

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

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Our Weekly Roundup of News and Views on Solitary Confinement

by [Lizzie Kane](#) | May 19, 2021

[Silenced: Voices From Solitary in Michigan](#) is a new, interactive, searchable, and growing digital archive of over 100 letters from solitary in Michigan. Conceived by the group Zealous, it was produced with local partners in the state, as well as a range of artists, designers, and coders, to raise awareness about the torture of solitary confinement and support the movement to abolish it.

[The Intercept reported](#) that California jails have neglected individuals who are in medical isolation, a form of isolation similar to solitary confinement and a tactic used to curb the spread of the virus. Incarcerated individuals and their families are quoted speaking about the instances of neglect. They've moved him multiple times, and they won't even replace the blankets he was using when he had the virus, said attorney Megan Hopkins in regards to her client Michael Pitre. It took weeks for them to even give him an inhaler for his asthma.

Ian Manuel [appeared on The Daily Show with Trevor Noah](#) to discuss his recently published book *My Time Will Come: A Memoir of Crime, Punishment, Hope, and Redemption* about his time in solitary confinement. He also spoke about how he befriended the woman he shot. Manuel was [interviewed on WBUR](#), along with Tammie Gregg, the deputy director of the ACLU's National Prison Project as well.

[The Connecticut Mirror ran another op-ed](#) about ending solitary confinement in the state. This piece was written by Mary Morgan Wolff, a former employee for the Connecticut Department of Correction for 27 years. Wolff oversaw a long-term solitary confinement unit in the state and recounts this firsthand experience in the article.

Solitary Watch and Prison Policy Initiative (PPI) editor Katie Rose Quandt and former PPI staff member Alexi Jones [published a report on PPI](#) on the lasting negative consequences of incarceration on individuals' mental health. Solitary confinement is one of the key components to the deterioration of mental health for people in the criminal justice system.

[ABC News aired a segment](#) with Anthony Gay, a man who spent 22 years in solitary confinement and who is now working to curtail the practice in Illinois. The segment highlights the Anthony Gay Isolated Confinement Act, a bill that would limit solitary confinement to no more than 10 days in a six-month period in the state. [The Guardian published](#) a piece on Gay as well.

[According to the Washington City Paper](#), attorneys continue to hear about and incarcerated people continue to report on the unsafe and horrific conditions inside the safe cell units used to protect individuals from self-harm in the DC Jail. Inside these cells, incarcerated individuals and attorneys report that people face extreme isolation, as well as a lack of access to running water to flush toilets and wash one's hands and clothing that covers one's body appropriately. In a follow-up story to an [April 19 article](#), [the Washington Post reported](#) that the DC Jail is relaxing its COVID-19 restrictions, including the 24-hour lockdown that individuals experienced for over a year.

[WTOP News reported](#) that after suing the DC Department of Corrections for being kept in the mens unit, a transgender woman named Sunday Hinton was moved to the womens unit of the DC Jail this past Friday. The jail had previously offered her a spot in protective custody, a form of solitary confinement in lieu of moving her to the womens division.

[According to Uprise RI](#), on Thursday, the Close High Side Coalition, a collective of individuals from various organizations working on criminal justice reform, protested the inhumane conditions at Adult Correctional Institutions (ACI) in Rhode Island by replicating a solitary confinement cell and placing volunteers in the space. The group staged the protest to highlight its support of bills S0395 and H5740, two acts that would drastically limit the use of solitary confinement in Rhode Island, better protect vulnerable populations from its use, and help increase access to essential mental and behavioral health services behind the walls.

Lizzie Kane was an intern for Solitary Watch in the fall of 2020 and spring of 2021. Her work has also appeared in The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Dallas Morning News, and Charlotte Observer.

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 [Mirilla Zhu](#)

October 26, 2022

by [Caitlin Konya](#)

October 19, 2022

by [Mirilla Zhu](#)

October 12, 2022

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