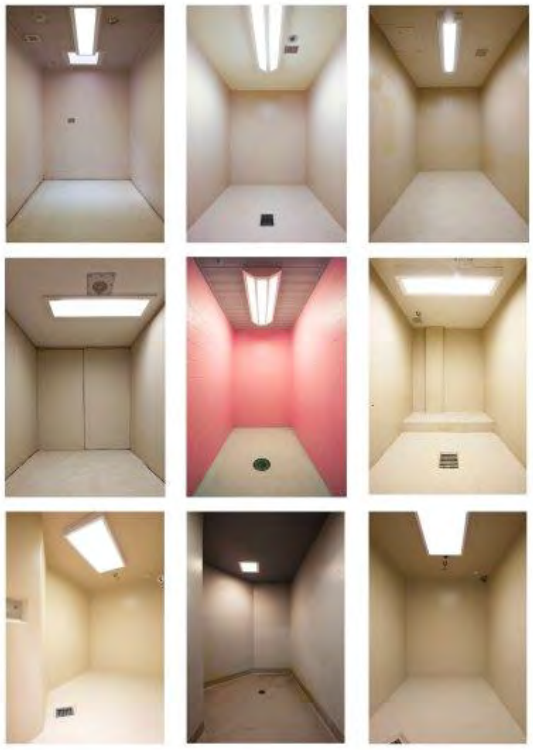
TIME

Winant, Carmen. “Inside America’s Juvenile-Detention System.” TIME, May 26 2015. http://time.com/3864814/juveniles-in-justice-richard-ross/

Inside America’s Juvenile-Detention System

Carmen Winant, May 26 2015

Richard Ross traveled to hundreds of facilities and photographed thousands of minors in American juvenile prisons



Richard Ross
C.T., age 15: "I got kicked out of school for partying and truancy. I use meth. They have had me here for 2 weeks. I think they keep me here because they think I am at risk of hurting myself. When they want to come in, they come in, they don't knock or anything — this is the observation room. MORE

As a teacher, I regularly have conversations with my students about how art can and should function. What constitutes an object as belonging in a gallery as opposed to a community? Who instituted these boundaries? Is it possible to make art that occupies both worlds? Finally, can art in either world effect real change? None of these questions are easily answered, or even attempted. The photographic work of Richard Ross dares engage their premise.

Ross is an artist and a professor, though in every sense his work is framed by, and propelled forward with, the cause of social justice. His images (and teaching) have long provided access to invisible sights that regulate bodies through discipline and containment. His 2007 photographic body of work titled *Architecture of Authority* pictured schools, the corridors of mosques, meeting rooms in the U.N., segregation cells in Abu Ghraib and a capital-punishment death chamber. The images are bleak but arresting; their compositions and color palettes feel almost painterly.

While photographing at a detention center in El Paso for that project, Ross asked the director if he'd ever be so successful that he'd be out of a job and was told, "Not as long as Texas continues locking up 10-year-olds." Subsequent research revealed that children as young as 7 can be charged as adults in 22 states. Ross launched his *Juvenile in*

Justice series (followed by *Girls in Justice*) in that moment and worked on it for four years — traveling to hundreds of facilities and photographing thousands of minors — without publishing a single picture.

Artists like Ross will be the first to tell you: for the "fine artist" who makes work that engages themes of social inequality, there emerges an interesting (and often productive) conflict. How does one navigate worlds that tend to not only be cut off, but also in fact negate one another? In making art that operates within both commercial and nonprofit channels, Ross is sensitive to this potential discordance. Though he's represented by a commercial gallery that sells his photographs as fine-art objects, Ross regularly licenses his pictures to socially progressive nonprofits and social-advocacy groups for free or at a nominal charge. In addition he deliberately exhibits his work in university museums. "Where better to show the work," he relates, "but amongst a younger generation who are themselves in the midst of learning about sociology, education, race and gender studies, journalism, political science, social work and law?" Real social reform, after all, comes from some measure of cooperation between all these fields.

This strategy of collaboration is visible across Ross's practice. He is currently working on several theatrical projects — one with Flex Dancers, another with preteens — with the director Peter Sellars. He has also collaborated with the sociologist Victor Rios (a fellow professor at the University of California at Santa Barbara) as well as his wife, the journalist Cissy Ross. The trio teaches a class at UCSB titled, simply, Justice. Though it's offered through the art department, the students are equipped with multiple kinds of constructive tools: they learn to write, think visually and methodize their research on the topic. Guest speakers have included Piper Kerman, the author of *Orange Is the New Black*; a transgender prison guard at San Quentin; the clinical physiologist Maryam Kia-Keating; and the black-studies professor Gaye Theresa Johnson (the latter two speaking to trauma and the African-American experience, respectively). The class visits a juvenile-detention facility, where, says Ross, "they check everything at the door."

It's a feeling Ross has gotten used to. In meeting his subjects, whose faces do not appear in the final photographs, Ross is conscious to be respectful and never assert power over them. Rather, he takes off his shoes and sits on the floor while talking and shooting. "I give them authority over me," he says (not an unimportant gesture in a place where the power usually flows the other direction). Mostly he listens. This exchange, perhaps more than anything else, is the sight of true creative, social and emotional collaboration.

Ultimately, the exchanges haunt Ross. "It is impossible to leave them," he says. "Last week I was talking to a girl who has tried to kill herself repeatedly. She had been raped, homeless, beaten. She was sobbing, body-racking sobs. Because she needs mental-health assistance, is a female and a minor, I wasn't allowed to touch her. All I wanted to do was hold her and tell her that it will be all right. But I'm not allowed to, and it won't be all right." These encounters can be emotionally draining and prompt a feeling of powerlessness, but Ross, who is one of the few conduits to their stories, cannot let up.

The answer to the initial question — how can we measure art's possible impact on human beings and vice versa — is impossible to locate. However, what is clear is that Ross's photographs make courageous strides toward change by inverting (or revealing) systems of power and returning to subjects their sense of worth and humanity.

*For more about **Richard Ross's** Juvenile In Justice project, visit his website.*

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Teicher, Jordan G. “What It’s Like to Be a Girl in America’s Juvenile Justice System.” *Slate*, April 26 2015. http://www.slate.com/blogs/behold/2015/04/26/richard_ross_photographs_girls_in_the_juvenile_justice_system_in_his_book.html

What It’s Like to Be a Girl in America’s Juvenile Justice System

By Jordan G. Teicher

“I should be a sophomore but I have no credits for school. The last grade I completed was eighth. My mom visits. She isn’t a parent; she’s a teenager in a parent body.” — M.O., 16.

Richard Ross

Richard Ross has been photographing the juvenile justice system for nearly a decade and has visited youth detention centers in more than 30 states. The system, Ross says, can get kids out of immediate danger, but it doesn’t do enough to help keep them out of trouble in the future or change the conditions that put them there in the first place.

“We say, ‘It’s better than having them on the streets.’ But that doesn't address the issue of why their neighborhoods aren’t better places to live. Just by the zip codes they’re in. It’s more likely these kids will go to jail than college. The kid hasn’t failed; we’ve failed,” he said.

Part of making reform happen, he knows, is getting people to pay attention to the issue. That’s why, three years ago, he self-published his first book-length exploration of youth in detention, ***Juvenile in Justice***. In February, he published another, ***Girls in Justice***, which collects the photos and testimonies of girls around the country. Girls are the **fastest-growing** population in the juvenile justice system, accounting for hundreds of thousands of arrests and charges—often for minor offenses, like running away from home or breaking curfew—every year.

As with *Juvenile in Justice*, he hopes this project will raise questions about why kids end up in detention centers, and what can be done to ensure they have a better shot at life once they leave.

“They took me from my mom at age 12 because she’s had drug problems. She was beating me, and I was molested by her friends. I think I was born in Asheville, North Carolina, but at this point I don’t really live anywhere.” — C.C., 15.

Richard Ross

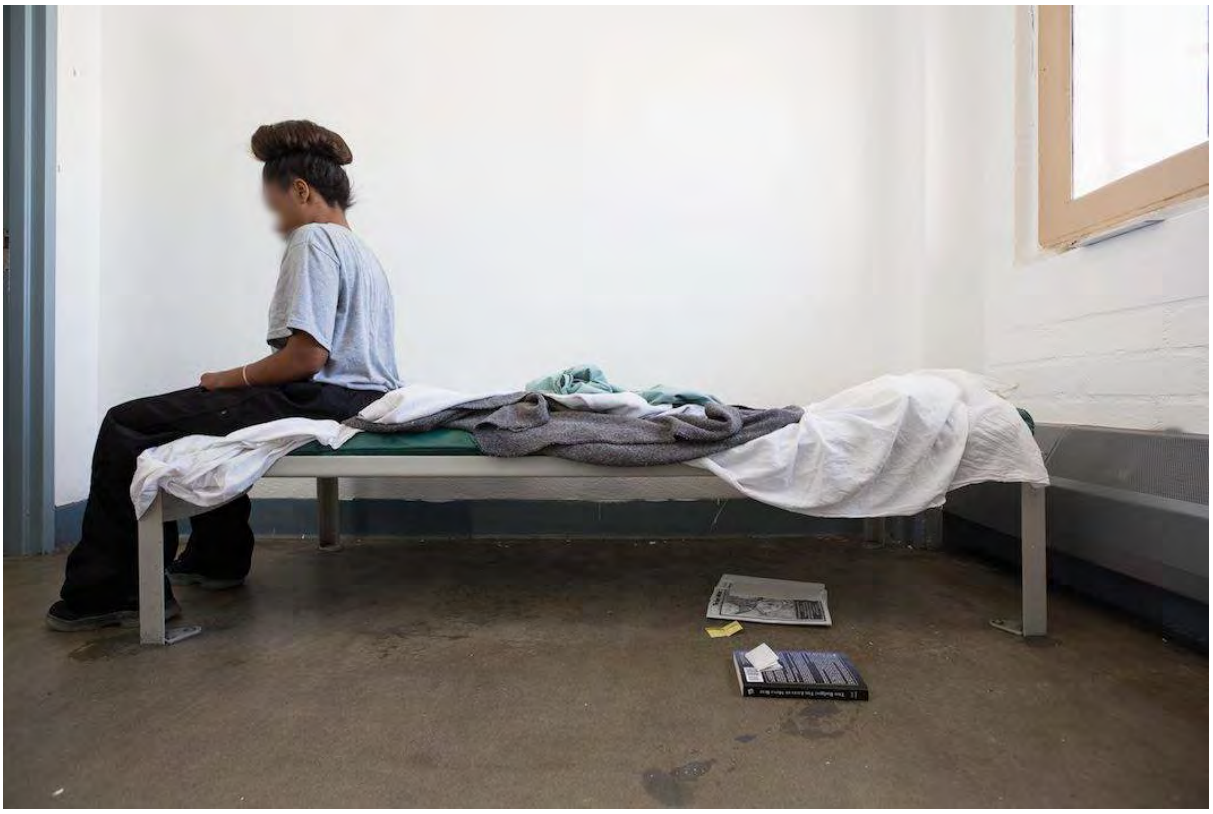
“No one comes to visit me here. I only see my family in court.” — E.Y., 11.

Richard Ross

When Ross visits girls at detention centers, he first knocks on the doors of their cells and asks them for permission to enter. If he’s granted it, he takes off his shoes, sits on the floor, and talks with them for about an hour. Often, he said, the conversation turns emotional, as the girls recount childhood abuse and neglect, often followed by stories of homelessness, drugs, or prostitution. He hears a lot of the same kinds of personal histories over and over again, and often meets girls who’ve been in and out of the system several times.

In his photos, Ross either blurs out the faces of his subjects or frames them so that they’re obscured. He does it, he said, because he doesn’t want them to be followed throughout their lives by evidence of their time in detention. But it also serves an artistic purpose—one that he hopes will impact viewers of his work.

“If you see a face, you can say, ‘Well, I’m glad that’s not my kid,’ ” he said. “But if the face is obscured, it could stand in for anybody’s kid.”



