

I've been incarcerated for a little over five years, so forgive me if I seem over sensitive by the words used by correction officers and their civilian peers who also work for the State. Who define me and other prisoners as anything other than a man. It's boy this, hey you, those animals, the inmate, your inmate, my inmate.

Bare with me as I reveal to you the new Jim Crow for it is none other than D.O.C. at its core. At the time of my birth I was named respectfully after an Argentine author named Jorge. But here at the prison there is no respect, I am not called by name, I am called from inmate to niggard and everything in between. After a while you come to expect that but one State employee took it beyond me, he talks about my mother like she was part of his tour. Now my mother always been a God-fearing, law-abiding woman yet this officer called her a whore.

I know I may not be the smartest, for I may make some mistakes, but I am far from stupid. You see, an adjective and a pronoun are different, and to define me as an inmate is inhuman and to slander someone's mother for just being a mother is just plain cruel. Now let me take you on a journey if you will. Picture yourself in a small room. A room so small that when you stand in the middle of the floor and stretch out your arms you can touch the walls on the side. When you lay down on the floor and stretch your arms forward and your feet back you can touch the front and back of that room. Now add a sink with a toilet in the corner, along with some lockers and a double bunk bed with another occupant. Now think about how every time you have to relieve yourself or defecate there is someone there. Even while the other is having their meal, forget that it's cruel and it extends beyond punishment, it's a D.O.C. rule.

Now back to the gist of the matter, the term inmate is a label describing one's situation. Here at the prison it defines the relation between D.O.C.'s employees and the prisoners. Somewhat like the relation a farmer has with his possessions. His mules, overalls, hat, and boots which leads one to ponder its original roots. Yes, I'm a convicted felon, but I am not a foreign terrorist nor enemy of the State, however they're those with hooded hate at D.O.C.. They forget that I am a United States citizen not a possession, I belong to no man, the 14th Amendment outlaw such abuse, ownership of people is no longer the truth.

Why does D.O.C. define us as simply just things? To dehumanize us in the public eyes in order to get away with the cruelty and bigotry toward prisoners. You know that even animals are protected by activist groups to make sure that the animal shelters adhere to the law and their rights. We are people, yes we made mistakes, but we have the mind and intellect to change and learn. We're supposed to be rehabilitated, and educated to be fit for society according to D.O.C. and the claim of the State. However, the State did away with free college programs. Was it by design in order to keep their multi-billion dollar business something the State yearns. Surely they know that without an education most prisoners are bound to return.

It should lead the public to speculate or wonder as to what sort of monsters and beasts are being created by the State at least. They didn't take away the boxing program, we have plenty of weights to add mass to our bodies but nothing for our minds. Will we be men with hope, men with souls, men with the intent on reaching positive goals upon release? Or will we be nihilist and strong bitter fools with desire and purpose to get out and be cruel which is what is taught by the officers at D.O.C.

These lines that I've written are not just my feelings but something definitely quite real that is happening under the public eye. I've learned that I cannot sit idle, I am using this time to improve myself. I am teaching myself by reading and studying Addiction Counseling which is my goal. I am in touch with my spiritual side, for I will no longer compromise my moral conviction, I will live life on life's terms, I will not be a statistic, I will not return.

I will not accept dehumanization by terms like, hey boy, hey you, those animals, or inmate. While I may be in prison, I won't let the prison dictate who I am. Whether D.O.C. think so or not, I am a man with feelings, not a means for them to make a profit. I am somebody, I am someone who has made mistakes in life, but above all else, I am still a human being...

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