

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://solitarywatch.org/2010/12/10/wikileaks-held-in-solitary-confinement/>

Campaign and Advocacy

close

Search

close

close

by [James Ridgeway and Jean Casella](#) | December 10, 2010

Both of the men at the center of the WikiLeaks case are now in some form of solitary confinement, though the differences in their conditions of confinement are significant.

As the [Guardian reported yesterday](#), WikiLeaks editor-in-chief Julian Assange has been transferred to the segregation unit at Wandsworth Prison, the Victorian rock in southwest London. Assange was remanded to Wandsworth on Tuesday after he was refused bail while awaiting a hearing on his extradition to Sweden, where he is wanted on sexual assault charges.

According to the *Guardian*, Assange is thought to have asked to be housed away from other prisoners, who had shown a high degree of interest in him after he arrived. He has his own cell and because of the consular and legal visits did not exercise, but will normally get one hour a day. Because he is in the segregation unit, his association with other prisoners will be limited. Assange's lawyer described the prisoner as quite chipper; he seemed to be bearing up, but said he had complained about the daytime television at the prison, and added that he doesn't have access to a computer, even without an internet connection, or to writing material. He's got some files but doesn't have any paper to write on and put them in. However, the *Guardian* reports, as part of a scheme called access to justice, prison authorities are arranging for Assange to be given a computer so he can work on his case. The computer will have limited internet access.

Assange's treatment compares quite favorably to that of Bradley Manning, the Army private who is accused of actually leaking the documents being made public by WikiLeaks. He is getting considerably less attention than Assange. But as Daniel Ellsberg has pointed out, Manning is the real protagonist of the WikiLeaks story: hero or villain, depending on your point of view and the figure comparable to Ellsberg himself. On WNYC radio today, [Ellsberg said](#):

Manning I see as the first person in 40 years who has been willing, as he said, to go to prison for life or be executed in order to get this information to the American people, and, as he said, to cause worldwide discussion, debate and reform. That's where I was 40 years ago, and I haven't heard anyone say anything like that in the intervening period.

Bradley Manning has been held in solitary confinement for the past seven months, first in Kuwait and then in a Marine brig in Quantico, Virginia. He has been charged with leaking footage of two Reuters staffers being killed by U.S. Apache helicopters in Iraq in 2007, and is a person of interest in the release of hundreds of thousands of military and diplomatic documents. He is expected to face a court-martial sometime in the spring of 2011.

Manning is apparently being held in conditions of extreme isolation, cut off from the outside world and denied visits from some [members of his own family](#). As we [wrote earlier this year](#), Bradley Manning can look forward to a long period in solitary confinement before he is convicted of any crime. Complete isolation will be key to silencing this man who knew too much, and who shared what he knew with the American public.

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 [Solitary Watch Guest Author](#)

October 13, 2022

by [Vaidya Gullapalli](#)

September 29, 2022

Solitary Watch encourages comments and welcomes a range of ideas, opinions, debates, and respectful disagreement. We do not allow name-calling, bullying, cursing, or personal attacks of any kind. Any embedded links should be to information relevant to the conversation. Comments that violate these guidelines will be removed, and repeat offenders will be blocked. Thank you for your cooperation.

wow odd rules in the places he is in now why cant he sleep or exercise in his cell thats not making any sense to me let alone i tell you what i seen this come to him way before anything was done said to a friend bet you he gets his ass thrown in solitary for life or something for pissing off the government hell i not shocked at this piss off the tribunal you end up in the hell of justice poor soul i do feel for him i hope he is well this holiday time no one should spend it in the hole though unlikely i hope he like Spizer did escapes the tribunals wrath god watch over him poor soul no one should go throw solitary unwillingly let alone a soldier he fights for us may there be light in the darkness of justice

i am glad they leaked out this info we have a right to know all i regret is that they did not leak anything on the FBOP i would have loved if they did that man i been all over it like flies to shit lol really i would be trying to get info on there adx and so called range 13 forever love to see there real numbers in solitary if i had their skilled men on my team the bop would be in for a run for their jobs i like to watch them run to try and cover their butts this time lol but they men did the prison a good deed i stand by them in doing so may there be light in the darkness of justice

P.O. Box 11374
Washington, DC 20008

info@solitarywatch.org

Solitary Watch

Copyright 2022, Solitary Watch

Read about [rights and permissions](#).



Solitary Watch News