

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

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close

by [Voices from Solitary](#) | March 11, 2013

The following essay is by William Blake. In 1987, Blake, then 23 and in county court on a drug charge, grabbed a gun from a sheriffs deputy in a failed escape attempt, murdering one deputy and wounding another. He was sentenced to 77 years to life. The New York State prison system, classifying him as a threat to safety and security, has placed him in virtually permanent solitary confinement. At the time he wrote this essay, he had been held in isolation for nearly 26 years; as of 2019, that number had grown to 32 years.

Since it was published for the first time on Solitary Watch, this essay has received more than half a million hits on this site alone, and has been reprinted and translated into several languages. It is also the lead essay in the 2016 book [Hell Is a Very Small Place: Voices from Solitary Confinement](#).

Reading and writing are what sustain Billy Blake after three decades in the box. He welcomes letters at: William Blake #87-A-5771, Attica Correctional Facility, 639 Exchange Street, Attica, NY 14011-0149.

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You deserve an eternity in hell, Onondaga County Supreme Court judge Kevin Mulroy told me from his bench as I stood before him for sentencing on July 10, 1987. Apparently he had the idea that God was not the only one qualified to make such judgment calls.

Judge Mulroy wanted to pump six bucks worth of electricity into [my] body, he also said, though I suggest that it wouldn't have taken six cents worth to get me good and dead. He must have wanted to reduce me and The Chair to a pile of ashes. My friend Governor Mario Cuomo wouldn't allow him to do that, though, the judge went on, bemoaning New York State's lack of a death statute due to the then-Governors repeated vetoes of death penalty bills that had been approved by the state legislature. Governor Cuomo's publicly expressed disapproval over being called a friend of mine by Judge Mulroy was understandable, given the crimes that I had just been convicted of committing. I didn't care much for him either, truth be told. He built too many new prisons in my opinion, and cut academic and vocational programs in the prisons already standing.

I know that Judge Mulroy was not nearly alone in wanting to see me executed for the crime I committed when I shot two Onondaga County sheriff's deputies inside the Town of Dewitt courtroom during a failed escape attempt, killing one and critically wounding the other. There were many people in the Syracuse area who shared his sentiments, to be sure. I read the hateful letters to the editor printed in the local newspapers; I could even feel the anger of the people when I'd go to court, so palpable was it. Even by the standards of my own belief system, such as it was back then, I deserved to die for what I had done. I took the life of a man without just cause, committing an act so monumentally wrong that I could not have argued that it was unfair had I been required to pay with my own life.

What nobody knew or suspected back then, not even I, on that very day I would begin suffering a punishment that I am convinced beyond all doubt is far worse than any death sentence could possibly have been. On July 10, 2012, I finished my 25th consecutive year in solitary confinement, where at the time of this writing I remain. Though it is true that I've never died and so don't know exactly what the experience would entail, for the life of me I cannot fathom how dying any death could be harder or more terrible than living through all that I have been forced to endure for the last quarter-century.

Prisoners call it The Box. Prison authorities have euphemistically dubbed it the Special Housing Unit, or SHU (pronounced shoe) for short. In society it is known as solitary confinement. It is 23-hour a day lockdown in a cell smaller than some closets I've seen, with one hour allotted to recreation consisting of placement in a concrete enclosed yard by oneself or, in some prisons, a cage made of steel bars. There is nothing in a SHU yard but air: no TV, no balls to bounce, no games to play, no other inmates, nothing. There is very little allowed in a SHU cell, also. Three sets of plain white underwear, one pair of green pants, one green short-sleeved button-up shirt, one green sweatshirt, ten books or magazines total, twenty pictures of the people you love, writing supplies, a bar of soap, toothbrush and toothpaste, one deodorant stick but no shampoo, and that's about it. No clothes of your own, only prison-made. No food from commissary or packages, only three unappetizing meals a day handed to you through a narrow slot in your cell door. No phone calls, no TV, no luxury items at all. You get a set of cheap headphones to use, and you can pick between the two or three (depending on which prison you're in) jacks in the cell wall to plug into. You can listen to a TV station in one jack, and use your imagination while trying to figure out what is going on when the music indicates drama but the dialogue doesn't suffice to tell you anything. Or you can listen to some music, but you're out of luck if you're a rock-n-roll fan and find only rap is playing.

Your options in what to do to occupy your time in SHU are scant, but there will be boredom aplenty. You probably think that you understand boredom, know its feel, but really you don't. What you call boredom would seem a whirlwind of activity to me, choices so many that I'd likely be befuddled in trying to pick one over all the others. You could turn on a TV and watch a movie or some other show; I haven't seen a TV since the 1980s. You could go for a walk in the neighborhood; I can't walk more than a few feet in any direction before I run into a concrete wall or steel bars. You could pick up your phone and call a friend; I don't know if I'd be able to remember how to make a collect call or even if the process is still the same, so many years it's been since I've used a telephone. Play with your dog or cat and experience their love, or watch your fish in their aquarium; the only creatures I see daily are the mice and cockroaches that infest the unit, and they're not very lovable and nothing much to look at. There is a pretty good list of options available to you, if you think about it, many things that you could do even when you believe you are so bored. You take them for granted because they are there all the time, but if it were all taken away you'd find yourself missing even the things that right now seem so small and insignificant. Even the smallest stuff can become as large as life when you have had nearly nothing for far too long.

I haven't been outside in one of the SHU yards in this prison for about four years now. I haven't seen a tree or blade of grass in all that time, and wouldn't see these things were I to go to the yard. In Elmira Correctional Facility, where I am presently imprisoned, the SHU yards are about three or four times as big as my cell. There are twelve SHU yards total, each surrounded by concrete walls, one or two of the walls lined with windows. If you look in the windows you'll see the same SHU company that you live on, and maybe you'll get a look at a guy who was locked next to you for months that you've talked to every day but had never before gotten a look at. If you look up you'll find bars and a screen covering the yard, and if you're lucky maybe you can see a bit of blue sky through the mesh, otherwise it'll be hard to believe that you're even outside. If it's a good day you can walk around the SHU yard in small circles staring ahead with your mind on nothingness, like the nothing you've got in that lacuna with you. If it's a bad day, though, maybe your mind will be filled with remembrances of all you used to have that you haven't seen now for many years, and you'll be missing it, feeling the loss, feeling it bad.

Life in the box is about an austere sameness that makes it difficult to tell one day from a thousand others. Nothing much and nothing new ever happen to tell you if it's a Monday or a Friday, March or September, 1987 or 2012. The world turns, technology advances, and things in the streets change and keep changing all the time. Not so in a solitary confinement unit, however. I've never seen a cell phone except in pictures in magazines. I've never touched a computer in my life, never been on the Internet and wouldn't know how to get there if you sat me in front of a computer, turned it on for me, and gave me directions. SHU is a timeless place, and I can honestly say that there is not a single thing I'd see looking around right now that is different from what I saw in Shawangunk Correctional Facility's box when I first arrived there from Syracuse County Jail in 1987. Indeed, there is probably nothing different in SHU now than in SHU a hundred years ago, save the headphones. Then and now there were a few books, a few prison-made clothing articles, walls and bars and human beings locked in cages and misery.

There is always the misery. If you manage to escape it yourself for a time, there will ever be plenty around in others for you to sense; and though you'll be unable to look into their eyes and see it, you might hear it in the nighttime when tough guys cry not-so-tough tears that are forced out of them by the unrelenting stress and strain that life in SHU is an exercise in.

I've read of the studies done regarding the effects of long-term isolation in solitary confinement on inmates, seen how researchers say it can ruin a man's mind, and I've watched with my own eyes the slow descent of sane men into madness sometimes not so slow. What I've never seen the experts write about, though, is what year after year of abject isolation can do to that immaterial part in our middle where hopes survive or die and the spirit resides. So please allow me to speak to you of what I've seen and felt during some of the harder times of my twenty-five-year SHU odyssey.

I've experienced times so difficult and felt boredom and loneliness to such a degree that it seemed to be a physical thing inside so thick it felt like it was choking me, trying to squeeze the sanity from my mind, the spirit from my soul, and the life from my body. I've seen and felt hope becoming like a foggy ephemeral thing, hard to get ahold of, even harder to keep ahold of as the years and then decades disappeared while I stayed trapped in the emptiness of the SHU world. I've seen minds slipping down the slope of sanity, descending into insanity, and I've been terrified that I would end up like the guys around me that have cracked and become nuts. It's a sad thing to watch a human being go insane before your eyes because he can't handle the pressure that the box exerts on the mind, but it is sadder still to see the spirit shaken from a soul. And it is more disastrous. Sometimes the prison guards find them hanging and blue; sometimes their necks get broken when they jump from their bed, the sheet tied around the neck that's also wrapped around the grate covering the light in the ceiling snapping taut with a pop. I've seen the spirit leaving men in SHU and have witnessed the results.

The box is a place like no other place on planet Earth. It's a place where men full of rage can stand at their cell gates fulminating on their neighbor or neighbors, yelling and screaming and speaking some of the filthiest words that could ever come from a human mouth, do it for hours on end, and despite it all never suffer the loss of a single tooth, never get his head knocked clean off his shoulders. You will never hear words more despicable or see mouth wars more insane than what occurs all the time in SHU, not anywhere else in the world, because there would be serious violence before any person could speak so much foulness for so long. In the box the heavy steel bars allow mouths to run with impunity when they could not otherwise do so, while the ambient is one that is sorely conducive to an exceedingly hot sort of anger that seems to press the lips on to ridiculous extremes. Day and night I have been awakened to the sound of the rage being loosed loudly on SHU gates, and I'd be a liar if I said I haven't at times been one of the madmen doing the yelling.

I have lived for months where the first thing I became aware of upon waking in the morning is the malodorous funk of human feces, tinged with the acrid stench of days-old urine, where I eat my breakfast, lunch, and dinner with that same stink assaulting my senses, and where the last thought I had before falling into unconscious sleep was: Damn, it smells like shit in here. I have felt like I was on an island surrounded by vicious sharks, flanked on both sides by mentally ill inmates who would splash their excrement all over their cells, all over the company outside their cells, and even all over themselves. I have went days into weeks that seemed like they'd never end without being able to sleep more than short snatches before I was shocked out of my dreams, and thrown back into a living nightmare, by the screams of sick men who have lost all ability to control themselves, or by the banging of cell bars and walls of these same madmen. I have been so tired when sleep inside was impossible that I went outside into a snowstorm to get some sleep.

The wind blew hard and snowflakes swirled around and around in the small SHU yard at Shawangunk, and I had but one cheap prison-produced coat on and a single set of state clothes beneath. To escape the biting cold I dug into the seven- or eight-foot high mountain of snow that was piled in the center of the yard, the accumulation from inmates shoveling a narrow path to walk along the perimeter. With bare hands gone numb, I dug out a small room in that pile of snow, making myself a sort of igloo. When it was done I crawled inside, rolled onto my back on the snow-covered concrete ground, and almost instantly fell asleep, my bare head pillowed in the snow. I didn't even have a hat to wear.

An hour or so later I was awakened by the guards come to take me back to the stink and insanity inside: Blake, recs over I had gotten an hour's straight sleep, minus the few minutes it had taken me to dig my igloo. That was more than I had gotten in weeks without being shocked awake by the CA-RACK! of a sneaker being slapped into a plexiglass shield covering the cell of an inmate who had thrown things nasty; or the THUD-THUD-THUD! of an inmate pounding his cell wall, or bars being banged, gates being kicked and rattled, or men screaming like they're dying and maybe wishing that they were; or to the tirade of an inmate letting loose his pent-

up rage on a guard or fellow inmate, sounding every bit the lunatic that too long a time in the mind-breaking confines of the box had caused him to be.

I have been so exhausted physically, mental strength being tested to limits that can cause strong folks to snap, that I have begged God, tough guy I fancy myself, Please, Lord, make them stop. Please let me get some peace. As the prayers went ungranted and the insanity around me persisted, I felt my own rage rising above the exhaustion and misery, no longer in a begging mood: Lord, kill those motherfuckers, why dont you! I yelled at the Almighty, my own sanity so close to being gone that it seemed as if I were walking along a precipice and could see down to where I'd be falling, seeing myself shot, sanity a dead thing killed by the fall. I'd be afraid later on, terrified, when I reflected back on how close I had seemed to come to losing my mind, but at that moment all I could do was feel anger of a fiery kind: anger at the maniacs creating the noise and the stink and the madness; anger at my keepers and the real creators of this hell; anger at society for turning a blind eye to the torment and torture going on here that its tax dollars are financing; and perhaps most of all, anger at myself for doing all that I did that never should have been done that put me into the clutches of this beastly prison system to begin with. I would be angry at the world; enraged, actually, so burning hot was what I would be feeling.

I had wet toilet paper stuffed hard into both ears, socks folded up and pressed into my ears, a pillow wrapped around the sides and back of my head covering my ears, and a blanket tied around all that to hold everything in place, lying in bed praying for sleep. But still the noise was incredible, a thunderous cacophony of insanity, sleep impossible. Inmates lost in the throes of lavalike rage firing philippics at one another for even reasons they didnt know, threatening to kill one anothers mommas, daddies, even the children, too. Nothing is sacred in SHU. It is an environment that is so grossly abnormal, so antithetical to normal human interactions, that it twists the innerds of men all around who for too long dwell there. Their minds, their morals, and their mannerisms get bent badly, ending far off-center. Right becomes whatever and wrong no longer exists. Restraint becomes a burden and is unnecessary with concrete and steel separating everyone, so inmates let it go. Day after day, perhaps year after year, the anger grows, fueled by the pain caused by the conditions till rage is born and burning so hot that it too hurts.

Trying to put into words what is so unlike anything else I know or have ever experienced seems an impossible endeavor, because there is nothing even remotely like it any place else to compare it to, and nothing that will do to you on the inside what so many years in SHU has done to me. All that I am able to articulate about the world of Special Housing Unit and what it is and what it does may seem terrible to you indeed, but the reality of living in this place for a full quarter of a century is yet even more terrible, still. You would have to live it, experience it in all its aspects with the fullness of its days and struggles added up, to really appreciate and understand just how truly terrible this plight of mine has been, and how truly ugly life in the box can be at times, even for just a single day. I spent nine years in Shawangunks box, six years in Sullivans, six years in Great Meadows, and Ive been here in Elmiras SHU for four years now, and through all of this time I have never spent a single day in a Mental Health Unit cell because I attempted or threatened suicide, or for any other reason. I have thought about suicide in times past when the days had become exceedingly difficult to handle, but Im still here. Ive had some of my SHU neighbors succumb to the suicidal thoughts, though, choosing death over another day of life in the box. I have never bugged out myself, but Ive known times that I had come too close. Ive had neighbors who came to SHU normal men, and Ive seen them leave broken and not anything resembling normal anymore. Ive seen guys give up on their dreams and lose all hope in the box, but my own hopes and dreams are still alive and well inside me. The insidious workings of the SHU program have yet to get me stuck on that meandering path to internal destruction that I have seen so many of my neighbors end up on, and perhaps this is a miracle; Id rather be dead than to lose control of my mind.

Had I known in 1987 that I would spend the next quarter-century in solitary confinement, I would have certainly killed myself. If I took a month to die and spent every minute of it in severe pain, it seems to me that on a balance that fate would still be far easier to endure than the last twenty-five years have been. If I try to imagine what kind of death, even a slow one, would be worse than twenty-five years in the box and I have tried to imagine it I can come up with nothing. Set me afire, pummel and bludgeon me, cut me to bits, stab me, shoot me, do what you will in the worst of ways, but none of it could come close to making me feel things as cumulatively horrifying as what Ive experienced through my years in solitary. Dying couldnt take but a short time if you or the State were to kill me; in SHU I have died a thousand internal deaths. The sum of my quarter-centurys worth of suffering has been that bad.

To some judges sitting on high whove never done a day in the box, maybe twenty-five years of this isnt cruel and unusual. To folks who have an insatiable appetite for vengeance against prisoners who have committed terrible crimes, perhaps it doesnt even matter how cruel or unusual my plight is or isnt. For people who cannot let go of hate and know not how to forgive, no amount of remorse would matter, no level of contrition would be quite enough, only endless retribution would be right in their eyes. Like Judge Milroy, only an eternity in hell would satisfy them. Given even that in retribution, though, the unforgiving haters wouldnt be satisfied that hell was hot enough; theyd want the heat turned up. Thankfully these folks are the few, that in the minds of the many, at a point, enough is enough.

No matter what the world would think about things that they cannot imagine in even their worst nightmares, I know that twenty-five years in solitary confinement is utterly and certainly cruel, moreso than death in or by an electric chair, gas chamber, lethal injection, bullet in the head, or even immolation could possibly be. The sum of the suffering caused by any of these quick deaths would be a small thing next to the sum of the suffering that this quarter-century in SHU has brought to bear on me. Solitary confinement for the length of time that I have endured it, even apart from the inhuman conditions that I have too often been made to endure it in, is torture of a terrible kind; and anyone who doesnt think so surely knows not what to think.

I have served a sentence worse than death.

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.

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by [Voices from Solitary](#)

September 30, 2022

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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.

I was serving 6 months at Jamesville Correctional Facility in Jamesville NY, a minimum security jail with no bars for people doing a year or under. Billy Blake was being held there for his case because The Public Safety Building in Syracuse where he was first held, he was always beaten by the sheriffs deputies. So for his own safety he was moved to Jamesville. I only saw him once from a distance because he was separated from everyone else. Never would I have imagined that he would be in solitary confinement forever! I watched the film Birdman of Alcatraz with Burt Lancaster. Based on a true story that man did 43 years in solitary before he was released to a minimum security place. Billy essay is I believe is truthful because he was behaving like a scumbag while being walked to the court room he would yell profanities to the media outside the court room covering his case! Seems like a changed man if released I think he would make a model citizen. But in the US even if he is considered for parole the police would make it impossible. Michael

Upon examination of the responses, I see no offer of a clear path to what amends and rehabilitation should look like. We dont seem to know how to respond to our fellow human beings in their worst moments of their lives. Theres a sense were all still scratching our heads about this in some way and while in this state of mystery we keep accepting the current system of incarceration, based on this gentlemans account of solitary supported by our tax dollars, our current default is torture.

I doubt anyone who has commented could survive a month.

Thats because were not killers!, theyll invariably shout.

But what if you were?

Could you then?

Cry me a River you deserve everything you have been getting . You killed an innocent man for selfish reasons . I hope you suffer 100 times worse than you have already suffered . Cry on selfish BOY !

As an former inmate of the New York State Department of Correctional Services, currently partial deaf since birth, and I have served over approximately altogether almost two years in the Special Housing Unit at Cossackie Correctional Facility, Eastern Correctional Facility, and Elmira Correctional Facility back in the 1980s. I forgive the the Correction Officer for fabricated and planting the weapon on me. Mr. Blake, thank you for sharing your story but life cannot be reversed for your action nor your pain of injustice is not acceptable. We all have to take responsible for own actions. Innocent or not. Thats life.

lol you are one angry camper dude

Well, theres rape and then theres rape. I mean just saying theres a lot of men going down for rape out there who are innocent of that charge.

I wouldnt judge you, Id simply allow anyone in the family of those you killed to do the same to you. And the 25 years alone (with a radio and books)? Yes, Id agree that you deserved it. The consequences of your actions, you should have thought of those before killing.

I did a cumulative total of about six months in Admin Seg and then later some months on Extended Lockdown on the rock (for the uninitiated, doing rock-time means that youre on disciplinary lockdown, and they take your mattress away from you for all but five or six hours in every 24, leaving you only the concrete and cinderblock platform your mattress normally rests on the rock or the concrete floor to sit or lie on.) Essentially, lockdown is the equivalent of being in prison, and in the prisons jail at the same time. Most of my time in the hole was because of my status! was a police officer for about seven years and had to wait in line on the backlog for a bunk in the protective unit but those lockdown months were in the disciplinary lockdown unit, where generally the worst of the worst inmates are kept. And it doesnt matter why youre in that unit, everyone is subject to the same draconian rules. It was the hardest thing Ive ever had to tolerate for an extended time in my life. Even my final disciplinary vacation on the rock, which came some three years into my sentence, before I finally understood that no matter how logical your argument, you cant win an argument with a person who has the ability to lock you in a cage, caused me to become physically sick once I began the sentence of ten days.

The best line I ever heard about lockdown was in the movie that most inmates Ive known consider the funniest and most accurate movie about prison ever made Lets Go to Prison. In that movie there is a scene where one of the two protagonists gets sent to lockdown. The other protagonist, an experienced convict, says The worst thing about lockdown is that you cant tell the difference between five minutes and forever. Anyone whos done lockdown time will say, when they see that scene, Yeah! All I can say is whoever wrote the screenplay for that movie had to have done time.

Every minute I spent on lockdown was tough. I couldnt imagine spending years in a cage with no respite. The convict who wrote this essay has my sympathies, and I hope he can find his way out of that hole sometime soon. Unfortunately, once an inmate has done either of two things, the courts will allow the prison officials to do whatever they want to the inmate. Those two things are: 1) escape or attempt thereof, and/or 2) any attack upon the prison staff that results in serious injury to them, or death. The courts have generally held that provided the prison feeds you, puts a roof over your head, provides some semblance of medical care, and doesnt beat the shit out of you all the time (without provocation) then they arent subjecting you to unreasonable punishment. The courts dont give a rats ass how rough lockdown is on the inmate. All they care about is why the inmate has been put in lockdown. And if prison staff can articulate a reasonable justification, they can lock you up forever if they want.

An inmate I knew actually managed to escape, temporarily, from the maximum-security prison we were in at the time. It was Christmas day of 2000. He was recaptured after a few hours on the run. He was immediately moved to supermax lockdown at the biggest prison in the state. So far as I know, hes been there in lockdown ever since. But regardless of his desire for freedom, he knew what the cost of escape was. He bought and paid for that ticket to Camp J. Another inmate I knew was a trusty. He got into a physical altercation with a lowlife chickenshit guard who had been picking on him because the inmate would be extremely reluctant to defend himself from a guard. One day the guard pushed the trusty a bit too far and the trusty administered the ass-beating the guard had earned after months of abuse against the inmate. The guard was a classic bully willing only

to pick on those who were afraid of or unable to fight back. When the trusty got sick of being bullied and took it to him on the express train, the bitch ass guard turtled up in a corner and cried. Unfortunately, the inmate who had been a trusty for the better part of 15 years without a single disciplinary writeup knew that his next step was going to be lockdown, probably forever, regardless of the abuse the guard had inflicted upon him over days and weeks. So he tried to escape. He hadn't driven a car in something like 25 years and he crashed into another vehicle before he even got off prison grounds (prisons in my state tend to be huge plantations in rural areas, with the actual prison only covering a small fraction of its total yardage). He knew his time as a trusted inmate and trusty who was utterly reliable and dependable and neither an escapee nor a violence risk was over. He was headed for a cage. So what did he do? He cut his own throat with a broken bottle and died on the spot. Or the guards who found him killed him. Either is as likely as the other (he was cremated by order of the warden less than 24 hours after his death). Ultimately, he died because he had done everything he was supposed to do, worked honestly and hard, was obedient and behaved, yet still was facing an eternity in a cage because of the petty machinations of one coward and bully who would not leave him be. So he punched out, in a manner I don't think I could manage even if I were on the verge of being burned to death.

I know inmates who are so big and strong that they could probably murder any two or three prison guards with their bare hands. But they will bow down and take an ass beating administered for any unjust reason by the shitbird coward guards who seem to turn up in

the staff of most prisons. They know what the cost is of resisting even the most unjust abuse dished out by guards. That's being handcuffed and beaten by yet more guards, and additional time added to their sentence via loss of good time or new charges/sentences. The worst of those punishments is spending entire decades on lockdown for the offense of raising their hands instead of dropping them and accepting physical abuse.

I had two fellow inmates at the place I spent the most time, one of whom was someone I'd call a good friend. Both were soldiers of the Colombian Medellín cartel who came to the US to kill an American who was set to testify against the Ochoas and Escobar and their organization. They were not able to get out of the country after the killing before the police caught them (see the Netflix series *Narcos* for additional information on that if you're interested). Because they were seen as an extreme escape risk, as well as a threat to prison staff due to their connections, they were kept on lockdown for over a decade before finally being allowed a transfer to the unit I was in. They told me that going from (extremely) extended lockdown to a unit where they could go outside and look at the clouds was almost as good as going from prison to freedom for anyone else. The unit they were on lockdown in at Angola was not a disciplinary lockdown, but rather a security lockdown, so they were allowed things the disciplinary lockdown inmates were prohibited from possessing, like paints and paintbrushes and colored pencils and the like (not the first budding artists who discovered the solace of the brush and canvas in prison). Still, they told me that they eventually lost the will to live and quit eating, because they simply did not want to be alive and in a cage any longer. Its irrefutable that inmates on lockdown pay a heavy price.

Myself, after my longest and worst stint on lockdown, when they finally released me into population, the first thing I did was go outside, drop to my knees, and run my fingers through the grass; something I'd imagined doing almost every day of being confined to a six-by-ten (or smaller) for months.

I know only a single person who is on death row, and I can assure you that he would be overjoyed to give back his death sentence and get life in exchange. Knowing more or less the day and time of your impending death, and watching the hours and days tick by to that day is its own special variety of torture. So I'm told, the very worst part of it is knowing what day your loved ones are going to spend hoping for a miracle, or intervention by a court, down to the last minute, only to have someone come out of the prison and tell them you have been exterminated. Cue grief and tears and hugs which do nothing to reduce the pain your loved ones are suffering.

I had a friend serving a life sentence who had a severe medical condition which, untreated, would certainly kill him within a year or two. He refused treatment, saying he had nothing to live for. The only argument I could come up with that had any traction with him was this: Just by being alive, regardless if he was in prison for his natural life, he still had a role to play in the lives of his children and grandchildren. Just by being alive he prevented the infliction of pain and grief upon those he loved, even if he did only see and talk to them every couple of weeks. I told him if he truly loved his family and friends, he owed it to them to inflict as little pain and suffering upon them as he could manage. It worked. He recently passed away, painlessly, from natural causes, at an age nobody would think of as too young. That makes about nineteen years he put off that inevitable suffering his family would endure after that conversation we had about his illness. And ultimately, I believe, due to his advanced age, his death was easier for his loved ones to accept than it would have been when we had that discussion.

I fully admit that my half-year or so spent on solitary doesn't qualify me to argue against the premise of this inmate's essay, that some incarceration is worse than death. But I will say that, based upon my own observations and experience, that any life is better than a certain death. I know dozens of men who have copped out to a life sentence to avoid a death sentence and consider themselves lucky. I would do the same, because I just wouldn't want some asshole redneck in a cheap suit or prison uniform to have to tell my family that clemency was denied, the courts refused to intervene. And that I was now dead by state-sanctioned murder, before I even had a chance to digest my last meal. I too would beg and cry and debase myself and cop out to a life sentence, whatever it took to put off my family from having to bury me, as long as I could.

I hope the writer of this essay still has some people in his life, in the free world, who love him and want him to be around regardless of the conditions. I've always said that suicide is a crime of violence you inflict upon those who love you. If you have nobody in the world then yeah, I'd say your life is your own to live or escape, whether via a death sentence or through suicide. But if there is even one person out there who means anything to you, who would suffer when you die, then you have a duty to inflict as little grief and suffering upon them as you can manage. Haven't we already made our loved ones suffer enough? Pursue that life sentence and avoid that death sentence; man up and suffer that prison sentence no matter how bad it hurts. It might not matter to you, but I promise it matters to those who love you.

I don't believe that he is fully remorseful. All I hear is him talking about how hard he's had it after he was convicted of killing one, critically injuring another. Is his anger at himself because of remorse, or is it because of where he ended up? If he had not ended up in the SHU, would he still feel the same way? Somehow I doubt that. I think this is nothing more than poor me. He took a life, and almost took another. If he had done his time on this initial charges, he'd be out by now without a murder conviction over his head placing him in solitary. A deputy is dead because Mr. Blake here didn't want to serve his time for a drug charge. He should have taken the damn drug charge and served his time.

A damn shame that someone who writes so well is wasting away in the SHU. Someone who writes that well shows signs of high intelligence, and where the hell is he? In some little box for almost 30 years now. What a GD waste! People would give just about anything for that kind of writing skill and instead of making something with his life with his talent, he threw it all away on stupidity. His stupidity cost a life and wasted his own. He may still be alive, but he killed what he could have done in this world with that talent. Idiot. Fricken IDIOT.

Regardless, solitary is torture. And while some may think that torture is what he and other inmates deserve, the fact is, we don't want to go back to those times. Part of a civilized society is to realize that torture is not an acceptable way to treat people. We treat terrorists better than we treat our inmates in this country. The death penalty is not there because we are blood-thirsty savages who revel in the idea of seeing the scum wiped off the face of the earth, but because if a man has no chance of getting out, especially if they will spend their life in solitary, then let them go. It is a waste of taxpayer dollars, a waste of space, and totally inhumane. There is no excuse to keep a person caged for decades with no hope at all of ever being released. We are not barbarians. Put them out of their misery. Society is protected, they do pay for their crime, but they are not tortured for decades to appease those who are either too stupid to know what its like to live in a cage, or too hateful to realize just how evil it is to make a human, no matter how vile that human may be, suffer in such a manner.

Let's face a few indisputable facts:
This man's punishment is cruel and unusual.
No person could conjure up in their minds a more evil way to treat someone.
This man's punishment makes anyone who is aware of it and has the power to do something about it an accomplice to a crime against humanity.
It doesn't matter if this man killed every person's family in front of them. Nobody has the natural right to purposely destroy another's mind.
This man has endured an atrocity skin to something one would expect from Germany's Third Reich.
The Warden of the prisons that this man has spent his time in the SHU are going to hell if there exists such a place.
The fact that something like this could actually happen proves that nobody really knows anybody and that we are all going to die alone. I say this because enough people in our community have been implicit in allowing this form of torture that it is quite obvious that groupthink is at play here and that not a single individual has the charisma to do anything about it. It is akin to a thousand strangers walking by a vicious rape happening and doing nothing about it. Because we, as a race, as a whole, do not care about one another. We only care about ourselves in these modern times cut off from one another by the powers that be that power based in big corporations having become the government for which we ourselves are supposed to be in and not be corrupted and not allow cruelty to go unnoticed.
This man's punishment is unnatural and we are the first generation of people inhabiting this planet that would lock someone in a broom closet and then use tax dollars to ensure he stays there.
I graduated from law school but didn't take the bar exam. But if I do, I am going to become this man's lawyer and sue so many people and parties so that this will never ever happen again.
The government cannot be allowed to control people's minds. Its really quite simple. His punishment is to stay in Ungodly quarters, cut off from any hope, until his mind is gone. Who among us would condone 25 years of torture rather than capital punishment? The person whose uncle was murdered with an axe is obviously a young fellow. It does not take a whole lot of wisdom to understand that nobody has the right to force someone to live in a torture chamber,

Prison terms, in my opinion, are far too long and solitary confinement is cruel and unusual punishment especially for non-violent crimes. To the people who set these terms I would say just spend six months on a hospital mental ward. Its an eye opener. I spent four months on one and paced like a caged big cat the whole time. I would choose death over even a six-month prison sentence. I'm amazed that most folks think the death penalty is worse than life in prison.

Im torn between whether solitary is unjust or whether these inmates are getting what they deserve. To think of trying to escape on a drug charge and then killing a deputy is and will always be unacceptable. Im also a person who has a man in the system and he does his time as if its a vacation because to him it is. There is clearly something wrong with our country when we have more people in our prison system than anywhere in the world and most of those incarcerated are for non-violent offenses. Clearly there is something wrong when prison is a revolving door so where is the justice? It boggles my mind that the justice system doesn't try to get to the root of the revolving door and why do some people feel that prison is home. Yeah I know all about the corrupt judicial system in this country. I visit my son's father and always ask if he's getting therapy or do the AA or NA groups go up and try to reach out he tells me their a no show more than a show so what the fuck how does one get help when he or she has led a life of street crimes since his or her teenage years and been in more than out? Im working on a degree in the hopes that I myself will someday work with women who are incarcerated and try to offer them hope and spirituality that they so desperately need. Jail is not the place for non-violent offenses and wake-up and realize that these people need help. It just makes me angry that they don't receive the proper treatment that should be required. Solitary well if you are a pedophile or serial killer then yes you should do your time in solitary because you stole a life away from an innocent victim so in those circumstances justice is served. Someday I will make a change and make sure that prison no longer becomes a revolving door for women because that's where my heart is and more importantly my goal.

I wonder how many people in this conversation consider themselves actual Christians. Im not talking about someone who goes to church, sucks up to their pastor and can quote the bible. Im talking about someone who genuinely tries to be a good person. Someone who genuinely tries to do good and someone who chooses not to judge others for their past mistakes. God does not call us to condemn the acts of another. He calls us instead to love and to show compassion for others and to forgive. There doesn't seem like there is love, compassion or forgiveness being shown here. I also wonder how many of these unforgiving comments would change if it was the loved one of any of you. Why must you all possess so much hate in your hearts? Is this the kind of example you all want to set for younger generations? If so this is very sad and I would suggest you all think about that.

I am confused by this article. Two things. 1) Most people are not in the SHU for 25 years. Most prisoners are not moved this much. I wonder if there were either behavioral issues or protective custody issues. Most LWOP prisoners are able to get some privileges with good behavior. And what of his family and friends? 2) He mentions the crime in passing. He doesn't explain his motive, or remorse, or an unawareness of what he did. Solitary is a very terrible existence, and maybe that pushed him into a malignant narcissism, but I suspect his impulsiveness, lack of empathy and narcissism predated his crime by years. He embodies all the classic symptoms of a true sociopath. Studies have shown the one overriding desire of sociopaths is for pity. They thrive on it. This essay is a pity fest.

Wow just wow... this man expresses and shares a truly horrifying punishment that is far beyond what we give most anyone these days for killing someone even a cop. Look at what you sheeple are writing here and I sure deserves it. really REALLY? Im with dolan on this i am horrified at the lack of humanity in all of you. I feel terrible for the family of the man who he killed but doing this to his killer wont bring him back and i am sure does little to ease the pain and loss that family feels. Better he be allowed to be productive and maybe earn some money while he is prison for all these years. Let him contribute that to that family to make up for their bread winner being gone. Why does some judge have the right to sentence someone to anything other than life in prison it should not be his mine to decide that it has to be solitary. why should he be sentenced to solitary when there are other cop killers out there and they are not in solitary cops do a job that is hazardous and they know it when they sign up like himing or deep sea diving etc it is a high risk job. Why is that cops life worth more than an office worker or chef or nurse? are their lives worth less than the cop this guy killed. OOO look who i am asking the rabble rousing mob that would have stoned jesus if it was fashionable and a popular current attitude. I am ashamed to admit i am human, that i am of the same species as you rabid self-righteous pathetic sheep You disgust me and i only hope in your life times you fall prey to the same laws you now bang your pasty soft white hands together in praise of. Cockroaches all of you

I know this thread is super old. Someone recently upvoted one of my posts and I ended up reading down the line again. Anyway, I just had to chime in on this:

Being a police officer is most certainly NOT NOT NOT a particularly hazardous job. Look at the actual statistics. Its not even in the top ten. In fact, police officers (statistically speaking) are *almost never killed in the line of duty*; it is incredibly rare. It *seems* hazardous because of the way the media hawks every time one of them *is* killed but one needs to consider the incredible fuck-ton of police officers roaming our streets. If you knew how many police officers there were in NYC alone (just as an example) you'd be disgusted. In fact, Im actually gonna find out the number & post it here. One sec

OK, this is straight from wikipedia:

The NYPD's current authorized uniformed strength is 34,450.[6] There are also approximately 4,500 Auxiliary Police Officers, 5,000 School Safety Agents, 2,300 Traffic Enforcement Agents, and 370 Traffic Enforcement Supervisors currently employed by the department. The Patrolmens Benevolent Association of the City of New York (NYC PBA), the largest municipal police union in the United States, represents over 50,000 active and retired NYC police officers.

Lets do the math $34,450 + 4,500 + 5,000 + 2,300 + 370 = 46,620$

Note that these figures are clearly estimates. That means there are so many god damn cops that they have to resort to fuzzy estimates for their statistics. *They dont even know exactly how many there are*.

The Officer Down Memorial page states that 1,577 officers have been killed in the line of duty in NYC. What year you ask? Thats total. Ever. Garbage collection is more dangerous. As is being a roofer or electrician or being a farmer. The idea of the dangerous cop job is a complete fucking myth and it needs to stop. That false conception is how police get extra consideration when they get caught doing evil and end up walking. People cut them extra slack because their job is so dangerous.

Furthermore, and this is something of a tangent here, but the reason for this number of cops? To consistently raise money for NYC municipality by fleecing its citizens along with the many tourists and other travelers/commuters. Make no mistake: Their jobs goal is certainly not protecting people. In fact, the Supreme Court already ruled that cops are under no obligation whatsoever to place themselves at risk in order to protect a citizen (look it up). Their job is to extract fines from the populace (along with the many many other creative ways they transform not-their-money into their-money). The concept of police as now exists was actually created for one reason: To protect the property of the wealthy from the poor. This is not rhetoric or hyperbole. This is simple fact. Do your own research.

Anyway, I totally agree with most everything else you said. Obviously the so-called justice system in this country is a complete fucking farce from top to bottom. Its a cancerous ball of shame with almost real redeeming qualities whatsoever.

People who are saying that the prisoner who is the subject of this thread should have just been promptly executed are also wrong. Knowing what you know about the justice system as a whole Its malicious incompetence at all levels Do you *really* believe it should ever be empowered to execute *anyone*? Really..? Because I dont. As far as what *should* have happened to the prisoner Well he obviously should have received a lengthy prison term to be served in a civilized environment where his basic human needs are met within a reasonable degree (and most certainly not fucking solitary for 25 years). Being as he was young at the time of the crime, he should be afforded the means to rehabilitate himself and maybe get out eventually so he can contribute to society and undo a little of the damage he did (obviously not to the victims directly, but by doing positive things for society as a whole to balance out the negative). Murder is horrible thing, but imprisoning someone for 25 years is a lot worse than people (*who seriously have no fucking idea at all about what prison experience actually is*) like to make it out to be. Believe me. 25 years is a fair sentence for his crimes. And thats 25 years NOT in fucking solitary. This man has been punished way beyond what a civilized justice system should have inflicted and frankly, he deserves not only to get out of solitary but also to get out of prison. He has also demonstrated that he feels constant remorse for his crime and feels no ill will towards his jailers. These are signs of a man who understands what hes done and accepts responsibility. This man could be affecting the world in a positive way right now but the justice system would rather annihilate his mind and make sure he becomes (and stays) a fucking animal.

I could seriously go on and on about this but I know this is already beyond wall-of-text-level length here; so Im going to stop.

Thank you for reading.

Wow, I cant imagine it is a fate worse than death.

Its very difficult to figure out how punishment should work. Im a vegetarian, and even though I know all meat eaters are accomplices to mass-murder (you will disagree with this if you are a human supremacist), I know Im probably exaggerating when I tell people they deserve to be kept in a cage and then torn to pieces at an abattoir. This would be equal vengeance. Vengeance feels good to me, especially in movies. But then again theres a tipping point when I feel that someone has suffered enough. This is because I have empathy. Also, the legal system both here in Australia and other countries does not allow the victims to have a say in the type of punishment. In one way, this is a good way of preventing too lenient a sentence based on fear of reprisal or too much forgiveness, or too severe a sentence based on anger and hatred. But it is obvious to note that the same hatred and anger that victims feel might have been precisely the same as the perpetrator felt. Once again, this empathy allows us to understand wanting to murder or steal or bash someones skull or in the case of the writer, torture them every moment of every day for weeks. Or months. Or years. Or decades. One second of torture hurts bad enough. I do not agree with forgiveness even though I was raised as a follower of Jesus in my youth. Even Jesus got angry in the Bible. His dad certainly did and committed severe atrocities including ordering people to kill their own children, drowning people, genocide, supremacist activity resulting in mass murder including extinction of entire species, etc. By default, chaos would clearly reign. Entropy is the default state of matter in the Universe. But then again the laws of physics make matter clump. And here we all are, knowing nothing about reasons for existence except through ridiculous old books, simply wanting to eat, sleep, defecate and have sex until we die. Hopefully well be popular enough to have a statue made in our honour, but erosion will take care of that either before or after everyone we know and all of their descendants are dead. Punishment from the government is both a deterrent and vengeance to sait our hatred and anger. Its useful. If the government didnt control it, wed return to the dark times of survival of the fittest which simply equates to constant rape, theft and murder continuously everywhere. Morals dont need to be taught we would behave nicely when we wanted something out of pure selfishness to get what we wanted naturally like chimps grooming one another. The feeling of being trusted and even loved is worth the effort. But if you are disrespected at every turn by too many people, violence is the most sensible option. You will then get at least some of what you wanted, and just like the satisfaction of the Judge who proudly buried this guy in a torture chamber for so long, you would feel a burst of happiness from satisfying your hatred through extreme violence. So what do we do? Genetically modify future generations not to feel anger? Reduce the testosterone in angry young teens by cutting their balls off before they can do any real damage? We can hold our anger inside, and suffer silently so those without empathy do not need to be bothered by their fellow humans suffering. Or maybe we can give people something like an exploding punching bag to break, or a forum of accusation, or merit points to take away societal privileges when a person insensitively annoys someone who is already sad or angry. But these are mere preventions. If someone commits power abuse to the degree that they profit from mass murder, say a butcher who sells animal corpses for supremacist consumption, then my immediate reaction is to say, torture them until they are insane from the effects of violence from the victims perspective. Then let them go. Torture has played a huge role in human society for thousands of years. Im ashamed of myself for not being able to figure out a cleaner solution so that everybody wins. It cant be that hard. Nature already knows the answer: Death to all, innocent or guilty.

So what do we do? Genetically modify future generations not to feel anger?

Anger, maybe is a reaction, lacking the sophistication of an emotion?? What if it is a reaction to, lets say, punishment?

Does this mean that Tolstoy's Crime and Punishment should actually be: Punishment and Crime??

Well, Adam and Eve are punished and thrown out of Heaven before any crime is committed, (eating an apple does not count as a criminal act, its Gods personal conviction). Subsequently, Eve and Adam take out their anger on their kids, and the rest is history or I should say :Biblical History.

So my friend, I think we just found the answer to your question: In order to eliminate crime, the history of punishment has to be erased from human genetics. Maybe then we can all enjoy a beautiful life. >>

A WORLD WITHOUT PUNISHMENT IS A BETTER WORLD

No punishment = A better world?

What kind of blanket is keeping reality from your eyes?

Nature is completely cruel, and humans are no exception.

If there was no punishment then we would need to rely on human kindness, rather than both kindness and fear of consequences. If that ever happens, tell me quickly so I can build my bunker and hide. The whole world would become a slaughterhouse.

Imagine the kind of world youre talking about:

A man who wants your mothers purse stabs her in the face thirty times and blinds her. Her teeth can be seen through her cheeks like a dog, her tongue is hanging from sinew in 40 pieces, blood gushes from her throat, her spinal cord is severed making her a quadriplegic, and though she can feel her pain acutely as you feed her through a straw every day for the rest of her life, you still find the time to thank the person who slashed your mother up because he bought you all dinner tonight with the money he found in your mothers purse. She can hear him and feels anger, but you smile at him because you are kind hearted and would never tell any authorities about his actions. Not because you are scared about what he would do to you, but rather because punishment is wrong.

I dont believe that you agree with what you wrote. There needs to be revenge, and its probably better that governments handle it rather than friends of victims. Many people in usually poor areas are given a great amount of respect for their violence rather than intelligence, and the absence of retribution/punishment/revenge would be a literal get out of jail free card.

We cant have no punishment at all. That would be anarchy constant unstoppable rape and murder everywhere.

I agree that the punishment system worldwide is still extremely primitive.

I did not mean for A World without punishment is a better World to be interpreted as: Starting today, there will be no punishment for any crime.

My idealists thought process, does not move alongside the linear progression of time. I dont claim to have an immediate solution to the problem, Im saying maybe we forgot which triggered the reaction. At the source of humanity, (Adam and Eve) did crime come first or second as a response to Punishment (being thrown out of heaven), subsequently punishing their kids, finally brother kills brother, the first criminal act of humans.

I am suggesting that punishment gave birth to crime, thats all.

Just like Future , gave birth to Hope. These concepts are now embedded in out genes, however not in the order they were received.

If the Bible is true, then God is either a bumbling idiot or a psychotic. Its not true, of course. Writers throughout history have been little more than cavemen who were able to turn their grunts into squiggly lines. I wouldnt say humans are the cruellest species to have ever lived on this planet, but it seems we are the best organised. During these primitive days of our history we are still having teething problems, trying to balance freedom and equality. We all want to be free, but things would be neater if we were all equal. Absolute freedom can only ever happen if humans do not take away the freedom of others, either by accident or through power abuse. If a human does take away the freedom of others, then there needs to be compensation, either by way of an apology, by paying money, or by suffering. Torture or murder is the only way we know to deliver that last one, usually by having men with guns take the offender by force and locking her or him in a cage, like the author of the article. I wish there was another way to handle things, but if someone causes me pain, I want them to feel pain in return, or at least give me great pleasure as compensation. But if they have killed someone, like Betsy the cow who was completely innocent (RIP), simply because the offender liked the taste of meat, then the offender can never repay Betsy. Should we then say that the victim is not suffering anymore so let the butcher walk free? No. The butcher cannot fix anything, and should be made to suffer torture as revenge. Hopefully others will see this as a deterrent and not kill animals for their own luxury. If there was no punishment at all, billions of animals would continue to be murdered every year. There is not, and they are. How do compassionate fight such human supremacism? If I walked into an abattoir and killed all the evil human workers to save the lives of hundreds of innocent screaming animals right now, I would not be considered a hero. I would be punished. The world still has teething problems, and yes punishments are misplaced depending on the morals of the society, but power abuse cannot go unpunished.

Its bad enough when you did something serious, its even too harsh for them, but no, spying for an ally does NOT deserve life without parole, it ALSO doesnt deserve 7 years of Solitary Confinement! I think Pollard has paid his dues!

William blake is a forerunner to thugs we have n o w in streets, he should have given more brutal treatment. He does not. care about his victims

At all. He should have been used. As spare parts for decent people that would reduce crime in america very quickly men like him are animals they should be destroyed. quickly

Imagine youre 18. Youre a kid, but think youre a man. Nobody can tell you nothing. Youre a big boy.

Then, you do something stupid. You get life without parole.

Youre in the box before youre 19. You die in there when youre 80.

Can you imagine it? Just try. Dont think of who deserves what for doing what to who. Just think of it; a mistake, a bad decision, one made when society told you that youre now a man, a big boy, and you can wear big boys pants.

On the day you turn 18 you see yourself a man, but on the day you turn 19 you know youre still a kid.

And youre in the box. For life. LIFE.

To all whos out on free street, think of all youve done since you were 18. You cant even remember all of it.

Now imagine youve been in the box since shortly after you left school.

Can you?

Imagine that you did something to help an ally, its illegal but you did it, while everybody else who did this gets 2-16 years, you get life without parole, and you agreed to a plea bargain, they break it, your lawyer didnt tell you that you had a right to appeal, so you have been disproportionately sentenced for 30 years, Pollard should of been out of jail for 26 years by now!

Was this something to help an ally high treason against the US and its people? Oh it was? Then plz fuck off.

bet he wont kill anybody else, smh. the judge took care of that. Im sure the victims families are happy to read about your plight. he has the option to end it all, anytime hed like, with the materials hes been given

Good glad hes not having a nice time in prison, glad hes not watching tv and enjoying luxuries. Fuck him

The victims should decide the perpetrators fate. I dont know how hard it is to follow such a rule. Justice isnt one size fits all. We have convicted people punished too harshly for small crimes and those who committed horrible crimes not being punished at all.

As far as this person is concerned, I dont get why they are so upset at their situation. Thats what happens when you commit a crime and you dont have rights anymore. Other people tell you what rights you have and can order you to accept things you dont want to accept if you get what Im saying. All convicted people suffer this fate, be it for a small offense or big offense.

I dont know about that, since sometimes, like when youre spying to help an ally, the victim is actually 2, America and Israel. Israel could of died if it werent for that spy, and America did an embargo, I think that sentence, life without parole is too harsh! I think Pollard should of been out of jail 26 years ago!

I agree that solitary would produce the kind of madness he described but no way did he write this article. Look at how elegantly this was written certainly not the type of prose that someone with presumably little education with no access to the real world could have possibly produced. In fact, most educated americans could not write like this (Im a trained journalist so I know professional writing when I see it).

Regardless it speaks to a good point and raises a lot of questions. People in solitary cannot be rehabilitated but for some, like this author, his prison term is so long that rehabilitation and introducing him to society is not even an option. Many of these criminals are mentally ill, or downright insane, even before going into solitary. I feel bad for them, but worse for the families of the people whos lives they took. A part of me wishes things were better for them, but a part of me feel that they deserve this and more.

He was allowed to read books and magazine his 25 yrs in solitary confinement. That was plenty time to educate himself in reading and writing especially reading articles written by trained professional journalists.

so hes one of the lucky ones, hes not very lucky, but its a sad day when somebody who done a less serious crime got solitary confinement for 7 years, and while he was waiting for a court case in washington, he was in solitary too, but he didnt even get those things. Im angry too, at how harsh our government is! I am angry at the mistreatment of Pollard too!

who said that he was uneducated? you assume because he went to prison or did this crime that he is less educated than someone else say yourself? lot and lots of educated criminals out there wake up .

You dont think 25+ years alone in a cell with nothing to do but read and write might make you a decent writer?

cant do the time? dont do the crime

how utterly puerile, how pathetically predicable, how pathological common..

To fucks like who say oh well, he killed people, he deserves it, fuck you, just fuck you Nobody deserves this kind of shit. If we punished all crimes to the same proportion that we punish people like this guy with life in solitary we would be decapitating people for petty theft.

If youre found guilty to the of degree of murder that this man was you should be taken out back and have two put in the back of your head. End of story. But no, since we live in a civilized society and executing people is such a fucking barbaric thing to do we, sorry gotta correct myself here, THE STATE has decided that the humane thing to do is to lock these people away in solitary for the remainder of their lives where they are not only forced to live a literal mundane hell that is a thousand times worse than being put to death but WE as taxpayers get to be the ones footing the bill to keep dicks like this alive.

And also, for assholes out there like you who think that the punishment fits the crime. Just wait. Just fucking wait. This piece of shit government of ours passes so many god damn laws under the table that sooner or later its going to be illegal to walk down the fucking block without the proper permits and youre going to end up just like this guy. You think the US has the highest prison population in the world because our general population is just full of BAD people? No, its because this system has passed so much bullshit legislature that pretty soon you wont be able to wake up in the morning without breaking three laws. This country now has more privatized prisons than all the other countries in the world combined. We have an entire industry devoted to this shit! There are people making money off other people going to prison. Think about that the next time you want to pat yourself on the back for being nice obedient law abiding tax paying citizen you smug fuck.

No,
fuck you, actually.

What could be more devastating than having someone you love dearly, like your father, brother or husband, put into their grave from which there is no chance of ever returning unlike prison, or even solitary confinement as a result of a senseless act of pure selfishness?

And for what? An almost non-existent chance to maybe get a bit a freedom for a very brief moment of time (a moment of freedom that clearly would not have been deserved, even if it could be achieved).

And yet folks like you, being both full of yourselves and your own personal political views, manage to muster a Victorian level of self-righteousness indignation for the suffering of a murderous convict. But when it comes to the tragic suffering of this same convicts victims, you shrug your shoulders and manage to say absolutely nothing.

As painful as solitary confinement may be (and I have no doubt that it is), I wonder if it actually rivals the metal anguish associated with knowing that someone dear to you was put into their grave and is gone forever for something as stupid as a one-in-a-billion chance at temporary freedom. (Again, for someone who doesnt actually deserve it.)

Seriously, how long could any rational person expect to remain free after murdering a law-enforcement officer in front of countless witnesses in open court? How stupid and selfish would you have to be to pull that trigger under these circumstances and against these odds and wantonly take the life of another person in the process?

And yet, this author was willing to inflict immeasurable mental torment on entire families for something so stupid and so nearly certain to fail not to mention the fact that he willfully and knowingly put his own future and well-being at risk: He knew what was at stake and pulled the trigger anyway.

We all know how the prison system works in this country, and no one can reasonably claim to be surprised to find himself languishing in prison, even in solitary confinement, for murdering a law-enforcement officer: Just like clockwork, this author suffered the well-known consequences of this type of crime.

And where was the authors sympathy for the unimaginable, life-long emotional and psychological torment that he was certain to cause countless other human beings by such a selfish act?

I am actually a libertarian and wholeheartedly agree with the notion that we have way too many laws, incarcerate way too many people and are way too anxious as a society to rip people from their families and confine them in prisons, even in cases where the accused poses no real threat to society.

But this is clearly not the case here: Some people, like this author, actually deserve to be in prison and need to be in prison. And regardless of your position on solitary confinement, no one here deserves to be called an asshole (let alone a fucking asshole) for not being sympathetic towards this author.

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No, fuck you, actually.

What could be more devastating than having someone you love dearly, like your father, brother or husband, put into their grave from which there is no chance of ever returningunlike prison, or even solitary confinementas a result of a senseless act of pure selfishness?

And for what? An almost non-existent chance to maybe get a bit a freedom for a very brief moment of time (a moment of freedom that clearly would not have been deserved, even if it could actually be achieved).

And yet folks like you, being both full of yourselves and your own personal political views, manage to muster a Victorian level of self-righteousness indignation for the suffering of a murderous convict. But when it comes to the tragic suffering of this same convicts victims, you shrug your shoulders and manage to say absolutely nothing.

As painful as solitary confinement may be (and I have no doubt that it is), I wonder if it actually rivals the metal anguish associated with knowing that someone dear to you was put into their grave and is gone forever for something as stupid as a one-in-a-billion chance at temporary freedom for a convicted criminal who doesnt deserve to be free.

Seriously, how long could any rational person expect to remain free after murdering a law-enforcement officer in front of countless witnesses in open court? How stupid and selfish would you have to be to pull that trigger under these circumstances and against these oddsand wantonly take the life of another person in the process?

And yet, this author was willing to inflict immeasurable mental torment on entire families for something so stupid and so nearly certain to failnot to mention the fact that he willfully and knowingly put his own future and well-being at risk: He knew what was at stake and pulled the trigger anyway.

We all know how the prison system works in this country, and no one can reasonably claim to be surprised to find himself languishing in prison, even is solitary confinement, for murdering a law-enforcement officer in open court: Just like clockwork, this author suffered the well-known consequences of this type of crime.

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To fucks like who say oh well, he killed people, he deserves it, fuck you, just fuck you Nobody deserves this kind of shit. If we punished all crimes to the same proportion that we punish people like this guy with life in solitary we would be decapitating people for petty theft.

If youre found guilty to the of degree of murder that this man was you should be taken out back and have two put in the back of your head. End of story. But no, since we live in a civilized society and executing people is such a fucking barbaric thing to do we, sorry gotta correct myself here, THE STATE has decided that the humane thing to do is to lock these people away in solitary for the remainder of their lives where they are not only forced to live a literal mundane hell that is a thousand times worse than being put to death but WE as taxpayers get to be the ones footing the bill to keep dicks like this alive.

And also, for assholes out there like you who think that the punishment fits the crime. Just wait. Just fucking wait. This piece of shit government of ours passes so many god damn laws under the table that sooner or later its going to be illegal to walk down the fucking block without the proper permits and youre going to end up just like this guy. You think the US has the highest prison population in the world because our general population is just full of BAD people? No, its because this system has passed so much bullshit legislature that pretty soon you wont be able to wake up in the morning without breaking three laws. This country now has more privatized prisons than all the other countries in the world combined. We have an entire industry devoted to this shit! There are people making money off other people going to prison. Think about that the next time you want to pat yourself on the back for being nice obedient law abiding tax paying citizen you smug fuck.

No, fuck you, actually.

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You keep saying this country. Are you assuming everyone on the internet is in YOUR country? Which country are you in?

No, I'm actually assuming that no one could possibly be so dim-witted that they couldn't easily figure out that since we are talking about solitary confinement policies in the US that I am talking about the US when I say this country.

I doubt that anyone else besides you has struggled to figure this out, Zxen.

And what do semantics have to do with this topic anyway?

Vulgar power abuse.

I'm not even sure what that means, Zxen.

Apologies for this tangent about American supremacism, but it relates to the article. Americans need to be very careful not to sound elitist on the internet. You have always prayed to your flag and worshipped yourselves; we all know that. But now all of a sudden you people get to see how the rest of the world feels about it. You are not number one. You are equal. Americans should walk on eggshells everywhere they go to prevent displaying an air of superiority or exclusivity. Power abuse is the only immoral act and should be considered the only crime. Now you know, bgaarsoe. Perhaps you were unaware of this for some reason so you had the excuse of ignorance. But now you've been told. Include us all, or specify your country as one of many. Never make it seem that your country is the main country.

The only thing you have communicated here, Zxen, is that you are one of the ever-growing list of people who has a big chip on their shoulder regarding American elitism, which causes you to see American elitism at every corner. This is a big problem these days as American elitism itself.

Zxen, all you are doing is reading way too much into this by projecting your own biases onto the simple use of the word this to refer to the country the commenter happens to live in.

If this were a similar story from China and some commenter used the term this country, all that that would mean is the commenter is from China, nothing more.

The fuck are you talking about? This is an essay about an American prisoner followed by a discussion of the American justice system. All you've done is outed yourself as a foreign weirdo that has a big I-hate-the-United-States hard-on. Nobody is gonna legitimize your completely out-of-place and irrelevant rant. You should probably just go fuck yourself. The only person here who said anything about worshipping America is you. Fucking nut-bag.

You sound like a jealous younger brother, Zxen. Concentrate on the shit your own country does and get off your high horse about America. We don't care what you think.

What could be more devastating than having someone you love dearly, like your father, brother or husband, put into their grave from which there is no chance of ever returning?

What the author described in his essay, for one thing. That would be a lot more devastating.

I think more devastating than dying is to be damned to eternal hell by being put in solitary confinement for the rest of your life. Dying is mercy compared to what this man is going through.

Exactly my point. This is some cold-blooded shit.

Really, and you know this how, Ephew? Have you ever had a member of your immediate family murdered and have you also spent time in solitary confinement to know which is worse.

And here is another fact that folks like you are conveniently ignore and something that was also conveniently ignored in this story: How this person ended up in solitary confinement: Even criminals who have committed the worst offenses imaginable do not automatically end up in solitary confinement. You can be a murderer and even a serial killer and still live in general population. You generally have to continue to cause problems, including engaging in violence within prison, to be consigned to solitary confinement. And even when it comes to solitary confinement, that is usually temporary. Only an elite few end up there permanently. And when they do, it is because they have proven that they are a continued danger to both prison staff and other inmates.

And I think anyone who automatically buys the notion that this guy has been treated unfairly and is MORE deserving of sympathy than someone who has lost a close family member is either willfully ignorant because of their own political or personal biases or simply incredibly naive.

Actually genius, my father was murdered. And I've also spent time alone in a cell. So yeah. I do have a pretty good idea what is worse.

Simply assuming that everyone on prison *deserves to be there* (or even everyone specifically in solitary) is pretty ridiculous when you realize that the prison system is mind-blowingly brutal and corrupt from the ground up. It victimizes hundreds of new people every day. And by victimize, I am referring to people who get something worse than they actually deserve in prison.

Additionally, revenge for the victim is not the intended purpose of prison and never was. The intent is protection of society and the idea that the criminal might be rehabilitated. However, we all know that this is not how US prisons work, in practice.

You were actually able to deal with the murder of your father more easily than spending time alone in a cell? That's interesting, but that doesn't let you off the hook for all of the other points that have been discussed: First of all, we are not talking about spending time alone in a cell. Lots of people have done that. We are talking about being put in solitary confinement for an extended period of time and the fact that that doesn't happen in a vacuum independent of any behavioral decisions on the part of the person in confinement.

I'm curious, Dan. How much time did you end up spending in solitary confinement, and why are you not still there? (My guess is you made better personal choices than this guy did.)

Spending days alone in a cell and then extrapolating that experience into the some 25 years that the prisoner describes is a simple matter if one has any quanta of imagination at all. Don't pretend it isn't.

It's actually tragic that any person's path in life leads to prison. And I'm sure that it's about the closest thing to hell on earth that exists. But this guy, and no one else here besides you, is talking about how horrible life is in prison. (I don't think anyone here disputes that.)

Again, that is not the topic of this thread, despite the fact that you are pretending that it is. (This is a very good example of what is called a straw man, argument, by the way.)

How do you figure? This entire discussion is about solitary being horrible. Solitary is a component of the prison system. When referencing solitary, the unfairness and hellishness of the prison system, at a systemic level, is decidedly relevant. Nice attempt at deflection though.

Yes. Yes I was. My father was murdered when I was 11 years old (and not in a pretty way either). And I'd take that over 25 years of solitary and no hope of it ever ending.

By the way: what crime exactly do you think will typically get someone landed in solitary for 25 years? You say that murder isn't enough, etc.

I know of many people guilty of less than murder who have spent decades or more in solitary. For example, there's a guy who accidentally shook his baby to death who is in solitary for life. He's generally passive, nerdy, comic artist. His accidental baby-killing is his only instance of violent offending. Point is, you can't just write off solitary like, well that must mean he's the worst of the worst worse than the most murderous murderer or rapey rapist.

I am glad to see that you are at least now talking about solitary confinement and not conflating it with general prison life. And that's a nice anecdotal story that would probably be hard for anyone here to verify (and feel free to post the link to his story if you can), but you are still missing the mark if you think this discussion is simply about how horrible both prison and solitary confinement are and how mean and unfair prisons tend to be. (No one doubts this!)

And I have been using the term generally for a reason: In just about every aspect of life, you can always find anecdotal exceptions to every situation. But it invariably turns out to be pretty tough to build any type of serious argument based on these anecdotal examples. It's even harder to persuade people they are representative of the larger (or general) picture, because these arguments are rarely capable of standing up to the larger historical and factual reality.

Nor am I convinced that this guy is one of those exceptions. It would be difficult to know for sure based on the story above, because he did not include any of those details, but I would be really surprised if he were actually a hapless victim in all of this who is beyond reproach when it comes to the situation that he has found himself in.

And the reason you are still kind of missing the mark with regard to this topic is because all this stuff about how horrible prison is and how horrible solitary confinement must be (which none of us actually doubt) are really nothing more than personal sentiments and do not even begin to address the question of what should be done with people who somehow end up qualifying for long-term solitary confinement. (Nor does your personal anecdote really begin to answer the question of why people end up in these situations.)

Dan, I'm sure that every aspect of prison is horrible; solitary confinement probably being the worst aspect of it. But again, that's still not the topic here.

If a guard doesn't like you, it's a simple matter for that guard to become concerned for your safety right on, and they would have the right to decide where you belong, even if those concerns were greatly exaggerated. I agree with you, I believe every person in the state, court, or prison system gets a unequal outcome due to the different mindsets of judges, political chairs, and legislative branches they are among. It can even go as far as, you said Dan, a prison guard simply not liking you and saying things to create a certain outcome. It really depends on the people your around and what their own thought patterns and rationalities are, even if wrong.

True. Death naturally comes to alleviate unjust deaths. But torture

Thank you, and what about disproportionate sentencing, imagine this, you oh say took marijuana, you get life, then another guy who took marijuana gets 6 months. That's not fair right?! Well it's ALSO not fair that

Jonathan Pollard gets life without parole, a complete VIOLATION of his plea bargain, then somebody else who spied, and for the same country, Israel, got 13 years, and to add insult to injury, Michael Swartz just gets discharged from the navy, a guy who spied for al quida got 10 years, they're now free, and even Andrich Alms got treated better. Solitary confinement is an outrage, it is wrong, after all, even MURDERERS have loved ones!

I have noticed that you used this most commented on article to raise the unrelated subject of Pollard's release.

