

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://solitarywatch.org/2012/09/08/voices-from-solitary-a-mans-strength-behind-a-steel-door/>

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by [Voices from Solitary](#) | September 8, 2012

The following comes from Georgia prisoner Carlos Grier, also known as Mr. BigMann. Grier was convicted in 1999 for the shooting death of a girlfriend (he maintains his innocence). For over two years, he has been incarcerated at the Georgia Diagnostic and Classification Prisons Special Management Unit, where 192 inmates are held in solitary confinement. The prison also functions as the location where executions in Georgia occur. Grier describes the SMU as a bleak world where inmates designated the worst of the worst are kept in prolonged isolation. Inmates are allowed out of their cells for a shower three times a week, and are allowed yard time twice a week for varying lengths of time. Grier has been kept in solitary following a 2010 radio interview with Macon NAACP President Al Tillman, which Tillman and Grier have speculated are the reasons for his placement in solitary. Tillman wrote a blog entry about Grier, which you can read [here](#). Sal Rodriguez

How would you, or, could you maintain living; in a concrete cell all day everyday? 23 hours on Georgias Hi:Max Special Management Unit, more likely, 24 hours lockdown. Theres no sunshine or day light beaming in certain cells, because of the dark black paint, spray painted on the outside of cell windows. Thus, the cell is pitch black with cell light off, and dimmed glared with lights on. Being engulfed in this cell, when you look forward, there it stands, and steel door with a slim window. The window centered in this steel door has a metal plate that lifts from outside, so you can be looked in on, but not look out. Therefore youre blinded to whats on the outside of this steel door. You can only hear whats taking course outside of the steel door.

This is the daily solitude tribulation inside a cell at Georgia SMU. The cell walls are brick and hollow. Therefore you can hear your neighbor walking around. Daily, men yell out their cell doors fighting against the process of dealing with their inner self, from being locked behind a steel door all day, by themselves, only with themselves. For this reason, they fight against themselves. By attempting to diverge focus entirely of themselves, by arguing with other engulfed men behind a steel door, or engaging in profane verbal confrontations with officers patrolling units. It very seldom gets quiet in SMU, being that inmates are suffering. When quiet time does come upon a unit, you could hear a feather land on the concrete floors.

There are 32 men housed in one man cells in each wing at this SMU facility.

In SMU once an inmate exits the cell, the inmate has to be handcufed behind his back and shackled on his ankles to leave from behind the cell door. This goes for yard call, medical, visitation, lawyer visits and showers. Some SMU cells have showers in the rooms. But a majority of men like to take showers; inmates locked behind this cell door come out to shower, basically, to get away from the misery congested in the cell with them.

Do you think you can be this man? Do you in your freedom think enough right now to understand? What a man endures in captivity daily, by his lonesome? Do you think your mind, heart and spirit contains the strength to maintain focus? Behind this steel door 23 hours a day. Or more likely 24 hours. Dont test your freedomstay free! This is truth of SMU experience in Georgia by Mr. BigMann.

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

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Do you know the ins and out of the system??^^

I WAS ON HIGHMAX AND BEEN HOME SINCE OCTOBER 2011 I HAVE SPOKE ON THE STEPS OF THE KKK CAPITOL WITH PASTER KENNETH GLASGOW..AL SHARPTONS BROTHER. TOMORROW I WILL B DOING A INTERVIEW WITH BRUCE DIXON FROM BLACK AGENDA NEWS PAPER ABOUT THE KKK RUEL, UNUSAUL, & INHUMANE TREATMENT THAT GOES ON AT NOT ONLY ON HIGHMAX BUT ALSO IN THE GA PRISON SYSTEM. CONTACT ME @678 790 8592

as small voice:

And people think it is cruel to keep animals in cages!!!! This is horrible.

And here is a good read on urban gang warfare:

http://www.salon.com/2012/09/09/fly_trap/

Here is an article on how wrongful convictions are made.

http://www.salon.com/2012/09/09/can_we_predict_a_wrongful_conviction/

As for this case it took me a few reads on Tillmans blog to make this summery.

Six stoned associates of the Crips fearing that the police are following them hurriedly make a turn down a known rival gangs street at night where in the dark they are spotted, recognized as rivals and fired upon. Damn if that isnt bad luck.

Was there a deal made for those in the car that testified against Grier?

Is it assumed that Grier used an illegal cell phone to conduct the interview on the radio?

Maybe the only thing one can say for sure is there should be a limit to this mans isolation.

What A Wonderful job you do writing these mens stories. God Bless You In Bringing Them Out In The Open* Gellybean

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