

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

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Our Weekly Roundup of News and Views on Solitary Confinement

by [Aviva Stahl](#) | May 1, 2016

The Guardian launched 69: A [virtual experience](#) of solitary confinement, a project for which Solitary Watch served as Consulting Producers. A host of accompanying articles about isolation included [an introduction to solitary](#) written by Solitary Watch's Jean Casella and Sal Rodriguez.

Other key material published on the Guardian included an op-ed by [Cory Booker](#) on ending the use of isolation for children, and an [in-depth piece](#) on the Angola 3's Albert Woodfox. There are moments I wish I was back there, Woodfox said.

The American Civil Liberties Union of Tennessee has [joined a lawsuit](#) against the Department of Children's Services and the Rutherford County Juvenile Detention Center, seeking an end to the use of lock down for children who are awaiting trial or have a mental illness. If you locked your child in a closet you would go to jail, said Thomas Castelli, legal director for the ACLU of Tennessee. The government cannot lock children in isolation like this with next to no standards or regulations.

Although the Obama administration is pressing states to reduce the use of solitary confinement, his power to do so [may be limited](#). Having President Obama speak out on this issue is huge, and having the largest prison system in the country, the federal one, move to reduce solitary confinement is very meaningful, said the ACLU's Amy Fetting. But that still leaves us having to go state by state, calling on individual jurisdictions to change.

A former Philadelphia police sergeant has spent the last seven months in solitary confinement for [refusing to release](#) the passwords to his encrypted hard drives. Francis Rawls is under suspicion of possessing child pornography, but has not been charged with a crime; he is being held in contempt for not complying with a court order.

Aviva Stahl is a Brooklyn-based reporter who writes about science/health at the intersection of mass incarceration, national security, and trans rights. She's written for the New York Times, Wired, BuzzFeed News, Solitary Watch, and other outlets. Find her [@stahlidarity](#) and at [stahlidarity.com](#).

Accurate information and authentic storytelling can serve as powerful antidotes to ignorance and injustice. We have helped generate public awareness, mainstream media attention, and informed policymaking on what was once an invisible domestic human rights crisis.

Only with your support can we continue this groundbreaking work, shining light into the darkest corners of the U.S. criminal punishment system.

by [Mirilla Zhu](#)

October 26, 2022

by [Caitlin Konya](#)

October 19, 2022

by [Mirilla Zhu](#)

October 12, 2022

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