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Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://solitarywatch.org/2012/07/22/voices-from-solitary-a-sort-of-solitary-psychosis/>

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close

Search

close

close

by [Voices from Solitary](#) | July 22, 2012

The following comes from an inmate at Utah State Prison, Drapers Uinta 1 facility. Uinta 1 serves as Utahs death row, long-term supermax, as well as the Draper institutions disciplinary segregation unit. The writer wrote over a period of days detailing a particularly violent few days in his unit requiring multiple cell extractions following several inmates covering their windows and flooding their cells.
Sal Rodriguez

Saturday

3:00 PM

Its around 3:00 PM Saturday here. Last night my neighbor flooded his cell by flushing his toilet a lot with socks in toilet so it flooded the whole section, except my cell (I plugged it off with plastic and towel). Then another neighbor slipped in his cell on water, hit head on sink, had seizure, and was extracted, then returned to cell. I notice that a lot of these guys have seizures. I dont think this is a faked issue. You can tell a true seizure by just listening to their head bounce off the cement floor.

8:30 PM

Cells 1, 2, 3, 4 have all proceeded tonight (8:30PMits almost 10:30pm) to pull all their sprinklers, cover all their windows, and flood cells by running sink and flushing toilets repeatedly. The damn sprinklers emitted no water for some reason. This means if there was truly a fire the captive would burn to death. They are going to fight the SWAT teams. So pepper spray/blood/maybe death is on the roster tonight. Waters barely seeping into my house but its plugged off pretty good. I dont mean to sound like a sportscaster. This shits not cool one bit. People die fucking around doing this shit.

A sort of solitary psychosis, no person can stop these guys.

Guess they are now shitting and pissing into the water. We now wait for SWAT. Pretty soon theyll become hip to the skip and shut off the water. Im going to fill juice bags with water to drink! Almost forgot.

10:35 PM

SWAT called cell 1 and 3 unresponsive. Could be hanging from the sprinkler. Cells 2 and 4 arent going through with it. Negotiator didnt work. Just sprayed a grip of pepper sprayCops are scared to go in! They sprayed each cell five or six times then they both cuffed up. Both alive. Its over for todayor not.

Sunday

5:00 AM

The cops put them back in the cells at 5:00 AM on strip cell and now cell 3 is going to pull his sprinkler again. The cells were soaked when they put them back in them. They are complaining of not being able to see from pepper spray. They were put on a wallhandcuffed behind back this whole time 8:45 to 5:00 AM. Both had to just piss on themselves. Im tired from just watching, not as young as I used to be, and those dudes got three/four days of strip cell to look forward to. Hateful shit.

One of them had a seizure when put on the wall. Theyve refused him medical attention for this. The cops havent fed them today. This is what I mean by subtle abuse. The blowers (big fans) are on in section. This trips temperature a good ten degrees. They do this to make these two on strip cell suffer. The blowers are off all other times.

Cells 2 and 4 are preparing to battle here Wednesday.

Hours later

Its been decided. I wouldnt say we do these things for attention. Its more getting back at them the only way possible. And the cops have to scrub our shit,squeegeethe water up. Actually work.

8:30 PM

Cell 4 is unresponsive. Windows covered. Guards are talking of using C.S. gas, which is a grenade. We had the Sgt. admit that he cannot be the man in charge of extraction because he used too much O.C. gas on the two yesterday.

9:30 PM

The true SWAT team came in on cell 4. Last night it was just staff in bio-hazard suits. They deployed the gas grenade. I cant breathe or see right now. Whole section, all cells, are smoked up. Theres a big fan blowing the shit, supposedly out of our section. But its just blowing it around and its coming in the cells.

3:00 AM

Fans still blowing. Smokes still burning face, eyes, throat. Seems like were in for a long smokey couple days. The CS gas is so strong it leaves black smudges on the cell door frames. Got a pain in my left lung or heart. The smells lingering here in my cell but cant pinpoint exactly where its coming from.

Wednesday

4:45 PM

Cell 3 is unresponsive again. Cell windows covered. Cells flooded. Sprinklers pulled. SWAT team has been called again. Negotiators negotiating. Its a standoff. They took Cell 3 to medical center after standoff to remove staples. Im going to try and mail this to you. Im tired.

Welcome to my world.

8:30 PM

Cell 2 covered window. Officers brought a stick (stick used to push mattresses away from door) and opened cuff port to see into the cell to make sure he isnt dying. SWAT called and we just barely got rid of the CS gas from earlier.

Cell 3 has been moved to Section 4, which has cameras in the cells. Now we wait.

They CSd him (Cell 2) and he had a seizureIts pretty bad in here

Later

You know, I didnt realizeNow that Ive read it all back to myself I seethis shit isnt cool. What is it thats caused me to become used to all this? I remember as a boy growing up wanting to be cool with a burly Raiders jacket and tattoos with a cool bowl cut. I wanted to emulate an older kid named Steve. Now Steve is dead. He hung himself with a string in his trailer closet in my hometown with a power extension cord.

Its now 1:00 AM Thursday.

I made a list once of all those Ive known and grown up with and most have died horribly and they never went through this type of hell. My family considers me crazy. So do my captors. So do my fellow captives. So do I at times but I must be crazy to make it. Strong crazy not weak crazy. Ill turn thirty in four months. Can you see the isolation Im drowning in?

I remember as a boy I loved to play in the stream behind our house. Chase water-skeeters. Pile rocks and dam up the river to play in. Lie on the grass. Build little huts out of old discarded wood. Play spin the bottle with the neighbor girls. Drink homemade root beer and eat homemade ice cream with my grandma.

Ive never killed anyone, and I wont. Ive never hurt a soul and I will not. I slipped my handcuffs while drunk and got caught with two grams of dope and now Im here. Punished

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

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

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

by [Voices from Solitary](#)

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September 6, 2022

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as the wife of a SHU prisoner, Ren needs to have his ass kicked by a woman, one for coming here and trash talking those who cannot speak out freely. and two for undermining the sufferings of others.

I bet Ren has no idea what he is talking about .. has never been in a prison or had to deal with the heartache of wrongful conviction

serious2020 Im in complete agreement with you. I would even point to the fact its exactly this kind of attitude some (maybe all??) of the holders of the keys have. the very kind of moral thinking that allows these nightmares to take place with no end in sight.

I think Ren needs to go to hell in a very large hand basket, w/ large purple cushions and I hope that he enjoys the trip.

You dont have to buy it Ren. You arent there. You havent ever been there. You might end up being one of the kinds of individuals that puts people there, or the next thing to it if you arent already.

So be quiet, Ren. So that the rest of us can stay focused, in case the 29 years young old person who wrote this piece stops breathing and writing for any reason at all. Then, maybe there will be just one more person or three that actually cares.

I can tell you from being in solitary myself that is standard issue. For those who dont understand why people force cell extractions besides the solitary torture and process in to never get out, Ill explain. As if solitary isnt bad enough where you stay in the cell 22 hours a day, often times you dont even get that. In California prisons you are supposed to get yard (Kennels that dogs use) 3 days a week every other day, and showers 3 times a week every other day. One day a week is dead where they run I.C.C. and pretend. See thats the problem. Often the prison administration decides they are too busy not doing anything to give those showers, or yard. So already stuck in slow motion, hardly ever getting out of the cell, the little you are supposed to get really matters! Check out my books to see whats really going on.

How do I respond to this? The old saying seems to apply here..The only difference here is, who has control of the keys..

Im not buying it.

my heart aches. for this young man.

P.O. Box 11374
Washington, DC 20008

info@solitarywatch.org

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