

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

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by [Aviva Stahl](#) | March 2, 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.

Federal investigators [have determined](#) that the state of Pennsylvania violated both the constitutional ban on cruel and unusual punishment and the American with Disabilities Act, by placing people with mental illness and intellectual disabilities in isolation in state prisons. U.S. Attorney David J. Hickton said, Pennsylvanias unconstitutional use of solitary confinement on prisoners with serious mental health illness victimizes one of the most vulnerable groups in our society. We remain vigilant in protecting the constitutional rights of all of our citizens, particularly those with intellectual disabilities and serious mental illness.

Nine Illinois legislators [toured Pontiac Correctional Center](#), a maximum-security facility that houses about 2,000 individuals.

The [Center for Investigative Reporting](#) published a new multimedia piece on teens in solitary confinement, focusing on New Yorks Rikers Island.

In [New York Magazine](#), Benjamin Wallace-Wells narrated the story behind last years 30,000-strong hunger strike at Pelican Bay Prison, describing the four men who initiated the strike and how they organized it.

[Aeon](#) published a long-form piece examining the existing scientific evidence that solitary confinement damages the brain.

Andrew Cohen of [The Atlantic](#) called on readers to be more critical of Colorado Department of Corrections Director Rick Raemisch, who last week published an op-ed in the *New York Times* about the torturous night he spent in solitary confinement. Cohen uses two cases studies to explore how Colorados recent reforms fall short of what is necessary.

The ACLU launched a [petition](#) asking Secretary of State John Kerry to grant a request made by UN Special Rapporteur on Torture Juan Mndez to visit U.S. prisons, and in particular solitary confinement units.

Last weeks Senate Committee hearing, Reassessing Solitary Confinement II, was covered by a wide variety of outlets, including [Democracy Now](#), [MSNBC](#), [the Huffington Post](#), [Esquire](#), [the Washington Post](#) and [NPR](#). [PBS](#) interviewed members of the faith-based coalition that hosted the mornings press conference. You can watch the entire hearing [here](#).

[Mother Jones](#) and [In These Times](#) covered the recent NYCLU settlement with the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, with both outlets musing whether the move signaled the beginning of a broader shift in policy.

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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There is NO LAW, ORDER or JUSTICE in the sham, kangaroo courts, star chambers masquerading as level playing field. There is NO SUCH THING as a Fair Trial.

The STATE BAR UNION MEMBERS use spells & a foreign language aka legalese to manipulate, control innocent people that DO NOT know the game.

In addition, THE STATE BAR UNION MEMBERS knowingly violate the Taft Hartley Act, using film flams, simulated legal process, Mentally Incompetent Fact Witnesses aka POLICE who are guilty of Impersonating a Peace Officer as each does NOT know the difference between an offense, a violation in the law & a crime which makes them Public Nuisances & a dangerous health hazard to All abiding Citizens everywhere, mail fraud, et, al,

Justice for juveniles.

Maricopa county 4th ave jail has one juvenile in smul max security he is 15 yrs old and has had illness since 7 yrs old . Allegations are of a detention officer NO MOTIVE. Awaiting trial. NO SCHOOL. No proper medication .approached by sheriff and was stripped down left for several

hours was asked by sheriff arpaio himself why did you kill my detention officer. Was taken from court out on buzy street back from court with no vest and was told he is going to hell. His diagnosis is as follows adhd odd mood disorder depression and anger. Now he is hallucinating hearing voices and extreme anxiety. Please help stop this mad man. Innocent until proven guilty? ?? Or guilty until proven innocent. ..thank you this young man is my son leonard moreno. ..

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Solitary Watch News