

**NON-STATE ACTOR TORTURE AND SEXUALIZED HUMAN TRAFFICKING
VICTIMIZATIONS PERPETRATED AND ORGANIZED BY FAMILY AND NON-FAMILY
PERPETRATORS AGAINST WOMEN AND WOMEN WHEN CHILDREN: CANADA**

**A response to Tlaleng Mofokeng, Special Rapporteur on the Right of Everyone to the
Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable Standard of Physical and Mental Health Questionnaire:
“VIOLENCE AND ITS IMPACT ON THE RIGHT TO HEALTH”**

By

JEANNE SARSON, BScN, MEd and LINDA MACDONALD, BN, MEd

January 17, 2022

ohchr-srhealth@un.org

Contact Details

Type of Stakeholder (Other): We are Co-Founders of [Persons Against Non-State Torture \(NST\)](#) with backgrounds in public health nursing and feminism. We have spent 29 years specifically centred on independently supporting women at a grassroot level recover from non-State actor torture and sexualized human trafficking victimizations perpetrated and organized by family and non-family perpetrators. Not only Canadian women but their voices explain the truths of thousands of women on this planet. To counter the Canadian and global social-legal human rights discrimination and marginalized they suffer, we have become human right defenders and independent scholars/authors with many published articles on exposing non-State torture victimization and recovery including our book, “[Women Unsilenced Our Refusal To Let Torturer-Traffickers Win](#)” just released in 2021. We are members of several NGOs.

Name of State: Canada

Emails: Jeanne Sarson: twin2@eastlink.ca | Linda MacDonald: flight@ns.sympatico.ca

YES you can attribute responses to this questionnaire to your State publicly and on the OHCHR website, under the section of SR health.

Non-State Actor Torture and Sexualized Human Trafficking Victimizations Perpetrated and Organized by Family and Non-Family Perpetrators Against Women and Women When Children: Canada

Jeanne Sarson and Linda MacDonald

Under section 1.1 we introduce Lynn. Her story shares how her husband and friends held her captured, tortured, and trafficked her for over four years until she escaped and shares the impact on her health and offers best practice.

Under section 1.2 we introduce Sara. Her story details being born into a non-State torture (NST) trafficking criminal family system and address what she suffered as a child, shares the impacts on her health, and best practices.

1.1: GENDER BASED VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: NON-STATE TORTURE (NST)

Lynn's story (741 words)

I was called bitch, slut, whore and “piece of meat.” Stripped naked and raped – “broken in” – by three goons who with my husband, held me captive in a windowless room handcuffed to a radiator. Their laughter humiliated me...tied me down spread-eagled for the men they sold my body to. Raped and tortured, their penises and semen suffocated me; I...almost drowned when they held me underwater threatening to electrocute me in the tub. Pliers were used to twist my nipples, I was whipped with the looped wires of clothes hangers, ropes and electric cords...drugged, pulled around by my hair and forced to cut myself with razor blades for men's sadistic pleasure. Guns threatened my life as they played Russian roulette with me. Starved, beaten with a baseball bat, kicked, and left cold and dirty, I suffered five pregnancies and violent beatings forced abortions. They beat the soles of my feet...when I tried to rub the pain away they beat me more. My husband enjoyed sodomizing me with a Hermit 827 wine bottle causing me to haemorrhage...I saw my blood everywhere when I was ganged raped with a knife. Every time his torturing created terror in my eyes, he'd say, 'Look at me bitch; I like to see the terror in your eyes.' I never stopped fearing I was going to die. I escaped or maybe they let me escape thinking I'd die a Jane Doe on that cold November night.¹

Impact NST victimization had on Lynn's health

1. **Suicidality.** Lynn was suicidal for six months following her escape.
2. **Anger outburst and negative labelling.** Unable to trust, Lynn had anger outbursts which placed her at health and safety at risk. In her 40s, with multiple sclerosis, in need of homecare, she was labelled a “difficult client” by the healthcare structure which threatened to withdraw her care. The healthcare system knew nothing about NST victimization-traumatization informed care until we intervened.²

3. **Mal-treatment and unjust fears of being “crazy.”** NST victimizations can be encoded into cellular memories which we call “body talk.” Lynn suffered for over 20 years feeling “crazy” not understanding her body was ‘replaying’ NST pain and suffering memories, such as:
 - a. Years of chronic lower jaw pain resulted in a dentist pulling out many of Lynn’s lower teeth. Lynn had not realized this was memory right-sided jaw pain from having her face bashed in and caused by violent oral-penile-and gun torture rapes. The pain never went away until we spent two years supporting her healing.
 - b. Lynn was unable to eat much regular food after escaping because of all the torturers’ body fluids she was forced to ingest, consequently she lived on Ensure which is a liquid food sublimate.
 - c. Lynn was terrified of vomiting because she thought the torturer’s body fluids remained in her body, feeling ashamed and unable to heal this emotional terror she was silent until free to heal with us.
 - d. Lynn explained, “I used to get an on-going smell of shit. I’d get bathed, put on clean clothes, and still, I’d smell shit...I was having sensory memories—I smelt my memories of shit!”
 - e. “For years and years my mouth never felt clean. It didn’t matter how much I brushed my mouth and my teeth, I always had a salty or bloody taste in my mouth. Even the toothpaste and mouthwashes tasted salty. Once I made the connection the saltiness and dirtiness tastes were ‘sensory taste memories’ from the semen and the bleeding caused by the oral rapes, my mouth feels cleaner!”
4. **Surgery.** “I was hospitalized for surgical repairs to my smashed-up face. Neither the doctors nor the nurses asked what had happened to my face or what had happened to me as a person. This made me feel more alone, discarded, and worthless.”
5. **Self-image.** Lynn kept her hair very short because she continued to live in fear of being dragged by her hair not understanding until supported that this was emotional memory of the non-State torturers dragging her by her hair. With NST healing processes she grew her hair in a manner that gave her confidence and safety back.

