications/justice\\_andthe\\_poor.pdf](http://www.oaith.ca/assets/files/Publications/justice_andthe_poor.pdf). Accessed 12 Dec. 2024.

Government of Canada, Department of Justice. "Introduction." – Legal Aid in Canada 2022–2023, 12 Aug. 2024, [justice.canada.ca/eng/rp-pr/jr/aid-aide/2023/p1.html#:~:text=Legal%20aid%20is%20one%20component,of%20the%20law%20\(section%2015\)](http://justice.canada.ca/eng/rp-pr/jr/aid-aide/2023/p1.html#:~:text=Legal%20aid%20is%20one%20component,of%20the%20law%20(section%2015)).

Sarah A. Sutherland 4 Apr. 2023, et al. "Are 80% of Legal Problems in Canada Really Going Unmet?" CBA National Magazine, 4 Apr. 2023, [nationalmagazine.ca/en-ca/articles/law/access-to-justice/2023/are-80-of-legal-problems-in-canada-really-going-unmet](http://nationalmagazine.ca/en-ca/articles/law/access-to-justice/2023/are-80-of-legal-problems-in-canada-really-going-unmet).  
Admin, Client. "Stigma and Domestic Violence." CAWC, 27 Feb. 2023, [www.cawc.org/news/stigma-and-domestic-violence/](http://www.cawc.org/news/stigma-and-domestic-violence/).

# The Effect of Poverty

Vérona Dupré

Many human beings in our world experience poverty or are in that situation at the moment. Poverty does have an effect in preventing people from having equal access to many resources when it comes to exercising their rights when needed, such as a good education, housing crisis or medical help, especially in the United States of America. Therefore, there must be changes made in the legal system to adapt to this crisis. People who live in poverty have a difficult time achieving certain things or getting the resources they need due to their low incomes and social status, troubles in maintaining their health, hunger, and education.

First and foremost, people do experience difficulty in accessing certain resources when being poor, including a good education system. For most people with low income, it's harder for them to make their children go to school, since they might have to work to help pay the bill or they might not have enough money to pay for the school supplies, or the classes might be too overcrowded. Therefore, they should be given money to have good access to high quality education since education is a wonderful way to get out of poverty. "Education is often referred to as the great equalizer: "It can open the door to jobs, resources, and skills that help a person not only survive, but thrive", How does education affect poverty? It can help end it. A good education also supports developing social, emotional, and communicational skills and it will make them gain knowledge and skills which will later lead them to a bright future. Although, some people think that education such as universities should not pay for the poor because they will be adults by then and will be able to make their own decisions with their life. Some people just can't afford it, which isn't always their fault, they either have to succeed in getting a scholarship or simply not continuing in their studies, which isn't the best idea since having a good education is mostly the way out of poverty.

Secondly, poverty has a huge effect on having access to health and medical care from doctors. The most expensive medical system in the world is that of the United States of America. Many poor people avoid medical care due to its expensive cost. Sometimes, they don't have insurance or the money to pay for it, leading to them being unhealthy or having medical problems. These medical issues can end up being fatal. For example, "the 2019 National Health Interview Survey found that a number of people either delayed or did not receive medical care (8.5%), dental care (14.7%), or prescription medication (5.6%) due to cost", Limited Access: Poverty and Barriers to Accessible Health Care - National Health Council. There should be changes done to adapt to their issues. Opponents say that healthcare is important to be paid for since it shows how people feel about the service and how it pays for their equipment and workers. However, shouldn't the priority of helping people be to help them get better instead of them refusing and avoiding medical care due to its expensive cost? Instead make it free and pay higher taxes, especially for the ones who already have difficulty affording certain things and it will end the suffering most individuals have.

Finally, human beings with low incomes moreover have difficulty with the housing crisis. It doesn't help that with the excessive amount of immigrants coming from everywhere around the world to live in Canada and the United States of America, there are even less houses available for the ones needed. Instead of helping the ones in need in their country's, the government invites more people, which causes housing affordability to increase which isn't much help for the ones who are suffering. For instance, "According to the 2016 Census, people in poverty were more than three times more likely to live in households that spent more than 30% of their total household income on shelter", Housing experiences in Canada: People in poverty. However, some researchers argue that immigrants contribute to the economy. Yet it should be best for the immigrants coming to live in countries to take a break so the country itself can solve their problems in the housing crisis for the ones in need.

In conclusion, there should be improvements made so the ones with low incomes can have better access to resources and better rights such as medical care, education, housing crisis, etc. Some critics explained that it is their fault that they are in that situation, however even if it is, they should be helped instead of ignored and left to suffer alone.

#### Work Cited

- "7 Reasons Why Millions of Children Are Out of School." Plan Canada Site, [plancanada.ca/en-ca/stories/7-reasons-why-millions-of-children-are-out-of-school#:~:text=Firstly%2C%20poor%20communities%20may%20not,or%20even%20getting%20to%20school.](http://plancanada.ca/en-ca/stories/7-reasons-why-millions-of-children-are-out-of-school#:~:text=Firstly%2C%20poor%20communities%20may%20not,or%20even%20getting%20to%20school.)
- How Does Education Affect Poverty? It Can Help End It. 27 Aug. 2020, [concernusa.org/news/how-does-education-affect-poverty. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/46-28-0001/2021001/article/00017-eng.htm.](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/46-28-0001/2021001/article/00017-eng.htm)
- [https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/surveys/2023/oct/paying-for-it-costs-debt-americans-sicker-poorer-2023-affordability-survey.](https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/surveys/2023/oct/paying-for-it-costs-debt-americans-sicker-poorer-2023-affordability-survey)
- Moore, Breshay. "Limited Access: Poverty and Barriers to Accessible Health Care - National Health Council." National Health Council, 8 May 2024, [nationalhealthcouncil.org/blog/limited-access-poverty-and-barriers-to-accessible-health-care/#:~:text=Poverty%20plays%20a%20vital%20role,ability%20to%20attend%20medical%20appointments.](https://nationalhealthcouncil.org/blog/limited-access-poverty-and-barriers-to-accessible-health-care/#:~:text=Poverty%20plays%20a%20vital%20role,ability%20to%20attend%20medical%20appointments.)
- Poverty as a Matter of Justice | the Age of Human Rights Journal. [revistaselectronicas.ujaen.es/index.php/TAHRJ/article/view/7327/7622#:~:text=Thus%2C%20although%20there%20are%20many,because%20prevent%20individuals%20from%20satisfying.](http://revistaselectronicas.ujaen.es/index.php/TAHRJ/article/view/7327/7622#:~:text=Thus%2C%20although%20there%20are%20many,because%20prevent%20individuals%20from%20satisfying.)

# RACISM AS A SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUE

By: Hailey Coveduck



In the photo above, it shows one white hand and one hand of colour.

This represents a social justice issue because it represents how discrimination was and still is present in today's day and age. How people of colour are treated unfairly by other races. This is implied to other races too, everyone faces racism, whether white, black, Asian, Mexican, or Indigenous, everyone faces it. In this photo it isn't just a white and black hand, it is also a white man's hand and a woman of colour's hand. This is also a form of gender social justice issues. This image represents, as well, how women can be treated unfairly to men. They can be belittled and looked down on by others, particularly men.



# Why High School Education Should Inform Us Of our Legal Rights

Serena Zapata

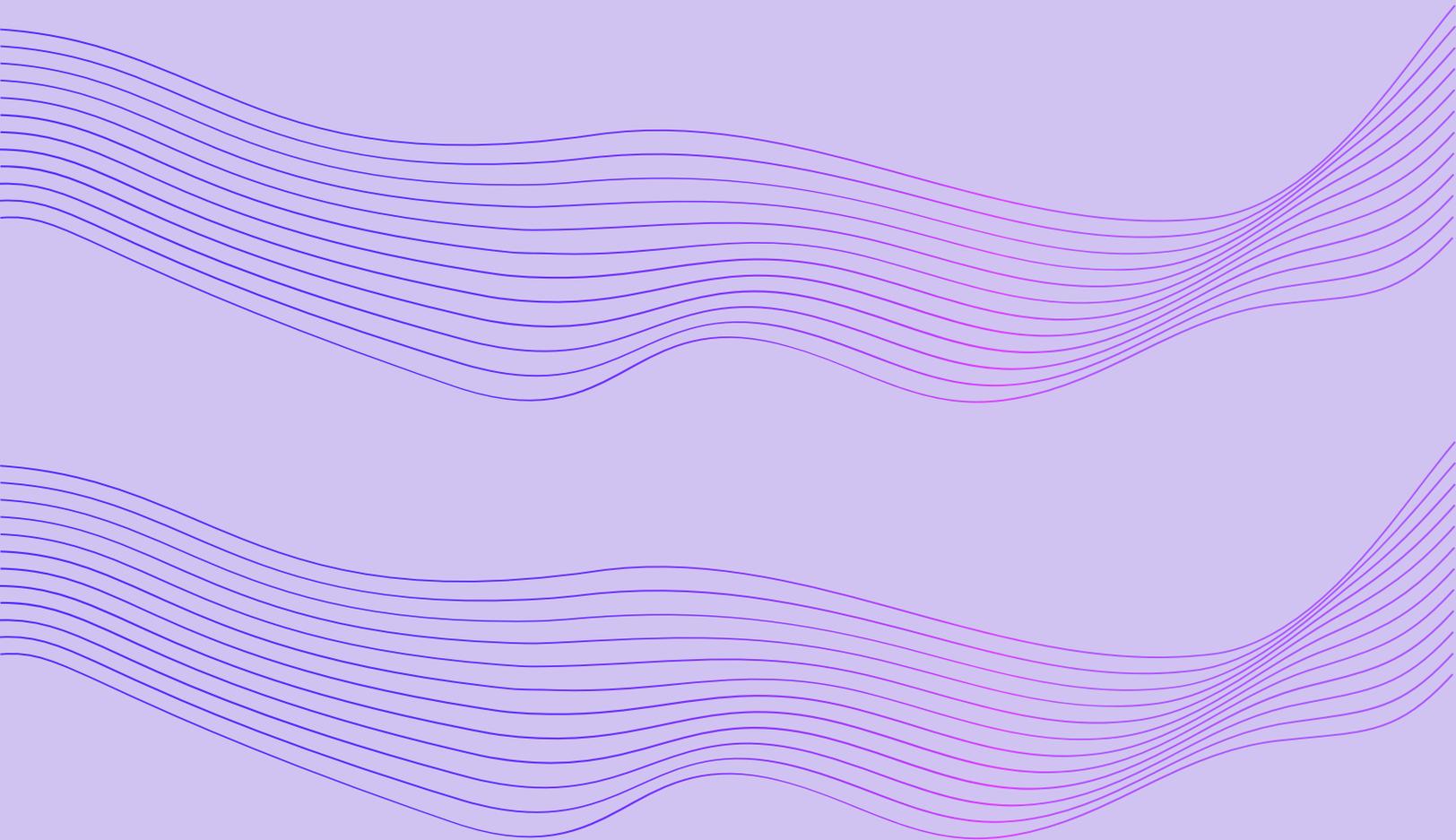
Although students today are not faced with problems with the law as frequently as they may have been a few decades ago, it is still important that they know our rights. Were some students to end up in trouble with the law, knowing what they do and do not have right to is crucial for our safety, security and well-being. Although it may be difficult to include the lesson into the regular curriculum, students should still be accurately educated of their rights while they are in school so that in the event that they are faced with an issue in regards to the law they know how to protect themselves and understand the consequences of their actions.

First of all, students should know their rights and know how to protect themselves rather than have to have someone understand things for them. If they were to end up in a situation where they needed to make a decision concerning the law, if they do not know what they have a right to, they could be easily manipulated. For example, when the Central Park Five were questioned by the police about what happened in the park that night they were told that all they had to do to get out of the hours of questioning was admit that they committed a crime they did not commit. And because they did not know that they had the right to stay silent or that they could ask for a lawyer, they were eventually sent to prison. Some could argue that their parents should know how to handle these situations for them but students should understand that they will have to deal with these situations on their own eventually.

Moreover, understanding the consequences to our actions can have a massive effect on how we react in certain situations and determine the choices we make. In the book *Punching the Air* Amal talks repeatedly about how much he regrets going to the park that night and how much he regrets having thrown the first punch, but he understands that those actions led to him being in prison. Because he was in such shock when he was taken in, he did not have time to consider the rights he had concerning what he had done because he had not yet considered the consequences, he was just trying to get away. Some could say that it wouldn't matter if Amal knew his right in that situation he still would have been arrested, but if he had known them well enough he would have known not to lie to the cops by telling them he had beat up that boy.

Furthermore, some people can make the argument that it would be too much work and too difficult to add a lesson on a student's rights to a regular school course because it would mean having to re-arrange the curriculum or remove certain lessons. I do not believe that this is really a valid argument because students have option classes every day of the cycle and any one of those days could be replaced. If schools really cared to make students aware of their rights, they could give students the option to take the class during a period when they would have their option class. Although it would give less time to practice whatever their option

class is, it would all be worth it to help students stay safe and informed. In conclusion, it is very important that all students understand their rights so that they know they can't just get away with anything and so they can keep themselves safe in the event that they commit a crime or are accused of one. This is why I believe that our legal rights should be taught to us while we are in school, to make sure we become aware while we are still relatively young. A program that teaches students about their rights could lead to a society where more individuals are better educated and are therefore more able to assert their rights and prevent legal challenges from escalating.





### **How do we create change in the world?**

**By: Eva Martinez**

We can change it by standing up for what's right,  
You can change it by being kind every day,  
I can change it by helping others find their way,  
We can make the world better with love and care,  
You can start today, with one small act to share.

### **How do we create change in the world**

**By Mia Jabbour**

We can change it by, helping others one by one,  
We can change it by spreading kindness like how the sun spreads its warmth.  
I can change the world by standing up when things are wrong,  
We can create the world where we all belong,  
You can shine like a star, unique and strong.

### **To change the world.**

**By Heidi Mitchell**

Our world always has room for improvement, and we can change it.  
You can change by helping the environment.  
I change it by picking up trash.  
We can all work together to make this world a better place.  
Wouldn't you like to reap the benefits of a world changed for the better?

### **Change begins with a thought small, and true,**

A spark of kindness in everything that we do,  
Through love and kindness, we find our way,  
One voice, one step, will calm the pain,  
Together, we rise to make the world new.

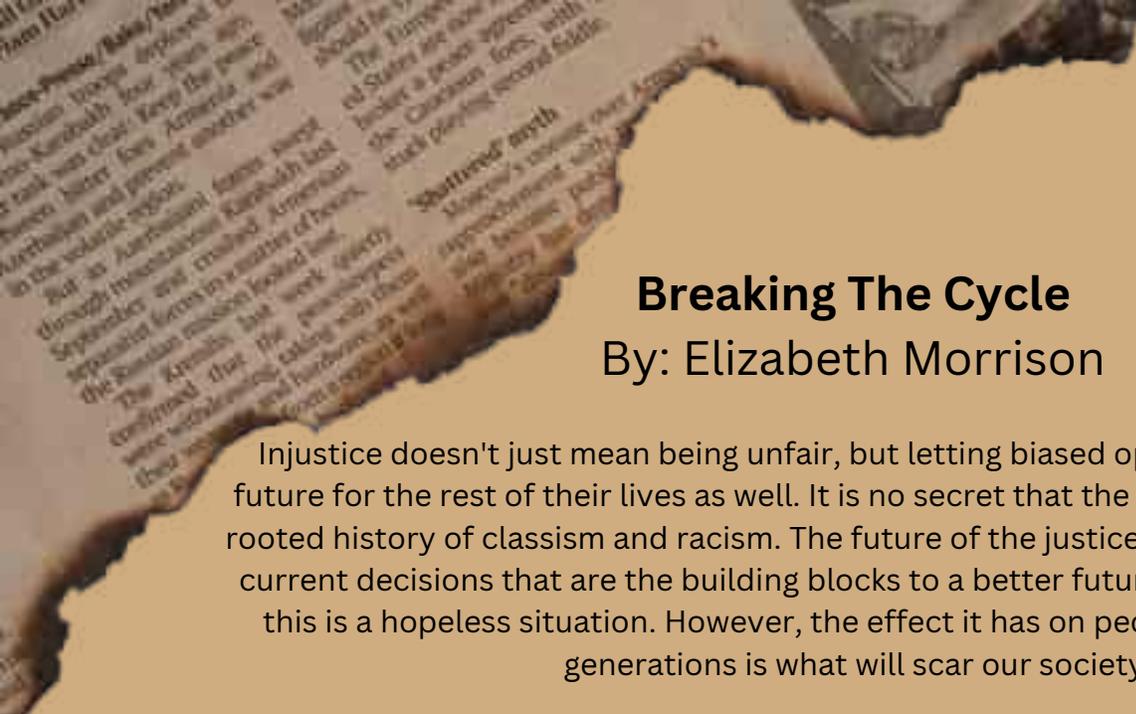
**By Aidan Lemieux**

### **You can change the world by eliminating pollution, the leaves are not threats, but what causes them to fall..**

Might be harmful  
If you see not a leaf,  
Sitting on the ground  
Something else, shiny or plastic  
If you Pick it up,  
Throw it out  
Then we can turn this world around  
Back in time..  
When pollution wasn't a threat

**By Lily Brown**





## Breaking The Cycle

By: Elizabeth Morrison

Injustice doesn't just mean being unfair, but letting biased opinions affect people's future for the rest of their lives as well. It is no secret that the legal system has a deep rooted history of classism and racism. The future of the justice system depends on our current decisions that are the building blocks to a better future. Some might say that this is a hopeless situation. However, the effect it has on people's lives and future generations is what will scar our society.

First, the issue of classism and racism keeps pursuing because of biased opinions that are outdated and not relevant. These opinions are applied to real life situations and are passed on as valid. These opinions appear in situations a lot with the law. The use of racism and classism is not something new in the legal system, it has been happening for decades now. This problem is so severe that it has been normalized by the legal systems almost entirely who often refuse to admit it. It is truly proven that a white higher class person can commit the same offence as a black lower class person and be treated properly. Black people are treated like animals when in legal trouble with the use of vulgar words, tone, the amount of time they are questioned, sometimes even going over and beyond to get every drop of information out of them simply for their skin. Oftentimes it wont even matter how severe the offence was. If it's getting pulled over for no reason or a murder, in the eyes of the law the lower class people of colour are responsible. We can see this in *Punching the Air* by Ibi Zoboi and Yusef Salaam. Hearing the way these black teenagers were talked down on in interviews and in court, tried as adults and when the DNA did not match any of them, they were still easy targets who were kept as the main suspects. Our society doesn't take into consideration the effect that accusations and publications of false information can have on people's future. The opportunities that are taken away from people of lower class or people of colour because of the stereotypes that sum them up, the low expectations people have and the view society has engraved in our minds: they are scummy, worthless, dirty and not contributing to our society in any way shape or form. We hear stories often about a person of colour being pulled over for no reason and being told to step out of the car or put their hands behind their back because they are seen as a "threat". These situations may make it feel like it's hopeless and there will never be light at the end of the tunnel. The segregation that still happens even in a society that we call "free" is appalling. We as a society must rework to be more inclusive because it is vital to ensure equal rights for all, properly giving us justice.

In this world, we need to come together to be inclusive and defeat the classism and racism that is expressed in our legal system. The future of us and others depends on it.

