

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

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by [Aviva Stahl](#) | October 11, 2015

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.

Two prominent voices in the movement to reform solitary published an article for [The American Prospect](#) entitled, Eight Principles for Reforming Solitary Confinement. Some of the principles listed include out-of-cell time is critical, and prisoners should be given realistic incentives and support to follow facility rules.

[The American Prospect](#) also featured an article that examines Charles Dickens writing on solitary confinement in American prisons. In his 1842 *American Notes*, Dickens wrote of prisoners he saw on his tour of Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia, He is a man buried alive; to be dug out in the slow round of years; and in the mean time dead to everything but torturing anxieties and horrible despair.

A man who spent two years in solitary confinement in a Texas prison is now [suing the states Department of Criminal Justice](#), claiming that he was never given a hearing to appeal the punishment. Nelson Patterson, who has since been released, also maintains that his time in isolation severely exacerbated his mental health problems but that he was still denied reasonable standards of hygiene and medical care.

Solitary Watch's Sarah Shourd examined California's Secret Solitary Courts for [the Daily Beast](#). In the article, she reviews the recent settlement in *Ashker V. Governor of California* which is anticipated to result in the release of thousands of people from solitary and end indeterminate sentences in the SHU.

Alan Pendergast [examined](#) a recent lawsuit filed by Prison Legal News against the Bureau of Prisons, for its routine banning its 19 subscribers in ADX Florence from receiving its monthly magazine. The lawsuit alleges that the rejections appear to treat any reference to any ADX inmate or staff member current or former as a security risk.

[The Boston Globe](#) published an editorial on Curtailing solitary confinement, expressing support for legislation recently introduced into the state senate to reduce the use of solitary confinement. [T]he bill would enhance public safety. And, of course, it would save taxpayers money by reducing the number of special units created and staffed for segregated prisoners. Massachusetts should join the growing national effort to limit solitary confinement.

Molly Crabapple's article for [VICE](#) examined What happens when inmates in solitary confinement blow the whistle on their abuse? She tells the story of prisoner organizing inside the Restricted Housing Unit of Pennsylvania's State Correctional Institution at Dallas, and the retaliation they have received from guards as a result.

A 21-year-old man charged with terrorism offenses [has been found fit to stand trial](#), despite his recent rambling outburst in court. Adel Daoud has been held in pre-trial solitary confinement at the Metro Correctional Center in downtown Chicago for more than three years.

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 [Caitlin Konya](#)

October 19, 2022

by [Mirilla Zhu](#)

October 12, 2022

by [Caitlin Konya](#)

October 5, 2022

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