

Driving up to Bon Air I had many different feelings. Talking about the facility the week before, and having my own preconceived notions of facilities such as those, I was a little anxious about what I was going to see. The first thing I noticed about the facility was the bleakness of all the one story buildings. I wasn't expecting there to be a cluster of one story buildings surrounded by large open grass areas. All juvenile and penitentiary facilities that I have ever been exposed to have been multiple story gray buildings with guard towers and spot lights. Bon Air had none of these. During class we had talked about how more and more facilities were closing so I was expecting since Bon Air was one of the few left, it would be larger to accommodate for the increase in people going to this facility.

Once we were inside one of the buildings and we had started to interact with the women working there I was surprised as well. Despite her slight strictness on filling out paperwork, she was very helpful and pleasant. The room we were in was well lit, and there was a TV in the hallway playing a talk show. This weird relaxed atmosphere was not what I was expecting. There were no guards or security checks besides the door we walked through to go to the disorganized closet in which we were fingerprinted. This part of the trip had very little resemblance of a juvenile center.

The only aspect, for me, that resembled a detention center was the barbed wire fences enclosing the center. Waiting in line to be fingerprinted, I was standing in front of a window with a view of another building protected by this fence. I spent some time looking and taking in this view. The sky was blue with some clouds in the sky which gave an almost eerily peaceful sense. The building across from the window had windows as well, but they were covered on the outside with grates blocking anyone's view inside and out. This was the only thing that kept reminding me that we were inside a juvenile center. The fences and the grated windows on all the buildings stuck in my mind when I thought of someone sitting inside those buildings.