

# Solitary Watch

## Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

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All Donations to Support Our Work Will Be Doubled Until December 31

by [Jean Casella and James Ridgeway](#) | December 21, 2017

Dear Friends, Colleagues, Readers, and Supporters:

With just 10 days left in 2017, we are writing to you one last time to ask that you consider a donation to Solitary Watch.

No matter what your beliefs, this time of year tends to be one that is rich in human fellowship, as family and friends gather to eat, drink, and celebrate. And the new year, even in dark times like ours, brings a sense of renewal and hope.

But for the men, women, and children spending these weeks in supermax prisons and solitary confinement cells all around the country, there is no human companionship allowed. Even on holidays, meals are delivered through a slot in the door, and there is little reason for celebration or hope. The most fortunate have loved ones on the outside who will send them letters or cards to read in their cells; a few may even be permitted a phone call or visit.

For others, the only communication they receive from the outside world will be the annual holiday card Solitary Watch sends to 5,000 people in solitary. But there are so many more still some 80,000 whom even we cannot reach, because we lack the capacity (a nice way of saying we don't have enough money to do it).

Before you head out on your holiday journeys, whether they be near or far, please consider a gift to Solitary Watch. As we have mentioned before, there has never been a better time to support our work, because this year, every donation up to \$1,000 will be matched in full through a special grant from News Match.

[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;"]Support Solitary Watch Now[/su\_button]

Donations in any amount are deeply appreciated and meaningful. For just \$15 (which gets doubled to \$30), we can add another person living in isolation to our Lifelines to Solitary program, which provides not only holiday cards but also quarterly newsletters and connections to dedicated pen pals on the outside with whom they can correspond all year a gift of human connection and caring that for some is, literally, life-saving.

Your support also enables us to pursue our larger mission, to expose and, eventually, transform the underlying system responsible for all this suffering. In our first eight years, we have helped bring solitary confinement out of the shadows, and made it impossible for the public, the mainstream media, and even policymakers and corrections officials to ignore this human rights crisis in our midst. But there is still much more to do.

The issue of solitary confinement is now approaching a tipping point, where real change is possible. At this critical moment, our work stands to have a greater impact than ever before and so does your support, especially once it is doubled by News Match.

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Thank you so much for considering our request, and for caring about solitary confinement and the people who endure it. We wish you all healthy and happy holidays, and hope for better days to come in 2018. Our own deepest hope is that we may some day be able to look back on these times including the fact that we allowed thousands of living human beings to be buried alive and wonder how it ever could have happened.

With our gratitude and warmest wishes,

Jean Jim

Jean Casella and James Ridgeway, Co-Directors

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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Solitary Watch

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