When people unite to acknowledge the issue of the biased legal system. It can help reduce or even eradicate the issue. Because of the biased and unfair opinions people of lower class and people of colour face everyday, we let true criminals walk the streets because it is just easier to frame a vulnerable community. As a society, people unite and fight this system that allows this racial and classical injustice. This unfair treatment is never deserved. The black rights movements have turned the attention on them to address such a horrific issue. The Black Lives Matter protests pushed to limits to ensure change and a chance to reform. This proves that collected actions taking place can lead to change. Not only is racism a huge protest subject but classism as well. The University of Edinburgh has been going through allegations or classism for asking people who are less fortunate what they are wearing. They have also been shown that their students seem to be anti-Scottish. "However, one person commented on the video saying there was, "not a scot in sight", to which the Edinburgh Tab responded, "as god intended" was stated on Mancunion.com

The students were later told to stop being "snobs". Classism and racism are such deep-rooted problems that it would take everything in the world to end it. Some people argue that there is not enough time or space to ever solve these problems or even reduce them. However, it has been proven in history multiple times that groups of people who put in effort with shared goals can lead to progress. By concentrating and prioritizing equal treatment within the legal system, we can have a future with justice.

In conclusion, injustice with law regarding classism and racism has been deeply rooted in our society for centuries. These biased opinions influence important decisions during legal issues. From animal-like treatment towards black individuals to stolen opportunities from the lower class we can tell these problems are enriched in our everyday lives. However, as discussed, when people come together there can be hope. Movements and protest are proof that a collective effort with the right mentality can make a difference. Although these efforts may not make an immediate change, good things come with time. The protest coming from passionate people who want a change takes time but has been proven to have a positive change. These collective efforts give the opportunities back to the less fortunate and people of color. It gives the hope of a better future. A world where we can have justice in the legal system that can thrive is what we need to demand. By acknowledging the problem at hand, society can focus on fairness and equality to ensure injustice no longer drives our important decisions. Our goal is to live in an equal world that reflects on justice within the legal system to help keep our world safe and fair.



**We can change it by being fair and supporting each other  
no matter person or race**

You can change it by being more available  
to who those that need your help  
I can change it by letting others know  
it's okay to be different  
We can be equal to everyone  
We can continue to use our knowledge and help those who want our help  
By Emily Lamb

**How do we create change in the world?**

They need to get their priorities straight.  
We need to work together more.  
You need to take the initiative.  
We can fix this.  
I can help.  
By Samuel Bates

**We change the world with every kind deed,**

A small act of love is all we need,  
Lend a hand, speak with care,  
In unity, we'll all repair,  
The world transformed with the love we share.  
by Darcy Robillard:

**How do we create change in the world?**

By Shawn Cariglia  
We can change the world by recycling so we don't make global warming worse.  
You can change the world by helping each other.  
I can change the world by spreading awareness about not polluting.  
We can change the world by stopping littering in the streets.  
You can pick up after each other to save the planet.

**We can change for the better**

Everyone just has to put in a bit of effort to make the world better  
The climate is changing  
We can help to fix it but no one is engaging  
Just think if we were polluting the world it could be safer  
Try and get the community involved, ask your neighbour  
We can do our best but you have to try  
We all need to come together and comply  
By Ryan Gasoi



# Women's Rights: The Global Fight Against Oppression

Emma Sky Cartile

According to The World Economic Forum, only fourteen countries out of the 190 assessed have achieved full gender equality. Across the globe, the rights of women are being overlooked and undermined, threatening fundamental freedoms. Far too many girls cannot go to school, are having their childhood stripped away from them through child marriage, and experience gender-based violence. On a global scale, we are nowhere near complete gender equality. Although significant improvements have been made, women still face cruelty and discrimination, and are sometimes even treated as second-class citizens. It is unacceptable and disgraceful.

Education is a fundamental human right. An estimated 130 million girls of ages six to seventeen are not in school. In Afghanistan alone, seventy-five percent of girls are not receiving an education. In a letter written to Ms. Magazine this past August, Suraya Mohammadi, an Afghan girl wrote, "We have been deprived of going to school and continuing our education, from working and having a bright future. Every day, I look out of the small window of my house and wish that I could go back to school, open my books again and dream of becoming a doctor, an engineer or a lawyer. But sadly, these dreams have now turned into a nightmare we experience while awake". (Suraya Mohammadi, Ms. Magazine)

This letter speaks for itself in demonstrating the experience of many girls in Afghanistan. Not only are girls being deprived of an education, but they are having a future that could have been taken away from them. While Afghanistan is the only country that explicitly bans girls' secondary education, in other countries where education is not mandatory, many girls do not complete their studies. In some cultures, it is believed that a girl's place is in the home, and parents do not see the advantage of giving their daughters an education. However, when we do not educate an entire gender, we lose half of a population's great doctors, lawyers, philosophers, and thinkers. This situation is worse in developing countries, where there is more poverty and low-income households. In these areas, many girls do not receive an adequate education, in favour of doing housework or being forced into an arranged marriage.

According to Girls Not Brides, an organization that advocates against child marriage, twenty-three girls are married every minute. That's approximately one every two and a half seconds. When we ensure that each girl receives an adequate education, child marriage rates significantly decline, since girls are most likely to be taken out of school in preparation for marriage or directly after.

In poverty-stricken countries, this situation is particularly worse, due to families marrying off their daughters to reduce the financial burden they have on their family. Alternatively, their marriage might even serve the purpose of settling a debt. In countries including Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Guinea, Mali, Niger, and South Sudan, 50% of women ages 20-24 were first married before they were 18. These marriages are usually forced, and the child rarely has a say. In these circumstances, young girls often face traumatic abuse, and early pregnancy and childbirth. According to the National Library of Medicine, the leading cause of death for girls aged 15-19 in developing countries is childbirth and pregnancy related complications. This is largely due to girls being thrust into adulthood before their time, through marriage. The practice of child marriage and its tremendous consequences is cruel and disgusting, and often results in violence.

While it is important to note that not only women experience gender based violence, women are disproportionately affected, making this not only a human rights issue, but a women's rights issue. The World Health Organization estimates that one in three women have been subjected to physical and/or sexual intimate partner or non-partner violence in their lifetime. In addition, a study done by Statistics Canada in 2021 found that women are five times more likely to be a victim of self-reported sexual assault than men, revealing how gender-based sexual violence disproportionately affects women. Furthermore, when a woman is sexually assaulted, people will often say that "she was asking for it," blaming the violent and unjustifiable actions of the perpetrator on her. By its definition, rape is, "unlawful sexual activity and usually sexual intercourse carried out forcibly or under threat of injury against a person's will" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). It is not consensual, so how could she be "asking for it"? This saying not only minimizes the trauma of the victim, but is rooted in misogynistic and harmful beliefs.

To conclude, restricted access to education, child marriage, and gender-based violence are three of many obstacles women face today. Far too many girls are not in school, and are having their childhoods taken away from them. In addition, gender-based violence is normalized and accepted in many cultures. No one should experience such things. As a global society, we have a long way to go. It is essential that we spread awareness of the reality many women experience, and support causes that aim to improve the situations of women across the world.

## Works Cited

- "244m Children Won't Start The New School Year (UNESCO)." UNESCO.Org, 20 Apr. 2023, [www.unesco.org/en/articles/244m-children-wont-start-new-school-year-unesco?hub=701](http://www.unesco.org/en/articles/244m-children-wont-start-new-school-year-unesco?hub=701).
- "Afghanistan." Malala Fund, [malala.org/countries/afghanistan](http://malala.org/countries/afghanistan). Accessed 6 Dec. 2024.
- "Child and Forced Marriage, Including in Humanitarian Settings | Ohchr." United Nations of Human Rights, 25 Mar. 2024, [www.ohchr.org/en/women/child-and-forced-marriage-including-humanitarian-settings](http://www.ohchr.org/en/women/child-and-forced-marriage-including-humanitarian-settings).
- "Child Marriage and Education." Girls Not Brides, [www.girlsnotbrides.org/learning-resources/child-marriage-and-education/](http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/learning-resources/child-marriage-and-education/). Accessed 5 Dec. 2024.
- Corkery, Neil A. "The Fight For Girls' Education." Sudan Relief Fund, 3 May 2022, [sdnrlf.com/campaigns/the-fight-for-girls-education/](http://sdnrlf.com/campaigns/the-fight-for-girls-education/).
- Cotter, Adam. "Criminal Victimization in Canada, 2019." Government of Canada, Statistics Canada, Government of Canada, Statistics Canada, 25 Aug. 2021, [www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2021001/article/00014-eng.htm](http://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2021001/article/00014-eng.htm).
- "If You Defend Human Rights, You Defend Women's Rights." Amnesty International, 20 June 2024, [www.amnesty.org/en/what-we-do/discrimination/womens-rights/#:~:text=These%20include%20the%20right%20to,basis%20of%20sex%20and%20gender](http://www.amnesty.org/en/what-we-do/discrimination/womens-rights/#:~:text=These%20include%20the%20right%20to,basis%20of%20sex%20and%20gender).
- Mohammadi, Suraya, and Sima Samar. "'We Have No Rights': An Open Letter From an Afghan Girl Living in Fear." Ms. Magazine, 15 Aug. 2024, [msmagazine.com/2024/08/15/afghanistan-women-girls-taliban-takeover-education/](http://msmagazine.com/2024/08/15/afghanistan-women-girls-taliban-takeover-education/).
- "Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The Gender Snapshot 2024." UN Women, 2024, <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-09/progress-on-the-sustainable-development-goals-the-gender-snapshot-2024-en.pdf>. Accessed 6 Dec. 2024.
- "Rape Definition & Meaning." Merriam-Webster, Merriam-Webster, [www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/rape#:~:text=of%20%20noun-,%3A%20unlawful%20sexual%20activity%20and%20usually%20sexual%20intercourse%20carried%20out%20forcibly,unconsciousness%2C%20or%20deception%20see%20also](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/rape#:~:text=of%20%20noun-,%3A%20unlawful%20sexual%20activity%20and%20usually%20sexual%20intercourse%20carried%20out%20forcibly,unconsciousness%2C%20or%20deception%20see%20also). Accessed 10 Dec. 2024.
- "Sexual Assault & Harassment: Violence Prevention." Canadian Women's Foundation, 16 Aug. 2024, [canadianwomen.org/the-facts/sexual-assault-harassment/](http://canadianwomen.org/the-facts/sexual-assault-harassment/).
- Stone, Tanya Lee. *Girl Rising: Changing The World One Girl at a Time*. Random House Children's Books, 2016.
- UNESCO. "Afghanistan: 1.4 Million Girls Still Banned From School By De Facto Authorities." UNESCO.Org, 15 Aug. 2024, [www.unesco.org/en/articles/afghanistan-14-million-girls-still-banned-school-de-facto-authorities](http://www.unesco.org/en/articles/afghanistan-14-million-girls-still-banned-school-de-facto-authorities).
- UNHCR. "Gender-Based Violence." UNHCR, [www.unhcr.org/what-we-do/protect-human-rights/protection/gender-based-violence](http://www.unhcr.org/what-we-do/protect-human-rights/protection/gender-based-violence). Accessed 7 Dec. 2024.
- "Violence Against Women." World Health Organization, World Health Organization, 25 Mar. 2024, [www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women](http://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women).
- "Why Girls Around The World Are Still Denied an Equal Chance of Education." Theirworld, 1 Dec. 2022, [theirworld.org/news/why-girls-are-still-denied-equal-chance-of-education/](http://theirworld.org/news/why-girls-are-still-denied-equal-chance-of-education/).
- "'Patriarchy Is Regaining Ground', Secretary-General Warns, While Women's, Girls' Rights Face Unprecedented Threat, as Commission Opens 2024 Session | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases." United Nations, United Nations, 11 Mar. 2024, [press.un.org/en/2024/wom2231.doc.htm](http://press.un.org/en/2024/wom2231.doc.htm).



### **How do we create change in the world**

We can change it by doing something simple.  
Standing up for someone when they aren't heard.  
Donate a bit of money to the homeless.  
Help a baby bird back to their nest.  
Changing the world doesn't always have to be something big. Being a kind person can make Someone's day and the world a better and happier place.  
By Brooke Vathis

### **A single spark can light the sky**

Actions can still defy  
With steady hands and people that dare  
We can all build the world fair and square  
Change only begins when we all care  
By Xavier

### **How do we create change in the world?**

By Colton  
You can create change in the world by being like a parrot. Parrots tend to be loud and noticeable. Parrots usually only get something they want by being extremely loud and noticeable. You can create change in the world by being as loud as a parrot for people to notice you. You should be similar or louder than a parrot.

### **How do we create change in the world?**

By Gia  
We can change it by planting hope like seeds in the earth.  
You can change by lifting voices like the rising sun.  
I change it by turning kindness into ripples on the sea.  
We can spark a fire that warms, not burns.  
You can be the wave that shapes the shore.

### **To change the world, just start with a smile,**

Lift someone up, go that extra mile.  
Speak kind words, no matter how small,  
Reach out a hand when others fall.  
Together, we can all make it worthwhile  
By Jad



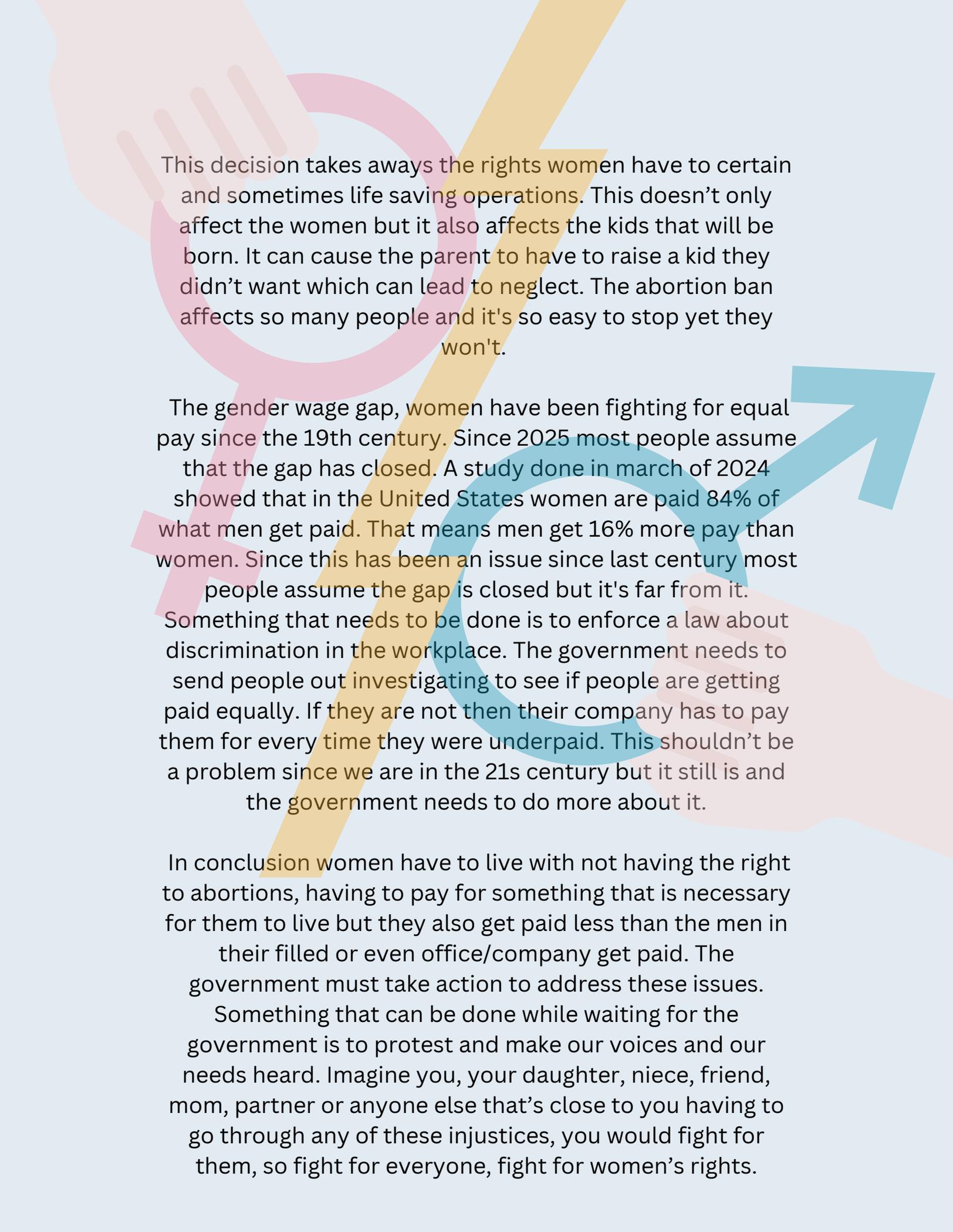
# Sexism in Our Society

Elizabeth Ferriera

Our world is filled with unjust circumstances and inequalities, but one of the worst is towards women. They have to pay for period products every month, they are often denied access to abortions even if their life depends on it and they still get paid less than men. Women have been treated as less than equals for ages and it's time to find a solution and end these injustices.

Girls and women are required to pay for something that is necessary for their health and well-being. The average amount of money a girl spends annually on period products alone is \$64.92, before tax and over their whole life they will spend around \$2402.04. While this may not sound like much to some, for those living paycheck to paycheck or in poverty, every dollar is critical for food and housing. Period products are already free in Scotland so why can't they make them free in Canada. It would help so many people and 65 % of the Canadian government already thinks menstrual products should be subsidized. If the majority supports it, why hasn't action been taken yet?

Abortions were legalized by the supreme court in 1973. Then, in 2022 abortions became illegal in 41 out of the 50 states. Because of that, even medically needed abortions are so hard to get approved that the maternal death rate in states where abortion is illegal is up over 24%. The easiest solution to lower this rate would be to legalize abortions again. But sadly that's very unlikely to happen. Men face no risk when it comes to conceiving a child, yet decisions about women's reproductive rights are still largely made by men.



This decision takes away the rights women have to certain and sometimes life saving operations. This doesn't only affect the women but it also affects the kids that will be born. It can cause the parent to have to raise a kid they didn't want which can lead to neglect. The abortion ban affects so many people and it's so easy to stop yet they won't.

The gender wage gap, women have been fighting for equal pay since the 19th century. Since 2025 most people assume that the gap has closed. A study done in march of 2024 showed that in the United States women are paid 84% of what men get paid. That means men get 16% more pay than women. Since this has been an issue since last century most people assume the gap is closed but it's far from it.

Something that needs to be done is to enforce a law about discrimination in the workplace. The government needs to send people out investigating to see if people are getting paid equally. If they are not then their company has to pay them for every time they were underpaid. This shouldn't be a problem since we are in the 21s century but it still is and the government needs to do more about it.

In conclusion women have to live with not having the right to abortions, having to pay for something that is necessary for them to live but they also get paid less than the men in their filled or even office/company get paid. The government must take action to address these issues.

Something that can be done while waiting for the government is to protest and make our voices and our needs heard. Imagine you, your daughter, niece, friend, mom, partner or anyone else that's close to you having to go through any of these injustices, you would fight for them, so fight for everyone, fight for women's rights.