“My mom is deceased. Drug overdose. I stayed with my auntie until I was 11 in Compton. She was abusive, verbally and physically. I went to maybe 15–20 foster homes.” — T.L., 16.

Richard Ross

“I was four months when I first came in the system. My mom didn’t have a house; she lost it. I’m here with my sister, but my sister’s now with a foster family. If it works out, she gets to stay. But she told me it’s not gonna work out and she’ll be back to see me.” — D., 11.

Richard Ross

“Been here two months for a violation. They make me take out all the studs they can. But the one in my throat and in my cheeks are implants. I ran away from placement. It was a group home with 65 kids in Critinton, Orange County.” — K.N., 15.

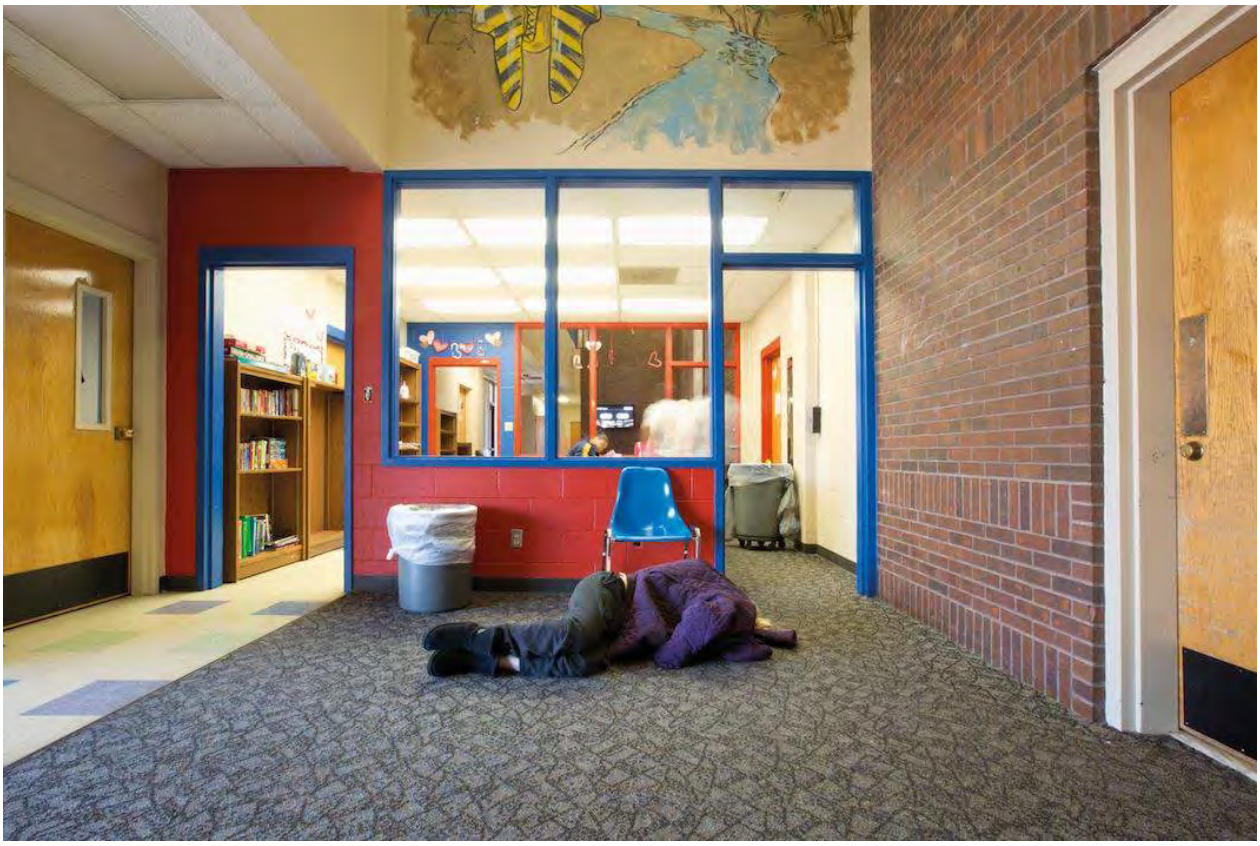
Richard Ross

While Ross wants readers to understand the direness of the situation in juvenile justice, he doesn’t want them to lose hope in his subjects. He believes that with the right care and allocation of funds these girls can “not just survive but thrive.” He also wants readers to know they have power to help bring about change in the system.

“The first step is to think about it. The next part is to think that you're not impotent to change the system, and to make demands on people that administer taxes and funds. Ask about the treatment of these kids and ask why it’s that way.”

You can follow Ross’ work on Facebook and Twitter, and on the **Juveniles in Justice** website.

Correction, April 27, 2015: *A photo caption in this post originally mispelled the city of Asheville, North Carolina.*



“My mom was arrested so I went to my mom’s friends house. When DHS started looking for me they went to the friend’s house. They had warrants on them … and they found drugs in the house.” — E., 14.

Richard Ross

“I have a 7-month-old son. He is with foster parents. Today was my first day seeing him in six months. Baby’s dad was there. He makes me feel awful by supposing he is better than me. I’ve been here 10 days. I’m here doing everything I need to take a GED.” — E.E., 17.

Richard Ross

“I’ve been here three months this time. I’m from South Central. I’ve been here four times before. The first time I was 14. I was with my sister, her boyfriend, and her best friend. She’s 26; he’s 31. He stole a cheap phone, a Metro PCS. This time I’m here for fighting, which is a violation of parole.” — L.T., 17.

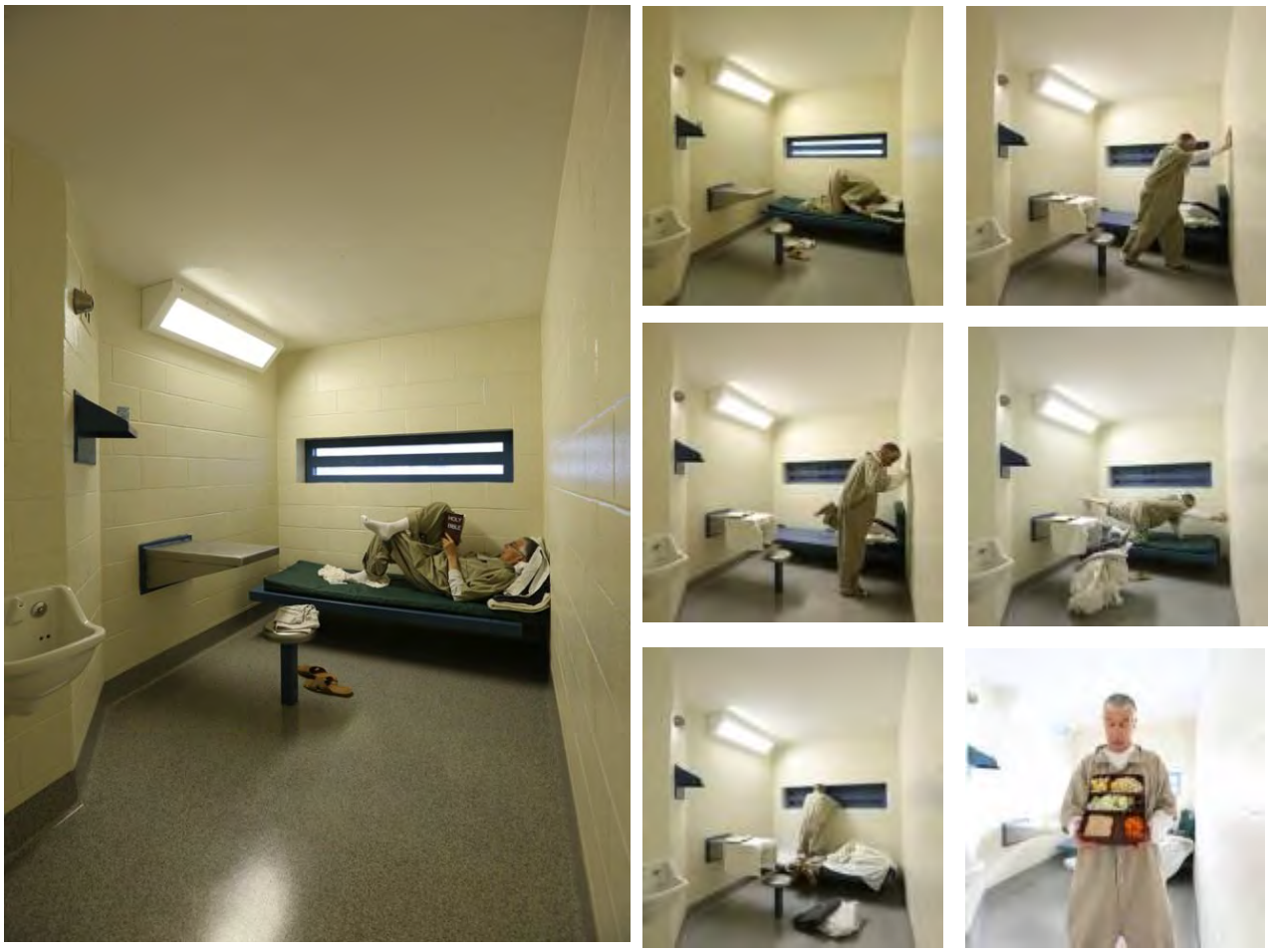
Richard Ross

Jordan G. Teicher is the associate editor of ***Slate***’s Behold blog. Follow him on Twitter.

Schiller, Jakob. “Bad Food, a Bible, and a Blanket: 24 Hours in Juvenile Solitary Confinement.” *Wired.* June 4, 2013.
http://www.wired.com/rawfile/2013/06/24-hours-in-isolation/

Bad Food, a Bible, and a Blanket: 24 Hours in Juvenile Solitary Confinement

BY JAKOB SCHILLER
06.04.13
6:30 AM



As a photographer, how far would you go to get in the heads of your subjects? For Richard Ross, it meant 24 hours in solitary confinement at a juvenile detention center.
Over six years, Ross has photographed hundreds of detention centers and interviewed more than a 1,000 children for a project called Juvenile-in-Justice that aims to educate people about the juvenile justice system. He’s as familiar as any outsider with the subject, but he decided it wasn’t enough.

“How do you understand this unless you go through it?” he says.

In a reflection piece he wrote after the stay he adds, “It is not enough to interview children from across a barren room. You have to hear the echoes, shiver in the cold, shelter from the random light, beg for any filtered daylight, taste the texture of the food, smell the warm milk and the urine, and hope for a reasonable allotment of toilet paper.”

The lockup happened back in May after Ross, a photographer and professor at the University of California Santa Barbara, convinced a juvenile detention center administrator to let him spend a full day in one of their isolation cells. Ross won't reveal the name of the facility, but he did say it was somewhere in the Midwest.

His incarceration started at 4:30 p.m. on May 3 and lasted until 5:00 p.m. the following day. During the entire time he had a digital camera and an intervalometer set up in the corner of the cell that took a picture every seven seconds as a way to record his stay.

Ross chose 24 hours because that's the typical amount of time a juvenile offender spends in isolation at the facility when they're first admitted. It's not punishment for some aggressive or egregious behavior, just a matter of procedure while the bureaucracy "evaluates" them. Sometimes children are put in isolation because they are low-level offenders and should not be housed with the more serious offenders in the general population. Isolation can also be used for disciplinary action, however, and Ross has interviewed many kids who have spent weeks alone.

"It was unbelievably dehumanizing [in the cell], and I'm an adult and I knew that I had 24 hours," he says. "Then you have these kids who are used to sleeping in their beds, some of whom have never been away from home."

Ross doesn't hide the fact that he's an advocate for reform, and his work reflects his outlook. In an earlier interview, he told Wired, "I respect artists that deal with surface, texture, shape, form, and concept. But my heart lies with people who try to change the world and feel they can have a difference in making people think differently."