Ill quote Hersh in the New Yorker,

According to senior members of the American intelligence community, Pollard's argument that he acted solely from idealistic motives and provided Israel only with those documents which were needed for its defense was a sham designed to mask the fact that he was driven to spy by his chronic need for money.

A number of officials Hersh spoke with believed that the intelligence Pollard provided was repackaged and given to the Soviet Union. Officials say that there was reason to believe that secret information was exchanged for Jews working in highly sensitive positions in the Soviet Union. A significant percentage of Pollard's documents, including some that described the techniques the American Navy used to track Soviet submarines around the world, were of practical importance to the Soviet Union.

If this is true, given our current tensions with Russia, the end result was unforgivable.

<http://www.newyorker.com/books/double-take/back-issues-jonathan-pollard>

It isn't true, they're lying!

Hersh is a liar! He is a known liar!

Consider this: Would his punishment have been anywhere even remotely as harsh if he had killed say a mail carrier or a teacher.? I think not. This sort of thing (aside from being monstrously-inhumanly-repulsively cruel) does much to support the idea that government employees' lives are somehow more valuable than anyone else's. That in itself is a grave error. I'm sure some psychopath will see my posts here and flame the shit out of me because this guy totally deserves it, etc. To those people I say: Fuck you. You inhuman sociopath. *You* are the true evil.

sir you are 100% correct. you hit it right in the head. going to jail nowadays doesn't mean you are a bad person and we have way too many people in prison. end mass incarceration. it would be way more merciful to just shoot this guy in the head and save us millions of dollars. what's the point of him suffering and us losing money. oh right, cause we're a civilized society and we don't execute people. we just bury them alive and let them suffer eternal hell. so civilized we are.

It's not just burning alive. Don't forget the constant dehumanization & psychological torture.

That's what happens when wealthy pampered-ass politicians who have *no fucking concept* of what prison is actually like are making the decisions. It also doesn't help when you have an *absolutely disgusting* hedonistic & utterly-amoral moneyed upper-class who actually believe that US prisoners have it too good. These are the very same pieces of *filth* who get out of prison sentences themselves by virtue of being able to hire a real lawyer (aka playing the game just as it was always meant to be played). As we all know: For the most part, it's only poor people or non-whites that actually see the inside of a prison cell. (I am white btw)

Dolan Duk
Just fuck you too, dipshit. I'd like to see how you'd feel about it if it was your brother or father or son this guy murdered in his futile attempt to escape. The people speaking against the convict who wrote the essay have a valid premise. He did murder someone. Time doesn't heal all wounds, at least not wounds like that, and you'd be the first one standing in line to take an ax to his skull if it were someone you loved that he killed. So quit the tough-guy act. You're not convincing at all. I did ten years behind bars so I speak here with at least a little bit of authority. If you went to every single inmate doing a life sentence and asked them, what would they do to a man who raped or murdered their parents, their siblings, their lovers, their children? I guarantee you to a one (if they answered honestly) would gladly take a ditch-bank blade and split the perpetrator from crown to chin. They would show no mercy whatsoever to the killer, just like most people in the free world. As I said in another post on this topic, the vast majority of inmates serving life sentences are doing so because they copped out to avoid execution, and considered it a good deal. Nobody wants to have prison personnel lying in wait with IV bags and poison to stick into their arms. I spent the better part of a year on lockdown for various reasons and I can tell you, probably 90% of people in the hole are there because they simply couldn't get with the program and continued to do things that posed a threat to or inflicted harm on other inmates or staff. Or, like me, they continued belligerence and disobedience long past the point that any rational person would shut his fucking mouth and move along. Most of the people on long-term lockdown are there because they presented either an escape risk (e.g. actually attempted an escape) or a continuing threat to the safety of either staff or other inmates. One of the people at Angola who has served decades on lockdown has been there because every time they let him go and placed him into population he either raped another inmate, or tried, or physically attacked and tried to kill another inmate, and this was a big, strong, brutal and primitive man your average fellow simply couldn't withstand an attack from. What else are you supposed to do with someone like that? Every single convict knows full well the life that awaits him if the authorities decide he's too much of and too incorrigible a threat to others, or too much a threat of escape. When he crosses the line he does so with full knowledge of the fate that awaits him. As many inmates I have known (some of them serving life sentences for murder) would say, fuck 'em. He knew what would happen. I'm not one to apologize for any chickenshit bullies who work as prison guards. I've known several I would love to anonymously stomp the teeth out of their heads for the chickenshit bully towards they were. Yet there were many others who were decent, and its dishonest and a bit cowardly to not give them credit where credit is due. Regardless, a prison guard has one responsibility that comes before all others: and that's to segregate the convict away from the world at large so he can't inflict harm upon any more innocent citizens like he has done in the past. Seen in that light, being draconian with the long-term confinement makes perfect sense. And you know what? When inmates get sent to do rock-time in the hole, you know what the most common reason is? Because the offender either threatened or harmed some of his fellow inmates. I got put on the rock several times because I had absolutely no respect for some of the guards and I wasn't bashful about letting them know it. Stupid. But most of the guys doing rock-time were doing it because they had either threatened or attacked a fellow inmate. Long story short every inmate with more than a couple weeks incarcerated under his belt knows full well what the consequences are if they threaten or cause harm to other inmates or staff. And people like the inmate who wrote this essay bought and paid for their consequences many times over. He claims his incarceration is worse than death? I know one guy on death row who would gladly trade places with him. If his lot is so terrible now, would he elect to be executed if the option was offered to him? Well, that option awaits. He presumably has sheets and blanket from which a rope can be braided (I knew someone who did it and used it so I know it can be done). So why is he still alive? Oh yeah, because like 99% of his fellow humans he doesn't want to die. Cry me a fucking river. Feel however you like about an inmate killing law enforcement or custodial jail personnel. But know that the man killed had loved ones, parents or mate or kids who sobbed at the funeral. I'm an old ex-con. But if this dude had killed one of my loved ones I'd take his head for a trophy if it were the last thing I did in life, and no putting woe-is-me whining would slow me down even a little bit. I'd bet that if you asked him, and he was totally honest, he'd do the same to anyone who hurt one of his. You know what the old timers at Angola Prison, one of the oldest, largest, and most brutal and primitive max-security pens in the country, say to new lifers who arrive on the bus? Many of them arrive with life sentences, and in this state life means life. You only get out when you die. The old convicts say to new lifers when they arrive: Any man who can live with a life sentence is a weak punk. I'd amend that to say that any man who willfully takes the life of another for any self-serving reason short of defending himself from murder, and who afterward complains about the severity or conditions of his sentence, is a weak punk who should have thought twice before he committed the brutal and self-serving harm he did. I say all this, but can also say that some of the best friends I've ever had in this life were convicted murderers. To a one I'd trust any of the with my back or my life. And not a single one of them ever whimpered about the severity or conditions of his sentence. One of them spent the better part of two decades on lockdown. Did he whine or complain? Not a bit. He took it like a man. He knew he earned it and he took it without crying about it. I have a great deal of sympathy and commiseration with my fellow convicts. But not much respect for one that whimpers about his sentence or conditions thereof. I learned really fast, as a new convict, that nobody wanted to hear anyone bellyaching about his sentence or conditions. Self-pity earns you nothing in the joint except scorn. And for Dolan Long Duk Dong I say again, fuck you, shut your dicksucker before someone shuts it for you. Or puts something in it for you to nurse on. You whining punk. You know nothing about doing time or about people who have to live with the consequences of brutal acts committed by others, like the inmate who wrote this essay. If I were classification personnel or a warden or assistant warden at his facility, barring some recent and fairly egregious dangerous behavior on his part, I would set him loose in general population. At this point, so many decades into his extended lockdown stay, he probably has established a track record that shows he is probably a threat to neither fellow inmates nor prison staff. And that should be the sole issue considered in whether or not to place him in general population. Without doubt the reason he has been in a cage for so long is likely the fact that he harmed prison personnel in his escape attempt. Since inmates are sent to prison *as* punishment and not *for* punishment meaning its not the job of prison staff to inflict punishment upon the inmate they have no legit role in punishing an inmate for wrongs committed by him in the past. So, yeah, I'd at least give him a probationary run at living in population. It simply isn't the fucking job of prison staff to decide to inflict such punishment upon him, and then inflict that punishment. There's even a convincing fiscal argument against keeping him in solitary. It costs something like 2.5 to 3 times more to keep someone on lockdown than it costs to keep him in a dorm in general population. If the guy hasn't done anything in his recent security history to threaten or cause harm to staff or other inmates, the staff owes him a shot at general population. Drop him into a slot where he costs less to house and where he might actually contribute toward earning his keep. Guys coming off of long-term stays in lockdown provided they aren't one of the numerous inmates with psychiatric problems typically present far less of a disciplinary problem than new inmates or those who go straight into gen pop after being sentenced.

But don't tell me he deserves less stressful circumstances. If that was one of my loved ones he harmed or killed, I'd go to prison on purpose if I thought I could get a crack at the guy, and I would knock the brains right out of his fucking skull.

Good Dolan to realize it is the STATE that is implementing this bullshit for safety reasons, etc etc etc. What a bloody joke.

So when will despotic government apply the same despicable standards of torture against those many many cops who murder unarmed and compliant citizens?

And all the bloodthirsty critics commending the torture of this felon fall silent.

You haven't lived till you have done 21 months in solitary. . . Yes, some spend a great deal more time than I did. . . What I don't understand is how people crack under that kind of pressure. . . After all, its quiet, none of the constant yelling, screaming, fighting you get in general population. . . I spent all that time reading, reading and reading. . . That was more than 20 years ago for me. . . Today, I own my own business, happy and have a nice life. . . I look back on that time and learned one thing. . . I had 21 months to work on me and my problems. . . I was forced to see myself for who I am and do something to change it, something MOST persons can't survive. . . I'm glad I went through that.

You are a fucking dummy. I hope you're not this stupid a year later.

that makes me really happy to hear. the fact that 80,000 people spend time in solitary confinement really hurts me to my core but to know that a strong person can make the best out of a situation it makes me feel pretty positive. i think long term solitary confinement should be banned however. but for short periods of time i guess it can't be that bad.

The crucial differences are:

The guy above wasn't in solitary for 25 years.

The guy above also knew he'd eventually get out he had light at the end of the tunnel.

I agree with you. It is totally different when there is light at the end of the tunnel. The people that lock them away day after day for years know what type of fucking sick torture it is and don't really give a fuck at all. This guy deserves to be free already. I do think about him too. To know that he is stuck in the same cell everyday. Its painful and its painful to know that this happens to thousands of other americans. It is sick. It is absolutely sick. I can't think of a worse form of torture honestly.

Are you stupid. Take a few guards out. Those people get above barely minimum wage and in your hyperbole you took your hatred on a system and narrowed it down to the only people that actually have a physical interaction with you. New story solitary confinement inmate escaped and kills 2 guards instant crack down and more harsh shu conditions, also a person trying to support another by getting the only job available in a prison town is dead when all they were trying to do was find some happiness in the lesser version of hell than the inmates that they themselves are in

So you feel the guys he killed were worthless and you'd want to kill more, you're the sicko. You're the one needing to be killed.

Good point, hope is everything and will cause you to survive even in the worst circumstances

This is a case where the punishment becomes far more evil than the crime. Those who inflicted it will face their own box after death.

Given that the record that i have showing up whenever my background check is carried out is from a time i was really young and stupid, but that was over 19 years ago, i sort for all types of help to prove am a different person entirely, including changing my name, didn't help, till i met a top dog of a human resource firm who informed me of a ground of ethical elite hackers who were able to help remove my records from the jurisdiction they originate to everywhere they ever existed was totally removed from my records, it was like a dream come reality, i was able to get a job a qualify for without my past hurting me, if your case is in anyway related to this, i suggest you contact hackhemp(AT)gmail(DOT)com, they are professional and dependable, you can thank me later, am sure we all make mistakes and for that we deserve a second chance to get over our past.

I am glad that you had a positive experience. Every person is unique, and every person is subjective, as how the original author described regarding himself and the fellow prison inmates he heard and knew. There is nothing more greater of an error than predicting or expecting an outcome of a person, no matter how close in intra and inter variables they may be to you and your experiences. You were forced to see yourself for who you are, that in your perception, it was a positive experience and were able to survive that. Most normalized people, if forced to do anything abnormally, would not take such a appreciative and gracious approach to such a experience as yours. Some people simply dont heal, some people do not choose to heal nor change, and some people may not even desire to learn about themselves and choose, willingly, to change. This is their choice. It is the beauty of something referred to as free will, under the amendment of free speech, etc etc. It is our own subjective journey, and ours alone, to decide what we want to learn and what we want to experience and/or become. I believe that realistically, most normalized people would not be glad to have gone through such a inhumane and undignified experience as you have gone through that would affect any normal persons mental health adversely. Any type of inappropriate isolation or forced seclusion for a long amount of time is abnormal, as to why we label it as a atrocity to a human right. I hope your crime truly did fit the time you were forced to spend in confinement.

Lisa Thank you for sharing Mr. Blakes great work. It is difficult to convey how much his words seared my mind and touched my heart. I dont know if he knows what an positive impact he has had on those of us who have been given the opportunity to read his story. I believe he has become the man he was destined to be; in that, he has transcended the hellish and unforgiving milieu of solitary confinement and survived. I, for one, wish him well.

(MusKens) You are joking of course? The name is Carmichael Highland Scot on one side of the family; do you want to tell me of your human treatment in view of my family name and you are in England? Or are you just stupid? What view European or other wise that condense the killing and dismembering of others is human? I live in the area where we have no deth penalty and I fought for the no death penelty when I realized that is the last thing a killer desires is long term life.. My decision has nothing to do with being human.. Nor when it comes to killing a life for a life You are one of these that have no idea what it is like to live with animal killers. I do been there done that. I survived because I was bader and more dangerous than most of them.. Not and easy way to live for the avergae prisoner.. Oh and by the way you better take a good lok around Europ before you keep spotting off. Engalnd with no guns is a dangerous place to live, they beat up the weak all the time.. Been there pal.. Tell the truth. About were you live..

Carmichael

If you compare human behaviour of that of animals and this human behaviour is worse than that of animals, then these humans are less than animals. ,

Muskens: all you really are is an animal.. One that is on the evolution chain. You got it. Smart monkey, dumb monkey, killer monkey.. What do you do with the monkey?

It is just cruel. This is indeed worse than death.

A society which allows this, isnt worth to be called human. Even animals are not doing this to eachother, so mankind is worse and lower than nature

I guess I want to understand your opinion (Muskens) if you think this is bad; what do you think about what Blake did? Was that as inhuman? O was that just a boo boo? Animals kill each other every day? Fish have feeding frenzys? What animal does not feed off another? Except a Blake, he just kills of course because he just felt like it

You can permit yourself this opinion because you are not in this situation. Although I am against the dead penalty and life long imprisonment, I could understand life long if people like Blake would be allowed to take part at normal prisonlife.

I know that you as US citizen has nothing to do with European opinions in this matter, I would like to draw your attention at the opinion of the European Court of Human Rights in which a prohibition on torture is written. This lifelong solitary imprisonment is plain torture.

http://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Convention_ENG.pdf

In my opinion we in Europe have a much more humane opinion, much better and healthier understanding of human rights.

That;s the main reason I never visited the US and I will never do.

I think you consider the pain of the ancestors of the murdered people aswell. Well, this pain isnt comparable with Blakes.

Convicting people to this punishment is inhuman and plain torture. Thanks God I dont live in the US.

If you compare animal behaviour with that of humans and you try to explain or to excuse ddisapable human behaviour in pointing to animals, than the people who commit this are no better than animals. In fact they are worse. There is no animal who locks up its pray in solitary confinement. So these people are lower than animals and should be treated likewise.

You see, the bottom line it this: I may or may not be different from any of the other monkeys? However, if you, or anyone else, deliberately killed one of my monkey offspring; you would never have to worry about the court process. For, I will, or my associates and family members will, find you and kill you; and that will be the end of the story no matter where you are or whatever you try to do. The killer of a family member of mine might as well kill themselves. That is how I feel about the subject. If I killed someone, in one of my robberies, than I would have deserved to die.. If you locked me up, Id say thank you, as I try daily to get out and be free, one-way or the other. That is the type of Monkey I am.. I would not be a cry baby monkey over past bad deeds

and he also can have no justice, no mercy! Mad world!

Ok, dont kill cops and you wont go to jail.

OK, killing a cop (even a deputy) brings you rightfully in jail (provided that justice is done and the cop or deputy did not do anything causing to be shot!), BUT being put 26 years in solitary confinement?????????

Were no longer in the Middle Ages were people were thrown in dungeons and they never saw daylight again, we live in the 21st century for crying out loud! We are supposed to be enlightened, and we are supposed to be treating our prisoners, whatever crime they did commit, as human beings, and not as animals!

Killing a cop. yes, that might bring you in jail, as said provided the cop didnt do anything that made the other defend him- or her-self against the cops actions, but what justifies being put in solitary confinement for 26 years?
Nothing!

If the man is mentally sick, then he does not belong in prison but in a mental institution, if the man is being a hazard to his fellow inmates then put him in another section were there is better supervision, and if he is considered so guilty that he deserves the death penalty, then sentence him to such a penalty, not 26 years in isolation! That is inhumane!

A country that supports a system that is unable to treat its people in a humane way and manner is unworthy to be considered civilized, and is lower then the lowest!
And people who practice such inhumane ways and manners are to be in jail themselves, for crimes against humanity!

Exactly lol

I cant imagine what solitary is like for that long. Im sure its maddening. To not touch the grass, hear a loved ones voice, see a familiar face, have a normal conversationterrible.

Of course, the man he killed cant do any of those things either. He cant hear his wife say she loves him. He cant see his children grow and have families of their own. He cant walk in the sun and swim/run/bike/play with his kids and friends and wife.

I cant say that my heart bleeds for this man. Im sure hes sorry for what he did. I think being locked up like that would make anyone sorry. Whos to say if he would feel this same level of remorse if he were in amongst the general prison population?

Maybe it is a miscarriage of justice to leave him in solitary for that long, but maybe you shouldnt kill someone either. He says its worse than death. I challenge him to say that to the wife of the man he killed. Or his kids. Or the parents of that man who had to bury their son.

I have to pretty much echo what Margaret said here. Im sure solitary totally sucks. Im sure that this man probably is genuinely remorseful by now. But the man is still dead. His family still grieves. He already killed someone as a member of general pop. Can that chance be taken again? Unfortunately in life, sometimes we make our own beds, only to find out later what a bytch it is to have to lie in those beds

The continuing torture of a fully repented individual who has served far more than equal pain and punishment than that which the dead cop and his family experienced, is a truly unnecessary act. all creatures deserve the right to be put to death, as an eye for an eye suggests Not by them self, but by those who they have wronged. An eye for an eye does not mean that when a man stabs your eye, it is just to make him slowly gouge his own eye out over a time frame of 25+ years. It means you take his eye, or his life. Torture is never justified means, even if it effectively deters others from committing his crime. That would be like sawing off a babies fingers because the baby stole candy, to deter others from stealing Just because the baby didnt realize the punishment for stealing was to lose its fingers.

more than equal is a ridiculous understatement too. After all, its very very easy to die. Dont get me wrong, I am not downplaying the seriousness of murder. That said, I wouldnt want *my own* murderer to suffer this kind of treatment. I also dont believe The State should have the authority to do something so utterly monstrous & heinous. Its torture. Anyone who says this is *not* torture is either completely ignorant of the human condition and has no empathy (aka is a sociopath themselves) or is not being honest with his (or her) self. There is simply no way to argue that what this man described isnt inhuman torture of the absolute highest order. Just knowing that a fraction of my taxes even if only a fraction of a penny is put towards paying for this sends chills down my spine.

An eye for an eye is Old Testament. Christians go by the New Testament.

No, actually, they dont. You clearly know nothing about Christianity. Anyone claiming to be a Christian AND calling for revenge is NOT following Christs command to forgive. Calling someone an idiot when they are right AND you are wrong isnt the way to communicate.

All who further condemn this man are wrong. Why?

People get over the death of lost ones. There are stages of grief, and acceptance is the last part. Grief of a lost one exponentially decreases with time, while the pain of a life sentence in solitary only increases. All of you lack of empathy. Solitary for murder isnt equality. If the murdered cops family met this man and heard his whole hearted testimony in person after coping with the grief of their deceased, they would break And so would the system of Solitary Confinement. This Judge Milroy swears by the bible, but surely knows nothing of the pain point to The Ghospel of Christ Forgiveness.

The murderer had a family and friends who miss him too, but unlike the cop who is dead and in a better place, the family of this prisoner is forced to live day by day knowing he is alive and being tortured. To take away a mans ability to sleep is the worst agony, and the worst psychological torture that no creature can endure forever without eventually killing itself.

You are all the cancer that plagues humanity, and you claim to understand the concept of God and Hell, Justice or Revenge but have no empathy, forgiveness or mercy.

Imagine what will happen if the Hindu Brahmins were right, and that when you die, youll experience life from the eyes of ALL creatures that ever lived, starting with this man The one youve most wronged? Dante once said The hottest places in hell are reserved for those who had the chance to do something, but chose to do nothing, essentially on account of their own viewpoint.

People get over the death of lost ones. There are stages of grief, and acceptance is the last part. Grief of a lost one exponentially decreases with time, while the pain of a life sentence in solitary only increases.

All of you lack of empathy.

Arent you just the voice of judgment? All of you? Really?

BTW, YOU DO NOT speak for ANYONE else but yourself when you talk about how a person feels after they have lost a loved one or their grief!! You OBVIOUSLY have never lost a child of your own!! Perhaps YOUR pain decreases over time, but when you LOVE your child Like a mother should, out absolutely does not decrease!!

People get over the death of lost ones. There are stages of grief, and acceptance is the last part. Grief of a lost one exponentially decreases with time, while the pain of a life sentence in solitary only increases. All of you lack of empathy.

Arent you just the voice of judgment? All of you? Really?

BTW, YOU DO NOT speak for ANYONE else but yourself when you talk about how a person feels after they have lost a loved one or how long they grieve!! You OBVIOUSLY have never lost a child of your own!! Perhaps YOUR pain decreases over time, but when you LOVE your child like a mother should, it absolutely does not decrease!!

Adults can make more children, that is there entire purpose in life. Back in the day they had like 14-18 kids in their lifetimes and maybe 8-9 died from various things. Maybe god doesnt exist anymore because enough peoples feelings forced god into a eternal hell of torture. Oh wait, they got over it and made more. Entitled assholes that try to put an equivalent exchange on someones elses life with time. He has been in there for 25 years. You paid for that in taxes . You pay for a permanent monthly sub to prison weekly instead of seeking rehab to cut prison costs to zero and maybe they will help you pay for your Medicare when you are dying at age 85. You are the reason prison is for profit and not the betterment of society, because you feel and judge them fit for whatever without accepting that without rehab everyone will pay for them forever and they will never contribute something back. Your blind ignorance to a solution is what will make prisons a corporation completely and you will spend months in jail for jay walking because the corporation will profit from it

It is sad how wrong he was when he states that thankfully folks like Judge Milroy are of the few, that in the eyes of the many, at a point, enough is enough.

Clearly within the majority of comments of this post, he was wrong. The majority dont understand the unnecessary pain of torture, because they were born with a silver spoon in their mouths. Clearly the majority truly Hold a toddler-like fury of eternal damnation as equal punishment for a crime.

Grow up. Not even the most barbaric tribes have the time, effort or resources to be so sadistic as to deprive a man of sleep and freedom with fear of men throwing their own shit at him every time he shuts his eyes, for 25+ years. Grow up. How old are you?

Yeah. There are a great many people in this country who are so far removed from the horrors of the so-called justice system that they actually think that inmates such as this man are treated *too well*; bloodthirsty souls with no concept of empathy for his fellow man. Its actually scary when you think about it. You could be standing next to someone right now who has absolutely no moral qualms with subjecting a human being to this sort of thing. I would be more comfortable standing next to a bank robber or a rapist, to be quite honest.

I would say it to the wife of the man he killed. No problem. The kids too. What The State has done (and is doing) to this man is completely unconscionable.

This solitary confinement is dark ages practice. I am angry, depressed, and outraged how a state of the USA can inflict such punishment. I feel this horrible type of incarceration is due to US social psychology has become fascist. The reason these politicians and authorities in Ca and DC can sleep at night is due to a mental phenomena called compartmentalization. These politicians including governor Brown totally put out of their minds what horrors they are doing to people. They are no different than the Nazis in Germany in world war 2. These authorities have for all intents and purposes have no conscience. They can go home love their families, go out an have a good time, cry at the cruelty to animals, fall asleep at the drop of a hat, etc. These prison officials and politicians are psycho sociopaths. If i had the choice to be confined in solitary confinement for years or being put being put before a firing squad I would chose the latter. Our federal government goes out of its way to go into a state and overturn sensible drug laws, the right to die, etc but does nothing about this evil of indefinite solitary confinement. All citizens of US and citizens of the world need to protest and engage in civil disobedience to abolish this worse than death indefinite solitary confinement. What would also help would be a multiparty government based on proportional representation. I know that many of these prisoners in solitary confinement are not even murderers and even if some are, their solitary punishment is so immoral. Always remember if not for the grace of god, their go I. Which means any of us could be put in the shoe.

The guy killed one person and maimed another he certainly did that no question about it. I dont want him as my neighbour do you?

Nope. I dont.

I also dont want the likes of some barbarian who locks people up in solitary for 30 years as my neighbor either.

Unfortunately those people ARE your neighbors.

America is better than this.

Cruel and Unusual punishments are constitutionally forbidden. He should have been executed a long time ago.

The treatment of these men reflects on us all. Would we torture these men in this way for so long if we were charged with their punishment ? Yet we build prisons and allow those systems to inflict this pain and suffering on fellow humans on out behalf. Some offenders deserve to remain in prison for their whole life. But torture like this is obscene.

One further point. 50,000 prisoners on full life sentences in the USA. In the UK, 50. FIFTY. The US justice/prison system is out of control.

America has become a police state with no regard for constitutional law.

Yes it is out of control. I actually saw a statistic which says that 1 in every 32 Americans is either in prison or on parole *right now*. That is a stunning figure. Concerning only the most visible aspect of the justice system: I have personally been harassed *more than once* by police (of which there are entirely too many) for having to gall to walk down the street. I was not suspected of a crime. I was not committing a crime. I was simply walking from point A to point B. Since most around here people drive everywhere, that evidently meant I was up to no good and thus I should be harassed/searched/intimidated/etc.. I once called 911 to report a fire that I saw while I was (again) walking down the street, since I thought that was the responsible thing to do. I then spent 2 hours being grilled by police (my girlfriend too) about how I supposedly started the fire then called to report it for kicks. I have had police pull me over, then rob me (twice). I have had police pull me over with no justification then straight-up fabricate violations for which to levy financially *devastating* fines. Right now, if you go to the main street near me and stand there, you will see a separate police vehicle drive by approximately every 30 seconds. They are constantly roving in search of people to victimize people who have not wronged anyone. When police here stop you, the first thing they do is say, why are you so nervous? (as if they dont know exactly why). And this particular rant is only about the police; to say nothing of the back-end of the so-called justice system (the courts & prisons). You arent wrong when you say the system is completely out of control.

I totally agree, as a society we have to say that we are not okay with people being treated like this. it is an affront to all of our humanity. the prison system is indeed totally out of control.

No guns in UK

But also to be fair, no draconian drug laws in UK

Amazing, scary story. Thank you.

Something I read from Blakes post was that he wasnt going to mess up in the next life. There is only one thing that makes us, us, and that is our mind, our consciousness and our memories. When we die, God through the Holy Spirit uploads our mind, which is our soul and saves it for our resurrection, just like uploading a file on the internet. God has one law, do unto others as you would have them do unto you, but there is a dark side to this, as you have done, God will do to you. When we are born we enter this life God has major and minor tests that we are to experience. What that means, is that Blake has earned his current state of being. How? Only God knows who Blake was his last time on this earth, but just suppose he was Adolf Eichmann, the German who carried out Hitlers plan for the jeues (Jews) or one of his close advisors, which is more likely, Eichmann has probably experienced the second death by now, but if you have ever read about the hell that they created for the Jeues (Jews) what Blake is going through is a walk in the park, comparatively speaking. What he is going through was specifically planned for him by God, and since God is the source of his problem, God is his only hope for help. Our job is not to cry over him, nor to aid him in getting back on the streets where he can do it again. All we can do is pray for him, and ask God to help him deal with what he has done in a positive way and help him to understand that Gods purpose is to bring him to a point where he would never want to treat anyone the way he is being treated and has treated others in the past.

you reap what sow, I have no pity what gave you the right to murder (you did) you should have been sentenced to death but you were not because someone with a heart choose for you live be thankful in your little you call home now !!!

My GOD! I cannot tell you how disgusted I am with the the Justice System in this country, this is horrifying and so very sad I pray for this man.

I dont feel a bit sorry for the writer of this article. I feel sorry for his victim and his family. The moral of his story should be not to kill someone or this is what happens to you. Not poor me. Where is his remorse or feeling for his victim? Maybe if he had some he wouldnt have done what he did. all he thinks about is himself and how he is affected. He also sentenced the mans family to a lifetime of hurt and pain and they did nothing to deserve it.

Wondering what the author thinks would be a fitting and just punishment for the wanton killing he was found guilty of

Bottom line, he took a life that was not his to take. Thats Gods place, not mans. And whoever said Americas justice system is vengeance not justice, I bet if it were your family memeber/loved one who was killed youd be saying different. To know the killer will never walk the streets again and never have the freedoms that he took from the person he killedwell if thats considered vengeance, then so be it. Theres not much difference between vengeance and justice if you really look at all aspects. All of our actions have consequences, good or bad. If you choose to take a persons life then yours should be taken as well, whether it be to the prison system or to the death penalty. When we reach an age of accountability, when we know right from wrong, we have a choices in life. Its up to us to make the wrong or the right ones. Wrong choices or right choices, they all have consequences. His choice was to kill and now hes paying the price. We all reap what we sow, and that is Biblical.

You talk about taking a life being Gods place not mans, but then you condone vengeance when that is something God said we shouldnt do.

Oh, boo hoo. My uncle was murdered in 1977. The weapon of choice? An ax. You wont get a nanosecond of pity or sympathy from me.

is his murderer in solitary for life?

I hope so. An ax is a horrible way to kill somebody

Holy shit, man. Im sorry about your uncle. Thats a horrible way to go

I know this post is very old, but I had to put in my two cents: Not even Hitler deserves what this man described. There is no earthly evil that justifies this. If youre gonna kill a man, kill him. Under no circumstances should the state have the authority to destroy a human beings mind and soul. Its funny how people will preach about rehabilitation from the right side of their mouth then they will endorse eternal cruelty and isolation from the left side. Thankfully, I have never tasted actual prison (let alone solitary). However, Ive read enough compositions by articulate men such as the author of this essay to *know* that nobody deserves it. State-sponsored rehabilitation should be limited in scope (much like places in Europe where the maximum sentence is 20 years) so that there is always hope and incentive to get through it and become better. I do not believe The State is competent enough or moral enough (not even remotely) to sentence people to death; let alone decades of solitary (which is a death sentence for the mind). Whats the point of rehabilitation if you completely remove all hope and utterly destroy the person being rehabilitated? As far as Im concerned, solitary confinement of this scope and duration blows *waaaaa* past the limits of so-called rehabilitation and lands squarely in the realm of

inhuman cruelty even more cruel than murdering a person.

100% truth.

On a cell level none of yourself from that time would still be alive and would be replaced by new cells, so it is literally not the same person

I am not sure what you are searching for...lets not forget the words you use in your paragraphs. I woke up to I felt like I ate my dinner the officer you killed, wont wake up to smell anything, he wont wake up to feel anything (sick, suffocated etc.) he will never have a dinner period.so what it is that your BITCHING about again? YOUR STILL ALIVE, your out now, your not dead are you?. The officer you killed isand for everyone out there sympathizing with this morbid pity partier, you are just have just been conned

I hear you.

America does the death penalty half assed and this is the end result.

He killed a guard and should have been executed.

Instead we throw him away and forget he exist in a place where you loose your mind.

Like the sentence is insanity by virtue of being alone.

We cannot do Capital Punishment half assed.

The likes of people in solitary for 10-20-30 years is cruel and usual.

He should have been executed. I am sure he would have preferred it. Im sure the victims family and friends would have also preferred it.

America is better than this.

you didnt really read it all he is still in solitary he isnt out he is his 4th prison in solitary like everywhere he has ever served anytime since his sentencing.all totaling 25 years in solitery out of a seventy seven year sentence. If the crime is so horrific then execute them if it isnt they should have a prescribed time and an out date period. execution should not take years and years to take place justice should be swift. this is barbaric and demonstrates that we are not a civilized society at all most of the people who commented here have no concept of what they are saying they dont think about what is being expressed here. this creates more violence and deviance. this is the path to every citizen being afraid and the government and police being all powerful . do any of you realize what could happen if we keep going this way or do you not care because you are older and figure it wont happen in your lifetime. once again sickening sheep baaa baaaa.

Fr. Russ my email is not working. I caught some type of virus, and lost the account, access to aol and everything I had on there. Can you give me a call when you get a chance.

@Suzy

First let me thank you for the educated and very smart part. I hope it applies.

But thankfully I have NEVER EXPERIENCED BEING RAPED!

However I was a teenager on my bunk in Baton Rouges Parrish Jail when the teenager in the next cell was raped.

I had to listen while he was abused which was made all the more real by the movement of my bunk transfered through the sheetmetal wall that our bunks were welded to.

I also witnessed a teen dive head first off the 2nd tier railing in solitary confinement on Christmas Day 1968 as he went to the shower. I suspected he had been abused.

I saw another hang himself in LA County Juvenile Hall. So I am sensitive to such abuse.

I have a BS degree but with no thanks to the system. No I am not angry and I hope I am normal. My concern is over those I left behind.

You should read:

Americas 10 Worst Prisons: Walnut Grove

A picture of such horror as should be unrealized anywhere in the civilized world.

By James Ridgeway and Jean Casella

They are the editors of this site by the way.

<http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2013/05/america-10-worst-prisons-walnut-grove-youth-correctional-facility-mississippi>

Here is something I believe which Jean and James write about in their articles.

Incarceration is a cruel gauntlet with one side lined with rouge guards and the other with predatory inmates.

These two adversarial groups consciously or unconsciously collude in order to mete out societies punishment.

If you are lucky you will reemerge on the other side with a new appreciation of what it takes to do your time in the middle.

By Alan

AlanCYA when you were raped in Baton Rouge did you sue like Billy BTK? My husband tells me that sometimes you guys come out of jail and you are never alright? How did you adjust? I mean you seem educated and very smart. Do you hold anger over your ordeal?

@Ann Dash: The real question and what should be front and center, is not about pity. It should be for us in society a cold and unemotional question of Justice. Our concern should be, what is the proper punishment for one that takes a life? I think the sentence should be equal across the board, dead is dead, no matter how it is accomplished. Nor do I see any difference between a police officer, corrections officer and a private citizen. IF? All things where equal, and they are not. I would favour a Death penalty. IF it is to be Life, then life it should be, and that decision should be in the Court system done by Judge and Jury. The problem as I see it, is sentencing to a life of what? I do not want to make the criminal a victim as they are now. I want the convicted to pay for the life they have taken, (it could mean a form of slavery or indentured servitude to the victim of the crime?) I want the person on implanted gps system with and impulse implant for violence. (That is right a stinger if you get my drift) We are close to perfecting such things Then let the person live in society with their dam mark of Cain implanted in their Butt A dedicated job, forced work controlled by the state, with 50% of the income to the victim, 25% for the state fee for supervision and enforcement and 25% percent living Something to these effects for the murderer.. (to take anyones life one should pay the maxim in retribution) In my mind God gives life, the Devil takes it. So you want to play Devil, I know how to fix you for the rest of your life. I know just what to do with those that cross my lines..

What do these criminals expect when they TAKE THE LIFE OF ANOTHER for no reason? I have NO pity for these people. If they didnt want to do the time, then DONT do the crime.

Absolutely fantastic piece, really eye opening.

Oh YeaAs for what exactly happened to Billy Blake it can be obtained by numerous different methods, one would be a F.O.I.L. request. yet I am sure anyone with half an education already knew that they could write to NYSDOCS, or the COUNTY Clerk of the County in which the incident happened, and use your \$\$\$ resources to obtain whatever documents will excite you. Sorry that I dont have a link for this information. links unless you trust the providing source give computer viruses and I am not in the habbit of clicking on them, or supplying them to others.

Yes attacks happen even on inmates locked in their cells. Sleep too close to the gate and get strangled. Or you can have you throat cut, and even be burned alive if done correctly. I was in a locked four man cell in Baton Rouge when an inmate from the neighboring placed a large amount of toilet-tpaper on the top bunk opposite me and lit it on fire. We all woke up to a volcano of fire. No one was hurt but it distrubed me. If he had used a flammable fluid it might have killed him.

But then there are cases like the following article addresses.

Id be curious as to which type of attack an unpopular inmate like Blake experienced.

<http://newscenter.berkeley.edu/2010/12/07/supermax/>

The logic of the SHU, at least in part, is to protect officers and prisoners from each other, Reiter notes. Yet her informants often reported being just as scared in supermax as when housed with the general prison population. Officers press a button to let you go out to exercise, Reiter says. Sometimes they open two prisoners doors at once, either by accident or on purpose and a physical assault can follow.

Yet lack of contact with other human beings is its own psychological endurance test. A man who spent 10 years in solitary confinement at Pelican Bay told Reiter about what happened once when his cell and his neighbors opened just slightly at the same time: a prisoner from a rival gang reached through and the two tough guys held hands. In the moment, being enemies didnt really matter, she says. They were just happy for the human touch.

I dont know if it makes a difference, but I am almost sure Blake was snuck up on and cut on his gate, I dont think anyone went in his cell? You knowYour in your cell with the gate locked hanging out in front of the bars and some one runs buy and gets a cut off on your face with a razor. I think the state was penalized for having someone unsupervised on the Teir roaming, not searching that person. and the fact that they are under an obligation to protect inmates regardless of whether Blake was locked in his cell or not. This is why they always count razors, do shakedown after shakedown, etc. to fulfill that oblication to protect. For some reason though, I am almost positive it went down as I just stated. If anyone is really interested, I could find out? We do know though that jail is not a safe place. Regardless of the country, security level, inmate guard, inmate, inmate relationship etc. Jail is not a safe place. Some jails are run by inmates, some jails are run by guards,

If the walls could only tell what they have witnessed. During jury duty I was unnerved by the sounds of the bailifs keys bouncing off his hip as he escorted us to the court chambers. I was so shakened by them that I asked to be dismissed because I didnt want to be part of sending anyone to prison. The judge allowed me to leave.

You should have stayed and then given a not guilty vote. Thats what I do whenever I have jury duty, regardless of the evidence.

Solitary
(in segregation on my 21st
Black Daythree in a row.) Ralph Hamm III now on his 45th. year in MA.

as i lie here
(hear?)
in this solitary prison cell
i hear
the cries of misery
the cries of frustrate anger
and the ever present sound
of the countless cell doors
clanging
echoing.
i feel the others
before me
who left something behind them-
some part of themselves here.
and what of the others
after me
who will hear
(here?)
in this solitary
prison cell?

So writes my brother Ralph some 40 years ago; while he waits for the Wall to fall. Hoping some day to see day light in the free world 45 years; if he had killed he would have been home 25 years ago So is the American Prison system

@Russ

Of course you are right that not every guard is corrupt or evil. And I salute you for your work in prison during 70s. I am also glad that you back your friends still there. That shows character.

As for your complaint: I wrote it is well known that officers have opened up cells of rival inmates so they can attack each other.

I made no claim as to how common this practice is. I only inferred that the jury may have heard evidence of such a tactic when they awarded Blake the money. I go on to acknowledge that I have no way of knowing why the jury decided in Blakes favor. That said Ive run into a few asshole guards for sure.

I am well aware of the danger of glaring at anyone while serving time not just those well connected but many others. I always avoided conflict but would step up to the occasion if I was cornered. I had a Id rather die fighting then let certain shit pass, attitude

But I dont claim to be a bad ass just not a punk.

For those who wonder if guards are ever in the wrong dont take my view as gospel google Guards under FBI investigation in Los Angeles County Jail, or Baltimore, or New Orleans. These are the most recent cases that I know of.

Here are a few other older cases starting with where my brother died.

Guards accused of cruelty, racism
By Charles Piller
cpiller@sacbee.com
Published: Sunday, May. 9, 2010 12:00 am

A Bee investigation into the behavior units, including signed affidavits, conversations and correspondence with 18 inmates, has uncovered evidence of racism and cruelty at the Desert facility. Inmates described hours-long strip-searches in a snow-covered exercise yard. They said correctional officers tried to provoke attacks between inmates, spread human excrement on cell doors and roughed up those who peacefully resisted mistreatment.

Many of their claims were backed by legal and administrative filings, and signed affidavits, which together depicted an environment of brutality, corruption and fear.

Read more here: <http://www.sacbee.com/2010/05/09/2737459/the-public-eye-guards-accused.html#storylink=cpy>

The movie Felon was based on 8 Corcoran Prison guards accused of staging inmate fights and discarded a policy of not mixing rival inmates in cramped exercise yards.

In the book The Rise and Fall of Californias Radical Prison Movement Eric Cummins writes:

Page 272: Much of the violence in our prisons, now as in the past, is perpetrated by uncontrolled gangs of guards. These abuses are not slipups at Pelican Bays SHU This is a prison that was designed on a principle of grossly inhuman treatment.

But yes these inmates are dangerous as the following recent case may show.

An off duty prison guard who worked at Chino State Prison was shot in the head at a local gas station. Sounds like the case in NY.

Much respect!

@Alan CYA: You dont seem to understand you do a disservice writing as a con that makes a blanket statement like it is well know tat officer open cell. You sound like all the do-good-ers and Liberals that have never been there. That is like a blanket statement about all guards and it is not true. Yes there are some, but it is not common practise. If it was there would be a hundred time the body count. 25,000 men is Solitary (about) I hate to tell you very, very, very few are good guys most would kill you in a second. Not that it justifies the reason they are treated badly. But call a spade a spade and be honest. When I was in prison, due to where I was on the picking order, that vast majority in my first year and a half, like 85% to 90%, would not Dare look me in the eye as they walked past, they walked with head down to the floor. If you have been there you know just what I mean, if you do not, you have never been there. I was one of the first that broke the picking order of our prison system, and taught that we were all init together. You can read what we did, Bobby Dellelo, Ralph Hamm in the book When the Prisoners Ran Walpole I was the funder and organizer of NPRA First certified Prisoner Union in the USA Read Ralphs book manumission his three others will be out this year, blackberry juice, tinderbox and a reprint of Dear Stranger/The Wayfarer See his web.(freeralphamm.org). Be cool, speak truth, no sobbing We are talking about dirty criminals, here, just like me. We are not talking about Cuier boys in any sense for he description. Man Up or Shut Up.. For those who do not know it is 45 years so far for Ralph in the MA., prison system (my brother, my partner. I am not free while he is still chained.)

Im still around PaulHave been for 50 years now.

@Shiran

Your welcome.

But let me make myself clear, I certainly do not condone Blakes crime.

But it is well known that officers have opened up cells of rival inmates so they can attack each other. They get 1 hour of rec time a day. Whether this was the case or not I have no way of knowing. However there must have been some justification for ruling in Blakes favor.

In 2000, a Court of Claims judge awarded Blake \$74,430 in damagesState Supreme Court Justice Charles T. Major ruled in 2003 that Blake was liable for damages. The Clarks never filed papers seeking that inquest until this past July.

That was July of 2011 well past the deadline for filing a claim to it.

But I do agree that the family of the slain officer should have received the money. Blake should not have received a dime. Unfortunately it seems that he had already spent it by then.

@Paul: No I am not confused it was your Country, a glass monkey cage. Your attack on our people and how we do things is fine, but your place is no paradise; it is infested with strife, and racial conflict, for being such a tinny, Winny, little place; it is not even and ant hill compared to the diversity and majesty of the USA. You have a Country full of intolerance and internal strife as I type.. You also apparently do not know what happens in the extreme cases of your own prison system Apparently you needed to get away from the place, hope you enjoyed the ride..

Fr. Ross, Allen T: wasnt around for a while. With he probably never got arrested I meant the drug charges. For killing a cop, cant recall when that happend, youll go to jail for lets say 20 years, good behaviour, maybe less. But they never get killed. We dont have so many fire arms as you people, uh we dont have them at all. I know my country has changed and that we arent that tolerant any more (I left Holland 8 years ago for a bike trip around the world). But the things I mentioned, prostitutes, smoking pot, euthanasia, gay marriage, that tiny little spot on the map is about setting the standard. Finally countries, even the States, are following our line af thinking (gay marriage, legalize smoking pot) and I was happy that euthanasia was legal when my poor mother asked for it. Your country was building a glass monkey cage to keep a man just like Blake in for the rest of his life. I have no recollection of that. I think youre confused with another country. We dont do stuff like that. But we should talk about Mr Blake. Did he finished his award winning novel yet? All the best.

Thanks for posting that link Alan. But that left me confused, since according to that link Blake received \$74000 in damages from the State due to attack he suffered from another inmate. Which leads me to believe he is not really in such a solitary confinement as he describes. He clearly does have some sort of human interaction. It is only after he came into that money he was sued by the murdered officer family, and rightfully so I might add. Remember as touching as his golden pen writing might be, he deliberately, callously and remorselessly shot 3 officers during his escape attempt.

@Kat: I find the post interesting: I have to check I did not find a place to respond? You have a man sentenced to Life, did not say why, then killed a prisoner in a fight? Know he is looking for friends I do not know about you, but do you think there is something wrong in his thinking? (Im just asking?)

Thank you for letting us know how you feel, William Blake.
And out there to all the people who want to help: Write to some of the people who are sitting in solitary. Some kind words from the outside world can do so much good inside these cells.

There is another prisoner who want to share his thoughts while sitting in solitary. Please read on: <http://www.concretetecage.blogspot.com>

I do not feel pity for this man. He took the life of another human being and severely injured another! Prison is not meant to be a cake walk! You should lose every human right possible! Blake chose his fate, his path in life, his destiny! His victims on the other hand did not, he chose it for them. Blake gets to eat, drink and breathe each and every day. His victim has been silenced for life with only his memory kept alive by his family and friends.

Burn motherfucker. This makes me so happy. All of you who read this need to take in his suffering and realize there's nothing that will ever change about it. He is going to die lonely and tortured in that cell 50 years from now.

God willing everyone in these cells will meet the same fate. And almost all of them will.

@Jobby: You are right, no one thinks of the consequence of action. When voting to suspend the death penalty are Liberals and others thinking of the consequences of a life sentence in which the individual does not care about anyone they are around and become a total threat to everyone else including the men they are serving sentence with? Many of the same people who voted and vote against the Death penalty will fight to end Solitary Confinement. Are they saying no punishment for bad acts? They can't seem to make up their minds; all someone has to do is yell poor me, I'm being abused, after I killed those people. Everyone asks me what would you do. My response is very cold. You kill one of mine, I want you dead or I'll kill you myself. I am and eye for an eye person.. Your dead it is over. Now, I say that and I only mean that if in fact you are the true perpetrator of the murder I am not talking about accidental death. I am not talking about one of my own that may be in the commission of a crime, they are on their own. I am talking cold-blooded murder. I'm talking say Mr. Blake. If that was my brother, he would have to worry about me the rest of his life getting to him.

I can only tell you this, when and if I did bad acts, armed robberies and such; if the situation arose and I had to use a gun and kill someone, if caught I would expect nothing less than the death penalty; if I was left to live with a life sentence, they guards would have no trouble from me because I would be spending my time trying to figure out how to escape. Which could mean I might be planning a way someone else would get hurt. Like some poor guard. Which also follows that were every they put me might very well be justified.. As one of my partners said to me this past week when I should him I was on this site. I was never placed in Solitary when I did not deserve to be there. I found that to be a very interesting statement. From a man that is doing very serious time.. There is pain in being honest..

He seems to have left out the part about how he ended up in solitary for all those years. Was he sentenced to serve his time in solitary or did he manage to bring that on himself once in prison?

@Isabel: We belong to very large prison advocacy groups. I noticed when I went to sign your petition you only had 3 signatures, that must be very frustrating. Our organizations are in coalition with many others, one such is the National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NARCAT) we have been involved with them at the highest level police making on the issue of Solitary. Robert Dellelo is the spokes person for us on this issue. Bobby is with the American Friends Justice Project. It is just a suggestion so you do not get frustrated, join one of these organizations, or affiliate with them, they have already met with the President. They will continue to meet with Him on the issues.. I suggest NARCAT for they have material and things you can do locally, from writing your editor to holding training meets, they have all the things you need. Oh! and you do not have to be religious to be part of their organization.. It is about the issue.. view us on nlhome.org and freeralphhamm.org also Street Talk of face book.. Good work. Know you are not alone in your struggle.

@SomePerson and G Ward: I would hope that SomePerson would reflect on why they desire such retribution, if they are not a direct victim. However I am grateful for the input. I thought I may think you go a bit far in your intriguing view of punishment, I wonder the reason why a Citizen has needs for another to suffer such fate. @ G Ward: I happen to think no one is coward who interjects their views on a social issue that affects all of us. Prisoners and the punishment that is executed on them do not belong to the victims. The punishment and the execution of that punishment belong to us, society as a whole, we are the ones that meter out justice whether you or anyone else likes it. It is paramount that people. Citizens, speak to the issue of punishment; and whether they are happy with it or they are not. As long as the general public feels that they are in need of solitary confinements, we will continue to have many folks in the Box. Only through education and finding out the why we need to do such horrific things is the only way you or anyone else will change it. The only cowards are the ones that cannot stand to hear opposing views, views that may offend one's senses; however, are never the less views of a fellow Citizen of a Free and Democratic Society.

I find it quite interesting that he says, Had I known in 1987 that I would spend the next quarter-century in solitary confinement, I would have certainly killed myself. He would have killed himself? Not, I wouldn't have reached for that gun. I wouldn't have shot those two men.

<http://wh.gov/tUcM>

SIGN MY PETITION TO END SOLITARY CONFINEMENT!!!

die slow murderer!!!! spread the word of the pain you've endured and hope it prevents followers of the same path.. you have received what you have asked for may God have mercy on your Soul.

The only people who have an understandable reason to spout the hatred some of you morons are spouting about this guy are the loved ones of his victims. The bile that many of you are vomiting up about a total stranger wishing misery and suffering and pain on himself is a lot about the quality of people you are. Personal loss creates understandable emotions but the rest of you are disgusting.

It's easy for you to sit in the comfort of your homes and say what another should suffer. Cowards.

Christopher is hope for a few reasons. 1). much worse than him have been released.
2). To give up hope, is to cease to exist
3). His support network would notice and leave.

Really felt sorrowful for him, but I wondered if we aren't living in boxes too, but less uncomfortable ones, is it reasonable to argue that?

I just got shocked when I noticed he still got hope. Not sure, but he indeed is a believer.

The individual case by case review I have spoke of this before. I'd be willing to bet only a fairly small percentage of all Solitary commitments are to protect Staff and the General Population from an inmate. So many inmates who have a fair amount of time to do, do not want to program, they just want to be in a cell by themselves and be left alone. Solitary provides that comfort. So no matter what they have to do to get there without catching a new charge they do it! One of many. To some it is PC with respectability? Rather than to sign into PC because they have enemies, or just have fear, etc. they get put into solitary where they are locked in 23 hours a day and are safe but with the label of PC, on the contrary they are in SHU, which to many is considered status! Although an individual case review does not guarantee anyone will learn the exact intentions of anyone? It will help to possibly determine who will commit violent acts to accomplish their needs, and allow them to be classified in a category of their own!

@Alan T: Well I do not think you must have served any time in isolation to understand the concept. As prisoners, I would like to talk about what we do with the individual that cannot for whatever reason be in the general population.. 1.) I want to look at why we need to get rid of this person and isolate them a.) it could be for their own protection. b.) it could be for the protection of others in the yard. c.) it could be that the person just wants to be alone. many reasons to look at 2.) Where do we put this person? (can he be with a few others of the same mind-set? 3.) If he does need to be isolated, in his own cell, away from any type of population. Then how do we place this person where they are humanely treated and security needs are met? Where he/she does not qualify for being the victim in the situation and is receiving the punishment they just deserve this could be an interesting conversation between prisoners and ex-prisoners. If I do this (we do this) at the same time will be sending stuff to Ralph Hamm and others in side asking them to write a short essay on how they view humane isolation, with some of if not all the same questions we will discuss. So we could have a book of prisoners views of Isolation?

Fr. Russ, NYS has Southport Corr. fac. about 45 minutes outside Elmira. When they first opened it up I believe it was designed to be an SHU facility, with a very small CADRAY of inmates to maintain the facility. It very well may still be an SHU facility? My point being is that NYS has tried different methods of housing long term SHU inmates, and they are up to date, if not advanced in this area. With this in mind truly believe proposals on how to effectively do this or that? Proposals on how to be a leader by taking initiatives in this manner or that, are not gonna fall on deaf ears. I learned a long time ago that there is a way since you put it that way. to everything in life, that effectively changes the entire course of a conversation. I myself, do not have enough insight, or expertise in the area of Solitary, housing SHU inmates in a cost effective, humane, and common sense manner. I truly entertain the idea of 1020, educated individuals participating in an orderly, respectful debate, that is made available for the analysis of others who are in a position to institute change. Something like you were suggesting when you spoke of taking a thread and recording it for the purpose of publication.

@T: He is sentenced to life for the killing. The escape is, in a fact irrelevant, to his sentence. The judge sentence him to the Corrections system, how they treat him, is in most cases none of his business.. The question, to the community, is was the life sentence just it does not ask currently, without a legal redress, whether or not in most cases, is where he is sentenced to place him under humane conditions or not. That becomes another question. What we have done to man, many criminals that we justifiably sentenced to prison for their bad acts, made them victims by not treating them humanely.. For few have the answers of how you do that under the conditions of confinement.. You have a bunch of, college educated theorist, that have no clue about the mind-set of criminals, make decision on bullshit science; and studies that are bogus. They are like, Theologians trying to prove God, on bullshit foundations of writings that are thousands of years old; Who knows if they are interpreted rightly or wrongly? In the end they have no relevance in reality to the subject at hand they have the nerve to call themselves Doctors.

I am curious though, why doesn't the President, Governor, or some major Politician intercede on Blake's behalf? Even someone prominent from another country, or where ever? Is the first real publicity that has ever been generated portraying him as being abused by the system? If so, he needs to keep attempting to make news of this, and not allow it to die down no pun intended. I think I made it clear from the beginning that I am not on his fan club, but I would help him or anyone else who is being abused, or rather tortured. It is ok all day long to say he deserves this or that because of the crime he committed, even if I agreed, which I don't, that's not my call to make. The max on a D felony escape is 7 years in Prison. So even had he escaped, been caught and returned, 7 years appears to be the max. From what I understand it was just reason to believe he was gonna attempt, or attempt? Why should a correctional facility superintendent have more authority than a judge who follows Laws enacted through legislative sessions etc?

In NYS solitary you have a short list of permissible items you can have in your cell. You can get an item a day. Some of the items have to be returned after use. So if you want a Tuna sandwich it could take 3 days. One for the Tuna, One for the Mayo and One for the Can opener. The bread you get on your tray at meals.

Haven't we upgraded our Solitary, from the days of the Dungeon?

They should consider reinstating certain legal courses in the high school curriculum. These young ones are getting in more and more serious trouble everyday, and most don't have a clue what they've went and got themselves involved in! It is like scolding a child for getting pregnant, but yet they were never taught what Birth Control is. Just an analogy. Most kids these days know all about that yet how many campaigns, marches, and demands had to be placed on those in charge of deciding what should be taught, and what should not be taught, before this type of education was recognized as something kids should learn A.S.A.P.! Educations probably the most effective deterrent to crime.

@ T : Believe it or not. I graduated Newton High School, and believe it or not I had two-years of law, business, tort and criminal law intro classes 11 and 12 grades. You don't get that anymore.. I remember them, Stanley Bond, left Guilda did the Cambridge and killed the cop, Powers and Sacks where part of that they were part of the Whether man or what ever; it cost me a year in prison, I was ready to go out on a college program and asshole screwed it up and they shut it down.

Sometimes I think The Death Penalty is appropriate, especially in acts of Terrorism such as the recent bombing in Boston! I had just been trying to get you to read about Kathy Boudin, her transition back into society, and using her as an example, why sometimes, no matter how severe the punishment, Society still is not satisfied. When she was with the Weather Underground movement, I was a very young boy, but do recall the bombings, some of them! Now she teaches Law at Columbia University in Rockland County, close to where the infamous Brink job happened. There is a mixed line about if that is fair or not, the fact that she is even out of jail, much less teaching at a University?

Fr. Russ. I see you had your coffee this AM. Sharp already you are. Two things I'd like to hear from others about including yourself. I think this thread had been abandoned for quite some time now, anyway. If nobody responds, I'll not take it to heart. 1). I never like the fact that we are the United States of America, key word United, yet we have different laws in different states/ 2). I think they should teach at least, local Penal Law, Criminal Procedure Law, Introduction to the criminal Justice system to 7th. and 8th graders! We have to educate pre-teens and Teens, on the Law, the same law that could cost them life in jail for violating? What's your take?

First off society decides what a crime is or is not. Depending where you live, can determine if you are committing a crime or not. It is up to the individual to know and understand the law he is under in the community in which he/she resides. E.g it is against the law for an ex-felon to carry a gun in Mass. However, it is not in Arizona; anyone of age can carry an open weapon; unless you are on probation or parole. So you need to know where you are and the rules in which you are living under.

Weed, is Federally illegal, to possess, grow and distribute; however we have many states that have made it legal for medical use. So whether you think you are unjustly punished is a totally different issue; and if you do not

like a law, like weed, then one needs to get others together and change it, as is being done In the mean time if you are using, possessing and selling in certain areas of the Country you are a criminal and if caught you will do time, you have no right to complain about it, in my opinion (I booked numbers, took bets on horses and dogs, they called me a bookey, one of the crimes I did time for; now the state has the lotto and off track beating, nobody paid me back for my time, and they have given me no cut on the take?) One day some things are a crime, the next they are not To be heavy and philosophical That an action is called criminal is a sign that it is subject to general social disapproval. it injures those whose interest the law is designed to preserve and protect. It is based on the reasoning that You ought not do this (because it is harmful, either directly or indirectly, and for that reason it is forbidden). and if you do then punishment will follow. The legislator must, then, decide which acts are criminal before embarking upon a general justification of the punishment for those acts.

It is more than fair to say that the majority of society wants Prison to be the system of punishment meted out to the criminal. Although at times we have disagreements over what should, and what shouldnt be a crime. We also have our share of Social Vigilantes who feel punishment is better left to the individual victim, or its vengers to handle Bernard Goetz. Ultimately though, Prison is the most popular method and dates back as far as the dungeons, if not even farther. We have taken social norms and shaped them into laws, and we have taken the deviants and labeled them as criminals. Bottom line, someone has to fill them cells! While I dont believe that we have jails full of innocent men, I do believe we have jails full of men who have committed questionable crimes. Before we can deal with the many issues surrounding Punishment, and whether or not it is an appropriate mechanism to deal with social deviants, first we have to take a long look at individual Crimes, and decide whether they are actually crimes, or moral issues that should be dealt with outside the criminal justice arena? I think alot of the stories we hear about guys being railroaded, set up, political prisoners, a victim of politics etc. etc. etc. deserve some looking into. On the otherhand, I have been arrested well over 50 times, never once has it been by mistake. However, were they all crimes I committed? If they were, then of course I deserved to be punished, but if they were just socially deviant acts that have been classified as crimes for 1000 different purposes, To fill cells at election time, offenses since deemed mental hygiene issues, or to fill Prisons that parts of society are economically dependent on TO NAME A FEWthen if this is the case, NO I did not deserve the punishment. This punishment concept gets very deep indeed!

My selfish interest, would be to focus on here in the US. Why we punish the way we punish. The questions (is it justifiable?) If it is not, what is justifiable? I me, to me silly people, talk about no vengeance; for the taking of every thing from a womans virginity by a con artist or forced rape to murder. No vengeance? To me that is pure bullshit. Why do we have Life sentences if life is not Life? At one point in my own thoughts, I figured Id want revenge, if some one took, a loved ones life from me. Id want them dead. However, now after years of study, and doing time with lifers. I am so vengeful, I voted against, the death penalty. (there were a number of reasons I worked and voted to get rid of the death penalty) while in prison; I did a study of lifer, would they or would they not want the death penalty, all the lifer I knew which at that time was over a hundred, all of them to the man, wanted death rather than life. (go figure) I know the system is to protect me from myself. At least I think that is the case. For it takes the crime or the criminal that did a crime against me and puts him into the communities system In most cases the victim is them left out of the process Well, if you killed on of my wives, Id want you dead, if it was murder; however if it was an accident then they have to keep you from me until my head and rage has subsided.. Were you a drunk driver, or a construction person that trip over a brick 15 stories up and the brick fell and killed her? Even in my on vengeful way there would be a difference In how I would want you handled Several years ago a women driver, killed my young grandson My first thought about her was, she was women, no women no kids murder went out of my head. My second thought was how did it happen, was she drunk, long story short after investigating the whole thing, my poor baby ran across the dam street and this poor women had no chance to prevent what happened, not her fault. Very sad, but not her fault Every one and the poor women will live with his death So the issues are very complicated, and each case is its own story

Fr Russ. You now have me thinking of punishment in other countries. I wonder how many times we have pointed to other countries to justify Solitary in our country? They do some very horrible things to criminals in other countries. When I was young I remember hearing that certain areas in the Far East will cut your hand off for stealing. I knew then and there I would have had Two stubs!

It is very hard to get over on anyone who has been around the world or has serious worldly contacts.. If you are a jet setter to you the world is a cherry Most of us are not If you are in the top 10% of the world economically you live far different from most of us But if you have seen the other side or you are blessed to know how they live, you also know they have their problems also.. I know of no perfect Country for the average or poor of society, I know of no prison heaven on earth.. You rarely get the full story..

Fr. Russ This is what I mean when I say some people just talk because they have lips. Yes only Honesty about who we are and where we came from can help us direct each other to where we need to get. Some people from other countries can tell me anything, I know little about world history, wasnt my strong subject of interest. After listening to your description of what Paul very possibly should have added, I think we are real decent over here in the USA. Dr. Kevorkian, ultimately got away with BS for many years. I call it BS because it wasnt as if he was a humanitarian, he was getting paid, good money. Yet acting like God isnt something I would recommend to anyone. Aside from euthanasiaMost people smoke pot every day uninterrupted, many relationships these days amount to prostitution. If I can only get involved with a ladie if I buy her jewelry, or other expensive gifts, the only way shell put out for me, is after a long evening in which I footed every bill? Kinda makes you wonder how wrong was the guy who gave her 10 bucks, had his moment, and doesnt have to act interested in her all night long and \$200.00 dollars later. Do I condone any of this? I am not a hard liner, however, I do know right from wrong. But to represent your argument for your country as being a fair place because you can smoke pot anywhere you want, and buy prostitutes at the supermarketwell, I think you said the rest! But dont go away Paul. We are not judging you, I am not, and I truly believe Fr. Russ wouldnt, we are just explaining what we believe, have experienced, or in my caseThat I think you are alot smarter than the statements you made, and you must know we are alot wiser than the amount of words we are allowed to, or care to, type in a Post! But docome on back now!

@Paul: excuse me, We do ban them, if they want to blow the place up, and insight riots and are not citizens of this Country.. We do not throw out our own people Like you do..