## **The Accuracy of Crime Statistics in Regards to Minorities**

### **Sophia Kyriakatos**

Whether it was through TV, books, stories, the internet, or the news, the general public has been taught the most common traits of a criminal. However, the accuracy of these teachings has recently been put into question. A recent re-examination of crime statistics has uncovered some flaws that may have significantly altered our perception of what the average criminal looks like. This has led to the role of minorities and underprivileged individuals being overplayed, and the role of privileged people getting overlooked.

The most important factor to consider when collecting data on the average criminal, is the difference between all criminals and captured criminals. One of the main reasons crime statistics are not accurate is because of the way they calculate data. The current data available is based on convictions or arrests. While that is the most logical way to go about it, it produces biased and incomplete data, as there is a significantly sized population of criminals, those who have evaded arrest, that are not included. One of the most prominent sources of this inaccuracy is police discretion. Police discretion is the decisions officers make in regard to the crime at hand. Who they decide to approach, who they arrest, who they let off with a warning, who they give a ticket to, and so on. Unfortunately, many police officers have personal biases that alter the way they interact with potential criminals. Self-reports from police officers have confirmed this. Police officers are more likely to arrest someone who is poor, or looks disheveled. Inversely, police are more likely to pardon or simply warn those who seem well put together or who 'don't look the type'. Assuming that everyone who gets arrested is guilty, that means a lot more poor criminals are getting arrested than well-off criminals. Along the same vein, that could mean a lot more black criminals getting arrested than white, depending on the officer. Once the already biased arrests have been taken into consideration, they pass on to the next reason statistics are inaccurate: the paywall.

The next way crime is measured is by convictions. Unfortunately, these are even less accurate because of the costs associated with evading prison. You have bail, lawyers, and attire. Someone who is well off will have no problem paying for bail, hiring a lawyer, or making sure they look presentable in front of the judge or jury. However, someone who can't afford these luxuries is much more likely to be found guilty.

Once again, the bias of the judge and jury must be taken into consideration; someone who cannot afford to buy a suit is going to seem more likely to commit a crime because they look like a stereotypical delinquent. On top of that, as it is with police officers, there may be prejudice against other minorities present.

Another reason crime statistics are inaccurate is because of the lack of context. For example, poorer neighborhoods have higher rates of crime. Is this because poor people are more likely to be criminals? One might imagine so, but, in reality, the fact that more crimes are committed in poorer areas is most commonly attributed to the increased population density. The increased population density means that, quite simply, there are more criminals. For example, if 1 in 10 people are criminals, there would be more criminals in a poor area with 60 people than in a rich area with 30 people, but to know that requires context. It is the same thing with Black and Latino people. According to statistics, Black and Latino people are more likely to commit crimes. However, once again, there is a lack of context as Black and Latino people are more likely to live in densely populated areas.

People have used the arrests in areas predominantly inhabited by Black and/or Latino people as a sign that Black people are more likely to commit crime. It is also a fact that poor people are more likely to live in the cities and rich, predominately white, people make up the majority of the people in the suburbs. The population of the suburbs is significantly less dense than their urban counterparts, which means fewer criminals. On top of cities having a more dense population, cities also have more commercial areas mixed in with residential areas. This is significant because it creates many more opportunities, as people are more likely to commit crimes near where they live. Therefore, a robber will have many more opportunities in the city than in the suburbs.

While these things sound true, can the statistics really be that far off? They absolutely can be. Ninety percent of Americans have committed a crime that they could have been sentenced to jail or prison for. For context, 90% of the United States population in 2024 is about 303 539 000 people. Are all 303 million people poor? Are all 303 million people of color? Or Latino? 90% is not a minority, and cannot be made up of only minorities.

On top of all that, the majority of these studies only study street crime, they don't even mention white-collar crime. White-collar crimes are crimes like fraud, tax evasion, or money laundering. These crimes are committed by privileged, majoritarly white people, as they are the only ones with the infrastructure to commit these crimes. If white-collar crimes were considered they would even the odds significantly. That being said, even if the statistics are correct about who is more likely to do what, the inaccuracy of their numbers is still damaging. If something seems like an overwhelming majority it will be much more impactful than a slight difference. This will alter the perception of the police, judges, jury, and general public.

In conclusion, the role of minorities and underprivileged people has been overplayed and the role of privileged people has been overlooked because of the lack of understanding of context and the difference between all criminals, and all criminals who get caught. While this may seem far-fetched, as it was explained previously, crime is far too common to exclude the general public. Now that these discrepancies have been explored, hopefully, the communities who have been demonized and scrutinized will be treated fairly, and those with more privilege who have evaded capture will be brought to justice.

#### Works Cited

"Social Problems." 8.3 Who Commits Crime? | Social Problems, courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-socialproblems/chapter/8-3-who-commits-crime/. Accessed 8 Dec. 2024.

Trappen, Sandra. "Social Class and Crime." <https://sandratrappen.com/2018/08/25/social-class-crime/>.

# CHANGE

## **How do we change the world?**

By Elie Ghafari

We can change it by making peace with each other  
You can change it by turning the tables right side up  
I can change it by helping out another  
We can all be allies  
You can join us too

## **How do we create change in the world?**

By Ella Desrosiers Oosterbaan

We can change the world by just caring a little less,  
Caring less about grades,  
Caring less about work,  
Caring less about others opinions.  
After all we all end up in the same place  
Whether you study or not  
Or whether you worry about it or not  
So make life more enjoyable by just living by your standards  
And just caring a little less

## **How do we create a change in the world?**

We can change the world by expressing ourselves  
more by writing poems, or in a different art style  
or by making music or by even speaking.

we can express ourselves in art like  
a drawing

or by a way we sing or dance,

or even the way we dress.

By Eva

## **We can change the world by...**

Having an action to call  
Doesn't matter if it's big or small  
Protests and speeches are other ways  
To create change and better days  
By Mason

# Racism and it's Societal Effects

Julian Coache

Racism is a significant issue in the legal justice system. One such example happened in New York, the Central Park Five case. In this case, a group of black, teenage boys were accused of raping and beating a female jogger in the New York central park when, in truth, they didn't. Because of their skin colour, they were discriminated against in court and even falsely admitted to doing the crime, simply because there seemed to be no hope for them. I believe that racism should not be present in the legal system, and that people should be judged purely by action. In fact, it would be more fair if the judge had a blindfold over their eyes during the court procedure, only hearing the facts of the situation. Minorities of all kinds are constantly getting consequences they don't deserve because of the court, and there must be something done to stop this false in the legal system.

Racism in the legal system is very present, even now, a time where most people would consider to be less racist than the past. In court, people that aren't white are much more likely to be sent to prison, and more than a few of them are even falsely accused of a crime they didn't commit. In fact, it was found that people of color were seven times more likely to be wrongly accused of murder than white people in 2022.

Although it seems the court is completely racist towards black people, there might be some evidence to validate the court's judgment. 26.6% of total arrests consist of people of color. That's more than a quarter of total arrests between all races being composed of only people with black or brown skin.

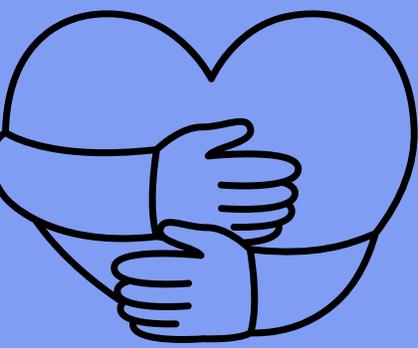
Although this makes it seem like the court is only accusing more people of color because they are arrested for crime more, it doesn't really. Police officers are especially known to discriminate against black people. There are much more white police officers than any other race, and black people are also often accused of crimes by police officers themselves. The court is still wrong, and so is the rest of the legal system.

Not only is the legal and justice system racist, it is also flawed on a fundamental level, discriminating against wealth as well.

A person who is wealthier will generally be less susceptible to being falsely accused, and in a court case (significantly with suing), the person with more money wins, because they can afford a better lawyer. I believe that lawyers should not be something taken into account by the court. The court should be only the people directly involved stating truthfully what happened, and if the judge deems the act worthy of prison or another consequence, it should be done (only after proper analysis of the situation). In the judicial system, lower income and less wealthy individuals make up most of the accused. This, coupled with the fact that oftentimes people who aren't white make less money, due to racism in the economy, creates a situation of unfairness towards racial minorities. Even if lower income people are more likely to be criminals, it still doesn't explain the amount of people in poverty who are falsely accused simply because they don't have a lot of money.

So what does this all add up to? The combination of racism and wealth discrimination in the justice system creates a machine that, if fed the right people, condemns, imprisons, and fines innocents without a second thought or any significant proof. This issue is terrible. It is so bad that studies show that up to 16% of people imprisoned or accused in the United States did not deserve it, and have proof to back it up. Almost all of these people are racial minorities and impoverished people. While going through our everyday lives, we make thousands of judgements about the people we come across, either consciously or subconsciously. So while it is easy to simply judge others, either in your everyday life or in court, think about how 16 out of 100 of them might not deserve your judgement, and how their limited lives are wasted because of an unjust system.





### **How do we create change in the world?**

By Lola Moosz

What would you do to change the world?  
Our world is in need of change in many ways.  
Recently climate change has and will keep increasing if we don't  
change it.

Life as we know it can end if people keep polluting the earth.

Do you know how to change the world?

How do we create change in the world?

### **How do we create change in the world?**

By Alison Spicer

We can make change, and raise a fist

You can help fight for human rights

And I will be there to back you up

We can push back against their bigotry

You can make change

### **How can I change something that is at heights I can not reach.**

I have so many opinions and ideas that will never be heard no matter  
how much I speak.

I believe I can change the world.

I know that our differences should be embraced,

Not a debate.

I don't understand why the world is the way it is,

All I can do is just watch myself Sit back and watch a world I want to  
change so desperately

But yet I can not reach.

By Malaya Villaruel

### **How do we create change in the world?**

We can change the world by being loud about it.

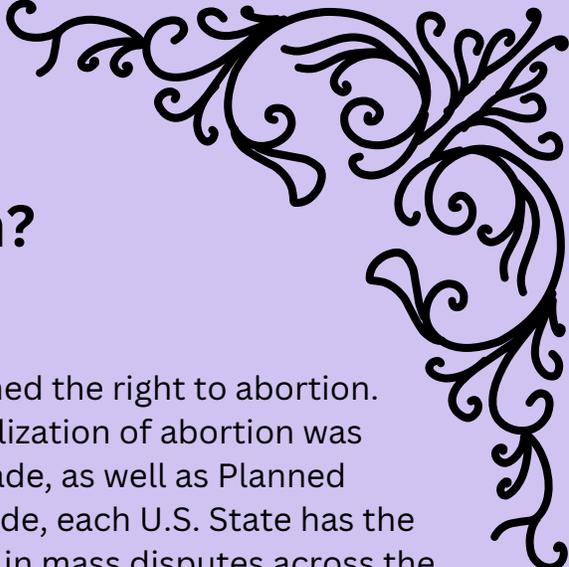
You can change it by being even louder.

I change it by being proud of who I am, and not letting anything  
control that.

We can be changed together

You can be changed with it

# **CHANGE**



# Pro Life or Pro Men?

## Emma McRobbie

As of November 6, 2024, 13 U.S. states have banned the right to abortion. Previously, between the years 1973 and 2022, the legalization of abortion was maintained under Supreme Court rulings in *Roe v. Wade*, as well as *Planned Parenthood*. Yet now, due to the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, each U.S. State has the right to ban or continue to provide abortion care, resulting in mass disputes across the Nation. Many have argued that abortion is unethical and should remain illegal. However, access to abortion is a basic human right, and should be remade legal, as the criminalization of abortion directly opposes the principle of gender equality, abortion is a life-saving procedure, and the banning of the procedure goes against several basic human rights.

Firstly, the criminalization of abortion is a flagrant disrespect to the principle of gender equality. For instance, gender equality is founded upon the belief that men and women alike have the same opportunities and rights. Yet, through the banning of abortion, women have now lost their ability to make decisions about their own body, surrendering that right to men. This implants in the minds of today's youth that men will always have the final say, and women shall remain powerless to the men's word, destroying the very foundation of gender equality. Men have been gifted the ability to impregnate women,

effectively being able to alter the very nature of that woman's life. Forcing females to carry a perhaps unwanted infant inside them, serving as a reminder of the heavy and painful idea that all they are seen as is a pair of child-bearing hips. The criminalization of abortion gives society the sexist narrative that it does not value the living, breathing woman, with hopes and dreams, but the embryo inside that woman and the organ in which it is carried. This mindset towards women's rights and abortion imposes a threat on the very lives of the mothers carrying these fetuses'.

Furthermore, properly performing an abortion has the ability to save a woman's life. Each year, it is estimated that 303, 000 women are killed in childbirth or during the pregnancy. Due to complications like heavy bleeding, amniotic fluid embolism whilst giving birth, or heart disease and stroke while still carrying the fetus. Through the denial of abortion care, not only is the mother's life lost, but the fetus can be lost as well. Resulting in two unnecessary deaths rather than if the abortion had been permitted, only resulting in the elimination of the fetus. In addition,

In several U.S. States, abortions expand beyond pregnancy cases and into miscarriage surgeries. Miscarriage means the unsuccessful delivery of an infant through excessive bleeding or cramping. In some cases, once the fetus is lost, some tissue may remain in the uterus to rot and potentially kill the owner of said uterus. The expulsion of this tissue through surgery is labelled as an abortion in several American States. This means even though the fetus was already lost, the mother has to continue to suffer and possibly die, all because male politicians are uneducated on female anatomy. The act of refusing abortion rights is not only a breach in morality, but basic human rights.

The banning of abortion contradicts the basic human right to life, as well as a violation of several other human rights, such as the right to health, the right to be free from torture and the prohibition of discrimination. The definition of torture goes as follows; “Acts specifically intended to inflict severe physical or mental pain or suffering.” (United States, Department of Justice.) Being forced to complete three trimesters of unwanted pregnancy or pregnancy that causes physical harm can be considered as emotional or physical torture. As the refusal to terminate the pregnancy can lead to physical distress and suffering, or emotional turmoil. All of which qualify as torture. “The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) have both clearly indicated that women’s right to health includes their sexual and reproductive health.” (United Nations.) Carrying a fetus can directly cause health complications for the mother bearing it, some of which can be deadly. Through refusing women of abortion care, the right to health is being blatantly ignoring the human right to health. This is a form of discrimination against all women, as they are being unjustly treated in comparison to their male counterparts. According to the Oxford Dictionary, the definition of discrimination goes as follows; “The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of ethnicity, age, sex, or disability.” (Oxford Dictionary.) Abortion is a fundamental aspect in caring for women’s health, as well as abolishing sexism in the medical field.

While some might argue that abortion is unethical and goes against religious beliefs, Exodus 21 in the Holy Bible directly defends abortion rights. “Exodus 21, for example, suggests that a pregnant woman’s life is more valuable than the fetus’s. This text describes a scenario in which men who are fighting strike a pregnant woman and cause her to miscarry. A monetary fine is imposed if the woman suffers no other harm beyond the miscarriage.” (Howard, Melanie.) The Holy Bible defends womens’ rights to their bodily autonomy. Another argument could possibly be made that abortion can be more dangerous to womens’ health than simply delivering the baby due to complications after the surgery. But to directly contrast that idea, through the period of pregnancy being longer than that of an abortion surgery, pregnancy provides more risks. “The risk any person accepts in continuing a pregnancy to term exceeds that of an early safe abortion by literally an order of magnitude.” (Adesomo, Adebayo.)

On average, an abortion procedure takes 1-2 days to recover from, whereas recovery from a pregnancy can take several months, or can simply be unable to recover from if uterus tissue is damaged. These statistics paint abortion in a far more positive light than simply following through an unwanted pregnancy.

In conclusion, abortion care should be remade legal and be provided in every U.S. State. As it helps save the lives of women, remains protected under basic human rights, and enforces gender equality. While some critics have complained about abortion from an ethical standpoint, abortion care allows women the ability to maintain a happy and healthy lifestyle.

Citations:

Diamant, J. (2024, March 25). What the data says about abortion in the U.S. Pew Research Center.

Maternal death and pregnancy-related death. March of Dimes. (n.d.). <https://www.marchofdimes.org/find-support/topics/miscarriage-loss-grief/maternal-death-and-pregnancy-related-death#:~:text=During%20birth%3A%20Emergencies%2C%20such%20as,womb>

Melanie A. Howard Associate Professor of Biblical & Theological Studies. (2024, December 3). What the Bible actually says about abortion may surprise you. The Conversation. <https://theconversation.com/what-the-bible-actually-says-about-abortion-may-surprise-you-186983>

Parenthood, P. (n.d.). Historical abortion law timeline: 1850 to Today. Planned Parenthood Action Fund. <https://www.plannedparenthoodaction.org/issues/abortion/abortion-central-history-reproductive-health-care-america/historical-abortion-law-timeline-1850-today>

Sexual and reproductive health and rights | ohchr. (n.d.). <https://www.ohchr.org/en/women/sexual-and-reproductive-health-and-rights>

Soken-Huberty, E. (2021, May 8). 10 examples of human rights. Human Rights Careers. <https://www.humanrightscareers.com/issues/examples-of-human-rights/>

Surgical abortion: What to expect at home. MyHealth.Alberta.ca Government of Alberta Personal Health Portal. (n.d.). <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Health/aftercareinformation/pages/conditions.aspx?hwid=av2707>

20. torture (18 U.S.C. 2340a). Justice Manual | 20. Torture (18 U.S.C. 2340A) | United States Department of Justice. (2020, January 16). <https://www.justice.gov/archives/jm/criminal-resource-manual-20-torture-18-usc-2340a>

The abortion choice. Centre for Sexuality. (2022, January 31). <https://www.centreforsexuality.ca/learning-centre/the-abortion-choice/>

YouTube. (n.d.). YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pTBJaM6L\\_30](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pTBJaM6L_30)

Wikimedia Foundation. (2024, November 27). Maternal death. Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maternal\\_death](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maternal_death)



# Humanity's Scale

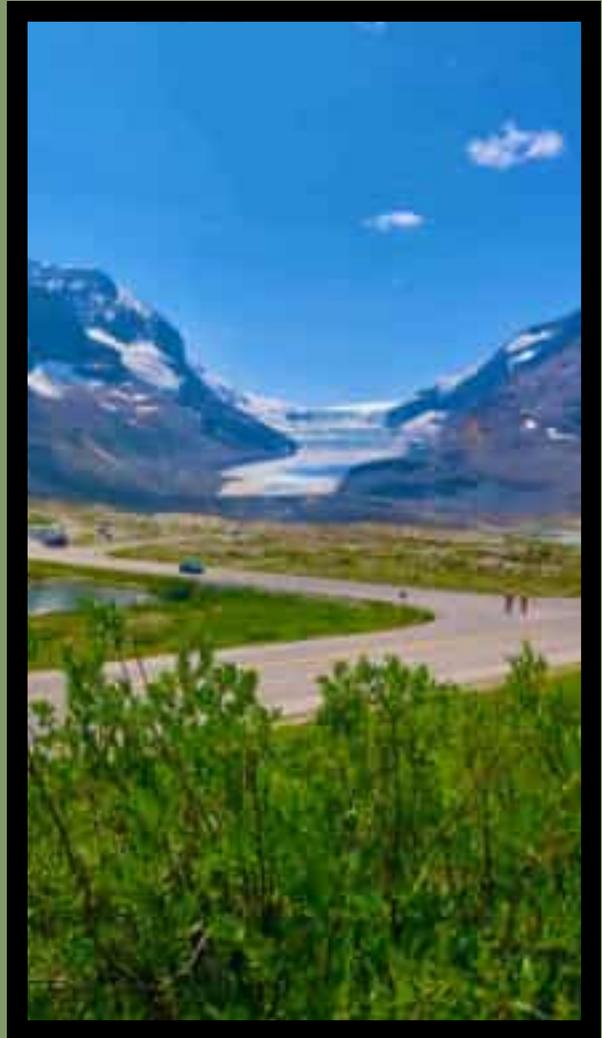
By: Liam Cameron



IN OUR MODERN AGE, WE OFTEN SEE THAT PEOPLE ARE TREATED POORLY BY LAW ENFORCEMENT AND THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM. FOR EXAMPLE, WE SEE THIS IN THE CENTRAL PARK JOGGER CASE, WHERE FIVE MEN WERE WRONGFULLY CONVICTED FOR A CRIME THEY DID NOT COMMIT. FOR SOCIETY TO PROGRESS AND PROSPER, WE NEED TO SEE A CHANGE IN TREATMENT FROM LAW ENFORCEMENT FOR THE BETTER. IN LAW, IT STATES THAT EVERY HUMAN IS EQUAL BEFORE THE LAW, NO MATTER WHO THEY ARE. EVERYBODY IS ENTITLED TO THE PROTECTION OF THE LAW AND PROTECTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION. THIS IS WHAT SOCIAL JUSTICE IS IN THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM, THE EQUALITY AND ENTITLEMENT TO THE RIGHTS OF EVERYBODY. THE SCALE IS MEANT TO REPRESENT THE EQUALITY EVERYBODY MUST HAVE BEFORE THE LAW. AS A SOCIETY, WE HAVE TO ENSURE THAT EVERYBODY IS EQUAL AND ENTITLED TO THEIR OWN RIGHTS BEFORE THE LAW. SEEING MORE AND MORE CASES SUCH AS THE ONES WE HAVE SEEN IN RECENT YEARS IS UNACCEPTABLE. WHERE WILL WE GET IF EVERYBODY IS AGAINST EACH OTHER? IF WE WANT TO PROGRESS FURTHER AS A SOCIETY, WE HAVE TO SEE MORE CHANGE IN HOW THE LAW TREATS SITUATIONS AND PEOPLE.

