

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

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Campaign and Advocacy

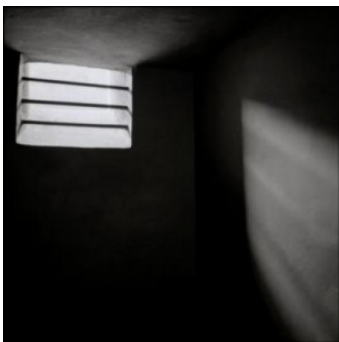
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by [Aviva Stahl](#) | January 26, 2014



The following roundup features noteworthy news, reports and opinions on solitary confinement from the past week that have not been covered in other Solitary Watch posts.

In early January, a South Carolina judge [ruled](#) that the treatment of individuals with mental illness in state prisons was unconstitutional particularly the disproportionate use of solitary confinement. This week, the Columbia [Free Times](#) explored the stories of prisoners involved in the lawsuit. In [The Atlantic](#), Andrew Cohen critiques the recent decision by the state to challenge the courts findings.

Writer, activist, and *Solitary Watch* contributor Vikki Law is featured on [TRGGR radio](#) discussing the prison crisis, solitary confinement and solidarity.

The Juvenile Law Center announced it [negotiated a \\$400,000 settlement](#) with the New Jersey Juvenile Justice Commission, in a civil rights lawsuit that challenged the placement of two teenage boys in solitary confinement.

Ralph Nader writes about solitary confinement in [Counterpunch](#), calling it Americas invisible and costly human rights crisis.

[According to a new report released by the U.S. Department of Justice](#), about 35 percent of incarcerated people who report experiencing inmate-on-inmate sexual violence are subsequently placed in administrative segregation or protective custody (while about 73 percent of perpetrators are placed in segregation as punishment).

Human Rights Watch released its 2014 World Report. Its [chapter on the United States](#) focuses primarily on the criminal justice system, including the use of solitary confinement against individuals in prison, jail, and immigration detention.

In [The Guardian](#), psychologist Jeffrey Kaye asserts that the U.S. military is still using techniques that are abusive and can even amount to torture against War on Terror detainees, including extended solitary confinement. This news comes [almost five years to the day](#) that President Obama signed an executive order calling for the closure of Guantanamo Bay.

[The Tampa Bay Times](#) profiles Floridas longest-serving inmate in solitary, 33-year-old Ian Manuel; he has spent nearly all his time in isolation since his conviction on robbery charges at age 13. An upcoming ruling the Supreme Court may result in Manuels sentence being thrown out.

[BBC Newshour](#) explores why children in the United States are placed in adult prisons. They interview Alisha Carrington, who spent 2.5 years in solitary confinement as an adolescent for her own protection. (Carrington was featured last month in a [Solitary Watch article](#) on DC children in solitary in District jails and federal prisons.)

Youth Advocate Programs Policy & Advocacy Center Advisory Board member Paul DeMuro published a [paper](#) offering some initial ideas for how and why the practice of using isolation as a disciplinary measure for youth in juvenile justice facilities may be abolished.

Aviva Stahl is a Brooklyn-based reporter who writes about science/health at the intersection of mass incarceration, national security, and trans rights. Shes 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

Solitary Watch encourages comments and welcomes a range of ideas, opinions, debates, and respectful disagreement. We do not allow name-calling, bullying, cursing, or personal attacks of any kind. Any embedded links should be to information relevant to the conversation. Comments that violate these guidelines will be removed, and repeat offenders will be blocked. Thank you for your cooperation.

Yes Martin, Robert Hare is the Canadian that came up with the Checklist used in the PCL-R test and I agree it is not perfect.

But the thrust of my comment and my concern is directed at the irreversible harm being done to our incarcerated youth whom share such genetics mentioned by Fallon. (By the way Fallon has the genetic makeup of those he studies and is living a remarkable life.)

