

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://solitarywatch.org/2018/11/14/support-the-work-of-solitary-watch-this-year-and-your-gift-will-be-doubled/>

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by [Jean Casella and James Ridgeway](#) | November 14, 2018

Dear Readers, Supporters, Colleagues, and Friends:

At Solitary Watch, we receive dozens of letters every week from people living in solitary confinement in prisons across the country. In one recent letter, a man described to us how he had managed to survive nearly a decade in isolation in a 69-foot cell, quoting the iconic musician Bob Marley:

You never know how strong you are, he wrote, until being strong is the only choice you have.



In these dark and discouraging times, when hope can be difficult to hold onto and determination difficult to sustain, we are constantly inspired by these letters, which come from people who have been stripped of every comfort and support, and effectively banished from the human community yet manage to reach out with stories about their lives, appeals for help, demands for justice, and gratitude for the simple knowledge that they have not been completely forgotten by the world outside their cells.

Their fortitude in the face of brutal isolation and deprivation has helped us keep going for nine years, working to place this once invisible human rights issue firmly in the public consciousness and on the agendas of advocacy organizations, mainstream media, and policymakers.

[\[su_button url=https://www.newsmatch.org/organizations/solitary-watch target=blank style=flat background=#2ed992 color=#000000 size=10 center=yes radius=5 icon_color=#000000 class=font-family: Arial !important; font-size: 16px !important; font-weight: bold !important;\]Please help us continue this vital work\[/su_button\]](https://www.newsmatch.org/organizations/solitary-watch)

The good news is that at last, real change has begun to happen. When you click through to donate, you can read about the new partnerships and ambitious initiatives that are bringing us closer to a tipping point on the issue of solitary confinement. Yet despite this progress, tens of thousands of people still remain locked in isolation for months, years, and decades. They include the man that wrote to us quoting Bob Marley, who has been in solitary for as long as Solitary Watch has existed, and is still teaching us how to be strong.

That is why we are reaching out to you once again, at this pivotal time, to ask for your support. Through the end of the year, your donation to Solitary Watch will work twice as hard. For the second year in a row, thanks to the NewsMatch program to support independent, nonprofit journalism, every donation will be doubled up to \$1,000, between now and December 31st.

Please consider a donation to Solitary Watch today. Together, we can find the strength to make solitary confinement a thing of the past.

[\[su_button url=https://www.newsmatch.org/organizations/solitary-watch target=blank style=flat background=#2ed992 color=#000000 size=10 center=yes radius=5 icon_color=#000000 class=font-family: Arial !important; font-size: 16px !important; font-weight: bold !important;\]Donate Now\[/su_button\]](https://www.newsmatch.org/organizations/solitary-watch)

With gratitude for your support,



p.s. Gifts in any amount will make a difference, and are deeply appreciated. Whatever you donate will be matched, so please make your donation today.

James Ridgeway (1936-2021) was the founder and co-director of Solitary Watch. An investigative journalist for over 60 years, he served as Washington Correspondent for the Village Voice and Mother Jones, reporting domestically on subjects ranging from electoral politics to corporate malfeasance to the rise of the racist far-right, and abroad from Central America, Northern Ireland, Eastern Europe, Haiti, and the former Yugoslavia. Earlier, he wrote for The New Republic and Ramparts, and his work appeared in dozens of other publications. He was the co-director of two films and author of 20 books, including a forthcoming posthumous edition of his groundbreaking 1991 work on the far right, *Blood in the Face*. Jean Casella is the director of Solitary Watch. She has also published work in The Guardian, The Nation, and Mother Jones, and is co-editor of the book *Hell Is a Very Small Place: Voices from Solitary Confinement*. She has received a Soros Justice Media Fellowship and an Alicia Patterson Fellowship. She tweets @solitarywatch.

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 [Jean Casella](#)

December 29, 2021

by [Jean Casella](#)

December 23, 2021

by [Events and Announcements](#)

December 3, 2021

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