

# 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](#) | February 14, 2016

Excerpts from *Hell is a Very Small Place* were featured on [In These Times](#) and [Longreads](#). The book was also [reviewed](#) by incarcerated whistleblower Chelsea Manning. The book, which is edited by Solitary Watch's Jean Casella, Jim Ridgeway and Sarah Shourd, is the first to feature firsthand accounts of life in solitary.

Taylor Pendergrass of the New York Civil Liberties Union [responded](#) to Norman Seabrook's recent column, in which Seabrook criticized Obama's recent comments on solitary confinement. Corrections officers, who work difficult jobs often without adequate recognition or pay, deserve representatives who have the vision to embrace changes like solitary confinement reform that will benefit their members, wrote Pendergrass.

NutraLoaf has been banned in Massachusetts, Minnesota and New York, but is still being served to people in solitary confinement [in Florida](#) if they are perceived to pose a security threat. Justifying the continued use of NutraLoaf, one Florida DOC official said, "If [an inmate] is endangering the safety of our staff, we take that very seriously."

[The New York Daily News](#) examined how New York manages and houses incarcerated trans people. According to DOCCS, 10.8% of trans prisoners are in SHU and 2.4% are in protective custody, they report.

[Lake County Jail](#) in Indiana made changes with regards to the use of solitary long before the recent settlement at the state level, including by creating a cutting-edge mental health wing in a new building. The way it was before, it was deplorable. They were placed in a cell by themselves with nobody to really take care of or counsel them, said Lake County Sheriff John Bunch.

Ashley Diamond, a trans woman who was denied medical treatment and forced into solitary confinement while incarcerated, has [reached a settlement](#) in her lawsuit against the Georgia Department of Corrections.

Bills in California's legislature to restrict the use of solitary confinement on children have stalled for the last four years, as reported by [The Desert Sun](#), but State Senator Mark Leno is planning to introduce a new version of a past bill. You have to remind yourself that these children are in our system to begin with because they are troubled. They've got mental health issues when they come through our door, and we exacerbate their problem, he said.

Texas is looking to further reduce the number of people held in solitary confinement by providing specialized treatment for those with mental illness, according to an article on [Chron](#). Under a new initiative that officials say has proven successful so far, the goal is to improve the offenders' mental health enough to return them to regular cellblocks instead of isolation cells known as administrative segregation.

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 [Mirilla Zhu](#)

October 26, 2022

by [Caitlin Konya](#)

October 19, 2022

by [Mirilla Zhu](#)

October 12, 2022

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