

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://solitarywatch.org/2014/08/25/seven-days-in-solitary-8242014/>

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close

Search

close

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by [Aviva Stahl](#) | August 25, 2014



The following roundup features noteworthy news, reports and opinions on solitary confinement from the past week that have not been covered in other Solitary Watch posts.

Shane Bauer, who has written extensively about solitary confinement for the outlet Mother Jones, was forcibly [escorted out of the American Correctional Association conference](#) by armed guards.

Snake River Correctional Institution in Oregon is experimenting with a Blue Room, where prisoners held in solitary confinement can view nature imagery for about 40 minutes each day, in lieu of the standard recreation time they would otherwise be offered. [The Oregonian](#) published an in-depth piece about the origin of the idea and why it might calm nerves and reduce disciplinary infractions.

A correctional officer at Mercy County Correction Center in New Jersey allegedly threatened to file criminal charges against at least one female prisoner, extend her solitary confinement and deny her meals unless she performed oral sex on him, [according to criminal charges filed last week](#). At the time, Officer John Ledbetter was a supervisor in the female solitary confinement unit; an attorney for one woman there could be up to a dozen victims assaulted by Ledbetter.

New Yorks City Council passed legislation [that will create greater transparency around the use of solitary confinement on Rikers Island](#). The Department of Correction will now issue four annual reports detailing: the number of individuals held in isolation; why and for how long they are held in isolation; the number of recorded suicide attempts and any related follow-up care.

Daniel McGowan, an environmental activist and former prisoner, was arrested from his halfway house and placed in solitary confinement in April 2013 after writing a HuffPost blog. Last week, [he sued the Bureau of Prisons](#) alleging that the arrest was unconstitutional, claiming he was retaliated against for expressing his views about the Communication Management Units, where he was held for several years.

Florence Finkle, the deputy commissioner in charge of internal investigations at Rikers Island, [has resigned from her post](#) amidst allegations of a deep-seated culture of violence at the jail and the excessive and inappropriate solitary confinement of teenagers. According to a recently published federal report, Ms. Finkles office conducted inadequate investigations into the use of force at the facility.

The family of a teenager who died while in solitary confinement at Rikers Island in April 2013 [has filed a wrongful-death suit](#). According to the lawsuit, Andy Henriquez, 19, complained about chest pains and breathing but was ignored by guards; he eventually died of a ruptured aorta.

Aviva Stahl is a Brooklyn-based reporter who writes about science/health at the intersection of mass incarceration, national security, and trans rights. Shes 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.

Only with your support can we continue this groundbreaking work, shining light into the darkest corners of the U.S. criminal punishment system.

by [Mirilla Zhu](#)

October 26, 2022

by [Caitlin Konya](#)

October 19, 2022

by [Mirilla Zhu](#)

October 12, 2022

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Designate one day a year as Solitary Day. In observance, all inmates will reject food for the entire day, and will sign up for sick call.

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