

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://solitarywatch.org/2012/06/03/solitary-watchers-named-2012-soros-justice-fellows/>

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by [James Ridgeway and Jean Casella](#) | June 3, 2012

We are pleased to be able to tell all of you, our readers and supporters, that [we were awarded](#) a 2012 Soros Justice Media Fellowship from the Open Society Foundations. As fellows, we will document and report on the use and abuse of solitary confinement in U.S. prisons, jails, and youth facilities, increasing public awareness of this pervasive but hidden practice. The year-long shared fellowship will give us the time and support we need to not only keep Solitary Watch going, but also do investigative reporting and commentary on various aspects of solitary confinement for publication in other venues.

Every day now we receive letters from those locked away in solitary. Letters of thanks, but most of all of encouragement to keep going, to dig deeper. To tell the truth about these all but buried people, and provide them with a way to express themselves, is at the very heart of our project. And this fellowship will help us carry forward these efforts.

Soros Justice Fellowships are awarded to both journalists and advocates working to advance fairness and transparency in the U.S. criminal justice system. A complete list of the 2012 fellows appears [here](#). (Notably, it includes two others who are working on the issue of solitary confinement.)

This is a major event in the short history of Solitary Watch, and in addition to thanking the Open Society Foundations, we want to express our gratitude to all of the people who made it possible for us to reach this point:

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.

Kudos, Jean and Jim!! Your work is crucial and sorely needed. My best wishes and prayers are with you both as you help us all to continue to bear witness to this madness. Justice is coming, yes I know.

Dear Jean and Jim, Congratulations on your totally deserved Soros grant. Solitary confinement is torture, and your brave and arduous journey through this darkest of corridors will surely make a difference in restoring some humanity to a system that shames us all.

Dear Jean and Jim, Congratulations on this well deserved recognition for your critical work. Because of you a spotlight now shines brightly on a dark place. With that light shining change already has begun and will increase. Keep the spotlight shining!

Yeah Team! Way to go Jim and Jean! Your efforts are helping to make solitary confinement the important issue it should be.

Congratulations! Your broad and deep reporting is a vital part of the advocacy process.

Dear Jean and Jim,
Congratulations! Well deserved support for your commitment and hard work.
Good luck going forward.
Joan

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