

Willow Baker

Why Halden's Liberal Prison System is More Effective than ADX's Extreme Authoritarian Approach.



Comparing the recidivism rates in both America and Norway within the last five years reveals drastic contrast, with America having gone up to 76% and Norway having gone down to 25% of re-incarcerated citizens. Of course, the apparent difference in these numbers is not a coincidence. It has in large to do with which money is being put to better use, which has become evident when looking at the comparative outcomes of inmates in both Halden and ADX. It is imperative that it is not just the inmate's responsibility, but also how they are being treated and the environment that they are put in these facilities that factor into how the incarcerated will respond when or if reintegrating back into society.

America and Norway are a sharp contrast of being the countries that have one of the highest and one of the lowest recidivism rates in the world. To explore the topic of why this is, we must first take a deep dive into individual prison systems within both countries. Inquiry is ultimately the process of elimination in order to get to the root of the reached conclusion.

ADX prison was built in 1994 and is in Florence, USA. It was made for the purpose of being one of the most secure prisons ever to contain some of the most dangerous prisoners out there. It is considered maximum security for good reason, as it is armed with many different forms of security such as razor wire fences and Lazor beams to attack guard dogs and double barred prison cells. The facilities at ADX are typically rooted in necessity with a bathroom and a bed in a single cell. The inmates are in solitary confinement for nearly 24 hours a day, and for the one hour they are not in confinement they are placed in a bigger cell with a vaulted ceiling and one 4 inches by 4 feet window where they are kept alone still. The experience of the prison is said to be disorienting in the way it lacks the small sensory details of everyday life that most people outside of confinement often take for granted. The facility does not even have a cafeteria for the inmates to eat in, and instead their food is delivered to them daily by hand. Prisoners are not allowed to interact with each other for at least the first three years of their sentence, and privileges such as more time outside of confinement and a transfer to a lower-level security prison can be earned but rarely given. Overall, it is apparent that the main goal of ADX prison is to keep its prisoners out of society with no plan of rehabilitation, giving the impression that ADX either deems rehabilitation a useless tactic regarding their prisoners or does not consider their prisoners in the context of being released back into society at all.

Halden prison is in Norway and was built in 2010. It is considered a high security prison but is less about razor wire fences and attack dogs and more about creating a strong rehabilitative environment for the inmates, where they can build a sense of community and trust, not just with each other but also with whom they call the "prison officers" (also known as guards) of the institution. They have programs such as yoga classes, woodwork, sports, and even luxuries such as a graphic design studio as well as an on-site garage where they can learn and acquire some valuable trade skills. All these programs are implemented to assist the inmates in positive self-expression which furthers the process of rehabilitation and increases the likelihood they will be better off when they are released for parole than when they were first incarcerated.

The architecture of Halden itself is very minimalistic and aesthetically pleasing, designed to invoke certain emotions depending on the setting, purpose, or recreational use of the rooms. There is even accommodation for visiting family members of the incarcerated to stay in if they register for the "Daddy in Prison" scheme.

In addition to the above-mentioned privileges, inmates are also given the right to vote and have access to healthcare and educational resources. It can be inquired that Halden prison's main goal is rehabilitation and that the objective of taking away one's liberty is the true punishment in this scenario, "Because inmates are human beings. "They have done wrong, they must be punished, but they are still human beings." ("Norway's Halden Prison Revolutionizes Incarceration")

A Common argument that is used to support the justification of extreme authoritarian and/or punitive prison practices is that "Prisoners are put in solitary because they have committed the worst of acts.," and while this may not be true for many incarcerated people, it is likely true for people placed in maximum security prisons such as Halden or ADX. However, society is much better off with prisons like Halden taking a more liberal approach by giving inmates more freedoms because it has more positive impact than leaving them in solitary to develop or enhance mental health issues. Furthermore, the effects of solitary confinement are not ones which would make it easier or safer on either end to readapt into the general population and can cause "A specific psychiatric syndrome, characterized by hallucinations; Panick attacks; overt paranoia; diminished impulse control; hypersensitivity to external stimuli; and difficulties with thinking, concentration and memory." In UT Dallis

criminologist Dr. Robert Morris's studies, he expresses that putting prisoners in solitary confinement makes them "no more or less likely of committing violent crimes when they reintegrate back into the population."

