

The Elderly in North Carolina Prisons / by: Dan Lewis 11-24-2020 Pg 1 of 8

I am currently Located at a Maximum Security Prison in N.C.

The Dorm that I am in, We call ~~it~~ 'The Hospice Pod'. Like all the

Dorms in this Prison, it has two ~~rooms~~ Tiers; 2nd Cells on Top and

bottom, the bottom be reserved for inmates who are physically

disabled. They have orderlies [the old guys who are waiting to die]

and those orderlies are housed above their "Patients". I probably came

off as a little heartless; I'm only stating the truth. These guys

are like living corpses. Many of them are attached to a colon

bag or a catheter because they've lost or is losing, control of

their bodily functions. At one point, I was the nightTime Dayroom

Janitor and 2 times I've assisted a officer in helping one and

the same guy from off of the floor. How he kept getting down

there, I don't know. But I know he couldn't get himself up. I consider

it awful, keeping guys or woman like this, locked up in this type of environments, regardless of the crime committed. At ~~what~~<sup>What</sup> age does it stop being Justice and start being Torture? To all of you self righteous, if you can't do the time, don't do the crime types; Do you encourage suicide? Do you encourage long, drawn out tortures? Let me tell you something. At the word 'suicide' I paused in my writing to greet a Inmate. When I asked him, "How is it going?" He said, "Deteriorating." He's 40 years old and one Hell of a Artist. How do you think men 80-40 are feeling?

There was a 60+ year old man. He was a Social type and I'll never forget the Wild Jig he dances as he uses his wheelchair for support. This year, 3 officers were assaulted in the span of 2-3 days. At this time, only 24 inmates were allowed out of

their calls at a time. But now that the assaults happened, they put the prison on lockdown. Showers every other day and then back to the room.

This went on for weeks and weeks. Finally, [REDACTED] I'd had

enough and I submitted a grievance on the importance of Mental Health

awareness; for being locked in a cell for weeks with nothing to do but

sleep, can take a toll on the mind and body. Nearly 2 weeks after

the submission of my grievance, I awoke at 5:35 to a mechanical

voice directing the procedure for C.P.R. During the night, a 60+

year old, disabled man hung himself from his ventilation with his

shoes strings. A lot of people in the world are talking about the

mental strain to being stuck at home with their, Dogs, Family, T.V.,

[REDACTED]

Treadmills, Cell phones, operatable windows that allow air to be inhaled,

Books, games and backyards as a result to Covid-19, but nobody

Talks about the strain it has on the minds and bodies of people

Confined to a hollow block of concrete with nothing to look at

but the walls, nothing to smell but our toilet, and nothing to do but

"Our time" in this torture chamber.

These older folks belong in a Rest Home or something, not in here.

Regardless if they are sentenced to life in prison, when the time

~~comes, when an elderly inmate can't take care of themselves; they~~

need to be placed in a proper facility that's fit for caring

for the elderly. If we can't help bring about the humane treatment

of the elderly, what chance do we have at bringing about the absolute

right to humane treatment for every imprisoned person in America, the

Land of the ~~Brave~~ Incarcerated!

Land of the ~~Brave~~ Incarcerated!

I do not take this position blindly; for I know that folks in prison (some) have done some very horrible things that lead them to being here. I've met the guy who the courts say killed Michael Jordan's father; the [redacted] News Branded 'Chapel Hill Rapist' (I played Scrabble with him a lot) and a Hannibal. Heck, my best friend's mother was chopped into pieces and left in a freezer; so don't delude yourself into thinking that I'm an Outsider!

In the end, it all comes down to morals, and anyone who has thought about morality from different perspectives: 'Cultural Morality' to 'our own Root beliefs'; know that reaching a decision on said morality can [redacted] be easy to impossible to the extent at which you either (1) decide not to decide or (2) you pick a side on impulse and stick with it. Morally, what some of these guys have done, is wrong. But is it morally right for us as a Nation built upon character, to let someone suffer [redacted]

unnecessarily? A lot of prisoners will die in prison [REDACTED] due to health failure as a result to old age. Regardless of what they may have done in the past, we all know that we can't look at a person and determine their past misdeeds as if this is some kind of twisted 'Nanny MacFee Alternate Reality' where people grow different styled moles according to the crime committed. [REDACTED] When I look at these guys, I don't see their history, I see a white guy who sleeps in his wheelchair because it's too much of a burden for him to get in and out of bed, but has no problem spewing Hell-Fire from his mouth or somehow finding his way onto the ground. A Black guy who always has a smile on his face but shakes so bad that he requires a transport anytime he goes somewhere. When I see these guys, I see humans who are forgotten and left to decay. I loved my Grandfather. He was like Superman/God: All Knowing and

Seemingly Immortal. When I looked at him, that's what I saw; Not a man  
Who use to beat his wife. When you, Reader, look and see an elderly  
relative asleep in their Recliner shivering from the cold, Do you look  
first into their past to determine if they're deserving of a Blanket? Or do  
you cover them; if not out of love, then out of human decency? If we, as  
a society, can't offer human decency to the most ~~vulnerable~~ vulnerable; I  
say our Nation is truly lost. When elderly people in wheelchairs, get the  
determination to thread a shoe-string through pencil sized vent holes, 7  
feet off of the ground in order to commit suicide; there's a problem  
with Society's Philosophy on Justice and the Prison System. As one who  
has met Despair and attempted suicide; it saddens me imagining  
someone going through that process. But more than that, it hurts my  
soul knowing ~~his~~ <sup>His</sup> current living conditions is what lead him to do it.

I'd asked a officers opinion on this subject. His position was that folks should have their choice of life or death at court sentencing. He also feels the elderly should be placed in a facility that's better suited for housing them. They're all stuck in their cells 24 hours a day right now, for the past 3 months because 3 awards 30 young guys assaulted [REDACTED]

As to the officers opinion, I feel he's right. But I also feel that the choice should be [REDACTED] available to inmates 'during' their prison sentence. To some, that sounds horrible. It's basically Assisted Suicide, right? Yes, I can see that. But I want you to envision something? That you come across an animal that is dying from an injury or sickness or old age. Do you keep going or do you hurt a piece of yourself in order to quickly stop the pain and suffering that animal is enduring? If that animal was you, that being, what would you want?