

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

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Campaign and Advocacy

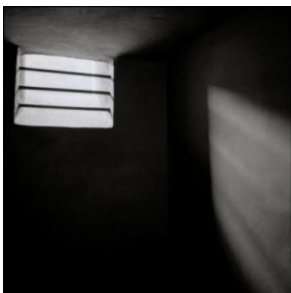
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by [Jean Casella](#) | October 6, 2013



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.

This week's news has been dominated by the passing of Angola 3 member Herman Wallace, after more than 41 years in solitary and less than three days in the free world. The most comprehensive, ongoing coverage was provided by [Democracy Now!](#) Solitary Watch spoke about the case in a feature on the [BBC News](#).

The [Los Angeles Review of Books](#) features Andrew Gumbels essay *The Scorched Earth Solution: Solitary Confinement in America*. After this summer's hunger strike in California, he writes, we can no longer say that we do not know what is happening under our noses. We are subjecting many thousands of prisoners to unbearable psychic torture day after day after day, at great expense and with no apparent benefit.

October 4 marked the one-year anniversary of the highly controversial extradition to the United States of British poet and translator Talha Ahsan. As a letter in [The Guardian](#) notes, Ahsan, who has Asperger's syndrome and had never before set foot in America, has spent that year in extreme isolation in a Connecticut supermax prison, awaiting trial on vague material support to terrorism charges.

According to the [Boston Globe](#), lawyers for Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, accused of carrying out the Boston Marathon bombing, are arguing that their client is being unduly held in extreme isolation under Special Administrative Measures that prevent him communicating with his family or his legal team.

[The Atlantic](#) reports on the case of a floridly psychotic man in Florida who spent years in squalor at ADX Florence federal supermax without any meaningful mental health care, despite behavior that extended to eating his own feces.

California prison officials this week opened the Security Housing Unit at Corcoran State Prison to reporters, yielding some powerful photographs in the [Los Angeles Times](#) of men exercising in small cages.

People with mental illness serving time in Virginia's notorious supermax prisons are being left behind by the state's much-touted incentive-based step-down program that allows prisoners in solitary to earn their way out of isolation based on good behavior. As a result, according to a commentary in the [Roanoke Times](#), those with psychiatric and cognitive disabilities are being permanently warehoused in solitary.

[Photo Requests from Solitary](#) received additional media attention from [American Public Media's The Story](#), in a piece titled *In Solitary Confinement, Requesting the Outside World*.

With an article by Jeanne Theoharis titled *Guantanamo in New York*, [The Nation](#) launches a new series on the abusive treatment of terror suspect on US soil which includes extensive use of pre-trial as well as post-conviction solitary confinement.

The [ACLU](#) has released a new video and petition urging Attorney General Eric Holder to end the solitary confinement of children under 18 in the federal prison system.

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 [Caitlin Konya](#)

October 19, 2022

by [Mirilla Zhu](#)

October 12, 2022

by [Caitlin Konya](#)

October 5, 2022

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P.O. Box 11374
Washington, DC 20008

info@solitarywatch.org

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