

Ending Design for Torture and Killing

**A proposal to amend the
AIA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct
to prohibit the design of spaces intended for
long-term solitary isolation and execution**

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Architects / Designers / Planners for Social Responsibility

Academy of Architecture for Justice Convention

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Why is this Ethics Code Amendment Needed?

- **Long-term solitary confinement is torture**
- **Execution chambers kill people**
- **Architects should not be party to torture and killing**

Solitary Confinement as Torture

No [former hostages or POW's] saw solitary confinement as anything less than torture. This presents us with an awkward question: If prolonged isolation is—as research and experience have confirmed for decades—so objectively horrifying, so intrinsically cruel, how did we end up with a prison system that may subject more of our own citizens to it than any other country in history has?

-Atul Gawande, “Hellhole”, The New Yorker,

“
http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2009/03/30/090330fa_fact_gawande#ixzz25cTjdyrz

“A considerable number of the prisoners fell, after even a short confinement, into a semi-fatuous condition, from which it was next to impossible to arouse them, and others became violently insane; others, still, committed suicide; while those who stood the ordeal better were not generally reformed, and in most cases did not recover sufficient mental activity to be of any subsequent service to the community.”

- United States Supreme Court Justice Samuel Miller, 1890

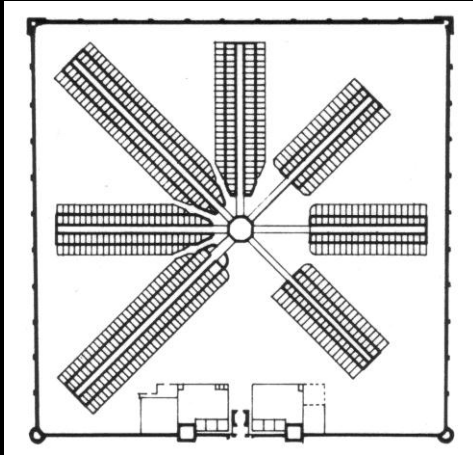
International Standards on Solitary Confinement

“Indefinite and prolonged solitary confinement in excess of 15 days should also be subject to an absolute prohibition”

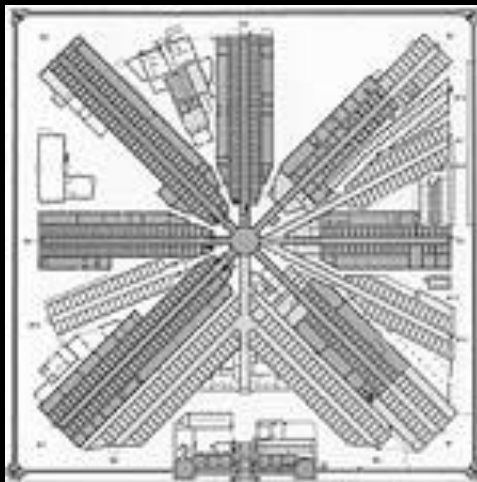
- Juan Mendez, U.N. Special Rapporteur on Torture, Oct. 18, 2011

“prolonged isolation and deprivation of communication are in themselves cruel and inhuman treatment, harmful to the psychological and moral integrity of the person and a violation of the right of any detainee to respect for his inherent dignity as a human being.”
- Inter-American Court of Human Rights, *Velázquez-Rodríguez v. Honduras*, Series C, No. 4, para. 156 (1988).

Solitary Confinement in History: The Eastern State Experience



Original Design, 1830's



Final State, 1900's

- Overbuilt
- Overcrowded
- Violent
- Too expensive
- Produced mental disorders, intense suffering, and madness



Current AIA Code of Ethics

AIA Code of Ethics, E.S. 1.4:

“Members should **uphold human rights** in all their professional endeavors.”



Photo: San Quentin State Prison, Gas Chamber, 2010
courtesy CA Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

Current AIA Code of Ethics

AIA Code of Ethics, E.S. 1.4, Rule 1.401

“Members shall not discriminate in their professional activities on the basis of race, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, or sexual orientation.”

