

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://solitarywatch.org/2012/02/18/voices-from-solitary-the-isolated-prisoner/>

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by [Sal Rodriguez](#) | February 18, 2012

The following poem comes from an inmate at Utah State Prisons Draper supermax unit. Initially convicted of a non-violent drug offense, for which he was sentenced to five years in prison, he has been held in isolation for more than three years. He is also corresponding for an upcoming Solitary Watch article on the practice of solitary confinement in Utah. He is held in his cell 46 hours and 45 minutes straight before being allotted 75 minutes to shower and use the phone. .

Isolated tension so thick you can see it, feel it when you walk into our section, or hear it if you stop and pay attention.

Intense anger and open fury evoked by constant frustration. Hidden cries and silent tears from hopes of false delusions.

Shattered dreams and broken promises from Men who played against reality, or some just out here on some type of adversity.

Still, the outcome is the same, a cell designed for my undeclared torture, for an inconceivable amount of time intended deep within the future.

Forty-six hours in a single cell with the very minimal needs given, while my sanity and well-being is constantly in a struggle of being taken.

Suffering from the hands of time that seem to never turn, while anticipating some type of unfulfilling yearn.

Sentenced to this heinous life like a chaotic scream! Stranded in a prison within a prison, designed with immorality.

Sal Rodriguez was Solitary Watch's first and most prolific intern. Based in Los Angeles, he served as an editorial writer and columnist for the Orange County Register and the Press-Enterprise, and is now the opinion editor for the Southern California News Group.

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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I am the one who wrote this poem. I am now out of prison and am doing really well. thanks to my family and a tight support group. there are too many people experiencing the same things i went through while my incarceration, some worse! I want to thank Solitary Watch and Sal for the opportunity they gave me, and others, to spread our stories. My deepest respects to all those who support the abolition of

solitary confinement! its no right to hold one in them situation for an unbelievable amount of time. but yet, theres inmates human beings who have been in solitary for decades! i was one of a few lucky ones to have only served 4 years in a control unit. My prayers go out to all those who continue to struggle.

I cant comment on the jails, but six years i lived in utah i was and am being tortured by electromagnetic and bio-chem-electromagnetic torture. I exposed govt fraud involving milltailings in grand co utah and i am tortured day and night. please go to electromagnetic torture.com this satanic torture is real and fbi in salt lake and montesello know it is real. the evil people that do this should be in the nut house. Please pray for me and the thousands of others tortured like myself.

Where is the compassion and justice.

It is also very difficult to get reading material to the prisoners inside the Utah State Prison supermax. They cannot order books and for unknown reasons they are not allowed books and there is no library that i heard of.

A copy of a chapter from The Peoples History of the United States by Howard Zinn was refused to my incarcerated friend, because it contained a copyright sign and that was against the law, or something. But starving people and making them go crazy is not against the law? Giving them rotten food and no yard time is what the law prescribes? No visits and no phone calls? (for some unknown reason my friend can also not make calls or receive visits).

Hang in there, you are over the halfway mark. Solitary is a good time to read that bible, sing, and talk in tongues. Or do whatever you didnt have time for when you were in the free world. Exercise, read, write poetry, write stories. I know you are thinking this is easy to say. But I dont have enough hours in the day so if I had the time I would read more, draw with my charcoal, write a book, read my bible.

I never really knew this was happening in the Utah State Prison, Until one day when my son was put into the hole for something he was defending himself. He could not call me, or I could have no visits. Reading on the Californina situation, I asked him, how is it in there where your at? He wrote me several letters, several poems, my heart dropt, how could this happen to any human? let alone my son? I will keep fighting and standing by the side of many, to end this kind of behavior to any human. My son is Native American, and believes in his tradition, and to be dealt like this is unhuman, we were born to respect human life. I pray for him that he still stays strong and not let this tear him down. I thank solitary watch for keeping us inform on this situation.

I am with you all in my thoughts and prayers and we want to thank Solitary Watch for the magnificent work they do in making the public aware of the lack of humanity we show our incarcerated. 97% Of all inmates will one day return to our communities. I wonder what we will have taught them. How does it help to take a mans hope away? Davids Hope is dedicated to ending the use of long term isolation especially for those with mental illness. <http://www.davidshopeaz.org>

This is a modern day tragedy and modernized slavery, full of hate for our People. African Americans, Blacks, Negroes or whatever We want to call ourselves, we are all Human Beings and Gods children. One should fight for the decent treatment of humans as you do for animals.

Forgiveness is one of the greatest things next to Love. And the greatest Love of Allis God and Jesus. They see this and these people will be punished.

My Heart goes out to this young man and his Family. May God Bless You and Shame on this Society of Hateful people (if it fits, claim it) and the Devil at large.

To have this injustice is to have injustice for All.

What can we do, something has to be done.

Since the The Movement for Freedom, Justice and Equality. People have just gone to sleep and afraid to wake up, because of the repercussions today. How sad, that the Freedoms we have been given are slowly fading away. Its like a Fog you cant see whats in front of You.

Linda, I agree with you almost wholeheartedly, we should all strive and stand up for humans , regardless of race, creed, religion, sex or background (color). Even with regular incarcerated and especially those in isolation (et al.) animals receive better treatment! We call ourselves humane but so few people even know of the truth the reality and conditions of life in prison.

Though I am curious why you point out our People. African Americans, Blacks, Negroes or whatever We want to call ourselves why the classification of people? Are we not all children of the Creator, regardless of where we come from? By pointing out one group, does it not call attention and mute the whole point?

What is wrong with the laws in Utah? What about time outside? Here in Arkansas in the Max you get (or are supposed to) 231 with the one outdoors. I know of most of them doing it even in bad weather (though I believe it gives the staff their kicks). You would think that someone in that state would have done something by now so I see Utah as an unfeeling state w/o one ounce of humanity.

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