@Paul: I just want to tell you. we do not ban people from this country for the way they think, like you folks. We also allow women to dress like they want and for religious reasons it is not a crime for them to wear a barque (sic) like it is in your country We allow people to integrate or stay separate and it is not violation of any law; yes we have an illegal immigration problem but we are not like your Queen, excuse me, she quit right? Now your King, trying to throw people out, we are trying to bring them in One other thing I dont bend my knee to any frekin, King or Queen So far we are not throwing anyone out that wants to institute Syria law; they are welcome to try to get it through our voting process So be honest you got one to the worse racist society in the whole of Europe, been there, you cant fool me We are not going to allow another Hitler in this Country. Keep it at your place thank you

@Paul: Can you still go the bathroom in private in your Country now or are there camara up your rear? Like England and Germany; I know we are getting just like you folks.. How many years has your Country been in existence before those barbarian travelled across the sea and tried to butcher my own ancestors in Scotland? So you can kill cops there now and what happens you get a ticket? Please, enough fairytale.. You folks are good at that; old Hans had some good ones

@Paul: Happy you told me you are from Holland. I was with the head of you Countries Corrections department over forty years ago Mrs. Rosenberg I believe; she was a guest lecturer at BU and the AFSC, which I worked for at the time, they brought her over; your country was building a glass money cage to keep a man just like Blake in for the rest of his life You folks where advanced, in the use of electric shock, and behaviour modifications crap, you study everyone under glass; you may think some of us are stupid and do not look close. You think euthanasia is advanced? Who decides to kill? When you run out of drugs or it is too expensive to keep the person alive All is not roses in your little country the size of RI with a population 1/4 of RI Anyone can control their back yard We are talking a Nation here full of bad guys that have Civil Rights

They just may have did Blake a favor keeping him in the box all them years? Since the conviction is not complete without the sentence if he can prove his entire sentence has amounted to no more then cruel and unusual punishment, starting with the sentencing Judges comments, all the way to almost his entire sentence being spent in solitary without proper due processthen his conviction/sentence may be found unconstitutionally obtained, a NYS CPL 440.10 motion would be an avenue of attack and anything is possible if you got a typewriter and know how to make a motion! Let the process begin!

I dont smoke pot anymore, and I dont smoke it any less either. Thruthfully I havent in a long time. Prostitution, I think making it illegal only helps them make more money. The only ones that seem to go to jail anymore are Public Health threats, however as soon as they stop clapping, their free to peacefully assemble once again. I can also name a list of people I wouldnt mind taking out there miseryThat sounds interesting, But Adam and Eve is what I believe, not Adam and Steve! So although we have our differences, we also have our reasons!

So Paul, now you have me curiousYou can actually kill cops and not get arrested where you live? Really? Really Really?

Im from Holland guys (Amsterdam). Just ran into this article and was shocked, and still am. I didnt know that these kind of things happen in the States. And youre such nice people. Holland is a tolerant country. Gay marriage, smoking pot, euthanasia, prostitutes, its all legal and for more than 30 years. What is not legal is torture, described by the unfortunate mr. Blake. To begin with, in my country he probably never got arrested. Hang in there, Mr. Blake. Write a novel, win the Booker prize and youll see birds and sunlight again.

i like this idea, I did alot of studying about this stuff in my undergrad courses, for some reason though I think this will be better directed from the gut, as opposed to from the book. I could be wrong?

I am not sure we can do what we want here a thread starts like this one and it has about 560 comments on it If we get started talking about punishment we could end up with several thousand. There are different theories of punishment like restitution vs. retribution This stuff gets complicated

i just typed a whole page before my last comment? Said awaiting moderation but now I dont see it? It was in response to punishment. It will show sooner or later I hope!

Lately I havent been going out of my way to do a spell check. Been doing alot of things in one day. You know what I mean, any questions thoughplease ask, Ill clarify!

You have alot of Hot Topics right now that could set the project in motion. Jodi Arias and The death Penalty Issue, There is a girl who gave a ball player 5 years hard time on her allegations and she sued the school where the incident happened and received 750,000 she now has been caught on tape admitting she lied but dont want to pay the money back. There is alot of questions about what should happen to people like her? Many people say it is time to rewrite NYS sentencing statutes. They recently changed all of the Drug Laws and corresponding sentences, it may very well be time to change the rest. (Draconian). Many would like to switch to civilian watchdog groups instead of Police but then we get cases like Zimmerman v. Trayvon Martin. Guardian Angels, and in certain disproportionate racially populated areasLynch mobs, Gangseveryone wants to get in on the punishment. ever see responses to death Penalty questions, people line up to kill someone and let it be knownOf course when you can speak under conditions of anonymityWould the same people voice a public opinion? How many would volunteer to pull the switch on old sparke?, or like Black Sabbath said Stick the Needle in How about a comparison of Laws from Country to Country?

Fr. Russ Im gonna put alot of thought into this over the next day or two

Wow! What a natural writer. Makes me wonder what he could have made of his life had he not made the choices he did Choices that, like any other, dont deserve to be punished through solitary confinemet or death.

I would include this essay in a time capsule.

@T: You tell me where and Ill be there Just hired my new file clerk, so she should free up a bit of time for me So many projects, right now I have a mountain of back filling that just needs someone to sit and sift through paper and put it in the right place.. Ill say this, that to deal with what you and I would like, we have to start at Punishment What type, for what reason and need This crap gets heavy. For we are talking about Punishment which is not something for the innocent. We have to assume whether rightly or wrongly that all that are sentenced are The Criminal I do not want to lessen to a bunch of legal arguments that are pleading not guilty so I shouldnt be here. That crap is for the Court I will commit to some time, Ill try for everyday to address this issue; whether it is just you and me or a bunch load You are talking a free college course in Corrections by the way If I like what happens; Ill publish what we come up with, through my new publishing company The Little Red Cell How is that IF the material is worth what we come up with. Your idea, youre the author, so after my publishing expense, is te darn thing sells; Ill give you the standard 15% on the profits (Just you) no other payment to contributors, this is your idea (Alan T.)

Fr. Russ I was gone all day. Just got back and I see your Post about starting a new thread about punishment. Sounds like an excellent idea. I could probably learn alot. They have had several names over the years, reformatioes, correctional facilities, even some of the new jail CASAT facilities that deal specifically with substance abuse issues... A name is no more than a title, what is really going on, on the inside?

@T: A thread concerning the justification of how and why we punish; would be interesting. I think;? How we could develop a justice system of correction or punishment of fair and equitable treatment, one that would be humane? Punishment is the reason or the primary reason a person is sentenced Rehabilitation is an aside that we hope would happen Corrections is a false term. Correct what? This gets real heavy, and most folks do not think it through. We as a society, direct, the prison system to punish as their primary objective The problem is, the punishment, turns the criminal into a victim One has to decide what is justified.. Life is life not 65 not 50 years or 30 or 20. How, that time is served, is not defined anywhere I know of? So you could serve the time standing on your head We are just now studying the brain and finding that kids under or around mid 20s their brain is not fully developed Well, what does that mean? So you butchered dogs and cats at 10 to 14 and now you are twenty, so your brain changed, did you stop butchering animals, and now are onto humans, or are you now St. Francis and holding mass for the squirrels? In the mean time, your brother the unlucky one, jumped from the cats to little Mary next door; he has been sentenced to the rest of his life without parole But wait! We know need to give him and opportunity because he was under seventeen to see if we can let him back out to try again at some point? All very interesting See, if you screwed with one of mine, they would have to protect you from me, and that is what part of the system is supposed to do (prevent personal vendetta)

Ive been busy with lives little trials but I commend you twos efforts to put together ideas to solve the problem of solitary confinement.

I would also like to address a few points previously directed at me.

First the reason why I feel it is important to go back 40 years is because that is when the roots of the current system happen to have their origins.

This will be old news for some (like Russ in particular) but for even some of those that lived through it the whole picture might have been hard to see behind the walls as they dealt with daily crises.

There was no SHU, nor the correspondent STGs such as the AB, BGF, or MME until the 1960s, when they were first born in Californias prisons. Then by the late 1960s and early 1970s all the major prison gangs had been formed and were at war with each other. This time period also coincided when the first criminals claimed that they were political prisoners and revolutionaries rather than bank robbers and murderers. Soon thereafter guards began to be treated just like any other gang by some inmates and so a series of guards lost their lives. This is when the authorities crackdown really began in earnest.

It is no coincidence that the Angola 3 were first placed in the hole in the early 1970s over the death of a guard or that Thomas Silverstein has been in isolation since 1982 for killing one, or that Blake has been held in the hole for the murder of a guard. It is my belief that in order to find a way out of this mess every inmate must work to stop the violence between themselves and hopefully the guards as well. Then maybe:

- 1) Lifers should serve time only with other lifers because they are more likely to be the shot callers with the least to gain from a cessation of violence between gangs. I think Allen T hit on this idea already.
- 2) Some oversight should be granted to an independent organization for those deemed a threat by the guards.
- 3) There should be a way out of the hole because without hope there is no reason to comply with the man.

Secondly as far as me focusing on my own story I'd like to say that I have always been uncomfortable in doing so. But without an advanced degree in such areas the only credibility that I can draw upon is my own experience and that of my two brothers.

I was one of the first people to support this site and tell my own story. Ask the staff. And over the years I have had more favorable comments than negative ones.

Thirdly I don't feel like I need any therapy because I only think about such topics when I try to help this cause in memory of my two brothers. I have a good life otherwise.

No I don't wish I had done adult time.

I was lucky and only witnessed or read about the worst abuses, I was spared such abuse by the grace of god and a willingness to defend myself. Without the first the later would not have been possible.

Sometimes I think we should jump in somewhere, or start a fresh thread and get these ideas jumping with a whole new group of fresh faces and ideas!

Very interesting? When the conversation begins to elevate to Topic specific information I get extremely interested, and I also feel it draws a larger audience of active participants. I want to hear the minds at work, from many others, of different cultures, different parts of the world, who have different perspectives and base their opinions on a whole different belief system. Here I was thinking Paul had a good argument and he does, BUT not in comparison to what very well go on in his own back yard! although at times our system (U.S.A.) might seem so cruel and torturous, and it very well may be? But in comparison to what? And most important of all, what are our options?

I oppose the death penalty, and the bargain you make with justice is that a life sentence means just that. What he describes here is terrible torture and certainly something which must be a last resort for someone under the age of 20 who may not be completely cognizant of their actions. But this man was, he killed two people whose families have suffered equally, if not worse, for what he did to them.

Paul is right, the punishment we meter out, is in part revenge. although I do not know which part of Europe he is from, the one where they cut off heads, or crucified or killed hundreds of thousands by burning at the stake; our laws in the US derive from England, France and Spain, just for a bit of history We are only a few hundred years old, so Paul take a look at how long your part of the world has been around and you folks are behind us in most things (I'm just saying) Everyone has a different view of Justice and Punishment; millions felt and some still feel the German Nazi never really got what they deserve; and they where operating under government orders, to kill Oh, and by the way it is you can not You should judge a Country by the condition of its Prisons Or the way they are treated, for if in fact we did; my next question would be, why are there any German and Japanese alive today? For my justice could say everyone involved in the murder and the torture of prisoners, before, during and after the fact should be exterminated Then where would we be?

i read what that guy Paul said an I was almost embarrassed to be an American. Almost!

@T: You are right it is all about economics However right now States and the Feds are hurting for money, and they can reduce the population of prisons as save money by going toward a minimum security rather than Solitary: They go to private prisons thinking they are going to save money, but in the end they cost more Our Governor is trying to close places, the problem is there is no community involvement of any substantial size Also they have not really worked with the prisoners on a large-scale, they do not know how You have to involve everyone for this stuff to work; and you are always going to have the few that screw things up You need strong leadership at the Governors level, and strong community base If, you can get the cooperation of a large group of prisoners that would be goal orientated. You then are on your way Mass. prisoners are the only ones that have a history that works We lead the way in programs, due to the fact they where all started by cons; and we took at the time the most violent prison and turned it into sand box for nearly four months (Prisoner lead and Prisoner driven With Community support) No one else has done anything like it

Not one Nazi or recent war criminal I know of, like Mlavic, Karadzic, or Charles Taylor and many others had/has to face a sentence like this poor bastard. People who had the blood of then thousands, up to millions of victims on their hands. This is not a sentence, this is revenge. Anyone who wishes this man another 25 years beyond hell should be ashamed of himself. You should judge a country also on how it treats his inmates. Reading this I realize that you gringos treat people worse than animals. I'm glad I'm European. At least we have some decency and less crime. Obama, please give this man a break or at least some fresh air.

Fr. Russ I can only speak on NYS because I have never been in prison anywhere else. I watch Lockup, not as much as I use to, alot of Repeats. But I can speak on NYS all the way back to before Fishkill was a PrisonIt was a hospital for the criminally Insane Mattawon, and Sing Sing of course was known as up the river, From looking at the picture on this page Elmira hasnt changed one bit, Auburn was always known as an Industry prison, Clinton and Attica were famous, Clinton for its ski slope, Attica for its Riot and Comstock and Cossackie were notorious for being the Young Lifer spots especially Coxackie. They actually tried to keep most of the kids in Elmira, Cossackie and Comstock. There was also Eastern Correctional which was suppose to be like an Honor prison something like Green Haven an Honor Prison, primarily because of their proximity to NYC, which made easy access for visitation. these were your maximum security prisons in NYS. I served time in most of these spots and while there I couldnt help but to meet many of the guys in NYS who were under life sentences. probably one of the reasons I stayed petty. I was not trying to get all that time. Oh no! Some were what was referred to as Political Prisoners, then you had guys like Willie Bosket who was single handedly responsible for changing NYS entire Juvenile Offender statute, at one point I believe he was in a cell of his own with cameras on him 24hrs. a day in his own private area at Woodbourne C.F. This was the 70s, 80s prior to the CRACK BOOM of the mid 80s early 90s that put in motion a doubling and then tripling of NYS population and a massive restoration and conversion of various properties into Prisons as well as the construction of several prisons in order to keep up with the massive increase in population. At one point NYS peaked at close to 65,000 inmates give or take from a sytem when I started that had maybe 1520 thousand. When I was a kid just about everyone knew everybody in jail, Nowadays, who the hell is who anymore?

my point being with all this change and transition and various increases in population, alot of solitary confinement cells were built that stay in use. guys go to the box for anything now. Back in the day you really had to do something violent to go to the box. I just keep thinking about all these cells that stay full and how many people are economically dependent on these cells staying full etc. This is why earlier on in these posts i was so geared towards a review board to look at these cases. Most of them are BS, and if reviewed the cases would either get reversed or modified. It just may close some of of these boxes!

I worked as a supervisor for a study that was being conducted by Metro North a few years back. i use to ride from Grand Central to New Haven 3 or 4 times a week, and I remember the sights out the window going from one end of CT. to the other. They have alot of space out there to build prisons. Since I was employed by an outside agency I did not have to go through the normal screening of a Metro North MTA employee, however when they did finally find out I was a convicted felonWow. they always find out sooner or later, but that is another story for another time. They do have the space to build these Prisons in CT. New York State, Upper NY primarily, is extremely dependent on its prison population, without the prisons, they'd be nothing but real poverty, farm land areas, or just plain unpopulated stretches of nothing but High grass and mountains. so many want to condemn inmates, and this and thatFamilies eat and pay bills off of the inmates. Common sense will tell you these jails stay full to feed the economy that is dependent on themSo are these sentences, and SHU commitments just another reflection of laws being abused in order to make sure a certain population dont starve? Age old argument, yet some things are just so evident!

@T: My concepts runs to a prison, city, no walls; like taking over a ghost town; and building a community as normal as possible There are many places in the Country you can do such a thing; even here in CT we have economically devastated old mill towns.. You start with low risk short timers and build in a system to bring in Lifers.. You bring in lifers that have long term in that you know are solid and are not going to give you shit With the technology to day you can have every one on (GPS) with me running the place bad guys are screwed Either youll be real about change or I do not give a shit Hell is always open

@T: You got it You build in incentives so a guy can test his metal and go forward It like grades in school, the only difference is you are not trying to fail him and youre not requiring him to super succeed it is at his own pace Every step has to be monitored because we are talking life and death in this situation. There are no games here It requires a discipline, the guy is not use to, it is a learning process Everyone involved has to be rutting for him to succeed not fail It require you to keep your eyes on the watchers (guards) just as much as the prisoner

Would you give a Lifer probation? In the joint I meanSee, I can build off of what you say. Concept. A guy has Two years box time, but after 6 months you put him out on Probationhe must earn a trade, stay in school for Six months minimum, participate and complete an aggression replacement treatment program,,,whatever. but by doing so his remaining 18 months box time is waived. What did we do here? We took what you said about a guy learning a trade, a skill, something productive, and added to it a possible way to shorten long term keeplock. So maybe, it cant be done, although we know it can. But we are trying to look at ways to do this. To me this is what this site is about! If each day we take one or two issues and attempt to build on itin 30 days we have 3060 ideas we can now try to introduce as ways to end long term keeplock, SHU, Solitary, refer to it as you may. This is our goal is it not? Better then 30 days of Posts, and we only have cons in each corner of the square staring at each other with shanks in our hand! the system loves that!

@Alan T: Your Concepts are much the same as mine Responsibility and Self-determination are real keys to change You also need to look in the mirror and see the change, you need to be able to mark your success, not like stars on a paper, but doing for others You can take a lifer; one who is never going to get out; but may have the ability to be a math teacher.. He gets his degree, he becomes a math certified teacher and he then can help and instructs other cons.. A guy is a plumber, killed his wife and kids: comes in screwed up You work with him and you get him to work with other cons, teaching them the trade He has lost every thing, but now he can help and given him a Light a slim ray of self-worth I can go on, and on.But you get the idea.. Guy was a big dealer in the street, that is an organizational man who can build a sales company How many artist did you know? I know a shit loud Stay strong and in the struggle for justice. I think of Tommy Manning his art his writing A wasted life He had so much more to give to the world..

Let go of the shit already that was 50 years ago your now referring to it everyday as some victim. Here look at my scar, I was in action! We are talking about men in State Prison many of whom are never coming back again. I said about 20 different things in my Post, once again thoughYou only respond with some article about a youth home that were in 50 years ago. What about the other 19 things that were said? What about Solitary watch. You dont get it do you? THIS AINT ABOUT YOU! Go see a shrink about your issues and I hope you get help. I see one. Does me alot of good. We are here to talk about solitary, not who can piss the farthest! We are here to talk about ways to change solitary for the good of those PRESENTLY in solitary! myself personally, I dont want to interact with you anymore, to meYour a troublemaker, you seek constant attention, I cant recall any one time, maybe weeks agothat you have said my idea for changing solitary is? or my idea to get rid of solitary?, or how I would go about changing solitary is? It is always some article about crime, murder, rape, This is not the history channel, or CNN or is it your site to continuously sandbag and sidetrack issues because you dont like the person or what their saying. It actually appears that sometimes you want to be seen as this warrior, you want to be a big time con, you want to make it appear as if your one of the fellas talk to Fr. Russ by email everyday, he has my whole history at his fingertips, I chose to trust him with that, I wanted him to see who he was talking to, he earned that respect from me. I talk to him as if he is my priest. It feels good to get things off our chest. But all seriousness to the issue, Can you Post ideas everyday for a week without mentioning yourself, without quoting from an article, and without talking about something from 40 to 50 years agoThe here and now? Can you? Try it, because from what I have Learned that is what this site is all about. This site! There are other sites now. all of this is just my opinion by the wayYou can go about this any way you want. This is not about me either, just my input about SOLITARY!

I was transferred to Preston on November 12, 1968, and escorted down the hill to my new residence. Sequoia Lodge was located a good distance away from all the other lodges in the far left hand corner of the institution from the main gate. This was because it housed the most violent prone wards in the California Youth Authority system. At Sequoia Lodge we were housed in individual cells, not dorms. Looking back on it, this was a blessing, because most of those housed with me were convicted murderers, rapist, or child molesters.

The next stop was the adult system so I was at the edge of the abyss. I visited all the major prisons on a trip down to LA for court. I seen enough.

Yeah I only did time in a youth facility and here is how this site described it for my post:

Preston Youth Correctional Facility. Opened in 1894, Preston was one of the most notorious reform schools in the country, known for its brutality and deprivation. More than a century later, little had changedat least, not for the better.

Last year, the Ella Baker Center reported abuses at California Youth Authority facilities that included young people locked in 20- to 23-hour-a-day solitary confinement for days, weeks and months on end; young people locked in 4x4 cages for temporary detention; guard and staff abuse, neglect, manipulation, and humiliation of the young people in their care; rampant sexual assault; virtually non-existent care for young people with mental health or substance abuse needs; shocking negligence in medical care, especially emergency care; woefully inadequate educational programming; [and] a culture and atmosphere of constant intimidation, isolation, fear and violence.

It singled out Preston, along with Stark, as the worst of the facilities. In the fall of 2010, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation announced that it would close Preston in order to operate more effectively and efficiently as the state adapts to changes in our youth population.

It was a cake walk. :)

Fr. russ if I was a very walthy man Id buy into contracts on a few Prisons in key states, and wouldnt do it for profit, however in the event it was madewhatever. My goal would be to have the security in place to hold the worst of the worst. of course there would be a box, or SHU, but if you couldnt figure it out quickId transfer you out. These guys would have real food, and real conjual visits and theyd have evrything I could give them, without being arrested myself of course! LOL! My point beingit would be none of the hard liners business, how I ran my jail, and after a while, their probably wouldnt be an out in the open fight, because my jail would be so sweet, nobody would want to get shipped out! People on the outside should not even concern themselves, because the guys arent coming home again anyway! My point beingthere would be no need for solitary, just a couple cells, for the ones who like eating a shit sandwhich and wont have it any other way. There are always a few no matter how sweet it is. You know what I mean, Fr, russ.

CYA: Lets get something straight. NOBODY gave you no vauge or any type of threat. I am a big boy, the last thing I will do is run my mouth, I step to my business, always have. Anyone who has ever been in jail knows there are certain words, certain things you dont say to a man. You wouldnt know this thoughCause you never been in jail! The quicker you realize that and stop trying to be something your not, the quicker will get along. Juvenile time, and a bunch of kids calling each other names, trying to rape each other or doing it, being able to open a window or door and run up the hill,,,That is something totally different. But noget it straight, I never threatened you. You have been a very rude and obnoxious self centered guy. I can show you a half dozen times I have made comments and seconds later youd start talking about some killing in louisiana or somewhere else. Not only totally disregarding what I said but in a very rude way! Then youd compare me to russ Well if I liked what russ had to say better. something like what a chick would do! I am NOT here for you Fr. Russ of nobody! I am not to be compared to anyone, judged by anyone or disrespected by anyone. Most important of all if I choose to totally disregard you after all this, then so what? Thats my business. we might be the only one talking, theres thousands of people watching, with that in mind go about your business, if you cant respect me, keep me out your mouth, but dont call me no chump, and get familiar with me, cause were not friends, you dont even know me!

@CYA: Sorry, I do not read, nor normally have the time to read, comments addressed to other people. I try, if I am on a thread, to read general comments or those addressed to me I run three business, off this machine and working on a fourth (I am dyslexic and so when I jump from one to the other I can really screw up.) In my business I have editors for my work; I am not even sure how I got on here (have big bills to pay) It appears to me T was just making a general statements, it reads to me? I also believe, he wanted and desires to stick to the issues at hand I may be wrong but if I read him right? Bless you stay cool..

Another misunderstanding it was not you that I was referring to.

I dont even drink not alone do drugs.

Here is the comment. You read it before remember?

Allen T. says:
April 11, 2013 at 7:00 am

Definition of CHUMPan old convict name for FAGS. ANY convict knows there is NO grey area when calling another convict certain names: Snitch, Bitch, Chump, Rapo to name a few. During the 20 plus years I served in State Prison, I seen guys get murdered for calling another convict/inmate certain words. I also seen many guys get their whole faced sliced with a razor blade or a can lid, for doing the same thing! There are certain things you just dont do, first thing your taught when you walk through the door, watch your mouth.

@Alan CYA: I clearly do not know what you are talking about? You are talking foolish. I said clearly; that what you are posting is not appropriate for this thread.. That is all Nothing more nothing less. You can continue to post you are not offending me in anyway. I do not care.. You are reading to much into what is said I do not care who agrees with me or not That does not get me upset? You do not have to believe who I am. You can look me up. You have a computer. You can go to my public website. <http://www.nlhome.org>. you can go to facebook, you can see me on youtube. You can spent 25 to 100 bucks and theyll do a background check for you You are talking silly Where did you get having my face sliced? I hope you are not drinking or using drugs while you are on here, not that is any of my business? However, you do sound funny and I do not mean funny ha ha:-).

No one needs to fear me for I mean no one any harm. Throughout my entire life I have never went after someone that was not in that very moment threatening me or attacking me. However I will defend myself when attacked. I have repeatedly said I respect you and Allens views but both of you get upset when I disagree with you. Ive tried to be as polite and respectful as possible when I disagree with you two guys but I guess I dont write clearly enough to avoid such hard feelings.

I believe that you are the man you describe I am the one I described as well. I hope I can continue to discuss the issues with you two without any chest thumping or vague threats of having my face sliced over a misinterpreted apology. (read the April 11th comments)

Such remarks do not make me comfortable to directly contact people.

Why put myself in a position where I might need to defend myself?

The prisons are full of men who felt they had to prove themselves.

I dont want to join them.

Now please do not take any of this all the wrong way I respect you as Ive repeatedly written on here.

@CYA: I just do not see this as the appropriate sight for that discussion. You could have going to my email or the one I posted for T on this thread I do not hide I am a public figure As one judge said, and stated to my attorney: Russ does not fear the Devil himself. I know him well.

Point well taken but I had been focusing on this case because of the blow back it generates for the men in prison. I mistakenly thought you shared this concern I will not share any further developments on here.

Take care

@Alan CYA: I just want to say. I am not on this tread to talk about killings I am here and I hope others are here to talk about Solitary confinement and its use of that methoed as punishment Is that a troubled concept that you cannot focus on I read the papers and I do not need you to direct me to the news, or issues.. I try not to be rude but you seem to not be able to stay on point No one is paying me to solve those murders and I am not here to teach people how to be smart in crime..

@Allen T: The conversation about closing Solitary is important and needs prisoner input for it to work.. As you note my stuff from the 60s and the 70s address the key, which in my mind is always Self-Determination without the cooperation of the prisoner you are dead in the water One has to want to change. The problem to-day there is little reward in change, you cant make a leaving, you cant get accepted back into the society you are trashed, so the change has to be very personal to the individual, it is not a cookie cutter thing Clearly the younger the harder, if you are a burnt out old man? Well the nursing home is ready and you can go and scary the cripples, but if you are young the questions becomes what is my future? Now for me, the future was my children; if they where not there; who knows what I may have become and what way I may have went? The problem in putting your efforts into someone else, it is very dangerous, like a girl-friend or wife.. Your change can not depend on anyone else but you You are the one controlling the Beast If you cannot, then one needs to be in a mental facility and not a prison (In my humble opinion.)

North Texas Man Charged With Terroristic Threat

The former justice of the peace in Kaufman County was charged with making a terroristic threat, authorities said Saturday.

Eric Williams was admitted to the Kaufman County Jail early Saturday morning, jail records show. He is scheduled to go in front of a judge Saturday morning, a Kaufman County Jail spokesperson said.

Williams remains in the Kaufman County Law Enforcement Center jail with bond set at \$3 million, according to the sheriffs department website.

Yesterday, law enforcement descended on the Wellington Park housing addition in Kaufman, executing a search warrant on a home they would not identify.

The search warrant was served by the task force investigating the murders of district attorney Mike McLelland and his wife Cynthia, and assistant district attorney Mark Hasse.

On Friday, CBS News learned authorities executed a search warrant at the home of former Kaufman County justice of the peace Eric Williams.

Law enforcement has also set up roadblocks near the Highway 175 service road adjacent to the Crossroads Liquor Store and at FM 1388s north side intersection with State Highway 34.

Williams was questioned by police several hours after the McLelland murders, and Miller explained that as the investigation draws out authorities pushed to find probable cause to obtain a search warrant. On Friday, investigators searched both Williams house and his in-laws home nearby for physical or forensic evidence that would tie him to the crimes.

Miller also shared detailed from what he described as informal conversations [with Williams] over time.

Williams was a police officer for 19 years before becoming the justice of the peace. He had been shaking up the system there.

He doesnt think the ABT was behind the murders either.

Eric Williams, a former justice of the peace, was convicted of burglary and theft by a public servant and was sentenced to two years probation.

The investigators understandably took an interest in Williams as someone who reportedly had been heard to utter death threats in the past and who had been prosecuted by McLelland and Hasse.

Assistant district attorney Mark Hasse also called local attorney Dennis Jones to the stand to testify about another death threat attributed to Williams.

Jones testified that Williams showed up in the law offices that he and Burt share on the Kaufman Town Square.

Jones said he heard Williams threaten to kill Burt, his wife; his children and that he would burn down their house.

Lt. Col. Troy Abbott, the commander of a Texas State Guard unit where Williams served as executive officertestified that Williams had overseen the armory.

Investigators are evaluating skid marks from large tire tracks near the McLelland home.

What is so incredible is the victims put their dogs in the kennel the night that they were killed and all the guns in a bag the night before. How convenient.

They had a party the night before and he gathered up all his guns and put them away in a bag so that his guests didn't stumble across them, J.R. McLelland told The Dallas Morning News.

Was the killer or a spy for the killer at that party?

The victims had a surveillance system that could record but didn't. He normally kept a gun in every room, but he placed them all in a bag the night before, he had dogs (plural) that were in a kennel. Then his wife opens the door in the evening but at least he had his PJs on. LOL

I read that he had been shot 20 times and his wife only once. Why bother to shoot someone 20 times with such a deadly weapon unless you hated the man?

So you have to think this is personal.

I also read there is a witness to the murder of his assistant Hasse and she describes the murder as a man argued with him in the parking lot and the prosecutor pushed him away so the guy pulled out his weapon and shot him then ran off.

So that one doesn't sound like a hit either.

However I went on to read numerous corruption claims in the area people that have a lot to lose.

Fr. Russ, Thank you for an answer that provided me with insight I was not aware of. I would want to find a representative who could qualify as a reputable agency for the purpose of seeking, and winning a contract to enter into the private run prison industry. I used the Catholic Church because they have so much financial resources, and connections in higher places. By no means was I venturing into creating a shirt and tie, bible in hand atmosphere. However, I am very attracted to the concept of chaining the beast within, and whatever course of methodology it takes to bring this understanding to other men who could so strongly benefit from this understanding. Like you said in similar words If it takes a magic Tea Pot to bring this transference about, then a magic Tea Pot it is. I thoroughly understand that you don't just learn the concept and everything is like okeverything is great now. That it is a transition, one that the individual has to want, and be prepared to live by. I just look at privatization as a first step towards taking the reigns. At this point the rest becomes more practical, more possible, there is so much more involved, and I could not even begin to imagine the exact nature of the complications We need to start somewhere though, and any possibility at all, appears to a better step towards making this happen, then exploring avenues that have already been addressed, dismissed and the same again, and again. Close to a month ago, I came on this site to address someone and move on, Now a month later, I am attempting to address something, and I won't leave until I feel I have made at least a worthwhile contribution to something I am learning each day to believe in more and more. Thank you again Fr, Russ.

@AlanCYA: As to being wise I am not sure The more I learn the less I know. With a white beard at seventy, if I did not learn anything I would be a total ass, I am only half assed right now In my life I have learned I can effect 83% of the dysfunctional, mis-directed criminals I come in contact with and have over many years, as long as they are open and will listen It is not getting easier it is getting harder, due to the economic situation, lack of jobs, destruction of the black and brown communities with this stupid drug war I struggle forward, it is all one can do

@Allen T: I believe I understood what you are saying There is huge money in privatization of Prisons, and clearly in my own mind I could run a seriously competitive alternative to much of what is established right now with our systems around the Country. However, I don't believe in privatization for a huge number of reasons at the base, it shifts the burden of Civil Rights, in my opinion, into a question of who is responsible, the State (whom I believe should be) or (the private organization that exist). I know both can be held liable however this goes between state and private can get complicated.. If I were to again do something along these lines, it would set up like the open prisons of England; which was much the concept I had in mind in my youthful days.. (@ T) As to the question of the use of Solitary: The question of who can use it is with the people the prisoner is in the custody of So if I was running the place there may or may not be an Isolation section On the other hand IF I was to deal with combative, I may in fact want to have the ability to use Isolation Methods? See every one begs the question of should it be used or not It all revolves around why is the sucker in there in the first place Look, in all honesty, I am not going to have some crap-head in my house, who would fight with family members, and cause problems all day long (who would?) All these Liberals are saying poor prisoners. (It may be true or it may not be true that the prisoner has become a victim?) Clearly for me: I do not care what mommy and daddy are saying, because they are the last to know that their son or daughter is nothing but a deviant combative person that is unfit to put near anyone else. I don't know about anyone on here, but I know people like this; and many are in prison. Some get along with a certain type of individual, like myself, as long as you do not turn your back on them (these folks are fight priority predators in my view; and I know them because I am one of them with a chained beast.)

The real question on this thread should be, why are we using solitary confinement? in my opinion 1.) It should have little or nothing to do with the first cause of sentencing to prison; unless the Court deemed it so 2.) If one than is to be confined and then is unable to follow the rule, that the general, population must follow; some thing has to happen, for the correction system, has to have conformity in the directed punishment that the Court sentenced that individual to; so conformity is necessary for its function (You are not the same as a public citizen when you are sentenced for a crime against the public citizens which are all crimes that I am talking about.) Your civil rights are curtailed, by the court system, and can vary from state to state. For states also make up their own laws. Which we know are not to be in conflict with Federal Law I look at Corrections as the governmental agency that is deemed to correct law breakers and punish them for bad acts The problem arises in how it is done. Correction is one thing and Punishment another Some places insist they are not there to Correct, they are there to punish To Correct requires responsibility in the individual. Where as to punish you do not need anything from the individual only your own imagination on how to inflict your determined punishment on your charge.. You may want a punishment that does not turn the criminal in to a victim How that is done I am not sure.. (Later)

Fr Russ like I was saying, I would think that with having tried everything conceivable and then some to end solitary in prisons, an important first step, would be to take away the reigns. Since privatization has opened this door of possibility, now very well be an ideal opportunity to take the reigns. The pretense or initiative I presented was for the purpose of establishing a credible bargaining partner. If they were to watch sports all day and Have conjugal visits 7 days a week id support it! i guess I need to make myself more clear some times Fr Russ.

@Russ

Your a wise man.

@Allen

From The Rise and Fall of Californias Prison Movement by Eric Cummins

Page 4:

Early prison advocates such as Benjamin Rush went even further in their attempts to mold the inmate mind, calling for forced attendance at prison religious services and strict diet of sacred reading, dominated by the Bible. Other books were expressly forbidden.

Rush compared the Bible to an apothecary's shop, in which is contained remedies for every disease of the body. The Bible was the ideal meditation for criminals, and the solitary cell was the perfect place for a convicts disordered senses to be reconstituted by its agency. The convict would fix his mind to God.

Notice the solitary cell and the Bible are the center of his treatment model.

What works for many is not the solution for everyone.

I love the Godfather clip where the Dons son is being Baptized as his henchmen murder for him.

I've seen alters set up in the cells of some of the most violent inmates I ever knew.

Fr. Russ let me be more specific. Say Donald trump or Mike Bloomberg someone with money No Name or affiliation at all, Just someone with the finances. They decide to finance the operation and take the reigns, wouldn't it be up to them that now have control as to whether or not they want to use solitary?

@Alan CYA: I do not believe in forced religion Fact is I do not believe in forced anything I believe in responsibility.. I believe in-depth searching of your own soul. Finding out who you really are, looking at all the ugly things that make you the person who walks around and inter acts with people the whole of society To chain a Beast you first have to know that you are one. You can't blame other people because of your own ugliness You have to look yourself in the mirror and see the real you; and if there is a beast in you, whether through your own fear or your own brutality, than you have to find the way to cage that animal so he won't continue to do you harm or anyone else It has nothing to do with God. It is all about You! or Me!

@T: I try not to sell my religion; it is a personal thing; not for everyone and you have to decide what you believe for yourself. I am not a Holy Roller and I am not going to shove a track in your face If you ask me about my belief than Ill tell you If I am holding studies on Theology, you would be or anyone would be welcome Never the less Religion does not or would not be part of my rehabilitation steps unless voluntarily and no one would get good marks or points because they are praying and going to church I know plenty of killers who go to church then confession They think three Hail Marys and an Our Father forgives their abuse Not with me

@Alan T: First off, I have been there; was consultant to commissioner John Boone, under Governor Sargent in the 1970 With my associated we went from the most violent Prison in the Country at that time, to not even a fist fight in four months; Bobby Delleo ran the place on the inside and I worked with other on the out side Also However I was one of the first in this country to do alternatives to prisons with high risk men I ran one of the first halfway house under the Lowell Court System of MA and the EASE program which was supported by L.E.A.A (Law Enforcement Assistance Act.) money 1974 through 1979; we had the highest three-year accounting of an 83% not returning to prison in the Country. Nixon cut my money and nine ex-cons were out of a job The program got closed due to havin no money Give me one week in any prison and allow me to work with the men; and I can turn the place around However they will never do that because I have demonstrated that we know what we are doing and we end the profits and jobs in corrections no one wants that..

In Cali juvenile facilities in the 60s we were required to go to Church. And in San Quentin they had a list of books to force Christian religion on the inmates there, some of whom were Muslim by choice. They called this the treatment era.

@Russ

You remind me of my older brother because of your size and history of violence. Over the years my brother has put many larger men in the hospital, some might have even died, he doesn't know for sure.

As far as the beast within, most people have the capacity to be violent given the right circumstances. I have literally been exposed to violence from birth so I know its negative effects. I've been told upon my arrival home after my birth I was the center of attention for the welcome home party of my family and their close friends. Afterward while I was resting in my cradle my older brother came in the room and tipped the cradle over knocking me to the ground. He has since told me that he had become jealous of the attention that I had received. Over the early years of my youth I often had my ass whipped by him and our parents.

We moved around a lot and as new comers we were always tested and retested by the bullies. In each new neighborhood we encountered the local toughs and we always rose to the occasion and almost always prevailed given fair odds. But I've also been tied to a tree and beaten by a mob when I was four years old; I've been hung upside down in a tree by another, and tied to another tree in the country then abandoned by yet another group of kids. I've been run over by kids on their bicycles as I lay on the ground playing. I've been held under water in the public pool, I've been made to fight a series of brothers one by one. By the time I landed in juvenile hall at the age of 9 fighting was a reflex which landed me in the hole over and over again.

All this in spite of the fact that I am by nature a laid back individual, and as such I avoid problems and areas such as bars. However when I'm confronted by unreasonable threatening individuals I try to never allow them that critical first shot.

As a senior citizen I have trained in an ultimate fighter gym where the younger crowd has often asked me tips on how to improve their punches and kicks after witnessing me work out. Yes I am 61 years old but I can still hold my own in a fair fight.

As they told me, Who would have ever guessed?

Fr. Russ. Your the Warden, you have a few hundred guys on board you hand selected, you design the program format, security, and create a prison totally unlike the traditional punishment/solitary, cops/convict atmosphere. You start out with a manageable number of Throwaways, and build from there. think you could do this on a private level? The fact that your a man of cloth and have the backing of a religious group, or church will possibly allow you credibility, It isnt like the state is going to hand over reings to any one person or group of people unless they are affiliated one way or another with a reputable organization, wheter its cost effective or not. So I chose the Church as a representative, and You as the warden. Could you build this into something that provides an alternative to solitary? However, by no means are we running a religious colony. Like this Rapo BS. Angola, or any other sick and twisted pedophile place. Were talking Lifers not kids. Men who are in Long term solitary. Like Lincoln Hall before the state took over. Private ran detention facility by the Brothers and civilians they selected. The Brothers wore no collars, I dont remember ever going to church, and the place had no forced religious activities or none of this sick twisted rape bullshit. Had you not known they were brotheers you would have thought they were just tough ass college guys making money working as counselors!

I quote from a letter to a former guard by the name of Henry Lesser from a condemned serial killer by the name of Carl Panzram warts and all, Lustmord: The Writings and Artifacts of Murderers, p. 202, (1997), Brian King, ed.

You know that I spent several years in one of those places [reform school] when I was a boy and the so called Training that I recieved while there is mainly the cause of my being the degenerate beast that I am today. I have thought about that system of Training young boys for all of my life and I know that the whole system is wrong. That system of beating goodness, religeon and Jesus into boys in the 99 times out of 100 has the direct opposite effect of taking all of the goodness, kindness and love out of them and then replacing those with hate, envy deciete, tyranny and every other kind of meanness there is.

Panzram was 11 years old and from a poor northern Minnesota farm family when he was first sent to Red Wing in 1903 for breaking into a neighbors house and he was deemed reformed in 1905. I was reformed all right, Panzram later said. I had been taught by Christians how to be a hypocrite and I had learned more about stealing, lying, hating, burning and killing. I had learned that a boys penis could be used for something besides to urinate with and that a rectum could be used for other purposes.

NYs Walnut Street penitentiary in 1790s and PAs Eastern State Penitentiary in the early 1800s were the first prisons designed for isolation an they were the idea of religious Quakers.

And the warden in Angola prison insists on preaching the bible and if you dont play along you are not going to earn his favor. It is not a happy place. Ask the Angola 3.

Im glad your experience was more positive. People are people and how they justify their cruelty in their own mind is the only difference.

I believe in god just not the churches.

This probably sounds like something out of left field; yet, have you ever considered a Catholic prison. Sorta like how lincoln Hall was when I was a kid. Lincoln Hall was a private run juvenile facility, the Brothers were the C.O.s and the entire place was run by the Brothers. If there were civilian employees, they were hired hired by the Brothers. In this day and age where our government is interested in cost effective alternatives to running prisons, and has even went as far as to seek out and employ private companies to actually run certain prisons, could the Catholic church, or another religious organization take over a Prison designated for what will refer to as The terminal Prisoner? Can the concept of chaining the beast, be instilled into other men, Can a secure facility end solitary, by replacing One Parent who is trained to be a good punisher, with another Parent who is trained to chain the beast within? Of course you and I know this goes alot deeper, but I wanted to offer a glimpse at an idea. An idea that didnt fail 40 years ago, but was rather replaced by a State or States, that wanted to monopolize on a booming marketplace. Could we now revisit this old idea with a new updated approach and level of sophistication that could possibly end solitary, by placing the same prisoner in the care and custody of a different parent with a whole different way of handling matters?

As I said in the beginning of my change, the number one factor was realizing the animal I had become and was: (and to date still am; however I have a chained Beast; that beast is chained by my God whom I happen to Call Jesus) However, god was not the first cause in my limited mind. #1 was self-realization: Then the realization that there was only one thing and I mean one thing I had any real feeling for Love if you will; and that was my children I did no give one shit about anything or anybody else Not One Shit! so #2 for change was due to my Children Then #3, I took on a Jesus philosophy and discipline to guide my screwed up life (having no believe in a God at the time). I emulated Jesus, the Jesus written about, in the book of Mark as best I could. I followed His Way then my God found me That is my three steps to freedom At the present day the steps are reversed in my Life 1.) is my God I call Jesus 2.) my children 3.) a continuing look at who I am and what I am doing So you have it from a chained free man in Jesus

Three things effect change within me. 1.) An honest look at what I had become. 2.) My children drove the change in me (specifically my oldest and youngest daughters) and 3.) My belief in and the direction and relationship with my God. (And I mean a very direct and personal relationship with that God. Which required many years of search and focus)

@Russ

You are indeed a lucky man to have so many children turn out well. FAMILY IS EVERYTHING!

Take care.

@Alan CYA: If I felt offended you would hear about it However, I am here looking and talking about ways to end Solitary Now, you need to understand that I am not into victim blaming; I believe in the use of punishment and responsibility; I am a father of eleven children; none of them abused, in any way, that I know; however they were punished when they did not follow rules set down by me All of my children, with the exception of one, is a college graduate; all where in their youth fairly exceptional athletes; several received full scholarship on their academics and athletics to schools; the youngest was excepted to both the Naval Academy and the US Coast Guard Academy from which she graduated and is an Officer in the Guard presently I say all this to emphasize; that I am not an idiot, I believe in punishment, also reward and achievement. Not, one of my children followed in my bad path I made very sure of that not happening.. I used, a withdraw and reward system, in bringing them up. If they did the wrong thing they lost privileges, if they did more than was required they got rewards; however it had to be above and beyond I say all this to tell you. That I believe that 97% of the individuals in solitary confinement and long-term lock down should be out of their tortures condition However, they need to be, under proper human conditions of confinement until they prove to be not a danger to themselves and others.. No one should be looked away be cause of their political views Removal from populations, should only be for physical safety reasons Our problem is that the system does not know how to be good parents; all they understand is how to be good punishes Which by the way is their frekin job..

@Allen

The online definition:

What is a chump?

A chump is someone who is easily played; a person who is gullible and easily fooled.

Dont be a chumpshes kidding you along.

This is close to my application Dont feel like a chump.

I hope this straightens things out.

@Allen

This must be a generational thing.

When I said dont feel like a chump I meant dont feel like a fool for laying out your story.

And the phrase was not calling you a fool it was an effort to apologize for not responding to you sooner. Now this is exactly what kind of misunderstanding I was writing about before. You take an apology and turn it into a insult.

I use the statistics the same way this site uses them to give credence to the statement.

Now I was exactly like you in the joint I knew the danger and tried to just do my time but sometimes people just dont let you.

Now I hope we can get on with the issues of solitary and why it was developed in the first place. I feel it is partly to prevent violence between inmates.

Until, as Russ says, these inmates realize part of the problem is their own use of violence then nothing will change. We need to work together not search for a word to fight over.

I do not feel I disrespected you only that you heard it wrong because of your own interpretation which is obviously different than my intent.

Things have changed in 43 years since I did time. I am open to that.

I encourage you to stay on here. Listen to Russ he is wise.

@Russ if you also feel slighted I apologize to you as well. Much respect.

The way it was giving to me is that certain things get checked even if 99% of you takes it as a joke. I seen two guys in jail having a verbal exchange and the one guy called the other guy a punk and the guy didnt say nothing he just walked away and laughed it off. Later on that day he came back from program and his whole cell was robbed by a third person who was no more than a fly on the wall. Within a week the guy was getting extorted, a day or two later he signed in PC! He was suppose to check that immediately even if he thought it was possibly a joke. Actually I wasnt one for verbal exchanges to begin with. I was a quiet guy, always watching what was going on around me. I use to say I was scared with good cause, yet I had too much heart to be scared. So once I learned what apprehensive meant, I would tell others I was apprehensive, very apprehensive and stayed on point so I didnt get eaten alive by the animals. Sometimes I guess I have to learn I am not in the joint anymore, but when dealing with people who claim they were, I have a certain expectation level of what I know for a fact they know is right or wrong! There is no way you can claim to have done time and make certain moves that you know for a fact are unacceptable. Otherwise you either didnt do any time, or you were a knucklehead that stood 5ft. off the CO everywhere you went till the day your couple months were up. either way around, I have no time to get involved with you. But I will stay right here on solitary watch till I am ready to move on.

One of the hardest things to learn and take if you desire to stay out of the joint, is verbal abuse It is very hard, I know; having a TV show for ten years taught me I have to accepts some abuse from assholes who are ignorant; an extremely difficult task for me Less than two months ago, a person went from verbal abuse to touching me, a very big mistake for them However, remember when we were kids: sticks and stones can break my bones but names can never hurt me Most of us are of a mucho breed that refuse to take even an ugly look So you pay the price of your own pride; and if you do, you have to accept your punishment @ Alan T: During my time, few were even allowed to look me in the eye due to the pecking order, knot me changing and organizing was very difficult in my early years due to the fear and the pecking order of the prison; we had to break that down, we had to let every work for the same goal of change It meant allowing the Skinner to help you with your legal stuff, you may have had to protect him You had to live assholes alone to a certain extent Staying out of prison is a choice, it is a behavioural choice. I am not very sympatric to guys that cry about their time For I have found with the vast majority, they put themselves in the box.. It takes and education for use to look at the damage we have done to others My crimes ranged from booking, shark-ing to armed robbery, extortion and strong-arming to name a few I never gave one bit of shit about who I hurt.. You cant tell me that; that is not the majority in the joint right now Society does not have to take anyone back, not should a con expect to have welcome arms hug him. What has to happen is you decide to stay out and live the best life you can put together

May be you get lucky, get and education and help some in something.. Tell your story and keep one kid from going down the road we choice That is all there is

Definition of CHUMPan old convict name for FAGS. ANY convict knows their is NO grey area when calling another convict certain names: Snitch, Bitch, Chump, Rapo to name a few. During the 20 plus years I served in State Prison, I seen guys get murdered for calling another convict/inmate certain words. I also seen many guys get their whole faced sliced with a razor blade or a can lid, for doing the same thing! There are certain things you just dont do, first thing your taught when you walk through the door, watch your mouth.

@Alan T: Ive been away I must have missed something? Mr. TrayTwon123, is up set with someone? Who is he talking to? I must have missed his posting on here

In jails where? During what period of time? and involving parties that were previously homosexual. Let me get a couple things straight here, who you think your talking to with all these stats, figures, and quotes? Also, and I am very serious about thisbe real careful who you call a chump, and be even more careful about how talk to me altogether. I should have straightened this out a long time ago. I dont like people who get familiar and then getdisrespectful. I asked how old you were because you have been sounding like a 15 year oldd, lately. The jury is still out as to whether or not your a cop or some type of Law enforcement. Now you give some thought to what I said and if you aint got nothing productive and respectful to say to me then go tighten knickers!

@Allen

I was 10 in 1962 when I was in LA Central Juvenile Hall so that makes me 61.

I dont have the article with me now but last year alone they claim there were over 216, 000 rapes in jails. Go to justdetention.org to learn more.

They are double bunking people now so what if your 130lbs in with a rapist much larger. Not a position I would want to be in.

Many of these guys are afraid of being in general population.

Ill read the article soon got to run. Did you catch that 94% plea out?

Alan CYA. if you dont mind me asking what is your age group? I didnt want to ask your exact age out of respect for your annonymity. The general area though if you dont mind?

T we understand where u r coming from and u r right we r never accepted back and should never look for that

In NYS SHU you back up to the gate get cuffed and move in most cases. Other then that they have so many COs during movement, and, or when an inmate is out their cell, There is no inmate to inmate contact without it being monitored. What Im saying is if guys are committing suicide in SHU it isnt about sexual abuse. Most of that stuff is no longer happening at all. These days if a guy is getting raped in Prison you can pretty much believe they invited it upon themselves. I havent been in prison in 7 years through the grace of God, yet I have been on Rikers Island within the past year doing skid bid BS, and jail has changed alot. I have to admit though, aside from NYS, I dont know anything about jail except what they show on lockup, or I hear about from old gangster guys like Fr. Russ. You cant discuss jail on alot of spots. That is why I kinda liked this experience, it was different. Just makes me a bit nervous because alot of cops get on here and try to talk it up, you have to always be wide awake. The conversation about Kathy Boudin teaching at Columbia University drew about 200, 250 hits. You can guarantee 150 were cops, but I still was once again reminded that the criminal is never welcome back in society. If you think for one second that most people in society would like to see a guy make a successful community re-entry, think again! That is why I wanted you guys to read that story about Kathy Boudin, so you could see the remarks and statements that were made. Real wake up call for me.

@Russ

Allen T. wrote at April 10, 2013 at 2:15 pm

One day I would like to take a look at the stats of how many of the incarcerated are in as a result of a plea as opposed to trial andalso he wrote

how many of these cases did the psychiatric problem exist before the incarceration?

My posting the figures was an attempt to answer his questions.

Do I get credit for my attempt? No I got lambasted instead. LOL Only kidding my friend. :)

@Russ

Yes you do sound a bit grumpy but that is ok

You must remember not everyone reading this has your inside knowledge. I am glad you do not refute the stats at least.

This site is for and about solitary but other factors figure into it. Prison violence is the biggest factor. The biggest factor in prison violence is race relations, and victimization.

Much is made of the fact of the over-representation of groups in prison but little is made of these figures. You and I were lucky my friend we missed the worst years.

I hope you feel friendlier. :)

@Russ

I didnt take your story as bragging.

I agree the man had a surveillance system that could record but didnt. He normally kept a gun in every room, but he placed them all in a bag the night before, he had dogs (plural) that were in a kennel. Then his wife opens the door in the evening but at least he had his PJs on. LOL

I read today that he had been shot 20 times his wife once. Why bother to shoot someone 20 times with such a deadly weapon unless you hated the man?

So you have to think this is personal not a gang or a professional hit.

I also read there is a witness to the murder of his assistant and she describes it as a man argued with him in the parking lot and the prosecutor pushed him away so the guy pulled out his weapon and shot him then ran off.

If the prosecutor thought it was a gang member he would have pulled his out on sight or at least I would have.

So that one doesnt sound like a hit either.

However I went on to read numerous corruption claims in the area. People that have a lot to lose if they are convicted.

Alan CYA: I do not mean to be insulting, however, you do realize that most of us on here at least that I have seen are pretty much aware of the prison stats I hold a Master in Social Justice and Change BU and Goddard amoung the school I have attended Im a doctoral candidate in two subjects, that I may never finish, nor do I care, I am a life long student. The more I learn the less I know: I have been involved with this issue on a National Level since 1971, as one of the founders of (The American Friends Justice Program) in Cambridge Ma. I was the first prisoner while on parole to be part of the staff; and was the recipient of an anonymous grant by one of the Quakers to establish that program (1971) and there has been an ex-con associated with the program ever since I mean the stuff you put out is like you are educating us? It may be me and I have been around so long, I do not know, but Im more interested in your personal story and lets close Solitary than rehashing shit I know Do you have a plan to get our folks out of Solitary? Forgive me is I am a bit grumpy

The point of my story was not to brag, about how good I am with guns and knives. It was to state that who ever killed these people, had to be the luckiest hit person or persons, to come into their house like that. Or, they are in my belief, whom ever did this, had to know them extremely well; or had direct inside information. There is no way you are going to walk into a paranoid armed persons house and find them unarmed if it is normal for them to be armed, without inside info (No damn way) I charge 5000 a class for strategic planning Just the basics; advanced classes could cost as much as a Masters Degree. My credential can be checked through the law enforcement persons that ended my career Bless you all:-)

Californias Prison Population is 38 percent Latino, 27 percent, white, and 29 percent African American which leaves 6% other.

I derived the following by adding those listed in the chart by race by the total number of suicides listed. 12/33 = 37% white, 5/33 = 15% black.

Yet the 2011 suicides in the SHU are 37% white (they are only 27% of the total population), 30% Hispanic (of 38% total pop.), 18% other (of 6%) and 15% African American (of 29% of the total population).

Why do you think this is?

I believe there is a direct link to the rate of their victimization in prison and suicide.

<http://bjc.oxfordjournals.org/content/44/2/241.full.pdf>

I quote:

One theme that emerges clearly from the US literature is the racially biased nature of sexual victimization. The aggressors in Lockwoods sample were 80 per cent blackwhile the victims were 83 per cent white. This led him to observe that, In prison, most aggressors are black; most targets are white.

Prison sexual aggression, thus, is a case study of interracial crime.

Human Rights Watch published a report about this in 2001:

No Escape: Male Rape in US Prisons

Past studies have documented the prevalence of black on white sexual aggression in prison. These findings are further confirmed by Human Rights Watches own research.

Overall, our correspondence and interviews with white, black, and Hispanic inmates convince us that white inmates are disproportionately targeted for abuse.

So the victims commit suicide rather than live in fear. Sorry if these facts offend some.

I think this more than the solitude is the cause of the suicides in the SHU.

But I hope it was not the case for my little brother at least.

Allen T

94% plea out. This Bill Moyers program is worth watching.

<http://billmoyers.com/episode/full-show-and-justice-for-some/>

BRYAN STEVENSON: Sadly, we still have a system that treats you better if you're rich and guilty than if you're poor and innocent.

You'll be told that if you plead guilty, you can go home. You're not told that there will be these collateral consequences. You might lose your right to vote, you'll be barred from public housing, you won't ever be eligible for food stamps.

You'll be building toward this situation where if you get arrested again, you'll be facing mandatory sentences like 20 years in prison, or life in prison. And all of that stuff has to come from an advocate who explains the consequences. Yet what we've done with the system is create a situation where the lawyers themselves have an incentive to plead everybody out.

About 94 percent of all cases in this country are resolved by a plea.

On the insane issue I think PTSD is a definite issue in prison. If you're lucky you'll only see some sick shit in there, but if not you'll be the victim of it, this is true even in the juvenile system. I saw the affect it had on my older brother and suspect it had on my younger brother.

My older brother Mike actually spent much of his youth in solitary for fighting or escape.

He was committed to Atascadero State Hospital from Deuel Correctional Institute State Prison. While visiting him thereafter I saw the really insane. Mike was not one of these he was functioning and after his release he was soon only a few credits away from getting a degree when his daughter died of sudden infant death syndrome. It was all downhill thereafter.

No one could have lived his life and not been affected by it. I could write a book about him but he won't talk about any of it. Never has, never will and believe me I've tried to learn more.

So I do think you can be driven mad it just takes longer for some than others. And of course many enter loony as well. Anyone that has sat in a holding cell can tell you that.

Ha ha well I often wonder if I have a mild case Asperger syndrome for I drop the ball in such matters. I've stepped up for some of those abused in the joint. As Russ said most don't out of fear of retaliation. I can confirm that is the case.

@ Russ

In light of both of your comments, Russ on knives, and you on victimization, as well as the stabbing at the TX college campus last night, I recalled this event from my junior year in high school.

I sat eating a bagged lunch outside on the Sylmar High quad when I noticed a group of three students in the distance aggressively moving through the crowd. I watched as the group approached a stocky, sandy haired, lone student dressed in Levis with a plain plaid, short sleeve shirt. As the group reached the student the shortest in the group angrily confronted him. In apparent preparation for the confrontation the angry guy had removed his outer shirt which exposed his plain white undershirt commonly called a wife beater and a pair of black suspenders. The choice of their clothing indicated that they may have been gang members.

It was with my own recent experience of being attacked at San Fernando High by a group of similarly dressed youths in mind that I closely watched the scene. This previous attack was why I was attending Sylmar High after all. All of my attackers had fled the scene when the staff yelled at us and I alone was expelled for fighting. I had also been new to SFH when I was jumped for no discernible reason while I drank from a water fountain.

I was still angered by the fact that no one had lifted a finger to aid me that day. I therefore identified with the kid being confronted by this new mob even though I had never noticed him at school before.

The confrontation went from words to blows in mere seconds. The shortest of the aggressors hit the victim in the face knocking him back a step or two, then as the victim regained his balance, he returned the blow knocking his assailant down.

Another attacker took the place of the first and began punching the victim. I watched as a third attacker pulled a knife out of his pants pocket and hid it under the sleeve of his shirt.

The second attacker was also knocked to the ground just as the third reached the victim and began to stab him. I watched as the victim was stabbed once, twice, three times in the chest before the victim was able to knock his third assailant to the ground. When the armed assailant hit the ground his knife flew out of his hand and into the gathering crowd's feet. The attacker was now crawling on his hands and knees searching for his blade while the other two continued their assault.

The fight was closer now and I approached the scene not sure of how I could most effectively assist the outnumbered and wounded victim. The victim now had his back to the wall near me and seemed to be struggling to breathe as he fought off two of the attackers.

The third attacker arrived with his knife which I could now see was a duck-billed utility knife used for cutting vinyl tile. The assailant slashed at the face of the victim cutting him from the back of his head just above his ear, to his chin which severed his ear in two and sent blood spurting out of the gaping wound in pulses. Alarmed by the horrified gasps of the growing crowd the assailant turned wildly in my direction with both his arms and legs out wide, with his legs bent in a slightly crouching position.

I reached for the assailant's hand that held the knife but someone else grabbed it first.

With his weapon in check I struck the assailant a solid blow to his face. My punch had landed squarely on the guy's nose which instantly began to stream out blood as he fell to one knee. Seeing an opportunity to finish the assailant off quickly, I kicked at the guy's head. My kick landed on the hair line and to my surprise my heel had made his scalp fold back like turf on the football field.

The other two assailants having seen the two of us enter the fight quickly fled the scene. So not wanting to be asked questions I too turned and slipped quietly into the crowd. I could only hope that no one could identify me. The disturbing thought of a possible parole violation passed through my mind as I left the scene. As I walked away I looked back and saw the semiconscious assailant still being stomped on by the other guy that had intervened.

While I was serving time I told this story to my only friend and he told me it was his buddy and that the guy thought I was a guardian angel of his imagination. He had collapsed shortly after I left having one collapsed lung. He almost died.

Some good looking low-riding chicks picked me up after school and thinking with my dick I went for it. But rather than taking me home they took me deep into their gang territory. Luckily the man was making a bust of their homeboys and they panicked and sped off. Good thing or I would have been the pinata at their party.

I could tell you a hundred stories about knife fights. I was sent to Preston over one with a large group of adult professional body builders. The 66 man was the chief of police's nephew and he went on to first cripple another teen, and then while he was waiting for his trial he beat another teen to death. I had went toe to toe with him until I tripped over a curb and fell. He got pool stick from his buddy and swung it so I rolled my shoulder to protect my head and he landed it across my shoulder then my brother stuck the pig with little pen knife. He screamed like a pig being slaughtered. I jumped up and ran over to a fence and with several muscle bound adults on my heels I jumped the fence into the blackness below. It was over 50 feet down with the last 15 feet on a slope or I would have broken my legs at the very least. But the night was not over we got in the car and headed back to the club only to be chased by the several B&W squad cars. I had to bail at about 35 miles an hour tumbled and rolled to a stop then seeing the cops were not going to stop I rolled up onto the curb. The car stopped beyond me I would have died. So I jump up and did a back flip over a five foot fence I was so hyped. I hid out in a garage until the dozen or so police left and then rode a bike I found the ten miles to my mom's where the cops waited. I did 11 months over a group of adult weight lifters jumping two teenagers whose combined weight was less than the victims. All we wanted was to watch the band in the club.

American justice.

What do you make of someone like Kathy Boudin NYSDOCs 84G0171. Does 22 years in Prison and comes out and Teaches at Columbia University. Kind of leaves the debate open as to whether long term solitary/incarceration/etc. is the real cause of a cancerous community re-entry upon release. I hear so many cases where men/women come out of jail after serving a lot of time with psychiatric symptomology worthy of an expedited Mental health referral. However, in how many of these cases did the psychiatric problem exist before the incarceration? One day I would like to take a look at the stats of how many of the incarcerated are in as a result of a plea as opposed to trial. How many who went to trial had a 7:30 examination, and how many attempted to go forward as unfit to stand trial. Because on a plea there is no unfit to plea that I recall, or extremely rare. Face it, a man/woman who is gonna cop out can't be unfit or they won't get the benefit of the plea. What I am trying to infer is that a lot of pleas are being taken from men/women who are mentally unfit. That it's not jail that makes the person crazy as much as the person is crazy before they go to jail. In most cases, I place emphasis on, in most cases.

Thank you finally a verbal response! I was just ready to write Anders and ask how I should handle you!

@Allen T

Sorry I do appreciate your story and our similar history. Don't feel like a chump. Your words meant something to me. :)

Alan CYA that was a great response you gave to my heartfelt empathetic summary of my feelings for your situation, and your vigilant dedication to the cause. Hope you're not always so verbal.