According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation (with which Ross has worked), there are more than 60,000 youth confined in juvenile correctional facilities or other residential programs on any given night in the United States, a disproportionate number of whom are young people of color. It costs at least $80,000 per year to lock up a child, and the U.S. spends more than $5 billion annually on youth detention.
The Annie E. Casey Foundation also says that only one of every four confined youth is locked up for a violent crime offense such as homicide, aggravated assault, robbery, or sexual assault. Forty percent of juvenile commitments and detentions are due to technical violations of probation, drug possession, low-level property offenses, public order offenses, and status offenses such as possession of alcohol and truancy.

"This means most youth are confined on the basis of offenses that are not clear threats to public safety," the foundation says.

The rate of youth in confinement has dropped significantly since 1995, but the foundation still issued a number of other recommendations for how to keep improving the system. In addition to only locking youth up who "pose a demonstrable risk to public safety," the foundation has called for the establishment of "small, treatment-oriented facilities" that can "provide a humane and developmentally appropriate setting in which [youth's] delinquent behaviors can be treated effectively."

"Humane" would not be how Ross described his experience in the cell. Instead, he says it was cold and designed to take away any sense of control. There was no clock in the room and someone else decided when the lights were on or off. The food was predictably terrible, the bed was unforgiving, and the only thing he was allowed to read was the Bible. To stay sane he sang "Ain't No Mountain High Enough" because it reminded him of his wife.

As difficult as the experience was for Ross, he had it easy. It was on his terms. He knew when he was getting out. He had a nice hotel and dinner to go back to. He spoke with many kids who were scheduled for 24 hours but spent many days. One child in California had spent eight weeks.

“The more teenagers are kept in an environment that is normal and the more they are treated as human being, the more effective you can be with communicating with them,” says Ross, who raised two children. “Everything about this world [of detention] is very counterintuitive.”

Ross knows juvenile detention centers provide important services for some youth. And he knows some officers and administrators are trying to do everything they can to help those locked up. But he sees no reason to continue solitary isolation if a child’s needs can be better served in other ways. His stay at the facility only intensified that conviction.

“Something like [being in isolation] doesn’t fuck with your psyche, it destroys it,” he says.

The New York Times

Cotter, Holland. "Richard Ross: 'Juvenile-in-Justice.'" *The New York Times,* January 31, 2013. http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/01/arts/design/richard-ross-juvenile-in-justice.html?_r=1&

ART IN REVIEW

Richard Ross: 'Juvenile-in-Justice'

By HOLLAND COTTER
Published: January 31, 2013

Ronald Feldman Fine Arts

31 Mercer Street, SoHo

Through Feb. 23

Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, NY
A photo from Richard Ross's "Juvenile-in-Justice" show.

Any hazy line between photojournalism and art evaporates in Richard Ross's "Juvenile-in-Justice,"at Ronald Feldman. The pictures in this solo show, a slightly compressed version of a 2012 self-published book, come from five years that Mr. Ross spent visiting some 200 juvenile detention facilities in 31 states, photographing and interviewing inmates, male and female, ranging in age from 10 to their early 20s, with most in their mid-teens.

Some were imprisoned for violent crimes and would eventually be transferred to adult prisons. Others were in for lesser offenses and less time, though the incidence of repeat arrests indicates that future patterns are already being set. Lockdown oversight rather than outreach therapy seems the institutional rule.

The prisons in the photographs are often clean, plain, almost blank spaces, not all that different from contemporary art galleries and, it would seem, similarly conceived, though with different dynamics of power. The white-box gallery is intended as a timeless, cultureless space that gives forceful visibility to the art contained in it. The prisons are designed to throw figures of prisoners — in their Mondrian-red or yellow or black-striped uniforms — into sharp, surveillable relief and to disempower them through a kind of cultural neutralizing.

Breaking the pictures' pristine look are the texts that accompany them, in which the young people photographed — all faces are obscured — speak of early abuse, material deprivation and emotional disturbance, realities that jail is likely to extend and exacerbate.

Conceptually, the show is a sobering trip down the dead-end street that is America's prison system. Visually, it's as gripping as any art around, and, in Mr. Ross's book, comes with a memorable epigraph by Booker T. Washington: "The study of art that does not result in making the strong less willing to oppose the weak means little."

Brook, Pete. “Uncompromising Photos Expose Juvenile Detention in America.”
Wired, April 11, 2012.
http://www.wired.com/rawfile/2012/04/photog-hopes-to-effect-policy-with-survey-of-juvenile-lock-ups/

Uncompromising Photos Expose Juvenile Detention in America

Pete Brook

On any given night in the U.S., there are approximately 60,500 youth confined in juvenile correctional facilities or other residential programs. Photographer Richard Ross has spent the past five years criss-crossing the country photographing the architecture, cells, classrooms and inhabitants of these detention sites.

The resulting photo-survey, *Juvenile-In-Justice*, documents 350 facilities in over 30 states. It’s more than a peek into unseen worlds — it is a call to action and care.

“I grew up in a world where you solve problems, you don’t destroy a population,” says Ross. “To me it is an affront when I see the way some of these kids are dealt with.”

The U.S. locks up children at more than six times the rate of all other developed nations. The over 60,000 average daily juvenile lockups, a figure estimated by the Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF), are also disproportionately young people of color. With an average cost of $80,000 per year to lock up a child, the U.S. spends more than $5 billion annually on youth detention.

On top of the cost, in its recent report *No Place for Kids*, the AECF presents evidence to show that youth incarceration does not reduce recidivism rates, does not benefit public safety and exposes those imprisoned to further abuse and violence.

Ross thinks his images of juvenile lock-ups can, and should, be “ammunition” for the ongoing policy and funding debates between reformers, staff, management and law-makers.

A 12-year-old in his cell at the Harrison County Juvenile Detention Center in Biloxi, Mississippi. The window has been boarded up from the outside. The facility is operated by Mississippi Security Police, a private company. In 1982, a fire killed 27 prisoners and an ensuing lawsuit against the authorities forced them to reduce their population to maintain an 8:1 inmate to staff ratio.

“My images were used by a senate subcommittee as part of a discussion on Federal legislation to prevent pre-adjudicated, detained [pre-trial] juveniles from being housed with kids who’d committed hard crimes. You shouldn’t house these populations together,” says Ross. “That’s a great thing for me to know that my work is being used for advocacy rather than for the masturbatory art world I grew up in.”

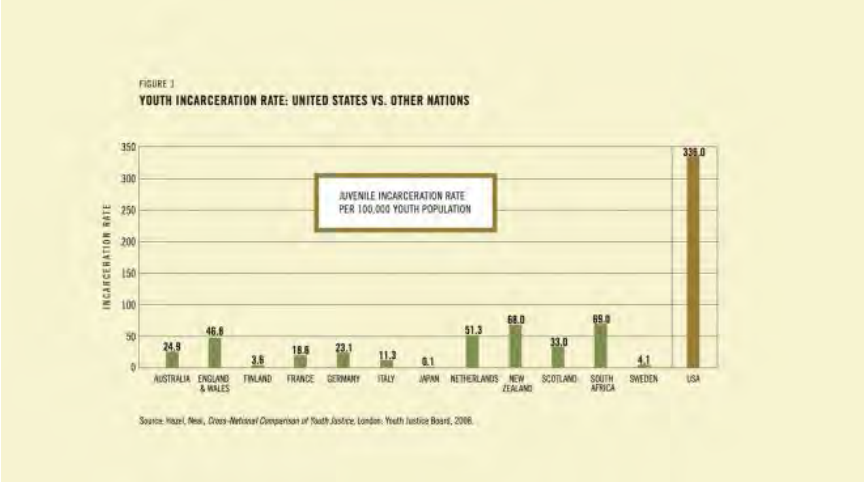
As a career photographer and professor at the University of California Santa Barbara, Ross knows his way around a camera. In 2007, he was awarded a Guggenheim Felllowship for his global series *Architecture of Authority*. At that time, the project was near its end and Ross was able to redirect money and momentum toward *Juvenile-In-Justice*.

“I respect artists that deal with surface, texture, shape, form and concept,” says Ross, “but my heart lies with people who try to change the world and feel they can have a difference in making people think differently.” To that end, Ross’s involvement wasn’t limited to simply taking photographs. Over the course of the project, he interviewed over a thousand juveniles.

“I consider it a privilege to sit in a cell with these kids for an hour and listen to their stories,” says Ross. “Every time I went in to a cell I’d sit on the floor. I’ve a terrible back, but I’d sit on the concrete floor so the kid was above me and had the visual authority to realize that I was subordinate to he or she, and I took direction from them.”

The stories he heard covered a range of issues, including children running drugs, parental abuse, homelessness, suicide attempts, addiction and illiteracy. But as difficult as the juveniles’ lives are, Ross is astonished by America’s widespread reliance on incarceration in its attempts to intervene.

“Many of these children should be out in the community getting better services and treatment where they stand a chance of rehabilitating and being corrected. From lockdown facilities we’re not going to see a change in behavior. Maybe society needs this to gain retribution against kids that they think have gone wild? But for the most part, these are vulnerable kids who come from dysfunctional families. And, for the most part, the crime is a crime of lack of expectation, a crime of a lack of opportunity,” says Ross.



States have turned away from punishing acts such as truancy and delinquency with detention; acts that are not criminal for an adult but have in the past siphoned youths into the court system. Less detention has been accompanied by less violent crime among youth.

“It may seem counter intuitive, but if you look at the types of offenses for which we’re no longer detaining youth, it is not,” says Sarah Jane Forman, assistant professor at the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law and director of the Youth Justice Clinic which provides legal counsel to indigent youth. “The kids who have committed serious violent crimes; they remain locked up.”

Not only is being locked up ineffective as a deterrent in youths who have not reached full cognitive development and don’t understand the consequences of their actions, it can actually make a criminal out of a potentially law-abiding kid.

“We are addicted to incarceration,” says Dr. Barry Krisberg, lecturer and director of research and policy at the Berkeley School of Law’s Chief Justice Earl Warren Institute on Law and Social Policy. “Young people [when detained] often get mixed in with those incarcerated on more serious offenses. Violence and victimization is common in juvenile facilities and it is known that exposure to such an environment accelerates a young person toward criminal behaviors.”

At the mid-point of the *Juvenile-In-Justice* project, Ross partnered with the Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF). “The images I saw the Annie E. Casey Foundation had didn’t have the power I knew I could deliver for them,” says Ross. “I decided to give them all my images so they could have ammunition for actionable change.”

Recent economic woes have brought spending on incarceration under scrutiny. The AECF reports that “states face enormous budget deficits and [are] looking for ways to trim spending, highlighting an emerging trend in which at least 18 states have closed more than 50 juvenile corrections facilities over the past four years.”

Following repeated abuse scandals in California Youth Authority (CYA) facilities in the ’90s, the Golden State carried out the largest program of decarceration in U.S. history. Reducing its total number of facilities from 11 to 3 and slashing the CYA population by nearly 90 percent, California simultaneously witnessed a precipitous drop in crime committed by under-18s. The AECF identifies this as a common trend.

“States which lowered juvenile confinement rates the most from 1997 to 2007 saw a greater decline in juvenile violent crime arrests than states which increased incarceration rates or reduced them more slowly,” says the report.

“In 2004, it was reported that over one thousand youth had been sexually assaulted by staff in the Texas juvenile justice system,” says Krisberg. “It was the emergence of legislation and scandals simultaneously that had people realizing these systems were unfixable.”

Access and Impact

Adopting a “philosophy of transparency,” Ross found access to correctional facilities a continual negotiation. “Nobody says, ‘Oh sure, just come in’,” says Ross. His partnership with the AECF — a non-profit known for its advocacy against juvenile prisons — was both a help and a hindrance. “Sometimes the name helped, sometimes it closed the door,” says Ross.

Ross, who can give his list of good and poor facilities and compare the efficacy of their management regimes, was always aware of institutions’ will to influence what he could and could not photograph.

“I’m completely supportive of institutions that protect juveniles; that’s their charge. I’m conscious of making sure the kid is protected and that my well-meaning efforts don’t damage the kid by revealing something, especially if their case is pre-adjudicated. [But] I have very little tolerance for an institution that is more concerned with covering its ass, and some of these places are.”

