

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://solitarywatch.org/2012/07/01/voices-from-solitary-isolated-for-having-a-gang-calendar/>

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by [Voices from Solitary](#) | July 1, 2012

We have heard a lot about the gang validation in California prisons the process by which inmates are identified as members of prison gangs. Validation can land a prisoner in solitary for five, ten, even twenty years, and was the main focus of the recent hunger strikes at Pelican Bay and other California supermaxes. We have also heard stories of prisoners who have been validated on the basis of tattoos or reading materials, as well as testimony by other prisoners, who are rewarded for debriefing. This is the first time, however, that we've heard of a prisoner being validated and placed in solitary because for having a calendar that was deemed to be gang-related proving, once again, that First Amendment rights often end at the prison gates. James Ridgeway

I am currently in the administrative segregation unit in a California prison. I was not placed in the ASU for any disciplinary reasons-I was placed here for having copies of a 10-12 year old cultural calendar. I'm basically here for having copies of other people's artwork that dates back up to 20 years. Because these individuals were deemed prison gang members I am deemed a threat to the safety and security of the institution for simply admiring their artwork. How trivial is that?

I've been in this situation for 15 months now. It is extremely mind-boggling how the state and courts allow the prison system to take all your little comforts, the things that help you feel like you are doing something positive with your time such as education (I was two classes away from getting a second college degree), AA/NA classes, a job and a few hours of recreation a day over some innocuous copies.

Now I sit here day in and day out wondering if humanity has desensitized itself to the suffering of other human beings. It is incredible when I hear about the anger and moral courage some people feel at how a chicken or any animal is caged up, but don't bat an eyelash when a human being is treated worse. It simply amazes me.

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

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

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

by [Voices from Solitary](#)

September 30, 2022

by [Voices from Solitary](#)

September 19, 2022

by [Voices from Solitary](#)

September 6, 2022

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Why didn't you finish your college stuff?

Tehachapi in Ca. is rarely mentioned it is also a hell hole Validated w/o due process windowless cells in them years and years and years.

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