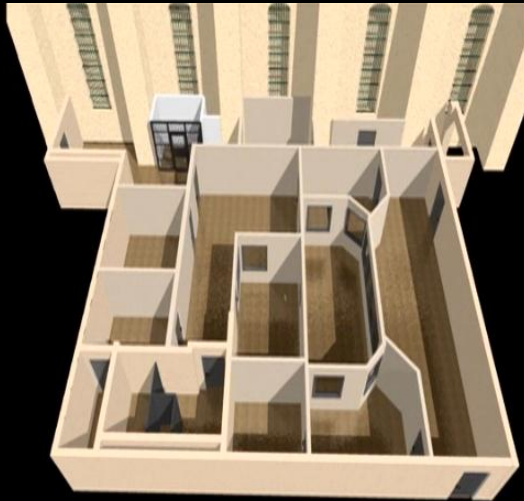
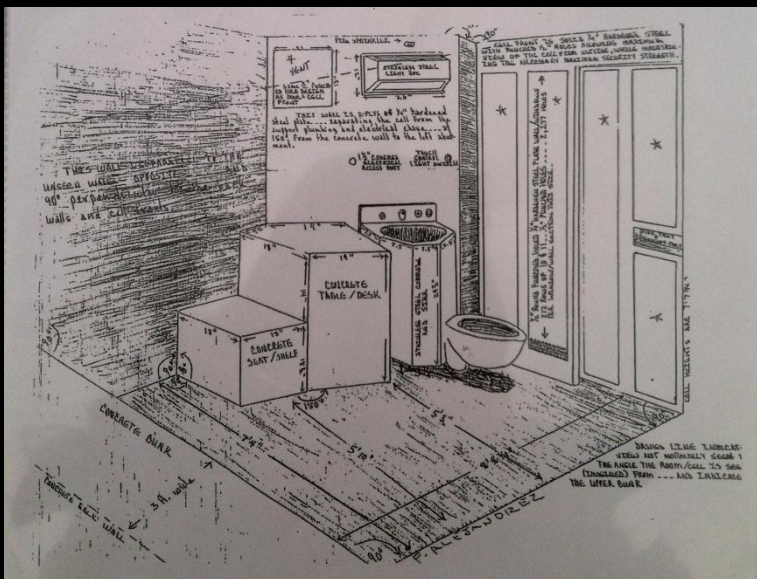


Photo: San Quentin State Prison, Lethal Injection Facility Project, 2010
Design: CDCR staff, Construction: CDCR Inmate Ward Labor Program
courtesy CA Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

Current AIA Code of Ethics:

AIA Code of Ethics, Rule 2.104:

”Members shall not engage in conduct involving fraud or wanton disregard of the rights of others.”



Drawing: Sonny Trujillo, Pelican Bay #D-09285. D101120
courtesy Legal Services for Prisoners with Children

Photo: Pelican Bay State Prison, California
courtesy California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

Life, Death & Professional Ethics

AICP Code of Ethics, Section A.1.f:

We shall seek social justice... recognizing a special responsibility to plan for the needs of the disadvantaged and to promote racial and economic integration. We shall urge the alteration of policies, institutions, and decisions that oppose such needs.”

AMA Code of Ethics, Opinion 2.06:

An individual’s opinion on capital punishment is the personal moral decision of the individual. **A physician, as a member of a profession dedicated to preserving life when there is hope of doing so, should not be a participant in a legally authorized execution.**

Proposal: Ethics Code Amendment

Recognizing that:

- **Long-term solitary confinement is torture**
- **Execution chambers kill people**
- **Architects should not be party to torture and killing**

Proposal: amend the AIA Code of Ethics to prohibit the design of spaces intended for long-term solitary isolation and execution

ADPSR welcomes your comments and support.

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