

THE NORFOLK REHABILITATION MODEL
ANDS ITS DELIBERTATE AND MALICIOUS DISMANTLING

by Timothy J. Muise

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts led the way in prison reform through the 1970's & 1980's. We had one of the lowest recidivism rates in the country (half of what it is now) as well as the most successful furlough programs and parole release rates. One of the system's aspects which played a major role in those successes was The Norfolk Rehabilitation Model. The prison in Norfolk, Massachusetts was set-up to be a community within the community where the incarcerated would learn to live under the hard won American social system; a system where if you worked hard, respected the laws of society, and were afforded a fair chance you could achieve a satisfying life for yourself and your loved ones. To use an old cliché, "Oh how the mighty have fallen."

The prison that produced Malcolm X and his "use prison as your college" philosophy now produces our Dominic Cinellis and Daniel Tavareses. The prison that had men earning a fair wage through avocations now releases unprepared and addicted men onto the streets of the Commonwealth with just enough money in their pocket to obtain a heroin addiction. Low level offenders are being turned into murderers at MCI Norfolk and no one seems to care.

I was here at the prison a few years back. A few vestiges of the past were left and making efforts to relive the glory days of rehabilitation; days when men could quest for self-realization. The Lifers' Group, Inc. and The African American Cultural Coalition were two groups working hard to attempt to make a difference, but even then the prison administration, the Weld era gulag turnkeys, were roadblocking any meaningful family reunification or community healing. It was sad to see then but now it is even worse. No prisoner group is allowed to stand on its own and work for real healing. That is now a disciplinary offense in the Department of Correction. Young men die in our streets, victims of gun violence which is a direct result of the failed prison system, and the "breaking rocks" entrenched screws cash their hefty checks and keep Budweiser and The House of Seagram in business.

This is a deliberate and malicious effort. The jobs program that is the Department of Correction cannot allow men to heal. This does not promote jobs. It is malicious as they know the answers, like I said we were the leader in the past, but pretend it is a mystery as to how to reduce recidivism. With their fake "job training" programs and lack of college programs the DOC offers the most complicated treatment demographic in society laughable programs were they cannot even convey rudimentary skills. Men use to leave the system with a real skill, \$20,000 or \$30,000 in a bank account, and a real community support system. Today, at The Norfolk Rehabilitation Model (I just threw up a little in my mouth) they leave knowing how to sew a seam on a bed sheet, \$500.00 in their account, and a total disconnect from the community and its resources. They might as well as pass out heroin and Glocks to the men on their way out the door. Tragic.

There are some men with a plan. Members of CURE-ARM will first work to expose this modern prison madness. We will name names of the DOC knuckle draggers and abusers. We will detail their ludicrous programs and train wreck education efforts. When the drunks and drug addicts of their rank and file get promotions we will let the legislature and other

entities with a vested interest know who they are. Once we get the exposure system streamlined into an effective vehicle the next step will be to compel the community to get reinvested in the prison system. Outrage about the systemic failures and their detrimental effects on the citizenry will be channeled into activism and focused protest which will bring real change. We have no time for naysayers and disbelievers as we are the real experts in this field and will push forward as such. The real change we have desired for too long now is coming. Please join us.

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