

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://solitarywatch.org/2012/07/14/voices-from-solitary-cant-you-hear-us/>

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by [Voices from Solitary](#) | July 14, 2012

The following is an excerpt from testimony submitted to the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Human Rights, and Civil Rights by Pelican Bay Security Housing Unit inmate Gabriel Huerta. He has been in isolation since November 1986; like most in the SHU, he was validated as a gang member on questionable evidence of gang activity. He writes about the latest basis for his renewed SHU term, the need for social contact, and argues that long-term solitary confinement constitutes an act of torture. The rest of his testimony can be read [here](#). Sal Rodriguez

Many people may not know what its like to be isolated for so long, the way that weve been here, and I would say that its like being locked in the trunk of a car with just enough weather stripping removed so you can breathe, and with enough food and water stuffed in every day so that you can physically survive. Youre soon going to realize what it actually means when its said that were social beings. Youre going to crave social interaction and human contact. Soon youll be hollering out there, anyone you can at least talk to for even a brief time. Just like that Pink Floyd song says, Hey you out there beyond the walls, can you hear me? And yet every time you talk, every time you act like a human being and interact with other human beings, youre told that thats gang activity and you have to stay another 6 years now before your next review.

A book was found in my cell on 12/8/08, that my neighbor had let me read. It had his name and number on the book cover. This same neighbor also shared with me some buy klonopin online usa pages from a Readers Digest that someone had sent him the jokes section. These pages also had his name and number on them. It was concluded by staff that, A friendship with a validated gang member proved through this lending and borrowing personal property solidifies the association with the gang itself. My next review will bow be 2014.

Now let me ay this, there are many of thus who can endure this and much more to the very end. But you know what? It doesnt make the is existence any less sorry. Its a sorry existence no matter how well you can endure it. I myself can, if I let myself, get lost in my own little world within the trunk of this car, reading my books and drinking my little pulque. I myself can, if I let myself, become comfortably numb. But thats sorry, and so Ive got to struggle in whatever way that I can.

The US is under the jurisdiction of the United Nations Convention Against Torture (CAT) and under CAT torture includes any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted Using indeterminate total lockdown to extract confessions is torture by international standards as is the use of prolonged solitary confinement.

And here we are, were being tortured!! Were being held in prolonged solitary confinement trying to break our bonds and ties to family, friends and community in an effort to extract information from us, in an effort to make us debrief.

Theres this giant junk yard over here in Crescent City, full of hundreds of wrecked cars, one stacked on top of another, and theres human beings locked in each of the trunkscant you hear us?

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.

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Gabriel Huerta: Very well stated. I feel for you and all those in solitary, it is torture, I agree and will do what I can to help.

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