Yet, even in poor facilities, Ross also feels his work can potentially benefit the staff.

“If you have a situation that is terrible and you show images, then the people [that work] in those institutions can use them and go to a legislature and the more they can say, ‘Our situation is dire — the way we are treating kids — we need to change it’.”

In one instance, the director of a detention unit in Reno, Nevada showed Ross’ photos to school principals in the facility’s catchment area. Under a zero-tolerance policy toward violence, a schoolyard scuffle at the principals’ schools could result in children being sent to the lock-up. The director asked the principals to think about whether his facility was a suitable solution, or if incidents could be attended to without the use of a cinder block cell.

“The 13-year-old’s mother cannot take off work until at least 6 o’clock or she’ll lose her job,” says Ross, explaining the circumstances of one child he met. “I said to the kid, ‘Don’t worry, your mommy will be here soon.’ We’re not talking about hardened killers. They’re frightened by the system.”

The *Juvenile-In-Justice* website includes a Google-Map with geotagged images.

“It allows people who work in isolated areas from one another to make ‘site-visits’ sitting in an office,” says Ross. “Maybe practitioners can get ideas about alternative methods.”

Complexity

There exists no magic strategy for helping children who’ve found themselves subject to criminal law. In some cases, Ross concedes that detention can provide stability.

“Some of them are nurtured and dealt with; in some cases they don’t have regular bedtimes, meals or shelters. They’re given stability for the first time. The officers act as juvenile counselors and in many cases they are the first sane male voice that try to listen to the kids, hear about their lives and try to impart coping skills. It is terrible that sometimes institutions do this and the family has not. And I don’t know how to solve it. All I can do is look at it, show differences in architecture and attitudes.”

On the other hand, Ross cannot separate his work from his personal politics and an appreciation of complexity. “I try to be somewhat objective and I feel like my camera is neutral, but I still have my tongue in my cheek because when you meet a kid that’s been held for three and a half years, hasn’t come to trial, his mother was a

crack addict who tried to kill him two months before he ran away from home at 13; he's never had a bedtime; he's never had a present that he's unwrapped on his birthday, he may have graduated elementary school where he was in Special Ed all the time; then he's with a group of kids with whom he has allegedly car-jacked a vehicle and allegedly gang-raped a woman. There are victims here but I do feel that kids like this are victims of society — of a political system, an economic system and an education system."

"Some of these kids really don't stand a chance at all. Have they committed crimes? Yes. But has society failed in the social contract to keep these kids in a safe environment? Absolutely."

Perhaps more than any other factor, the incarceration of youth is effected by the education of youth. Ross often cites the situation in Oakland, a city which spends $4945 per child in its public school system, but $224,712 per child incarcerated in the Alameda County Juvenile Justice Center.

"That's an equation that's somewhat perverse," says Ross. And he's no the only one who thinks so. "People on the far left and on the far right of the political system are saying there is something wrong here economically. Maybe there's a way we can adjust it?"

Developing an Audience

Ross makes use of data visualizations and statistics on his site to engage viewers in the issue, but the images themselves must be compelling. He brings all his photography skills to bear in order to lure the viewer.

"These flows of information are great little sound bites but how do you visualize them? How does a person see? All of good advertising seduces you in first and then you can analyze the message," says Ross.

In an effort to maximize the effect of his photography, Ross will give away images for free to non-profit groups working actively to improve conditions within, and laws pertaining to, juvenile detention. The *Juvenile-In-Justice* website regularly publishes new images, often grouped around a theme. Maintaining an overarching perspective and an eye on complexity, the website also features articles on associated topics such as trauma, rape, prison architecture and best practices.

It's not all about the photography, but for Ross it never was.

Photos: Richard Ross

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For its photo edit of Juvenile-In-Justice*,* Harper's Magazine *was nominated last week as a finalist in the "News and Documentary Photography" category at the National Magazine Awards.*

Juvenile-In-Justice *will premiere as a museum exhibition at the Nevada Museum of Art, Reno, NV in August 2012. At the same time, Ross is set to release a photobook of the project.*

The New York Times

Cotter, Holland. "Richard Ross: 'Juvenile-In-Justice.'"
The New York Times, February 1, 2013, p. C29.

Art in Review

Richard Ross

'Juvenile-in-Justice'

Ronald Feldman Fine Arts
31 Mercer Street, SoHo
Through Feb. 16

Any hazy line between photojournalism and art evaporates in Richard Ross's "Juvenile-in-Justice," at Ronald Feldman. The pictures in this solo show, a slightly compressed version of a 2012 self-published book, come from five years that Mr. Ross spent visiting some 200 juvenile detention facilities in 31 states, photographing and interviewing inmates, male and female, ranging in age from 10 to their early 20s, with most in their mid-teens.

Some were imprisoned for violent crimes and would eventually be transferred to adult prisons. Others were in for lesser offenses and less time, though the incidence of repeat arrests indicates that future patterns are already being set. Lockdown oversight rather than outreach therapy seems the institutional rule.

The prisons in the photographs are often clean, plain, almost blank spaces, not all that different from contemporary art galleries and, it would seem, similarly conceived, though with different dynamics of power. The white-box gallery is intended as a timeless, cultureless space that gives forceful visibility to the art contained in it. The prisons are designed to throw figures of prisoners — in their Mondrian-red or yellow or black-striped uniforms — into sharp, surveillable relief and to disempower them through a kind of cultural neutralizing.

RONALD FELDMAN FINE ARTS, NY

A photo from Richard Ross's "Juvenile-in-Justice" show.

Breaking the pictures' pristine look are the texts that accompany them, in which the young people photographed — all faces are obscured — speak of early abuse, material deprivation and emotional disturbance, realities that jail is likely to extend and exacerbate.

Conceptually, the show is a sobering trip down the dead-end street that is America's prison system. Visually, it's as gripping as any art around, and, in Mr. Ross's book, comes with a memorable epigraph by Booker T. Washington: "The study of art that does not result in making the strong less willing to oppose the weak means little."

HOLLAND COTTER

Fritz, Mike and Brown, April. “Juvenile Education: Inside a Confined World.”
PBS Newshour, February 2, 2012.
http://www.pbs.org/newshour/updates/american-graduate/jan-june12/richardross_02-02.html

Juvenile Education: Inside a Confined World

Photographer and professor Richard Ross has spent the last five years documenting juvenile detention facilities throughout the nation. The NewsHour recently spoke with him in his studio at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

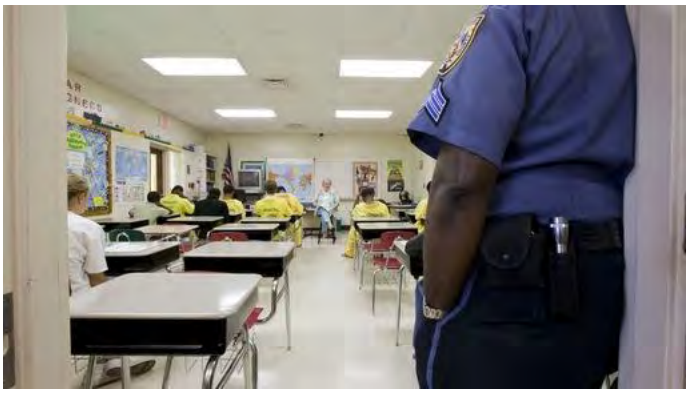


Photo by Richard Ross in Harrison, Miss., juvenile detention center

Mike Fritz and April Brown

That's the word photographer and researcher Richard Ross heard often throughout the last five years, as he documented over 300 juvenile detention facilities in 30 states across the United States.

"I always felt like the word 'no' was simply a starting point," said Ross, who is also a professor at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

The project started when Ross called up his cousin who is a prosecuting attorney in El Paso, Texas. His cousin was able to get him inside a detention facility there and what he saw compelled him to expand the project as far as he could.

After receiving a Guggenheim Fellowship and locking down additional funding from a variety of other foundations, Ross said there was no strategy he wouldn't employ -- besides lying -- to gain access to facilities in states that included Hawaii, Alaska and Washington, D.C.

"Each place was a negotiation," said Ross. "And every place that I've been I've always returned images to them and said you can use them for anything you want. No charge."

Ross also interviewed more than 1,000 juveniles in the last five years, ranging in ages from 7 to 24. He said because there is no federal statute, states determine how long an adolescent can legally be considered a juvenile.

Most states do have statutes that require juveniles to have at least 6.5 hours of schooling every day, and Ross said sometimes the instruction they receive within these facilities is the best education possible for them because the teachers are qualified to handle at-risk adolescents.

Many of these kids are dropouts and they have special needs, Ross said. "They go to school within these institutions and sometimes the teachers are brought to them, so they can't ditch school."

But Ross feels the problem for many of the juveniles he spoke with lies in what he calls "the culture of expectations."

"Their families have limited expectations of who they can be and they themselves have limited expectations," Ross said. "But when you get a teacher that's dedicated to these kids and they say, 'ladies and gentlemen I expect something of you,' they can amaze you."

Yet Ross conceded that success stories are rare among delinquents. But he said it would be a crime to give up on kids simply because they have had a troubled youth.

"When you stop their education, you're stopping any chance for them to have a better future," said Ross.

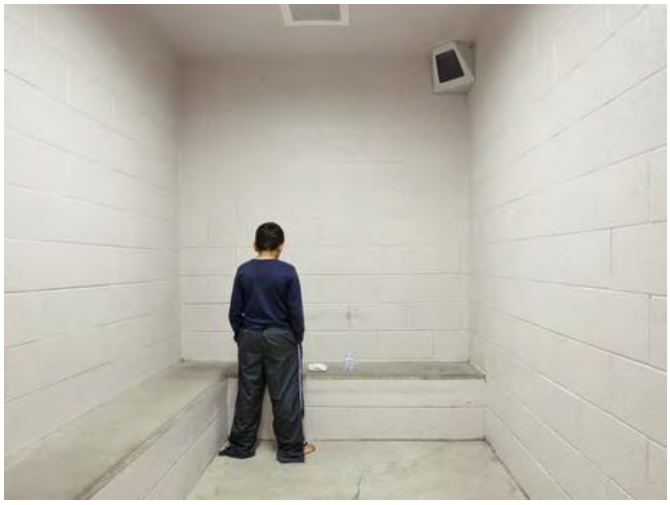
Ross also recently visited juvenile detention centers in Canada and is planning to document facilities in Mexico as well in the coming months.

Farrington, Dana. “An Unusual Glimpse Behind Bars: Juveniles In The Justice System.”
NPR, February 6, 2012.
http://www.npr.org/blogs/pictureshow/2012/02/06/146419053/a-glimpse-behind-bars-juveniles-in-the-justice-system

An Unusual Glimpse Behind Bars: Juveniles In The Justice System

Dana Farrington

This 10-year-old, R., was brought in from school by a police officer. He had stabbed a schoolmate, but it was unclear what tool he'd used. He was waiting to be picked up by his mom, who couldn't get him until she got off work, for fear of losing her job.



Richard Ross/Juvenile-In-Justice

In the confines of jail cells, photographer Richard Ross documents children's experiences. He snaps pictures without revealing his subjects' faces, aiming to "give them a voice."

The Juvenile-In-Justice project includes photographs of more than 100 facilities in 30 states. The project's website has numerous images and quotes from incarcerated children.

Shooting compelling images in a bare, 8-by-10-foot cell is not an easy task, the veteran photographer tells The Picture Show in an email. Neither is "coming up with a new solution that respects the juveniles' privacy, identity and still gives a feel of what the space is, without being boring or predictable."

His images highlight scarred arms, bright jumpsuits and angular, empty cells. They show a variety of facility conditions and inmates of different genders and ages.

One photograph shows a small 12-year-old looking over papers in his cell. He says he was sent to the facility for fighting with another boy.

Ross argues in a caption that "institutionalizing juveniles and branding this as criminal behavior rather than dealing with it as normal behavior wrongly places juveniles in places they should not be."