Ian's own comments echo the traits listed by Fallon notably, a feeling of being disconnected and the inability to control his impulses.

Ian's anger towards his victim when she did not give him the change that he requested also seems to sound like this line from the article, People with the right genetics, that also experience early trauma or abuse, grow up angry and with a desire for revenge.

So well I agree that it is impossible to go by a test alone especially when the person being tested is aware of it and shares the deceitful and manipulative characteristics of a psychopath, but over time a pattern can be established in the controlled setting of an institution by independent, trained, and unbiased personal. (Might be impossible to fill that role however given the money involved.)

What I don't want to see more of is the system creating the conditions necessary for those with the genetic makeup to leap from a nonviolent psychopath to a violent one at taxpayer expense.

Just so you know I write as a novice on this subject but with some experience as a witness to such conversions while serving time.

Alan, I gathered by your tone that you have had some front line experience in the subject, even in the role of observer. This is more than I can say for many of the experts who pronounce on the witness stand, based first on a testing regime which was never designed for the purpose and second on a growing reliance on fMRI representations which have no demonstrated use in a judicial setting.

As for myself, I am the research coordinator/librarian for a growing crew of recyclers who operate within a cooperative and earn a far better than average living clearing societies detritus and cycling it into value. We operate on Vancouver Island and have satellite operations in Los Angeles, Lahaina Rose, New Orleans and Brooklyn. Most of the crews come from the Ritalin recovery community with a percentage former Crystal Meth addicts who have found a more constructive use for their time. One standard comment that is heard around here is: You don't need a criminal record to join the crew but it helps. This is because while most of society would rather continue the punishment, we take it as an advantage for people to get even, that is, put back what was taken away from them.

Martin G. Smith

To Alan CYA # 65085

The reality is, Psychopathy occurs in about 32% of the adult population and the most popular determinant of the trait, the PCL-R, is so completely discredited, at least in the Canadian context where it was abused with fanatical abandon in judicial settings, the notion of psychopathy in a prison setting especially as a determinant of risk should be discounted at every turn.

As to the presence of MAO-A gene, genetics are not destiny and do not determine choice

Martin G. Smith

From an NPR article titled.

A Neuroscientist Uncovers A Dark Secret
by BARBARA BRADLEY HAGERTY
June 29, 2010 12:00 AM

The criminal brain has always held a fascination for James Fallon. For nearly 20 years, the neuroscientist at the University of California-Irvine has studied the brains of psychopaths.

In Fallon's book *The Psychopath Inside: A Neuroscientist's Personal Journey Into the Dark Side of the Brain* he points to several critical

periods in our development that affect our behavior for life.

During puberty sometime between 17-20 years old, our frontal lobe of the brain and its connections, start to mature. This is a critical time when you see schizophrenia, depression, and other major psychiatric disorders emerge especially in incarcerated adolescences held for prolonged periods in solitary confinement.

People with the right genetics, that also experience early trauma or abuse, grow up angry and with a desire for revenge.

In the Tampa Bay Times article Meg Laughlin wrote:

When he was 13 years old Ian Manuel shot a woman in the face in a botched robbery.

Ian learned to live under extraordinary control and deprivation, Haney said recently. He cant undo the effects of almost 20 years on his own. Hes facing enormous psychological challenges if hes released.

Ian said, I couldnt control my impulses.

I need to feel connected to other human beings.

James Fallon wrote A primary psychopath lacks any sense of connection with individuals and the human race more broadly.

Fallon claims that we are all born with genetic programming that drive us to undergo some 350 complex adaptive behaviors in sequence beginning at birth. If at any point an emerging adaption is interrupted by a stressor, it will affect that particular behavior.

According to Fallon the three ingredients of a psychopath are.

- 1) A certain type of brain abnormality.
- 2) Presence of the warrior gene, MAO-A gene (monoamine oxidase A).
- 3) Abuse or violence in ones childhood.

My question is does he have the other two?

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