

## Nate's News 29 June 2014

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So, I finally made it to prison sweet prison, where interracial gay lovers may frolick around the rec. yard free from threat of death, ex gang members may safely stroll the yard, and snitches anxiously look for something to tell on.

On really hot days (so I'm told), prison staff hand out snowcones. Reluctantly, I'm sure, as many staff here go out of their way to be assholes.

You might think that staff — whom, most people assume desire that prisoners behave more lawfully — would be pleased at the more placid nature of prisoners here at Coleman 2. Mais non. These are the rudest, foulest staff I've yet encountered while in the B.O.P. For example:

- on the night of my arrival (19 June), a guard doing 10 P.M. count persistently knocked at my door, demanding (unknown to me, as I had earplugs in & was sleeping) that I stand, refusing to accept my wiggling foot & then waving arm as evidence that I was alive, unlike every guard I've previously encountered in the B.O.P.;

- the morning after my arrival, a guard named T. Jones refused to give my cellie & I drinking cups, falsely saying that he put some in our cell already, then accusing us of lying about having cups when we said none were in there ("I don't care what you say");

- the evening of the 2nd day I spent here, a third guard accused us of lying when my cellie & I said that we only had one pair of socks rather than the two pairs we were supposed to have. He said he'd have to search our cell before he gave us a second pair of socks. When we said, "Go ahead," he left, never returned, & we never got our socks.

- on my third day here, a diabetic prisoner asked T. Jones for his medication, which the nurse neglected to give the diabetic. T. Jones rudely replied, "Why're you always trying to talk to the police? I don't get it." After the diabetic explained, T. Jones said, "I don't ask you for nothing. So why're you asking me for something?"  
Etc., etc., etc.

Every day I encountered a new, senseless example of rudeness

Many prisoners are here because they're not safe at other U.S.P.s, because they dropped out of a gang, testified against someone, or have something bad in their paperwork.

But many staff are here because they are not safe at other U.S.P.s. E.g., T. Jones was stabbed & severely assaulted twice over at Coleman U.S.P. #1, & his coworkers (so I was told) insisted he be transferred because he was making the work environment hostile.

Because the prisoners here can't go to many other U.S.P.s, they're reluctant to assault staff here who mistreat them, which, as terrible as it sounds, is a tried & true method for compelling staff to act right. Thus staff with foul personalities, abusers, persist.

That's how it was in the S.H.U., where there's little else to do other than notice & ruminate on petty irritants. It took about a week, & now I'm out of the S.H.U.

I did, this morning (the 29th), have an encounter with a <sup>Black</sup> female guard (most of the Black female guards I've encountered are decent, even nice) who was clearly fishing for an argument. On the way to breakfast, she stopped me & demanded, "Where you going in those house shoes?" (Canvas dock shoes, issued to S.H.U. prisoners). Another guard brought out that they were the only shoes I had & let me go and eat. (We're supposed to wear tennis shoes/sneakers to meals). On the way back, that Black female stopped me, and I replied, "What's up?" to which she replied, "You don't address an officer like that! I'm not your friend!"

Etc. I always see her having friendly chats with Black prisoners....

It'd be interesting if I could peer into the minds of such staff, discover what spiders spun the webs that clearly exist in their minds. But, really, I have enough burdens already, as is — I'm sure — the case with many other prisoners. I suppose that's why, occasionally even here, a prisoner snaps under that burden & violently tries to shrug it off.

The weather is nice, but a little too sunny for me. It is nice to be able to get tanned after more than a decade of segregation in the Wisconsin prison system, where sun was as rare as... love from... anyone.

Most of the prisoners are laid back. Those who are not, I brush aside. The coolest guy I met is a Spanish Mexican named Hector and a mestizo Mexican called Gato. Met a couple cool white guys too. The cool, considerate people, which does include some guards, enables me to disregard the foulness of others.

Love & Respect  
Nate