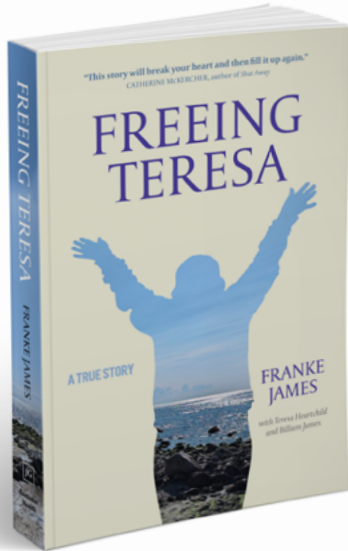

FREEING TERESA

A true story by Franke James (with Teresa Heartchild and Billiam James)



*Trade Paperback, E-Book,
Hardcover, and Audiobook*

An activist tries to stop her powerful siblings from putting their disabled sister into a nursing home. She fails. And then must rescue her sister.

Franke James immediately objected when she heard her siblings' plan to put their youngest sister, Teresa Heartchild, into a nursing home. "What about Teresa's human rights?" But Franke was told that Teresa, who has Down syndrome, had lost her right to decide. She had been declared "not capable" by a social worker. The other siblings, now acting as Teresa's "guardians," insisted they had all the decision-making power and they put Teresa into a nursing home. But Teresa didn't want to be there. So, Franke put a team together and helped Teresa get discharged. That's when all hell broke loose. And, the two sisters had to stand together—against their siblings, the medical system, and even the police—to defend Teresa's right to be free.

"Gut-wrenching and awe-inspiring. This story will break your heart and then fill it up again."

CATHERINE MCKERCHER
author of *Shut Away*

"A gripping story about courage, love, and an unshakeable belief in human potential."

MARTY SELDMAN, Ph.D.
author of *Survival of the Savvy*

"A courageous, personal account of fighting the system—and family—to free Teresa from forced care."

ALANNA HENDREN, Executive Director
Developmental Disabilities Association

"Full of insight, heartbreak and inspiration. This no-holds-barred story is a must-read for anyone working in the field of disability rights."

KARLA VERSCHOOR
Executive Director, Inclusion BC

"A truly amazing story. A must-read for anyone who cares about human dignity and equal rights."

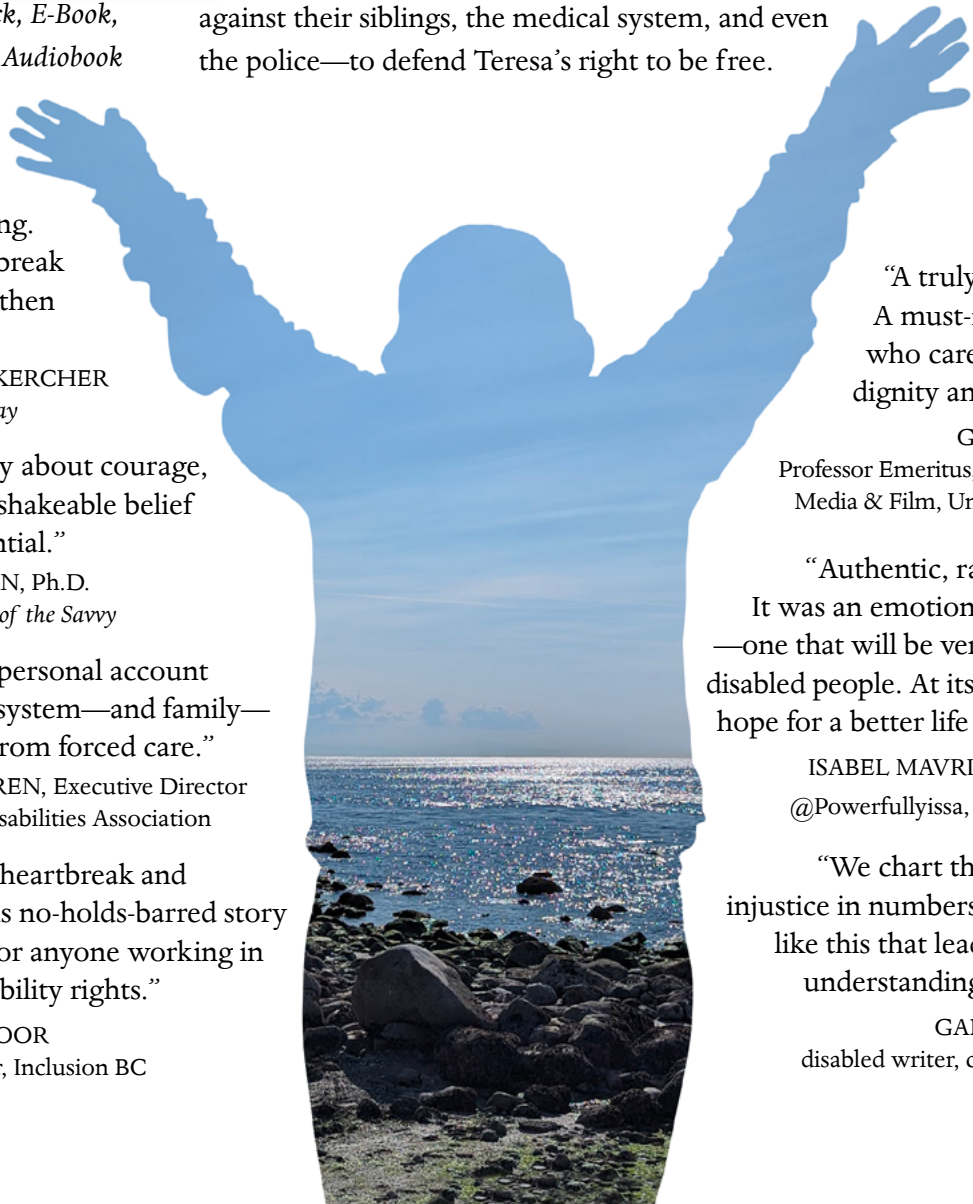
GEORGE MELNYK
Professor Emeritus, Communications,
Media & Film, University of Calgary

