

Anatomy of an Inmate

Inmate Deane Brown may as well have MADE IN MAINE stamped on his forehead. The finished product is an inmate serving 59 years at the Maine State Prison, which still has baby teeth and diabetes. Deane was born the fifth of six children, to alcoholic parents on New Years Day 1964, at Knox hospital in Rockland, Maine. By the age of 4, he was diagnosed with what is now known as Attention Deficit Disorder, and prescribed medication. He was sent to live with his aunt in Connecticut for a short time, and returned home to Rockland.

Deane's father allowed him to finish his cigarettes and beer. At age 5, Deane wore a green harness with silver buckles and a short chain which locked him to the kitchen sink of their trailer. He was placed in a laundry basket to insulate him from the floor. He tried his father's keys to open the lock, but they didn't work. Determined to be free, he picked the lock with his younger sister's barrette. When Deane's father found him sitting on the couch, he threw him into the trailer wall so hard that Deane stuck in the wall.

One month before Deane's 7th birthday he was sent to Pineland for psychological testing. Dr. Strouder was amazed that Deane took apart his watch and put it back together again. He was placed in a room for observation and rigged up a train to the door and made it go across the room. Deane beat the psychiatrist at chess. The psychiatrist would not allow Deane to have the birthday cake his mother brought, so he broke the ashtray he had made her. He felt he was denied his mothers love. He was molested at Pineland.

By age 7 or 8, Deane was put on Ritalin and sent to live at Sweetsir, where he was physically abused for 3 or 4 years. From Sweetsir he was sent to the Bancroft school at age 11, and continued medication for the ADD. When Deane was 13, the staff at Bancroft had Deane drive their van up a steep hill, which they could not seem to do. He obviously had no license. He had a marijuana joint he took from a councilor which he decided he liked better than the pharmaceuticals which caused uncontrollable twitching, convulsing, itching, and once he accidentally overdosed. From Bancroft, Deane was sent to Élan, and taken off medication.

Élan was a for profit cult licensed by the State of Maine, which utilized physically and emotionally brutal tactics, such as cowboy ass kickings where Deane was violently beaten by ten men at the command of the director, spankings with a cutting board, isolation, shaming, humiliation in front of hundreds, chain gangs, spitting and screaming in ones face, and constant cleaning and being yelled at. Defying Dorothea Dix's model, Élan combined people from mental hospitals, children of politicians, violent criminals and children who had committed no crimes at all. Some juveniles were sent there by court

orders, others by wealthy parents, others by psychiatrists, and others by school districts(who used special education money). Kennedy cousin Michael Skakel was ordered to beat Deane in front of over 150 forced onlookers. The beating was so severe that Deane dove through a window to escape the beating. Scars remain on his hands from the glass.

Deane found himself free at 17 with no idea of how to fit into society. His mother kicked him out. He got drunk and broke into a pawn shop. He was arrested and held at Knox County Jail. Then he was sent to the Maine Youth Center. While at the Maine Youth Center he developed a cigarette craving. He started the State truck he was sent to clean with a paper clip and was waved through the gate. He then had a stranger buy him cigarettes and a beer, at a nearby convenience store. Then he drove down I-95, and was surrounded at the border bridge by 6 cruisers. He refused to exit the vehicle at gunpoint until he was sick of chain smoking. He was arrested and held at the York County Jail, in a holding cell with a paddle lock. His shoestrings, belt and cigarettes were left on a nearby counter. Deane picked the lock and as the MYC people came to transport him, he escaped and drove the state truck back to the MYC undetected. He was rewarded with a cigarette.

Deane was sent back to Élan to work as the maintenance man. He was fired after about a month. He went home to Rockland where his mother put him on a bus for the MYC. He got off the bus in Thomaston to see his father who also kicked him out. Deane called the Knox County Sheriff's department who drove him back to the MYC. Tired of the juveniles at the MYC Deane asked to go to the Cumberland County jail, where he remained until his 18th birthday. He was given a bus ticket home, but stayed at a rooming house in Rockland for 1 night. He decided to go to his friend from Élan in New Hampshire. One month later, he tried acid, and on a bet by the dealer, broke into several stores. A locksmith said it would take a long time to pick an Arrow 921k deadbolt, but witnesses testified Deane had it off in less than a minute. His partners in crime served a couple months, but Deane the youngest at 18, served 10 years and 8 months in the New Hampshire State Prison. Both of Deane's parents died during that time. Deane used a razor to attempt suicide, and several horizontal slice marks remain on his inner wrist straight up his forearm.

Deane was paroled and left prison with a bus ticket, one hundred dollars and the assurance by the authorities that he'd never last outside prison. The police said he wasn't welcome in New Hampshire, so he stayed with his younger sister in Rockland, in 1993. His father's friend got him a job as a Maintenance man, but he was fired for lack of experience. He held a fishing job in Alaska, and returned to Maine to do roofing and siding. Deane was finally enjoying life. The taste of food outside an institution didn't take much getting used to. His brother, a police officer, got him a job as a bar bouncer. He drank to celebrate his first year of freedom.

Deane was convicted of burglary in April of 1995. His alleged partners in crime served a year, four years, and no time. Deane was given the title of ringleader and sentenced to 59 years at the Maine State Prison. Two years ago Deane's brother was murdered, and the murderer received only a 40 year sentence.

Just recently a social worker had Deane pick open his locked file cabinet. He is forever banished from society for using the only trade he knew to survive from age 5.