# MELTING FIELD

BY:TREY MARSH



THIS PHOTO I TOOK OF THE ATHABASCA GLACIER IS MEANT TO DEMONSTRATE THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE AS THE GLACIER LOSES 5 METERS OF DEPTH A YEAR, TOTALLING OVER 1.5KM IN THE PAST 125 YEARS. THIS LOSS OF DEPTH MAY CAUSE THE GLACIER TO DISAPPEAR BEFORE THE END OF THE CENTURY. THIS IS ONLY A DROP IN THE BUCKET THOUGH AS THE COLUMBIA ICEFIELD, WHICH THE ATHABASCA GLACIER IS A PART OF, HAS LOST MORE THAN HALF ITS THICKNESS AND HAS RETREATED OVER 20 KM SINCE THE 1980S. CLIMATE CHANGE IS A MAJOR SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUE AS IT AFFECTS MANY HUMAN RIGHTS SUCH AS FOOD SECURITY, AND WATER SECURITY. THIS IS DETRIMENTAL TO THE ENVIRONMENT BECAUSE IT IS CAUSING DROUGHTS, TORNADOES, HURRICANES AND RISING SEA LEVELS. THEREFORE I IMPLOR THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE WORLD TO TAKE MORE ACTION TO FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE AND SAVE THE ATHABASCA GLACIER BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE.

# The Effects of Poverty In The Judiciary System

Taylor Broodney

Throughout history, many groups such as people of colour, women, teenagers or young adults have suffered inequality and bias within the law. But what goes unheard is how many working-class or low income households also suffer. Many people may argue that those who experience poverty don't suffer in the judiciary system because everyone has the right to an attorney regardless of one's financial position, however it is proven that low income households often face more struggles within the law. Individuals in poverty must be treated fairly by all law enforcement and court.

People with low incomes have less access to support and resources in court. According to Brookings.edu, The Hague Institute for the Innovation of Law held a survey between the years 2013 and 2018. This survey was held in thirteen different countries, some high class, some middle class and some low class and they represent over 70 000 respondents. The results state that low income countries suffer more legal issues. Unfortunately, private attorneys can cost an incredible amount of money, and public attorneys are often underpaid and lower quality. As well as court fees, bail and bond which can add on thousands of dollars. Legal processes are often very complex and are only understood by specialists, meaning some people cannot afford to understand the process because they do not have enough money to hire an expert.

To continue, bias and discrimination cause a large portion of this inequality. Often times people with a larger pay are let off the hook easier due to the courts seeing them as having a higher status or better importance. Though it is sad, immigrants often face poverty and if they need to attend court they may face a language barrier which could affect their involvement in the legal process, it could cause racism or other forms of discrimination leading to worsened accusations or punishments from the court, costing them more money and further damaging their income. It also may cause immigrants to be taken advantage of. Between the language barrier and the possibility that some immigrants didn't have access to adequate education in their home country, it is easy for people to take advantage of them.

Also, minorities or low income individuals are typically held for stricter sentencing and are less often given the opportunity to be on probation, enter a rehabilitation centre or have a shortened sentence due to discrimination.

Finally, social acceptance. It isn't uncommon to be bullied growing up or at school because your family doesn't make a six figures. Unfortunately, nothing changes as you grow up. Underprivileged adults are less socially accepted by the rich. For example, a judge. According to [Jobbank.gc.ca](http://Jobbank.gc.ca) a judge makes around \$300 000 a year. In 2020, the average income for a Canadian was \$54 630. That is approximately five times the average income of a Canadian. With this comes an ego and sense of power above the citizens. People with high incomes often feel a superiority to the average Canadian which can lead to people putting others down. Following this, some people who work in law feel like they can put down their clients or use them for money.

To conclude, it is incredibly unfortunate that people who face poverty have such a hard time with the law. They deserve more access to resources as well as support from people around them. As a society, it is important that we pay more attention to this topic and make sure it receives more awareness.





**HOW DO WE CREATE CHANGE IN THE WORLD?  
BY MATTHEW DARBY**

WE CAN CHANGE IT BY LETTING OUR IMAGINATION SOAR FREE  
YOU CAN CHANGE BY HELPING THE WORLD TO GET MORE HOPE  
I CHANGE IT BY SHARING THE KNOWLEDGE AND KINDNESS OF EVERYONE  
WE CAN CHANGE IT FROM TWO WRONGS INTO A RIGHT  
YOU CAN LIGHT A MATCH TO HELP BRIGHTEN THE WORLD.

**HOW DO WE CREATE CHANGE IN THE WORLD?  
BY GABRIEL MILLROY**

WE CAN CHANGE IT BY BEING UNITED  
YOU CAN CHANGE BY BEING KIND  
I CHANGE IT BY DOING MY BEST  
WE CAN ONLY IMAGINE THE THINGS WE CAN FIND  
YOU CAN CHANGE THE WORLD WITH YOUR MIND

**HOW DO WE CREATE CHANGE IN THE WORLD?  
BY HAILEY PORATH**

WE CAN CHANGE IT BY CREATING A SPACE OF TEAMWORK  
YOU CAN CHANGE IT BY CREATING A SPACE OF SELFISHNESS  
I CHANGE IT BY CREATING A SPACE OF HAPPINESS  
WE CAN CREATE A SPACE OF CHANGE  
YOU CAN CREATE CHANGE

**HOW TO CHANGE THE WORLD  
BY ALANA SULLIVAN**

WE CAN CHANGE IT BY BEING KIND  
YOU CAN CHANGE BY DOING YOUR PART  
I CHANGE IT BY HELPING, BY BEING ME, BY JUST BEING  
WE CAN CHANGE THE WORLD BY CHANGING THE WAY WE THINK  
YOU CAN CHANGE.



## Our Inadequate Legal Education

Noah Gilbert

Rights; we all deserve them, but they're of no use to us if we don't know what they consist of along with how to effectively utilize them. The justice system and the education system are controversial topics for many reasons but mostly because these systems have failed us and tend to polarise people. Some people are so hurt by these systems while others get nothing but help from them. The schools would rather teach us about obscure math formulas and science concepts rather than teach us our legal rights and how to protect ourselves. This must change! It is essential that moving forward the youth is taught about their legal rights and what to do when facing legal troubles.

Firstly, 18% of Canadians will face legal troubles in a year and 71% of people with legal problems don't get professional legal assistance. This shows that the average Canadian is unaware of how to move forwards during legal proceedings and how they should defend themselves. Educating the population about their rights would make them better prepared to face these challenges. Some Canadians may think that it is your own responsibility to figure out how to defend yourself in the midst of legal troubles; it is not. The education system has failed us and moving forward it must prepare us and teach us how to defend ourselves. "Knowledge is power" and the knowledge of how to protect yourself legally is essential to your freedom.

Many people think that knowledge of your legal rights is something that should be learnt on your own or from your parents just as we learn how to file taxes and how to do simple construction projects at home. This isn't true since freedom is a fundamental right that should be given to everyone equally. The knowledge of how to protect your freedom is essential knowledge that must be taught in school.



Our curriculum must include comprehensive explanations of legal proceedings. If you understand and are comfortable with how the legal system works, you are less likely to get overwhelmed, pressured, or manipulated into taking a bad plea deal or admitting to something that isn't quite true. This can hold lifelong repercussions like jail time and a negative hit to your reputation which can affect professional and social relationships. All this to say: unfortunately a lot of Canadians have been let down by our education system and haven't been prepared to face legal troubles which causes them to respond poorly when faced with those types of problems. The result is them not taking the proper steps to protect themselves such as consulting a lawyer or a professional which has severe consequences for all of society.

#### Works Cited

- Sarah A. Sutherland 4 Apr. 2023, et al. "Are 80% of Legal Problems in Canada Really Going Unmet?" CBA National Magazine, 4 Apr. 2023, [nationalmagazine.ca/en-ca/articles/law/access-to-justice/2023/are-80-of-legal-problems-in-canada-really-going-unmet](https://nationalmagazine.ca/en-ca/articles/law/access-to-justice/2023/are-80-of-legal-problems-in-canada-really-going-unmet).
- Staff, EasyBib. EasyBib, Chegg, 1 Jan. 2024, [www.easybib.com/project/style/mla?id=3a537c9f-9cb2-4758-b65c-ef12e538cea5](https://www.easybib.com/project/style/mla?id=3a537c9f-9cb2-4758-b65c-ef12e538cea5).





**WORKING TOGETHER  
BY MATEO**

WE CAN CHANGE IT BY WORKING TOGETHER IN ACTIVITIES  
YOU CAN CHANGE BY TRYING YOU BEST TO HELP  
I CHANGE IT BY HELPING OTHERS  
WE CAN ALL CHANGE BY WORKING AND HELPING IN A TEAM  
YOU CAN HELP BY BEING SMART WITH YOUR DECISIONS

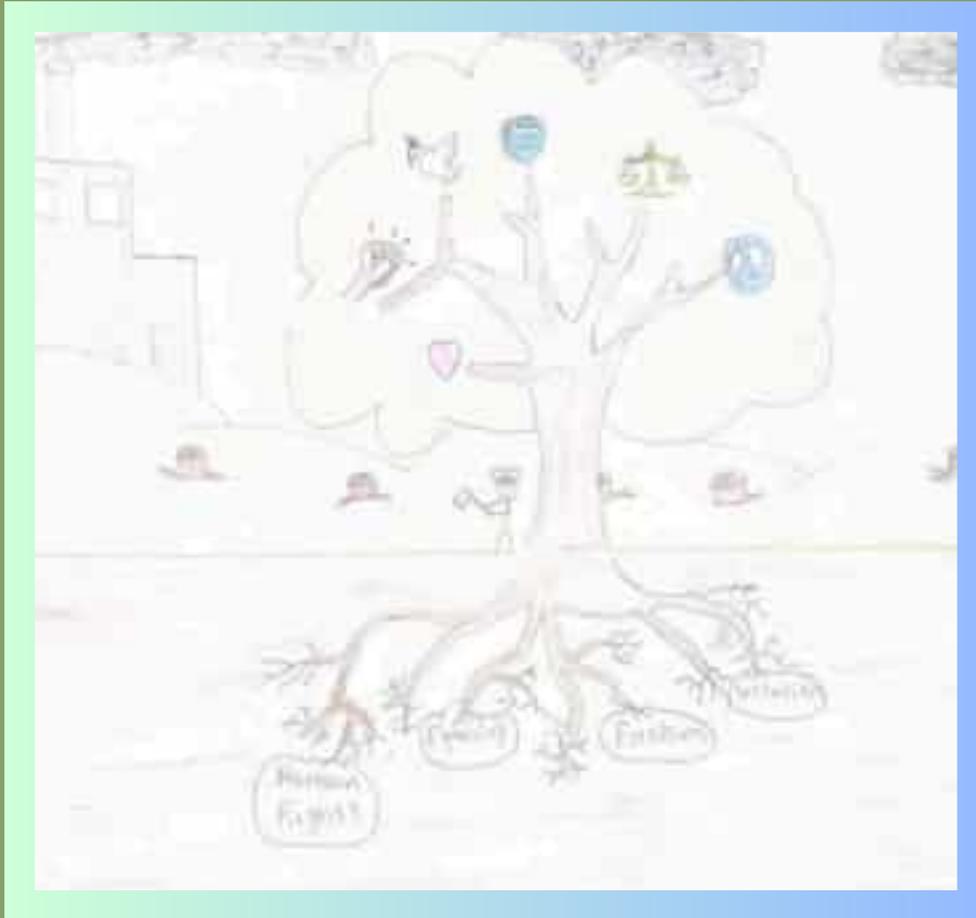
**ONE WORLD  
BY FREDRICK DESOUZA**

WE CAN CHANGE IT BY WORKING TOGETHER AS ONE .  
YOU CAN CHANGE BY BEING KIND WITHOUT ONE REASON .  
I CHANGE IT BY PICKING UP ONE'S GARBAGE .  
WE CAN CHANGE SOMEONE'S ACTIONS .  
YOU CAN MAKE ONE CHANGE .

**HOW DO WE CREATE CHANGE IN THE WORLD?  
BY RACHEL RUBIN**

WE CAN CHANGE IT BY STICKING TOGETHER  
YOU CAN CHANGE BY BRINGING KINDNESS TO OTHERS  
I CHANGE IT BY WORKING TOGETHER  
WE CAN HELP GUIDE EACH OTHER  
YOU CAN BRING US TOGETHER

# SOCIAL JUSTICE TREE TIAN CAMPOS



In my drawing, there are a lot of things going on in the image. For example, there is a factory and dead trees in the background. In the centre of it all there is a big tree with many symbols, but what do they mean? In the roots of the tree, it has 4 letters that social justice stands for. On the top of the tree, instead of there being apples like an apple tree, it has symbols that represent social justice. The heart and peace sign stands for love and peace. Dove for peace and harmony while the balance and fist stands for justice and equality. The earth represents global unity meaning people come together. Lastly, the factory and the lumberjack are the problems. They are affecting the tree negatively, this relates to how people in real life don't cherish and stand for social justice. This drawing overall represents how important social justice is and how people don't respect it.



**WE NEED CHANGE  
BY MAYA**

YOU CAN CHANGE IT BY USING YOUR VOICE  
YOU CAN CHANGE IT BY SPEAKING YOUR TRUTH  
NEVER BE AFRAID TO DO BEING DOING THIS SINCE YOUR YOUTH  
WE CAN REJOICE  
TOGETHER WE'LL MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE

**HOW CAN WE CHANGE THE WORLD?  
BY DYLAN KOPAL**

WE CAN CHANGE IT ONE STEP AT A TIME  
YOU CAN CHANGE BY BEING KIND  
I CHANGE IT BY SPREADING LOVE  
WE CAN ALL RISE ABOVE  
SOMETHING YOU CAN BE PROUD OF

**HOW DO WE CREATE CHANGE IN THE WORLD?  
BY CHARLOTTE AUSTIN**

CAN WE CREATE CHANGE IN THE WORLD?  
COMMUNICATE.  
WE CAN WORK TOGETHER BY EXPRESSING OUR FEELINGS,  
WE CAN WORK TOGETHER TO VOICE OUR OPINIONS,  
TO CHANGE WE NEED TO COMMUNICATE.



**CLASSISM IN OUR SOCIETY TODAY.**  
**MADELYN VAN REESE**

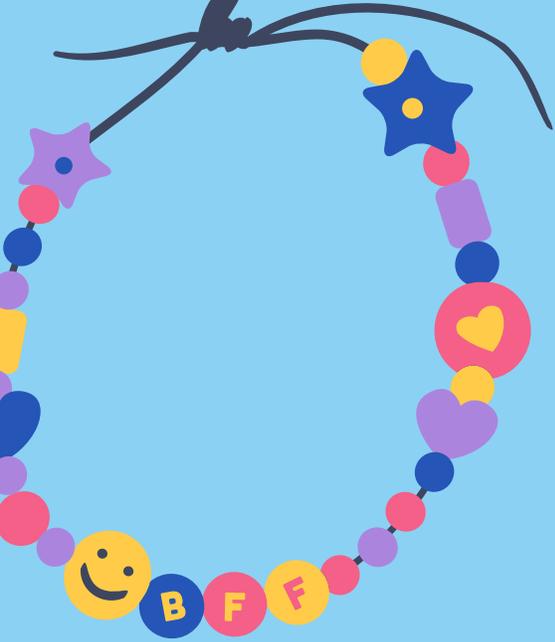
ALMOST EVERY COUNTRY IN TODAY'S SOCIETY IS AFFECTED BY CLASSIST PEOPLE OR COMMUNITIES. CLASS DISCRIMINATION IS BASICALLY WHEN PEOPLE OF HIGHER "CLASS" (I.E. THEY HAVE MORE MONEY OR A BETTER BIGGER HOUSE) DISCRIMINATE AGAINST THOSE WHO DON'T HAVE AS MUCH OR WHAT THEY HAVE. CLASSISM IS EVERYWHERE IN THE WORLD, YOU CAN LOOK LEFT AND THEN RIGHT EVEN UP AND DOWN AND YOU WILL STILL BE SURROUNDED BY IT. IT'S A MAJOR ISSUE AND IT'S NOT GETTING ANY BETTER! THIS CAUSES THOSE WHO DON'T HAVE NICE THINGS TO THINK THEY ARE INFERIOR, LIKE THEY DON'T HAVE THEIR OWN RIGHTS, ALLOWING THOSE WHO BELIEVE THEY HAVE MORE POWER TO CONTROL EVERYTHING! THIS LEADS TO CAPITALISM; THE TWO ARE TIGHTLY LINKED. THIS PHENOMENON IS NOT IDEAL, THE GOVERNMENTS WORLDWIDE NEED TO SET OUT RULES THAT WILL HELP STOP THIS MAJOR PROBLEM IN SOCIETY.