Best practice:

NST victimization-traumatization informed care requires:³

1. Naming the NST CARE required;
2. Naming her VICTIMIZATION as a NST CRIME, puts responsibility on torturers, helps eliminate women’s Self-blaming, promoting freedom to tell torture crimes which is a global standard in healing;
3. Naming and addressing the TRAUMATIZATION SURVIVAL RESPONSES for healing.

1.2 GENDER BASED VIOLENCE AND OTHER FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

Sara's story of childhood NST (739 words)

At 14 made to go with 'G', my dad's friend...He took me many times...He terrorized you in the car. He hits you on the side of the head...He would get mad if you cried...choke you until you would almost pass out...punch you...say he would kill you. He would laugh a scary laugh, looks scary in his eyes.

On the boat he would get the shock things out [*electric shocking NST*], throw you down...hit you, make all kinds of bruises with tools like whips, chains, knives and guns (*physical NST*). He blindfolds you so you don't know what he's doing (*psychological terrorization NST*). He sticks a broken bottle in your ribs and sucks the blood (*more physical NST*). He says smile' (*dehumanization*). He had a big black dog [*bestiality NST*]. He gets food...does not give it to you, no water either (*depravation NST*). He puts you in a cage, throws you overboard...drags the cage in the water with the boat. He drowns you (*water NST*). He pulls you up, throws you on the deck, rapes you... you were supposed to say you wanted more (*dehumanized and powerlessness NST*).⁴

Impacts NST victimizations had on Sara's health in childhood but lasted almost a lifetime include:⁵

1. **Conditioned-suicidality femicide.** From toddlerhood Sara was conditioned to normalize that she had to die by suicide if she ever told on "the family," explaining being "taught" how to cut her wrist.
2. **Intentional destructions of parental and male sibling relationships.** Sara described when she was about two years old her father's tactic was to initiate "playing tent game" which led to her father raping her. She also explained her father victimized her two older male siblings by forcing them and her into sexualized victimizations. Adding to her:
 - a. severe and long-lasting emotional aloneness, sadness, fear, terror, and abandonment
3. **Sexualized trafficking.** Sara understood trafficking as being "rented." She says this began at age two years when sold over the counter of her parents' store. She remembers her father saying to those that came for her, "Bring her back when you're done."
4. **Taught Self-harming.** As a toddler Sara explained her father instructed her to head bang telling her the bruises made her "pretty." We learned head banging was a violent NST tactic used to redirect Sara's attention away from the NST pain in her vagina and anus by conditioning her to focus on head-banging pain.
5. **Stalked.** Sara was stalked when she started grade 5 at a new school, explaining that her mother volunteered at daily school functions so Sara was constantly psychologically captive, oppressed, threatened, and sad and not permitted to have friends.

6. **Teenage trafficking.** As a teenager Sara explained being given a code name by her parents before going to school so when walking home after school and a car stopped and spoke the code name, she automatically entered the car and was raped by individuals or a group.
7. **Violent abortion and Self-hatred.** At about age 14 or 15 she tells that torturers forced a violent abortion, forcing her to ingest some of the fetal tissue. This furthered her emotional Self-hatred of her body which led to Self-cutting.
8. **Destruction of her relationship with Self.** The aim of torturers is to destroy those they torture. Until we supported Sara to understand she was a human person with human rights not to be subjected to NST, she perceived her-Self as “a thing” “a nothing” and an “it.”

Best practices:

1. **No Canadian data exists unless NST is criminalized.** By politically and legally renaming NST as assaults no national NST crimes exist, non-State torturers are not criminalized for the crime of NST, women or girls NST victimized remain invisibilized and without truth-telling justice, and no NST victimization-traumatization informed care develops.
2. **Criminalization of NST.** Sara says she needs a NST law so she “does not die an ‘it’.” When Canadian governments decided it was “redundant” to amend the Criminal Code to include torture by private actors,⁶ this ignored the Victim Impact Statement sent to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights by Alexandra Lane saying:⁷

As a victim it is so simple. Anyone who has been through or cares about someone who has been through non-State torture would say it is a crime.

Unless this crime is named ‘torture’ I won’t be an actual person. I will always be the dirty object with no rights.

Endnotes

¹ MacDonald, L. (2014, July 9). *Evidence*. House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, Number 040, 2nd Session, 41st Parliament. Canada. <https://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/41-2/JUST/meeting-40/evidence>

² Sarson, J., & MacDonald, L. (2019). “A difficult client”: Lynn’s story of captivity, non-state torture, and human trafficking by her husband. *International Journal of Advanced Nursing Education and Research*, 4(3), 107-124.

³ Sarson, J., & MacDonald, L. (2021). *Women unsilenced Our refusal to let torturer-traffickers win*. FriesenPress.

⁴ Sarson, J. (2014, July 9). *Evidence*. House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, Number 040, 2nd Session, 41st Parliament. Canada. <https://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/41-2/JUST/meeting-40/evidence>

⁵ Sarson, J., & MacDonald, L. (2021). *Women unsilenced Our refusal to let torturer-traffickers win*. FriesenPress.

⁶ Sarson, J., & MacDonald, L. (2019). Non-state torture human trafficking family systems: Coming out alive—normalizing women’s survival responses. *Justice Report*, 34 (3), 11-15.

⁷ Lane, A. (2016). *Victim impact statement from Alexandra Lane Re: Bill C-242 an act to amend the criminal code (inflicting torture)*. House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, Canada. <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/421/JUST/Brief/BR8486871/br-external/LaneAlexandra-2016-10-15-e.pdf>