@Alan CYA: things do not make sense. It may be the reporter. I am about 59 200 lbs. 70 years old, was a bum club fighter as a teen; know a bit of self-defence, nothing compared to my associates. However, I am a gunman, was a very fair marksman; am very dangerous with knives; and still a bit paranoid given my past occupations.. At 70 I am limited, an older punk, not eight weeks ago, when at my friend's bar and OTB, were I on occasion have a beer and bet my horses. Verbally assaulted me he was a very stupid 64 about 50 years old male who did not like a priest betting horses (and winning substantially) I took the verbal abuse; then he got brave and put his hands on me. I dropped him to the floor with one shot. Clearly everyone in the place was extremely surprised I am saying this because the man killed was a paranoid, a gunman who put away his guns: Does not make sense? He was in fear of something happening and he left all his guard down? How did that happen? (I got rid of my guns due to my youngest daughter's request) However, as I mentioned I am fairly good at self-defence; and I know my way around a knife or knives pretty well. I have within reach, deadly knives. Where ever I am in my house, I am arms length away from a knife. I do not worry about security; for I have, not one but two, trained pit bulls. You cannot go by the front of my home without them alerting me that someone is there I say all this, because, if the man is the way he is described in the news reports he prepared his household for someone close to him; someone he or she trusted and let his guard down with; every report is saying he did not have a chance, she opened the door I open my door to family. That is it I consider my life long partner's family; they would be able to assassinate me with ease.. Anyone else, would have a problem I mean this man was a security nut. Worse than me, well he was still in the field of danger. So it even makes more sense this is someone close.. Ill bet they already know. Or he got set up, mafia style, preparing for one thing, and Mr. Death came in. Look I have a son, my oldest, booze has been his problem all his life; if he were coming over; all my dangerous weaponry would be secured before he got to the house. Get my drift? My dogs would only be secure if I was expecting someone who feared them. Keep thinking

<http://www.dallasnews.com/news/crime/headlines/20130408-slain-kaufman-da-s-children-say-his-guns-were-out-of-reach-the-night-he-died-ecce>

So they put the dogs in the kennel the night that they were killed and all the guns in a bag the night before. How convenient.

They had a party the night before and he gathered up all his guns and put them away in a bag so that his guests didnt stumble across them, J.R. McLelland told The Dallas Morning News.

Was the killer at that party?

Allen CYAOh yeaBefore I forget, It was very sad hearing about your Brothers experience. I think that would make me wanna get involved also. I have a Brother, hes older. One time he got arrested and me of course knowing what jail is like, was scared for him. Not only he had never been in jail before, but he waa soft as ice cream and no muscles, on the contrary maybe even the resemblance of man boobs, just a fat scared kid. This is my Older Brother mind you. I thought of how maybe I could do the time for him, how Id kill someone if they did something to him, and I prayed that hed live off my reputation and somehow survive? he got bailed out right away, never went back again his entire life, it was a drug beef sale and possession. Anyway, knowing how I felt about my Brother being in jail for One dayI can imagine how you must have felt/still feel.

@djhfkj: You, said it all right there

@Alan CYA: Without giving anyone ideas on how to break out of Jail First the sheriff to me looks like a regular guy, that would be very easy to threaten with serious harm So my guess is they terrified this guy or his family to let the man out Simple.. You would not want to owe me money, I can tell you that; and any jail I was ever in; if i so desired I could have gotten out of That is my guess without knowing anything about the case

@Allen T

Yes I did about a month for every year I spent in the system. It is fornicate, fight, or flee my friend. I choose the middle ground. I just recently found the pictures of one of the holes. They were in my last post on here. Check them out. Ive started to collect these juvenile detention centers history. The stimulus package for the depression of the 1890s. :(

@Russ

What do you make of this article?

http://www.denverpost.com/breakingnews/ci_22979109/denver-sheriffs-deputy-custody-following-jail-escape

Alan CYA Ok BrotherI didnt ask for a resume. I had a strong feeling you were in a Youth facility having recognized the initials be cause I was in a half dozen before I went up top. Its just that I thought you had said you did BOX TIME? That is why I asked. Yea.. a few days worth of POSTS back Im almost positive you said you did a couple scraps in the box?

@Alan CYA: Any good student of strategy, a good chess player, a planner, will be able to get you if they have the mind to do you in.. As far as I am concerned these people are nitwits, they are public, they flaunt what they are about and what they do; they long to get caught. It is all they have in life, getting caught so they can be a big deal, they do not see themselves as friken idiots They call themselves warriors, they do not have a clue what that means Ralph Ham is a warrior.. Bobby Dellelo is a warrior, those who work for the benefit of all our brothers and sister whatever their color whatever thier crime those are real warriors.. You do not have to like the guy or women beside you, you just need to understand you are suffering the same fate, and you are stronger to join together and fight the indignity.. If you cant get that then your an idiot in my humble opinion..

@Alan CYA: He said just what I posted The man would open the door to a cop or someone of that status. However they say it was the wife, who would most likely ope to a salesman of a FDX delivery guy caring a big package Note however, I am not going to write here and give lesson on how to get someone, but if one has a little better than half a brain it is not that hard; for me I would not care where you are or how much protection you have. If I wanted you, Id get you, you could take that to the bank

Well, maybe you shouldnt have killed the deputy, dipshit.

<http://solitarywatch.com/?s=Carl+>

Here is a story Carl wrote for SW.

I wouldnt have opened for anyone in the evening after my assistant was gunned down in the street in broad daylight.

Only if they came like they were there to protect me because they had received a threat, then maybe I would have fallen victim to the ruse.

I note that a swat vehicle would leave a heavy print and the occupants are well armed. Time will tell. The family thinks no one is moving on solving this however.

@Alan CYA: No I have not seen Carls postings When I did time in AZ, the warden was Jim Upchurch, he was an alright guy, very progressive, did not give me anything I could sue on Infact I liked the guy alot.. He just did his job and ran a good place (no bullshit). I did get locked up for a month, someone said I was helping a group escape (It was bullshit). Well as bad as I was, the other side would have opened the door for me Or the person came to the door like a sales man or even someone from the Court I would think If I had thoughts of doing something like that I would have dressed and a sheriff or a cop; I would have looked like a detective going to that mans front to door However, I would think sales man given the size of the rifle he was carrying.. So I would say salesman..

@Russ

Have you noticed Carl on here he was an assistant warden in AZ? Also today this:

http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-18563_162-57578333/family-not-enough-done-to-protect-texas-prosecutor/

Investigators are looking into whether the McLellands may have known their killer or killers.

Considering the tensions following the murder of Mark Hasse, they question whether Cynthia McLelland would have opened the door for a stranger.

Some kind of acquaintance huh?

@Allen T

<http://solitarywatch.com/?s=Alan+CYA>

CYA stands for the California Youth Authority

I never did adult time (except in Baton Rouges Parish Jail) but I have two brothers who did. Ive written these three articles in the link above (I know you said not to post a link) on my experience. I did this to honor two of my my brothers one who one died in the hole after over a decade and the other who was made incapable of functioning in our society due to his time spent in prison.

Mike was a brilliant and fearless warrior (although he was to light in the ass for this role) who is now a homeless paranoid schizophrenic. But hey I love him.

My little brother Victor was a nonviolent person but also unafraid to speak his mind. This more than likely resulted in his being placed in the hole to which he never reemerged alive.

In my teenage years I partied with bikers, low-riders and other such gangbangers but I always stayed independent because I just didnt like the lack of freedom of movement entailed by being in a clique. These guys got shot outside their own turf. F that shit.

Mostly in my youth I just wanted sex, drugs and rock & roll. I never was a criminal for profit nor was I a predator inside or outside. As such I had no backup whenever I was out in the foothills partying with these Vikings. I was just a skinny teenager in over my head but hey I held my own.

My best friend in the CYA was the kid brother of the Satan Slaves president which later became part of the Hells Angels and my friend went on to become a Galloping Goose member. (If you see this it is noted on the MC clubs web page so its no secret.) But it seems he too has went off the grid.

You can also find this article on here. It begins during my second bust at age 10.

I had already spent my 10th birthday in another juvenile hall.. Search for it using the SWs search engine on here.

In Solitary at LAs Juvenile Hall, circa 1962
February 12, 2010

For those who do not know: I did four years in Walpole 68 71. then did another three in the 80s in Arizonas Perryville which was a country club for me The hardest was in the Florence jail, however, I taught about thirty-five young men how to sue those dirty suckers is Florence.. They still have not recovered from my being there.. Bunch of dirt bags.. They had no idea what Civil Rights meant My Judge was Roy Bean III, a real piece of scum I cost that shit hole place millions for what they did to me

Alan CYA: If you dont mind what State did you serve your time in, and when? If you have already stated this in earlier links I apologize for not taking note, and if you rather not be specific, I understand that also. Whatever you decidePLEASEdont send a link. LOL!

Warden Clinton Duffy, who put 90 people to death in San Quentin said,

I never executed a rich man.

Bottom line is if you can afford a decent defense, you probably will not die in an execution chamber.

http://www.kaufmanherald.com/news/article_88f97d22-9cad-11e2-823d-0019bb2963f4.html

The attorney representing former justice of the peace Eric Williams said his client has been given notice that the appeals court has set oral arguments for a May 22 proceeding concerning the state jail felony conviction.

The order went out to the attention of David Kenneth Sergi and Mike McLelland and is dated March 29, the day before the McLellands were killed.

Williams has one remaining indictment still outstanding.

If convicted, that charge carries a penalty of not less than two years, or more than 10 years, in prison

I refer you back to the Duffy quote above.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/bill-moyers/texas-the-eyes-of-justice_b_331820.html

Now this guy kicked ass Excerpts:

William Wayne Justice was a Federal judge for the Eastern District of Texas.

As a former Texas lieutenant governor put it last week, Judge Justice dragged Texas into the 20th century, God bless him.

And Justice demanded a top-to-bottom overhaul of Texas prisons, some of the most brutal and corrupt in the nation. He even held the state in contempt of court when he thought it was dragging its feet cleaning up a system where thousands of inmates slept on the dirty bare floors of their cellblocks and often went without medical care. The late, great Molly Ivins said, He brought the United States Constitution to Texas.

Some say justice stings. William Wayne Justice certainly did and his detractors stung back, with death threats and hate mail. Carpenters refused to repair his house, beauty parlors denied service to his wife. There were cross burnings and constant calls for his impeachment.

They can be short on mercy in Texas. All the more reason to mourn the loss of Justice William Wayne Justice. Rest in peace, your honor.

<http://www.hueylong.com/legacy/louisiana-after-long.php>

On September 8, Huey was in the State Capitol in Baton Rouge for a special session of the Louisiana legislature, pushing through a number of bills including a measure to gerrymander opponent Judge Benjamin Pavy out of his job. According to the generally accepted version of events, Pavys son-in-law, Dr. Carl Weiss, approached Huey in a corridor and shot him at close range in the abdomen. Hueys bodyguards immediately opened fired on Weiss as Huey ran to safety.

Weiss was killed instantly, and Huey was rushed to a nearby hospital, where emergency surgery failed to stop internal bleeding.

Huey died two days later on September 10, 1935, eleven days after his 42nd birthday. His last words were, God, dont let me die. I have so much to do.

After Huey Longs assassination in 1935, a wave of corruption swept Louisiana politics. Officials who promised to carry on Longs programs to Share Our Wealth instead stole the wealth, tarnishing the publics perception of the populist movement.

mostly through a lot of luck, or blessing in my personal view But for the Grace of.

Damn we think a like but Ive lived down south (Baton Rouge) and I lived in Jersey, and LA believe me the corruption down south is a way of life. New Orleans is most famous for it but the governor was machined gunned on the capital steps during the depression.

I dont know if you read past the bloggers to read about the NY case and the neighboring town in Texas that was shaking people down they stopped. Maybe this is what happened they shook down the wrong outfit. If so that made it personal.

I put those in there to balance the blog but the blog at least gives one a sense of the communities view of corruption in the area.

Just start with the elections did you catch the major of that town doing the shake downs was the longest serving major in the states history. He resigned.

I also note that the Feds are starting with corruption cases. Why?

If you read the Daily Beast article it explains.

Since I am the only one of my running buddies alive from that fools world I feel lucky too.

Divine grace or just the awareness of the risks involved you decide?

I could of been a collector but would I still be here?

I ran alone, inside and out, no crew, no back up, and no rats.

I trusted only one person in that era and he is my brother.

That is no way to live my friend. Peace!

I also posted the Rolling Stones article To Big to Jail for Allen T. He was to defensive to read it. Money corrupts but damn it is nice to have some huh?

@Alan: My problem with a blog like this fellows does, is his blanket indictment, against police. His presumption of they are out to get us The fact is, if you chose to be a bad guy, you are right they are out to get you, that is their job, and what they get paid for doing; however, almost all the police I know; and I know a lot they came from the same neighborhoods and out of the same class; and most of the time the difference between us and them; they have a ligament job Bad guys that hate police I find ridiculous; you choice the wrong side, they have the force of ligament society on their side A bad guy with brains should understand that; that is not to say there are not crooked Cops; I know I was in the robbing business with a few a very few that I grew up with. One of whom became a chief of police When we where kids they played the Cowboys, I was always an Indian. Supposed, revolutionary types, just are off the mark when they target police; they in fact are targeting the very people they are supposed to care about the general society The shakers and the mover, that set the government agenda are the Wall-Street Clan the 1%; and the fact is in this Country you are not going to get to that group, to cause them any real pain.. If you are not smart enough in your criminal business and you end up in the shitty system, it is your own fault for being stupid, I know it was mine; I had bad hiring practices; two rats brought me down.. My own fault cause I always knew they where weak We are the ones responsible for putting ourselves in the system, no one else And the system sucks, it is a horror; however it is our own fault, we continue in our destructive violence and bullying other to keep it that way When you are a criminal, youre a criminal, you are not the average Joe, whether you steal a hub cap or a few million on an armored car job The fact is, youre the same just the degree of profit makes you any different Oh yah, the same with a killed, whether you thing youre a pro or you killed your girl, your still just a killer. I say this knowing I am no different from a Mr. Blake, just more fortunate, may be if lucky was not with me; i would have been with my friends like Bobby Delleo and Ralph Hamm, Bobby did 40 and Ralph is on 45 I have been breathing free air for 38 of Ralphs years. mostly through a lot of luck, or blessing in my personal view But for the Grace of.

<http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2013/04/04/the-aryan-brotherhood-of-texas-brutal-deadly-and-effective.html>

Good background info.

On a blog about a wrongful death at Terrell State Hospital

JamesPoppell 13 months ago

Great hub Wesman Todd Shaw. As a current resident of Smith County, Texas, I am not surprised this has happened. I moved here from California six years ago and it has been somewhat of a culture shock to see how the judicial system works out here. It seems as though not a month goes by when the local evening news reports on wrong doing by one law enforcement entity or another. I believe there was a story just last week that reported three Constables were arrested for operating a Security business without a state license. I never saw these kind of stories on the news in California, but it seems like the norm here in East Texas. The point I am trying to make is that people in a position of authority seem quick to cross the line for one reason or another. I was also surprised to learn that the Sheriff has been in office for over thirty years (30 years). My heart goes out to your two friends and their families for having to endure such senseless acts. I cannot imagine the power a mental institution has over an individual and the thought sends shivers down my spine. Thank you for sharing your story.

Wesman Todd Shaw 13 months ago from Kaufman, TexasHub Author

Thanks very much, James Poppell !!!!

Ive lived in Tyler several times, and was there to visit my brother just a couple days ago.

Not far away here in Kaufman, Texas the county Sheriff a decade or so ago ran the entire methamphetamine distribution business!

Oh Im told the feds investigated him a time or three.but very likely, they were in on the whole thing too.

Then I recalled this from last year.

Texas Police Shakedown Lawsuit Settled
Posted: 08/09/2012 8:16 am Updated: 08/09/2012 11:42 am

Under the terms of the settlement, the proceeds of property and cash seizures must be used to purchase audio and video recording equipment for traffic stops.. Voters in June turned Tenahas mayor out of office after 48 years, ending the term of the longest-serving mayor in Texas history.

In 2011, Texas changed its forfeiture and seizure laws as a result of news reports about Highway 59. Law enforcement agencies must now account for every cent collected though a seizure or property sale. And law enforcement agencies cannot use the funds to boost officer salaries or to pay bonuses without the permission of an elected body.

Last night I had a Sherriff patrol car stop in the parking lot in the lane in front of me and then remain there for a couple of minutes until he drove around to my lane and parked next to me and I felt a bit uncomfortable. But as I said Im clean so I do not fear arrest unless someone framed me. The funny thing is the officer was covered in tattoos and walked up behind me first then went in the market for a moment, returned with nothing in his hands but this time he passed in front of me to get a good look.

Although I do not live in TX I am becoming a bit paranoid of the police now too.

Two news reports below:

Of course this is not just a TX thing and criminals do have access to such weapons.

(CNN) Thu April 4, 2013

A veteran New York police officer is accused of equipping a robbery crew with state-of-the art New York police equipment and helping them loot drug dealers out of a million dollars.

August 31, 2012

Oswego, NY Two Onondaga County men were arrested Thursday evening in Oswego, charged with selling two assault-style rifles and a silencer to an undercover police officer.

Dudley and Longo sold a loaded .22 caliber assault rifle with an attached silencer and a loaded Iz mash Saiga .223 caliber assault weapon to the undercover officer.

A flashback to the days when my knees buckled when a police cruiser pulled up. They were the most feared gang of all in my neighborhood.

I bow to your superior knowledge for I am no expert or hunter.

But your description also sounds like a vehicle and a gun from the armory.

@Alan: As a hunter trapper, I would say a .223, is used by; someone very failure with weapons. A good sniper gun with a good scope, it is what I used is Arizona It leads me to think, militia types An average guy would grab a carbine or a 15, not a .223 I could be wrong it may just be what was handy? It is not a close range gun It is not a hitman piece either; one would go for a Rugger 22 (at least a pro) This guy is over kill, and sending a message The truck tires tell me a hunter, off-road man headed for the Woods or Mountains, the gun tells me survivalist, militia

@Russ

We are of like mind.

The facts as they appear in the press. Scattered like the shell casings.

Cynthia McLellands body was found in the houses front room near the front door, and it appeared that she had answered the door.

Mike McLelland was found shot in the hall way toward the rear of the house dressed in his pajamas after apparently trying to get away.

Sources said a .223-caliber assault rifle, similar to an AR-15, was used in the murders, with approximately 14 rounds being fired.

A law enforcement official who spoke on condition of anonymity described the scene at the McLellands home as an awful scene. There are shell casings everywhere, the official said. This is unprecedented. This is unbelievable. This is huge.

One suspect is Eric Williams, a former justice of the peace, who was convicted of burglary and theft by a public servant and was sentenced to two years probation.

The investigators understandably took an interest in Williams as someone who reportedly had been heard to utter death threats in the past and who had been prosecuted by McLelland and Hasse.

Assistant district attorney Mark Hasse had called local attorney Dennis Jones to the stand to testify about another death threat attributed to Williams. Afterward Jones testified Williams showed up in the law offices that he and Burt share on the Kaufman Town Square. Jones said he heard Williams threaten to kill Burt, his wife; his children and that he would burn down their house.

Lt. Col. Troy Abbott, the commander of a Texas State Guard unit where Williams served as executive officertestified that Williams had overseen the armory.

Investigators areevaluating skid marks from large tire tracks near the McLelland home.

Then again there have been only 14 prosecutors killed In the past 100 years

One victim had sentenced his killer to a mental hospital and Mike McLelland was just such a judge. And his wife also worked at the nearby Terrell State Hospital as a nurse.

The other such case:

Victor C. Breen who was serving as district attorney of New Mexicos 10th Judicial District in 1971 when he was shot to death as he got into his car to drive to his office. The assailant, Jose Resendo Garcia, had been committed to the New Mexico Mental Hospital on Breens recommendation. The district attorney was considering having Garcia recommitted when he was killed. Garcia was sent back to the mental hospital and never brought to trial.

@Allen Thank you I do try to widen the discussion.

@Alan: On your remarks on Country; I have children and family members that are career military, youngest daughter, officer in the Coast Guard, graduate of the USCG Academy. I myself a prison organizer both on the inside and outside now for fifty years in the trenches, believe our people are the ones that will change the system for the better. I believe we have a fringe nut-bag group that makes a lot of noise but are all self-interested. They are very few in comparison to the population inside and then multiply that by family members on the outside.. We as a group are and have always been the key to real change Revolutions, as these folks who push or talk that line is an impossibility in the United States; they neither have the backing or the material and access necessary for such a venture, they are nit-wits Even if you choice to be a career criminal this is the best place in the World to do it :-> Only place where you have a voice even when you are in Solitary Only place in the World I love this Country and I am so proud of all mine that serve Also many of my family work for the government dedicated public servants, love them all

As to the case and killings; I am hoping that who ever did this, has no, connection to the prisons and are not ex-cons; However, the hits looks to me like professionals I hate to tell people; that means people like us; we are more sophisticated than the military, at least some of us in planning and execution of targets. A gang member would not walk around that place displaying all his tattoos, he might dress like the mailman caring his loud and walk right up to the door; or he might pull up in a pizza delivery car or dress like a cop Gang-members and leaders are not stupid I know of one in particular whos IQ was a 180 Went to Harvard after his bit with me Running a huge gang is no different from running a huge cooperation takes the same skill Marketing is marketing, buttons, drugs or guns all the same skill set is needed Money laundering takes wisdom, investment hiding, you better know what you are doing.. And who you are doing it with. Stay safe and strong

@Alan: Please note on communication, I understand. For me I am a public person, with a background. I do not run and I do not hide; that said I have never been stupid, and I am always vigilante. I live in New London CT. You can find my address on our website; or in the phone book. My email is somewhere on this site.. Nevertheless that is me Any fool knows that coming after me even now, would get them retaliation from associates or relatives. I am not like Jimmy Bulger who killed all his friends and associates so now he has to live locked up; his whole crew but for two guys are all rats, which are arrogant and do not realize the people they killed have family members who you never know may in the end retaliate.. I say this to say I totally understand your wisdom. Also know there are those that if they want you and have the right connections they could find you rather easy, because you are on the internet It is not as many believe securing your identity In fact this system is profiling everyone on it and has for some time; use of these sites all the social networks, once on you have opened the door to who you are. You notice several of my associates I talk about, though they read all this stuff, do not respond They like to keep a low profile We are also highly political, go all over the Country, speaking and Daily I work on our issues, testify at the State House, have two public TV shows, one I produce and one I Host However that is me; and I am highly controversial to some Stay Well friend.

Alan CYA, just one thing from reading your post, about the part of a heavily tatoood gang member walking through them streets without being noticed. I use to think like that, What does a gang person look like, then I was watching a gang series on television a couple years back and they were showing guys from a well known Biker Gang and they were business men. Looked like your local Barber, or City Council rep. I was taken by surprise at first, because of the notoriety of the gang. What Im saying is that old saying that you cant judge a book by its cover holds so true. Could have been the mailman? Another thing I wanted to tell you is that I have learned alot from your posts. Take care and thank you for all your time taken to make your contributions.

The deceased couple had both worked at Terrell State Hospital (asylum) which has been accused of abuse of its patients. The husband was a judge there and his wife a nurse. Is it possible that someone that was a patient there was crazy enough to do this? humm

Although the professionalism of these attacks seems to be above most criminals abilities.

Also I doubt that a non local or a heavily tattooed gang member could go unnoticed on that street where they were killed. They were cased out and they believe the wife opened the door so I believe it must have been a local.

Then there is this on CNN:

Since the January 31 daytime slaying of chief felony prosecutor Mark Hasse outside the courthouse, authorities have pored through his case files.

Saturday night, hours after Hasses boss, District Attorney Mike McLelland and his wife, Cynthia, were found dead at their home, investigators met at a local Dennys restaurant with the convicted official, his attorney told CNN on Tuesday.

Investigators took swab samples from Eric Williams hand to test him for gun residue, attorney David Sergi said. CNN does not know what the results of those swab tests have revealed to investigators.

Sergi says his client voluntarily cooperated because he has nothing to hide.

Williams, a former justice of the peace, was convicted of burglary and theft by a public servant and was sentenced to two years probation.

The development shows investigators are looking at much more than possible cartel or Aryan Brotherhood of Texas connections to the cases.

They are looking through all the McLelland and Hasse case files to see if any red flags arise.

County Judge Bruce Wood said literally hundreds of investigators are working the case.

Im not sure what time frame were on, but Im confident that they will find whoever committed this crime, he told reporters Tuesday.

Russ I have wanted to email you and another person that just gave me her email on here but the fewer that I make contact with the better. Why?

Because the way things can be misunderstood on here makes that decision seem to be the best for my families security. All the blood and guts throughout the history of the prison movement that I have read about has made me somewhat paranoid.

However I do respect you and your views.

I am not afraid of my government I am a proud American that believes we can oppose elements of its policies without being killed something I think is not the case with many of the people involved with the prison movement.

I gave up drugs over 40 years ago served my country in the military and so on. The people who work for the government that Ive known are the best people Ive ever met.

However there are people that abuse their positions and I do not approve of those I've run into like those LAPD that cruised my neighborhood four to a car in riot gear.

I lived by the code (never a snitch) as a criminal (a harmless drug user) but I respect those that just do their job to protect society from rapists, child molesters, serial killers etc.

A balance that you seem to understand as well. With respect my friend. I hope I can meet you one day. I'd love to chat with you. I'll come around to emailing you one day.

@Alan and Allen T: Please don't get upset if I offend someone. I do not mean it. I am working; and occasionally going back and forth with this computer. I get a little short. Today was just one of those days, payroll, and getting ready for Tax person tomorrow, TV show tomorrow night; then my Luca Brastys was being a pain in the rear, not wanting to do his house work. I have a few employees that are challenged; Well, there are days I started at 6am on here and I am not finished. Our care client decided they wanted to go shopping at 7pm. Oh, what a problem; but to keep the peace we got it done. Stay cool.

@Alan: After reading what the question and answers things stated, in his research; I'll leave this to other profile folks. I find my information may differ than his own a bit. Like is he counting McVea and Company or is he leaving that out? Is he looking at one group or several? This may be the wrong venue for a discussion like this? Good strategist give people ideas just by accident. I would rather not contribute to nut bag agendas. I write T through email on occasion less public; however, homeland security. I am sure monitors my computers (I warn everyone). Given that several of my own family work in the field, for law-enforcement.. There are clear patterns coming out.

Yeah like that merchant marines suicide that Tony Sr told me about.

Oh did you catch that Ebel was also Sicilian?

Glenn McGovern has been compiling statistics on such attacks for years. He's the author of the book Targeted Violence as well as the recently published study Murdered Justice: An Exploratory Study of Targeted Attacks on the Justice Community.

McGovern, a former SWAT officer, spoke with us from Santa Clara County, Calif., where he works for the district attorneys office as an expert in threat, risk and vulnerability assessments.

There's not a lot of information on targeted attacks on members of the justice community, which includes prosecutors, McGovern said, at least not a lot that isn't classified.

I just started researching, and it just grew from there, he said of his efforts to put the attacks into statistical context.

Before we jump into our question-and-answer session with McGovern, here is some of what he said he learned reviewing the 133 individual hostile events he found that targeted the justice community in the U.S. between Jan. 1, 1950, and Dec. 31, 2012.

The targeted victims were killed in 41 of the events.

Revenge was the motive of 67 percent of the attacks, and guns the preferred weapon.

The attacks almost equally targeted judges, prosecutors and law enforcement officials, but judges were more frequently the victims of fatal attacks.

Just over half of the attacks occurred at the victims home, usually on a weekday and generally in the late summer or early fall.

More than 80 percent of offenders were facing charges at the time, more than half were males in their 20s and 30s, and 57 percent of them were white.

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2013/04/01/175940691/expert-recent-attacks-on-justice-community-really-unprecedented>

Read the part near the bottom where he also states it is unlikely to be the ABT. At least on the orders of the leadership.

Far better than sleeping with the fishes..

Alan: The damn problem is there are far more than one group; and some of these nut bags use the Turner Diary stuff. Either a small pack or a lone wolf. If it proves to be this type of stuff, they set us way back on the Solitary issue big time. We have been working on that long and hard.

@Alan: I'm a funny guy, what damn good are dogs locked in a kennel or having a gun in the house unloaded and a lock on it :-). I sleep with the dogs.

This is against the normal policy, says former Los Angeles County sheriff's sergeant Richard Valdemar, who has testified more than eight times in federal trials against the Aryan Brotherhood in California. He was also the technical adviser on the History Channels Gangland. They know if they attack the police they will bring heat down, so they usually avoid it.

So far a member of the ABT, a lawyer for the group, and a guy who wrote a book on targeting of public officials has voiced their doubts.

I hope it is just someone that had a grudge because if not prison reform has just gotten near impossible.

I posted the comment but it is on hold.

I know Russ that is how I looked the article up because you told me about the movement.

Mike McLelland had his dogs in the kennel according to the press.

He thought his military training and fire arms would protect him but he was wrong!

My Maltese wouldn't be of much use. LOL

@Allen

The authors of this site are from NY so they would know. I would be guessing one way or the other.

Alan: Who ever wrote that statement about sophisticated leadership of gangs; has no idea of gang leadership mentality.. they apparently never studied the gang wars of the past 50 years; for if they had they will find that outside of your own gang members do not give a crap about the overall consequence of their actions and when they want to make a horrific point. Someone is in trouble.. When one picks up a gun, especial if you are a leader and decide to go to war, with however, it is with deep reason and with no regard to what may or may not happen to you and the people you lead.. It is like going in to take and armored car or a bank (the mentality is) If we get away with it so be it and we have the money; if we are screwed in the proses and have to shoot it out, it was a fine day, and we weren't doing anything important that day anyway as we say a good day to die with company. I know, Sick! But been there done that I know my own well, cause i am a nut bag just like them; only I have with the help of my God chained the Beast. At least so far.

Alan CYAI was talking about disciplinary Jails in NYS. that have not closed. My entire Post is on jails in NYS only. If you read the entire POST you'll see several times I said NYSDOCS.

@Alan: come to my door and my pits will have them for lunch :-)

@Alan: I was there at Walpole; it was said I ran the prison on the outside and Bobby ran it on the inside (by the Guard Leadership) who to this very day will not put my name in a book for fear. The problem for us exons on the street, is just what you are having going right now.. No different. People were targeted, clowns wanted to start a revolution. They set all our work backwards; and force was meant with force. These clowns put everyone at risk; even if you are in a defensive mode, you're a convict and you are operating illegally. The problem with the prison and abolition of them is much like the problem of American Slavery; it is a horrific immoral thing in many ways, but how do you end it, with a minimum of catastrophic problems, to the general society? How do you deal with wackos like we have killing people and have the general society understand they are a tiny part of the criminal society? Everyone should not be subject or held to the standard that these crap heads will be held too.

<http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2013/04/02/how-the-aryan-brotherhood-kills-from-the-gang-signs-to-the-sanctioned-hits.html>

Why the recent string of Texas killings may not be the doing of a prison gang. Excerpt:

These people are somewhat sophisticated, specifically those in leadership positions, Ely added. They run multimillion-dollar criminal organizations. They have smart, cunning people running them. They would realize the world of hurt that would come down on them. Whoever did it wasn't thinking about the long-term effects of this. Law enforcement is never going to rest after this.

On education I agree that inmates need a skill when they get out to succeed. However the system remembers the last time it allowed outside volunteers to teach in prisons.

From The Rise and Fall of California's Radical Prison Movement by Eric Cummins

Page 246: By the fall of 1975, prison movement foco guerrilla strikes had ceased in the Bay Area except for occasional gangland hits. The most tragic of these would come in 1979, when, as if to sound a definitive death knell for the movement, claimed one of the movements most ardent supporters, attorney Fay Stender, a victim of the prison movement foco theory that had appeared originally in California inmate self-improvement organizations and covert study groups.

A former member retells the story:

A woman knocked on the door of Fay Stender's house. When Fay answered, a man appeared with a gun and came into the house. I think Fay's son or daughter was there at the time. He accused her of betraying the revolutionary movement and shot her several times. She didn't betray anybody. She moved on.

Fay Stender was a victim of the prison movement foco theory that had appeared originally in California inmate self-improvement organizations and covert study groups.

A quote from today's DailyBeast article:

The danger beyond the immediate threat is that criminals will take the killings in Texas and Colorado as something the cool killers are doing.

As the sun set on Monday, crime-scene tape was still strung around the McLelland house. Water left over from the thunderstorm on Friday and the one that followed on Sunday stood in a drainage ditch that had been dry during a long drought.

It's the first rain we've had, a deputy said. The end.

Or at least in decades I would add.

Lets hope this new tactic doesnt put an end to the movement to stop the use of long term isolation.

Yes at least two have closed,Tamms was closed and Colorado State Prison 2 never opened because of the cost. Ironically it was Clements that opposed the later.

But yes the unions will and have reacted as this article points out on Russ's movement.

Mer Stevens reviews a book about the hidden history of a prisoners uprising at Walpole State Prison in Massachusetts.

September 11, 2008

At the Walpole State Prison, inmates formed the National Prisoners Reform Association, or NPRA. NPRAs stated mission was to exercise self-determination within the prison and to demonstrate that the prison itself was unnecessary.

Prisoners and their allies outside had some early victories that helped pave the way for the struggle to come.

The guards maintained a dedicated campaign to break the prisoners organization. They let off 418 canisters of tear gas inside the prison in a single night, enough that residents of the town of Walpole were affected. The guards union staged slowdowns and walkouts against the reforms that led up to a strike against the betterment of living conditions. In a public condemnation of the strike, one citizens commission wrote:

Their strike was not for better wages, hours or other traditional union goals; their strike was against the better and more effective treatment of other human beings. What could condemn a system more than evidence that it caused human beings to have a vested interest in the mistreatment of others?

The strike left prisoners and citizen observers in charge of Walpole. Under their leadership, there was almost no violence. Instead, inmates trained one another in conflict resolution, understanding that any incident would be used as ammunition against their struggle. Remembers Dellelo, When the guards walked out, they expected the prison to explode. We held it together.

<http://socialistworker.org/2008/09/11/prisoners-in-charge>

By no means are you bragging. You speak the truth. What you said about them not wanting you to speak is true. Your ideas cost them jobs. My exact point with the Long Term Keeplock Disciplinary Jails they built. They are keeping them full, if they had to shut them down think of all the jobs theyd lose. NYSDOCS lost about 10 Thousand inmates over the past 10 years or so. They say its becaus guys arent coming back. That may be part true. I think alot of the old breed died off, OD, Aids, old age, relocated. all kinds of stuff, and some havent went back. Anyway, the NYSDOCS population died down and they have closed some jails. Never good for the Upstate economy that lives off the Prison. I dont recall any disciplinary jails closing down though?

While I did in fact mean exactly what I said. To end programs for some that may never come home. It was not at all an easy statement to make. I gave thought to the CADRAY system and everything you said, there are other programs at no cost or cost effective for these guys. The money saved can be better used if monitored. Thats another thing if monitored. The Prison system is like the military with the 2 dollar nail and the 50 dollar hammer. Lets face it. You can save the system millions of dollars, but if dont account for that money, it will be wasted on something else real quick!

This is not about bragging. One of my folks here said I do not talk about this stuff enough; when I do it sounds like bragging to me. It is just the fact that myself and a few others where out organizing and were in the right place to have some of this stuff happen and we where of the same mind Being in Boston connected us with all the schools; being the first convict at the American Friends in Cambridge gave me access at that time to lots of folks who had been in the peace movement; also coming from Newton was a very big advantage and having the political connects that I had, was very unusual for a convict I mean, I was on parole, out not even four months, and the Mass. Chief Justice invited me to a Justice conference at the Mariot in Newton. I went from a cell to a suite over night. Sen. Jack Backman, of Newton, had me under Senate protection because the parole board wanted me to end my organizing ex-cons in the street, it was a violation of association at that time..

We know for sure over the very long history of prison system in this Country and in others that Education is one of the corner stones that can effect change in a person. We know the brain now scientifically is not fully developed until on reaches early twenties. So as I look and have looked at the system with my associates like (Bobby Dellelo) (Ralph Hamm) and many others. I look at in side first. We have men (and I deal with mens prisons primarily) doing very hard and long time; who are or can be educated to the point with their long terms they can be come teachers and mentors to others that are incarcerated under shorter sentencing. We had or we can train people to every skill you can imagine, for it takes nearly every skill to maintain a prison system, from architecture to zoning needs Plumbers, electricians, cooks, industry cleaners, painters artist etc You need a good classification system and people who can sift through the population and place those individuals in the area where they can excel and contribute to the rehabilitation of themselves and others It can be done and done effectively. The really scary part about me and my folks is; we already have proved it can be done; and we know how to put it together. Which means, we can do it far better, far cheaper and nearly no need of guards. Or huge monolithic prisons.. So we are the most serious threat to privatizing prisons, the guards union and anyone making money off this failing system No one invites me to speak any more. I was all over the Country in the Early 70s, I help and instituted many alternative program from prison in the Court system, our programs were emptying out the system. 80% of our guys were not returning. Polaroid, in Waltham MA., had one of the best work programs in the Country, Dr. Land loved me, he was from Newton, he implemented all my ideas Honeywell, project we brought in to Walpole with Vice President of Honeywell Mel Smith No one studies the stuff; and no one want to listen because it may mean they are out of a job. My union friends go crazy Because the are limited in their vision, unions would grow if they would do what we suggest with apprentice programs; but you are always buying someones job It is in the very thing we suggest in reform rhetoric.. Change means some-one is out of a job or they have to work to get educated to the change Scaries people.. No one is going to have me talking at any College anymore.. Clearly if they have justice programs for guards; which we were the first to suggest that guards needed education. (that tells you how old I am) there were no justice prigrams in any schools in the whole Country

Without a doubt the entire system needs to be restructured from top to bottom. Whereas initially, penal colonies were ran much more as disciplinary institutions. If you committed a crime you were sentenced to what was termed a reformatory. However, there wasnt a whole lot of reforming going on! Prisons were full of convicts and they did hard time. Much unlike todays prison where offenders are caled inmates and enter into a Correctional Facility full of various programs designed to provide rehabilitation.

Emphasis on rehabilitation didn't come into play until much later. The Attica Riots which is detailed in the book titled The Turkey Shoot was a very significant turning point in the history of the NYSDOCS. At this point emphasis seemed to switch towards rehabilitation programs designed to rehabilitate the offender, and enhance their opportunity to make a successful community re-entry. The inmate would now learn educational and vocational skills that could possibly lead to employment and other opportunities that would help reduce recidivism.

Then came Treatment programs, The Quakers with Alternatives to Violence program, (ASAT) and (CASAT), and a program for every letter in the dictionary, a prison chaplain or religious representative for every inmate in the system. These programs + The Death Penalty = \$! In the midst of it all, disciplinary jails were built to house any inmate who dare interfere with the
\$

Today we need to go back into them disciplinary jails and find out who is who and what is what! As far as rehabilitation, with the tax payer footing the bill, maybe every inmate shouldnt be afforded rehabilitation in the form of expensive programs. if a guy is doing 77 years to life and most likely is never coming home, why would you pay thousands of dollars a year for him to learn vocational and educational skills? Maybe we need to take 1000, 2000 or more of these inmates who are probably never coming home again and build them their own jail? Of course the dilemma exists that if we put them all together we are asking for an uprising! Not necessarily. I have ideas.

@T: I just can't believe I have made it to this point in my life I thank my God for the great trip, never would have wanted to miss it I have great kids (my reward for some of the things good that I may have mistakenly done) Today my concern is for our brothers and Sisters that will ultimately pay the price for the foolish killings that are or appear to be directed at Corrections and the Justice System by White supremecy; at least it is appearing that way? Everyone suffers for these nut bags I have no use for the gang mentality, (or the bullshit revolutionary, they are a joke to me, they are all about themselves and knee-deep in bull) I know, funny coming from an organized crime guy I will not explain my view, for I might sound defensive of my own actions. I will say, it was a different time, and we operated very different from today's organized structures.. I believe I was one of the first with an integrated unit, although my older generation had coalitions in the Jewish community, I just expanded my view; and it was always about earning and making money; I came out of very old school no drugs. I could have made millions in the grass business (was not meant to be)

Im thinking about Tom Manning today, and all the good work he could have done out here I liked Tommy, but the nut bag Ray filled his head with bull and the peoples revolutionary crap.. And look what it got him A very talented man, could have helped try at least to change things, rather than to bring things backwards. You stay strong

I have been sitting here thinking of how to set up an independent council A Watchdog Agency that would oversee individual cases involving inmates serving Long Term Keeplock key word independent. see, now they would sort out whos in there on disciplinary, and whos camping out hiding from the everyday issues in General population.

Between the age of 13 and 30, I did that a half dozen times. Once from Lincoln Hall. Always from the car as an adult. if you look at my sheet which is public information and I have absolutely nothing to hide, its all over it throughout the years. The charge anyway, the conviction always ended up as resisting, disorderly, even assault once. I was so careful never to plead to escape again! It didnt matter though. That one time conviction burnt me for life. For everything and everything right up until last year on the Island. After 30 you could put me outside the jail and come back in the morning and Id still be standing there! LOL! Its amazing the difference once we become institutionalized. For a matter of fact they had mistakenly sent me to Hudson Correctional Facility once, took them Two months, but they caught it. One day they came and handcuffed me from program, put me on a van and within an hour I was in Greenhaven! I meant to say you were on your way to becoming 80 years young.

@Allen T: When you said my age like that, and I thank you, it is a shock to the system A least for me; I was told that I was not going to make it past 1976. I am still here and many of my doctors have passed on I never think about age. Even doing time, one day was like the next. I buried myself in reading while doing my time, not much on the weight yard, but ran five to seven miles everyday. I have partners that were like you; rabbits for the wall. I think Dellelo in his forty plus went three times All most impossible to keep Bobby in a cage; he is always planning his way out; or was he has been out nine I believe now I even screwed up one of his planned escapes. We where going back and forth from the prison to Court and the jail. He was read to take off. I was not, he had a bundle of time and on this particular run; I ended up getting less like your freind did, when you worked on his case. Poor Bobby was upset I then had four kids waiting for me; and was working on number five Stay cool

Anders do you seriously think the united nations cares at all some cop killer withan escape history who was spared the death penalty? the bottom line is if WE The people who been there dont care do something about it nobody will. While your suggestion is noted, were way past that. myself, without being disrespectful to you, because I actual have no reason to be, have nothing else to say to you, nor do I care to hear anymore of your philosophical argumentation that is no more than smoke so you can appear as an authoritarian on a subject matter that you really dont have a clue about. we are a bunch of ex cons talking about jail, changing the system, faith, etc. primarily though Jail is the issue. I have a strong feeling that you have never did a day in jail, that you like to argue, and that you are an otherwise boring person if you look forward to each day that you can confront and debate with a clergy member who is well on his way to being an octogenarian. Think I used that word right the guy is moving in the direction of 80 years old. I would wanna go a round in the ring with him, and I consider myself pretty good with my hands.

What I am saying is if you dont have anything to contribute on the Jail house matter, why dont you do like socrates and go find a group of other intellectuals to impress?

@Anders: You have to be a complete nit-wit I do not care what anyone believes You apparently cant read that statement. You interjected yourself into this conversation that I was not directing to you at all You are just looking for a fight, you are welcome to come to New London and Ill accommodate you face to face in debate on one of my TV shows, how would that be? However I believe you to be a coward, so I do not expect to see you any time soon If you cant afford to come to me just put your address down and Ill be there in 24 hours? Even if you are out of the Country I have my passport right here Oh, and I get around a lot, all over the world

@Fr. Russ (April 1, 2013 at 7:56 am) Whether you celebrate or mourn, with a Jesus on or of the cross, you just twist is to I am a Christian Mystic, who believes, that they have been in the presence directly and factually with Jesus the Christ for the fact that the vast majority only have Christ through Faith not Knowledge well, well, that knowledge of yours being in direct contact, for sure you will have valid proof of that, dont you. Or do you expect everybody just to have faith in what you claim?

Actually, as you have direct contact, you then are a kind of supernatural Father Russ. Now it comes clear why you so urgently pressed me to lookup who you are. Cant grasp the absurdity yet of what is displayed here.

The staggering and disconcerting fact however is that most urgent issues never have been picked up by you:

This is going on in your country:

US Prison Population: The Largest in the World

Prisons and low-wage labor detainees billion dollar business

majority of prisons are private and enlisted at Wall-Str

children are getting brainwashed at school on a daily basis by state law they have to repeat daily the nonsense one nation, under god:

you cannot run for president unless you commit yourself to one of the religious clans

anders says: March 24, 2013 at 1:14 pm This should be an issue for the United Nations against torture ! Its horrific to learn about such inhuman imprisonment which says allot about the USA.

@Allen T. (April 1, 2013 at 7:22 am) Hatred? Where, when? Facts are facts. The bible says that a rabbit is a ruminant which is a false and pretty ridicule assertion. A book, which even is worshipped as holy, having a false and ridicule claim, is obviously not a great book, it reveals stupidity.

When reacting to the article of William Brown the motivation was to stress that this should be put forward to the United Nations. Obviously, to Father Russ it was important to hijack the issue of solitary confinement for his religious belief: F.Russ (March 24, 2013 at 4:55 pm) @Anders: The issue is and we (our prisoner and ex-prisoner groups) belong to the National Religious Campaign Against Torture; they are a front-runner on this issue and have been. They are the best people in the world. We love all of them and know them well Also sojourners Rev. Whale another great group of people.

Father Russ,

Dont even sweat that! am the worst as far as following tradition, I very seldom go to church on holidays, I havent gotten ashes in years, no meat daysnot me.

I pray to God, My personal relationship with God has nothing to do with rules and tradition. Maybe this is why I feel so good. Although a practicing Catholic would challenge my principles and declare me unobedient, in need of repentance, and maybe even a fraud? I just concern my self with where I am at in MY relationship with God and whatever others feel a need to do, like I said whatever?

Everybody has these expectations once they hear your a member of the clergy.
ok. kidsdont burn the house down! have appointments and wont be back till later>

My morning post on facebook to the many who seem to care about what I may or may not communicate: (Anders seems such a frightened little person, always trying to twist what folks are saying, needs to quote for he is void of his own creativity and response the views and opinions f others, he just wants to fight.) The very first thing this morning I was put to the test (called a hypocrite) by a contributor on solitary Watch my first reaction was to get defensive. That I thought about it; his criticism was over a remark I made concerning Jesus: I had made the statement: Fr. Russ said (March 31, 2013 at 10:07 am): On Easter day; I do not celebrate Easter like many. Even though for me my Jesus has risen and is off the cross; Obviously you are a hypocrite.

Well the man is limited in his understanding and the difference in the Christian Religion. I am not a traditionalist, most know that at least those that I am concerned with. I also am aware the Jesus is believed in through Faith by the vast majority of Christian, where I do not claim to believe in Jesus by Faith. Most see folks like me (In my belief system as a nut bag) which is fine with me; for I am a Christian Mystic, who believes, that they have been in the presence directly and factually with Jesus the Christ Now in the context of my remark. I was stating that I do not celebrate Easter as the Traditional Christian does. I celebrate it as a day of mourning; for the fact that the vast majority only have Christ through Faith not Knowledge and I further do not push Jesus or the Christian belief on anyone (Never have and never will) I see that as the job of the Paracleti and none of my business As Christ Priest I share when moved to and what comes out I am sorry if it appears hypocritical since I do not believe that I am.. However, I understand the criticism that says I may be (However that is the persons right to their opinion..) This particular nut bag that made the remark I have little to no regard for, just a trouble maker, puffed up with his/her own views Has no concern for others (In my opinion)

Anders, I actually thought you left us. While I shake my head and laugh at your aparent hatred, and total disregard for the Bible, God, etc. as you list it, I remember so clearly when I said similiar if not the same things. I think I was worse though because I was a criminal after the fact. in other words I knew, or at least thought I knew what was going on and I decided to be a criminal anyway. Like a real outlaw. I remember not wanting to read my new International Version study Bible because I was told that once you have the information you are accountable. So I figured as long as I stayed STUPID about certain things Id be safe from judgement, couldnt be held accountable for what I dont know.

how many times have you read a book and something sounded amiss, just not right no matter how many times you read it over and over? Did you throw the book away, or just draw your own conclusions? When and if you answerPlease allow yourself to answer. without quoting from Bertrand Russell.

@ Allen T. (at 4:21 pm) What you write does remind me about Pascals Wager (also known as Pascals Gamble) and the argument from inconsistent revelations. Anyhow, the fact that the bible says that a rabbit is a ruminant does reveal that anyone who believes in that book (as holy) is a fool. Thanks for your honesty and your time to put effort in explaining your views.

@ Fr. Russ

Fr. Russ said (March 31, 2013 at 3:42 pm): I never have said one thing about God to you. (Nada)

Fr. Russ said (March 31, 2013 at 10:07 am): On Easter day; I do not celebrate Easter like many. Even though for me my Jesus has risen and is off the cross;

Obviously you are a hypocrite.

@ Thyrone Magloire(at 4:18 pm) The fact that the bible says that a rabbit is a ruminant does reveal that anyone who believes in that book (as holy) is a fool.

@Allen T: have to say, you and I are on the same train, in the same box car, two dont give a crap hobos, just happy nut bags in hopes we found The Way; for it is for us Caging that dam Beast for me whatever works If you believe in an invisible tea-pot going around the universe and it cages the Beast. I say more power to you and bless the tea-pot

Anders I have found that people seek out religion/spirituality/Higher Power Concept, for many different reasons, and that we have many different factors that motivate us to continue with our beliefs. Fear of anything, is not a good reason for anyone to be a part of something. I have often heard the expression I am a God fearing man or Woman. If this is the root of someones motivation then perhaps they should search farther, for there is so much more to this.

Once again, I am at my best when I speak for myself, and my relationship with God is truly something that I desire, I am a willing participant, not a hostage, and I have no fear at all of death. I think death is very sad. I will miss my family and theyll miss me. I hope to live to be 100. However, we all go one day and I am no exception to this. I dont blame God for my problems, nor do I expect him to ever intervene on my behalf.

I spent 7 years in Catholic Scool and I have read the old testament, new testament, King James international study version. I have read from the koran, I have read hundreds of pieces of literature associated with religion, religious values and beliefs, and many spiritual messages. I have also studied Bertrand Russel, Victor Frankl and other philosophers, intellectuals, and otherwise highly regarded sources of knowledge, pertaining to various theories, beliefs and concepts such as the Fear Factor and Existentialism to name a few.

With all this in mind I have chosen to believe that there is in fact a God and that in the event I am wrong, not only I have absolutely nothing to lose in my beliefs, but on the contrary I have everything to gain because my beliefs as Father Russ puts it Chains the Beast within me! it gives me a desire to live a certain way, and the way i live is like a civilized human being instead of a savage dopefiend or frustrated dry drunk in and out of anger rages.

Why cant I just do this without a God? I tried for many years, and now I am trying with God, and I like these results much better. I am much more at peace with myself and others, and I am experiencing a certain wholeness, for the first time in many years. I strongly attribute this to my ability to not expect anything in return for having faith and belief. Which makes sense. Imagine having a friend who you always rely on, always expect things from, and are always trying to charge that person for you quality time, not to forget that things go wrong anythingyou blame that friend. That friendship isnt gonna work, and it is also a very selfish, one sided friendship isnt it?

God always has a purpose for everything. Being able to write such a story after so many years of suffering is truly a gift. Its purpose is to go further than just the prison walls.

What has been done to Mr. Blake is cruel in our human eyes. But just imagine what Jesus went through for our salvation from the real hell. Repentance and forgiveness is the key to unlock the prison gates and be free for ever. There is hope for us all.

My focus at this moment is not the (human) judge but Mr. Blake and his work and guide for those that are in the same situation as he is (but soon no longer will be, depending on his following steps).

I would recommend getting in contact with Mr. Mike Barber (Mike Barber Ministries)

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The Bible teaches us Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Mr. Blake knows how he got to where he is now. Jesus knows where he will be next and Jesus wants him (just like all of us) to be in peace and in His Kingdom now. We have done wrong in our past, but what Jesus did on the cross can free us from the consequences of our wrong doing. By repenting from what we did and asking God for forgiveness He will forgive us as we also forgive those who have done us wrong. We must allow God to speak to our heart and mind to receive His invitation to be part of His family. He will guide us through hardship, more so than what He has already done. It is not always that we are aware of his presence in our life, but He IS there all the time.

May God keep on blessing you Mr. Blake and may His dream for your life be realized according to His perfect plan.

@Anders: Only a fool would believe such a story Has little or nothing to do with my own belief system between good and evil But this site is not for Theology Believe what you will I suggested a book to you about a man who survived the Holocaust and how he did that Our prisons are much like German concentration camps My interest is that my brothers/sisters survive them.. I really do not care about you what so ever, you are out Apparently free We do not bullshit talk about change, we are out attempting to bring change Guys like yourself or girls (I am not sure which you are) just have month it seems to me I have great respect for many that are out on a daily basis trying to free their brothers and sisters, even if I disagree with them, even if I may have attendances to hate them. I love them for their discipline and attempted at relieving others pain Where you seem only to bring pain.. You sound like you just want to fight (I can be up for that in another place.)

Your problem (if I may interject) is the assumption that someone is asserting to you that there is a God? And that my very well be that your assumption may be right; however it is not me. I never have said one thing about God to you. (Nada) I never assert, to any one what they should or should not believe. Not Anyone! What I believe, like if I believed in the tea-pot, that is my own beliefs; and I would not have to prove that to one soul If I am nuts, than that is fine and none of anyones business; unless I am selling my belief to them I do not nor have ever done such a thing
So stay cool I am not interested in what you do or do not beleave.. May be some other on here care, I do not

@ Fr. Russ (March 31, 2013 at 3:23 pm)

Keep me out of this abject, utterly cruel, barbarian, monstrous figment of a father who would send his son or daughter out into the world to get itself slaughtered by dawning; burning at stake, stoning or crucifixion.

Victor Frankl he writes about Existentialismwhat a book. I enjoyed that. Highly recommended!

In an article titled Is There a God? commissioned, but never published, by Illustrated magazine in 1952, Bertrand Russell wrote:

Many orthodox people speak as though it were the business of sceptics to disprove received dogmas rather than of dogmatists to prove them. This is, of course, a mistake. If I were to suggest that between the Earth and Mars there is a china teapot revolving about the sun in an elliptical orbit, nobody would be able to disprove my assertion provided I were careful to add that the teapot is too small to be revealed even by our most powerful telescopes. But if I were to go on to say that, since my assertion cannot be disproved, it is intolerable presumption on the part of human reason to doubt it, I should rightly be thought to be talking nonsense. If, however, the existence of such a teapot were affirmed in ancient books, taught as the sacred truth every Sunday, and instilled into the minds of children at school, hesitation to believe in its existence would become a mark of eccentricity and entitle the doubter to the attentions of the psychiatrist in an enlightened age or of the Inquisitor in an earlier time.[1]

Russells teapot, sometimes called the celestial teapot or cosmic teapot, is an analogy first coined by the philosopher Bertrand Russell (1872-1970) to illustrate that the philosophic burden of proof lies upon a person making scientifically unfalsifiable claims rather than shifting the burden of proof to others, specifically in the case of religion.

@Anders: A suggestion if you do not mind: Mans Search for Meaning by Dr. Victor E. Frankl one of the best books I ever read as a prisoner in my life It is an easy read (from one was a long time Atheist. I hated religion and every religious out there.) I know I can hear you, and now the call me father, well if you had 11 children they may call you father or dad also :-) Stay cool

@Allen T. at 7:44 pm Your response gives a very interesting inside observation, how people react towards deprivation of freedom, forced to deal with people one might not had chosen otherwise. What you write about your position regarding religion its not my intention to get you into any discussion. Dealing with the phenomenon religion is important to me as it unfortunately demands to be a major factor; its puzzling how much extreme irrationality is out there and popping up (like in the Middle-East, in Africa and this Arabian spring, which to my humble opinion is a freezing winter). The effects are on such a big scale that its also inflicting Western European countries. Probably its much less urgent, not that tangible in the US. With regard to all those kind of issues I was happy to get some guidance at a certain moment in my life by reading books, dealing with for example logic; and as a lot of philosophers are mathematicians it was a complete new point of departure to look; some specific discoveries enabled me to stop the oppression I had to face for years by that family I was forced to live with and their religious terror which nearly killed me.

@Alan: I would bow to Allen T, if he wanted to do a thread, I would contribute. Id also have Ralph send out stuff to contribute see (freeralphham.org) Ralph is a prolific writer and is on his 45th. year in the MA prison System His book Manumission is one that anyone in this business should read.. He was a major contributor to the book When The Prisoners Ran Walpole and that book should be mandatory for again anyone who is working for change in our system: presently, I am trying to get Yale Law schools, justice program to make it required reading Not that I agree with everything but it gives a snap shot of what was going on.. Far more history, is needed on the Walpole-Norfolk organizing of prisoners, ex-prisoners and their family and friends Our prison and political movement of the time, impacted, not only Ma but the whole New England region; the power that be, would like it to be forgotten We are the ones that need to educate ourselves, and come together, we can effect this system; we have effected this system; but to do that you have to forget about ego, not give much shit about who gets the credit, coalition with anyone working to humanize the dam place, even if you have to deal with the devil himself; then struggle in poverty for the rest of your damned life (you may before you die get a glimpse of change?) not a guaranty.. Oh yes, least I forgot; many of your brothers and sisters may hate you along the way But, that is the price of doing the right thing in this struggle for Justice

On Easter day; I do not celebrate Easter like many. Even though for me my Jesus has risen and is off the cross; however for many of my brothers and sisters I left so long ago in prison and for those struggling out here in the streets with no job; and no or very little hope. Jesus has not risen for them, he has failed them and in many case it was not or is not for their want of trying to touch Jesus. Why the failure? I do not know it is beyond my comprehension, like many Spiritual questions I have no answer. I morn today rather than Celebrate. I see the Cross of Jesus as the destruction of society convicting and punishing an innocent man. Today reminds me of the Struggle for Justice which I pursue and the inevitable of failure in that Struggle. You, see failure, in your work and struggle Fr. Russ? I most certainly do; for if Christ could not change things in the two thousand plus years the Cross has stood and nothing has changed; and in some case it is today worse than when he walked the earth; what can I, or others like me do, but follow him to the Cross of failure For those who see our work and even join us in our failure, they need understand, that all we or can be in our own weakness; is a reminder to the greater society there was a man/women who came along and cared about their brothers and sisters. In our weakness as human being it is all we can do And maybe hope one day society in general gets it?

@Alan: I was in the hole for a thirty and a sixty: joke time I was isolated in the jail in AZ for four months..(Again no big deal)

When I was in Emira back in the very early 80s I was picked from the reception inmates to feed the guys on Keeplack. i just had that real White Boy look! LOL! So, one day they slided this big steel door aside and it was real Daker on the other side and the CO told me go feed them, and I was like real apprehensive. It was a Box they used on the A block side. It was like they were isolated from the world. One day I seen the CO with a Salt Shaker putting lotts and lotts of salt on the food trays. I told him I wouldnt hand it out, he had me lock in and got another inmate to do it. There is always one that will do it. After that they hosed me down in my cell a couple of times. There was a CO there with burn marks around his neck rumor was they hung him during the Attica Riots? There was a CO with Tattoos of little Black Babies on his arm and a saying? The Administration never said nothing to him, that I know about? Elmira has always been a disciplinary Jail, the place that other dont want to go. Nasty ass placeWalpole, Im fairly sure Elmira is romper room compared to Walpole. Happy Easter also. Since the guys inside dont get a Holiday off, figured I wouldnt take one either.

@Russ

A powerful testament!

You and Allen should write a post on here from the view point of a ex-con with nothing to gain. I imagine many people are skeptical when it comes from those still held in the hole. Take old Blake as an example.

I think I am the only one that has written on here that has done any time in the hole and my experience is nada compared to what others have done and are doing.

.

Our message and who we are remains the same; we have been in this struggle fifty years and you or anyone can trace our history and come and visit, we do not run we do not hide; we have studied all the systems in the World that we could get access to and I changed my view from reformer to Abolitionist in 1974 75 as you can note or look up in research: Alan, Allen T and Anders be safe a nice thread Got job Allen T on why folks go to solitary voluntarily: Here is a bit of history on myself and my associates views: Empowering Prisoners

People who support the prison movement still need to understand what selfhelp and selfdetermination are, because these are the basic philosophies we operate under. They simply mean that prisoners are helped by prisoners. And organizations concerned with prisoners should be run by and for prisoners.
Russ Carmichael, NEPA News, April/May 1975

It seems strange to me that convicts or exconvicts are never consulted about prison matters, nor even considered for consultation, when they are what prison is all about and the only true professional.
Robin E. Riggs, The Outlaw, March/April 1975

I think the prison leadership has to come from the people suffering from the serious plight of prison. There are many people in our ghettos thruout the country who are in minimum security type prisons where the walls are not visible. I think that a lot of people can support our movement, but I do definitely believe that the movement must be initiated by the people who are oppressed the most by those particular possibilities or plights.
Arnold Coles, NEPA News, April/May1975

A national priority was discussed. The most obvious one came outconvicts speaking for themselves; not sociologists, counselors, administrators, etc., but convicts. The most important national priority is the convict voice in their own destiny.
Stephanie Riegel, The National Prisoner Union Conference, The Outlaw, June/July 1975

Last spring when the guards went out on strike, the prisoners ran Walpole for nine weeks. Aside from the day to day running of the prison, including the kitchen, educational and vocational programs, prison industries and daily counts, the prisoners took care of their own internal problems. There were no rapes or killings.
The movie 3,000 Years and Life was filmed at this time. It shows Jerry explaining how wrongdoers are corrected by persuasion and embarrassment in front of peers. He said that if one con steals from another, the men tell him, Youre a pig. Just like the System. The brother gets embarrassed. Then the men say, Its no big deal, we know it wont happen again. Then they pat him on the back, give him a cigarette, and its over.
When the guards returned exactly a year ago today, as I write, Jerry and Bobby Dellelo were stripped, beaten, run naked across broken glass and thrown in the hole. The administration doesnt want the prisoners to exercise responsibility, but when the prisoners had the responsibility of running the prison, the prisoners virtually ended violence at Walpole, and generally ran the prison better than it had ever been run before.
Superintendent Vinzant has a different perspective on prisoner solidarity. All prisoner solidarity does is to foster disrespect, tension, and abuse between the prisoners and the guards .
Donna Parker, NEPA News, June 1974

Prisoners demands are no secret. Whether prisoners are bursting from their cages in anger and frustration or coolly presenting carefully drawn manifestos, their message is the same:

Anders when I did my undergrad work in college I was exposed to many philosophers and their theories. I do remember Bertrand Russell, and his teachings. I am like the last one in the world to question anyones Religious beliefs, or how they feel about God, the Church, etc.

While I was in prison I seen white guys turn Muslim admittedly for protection, I seen Rapists flock to the Church in different claims of faith Catholic, Baptist, whatever have we may, some ran to the Rabbi and became Jewish because they claimed their Mother was Jewish, this entitled them to kosher food and bags of goodies during Jewish Holidays. Much of this disgusted me. So personally I have seen quite a bit.
I make it a point not to debate Religion if I can avoid it. I still havent quite figured out the part about walking on water and the staff becoming a snake. Yet if I was to sit around every day and focus on these things, I would just be a matter of time again before I stopped believing God and started to believe in heroin and whores, and everything else that made me such a great piece of shit. While Im far from perfect, and I still do things that make me wonder about myself, I have things in my life today that Bertrand Russell and his best thinking could not have made possible for me, and while i would like to blame God, for my Mother dying while I was in prison for robbing a drug dealer who pressed charges. While I would like to Blame God for when I was homeless, and for my wife being in a wheel chair, he has nothing to do with none of that. Today I realize these things, it wasnt always like that.

It is my belief in God, not a particular Religion, just God, that helps me through each day and keeps me safe, first and foremost from myself. Because all these years I was my own worst enemy, and I got in my own way much more than any cop did, and they were forever arresting me for some stupid shit!

I do admire some intellectuals, i think it is a great hobby and time well spent to further educate oneself. In my spare time i collect vintage sports cards and nobody could make me stop.

however, what I have seen happen with many intellectuals, is that they become so smart, so wordly endowed with knowledge and wisdom, that they start to think and act if they were God themselves, or at the least that they have no use for him.

I myself always have a use for him, and I pray daily for various things and people and it makes me whole, gives me a positive feeling and I never feel alone.

@ Alan CYA # 65085 (at 5:31 pm) okay, thnx

@Allan T. (at 4:13 pm) Who is Betrand Russell: he was one of the most important philosophers of the 20th century (the most important with regard to analytical logics); he was imprisoned twice, wrote lots of very interesting books, got a Noble Price.

