

August 31st 2019

To: American Prison Writing Archive;

(The following is my submission; normally I would type it, but USP Tucson has been on an Institutional lockdown since Wednesday, August 28th. I have already filled one of your surveys out as well)

Chronicles of August

(Food, glorious food... or lack of)

Today's essay is one I'm sharing in the middle of an Institutional lockdown here at USP Tucson. I want to share with you an entry I wrote today, August 31st, and as I share this, it is 8:50 pm. I wrote three installments today and I'll share them with you.

To get you up to speed, on Wednesday, August 28th there was an incident in one of the dorms here at USP Tucson. When such things happen, the prison - for what they deem a "security issue" will lock down the compound. That means we're all confined to our cells. Depending on the severity, it could be a day, or days - or longer. Now as I heard it, we are to be confined to the cells until Tuesday. That means we cannot leave the cell for any reason except a shower - and we're allowed only ONE every 3 days...

Yeah, go figure

They also turned off the televisions, of which makes no sense. What do you hope to accomplish by turning off the TVs? The problem happened in another dorm; why punish everyone by denying us a chance to at least watch TV from our dorm? This is pure punishment for no reason at all.

And it continues to our food. Hopefully you'll see it as I begin my entry. As I do with all my journals, I'll "Pause" in parts to color some details in. Let's begin: August 31st 2019. Saturday morning, 8:10 am... college football later and we're still on lockdown. We "ate" breakfast; they delivered a bag with a small, unripe pear, one pouch of 10% milk, a .88... I say again, a POINT eighty-eight ounce of bran cereal, a tiny pack of coffee, and a muffin. There's no way this is the minimal requirement. Who eats less than one ounce of cereal? A 5-year old eats more than that! And why are we getting only one milk? We're supposed to get 2 each! These Barlett pears are hard with almost no taste; they've been showing it at us for weeks; usually it ends up on the tables in the chow hall. I cannot believe this is the requirement for meals. They're feeding us less because it's cheaper and easier for them, but it's NOT the required amount. We're supposed to get 2000 calories a day; that's about 600 a meal.

OK, the cereal was 90 (I read that on the package), the pear likely 70 or so, because it's small. The 10% milk, maybe 80, a total of about 240. Not sure how much the muffin was. I'm sure that muffin wasn't 400 calories - so we're behind the curve. Thank God I have canteen to supplement it if necessary. We'll get lunch about 11 am, probably even less calories. I'll try to record it and see. Oh well, 8:27 am.

("PAUSE"; that's my first entry. My concern was that USP Tucson was intentionally under-feeding us, which could qualify for "excessive punishment". Now, I grant you that

(over)

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Many of you may not fully understand what I'm sharing. Let me explain!

Remember, the punishment is to BE in prison, not the extra abuse that prisons use to torment other human beings. No man, or woman working in the Federal Bureau of Prisons has the right or authority to abuse any inmate with prejudice. So for example, no officer here at USP Tucson has the right to beat an inmate simply because they can - but it happens.

This is because whether most people know it or not, inmates DO retain most rights that are guaranteed by the US Constitution. Prisons MUST treat inmates like human beings, and this obviously includes feeding them.

Often, to "punish" inmates, prisons will cut back on the minimal requirements that they are supposed to give inmates. In short, they're slowly starving them...

And while we can argue about how others that aren't in prison eat less; I agree. But when a human being working for the United States government makes the ill decision to refuse to feed men the minimal requirement - that is excessive punishment. Thus my essay. Let's continue to later that day...")

11:45am as we had lunch: 2 slices of bread, a Pink Lady apple, 2 thick slices of turkey ham, and in my case, a slice of cheese - my cellie didn't get cheese. Add a small packet of drink mix, and how many calories do you get? Maybe 400-500 total. So we're several hundred calories behind the curve. No way we're getting a 1700 calorie dinner; we'd be lucky to see a 600 calorie meal. We'll see.

("PAUSE: So we're looking at about 1000 calories, less than what grown men should be getting. I didn't set these requirements, the prison did, by laws concerning fair treatment of human beings. USP Tucson knows how much we should get, but takes shortcuts to punish us. No different from turning off the TV. We can't watch the news, or any thing, and the punishment has nothing to do with inmate behavior. It's simply punishment. OK, let's finish with my 3rd entry of the day...")

6:35pm as we get dinner - exactly the same as lunch. Maybe 500 calories. So, if I had to guess, we got about 1500 calories - well below the minimum. And I accidentally dropped my sandwich on the floor! Crap! And I had eaten only half! Big Soldier's in cell 117 trying to buy a soup (Ramen) - funny, he spends well over \$300 a month but his debts keep him from stocking up. If I could get some to Gerbil, his cellie, I would. But that's 4 cells down; I can't fish that far - oh well, it's been getting tough trying to get college football scores; only a handful for now. This sucks - but many of my picks have been pretty close - more later.

(End of entry)

I feel sorry for guys with no snacks - they're hungry. There's no question this prison isn't feeding us the requirements, only what they want. It's not right to purposely starve human beings. Yes, we're eating, but over 5 days, the lack of a balanced meal, and calories, will have a detrimental effect on these guys. They're literally living from snack to snack, not meal to meal. Inmate or not, it's not humane.

But it happens here, and nobody seems to care.

I'll share more soon, stay tuned (I may lose a few pounds by then...)