STARTING THINGS OFF WITH PERSPECTIVE. TO SEE SOMEONE ON THE STREETS AND THINK THAT THEY LOOK DIRTY AND OR GROSS IS THE FIRST ISSUE, MAINLY BECAUSE HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO UNDERSTAND THEIR LIFE WITHOUT HAVING LIVED IT? PERSPECTIVE. THERE HAVE BEEN COMMENTS BY PEOPLE SAYING THINGS LIKE "WELL IF THEY DON'T HAVE MONEY THEY CAN JUST GO AND GET A JOB." BUT WHAT ISN'T UNDERSTOOD IS THAT THE SECOND THAT A HOMELESS PERSON WALKS INTO A STORE AND TRIES TO TALK TO SOMEONE THEY ARE "SCARY" OR "INTIMIDATING" AND THEY ARE TOLD TO LEAVE THE SHOP. HOW ARE THEY GOING TO GET A JOB IF PEOPLE CAN'T LET GO OF THEIR FALSE PERSPECTIVES OF HUMAN BEINGS WHO ARE JUST IN NEED? IS THIS FOLLOWING SOCIAL JUSTICE? THERE SHOULD BE SOME CHANGES IN THE SOCIAL JUSTICE SYSTEM THAT GIVE THOSE WHO WANT TO WORK JOBS THAT WILL AT LEAST GET THEM SOME MONEY TO BUY THEMSELVES FOOD INSTEAD OF HAVING TO BEG FOR MONEY. BUT WHAT WILL THEY DO WITH THAT MONEY IF THEY NEVER LEARNT HOW TO BE RESPONSIBLE? AND MAYBE THE GOVERNMENT CAN PROVIDE INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO SPEND MONEY WISELY, AND RESPONSIBLY.

NORMS ARE ANOTHER THING THAT ARE HEAVILY AFFECTED BY THIS. THERE CAN BE SOCIAL NORMS OR NORMS THAT ARE FAMILIAL AND ARE PASSED DOWN BECAUSE OF CLASSISM AND ITS EXTREMITIES IN THE PAST, BUT THE MAIN IDEA IS THAT WE NEED TO LET GO OF THEM. STOP DOING WHAT IS "NORMAL" AND MAYBE DO WHAT IS RIGHT. HERE IS AN EXAMPLE; WHEN YOU STOP AT AN INTERSECTION SOMETIMES YOU SEE A PERSON IN NEED AND THEY ARE HOLDING OUT A JAR, WHAT DO MOST PEOPLE DO? IGNORE. AND MOST PEOPLE DO IT NOT BECAUSE THEY DON'T HAVE SPARE CHANGE BUT BECAUSE "THAT'S JUST WHAT EVERYONE DOES". BUILD YOUR OWN HABITS THAT ACTUALLY ILLUSTRATE WHAT TYPE OF PERSON YOU ARE, NOT WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE OTHERS ARE. STATS TELL US THAT 30-40% OF HOMELESS PEOPLE ARE STRUGGLING WITH MENTAL ILLNESSES! THIS IS WHEN THE GOVERNMENT CAN OFFER EXTRA HELP IN THE MENTAL SECTOR OF THINGS SO FOR THOSE WHO NEED HELP TO GET THAT EXTRA SUPPORT THAT THEY ARE SUBJECT TO.

CLASSISM ALSO HEAVILY AFFECTS THE EDUCATION SYSTEM. THE GOVERNMENT PUTS MORE MONEY INTO PRIVATE EDUCATION AND THOSE SCHOOLS ONLY HIRE THE BEST TEACHERS AND SOME PEOPLE WHO TEACH AT PUBLIC SCHOOLS DON'T HAVE A SPECIALTY IN TEACHING WHAT THEY ACTUALLY TEACH. THIS IS ALL BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT PRIORITIZES PEOPLE WITH MONEY TO KEEP THE CYCLE GOING. "THE CYCLE" IS HOW PEOPLE SUCCEED AND THEN PUT THEIR MONEY INTO THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION AND THEREFORE PAYING FOR THE BEST TEACHERS ONLY BECAUSE WHY WOULD THEY WANT THEIR CHILDREN TO NOT GET WHAT THEY RIGHTFULLY PAID FOR. BUT FOR THOSE WHO DON'T HAVE AS MUCH MONEY AS THESE SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS MEN AND WOMEN, WILL PUT THEIR CHILDREN IN PUBLIC SCHOOL AND THESE KIDS WILL CONTINUE ON WITH THEIR BASE LEVEL EDUCATION. BUT SOME KIDS WHO WENT TO PRIVATE SCHOOLS DON'T SUCCEED AS MUCH AS THEIR PARENTS, AND SOME KIDS WHO ATTENDED PUBLIC SCHOOLS SUCCEED IN A BIG WAY. YES THIS IS THE CASE FOR CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS BUT THE IDEA IS THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS GIVING PUBLIC SCHOOL GOERS A BETTER CHANCE AT SUCCESS, GIVING THEM A PASSAGEWAY.

SO WE KNOW THAT PERSPECTIVE, NORMS, AND EDUCATION ARE HIGHLY AFFECTED BY THE MAJOR SOCIAL ISSUE OF CLASSISM. PERSPECTIVE IS SOMETHING PEOPLE WILL BELIEVE AND OR THINK BASED ON THEIR PAST EXPERIENCE AND OR THEIR PARENTS' PERSPECTIVES. THIS IS ALL BASED ON SOCIAL NORMS AND OR FAMILIAL NORMS, WE LEARN OTHER PEOPLES WAYS AND THAT IN TURN CHANGES THE WAY WE SEE THINGS TO BE SIMILAR TO THEIRS. AND BECAUSE WE PASS « TRADITIONS » DOWN TO OUR OFFSPRING WE ALSO PASS OUR IMAGE AND MONEY DOWN AS WELL, LEADING TO THE RICH GETTING BETTER EDUCATION THAN THE POOR BECAUSE THEY CAN ACTUALLY PAY FOR THE EDUCATION. CLASSISM IS A VERY VERY HORRIBLE ISSUE THAT IS ALL OVER THE WORLD AND THE PHENOMENON NEEDS TO BE TAKEN INTO CONTROL AND DIMINISHED IMMENSELY WITHIN REASON. BUT IS THE GOVERNMENT TAKING CONTROL A GOOD IDEA? MAYBE NOT BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT ITSELF IS CLASSIST.



**Change is only made by action.**

By Tristan

We can change it by taking action

You can change by being the first to act

I change it by putting in the effort

We can save the world

You can save the world.

**How do we create change in the world?**

By Blake Choptain

We can change it by raising our heads, like lanterns to the sky

You can change by filling your lungs with air, letting your words flow, like a brook

I change it by conveying my voice, the color bright, capturing the eye.

We can speak, and talk, our voice a megaphone, capturing attention like a fish on a hook.

You can make your own decisions, and fight, brawl, and battle for what you want.

**WE R 1**

By Charles-Antoine Tuite

We can change it by working together

You can change by making it better

I change it by gathering people

We can do it with our strength and making it powerful

You can do it, we are one

**How do we create change in the world?**

By Skyla

We can change it by picking up garbage

You can change by recycling

I change it by reusing

We can think more about sea animals

You can think more about the world

**We can change it by exploring out there, travelling, meeting new people**

You can change by acting like yourself

I change it by finding myself through kindness and creativity

We can allow and accept new challenges

You can face and learn new obstacles

By Gael Santana

# Social Justice

## Lucas Broadbridge

SOCIAL JUSTICE IS THE IDEA OF ESTABLISHING A SOCIETY WHERE EVERYONE IS TREATED EQUALLY, AND GIVEN THE SAME OPPORTUNITIES, REGARDLESS OF THEIR CULTURE, BACKGROUND, SKIN COLOUR, OR SOCIAL STATUS.

SOME OF THE MOST COMMON EXAMPLES OF SOCIAL JUSTICE ARE:

ECONOMIC INEQUALITY.

RACIAL INJUSTICE

GENDER INJUSTICE

THESE ALL HAVE HAD SUCH A BIG IMPACT ON DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES, WHICH HAVE LED TO SEVERAL MOVEMENTS TO TRY AND MAKE A CHANGE. FOR EXAMPLE, THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT. THIS MOVEMENT FOUGHT FOR THE RIGHTS OF AFRICAN AMERICANS, INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO VOTE, THE RIGHT TO EQUAL EDUCATION AND THE RIGHT TO EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

WHEN IT COMES TO THE LEGAL SYSTEM, SOCIAL JUSTICE REFERS TO THE APPLICATION OF LAWS, AND POLICIES THAT PROVIDE FAIRNESS, EQUALITY, AND PROTECTION OF RIGHTS FOR ALL INDIVIDUALS, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO COME FROM LOW-INCOME AND DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES.

HUMAN RIGHTS ARE THE LEGAL RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS THAT EVERY PERSON IS ENTITLED TO, REGARDLESS OF THEIR NATIONALITY, SKIN COLOUR, GENDER, RELIGION, OR ANY OTHER STATUS. EQUALITY IS THE IDEA THAT EVERYONE IS TREATED EQUALLY AND HAS THE SAME OPPORTUNITIES, RIGHTS, AND ACCESS TO RESOURCES, REGARDLESS OF THEIR CHARACTERISTICS SUCH AS RACE, GENDER, AGE, RELIGION, DISABILITY, OR SOCIAL STATUS. DISCRIMINATION IS THE UNFAIR, AND UNEQUAL TREATMENT OF PEOPLE OR GROUPS BASED ON CHARACTERISTICS. IT OCCURS WHEN SOMEONE IS TREATED DIFFERENTLY BASED ON THEIR PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS AND BELIEFS, RATHER THAN ABILITIES AND DISADVANTAGES. THE 5 BOYS WHO WERE A PART OF THE CENTRAL PARK 5 WERE ALL DISCRIMINATED AGAINST AND TREATED UNEQUALLY BECAUSE OF THE COLOUR OF THEIR SKIN.



## Different Sides

Ella Robins

THIS PHOTO CONVEYS AN EXAMPLE OF SOCIAL INJUSTICE. DISCRIMINATION IS ONE OF THE MOST COMMON THINGS IN SOCIETY. THIS TOPIC IS VERY IMPORTANT TO ME BECAUSE I HAVE BEEN A PART OF BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST FOR MY RACE. IN THIS PHOTO, WE SEE WHITE PLUSHIES DESCRIBING WHITE PEOPLE ON ONE SIDE, AND THE OTHERS ARE LEFT OUT FOR THEIR DIFFERENT COLOURS. THEY REPRESENT ASIANS AND AFRICAN AMERICANS. THIS PICTURE DESCRIBES MANY ISSUES AT THE SAME TIME, RACISM AND SEGREGATION FOR THEIR DIFFERENCES. IF THOUGHT DEEPER, IT LOOKS LIKE THE WHITE PLUSHIES ARE SECRETLY WHISPERING TO EACH OTHER AND JUDGING THE OTHER TWO. THAT'S WHY THEY'RE ON DIFFERENT SIDES. THESE TOPICS SHOULD BE TALKED ABOUT MORE TO RAISE AWARENESS SO THESE TYPES OF THINGS SHOULDN'T BE NORMALIZED ANYMORE. EVEN IF THESE ARE SILLY ANIMALS, THEY ALL HOLD AN IMPORTANT MEANING TO SOCIAL INJUSTICE. IT IS A PERFECT EXAMPLE FOR LITTLE KIDS TO UNDERSTAND AS WELL SINCE THE TOPIC CAN BE HARSH AND THE CUTE ANIMALS MAKE UP FOR IT.

# Legal System and Poverty:

AVA MASSOURAS

IN A SYSTEM THAT PRIDES ITSELF ON JUSTICE, THE REALITY IS THE POOR ARE LEFT DEFENSELESS, UNABLE TO HAVE ACCESS TO THE SAME OPPORTUNITIES TO PROTECT THEIR RIGHTS AS THOSE WITH MORE PRIVILEGE. POVERTY MAKES IT HARDER FOR PEOPLE TO GET THE PROPER LEGAL HELP THEY NEED, PUTTING THEM AT BIGGER RISK TO BE WRONGFULLY CONVICTED. TO CREATE A BETTER, MORE JUST SYSTEM WE MUST IMPROVE LEGAL SUPPORT, FUND BETTER PUBLIC DEFENCE LAWYERS AND RAISE MORE AWARENESS TO THE UNFAIRNESS OF THE MATTER.



THERE'S A HARMFUL LINK BETWEEN POVERTY AND POOR ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM. THE LEGAL SYSTEM OFTEN PUNISHES PEOPLE FOR THEIR ECONOMIC STATE. A FEW EXAMPLES OF THIS ARE THE CRIMINALIZATION OF HOMELESSNESS AND BEING PENALIZED FOR THE PAYING/LATE FEES. HOMELESS PEOPLE ARE OFTEN FINED AND ARRESTED FOR THINGS LIKE LOITERING OR ASKING FOR MONEY. THESE ISSUES ARE A DIRECT CONSEQUENCE OF BEING IN EXTREME POVERTY, YET THESE PEOPLE ARE STILL TREATED AS THEY ARE DOING SOMETHING WRONG SIMPLY BECAUSE THEY HAVE A LACK OF SHELTER. THOSE WHO CANNOT AFFORD TO PAY BILLS ON TIME CAN BE FACED WITH LEGAL CONSEQUENCES. FOR INSENCE A FAMILY LIVING IN A LOWER INCOME NEIGHBOURHOOD WITH 3 YOUNG KIDS WHO ARE LATE ON THEIR UTILITY PAYMENTS, THE CITY CAN SEND THE CASE TO COURT AND IF THEY STILL CANNOT PAY IT CAN LEAD TO EVEN MORE FINES, IN THE RARE CASE THEY CAN ALSO BE ARRESTED. THIS FAMILY WHO IS ALREADY STRUGGLING ON ITS OWN CAN HAVE THEIR FINANCIAL SITUATION GET WORSE. THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF THE CONTENT CYCLE OF POVERTY AND SHOWS HOW HARD IT IS TO BREAK THE CYCLE, WHEN POVERTY IS SEEN AS A CRIME IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM.

ONE OF THE MAIN REASONS THERE IS A MASS INCARCERATION CRISIS IS BECAUSE PEOPLE ARE TOO POOR TO AFFORD PROPER LAWYERS. THIS IS THE REASON THERE ARE PUBLIC DEFENDERS, UNFORTUNATELY PUBLIC DEFENDERS ARE OFTEN OVERWORKED AND UNDERPAID. THIS RESULTS IN THE CLIENT NOT RECEIVING THE PROPER TIME AND ATTENTION NEEDED TO WIN THEIR CASE. WITH LITTLE TIME TO LOOK OVER THE CASE, BUILD A COMPELLING ARGUMENT AND GET TO KNOW THEIR CLIENT THE RESULTS ARE OFTEN NEGATIVE WITH THE CLIENT BEING WRONGFULLY CONVICTED. THE LACK OF QUALITY FOR THE POOR CREATES AN UNJUST SYSTEM.

MORE AWARENESS NEEDS TO BE RAISED ABOUT THE DISADVANTAGES FACED BY THOSE WHO LIVE IN POVERTY, ESPECIALLY IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM. MANY PEOPLE DON'T RECOGNIZE OR ARE COMPLETELY UNAWARE ABOUT THEIR DISSERVICE AND LACK OF PROPER REPRESENTATION. THANKFULLY THERE ARE LOTS OF NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS TO RAISE AWARENESS ON THIS TOPIC AND RIGHT THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN WRONGED BY THE LEGAL SYSTEM. ALONG WITH SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS LIKE #FREETHEMALL HAVE ALSO PLAYED A CRUCIAL ROLE IN RAISING AWARENESS TO WRONGFUL CONVICTIONS, STARTING CONVERSATIONS ALL AROUND THE NATION ABOUT FLAWS IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM AND LOOKING OVER CASES THAT HAVE BEEN PUSHED ASIDE, OFTEN LEADING TO CLOSED CASES BEING REOPENED TO GIVE EVERYONE A FIGHTING SHOT AT A JUST RULING.

WHILE SOME MAY ARGUE THAT PUBLIC DEFENDERS ARE THERE IN-FAVOUR OF LOW INCOME FOLKS WHO CANNOT AFFORD A LAWYER. THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER IS THAT THESE PUBLIC DEFENDERS ARE FACTUALLY INFERIOR TO A PROPER LAWYER BECAUSE OF HOW OVERWORKED THEY ARE. ANOTHER ARGUMENT THAT CAN BE MADE IS THAT THE LEGAL SYSTEM HAS THINGS IN PLACE TO PREVENT FALSE CONVICTIONS SUCH AS THE APPEAL PROCESS AND THE POSSIBILITY OF RETRIALS. IF SOMEONE IS WRONGFULLY CONVICTED, THE LEGAL SYSTEM ALLOWS FOR THESE DECISIONS TO BE REVIEWED AND CORRECTED BY HIGHER COURTS. THEREFORE, THERE'S NO NEED TO CHANGE THE SYSTEM, AS THERE ARE ALREADY MECHANISMS IN PLACE TO FIX MISTAKES. BUT THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER IS THAT THESE SERVICES ARE SO MUCH LESS ACCESSIBLE TO THE POOR. THE FINANCIAL BURDEN OF PAYING FOR AN ATTORNEY TO REPRESENT YOU. ASWELL AS THE LONG PROCESS THIS WOULD TAKE, IT CAN TAKE YEARS WHICH MEANS THE CLIENT MAY REMAIN INCARCERATED.

IN A SYSTEM THAT CLAIMS TO BE JUST, THE REALITY IS THAT THE POOR ARE LEFT UNPROTECTED, WITH FEWER RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES TO DEFEND THEIR RIGHTS. TO FIX THIS PUBLIC DEFENDERS NEED TO BE BETTER FUNDED TO INSURE THAT WE ALL HAVE A RIGHT TO A FAIR RULING. AS WELL AS SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS AND MOVEMENTS TO RAISE AWARENESS, THE LITTLE THINGS MATTER TOO!

