

#90 Message for Nikki in Australia, written + mailed 10 Oct. 2011
from <http://betweenthebars.org/blogs/540/nathaniel-lindell/>

Dear Nikki: The "dear" is deserved. Just rec'd your letter w/ your writings etc., and, since it's 4:30 AM + I'm up listening to my neighbor (J.F. - Mr. Poop-fetish etc.) "play" crazy, I thought I'd write ya. Bet Benj @ BtB was ecstatic about you studying this site. Let him know I^{recently} had about 20 letters sent out to lawyers, legislatures, + media orgs referring them to it + I cite my URLs in legal papers I write for others. ☺

I like brains, + not just because they taste good. ☺ Brains are hard to find in prison - I mean either in staff or convicts. Your perceptions are astounding for s/o who's not been in prison: 1) the deprivation does magnify everything (e.g. the scent from soap on a female guard can/does seem like perfume; calling someone a name can/does lead to severe retribution); 2) what you say to us has unusually profound impact; 3) BtB does give us a chance to let down our monster mask, a mask that comes in very handy in here. You're studying psych. + criminology? Keep in touch!

Please feel free to print + send to the other convicts you write - e.g., the one in Arizona — any of my posts, I'm thinking mainly of the legal discourses, but any. And you can tell Gary Field in FL (you profiled his post for Blog Week 6, "Genre") that I almost had an asthma attack laughing at that. And Jeremy Pinson @ Florence, Blog Week 7, that Sean Riker was there, now he's here + to say "hi" to his riders.

Are those rocks around your town sandstone, granite, or what? They look sandstonish. A lot of sandstone bluffs in WI; laughable compared to the more complexly colored granite of Montana. Yet, except for too many dwellings, I love the sight of where you live — ocean, a lagoon, rugged land, bright blue sky — Kansas'd make you cry (it's so flat!)

Love the cleavage! ☺ Ya got nice skin too! Get me a bigger photo + I'll post your portrait. What color are your eyes, by the wa.? You can see my pic on www.prisonpenpals.com/303724.html (Sean says I look like "a brain-eating serial killer", so please give me your assessment — usually I smile for prison photos, 'cause they want us to frown).

The one thing I noticed in your writings that I suggest you reconsider is the existence of "one genuine identity". Personalities are one of the topics I heavily ponder + study, how they are produced (nature...nurture...). You might want to reconsider the existence of "one" + "genuine". The Mask of Sanity by Harvey Cleckley, I never read, but a shrink here urged I do; the "genuine" us is a collection of characteristics we've adopted or were born with, modified by our drive to survive, etc. You are genuinely slightly or greatly diff'nt identities with your kids, your mates, your profs, all genuine, even if genuinely fake. ☺ Few paper take the time to consider that, as Tuft U' Prof. Daniel C. Dennett (tell him I said "hi") terms it in Consciousness

Explained, p.410, we're "the center of [our] Narrative Gravity".... Look it up. ☺

Also, neither "good" nor "evil" actually exist. They're just handy concepts most pretend exist b/c they're handy ways to justify their own interests. I'm not, e.g., saying we should not call pedophiles "evil" or crack dealers, but that we'd be better off at understanding the nature of ourselves + the societies we concoct if we didn't believe our own lies, which has led to projecting the "devil" on others (thereby making angels out of the projector) + distracts us from understanding + bettering ourselves.

Thought - a good personality is like an ATV: it'll carry you over all kinds of terrain/obstacles. The motor is our will to survive. The driver, our intelligence.

I'd miss your comments + personality, though, you're right - we're resilient.

Since you are an astute psych. student, ya might want to network w/ Prof. Joseph Newman @ U.W. Dept. of Psychology, Newman Laboratory, 1202 West Johnson St., Madison, WI 53706-1611 - you can probably e-mail him at newman@wisc.edu. He, I'm told, studies cognitively-impaired prisoners. U.W. Mad is, fyi, B.F. Skinner's old stomping grounds, excellent psych. program there.

Your kids are lucky to have a perceptive + compassionate mom. Don't underestimate your influence on others. We can have a good impact + hardly even try, I hope!

Consider this episode, 'cause I like kids, particularly rowdy boys: Once, while fishing, some 9-10 yr. old kid came along, alone, poor, exploring/fishing. When I was his age, I was much the same, except I had better tackle, mostly stolen. I let him use some of my lures, didn't care when he lost one to a snag (again, ¹A), + gave him an 8-9 pound Northern Pike I caught (these fish are shaped much like a barracuda, with a mouth full of long, sharp teeth, pale bellies, red + black tigered fins, + brownish sides with white oval spots - I like their taste). He invited me home + to meet his mom. I passed, just wanted to give a kid like I once was a good memory. That was the genuine me - but I was genuine when I've hurt people too, although, of course, I believed the punishment or worse was "appropriate" (what a cold word!).

We don't like being called "offenders". I'm not always "offending," + often find myself offended against by those using that label. Might as well call me "white boy."

The Psychology of Crime? Check out my "^{#37}Sassy Girls" post, sent in Dec. 2011. Please tell me if you find it funny or stupid. Seriously, consider chronic suicide, which I kind of explain in my forenoted prisonpals ad. My mom was drag'd w/ M.P.D., now called D.I.O. (Sybill, but worse), and then so was my youngest bro. At the age of 13-16, I acted as a Psych. Care tech., probably had PTSD already, definitely after/during, ¹wrongly labelled ADD. Talk about trapped! I hated suicidal stuff, cause of seeing my mom + bro's attempts, yet pretended not to know I was killing myself in a less direct way. I think this is more common than people realize. More on this etc. later.

Keep in touch!

W/ Love + Respect, Nate