

~ Blog ~

Do you ever sit back and consider history and how it has impacted your life? Not your personal history, but events, people, societies and even empires anywhere from 100 - 10,000 years ago?

I do.

Sitting in this cell in the nation's oldest functioning prison, I am forced to look around me and notice this place's medieval construction, the age of the stones that make some of its ramparts, and the psychological impression this prison's appearance makes upon you when you first drive up to its gates.

It's not so much the architecture, I think, but rather the aura surrounding it which is so compellingly daunting. Though a far cry advanced from the physical reality of a medieval dungeon, for example, the effect of being encased in stone is such that I often feel like an outlaw condemned to a dungeon.

In all reality, what is the difference between the two? As part of any given society's social mores, there has been, is, and always will be an interest in deterring conduct and behaviors contrary to the communal welfare... and so was born the "dungeon" as one such evolved deterrent. In this age, we call them "prisons". Yet, though physically different, they both effect social isolation, deprivations of any/all manner of freedoms and privileges we so often take for granted, and manage to retard our social development and interactions.

In today's age, both cater to punishment versus rehabilitation with harsher sentencing, laws, reduced budgets which in turn eliminate rehabilitative programming initiatives/options, and with more emphasis placed on harsher sentencing practices, the rehabilitative options that are available lose incentive and attraction as participation or completion within such programs propels people with longer sentence structures no closer to their freedom or any appreciable reward.

With this thought, I am compelled to recognize the dehumanization that occurs or would occur in prisons/dungeons... as a hopelessness is bred within both confines, a hopelessness that stifles the voice of reason within us and confines us to the chaos that is incarceration. Such hopelessness has a way of battering the spirit and without hope, what reward does life have to offer?

Where is redemption if not through hope? Any thoughts...