## **RICH PRIVILEGE IN THE COURTROOM**

**LUCA LORD**

**HOW COME WE SEE FAMOUS PEOPLE GET AWAY WITH CRIMES WITH LITTLE OR NO CHARGES AGAIN AND AGAIN? IT'S BECAUSE THEY HAVE SO MUCH MONEY. THE INCOME A PERSON MAKES CAN AFFECT THE CHARGE THEY RECEIVE IN COURT, BECAUSE OF THE LAWYERS THEY CAN AFFORD. ALTHOUGH THE LEGAL SYSTEM WORKS IN FAVOUR OF THE RICH, ALL PEOPLE SHOULD BE ABLE TO DEFEND THEMSELVES WITH EQUAL RESOURCES NO MATTER WHAT THEIR INCOME IS BECAUSE THE AMOUNT OF MONEY YOU HAVE DOES NOT AFFECT WHETHER YOU COMMITTED THE CRIME OR NOT, PEOPLE SHOULD BE PUNISHED EQUALLY AND YOU SHOULD NOT BE ABLE TO BUY YOUR WAY OUT OF TROUBLE. FOR A PERSON LIVING IN POVERTY, THIS LEGAL SYSTEM DOES EVERYTHING EXCEPT HELP THEM.**

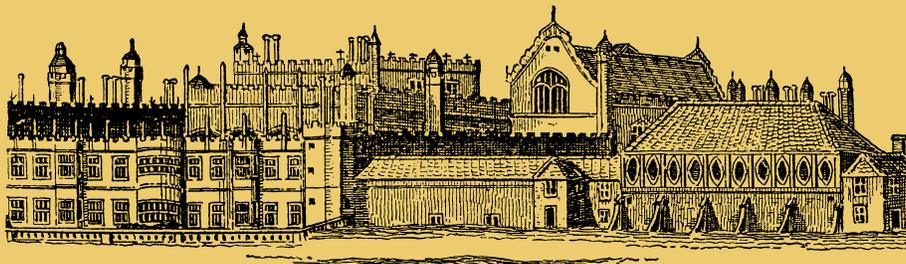
**FIRST, THE AMOUNT OF MONEY YOU HAVE DOES NOT DETERMINE WHETHER YOU COMMITTED A CRIME OR NOT. MURDERERS, ROBBERS AND DRUG DEALERS ARE NOT DETERMINED BY THEIR INCOMES. FOR EXAMPLE, HAROLD LANDRY WAS A WEALTHY MAN WHO LIVED WITH HIS WIFE LUCY. TO QUICKLY SUMMARIZE, SHE WANTED TO GET DIVORCE AND THEN HE KILLED HER. THIS STORY GOES TO SHOW US THAT THIS IDEA THAT RICH PEOPLE DO NOT COMMIT CRIMES IS VERY WRONG. THIS IS JUST ONE OF MANY EXAMPLES. OFTENTIMES IN COURT, THE JURY IS PERSUADED BY STEREOTYPES THAT PLAY IN FAVOR OF THE RICH. MANY PEOPLE REFUSE TO BELIEVE THAT STEREOTYPES STILL EXIST IN COURT, BUT ACCORDING TO JSTOR “DEFENDANTS ARE SEEN AS BEING MORE LIKELY TO BE GUILTY WHEN THEY COME FROM SOCIAL CATEGORIES THAT ARE STEREOTYPICALLY LINKED TO THE FEATURES OF THE PARTICULAR CRIME THEY ARE ALLEGED TO HAVE COMMITTED.”**

**SECONDLY, ALL PEOPLE SHOULD BE PUNISHED EQUALLY, THE RICH SHOULD NOT GET SPECIAL TREATMENT. ACCORDING TO THE US DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, THE RICH TEND TO GET AN ECONOMICAL BIAS. THE CRIMES THEY COMMIT ARE OFTEN TREATED LIGHTLY OR EVEN IGNORED SOMETIMES IN COURT WHILE THE POOR GET PUNISHED FOR COMMON CRIMES VERY EASILY. THE REASON FOR THIS IS THAT OFTENTIMES RICH PEOPLE HAVE SUPPORTERS THAT BACK THEM UP AND THE JUDGE AND JURY ARE WORRIED THAT A LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WILL DISLIKE THEM. BUT TYPICALLY, THE POOR HAVE SMALL CIRCLES AND THE JURY IS NOT WORRIED ABOUT THEIR OPINIONS. MANY PEOPLE WILL TELL US THAT THIS IS JUST NOT THE CASE AND IT'S JUST THAT POOR PEOPLE COMMIT MORE CRIMES, BUT LIKE MENTIONED BEFORE PEOPLE ARE OFTEN NOT EVEN AWARE THAT THEY ARE HAVING THESE BIASES.**

FINALLY, NO ONE SHOULD BE ABLE TO USE THEIR MONEY TO THEIR ADVANTAGE IN THE COURTROOM. FIRST OF ALL, THE COST OF LAWYERS CAN BE VERY EXPENSIVE, THE LAWYER YOU HAVE CAN MAKE A HUGE DIFFERENCE IN WHETHER YOU WIN OR LOSE THE CASE. MANY PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY GET CHARGED FOR CRIMES THEY DID NOT COMMIT BECAUSE THEY EITHER CAN'T AFFORD A GOOD LAWYER OR THE OTHER SIDE HAS A LAWYER THEY CANNOT COMPETE WITH. WHEN YOU'RE RICH YOU CAN GET AWAY WITH CRIMES YOU COMMIT BY PAYING FOR THE BEST LAWYERS AND PAYING TO HIDE EVIDENCE.

THE JUSTICE SYSTEM NEEDS TO SOLVE THIS PROBLEM BY FINDING A WAY TO MAKE DEFENDING YOURSELF EQUAL FOR THE RICH AND POOR BECAUSE A CRIME IS SERIOUS AND YOU SHOULD NOT BE PUNISHED BECAUSE YOU DO NOT HAVE MONEY. MANY PEOPLE BELIEVE THAT IT IS FAIR FOR PEOPLE WITH MONEY TO HAVE AN EASIER TIME BECAUSE THEY WORKED HARDER FOR THE MONEY AND IT'S A PRIVILEGE THAT COMES WITH IT. THE PROBLEM WITH THIS IS THAT YOU NEVER KNOW THE SITUATION OF SOMEONE IN POVERTY, AND IF YOU COMMIT A CRIME YOU HAVE TO LIVE WITH YOUR CONSEQUENCE, MONEY SHOULD NOT BE A FACTOR IN THE COURTROOM. LIKE MENTIONED EARLIER, RICH PEOPLE CAN BUY THE BEST LAWYERS THEY WANT AND JUST THAT MAKES A MASSIVE DIFFERENCE.

IN SUMMARY, THE JUSTICE SYSTEM WORKS IN FAVOUR OF THE RICH BECAUSE THEY CAN USE THEIR MONEY AND POWER TO DEFEND THEMSELVES. THE JUSTICE SYSTEM IS NOT IDEAL FOR PEOPLE IN POVERTY. ALL PEOPLE SHOULD BE ABLE TO DEFEND THEMSELVES WITH EQUAL RESOURCES NO MATTER WHAT THEIR INCOME. IF WE WANT TO MOVE CLOSER TO A WORLD WHERE PEOPLE ARE TREATED EQUALLY, WE MUST CHANGE THE WAY OUR JUSTICE SYSTEM WORKS NOW.



WORKS CITED AUTHOR(S)

J H REIMAN, AND CORPORATE AUTHOR JOHN WILEY AND SONS ADDRESS 605 THIRD AVENUE. "NCJRS VIRTUAL LIBRARY." RICH GET RICHER AND THE POOR GET PRISON - IDEOLOGY, CLASS, AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE | OFFICE OF JUSTICE PROGRAMS, [WWW.OJP.GOV/NCJRS/VIRTUAL-LIBRARY/ABSTRACTS/RICH-GET-RICHER-AND-POOR-GET-PRISON-IDEOLOGY-CLASS-AND-CRIMINAL](http://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/rich-get-richer-and-poor-get-prison-ideology-class-and-criminal). ACCESSED 9 DEC. 2024.

CARL MARKS .f67943c9-ae5-4b4c-9cf0-7bd937c850f4(fill:#82b964;) , ET AL. "10 MURDERS COMMITTED BY THE ABSURDLY RICH." LISTVERSE, 26 OCT. 2019, [LISTVERSE.COM/2019/10/26/MURDERS-COMMITTED-RICH/JSTOR HOME, WWW.JSTOR.ORG/](http://LISTVERSE.COM/2019/10/26/MURDERS-COMMITTED-RICH/JSTOR%20HOME). ACCESSED 9 DEC. 2024.

# POVERTY AND ITS EFFECT ON LEGAL RIGHTS.

JAKOB DEMEULES

It's a sad reality that for many people, justice comes at a price they simply can not afford. People in poverty often are not able to have proper access to education, or other services needed to defend their case or are Poverty prevents people from having equal access to resources when it comes to exercising their rights, and changes must be made in order for the scales of justice to truly be egalitarian.

Those in impoverished conditions are hindered in their ability to exercise their rights, due to difficulty in accessing legal resources. In the research report "Poverty and Access to Justice" it's explained that "Cuts to government funding and lack of investment into legal aid services is further widening the gap between socioeconomic classes" (Flynn & Hodgson, 2017, p.8) This unfortunately makes it difficult for low-income defendants to obtain legal representation, as they cannot afford a private lawyer. Flynn and Hodgson characterize access justice as a "contested privilege". Some might argue that the individual is responsible for avoiding these situations. However, the lack of publicly available legal resources makes it nearly impossible for the poor to assert their rights, which unfortunately reinforces the inequalities causing these issues. More funding for legal aid is key to ensuring equal access to justice.

The criminal justice system is riddled with payments and fees, which can cause a build-up of debt for those unable to make the payments. This debt created by the accumulation of criminal offence fines, court fees, victim surcharges, restitution, and regulatory offence penalties is referred to as "justice debt" (Ben-Ishai & Nayerahmadi, 18) which can cause poverty in itself, because they cannot be waived, reduced, or released (Ben-Ishai & Nayerahmadi, 2019.) Not to mention the cost of legal fees alone. Most impoverished individuals are unable to afford a lawyer which can force them to navigate these legal issues alone, or not take legal action at all. Many will say that people should save up for legal expenses, but when basic living costs account for most of their income, it's impossible for them to afford these fees, reinforcing these economic injustices.

Another issue for people in poverty is a lack of legal identity. The paper "International Access to Justice: Barriers and Solutions" by Julinda Beqiraj and Lawrence McNamara explains how "Recognition and proof of legal identity are frequently required if individuals are to claim entitlements, such as access to healthcare and education." (Beqiraj & McNamara, 15) Unfortunately, in some countries such as Uzbekistan, parents must pay a fee to register a child.

If the parents can not afford to register their child, their child will not have a legal identity. This prevents them from having access to legal protection, healthcare and education, which causes a cycle of poverty. Critics may argue that gaining legal identity is simple in many jurisdictions. However, economic barriers such as fees, administrative complexities, and geographic limitations make it unfairly difficult for impoverished individuals to obtain legal documentation. In short, poverty creates significant barriers to justice, such as limited access to legal aid, the inability to pay justice-related fees and makes obtaining a legal identity difficult. These obstacles make it nearly impossible for people in poverty to defend their rights. Changes must be made to create a system where justice is not reserved for those who can afford it. If we work together to address these systemic issues, we can move towards a more equitable society, that doesn't discriminate based on paycheck.

#### WORKS CITED

- BELLESMITH, IRELAND, ET AL. "POVERTY AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE." INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR CRIMINAL LAW REFORM, 2022, [HTTPS://ICCLR.ORG/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2022/02/ACCESS-TO-JUSTICE-AND-POVERTY\\_ICCLR\\_RR-2022-2\\_BELLSMITH-GOERTZEN-NEILSEN-STINSON.PDF](https://icclr.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/ACCESS-TO-JUSTICE-AND-POVERTY_ICCLR_RR-2022-2_BELLSMITH-GOERTZEN-NEILSEN-STINSON.PDF).
- BEQIRAJ, JULINDA, AND LAWRENCE MCNAMARA. "INTERNATIONAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE: BARRIERS AND SOLUTIONS." BINGHAM CENTRE FOR THE RULE OF LAW REPORT, 2014. BINGHAM CENTRE FOR THE RULE OF LAW, [HTTPS://WWW.BIICL.ORG/DOCUMENTS/485\\_IBA\\_REPORT\\_060215.PDF](https://www.biicl.org/documents/485_IBA_REPORT_060215.PDF).
- FLYNN, & HODGSON, J. (2017). ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND LEGAL AID: COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES ON UNMET LEGAL NEED. HART PUBLISHING.

# POVERTY HARDSHIPS

## GIANNA D'AMICO

POVERTY IS ONE OF THE MAJOR BARRIERS THAT PREVENTS PEOPLE FROM GETTING WHAT THEY NEED TO LIVE A PROPER LIFE. SO MANY PEOPLE, ALL OVER THE WORLD, SUFFER DUE TO A LACK OF MONEY FOR SCHOOL, HEALTHCARE, CLEAN WATER, AND PROPER FOOD. WHEN RESOURCES ARE NOT WELL DISTRIBUTED, IT BECOMES VERY DIFFICULT FOR THEM TO COME OUT OF THIS SITUATION. TO BE ABLE TO OVERCOME THIS, ONE HAS TO UNDERSTAND HOW POVERTY CAN AFFECT EACH AND EVERY ONE OF THESE BASIC HUMAN NEEDS.

EDUCATION IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST SECTORS IN WHICH THERE IS A PROBLEM CREATED REGARDING POVERTY. SEVERAL PLACES CHARGE FOR SCHOOLING, THINGS LIKE TUITION, UNIFORMS, BOOKS, AND TRANSPORTATION EVENTUALLY ADD UP QUICKLY FOR FAMILIES THAT HAVE VERY LITTLE MONEY TO START WITH. A LOT OF THE TIME THIS MEANS KIDS HAVE TO DROP OUT OF SCHOOL OR CAN'T GO AT ALL. WITHOUT A PROPER EDUCATION IT'S HARDER TO GET A WELL PAYING JOB, WHICH CAN KEEP FAMILIES STUCK IN A CYCLE OF POVERTY. EVEN WHEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN A COUNTRY DO NOT CHARGE TUITION, CHILDREN FROM POORER FAMILIES MAY NOT HAVE ACCESS TO GOOD SCHOOLS OR EXTRA HELP AND ACCOMMODATIONS WHICH CAN PUT THEM AT AN ACADEMIC DISADVANTAGE.

ANOTHER BASIC NEED DIFFICULT TO ATTAIN WHEN IN POVERTY IS HEALTHCARE. MANY PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY CANNOT AFFORD TO GO TO A DOCTOR OR BUY MEDICATION. THIS MEANS THEY ARE NOT TREATED WHEN THEY GET SICK, THIS CONTRIBUTES TO DETERIORATING HEALTH. IN SOME POORER REGIONS, HOSPITALS AND CLINICS LACK STAFF, SUPPLIES, OR SIMPLY ARE TOO FAR AWAY TO EASILY ACCESS. POOR HEALTH IS POTENTIALLY LETHAL AND MAY FURTHER PREVENT PEOPLE FROM WORKING, WHICH ONLY ADDS TO THEIR FINANCIAL PROBLEMS

THE OTHER TWO BIG CHALLENGES ARE CLEAN WATER AND PROPER NUTRITION. IN TOO MANY PLACES, PEOPLE FROM POOR COMMUNITIES LACK ACCESS TO SAFE DRINKING WATER AND MAY GET SERIOUSLY SICK FROM IT. AS IT WAS SAID BEFORE, HEALTH CARE IS ALSO NOT THAT AVAILABLE FOR THEM TO GET, WHICH WORSENS THEIR SITUATION IN SEVERAL WAYS. NOT BEING ABLE TO BUY FOOD CAN CAUSE MALNUTRITION, ESPECIALLY IN CHILDREN. MALNUTRITION LEADS TO CONSEQUENCES FOR THE GROWTH AND LEARNING OF KIDS. IT MAKES THEM MORE VULNERABLE TO SICKNESS. AND WHEN PEOPLE ARE HUNGRY AND ILL, IT BECOMES EVEN MORE DIFFICULT TO ESCAPE POVERTY.

POVERTY IMPACTS NOT JUST INDIVIDUALS, BUT NEIGHBORHOODS AND WHOLE COMMUNITIES. LESS FORTUNATE COMMUNITIES COMMONLY LACK GOOD PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, SAFE PLACES TO LIVE, AND PARKS OR OTHER SPACES IN WHICH TO RELAX. WITHOUT THESE RESOURCES, IT BECOMES DIFFICULT TO GET TO WORK, SCHOOL, OR THE DOCTOR EASILY. THESE ARE NEEDS THAT ALL PEOPLE REQUIRE, YET HAVE BEEN STRIPPED FROM THEM BECAUSE OF THEIR FINANCIAL STATE AND SITUATIONS.

WE HAVE TO ACT AND ENSURE THAT EVERYBODY HAS WHAT THEY NEED. A BETTER TRANSPORT SYSTEM, IMPROVEMENT IN SCHOOLS AND HOSPITALS, PARTICULARLY IN THE POORER AREAS, WILL BE A HUGE BE HUGE HELP IN MAKING SURE EVERYONE IS GETTING TO LIVE THE LIFE THEY DESERVE.

HELPING POORER COMMUNITIES HELPS GIVE OTHERS EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN LIFE AND IMPROVES THEIR OVERALL WAY OF LIFE.

IN CONCLUSION, POVERTY MAKES IT MUCH MORE DIFFICULT FOR PEOPLE TO GET WHAT THEY NEED TO LIVE HEALTHY, HAPPY LIVES. HOWEVER, WE CAN MAKE A FAIRER WORLD BY WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE THE LESS FORTUNATE AREAS AND ALLOWING EVERYONE TO LIVE TO THEIR FULLEST POTENTIAL.



## JUSTICE UNBALANCED

JULIANNE WALSH

A BULLDOG AND A CUTE YELLOW DUCK ARE IN COURT, AND DESPITE NO EVIDENCE, THE JUDGE (A CAT WHO DISLIKES DOGS) SENDS THE BULLDOG TO PRISON. WE WOULD LIKE TO BELIEVE THAT THIS IS JUST A LITTLE STORY ABOUT ANIMALS, BUT IT'S A REAL LIFE ISSUE, FACING CLASSISM IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM. THE LEGAL SYSTEM STRUGGLES WITH BOTH RACISM AND CLASSISM, OFTEN TREATING POOR PEOPLE UNFAIRLY COMPARED TO WEALTHIER INDIVIDUALS AND OR BECAUSE OF THEIR RACE. MANY PEOPLE FACE UNFAIR TREATMENT IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM BECAUSE OF THEIR RACE OR HOW MUCH MONEY THEY HAVE.

PEOPLE WITH LESS MONEY OFTEN RECEIVE HARSHER PUNISHMENTS IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM COMPARED TO WEALTHIER INDIVIDUALS. IN THE CASE OF PUBLIC DEFENDERS VS PRIVATE ATTORNEYS, A PRIVATE ATTORNEY WILL BE INCREDIBLY MOTIVATED TO WIN YOUR CASE BECAUSE THE MORE CASES THEY WIN, THE MORE CLIENTS THEY WILL BE ABLE TO OBTAIN AND THE MORE MONEY THEY OBTAIN. FOR PUBLIC DEFENDERS THAT JUST ISN'T THE CASE, THEY WON'T ALWAYS HAVE THE SAME OR ADVANCED EXPERIENCE AS PRIVATE ATTORNEYS. CLASSISM CAN BE VISIBLY PRESENT, THE LESS FORTUNATE INDIVIDUALS WHO CAN'T AFFORD PRIVATE ATTORNEYS WILL BE FORCED WITH A CLEAR DISADVANTAGE AGAINST THE WEALTHIER INDIVIDUALS AND JUSTICE WON'T BE SERVED TO ITS FULL CONTENT. AN OPPOSING SIDE COULD ARGUE THAT THE LEGAL SYSTEM TREATS EVERYONE EQUALLY AND THAT DIFFERENCES IN JUSTICE ARE BASED ON THE SPECIFICS OF EACH CASE. THE STATISTICS SHOW THAT PRIVATE ATTORNEYS HAVE A 25-40% HIGHER CHANCE OF WINNING OVER PUBLIC DEFENDERS.

