

WE'RE ALL INSIDE THE FENCES

The Reproduction of Prison Inside Our Heads

By Rand W. Gould

In every cry of every Man,
In every Infant's cry of fear,
In every voice, in every ban,
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear.

- William Blake, "London"

"It's all in your head, man." How many time have we heard that before? I'm bettin' plenty and it's truer than one might suspect. Why? Because the blueprint for the system of our oppression - state, religion, politics and civilization - is inside our heads where, if we're not careful and, sometimes, even if we are, it's constantly being reproduced. Prison is truly in our heads.

From the day we are born, we're all inside the fences and subject to civilization's unrelenting domestication project. Remember your crib? Not much different from jail, only the bars were wooden and not steel. Same for our playpens. How fucked up is that? Starting life off in a playpen and, in the case of many of us, winding-up in a state pen.

the dream sea has been poisoned,
the stop light splashes me red
innocence suffocated in its sleep,

- Acid Bath, "Dr. Seuss is Dead"

Our domestication begins when we leave the womb and continues, with the mostly unwitting assistance of our parents, right on up through adolescence and beyond. As we grow older we're confronted with an ever-expanding series of physical boundaries or limits - the backyard fence, the block, the freeway, the town or city, state and nation. All of which assist in the erection of mental fences where there are no physical ones - the so-called taboos. Especially forbidden is sexual play and experimentation on our own or with other children. As children we've all played doctor, our curiosity being innate, and we've all caught hell when caught doing it!

I have no name
I am but two days old.
What shall I call thee?
I happy am
Joy is my name,

- William Blake, "Infant Joy"

Then, of course, there's school and religion, those purveyors of dogmatism, lies and peer pressure that we all know so well. Blake was right to call school "the great Sin," but the social engineers proved him wrong for saying, "There is no use in education." The state puts education - the social coercion of school and religion - to use by having teachers and preachers beat our innate joy right out of us in a veritable frenzy of domestication.

Anytime I want
I got a right to move,
no matter what they say.

- Iggy Pop, "I've Got a Right"

In civilization's social engineering project, the tamer we are the more room we have to move. The less amenable to the project, the less room to move. The wild ones find themselves pushed into an ever-decreasing series of spaces - jails, prisons, mental hospitals, etc. - by the authorities known as teachers, preachers, police, lawyers, judges, politicians, etc. In two words - the parasites. And inside of these spaces, these prisons, there is yet another series of shrinking boundaries - minimum-, medium-, maximum-security, administrative segregation (Ad-Seg), communication management units (CMU), secure housing units (SHU), etc. All of them the gut-wrenching, mind-shredding, soul-killing instruments of domestication.

You don't play along, the parasites put you in here. Inside a system where more than ever the law is to be obeyed but not followed. A prison where the convicted are just as likely to be innocent as to be guilty. Unknown to most on the outside, once arrested and charged you will never be considered innocent. The best you can hope for is a finding of "not guilty" and if you were to sue for, say, false arrest or malicious prosecution, the courts will quickly disabuse you of any thinking that not guilty means you're innocent.

Justice, dignity, nobility, freedom...these words that yap and howl, are they anything other than household pets whose masters have calmly awaited their homecoming since the time when heroic lackeys won the right to walk them on the streets?

- Raoul Vaneigem

Our much-vaunted constitutional rights, which at best were an illusion, along with "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," have steadily been stripped away. For example, the Fourth Amendment states no searches and seizures are to be conducted without a warrant issued by a court upon a showing of probable cause, nevertheless this has somehow been reinterpreted by the courts to mean the suspicion of any armed parasite, i.e., law enforcement officer, allows searches and seizures. All that's left of the Bill of Rights is the Third Amendment, as they're not quartering soldiers in our homes, yet!

The passage of the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 (AEDPA) gutted the Writ of Habeas Corpus, i.e., the Great Writ, along with 800 years of case-law precedent and Article I, Section 9, clause 2 of the United States Constitution. This means once you're convicted you're likely to stay convicted, no matter what new evidence you discover or what rules or laws the courts, prosecutors, police and your lawyers have broken. Yes, "your" lawyers, who are officers of the court, so guess where their allegiance lies?

Then there's the Prison Litigation Reform Act of 1996 (PLRA), where the so-called "reforms" make it nearly impossible to pursue a lawsuit for any violations of your personal, human or constitutional rights. For example, if a prison doctor prescribes the wrong medication but it doesn't result in an immediate and serious injury, you're left without a remedy. The potential for future harm doesn't matter. There's a lot more to it, but suffice it to say the PLRA gives our jailers, the parasites, carte blanche to torture us.