Who is Christopher Hitchens: he was a journalist and writer. He contributed to New Statesman, The Nation, The Atlantic, The London Review of Books, The Times Literary Supplement, Slate Magazine, Free Inquiry, Vanity Fair and wrote several books.

Like Russell,he spoke against nuclear weapons and the Vietnam War. He spoke about the allegedly harmful nature and influence of religion on the personal and public life.

You asked for some info about who is writing this I did read books of both authors, do read a lot, try to follow the news, watch documentaries, movies and sometimes comment on issues which are important to me. Im the owner of a public library card, thats all; I write on behalf of myself, not for any organization.

Some more about Hitchens:

Hitchens often spoke out against the three Abrahamic religions, or the three monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. He said: The real axis of evil is formed by Christianity, Judaism and Islam. In his book God Is Not Great Hitchens expanded his criticism to include all religions, including Hinduism and neo-paganism. God Is Not Great was nominated for a National Book Award on 10 October 2007.

Hitchens argued that organized religion is the main source of hatred in the world. Organized religion is violent, irrational, intolerant, encourages racism, tribalism, and bigotry, it invests in ignorance, in hostile to free inquiry, is contemptuous towards women and imposes itself from childhood.

He was an honorary member (Honorary Associate) of the National Secular Society and was on the advisory board of the Secular Coalition for America, a lobbying group for atheists and humanists in Washington, DC. In 2007, Hitchens has written a series of debates with Christian theologian Douglas Wilson, published in Christianity Today magazine. The series began with the question: Is Christianity Good for the World? The discussion was published in 2008 with this question as a title. The tour for the book was filmed by Darren Doane who produced the film Collision: Is Christianity GOOD for the World? which was released on October 27, 2009.

@Anders

Yes we are talking about crazy fellows. Im not one but they are out there or so Ive been warned.

@Allen

I think you have shown a lot of intelligence and thoughtfulness on here. Thank you for the definition of CG I never heard that one. Im being serious. On the article.

First I thought you'd like the article (it was voted one of the best reads of the week) secondly as a person that has been down more than once I thought you'd feel a bit vulnerable that you could be sent away for life over a pair of socks. Yes your right he wrote both articles. This is his last paragraph:

People get so hung up on the concept of innocence, says Mills. But its intellectually uninteresting. What does matter is how we treat the guilty, and thats where we still have work to do.

As Ive said before it is a paradox as far as what is the solution. All I know is this ultra long term use of Isolation is fairly new and we had fewer prisoners before it was instated. Something is amiss there in my opinion. Even the governor of Colorado said something like They are too dangerous for the general population yet we release them right out to the street. It doesnt make me feel safe, how about you?

We should all just go out and have some fun like those kids. Peace.

@Alan CYA # 65085 (at 1:07 pm) Thank you for your response, nevertheless no idea what to think about those warnings of yours. Do you want to say that the first amendment of the US (freedom of expression) does only apply for certain people and not for anybody? That would mean that some people are more equal than others. With regard to that killing that would mean that some people not only would die for their religion, they also would kill for it. In that case we are talking about crazy fellows.

I was just looking out my back window, I live in Spanish Harlem in NYC. These young African American kids are playing Football on the concrete and one of the real little ones fell and was slow getting up he abraded his hands on the concrete and skinned his knee when he fell. I felt sorry for him, not actually because he fell, thats all part of the game, I felt sorry because they have no grass play on.

What I am trying to say is sometimes I question myself, my thoughts, how I spend my leisure time. Here I am debating with a bunch of grown men over who has the biggest war chest of knowledge, and how I can help out convicted felons, many of whom definitely knew the price to pay if they got caught. that part is never a mystery, everyone, just about, knows the penalty if caught Yet these kids playing football in the Projects I live in, they havent harmed anybody, and they dont even have grass to play on! Sometimes I wonder what is important and what isnt?

Anders I looked at the link you sent, scanned the bibliography info, but didnt read none of it. Im still curious who you are? The reason I ask is because you ask of me to look at certain literature, to open my mind to certain beliefs that dont correspond with my beliefs, but I dont make a habit of following strangers. Are you affiliated with any organizations? Do you repent any type of mission or cause? Are you a celebrated person in your place of origin. Do you have references? Your real name, where you live, your social security number I care less. But I do like to know who I am trusting my thoughts and feeling with. I do know that I like to be able to have cause or reason to follow someones advise.

Alright so this guy was a robbery look out, this what the article says. was someone killed in the robberies, was he a suspect in other things? this is what the article dont tell us plus many more things.

I also heard one years ago about a guy who got life for stealing a slice of pizza. Absolutely horrible.

However, in many states the three strikes isnt even considered. was this guy offered a cop out of a year in jail? was this after a \$100,000 dollar trial? There are so many facts we dont know. there are certain countries that will chop your hand off for stealing, depending on what you stole maybe chop your head off. All of sudden 20 years sounds good. Do i agree with any of this no!

Now what can we do about helping the guys out who are in long term keep lock? The ones that havent made a home of the place?

Let me get on my tippy toes now I have a habit of misspelling words, abusing commas, and run on sentences. Just in case we start with the spell check Grammer Police stuff..I plead guilty!

The third strike was for a pair of socks what were the first two for? Can you answer me that? Is it possible they were for Rape? News articles, the media, dont sell me none. I have been trying little by little all day to create a format that isnt about whos right whos wrong as much as who has thoughts. I like information from people I am talking to. I can read a book or turn on the news anytime. This is why with the Three Strikes I specifically said Based upon the individual facts surrounding EACH INDIVIDUAL CASE did I not say that? So spare me the this ones right, this ones wrong, For every article you can show me for something, I can show you two against something, some of them even written by the same person, Do you realise this?

<http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/cruel-and-unusual-punishment-the-shame-of-three-strikes-laws-20130327?print=true>

A RollingStone Article

Cruel and Unusual Punishment: The Shame of Three Strikes Laws

While Wall Street crooks walk, thousands sit in California prisons for life over crimes as trivial as stealing socks

by: Matt Taibbi

Life in prison over a \$2:50 pair of tube socks while Too Big to Jail bankers go free?

Anders has a point there.

There is a big difference between being an anonymous person who engages in a conversation, and a computer gangster. You dont enter the definition of being a computer Gangster until you start to insult others, curse and demean others, and do so under either an assumed identity or with the comfort of knowing that others will never know who you truly are, so in effect you feel you have a license to trash talk others To me, thats cowardly. Like calling someone on the phone and disguising your voice while you curse at them.

My thing is if your gonna pop off at the lip at someone Say who are, be a standup guy own your statements. I always likened it to when their was a crowd around and someone was talking under under their breath and when confronted with the old ok who said that all of a sudden everything gets quiet. Be a man step up say I said it! Otherwise shut your mouth.

Did I explain this computer gangster thing a little better. it has nothing to do with posting your social security number. Just own whats yours!

NYSDOCS SHU first and foremost I am against long term keeplock, SHU and other forms of solitary. In order to get at the truth of the matter only honesty will enable others to see why many of the horrible conditions exist. The roaches and mice seemed to have been a problem throughout the entire Prison in most places I had been, not just SHU. The Plexiglass that covers the cells openings were initially installed in response to feces and urine being thrown at Correction Officers, employees and other inmates. Prior to the then Governor George Pataki making amendments to Correction Law, making it a felony to assault staff with feces, urine, spit, and other concoctions, it was a daily occurrence for someone to get Blasted with the aforementioned. Inmates were known to take plastic containers like what the honey, or mayo came in and make squirt guns , mixing all the substances together and squirting employees, or other inmates that walked past their cell doors.

Instead of getting up and going to school or a vocational shop, some inmates opted for keeplock as a way of doing their time in Isolation without any type of responsibility. They simply preferred to sleep all day, read books at night and work out in their cell, never coming in contact with other inmates.

Some inmates would be subject to daily misbehavior reports which would accumulate into long Term keeplock.

Some inmates enjoyed the protection of being away from General population.

There are dozens of stories that explain why inmates go to SHU willingly. My point being, that many of the inmate who are in SHU want to be there. In my heart I feel for those that have been placed in SHU in an abuse of discretion and power, those that are subjected to the inmates who have made a home out of SHU and create an environment that is hostile, rebellious and unsanitary.

However, before anyone can say SHU is inhumane or unsanitary because this is the way the administration has made it We must know the whole history of SHU, the inmate population it houses, and the reason that individual inmates are housed there! I am going to run out of thread. I just felt a little thought given to issues that may not be thought of is in order. How can anyone make an educated, informed decision without all the facts? It is always easy to Blame, the system, the administration and our Government. Yet, a certain amount of responsibility for the way thing are, and why they are this way, easily escapes all parties attention when the facts are not all available. why this only represents a couple of paragraphs of informationa book could be written on the Truth of the matter.

@ Allan T. for excerpts see: http://www.carotta.de/subseite/texte/jwc_e/contents.html

@Allen T. Thanks for your reply and that you give feedback that everyone is entitled to have points of views. Obviously Im from Europe; did spent some time living / working in the States.

When I red the article of William Blake my first response was disgust. As far as to my knowledge in Western Europe there is no country putting people in confinement for lifetime (lifetime here means mostly less than 25 years); there are a view exceptions, mainly with regard to mental illnesses and solitary confinement is another thing, its definitely restricted in time and definitely not years, let alone decades or even real lifetime.

After reading some of the postings it was striking to find out that there where others with the same purport as mine (first posting) but they did not get a reply from F.Russ.

Anyhow, I replied to his posting mainly to emphasis again (!) that its a matter of humanitarian affairs and that religion (organised religion and their institutions) actually has been and still is responsible for most of the misery in the world, including bad laws where believe (in a mighty god, heaven, hell, sin, punishment, revenge and so on) gets political influence and that is very much the case in the US.

The patronizing way of F.Russ responding, and how he was speaking about Bertrand Russell and Christopher Hitchens, to my humble opinion did and does reveal the self-righteousness of F.Russ, not mine. Its definitely striking that there where no response to any of the very serious issues and questions (!!) I forwarded.

In that regard its interesting to find out how little of argumentation already can inflame (some) people in the States.

Much more interesting is, whether you red Bertrand Russells teapot and watched the compilation of Christopher Hitchens, or not.

It was difficult but also fun to write in English again; scusa, ma adesso devo proprio scappare

PS: Just red a TV-review about a show where The Passion had been presented in a modern way and of course there was the comparison with Brian, referring to Monthy Pythons film The Life of Brian, that great movie which had been banned in several countries for years due to complains by believers in crucifixion (by the way, regarding the offence according to Roman law the subject would have faced death by stoning not crucifixion) if you want more demystification there is a book which clears so called wonders: Jesus was Caesar: On the Julian Origin of Christianity. An Investigative Report. 2005, ISBN 90-5911-396-9 (excerpts).

@Anders

Too bad you didnt begin the conversation on such points of agreement. This series of back and forth attacks has reaffirmed my decision to limit my profile. Russ even warned me about giving up too much info.

Although I am no Computer Gangster, or a coward as Allen writes I still realize that, Everyone bleeds, anyone can kill you. So why enable them?

There are people who are capable of doing you harm over just a misunderstood comment not alone a full blown attack on their core belief system?

By the way youll find a few links to the statements on here that were made by UN and International Human Rights Groups that have called the US out over our penal system.

Not every system will work here in the US however.

For example The Economist reported:

Japans prisons

Eastern porridge

Even Japanese criminals are orderly and well-behaved

Feb 23rd 2013

A landmark report in 1995 by Human Rights Watch, a lobby group, said this remarkable order is achieved at a very high cost, including the violation of fundamental human rights and falling far short of international standards.

Europeans and Americans inside Japans prison system have developed mental problems. Yet for Mr Shinkai the differences with the West are a point of pride. Of course we look too strict to outsiders, he says. But his inmates, he goes on, all come from Japanese society. For them, it works beautifully.

On the other hand Norways system is totally the opposite of Japans. But both Japan and Norway are also demographically totally different then the US both in size and makeup of its population.

Thus I believe Norways systems would be difficult to import to the US as would the other counties that you listed. and I sure wouldnt want Japans here.

Now Frances system does look something like the USs in this movie A prophet.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ast5eex2e0>

@Allen

Hang in there! You have quite a story. But I am an example that you can also make it.

I stopped at the very edge of the abyss over 40 years ago.

Stay strong!

@Russ Interesting, and good luck.

Anders, I meant to say I dont recall your introduction as mentioned in the previous post.

I do agree that the USA has alot of harsh laws and an extremely tough stance on crime, They are in the process over the past 7 years or so, of changing many of the antiquated, draconian substance abuse laws. Also, alot of the laws on the books like Three Strikes are not seldom used. Some of these laws are just there for the purpose of discretionary judgements based upon the individual facts and circumstances surrounding an individual case, and societys need to be protected against repeat predators. if a guy gets caught up in the Three Strikes law, most of the time they took the matter to trial and rejected a plea bargain. Every case is different.

While I dont condone, computer arguments, everybody has a temper and sometimes we get carried away. Your entitled to your point of view like anyone else. Over here if we were gonna make numerous comments and lets say debate with someone. we say who we are, where we were from, what we were about and what motivates our interest in a topic for the most part. I speak for myself. if you were to go back in these threads youll see I gave up plenty of identifying information about myself, probably a little too much, but whatever, I am who I am and i wear no mask.

I just recall you explaining who you are, what your interests are, where your from, perhaps I missed something? But it appeared to me that you just went into attack mode. Challenging, argumentive, comparing, alot of what can be considered self righteous stuff, and on top of that Who are you? like out of nowhere.

@Allen Maybe you can get in contact with those (*) countries and their legal system to assist you in fighting this inhuman injustice.

* For example: Norway, Denmark and the Netherlands

@Allen I want to thank you for sharing what happened in your life; its heartbreaking, especially because most tragedies did not had to have happened. If you compare jurisdictions in different countries one can see how different laws sentences are. Norway, Denmark and the Netherlands for example have a totally different approach, for example on drugs related crimes. Where in one of those countries you can buy a joint in a legal shop, in your country (certain states) you can go to jail for smoking one. Then you have this three-strikes law in your country, one can end up in prison for three minor little things for lifetime, under horrible circumstances (lifetime enclosed with the possibility of being raped inside or even getting killed, living between various gangs [ethnic, coloured, nazis] besides bad food, cockroaches, emptiness as an American told me, after he has left the USA. This is unacceptable. Its inhuman.

There is a big difference in approaching a spiritual life in contrast to organized religion and organized religious institutions, especially when they dominate politics and thus lawmaking.

The issue of Solitary Confinement as described by William Blake and others has to be put forward to the United Nations, to Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International.

Maybe you can get in contact with those countries and their legal system to assist you in fighting this inhuman injustice.

Wishing you the best to succeed !

There is no need to react on Father Russ revealing views at 8:11 am: (Individuals, like Anders, have no inner strength they believe in nothing but themselves a serious weakness of mental power / They are fearful little frauds / They would never want to meet you or I in an alley: / Your weakness shows if you cannot think beyond yourself) .

@Allen T and Alan: Bless you folks; on my way to see Kevin Collins and Murphy our Boston Globe reporters that wrote the new book about Jimmy Whitey Bulger. I want to see who they think took the Gardner Museum Art? Before the Feds come down with the arrest, should be soon they are offering a 5 million reward for return of the art Only a fool would try to collect. My associate did that years and years ago with paul Revere works as soon as he handed over the stuff the indited him for receiving stolen property a ten-year bit.. (Carl Blue-Jay Vellica) one of my best friends

@Fr.Russ You argue that I would insult someone. Where this happens you dont say and you make judgements like pretty big one, with a pea for a brain and suggestively you write Get those knickers loosened up and stay away for children, which seems your big interest?

Well, Father Russ, you came up with this: Fr. Russ says: March 29, 2013 at 10:12 am: (you are seriously funny your knickers are too tight) and I replied: an expression which fits pedophile clergy

This kind of language used by you knickers too tight says something about you. Its a remark which could come right of the mouths of pedophile clergy talking to children. Which happened, indeed.

You then try to threaten.

Well, this clown here reminds you about the following: see the posting from March 27, 2013 at 6:07 pm and think again.

Then look at your fine remark: (we need to stay away from people like you who are a cancer to us) who have their head up their posteria.

While you avoided to look into any of the issues which have been put forward in my postings, you avoid to reply to the issue of indoctrination in American schools where children have to repeat day after day one nation, under god; you avoid to reply to the issue that in your country running for president implies that you must be part of a religious clan, if you will make any chance; you avoid to look into Russells teapot and others mentioned; and then you talk about cowards. Awesome.

Then you are listing up how important you see yourself.

Followed by a presentation of the religious line of your ancestors and a religiously motivated murder.

You close your latest posting with Seems religion and war runs in the blood, indeed, war and blood runs in those minds which are inflicted by religion.

Indeed, like Bertrand Russell said: Religion is based mainly on fear fear of the mysterious, fear of defeat, fear of death. Fear is the parent of cruelty, and therefore it is no wonder if cruelty and religion have gone hand in hand . My own view on religion is that of Lucretius. I regard it as a disease born of fear and as a source of untold misery to the human race.

And in all of your posting you havent picked, not for one time, this:

The issue of Solitary Confinement has to be put forward to the United Nations, to Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International.

@Allen T: Where ever you find your God; and however you define that; it is a good thing; as long as it has positive strength. Individuals, like Anders, have no inner strength, they believe in nothing but themselves; which is in my mind a serious weakness of mental power So much is unproven; most of science, is theory, as with much of life One needs to be open to all possibilities even in a God otherwise you have totally limited yourself, as we see in this person, who makes claims and judgments without know or even understanding the consequences of their limited actions.. They are fearful little frauds They would never want to meet you or I in an alley:-) Even at my old age They believe they are secure in their autonomy; which if they knew the world, would understand in todays age there is no autonomy; if one has the desire to really find you I always loved Joe Lewis saying there is no place to run and no place to hide. of course he meant that in the Ring, we used it in the Prisons; however now it can be said of the world if you have the right tools; It is the same for your personal self. Your weakness shows if you cannot think beyond yourself, if you cant think as big as the universe you are only a speck of sand like the small pimple on the ass of a rat

@Anders: You are right in one thing I write about myself. Given I represent well over a Thousand prisoners in the United States. I am the founder of the first prisoner union in this Country NPRA (National Prisoners Rights Association 1971).. Given my years behind the Walls and on parole; a survivor of several of th Boston Gang Wars.. I dont write for clowns like you. I write to demonstrate to my sisters and brothers there is a way out; and working together we can change things. (we need to stay away from people like you who are a cancer to us) who have their head up their posteria I am about and have been about my brothers and sisters. One of my partners is on his 45th, year in the MA. system (www.freeralphhamm.org) so I have little use for individuals like you; that are myopic and biased in their small outlook and have no idea what they are talking about.. One thing I do not do and that is hide. You can find my phone, address, picture all publicly on the net in a phone (I am in New London, CT) book and you can see me any place in the World face to face (I hate cowards). That is the kind of Priest I am.. I come for a very long line of religious one of my past ancestors monks killed the Bishop cousin Peter, was a good Scot, one of Knoxs gang Seems religion and war runs in the blood

@Anders: Id suggest that you find out who you are talking too; <http://www.nlhome.org> may give you some insight? You have no idea, not one little clue, the type of folks you are insulting. You do not know their education, background, what they do in life You are assuming Picking up little tid bits, then you assume; which places an ass between u and me.. Right now you are looking like a pretty big one, with a pea for a brain I would be very careful calling me what you did in your post, very careful Get those knickers loosened up and stay away for children, which seems your big interest?

@Allen T. (at 7:04pm)

Hi Allen, on 2013/03/24 there was an article in a newspaper about solitary imprisonment in the US. It was in the section long-read.

After reading I posted on March 24, 2013 at 1:14 pm This should be an issue for the United Nations against torture ! Its horrific to learn about such inhuman imprisonment which says allot about the USA.

Unless its fiction what William Blake wrote about his 25 years so far of solitary confinement I would say that he might be better off in Guantanamo Bay at least there he would be out in the open. Its inhuman and disgusting what the USA do to prisoners; in Guantanamo Bay they are even looked up for years without any indictment / process.

What is your problem with that view / conclusion, havent you read William Blakes article, dont you know about whats going on in Guantanamo Bay?

Why having a discussion forum when you dont welcome views on that issue?

Then comes a posting by a F.Russ on March 24, 2013 at 4:55 pm: @Anders: The issue is and we (our prisoner and ex-prisoner groups) belong to the National Religious Campaign Against Torture; they are a front-runner on this issue and have been. They are the best people in the world. We love all of them and know them well Also sojourners Rev. Whale another great group of people.

Well, this I do call pushy and trying to hijack a matter of humanitarian affairs for religion, which to my humble opinion is contradictory to whats really going on. Thats what I wrote/write about.

Hadnt heard about a Father Russ until you came up with it. Because many know him, as you write, does this make his contributions valuable, does this should impress me?:

Fr. Russ says: March 29, 2013 at 8:25 am: @Anders: I am sorry for you, and your inability to comprehend facts. Clearly one can tell you are a charlatan

Fr. Russ says: March 29, 2013 at 10:12 am: (you are seriously funny your knickers are too tight)

. it would become a long-reed to list up all of the accusations and insults without any valid argumentations made by this Father Russ.

Who by the way is that crock of BS you write about ?

The question still is if you are open to other views than your own ones.

Why not have a look and inform yourself before making accusations like computer gangster? Sharing interesting material and by this inviting people to enrich their life is a different thing than what Father Russ does in his postings.

You do have internet, so you could read Bertrand Russells teapot, you could listen to the compilation of Christopher Hitchens and you could take notice of what Richard Dawkins has to say about Ratzinger.

Russells teapot:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russell%27s_teapot

Christopher Hitchens The Best of the Hitchens (1,522,520 views):

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mQorZOS-F6w>

Richard Dawkins Intellectually and Morally Crucifies Joseph Ratzinger (78,572 views):

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vhtj6DqNwgQ>

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The issue of Solitary Confinement has to be put forward to the United Nations, to Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International.

AndersI have a hard time accepting that you wish me well, that is unless you have Two faces? The one I see that appears educated, book smart better yet, has the ability to differentiate between whats right and wrong. Yet, the other face seems to condemn a certain society and its ways of dealing with justice, while at the same time you judge others and seem to aim to hurt with your comments. The type of person that you claim to be and the values you represent just dont correspond with the venom that spews forth from your mouth.

It is apparent that this is not the first or second time that you have presented your views to someone in a debate type format. As far as Im concerned whatever you choose to believe and how you have arrived at your beliefs is your business. To impose your beliefs on others, challenge other and their beliefs, or to try and demean others in the process is not cool. Not because I said so, because its the way it is universally. People who do this are looked at as cowards, bullies, and generally are viewed as being trouble makers.

You know so little about Fr. Russ, yet I see this need of yours, from the very start to challenge him at every turn, to be better, more informed, more educated about everything and anything. Now I see you challenging his manhood, first you angered him, then he made a statement and you flipped into a remark that would open a door so you could come at him a certain way and label him. That shit was so weak, so obvious, if he replied to you on that crock of BS you just ran, I think I would be disappointed.

Now we have a thing over here that we call computer gangsters, its when people run their mouth about other people and get tough, and grimey with their words knowing that they cant be touched. Computer Gangsters are like the lowest forms of life. see now Father Russ, is well known everywhere in the States not only for the Beast that he was, but for the man who shows others that The Beast can be put on a chain. That man can live without killing, without using drugs, without going to jail. Yes. Father Russ is known by thousands, hundreds of thousands! Therefore that slick stuff you said about Priests and the Church and abuseWe all knowHe doesnt go there!

Before I get off track. Who are you?

@Allen T. (at 2:11pm) Hi Allen, in your posting from March 28, 2013 at 8:55 pm you write: Anders the battle is not between me, or you, or Father Russ. That for me was the first time to get to know that F.Russ is a kind of clergy. You obviously have been through a very sad mill of misfortunes and neglect (family, environment, education, government) and do wish you well !

@Father Russ What you write you write about yourself. Your postings are all admissions of failure which are revealed to any reader who still wants to dig into your charlatan world. You dont truthfully quote and what you try to ascribe to me actually tells all about you. You write: your knickers are too tight an expression which fits pedophile clergy of whom the world had to hear about so much

Parliamentary questions to the European Commission on 20 August 2003:

Subject: Crimen Sollicitationis Instruction issued by the Supreme and Holy Congregation of the Holy Office of the Holy See to cover up sexual abuse by clergy

On 6 August 2003 the American CBS network revealed a document of the Supreme and Holy Congregation of the Holy Office (now called the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith but originally the Sacred Congregation of the Roman and Universal Inquisition) which had been kept secret since 1962.

This document, entitled the Crimen Sollicitationis Instruction, is addressed to all Patriarchs, Archbishops, Bishops and other diocesan Ordinaries even of the Oriental Rite on the manner of proceeding in cases of solicitation and is dated 16 March 1962.

Destined to be diligently kept in the secret archives of the Curia, it gives the clergy strict instructions regarding the conduct to adopt in cases of sex crimes committed by clergy against members of church congregations.

The document shows that the Holy See has prescribed, adopted and caused to be adopted, proposed and imposed upon the ecclesiastical authorities conduct aimed at preventing sex abuse by members of the clergy from coming to public knowledge and to the knowledge of the law, upon penalty of excommunication.

Further, it is clear from the Apostolic Letter Motu Proprio Datae Quibus Normae De Gravioribus Delictis signed by John Paul II on 30 April 2001 and from the epistle De Delictis Gravioribus of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith signed by Cardinal Ratzinger on 18 May 2001 that, at least on these recent occasions, the Crimen Sollicitationis Instruction has been reconfirmed and attention again drawn to it in the light of the continual spread throughout recent decades of this true scourge of the Catholic ecclesiastical world and of the scandals resulting from it.

As further proof, if that were necessary, there has been widespread condemnation of the refusal to cooperate with the judicial authorities and police inquiries and the obstruction of justice.

In view of the European Unions institutional and diplomatic relations with the Holy See, can the Commission say:

what enquiries, preventive measures, sanctions and diplomatic steps it intends to take in relation to the fact that the instructions contained in these documents run counter to the policy of the Union and of its Member States on human rights and fundamental freedoms and the fight against sexual abuse, especially that against children and women?

whether it intends to ask the Holy See to remove these instructions which are clearly and explicitly intended to prevent society, and in particular the administration of justice, from gaining knowledge of a serious moral, social and political evil?

whether it intends to conduct an enquiry into the relations between the Member States and the Vatican in order to ascertain whether the legal relations regulating them and giving the clergy privileges with respect to the law of the Member States are in breach of international and European law on fundamental rights and freedoms?

Whether it considers that Article 51 of the draft European Constitution urgently needs to be revised in order to prevent national and European law from creating grey areas and impunity for the clergy?

Ill reply, wasnt gonna but I will. I think I made it clear I didnt find God in jailActually, it was the opposite, I blamed God for everything while I was in jail, if you went to church on any day but a holiday, I thought you were probably a Rapist hiding out in the church, and if I spoke to a Priest I was trying to hustle a free phone call.

I made a small list of books and movies just to make a point, not to win an argument or impress anyone with my library of knowledge. You spoke about fathers My Father died when I was 10.

I escaped out of a cop car in handcuffs when I was 16 and was convicted of it. Therefore, since I was convicted of an escape, I never got Work release, Outside Clearance nor was I ever eligible to go home even one day early. So I didnt pray, or fake it to find someone to get me out early. if I prayed to god it was when I was ready to get into a fight, Id pray that I would stab or pipe someone instead of getting stabbed or piped. My release date was for the most part established the date I was sentenced. Which in a way was cool cause I didnt have to be one of those phoney dudes always walking around trying to find a mentor to bargain early release from me. So what were you talking about anyway? Because you apparently have me confused with someone else. Plus, although I pray daily, I am not a Priest or part of any church choir, so when you speak to me please, speak with the same respect you yourself would like to be given. ok!

I spoke of my beliefs and moral convictions, dont interpret this as an open invitation to disrespect me, evaluate me, or draw any type of conclusions about me. the only thing you know about me is what I let you know about me, their is alot more to my story than the few paragraphs I have decided to share. But the most important thing I have shared is that I am no longer on Parole, I am a free man, and I strongly credit my transformation to my higher power and spiritual beliefs.

@Anders: lupus est homo homini: your are right on the Latin

It is interesting that true nut bags talk about people they do not even know Are so full of air in their own fantasy view that they rant all over the place, talking to people and about people they do not even know Even talking about the religion of others that they dont even know if the person is or believes what they think or are talking about.. I think it is so funny As to a family of warriors I can trace mine back on the Italian side to Rome and on the Scot side to The Bruce It is called Know thy Self. apparently we have here an Anders that does not have one clue about which theyre talking about.. (you are seriously funny your knickers are too tight)

@Allen T. (at 8:55pm) Surprise, surprise, its Father Russ, well, that does complete the picture. Havent read anything from Father Russ what would give me a clue about him being an intellectual, or fact based or giving valid arguments.

If a government does not provide education and save environments (allowing any nut to have guns), if it creates so called enemies (war on this and war on that), then that government legitimises and actually promotes violence. By doing so that government and its main captains of industry are having as target to create an industrial chain of needs from which their small elite can profit. One of those strategies was and still is the war on drugs; it had been enrolled on Middle- and South American countries who until now pay the highest price. Unfortunately, you are part of that strategy which actually is about the weapon- and security industry, with the prison-industry being the ultimate corner stone US Prison Population: The Largest in the World most private prisons are enlisted on Wall Street and are booming business.

Allan, you obviously have been through the sad mall of neglect (family, environment, education, government) and then their might have come a Father, telling you that by converting and obeying to that god of Father Russ you might get a chance of earlier parole (those things happen in the US) and now you restrict yourself from anything what might give you a different view (literature and movies) and you enclose those arguments with: two porn magazines and the wish not to worship false idols.

You know what real hard porn is? That masochistic relationship between that idol god and his followers that god you have to worship and to fear and you have to do that by thanking him all over in order not to get punished and you always are a sinner, more over: you are already one by birth.

This ideology of a continuous invisible god-eye watching you, that is the ultimate dictatorship, like North-Korea.

Religion is dictatorship, its the best cocktail to poison everything starting from the first breath you take.

As Father Russ said: For me and my family of warriors we are in the right place and 8.) Im happy we had many a warrior that made us the strongest Nation in the World. 9.) and my children are part of that military complex, the rules the world.. Again whether you like it or not.. have to live with it. (fact).

Father Russ points out that he and his family are warriors (fighters, because he has / they have enemies) and his children are part of the military complex that rules the world it does say it all, does it.

While Father Russ comes with some holy water and says some Latin to the weapons he blesses and to his children before they go to war to rule the world, he also will tell them that all is in gods hands and that the death of their enemies will be righteous and that its heroic to go to kill.

Regarding modern times Father Russ or any other Fathers will bless the joysticks for launching drones and when those drone-warriors come home after another day behind their computer screens they all happily enjoy the barbecue which first will have been blessed.

Get the picture ?

The issue of Solitary Confinement has to be put forward to the United Nations, to Human Rights Watch and to Amnesty International.

Due to the fact that the USA does not recognise The International Court of Justice, the primary judicial organ of the United Nations (The Hague, Netherlands) you should blame your government for facilitating and performing torture in its prisons. Isnt it a fact that the United States of America advocates human rights or arent they?

@Anders: I am sorry for you, and your inability to comprehend facts. Clearly one can tell you are a charlatan, by your publication of the list of books, which not only have I read a few, I have them in my library, at my finger tips; however just one of the authors like Machiavelli can take a life time of study and many of the people you have down there are religious I have read Hutchins the atheist, Harris and met with Dawkins at Harvard (Big Deal) I am happy you have read all 4000 books, you must be a speed reader I read Tolstoy in one night, speeding reading his stuff, it was all about Russia.. :-)

@Alan T: Just do what works for you. Be happy, never mind what anyone think, it is what works for you Bless you in your struggle The key to our life and happiness is to stay out of the frekin joint and out of trouble However one does that is a good thing

Playboy
Penthouse
Stephen King
Cocaine Cowboy
Debbie Does Dallas.

The extremes one will go to!

I shall not worship false Idols That includes literature. For me to read a book or watch a movie that contradicts my present spiritual beliefs, if in fact I am doing this for the purpose of testing my convictions or questioning my beliefs, I might as well slit my wrists! I was a worthless dopefiend that would just assume rob you, rip you, and leave you for dead for my next fix, I spent 27 years in jail starting at the age of 13, 1/2 my family either passed away or left me as the years went by and I continued to abuse drugs, abuse life, abuse any and all In the end I was tied down in a psych ward high on Angel dust, with a 100 dollar a day heroin habit, and list of psych meds that looked like a paragraph long. It wasnt a church, a person, a jail cell that made me cry out for my life back. It was my higher power, as a result of all my knowledge, beliefs, values, life experience, a last minute desire to live. Today I am off Parole for over 5 years, and I have been on Rikers Island in almost a year. I have my good days, and my bad days, but I have never been more alive in my life. I thank my belief in God, and the strong willpower that attaches to such a moral conviction.

Anders the battle is not between me, or you, or Father Russ. Who is the greatest of intellectuals, who has the best fact finding search, or who has the longest list of material in support of their aargument. For a matter of fact The battle is long over, for me anyway.

@Fr. Russ (at 1:44 pm) With your latest reaction you just consolidated exactly what i mentioned before (at 6:53 pm): 1. You dont give any argumentation for any of your so called facts. 2. You ignore everything what is not to your convenience, instead you come with out of the blue new issues; you are dwelling with fallacies, lots of them are ad hominem. 3. You yourself talked about the greatness and economic and military power of the US and when i mention BRICS-countries you accuse me of claiming to be an expert (man, look at your own comments). 4. You made assumptions in my name and now you deny that you did, but wait, I quote you: Whether you or I like it we will be long dead before anything changes.(fact) Another quote of yours: @Anders: It appears to me you are the one so very angry. Here another quote of yours: apparently it upsets you that maybe religious people are in the forefront of change there is where you are contradicting yourself with regard to that change and obviously you cannot cope with the situation that someone is drawing attention to your inability to come up with valid arguments.

In this regard you do fit exactly in the profile which is addressed by Christopher Hitchens (see The Best of the Hitchenslap on YouTube) and this righteousness claimed by religious people as Bertrand Russell so well explains in his book Why Im not a christian. Dont forget to look at Richard Dawkins about Ratzinger and the creepiness and falseness of religion in general (YouTube). Maybe you should start with looking into Russells teapot (Wikipedia).

This is whats going on in your country:

YouTube US Prison Population: The Largest in the World (24-08-2012)

YouTube Prisons and low-wage labor detainees billion dollar business (17-09-2012)

children are getting brainwashed at school on a daily basis by state law they have to repeat daily the nonsense one nation, under god;

you cannot run for president unless you commit yourself to one of the religious clans;

2011: City in USA lets crooks choose between cell or Jesus / Editorial 27/09/11: Petty criminals who are arrested in Bay Minette, in the U.S. state of Alabama, can now choose between jail or Jesus. Bay Minette has this week launched Operation Restore Our Community. This lets perpetrators of a minor offense choose between a fine and / or imprisonment, or a year church attendance.

With regard to the latter probably you are involved in this . ? :)

Religion deals in beliefs and is the opposite of science which has been counteracted by religion.

If you want to educate yourself, go and read all those books which have been banned by the church / vatican over centuries, till today. That library is called Index Librorum Prohibitorum. More than 4000 books, by the way, including:

Epicurus
Francis Bacon
Honoré de Balzac
Henri Bergson
George Berkeley
Giordano Bruno
Miguel de Cervantes
Nicolaus Copernicus
Daniel Defoe
René Descartes
Denis Diderot
Alexandre Dumas père
Alexandre Dumas fils
Desiderius Erasmus
Gustave Flaubert
Galileo Galilei
Thomas Hobbes
Victor Hugo
David Hume
Immanuel Kant
John Locke
Niccolò Machiavelli
Karl Marx
John Milton
Blaise Pascal
Jean-Jacques Rousseau
Jean-Paul Sartre
Baruch Spinoza
Laurence Sterne
Jonathan Swift
Polydorus Vergilius
Voltaire
mile Zola . and lots more .

http://www.cnn.com/2013/03/28/world/europe/vatican-pope/index.html?hpt=hp_t2

Pope Francis washed the feet of a dozen prisoners, including young women, at a youth detention center in Rome as part of a Holy Thursday Mass ahead of Easter.

@Anders: 1.) I do not impose anything on anyone. (figment of your imagination) 2.) You make statements like you know the history of economics? (That the BRICS have come even this far could be seen as surprise. The group began as an idea in a 2001 research note by a Goldman Sachs banker, who coined the term BRICS to refer to fast-growing big countries Brazil, Russia, India and China, on a path to overtaking the worlds rich nations in economic power.) apparently you do not. 3.) I do not get paid to teach on this site, so I am not about to give history lessons. (You seem to think you are the expert.) you may be? 4.) If you understood the Economic realities of the World you would not need a lesson understanding what is fact and what is the opinion. 5.) I do not have any feelings of anger or joy over what you say, I do not know you Your apparent hatred for the US seems to come through. You place yourself far above our society with your eschewed view. Sorry I so clearly noted that.. 6.) You're the one that seems bent out of shape over religions; stating only half what it has contributed to the World.. Many wars yes and horrors. However, the Western World with its education , economic development and nearly all development in science and medicine came out of religious.. So I think you need to get a grip.. At least put the whole story out here, not your myopic view only..

I hope this article is not just fuel for the fire but something you three can agree on:

<http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/cruel-and-unusual-punishment-the-shame-of-three-strikes-laws-20130327?print=true&src=longreads>

Excerpts:

Wilkerson was sentenced to life in prison for stealing a pair of plain white tube socks worth \$2.50 while Gangster Bankers were declared too big to jail. (See link in article)

In the age of mass media and the sound bite, fixing the law would be a heavy lift.

Its very easy to say, Three strikes and youre out,' he says. Its a lot harder to say, Well, wait a minute do you mean three strikes, or do you mean three serious strikes? And what do you mean by serious?"

People get so hung up on the concept of innocence, says Mills. But its intellectually uninteresting. What does matter is how we treat the guilty, and thats where we still have work to do.

@Fr. Russ (at 11:07 am) Again you impose your thinking onto me (angry, upset and those emotions are obviously your thing). You even contradicted yourself by now stating change (see your posting (at 6:53 pm). My argumentation is directed towards the mind set of a society (adoration of weapons, believing in violence, wars, torture, death sentence, secret prisons and so on) and how civilizations decline by getting brainwashed. To stick to the facts: you addressed my posting referring to the religious aspect of the involvement concerning solitary confinement thats when I responded to your posting. Humanitarian action should be free of any involvement of cruel religion being the foundation of all this misery.

@Allen T. (at 10:25 am) Have a look at Russells teapot (Wikipedia). Get yourself informed by The Best of the Hitchenslap (Christopher Hitchens) on YouTube. And dont forget to look at Richard Dawkins about Ratzinger (YouTube).

@jdejong (at 7:50 am) My argumentation is directed towards the mind set of a society and how civilizations decline by getting brainwashed.

@Fr. Russ (at 6:53 pm) 1. You have not given any argumentation for any of your so called facts. 2. You just ignore everything what is not to your convenience and by doing so your are dwelling with fallacies 3. You obviously are uniformed about what is going on in the world (economy / havent head yet of the BRICS-countries?). 4. You think you can make assumptions in my name (change) and on top of it you call it a fact. 5. You make idiotic comparisons (without defining your criteria) which then obviously will fit your narrow view. This simplification of yours is as dangerous as your believe that economical power justifies wars, cruelty, inhumanity and poverty.

On Anothers Sorrow

Can I see anothers woe,
And not be in sorrow too?
Can I see anothers grief,
And not seek for kind relief?

Can I see a falling tear,
And not feel my sorrows share?
Can a father see his child
Weep, nor be with sorrow filled?

Can a mother sit and hear
An infant groan, an infant fear?
No, no! never can it be!
Never, never can it be!

And can He who smiles on all
Hear the wren with sorrows small,
Hear the small birds grief and care,
Hear the woes that infants bear

And not sit beside the next,
Pouring pity in their breast,
And not sit the cradle near,
Weeping tear on infants tear?

And not sit both night and day,
Wiping all our tears away?
Oh no! never can it be!
Never, never can it be!

He doth give his joy to all:
He becomes an infant small,
He becomes a man of woe,
He doth feel the sorrow too.

Think not thou canst sigh a sigh,
And thy Maker is not by:
Think not thou canst weep a tear,
And thy Maker is not year.

Oh He gives to us his joy,
That our grief He may destroy:
Till our grief is fled an gone
He doth sit by us and moan.

William Blake

The Divine Image

To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
All pray in their distress;
And to these virtues of delight
Return their thankfulness.

For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
Is God, our father dear,
And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
Is Man, his child and care.

For Mercy has a human heart,
Pity a human face,
And Love, the human form divine,
And Peace, the human dress.

Then every man, of every clime,
That prays in his distress,
Prays to the human form divine,
Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace.

And all must love the human form,
In heathen, Turk, or Jew;
Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell
There God is dwelling too.

William Blake

A Poison Tree

I was angry with my friend:
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
I was angry with my foe:
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I watered it in fears,
Night and morning with my tears;
And I sunned it with smiles,
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night
Till it bore an apple bright;
And my foe beheld it shine,
And he knew that it was mine,

And into my garden stole

When the night had veiled the pole:
In the morning glad I see
My foe outstretched beneath the tree.

William Blake

Blake was an English Dissenter which broke away from the Anglican Church.

Blake wrote this poem to protest the Anglican Church's policy of stifling sinful emotions in people, such as anger and frustration.

Blake believed that stifling anger would only cause the anger to grow.

Blake even decided to call the original draft of a Poison Tree, Christian Forebearance.

When religion is used to ease the suffering of our fellow man it is welcomed by me when it is used to justify an eye for an eye I find it has lost its way.

Mans interpretation of religion is too often eschewed towards vengeance but hell let them vent and not have the hate fester.

My best to you Russ and Allen

@Anders: It appears to me you are the one so very angry; however you must have missed something in your historic search, the development of Nations and Peoples My confusion is you think your free? You addressed me in your remarks. I am clear in my knowledge of what the NRCAT did in the New England States, helping end the Death penalty here in CT. which took us several years with tons of other people; the end or reduction of Solitary Units in Maine, a huge victory; apparently it upsets you that maybe religious people are in the forefront of change. To be honest with you; to end and Abolish the prison system, as I know it, Ill deal with the Devil himself, if there is one.. Im happy for you that you live in such a wonderful place that please your needs. For me and my family of warriors we are in the right place; just like my Roma and Scot ancestries were, where they needed to be in their lives as they passed through.. Bless you..

Anders: you sound so sound in need of stuffed animal , and then you quote Thomas Jefferson and Bertrand Russell, the old red herring maneuver, not to mention neither of which are worthy substitutions for a higher power Religious/Spiritual values have saved my life. For anyone who truly knows me I was headed to serve my entire life in jail, that is if I didnt overdose or get murdered in the streets. I was forced fed Catholic school at a very early age. I turned to Black Sabbath hard drugs and Satan in every form towards the end It is when I humbled myself and pleaded with my higher power to lift me out of the pile of shit I was in, this is when my path to being saved through the grace of Religious values and spiritual soundness begun. Today, while Ill be the first to admit, I am not a fanatical devout follower of Religion or the church I am a grateful, forever praying decent person who knows all so well how I got to where I am. if I was to sit here and make a list of all the great things that have been introduced into my life starting with my Daughter as a result of divine intervention, for sure there would be no doubt that these blessings could have come from any other source. Therefore, I find it hard to condemn something that has not only worked for myself, but so many millions of others.

May God/a Higher Power bestow his Blessings upon you,

The stuffed animal was a substitution for a hug in case you thought I was being sarcastic.

anders: To my humble opinion your country is the most uncivilized must inhuman so called western country on the planet.

I agree: but lets not be hypocrites or think we are morally, intellectually or spiritually way above such things. (the we are Europeans mostly). Im not only talking about nations; havent you ever felt when you were angry, very angry , that you were capable of killing, maiming, hurting someone? havent you yourselves never felt such a resentment towards a person that in your mind he/she had lost all humanity? all hatred, all resentment is self-hatred and nothing else the US seems to hate itself very, very much.

yes, stop this mans torture . give him a rope.

@anders: 1.) You have said nothing that I do not already know. 2.) Your views are your own and almost all are opinions. 3.) Those you quote are nothing new to me; fact is years old. The good Scot I study as a young man 50 years ago. 4.) There is no such thing on the face of the earth as a Free Country just degrees of freedom (fact) 5.) Whether you or I like it, the United States is the most powerful Nation in the World, and runs the world through our economic system and has since 1945.. (fact) 6.) The economic engine of the world only moves at the behest of our Navy (fact) . &.) Whether you or I like it we will be long dead before anything changes.(fact) 7.)The homeless right here in New London, CT. Live better than 75% of the world poor. I have three living under our roof how many do you take care of? (fact) 8.) As far as Religion whatever floats your boat.. I am happy I live here. 8.) Im happy we had many a warrior that made us the strongest Nation in the World. 9.) and my children are part of that military complex, the rules the world.. Again whether you like it or not.. have to live with it. (fact)

Anders: Clearly you are not telling me anything I do not know: However, you do know that is just your opinion and the opinion of those you quoted. As far as the Us, we may be the most war like people in the world; but the fact is we are running it right now, whether you or I like it and Id guess will be running it for some time. Ill be long dead ans so will you Aside from my dyslexia, which I am sorry to say sucks; I hold a Master and I am presently a double Ph.D candidate; not the brightest bulb but no fool either; my years in prison were spent studying. I study the good Scot thirty years ago, was one of my favorite and the racist Jefferson, who never paid his bills, I may know more about him that yourself All opinions The Fact is the United States Rules the World May be by force Oh, and I come from a long military family, have kids right now enforcing our might around the World One other thing there is no such thing as a free country no where on the face of the earth Only degrees of freedom Oh, by the way our homeless here in New London Ct. eat, dress, live better than 70% Of the Worlds poor I know cause we help take care of them, do you? I have three in our house right now as I type My website <http://www.nlhome.org>

@Fr. Russ you write: The issue is and we (our prisoner and ex-prisoner groups) belong to the National Religious Campaign Against Torture.

Thats ironic because of the fact that torture and cruelty has been introduced and facilitated by religion for centuries (see history: inquisition, witch hunt and so on).

There is not one moral or intellectually reason to assume that any religion is true. As Thomas Jefferson already said: Religions are all alike founded upon fables and mythologies.

The philosopher and rationalist Bertrand Russell said: Religion is based mainly on fear fear of the mysterious, fear of defeat, fear of death. Fear is the parent of cruelty, and therefore it is no wonder if cruelty and religion have gone hand in hand. . My own view on religion is that of Lucretius. I regard it as a disease born of fear and as a source of untold misery to the human race.

Indeed, this combination of religiousness / worshiping of blood and violence is most effectively imprinted in your country.

I really feel pity for all those American children which are getting brainwashed by law on a daily basis at school to have to repeat this nonsense of one nation, under god and the idiotic cherished American dream on behalf of other human beings.

The horrific dominance of religion in your country (you cant become president unless you belong to a religious clan) reflects the laws and constructions made by those religious-right people. They culminate in the facts and figures of the USA having the highest number of impersonated people of all Western countries. And most prisons are privatized another sick obsession by corporate privatization where citizens are becoming slaves of corporate elites who, by now, actually run the government.

Im really shocked by most comments here revealing the mint set of a total perverted nation. I pity the American obsession for weapons, the adoration of abject violence and idiotic heroism as promoted in movies and games by the Hollywood industry and which is reflected in the outrageous budgets for military spending and the military-industrial-complex. Your country is based on war and warfare and thus embracing collateral damage and retribution mercilessly, without ever looking at any given context.

Look at the horrific results those wars on drugs and terror have imposed on targeted countries. They have to deal with this shit your country / your government forces them into while they enrich a tiny elite.

Your country is not the land of the free its the land of the imprisoned. Look at the rate of people who are homeless and utterly poor and then look at the figures for military budgets. To my humble opinion your country is the most uncivilized must inhuman so called western country on the planet.

I think I have one final commit on this thread: Know and understand this for this is the reality of were you are living and the times you are living in; if you do not get this than you are on the losing end I fear, so good luck: As Mr. Kaplan states this truth: Modernity, at least in the West, is the journey away from religious virtue toward secular self-interest. Religious virtue is fine for ones family and the world of private morality. But the state that defining political structure of modern times requires something colder, more chilling. For the state must organize the lives of millions of strangers and protect their need to selfishly acquire material possessions. If everyone stole from everyone else there would be anarchy. So the state monopolizes the use of force, taking it away from criminals. The state appeals not to God, but to individual selfishness. Thus, it clears the path for progress.

What a bunch of crap. The guy is a murderer. Let him rot. Pure sympathy piece. He talks about the guys he has seen lose it or bug out? I thought he hadnt seen anyone in 25 years. Somebody give him a razor blade so we can quit paying for his pathetic existence.

Murder is always wrong, but NO ONE should every be put in prison for a drug charge, in the first place. We should end the war on drugs, and legalize all victimless crimes drugs, prostitution, etc. Murder will and should always be illegal, but had he not been put in prison for a non-crime in the first place, he would not have murdered anyone trying to escape.

Im so disgusted by the majority of the responses to Blakes story: You did a terrible thing, so you should suffer, too bad, quit bellyaching For those of you who are religious which Im not isnt it God whos to do the judging and punishment? Science has learned so much, but not yet all, about the multiple causes of criminal/antisocial behavior to know for sure that punishment for the simple excuse of retribution solves nothing, and only contributes to the shared dehumanization of those perpetuating such inhumane treatment.

This is a strange event. I know the American society as widely injustice. Bearing Bob Dylans Percys song in mind. Not unlike large parts of the world. American justice is nice for the rich and famous, gruesome for the poor. Though horrified I must speak for the dead too. Can you imagine what they are deprived of? And I fear that I will be misunderstood. There are parts in the world where life is hanging on a thread where this mans plight is just a figment of his own imagination. There are places where a sane human would willingly swap places with him. How come? What deed can rescue this man? I feel that this man is feeling more sorry for himself than for any other living being on earth. Yet his condition is so alike most living beings, be they in forced marriage, labour or captivity, as animals for the slaughter, disrespected, disregarded, despised. He is not alone.

Is he in the position to learn? I think so, if the American Government would not deprive him of information or books there is a Way. Would he take it? Thats up to him. Counting breaths, and being kind to the living who knows whos the captive and who the captor?

@Appie: I believe I met the woman who ran your systems of Corrections in the 70s. I cannot think of her name, she came and spent time at Boston University. I have to research her name. She was outstanding and that was nearly fifty years ago.. She was a Doctor. I am not sure if it was your system of the Dutch; nevertheless it was in your area of the world; she blew everyones mind then Rather than getting better we got worse Everyone hates the reality; our founders got thrown out of their Countries for being nothing but trouble makers US History does not tell it like it is We are almost as bad a Shira law Very few will be honest with the issue

@Anders: The issue is and we (our prisoner and ex-prisoner groups) belong to the National Religious Campaign Against Torture; they are a front-runner on this issue and have been. They are the best people in the world. We love all of them and know them well Also sojourners Rev. Whale another great group of people

@Dorothy: Bless you, you live in a civilized society, we in the USA do not as yet We are still evolving.. We are a barbaric group, make no mistake about that We just refuse to admit it

@Martin: We agree Right on

This should be an issue for the United Nations against torture !
Its horrific to learn about such inhuman imprisonment which says allot about the USA.

Its time to release the man. People get killed every day. It is always the case that afterwards we can not change the fact what we have done. It is important this man will have a chance to tell his story, about the sentence he got and how he fulfilled his sentence. It has nothing to do with forgiving the fact what he did: he now knows it was very very wrong.

It is inhuman to punish a man like this, no matter what he has done. A society can punish, but must not torture like this. Every bit of civilisation is denied by this punishment. A society cannot get retribution for severe crimes, and should not seek for retribution. Punishment is about something else.
Blake describes a 25-years hell that not will end so he knows what he still gets in future. He would rather be dead than lose his mind. Nobody can feel his angers. Does your society at last urge him to suicide? Does the USA this crime in the name of justice?
Is there anybody who does not call this torture but justice?
I live in the Netherlands. This level we did not reach so far, and I hope we will not follow the US on this path!

This sounds like 25 years of torture.

@Martin: No offense but apparently you have not read the Bible lately, using that book to argue for humane treatment is a serious mistake; how about stoning, banishment, kill your kids if they are unruly We are barbaric, killing people as a society or personally, is barbaric whatever the reason; however, I know, I could justify, my own doing so for certain reasons I recognize I am a barbaric individual just like the majority of us here on earth You may not be, may be just due to the fear of the consequence? I do not know; however I know most seek retribution for pain given That is just a fact Whether we like the fact or not

@Fr. Russ: true I have read the Bible lately (also not earlier). I am a humanist. Empirically seen the Bible and Koran have not brought any good to the world. So I stay away from it as much as possible.
I know that it is difficult to find a balance between punishment and retribution. Personally I dont think retribution is a healthy component of a legal system. Although I am aware that it is an emotion on an individual basis. I find it disgusting that a so called free and democratic society allows anyone (!) to be imprisoned in isolation for so long. Such a society loses its right to judge any other culture or country that do similar things to humanity.
I can in a way better understand the cruelty in society dominated by poverty and injustice, than in a so called civilized society that allows these practices. It is institutionalized perversion.
I find America a mentally very sic country (or at least half of it).

This shows that America is by far not a civilized society. Part of the American brain still can be considered as barbaric and underdeveloped. I dont understand people that seem to read the Bible and believe in God and do this to other humans. It is simply incomprehensible. There are no excuses, not even murder. I can imagine that many Americans are deeply ashamed about their fellow citizens that support this devilish morality.
Barack Obama where art thou ?????!

I Am Shocked to hear you suggest such things! LOL! Your ideas although Fiction in creativeness, are basically what it will come down to one day. The reason I said to have an Order to show cause attach to all keeplock SHU sentences of 6 months or a year or more, would provide a fair review of each case to ensure their isnt an abuse of authority. This initiative can be entertained by showing a pattern of such abuse, which I am sure wont be hard. Many of these guys are put in long term keeplock because they sued and won against DOCS, because they have gang affiliations, because their crime has political markings, yet, a close review of each case will probably show that the infraction that brought them before the adjustment committee/Superintendent proceeding was not an infraction that warranted years of SHU time!
Retroactive, it would also cause for review of some of the cases that have already created this dilemma. A legal fact finding, is the only thing that is gonna ascertain required change. The inherent authority granted through Correction Law is too broad, it allows for unlimited sanctions that often go unchallenged because of the amount of Power and Authority they are given in reaching these determinations. it is either time to modernize, update, and change these definitions that define this authority in correction law; or police/watch dog these cases individually in order to make sure that these inmates arent getting resentenced. Whats fair is fair! I know this road has been traveled. Maybe a new approach, Bring in these big time Civil Rights attorneys pro bono, attack the statutory definitions that are ancient and allow for this unlimited authority and file class action multi state. Something has to give. It is time to redefine sections of Correction Law, as well codes rules and regulations which govern these matters. I know Im talking in circles using different words each time. Its what I feel though!

Allen T and Alan: My system is presently all screwed up, due to AT&T screwing with the email and crap You can email me at fruss@gmail.com that should get through.. I am so pissed at AT&T and Yahoo, even Facebook they just wont live stuff alone

@T: Also your email should get to me by info@nlhome.org

@T: Go to facebook, look up Fr. Russ Carmichael, send me a request to friend

@Allen T: I think you may be on to something with a Stephen King concept. I have no idea, well it is not true I do have ideas, they cost serious money far more than they are spending on solitary presently I can figure out how to be Constitutionally correct with the facility part It is the solitary factor that is the greater problem as one can note with a reading of Robinson Caruso even on an Island alone one goes mad; at least most, not all There are many today that seek to isolate themselves, in many places How about banishment to a solitary Island, where one could be monitored electronically or with drones.. Supplied and left to oneself after fitted with basic housing shed or probable housing unit.. A living size module unit would do.. There are plenty of small Islands, you may even put a few of those bad guys together that are equal in combativeness? There are isolated place where with a little bit of thought they would be removed from everyone Again monitored and even supplied by the use of drone engineering Robotics are to the place where they will be able replace guards in a few year less than ten.. They are nearly ready for the battle field Right out of Robo Cop Implanted GPS and youll not be able to go anywhere Implanted violence stinger and you will be immobilized by any attempt at violent action (triggered by your own brain) . I do not know what you study; but science and MIT is the place of innovation and the military is the place of testing these damn things out It will not be long when the changes that people are asking for will be implemented to their own chagrin by means they never even thought possible End of gang violence A city like that silly movie Stallone played in as the back from the past cop Can you imagine and implant that will immobilize you if you are or even though about being criminal or combative will be the first and easy one; shocked by your own thought pattern You do not think they are working on this stuff, right?

When I tried to email it didnt work for the reason I said in my previous post; but when I clicked on the link I got the Home page and related POSTS. You have truly been blessed in many ways. I have a daughter, I dont know if I mentioned that in a previous Post. Believe I did, however, although it can be challenging at times, what a true blessing it is.
Ill keep trying the email and hopefully I can get through? Otherwise what about info@nlhome.org? Or if that email is not for that I understand. The again, it may do the same thing.

Fr. Russ, I put in <http://www.nlhome.org> and when I hit send @aol.com attaches and it wont go through?

@Allen T: That Father Russ is not me: I have no idea who he is: my web site is <http://www.nlhome.org>. Im also on Facebook I look more like the grim reaper I am not clean-shaven Depending how you know me, some would say Santa-Clause

I have given alot of time over the past couple of days throwing around possible Starting Points towards a sollution to the matter at hand. Seems as if Im going backwards instead of forward. I guess I can only say What I would do. As for what you guys appear to be looking for, seems like its gonna take Stephen King to come up with something creative enough.

The affects of solitary are described by his father in front of the Colorado State Legislature.

<http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2013/03/22/friends-of-colorado-shooting-suspect-evan-ebel-remember-a-dark-scary-kid.html>

Jack Ebel, Evans father, is a well-respected Denver oil and gas lawyer. He told his sons friends that he was going to dedicate the rest of his life to helping Evan. Just two years ago, Jack Ebel testified in front of the Colorado State Legislature imploring lawmakers to consider other options for the mentally ill instead of solitary confinement. His son, he told them, would spend many hours in lock up by himself, and it severely affected him.

Hell rant a little bit. Hell stammer, said Ebel. Hell be frustrated that he cant find the words. And I let him get it out, and eventually, because Im his father, he will talk to me. And Im convinced, if any of the rest of you were to go talk to him, he wouldnt be able to talk to you.

The solitary connection. Oh and his juvenile history.

http://www.denverpost.com/news/ci_22845009/tom-clements-slaying-suspect-had-promise-says-ex

Evan Ebel spent much of at least five years in solitary confinement, according to a post his mother wrote on a memorial website for his sister, who died in a car accident when Ebel was a teenager.

In Caon City, he was kept in his cell 23 hours a day, she wrote. When they visited, she could speak to him only through a thick pane of glass.

I cannot imagine the transition for him as it has been really hard day to day, his mother, Jody Mangué, wrote in a post within the past several months.

Denver defense attorney who once represented Ebel was shocked, Its unimaginably terrible, Scott Robinson said. He was a young man who had real promise as a human being.

In his mothers words, Ebel liked to read, study and write poetry. In one post, she called him a history buff. He had read War and Peace multiple times.

Evan talks about his plans for the future, more about him meeting someone and having a family, she wrote in a post describing his life in prison.

But she also hinted at the deep roots of Ebels troubles. In the same post, she referred to her and Ebels father making hard decisions when he was younger hoping to avoid where he is now.

She said he had been in behavioral programs beginning when he was 12 in places as far flung as Jamaica, Samoa and Mexico.

I often wonder if we are not able to really avoid certain situations in life something we have to endure manage and accept, she wrote. We all have our private struggles.

@Russ

No need to apologize and although I am not as sure of my own convictions on these issues as you seem to be I find your frankness refreshing.

Most commentors on here speak without without weighing the other sides argument. Maybe I am also guilty of this. I find this whole issue a real paradox with no clear solution only thing I know for sure is it is counterproductive.I also have felt its affects first hand but thankfully only slightly.

@ Allen T: I am a Boston Boy, grew up in Newton Mass. I was born in California on the Marine Base, Oceanside

@Alan: I was joking, nevertheless, you read the articles very fast and had the connection, I am sure as fast a law enforcement, maybe faster. I did myself You are a good student of the news, from all over. I do however want to say to you and T. I in no way have all the answers, and I just put things out there, to think about I do not mean in any way to offend either of you, we all have our opinions like other things I am strong in my views, as I see both of you are, which is great for conversation It seems our common background is key to how we look at things Please forgive my saltness at times. I have spent many years in this business; some very personal trying to get friends released most of the time a general concern for all folks behind bars. My ability to stay out of prison are two-fold one my philosophical changed view and the second the advocacy and success I have had helping others stay out or get out of the joint I confess it was and is no easy process to control the beast within Its that Redneck thing Sowell talks about, or the Highland attitude coupled with a fast Italian temper The good Father Gavin from Boston told my Dad and Mother I never had a chance; he said to them You put the worse Nationalities for violence in to that young man. Bless those poor parents of mine were ever they are

@Allen T.

Read it for yourself. (In the middle)

<http://solitarywatch.com/2013/03/11/voices-from-solitary-a-sentence-worse-than-death/#comment-11775>

@Russ

Im not sure what profile your referring to.

But If someone wants to know how I find the articles it is called Google and just taking the time to read the news.

I have no inside info only what I read in open sources.

Anything I wrote is on the news so I guess one needs to check the links I supplied.

Im clean as far as the authorities are concerned. I have no concern there.

I am concerned about how others may interpret my interest however.

To them I would only say from the beginning I feared that this would blow back and harm the chances of relief for all those held in the SHU.

Alan CYA#65085, I swear I read all your comments twice and couldnt find where that Blue Blood thing came about LOL! That was eating at me, no BS. Ok. gone, but ever since then I have been harboring ill feelings about you. had a guy make an insinuation once that I was a pansy for the administration, broke his nose and tried to bite his finger off. about 10 of my 27 years came from being dimed on. I need to say, by no means am I a tough guy, I have seen tough guys, I know of the cold feelingless people that will rip you apart for looking at them the wrong way, no Im in no heavyweight bracket and pushing some old numbers myself I just have certain principles that cause me to react a certain way when my buttons are pushed, i have come a long way with this and have much more to go. actually I am the type of guy that is so nice, so humble at times, that people actually mistake me for someone else, this is where I become offensive, when I feel I am entering that zone with someone. I try to cut to the chase and clear the air so to speak. Most of the time its all in my mind. thats one of the effects of long term time in the system. Not delusional but very offensive at times, Onward we go. Im sure youll probably get a laugh out of my wrong Fr. Russ conversation with some old mid west or mid south? preacher by the name of Fr. Russ.

@Alan: You may have been a bit fast writing your profile, and someone may be looking at how you did it? (I am just saying) My youngest is Homeland Security, we do not talk about any off her business unless she is looking to analyze something I may have insight into. As one of my partners states; everything that goes over the wire or out of my home is public knowledge At least the moment I press send.. Or speak on our phone :-)) These so-called warriors have no concern for the heat they bring on others; I was and my children in the 70s were called collateral damage by Laversour I was told we were Expendable I could write a scene for a movie play when he said that to me; while we were in the North End of Boston, at my distant cousins restaurant, not a very smart place to say that type of thing; not to a person who was risking them-self and family for your crew. Even more stupid, when I had ten grand, money designated to go to their efforts. I am sure you guessed by now. Expendable I hope he learned how to spell it, for it cost him or them the ten grand I never play, did not then, do not now These guys hurt the general population, they hurt and put their own friends at risk, and they do not care one bit It is all about them and their needs, screw everyone else.. I have been blessed by my partners and associates both streight and in the life that we have been friends and survived some over sixty-years with me out of my 70 I todays world I would not trust a dog I did not bring up myself Drugs = Rats = crybabies= poor me folks I love the saying if you cant do the time, well then dont

@Allen T

Should read we need ex-cons experience to solve this paradox.