PEOPLE OF COLOR, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO ARE UNDERPRIVILEGED, ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE STOPPED AND ARRESTED BY THE POLICE. INDIVIDUALS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE ARRESTED FOR MINOR OFFENSES, WHICH THEN WILL LEAD TO A GREATER LIKELIHOOD OF BEING CONVICTED AND SENTENCED TO PRISON. THESE INDIVIDUALS WON'T BE TREATED WITH THE SAME RESOURCES AS OTHERS AND WILL USUALLY BE ASSUMED TO BE THE CRIMINAL EVEN IF EVIDENCE COULD POINT IN ANOTHER DIRECTION. THE CENTRAL PARK 5 ARE A GREAT EXAMPLE, THEY WERE NOT ONLY ACCUSED BUT FORCED TO ADMIT TO A CRIME. THE PUBLIC WAS QUICK TO HATE AS WELL, EVEN THE LEGAL SYSTEM SHOWED RACISM AND CLASSISM BECAUSE THE 5 WERE BLACK AND UNDERPRIVILEGED.

POOR PEOPLE OFTEN CAN'T PAY BAIL, SO THEY STAY IN JAIL BEFORE THEIR TRIAL, WHICH CAN LEAD TO HARSHER PUNISHMENTS. PEOPLE WITH FEWER RESOURCES WON'T BE ABLE TO PREPARE IN PRISON BECAUSE THEY CAN'T AFFORD BAIL AND PREPARE FOR COURT PROPERLY. ONE EXAMPLE IS KALIEF BROWDER, A TEENAGER FROM NEW YORK, WHO WAS ARRESTED FOR ALLEGEDLY STEALING A BACKPACK. HE COULDN'T AFFORD THE \$3,000 BAIL, SO HE SPENT THREE YEARS IN JAIL, MUCH OF IT IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT, BEFORE HIS CASE WAS DISMISSED. HIS TIME IN JAIL SEVERELY IMPACTED HIS LIFE, EVEN THOUGH HE HAD NOT BEEN CONVICTED OF ANY CRIME. IT'S NOT RIGHT AND IT IS A RESULT OF CLASSISM AND RACISM IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM.

People from lower-income backgrounds, are more likely to be arrested and unable to pay bail and be stuck with defense attorneys that won't be able to help them. This shows how classism and racism lead to harsher punishments, with those who have less money facing much worse consequences than wealthier individuals in the legal system.



Many people are treated unfairly in the legal system because of their race or financial status. We need to fix the legal system so that everyone is treated equally, no matter their race or how much money they have.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION

SAMUEL LABAR

DID YOU KNOW THAT 4 IN 10 PEOPLE SAY THEY KNOW LITTLE TO NOTHING ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS? SO SINCE A LOT OF PEOPLE DON'T KNOW THE RIGHTS AND LAWS OF HUMANS, SHOULD WE BE TEACHING IT IN HIGHSCHOOL? IT'S A REALLY IMPORTANT TOPIC IN TODAY'S SOCIETY SINCE EVERYONE IS QUESTIONING SOCIAL JUSTICE. THERE SHOULDN'T BE ANY EDUCATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN HIGH SCHOOL. HIGH SCHOOL IS MEANT TO TEACH MORE BASIC TOPICS, IF PEOPLE WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS, THEY CAN TAKE LAW IN CEGEP OR UNIVERSITY. IT IS ALSO A VERY LARGE TOPIC AND WOULD REQUIRE A LOT OF HOURS IN THAT CLASS AND THAT IS WHY IT IS A MAJOR IN UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE. ANOTHER REASON IS BECAUSE THE LAWS IN EACH COUNTRY, STATE OR PROVINCE VARY WHICH MAKES IT MUCH HARDER TO TEACH. THESE ARE ALL REASONS WHY IT SHOULDN'T BE TAUGHT IN HIGH SCHOOL AND SHOULD STICK TO BEING A MAJOR IN LATER EDUCATION.

HIGH SCHOOL IS SUPPOSED TO BE TEACHING THE SUPER COMPLICATED SUBJECTS THAT ARE IN HIGHER EDUCATION. HIGH SCHOOLS ARE MEANT TO BE TEACHING STUDENTS THE BASIC STUFF LIKE SCIENCE OR MATH. SO IF WE NEED TO TEACH ALL THE BASIC TOPICS IN HIGH SCHOOL, WE CAN'T BE TEACHING COMPLICATED SUBJECTS LIKE LAW. SOME PEOPLE MIGHT SAY WELL WHAT IF THEY DON'T WANT TO LEARN SCIENCE AND MATH. IT IS AN OBLIGATION TO LEARN THESE SUBJECTS IN HIGH SCHOOL BECAUSE THESE ARE THE 2 BIGGEST SUBJECTS IN HIGH SCHOOL. SO IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO NOT TAKE THEM BECAUSE IT'S MORE OF THE BASIC STUFF WHICH ARE WHAT HIGH SCHOOLS ARE SUPPOSED TO TEACH.

LAW IS ALSO A VERY BIG SUBJECT AND TAKES UP A LOT OF TIME TO TEACH. HIGH SCHOOLS ALREADY TEACH A FEW BIG SUBJECTS LIKE MATH, SCIENCE, HISTORY AND OTHER CLASSES LIKE THAT WHICH TAKE UP A LOT OF TIME AND CAN'T AFFORD TO FIT IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF HUMAN RIGHTS. SO SINCE WE'RE ALREADY SPENDING SO MUCH TIME AND HAVE CLASSES EVERY DAY ON THE BASE SUBJECTS, THERE IS NO TIME TO SPEND ON OTHER SUBJECTS BECAUSE THE HIGH SCHOOLS ARE PREPARING US FOR THE MORE COMPLEX SUBJECTS LIKE LAW. SOME PEOPLE COULD SAY THAT LAW IS A VERY IMPORTANT SUBJECT AND WE NEED TO BE ABLE TO FIT IT IN. IF HIGH SCHOOLS DECIDE TO FIT IT IN, IT WOULD HAVE TO BE ONLY A SLIGHT INTRODUCTION AND EVEN THEN THEY WOULD HAVE TO TAKE TIME AWAY FROM OTHER SUBJECTS. THIS WOULDN'T BENEFIT THE STUDENTS AT ALL AS THEY WOULDN'T LEARN ALL THE SUBJECTS TO SOME DEPTH AND ONLY BE INTRODUCED TO A FEW CLASSES.

ANOTHER REASON WHY IT SHOULDN'T BE TAUGHT IS BECAUSE IT VARIES BY THE COUNTRIES, THE STATES AND THE PROVINCES. SINCE IT VARIES, IT MAKES IT MUCH HARDER TO TEACH AND WOULD CONFUSE A LOT OF THE STUDENTS. IF THEY'RE CONFUSED ABOUT A CLASS, IT COULD RESULT IN STRESS AND THE LAST THING YOU WANT A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT TO BE IS STRESSED. SO SINCE IT VARIES A LOT, IT MAKES IT MUCH HARDER TO TEACH. PEOPLE COULD SAY THAT TO JUST TEACH THE LAW OF THE STATE THAT YOUR SCHOOL IS IN. THIS WOULDN'T REALLY EDUCATE THE STUDENTS MUCH BECAUSE THERE ARE A LOT MORE LAWS THAN JUST THE ONES IN YOUR STATE OR COUNTRY, SO IT WOULDN'T BE A SUCCESSFUL TEACHING.

IN CONCLUSION, TEACHING LAW IN HIGH SCHOOL WOULD LEAVE OUT A LOT OF OTHER IMPORTANT CLASSES LIKE HISTORY AND MATH. IT IS A COMPLICATED CLASS TO TEACH SINCE IT VARIES EVERYWHERE IN THE WORLD, AND HIGH SCHOOL IS MEANT TO BE TEACHING MORE OF THE BASIC TOPICS. LAW SHOULDN'T BE TAUGHT IN HIGH SCHOOL FOR THESE REASONS. SO IF YOU WERE A TEACHER AT A HIGH SCHOOL, WOULD YOU DECIDE TO TEACH YOUR CLASS SOME HUMAN RIGHTS?

# CHANGE

## **Change**

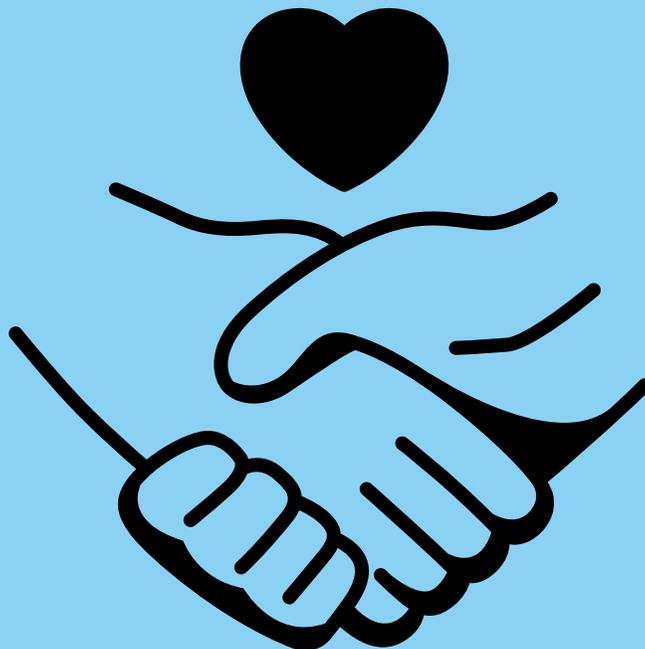
By Annika Chuprun

We can change  
Seasons can change, we can change seasons  
Times can change, we can change times  
Lives can change, we can change lives  
We can change

## **The change we need for a new chance**

By Owen Stewart

We can change it by looking from a different view and putting in the effort  
You can change by acknowledging the mistakes  
made to do this to the world.  
I change it by adding the efforts to the everyday norm  
We can unite to help make more people stand for this  
You can work towards the change one step at a time



# LEGAL EDUCATION AND ITS IMPORTANCE INDIANA HACKEL

Have you ever had an encounter or seen somebody be mistreated by a police officer or somebody within the legal system? I have seen many things about people being mistreated and to this day in our society most people go through legal issues without knowing their rights. It's very important to understand your rights because if not it could leave you vulnerable to being exploited and to potential injustice. High school is a huge part of everybody's life because it's how you learn about most things and it shapes you so it would be a good idea to incorporate legal rights into the learning process. I personally think that this would allow people to protect themselves more and to prepare them to become an adult.



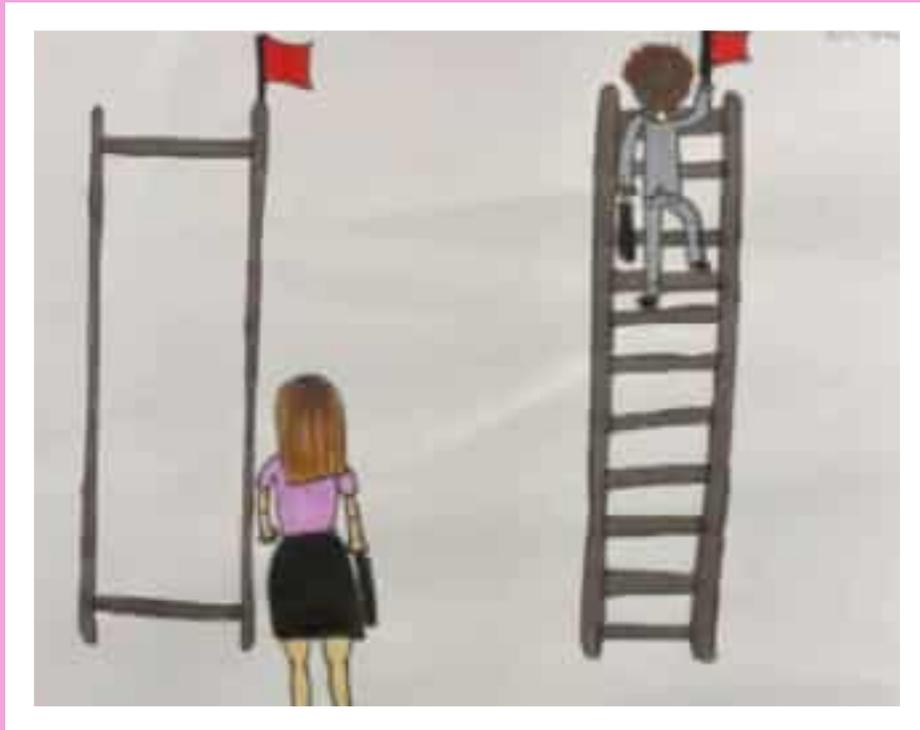
A big part for adding legal education in high schools is to give students the information that they could use to protect themselves. It's also around the age when you're in high school that you begin to explore more and can find yourself in situations where you need knowledge on the legal system. An example of this would be somebody having an interaction with the police and understanding their rights, such as the right to stay silent which could make a person feel much more confident in this type of situation and to make sure they aren't experiencing any type of injustice. On the other hand, this could make it so that it would be harder to catch some criminals if they were more educated on the law because they would understand how to deviate their way through the legal system.

Adding legal education to the school system would also promote better actions and a sense of responsibility to the youth. Laws are what we live by everyday and they are what keeps our society alive because the laws are enforced which makes it so you have consequences for breaking them. Because of this, incorporating some education of the law into school could make it so people act more responsibly and so that they understand their freedom and rights. On the other hand, it's still possible to act cruel legally. It mainly depends on a person's ethical behavior however people will always try to break rules.

Teaching legal rights in school is also great for students who deal with certain issues like bullying, work related problems, etc. A study done in 2021-2022 by the National Center for Education Statistics shows that around 19 percent of students have reported being bullied but don't actually know how to protect themselves. Being taught about laws regarding things like harassment can help students understand their rights when being violated and what they can do in certain situations to protect themselves. Some people argue that legal topics being taught are too complicated for high school students but some studies have shown that if they are taught in an engaging way the students can understand well.

Injustice and being treated badly is always a bad thing so it's important to learn about the law even just a little bit to get a fundamental understanding of it so you can avoid the possible consequences. Learning about it allows you to know your rights more and could make people act more accordingly to society's rules. Adding this makes it so people understand how to protect themselves in certain situations and prepares them for the responsibilities they will have later on. To conclude, I believe that a part of the law should be taught in every school so the population understands basic laws and regulations.





## Ladder of Opportunity Penelope Orozoco

Injustice happens all the time. One injustice that really stands out to me is sexism in the work environment. As a young woman, I want to have equal opportunities as men. I know that society has changed for the better and women now have a wide variety of careers to choose from. Unfortunately, women still face inequalities. For example, women aren't paid the same as men in certain industries. This one really sticks out because why should I get paid less than a man when we're doing the same job. I'm not worth any less than a man. This is why I chose to draw this. The flag is a symbol representing things such as salaries, goals, careers, etc. The ladder represents the steps to get to where you want to be, the goals you want to achieve, the flag. My mom is one of the only women managers in a global company in a society where it would be called a "man's world". This just goes to show that women can do it all- sometimes better than men can.

## Equilibrium Within Our World

Melina Silva

Social justice emphasizes fair opportunities within society, aiming to create an equal environment for all individuals. It is closely linked with human rights which represent the fundamental entitlements that belong to everyone, regardless of their background. While equality focusses on each achieving equal status and opportunities, discrimination poses a barrier between both social justice and human rights, which are two necessities for ongoing efforts.

Human rights are essential for ensuring dignity, equality and justice in society and they are seen as a foundation for social justice. By following human rights, society should work towards creating environments where all individuals can live really without judgment. Equality is the principle of fairness and injustice when it comes to the treatment among individuals. To be equal means to emphasize uniformity and treat everyone the same. Similar to equity, which recognizes that different people have different needs that should be considered to confirm that everything is fair. Concept in particular is important when addressing systemic inequalities because promoting equality can cause society to work towards creating environments where everyone has the opportunity to succeed. Discrimination is a horrible thing that many people worldwide still suffer from to this day. You would think at this point people would wake up and realize that everyone should be equal no matter what background manifests in social, economic, and institutional practices that disadvantages certain groups while privileging others discrimination against the principles of equality and human rights leading to significant societal division. As much as we have changed as a society to become more accepting towards others, there is still so much that needs to be discrimination, injustice all over the world many times leads to situations that can quite destroy the lives of others.

In conclusion, social justice is such an important aspect of society today because it spreads awareness of equity across the world, which is what we need if we want to make a difference. Discrimination is an ongoing issue that is still wrongly affecting people of different races, religions and orientations. At the end of the day we are all humans that are entitled to the same rights and privileges as everyone else.

# **Students' Legal Rights**

## **Xavier Lapointe**

**Approximately 18 percent of criminal charges in Canada are pressed against, due to false guilty pleas or imaginary crimes . Students in all schools should be taught how to protect themselves in the legal world. Students should be educated on their legal rights, responsibilities and self protection in the legal world. Being able to understand legal procedures, recognizing legal risks and how to protect yourself in a bad legal situation. By adding legal education into the curriculum, students will be better prepared to protect themselves in the real world.**

**Students should be educated on their legal rights for many reasons. The first reason would be to determine in the future if something ever happens, if they should be getting convicted for that crime or not and learn how to navigate around it. Second reason would be that teaching students their legal rights will empower them to make smart decisions and have better awareness in the world. 3 out of every 10 000 youths get prosecuted and go to jail. By educating people on their legal rights it can decrease the youth crime rate and set up the future for less crime. Many people believe that school should be focused on traditional education and talking about legal rights will distract them from the main school topics. Even though this point is true you could easily fit in some time to teach the topic and keep the other important topics too and it will make a big difference for the future.**

**Students should be educated on their legal responsibilities. If students better understand their legal responsibilities it can help them get into less trouble by following the law and respecting it. It will also give students a better understanding of how they can operate in the workforce in the future and by what laws they have to follow and what path they choose in the future. 28% of businesses worldwide are not aware of their legal responsibilities. By educating students on their legal rights it will again set students up for a better future and learn how to act in the workforce. Some people will argue that it's not necessary for kids to be learning these complicated topics and that it's a waste of time. This is not a valid argument because learning all the basic topics like math and science is just preparing us for the future, not the present. This is the same thing for educating people on their legal responsibilities, so learning these important life skills will better prepare students for their future careers.**

Students should be educated on legal self protection. In the future you might never know what can happen. A police officer could pull you over for a terrible reason, you could be framed for a crime and many more scenarios that can cause bad punishments.

By teaching students their legal self protection it will allow them to understand what rights they have as a person and if the conviction is faulty. Around 30% of cops will not respect the rights you have. This means that knowing what rights you have to protect yourself in any bad situation can help you decline some charges or know what laws you have to protect yourself. Teaching legal protection could encourage people to seek legal action at the first sight of a problem instead of attempting to resolve it. People also argue that it can cause students to feel invincible and that legal protection can protect them from anything. To solve this concern teachers could just tell students what not to do in a bad situation and how to resolve a bad legal situation instead of just saying you are protected or not. All these arguments could just be solved with the help of proper education on the topic.

In conclusion, teaching students their legal rights, protection and responsibilities are very important for educating students on what can happen in the future. Students in all schools should be taught how to protect themselves in the legal world. Students should understand not just their legal right but how to use them responsibly and it will create a better future for the future generations.



