

# Solitary Watch

## Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://solitarywatch.org/2012/07/26/new-video-solitary-confinement-the-season-of-sorrow/>

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by [James Ridgeway and Jean Casella](#) | July 26, 2012

The following video, titled Solitary Confinement: The Season of Sorrow, was directed and produced by our gifted videographer and reporter [Valeria Monfrini](#), who also shot the other original videos on Solitary Watch's [YouTube channel](#). Here is her brief description of the content:

This short documentary explores the experience of solitary confinement through the testimonies of former inmates held in prolonged isolation and their family members, from the city of Philadelphia.

LuQman Abdullah, 48, spent 5 years in solitary. Since his release, he has worked to turn his life around, working as a community activist and raising his two daughters. Lynell Wesley, 29, believes discovering art helped him to endure the 3 years he spent in isolation. Theresa Shoats, 49, is the daughter of Russell Shoats, a former Black Panther, who has already served more than 30 years in solitary confinement.

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Pe9v7Lmsnc]

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

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Torture pure and simple for all people of all races religion horrible sickening tragedy of human rights violation in American against its own people. Tom we are always here never leave you. You are not alone we suffer with you. ~ namaste ~ I salute the light within these human beings suffering.

Solitary Confinement should only be used in extreme cases; where a prisoner is temporarily out of control, but not suffering some mental

illness that is treatable by other means, and Sol Con should only be for short periods, the use of Solitary Confinement for long term is nothing short of Torture as in the case of Thomas E Silverstein (Tommy) who spent 28 years in isolation, somebody / authority has ultimate responsibility for putting this man through that endless torment, which breaches his Human rights under the US Convention; No cruel or unusual punishment

Stay strong Tommy, your pal Barri J

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