

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://solitarywatch.org/2011/02/05/voices-from-solitary-worse-than-angola/>

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by [James Ridgeway and Jean Casella](#) | February 5, 2011

The following description came by letter from a prisoner being held in solitary in a Louisiana state prison. His name and the name of his prison are withheld to protect against the possibility of retaliation.

I am being housed in solitary in the worst, most unconstitutional conditions in Louisiana even worse and more strict than the infamous Angola.

According to the Department of Justice Bureau of Statistics, only one percent of Louisiana law suits make it to trial, let alone win or change anything. The local FBI will only investigate murders or rapes involving correctional officers, so getting good help is futile to say the least

We're being forced to wear handcuffs and shackles in the exercise pens which is just a start the equivalent of no rec or exercise in a period of over 10 months. That's just for me. Some of these guys have been down here for years.

We are even forced to have all sick call visits and psychiatric visits while we are in our cells in the hearing range of all the other inmates and guards. Social workers, psychiatrists, nurses etc. stand in the hall (on the cat walk) in front of our cells. Our cells have only one opening. This is the equivalent of no treatment at all with people being mocked and ridiculed by what they say.

This is only a couple of things, but serious enough to warrant a federal investigation

We need help!



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 [Voices from Solitary](#)

September 30, 2022

by [Voices from Solitary](#)

September 19, 2022

by [Voices from Solitary](#)

September 6, 2022

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Please tell us how we can help. Can we write letters to your warden?
To your Dept. of Corrections? Give me addresses, please.

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