

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://solitarywatch.org/2011/04/25/easter-as-a-story-of-criminal-injustice/>

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close

Search

close

close

by [Jean Casella and James Ridgeway](#) | April 25, 2011

We missed this post yesterday, but its too good to pass up so we were sharing it a day late. This is [from Scott Hensons Grits for Breakfast](#), which provides the blogospheres best coverage of the Texas criminal justice system.

Easter is strikingly filled with criminal justice themes, isn't it? The Christian religion was essentially founded on a repudiation of Roman capital punishment. Easter celebrates the sinless Man-God killed for His beliefs who triumphed over the grave, mooting, even while respecting to the end, the earth-bound laws that condemned Him. Jesus, a blameless man executed, is the all-time poster child for the innocence movement. Corrupt and biased prosecutors prevailed in His case because of a judges personal indifference and deference to the mob. Christs betrayal by Judas was the archetype cementing into [Christian values](#) a lingering [distrust of snitches and informants](#). Romans accused the disciples of grave robbery. St. Peter committed assault with a deadly weapon in the Garden of Gethsemane then thrice lied about his identity to avoid arrest. And taken as a whole, the passion story documents Jesus arrest, trial, and execution all taking place in an incredibly short span, as though criminal convictions could be obtained as quickly in real life as on an episode of Law & Order.

Christmas is a story about family. Easter is a story about a wrongful criminal conviction, the misapplication of the death penalty, the overweening power of the state, and the irrepressible urge of humanity to resist it.



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 [Juan Moreno Haines](#)

October 25, 2022

by [Caitlin Konya](#)

October 19, 2022

by [Solitary Watch Guest Author](#)

October 13, 2022

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Here is an article on excessive phone rates in prison and how the phone companies use kickbacks to get their contracts.

<http://dailycensored.com/2011/04/12/excessive-prison-phone-rates-exploit-prisoners%E2%80%99-families-with-kickback-to-states/>

I enjoyed the part on snitches.

I couldn't help but think if the Romans had access to cell phone records like those available today they wouldn't have needed Judas after I read the following story on cell phone data.

Excerpts from today's WSJ journal article:

The scientists said that, with enough information about past movements, they could forecast someone's future whereabouts with 93.6% accuracy.

The patterns are allowing us to learn how to better manipulate trends, opinions and mass psychology.

(This would have made the FBI's job much easier during the CoIntelPro years.)

They found that we as individuals are more influenced by those we encounter face to face everyday than those we consider to be our closest friends but see less frequently.

(This revelation gives the promoters of CMUs scientific evidence supporting their case.)

Dr. Bollen and his colleagues, for example, found that the millions of Twitter messages sent via mobile phones and computers every day captured swings in national mood that presaged changes in the Dow Jones index up to six days in advance with 87.6% accuracy.

They also point out how political trends can be detected and influenced.

So with the advancement of high tech algorithms to mine our cell phone records even the lowly task of snitching is being automated.

Too bad for the snitches they'll just have to do their time like those they snitch on or falsely accuse!

So maybe now the BOP will finally allow inmates to use cell phones. LOL

Oh did anyone catch the article on how phone companies pay kickbacks to the BOP to gain a contact with them. It is a big money maker for both partners? Of course it is the inmates that get screwed with overpriced phone service even though most inmates come from impoverished households which cannot afford even normal rates.

Where is all of this headed to? I think the last line of the article sums it up.

The overweening power of the state, and the irrepressible urge of humanity to resist it.

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704547604576263261679848814.html?mod=WSJ_hp_mostpop_read

Glad you enjoyed it. :)

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