# **The Effect Of Poverty**

## **Jackson Macnab**

**As of the most recent data, approximately 1 in 7 Canadians live in poverty, which is around 4.2 million people. Poverty shouldn't be a thing that distinguishes people from being equal but it is. We know that there are a lot less homeless people being offered jobs than non homeless people. Poverty does not necessarily change the equality rights of someone but it definitely changes the opportunities and resources they are presented with. To show this, the number of people in poverty with jobs, the stereotype and number of people in poverty in jail . Being homeless doesn't choose how your life should pan out.**

**In the US and Canada there are a lot less people in poverty that have jobs than others who aren't. From a study in 2013 it says that "of the 3.5 million Americans who experience homelessness each year, 25% are employed." This shows that there aren't many homeless people being given a chance in the working class. With this much of a low percentage it is visible that homeless people are not given as much of a chance. It's not that they don't work hard but because they aren't being treated equally. If being homeless doesn't affect your life and opportunities, then why is there only 25% of them who have working jobs?**

**There is a stereotype that is attached to homeless people that everyone knows. We all think that they are lazy, dirty, weird, old. That has a great factor in the workforce. When a boss or owner is looking for a new employee they won't pick someone who looks like the typical stereotype. It isn't that they don't try or work as hard, it is just the way they present themselves. If you owned a business and were looking for a new employee would you choose a good looking man or woman in a fancy suit and nice hair or a man with a ripped shirt and frizzy hair? I bet you would choose the first one, because again it is just human nature and the stereotype has a big impact. You could say that the stereotype can't affect anything but who was the last time you saw a homeless person working or in court with a fair judgment.**

**People in poverty are constantly seen as less than wealthy people and sometimes even people in the middle class. When a homeless or very poor person gets sent to court they are given a really bad lawyer and aren't given a fair judgment. It is demoralizing and really is not fair. From the James Howard society of canada "Among this group of prisoners, 22.9 percent, or roughly one of every five prisoners, was homeless, that is they were staying in a shelter, living on the street" We always talk about BLM and how they should be treated equally but what about poverty? The same thing is starting to happen; they are not being treated right and aren't being given enough of a chance. When people say that people in poverty are given a fair shot in court they don't realize that they don't get a good lawyer. Since they are very poor they don't have the money to get a good lawyer but the justice system or government should realize this and give them a better chance and overall a more equal chance.**

**In conclusion, there is a very low percentage of homeless people who have an actual job and that are being treated fair in court. There is nothing they can do about it because of the way they appear. Poverty does not necessarily change the equality rights of someone but it definitely changes the opportunities and resources they are presented with. People in poverty are definitely given a fair chance to accomplish some things that others mind find easy. They are still humans and should' be treated this way. If you were someone in poverty would you be alright with being treated unequal and unfair? What about any of your family members?**

# The Price of Being a Woman

Gabrielle Jansen

Gender inequality has always been something common throughout society. Big steps have been taken in regards to women's equality and rights, but there are still some occasions where sexism is still very apparent. This is mostly common regarding the pricing of many women's products, known as the Pink Tax. This is when companies charge more for marketed women products than similar ones marketed for men. The Pink Tax contributes to gender inequality since it preserves stereotypes, it improperly puts an extra financial burden on women, and causes psychological inequality between genders. Even though some people might believe it isn't present anymore, the Pink Tax still exists in many expanses, like hygiene, clothing, personal care products, and even insurance.

Many stereotypes towards women have been brought up and maintained for many years, especially the one of how women are expected to consume more products than men. The term "Pink Tax" was first established in the 1990s, but the concept of womens products being priced higher than mens has been around since at least the early 90s. This also first originated in the 20s, even when the only noticeable difference was the packaging, but slowly started to expand into the rest of the century. The belief that women were more consumeristic than men was a well-secured stereotype, so companies started to think that they could raise their prices without anyone noticing and even complaining. The higher prices of womens products, like mostly hygiene, can bring up the idea that women's needs are somehow more expensive than mens or how they are more "high-maintenance" than men. This contributes to gender inequality since it supports harmful stereotypes about gender expectations that many women have to follow. While some people believe that the Pink Tax has slowly gotten better throughout the years, it is in fact the opposite. A study in 2021 conducted by a Canadian web scraping blog Parsehub established that on average, women pay up to +50% more on many hygiene products than men. They also concluded that back in 2016, women only paid 46% more than men, proving how with their new research, women are still paying more but also how the Pink Tax has increasingly gone up, rather than gone down.

The Pink Tax can cause an effect on women's financial security, which is already combined with the fact that women get paid less than men for the exact same work. According to a study, women get paid at most 89 cents for every dollar a man earns for work of equal value. With the increasing cost of products and services for women and the combination that women still earn less than men, it can put an even bigger economic burden on them, which can also cause many troubles for single moms' financial and psychological state.

Some might argue that the psychological effects of the Pink Tax on gender inequality may even be exaggerated when compared to broader issues in society. Too much attention on the Pink Tax could divert attention away from more important problems that impact women's financial well-being. But even though many things can affect this, the Pink Tax is still a very crucial topic to understand which affects many various topics in society. Diverting attention away from the Pink Tax and focusing on 'more important' topics will not dismiss anything towards women. Instead, we should be focusing on all of this and ways to improve gender equality and not pushing anything away because they aren't seen as important as other topics.

The inconsistency of prices, especially women's, can lead to psychological inequality between genders. The higher costs associated with women's products can show women that their needs are less valued and should even be willing to pay more for basic products. For example, at the pharmacy Jean Coutu, a men's unscented Dove deodorant is priced at 8.49\$ for 85 g of product and a women's unscented Dove deodorant is priced at 9.49\$ for 74 g of product instead. The fact that a simple hygiene product is nearly 1\$ more when marketed for women than the ones marketed for men, even though the women's ones contain less product. The higher costs for women can help the thought that they are more consumerist than men, which just strengthens these gender stereotypes in society and can cause a sense of frustration in women. They may feel unfairly treated and believe that their needs are more expensive to satisfy than men's. The stress women are then being faced with because of these changes can accumulate and lead to negative psychological effects. Feelings of inequality and unfairness might occur because of this, especially for women who are already faced with inconsistent wage gaps or job opportunities.

Overall, the Pink Tax is a clear example of gender inequality throughout our society. With this, women are at a financial disadvantage because of the pricings, especially since they receive a lower pay than men, as well as helping to preserve many stereotypes, and causing a psychological inequality between genders. While minor changes about gender-based pricing have been made, mostly in the United States, the Canadian government has yet to do anything federally to stop the Pink Tax. Getting rid of this would be a step closer to closing the gender gap and promoting equality for everyone.

#### Works Cited

- "Breaking down the Pink Tax: What You Need to Know." Finance, [fincents.com/blog/pink-tax](https://fincents.com/blog/pink-tax). Accessed 11 Dec. 2024.
- "In the Publication Quality of Employment in Canada, the Pay Gap Indicator Is Based on the Self-Reported Usual Hourly Wages of Paid Employees, Aged 25 to 54 at Their Main Job." Pay Gap, 1998 to 2021, Government of Canada, Statistics Canada, 30 May 2022, [www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/14-28-0001/2020001/article/00003-eng.htm](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/14-28-0001/2020001/article/00003-eng.htm).
- Perez, Martin. "Does the Pink Tax Still Exist? Women Are Paying +50% More." ParseHub, Web Scraping Blog (Tips, Guides + Tutorials) | ParseHub, 9 Mar. 2021, [www.parsehub.com/blog/pink-tax-women-pay-more/](https://www.parsehub.com/blog/pink-tax-women-pay-more/).



# **The Affects of Classism and Poverty**

**Alexia Spetsieris**

**It is stated that 44% of the global population is lower class and lives on less than \$6 a day. That's over 3.5 billion people who wake up and go to bed hungry, cold, and exhausted. These are people who don't get to have the same opportunities as us, the same freedom. Not only do they have a limit to education and employment but they also just have unmet social needs in general. It's unfair to them. It's unfair that people with more money essentially get more rights as a human being than those who are less wealthy. That's not justice at all, no matter how many times the system tricks us into believing it is. The lower-middle class has way less freedom than those wealthier, and that's a fact.**

**Some people say that there is no worse life than those who are poor, and honestly, I can agree with that statement. I can't even begin to imagine how so many millions of people live every day starving and just overall depressed because of their situation. Let's take "Punching the Air" for example. Amal didn't have enough money to afford a good lawyer, which I guess means that having more money means that he's less guilty. Just imagine that that's the reality for so many people. It's hard to think about everyone who's been wrongly accused of a crime and that maybe if they had better opportunities, they wouldn't have been arrested. It's just sad that money plays such a big factor into all that.**

**Secondly, poor citizens don't have the same educational opportunities as those wealthier, and I'm not just referring to elementary & high school. Statistics show that 58.4 million children in the primary age don't go to school. In some families there has never been anyone to go to college. To add, there are over 773 million people in the world who are illiterate. Some of which was all because they didn't have enough money to learn. They shouldn't have to pay that big of a price just because they weren't born in the best family, it's not fair.**

**Thirdly, some people ask the question; "if someone is poor/homeless, why don't they just get a job?" but it's way more complicated than that. To start, poor people have barely any money, which means that there's nowhere for them to get good clothes to show up for a job interview. Plus, there are not a lot of high paying jobs that don't require a good education for them to acquire. Also, what if they have kids? Who would take care of their kids while they're working? Exactly, nobody can. It's never as simple as others think it is.**

**Yes, some may say that there's homeless shelters available for those in need but that's only what people see. Sure, there are many homeless shelters in North America but what about the countries with extreme overpopulation and poverty. For example, Hong Kong has these living accommodations called "coffin homes". They're extremely small, each one roughly 2 feet wide and 5 feet long. Now think about it, there's people who live their whole lives inside these homes. Sources say that bedbugs, cockroaches, and just insects in general are very common. There are no windows either, people living there can't even tell what hour of the day it is.**

Overall, I'd say that there's nothing worse than being so greatly affected by poverty like so many people. I wish that there could be more solutions for everyone around the world, but sadly, there's not. Hopefully in the future we'll have better choices and opportunities for everyone, so that everyone can get the justice they deserve.

#### Works Cited

- Douglass, Frederick. "773 million people would not be able to read this article." Action Education, 8 September 2023, <https://action-education.org/en/773-million-people-not-read-this-article/>. Accessed 5 December 2024.
- Fry, Richard, and Anthony Cilluffo. "A Rising Share of Undergraduates Are From Poor Families, Especially at Less Selective Colleges." Pew Research Center, 22 May 2019, <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2019/05/22/a-rising-share-of-undergraduates-are-from-poor-families-especially-at-less-selective-colleges/>. Accessed 5 December 2024.
- Haas, Benjamin. "My week in Lucky House: the horror of Hong Kong's coffin homes." The Guardian, 28 August 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/aug/29/hong-kong-coffin-homes-horror-my-week>. Accessed 5 December 2024.



**LEAK:**

**BY: EMMA McROBBIE**

There's a leak in my ceiling  
Dripping down on my head  
I can't find the source  
But there's a puddle in my bed  
I toss and I turn, I yawn and I yearn  
For the water to swallow me whole

I'm a leak to someone  
A nuisance, a bother  
A thing to be fixed  
That gets harder and harder  
To ignore and have around  
They can't stand the sound  
Of my dripping

Patching me up,  
Or letting me fall  
The leak is stil there  
A drip down their wall  
I linger and ripple  
I double in size  
The more you ignore me  
The louder I cry

I'm the leak in your ceiling

# Clay

Anonymous

Being a girl means staying vigilant and aware  
Of my surroundings and my feelings  
I am making sure I am prepared  
If I am attacked or harassed  
By people who don't see me as a girl  
Only something to admire with  
Grabbing hands and prying eyes  
Like clay to be molded and folded until it's just right  
For the beholder  
Acting like I don't have a beating heart in my chest  
Pounding behind my breast  
Only caring about my appearance  
An animal in a cage whose only job  
Is to sit pretty and  
Keep my mouth shut  
Tight





## **I Want To Be A Lawyer** **By Addison Amelia Martin**

Imagine being 16 years old, accused of a murder you didn't commit. Imagine sitting in a courtroom as the prosecution builds a case against you with no physical evidence, just a coerced confession after hours of relentless interrogation. Imagine the jury believing them, sentencing you to a life in prison while the real perpetrator walks free. This was the reality for Kalief Browder, for the Central Park Five, and for countless others.

The law is meant to be a pillar of justice, a system designed to protect and serve people equally. But what happens when that very system fails the people it is supposed to protect? What happens when justice is not determined by truth but by wealth, privilege, and systemic bias?

I want to be a lawyer. No, not for the paycheck, the pantsuits. My passion for law is not just about understanding rules and regulations; it is about fighting for the people who fall victim to a broken and corrupt judicial system. The law is not just a tool for adjudicating disputes; it is the foundation on which societies are built. When we ensure that the law is just, we create the framework for a more equitable world, one where every person, regardless of background, has an equal chance at justice.

To fully understand the scale of this injustice, let's look at the numbers that reflect the harsh reality many face. According to the National Registry of Exonerations, over 3,400 people in the U.S have been exonerated since 1989 after being wrongfully convicted, spending a combined total of over 30,000 years in prison for crimes they did not commit (National Registry of Exonerations, 2023).

In Canada, wrongful convictions are also a pressing issue. The Innocence Project Canada organization has helped exonerate over 24 individuals who collectively spent more than 200 years behind bars for crimes they did not commit (Innocence Canada, 2023). These are years of stolen lives, shattered families, and lost opportunities. How does this happen? Corrupt prosecutors, coerced confessions, and unreliable eyewitness testimonies all play a role. And if that sounds like a broken record, it's because this is a cycle that keeps repeating. But unlike the people trapped in it, the numbers don't lie.

But wrongful convictions are just one example of injustice. The cash bail system, where defendants must pay a set amount of money to be released from jail before trial, disproportionately affects low-income individuals, keeping them in jail for months or even years before they even have a trial. A study by the Prison Policy Initiative found that nearly 500,000 people are sitting in jail on any given day simply because they cannot afford bail (Sawyer & Wagner, 2022). In Canada, Indigenous peoples and other marginalized communities are disproportionately impacted by pretrial detention. According to Statistics Canada, Indigenous peoples account for about 32% of the federal prison population despite making up only 5% of the national population (Statistics Canada, 2023). Now, think about that on a large scale, hundreds of thousands of lives disrupted, families torn apart, and futures put on hold. All because justice has a price tag that many simply can't afford.

Inefficiency in the judicial system is not just a problem in the U.S. and Canada; it's a global issue. In Italy, over 6 million cases were pending in 2022, with long delays and an overloaded court system (European Commission, 2022). In Greece, the judicial system suffers from significant delays, with many cases taking years to resolve due to a lack of resources, political interference, and an overloaded system (Human Rights Watch, 2022). Similarly, in Poland, recent judicial reforms have been criticized for undermining the independence of judges and introducing political influence into legal proceedings, raising serious concerns about fairness and justice (European Union, 2023). In the United Kingdom, racial disparities in sentencing persist, with Black and ethnic minority individuals more likely to receive harsher sentences compared to their white counterparts, which contributes to the cycle of inequality in the justice system (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2023).

But it's not enough to just become a lawyer. You see, watching crime documentaries and hearing about all of these tragedies my entire life has sparked my passion for justice. Every time a documentary ended, I found myself thinking, That victim deserved better. This leads me to my next point. I need to make a real difference, and that's why I've outlined a clear plan of action. My journey starts with gaining hands-on legal experience at a reputable firm like Cleary Gottlieb or Covington and Burling, where I will build my expertise. In parallel, I'll collaborate with nonprofits like the Innocence Project and Amnesty International to advocate for criminal justice reform. Over time, I aim to leverage this experience to start my law firm—one that blends legal practice with advocacy for underprivileged communities

From there, I will push for more change. I will leverage my network and influence to start my law firm or joint with reputable law firms—one that integrates the work of NGOs directly with our legal services. This firm will focus on representing those who cannot afford it while also working to ensure that underprivileged communities have access to fair legal representation. I envision a global network of lawyers working together to ensure no one is left behind, no matter their race, background, or economic status.

In the long term, my goal is to create a union of global lawyers who will dedicate part of their practice to serving the underserved, with maximum funding for public defenders and pro bono efforts. Retiring lawyers will be encouraged to continue contributing to this mission, using their expertise to train younger generations, take on cases that others may overlook, and continue fighting for justice even after they retire from traditional practice. Though the road to justice is long and filled with obstacles, each step we take brings us closer to a world where the law truly serves the people, no matter who they are.

This is not a dream, it's a plan. A plan to build a world where justice is a reality for everyone, not just the privileged few. Together, we can change the system. I urge each of you to stand with me, whether by supporting criminal justice reform, amplifying the voices of those unheard, or simply challenging the biases we all too often overlook. I need all of your support to support these causes and to push for a system that truly protects and serves all people equally.

Thank you.





## Liberty by Ryan Gasoi

I constantly hear about the issues that are going on in our world and community

It concerns me that we can't come together in unity.

Everyone has a right to be what they want to be or what they want to do

People should be treated equally and be treated with respect, unfortunately there are people who want a different view.

Some people want the world to be as two genders and what they call normal people

We tried to improve when being who you wanted us to be was illegal

I watched first hand people being treated differently by the way that they dress, by how they act, and by what they believe in.

It can't be normal for people to be treated differently because of the color of their skin

Why can't we just get along regardless of what we want to do with ourselves

These kinds of people make us take our emotions and put them on shelves

They make us forget about who we really are

All this hate towards us will leave us with a mental scar

The law can't even be okay with us being different than other people, they are taking sides just because I'm different

You have no right to treat me differently just because I'm an immigrant.

We have the right to have our own liberty

We can't just keep producing this negative energy

Who has the right to tell me what I can and can't do

Remember the hurt that you did to others you cannot undo.





## Letter from Supervising Teacher Melinda Cochrane

Voices Magazine has grown from seeds of care and love planted by a group of individuals who believe in change through the written word. It began as a project that simply wanted to get students involved in social justice issues and has led to 3 issues of the magazine.

This year's issue has grown to over 80 submissions on a range of topics. Emma McRobbie, Carmen Rebecca Levitt, Addison Mirijello-Bergnach, Sofia Mazzarello and Elizabeth Ferriera have worked tirelessly to put the magazine together. Their work and dedication resulted in a beautiful work of art. They are a power team of students who worked 2 lunch hours a week to put this magazine together. Their dedication to social change and creating a dialogue about social justice was evident in all our meetings. They are a group of caring and compassionate people looking to make the world a better place.

A thank you as well to our McGill Student teacher Anndrea Nicholas for her presentation and editing help.

We also had community members ( past and present), staff and parents who contributed. A special thank you goes to Mr. Mathieu Canavan, Director of Educational Services from the Lester B. Pearson School Board who contributed to the magazine and shared an important message for everyone about the value of having conversations about the important issues facing today's world.

This magazine would not have happened without all of the people who contributed to the magazine. Great things never happen in isolation and it is with this sentiment that we would like to thank the BHS community for its continued support of this project.

A thank you also goes out to our principal, Elaine Fraser who has encouraged the project and was always so genuinely excited when we shared news in regards to it and the students dedication to it.

In every journey we take with this magazine students learn to work together for change, which is an essential message in the magazine. We hope this year's issue sparks an interest in all of you to write next year!

Sincerely,  
Ms. Melinda Cochrane  
Senior English Teacher  
Beaconsfield High School

Create a **POSITIVE**  
and **INCLUSIVE**  
*Learning*  
**ENVIRONMENT**

INCLUSIVITY

The image displays the word "INCLUSIVITY" in a light purple, rounded, sans-serif font, arched over a rainbow. The rainbow consists of four distinct bands of color: red, yellow, green, and purple. The word is positioned above the rainbow, with the letters following the curve of the top arc. The entire graphic is centered on a plain white background.