"Authentic, raw and riveting. It was an emotional roller coaster—one that will be very real for many disabled people. At its core, it's about hope for a better life and resilience."

ISABEL MAVRIDES-CALDERON
@Powerfullyissa, disability advocate

"We chart the prevalence of injustice in numbers, but it's stories like this that lead us to a deeper understanding of its impact."

GABRIELLE PETERS
disabled writer, community activist



FREEING TERESA: ABOUT THE WRITERS



FRANKE JAMES – AUTHOR

Franke James is an activist, artist and the author of several books on human rights, climate change, free expression, and ethics. For her, these issues are all connected by the need to speak up and take action.

The spark for *Freeing Teresa* was lit in 2013. Franke and her husband Billiam James helped her younger sister get out of a nursing home, regain her decision-making rights, and get an official apology.

Earlier that same year, Franke had published *Banned on the Hill*, which led to her winning the BC Civil Liberties Award for Excellence in the Arts. Her related poster campaign, “Do Not Talk About Climate Change,” appeared in three Canadian cities and Washington, DC. In 2015, Franke was awarded PEN Canada’s Ken Filkow Prize for “tenacity in uncovering an abuse of power and commitment to fostering a national conversation in the face of censorship.”

Franke lives in Vancouver, BC with her husband and her sister, Teresa.

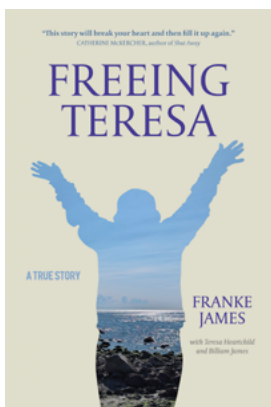


TERESA HEARTCHILD – CONTRIBUTOR

Teresa Heartchild is an artist, self-advocate, and author who has Down syndrome. Teresa has shown remarkable resilience and courage. In 2013, a social worker said she was incapable of deciding where she would live. Teresa was put into a Toronto nursing home. Within days, her father, her sister Franke, and her brother-in-law, Bill, helped her get discharged.

Teresa had a new capacity test done that determined she could decide where to live. Two years of campaigning later, BC Civil Liberties wrote to the Ontario government on Teresa’s behalf: “We are gravely concerned that the government, through its actions, appears to condone the forced placement and mistreatment of developmentally disabled adults.” The Ontario Minister of Health responded by publicly apologizing to Teresa.

The BC Human Rights Commissioner named Teresa a “Champion for Change.” In 2023, Teresa is celebrating the 10-year anniversary of her rescue and lives with her sister, Franke, in Vancouver, BC.



Title: Freeing Teresa: A true story

Genre: Memoir/True Account

Author: Franke James

With: Teresa Heartchild/Billiam James

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