

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://solitarywatch.org/2012/06/12/voices-from-solitary-no-longer-a-part-of-the-world/>

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by [Voices from Solitary](#) | June 12, 2012

The following comes from a prisoner currently in Virginias Red Onion State Prison, describing the three years he spent at the United State Penitentiary, Administrative Maximum Facility in Florence, Colorado. He describes the facility as exceptional in its ability to overwhelm prisoners with the sense that they are no longer a part of society, and the bleak physical nature of the facility. He is currently corresponding with Solitary Watch on the conditions at Red Onion. Sal Rodriguez

The moment you set your eyes on it its a mixed ball of emotions and feelings that hit you, its extraordinarily spectacular the ADX facility. I have seen many prisons/penitentiaries not even Red Onion can compare to the federal supermax, it was built to be a spectacular view of intimidation from the moment you set your eyes on it. The psychological intimidation starts without even setting one foot into the ADX and the remoteness also adds a touch that you are no longer to be a part of the world the moment you arrive you realize youve reached a level of solitary living that is specifically designed to keep you totally separated from human contact its a chilling feeling.

The sensory deprivation starts from the moment you arrive into the intake, the deadly silence adds to the reality that youre not in a normal prison what was normal was the humiliating experience of becoming a new inmate. After the intake process I was shackled and box-cuffed and escorted by a number of corrections officers with black batons at hand and ready to beat me down if I made a wrong move.

I was escorted down a series of never ending, lengthy wide and tall hallways that were painted an off white and were at a downhill angle which make your ears pop as you move down them. Its just another drop added to the emotional and psychological design and purpose of solitary life. I was then housed in the famous D-Unit The confined space that you are housed in is a 7-by-9 foot sound proof cell that comes with a concrete slab and a thin mattress for a bed, a shower within the cell with a timer to conserve water and prevent flooding, a sink with no taps, just touch buttons a toilet with a valve that shuts off the water after two flushes automatically for an hour, an immovable concrete desk and concrete stool, a polished steel mirror riveted to the concrete wall and a thirteen inch black and white television encased in plexiglass to prevent tampering.

I have been to many different prisons and none can compare to ADXs conditions. Of course Im not taking away the fact that the animalistic treatment isnt the same when it comes down to the beatings, torture, and psychological abuses These places are designed to drive you crazy, you can feel the madness closing in on you. You can feel it eating away at you and there is nothing you can do to stop it you can slow it down by writing and reading but thats all it does, slow down the process of mental madness.

The Voices from Solitary series publishes dispatches from people surviving the lived experience of solitary confinement.

Accurate information and authentic storytelling can serve as powerful antidotes to ignorance and injustice. We have helped generate public awareness, mainstream media attention, and informed policymaking on what was once an invisible domestic human rights crisis.

Only with your support can we continue this groundbreaking work, shining light into the darkest corners of the U.S. criminal punishment system.

by [Voices from Solitary](#)

September 30, 2022

by [Voices from Solitary](#)

September 19, 2022

by [Voices from Solitary](#)

September 6, 2022

Solitary Watch encourages comments and welcomes a range of ideas, opinions, debates, and respectful disagreement. We do not allow

name-calling, bullying, cursing, or personal attacks of any kind. Any embedded links should be to information relevant to the conversation. Comments that violate these guidelines will be removed, and repeat offenders will be blocked. Thank you for your cooperation.

Americas prisons are not designed to rehabilitate, but to torture. This is so wrong. I dont know how the guards can look themselves in the mirror knowing they play a part in people losing their minds.

its posters like whatever that believe God blesses America. America is so dirty and corrupt and the military protects us from none of it.

I agree with Alan. People need to be more informed. You are not alone.. your voice is heard. Thank you for sharing you thoughts

@whatever: I think you need to read more articles on Solitary Watch. There are many reasons prisoners end up in solitary. One is mental illness where they just cannot adapt to the environment. Another is because they are juveniles. Other are there for protective custody reasons. As for those that have been in altercations whether with staff or other inmates it is just part of doing time. If you end up in prison you will have to stand your ground or become a victim. Guards are not saints either many are worst than those they watch over. Again read the news. Read about the LA County Jail where guards get tattoos like gang members and then brutalize inmates. Read about Green Wall and countless other stories of thug guards. No assaulting such guards might just be a result of defending one self.

Here is a link to the governments own statistics. Ill just list the percentage of new prisoners entering prison in 2009 by category of offense.

<http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=2056>

Drugs27.4

Property27.1

Public disorder16.1

Violence29

of which < 4% were for various levels of murders (manslaughter, 1st & 2nd degree)
and 1.5 for rape.

Toss in parole violations and it adds up to 100%.

Yeah right whatever.

the majority of inmates have been sent there because they have an extensive history of committing violent crimes against corrections officers and inmates in other prisons, up to and including murder.

If you didnt want to be in solitary in a horrible prison, perhaps you should have behaved at your original prison.

This is cruel and inhumane. What kind of government allows such treatment of a person. These facilities are like concentration camps. This is not rehabilitation. This is destroying the very essence of being a human being. Shame on a government that calls this a just punishment.

God, this is so wrong, Please hold on with your mind. Do not cave into them. We are not forgetting anyone, especially the prison that are doing such torture.

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