Experience that you have. Smile dude. :) Dont be so serious.

Maybe Im not saying it right. Im talking about a Prison for guys doing large sentences. Guys that the state fears and instead of making up excuses to put them, and keep them in SHU, put them in this prison and make it a general Population prison. Blake is not the only one who is on keeplock for who he is, and not for what he has done. Many, many guys are on long term keeplock because of who they are, and not for what theyve done. they could fill the place twice if they get honest with the reasons they are using to impose these long term sanctions. This is why I said the Article 78 show cause would attach to any keeplock decision that results in more than 6 months. So it is automatically reviewed. to keep them honest. to keep these determinations from being secret, to shed light on the corruption so to speak.

@Allen T

First of all I already told you the Blue Blood reference was directed to Russ. He said he sat around the dinner table with his family many of whom are in law enforcement. If you ever watch Blue Bloods an Irish family of NY police and a prosecutor have Sunday dinners together.

Secondly I have no legal Background to judge your suggestions and hoped youd stick around until someone qualified could answer you.

Thirdly when I found points of agreement I said so.

I have nothing on my mind that Im holding back.

Im not the best writer especially since I do this from work so I use articles of better writers to make a case. It is something the editors of this site do as well.

Im just a senior citizen filling my day with an issue that took my little brothers life.

Im glad youve turned around we dont need ex-cons experience to solve this paradox.

If I agree more with Russ than you it may be generational.

Some of what I post are my own experiences which apply to the subject matter.

My experience in Baton Rouge of having a thug rapist housed near me was relevant to Russ's position.

Dont make things personal I feel no ill will towards you and I hope this doesnt seem flippant.

@Russ

I totally agree! For some reason my previous comment on this is still waiting approval.

@Alan: Looks to me like they have them tied together and maybe more The backlash will be heavy This is the crap I get pissed of about. This is the shit Manning and others pulled to get us to were we are today Dam jerk-off that do not care about the whole only their little groupies These idiots do not connect all the dots In my day the shit bum Stanly Bond cost me a year in prison I was one week from going out to Brandies University in Waltham, my family and kids were in Newton; ass robbed the bank killed office Schrouder, a cop the community loved, then he and his nut bags declared war on the US They shut the program STEP down and I was set back a year Tommy, Ray and others affected lives all over New England they did not even care about; they were having fun screw collage little girls, playing at big time bank robbers for the people all true bull-shit

@ Allen T: I basically hear you saying leave the system the way it is. I did time in AZ and Mass., all have a minimum, mid-lock or medium, Max, with common populations, then some have a Max-Max, with a small common population. Then we have seg units 15 to 60 days Walpole had 10 block a year lock-down and all are open to PC the ladder system you have suggested has got us right were we are today In my opinion; we need something new

Actually Fr. Russ I tried to avoid my other side I let get the best of me at times when I become involved in open air conversations. I looked up Father Russ on google and it says a mid west preacher and has a picture of this older gentleman with glasses sitting at a table. I was like he doesnt look so tough to me, then with my schooling Im like thats the one, the quiet guy you sleep on! LOL. cause I email the guy and tell him my dilemma with open air debates, and the Fly on the wall etc. and list all these reasons they have to end Long Term SHU and all the ways Id go about doing it. ? nothing? So I do it again the next day? I get an email from Fr. Russ, I was like here we ago out of the spotlight away from the audience and criticsWrong Fr. Russ. LMAO! Moral of my story, I tried two days ago to stop leaving Posts on this site, out of respect for stephanies wishes, in order to take myself off the stage so to speak Just dont want to be the Prima donna, usually a low key I am. in any event. I have seen guys get work release and the first day out abscond. In other words no matter how sweet it gets someone will mess it up, saddest part is usually its the guy with the 1 to 3 that makes the most noise!

Alan CYA#65085 In the past 4 days I have made a 360 with my attitude and attempts to build an argument for instead of against SHU.etc. I am very possibly a low man on the Totem pole when it comes to legal arguments. I have never actually rated myself in terms of qualifications. You seem obsessed with articles and movies and one liners. For it appears that alot of the questions that FR, Russ is asking me, you already have an answer for, and when it isnt the answer that meets your standards you become dismissive and politely arrogant. So if there is something on your mind say it. if you didnt take me over the top with the Blue Bloods comment, or the some of the other one liners you have directed at me, then go for it. I am definitely not they type of guy whos gonna taer at the eye. But as far as the take care, step off type BS, Id much rather you spoke your mind and not from an article or highlight reel. I posted close to this statement 10 minutes ago but it didnt show up?

Lets not mistaken a hub cap thief for a gladiator By no means. However, NYSDOCS has minimum, medium, maximum etc. Chances are the hub cap thief isnt gonna see a max, unless he/she has extenuating circumstances that warrant this classification. NYS Prisons had/have? Great Boxing programs. The Cadets and State Police use to go to Tappan and fight the guys from Sing Sing, Elmira had a great boxing program. The Brawlers are everywhere in the system, always have been. If a guy feels intimidated and wets his pants let them go to PC. This is Prison, not a protection racket. I am talking about taking a Prison like Five points and designating it a super max, Put what you perceive to be your high risk inmates together, but let them have a General Population. With the right trained staff, security in placelt will work just fine. For some reason the Beast will respect the Beast, youd be surprised, it will probably end up functioning like a low incident honor prison.

My question is always this: 1.) Is the individual being removed from general population due to his/her being a threat to other, whether to guards or prisoners? 2.) Does the individual have a consistent history of threatening and combative behaviour toward others? 3.) Does the individual responded to restrictive behavioural conditions as a modifier too his/her combative behaviour and threats? 4.) How many times has this person repeated the combative or threatening behaviour? 5.) the individual, acquirer others to carry out his/her threats, rather than self involvement and can this be proved? If the answers to these questions is yes, yes and yes What do you do to protect others in the enviroment (before and after legal agreements and judgements?)

@Allen T: It seems to me you are saying as far as the security factor , that all prisoners are the same That is not true It happens that many of my associates and crew members where Irish and Italian club fighters My cousins, one that had been a gangland hit, was golden gloves champion. I have others that where professional fighters. You would not fool with these guys in or out of prison. However, that is not the check passer or the hub-cap thief that may need to be protected from the others he is serving with, so, I am not sure I agree with you letting them all out and having no security within the system. (I do believe if your going to be locked up while being locked up you need Due Proses hearings, and advocate or lawyer) All of which is costly

@Allen T: You have a lot opinions in your statements I am not sure were to start however: 1.) As to why man are afraid in the joint versus the street, Ill use the old quotation from Joe Lewis No place to run, No place to hide. not like the street were you can run home and hide in your own town 2.) Also these bad guys in the street were never bad guys to begin with they had to have others around them 3.) As to leaders, most of us way down deep are cowards of the first order, and our need is to protect ourselves. (It is the reason we have big strong dummies around us who cant think and will handle any threat toward us.) All good leaders of bad guys/gals are Machiavellian in nature and should know the philosophy That said, you would have been very foolish to give me any crap while I was doing time. Nevertheless, even though I always felt secure and safe in the prison environment; due to the fact of having my own very large group of dedicated and loyal friends and even relative around me.. I was aware that I could take a shiv in the back by the little gray man who was not impressed by

my status as a leader. 4.) For some reason, I grew up with and open non-racial view, my group was inter-racial, and that view carried into my prison time, so as a prison organizer, I ventured out of my group and recruited the whole place into work for change, we broke down the picking order, and taught everyone that we where in the same boat, black, white, red, yellow, armed robber, killer, thief, rapist, sex-offend, gay, streight We were the prisoners, they were the guards, guards just worked for the man and the Administration which is the real enemy of change You had to sue guards to get to the Admin We wanted a union so we could sit down across from the guards and run a safe peaceful place We developed a political movement with our outside sisters and brother, their families and friends, first; then we spread out Of course in the end we fell apart due to lack of education and the mans manipulation a whole other story.. (Enough for now)

@Allen T

I hope you stick around until someone more qualified can answer. Read the Angola 3 case for a start. 40 plus years pf legal action and nada. Take care and thanks.

So many of these laws come down to interpretation and legislative intent. A close review of the inherent authority granted to Commissioners, Superintendents, or other major movers and shakers authorized to make decisions through correction law, may show that it was never the legislative intent while creating laws and rules governing SHU placement, to allow for long term use of SHU. or that an abuse of power and authority through the unintended use of legislation has transpired causing intervention, or that an amendment is appropriate that will allow for a change in statutory definition, etc. gotta roll the dice when your in a nothing to lose situation. but to say if this or that was that easy Youd be surprised, or maybe you would not?

Sometimes we look for something complex answers to combat a complex issue, when in all actuality the answer is simple and as so easily overlooked, or not considered at all!. I would enter the Order of Show Cause in a Class action format and challenge the statute in Correction Law which grants authority in these decision making procedures, as violative of constitutional rights, due process, equal protection, cruel and unusual, etc. if it can be proved that The NYSDOCS is abusing the inherent authority granted to them through statutory interpretation by resentencing inmates, then perhaps a Court would make such a finding and grant the relief I mentioned in my previous Post?

http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-201_162-57575695/police-texas-shootout-may-be-linked-to-colo-officials-slaying/

Clements is the fifth criminal justice official in the United States to be targeted since the beginning of the year, including the still unsolved murder of a Texas prosecutor shot dead outside a courthouse in January, CBS News correspondent Mark Strassman reports.

Glenn McGovern, an investigator with the District Attorneys Office in Santa Clara County California, found that there were 35 such attacks or attempted attacks between 2010 and 2012. Thats nearly as many as all the attacks on public officials over the prior nine years. The primary motive, McGovern told Strassman, appears to be revenge.

May God forgive us all

Yes. while I breezed through several of the other comments. No I havent taken time out to read your or Fr. Russ, as well as many others. I speak of my insight. The answer to his question that I feel would address all SHU cases is a legal decision being made that all SHU cases involving more than 6 months should automatically attach to a Court Ordered Article 78, Order to show cause hearing of some sort. This would enable the courts guaranteed review of corrections actions in these cases to see if they have acted in an arbitrary and capricious manner in reaching their determination, if they have violated constitutional issues in reaching their determination, or if they are abusing their discretion in sentencing someone to what amounts to a sentence within a sentence. They do have many trained Law Library workers, PLS, and other staff and Pro Bono attorneys that could assist in representation without this turning into a costly experience. This would ensure that the inmate that has no voice is heard also. Many of these inmates would and could successfully challenge their SHU Commitments, but dont have a clue how to file, research, shepardize, or fill out and submit a Order to show cause challenge.

East Baton Rouge Jail 1969:

One morning as we ate breakfast Antoine got up without saying a word then walked behind one of his other roommates and began punching the man in the back of his head. The poor guy hadnt seen the attack coming and was quickly knocked out by Antoines fierce blows and when the attack was finished the mans body was left twitching spasmodically with his face buried in his bowl of oatmeal. No one spoke a word but this brutal act was all the proof that Antoine needed to show Chris and everyone else who witnessed it that he was a ruthless thug to be feared.

The walls between our cells were sheet metal with our bunk beds welded to each side of the wall. Consequentially any movement on a bunk on one side of the wall could be felt on the other side. One evening as I lay in my bed I heard muffled voices in the next cell and felt movement on the bed. Then I clearly heard Chris say No but Ill suck it! Antoine said Youll do as I say punk. Whats your problem bitch, anyway? Chris replies I dont want to because it hurts. Here let me suck it instead. Slurping sounds begin and Antoine says Yeah suck it bitch. Awe! This went on for a couple of minutes then the bed moved abruptly as Antoine forced himself on top of Chris. Chris whimpered as he was entered and then grunted and moaned as Antoines thrusts grew ever stronger. Finally a few minutes later it was all over. Disturbed by the mans rape I thought to myself how many nights will I have to listen to this shit?

So I switched bunks with someone interested in the activity.

About a week later I awoke in the middle of the night as a huge orange fire ball fell from my old bunk towards me just as the guy occupying it cried out What the fuck? Shit! Antoine had rigged his sliding door to his cell so it didnt lock that night and placed a large amount of unrolled toilet paper on top of my roommates bunk and ignited it.

I didnt like the idea of Antoine being able to reach me in the middle of the night. And I was even more concerned to learn of a rumor that Antoine was fashioning a weapon to attack me with. However Mikes presence represented a logistical problem for Antoine. If he attacked me in the same manner as he had his old roommate he knew that Mike would surly counter attack. He needed to quickly finish us both off and to do so he needed a weapon.

Whether this was his reasoning I will never know because a few days later Antoine got into a confrontation with the same antagonistic guard that was harassing me. After a visit from Antoines lawyer the guard mocked his chances for beating his case which resulted in Antoine attacking him. Other guards rushed in and Antoine was beaten down and never returned to our cellblock.

It made me wonder if there was foul play involved because it was not uncommon for inmates to just vanish during this era in the south. The movie Brubaker is based on actual events in the Tucker and Cummins Prison in Arkansas where scores of prisoners became victims of foul play by guards.

No one in the cellblock would have ever grieved for him however if that was the case.

@Allen T

Maybe you missed these comments Russ made above.

Fr. Russ says:
March 14, 2013 at 10:58 am

When you go to prison as I did with thirty or more associates and going to prison is like meeting your friends at the corner, you do not have the same fear, as going in alone and being vulnerable to everyone

Fr. Russ says:
March 19, 2013 at 1:11 pm

I never have admitted to much fear; I am not even sure I know what that is since childhood;

Personally I believe that whether your inside or outside a healthy respect for everyone is wise.

I like this quote from Edward Bunkers Education of a Felon:

Page 131:

Convicts may have the foulest months in the world, but unlike the images set forth in movies and television, they are better than New Yorkers about certain amenities. Among the numbered men there are always a few with paranoid streaks.

He goes on to give an account of how a bully disrespected a skinny kid held for there for murder in another state. Then this:

The fool brooded for nearly a month and then walked up behind the bully as he sat eating in the mess hall. The knife paralyzed the bully from the neck down. He was a bully no more. The prison adages include:

Everyone bleeds; anyone can kill you. Where anyone can get a big knife, good manners are the rule of the dayeven if they are accompanied by vulgarity. Think about it.

Ive seen just such an attack although it was punches to the back of the mans head just after I arrived to E. Baton Rouges Parrish Prison. The man was taken to the hospital still unconscious. I would later listen to this same man repeatedly rape a teenager in the next cell. I took note and kept an eye on him while there.

Jailhouse lawyers, those that have killed or been connected to those that have killed correctional officers, and revolutionaries abound in the hole.

Since the lines have been blurred between all of these groups the people like the Angola 3, Thomas Silverstein, and Billy Blake have almost no chance of the authorities ever releasing them on their own accord.

Russ may agree that as the Homeland Security Report states above.

Some of the worlds most dangerous radicals are currently serving lengthy sentences in U.S. correctional institutions.

The prisoner radicalization problem cannot be separated from the prison gang problem.

Radicalization is increasingly developed on a prison gang model.

The greatest individual-level cause of prisoner radicalization is one-on-one proselytizing.

Within inmate organizations, the greatest cause of prisoner radicalization is charismatic leadership.

Charismatic leadership is more important than the most commonly cited sociological factors associated with radicalization.

A miniscule percentage of radicalized inmates will join terrorist networks, and they are likely to be fresh convertsthe newly pious, those with an abundance of emotion and feelingwho are highly secretive about their intentions.

The greatest challenge to gathering intelligence on prisoner radicalization is hidebound organizational culture. There are two essential features of such organizations:

- 1) a lack of law enforcement mentality capable of detecting both criminal sensibilities and radical ideologies among inmates; and
- 2) the lack of management information systems capable of terrorist screening, investigation, and assessment.

the study found that maximum security prisons are more likely to produce radicalized prisoners than lesser custody institutions.

Maximum security has fewer rehabilitation programs; higher levels of overcrowding; more serious gang problems; and more politically charged living spaces. These factors constitute a Petri dish in which terrorism may grow and prosper.

Their threat comes from the ability to motivate others to carry out attacks and not their own propensity for violence. Billy has no following however that I can discern in fact as you point out he has those that would and have attacked him.

I could never understand guys who went to jail and all of a sudden got scared of other guys. I use to try and think of it as it is Everyone there came from the streets at one time or another, and I wasn't scared out there. What is it about Prison that all of a sudden guys who were calling shots in the streets are all of a sudden quiet as a mouse in Prison? They got gangs in the street, they got muscle heads in the streets, they got cowards with guns in the street and a coward with a gun has to be about the most dangerous guy you'll ever meet. Hell shoot you in a second cause he can't fight for shit! So pound for pound, situation for situation same thing, out here in there! This is the purpose of Maximum security lockups Let the boys loose. Keeplock should be for the disciplinary infraction and that's it. The guy gets 90 days, 6 months in the box, and back out into general population. There should be nobody who is so dangerous the State needs to place them in administrative Segregation for any undetermined amount of time! Back in the day, when Mother Dear, Scrap iron, and a few of the other notorious knock you out and take it booty bandits ran through the system, some guys had reason to worry. At the same time it was very, very hard to catch an outside charge for shanking someone. They give out new charges now, cameras everywhere, COs every 10 ft. cut it out, Let Prison be Prison, let's cut all the sissy stuff and put these guys out in population. Guys like Blake, they are penalizing him on the down low for his crime. Also, they HATE jailhouse lawyers! If they even think you have half a brain and you do law work they don't want you in population unless your reporting to the administration. Bottom line, guy like him get the whole place going Article 78, Writ of habeas Corpus Crazy! Before you know it COs are getting called down for that Psych eval Stays in their folder, The place has to conform to minimum standards for this and that, \$\$\$\$\$\$\$! They will box you rather than have you poking a stick in a bee hive in population! Guys like that DA, buy Blake a deck of cards so he can play solitary who has connections in Albany could be calling a favor and having him kept boxed. BUT he is NOT in the box because he is an escape risk, and not because he is a threat to other inmates or corrections officers, That very well may be the excuse they are using, I happen to know that they have some MONSTERS walking around population in the NYSDOCS guys who will rip you in two pieces if they want, they are not in administrative segregation, go figure! The solution, a fact finding hearing with an Order to show cause! this should automatically attach by law to any SHU case that results in more than 6 months or 180 days SHU time. This way it is reviewed and legally binding as well as appealable. How was that? A little closer to the answer you were looking for FR. Russ?

I just read some more of that homeland security report with a bit on Celtic religion.

So I thought I'd share this little vignette on one AB leader's conversion:

Kenny is close to my age and from a nearby city. That is where the similarities end.

Kenny was born in Simi Valley, California, in 1953. His teenage years coincided with the peace and love era, though, and Kenny fell in with the California hippie movement. LSD introduced him to the possibilities of expanded consciousness and California flower power provided the social network to make those possibilities happen.

Throughout the late sixties and early seventies he tripped, sold marijuana, grew his hair long, and moved from one California commune to the next. During these years Kenny did two terms in the California Youth Authority. Kenny never went to school, never held a job, and by 1972 the 19-year-old had become an acid casualty. LSD fried my brain, he says.

Kenny killed someone in 1972 he doesn't offer who or why and was sentenced to life without parole. He did his prison time with the same abandon as he displayed on the outside. He didn't work, didn't program, and had no use for religious groups, which he thought were weak. Mainly he walked the yard and developed the reputation of a thug.

In 1977 Kenny was sent to Folsom Prison where he was pressed into the Aryan Brotherhood. Two years later, he hit bottom:

I went to the hole for stabbin somebody in 79. The AB leadership sent me down two books to read. One was on Wicca. I liked the stuff about Celts. It made things a lot simpler.

Kenny emerged from solitary confinement a follower of the Wicca religion. Its pagan practices and rituals, focusing on the sanctity of nature, reminded him of the California hippie communes with their psychedelics and back-to-the-land philosophy.

Ironically, and wildly contrary to anything that has ever been written about them, the Aryan Brotherhood was responsible for Kenny's spiritual awakening.

In the 1990s he helped organize a group of prisoners who petitioned the administration for their right to open and maintain what is called a Wicca/Asatru Circle.

The Circle is an open-air cage, about the size of three prison cells that sits adjacent to the Folsom chapel. I spent some time at the Circle on my visit to the institution. From what I observed and was told, Kenny and the others spend their days in the Circle worshipping the sun, the sky, the wind, and the birds. Generally, they hate buildings.

(I can understand why LOL)

The book Wicca: A Guide for the Solitary Practitioner.

Kenny says It made things a lot simpler.

So send them all a copy.

@Russ

My great grandparents on one side immigrated to NY from Northern Ireland during the Potato Famine (Think Gangs of NY) my other side came before the 1700s from England.

My grandfather was placed in the NY House of refuge as an orphan and later was placed on the orphan train and ended up in Iowa. Tough hard-bitten man.

My other side were southerners of which Sowell speaks.

I understand you :)

@Alan: What can I say, I am a dependent of that Highland pride only one generation on the Scot side out of the Clans When I started studying that stuff some years ago it helped me find myself, and understand the stupidity in me.. Harold DeWolf out of BU and Sowell have great insight. I did not listen to DeWolf early on he made me angry pissed me off in 1971, but he put me on the road to studying where I come from, who I come from and our history To say I am from Craker stock would be an understatement My ancestor are who Sowell in the South is talking about; and in Canada they were the first settlers, although they seemed to get rid of the attitudes quicker

@Alan and T: Sorry Alan, I was responding to you not T for understanding where I am coming from.. Also I know the book, actually I have it. T very nice commentary; but still no answer May be we could build 80,000 individual isolated homes for each one of these folks, surrounded them with double charged electric fences and monitor them with cameras; we could have drone keepers to make sure they do not hurt anyone any longer. We need to have the place in areas with weather conditions that these folks prefer Like we could put their single facilities in Florida, Arizona, Montana for those who need to ski for their recreation time You see, my problem is when you want to do away with something, you need to provide and answer to what you want to replace it with. Believe me, I have been down this civil rights road, before, with designing cells and other stuff It seems to only get worse

@Russ

I think your responding to my interpretation of your views which I addressed to Allen T.

Im glad I got your views correct. Whew!

Maybe we can fill one prison with them all and build grandstands to watch the battles.

I'd take my chances in the arena. At least I'd go down with my pride intact.

Sowell calls it cracker pride. But I bet all the true warriors in the SHU would also prefer such a death over just wasting away.

But without their pawns they would most likely get along. At least I would hope so.

Sowell on the Scotts:

Emigration from Britain, like other migrations around the world, was not random in either its origins or its destinations. Most of the common white people of the South came from the northern borderlands of England for centuries a no-mans land between Scotland and England as well as from the Scottish highlands and from Ulster County, Ireland. All these fringe areas were turbulent, if not lawless, regions, where none of the contending forces was able to establish full control and create a stable order. Whether called a Celtic fringe or north Britons, these were people from outside the cultural heartland of England, as their behavior on both sides of the Atlantic showed. Before the era of modern transportation and communication, sharp regional differences were both common and persistent. Scottish highlanders were, in centuries past, part of the Celtic fringe or north Britons, outside the orbit of English culture, not only as it existed in England but also in the Scottish lowlands.

In colonial America, the people of the English borderlands and of the Celtic fringe were seen by contemporaries as culturally quite distinct, and were socially unwelcome. Mob action prevented a shipload of Ulster Scots from landing in Boston in 1719 and the Quaker leaders of eastern Pennsylvania encouraged Ulster Scots to settle out in western Pennsylvania, where they acted as a buffer to the Indians, as well as being a constant source of friction and conflict with the Indians. It was not just in the North that crackers and rednecks were considered to be undesirable. Southern plantation owners with poor whites living on adjoining land would often offer to buy their land for more than it was worth, in order to be rid of such neighbors.

What exactly constitutes, or defines a violent felony or act takes upon an extremely broad definition. One could burglarize a dwelling with nobody at home and has committed a violent crime by statutory definition. One can get caught with a knife of a certain length and by statute, has committed a violent crime. Therefore, not every violent crime involves a victim who was in immediate danger, and in some instances some crimes defined as violent involve no victim at all! Yet, in many cases the penalty range is the same as a violent crime that involves victim contact.

With that in mind, each case presented should be evaluated on the inherent set of circumstances, for the most part, are system allows for this, however, sometimes individuals receive different treatment from different courts, for a variety of reasons. I have thought about the federal system, somewhat like a computer, with the mandatory guidelines. However, this within itself does not guarantee equal sentences around the board for everyone regardless of financial ability, race, religion, or popularity.

Fr. Russ. (1). I strongly feel that if an individual poses a continued threat to the well being of others, that individual has to be removed from society. (2). In this day and age our system is equipped with sophisticated enough technology to ensure escape proof prisons, and to resort to draconian methodology, and assert claims of our only alternative is place this guy in solitary is unacceptable. We don't need to incarcerate the incarcerated. Although inmates who refuse to follow rules and regulations must be dealt with in an effective manner, solitary is so outdated, that it is amazing that any correctional institution in the Nation can still get away with it and

claim that its done without violating constitutional rights. Some of these conditions arent fit for an animal much less a human being. Some argue there is no rehabilitating certain offenders, some argue prison should in fact be a place reserved solely for the purpose of punishment. Others argue that anyone can be rehabilitated, and that jail is not a place to levy punishment on an individual who has been effectively removed from society. That certain punishments are draconian, barbaric, and knowingly to be inhumane. While SHU may very well be a needed part of any prison, there are changes within SHU that must be updated with the present age and time. As far as long term SHU, I have never been big on scientific study conclusions, my heart and mind tells me its wrong. Long Term SHU is a total violation of numerous constitutional rights. I can hear it now They forfeited their constitutional rights when they committed the crime, These muts have no rights etc. etc. etc. this is anger, and rage, and in some cases heartfelt beliefs by victims of crime and their family members and although I understand their feelings, it doesnt make it right, and it never will!

@Allen T: Bless you, you got it right on; no need for me to repeat anymore That is just what I am asking and saying We three i am sure can defend ourselves; what pray tell of the rest? Who protects them, even I must say at one time, from people like myself, who will die un-evolved to the point of never being triggered Shame on me

@Allen T

I believe I understand Russ's view point by now after all he has repeated it on here numerous times. It is a paradox which I find almost unsolvable.

The three of us have done time and lived in areas where violence was normal. (At least frequent.)

His question is Is it ok to place a violent predator in a cell with you? Or to allow a thug on the street corner to intimidate everyone else on the block?

He believes it is not fair to make others fight for their lives and possibly have to kill some dude that wants to take their manhood, money, food or whatever else he desires.

Everyone that has done time or lived in gang infested neighborhoods knows of what he speaks. The question is Is indefinite solitary confinement the answer?

Obviously it is not. So what is?

@ Ben Thomas

John Hope 1739-1785: Wrote of those in power, Look down upon the lower class of people. As a distinct race of beings, despicable and worthless. The scum of the earth. Not born of common rights of humanity. In regards to those who have been found Guilty of wrong doing !.

Here is one from the French;

The poor and the vicious classes have been and will always be the most productive breeding ground of evildoers of all sorts; it is they whom we shall designate as the dangerous classes. For even when vice is not accompanied by perversity, by the very fact that it allies itself with poverty in the same person, he is an object of fear to society, he is dangerous.
Honore-Antoine Fregier (Paris, 1840)

And we brought this view to our shores where it was followed to its logical conclusion:

National Congress member Zebulon Brockway, wrote in 1884 that at least one-half of his charges were incorrigible due to their genetics.

Brockway further characterized modern criminals as to a considerable extent the product of our civilization and . . . of emigration to our shore from the degenerated populations of crowded European marts.

Brockway reserved the harshest disciplinary measures, e.g., frequent whippings and solitary confinement for those he deemed incorrigible (primarily the mentally and physically disabled).

By 1893 Elmira reformatory where he was warden was seriously overcrowded and Brockway's ideas about genetic degeneracy, low-intelligence, and criminality came under fire as a result of his brutality toward the mentally and physically disabled.

An 1894 executive investigation of Elmira's disciplinary practices concluded that discipline in the institution was harsh, and the continuing stigma led Brockway to resign from his post at Elmira by 1900.

But these ideas live on!

@Alan and T: Frist, what I am saying or asking; is what do you do that is constitutionally correct with combative prisoners while they are under sentencing and need to be separated from everyone, due to their threatening, behaviour? Second to Alan: He was tasked to write about his experience in solitary not on his remorse Yes! His experience in solitary that is the key here. Which means his Thought process also; not only the conditions of his confinement, he touched on his thoughts about solitary and they seem to be void of remorseful thinking Unless I missed something? I know what the Court said in Mass. and it did not go far enough. (Due Process)
What I find interesting is that people believe there are 80,000 prisoners that people do not seem to think poses any threat to anyone where they are separated from the rest of the population in prison What do we have now have locked up over a million and a half I believe (My key question continues to be. Tell me what we should do with folks like Blake or Manning or 80,000 others; that is human for the rest of us?) No one here seems to have the answer. Corrections has their answer which is lock them up and keep them separated for ever. Or is time for society to own them again

Sorry Fr. Russ, I am just a little confused with your exact question(s)? Are you saying (1).What do you do with a dangerous individual who repeatedly harms others, like a repeat violent offender? (2). What is the legal or constitution method of protecting others from the individual who poses this risk of harm to others? are these your questions?

@Allen T

I agree and you're a real man to admit that you didn't see beyond the man's character to the get at the main issue which is solitary confinement.

Im glad you finally read the right words to get this across but I attempted to convey this same point several times. Here they are and one was even addressed to you.

CYA #65085 says:
March 15, 2013 at 8:08 pm

Ill say it again he was asked to write about solitary not about his crime or his remorse.

Alan CYA # 65085 says:
March 15, 2013 at 11:28 am

He was tasked to write about his experience in solitary not on his remorse

Alan CYA # 65085 says:
March 19, 2013 at 2:21 pm

@Allen T.
I cannot help but believe there is a personal history between you two which doesn't allow you to see the greater good in having such conditions Blake describes in his essay aired. The essay's purpose was to explain what it feels like to live in isolation for an indeterminate period of time and nothing more.
When you write such an essay you need to focus on the subject and not head off into tangents.

Then finally

85k says:
March 20, 2013 at 10:12 pm

This essay is about the conditions of inmate in SHU and the way his world in it is. It is not about his crimes, his feelings of remorse or lack of, his victim, or even about the man himself. Its about the circumstances of his imprisonment. And he describes just that from the mouth and mind of a inmate because there is no other way to do so.
Its hard not to take an emotional view one way or the other but that's not the point of the whole thing. Its to describe the state of his surroundings as a SHU inmate over 25 years, which is exactly what he does.

I thought it worth re-posting these words so others might also come around.

@Allen T: I want to make sure you understand, that I am about totally and constitutional change to these brutal tortures conditions across the Country; that is what we dedicate our life to changing: That said, the priority in my mind is 1.) concern for the victims,. 2.) concern for the safety of those confined with the offender and the safety of those in charge of the offenders. 3.) Our totally societal concerns, justice, safety, etc In this case and in many others their thought pattern which they interject in their description is of concern Also their behaviour toward others is a concern I want to know what you do with a dangerous individuals that harm others continually when you give them the chance too? I want to know the Constitutional way you protect others from these persons with risk to others. I have yet to get a straight answer from anyone

I learned many years ago That one of the essential elements of manhood is being able to admit when you are wrong, I have seen many people die over an argument, or a principle, whereas had they just admitted that they were wrong they'd be alive today. Pride in some instances causes us to say and do things against our better judgement. It clouds our vision and enables us justify and rationalize long after we know that we are wrong. I find that 85K's comment which was made at 10:12 pm. on 03/20/2013, to hold extremely valuable truth in this whole comment process, truth that applies to me anyway. Looking at it from his perspective, Blake has defined the conditions of SHU superbly, and the comments I made were unwarranted and do not apply to this subject matter, I was wrong. Perhaps another place and time, maybe even a letter to Blake?
If one was to look at the alleged personal history of every artist, philosopher, etc. and either accept or not accept their work depending on what their personality or character measured up to in accordance with the standards of who? Then there would be no interest in History and a meaningless value to possible precious knowledge. I could go on and on we all can, bottom line I was wrong, his description of SHU is accurate, and his quest to end this open air environment of abuse that by no means conforms with minimum standards, or constitutional standards, should be heard. I also apologize to Stephanie, however, this isn't about Blake, it never was, I made it about him and for that I was wrong. Although he very well just may not deserve the attention he's getting The conditions in our Nations SHU namely NYS do deserve the attention, and they have to be investigated and changed to comply with constitutional guarantees whether it is a popular initiative or not. It is supposed to be the Law!

@Ben: That is an interesting point of view. I tend to think you are right; and it is historically a way of looking at people, right out of the History of Britain; an attitude and way of looking at people, that was brought over here with our founding fathers; the way we treat people, much like the expulsion of my race from Scotland, basically that is what you are saying, like the people who founded PI; and the way they were sent to Canada. In the English view they all were the scum of the earth. apparently it carries on in my Country a bit more than in yours.. We do not send them away we just lock them up.. Out of sight out of mind.. (think about it)

@85K: You are apparently missing the point that many of us are stating. You are right about what he is writing, however, that includes his thought pattern, where his focus is, you know what that is, he thinks about while being in the SHU, or solitary, were looking at where his mind is while he has only time to Think And it appears in his own words it is only on himself No though or very little on what he has done, on his remorse That, my friend tells it all

This essay is about the conditions of inmate in SHU and the way his world in it is. It is not about his crimes, his feelings of remorse or lack of, his victim, or even about the man himself. Its about the circumstances of his imprisonment. And he describes just that from the mouth and mind of a inmate because there is no other way to do so.

Its hard not to take an emotional view one way or the other but that's not the point of the whole thing. It's to describe the state of his surroundings as a SHU inmate over 25 years, which is exactly what he does.

@Alan: They'll find them and they'll end up dead or in the SHU. Such is the way of the violent criminal life.. As I said to Stephine, we are ignorant, ill-cultured still, vengeful. limited education

@Stephine: I hear you I have eleven Children, eight young women. As I told you in another post. Laws are enforced to keep us in check. To keep our society civil and to prevent vendetta. If one of mine was deliberately hurt by someone, I am doomed to a genetic history, for I would hunt them down, and they would need to hope the police and justice system can prevent me from reaching them (one way or another) (I pray my God continually to protect mine and protect me from myself.) Personal vengeance is just what the system is supposed to prevent from happening. We all would like to have a Civil society; however we haven't evolved there yet. Many of us millions are still ignorant, macho, and un-cultured prone to violence for moronic issues (thank you for sharing)

And you, sir, still have your dreams and hopes with you after nearly 26 years of prison?
That is really great to know.
I admire you for living, sir, and for winning those hard battles against yourself all these years.
Keep dreaming!

Not for nothing. My family doesn't want 5mil. It's not about money. No amount of money would make things better. Knowing Blake is suffering brings a sort of justice. Don't blame police because he got life in prison. If one of your family members were murdered, you'd want them in prison forever too.

Once you start reading you can go on and on. How sad

@Stephanie

Unfortunately there are another 80,000 plus families to consider here. The current estimate of prisoners held in isolation.

I do understand your view however and wish I were wise enough to know what words could make things right.

May you and your family find peace.

OK, he killed a cop, A husband, father, son. A wife that will never feel her husband's touch again, children who will never feel their fathers hug again, a mother and father who will never see their son flourish. And he's complaining about HIS life? He deserves everything he's going through. I credit this article with changing my view about the death penalty. This is a far more appropriate form of punishment for this crime. To think of what he did, to suffer for the rest of his life!! He deserves every moment of his distress and I wish him many, many more days and years of it..

I think it is too terrible to be in solitary for such lengths of time. Could there not be an in-between? Perhaps where prisoners in solitary get to socialize with other prisoners in solitary? This way they would not be a danger to the less violent prison population.

I also think that after so many years, based on good behavior, a prisoner's sentence should be commuted (even for killing police).

I believe in forgiveness.

Lin Bnr; Hard to forgive when you're still being BSed. How is that done? I can pity him for having such violence and double-talk inside his skin. But even God requires that you search your soul and acknowledge what you've done and made amends before doling out forgiveness.

@Stephanie Pretty sure Blake knows suffering that you and your family will never know.

His pain is not any different than the pain of those others in SHU, I'm sure, he just knows how to articulate it well. As someone who is a bit of a creative writer, I know how to spin words to make bored experiences sound very painful, I know how to explore thoughts and think deeply enough when I am bored to actually feel some drudgery or pain. But that is what I am bringing on myself. What the system is doing to punish someone is putting them in a room for the remainder of their sentence. The stark-raving madness that then ensues is purely a result of where your head goes. On top of that, there is probably some madness in the mind of someone who is paralyzed because of a drunk driver, they are now confined and imprisoned and did absolutely nothing to deserve it.

@Stephanie: Very sorry for your hurt and pain. Nevertheless, crime and the criminal acts are public; not only are they against the victims, in a personal sense, but society in the greater sense. Given that our society places the crimes in the public forum, it allows us to (we hope) find the just retribution for the victims and our society in general. Clearly, this crime and its punishment is a concern to a vast majority of people; I would think mostly due to Blake's legal challenges and public relations. The pain of such a horrific act never goes away, the loss never able to be replaced. However, we are supposed to be a civil society and we look for some form to satisfy all the interest of justice. Our society through its laws are attempting to keep everyone in check so we do not have a personal, vendetta system, running rampant in our society. In the public forum there are many views to the complicated issues of Justice; and we are a society where as good citizens you are asked to participate in the dialog to find workable solutions to the Justice process. It is an obligation of you being a part of the social system to participate; it is what being a citizen in a just society is about. May you find some peace and rest for your pain.

The point of imprisonment is not rehabilitation, it is to serve as a deterrent to others. With that in mind, everyone needs to read this piece. Not to sympathize, but to understand that actions have consequences. Fate worse than death? Maybe. Sometimes you get even worse than you give.

If he had been a deputy he would not of got life and the family would of received five million dollars. It's always one rule for one and one rule for another where police are concerned and absolutely disgusting the police are bent bastards no matter what country you live.

You know what I don't get. Why everyone pities the family. I am David Clark's niece, and I know my family doesn't want pity. They want all of this to just end, to rest, to keep my uncle's name out of the mouth of this scum bag. None of you, weather you are praising his good work or showing hate and anger toward him are doing any good. You are giving him the attention he wants. The fame he wants. He is so starved for attention from being in SHU for so long that he is crying out for help. I am just so sick of this. I lost my Uncle My God Father. I didn't even get a chance to know my uncle, my cousins didn't get a chance to grow up with a father, and the worst thing of all is seeing how my aunt has suffered. She is one of the strongest people I know. For 26 yrs now she has had to deal with the death of her husband EVERYDAY because people can't just let it be. They keep opening the same wounds. I could continue to go on and on about how upset and frustrating all of this is, but what's the use? There will always be another comment, another letter, another person giving him the attention he wants and has never deserved. He will never know what suffering is. My family knows all too well.

I hope that all of those that feel criminals are without morals read both Allens and Russ's words. No I haven't seen Blake's site. Maybe the east coast was different.

Bless you both.

@Alann and T: You either really turn it around or you end up lost. Some can never turn it around. I have friends relatives that just can't shut it down. I hate to have anyone, and I mean anyone endure the tortures that exist in our prison; however I know the reality of the chance any real change is coming to those in the most desperate situations. However, if they are not mentally ill, although most of us are a little bent, the stark reality is they put themselves there. I put myself in the box, made very bad choices and once on the road it was get out of my way or get run over. Oh, and Alann, no offense on the psych-co reference, I do know myself well, and I know there are missing parts. As you might note here; I'm dyslexic; in my work, I have editors, here I am not using one, what you read is what you get. What Bobby D does with the AFSC and our TV show Struggle for Justice speaking and writing about, the system and his own journey through that system; his is another story of more brutality concerning the system. Our goal is to attempt to change the brutality, to abolish the system as we know it. I can't speak for him or my other associates, they can speak for themselves; but I am looking toward restorative justice. Many years ago I and others suggest honor type system for lighter felons, they have them in England. There are models around the world for dealing with folks like Blake and others that are far more human, much is about money. No matter what we do; the needs of society to be protected will over-ride every thing and it should. We are the law breakers. The needs of the victim is again more important than us who made them victims. Until we can talk and understand the burden is on us to change. It is not even on those who keep us locked up. All they are doing is their job, whether they are not bags or not they have not been caught breaking the law, they did not go to court, for most of multiple times. We are the foundation for change; which means we first need to be able to live with the other idiots we are confined with, whether we like them or not. If we can't do that, then who will give a shit about us? It begins and ends with us. I can't understand that, than no change will come. Bless you guys, bless every one here. My prayers go out to all you victims, it may sound meaningless to you, however it is honest.

@Russ

I meant started early in the system. If the system actually worked they should not have went on to adult prisons. I believe him when he says.

Reform schools were places that taught violence, said Dellelo. In Massachusetts, your killers, your mobsters came through these institutions.

My brother's friends from the D.V.I are all dead. Psycho overdosed, Greg Whitman, went on to become a Hell's Angel and then crashed his bike at high speed into a pillar under and overpass, another biker friend dropped a handful of pills when he was stopped by the police and the police were so pissed they locked him in isolation and watched him die.

Those are the words of his club brothers who heard the police say I hope you die. Or something to that affect.

I parted with all these bikers etc but I never became one. One never felt safe in their world either as an outsider they could turn on you in an instant.

I was looking for a good time not violence. Not in my character.

@Alan: No, Bobby did not begin earlier than I, he would tell you I lucked out being a little rich kid; just had a more influential family than he did; to understand the Italian structure in Mass and New England the ties and relationships Street Connor Society is the classic study.. My family ties though I grew up in Newton, go into the Italian communities of the North End of Boston, RI and into New York among other areas.. Begin a cross-breed on the other side; family ties go into South Boston and all over, I am Scot Italian, though most think I am Irish due to married relationships.. The tragedy with Bobby and many of my friends and partners they did suffer the reformatories of Mass (I was very lucky) I had a gang and was first arrested at 11. A big gang. Our families paid out a lot of money to keep several of us out of reform school. I was lucky as Newton kid (Timing and were you are is everything)

@Russ

I looked up your associate Dellelo and I am finding that unlike yourself most begin early:

<http://www.prisonstalk.com/forums/archive/index.php/t-93582.html>

Dellelo's prison life began at age 13, at the Lyman School for Boys in Westborough, the first reform school in the nation. While there, he and other boys were subjected to violence and molestation at the hands of those who were charged with their care. They also acquired new skills like car theft and lock-picking, along with an intense anger and hatred for authority.

Reform schools were places that taught violence, said Dellelo. In Massachusetts, your killers, your mobsters came through these institutions. Robert Dellelo believes Massachusetts prisons are creating more problems than they are solving. It is a claim he does not make lightly. Having spent 46 of his 63 years in those prisons, he is somewhat of an expert.

In 1983, Dellelo was sentenced to 40 years in prison for manslaughter and attempted armed robbery because his co-defendant shot a police officer. Since his release in November 2003, Dellelo has been working with groups such as the American Friends Service Committee and the City Mission Society to change the prison system he believes to be a failure.

I am tracking the history of these reformatories every since I discovered the building boom in the 1890s. They are often responsible for the hardening of those they reform.

Did you read my other comment directed at you above?

March 19, 2013 at 1:29 pm

Yes timing is critical isnt it? Glad you made it.

One of the reasons why the Boston History cant get by me I was there. I was then a player; so I know the lies and it is interesting to see the supposed history of the prison reform movement out of Mass from the 1960 through the 1970 most of it written by poverty-pimps, rat convicts, lying guards and people who were never at the core of the development, but interject-themselves in like they did it.. It was a convict movement that started inside in the mid 60s those folks went outside and hung together and developed a political movement, then a union and then the place exploded.. No one wants our brothers and sister to know how it was put together, they only want to tell them parts. The failing parts, the bullshit revolutionary parts that made huge failure and dupes out of a few good convicts like manning and others..Now useless to helping bring about real beneficial change for everyone.. They want you to think Stanley Bond was great, a complete asshole for what he did as was Tommy and Ray bunch of jerks declaring war on the US you have to be a fool. I know all the nut bags Alan. I was one myself. I represented twelve hundred Mass. Prisoners in the 1960 and 70s by petition before State and Federal legislators.. A movement that could have change things was torn apart piece by piece because it got too politically strong and brought all folks together as one There are writers on here that do not even know the real History of the AFSC David Spinney out of Cambridge was the first to write too prisoners in Walpole and Norfolk I was one that came out and with him started the Friends Justice program I got a grant first Ex-Convict on parole founded the Justice project which today has Bobby Dellelo there You wont find any Guards books writing about me (there is a good reason, unless they tell the truth) The Mass. Prison Movement really started with a group of guys in the jails waiting trials; we started in Middlesex jail, with food strikes, we got out then we where back in at the Boston Charlies street Jail We came from different groups but had a common idea about working together to get silly stuff like extra time out of the cell, TV, food improvement, that was before we went to State prison.. The common tread also was we were an integrated group the youngest and a bunch of crazy suckers My own crew cut across racial and ethnic lines, we where from the Italian sections, Irish, Black, Indian, just beginning the climb up the criminal ladder Well another story You stay safe..

@Alan: All I can say is I know all the players Even the man you know as Zannino was referred to as Larry in the street and Jerry well was Jerry, bless his old soul. I come out of that area and era, (Cleary as I stated on of the crimes I went for was Book-making and Loan-sharking among many others.. I know or knew all of them very, very well He (Joe) met members of the Anguillo family at Concord prison, he was from Fall River or New Bedford I forget which I dont know if it was Danny or Frank? My older partner at that time was a member of Joes crew that worked for Jerry; one of the reason why I was or missed getting killed myself under the Bulger bull-crap I guess one has to say timing in this life is everything

CYA#65085 I have to honestly say that when I went through State Prison there was a certain honor system amongst the fellas. Lets just say I caught the last of the so called good guys. Lets not get it twisted, 80% of them once you threw a bag of dope in the game all rules were off. But the other 20% taught me things about life that I apply today and will apply for the rest of my life. He could have chose to be one of the 20%, but instead he was one of the 80% so to speak, yet now he wants to claim status of the 20% and reap the benefits! This is my problem with Blake. While I was far from the brightest light bulb in the ceiling I was definitely no fool. My feelings for Blake are based on how he presented himself then and how he allows himself to be seen now. His writing skills are beyond a doubt commendable. So therefore what your saying is that is the only point that matters therefore everything else is after but which means bullshit, is exactly that. Maybe for you, because as you said your interest is only for the purpose of promoting a sensational argument for ending torture through SHU abuse! Looking at it from that perspective your 100% right! I have no history with Blake that makes me hate him. Hate is a very strong word. What I dont like is a hypocrite. he got someone boasting him up as a legal beagle that sued NYSDOCS for 76 Gs sent the familys zilch! He got someone boasting him up as a stocks and bonds wiz who made quite a bit in 2000, 2001 and sent the famliys zilch. This is on his Billy Blake 87a site. Have you read it? If you havent maybe you should. Then he talks of his hurt and pain over the guys kidsHe complains about noise on the gate yet had to be one of the noisiest guys on the gate you ever heard! What happened to Blake in 1991, although I heard, I wasnt there so i wont speak on what I heard! However, if he prays he wont be alone, that I learned today. I woke up this morning and wanted to help Blake. That good guy within wanted face down that bad guy within. I have 20 plus years certified as a legal researcher, a half dozen degrees and certifications of my own. So I said Im gonna help this guy! Then I read his web site and seen the money he had and that he could have got a lawyer, helped the victims kids, anything positive, Yet it appears that he used it to make friends and form relationships for his own self serving needs, not priorities, needs. If my information is wrong then he can thank the person who formulated his web site! I still felt bad, then I seen the statement that if we pray we are not alone, and it came to me. What he needs to do is pray, and the rest will come to him.

Nothing more nothing less!

@Fr. Russ

Joseph Barboza was hit by four shotgun blasts from close range, killing him instantly.

Ilario Zannino, chief enforcer of Gennaro Anguilo, was later overheard saying to an associate on a hidden bug that it was J. R. Russo who had assassinated Barboza. In the conversation, Zannino described Russo as a genius with a carbine.

It is thought that he first met figures of Boston organized crime while incarcerated at Walpole.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Barboza

@Allen T.

I cannot help but believe there is a personal history between you two which doesnt allow you to see the greater good in having such conditions Blake describes in his essay aired. The essays purpose was to explain what it feels like to live in isolation for an indeterminate period of time and nothing more.

When you write such an essay you need to focus on the subject and not head off into tangents. Now I have no idea about the mans character or fighting tactics but such un-sportsman like tactics are not uncommon in the joint.

I read he was attacked in 1991 and assume the slicing you speak of might have occurred then, what comes around goes around.

Hate is not a positive emotion and although you may have reason to hate the man I hope your able to put it aside for the sake of your family.

Glad your making it much luck to you in the future.

You can read my story here to understand my concern over solitary:

<http://solitarywatch.com/2012/12/30/voices-from-solitary-haunted-by-memorys-ghosts/>

I looked up those reformatories a kind of hobby for me. A couple of facts.

Lincoln Hall, was founded as a home for Civil War orphans in 1863.

When Tyson was 12, he was sent to Tryon Reformatory, where he knocked out a score of boys and several guards. His fighting ability caught the eye of one guard, former boxer Bobby Stewart, who brought him to Cus D'Amato.

I collect info on juvenile institutions.

@Russ

Yes there is a certain vibe with some an intensity and void in their eyes. My brother Mike was like you. No fear this is the case with psychopaths now before you get insulted not all psychopaths are evil some are test pilots, soldiers, police, firefighters and yes criminals. This is not the norm our species developed the fight or flight instinct to survive. I will give you an example and use the snitch angle. It also shows the difference between old school and the new criminal.

Remember that I told you that I was introduced to the collector by Tony Sr. Heres the story behind it. Both Tony Sr. and his son have passed away so I can tell this story.

Tony Jr. was better known as Psycho, the product of a professional relationship between his Sicilian American Merchant Marine father, more pirate than Marine, and a prostitute. So Tony was very sensitive about his mother and when he was under the influence of drugs he could get violent over any real or delusional affront on his mothers character.

So one day while he was sniffing glue in the park near his home he become convinced that this dwarf sitting near him in the park had somehow insulted his mother. Now mind you he had never seen the dwarf before nor did the dwarf know his mother at all so it was all in his head. Tony was so enraged by this delusion that he grabbed the dwarf around his neck with both hands and lifted him off the ground then held him there until the little man turned blue in the face. He would have killed the dwarf if some passersby had not intervened on the little mans behalf. So after telling this story in D.V.I. where he served time with my brother Mike someone busts out laughing and says, Dude your psycho man. And the name has stuck ever since.

Soon after their release Psycho ratted Mike out so Mike retaliated with a drive by on Psychos house. In response a contract was placed on Mikes head and I was soon cornered by twenty odd bikers outside a skating rink. The leader had rightfully recognized me as being Mikes brother but luckily we have different last names so I was able to convince them they were mistaken or I would have died that night.

I told Mike about the bikers and he told me that they were friends of Tonis from the joint. He said he would take care of it.

So some days later as the two of us walked down the street Mike asked me to accompany him up to a house. When we arrived at the front door Mike asked me to knock on it so I innocently comply with his request. Mike was standing just to my left and behind me when I turned to ask him, Who lives here? Mike replies Tony. And I reply incredulously, Psycho? Then Mike says Yeah Tony. I am dumbfounded and say Awe shit man. Why Then I hear the door being unlocked.

I turned my attention back to the door where Tony Sr. now stood in the doorway wearing only a tank top and underwear under his opened robe. My heart begins to race as I spot the 45mm pistol at Tonis side which he promptly places to my forehead. With the guns trigger cocked he demanded to know Is your name Mike? Just like I had done with the bikers I denied it without elaborating so Tony turns and points the gun towards Mike asking Are you that punk that shot up my moms place. Mike said Hold on! Let me explain what went down. You see Little Tony had boosted some shoes from the mall and he had to run for it. Mall security was hot on his heels when he jumped back into his ride. So I punched it and unfortunately wrecked Tonis ride trying to get away. When the man arrived Tony gave me up. So you see I was upset with the prospect of being sent back to the joint. Tony Sr. replies My Tony snitched on you? That fucking punk he knows better than that shit. If you would have come to me first I would have kicked his fucking ass myself.

I stood there in disbelief as I listened to the twos conversation Mike was actually turning this mans anger around. Even though Mike had always had a gift for bull shitting this was deadly serious business for when he had first opened that door I saw murder in this mans dark hollow eyes. Now Tony Sr. tells us to come on in waving the gun in a fast half arch prompting us to enter quickly. I hesitated to enter at first thinking that it was much safer outside where Tony might be deterred from shooting us by the possibility of a witness observing our cold blooded murder from a distance. However, I found myself following Mike and Tony into the living room, just as his mother peeks out from the kitchen. Not noticing the handgun which Tony now discreetly held behind his back she asks Are your friends hungry? Should I bring you all something to eat? Tony answers No mom Ill be in my room I want to show them something. I follow Mike and Tony into his bedroom and although it is mid-day its very dark in his room. Then I notice the aluminum foil on all the windows blocking any sunlight from entering the room. Tony says I just got back from Nam (Vietnam) and I brought back some good weed not like that shit you kids smoke. Then Tony hands Mike a joint and says Here light this up. I feel a little more at ease now as Mike lights up the joint sucking hard for a few hits. Then as Mike holds the fumes in he reaches over and passes the joint over to me. I follow suit and pass it on to Tony who had just got done lighting some incense on his dresser to mask the odor of the weed to avoid the suspicion of his mother. I tried to search Tonis eyes for any sign of mal-intent on his part, but it was hard to come to a definitive conclusion with only a black

light and a lava lamp for lighting. But I was already feeling the relaxing effects of the weed and as my eyes tighten I said, Man your right this is some bad ass weed. He replies Yeah I know I had to go through a lot of shit to get it here. On the way back to port I had this punk on the ship demanding that I split my stash with him. He had all the rest of the crew shitting in their pants because of his size. Do you know that punk had fucking 20 inch biceps? Yeah he thought he was a real bad ass. So I put him on night watch and can you believe it he cut his own throat, and fell overboard. The guy that was supposed to relieve him came up to me the next morning and told me that the dude was nowhere to be found at shift change. He chuckles a little. Bad luck on his part, right? Ha fucking punk he got his alright. You know you two are fucking lucky I could have blown you both away at the door but I like your balls for coming here. I want you to know something though, I had been searching this fucking city for your ass Mike, and it was not so I could share my weed with you either. You understand what I mean dont you? putting the gun down next to him to accentuate the point. I hate a snitch too and I cant believe my Tony would have given you up to the man. Tell me again what happened.

So Mike recounts the events beginning at the mall right up to the shooting.

I have to say even as a boxer I fought with a healthy amount of fear. It is only natural to have some fear the trick is to face your fear and still be able to act now that is true courage. In my opinion anyway. I envy those who dont have it however. And the last point I understand having to be confronted by people who just dont know who they are fucking with. It is harder for some than others.

Just a note: Joe was not italian, just worked for them Killed fro them..

@Alannen T: Thank you, I have to confess you are right. But for the grace of My God, I keep a tight chain However one can trigger PTSD and all that bull Having to be humble when youd like to kick someones teeth in, taking crap with some clown in your face that has no idea what you are capable of, all these things make individuals like me and those inside a danger to themselves, and others.. I never have admitted to much fear; I am not even sure I know what that is since childhood; but one man-made me extremely nervous, i use to hold on to my gun when around him. Joe the animal Barboza, one of the Italian rats out of Boston long ago.. I was younger and my cousin use to prod me in front of the man what you doing Russ he knew Id had my hand on my gun and they would laugh Right! When you take the dirt road you can expect only dirt and mud in your face, nothing clean You take care T

I woke up this morning and felt that maybe I can help this guyI try to challenge myself to confront my shortcomings, put aside my negative feelings about someone, and use my skills to help people in need. This guy would be perfect for me because I see alot of me in his attitude and behavior. So I went on his other sites and one calls him a legal eagle who won 70 thousand from NYSDOCS, and then some girl commented on a picture he posted as I mentioned in my previous post. However, I said to myself this guy had 70 grand and from what the Posts on his site saysOne chick took the most of it, why didnt he make some sort of restitution to his victims? At least something? He has a site called Billy Blake 87A something and a Free Billy Blake site. It is listed right along this one, you cant miss it. look it up. Again, I have said nothing that wasnt prompted by his statements, or his actions. I have said nothing that isnt documented. With all that saidIm kinda short lived for this site, actually just passing through, so you have most likely heard about all you will from me. On this subject anyway. Fr, Russ I like your style, I wish you support on your mission and most important of all keep that beast within on that chain, I have a feeling if it gets loose will be writing Posts about you! God Bless!

I havent read anything so damn depressing and soul sucking since Zolas Germinal or Solzhenitsyns One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich.

Ive often wondered whether or not someone who really had to do life in prison would think it was a break. I would say that I agree with this guy though. If you had to be in solitary confinement for the rest of your life, you would be better off dead.

He put himself there.

@Alanen T: Good post, I did not know about the case or settlement, that says it all for me; I have spent now, nearly fifty years in this struggle for real justice, both for my brothers and sisters and for their and my victims, which is the over-riding factor for me. I can never in any way give back what i took, or caused; so I dedicated my remaining years to assisting others and trying to free the rest of my partners, even the ones that have not changed.. I tried to give myself to my children as best i could for what I did to them. But more importantly I recognized waht a shit-bumb I was and how much harm I caused. I am no easy person and I do direct, what people may call ministry. I deal with our harden for the most part I still take no crap But today Id live under the bridge swollo my pride as best i could before I would hurt someone; or take from them Not that I would not defend myself, but I no longer would hunt someone down to do them harm You want catch me robbing any place, or strong arming anyone You might catch me betting on a horse, some things are hard to change.. The work I have done and some of it was good, was for my victims, that I did not know and even the ones I knew but could never change what went on I think we all have to recognize (those of us that have it) the Beast within, and it need to be restrained and tamed and even chained at times.. Nice post T..

How about my actions caused the Death of one man and severely injured another, Instead of I know there are some haters out there I killed a cop? How about that lawsuit and that money, did the victims family see any of that? Probably enough to set up college funds for the victims Two children? Or. did it go to people out there in an attempt to earn companionship and status. Like one girl said I cant believe you posted a picture of her on your facebook she stole almost all your money.

I made some very uncharitable comments yesterday about Blake, Today I woke up and debated with myself as to whether or not I was fair, whether or not Blake should receive my help, or should I just ignore this guy based on his track record of slick moves hes made, or not so slick moves. So I pondered upon some of the aforementioned questions? I looked at words he uses like reiterate, fathom, haters, such a mix of vocabulary, as if the other guy pops out and surfaces and then goes back inside and hides behind the tree waiting, watching for reactions.

Do you blame Blake for being the way he is? Do you blame the system?

When I was young and crazy he says. I have never been on meds or in a mental Health unitHe doesnt realize how insane he actually is, that jail is one big mental health unit, and that meds might help him? IQ tests are not a measure of ones intelligence as much as they are a measure of ones awareness skills. Being the survivor he is, I would expect a heightened awareness. Yet as far as intelligence, I think it would have been intelligent to give that lawsuit money to those children who were deprived of a Father. Or, the other gentleman who needed several surgeries and acquired bills, and such great losses with his inability to work or perform everyday normal living activities.. Maybe if for no other reason, send it to his victims just out of a caring and remorseful spirit? Remorseoh yes, An intelligent person would not have went on the world wide stage pleading 2 hours for intervention, while only giving 10 seconds worth of remorse for his actions which initiated the situation.! Last but not least, over and over again, about it being cops, these were human beings, while their choice of profession ultimately factored into their death, first and foremost. they were human beings.

Twenty-five years ago I spent 55 hours in solitary confinement. Hard as it may be for anyone to believe, it was torture. At 25 years, Blake passed 219,000 hours. My 55 was really, really hard. My mind started coming unglued. Now compare 55 to 219,000.

if the idea of prison is to rehabilitate rather than to seek retribution for ones acts no matter how appalling we as a society may find their acts to be then this guy is quite clearly by his own words remorseful contrite and regrets the impact his actions have had upon himself whilst appearing to understand the detrimental effects his actions posed on society and others if thats not rehabilitation what is i say time to let him be free and rejoin society clearly this man will never again pose a threat to anyone with the memories of the penalties he has already faced i would advocate strongly for his release

Well you picked a horrible example in Billy Blake. Perhaps he has grown up and I am sure he has changed. there is no way possible someone cant change given them circumstances, However, his problem is his. As far as getting into anymore Blake war stories, he does a good job of that all by himself. As for myself, I have already had my 15 minutesand some. Today I am off Parole, married, with a 17 year old daughter and I collect vintage sportcards as one of my hobbies.

While I know of the conditions in the Box to be deplorable and in many instances what can definitely be characterized as cruel and unusual punishment, violative of due process, and in violation of probably a half dozen other constitutional rightslets not forget that it is Prison, SHU at that, a place where many people with Mental Health issues are put together because they were sentenced to jail instead of a mental health facility. This is something NYS is guilty of, sentencing mentally ill inmates to jail instead of committing them, and leaving them in jail long after they should be placed in Mental Health Facilities. I have seen many inmates decorate their cell in feces and piss out their cell door on a daily basis. The usual outcome is a beatdown by the Porter not a trip to the Mental health department. Perhaps a class action suit challenging the conditions based on the unsanitary and unsafe prison conditions due to the presence of a large number of inmates with presenting Mental Health issues being housed with general population/segregated mentally cleared inmates is in order. The amount of money it would cost to figure out who was who and who needed to be placed where would be enough to get them to meet any conditions stipulated as an alternative settlement!

I think the sentence is serving him well. Please continue locking him up for life.

Today's society needs to apply this kind of sentence more often, particularly to the rapists. These criminals do not deserve sanity.

@Allen T

Im sorry I was responding to Russ.

Im not upset I dont know the man the only thing Im defending is the right not to be tortured.

As someone who has done time like me you must have an interest in that. Scroll up and read more of my comments.

Id like to hear about the slicing. And your experience in those places. We have similar histories.

CYA# 65805, I know nothing about Blue Bloods except its a TV show full of cops. I on the contrary grew up in Lincoln Hall, Tryon and other reformatories. So my Sunday dinners were with NY's future killers. So if that remark was directed at me because you were upset with what I said about Blake, or you wanted it to appear that the comment I made came from a CO or CopThats not it my man, not at all. I call a spade a spade, Blake spent more time in his letter from hell trying to impress the world with how He fancies himself as a tough guy, then he did showing any remorse or solllution to his situation. I simply wanted it to be known that I know of his cowardly fighting tactics, some of which have earned him numerous enemies throughout the NYSDOCS. That is why I asked is Administrative Segregation being used as PC in his case? Hell. let him out the box, what would I care where he does his time. however, dont be surprised if he gets let out the box and gets his face sliced AGAIN!

@Alan: The Hit Man story is all the same just like Bostons own Matarano; in fact his book is titled Hitman also was on 60 minutes; they both should be called Rat-man all though today it does not matter As I said the first one to the DA gets the deal These guys like the lime-light however they never know if there is a family member of one of the people who they so crudely talk about having taking them out that might take them out We here in the US are not like the old-time Italians or Celtics; for if we were they would not be so flippant about who they killed. These guys are serial killers that happen to hook up in organized crime If they had been under either old Italian or Celtic rule, they themselves would be dead, even now We live in a Country that seems to praise these clowns, that appears to me to get off on their stories of debasing, killing and screwing every one involved They get away with their sick killing due to the fact they, kill for someone, then when the heat is on, they rat out or frame someone by using the justice system to get out of what they have done, (usually serial killing) and the Tax payer foots the bill for everything That is the American way Oh, yeh and idiots like Blake and manning end up never seeing the light of day They kill cops, about as stupid as you can get While the Hitman is out free to do what ever he has on his mind Like praying to God for a new job?

