

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

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Our Weekly Roundup of News and Views on Solitary Confinement

by [Aviva Stahl](#) | September 11, 2017

[A settlement has been reached](#) after an individual incarcerated in Louisiana accused prison officials of retaliating against him for exchanging emails with a reporter. Last year, William Kissinger was transferred out of the Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola and sent to another prison, where he was placed in solitary confinement. Under the settlement, Kissinger will be returned to Angola, restored to his trusty status and assigned a job that pays 16 cents an hour.

[The Baxter Bulletin](#) published an article about kids at the Arkansas Juvenile Assessment and Treatment Center being held in solitary confinement. According to multiple youths, former staffers and others, confining a youth alone in a cell in Building 19 or in another room on campus has been regularly used at AJATC as a disciplinary response to nonviolent misbehavior in class, as well as for more serious misconduct, with the youth sometimes staying there for much of the day. If a youth is deemed to be a danger, the practice is sometimes used for a period of multiple days.

Prosecutors in Iowa have arrested the owner of a for-profit boarding school for teenagers, for allegedly coercing young women into sexual relationships, having other female students undress during therapy sessions, and keeping young people in solitary confinement for extended periods of time, [reported the New York Post](#). Former students have told The Associated Press that they were forced to stay in small concrete isolation boxes for days or weeks and that staff wouldn't let them out unless they sat in a specific posture for 24 hours.

The use of solitary confinement in New York State Prisons has dropped dramatically in the past year, [reported the New York Civil Liberties Union](#) (NYCLU), in what was the first of a five year settlement between the state and NYCLU to address the use of isolation. The report shows the number of people held in solitary as punishment on any given day has dropped by 24 percent and that the average length of time spent in disciplinary solitary declined by 16 percent. Meanwhile, [local activists walked from Harlem to Albany](#) to draw attention to criminal justice reform issues in the state, including solitary confinement and other conditions on the inside.

Longtime political prisoner Herman Bell has been assaulted by prison guards at Great Meadow Correctional Facility in New York, cracking two ribs and damaging his eyes, according to supporters on the outside. [The San Francisco Bay View](#) reports that Bell has now been charged with assault on staff and transferred to the Special Housing Unit at Five Points Correctional Facility.

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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