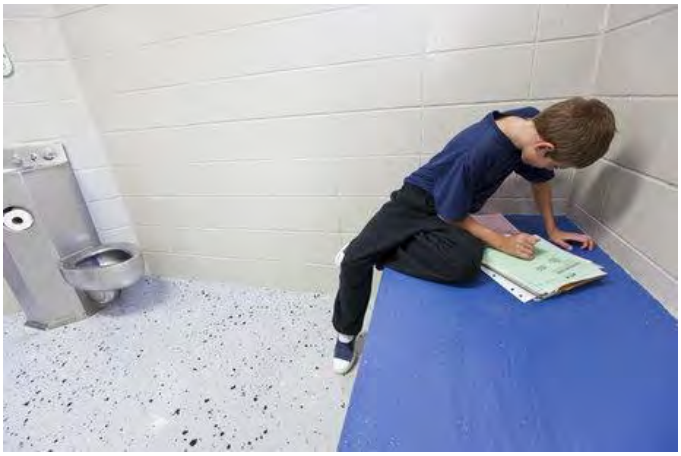
Richard Ross/Juvenile-In-Justice

Richard Ross/Juvenile-In-Justice

Richard Ross/Juvenile-In-Justice

Richard Ross/Juvenile-In-Justice

Richard Ross/Juvenile-In-Justice



Richard Ross/Juvenile-In-Justice

The online galleries feature testimonies with the children's ages and other background information, which add more context to the faceless bodies. But Ross says the act of hiding identities sends a message of its own. "By not showing the faces, I can imply shame or a sense of universality," he says.

The goal, Ross says, is to hand over the photographs to "organizations that have better data and more skills at advocating for policy change than I do. I hope this will better arm them to show a human side to their statistics."

Juvenile-In-Justice has required a high level of perseverance and negotiation, Ross says.
"I had to try and convince many, many people I was working with them in a spirit of bonhomie," he says. "Yet, I still had to allow the images to be critical or comment on the situation, while not violating the trust of the people I was dealing with."

The photographer has a forthcoming book featuring his photos of the juvenile justice system.
"After the years and years of work I have done in many fields on many assignments," Ross says, "this is the one that has been the most rewarding."

The New York Times

The Associated Press. “Juvenile In Justice: Jailed Youths Photo Exhibit.” *The New York Times Online.* October 25, 2012. http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2012/10/25/arts/ap-us-juvenile-jails-photo-

Juvenile In Justice: Jailed Youths Photo Exhibit

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Published: October 25, 2012 at 12:56 PM ET

RENO, Nev. (AP) — One picture shows a 12-year-old boy in a yellow jump suit staring at the wall of a tiny, windowless cell at a Mississippi detention center. Another zooms in on the bruised and blackened eye of a 14-year-old Oklahoma girl locked up for running away from a group home.

A third depicts a 10-year-old Nevada boy, barefoot and beltless in a white, concrete intake cell with a sandwich and a small carton of milk.

The stark images are part of an exhibit, "Juvenile In Justice," that photographer Richard Ross hopes will bring changes in the way the nation deals with what he said are the roughly 70,000 youths held in detention or correctional facilities across the country on any given night — many of them for offenses no more serious than skipping school.

"These are no places for kids," the longtime art professor at the University of California-Santa Barbara, adding that he is on a mission to test the limits of the "power of images in social advocacy."

"I'm not a criminologist or a sociologist," he said. "I'm just trying to help arm those people, give them visual tools they don't have to make their case. They can show policymakers this is real."

The exhibit at the Nevada Museum of Art through Jan. 13 — and a book of the same name — are the product of Ross spending parts of the last five years photographing and interviewing more than 1,000 incarcerated youths at more than 300 facilities in 30 states.

Excerpts of the interviews supplement the pictures:

"I spend all day and all night in here," said a 16-year-old boy in a cell at South Bend (Ind.) Juvenile Correctional Facility. "No mattress, no sheets and I get all my meals through this slot."

A 14-year-old boy at the Pueblo (Colo.) Youth Services Center held on a gun charge and probation violation said: "I've been in 15, maybe 16 times ... My dad can't visit 'cause he has warrants out against him. He's in a gang. So are my four brothers."

The stories and the settings are all too familiar to Shawn Marsh.

"It is an accurate reflection," said Marsh, who worked in a number of facilities and now is director of the Juvenile and Family Law Department at the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. "In many ways, the photographs are mild. They don't show the abusive side."

"These are not facilities that encourage even the best of the best to be human," he said.

It's a very different view of the world than Ross, 65, used to capture as principal photographer on a number of architectural projects at the Getty Conservation Institute and the Getty Museum in Los Angeles, or shooting pictures for the New York Times, Harpers and others.

"I spent years and years — maybe too much time really — doing beautiful things, creating things with lines and texture, shape and form," said Ross, who quotes Booker T. Washington in the book saying: "The study of art that does not result in making the strong less willing to oppress the weak means little."

"I lecture more now at law schools than art schools," he said. "People are using my images not only in museums, which is great, but also in public policy."

That includes Rebecca Gasca, a juvenile justice advocate and consultant with the Campaign for Youth Justice who intends to take his book with her on lobbying trips to the Nevada Legislature. "We need to put this on coffee tables in every legislator's office," Gasca said.

The project — which opened earlier this year in Paris and is off next to Chicago, Atlanta and New York City — became possible initially when Ross won a fellowship from the Guggenheim Foundation.

With prior experience photographing juvenile detainees, he began to take a more thorough look at the situation and became convinced it was a project he had to do during a visit with a juvenile justice instructor in El Paso, Texas.

"I asked him, 'Do you ever think you'll be so successful that you'll be out of a job?' He said, 'Not as long as the state of Texas keeps making 10-year-olds.'"

Over the following five years, Ross sat on bunks and floors, listening to their stories. "They work with me on how we can take their pictures without their faces," he said.

Public radio's Ira Glass, host of "This American Life," wrote the forward for the 192-page book the Annie E. Casey Foundation helped support along with the overall project.

William F. Dressel, president of the National Judicial College at the University of Nevada, Reno, and a former judge in Colorado, hopes the exhibit will help lead to reforms. He said there will always be a need for consequences for delinquent behavior, but that the system today is extreme.

"I want you to understand that the vast majority of these kids in these pictures have not been found guilty of anything," he said. "They are in pretrial status."

THE HUFFINGTON POST
THE INTERNET NEWSPAPER: NEWS BLOGS VIDEO COMMUNITY

Sekoff, Hallie. "'Juvenile In Justice': Richard Ross' Photographs Provide A Thoughtful Glimpse Into The Young World Behind Bars. *The Huffington Post*, September 22, 2012, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/09/22/juvenile-in-justice-richa_n_1889058.html.

'Juvenile In Justice': Richard Ross' Photographs Provide A Thoughtful Glimpse Into The Young World Behind Bars

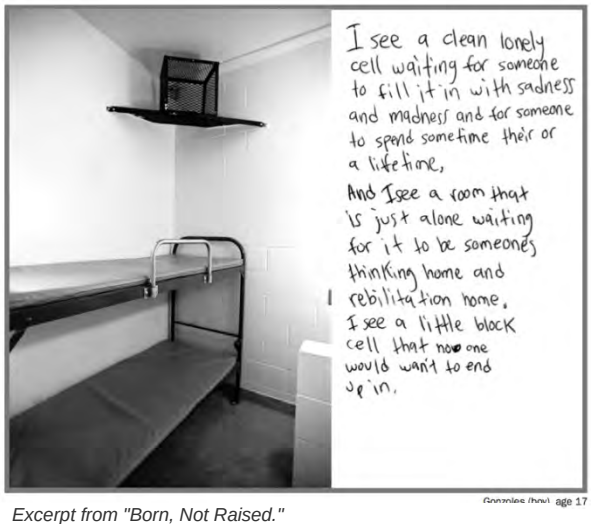
Hallie Sekoff

There are approximately 70,700 imprisoned youth in the United States. This number is set against the backdrop of a jarring total of 2.3 million incarcerated individuals in America alone, meaning a staggering 1 in 100 American adults are currently under detention.

In Richard Ross' new book, "Juvenile In Justice" the veteran photographer documents imprisoned youth from more than 200 detention centers across the United States. Throughout almost 150 images, Ross takes his viewers into the isolated world of youth under lock and key. Whatever their crimes — and some are horrendous -- the series raises serious questions about the workings and purpose of the juvenile justice system. Are we really offering any chance of transforming these young people's lives? Ross offers a thought provoking entry into this dark world.

The photographs are accompanied by short vignettes about the young people Ross photographed and interviewed over the course of five years, and this harrowing montage gives a face and a voice to the young people hidden outside our view. Ira Glass of This American Life and Bart Lubow of the Annie E. Casey Foundation have also written essays to accompany these images. In a press release for the book, Ross notes that he hopes his work "offers visual evidence of a system that desperately needs reform, revealing an aspect of American society that is rarely seen or understood."

Ross' photographs harmonize with the images and stories from Susan Madden Lankford's new book "Born, Not Raised: Voices from Juvenile Hall." In the book, Lankford chronicles the two years she spent speaking with incarcerated youth as well as a number of psychologists, lawyers, and experts in the field of juvenile justice. She paints a poignant yet distressing picture of the aspirations, fears and pain these young people grapple with. We've included one excerpt from the book that powerfully illustrates a young person's reflection upon seeing a photograph of an empty jail cell.



Excerpt from "Born, Not Raised."

In 2007, Ross was awarded the Guggenheim Fellowship for "Architecture of Authority," a photographic series that chronicles architectural spaces around the world that employ power over individuals in a Foucaultian fashion.

Artists like Ross and Jessica Blank/Erik Jensen of *The Exonerated*, as well as programs like Bard's Prison Initiative and The Public's Mobile Unitpoint out that small waves are being made in helping illuminate the need for prison reform, as well as providing educational and cultural connection to thousands of Americans behind bars.

See more images from Ross' "Juvenile In Justice" in the slideshow below and be sure to check out the Juvenile In Justice webpage where you will find more information about the book and project.
What do you think? Should teens be imprisoned like adults?

A.N, age 18, from Opalaka. He will be here for four months according to the court. He is here for burglary, and has ten open cases of more burglaries from the past. He has been here six times, or more. His parents don't live together, his mom is an outreach worker, his dad does trucks. He did not attend school outside The Center. He went to a program called CATS, and spent six months in a moderate risk program. He has three brothers and a younger sister, another sister died very young from health conditions.
Miami-Dade Regional Juvenile Detention Center (Juvenile Justice Center), 3300 Northwest 27th Avenue, Miami, Florida, 33142. The Center is run by the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services and has a maximum bed population of 226, but can exceed that number by more than 100. According to their own material, The Center has an average length of stay, per youth, of 13 days.
At the Youthful Offender System facility in Pueblo, Colorado. The Orientation Training Phase is set up to run like a boot camp.

C.C, age 16, an 11th grader, has been here one week. I ask him "How was lunch?" and he responds, "Junk." He is under court order to stay isolated from other kids. While the room has a capacity of 8, only 3 boys are staying in the room. C.C was adopted and has been in foster care for about 11 years. He committed a crime when he was in 7th grade –- residential burglary -- but nothing really bad since then, just lots of probation violations, like being tardy to school, and not appearing at his parole officer meeting. He says that "drug court saved my life." His mom is into drugs and his dad was deported to the Phillippines. C.C. has three sisters and lets me know that all the kids are split up. He sees them once in a great while. The only person who visits him is his YMCA drug counselor.

Hale Ho'omalu Juvenile Hall, Honolulu, Hawaii. At the time these images were shot, the facility was under a Memorandum of Understanding from the Department of Justice; It has since been shut down and replaced with a new facility.

Mendota Juvenile Treatment Center is on a historic native American encampment on Lake Mendota, WI. Average stay here is 8 months. It houses 29 individuals at a time and is always at full capacity. The units are for emotionally and mentally disturbed juveniles, some of which are self-abusive or suicidal. Kids are here not for the severity of their crime but for their failure to institutionalize their behavior. Kids must be released at age 18, sometimes with no transition options available to them. The facility operates on a basis of treatment and punishment when needed.