@Alan: I do not know about finding God, that is a personal thing. I know my partners do not want me to interview John Matarano about his three Hail Mary forgiveness from a priest. Johnny is walking around the North End having wacked 19 or 22 did 12 years and will testify against Jimmy Bulger.. Everyone is a rat today, not like old school, first one to the DA goes home; the rest end in the SHU I lost several partners and friends to the Boston gang wars and the Bulger bull crap It is a life which if you choose than what ever happens, happens, and you have to know you did it to yourself There is no such thing as honor among thieves We, have idiots, that were one time, wise-guys not at 80 they get arrested for shacken down people Have to be kidding me The new wise guy is a hop head, does it not even no what loyalty means, lucky if he can find the bathroom without help Clowns kill for nothing, steal all over their own neighbor-hood.. It is a different time When I went to prison you were lucky to find 5% using drugs; now as I have said 95% are drug users and you have a few idiots like me still around You were smart to stay out of the business I was in.. I was lucky, had great partners (Stand-Up) from being a kid for the most part Was, smart enough, to be able to work the system at the right times other wise I would heve been beside Manning or Blake

I am at ease knowing you are in a place far worse than hell. You killed an innocent man and shot another. Did you once in your pathetic essay tell how after 25 years of sitting in solitary with all this boredom have any thoughts of remorse? What about these men who put on their uniforms, kissed their wives and children goodbye and went to work? One to never return home and the other to lay in a hospital surgery after surgery being put back together because of you? Do you know what hell it has been for their families? This essay is nothing more than a woe is me story. You have nobody to blame but yourself. All these people defending your poor upbringing – what about David Pelzer? He went through hell as a child. Do you feel as though you deserve anything but the lowest level of care? To fester in solitary and think of all the things you once loved and enjoyed? A person like you is not capable of those things. Death would have been an easy way to take your waste of skin out of this world but suffering is far more just. I truly hope that you spend the rest of your days alone with nothing but your sanity slowly slipping away. Thank you Gov. Mario Cuomo for keeping Billy Blake in this hell and I can only hope he is never granted a pardon!

And some how there are people out their that feel sorry for this POS. If got what he had coming. Im glad to see that some times the system really does work.

@Russ

Here is an example of our justice system and this mans history makes me feel very wise that I turned Tonys friends offer to work for him down.

I could not have done the things that went alone with the job.

http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-18560_162-57574760/hit-man-has-a-mobster-found-redemption/

60 Minutes

Hit man: Has a mobster found redemption?

Excerpt from the conclusion:

John, I gotta tell you. In talking to you, sometimes I wonder if youre still just a tough guy or if youre still part of you a bad guy.

In this case I have no doubt.

If you cant do the time, dont do the crime. I have a son in prison for murdering a 17 year old girl in 1992. He got life but breaks all the prison rules and has been put in solitary 19 times that I know of. He has no remorse and when he comes up for parole I join the victims family in protesting his parole. He was not raised to be a criminal, and he lied to me about the date of his trial because his defense was his abused childhood. For many years he had me convinced he was remorseful, until I finally found out the truth.

@Lisa Dawson

Allen T. just gave at least one institution that Blake was held in as a juvenile.

http://www.archives.nysed.gov/a/research/res_topics_legal_corrections_inst_coxsackie.shtml

Coxsackie Correctional Facility is located in West Coxsackie, Greene County. It is classified as a maximum security general confinement facility and detention center for males between the ages of 16 and 21. Coxsackie presently confines approximately 1,000 inmates.

The New York State Vocational Institution, established by the Laws of 1932, Chapter 538, opened in March 1935. The first inmates received at this institution, generally known as Coxsackie, were older inmates from the New York House of Refuge which was being closed after serving as a juvenile reformatory since 1825. Coxsackie continued this reformatory function, providing inmates with a program of academic and vocational education. Industrial training is presently provided in mechanics, machine shop, printing, and other trades, as well as training in agriculture. For the first ten years of its operation, Coxsackie received inmates by direct commitment from the courts. Since 1945, with the opening of the Elmira Reception Center, Coxsackie has received nearly all its inmates from this Center.

The New York State Vocational Institution, established by the Laws of 1932, Chapter 538, opened in March 1935. The first inmates received at this institution, generally known as Coxsackie, were older inmates from the New York House of Refuge which was being closed after serving as a juvenile reformatory since 1825.

Here is a bit of its early history.

Researchers in the mid-1940s studied the transmission of a deadly stomach bug by having young men swallow unfiltered stool suspension. The study was conducted at the New York State Vocational Institution, a reformatory prison in West Coxsackie.

@Allen T: my sentiments exactly, he reminds me of Pet Remick, out of Norfolk that wrote the book In Constant Fear, nothing but selling rat lies, twisting the truth for his own ends.. For me it is either being honest with the streight world or just shutting up.. The fact is streight people are not going to like to hear truth, they romanised about bad guys and the evil we do; they all want to change us, make us good folks, when they cant do it, has to be done alone; and you must have a reason to change i dont even believe you really change. i know I have not. I just have a chained beast inside. I could for the life of my get myself under control; until I decided to discipline myself to follow in the philosophy of the guy called jesus and all i could read on what the man did or tried to do.. It is a much better trip than the Machiavellian one I was on. (i did not get galloping religion in prison by the way. I was a stone atheist and if you carried a bible I mocked you.) Like the donuts though

@Allen T.

I dont want to defend the mans actions but I never saw a fair fight in the joint. Most look to dust their target before they know it is coming or at least have them at an angle that they cannot return a punch. Think of shock & awe tactics of the military.

I assumed he wasnt popular from the law suit he won (see above) but the whole idea is being lost on his character this is about solitary conditions. And of holding people for indefinint terms in such conditions as he discribs.

Family is important your lucky to have had those Sunday dinners like the series Blue Bloods. LOL People are people and everyone is affected by their environment Read the statistics in my post above on the % of inmates I posted the source

Not feeling the dude. Nothing more than a good writer with a cell full of dictionarys. When he was in Coxsackie as a kid, he was a cowardly fighter who use to sucker punch people when they werent paying attention. I remember when he got a taste of his own medicine while being escorted through the Rotunda and inmate Hogan knocked him out cold! All of this is on record in files maintained by NYSDOCS. When did he become Billy the Kid? Blake thats what he was called. I would also like to know if Administrative Segregation is just a fancy name for Protective Custody (PC)! I know that he is a very hated inmate, not just by correctional employees, inmates alike. That is ofcourse unless hes doing free legal work for them or some other type of favorsThen of course hed be Billy the Kid! My point being, I hate to see a murderer, whos very possibly playing PC, acting like hes a stand up guy, trying to sucker people on the outside who dont know any better. So if it smells like shit check your upper lip Blake!

@Alan: Only 8% of the US is on Drugs or drug users That said, I do not believe it should be under the Justice Departments preview. As to riots, been there done that The bad behaviour is on both sides and has nothing to do with the fact that these people whether prisoner or guard come from the same community class and are pitted against each other because they are both stupid and cant talk to each other that is an educational nd a communications problem Who and when should one or the other recognized they are brothers? (I am sure you want to put the weight on the guard or the police officer, I on the other hand think it has to be us the law-breaker) In my family and in the many families of my associates, it was easy for we sat across at Sunday meals from our fathers, uncles, brothers that were law enforcement while we were criminal. Same kitchen table with ma and dad (Brother is a Sheriff, many of my family are military, youngest daughter Homeland Security.) Power to the people These are my people; the people those bums want to destroy.. I was an organized crime guy. I played my game and took the chances; I also paid big for what I did; i dont blame anyone for the lose of family, friends except myself It was all about me. (just like it is all about them, now they cry poor me. They need to man up.) You throw the dice you should know the game, win or lose you got in it on your own. Unless you have a mental disorder, on which I take a very different view (Note: I am talking about the Criminals here) Not mental Health people who need to be under mental health. Eg. Sex-Offenders, drug addicts, anyone with a mental disorder

As a prior drug user as a teen I know the ill effects drugs have on our youth and unfortunately if your parents use it is more likely that they will. In fact many an adult uses legal drugs to get high and the kids usually find steal and pop them first. If not a older person in their life turns them on how many on here have had an adult buy them booze?

Just an example people I am not for prohibition. LOL

I try to set a positive example for my four children. Non of whom use drugs or abuse alcohol. (As if they would tell me right?) No as a prior user one can tell.

As far as correctional workers go Ive met a few good ones but as my brother writes in a letter after a prison riot in 1967 most end up no better than those they watch over.

Cops are equally affected by their work. Here is an excerpt from my older brothers letter.:

Dear Al

There may be worse things than being caught in the middle of a prison race riot, but frankly I cant think of one.

Time: March 28, 1967

Five thirty in the morning and the racking of the cell doors, shrilling sirens and glaring lights wake be from my dreams. Its another day at the Deuel Vocational Institution at Tracy, California, but the sun doesnt know it yet.

Rumor has it that it is going to come down sometime this weekend, probably Sunday, but it could happen any day, any hour, and if it does, it can easily escalate into a full-blown riot of the worst kind racial. Most riots are focused on the bulls guards, staff but when its racial the ugliness turns inward onto the inmates themselves: rapes, beatings, mutilations and often deaths. The guards wont get involved except to finally clean up the mess because this vile, this violent, they know theyre helpless and apt to be swallowed up in the insane whirlpool.

So it comes down to every man for himself or every fraction for itself: The Black Muslims, the Mexican Mafia, the Crips, the Bloods, the Aryan Brotherhood, the American Indians from Comanche to Sioux, to your basic misfits, fruits, nuts, and vegetables, all fighting, all competing for a stake in power and control in an environment of only four square acres held loosely in check by guards who are really no healthier or better psychologically or emotionally, than the animals they watch over. It simply comes down to animals guarding animals a cesspool in a pressure cooker!.

A black guy comes screaming out from behind the serving line with hot grease on his face, his skin streaming down like a pink river. Oakie now is lying face up in a sightless stare at the ceiling, the knife still deeply embedded in his throat. Sammy comes running, dodging the small groups of fighting men, seemingly untouched, but screaming out for Lewis and me. He looks bewildered and cant find us; I see the knife lodged just under his shoulder blade. I stand up to call out to him, and theres a whizzing sound over my head, then a painless pressure strikes the top of my skull and the floor rushes up to me. There is a sound of braking glass and I can smell something, at first sweet and thick, then gagging. And I begin to dream. I am back home with my brother Al and family in North Hollywood, we are all sitting around the floor of our home and I am happy, so very happy.

The voice is calling my name over and over again.

Hey, wake up. IF I have to lay here awake staring up at the peeling ceiling, so do you. As if rising from the depths of a deep dark well, the voice pulls me away from my family. I move and feel something wet and slimy as I slide my skin across it. My left wrist aches something awful. Turning, I finally waken enough to realize I am in bed in the prison hospital. The slimy feeling is the old, unchanged bed sheets Im lying in. Opening my eyes, I look up and see my left wrist has been handcuffed to the bed post. The side of my head is bandaged and the gauze hasnt been changed in quite a long time.

Man, I thought you were a goner for a while, Lewis says with a half-hearted smile. You took a good one across the head. At least, thats what they tell me.

Well, sidekick, you werent moving too swiftly either. In fact, I thought theyd taken you off the count too.

They did take Sammy off, Lewis says, turning his head and looking away.

With only a mild concussion, Im promised to be back to life as usual, lucky me.

Im confused.

Am I supposed to feel pity for this vermin? I truly have none.

My pity is left for Christopher and Jason Blake and Wendy Blake, the sons and widow of Onondaga County Sheriffs Deputy David Clark.

If this vermin had a shred of decency he would find a way to take his own life.

Or he can rot for all I care.

@Alan: for me I believe many drugs need to be legal; all drugs need to be under Health Department, treatment not legal consequence. If some one wants to kill them self and is of age, it is their business. Selling to others, harming others, that are minors, different story. Consenting adults who care, not me. Abuse to yourself should not be criminal. That is the majority now in prisons violence toward others no matter what the reason criminal and belongs in the court system.. (in general) My humble opinion..

I think Deet means there are better ways to handle a drug user then prison. Here are two others that feel the same. Since we are too broke to pay for rehabilitation programs maybe reducing the number in prison on nonviolent drug charges would free up some money to treat them.

I don't believe drugs should be totally legal except maybe weed.

Jenny says:

March 16, 2013 at 12:34 am

The following is part of a letter I received today from Roman who is in solitary, SMU in Arizona. Its cost in money and ineffectiveness, the abnormally high suicide rate as part of that cost, and the effect it has on people who will be released into society. This place will make a non-violent drug addict who is a petty crook turn into a monster who will use the cops for target practice. The recidivism rate is super high for people leaving here and almost everyone comes back for serious violence. It De-socializes and institutionalizes people severely. Roman has been in solitary for going on 5 years, and he has a release date. Personally, I would prefer those that re-enter the free-world to not feel angry.

Alain Lajoie says:

March 17, 2013 at 12:09 pm

I see a day when drugs will be seen as a health issue and not a war upon ourselves.

http://open.salon.com/blog/stephanie/2010/05/16/how_many_people_are_incarcerated_for_drug_related_offenses

around half of all inmates in federal prisons are there for drugs, around 20% of inmates nationwide in state prisons are there for drugs and around 18% of inmates in California state prisons are there for drugs.

In the overview budget report for the CDCR on March 19, 2009, it indicated that the average cost to detain an inmate in California was \$48,843 annually(source), which translates to roughly \$1.5 billion to incarcerate people for drug crimes annually in California.

In 2007, according to the American Corrections Association, the average yearly cost for a state prisoner was around \$24,600 and at that time state prisons held around 280,000 inmates for drug offenses. So that means states spent around \$6.9 billion dollars that year on drug incarceration expenses.

Back in 2001, it cost on average \$22,000 annually per inmate in federal prisons (source). If it cost the same to incarcerate those individuals now, it would be \$2,200,000,000 annually to incarcerate the 100,000 people in federal prison who are there for drug charges. However, I'd say it's fair to say that this number has likely gone up in the past 9 years.

@Deet: Do you think about what you are saying.. People should mind their own business? That is your argument for justified violence? We live in a Civil Society, apparently you have no idea what that means. We are ruled by laws that the people make. Whether you or I like them, you can change them by the vote and getting enough people to see things your way; or you have to follow what you may not like and suffer the consequences of rebelling against that. We do not live in the Wild West, like some would like, excluding myself. Might and power in the end do not make right. The vote does, laws do and that is the trouble with all convicted prisoners.. They did not, nor do not like rules just like me I make my own if I can. Otherwise, I'd live some place else. I change what I can to fit my ideals, peacefully, with the vote and people I have no use for traitors, my own family has a long history for fighting for peoples rights (All People) these clowns that say they are revolutionaries the only people they hurt are the common man. They are the biggest joke going. Cop haters, they are so stupid they do not realize that cops are just doing their job; they even come out of the same community as the people they have to go after. Only dirt bags hate cops. In most cases the difference between a cop and thieves are one has a legitimate job. Same with correctional people; in fact they are even closer in education and same communities, and living standard that the criminal comes from. Those follow who think they are the people warriors are as dumb as a box of rocks. They hurt and kill the very people they are supposed to care about. Dead heads all of them. We happen to live in a Country where you can change things with the vote rather than the gun. However, it takes time and discipline, oh and had work to bring change; something these folks hate.

You killed a man. I don't feel sorry for you. I don't agree with the death penalty because the killer doesn't get to endure the effects of what he has done. The torture you feel is nothing compared to the victims/families.

You are brilliant with a pen. Too bad for you that you didn't find this talent before you killed that man.

You are not the victim in this. Keep writing, maybe your experiences can stop the rash decisions of someone else.

The shame is that this all started over a drug charge! There was no victim and therefore no crime until the state threatened him with incarceration for only harming himself. He, only then, turned to violence. Had the people minded their own business and never had tried to legislate morality his victims would be alive and millions would not have been wasted on his trial and imprisonment. The war on drugs has been lost, its time to admit it to ourselves and allow people to be free as long as they do not infringe on the rights of others.

Deet, I'm all for legalizing street drugs. Less need for illegal firearms, less murder. But you're not doing Blake any favors by giving him a target to blame for his own actions.

@Alan: I never read that post. I am new to here. I have associates that are on, but my work keeps me too busy, usually. One of my partners insisted I read Blake's article, which I think he knew I would write a response.. I do not have a lot of time for ragers. We work with a lot of organization trying to end Seg. Clearly I believe it is Torture. NARCAT, I've worked with a long time and I know personally many of the ministers involved on these issues for years. One of my associates, Robert Dellelo deals with the Solitary issue. His done the time to talk about it; I did very little time in isolation in comparison to these guys.

Thanks Russ.

Interesting views on many issues. The only reason I mentioned Manning is there are only four comments on Bonnies post and over 200 on this one. They both committed the same crime. Puzzling why all the attention is on Blake.

@Alan: Sorry about your brother. My prayers.

What is exasperating to me 1.) People think it is all about hate, may be for some but not all here. (I have no hate for Mr. Blake. I do not even know him. It could be me in his situation, but for circumstances. 2.) Here it appears the focus is on Blake's past acts concerning the Sheriff, who was killed, and the other one maimed. Which must be taken into account. (However that is not the big picture, it is only a snap shot: and not all of which that needs to be taken into account, at the present time; at least not for me. 3.) I am responding to both what Blake himself has written and my own views as an ex-convict. (You will read hard base honesty from me; that is due to the fact, I have work in this field now over 50 years. You might not like what you hear. Personally, I am not concerned with your likes or dislikes. (this is an open site) I am sharing my views with criminal and straight persons. To the criminals, like myself, I tell you folks I know the Bull and I don't have time for it. If you can't be honest you need to shut your mouth and stay lost in your selfish ways, stop the con.. To the straight people, my condolence for any loss you may have had due to us and I doubt you will understand much in the way we criminals think and prey on people like you. For those of you who forgive people like me, Thank You; and I thank my God you exists for you do help make this world bearable for those of us who try to change. For those of you who hate us and seek vengeance, I can only say I understand, I do hope for your own sake you get us before we get you 4.) My concern, as someone herein has stated is about the facts on Cruel and Unusual punishment however, my first thoughts are not for Blake at this time; but rather for the prisoners he may eventually be residing with again. The population inside, doing their time. (I believe it is a cruel and unusual punishment for anyone to have to serve their time with a combatant; placing me and folks like me in a situation were I, or we might have to kill someone in defense is unreasonably cruel.. Can't happen you may say? (@Alan) I go back to Norfolk when in the yard my partner and Manning had a fight nearly to one or the others death. This was long before Tommy shot that cop in NJ Long before his buddies screwed the Mass. Prisoner Movement for our chances for many men trying to serve their time and come home changed; rather than idiots like he and Ray declaring war on the US (screwing little rich girls and taking their money) Nothing, but stupid, his claim to be a Warrior of the People nothing but dirt bag thieves and robbers as I was.. (A true bunch of selfish clowns. Armed robbers in it for themselves) (A note: I did like Tommy Manning in those days) 5.) I say this because, there are many, many men/women who are trying to change people who are not gaming the system; and they need help. They also need compassion and forgiveness for were they ended up, the fact is they are the majority in the prisons 6.) Then there are the people like Blake; who by his own writing shows little if no remorse; is a combative by his own pen; is a killer by his convicted deeds, among the other crimes he has committed.

7.) In my heart of hearts hope he gets out of his situation as I do for Manning. However, realistically I do not see the State at this time building him or anyone in his situation a Pent House, stacked with the things he needs to integrate.. 8.) I only see one way out of his situation, well no, I see two. He may get very lucky and get the courts to force corrections to place him in population? However, aside from that, I think he needs to bend over, beg and eat crap, pleading for mercy, on the floor crawling to his captors, begging them, over and over, to place him with others, pleading and groveling, assuring them he will not hurt anyone, sucking up any pride he has left and leaving it on the floor of his cell. He must humiliate himself crying for mercy. Crying for the mercy that he would in fact not give to another. Blake knows what I mean. He has to go back to being the baby he does not want to be, losing any sense of pride and breaking down, for in reality he is no man to begin with. He needs to break himself or die. He better hope he has a God that will get him out, that will take him down the road to where he has to go, for any hope, of being a man. One who can face the reality of his real-self. The one that will not blame anyone else for his own bull 9.) Even then that may never change him; but he might, chain the beast within, allow himself a bit of freedom, socialization? That is a maybe 10.) I can hear those straight folks asking how do you know them? I know their soul! Asking again, how and why are you so arrogant Russ and sure of who they are? Because the honest and true fact is there is not much difference between me, Blake or Tommy Manning; except I am on the outside; in fact I may be far worse than both of those men? However, I am free and have been free nearly thirty years without having the beast hurt anyone I was fortunate, in finding a God, that has taken care of me; that keeps the beast under fairly good wrap. I live knowing everyday, I could be where they are, but for circumstance.. 11.) Somewhere along the line you make choices, you either become honest with yourself or you live the lie. You live the bull-crap; and sometimes the bull-crap the anti-social psychopathic way is far easier to live with than being a nut bag living in a normal world and knowing you do not belong. Folks like Blake may never get out; nevertheless they can find meaning in their captivity. They can help others if they chose. However the first, the very first step is to face yourself and who you are and what you have caused others. If you cannot do that honestly. You have no chance in being a real man/women and all you'll do is live the lie. The lie every one of them knows. Blake needs to meditate, pray whatever, every minute and second for the people he killed, hurt for their family and the suffering he put them through. Tommy, Warrior of the People? You did nothing but killed a protector of the people, he needs to wake up.

Two wrongs don't make a right. A 23 yr old made a huge mistake and drugs were involved. I see a day when drugs will be seen as a health issue and not a war upon ourselves. I am ashamed because there is a better way than acting like an animal and treating an animal this way. Rehabilitation and drugs seen as a health issue are the future, self righteousness are the past. Some people have to put away their golden spoons.

then kill yourself

My brother died here in 2007.

Last month, the inmates attorneys received copies of two letters signed by a group of psychiatrists who work at the Salinas Valley State Prison complaining they are averaging a caseload of about 40 patients daily, with some averaging up to 60 daily. The psychiatrists contend the standard caseload should be 15 and that current staffing levels will create an unacceptable level of risk as far as patient safety.

The psychiatric staff at Salinas is under constant pressure from above to authorize early release of mentally ill inmates, said Bien, the inmates attorney.

In addition, according to Bien, the psychiatrist testified that the facility is so understaffed due to layoffs that conventional treatment has given way to crisis management.

Read more here: <http://www.sacbee.com/2013/03/17/5269205/inmate-suicide-rate-is-focus-in.html#storylink=cpy>

Like in my own brothers death questions have been asked in the following case.

The legal jousting has sunk to the macabre, with a dispute over whether Inmate HH, who is classified by the special master as the 34th suicide of 2011, really killed himself. The special master concluded that this death was more likely than not a suicide.

Corrections officials, who initially reported the case as a suicide, later decided the inmate had been killed by his cellmate and his body positioned to appear as a suicide. The case was turned over to the Solano County District Attorney, but no charges were ever filed, corrections officials say.

Lawyers for the state objected to the federal court allowing Inmate HH to be counted as a suicide, and on Friday Karlton overruled their objections and ordered them to provide a copy of the coroners final report on the inmate death, under seal, to the special master.

The clash over whether one inmate killed himself highlights how critical the suicide rate will be in determining whether California regains control of its prisons. Inmate HH, is one of 437 inmates since 1999 ruled to have committed suicide in a state prison.

437 grieving families of which mine is one.

Alan CYA. Much of this has been corrected by having more psych in the prisons, more Drs and more LPTs. But, sad to say, it is going back to the days of no or little mental health with lay offs and cut backs. Even the staff in the ASUs and SHUs are being cut back. All to save \$. All due to this fake budget crunch. Want to help? Write / call Gov Brown and tell him to stop laying us off and or making us relocate.

Yes it is true Jack Henry Abbott killed after he was released but many less well known men have went on to live their lives without resorting to such senseless violence.

Read Micheal Jewells story a few posts down.

I always have said you need to think of prison like deep sea diving experience, the deeper you have been, the more stages of decompression you need to surface to prevent injury.

Such abuse to these mens psyche in SHUs will be difficult to overcome for sure, so why use such a system except under well monitored conditions? The press and mental health professionals need to be given access to better judge what harm the system is inflicting on us in the free world upon the inmates release.

Many were nonviolent when they entered such prisons and found themselves in the SHU. My own little brother comes to mind and he died in the SHU. Families like ours also morn our loss.

When one enters prison shit happens, people may lie and you pay the price by being sent to the SHU. Read the stories on here about how suspect the validation process is. Sorry for the profanity Im not a Yale grad and most on here are not from such universities. But you dont have to be even a college graduate to see the error in the system.

These people when released are angry and will do anything not to return just like Blake.

Lets hope no other such incidents happen but I can guarantee if none ever occur that wont be because of the rehabilitation methods found in the SHU.

There have been a number of brilliant writers whose parole had been supported and granted by intellectuals who were impressed by their insights.

Jack Unterweger comes to mind. He was released because of his brilliant writings, including his autobiography, Purgatory, or the Trip to Prison. Among those who agitated for his release were the usual radical-chic set, artists, writers, journalists including the 2004 Nobel Prize winner Elfriede Jelinek, Gnter Grass, Peter Huemer, and Alfred Kolleritsch. After his release, his autobiography was taught in the schools and his childrens stories were played on the radio, he hosted television programs on criminal rehabilitation, and became a reporter on the state broadcaster ORF, Austrias equivalent of BBC. While working for the ORF he reported on some of the murders he was later charged with committing; in fact, as a reporter he was sent to the US where he killed at least three victims. He was later convicted of nine murders in Austria and sentenced to life in prison without parole, whereupon he killed himself apparently using the same knots he had used in killing his victims.

Jack Henry Abbott was paroled after prominent intellectuals including Norman Mailer called for the parole of this allegedly brilliant man. He then went on to murder Richard Adan, the son of a restaurant owner when he was denied use of a staff only restroom. The very next day the NYT wrote a glowing review of his book, The Belly of the Beast, which of course was about Mr. Abbotts life in prison.

He was tried and convicted of manslaughter; among those supporting him who believed that it was unjust to imprison such a brilliant man for killing a mere restaurant staff member were Jerzy Kosinski and Susan Sarandon. In later years Mr. Mailer and Mr. Kosinski regretted their support for Abbott.

I have only one problem with the notion that society should not indulge in vengeance and should forgive and free violent criminals: the victims.

Lets try empathizing with them the victims for a change.

Imagine youre a young coed walking under the railway bridge between campus and the dorms at Central Washington State College. An apparently injured man is having trouble putting his books in his car. You volunteer to help and as you bend over to reach in, their is incredible pain in your head. You wake up handcuffed in the back of the car, and he takes you into an isolated place where you scream and scream and scream, and bleed, and finally die.

Youre a wife, and there is a knock on the door. You answer it and your world ends. Never again will you snuggle with your husband, and for the rest of your life you will have to deal with not only your own pain and anger, but with the misery of children at first to young to understand, and later outraged when the media gives endless coverage to the alleged sufferings of the man who murdered him in order to escape from drug charges. For months you will curl up with his pillow just to savor his scent one more time. You will keep the mattress until the springs come through because you feel like you can still sense his presence there, and for years in the early mornings you will sidle over to cuddle him and be jerked awake by the void.

Youre a child, and you cant understand why Daddy isnt coming home ever again. Everyone around you is sad, and you just wish Daddy were there. But he isnt and he never will be. When youre older you discover there are literally thousands of wealthy, affluent, politically connected people affiliated with institutions such as Yale University who will weep tears over the man who took away your Daddy forever while condemning you as spiteful and vengeful because you think the man who took away your Daddy should never walk the streets again.

Im with Andy. No sympathy whatsoever. No hatred, but no sympathy. He shall reap what he hath sewn.

Excellent essay though. And it should be used in youth detention centers.

May you live another 25 long, slow years.

A civilized society does not wreak vengeance on those who have committed crimes. The goal is to keep murderers off the street and for those who have a chance of parole to try and rehabilitate them. Cruel and unusual punishment does not bring back the dead all it does is highlight our reciprocal inhumanity.

Its the most horrible system on the planet America. In the name of freedom, we do this. The righteousness of our citizens, our blindness to the disgusting stupidity and animal venality of our enforcers of justice the insanity of giving police the ability to use their discretion the lack of gray area in meting out punishment is why America will never last on a global stage. Might shall never make right for criminal or defender living death is as inhuman as murder.

To say in the name of justice that death or living death is right, but to kill in anger or retribution is wrong is so puritanical if Jesus were alive hed be confounded on how to proceed in the face of such civilization. 1000 of years and mankind, as seen exhibited in the American penal system, is no more evolved than a rodent. The suffering this man is enduring is beyond suffering an eye for an eye this nation under God is polluted the man victimized by the system has become the better man than the watchful eye of the law.

This right here, earth , for all of us, is becoming hell. This world he describes is our world, his punishment is our indifference to another mans suffering. His plight makes all of us guilty as if we ourselves have committed murder our silence and justification or willing blindness taints all our souls.

I am surprised and dismayed by the uncharitable comments that this article has received. I wouldnt wish the fate Blake describes on my worst enemy, and its deeply upsetting to find that my fellow citizens approve of such a punishment.

While I personally think that discussions of punishment ought to be separated from any kind of religion, I am particularly appalled by those who call themselves Christians and have no sympathy for this man. In addition to the Matthew quotation above, dont you remember Hebrews 13:3? Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them. The epistle-writer asks that we empathize with the prisoner, to imagine their experiences as though we were in prison ourselves. Blakes description takes on a chilling quality if I imagine that that has been my life for the last 25 years.

The issue of wrong-doing raises some interesting issues when, view over a period of more than twenty years.!. To what extent is a person the same person as he or she was twenty or more years later ?. I take the view that by denigrating others we denigrate ourselves. I suspect that when we do denigrate then it is out of a sense of hopelessness ! . I live in the UK, and I tend to view, so called American Justice, as somewhat harsh !. It brings to mind the following

John Hope B1739-D1785 one-time mp for Linlithgow (west Lothian): Wrote of those in power, Look down upon the lower class of people. As a distinct race of beings, despicable and worthless. The scum of the earth. Not born of common rights of humanity. In regards to those who have been found Guilty of wrong doing !.

With America, it sometimes appears as if those considered Guilty of wrong doing are considered being seen as a threat to America, and the American way of life.
<http://www.sentencingproject.org/template/page.cfm?id=107>

First let me say this. I have read all kind of comments and very sad to see the majority are full of hate and I wish them all they or any family member never ever be in this in Mr. Blakes shoes. This story has put tears to my eyes, Im suffocated just to imagining what would be in SHU? I strongly believe no human life should be taken but no human should ever. experience such cruelty no matter of the crime committed or who the person was. Mr. Blake did deserved a punishment such as life in prison without parole ever, where is our legal system? human rights? with this evil cruel solitary confinement with no excuses for it, it is inhumane in the extreme. Any system that impose this kind of punishment on someone is deeply flawed as the society that allows it. It is beyond sickening for a nation that claims to value human life. Let me tell you as a single mother two wonderful kids a boy an a girl and God forbidden if andl ever take hem, I can assure you 100% without a doubt would I would not be at pace for someone to be punished the way just like Mr. Blake has.

Again, prevention is the key. Education, non violent culture, tv. Solitary for years does appear to be a torture like. Normal life in prison, no release should be enough. Ni death penalty nobody can be allowed to kill human being, under no circumstances.

Whyd he shoot a cop? Why hasnt he killed himself.

I dont get this guy at all.

Billy Boys letter was neither inspiring or convincing. Just another bad attempt of a CON to gain sympathy for obvious reasons. What does bother me some is the great expense to the American taxpayer to house these killers. Im not to keen on the electric chair, gasing or hanging, but an overdose of heroin while watching porn wouldnt be a bad way to go. People have to be responsible for their actions, how much more simple can it be?

25 years of free food, books, music, a bed, toiletries, clothes, heat, blankets, etc. There is just no pleasing this guy.

I love his comments at the beginning of his story no one suspected this would be the outcome. Knowing he did this to himself this is priceless. He is searching for someone to blame. Too bad he doesnt have a mirror in his cell so everyday he can see who did this to him. I am sure he would smash it.

what kind of person can live with himself knowing that he is part of a system that does this sort of thing. I have a hard time believing in the sanity of the guards

If only this brilliantly written essay could be used as a deterrent to crime But alas .

Yes, he was convicted of a heinous murder. Either Death Penalty, or Life in prison seems appropriate. But, his letter offers a lot of Insight that none of us can ever have. It almost makes the Nazis look more civilized, for their (sometimes) practice of leaving the condemned prisoner a pistol, with one round chambered in it. One act of Mercy, however horrible it may seem to some. In my humble opinion, allowing a condemned man One Way Out, should be considered, in many cases.

i dont feel any sympathy for this guy whatsoever

I am caught between my sense that the crime must be paid for, and that the crime was as enormously selfish, greedy, thoughtless, pitiless as the punishment being endured and on the other hand, my belief that the best response to criminal acts is to make the criminal person fully, totally aware in every specific of what they did, to feel it, know it, live in it and be unshielded from its horror. Awareness is the best revenge and the best reformer in my opinion. How to convince society to apply this is the hard task.

Why do people fall for the self-serving garbage spewed by violent offenders? Are those expressing sympathy for Mr. Blake willing to have him live with them? Why do the wealthy elite feel much sorrier for criminals than for their working class and poor victims?

No one here would suggest that we free Charles Manson; his victims included rich people.

Here are some first hand accounts of solitary confinement from NON-violent offenders in solitary for non-violence related reasons:

1) From a prisoner in Utah who has spent five years in solitary confinement. His record consists primarily of drug offenses and he was placed in solitary for an escape attempt. <http://solitarywatch.com/2012/06/14/voices-from-solitary-from-the-vortex-of-uinta-one/>

2) From a prisoner in Utah who is in solitary confinement for his own protection. <http://solitarywatch.com/2012/12/17/voices-from-solitary-no-wonder-there-are-so-many-suicides/>

3) From a prisoner in Texas who has spent years in isolation for being deemed a prison gang member. His criminal history consists of drug offenses. <http://solitarywatch.com/2012/10/21/voices-from-solitary-it-has-zapped-me-of-my-personality/>

Just cant stay within the scope of this discussion. You are great at googling though.

BTW this was my response to your last response to me, which I think went to the wrong place.

In regards to your points, whilst, his unique situation is only one example of countless others, the discussion is NOT about other prisoners who will later be forced to assimilate in the outside world once they are released. The sum total impact that S.C. has on Mr. Blake will not be felt by outside society. He is not getting out and that is the point.

You have in your original point 3 implied levels of depravity, thereby diminishing the heinous act of murder. And if anything should be drawn from that is the question why prisoners who have done far worse are in fact in better standing? I dont have an answer for that.

4. On a tangent, I believe that the Judge pushed for the death penalty and Gov. Cuomo in fact granted Mr. Blake clemency. Ironically, Mr. Blake instead of expressing gratitude for sparing him complains that blames Gov. Cuomo for inadequate prison conditions such as limited academic facilities and so on

All of which leaves me to the opinion that this man, has little to no remorse for his crimes and the impact on the victims families. I have read his entire essay and the void of remorse is glaring. Instead, he is completely self entitled, he complains of dismal meals, no entertainment, no access to computers or the internet, only government issued clothing. Its all so ridiculous, he is so far and ahead of his victim he should be ashamed to complain. He KILLED someone and these are the thoughts that occupy him the most- lack of quality food. S.C seems to fit the bill for him.

anon101,

Great at googling? I am a writer for this website, hence I was able to easily recall three stories that I published over the last year that fit the criteria of non-violent prisoners in solitary confinement for non-violence related reasons. I did read your response, but I dont see anything to respond to. It is clear that you dont have much sympathy for this man, which I understand, because it is difficult to really empathize with someone who has taken a life. I have no interest in convincing you to empathize with him, but only to consider that these conditions are experienced by many more people.

anon101,

Anonymity might make it easier for you to call commenters dolts and refer to those who disagree with you as a confederacy of dunces who use ten dollar vocabulary but please try to be civil.

Exactly, a confederacy of dunces here!

What convict writes down his plans to escape and murder?

Third it is not beyond the realm of reason to believe this was false testimony by vengeful COs.

He has written and said in an interview that he wouldnt try to escape again because he didnt want to be hunted down like a dog. He must also realize the sharpshooters would like nothing more than to blow him away. This is a maximum security prison and Ive seen enough of them to realize it is no cake walk to escape or we would have tens of thousands escaping their conditions.

Kurt Myers the man who just went on a killing spree in NY well it turns out his brother, Lance Myers, died in federal prison in 1982 at age 31. So just maybe the fact that he shot to death two corrections officers one in a barber shop and one nearby (4 total casualties) had to do with such comments as the haters on here. After all one hears a lot of bull shit in a barber shop full of corrections workers.

His brother had been serving a four-year sentence for an embezzlement conspiracy at Oneida National Bank, where he had been a manager.

I hope with all the ex-cons in this country we dont read about more incidents like this. Keep your hateful thoughts private in public at least because I dont want to read anymore sickening news like this.

What the hell, is your point anyway? You babble like a brook. And can you at all refrain from using the word haters sounds ridiculous. Elevate your writing skills, dolt.

Well. let me tell ya! am alone in nerve pain not 25 years yet but if I live and probably will 25 years will come slowly. Its torture and I DIDNT KILL ANYONE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Im not buying this. He murdered two people for the sake of escaping. Then in 2003 he attempted escape again. Not falling for this. His tone suggests that he is some sort of victim here trying to invoke sympathy. I do agree that solitary is not helpful in this instance. He should be in a factory somewhere manufacturing school desks or writing books telling the dangers of drug abuse.

Locking someone up in a box for 77 years isnt going to fix anything. Make them really pay and turn it into a learning experience.

petitioner [Blake] had recently engaged in activities and communications indicating renewed interest in escaping from the facility, provide substantial evidence supporting the Commissioners determination that petitioner continues to present a safety and security risk to the facility which renders him unsuitable for the general prison population

<http://caselaw.findlaw.com/ny-supreme-court/1023939.html>

Who cares about you. Never once did you mention any remorse about killing an innocent person. You are nothing but scum on this earth.

Cry me a fucking river! You do the crime, you do the time. No TV? Big deal. Go fuck yourself. Life is precious; when you murder someone you permanently end their existence, cause their thoughts to stop forever. However, I think it is very important to spread writings like these as a deterrent to would-be tough-guy cop-killers; not to spread awareness of the plight of murderers serving time the way it should be served: devoid of all of lifes pleasures. Its still better than the sentence they have given to their victims, despite what their selfish boohoo criminal mind thinks.

Exactly, it is murder, the end of ones life. All these commentators with their ten dollar vocabulary gloss right over that!

WAAAAA! You earned your misery by depriving another of his life, his family and friends of his presence, and a community of his contribution. You are intended to be miserable to pay your debt to society, which in fact can never be fully paid. That is to say, you cant suffer enough. Your whining moves me not at all, except to prove to me how self-centered you really are. Did you write an essay about the life long pain and loss you caused others? No? How telling.

A few key things many (chest-pounding) commentators seem to be forgetting or are completely unaware of:

- 1) 25 years. Think about it. Really.
- 2) Blake is one of 80,000 in conditions such as this in the United States. Unlike Blake, the vast majority of prisoners in solitary will get out of prison, often directly from solitary confinement. Now think: Would you want someone who just got out of months or years in solitary confinement, deprived of meaningful social contact and constructive outlets, back on the streets? Its setting people up for failure.
- 3) There are prisoners who have done far worse than Blake and are not in solitary confinement. People convicted of murder are not necessarily placed in solitary and are typically allowed to serve their time in general population.
- 4) The practice of solitary confinement, at the rate and duration used in the United States, is uniquely American. Most advanced countries do not use this practice, and the United Nations and mental health professionals here and around the world have condemned it as a form of torture.

Yeah, lets think about it.

1. 25 years. Uh yeah, the victim isnt coming back. The victim doesnt get 3 meals a day, a bed to sleep in, books to read.
2. This article is specifically about one murderers account. It is not about all prisoners in solitary, it is about one man who isnt getting out of prison. This is not a discussion about S.C in general.
3. What a pathetic barometer you are working off of There are prisoners who have done far worse than Blake and are not in solitary confinement
- He didnt steal food for his family, he killed a man while being transported. If he raped and killed 5 others would that be satisfactory grounds? Just one little murder, right?
4. No one is arguing the hell of S.C., again this about a murderers account. When he took away the God-given right for the victim to see the sun, walk in the park, hug his kids, see his wife- He should expect the same.

anon101,

1. That is a given. No one, to my knowledge, is denying that what Blake did to get a 77 year prison sentence is absolutely deplorable and that he definitely deserves punishment. However, most in the prison system who have been convicted of murder are not placed in solitary confinement for a seemingly indefinite term in what the UN Convention Against Torture, which the US government has ratified, has urged the abolition of. If you are arguing that all people convicted of murder should be placed in solitary confinement for life, that is an interesting debate to have.

2. Correct, this is a submission by a prisoner about his experience in solitary confinement. However, like all pieces of writing, there is more to it than that. There are 80,000 people right now, in the United States, in precisely the same situation as him. Most of them will be getting out.

3. You put words and ideas in my mouth that I never mentioned. The point of bringing up what I did is that Blakes indefinite solitary confinement is not the norm in corrections.

4. I am completely in concurrence that what Blake did was terrible and that the pain he has caused the family of the person he murdered must be taken into consideration. However, the courts have already done this, and hence he will likely die in prison. The more complex issue is: what conditions of incarceration are allowable and acceptable. Some argue that solitary confinement is unacceptable, others think it is perfectly legitimate.

Thank you for offering your opinion.

In regards to your points, whilst, his unique situation is only one example of countless others, the discussion is NOT about other prisoners who will later be forced to assimilate in the outside world once they are released. The sum total impact that S.C. has on Mr. Blake will not be felt by outside society. He is not getting out and that is the point.

You have in your original point 3 implied levels of depravity, thereby diminishing the heinous act of murder. And if anything should be drawn from that is the question why prisoners who have done far worse are in fact in better standing? I dont have an answer for that.

4. On a tangent, I believe that the Judge pushed for the death penalty and Gov. Cuomo in fact granted Mr. Blake clemency. Ironically, Mr. Blake instead of expressing gratitude for sparing him complains that blames Gov. Cuomo for inadequate prison conditions such as limited academic facilities and so on

All of which leaves me to the opinion that this man, has little to no remorse for his crimes and the impact on the victims families. I have read his entire essay and the void of remorse is glaring. Instead, he is completely self entitled, he complains of dismal meals, no entertainment, no access to computers or the internet, only government issued clothing. Its all so ridiculous, he is so far and ahead of his victim he should be ashamed to complain. He KILLED someone and these are the thoughts that occupy him the most- lack of quality food. S.C seems to fit the bill for him.

The top predator, at the top of the food chain often makes poor decisions, both in its predacious and punitive proclivities. Many comments in this thread appear to bolster my theory.

Fortunately, we are doing a lovely job of boiling our own plant. And since were murdering ourselves, theyll be nobody left to murder or to put a zoo/prison.

While I do have some empathy for Mr. Blake, he seems to have more than enough pity for himself, and he does not express any remorse for the life he took.

The points covered in Blakes essay are; the hell of solitary confinement, the lousy hand he was dealt in life, an overzealous judge, a tiny mention to the lives he destroyed and ended.

Solitary confinement sure does sound like a living hell, no comparison to the hell of the surviving family of the victim.

I dont believe Blake has any remorse and heartache for the family. With all the self pity and whining, there is room for little else.

Also, his less than favorable opinions of Cuomo, is just another manifestation of his self entitlement. He had expressed how Cuomo had done little to improve prisons academic and rec programs, what a joke.

This man killed someone and is no longer entitled to anything.

I guess you shouldnt murder people if you dont want a sentence worse than death

Yes a judge can sentence you to Solitary and add special conditions.

Judicial Sentence of Life in Solitary Upheld

The court of appeals for the Second circuit affirmed a court imposed sentence of life imprisonment in solitary confinement and prohibiting all communication with anyone except the defendants attorney and close family members after the district court had approved them. The appeals court also extended the reasonableness test of Turner v. Safley, 107 S.Ct. 2254 (1987) to judicially imposed conditions of confinement.

I admit I havent had time to read all the links, but I wish hed told us why he was in solitary. Can a judge sentence you to solitary? Or do you have to do something to deserve solitary over and above your regular prison sentence? I was under the impression that solitary was something the prison decided to give to you, not the judge.

Someone with that much self-pity and a history of violence probably should not be out on the street; is he possibly a danger to the rest of the prison population?

People quote the Bible: Matthew 25: 35-40 For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; 36 naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.

The problem is that this man should not be in prison he should be dead. Murder is a capital crime and deserves the death penalty. If we are going to do what the Bible says, then let us put this man to death. We should not be visiting this man in prison. Mercy is with God, but we are commanded to put murders to death.

This is what happens when you decide to take a life. No remorse from me, you deserve this. You shouldnt have murdered then. Simple.

America is an immoral country. This is aptly demonstrated by our penal system, judicial system, and the smattering display of schadenfreude comments from empathetic challenged conservative hawks.

Blake is exactly where he belongs. Unfortunately New York does not have the death penalty. This animal took life, now suffer and enjoy many more days of the SHU.

its not all or nothing, folks the author can be both a (mostly) unrepentant murderer and a good writer the kinds of paradoxes are less rare in the penal system than one would imagine some scholars are quite depraved and vice-versa

I am surprised and dismayed to learn that we still confine people in solitary confinement for years decades at a time. I had allowed myself to be deluded for example, by the film Murder in the First into believing that torture was prohibited in our prison system. How very naive of me.

The judge was wiser than the whole system. He knew the only way to make this guy pay was to give him many years in solitary.

I dont like the idea of solitary any more than anyone else. It is nasty and can be misused and harmful. But in Blakes situation it seems to fit. We seem to be confusing the idea of solitary in general versus solitary for Blake. He is a very lucky man. If it is so bad, and he is such a bright boy, then he should be able to figure out how to kill himself. Let him get right with God, but he will never be right with society. While I believe in mercy, some things can not be made right in this life. Kill someone and you deserves the death penalty, no questions asked. There is to be no mercy for murder.

This mans woes are all very personal and his anger is directed at everyone else. I dont notice any thought at all given to his crimes, his victims, or why hes in prison in the first place.

UmmmTough DudeYou Brought it on yourselfnow quit your whining.

Blake, point taken: The U.S. should commission research and execute required changes in places like the Shoe to prevent your type of incarceration from morphing into the moral equivalent of life long water boarding.

But your writing tone struck me as that of some decorated war hero who has suffered untold adversity in the pursuit of a noble goalcoupled with your political jab at Cuomo and fairly transparent attempts to stroke sympathy, I see why you are still considered a security risk.

May God have mercy on your soul.

The Eight Amendment of the Constitution: nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted. If a quater century of solitary confinement isnt cruel, what is?

Kill yourself.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2013/03/eric-holder-a-state-of-crisis-for-the-right-to-counsel/274074/>

The broad abandonment of the right to counsel, says the attorney general, is unworthy of a legal system that stands as an example for all the world.

How can you apply the death penalty when this is the case?

A sentence worse than death? Did you confirm that with the guy you killed? I have no sympathy for you. Your choice put you in the box. Keeping you alive is a waste of money and resources. I say you deserve NOTHING in the box except bread and water. Period.

Mercy

WHY is this convicted felon, with almost NO chance of ever being released from prison, being held in Solitary in the first place. What act, while serving his current sentence, did he commit and against who to warrant this segregation? For what infractions IS Administrative Segregation used?

This is one of the most interesting articles and debates I have ever read. Lots of good points from many different points of view. There havent been many(if any) comments that this punishment is actually cruel and unusual and therefore would be unconstitutional. If in fact the inmates cannot sleep for more than an hour at a time, then that is torture.

I can only think of the old prisoner in Shawshank who got out after 30 or 40 years and couldnt adjust.

Its a different topic, but clearly the cost of housing these inmates for 40 years is off the charts. Surely, on several levels the institutions should be able to identify the sane inmates and find a way for them to work.

@Sandi

Blake said, My mother took off when I was seven years old Thats ridiculous. I actually wanted to kill her boyfriend because he had cut her in front of me. I came close. I actually got a butchers knife and stood outside the door and looked in, watching him sleep. But I didnt have the nerve to go in there and do it. And I hated myself. I felt like a coward.

So in a sense he also lost his mother that day. I am sorry for your loss I lost my father when he didnt hang around after my parents divorced.

It is true that parenting is difficult but hang in there because life is like relay race your childrens success in life is directly related to where parents leave them in life.

The author decided to kill. I have no sympathy. Losing your mind because of a choice you made is your reward. Letting you live is a waste of money and resources.

I cannot think of a worse fate. Death is better. It is hell. Can he receive letters?

wouldnt it be better just to prevent, avoid these crimes of american crime epidemic from happening in the first place??

its simple -a democracy job and livable wage, medical care, but mainly- an education, non violent education and culture.

no violent tv, movies, games no gun culture

Your idea of the perfect society kind of sounds like North Korea. You should move there with all the weak minded so there will be no temptation. By the way Im sure the prisons there are far more humane.

good. you killed two cops. you killed two people. what did you expect the people of the state to give you? sympathy? am i supposed to feel bad about being in solitary confinement? this is the best alternative to the death penalty? boredom? good. you see this punishment is what people like me who embrace life on planet earth feel you deserve. feel what it is like to live and suffer. one day youll meet your maker but for now we who love life and liberty will have a say before you leave on ..

He writes so much better than he speaks, i almost wonder if its the same person.

Nick you and Strawman make excellent points.

I differ with Capital Punishment since it has been proven to make too many errors and opps after the fact doesnt make it right.

I am also a veteran of the military but I only rode in the back of the squad cars. LOL

Drugs were the culture during the 1960s in Cali where the LAPD was all too willing to bust your head open. I was more afraid of the four man teams in Swat Style uniforms that cruised my neighborhood then the gang members. I knew the gang members. The police on the other hand had greater numbers and weapons and they knew how to use them.

Just recently they discover the Jump Out Boys in the the LAPD. As the term implies they jumped out and took down people on the street.

I agree with Nick if we would only spend a small % of the money on prevention we would all be better off.

To clear a log jam down stream stop the logs entering up stream. The logs in this metaphor are our youth.

Some say he is intelligent what a brilliant mind! But what idiot shoots someone in a court house and thinks he can escape? That is just stupid. So now after 25 years he realizes the error of his thinking? This guy is just visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me. 37 Then the righteous will answer Him, Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? 38 And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? 39 When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You? 40 The King will answer and say to them, Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.

One thing I havent heard in this essay is any repentance to God for what he did, nor accepting Jesus Christ as his savior. If this man were to do so and begin reading the Word of God, things would change and God not only forgive him as a sinner we all are, but would take up his spirit.to heaven.

This man needs to repent and acknowledge taking the life of another is against Gods Commandment. Instead hes dwelling on his incarceration. If he doesnt repent and turn to God, he will merely be transferred to the real hell, a burning lake of fire upon physical death. Someone get this message to him, its all very simple. Pray to God, accept Jesus Christ into your heart and repent of your sins against Him. Were all sinners, sin is sin.

First of all I want to say that Mr. Blake is an excellent writer. His description of his life in the box provoke visceral reactions. Next, I am ashamed of being part of a society that punishes in this way. It is beyond sickening for a nation that claims to value human life. Clearly we dont. Blake is in solitary because of who his victims were, simple as that. There is no legal reason to keep him in solitary confinement for this many years.

Clearly the punishment is incomplete he should not be allowed to contact anyone outside of prison staff for his complete term. His writing is just an attempt to game the system.

Too bad folks like Mike W dont realise how fortunate we all are not to be in a similar situation. One coach, one babysitter, one uncle, one cousin Any one of them could. through one act scar us mentally for life and render us unfit for society.

Matthew 25: 35-40 For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; 36 naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me. 37 Then the righteous will answer Him, Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? 38 And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? 39 When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You? 40 The King will answer and say to them, Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.

Having read some of the replies to the article I find it funny that there are those who adopt the attitude that you took a life, too bad youre suffering now. These types of sentiments are usually associated with those that believe the military is doing the Lords work when they kill innocent civilians in far off lands because some yahoo in the White House says they should. USA! USA! These are the same type people who get hard-ons when military jets fly over the stadium at halftime of a football game.

Yet in a lot of cases these are the same type people who are too afraid to actually risk their lives by joining the military or becoming a police officer. I have been in the military in the 1970s and became a police officer afterward 1980s-1990s. Ive seen bad people and Ive seen dead people. As a society we dont do enough to prevent either of those.

Sentencing someone to 25 years in a box reveals that there is still a large measure of barbarity in the human condition. Regardless of how we feel about a particular crime or person, our humanity demands that we retain our compassion.

Do not misconstrue compassion for lack of justice. Justice demands that we execute those animals that take innocent life. As the author of the above article alluded, death would have been preferable and in that, I would agree.

So that the majority will understand, after having taken an innocent life, Blake should have been voted off the island long ago. It would have been the compassionate thing to do.

I agree with much of what Strawman above says

His words are powerful and yet Im a parent and a daughter whos mother was killed when I was 10. Growing up without one of your parents is tough but more so, when theyve been taken from you by someone who kills them. You go onbut you never ever get over that and its kind of like a prison sentence in your mind and that death makes your life take twist and turns that are forced on you because someone took their life and changed your life!

As a parent of 2 boys, I found it my most important lifes work and responsibility to make sure that they were never tempted to harm anyone and met every one of their problems head on and found help if I needed to while they were growing up.

No one can be a casual parent! Its the hardest work anyone will ever do is raising responsible human beings and not criminals who prey on others in life. Responsible parenting in society should be its 1st priority.

Certain % of Humans are born with brain disorders and some of these disorders can not be cured and these people become pedophiles, psychopaths or sociopaths. Prisons are full of them!

But there are criminals who are in prison because of their abusive childhood environment and/or who had parents that failed them or no parents and so, they had to fend for themselves or ended up in foster care. Weve heard countless tales of these stories from people behind bars.

After raising 2 boysmy insights now into how difficult it is to combat all the things that it takes to do the job of parenting right. With all the things that are out there to tempt children coupled with their own personal brain wiring; the more I believe that without strong parental guidance, some % kids will not be able to avoid becoming criminals.

We always hear how a % of these criminals who go to prison and with the structure prison offers, their maturity and sometimes educationthey become different people but its too late by then if they are serving a life sentences or on death row.

Not all neglected or abused children become criminals or murderers but a % of them will. We have not solved the problem of how to help those children to insure that they do not turn to a life of crime.

Thomas Manning has written, I stand accused of being a part of the Sam Melville/Jonathan Jackson unit in the 1970s and the United Freedom Front in the 1980s. I am proud of the association and all that it implies

He claims self defense in the murder of a Jersey trooper which, like Blake, he shot when the trooper went for his gun.

While manning is proud Blake on the other hand has offered an apology.

And Im sorry that it happened, terribly sorry. Not because I got caught. Not because Ive been in prison all these years because to me, to me, its a small thing. Prison is a small thing, he said.

Im sorry because I was terribly wrong and I made two kids I never wanted to harm a kid in my life, and I caused two kids to grow up without a father, and that really has messed with my conscience over the years, Blake testified, noting hed never forgotten the pictures of the two Clark children hed seen in the newspaper.

Clarks son,Jason, was 7 at the time. His son, Christopher, was two weeks shy of his 9th birthday.

Blake admitted his hatred for police (like Manning) left him unable at that time to feel any remorse for having killed an officer. But thats changed, he said.

Its long gone. More than twenty years ago that stopped, he noted. But I didnt have any desire ever in me to harm any kids, and I know what I did to cause two kids to grow up without a father and for that I know I was wrong beyond more than words could ever say, so Im sorry for that.

Im sorry that I made a woman that never did me no harm grow up or live without her husband. Im sorry I did that, Blake added in concluding his brief statement during the inquest.

Now tell me what is the difference between these murders that Blake is attacked and manning is not?

Read about some of Mannings crimes leading up to the murder of the trooper here:

<http://solitarywatch.com/2013/03/13/the-hidden-history-of-solitary-confinement-in-new-jerseys-control-units/#comment-11513>

Cry me a river.

Solitary and food loaf twice a day is far cheaper than is the death penalty and its nearly endless appeals.

The author discovered the same thing the designer / warden of Alcatraz Prison discovered / said; that an inmates greatest punishment is solitary confinement with the demon that is himself. Death is the easy way out and if those in solitary wanted death they could find it. There are justified murders and unjustified murders. Killing correctional guards under the circumstances that happened here was inexcusable. So sad. Move on.

Um hmmm. The people he killed are not having fun either.

Out of sight , Out of mind, with lots of time to think about what he has done and the people he has harmed. He seems to only be thinking of himself. Typical!

I dont want my tax dollars, money confiscated from me by the state for its own purposes, to be spent endlessly housing prisoners in the SHUs which they are ever building more of. My understanding is they were originally for completely unmanagable prisoners who were violent and impossible or top gang members who were shot callers. How have they now become used for minor offenses or whatever a CO or two deem? Its unChristian and immoral and a crime against humanity. For those of you who want them to suffer endlessly, you are just as bad as a violent felon in my book.

@Nick Lento, incog_nico, Arlene Joyce, Jenny, and all of the other human public that has seen the error of solitary confinement.

I agree with you, but I also want to say Russ has a point. Prisoners are too often nothing more than tethered animals in a slaughterhouse waiting for the ax to fall. Predators lurk in the blind spots waiting for a victim. Men are bought and sold as sex slaves etc, etc. But I dont believe Blake is such a threat to at least other prisoners and he seems to be intelligent enough to realize the guards want to be given a chance to kill him either directly or indirectly as has already transpired. He was attacked in prison and sued the state.

The fact is that radical inmates, wishing to avoid attention, act as model prisoners, leading prison officials to focus on violent prisoners while overlooking radicalization. Maximum security prisons are more likely to produce radicalized prisoners since maximum security has fewer rehabilitation programs; higher levels of overcrowding; more serious gang problems; and more politically charged living spaces. These factors constitute a Petri dish in which radicalism may grow and prosper. When released, these offenders might even murder their own countrymen in a kind of payback for perceived injustices done to them.

Kurt Myers the man who just went on a killing spree well it turns out his brother, Lance Myers, died in federal prison in 1982 at age 31. So just maybe the fact that he shot to death two corrections officers one in a barber shop and one nearby (4 total casualties) had to do with such comments as the haters on here. After all one hears a lot of bull shit in a barber shop full of corrections workers.

His brother had been serving a four-year sentence for an embezzlement conspiracy at Oneida National Bank, where he had been a manager. Blake has said he does not want you to feel sorry for him I think he only wants you to know what we are paying for. And what will be may reap for such ill treatment in the future. Only time will tell.

By the way Homeland Security also fears the anger the abusive policies of prisons have generated.

The higher the security level the more intense the anger.

I hope we as a society can find a way to reduce the pressure before it all blows up.

Re:

Alan CYA # 65085 says:
March 16, 2013 at 10:44 am

I fully appreciate your points.

Where there is truly a legitimate reason, solitary confinement is a tool that needs to exist.but it should be used justly and intelligently.

The toxic consequences of a brutal system are real, but the answer is not to make the brutal system more brutal and larger/more powerful.

If a dog is mistreated and becomes viciousand then becomes a threat to innocent people in its vicinity, it needs to be dealt with.I get it. But the real/deeper culprit is/are the conditions/people that created that vicious doguntil we deal with root causes nothing much will ever change.

We need to face the reality that the existing system is fat and happy and just LOVES the status quo that keeps it that way. More crime = more money for the system. I cold go on at great length but I suspect most of you here already know and understand this.

Thats great to read, I was so over come with sadness I went out and bought some more peanut butter for my heart, I just didnt want it to be over worked.Why is he allowed to sit down, he should be made to sit on the edge of his bed and the bed must be made. Remember he shot someone attempted Murder and Murder they are not coming back, so why should he have the life of luxury. I suppose he has a doctor check him out, and I hope it is limited to once a year, the victim doesnt have that choice. One person commented on the rehabilitation of the Prisoner, there is none, this is a Goal Post Moving Operation, by that I mean with the elected officials OWNED by the corporations, they keep making New Laws and Never use the LAWS on the books, it is designed so the Privatized Prison Never run out of Money and have a continued steady stream of return prisoners.

Start tying percentage of Prisoner returns on a National Average against the TOP ADMINISTRATION Officials then start with a automatic 15% pay cut Nation Wide across the board for returned Prisoners, after 25% pay cut it now turns into Heavy Fines starting at 250,000 dollars and minimum mandatory 5 years Hard Time Felony conviction. Where it can be proven the Prison Administration has Padded the time and Books everything DOUBLES.

The one thing I did not see was remorse and or regret for his actions, a lot of what the Judge said,hate letters to the Editors and Newspapers, yet no real regret on his part, did I miss that?

Now that is what I am talking about Life in Solitary confinement and NO PAROLE, the DEAD can not receive Parole, so why should he?

FYI to be kept in a special housing unit for that long, you have to show a lack of ability to get along in general populationor just be a problem child.

Perhaps he should turn his attention to those who are on the path to destruction that he choose and try convincing them ..At least he can feel that he is accomplishing something other than trying to make us feel sympathetic to his plight When you have lemons ,you make lemonade I find myself not caring.

I would be very interested to hear the reaction of the family of the slain policeman to this piece. Would they revel in his Dante-esque account or would even they feel some degree of sympathy?

What I miss in this rambling account is evidence that he has been forced to face up to himself, to experience self-knowledge. Quite true its been worse than death & that he should have been killed. Instead, a waste of self-pity (& taxpayer money.)

The bitter hateful cruelty of those here who take a perverse pleasure at the torture and suffering of Blake is an ugly indication of just how much the hateful commenters have allowed themselves to be polluted by the heinous criminal brutal actions of the murderer in the cell.

By living in a state of hatred and rage and ill will towards evil,you actually have embraced the very evil your pretend to loathe. Youve got the bug and it cheapens and distorts your life as it isolates you from the capacity to fully love and to fully enjoy your own life.

The lust for vengeance only breeds more reactive ugliness and violence and criminalityand the system laps it all up as these activities are the cause of hundreds of billions of dollars in cash flow. All this money being spent keeping millions of people in prisonsmany if not most of whom get out only to re-offendtends to generate its own perverse logic of evil feeding on evil to produce more evil.

Keeping Blake in prison for the rest of his life is clearly appropriatetorturing him is counterproductive on all levels, not the least of which is that the human soul is not confined to the sack of flesh we call a body.nor can it be constrained by closet sized torture chambers. What we do to one we do to allwere all connectedfor good or ill.

Nick Lento: HOW VERY WELL SAIDBRAVO.

Wah wah wah. When those people you MURDERED come back to life you can get out.

Suicide should be an option. Why because the prison guards could be harmed or killed by people with nothing to lose. Plus it costs to house and feed them. Give them the option, and society will be better for it. It is cruel an unusual punishment in itself.

All of this down to one simple thing. If you dont work in the field or if you have never been in a SHU you have no clue. I work in the field, like one other on here, John M, who made a comment. I also have my degree in psych and my licesne in it and in medical. And I happen to agree with him. I talk with inmates who are in the SHU everyday. Mental health has to make rounds everyday to make sure they are alright and not suicidal. An indefinite SHU term is just plain wrong. I understand the view of But he killed someone so can that person get back their life? But it really doesnt help anyone in the long run. It just feeds the anger and bitterness of victims and family members. I agree that somethings in prison are far to relaxed and that the inmates get far to much. But then you see these SHU terms and you realize there needs to be a middle ground. But you can not get away from one simple fact. They are now wards of the state and thus, have rights. Far to many right? Yes, at times. But rights never the less. Honestly, when I walk the yards, I often feel many of the inmates I have talked with and helpped have my back more then the staff. I have been stabbed in the back by more then one co worker and a few supervisors.