But the oppression of law is the least of it, because it's so obvious. Although, many prisoners wind-up domesticated, insane, or both in their pursuit of perceived but non-existent legal remedies. The real danger is the shit in our heads and the insidious methods our jailers use to reinforce and add to it. Modern prisons act like monstrous pacifiers, while simultaneously training its victims to be servile members of civilized society.

Everyone sleeps here in a single grave.

- The Cocktail Furies, "The Swelling of Leeches"

In men's prisons the pacifiers range from cable TV and organized sports to the female guards that George Jackson so correctly assessed as extremely dangerous. Some prisoners are so docile that they don't want to leave, and would just as soon stay in their cells and rot. The gun-towers, chase-cars and fences could all be removed and very few would walk away, except maybe the prisoners at the highest security levels.

When prisoners aren't laid-up in their bunks watching TV and eating a bowl of Ramen noodles or a bag of chips, they're down on base playing cards or kickin' it with some guard, usually female, spilling the beans about all and sundry. Like Pavlovian zombies they gather three times a day, waiting 30 minutes or more for chow to be called so they can run to the chowlines and stand in them for another 10 or 15 minutes in order to eat. They'll complain like crazy about how short yard-time is, yet automatically walk off the yard when it gets close to the normal closing time, regardless if it's been closed or not.

The programs, as in domestication programming, are even more insidious, from substance abuse, assaultive and sexual offender therapy to building trades, food tech, etc. All crap the jailers pound into your head in order to force your acceptance of their nightmare world, where nobody bats an eye as predator drones reduce whole villages to ashes in Asia and Africa, preferably women and children first, all in the name of civilization.

My own mind is my own church.

- Thomas Paine, "Age of Reason"

Of course, there's school and religion in prison. Hell, these damn joints are littered with Bibles and Korans, even L. Ron Hubbard's ravings! Right from jump, a close friend warned me, "You better be careful 'cause god is creepin' all around those joints." It seems a mutual friend went to jail and found christ, and she wasn't talking about Alexander the Great. You cannot walk the yard without seeing scores of victims of the desert death-cult religions clutching their holy books, while preying on the young kids that come through the bubble. Disgusting, but not surprising, when their holy books are little more than paeans to predation and slaughter.

You don't get made a victim,
you have to make yourself a victim.

- Brigitte Mohnhaupt, RAF member,
quoted by Stefan Aust, Baader-Meinhof

It's a head game and the jailers' maximum effort is devoted to creating a condition commonly called "Stockholm Syndrome." I wish, because we'd be living in a very different world if the Red Army Faction (RAF) of Andreas Baader and Ulrike Meinhof had anything to do with it. The April 1975 RAF attack on the German embassy in Stockholm, Sweden, resulted in the hostages being released, walking out and declaring the RAF was right in trying to overthrow the German predator state and the rest of the states in Europe! Although, I suppose, as Marxists they would've replaced the capitalist state with their "dictatorship of the proletariat." Another, albeit different, blueprint of oppression.

Inside prison, "Stockholm Syndrome" is manifested in prisoners currying favor from guards and the administration by snitching out their fellow prisoners. The reward might be sex with a guard or transfer to a "better" prison. However, it's not unusual for prisoners to give-up a fellow prisoner, even give them a case and testify in court against them, in return for nothing but a little recognition from their pals - the guards!

Politics: That's the religion of today, that's the cancer that annihilates every possibility of community and puts an end to every period of ferment.

- Fredy Perlman, Letters of Insurgents

But, it isn't just inside prisons where this is going down. We're all witnessing how Occupy Wall Street and the leaderless movement it engendered is being attacked and destroyed from without by armed goons and parasites known as police, while simultaneously being attacked from within by the advocates for leaders. And not just by the avowed statisticians, either, whose various political parties offer up a plethora of ready-made leaders, but even, however inadvertently, by Berkeley's Slingshot, where the Hella Occupy Edition 2011 article, "Solidarity not Unity," quoted Zizek asking, "What type of new leaders do we need?" Huh!? The cry for leaders, the very antithesis of anarchy, is ubiquitous and will continue to be reproduced so long as the blueprint for oppression, Blake's "mind-forg'd manacles," remains in our heads!

Consequently, our survival depends on getting out of our heads and into our bodies. It's time to quit consuming all the spectacular bullshit and start living - quit school, work, watching TV, texting, sitting at a keyboard and monitor, driving cars, all political parties, and worshipping patriarchy and hypocrisy in temples, churches, mosques and synagogues. Pull down the temples, run wild in the streets, tear them up, and sow a garden of your own desires!

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