

# The Pandemic Journals

## (Day 67: Blind Eyes)

If you're new to this series, know that there's no real order. I take one day out of my journal, and write an essay on it. Although I have 5<sup>+</sup> years of journals, I started this series to highlight the COVID-19 pandemic while in prison. Today is August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020, but I'm turning back the clock to May 20<sup>th</sup>, to share my entry on how the Federal Bureau of Prisons, and USP Tucson, may be deliberately turning a blind eye to the issues of the risk of inmates catching the Coronavirus. Let's begin, and I'll "pause" from time to time to color in some details:

May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020 - 3:38 on Day 67; I forgot Tuesday. We had rec at 7:30 pm. 22 of 30 went out on my section.

(PAUSE: At this time, USP Tucson had us on a 22-hour lockdown. We're in a cell 22 hours a day - with a cellie. We get 2 hours out to do laundry, shower, call home, and other stuff.

But once a week, we get 1 hour outside, to get fresh air. We had to complain to get it because otherwise this prison wouldn't have cared. You'll get the idea in a minute...)

Today we found out how devious the BOP, or DOJ is. Last week, they instituted a COVID-19 email, in addition to the OIG (to the DOJ) for prison abuse. I fired one almost every day, from the FRP, to A.W. Segal; I lit it up.

(PAUSE: The prison gives us a venue to complain by email. With so many problems, I had to write about some of the issues. Too many to recount here. "OIG" means Office of the Inspector General, "DOJ" is Department of Justice. They're supposed to be able to mediate the issues, but they don't; you'll see. "FRP" is Financial Responsibility Program, where the courts charge inmates for court fees - even during an economical disaster such as the pandemic. Let's continue...)

Well today, mysteriously, the prison took off both the COVID-19 email and the OIG, thus cutting off all communication with the authorities. Now we cannot voice our complaints outside the prison, making this fertile ground for retaliation,

They provided us with a land address... which is a fool's play, because USP Tucson blocks mail from getting out. So, in effect, USP Tucson has become an illegal gatekeeper of →

the abuses during the COVID-19 pandemic... could explain why I haven't received any letters from Art For Justice, or could it simply be that they haven't responded yet? It's been over a month. I'll keep writing, maybe I'll get something today. (End of entry)

Ok, here's the problem: the DOJ institutes a venue for inmates to report staff misconduct, and didn't realize the floodgate that would be opened with the complaints from inmates. And once they did, we all started voicing issues - too many to list here; you'd have to find my other essays - but I'll give you one:

During the pandemic everyone in the prison should be wearing face mask. Inmates are mandated to wear one, outside our cell, but staff apparently don't have to. Half the time, they don't wear face masks, as if they're immune. But no inmate in the prison can catch the virus unless someone from the outside brings it in. So, it's a greater responsibility for staff to wear face masks to protect inmates - and other staff - from possibility catching the virus.

But, they don't subscribe to that theory. You've no idea how bad it is in here, and it only goes to prove that, to date, no cases of COVID-19 for inmates is by the grace of God - not by any stretch of the imagination due to USP Tucson's protocol.

So, inmates write email to the COVID-19 address, and the DOJ is overwhelmed of the problems, that they took the only measure they could think of, to solve the problems - they turn their backs.

It makes sense; if you never report a violation, to them, it doesn't exist. So, rather than answering 2000 emails about staff misconduct, it's best to simply get rid of the email, and pretend everything is ok. They provided a land address, but writing a letter, it can be "lost" by the USP Tucson Mailroom -

So now, inmates' voices are silenced, while USP Tucson sells the idea that everything in the prison is fine... while people suffer.

Who will know? There's no eyes to see over the walls. And ~~these~~ here are blind.

Until next time —