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Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

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Our Weekly Roundup of News and Views on Solitary Confinement

by [Aviva Stahl](#) | May 21, 2017

A Panamanian man [killed himself](#) at a privately run immigration detention center in Georgia after spending 19 days in solitary confinement. The death of Jean Jimenez-Joseph, 27, is supposedly being investigated by federal authorities. Trump has promised to detain more immigrants than ever before, and to relax protections for people inside immigration detention, including when it comes to the use of solitary.

[New York Magazine](#) published a story featuring the voices of four women who were held on Rikers Island. I worked in the medical unit, and in the nursery, said one woman. While I was in the nursery, someone was crazy and tried to attack me. Any time you're in an altercation, you get placed in solitary. I was in there for three months. You spend the time just trying to keep your sanity. I read books and tried to sleep.

[Business Insider](#) published a video interview with a hacker, Kevin Mitnick, who spent eight months in solitary on the grounds that he might otherwise try to hack a North American missile defense system. Imagine going into your home tonight, when you get out of school or out of the office, and locking yourself in your bathroom. And not leaving your bathroom for 23 out of 24 hours a day. And then for an hour a day, they give you a little bit more room, but you're outside, you could look up at the sky. It's pretty horrific. It takes a lot of time for the human to adapt to those conditions. But we can adapt to anything, right, eventually.

[Texas Public Radio](#) published a segment on the continued use of isolation in the states' prisons and jails. The questions they explore include, Is the use of solitary confinement necessary to ensure maximum security, or are there safe, viable alternatives? Can Texas jails and prisons find a balance between prioritizing security and mitigating the risk of damage to isolated inmates?

Army whistleblower Chelsea Manning, who served a seven-year prison term, including significant periods of time in solitary, was released from the military barracks at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas. In a statement to [ABC News](#), she said the past will always affect me and I will keep that in mind while remembering that how it played out is only my starting point, not my final destination. The day after her release, Manning [posted a photograph](#) of herself on Instagram and Twitter, the first image of her as a free woman.

A three-judge panel is [set to decide](#) whether Nebraska man Nikko Jenkins will receive life in prison or the death penalty for the 2013 murders he committed shortly after his release from prison. As the Omaha World-Herald reports, Following a 10-year prison sentence more than half of which he spent in solitary confinement Jenkins was released July 30, 2013. Just before his departure, he had begged to be released to a mental health facility for what he claimed to be schizophrenia and psychotic disorders. Less than a month later, four people were dead.

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.

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by [Caitlin Konya](#)

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by [Mirilla Zhu](#)

October 12, 2022

by [Caitlin Konya](#)

October 5, 2022

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P.O. Box 11374
Washington, DC 20008

info@solitarywatch.org

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