

Entry #8 : Changes in prison regarding inmate behavior.

If I havent mentioned it already this is my 2<sup>nd</sup> stint in prison ; my first conviction was a 4yr sentence for Agg. Assault on a Peace officer. long story short I was buglarizing a pawn shop on Boca Chica Blvd in Brownsville TX on a busy street and I was loaded out of my mind on Roach 2<sup>5</sup>, the drug now commonly known as the Date-rape pill ( Rohypnol ). Not of people think its only used as a "roofie" on women. Anyone who's from a bordertown knows they were the drug of choice in the 90's. Still in use now but not as popular - probably due to the crackdown and pressure on Mexico because of its date-rape usage.

Anyways, I came to prison the first time in 1996 and quickly got involved with a prison gang (of which I am no longer associated with after 12 yrs as a member). And as soon as I hit the prison system I literally walked into a war-zone. The gang I was with was at war with 2 others simultaneously. Now in the 90's the prisons were still "Rockin - n - Rollin", where were lots of stabbings , people getting killed left - n - right - especially on certain units where the gang members went (maximum security units). At that time it was a way different atmosphere as now. I was having a conversation recently with a youngster (21 yr old) who is fresh in the system and who doesn't know how much its changed. So this is what prompted me to blog about this subject.

You see, prisons now are a lot SAFER (at least in Texas they are) than they use to be. In TX. they have

2.) installed the "Safe Prison", what oddly enough began over a murder at the Terrel Unit where I was at from 1997-2000. The Safe Prison is set up to protect what at one time was taken advantage of or killed such as snitches; child molesters; rapists; and homosexuals. The perception in society has been what snitches or child molesters/rapists get killed in prison. maybe at one time, but this is no longer the case. The snitches, rapists, and child molesters RUN the damn place. They are so protected that snitching has become so common place they don't even call it "snitching" anymore. It's now called "Staying Down For Mine." People (some) don't even try to hide it, they'll snitch in front of everyone, anyways what can anyone do? - If you even act like you're going to harm them you're liable to get extra time stacked on your sentence. So the perception that those inmates are killed or harassed is no longer accurate.

Where stabbing used to be the norm to settle differences or wars, people rarely want to even possess shanks, much less use them. It's more about fighting now one-on-one. This is good in a way because it reduces deaths and stabbings. But from the perspective of one who lives in here and has to deal with this change it's not so good in that there's less respect. Reason being, someone who can fight real good and beat anyone has somewhat of a "I can do whatever I want" attitude. Whereas before, it didn't matter how good a boxing game you had because a piece of steel trumps cold hands. So there was more fear and respect before. "Certain" people were kept in line, the same people who now feel they can bully everyone.

3.) I was asking this youngster I was having the conversation with "why" he was always getting himself into problems with other inmates. His response was that he didn't care because he could beat them in a fight. I said ok sure, maybe, but what are you going to do when you piss off the wrong guy and he don't care about fighting, he cares about sticking you full of holes? He said that nobody does that. Sure, maybe not so much NOW, but luckily for him he wasn't in the system 15 yrs ago when he'd of been in some major trouble. Even now you can only go so far with certain individuals, no matter how cold your boxing game is you run into someone who's never going home or just plain don't give a damn and you're outta there. Safe Prisons can only do so much.

Another misperception is that a lot of people get raped when they come to prison. It's a big joke all over the country, we all heard them about how to expect to get turned into someone named "Bubba's" wife. As many stabbings and fights that I've witness in 15 yrs in the Texas Prison system I can honestly say that I've NEVER witnessed a rape. That's not to say they don't happen because they DO, just not as frequently as society seems to think. Even back then when it was more dangerous.

Then a lot has to do with how weak or strong you are. The inmates right away can tell who will stand up for themselves and who won't. Naturally the strong prey on the weak. It's the way of nature. Ralph Waldo Emerson said it best "Nature has decided that whatever cannot defend itself shall not be defended." The Safe Prison however does a lot to neutralize the weak vs. strong.

24. Scenario. It's more balanced, or you can even say tips in favor of the weak, since as I said they now run the system.

Overall, from an outsiders perspective I would say that because of what things have improved. From an insiders point of view, as someone who lives here and has to deal with that change of environment, I'd prefer it went back to how it used to be. There's something to be said for fear and respect when it comes down to it. Then to maybe that's just my own moral (or immoral) philosophy. I grew up in the lifestyle where snitching was a no-no. where child molesters were supposed to be smashed, and rapists the same. If any of you checked the percentages of who gets paroled in Texas based on the crime committed you might be SHOCKED to find out that consistently the sex offenders (which include: rapists, child molesters, etc.) have the highest rate of parole being given. This is ironic because as much noise as is made about child molesters and all these new laws passed to prevent them being released or from committing the same crime its them who have the highest/best chance to make parole. I've seen the percentages. The average non-sex offender percentage is between 18-24% of who get parole. The average % for sex offenders is in the area of 40-50% who get paroled. I was recently denied parole for the 2nd time on this Agg. Robbery case I have. I come up for the 3rd time this coming April. I have 70% of my sentence completed. I am not a trouble-matter. I have many accomplishments to my credit. And the reason for denial had nothing to do with anything I have control over. It was because of things that I can't change. Such as who nations of the country and not me

5.) past criminal history. I understand what you say.  
But if you read my Entry #5 on Punishment vs. Rehabilitation  
I am proof that rehabilitation that we accomplished  
had little to no effect on whether to be granted parole or  
not. The proof is in the 2 reasons given which are  
things that can't be changed.

I remain on the march, my step hasn't  
slowed. I'll gladly pay my due and wait for my time  
to come.