D, age 16, from Seattle. At home, he lives with his mother, ten-year-old brother, and step father. He does not know his real father. He doesnâ□□t like school and has been suspended. He spends his time at home hanging with his friends. He has two older brothers and one older sister, all in their 20s+, and they all don't live at home. He has been at King County for about a week and has been here 3 other times. They are thinking of moving up his charges to Robbery 1. He might be going to a decline status, not an auto decline, a person on person crime. He might be going to RTC to break the detention cycle.

King County Youth Service Center houses the Juvenile Detention Center, Juvenile Court and Juvenile Court Services, as well as juvenile divisions of the Prosecuting Attorney's Office and the Department of Judicial Administration. The Youth Service Center is located in Seattle's Central District neighborhood.

July 2010, Gabriel is small African American kid in cell. He is viewed through window as well. 14 year old. Been here for a week. In Observation room. He goes to class in the AM and then comes back to his room; he doesn't read, doesn't watch TV. He sits in the cell. He eats in the cell. He was supposed to come home today, but his Aunt didn't come. He can't live with his mother nor father. Iâ□□ve been here three times before. This is the longest. So his aunt doesn'□□t visit□. She is never sure when the visiting days are. He didn't tell his aunt that he is here (she has to be notified) He is low functional. He has a very slow mannered speech. CPS must be involved as well. He has been charged with battery against his aunt.

Caldwell Southwest Idaho Juvenile Detention Center. Kids aged from 11-17 years old. When they turn 18, they are released to an adult institution. Discretionary days□□-violation of probation, stays at the facility for a while. Prison population contains more Hispanic youths than the general population. Isolation Cells. Kids eat in cells. Average stay is 14 days, some kids stay longer.

Washoe County Detention Facility, Reno, Nevada. Built in 2004 for a capacity of 108, all juveniles here are pre-adjudicated. The facility holds youth for up to 30 days before transferring them to commitment.

Orleans Parish Prison (O.P.P), New Orleans, Louisiana. Air Conditioning is not working. There was a fight there the night before, so they have taken away privileges, such as TV, cards, and dominoes. OPP currently houses about 23 juvenile boys, two boys per cell. At its narrowest portion, the cell measures about 6 feet wide. OPP is controlled by Sheriff Marlin Gusman and there is minimal supervision.

Caldwell Southwest Idaho Juvenile Detention Center. Kids aged from 11-17 years old. When they turn 18, they are released to an adult institution. □□Discretionary days-violation of probation, stays at the facility for a while. Prison population contains more Hispanic youths than the general population. Isolation Cells. Kids eat in cells. Average stay is 14 days, some kids stay longer.

(Multiple values) There are six girls here today.
2 of the girls runaway/curfew violations.
1 lewd and licivious conduct, molestation abuse
1 controlled substance
1 trafficking methamphetamine
1 burglary and marijuana

Drugs of choice are meth, weed, a SLIGHT rise in Spice-Salvia)

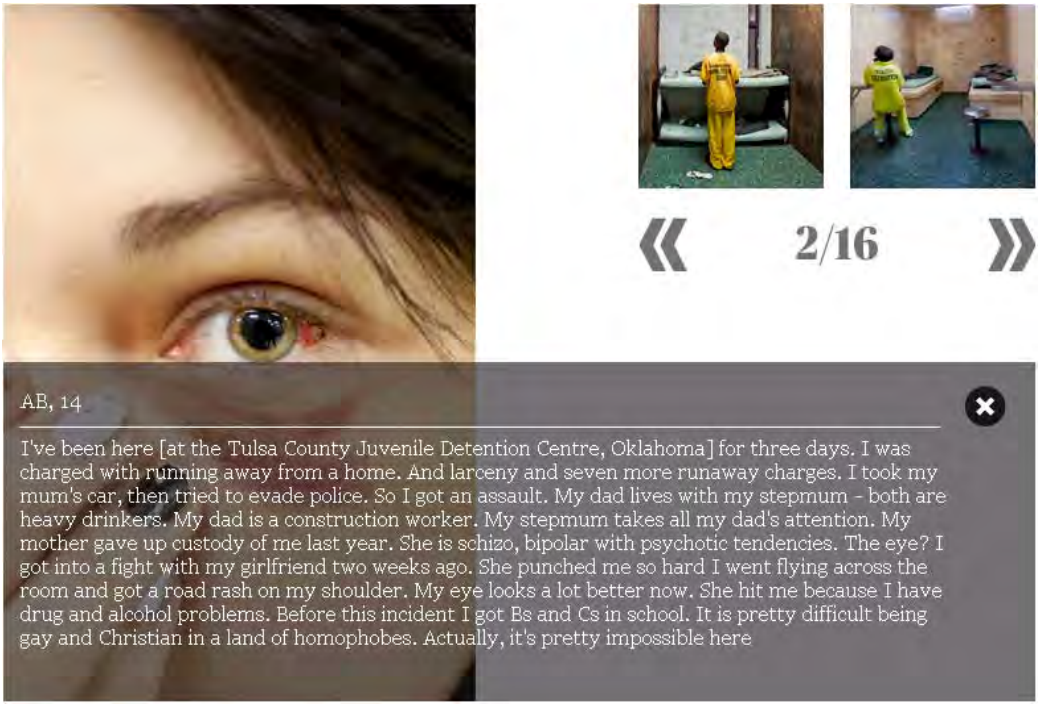
Oliver, Christine. “Children Behind Bars: US Young Offenders – interactive.” *The Guardian.* November 9, 2012. http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/interactive/2012/nov/09/us-crime-usa

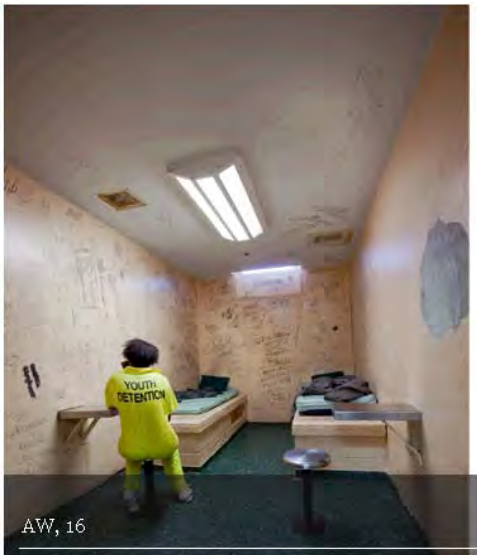
Children behind bars: US young offenders – interactive

Photographer Richard Ross captures the lives of juveniles held inside American jails.

Photographs: Richard Ross. Guardian graphics: Christine Oliver

All photographs and words taken from the book Juvenile In Justice, by Richard Ross. See the complete project and follow the blog at juvenile-in-justice.com

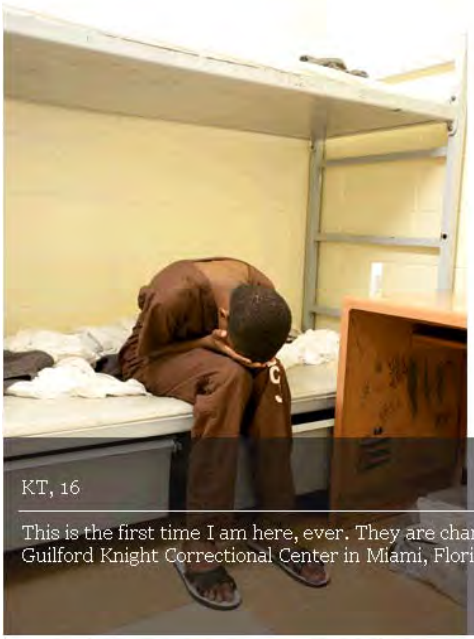




« 3/16 »

AW, 16

I have been here [at the Harrison County Juvenile Detention Centre, Mississippi] for three weeks, for violation of probation. Not much to do here. Mostly I write on the wall. I really don't want to talk to you



« 4/16 »

KT, 16

This is the first time I am here, ever. They are charging me with armed burglary of a residence. [Turner Guilford Knight Correctional Center in Miami, Florida]

« 5/16 »

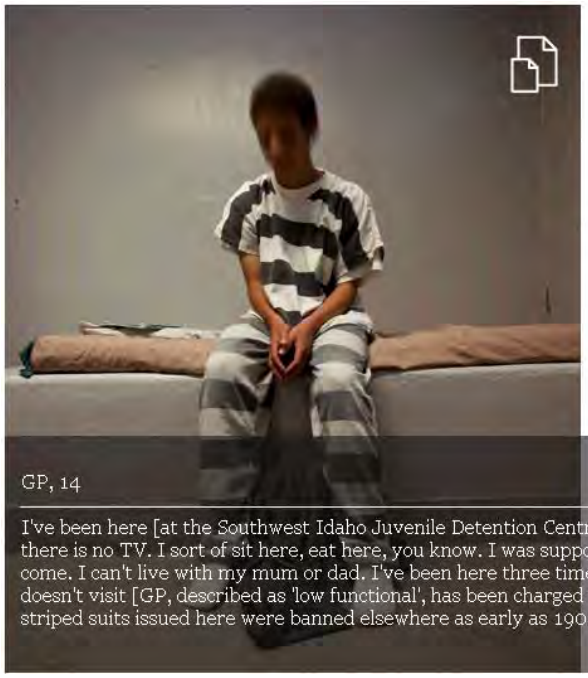
ST, 15

I was with a group of guys when I was 13. We jumped this guy near the lake. We got about $400. They gave me the gun 'cause I was the youngest. I been in Juno cottage for two years. I was coming back from the med unit with a homie and we broke into the canteen through a window and ate all the candy bars we could find. He got sick and we only had a five-minute pass so they caught us. I got sent to Valis but got played by a staff there so they sent me here to Martin [Ethan Allen School, Wales, Wisconsin]

« 6/16 »

RT, 16

There was a big raid at the packing plant - lots of trucks and men with guns and helicopters. They deported most people, but kept some of us to go to court against the owners. They had a lot of minors working here, from the same village in Guatemala. We live in houses [in Iowa] the company owns. I think they let me stay because of my baby



« 7/16 »

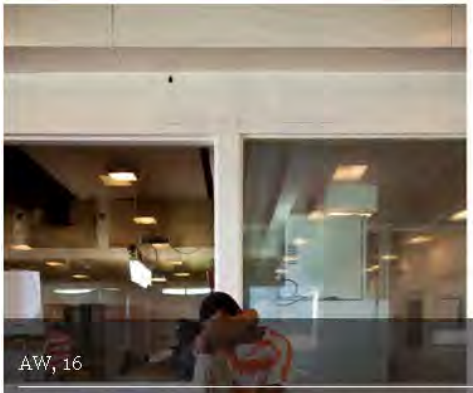
GP, 14

I've been here [at the Southwest Idaho Juvenile Detention Centre] for a week. I don't like to read and there is no TV. I sort of sit here, eat here, you know. I was supposed to go home today, but my aunt didn't come. I can't live with my mum or dad. I've been here three times before. This is the longest. My Aunt doesn't visit [GP, described as 'low functional', has been charged with battery against his aunt. The striped suits issued here were banned elsewhere as early as 1904 for being dehumanising]

« 8/16 »

AS, 17

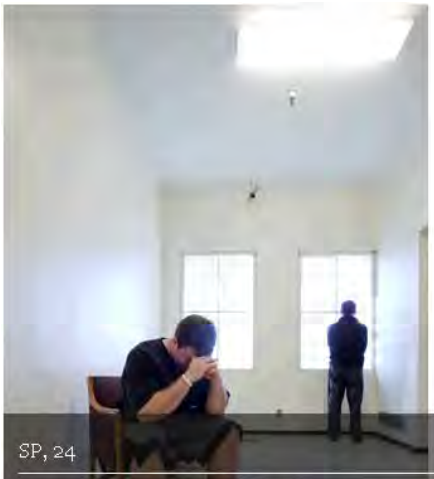
I am a transgender female. They have me living in an isolation area for the past seven months I think to protect me against suicide, but also keep me sort of away from the other girls. I live on the street with older friends who are part of 'that life'. They're mostly people who are positive about who I am but also got involved in stuff like burglary, drugs, and prostitution. I don't mind being separate from the other girls, but I miss the interaction. [Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility, Kailua, Hawaii]



