

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

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Our Weekly Roundup of News and Views on Solitary Confinement

by [Aviva Stahl](#) | February 7, 2016

[VICE](#) published a piece on the experiences of people with mental illness in solitary confinement. Journalist Paul Willis quotes the words of ADX prisoner Tommy Silverstein. The mental anguish of 28 years of solitary confinement is worse than any physical pain I have ever suffered or imagined. The indefiniteness of my confinement makes my mental suffering never-ending.

A post at [ThinkProgress](#) explores the story of Anthony Hinton, who was exonerated after spending thirty years in solitary on Alabama's death row. When he was first released, Hinton went to a nearby mall to try to get used to people. The anxiety of being surrounded by large crowds after years of sensory deprivation caused him to break down in public.

Norman Seabrook, the president of the New York City Correction Officers Benevolent Association, [penned an op-ed](#) on why Obama is wrong on solitary confinement. Separating dangerous inmates from the general population and civilians inside correctional facilities is an essential deterrent used to ensure everyone's safety. It is a protective measure that exists for a reason.

Meanwhile, [The Bangor Daily News](#) published an editorial entitled Why reducing solitary confinement helps inmates, makes prisons safer, which explores the positive outcomes of the reductions in solitary that have occurred in Maine.

Writing in [The Intercept](#), Arun Kundnani exposes the pre-trial conditions of extreme isolation that terrorism suspects endure at Metropolitan Correctional Center in lower Manhattan. He describes what one young man, Mahdi Hashi, has experienced there: For over three years, [Hashi] has been confined to a small cell 23 hours a day without natural light, with an hour alone in a slightly larger indoor cage. He has had no physical contact with anyone.

[Slate](#) published a video featuring two men who were released after spending long periods of time in solitary. They describe what it's like to spend months, and even years, in extreme isolation, and how hard it has been for them to recover since they regained their freedom.

An article in the [International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health](#) explores The Clinical Alternative to Punitive Segregation (CAPS) Program in New York City Jails.

Aviva Stahl is a Brooklyn-based reporter who writes about science/health at the intersection of mass incarceration, national security, and trans rights. She's written for the New York Times, Wired, BuzzFeed News, Solitary Watch, and other outlets. Find her [@stahlidarity](#) and at [stahlidarity.com](#).

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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P.O. Box 11374
Washington, DC 20008

info@solitarywatch.org

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