

13 Stories III
Story Options 2022

Option #16: "The Minidoka Six"

Six teenagers (ages 16-18, four boys and one girl) were charged with drug crimes in Minidoka County in 1970. Judge Sherman Bellwood intended to set a precedent and example for those caught selling drugs in Idaho. Their charges for Possession of Drugs and Intent to Sell shocked their quiet community, as those around them discovered that the large size of their hidden operation, selling drugs such as marijuana and LSD to other young people out of a cabin north of Rupert, Idaho. Authorities arrested the six youths after an undercover policeman purchased drugs from them. Daryl Renz (17), Claude Bronson (18) received five-year sentences, and Roman Garza (17), Anna Lee Bronson (16), Garth Bean (18) and Roy Hull (16) were sentenced to four years each. They received prison sentences rather than time in county jails or youth detention facilities, as District Judge Bellwood felt they were too "knowledgeable and sophisticated" about their crimes for a detention center, and that county jails "tend to make heroes out of young offenders." Judge Bellwood's young son would later pass away after a drug overdose.