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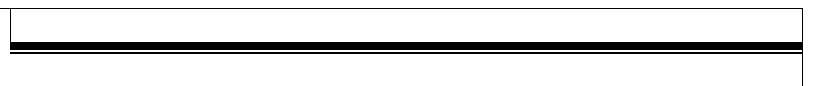
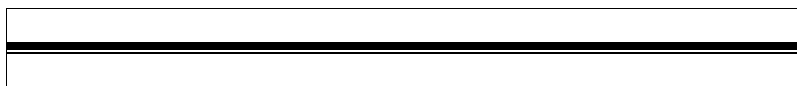
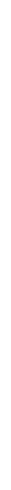
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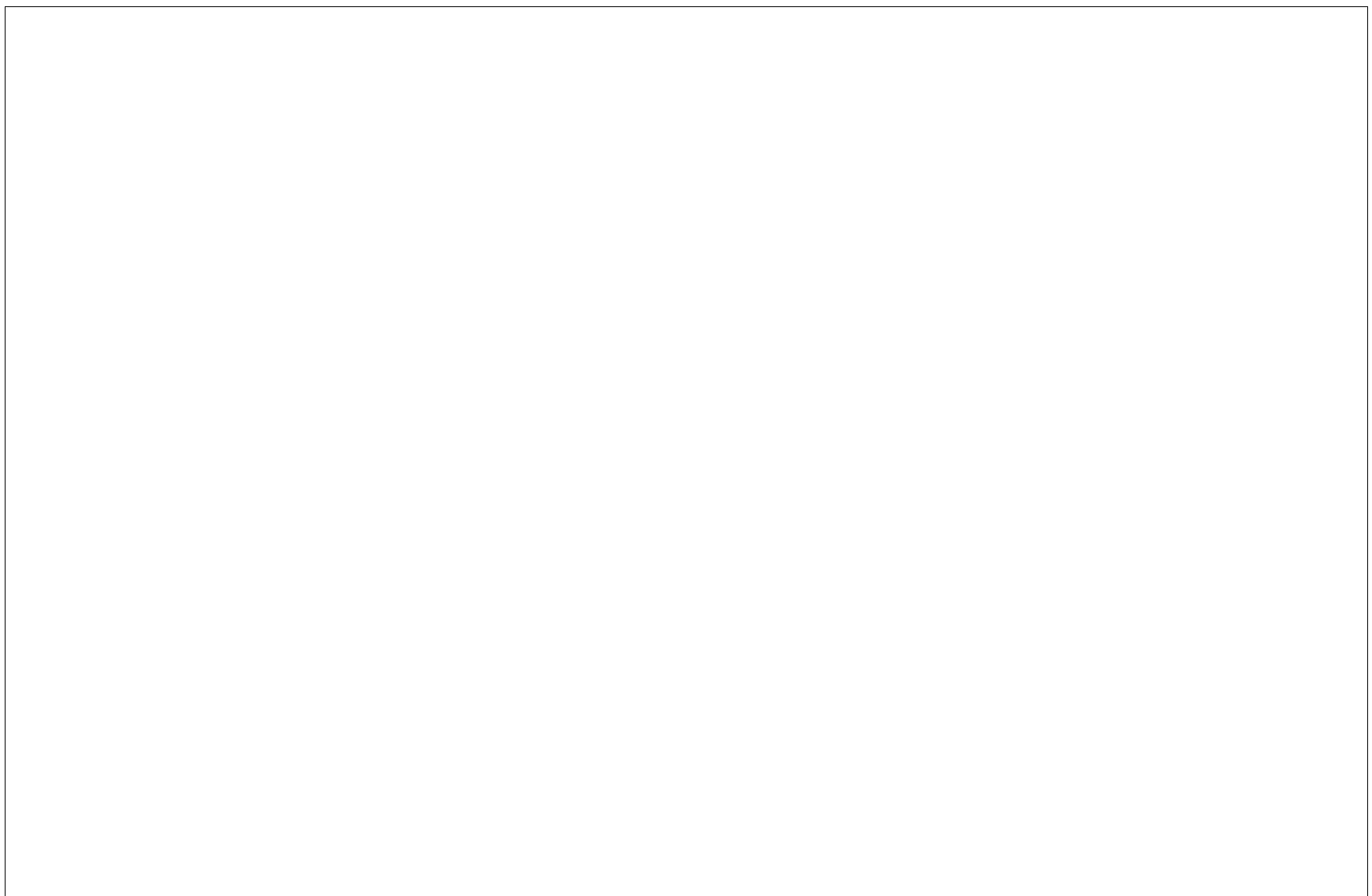
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