



PROFILE OF
THOMAS JANARVIS ARMSTRONG

Full Name: THOMAS JANARVIS ARMSTRONG
Prisoner Number: 206186
D.O.B.: April 24, 1974
Crime(s) Convicted Of: Murder
Date of Crime: Not Given
Conviction Date: January 3, 1990
Age at Time Crime was Committed: 15-years-old
Age at Time Entered Prison: Not Given

Brief description of offense and prisoner's role in it.

It was a felony murder charge resulting from a home invasion. At first it started off as a burglary and co co-defendant decided to kill someone without my knowledge. By then it was too late. This all came out during trial, but as we know, an aider and abettor is as guilty in the eyes of the law as the principle offender.

What difficulties have you experienced as a juvenile living among adult prisoners?

At first I could not relate to them. Here I was a kid living around men who had children my age. I had no friends; I was lonely and afraid.

Have you been negatively affected by your experiences as a juvenile living among adult prisoners? Please explain.

As we are all aware, prison is a predator environment. When I first came to prison as a juvenile I found myself targeted by predators of all kinds. No one wants to admit that they have lived in fear in prison, but to be honest that is exactly how my first few years in prison were. I was a child living in a man's violent world. The fact that I was a target for exploitation meant that I could not form friendships because I could not trust anyone not to try to exploit me. These experiences negatively impacted my emotional and psychological development. Experiencing adolescence and my teen years without instruction or mentor was very, very hard.

How have you resolved these difficulties or dealt with them?

It has taken my longer to mature in prison than it would have in a free society. Developing a sense of one's self worth in a place where aggression and violence are qualities that are looked up to as being (hard) okay or good. But I was able to avoid the traps of older predatory prisoners, and with the support of family who wrote and visited when possible, I found my way to maturity. I gained a sense of self worth and morals not of this place, but

of a more sensitive world. I was blessed.

How has a life of incarceration changed you?

I am not "immediately" sympathetic to the suffering of others. Because of prison, morally and emotionally I know I should be, but after years and years of seeing man's brutality to man, I am just happy it is not me for the most part. In prison you learn that compassion is not a trait that you reveal to others. It is simply a reality of life in prison that I have come to face.

Have you remained in continual contact with family or friends since becoming incarcerated?

Family and friends for the most part.

If you were granted a second chance and released, what would you do?

I would like to attend college and take classes on Economic Growth and Business Administration and Management.

Accomplishments/Achievements since you've been incarcerated.

Group Therapy, Nurses Aid Certificate, Legal Writers Certificate, Food Management Certificate, Building Maintenance Certificate, Herb Gardening and Garden Research Certificates, Certificate in Civil Law, Financial Survival Certificate.

Make any statement you'd like (100 words or less, please).

I was convicted of a crime I did not commit. My attorney, Mr. Nathaniel C. Perry, did not give me a proper defense. I also feel Mr. Nathaniel C. Perry played "Flip The Coin" with my life and sold me out. My inability to process reasonable thoughts, rationally, for my own best interest, led me into a situation that no child should never have to go through. I am sorry for the crime. I still can't process a lifetime in prison for something I didn't do. The Legislature and courts in a whole has various alternatives to protect juveniles and citizens from harm.