« 9/16 »

AW, 16

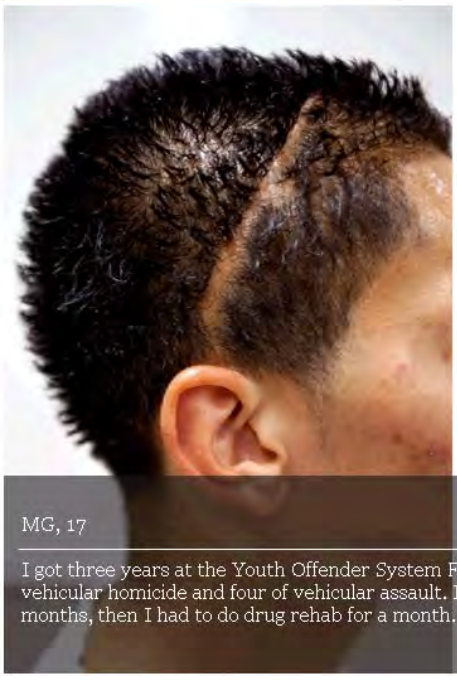
I'm from Riverside originally. I was living in Las Vegas, partying a lot, doing lots of drugs, and trying to be a DJ. They tried to guilt-trip me into living with my grandmother. She runs a bunch of women's shelters. My mom is emotionally distant and my stepdad is really aggressive. They are Catholic and Jehovah's Witnesses and don't like that I am gay. I am here for curfew violation and running away from rehab. I do X, acid, MDMA, and I drink. I shouldn't be in rehab, as I stop doing drugs whenever I want. I am not addicted to anything, just take different drugs when I want. Being gay in a place like this is hell. A lot of guys think they can have sex with me anytime they want because they are in prison so it doesn't make them gay. And it doesn't count as long as they are giving rather than getting. These are a bunch of closet fags and a lot of homophobics. If I report them to the staff they hate me. I am here for four to six months but I am not sure I will make it



« 10/16 »

SP, 24

I have two more days here [at the MacLaren Youth Correctional Facility, Oregon], then I go to the adult facility. I was convicted of killing one of my friends' mothers. I'm the only one out of the four kids involved that received life without parole. I want to apply for clemency, but can't find an attorney that would take it pro bono. I don't have money for an appeal. We went to Canada and were at the border in a stolen car. I was brought back and interrogated. There was no one that advocated for me in the room while I was being questioned. I can either give up or try and do something with my life



« 11/16 »

MG, 17

I got three years at the Youth Offender System Facility, Colorado, and six years hanging. One count of vehicular homicide and four of vehicular assault. It was a fatal car accident. I was in a coma for two months, then I had to do drug rehab for a month. I had a bunch of priors

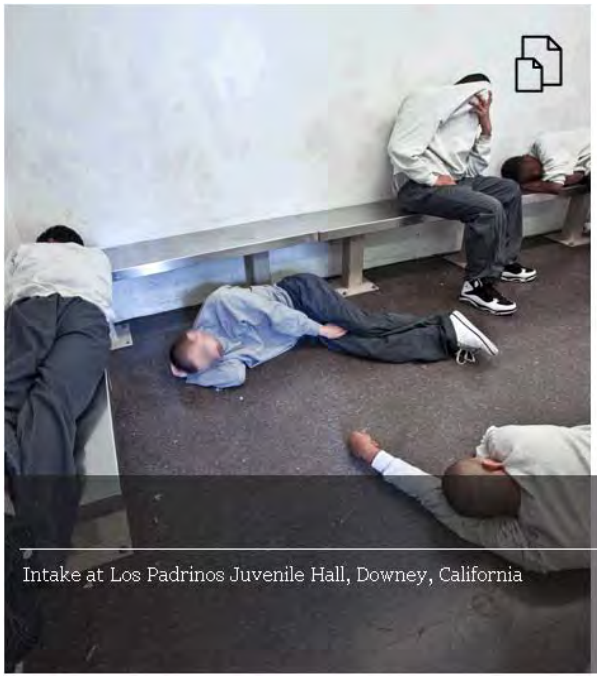
« 12/16 »

A female juvenile at the Warshoe County Detention Facility, Reno, Nevada, with the scars on her arms she got from cutting herself

« 13/16 »

RT, 10

I am waiting for my mum to come get me. Is she in there? She's at work today. I want to go home, I got in trouble at school. [RT was brought into Washoe country Detention Facility, Reno, Nevada, by a policeman. He stabbed a schoolmate, but it is unclear what tool, a pencil, knife, fork. He is checked on every five minutes]



« 14/16 »

Intake at Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall, Downey, California

« 15/16 »

The 'wall of shame' at the Miami-Dade Regional Juvenile Detention Centre, Florida: mugshots of kids who were released and killed - 'expired' - by gunshot wounds

« 16/16

Young men at Orleans Parish Prison, Louisiana. There was a fight the night before, so TV, cards and dominoes have been taken away. It is August and the air conditioner is broken

Martinez, Edecio. "'Juvenile in Justice' photo project captures kids behind bars."
CBS News, May 3, 2012.
http://www.cbsnews.com/2300-504083_162-10012088.html?tag=page

"Juvenile in Justice" photo project captures kids behind bars

Edecio Martinez

Photographer Richard Ross captured images of over 1,000 juvenile inmates housed in over 200 detention centers and correctional facilities throughout the U.S. and Canada. According to his website, the "Juvenile in Justice" project explores the "treatment of American juveniles housed by law in facilities that treat, confine, punish, assist and, occasionally, harm them."

"The hope is that by seeing these images, people will have a better understanding of the conditions that exist," he writes on his website.

The following images contain excerpts from interviews conducted by Ross with several young inmates. The photos were shot between 2005 and 2012. The "Juvenile in Justice" exhibit premiers at the Nevada Museum of Art in Reno, Nev. in August 2012. A companion book is also set to be released in August.

Miami-Dade Regional Juvenile Detention Facility, Miami, FL

I was at TGK (Turner Guilford Knight Correctional Center) for a year. It wasn't too bad, but I remember getting out and my mom hugging me for the first time in a year and we both cried and cried. I am here now on other charges I caught- home invasion, kidnapping armed car jacking, aggravated assault, battery and armed battery.

All of them were dropped to juvenile. They could have been charged as an adult, but I caught a break. Adult would have been 10 years but Juvie will get me into a level 10 program at Okeechobee. I got 3 years but can get out in 1/2 that if I behave well. I am in confinement for writing 'F*** Folk' on my notebook.
- S.M, age 15

Youth Training Center, Elko, NV

I'm from Southern California originally. I was living in Las Vegas, partying a lot, doing lots of drugs and trying to be a DJ. My mom is emotionally distant and my step dad is very aggressive. One's Catholic and the other is a Jehovah's witness. They really don't like that I am gay.

I am here for curfew violation and running away from rehab. I use X, acid, MDMA, alcohol. I shouldn't be in rehab as I can stop doing drugs whenever I want. I am not addicted to anything-I just take different drugs when I want. Rehab wasn't right for me-so I ran away. A lot of guys here think they can have sex with me anytime they want because they are in prison so it doesn't make them gay. It doesn't count as long as they are giving rather than getting. These are a bunch of closet **** and a lot of homophobics. If I report them to the staff they hate me. Being gay in a place like this is hell. Being trans? I can't even imagine that nightmare. I am here for 4-6 months...but I am not sure I will make it.

- A.W, age 16

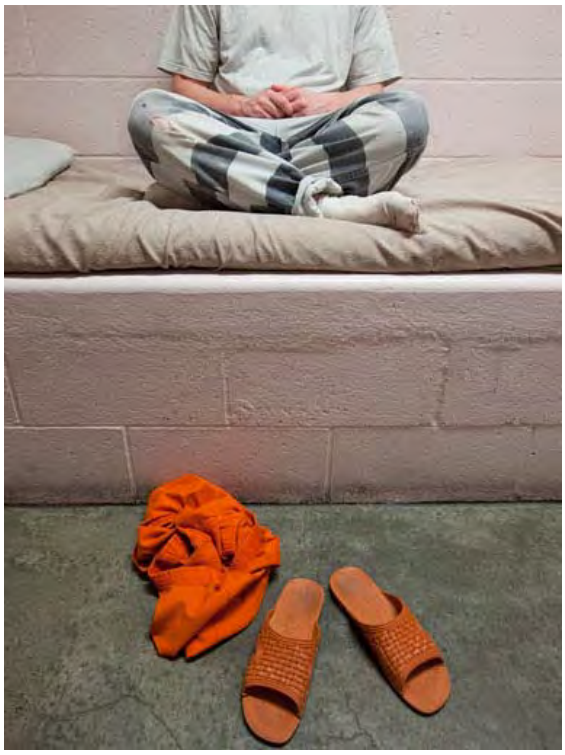
Juvenile Detention Center, Tulsa, OK

I've been here been here 3 days. I was charged with running away from a group home. And also larceny and seven more run away charges. I took my mom's car and then tried to evade police. So I got an assault. My dad lives with my stepmom and both are heavy drinkers.

My dad is a construction worker. My stepmom takes all my dad's attention. She's an accountant. My mother gave up custody of me last year. She is schizo, bipolar with psychotic tendencies. She works at a hospital. The eye? I got into a fight with my girlfriend. She punched me so hard I went flying across the room and got a road rash on my shoulder. My eye looks a lot better now. I got hit two weeks ago. My girlfriend is a big volley ball tack player. She hit me because I used to have drug and alcohol problems. I said I would stop drinking, but I came into her house drunk. She lives with our best friend, E. She was living with her family, but they moved away and left her. I hope E's mother will adopt me or at least be guardian. Before this incident I got Bs and Cs in school. I'm in 8th grade. I should be a sophomore but because of issues I am in 8th grade again. It is pretty difficult being gay and Christian in a land of homophobic. Actually it's pretty impossible here.

- A.B, age 14

Caldwell, Idaho



I've been here 4 1/2 months for PV (probation violation). I dropped dirty (positive for drugs urine test). I dropped out of high school. They say I am a model prisoner.

I'm going to court next week and hope of my sentence will be lowered. Last time I was in court, my dad was supposed to be there, but he didn't show up. I'm bummed. My dad is in the National Guard and was deployed to Iraq for one tour. Now he's home working for an industrial HVAC company, but recently got laid off. Now dad is studying to get trucker license. My Mom stays at home. She doesn't visit. I got two sisters and one older brother.

- D.R., age 17

Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility, Kailua, HI

I am a transgender female. They have me living in an isolation area for the past 7 months I think to protect me against suicide but also keep me sort of away from the other girls. I have 2 months to go before I turn 18 and can go home.

I don't really spend much of my time at home, mostly I'm on the street with older friends who are part of "that life." They're mostly people who are positive about who I am but also got involved in stuff like burglary, drugs and prostitution. My parents don't really get me, the girls here are welcoming, staff is ambivalent. I don't mind being separate from the other girls, but I miss the interaction. At night it is so noisy that I enjoy the quiet.

- A.S, age 17

Miami-Dade Regional Juvenile Detention Center, Miami, FL

I been here eight months, right now I'm reading Metamorphosis [by Franz Kafka]. I been in 20-25 fights here. I'm got two counts of murder, rape, and assault.

I stabbed my sister and her boyfriend and his friend. My sister lived. I spent some time in Citrus [mental hospital]. I blame all this on my father. He used to burn my hands and electrocute me, and he beat me with a baseball bat. My older brother got shot and died in my arms. I'll probably go to adult prison. Nobody visits me.