Maybe someone has already said this here, but it is said you can judge a society by its prisons. Any system that would impose this kind of punishment on someone is deeply flawed as is the society that would allow it. It is inhumane in the extreme. And, there is simply no excuse for it.

Wowit made my day to read this, I was smiling the whole time. This guy is getting EXACTLY what he deserves. Use of this method should be more widespread.

Why are we not offering a choice to these scumbags.
Every day a 6 ft piece of rope should be left in the cell.
It will open up more space for people like this.

a just punishment for an unjust man

Blake needs to count his many blessings. There are millions of innocent people in the world living worse than lives than this punk. They would love to trade places with him.

Blake is an animal and he needs to be caged.

Dear JJJ: No place in the Western world are prisoners treated worseyou need to get your facts straight. When you start calling people animals you are mimicking the Nazis who used such terms to describe people. Being in prison,isolated from family, losing your car, home, money etc is punishment. I would suggest that you have a Fascist mentality

I worked as a teacher at Salinas Valley State Prison, Soledad, CA. After 8 months, I was fired for reporting the Lt. of C yard for doing amphetamines, that affected my ability to work with him. As I experienced the prison, I often thought I would rather meet a firing squad than spend 10 years or more in that Prison. Maryland just abolished the death penalty by politicians who have never been in a Prison. They do not know that the prisoner dies each day and in the case of this manhe is dead..he just has not been buried yet. This punishment is worse than anything the Third Reich ever gave

a prisoner as bad as the USSR we have become the most conservative nation on earth willing to give out punishment to nations as well as our own people. This man committed bad crimes but God will punish him after death. There is no reason to torture him before this death.

He killed two police officers and I'm supposed to feel sorry for him? Guess I haven't become that civilized yet. I feel sorry for the families of the officers he shot. But I do think it's good to let him have his say. Maybe it will deter some other young idiot.

I never heard a word of remorse for the people he killed. Everything he writes should be filled with remorse for the people he killed. I hear a lot of remorse for himself. It sounds like he needs to spend some more time thinking about his crimes. At least his family can read his letters. His victims will never write another letter and their loved ones are still in pain.

Isn't it strange that Americans think they live in the land of the free and fight tooth and nail for their right to bear arms and yet the reality is they live in perhaps the most imprisoned society on Earth with the most inhuman prisons on Earth. And their arms are just a sop. Only North Korea might be worse.

Why would someone need to be in SOLITARY confinement? Standard prison and keeping the criminal away from the public is enough. Sounds like cruel and unusual to me. On the other hand, if it were WORSE than death, I would find a way to kill myself.

Ask the Loved ones of those Murdered if it is cruel and unusual punishment, you would rather let these lowlives off the hook with socializing, were do the dead get to Socialize.

When do the DEAD get to celebrate the sadness and joy, the failures and triumphs of their LOVED ONES left behind, no TOTAL ISOLATION for the rest of their NATURAL LIVES and a DNR order when they get older.

The Death Penalty is a cop out these PUKES get a free ride and release from their Crimes and the Loved ones have to live with it the rest of their Lives.

.Wha..wha, wha, wha, wwwHHHHHAAAA!!!! How about those you killed, jerk?!

@Russ

I know exactly what you mean about having to live with violent predators. I am more in line with you than you might believe.

When I attempted to help those being victimized while I was incarcerated I was under threats of death. After I went toe to toe with the ring leader over 80 weapons were found and he admitted planning to attack every white in the unit with me as there grand prize.

I believe that prison is a cruel gauntlet with one side lined with rouge guards and the other with predatory inmates. These two adversarial groups, consciously or unconsciously, have colluded together to met out society's punishment.

If one is lucky they will reemerge on the other side with a new appreciation of what it takes to do your time in the middle.

One charismatic leader can do more harm than any lone violent inmate for he controls an army. The thing is I don't think Blake has a following but only a few other articles have generated such hatred as this one on this site.

Read my last article on here if you have the time.

Oh I have never been a predator I used drugs and fought off the predators.

Also if you want read my comments on Jewell's story a few articles down from Blake's.

<http://solitarywatch.com/2012/12/30/voices-from-solitary-haunted-by-memorys-ghosts/>

Much respect!

Prisons are an extension of our failed mental health and education systems. Even 5 & 6 year old kids are labeled and drugged today and sent on to school to be set apart in isolation from their peers. There is no Health Care System in our country or safety net for humanity and people wonder why we have such a gross environment for abused, neglected kids and this is where they end up now in private, for profit prisons.

Until corporations and the political leaders that are OWNED by the corporations can find away to PROFIT at a maximum potential while delivering the minimum amount of care for the HIGHEST PROFIT, there can be NO Mental Health care, if you think Health Care is about the Patient you are WRONG, it is about Maximizing Profits and Hidden profits. Want proof look at the Obama health care, companies are making Imaginary Devils, Lies and TWISTED FACTS, because of the cut into Privatized Rationalized and High Profit Medical Care.

Were missing something here. Feeling sorry for his lack of socialization, a good meal, a walk, talking on a phone or watching tv that he is deprived of for 25 years is something I find hard to sympathize with. I bet the deputy he shot would love the opportunity to do nothing, just be alive! don't feel sorry for him, maybe it's an example to other young punks. He had no regard for human life, yet now he wants us to give him a better life? Too late. You loose.

Mr. Blake said what I have always said. Death is an escape. I'm anti death penalty for that very reason. I have said repeatedly still them in the hole for life and let them live with their actions.

Stop crying you big baby. You did the crimes you are a murderer and a scum. If I had it in my power you'd be in SHU even now for the rest of your natural life. If it were up to me you would never see a blue sky or a blade of grass ever. You would never know the sound of another human voice. In my vision of Solitary confinement you would see and hear nothing but the sounds white paint and concrete walls make. The foulness of your environment reminded you that you were yet still alive. I'd like to take even that from you. I would love placing you in a sterile white cell. No books. No magazines, no pictures, no window, just white cold concrete, a metal sink toilet combination and a gray cell door. The guards would shove your food to you through a slot saying not one word. I'd want you to ache to hear another human voice and have that pain go unheeded. You are a monster sir and far as I am concerned society is being foolish to let you out of SHU. You have earned a place in SHU for the rest of your natural life. Were I in power your dying breath would taste of human feces. Your last words heard would be the rantings of your fellow mad men. You last touch would be your own for no human would touch you again till after you have passed over from this Earthly realm.

You killed in cold blood. You have no remorse for your crime. Most of all you dare write this story crowing about how your sick evil mind triumphed over the SHU letting you survive. Your survival is proof that bad as the SHU is the place needs to be made more hellish. My only prayer is that you find a place on Earth before you die that you can't survive with your smug arrogant manner. Only when you are a broken man lost in incoherent ramblings will you truly know the horror you have visited on those you killed and hurt. You are a monster sir and you should be treated like a monster for the rest of your days not just 25 little years. That you are not still in SHU is a testimonial to all that is wrong with our prison system. Prisons are too easy on inmates. Prisons are like country clubs where inmates live pampered lives watching TV and learning how to be even more malignant monsters upon release. Maybe you will find true justice when you die and rot in hell because; you escaped the full measure of justice on Earth in my humble opinion!

He certainly makes an excellent argument for commuting all death sentences to life in solitary confinement,

I would be ok with abolishing the death penalty if they would be willing to do that

@incog-nico: I am sorry, you are the one that is missing the point. As a prisoner while I am doing time, what right have you to place another person in with me that has a continual history of combative behaviour to the point of killing another? What right while I am serving my time do you or anyone else have to place that burden on my survival? Making it possible for me to become a killer in my own defense? been there pal and I am sorry you and these do-gooders have no idea what it is like to do time in a violent prison. Walpole, was the most violent prison in the country, when I did my time, twenty-two killing in 18 months, fights every day, stabbings, please you are not taking into account the others people who are confined for bad acts, they are folks doing time that have Rights to be safe You need to learn about what the issues are and a little time in the place you might have a different view.. For the most part the majority of Men that are in Seg. are there for a reason Yes it is torture, the whole place is torture You do not get to State prisons for being a good guy, that is a very rare case You don't get there by being honest either; or being sorry, or following anyone's rules Please, tell it to the do-gooders I was in prison because I was and may be a predator. Now I may have the beast in me controlled; but I have no qualms about using violence in my defense, if you get my drift and I am 70 (Know they Self it will set you free.)

I'm amazed by how some are responding to this article. Truthfully, I'm not surprised to witness people react unsympathetically to the prisoners' grievances. I am, however, disappointed to see how so many people are failing to understand the gravity of the central point - that is, solitary confinement is inhumane and well beyond the scope of what can be considered correctional punishment in the criminal system. Solitary confinement, to be sure, is grossly inhumane and unequivocally torture by consideration. The practice serves nothing but to satisfy the most pitiful of human emotions that derive from our primal need to seek retribution for crimes committed. By all accounts, this is a failure not only of our criminal system, but of our scientific understanding of the human mind, and most importantly, of our most basic sense of human decency and compassion.

One other thing for me at least is do-gooders and mental health professionals in the prison system I have found have no clue to who and what they are dealing with. They are one of the biggest failures in their approach to rehabilitation, proven clearly by the return rate of male and female prisoners to crime and back into prison As a believer in self-determination restorative-justice in a holistic manner I keep stating, the individual has to demonstrate clear and actually not verbal responsibility for their actions and past bad acts Being smart does not mean there has been a change in personal direction A danger is a danger smart or dumb

The following is part of a letter I received today from Roman who is in solitary, SMU in Arizona. Its cost in money and ineffectiveness, the abnormally high suicide rate as part of that cost, and the effect it has on people who will be released into society. This place will make a non-violent drug addict who is a petty crook turn into a monster who will use the cops for target practice. The recidivism rate is super high for people leaving here and almost everyone comes back for serious violence. It De-socializes and institutionalizes people severely. Roman has been in solitary for going on 5 years, and he has a release date. Personally, I would prefer those that re-enter the free-world to not feel angry.

@Alan: I do not know about anyone else on here, but I did not read other articles. I responded to Blake's article, no one else's. You are right when you said he wrote about solitary; and as I said I do not know about others, nor was I talking about others. Blake's writing is the issue here for me; never the less in his addressing the Solitary issue the factor of remorse is missing. You do not seem to understand that, and are defensive about it. If a monk is in a cave and all he talks about is the cave and his suffering, then you would have to wonder about his/her spirituality, little mention of God would tell you that he was not thinking in that Spiritual vein that you would think would be touched on, as an example; Mr. Blake seems in his solitude to have little or no concern for the matter facing his mental issues over the victims I would agree with the mental health person that everyone needs opportunity and should be reintegrated into population and society (Only if not a Threat to Others) I am a believer in restorative Justice no matter what the offense. However, a combative individual, one that has proved so continually has no Right again no Right to expect to be allowed to subject others to their abuse and violate their Right to live safe from harm If as a mental health expert one does not respect The Rights of the greater community, you should be in another business One person's Rights should not be allowed to threaten or abuse any others It is that simple Especial in a prison setting when you have combative individuals thrown in together, where you have such a closed community as to have no place to run no place to hide for the weaker of the species shall we say.. Any individual whether Blake or Joe Balone that demonstrates a clear a present threat by past acts, that are continual, needs to be viewed under tight security and a magnifying glass to protect others of our community Whether, he likes it or not

Blake's essay is very compelling. I read it and all the comments here to try to understand why he is in solitary confinement. His long prison sentence was deserved as punishment for his crime, but a prison sentence is not a sentence to be tortured. It is barbaric to keep him in solitary confinement, which should be reserved for crimes committed while in prison. I am disheartened by the vile vengeance in many of the comments. The prisoner has more empathy than many of those who commented. They say he expressed no remorse for his victims or their families. But he did so in other essays and statements, which are posted in this thread. This essay was about the torture of solitary confinement. I hope the essay can be used to end this inhumane and horrific practice.

After 25 years you'd think a mind might turn to thoughts beyond self. The hell of each moment is contained in the same voice in your head and that you choose to keep playing it. Insanity is expecting a different outcome from the same thoughts and actions! The criminal victimizes themselves and blames others.

@John M

As a mental health professional who works in prison you write that everyone should be given a chance to re-enter the GP after your program. Further more you write:

Not offering this chance, while not illegal, is immoral. I agree.

I would like your opinion on this study which I believe helps to explain why so many people on here feel just the opposite. They actually like that the man suffers.

<http://www.psychologicalscience.org/index.php/news/releases/babies-prefer-individuals-who-harm-those-that-arent-like-them.html>

Some researchers believe such sentiments are part of our nature from birth. I quote:

According to several American researchers, babies like people who harm or otherwise injure babies who are somehow unlike them.

The fact that infants show these social biases before they can even speak suggests that the biases aren't solely the result of experiencing a divided social world, but are based in part on basic aspects of human social evaluation.

Few of the commentators see Blake as even remotely like them and therefore they like that he suffers.

Another oddity is why this man and almost any of the other convicted murders that have written about their own experiences in Voices From Solitary without ever referencing their victims? Is it out of fear of retaliation or something about this particular case?

Does God forgive this man? What's the cut off line for forgiveness? Rape? Murder? Let he who be without sin cast the first stone. I pray that God forgives him. I pray that God forgives all of us. If God forgives this man, and we choose to condemn him, what then?

He should suffer a year for every year that the dead man's wife does. She didn't have a choice. He did.

Kill these sorry bastards and be done with it.

Ill say it again he was asked to write about solitary not about his crime or his remorse. Would Liza confirm this?

Also when some have read his apology they said they didn't believe it to be sincere

This like Sal points out is not only about him.

CHEER UP MEN!!!

DONT TRY TO KILL YOURSELF

As a mental health professional who works in prison, I have been involved in establishing a program to help inmates on 23/1 segregation have an opportunity to learn skills and examine their antisocial attitudes and ways. This has been remarkably successful, reducing infraction 97+%, but one of the greatest achievements was offering an inmate in the box for 19 years after nearly killing a correctional officer the chance to re-enter the regular population. He has been in RPOP for five months without incident. This chance needs to be offered to almost all of the long term segregated population in order to offer them a way to re-enter the more normal RPOP. Not everyone will want to go through this program; not everyone who attends will participate and progress. But not offering this chance, while not illegal, is immoral.

Tough shoot Blake! I am not feeling bad for you at all. You deserve to be where you are. You are where you are because you made a choice. I am where I am because of my choices. I have never chosen to END someone's life and spread the pain to their family members and loved ones. You suck and deserve to rot right where you are. It is nice to know the justice system DOES work in some cases.

After reading everyone here. What is most interesting to me is that most everyone like myself found there seemed to be little concern for the victims and it's all about poor me. Also, I don't believe he is just there due to killing a sheriff, at least not for this totally length of time; it seems to me and I note I could be wrong but it is years of his total behaviour. He has to be a threat not only to guards but other prisoners, and may be too himself. One of my partners spent years in Solitary, and I know his story; he tells the story of long term isolation with out the poor, it only happens to me syndrom, that runs through Blake's writing. That is the point for me; for you can't change if you have no feeling or even view of what you have caused to others and there pain..

Maybe it's a worse fate than being instantly killed by a bullet. However I would doubt your suffering is even close to those who have been bereaved by the cold blooded murder of a loved one.

at the same time though imagine the cops family. it's such a tough call to say what's right here..I think I'd forever be going back and forth as to what's right or wrong in this case

Thanks for writing this article and sharing your experience. Well I don't know but it does shed some light on what my husband who is disabled endures day after day in total darkness thanks to Judge Mulvey, Judge OShea, appointed attorney Kevin Moshier who gave this slow death to my husband and of course the so-called protectors Attorney Don Thomson, Deretha Watterson DSS and APS for keeping him that way alone, isolated 3 security cameras like he is a caged creature and my husband Gary committed NO CRIME nor did I! He is locked up in St. Joseph Hospital Elmira NY and the county and hospital tried to kill him in 2009. Mercy and grace on the county for such cruel and inhumane treatment on disabled and elderly people of Chemung County. <http://www.helpbringgaryhome.com>

man, why would you let a human mind like this go to waste..at least give the man a job to do while he's there, or try and give him counselling. the worst part about this is if he would have killed a regular person he wouldn't be in solitary confinement. only cops get special treatment. people with anger/ sociopathic problems get treated like sh** for something they can't help, meanwhile people with other disabilities get all the help in the world. I've never had anyone close to me be murdered but from my view point right now, at least let his mind do something productive.

OK, he seems to have access to books, magazines, can speak to other inmates if he so chooses. He can write essays and have them published and also do interviews? He can access some form of entertainment (although not to his liking) with earphones and has photographs of his family if desired. I understand that solitary is above and beyond basic incarceration, and that others guilty of the same offense are serving in regular population, but he DID kill one and seriously wounded another. He was in and out of prison his entire life. This is not one action that resulted in defining his life this was a lifetime defining/determining his punishment. And in all of his writing and interviews that are presented here and elsewhere, you see VERY little regarding true remorse and too much about how he has suffered. I think a large part of this essay needed to be an apology to the families and less of an apologia on his thoughts of punishment.

Absolutely!!!! I totally agree.

Ole Billy Boy is now contemplating his life. But he has no thoughts of others. To me, he is a con artist and he wants people to feel sorry for him, believe his story, feel his pain, see his side, etc. But I am not buying it. Let him enjoy the smell of crap the rest of his miserable life. Let him have to endure the constant screams of others. Let him get used to the smell of the foul urine during his meals. Let him live this life for 50 more years before he dies.

First the date on that commissioner's determination is September 23, 2004. This is 2013.

Second what convict writes down his plans to escape and murder?

Third it is not beyond the realm of reason to believe this was false testimony by vengeful COs.

He has written and said in an interview that he wouldn't try to escape again because he didn't want to be hunted down like a dog. He must also realize the sharpshooters would like nothing more than to blow him away. This is a maximum security prison and I've seen enough of them to realize it is no cake walk to escape or we would have tens of thousands escaping their conditions

It is really hard to feel sorry for him. I don't care that he doesn't like his surroundings. And it's too bad the food is not good enough for him. He could get out of there if he wanted, but he is too much of a coward to take his own life. So let him contemplate his choices. But he should not expect people to feel sorry for him.

It's such a complex issue, suffering, vengeance, correction, deterrence, restoration, human value..the list goes on. To respond to Mr. Blake's letter with a terse dismissal seems utterly counterproductive from the individual and a societal perspective.

petitioner [Blake] had recently engaged in activities and communications indicating renewed interest in escaping from the facility, provide substantial evidence supporting the Commissioner's determination that petitioner continues to present a safety and security risk to the facility which renders him unsuitable for the general prison population <http://caselaw.findlaw.com/ny-supreme-court/1023939.html>

Thank you for taking the time to submit and discuss this letter. The elements of what prisoners experience in confinement as insufferable beyond measure has and does have deterrent value to me. In the split second between stimulus and reaction, I hope others will also be strengthened by your words.

I have one question for the law and order crowd.

Where is your outrage when it comes to many of the other convicted murders on this site? Only one other convict receives this kind of hate his name is Thomas Silverstein.

Why are these admittedly heinous crimes any more morally repugnant than this:

<http://solitarywatch.com/2013/03/13/the-hidden-history-of-solitary-confinement-in-new-jerseys-control-units/#comment-11513>

I think I know the answer to why you vent on some people and not others do you?

Just a heads up to the commenters; regardless of what you think of Blake, it is important to know that his experience is far from uncommon. Approximately 80,000 prisoners, violent and non-violent, are in solitary confinement not unlike Blake. This is why it matters to even the most ardent tough on crime advocate: most of them will get out someday, often directly from isolation. Unsurprisingly, they tend to have higher recidivism rates. Many describe aggravated impulse control problems, social impairments, and even psychosis after long periods of time. Feel free to check out the Solitary Watch FAQ for more information on this widespread practice.

I have no problems with the way this guy has been treated. People fight for no punishment by death, they complain when a dangerous felon is locked away from the world. Let's ask the officer he killed what death is like, oh wait we can't do that, he died trying to support his family and protect people like us from scum like Billy

<http://today.brown.edu/articles/2008/09/loury>

Glenn Loury THE 2008 OPENING CONVOCATION ADDRESS at Brown University:

Reflections on Identity and Authenticity

I grew up on the South Side of Chicago in the 1950s and the 1960s. A formative experience for me occurred during one of those earnest political rallies so typical of the period. Woody, who had been my best friend since boyhood, suggested that we attend. The rally was called by the Black Panther Party to galvanize our community's response to the killing by the Chicago police of party activists Fred Hampton and Mark Clark during an early-morning raid on their apartment in one of the city's many all-black neighborhoods. I can remember even now how agitated about it we all were. And, judging by his demeanor, Woody was amongst the most zealous.

Despite this zeal, it took real courage for Woody to attend that meeting. For, although he proclaimed his blackness often, and though he had descended from Negro grandparents on either side of his family, he nevertheless looked to the entire world like your typical white guy. Everyone, on first meeting him, assumed as much. I did, too, when we began to play together a decade earlier, just after I had moved into the middle-class neighborhood called Park Manor where Woodys family had been living for some time. There were a number of white families on our block when we first arrived; within a couple of years they had all been replaced by aspiring black families like our own. Yet, Woodys parents never moved, which puzzled me. Then one day I overheard his mother declare to one of her new neighbors, We just wouldn't run from our own kind. Somewhat later, while watching the film *Imitation of Life* on TV, my mother explained how someone could be black even though they looked white. She told me about people like that in our own family second cousins who lived in a fashionable suburb and on whom one would never dare simply to drop in because they were passing for white. This was my earliest glimpse of the truth that racial identity in America is inherently a social and cultural, not simply a biological construct that it necessarily involves an irreducible element of choice.

Evidently, Woodys family had been passing for white in pre-integration Park Manor. The neighborhoods changing racial composition had confronted them with a moment of truth, and had led them to elect to stay, instead of fleeing as nearly all of their previous neighbors had done, and to raise their children among their own kind. This was a fateful decision for Woody, who, as he matured, became determined not simply to live among blacks but, perhaps in atonement for what he took to be his parents sins, unambiguously to become black. The boys in the neighborhood didn't make this easy. Many delighted in teasing him about being a white boy, and most simply refused to credit his insistent, often repeated claim: Im a brother, too!

The fact that some of his relatives were passing made Woodys racial identity claims more urgent for him, but less compelling to others. He desperately wanted to be black, but his peers in the neighborhood would not let him. Because he had the option to be white an option he radically rejected at the time those without the option could not accept his claim to a shared racial experience. I knew Woody well. We became good friends, and I wanted to accept him on his own terms. But even I found myself doubting, from time to time, that he fully grasped the pain, frustration, anger, and self-doubt many of us felt upon encountering the intractability of American racism. However much he sympathized with our plight, he seemed to experience it only vicariously.

So there we were, at this boisterous, angry political rally. A critical moment came when Woody, seized by some idea, enthusiastically raised his voice above the murmur to be heard. He was cut short in mid-sentence by one of the dashiki-clad brothers-in-charge who demanded to know how a white boy got the authority to have an opinion on what black people should be doing. A silence fell over the room. Who can vouch for this white boy, asked the brother, indignantly. More excruciating silence ensued. Now was my moment of truth; Woody turned plaintively toward me, but I would not meet his eyes. To my eternal shame, I failed to speak up for my friend, and he was forced to leave the meeting without a word having been uttered in his defense.

That was not exactly a profile in courage on my part, I must confess!

This incident of some forty years ago is etched indelibly in my mind, serving as a kind of private metaphor for me, underscoring just how difficult it can be to live in good faith, and how vitally important it is to try. That moment of truth, in that South Side church basement and my failure in the face of it helped me become aware of the depth of my need for the approval of others particularly co-racialists. The fact is that I willingly betrayed someone whom I loved and who loved me, in order to lessen the risk of being rejected by strangers.

Let him rot. Ask the families of those he killed what the last 25 years have been without their loved ones. I assure you, their suffering is far worse than this mans torment. Prison isn't meant to be comfortable, or fair or even reasonable. He committed a terrible act and is paying for it. In my opinion, these sentences are worse than death, and they should be.

Whenever you oppose evil with more of the same you lose your own soul. The answer to crime is not for society to commit an even larger crime that is just sick, sadistic and evil vengeance. The lust for vengeance in a victim is understandable but for a whole society to institutionalize vengeance and cruelty in the name of justice is perverse and poisons our common humanity.

In America, this is big business. The prison/justice industrial complex makes lots of money on crime and disfunction. There are all manner of perverse evil incentives for the status quo. Keeping over two million people incarcerated is not the answer to our problems.

Tree, I grew up in poor predominately African American communities. I have been brutalized by these kinds of predators and I survived.

Blake, There was only two kinds of white boys in my neighborhood. Punks that got abused, or fighters.

Tree seems to be making Blakes case for him.

For sure it depends on the era and the poverty level.

The sixties and even the 50s when I lived in such neighborhoods it was hell.

Then again I still live in a home with blacks on all sides of me and they are good neighbors and very fine people and by the way they are far wealthier than I am.

The people who most need to read this wont or cant.

Blake is suffering cruel punishment. Its a reality he brought on himself, ruining his own life as he ruined the lives of others. He has experienced uncountably many more moments of joy in the last 25 years than David Clark has. Blake is still able to make choices, limited though they may be, while Clark has no choices because he has no life. Blake took it. As a society, our only responsibility to this murderer is to ensure that he takes no one elses life. If he wants to end his suffering, he is free to kill himself.

Kurt Myers the man who just went on a killing spree well turns out his brother, Lance Myers, died in federal prison in 1982 at age 31. So just maybe the corrections officers were his target. After all one hears a lot of bull shit in a barber shop full of corrections workers.

He had been serving a four-year sentence for an embezzlement conspiracy at Oneida National Bank, where he had been a manager.

I dont think Blake wants you to feel sorry for him I think he wants you to know what we are paying for. And what will be reaped for such treatment in the future only time will tell.

@Tree: I have to say bravo, for those are the words that I have continually heard from prisoners, ex-prisoners and victims alike over my 50 years in this struggle How do we find restorative justice? It begins as we are seeing here with the predator, they need to accept the responsibility for what they have done and who they are..Without that acceptance you can throw away the key to any type of change, I think that is a sorrowful fact

Why did Kurt Myers, 64 just go on a shooting rampage in up state NY?

Is the fact that two of his four victims were reported to have worked for the department of corrections just a coincidence or were they the targets? No reason has been given.

Michael Ransear, 57, a retired corrections officer and Michael Renshaw, a 23-year veteran of the state Department of Corrections.

Read more: <http://www.foxnews.com/us/2013/03/14/4-dead-2-injured-in-upstate-new-york-shooting-spreed-manhunt-underway/#ixzz2NdDRW2k1>.

Poor guy, having to suffer like this. After all, he only killed one person. Sorry, I dont feel pity for him. He took a risk trying to escape and he knew it could go bad. It did. Same thing if, for example, I drink and drive or rob a bank. I might get away with it; I might not. For that matter, even investing in the stock market is a risk. For Blake, he took what he thought was an acceptable risk. However, trying to escape from a courthouse is foolish.

@Alan: I know my youngest daughter is with HLS; I have read their reports and other law enforcement reports; it is surprising how many are in favor of a lower security for 85% of those incarcerated

Life is the most important thing and he crossed a line by taking it and he is paying the penalty. It must be horrible to live the way he does, but he crossed that line and he doesnt get to come back.

<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/220957.pdf>

In 2006The Homeland Security Policy Institute and Critical Incident Analysis Prisoner Radicalization Task Force published Out of the Shadows: Getting Ahead of the Prisoner.

In harmony with previous scholarship, the study found that maximum security prisons are more likely to produce radicalized prisoners than lesser custody institutions.

Maximum security has fewer rehabilitation programs; higher levels of overcrowding; more serious gang problems; and more politically charged living spaces. These factors constitute a Petri dish in which terrorism may grow and prosper.

This is what you get with harsher prisons.

This killing was wrong but the statement that prison needs to be harsher is also wrong. Those that believe this need to ask themselves what evidence there is for this claim? The man spent much of his youth locked up in correctional institutions and rather than being corrected as the term implies he was molded into a selfish scumbag.

Blake had been out of prison all of 50 days and he didnt want to go back.

In his own words:

This whole time from the point where I decided I could try to get one of the officers guns, my mind was racing, you know, thinking diabolically, like a scum bag, because thats what I was at the time. I was a selfish scum bag.

I didnt actually think about killing anybody, shooting anybody. That wasnt in my mind. The only thing in my mind was leaving. Escape. The thought of killing somebody never even entered my mind. The thought of even firing or shooting didnt enter my mind. Blake lunged for Meleskis gun. Bernie Meleski and David Clark tried desperately to get the weapon back. Clark finally backed away to pull his own revolver.

Blake said, I swung the gun around as quick as possible and I shot Clark just as his gun was another millisecond and he would have shot me.

Then he turned his attention to Meleski.

Before he could even get back on me, I shot him three times. I just squeezed until he fell,

Blake later said,

I remember seeing the pictures of the two little boys of Deputy Clark in the paper. That picture has haunted me all the time. It never goes too long without me thinking about the impact I had on two childrens lives.

Onondaga County Sheriff Kevin Walsh said, The Clark family lost a husband and father. Those impacts cannot be erased by any kind of apology.

An apology Billy Blake knows the family of David Clark will never accept.

I took their Daddy away from them, and I didnt have a good reason to do it, he said. It was selfishness. And thats how I was, basically, back then. I was a selfish scumbag.

He was tasked to write about his experience in solitary not on his remorse when he wrote the following:

Ive seen minds slipping down the slope of sanity, descending into insanity, and Ive been terrified that I would end up like the guys around me that have cracked and become nuts. Its a sad thing to watch a human being go insane before your eyes because he cant handle the pressure that the box exerts on the mind, but it is sadder still to see the spirit shaken from a soul. And it is more disastrous. Sometimes the prison guards find them hanging and blue; sometimes their necks get broken when they jump from their bed, the sheet tied around the neck thats also wrapped around the grate covering the light in the ceiling snapping taut with a pop. Ive seen the spirit leaving men in SHU and have witnessed the results.

The box is a place like no other place on planet Earth.

These men of which Blake speaks may also have children left behind. Not one of revenge seeker has mentioned this.

The account of his suffering in SHU for the crimes he has committed reenforces that it is where he should be, not the opposite. The suffering he has brought to the families and friends of his victims will be with them for a lifetime, and so should his suffering for his acts be with him.

I find statements that covertly excuse and even romanticize this mans criminality to be offensive to survivors and victims of violence everywhere.

I do not believe in capital punishment an eye for an eye is barbaric. I believe in therapeutic rehabilitation under extremely firm conditions of incarceration. Why extremely firm? Because many proven criminals like William R. Billy Blake are predators, sociopaths and/or psychopaths who are cunning manipulators consumed with their own self-protection and self-fulfillment: and they are full of excuses.

I have been brutalized by these kinds of predators and I survived. I know their type very well. If you had scars and wounds, or had to live with life without or with loved ones who were murdered or maimed, I think your perspective may be similar to mine.

What does true remorse sound like from proven offenders?

True remorse from proven and admitted thieves, rapists, murdered, and violent prone persons means hearing them say something like this:

I truly committed unforgivable and heinous acts that wholly transformed others lives for worse in a way that will last lifetimes for them even if they gain some measure of healing. Consequently, I deserve my punishments, including very limited social access to others. Please give me a safe, clean, monitored environment within which to live. Please give me therapy and medical treatment so I can understand my behavior overtime and be reasonably healthy. And please allow me to work and pay back society for my crimes. Everything else is what I deserve for my crimes.

Thats what true remorse sounds like to survivors like me.

While at times he has shown what seems like remorse, Blakes true stance seems to me like psychotic justification, self-defense, and veiled bigotry.

For example, in speaking about his childhood, Blake has consistently blamed his violent, deviant behavior on growing up among poor supposedly depraved African Americans. (From his statements: I grew up fighting. I grew up on the south side, where you know its predominantly black. In the 60s and 70s, Im a white boy in a black neighborhood. There was only two kinds of white boys in my neighborhood. Punks that got abused, or fighters. There was no in between, said Blake. Strength is what matters. Decency doesnt matter.) I find his stance here to be incredibly covertly bigoted and entirely reflective of his own way of looking at things, which is entirely his own fault. I grew up in poor predominately African American communities and I know scores of whites, blacks, Asians, and others who did the same and who did NOT become thieves; who did not become drug pushers; who did not become addicts; who did not become violent-prone persons; who did not become depraved murderers; who did not consistently talk about their own self-protection and self-fulfillment instead of being quiet in the face of victims and survivors suffering as a result of their actions.

There are too many INNOCENT white, black, Latino, Asian, and native prisoners in this country to be consumed with the situation of a PROVEN offender who factually murdered an officer, brutally maimed another, and who also conducted other crimes of theft, drug pushing and violence within his record for which he has never atoned.

I have been attacked by white and black offenders who are similar to Blake. They need therapy. They need recreation. But we must be vigilant and firm in making sure that their lives are monitored and that they are kept away from others until they exhibit overtime the true remorse that I speak about here. My wounds as a child and an adult make me see his lot in very different eyes. This is a man who does not deserve to die. But he certainly deserves to reflect on his situation in prison under circumstances that are commensurate with the abjection of those that he killed, brutalized, thiefed from, and hurt.

How 5 seconds can change the rest of your life. He does write better than a yahoo news publisher. He must have spell check while in solitary.

i would like to start off by saying I knew billy from the neighbor hood. my wifes family also knew him and yes we are white and we grew up on the south and also the west side of Syracuse.for the life of me I cant reason out why anyone would show sympathy for him. he says he had a rough time living on that side of town, we never did. we grew up and are having a great life.he was always looking for a way to make trouble or stealing. I would be surprised if his family ever has anything to do with him .he actually was involved with shooting his little sister up with a needle back then. he was worthless then and he is worthless now. he crys about being in the special housing unit for 26 years he cant stand the noise, well what about those 2 sheriffs deputys he murdered I bet they would love to hear the noise I bet they would loved to have heard the voices and noise of there fatherless children. billy like I said you are a waste of the tax payers money they should bring back the death penalty for people just like you.you are a blight on the human race just shut up and take your easy punishment, remember those officers every waking moment of your rotten life. you took the life of those men and took them from there familys. that can never be righted. I hope you suffer all the rest of your miserable life. this is from a old child hood friend

So last year hes quoted:

And Im sorry that it happened, terribly sorry. Not because I got caught. Not because Ive been in prison all these years because to me, to me, its a *small thing*. Prison is a *small thing*, he said.

But now in this story,

The sum of the suffering caused by any of these quick deaths would be a *small thing* next to the sum of the suffering that this quarter-century in SHU has brought to bear on me.

He oddly seems to say whatever helps him out at the time.

Has the family of the officer he murdered forgiven him?

How does one in total solitary confinement become as educated as he unless he has had access to somehow become such a verbose author on his wrongs?

Not 1 word about how the family of the victims might feel. How the kids of the guys he murdered spent their Christmas/Birthdays without a father. No apology, not 1 word of regret about what he did. Just poor old me, I am a victim boohoo, look at how I live, someone care for me.

This murderer should suffer more.

@ Dontkill: As an ex-prisoner and criminal I have to agree with nearly all you say. I did a survey while in Norfolk prison in 1969 of men doing life, nearly all to a man wanted the death penalty rather than the life sentence they were serving When I vote against the death penalty, part of that vote rested on my knowledge of the pain a perpetrator would suffer under that type of sentence. I did that knowing I myself under certain circumstance ran the risk of such a sentence; nevertheless, I have children and a huge family and one does get what one deserves when you take another life under a life sentence living with what you have done. I situation more difficult than taking the easy way out with the big sleep On the other hand wasting away in a cell does not take care of restoring anything to the victims.. It cost serious money just to keep the person alive; so there should be some way the individual pays, earns something to give back first to the victims family than to us as a society If one is totally incapable of such a punishment. I have no trouble with a solitary life, which may drive some one to madness You kill one of mine; and society needs to protect me from killing the perpetrator I am and eye for and eye believer I do not apologize for it; and I did my crimes and I paid the price of exacted time the law required, I still pay as a felon, and I do not cry about it Also I have teenagers At Risk Teens reading this stuff. going to the Statehouse with me to listen to testimony of those of us who made the mistake of crossing the line. www.nhome.org <http://www.ralphhamm.org>

Why do people get so bent out of shape everytime some cop gets clipped in the line of duty? Getting shot at comes with the job, deal with it.

<http://www.EliteAnon.tk>

This should be shown to every teenager so that they dont kill another human being.

It should be hell. It should be horrible. It should be the most horrific thing imaginable, then maybe others would think twice about killing. Not once does he say anything about the victim or their family.

Had I known in 1987 that I would spend the next quarter-century in solitary confinement, I would have certainly killed myself. How about Had you known this in 1987 you wouldnt have killed someone!

That would be the First step in Not being in solitary confinement. Not Killing!

See those of us who havent killed another human being get to do those things that he said, like talk on the phone or watch tv. That is the lesson. That is the moral of the story.

You kill someone and you get punished. And unlike the mild verbal punishment a parent of a child who spills some milk does out, when you kill someone and take their life you dont get an easy ride. You shouldnt get tv. Phone calls.

It should be the most severe thing ever because You caused the most severe ever sentence death for the victim. And the most severe ever lifetime sentence of pain and suffering WAY MORE unbearable suffering than your solitary confinement for the families and loved ones of the victim whose life you extinguished.

But now, he wants sympathy? and wishes for the same death that he unilaterally dished out because he has been punished? That he hasnt been treated humanely???

Was he humane in his handling of his victim? Was it humane to send his victim to the ground? Was it humane to sentence the victims family and friends to a LIFETIME and generational lifetimes of solitary pain in the loss of their loved one?

Death is too easy and what absolute Hypocrisy for those opposing the death penalty to then publish, peddle, and celebrate this crap that he wants and wishes for death because that would be easy For him.

Prison should not become a place that people want to come back to, sadly however too many that have been imprisoned want to and do end up back there.

The death penalty is horrific and wrong. But, just because he cant watch ESPN on Sundays doesnt give him the right to complain that his life is too hard.

Sorry you took a life. That is too hard. That should be avoided. That should be the focus. That should get honorable mentions. That should warrant your punishment.

For if not then what? Pizza parties during SuperBowl while he surfs the internet on his iPhone5 while waiting to go out to play with his buddies? Yeah sure that will surely make someone think twice about ripping apart the fabric of humanity by killing another human being.

Every one that voted for this article in order for it to get Honorable Mention should reprint this, take it to their local middle schools and high schools and say you dont want to be here so dont kill someone. And if you do then this is what you can expect.

Im impressed by how well he writes and his ability to contextualize the complex issues involved in his incarceration. I am most sympathetic to his complaints about the constant noise. However, his other complaints ring hollow. He is isolated because he killed a guard and may do so again. If you cant do the time, dont do the crime.

@Alan: Thank you, I have had the benefit of being around good company. Dr. James Isenberg, still a friend and was there with John Boone It was the Zebra killings I was thinking about Delancey street put teams out and took the elderly and folks shopping t that time. I was there when there was no one in the street only for a short time; I spent a week with John, and the guys; but New England was home and my guys where working their way out Cleary I do not agree with Mike on Blake, believe in restorative justice, being locked away for ever may serve vengeance but does nothing to restore some of the loss, not that one can ever give back a life What we have needs to be abolished Im not sure what needs to be put in its place Clearly for me we need to work out of this current form of retribution However it starts with folks facing themselves who they are what they have done and no matter where their circumstances find them they need to get control of their beast inside.. Not easy and it takes a life time

My 25 yr. old son spent the last 10 mo. in SHU for spitting on a CO, which he never did. Asked for Med. Emergency while having asthma attack, CO beat the shit out of him, while handcuffed and unable to breathe.. Sent him to SHU for assaulting an Off.. He just helped build a rec. center for no pay. These prison Off. are animals. Son will be home in one week after serving 5 yrs. (non-violent)

Wahhh. That is what he gets for shooting two people and killing one of them. I hope he suffers for 25 more years.

The Education of a Felon by Edward Bunker:

Page 276: The Vietnam War rocked Americas college campuses. Bombs exploded; white radicals became revolutionaries and robbed banks. Meanwhile the black ghettos in one American city after another burned in long, hot summers to the chant burn, baby, burn. In Mississippi the Klan murdered civil rights workers. In San Francisco a group of blacks prowled the night and killed whites they caught alone. These were called the Zebra Killings, and I thought it likely that black ex-convicts were involved (I was right), for only in Californias prisons had I seen similar killings.

I remember the Zodiac murders but I dont remember anything about convicts protecting old ladies. Unfortunately in the Zebra killings (71 victims) prison radicals were behind it.

<http://archive.frontpagemag.com/readArticle.aspx?ARTID=21980>

It is part of Cummins book as well. The link I supplied for Sowell has some good passages in it. Makes you realize how culture rather than race influence our actions. I was exchanging comments with Michael Jewell about southerners but forgot to reference this observation by Sowell.

I googled the New England Prisoners Association 1971 this book came up.

The Hidden 1970s: Histories of Radicalism by Liz Samuels
Page 32-34

<http://books.google.com/books?id=gT0klAK4pG4C&pg=PA38&dq=New+England+Prisoners+Association+1971&source=bl&ots=auVRZrIpcP&sig=NpVFpPPYyFAAmwSZudywcfSuzp0&hl=en&sa=X&ei=hytCUYgwgubZBeGpgPAK&s>

Their conclusion was similar to Cummins.

Also looked up Boone.

03 December 2012

John Oscar Boone, Sr., a pioneer in the American Correctional System and the brother of the late civil rights pioneer Joseph E. Boone, died late Friday in Atlanta surrounded by family and friends. He was 93.

In the 1970s he was appointed the state of Massachusetts commissioner of corrections, during which helped craft national legislation aimed at providing resources for reform (LEAA), implemented a number of successful reforms, including work release programs for inmates. His leadership and guidance brought forth many innovative and progressive programs that are still in use today.

The people of Atlanta never knew all of the great contributions that John O. Boone made to our nation and to the world.

Im impressed with the company you keep! Much respect.

You do me good; I mean I knew Sowell as an economist from the Hoover Institute but I never read his books.. I will read the one you suggested; the man is no dummy sorry for your losses Maher wanted me to come out in 73 and join them when they developed Delancey Street. I chose to stay her at that time I was dealing with Walpole and new England I was out there when convicts were protecting old ladies from the zodiac killer.. Long time ago Stay strong, study and stay in the trenches Keep hope Alive!

Feel no obligation to respond to me at all.

You do indeed have a very impressive history in the system. I concede to your first hand experience but I just wanted to give an example of where I came up with that line. Many times another persons prospective adds to our own understanding of events and sometimes we need to step back in order to see the whole picture more clearly.

I also lived in the Bay Area, Hunters Point to be exact, as well as N.J., so we have that in common. Ate lunch in San Quentin when I was 17, stopped in every major penitentiary in California that year picking up prisoners and listening to their stories. My brother died in the SHU in Salinas Valley in 2007 and my older brother was in D.V.I when George Jackson lead a riot. (1967)

Although Im not talking with a great deal of personal experience Im not totally unaware of prison politics either.

I have to admit I needed to read the history because when I was locked up all I could do was react to events since we had a very limited view of the whole picture within those walls. Only now am I getting a feel for the whole picture.

Keep on keeping on.

I know what Blake meant about Syracuse, Hunters Point was very similar.

@Alan: It is hard due to my work to keep responding to your stuff. I have read most everything there is on prisons; and my response can be flippant due to the long history I have of being evolved with this stuff since as far back as 1967. I do not mean to run you down in any way, and due to my work here I am short in my remarks. Though a suffering dyslexic my education level is Master with a double Ph.D close at hand although I am not happy with academia given I think most is bull-crap writing about history as is done in the above is not the same as having been there and been part of what was going on. Eric Mann back in the day I though was very arrogant when he would say to me. I dont write the news, I make it. seems funny now for that is what I feel myself at times.. Many folks made a lot of money being poverty pimps, got great educations went on to leave te trenches and got professorships and some got law degrees and i know one who became a judge out in San Francisco, my birth area.. there is not much anyone is going to tell me about Georg Jackson of Big Red; as I said it is one thing t write about it another to live it To have known the Attica Brothers and been in the same struggle and still in it; is very different from setting in a scholastic setting dreaming and think what you know is truth? I have been there my friend and I am still here at 70, still down and dirty in the struggle, with folks that go back with me fifty years, all of us walked through Hell, some are still there; and we work to get them out, one at a time Dont need to read about what we do or what we went through.. Stay strong I write you so you know who you are talking to. Founder of the New England Prisoners Association 1971, ECO 1970, EASE of Lowell mass. 1972, NPRA (National Prisoners Rights Association) Only certified at one time prisoner union in the Country Consultant to Gov. Frank Sargent of Mass on prisons issue while on parole. Representative by petition of 1200 Mass. prisoners be for Stat and Federal legislators.. Consulted ex-convict to corrections Commissioner John Boone (The most poggressive Commioner in the sytem ever; we lost a great and carring man when he past away.) You stay strong Alan.. Bless you in your work..

The Rise and Fall of Californias Radical Prison Movement by Eric Cummins:

Page 187:

When a full-scale prisoner unionization movement emerged in the prisons in 1970, using the rhetoric of class analysis originated by the prison system radicals, scores of community groups turned out in support and lobbied the state government for change.

But sadly, revolutionary convicts would insist on adding to the moderate reform goals of union inmates absurdly impossible demands as the spirit of the Marion County Courthouse shootout seized control of the explosively angry movement and turned reform aside for terror, as if demanding bloody confrontation. This would not have happened had radical prisoners not been misled into thinking they were center-stage leaders of an already advancing American revolution.

The book is not one sided and attempts to give both sides arguments equal weight. One review was critical in that either side could find supporting arguments.

@Alan: all I can say is you did not read about the unions very well. the war was started by the other side Nixon is the man who cut all the great and progressive programs started by prisoners and ex-prisoners programs that were working and empty out the prisons. Hope you read when the Prisoners ran Walpole, and manumission by my partner Ralph Hamm his new book will be out soon; and of course the New Jim Crow by Michelle If you want to go back well good luck The is the Abolitionist where youll find me; may be one of the crazies? Sorry have to go to work

No I dont believe in that that is the reason I posted the following to expose how such genetic arguments are out of step. I do agree we can learn a lot from our history though. I researched mine and found a long line of hardship. No wonder we were so poor.

Elmiras first warden, National Congress member Zebulon Brockway, wrote in 1884 that at least one-half of his charges were incorrigible due to their genetics. Brockway further characterized modern criminals as to a considerable extent the product of our civilization and . . . of emigration to our shore from the degenerated populations of crowded European marts. (Note that he references European marts.) Brockway reserved the harshest disciplinary measurese.g., frequent whippings and solitary confinementfor those he deemed incorrigible (primarily the mentally and physically disabled).

By 1893 the reformatory was seriously overcrowded and Brockways ideas about genetic degeneracy, low-intelligence, and criminality came under fire as a result of his brutality toward the mentally and physically disabled.

But on that train of thought I'd suggest a book by Thomas Sowell titled *Black Red Necks and White Liberals*. (Sowell is black.) Click on this link:

<http://ronloney.files.wordpress.com/2011/05/black-rednecks-and-white-liberals-by-thomas-sowell.pdf>

I have read about the prison union movement of the 60s. The union could have done a lot of good but the crazies started a war with the man and now we are dealing with this new evil solitary confinement.

I could have got involved with numbers and such but I saw no future in it. I'll share the moment of decision my decision with you.

Our reputation on the street may be why Tony Sr. a naturalized Sicilian, told his mob friend in Hollywood Hills about Mike and I, vouching that we could be trusted to take care of business and to hold our mug if we were ever got busted. So we felt obligated to listen to his friends proposition since neither of us wanted to appear to punk out by refusing to even consider this mans offer to work for him. So we followed Tony to an address somewhere in the Hollywood Hills then after Tony parked his car we pulled up behind him, parked, and got out to join him.

The house we arrived at was a large 1920s Spanish Mission style home common in the wealthier areas of the city. Tony took the lead and walked up to the front door, rang the door bell then waited a couple of feet back from the center of the large decorative wooden door with its black iron ornamental hardware. Tony wanted to be sure that he could be easily seen and thus recognized. But on the other hand Tony wanted us to stay a few feet to the side out of view. Someone opened the small speakeasy door and through its decorative black iron grid stern suspicious eyes darted from side to side, scanning the viewable area through its opening.

Tony greeted his friend Its me Tony! I brought over the two guys that I told you about. Tony waved us over to join him in order for his friend to look us over. Apparently satisfied with what he saw, the speakeasy door was closed and locked, and then the multiple locks on the front door were unlocked one by one until finally the door opened allowing all three of us to enter. We entered the room as the owner dressed in a white robe and flip-flop sandals stood behind it with one hand behind his back. Before he closed the door he stuck his head out the door took a quick scan of the area to make sure no one else was coming up behind us and then he removed his hand from behind his back to reveal a 45 caliber hand gun, proclaiming You cant be too careful you know.

Tony then introduced us to the Collector as he was apparently known by his circle of friends. He was aptly called the Collector because his business was to collect on bad debts for his unnamed employers. The debts were said to be mostly from gamblers but there were also the occasional off the public record personal loan. It was the Collectors job to convince those that fell behind in their payments that it was in their best interest to pay up. Simply put the Collector needed muscle to help persuade those reluctant to pay to cough up the dough and as quickly as possible.

The Collector wanted us to aid him in strong-arming debtors into compliance.

Throughout the conversation I got the feeling that it was me that he wanted more than Mike, maybe because of our size difference, but it could also have been my demeanor or something that Tony had told him. Possibly Tony had informed him of Mikes propensity for excessive violence. After all the main idea was to get paid and not to use any more force than necessary to obtain the desired result. What good was a hospitalized debtor? It could only bring unwanted questions by the police. During our conversation the Collector more than once conveyed the message that he would rather snuff a crime partner than to become a victim of a snitch. Although I lived by the criminal code of silence he made me believe that I would never be given the chance to prove it before I was taken out by him or one of his associates. I decided then and there that I wasn't interested but I remained silent about how I felt however.

@Alan: One other note I might add seeing you believe in the hereditary process, and I am not saying I do or Do not, you might read some of Prof. Harold DeWolf's stuff he is or was, has passed on, out of Boston University on the subject of Corrections and the people in them.. You may find it interesting.. He was the man that made me check out my own ancestry which I found very informing and know who I am and what I come out of on both sides of my family. History is an interesting study, when it relates to you and your traits..

@alan, my response to Blake and no others was due to his article, nothing more or less, I was not looking at him in any other light, as you suggest. I dropped the prison picking order long ago, while in Norfolk and Walpole When we started the first union of prisoners in the Country our emphasis was we are all in the boat together doesnt matter if your OC or a sex-offender You are caged by the man The reason people look the other way whether in or out of prison is fear, fear of retaliation When you go to prison as I did with thirty or more associates and going to prison is like meeting your friends at the corner, you do not have the same fear, as going in alone and being vulnerable to everyone I as very fortunate. I missed juvi, and was twenty-five the father of four and the head of a small up and coming crew.. I went for booking numbers and sharking to armed robbery; one snitch took down 34 of us Bad hiring practices on my part..

@Fr. Russ

Besides trying to lighten up the conversation a bit I was attempting to point out through the scientific study on babies why the public supports this harsh punishment.

The ordinary citizen does not see those held in prison and especially the hole as being remotely like them so therefore they like those that do them harm. Take P. Rick and R. Cutler above as an example.

The researchers found evidence that even babies like people that do harm to babies unlike them. This is an important discovery. It could also be an explanation as to why inmates look the other way when men are raped, assaulted, or murdered in prison.

I dont have any baggage about what Ive done in life I only fought to defend myself. I do however still see the faces of those I witnessed harmed.

@P. Rick and R. Cutler

I for one posted the sons comment above as well as Blakes apology.

Black himself was later attacked in prison (maybe with the help of the guards) and has since sued the state for negligence. So what comes around goes around.

Keep up the positive work Russ but ask yourself why you picked up on Blake and not on any of inmates listed in the post above his. Could it be as a OC you see Blake as being different?

If so dont blame yourself you were born that way at least according to that scientific study.

This should be about the victims and their families , not the psycho / sociopathic murderers.

His victim is in a 2 X 6 foot box.

Imagine being innocent

<http://www.psychologicalscience.org/index.php/news/releases/babies-prefer-individuals-who-harm-those-that-arent-like-them.html>

Bad intentions are part of our nature from birth. I quote:

According to several American researchers, babies like people who harm or otherwise injure babies who are somehow unlike them.

The fact that infants show these social biases before they can even speak suggests that the biases arent solely the result of experiencing a divided social world, but are based in part on basic aspects of human social evaluation.

@Alan: I am sorry I do not get your point Are you saying then babies need to be locked up if the show tendency of violence? Im on here because I would like to see prisoners that can be honest with themselves and are looking to change and at things like restorative justice. Im not interested in foolishness that is not going to get us anywhere I work in a factual world, with brothers and sister that seek real change that have changed that are in the process of change that have looked in the mirror and faced themselves and what they have done to others We are not about bull-shit.. I personally can never give back to my many victims, there just is no way and I dont have a clue to how many there where in my OC days However I can and have attempted to change my predatory ways and find ways to contribute to society in a meaningful way, to attempt a pay-back a restoration to society as a whole. I have and do assist these like myself that seek to adjust our life toward the norms of society, knowing we may not be accepted back in but at least we can contribute to a positive rather than be destructive Those that cannot, that we know, we still care about Simple However no bull-shit

And as far as capital punishment is concerned, I invite you to read a very short blog of mine on the subject.

<http://idan67.blogspot.de/2012/06/capital-punishment.html>

Justice in form of retribution is one of the most sickening aspects of our humanity.

Hopefully one day, we will see the immorality of it and try to understand and deal with the problems of society and our psyche.

An eye for an eye is a pitiful outlook on life, but a head for an eye is utterly despicable. Sometimes, Im embarrassed to be a part of the human race.

For Goodness sake people !!

We clearly apposed the death penalty and did away with it here in Conn. It was a long hard struggle Lots of pain on both sides I apposed it on the grounds of the un-fairness in the way it is applied; non the less the vast majority of us human animals right or wrongly seek revenge for the killing of those closest to us.. It is a reality of life and some of us are far more vengeful than others.. If I have time Dan Ill get to read your blog.

Black offered an apology.

And Im sorry that it happened, terribly sorry. Not because I got caught. Not because Ive been in prison all these years because to me, to me, its a small thing. Prison is a small thing, he said.

Im sorry because I was terribly wrong and I made two kids I never wanted to harm a kid in my life, and I caused two kids to grow up without a father, and that really has messed with my conscience over the years, Blake testified, noting hed never forgotten the pictures of the two Clark children hed seen in the newspaper.

Clarks son, Jason, was 7 at the time. His son, Christopher, was two weeks shy of his 9th birthday.

Blake admitted his hatred for police left him unable at that time to feel any remorse for having killed an officer. But thats changed, he said.

Its long gone. More than twenty years ago that stopped, he noted. But I didnt have any desire ever in me to harm any kids, and I know what I did to cause two kids to grow up without a father and for that I know I was wrong beyond more than words could ever say, so Im sorry for that.

Im sorry that I made a woman that never did me no harm grow up or live without her husband. Im sorry I did that, Blake added in concluding his brief statement during the inquest.

I did not see this in his writing; I will leave what I have said to him in a lengthy return which may or may not be fair. As an ex-prisoner and criminal. I have difficulty in reading I did not understand the consequence of my act. For I knew when I pulled a gun and was meaning to use it. I knew what I was doing and I was nothing but a low life predator.. Bad guys know who they are.

My response to Blake is too long for here. I may send it to him if I can; one of my associates did 40 years in the Mass., system for a killing in an armed robbery, a cop got killed. Another friend is still in on his 45th, year no dead body in the crime. I myself did seven.. There is a reason why someone is in lock down, and I must be missing something here; although I read he is a fighter? Lots of focus on himself, no folks on the victims or the family Have to say that bothers me a bit

fuck hard time I can see life with no parole with the general population but 25 in the shu and still counting fuck the legal system!!!! thats like the catholics of old practicing torture on those that didnt bow to the pope

during the dark ages or renaissance period. my heart goes out to all those types of criminals in California New York and everywhere.

This story brought tears to my eyes. I felt suffocated just imagining what it would be like in SHU. No one should ever experience this type of punishment. The worst punishment a criminal should face is a death sentence.

@Ben Thomas

The first prison in NYC was renamed after Newgate in England with reform in mind.

Officially designated the State Prison, the Greenwich Village institution soon became known as Newgate, the name for Great Britain's ancient citadel of incarceration, if not Correction.

<http://www.correctionhistory.org/html/chronicl/nycdoc/html/penitentiary2.html>

Well I am not sure which institution William Blake served time in as a juvenile I still found a link to the 1800s youth reformatories in his current residence.

Elmira was the site of a prison camp for Confederate prisoners of war from 1864 to 1865. Built in 1876, the Elmira institution was designed to hold first-time felons, between the ages of sixteen and thirty, who were serving an indeterminate term of imprisonment, set by their sentencing judge.

The prison, which officially received its first prisoners from Auburn Prison in July of 1876, began a new era in the science of penology as the first reformatory.

Discipline was largely patterned after military academies. Inmates would be dressed in military style uniforms often marching to the tune of a military band.

Although the education programs introduced in Elmira were the first to serve inmates in a correctional facility, the majority of the teaching staff was often unqualified and its complex grading system made progress difficult to maintain.

The only limits on inmates terms of imprisonment were whatever upper threshold the legislature set for their offense.

Elmira's first warden, National Congress member Zebulon Brockway, wrote in 1884 that at least one-half of his charges were incorrigible due to their genetics.

Brockway further characterized modern criminals as to a considerable extent the product of our civilization and . . . of emigration to our shore from the degenerated populations of crowded European marts. (Note that he references European marts.)

Brockway reserved the harshest disciplinary measures, e.g., frequent whippings and solitary confinement for those he deemed incorrigible (primarily the mentally and physically disabled).

By 1893 the reformatory was seriously overcrowded and Brockway's ideas about genetic degeneracy, low-intelligence, and criminality came under fire as a result of his brutality toward the mentally and physically disabled.

An 1894 executive investigation of Elmira's disciplinary practices concluded that discipline in the institution was harsh, although it eventually cleared Brockway of charges that he practiced cruel, brutal, excessive, degrading and unusual punishment of inmates. But continuing stigma led the Brockway to resign from his post at Elmira by 1900.

The Elmira Reformatory would influence the construction of 25 reformatories in twelve states over the next 25 years, reaching its height in 1910.

The Elmira experience suggested to contemporary reformers only that management was to blame, not their proposed system of incarceration generally.

The Progressive Era of the early twentieth century thus witnessed renewed efforts to implement the penal agenda espoused by the National Congress and its adherents in 1870 albeit with some noteworthy structural additions.

I also want to post the one of victim's sons comment:

http://connect.syracuse.com/user/jason_clark/comments.html

My condolences Jason Clark!

I can't imagine your pain.

Thanks, Alan. I'll look into that and get back to you.

@ Lisa

Good work and quote, but it may be too noble an act for an increasingly revengeful public.

I choose the friendship quote because of his solitary confinement.

Could you find out which juvenile facilities he was held in for my collection of reform schools?

Very fitting indeed.

Great story. How this man has remained sane after enduring this torture for 25 yrs is beyond me.

In response to Alan's comment on Blake's namesake, the freedom-loving English poet emphasized forgiveness over retribution in his writing. Very fitting!

And canst thou pity and forgive? - William Blake, English poet

On Richard Honeck mentioned above you can see his before and after photo here:

Others have actually served longer terms.

<http://allkindsofhistory.wordpress.com/2010/07/24/a-prison-curiosity/>

This listing is probably incomplete; furthermore, since, as David Frigault points out below, there are currently 50,000 prisoners in the US serving sentences of life without the possibility of parole, a sentence introduced in many states in the 1970s,

it seems inevitable that these records will begin to be beaten sometime in the 2030s.

- [1] Paul Geidel. 68 years, 245 days
- [2] Johnson Van Dyke Grigsby. 66 years, 123 days
- [3] William Heirens. 65 years, 127 days
- [4] Richard Honeck. 64 years, 30 days
- [5] Howard Christensen. 64 years and <25 days
- [6] Howard Unruh. 60 years and 347 days

Prison life movie:

Felon (2008)

The character John Smith's quote:

When your life is defined by a single action, it changes the concept of time.

http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x6hru6_felon-movie-trailer-2008_shortfilms#.UT35UhzAshs

I find it very hard to understand the logic behind American justice ?. If anything a lot of so-called American Justice, appears very unjust !. It also appears to produce attitudes which can be very contentious to the very existence of America !.

I am looking at this from the UK. Here we do not have the Death Penalty, except for few very specific cases. Our Police are generally unarmed, with specialist response units available to tackle armed situations !.

HM Prisons

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/statistics/hmps/monthly-figures/2013/prison-population-monthly-feb2013.docx>

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/corporate-reports/hmi-prisons>

It was just another bloody day in Dodge for me, he said. That's how I felt. Violence to me, by the time I was 23, was par for the course. I had done years in prison. Years in juvenile detentions, as a kid. That was my life.

http://elmira-coming-ynn.com/content/top_stories/575980/interview-with-convicted-killer-billy-blakepart-1/

Here is the beginning of the story of WILLIAM R. BILLY BLAKE JR.

Born: Oct. 16, 1963.

Former address: 211 Holland St.

Parole: Eligible Aug. 4, 2064.

When he was sent away a quarter of a century ago, Billy Blake was no stranger to prison. He'd spent most of his life in lockups.

(So much for the states rehabilitation methods.)

Blake said, My mother took off when I was seven years old Thats ridiculous. I actually wanted to kill her boyfriend because he had cut her in front of me. I came close. I actually got a butchers knife and stood outside the door and looked in, watching him sleep. But I didnt have the nerve to go in there and do it. And I hated myself. I felt like a coward.

I grew up fighting. I grew up on the south side, where you know its predominantly black. In the 60s and 70s, Im a white boy in a black neighborhood. There was only two kinds of white boys in my neighborhood. Punks that got abused, or fighters. There was no in between, said Blake. Strength is what matters. Decency doesnt matter.

He said remorse has set in for the Clark shooting. That was something he had to keep to himself.

You know, I dont get out my gate and say, oh, I feel so terrible about this. Thats not prison cool. You know? Killing a cop is. Thats prison cool. Thats major points. But, being sorry for it, if somebody asks me, I admit, if I had to do it over again, would you? Of course not, said Blake.

Still considered a severe security risk, Blake has spent the past 20 plus years in whats called administrative segregation, the equivalent of solitary confinement. Most of his time alone. Reading, writing, and thinking.

Billy Blake was sentenced to 77 years to life in state prison. He will be eligible for parole in the year 2064.

Still, in Billy Blakes mind, there is room for hope.

Because Im intensely curious to see how this mad thing is going to play out. Am I going to die of old age in prison, someday? Or, am I going to make it back out there, free? I have no intentions of escaping. I dont want to be hunted like a dog. I wouldnt make it for long and then Id be right back here. And Im not going to kill nobody else, again. Unless Im attacked and its to defend myself. I dont want another dead man on my conscience, said Blake. Im just biding my time until my time in this world is over. Till I get to the next life and that I aint going to screw up as bad as Ive done this one.

Blake hopes, eventually, a governor will consider a grant of clemency. The longest time ever served by someone in an American prison was 64 years. That inmate, convicted murderer Richard Honeck, was freed from an Illinois prison in 1963. At that time he was 84 years old.

He lived another 13 years, free. :)

The bird a nest, the spider a web, man friendship.

William Blake an English poet, painter, and printmaker.

Born: November 28, 1757, London

Died: August 12, 1827, London

Although not the poet of his namesake he is one hell of a writer!

And on top of this torture the court ordered him to pay the murdered deputys family \$5 million in damages.

http://www.syracuse.com/news/index.ssf/2012/01/killer_billy_blake_ordered_to.html

Incredible!

Great work You are doing!
With my best regards!

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Solitary Watch

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