- A.H, age 16

Mendota Juvenile Treatment Center, Mendota, WI

I'm from Kenosha and I been here for two months, nobody visits me. I was in Ethan Allen for a year, and a month in Martin. I wanna be a R&B singer, I write my own songs [proceeds to sing, thumping against his chest for a beat]. I'll send you my lyrics.

I want to be successful. I wanna have a restaurant called "Brother's House of Fine Ribs." I'm gonna own a whole chain of them. This little sculpture dangling from this string here? That's a dream-catcher.

-T.C.W. age 16.

Orleans Parish Prison, Louisiana

LEFT: I'm sort of in 10th grade. I been here at OPP for three months. I been charged for attempted murder. They charged me when I was 14. Yeah 14 when I was first charged. I had other charges when I was younger. I got six sisters and four brothers.

- A.L. age 16,

RIGHT: I be in 8th grade. I waiting trial for armed robbery. I lives with my grandmother. Been to OPP twice already.

- J.L, age 17

Harrison County Juvenile Detention, Biloxi, Mississippi

I have been here about three weeks. I got picked up for VOP
Not much to do here. Mostly I write on the wall. I really don't want to talk to you.

- A.W, age 16

Spofford, Bronx, New York

I'm from Brooklyn. I have been here a week and am waiting to transfer to Crossroads. I've been in the system 10 times. I was 12 when I first offended. I'm a Crip. I won't sleep on a white sheet. I won't eat donuts because when you take a bite into it-it looks like a C, which is disrespectful because one of our leaders was killed in front of a donut shop. I think it was Randys in LA. My parents don't live together, My father visits once in a while. I got two felonies. I go up for 1-3 years.

- C.R, age 14

Miami-Dade Regional Juvenile Detention Center, Miami, FL

Two counts of possession of marijuana, burglary, controlled substance, shoplifting, trespassing-That's about it. I made mistakes in life. God is helping me change.

I got 21 days. I've been here for a week already. You have to stand in front of your cell before you go in and when you come out. They have a system. My parents are divorced Nicaraguan and Columbian. I'm in 8th grade. I have 2 brothers and one older sister.

-J.C. Age 14

Challenge Program, El Paso Sheriff's Department

They come in once a day and do a search of my room. Everything I have in there, EVERYTHING, goes out- including the inside of the mattress and a body search- once a day. It happens anytime. Random.

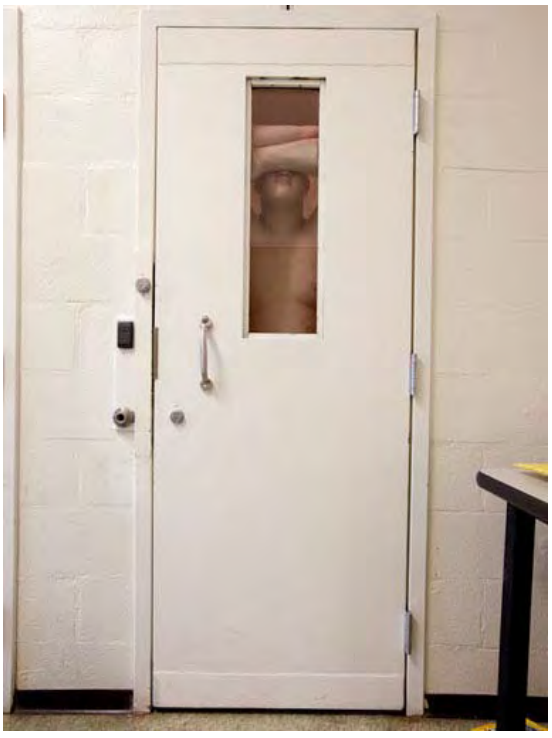
I was arrested for assault against a 13-year-old girl. It's sort of all right, but it also really sucks. You have to listen to officers and do exactly what they tell you to do. I'm the only girl in here so it's boring and lonely. I'm here for VOP (Violation of Probation.) I was at home with an ankle bracelet but ran away to Juarez with my boyfriend and another couple. They got married in Juarez. I got mad at my mother and started throwing chairs and cut my ankle bracelet. I've been here four months now. (Program is normally five months with three-month probation, outside support.) My Mother works for Rody One industries; my Father lives in Juarez. I just finished starting 8th grade. I have six sisters; I'm the fourth. It's boring but I like to write poems, and listen to music. One day I might want to work as a Corrections Officer in a prison.

- D.M. Age 14

Santa Cruz County Juvenile Hall, Fenton, California

I am in for a mistake, "wrong place, wrong time!"
I was in a car, where someone had a gun. I'm from Watsonville--the city without pity. I was put at a ranch (group home)-had to leave for fighting and running away. I'm gonna be committed to a longer term in ten days. I'm in 11th grade. If you make money from any of these pictures I want some.

- U.E. Age 18



MacLaren Youth Correctional Facility, Woodburn, Oregon

"I'm here because I hurt myself and they put me in confinement and observation."

-B.G. age 18

MacLaren Youth Correctional Facility, Woodburn, Oregon

B.G. is self-abusive. He is not taking his meds and he is combative. He wouldn't think twice about hurting the staff.

Spofford Juvenile Center, Bronx, New York

I got into a fight with a blood. I didn't get hurt in the fight, but when they put me in solitary I punched the wall and broke my hand in three places.

- R.G, age 15

Pat down search at Miami-Dade Regional Detention Center in Miami, Florida.

Sycamore Canyon, Arizona

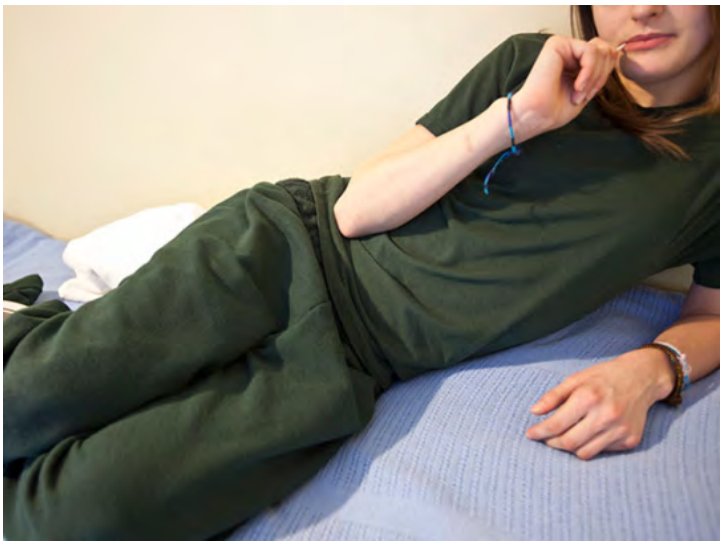
Nothing you do is gonna keep that kid off the corner. You're gonna have to taser that boy. You need to throw some volts on that boy's a**.

-D.L.'s Mother age 31 (D.L. is 14)

Burnaby Youth Custody Services Center, British Columbia, Canada

I'm in for trafficking and selling cocaine and heroine, theft over $5,000 and driving a stolen vehicle.
I get out on Monday and go to a half-way house in Burnaby. No one from my family visited me here- it's too far away. I've been here about 15 times. The first time I was here I was 13. The longest? About 3 months. My mom works at a pub. My Dad died when I was six. I'm kind of jumpy. I have ADHD. I get drug tested every day.

- C.S., age 17



Burnaby Youth Custody Services Center, British Columbia, Canada

I was doing a lot of drinking, drugs, robbing people, fighting. I stabbed a girl and robbed a guy.
I got ten months in and then I serve five months on the outside. The staff here is really supportive. My sister visits me. She's the only one. Originally I'm from Alberta but I ran away from there and ended up in Vancouver. I did the tattoos on my hand with India ink when I was home. I want to be a tattoo artist. I'm pretty good. I got in a lot of trouble in Alberta, but I think I can do better when I get out this time.

- T.L. age 16

Burnaby Youth Custody Services Center, British Columbia, Canada

I'm here for manslaughter. I did two years and then went home, but did a curfew violation or something. Been back here for four months. My mother comes every Sunday and braids my hair. My father is still in Africa. It's really boring here. Really boring. Boring. Boring. Boring.

- B.F, age 18

Pima County Juvenile Detention

I've been here three weeks. I'm 13, I'm in 7th grade. I'm Somalian and my dad still lives in Somalia. We're Muslim. My mom has never visited. No one visits me. I have been in the U.S for five years... I have lived in refugee camps for a while. This is the first time something like this happened. Lots of people don't do nothing; they just yell at me. I have trouble in my classes. They're pissing me off. Every day they make a big argument, an argument about some nonsense. I threw a book at the teachers. Here I threw a food tray. It was an accident.

- A.A, age 13

Lemon Grove, California

I made friends with some of the other girls here. This is Mia. She is a puppy that belongs to one of the counselors here. I came from Texas where I ran away.

This is the nicest place I ever lived. It has been a very long time since I saw my mom. That's what makes me the saddest. I LOVE Mia.

- M.M. age 14

Photographer Richard Ross is seen here interviewing a young inmate. The "Juvenile in Justice" exhibit premiers at the Nevada Museum of Art in Reno, Nev. in August 2012. A companion book is also set to be released in August. In this photo, a 12-year-old inmate is seen here in a detention center located in Biloxi, Mississippi.

HARPER'S
The Stream

Ross, Richard. "In Focus: Juvenile Injustice." *Harper's Magazine.* September 26, 2011. http://harpers.org/blog/2011/09/in-focus-juvenile-injustice/

In Focus: Juvenile Injustice

By Richard Ross

Richard Ross is a photographer based in Santa Barbara, California. His work will be on view at the Nevada Museum of Art in Reno from August to November 2012. His website is richardross.net.

Richard Ross's photo essay "Juvenile Injustice" appears in the October 2011 issue of*Harper's Magazine*. The pictures in the essay were drawn from the five years Ross spent photographing and interviewing more than 1,000 juvenile detainees across the United States. We asked Ross to provide *Harper's* online with a closer look at one of the prisoners he spoke with for the series:

Ronald Franklin

In May 2008, a group of five young men were arrested in Miami for armed carjacking, burglary, sexual battery, and assault. Among them was Ronald Franklin, thirteen, who was cited by the other members of the group as their ringleader even though he was the youngest among them. Since his incarceration in June 2008, Franklin has been held awaiting trial in an eight-by-ten cell at Turner Guilford Knight Correctional Center in Miami-Dade County. The following transcript is drawn from interviews Richard Ross conducted with Franklin at the prison in December 2010 and September 2011.

Richard Ross: Where were you born?

Ronald Franklin: Wooster, Massachusetts.

RR: What part of Miami did you live in?

RF: Over near Miami Gardens.

RR: Did you live at home?

RF: I was kind of living on the street or at friends' houses.

RR: What was home like?

RF: There was never enough food. I didn't want to be in Miami. I was ten when we moved here from Vernon, Connecticut. I had to leave all my friends and start again. I went to the wrong elementary school that didn't have the program I needed so I had to switch after a year. I didn't really have a bedtime. I liked to stay up and play*007* on the PlayStation. I fell asleep most days when I went to school.

RR: You don't talk about drug use in the house. Am I misreading something?

RF: I didn't see that much drugs in the house, but my mom would act funny sometimes. I didn't realize until I was about twelve that my mom was using. I am not sure what she was using — crack or heroin. One day I came home and she and Junior were in the bathroom and my sister said, "What you think they doing?"

RR: What were the best times you had growing up?

RF: Playing football. I am great at that.

RR: Have you ever seen your father?

RF: He came to a game once. Picked me up and took me over and watched me. He stayed for a few days but I ain't seen him since. My mother never came to any of my games.

RR: How is your mom? Does she ever visit you here?

RF: My mom is clean now. She got clean with religion. She comes to my court appearances but she has never visited me here. I try to stay out of trouble. I was angry when I first came here. I felt I had no one. I got in trouble when I first got here, but now I am OK, and they made me a trustee.

RR: If you could do it again or change it. What would you do?

RF: I would have my mom be there for me. I think about getting out like thirty times a day—but it's OK. It is what it is.