



RETHINKING SOLITARY CONFINEMENT:

Where Do We Go From Here?

April 26-27, 2018

About Our 2018-2019 FELLOWS

Lisa Armstrong is an award-winning freelance journalist who has written for *The New York Times*, *The Intercept*, *The Daily Beast* and other publications and websites. She has received grants and fellowships from, among others, The Investigative Fund, The Carter Center, the Fund for Investigative Journalism/Schuster Institute, The Pulitzer Center and New York University. She has been featured on NPR and the BBC, discussing rape and HIV/AIDS in camps for Haitians dislocated by that island's most recent, historic earthquake. Armstrong currently is reporting on juvenile incarceration. She has published stories about juveniles sentenced to life-without-parole and solitary confinement; and directed "Little Boy Lost," a documentary about a 16-year-old remanded to an adult prison, which premiered in May 2017 and film was the subject of a SXSW 2018 panel discussion. Armstrong is an associate professor at the City University of New York Graduate School of Journalism.

Michael Barajas is a staff writer for the *Texas Observer* who's covered the criminal justice system, police brutality and other civil rights issues across Texas for the past eight years. Before joining the *Observer* in 2017, he wrote for and edited the *San Antonio Current*, where he covered everything from Texas' woefully funded and patchwork mental health care system to jails plagued by inmate suicide. Previously, he was managing editor at the *Houston Press*, where he wrote about the city's unconstitutional bail system, failings by local prosecutors that resulted in hundreds of false convictions, and questionable police shootings.

Jamila Bey is a Washington, D.C.-based journalist and radio show host whose program, "OMG! (Oh My Government!)" airs weekly on Pacifica station WPFW-FM. Her reporting has appeared in *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, NPR, MSNBC and WebMD. While at NPR's flagship "Morning Edition" show, Bey was part of the team that won a Peabody Award for its coverage of the 9/11 attacks. Over the next years, at that network, she also served stints as an editor and producer for shows including "All Things Considered," "Talk of the Nation" and "Tell Me More," with Michel Martin. Bey also was part of the launch team at the Air America Radio Network, founded by Al Franken. A longtime freelance reporter, much of Bey's work explores the First Amendment and other citizens-rights issues.

Keri Blakinger is a reporter for the *Houston Chronicle* covering prisons and death row. She has written about mental health backlogs in local jails; Hurricane Harvey and its impacts on the prison system; and changes in the Texas prison policy regarding the use of inmate isolation. She broke news of controversial plans to re-evaluate juveniles for possible transfer into the adult prison system. Before moving to the Lone Star State, Blakinger was a reporter at the New York *Daily News*, where she covered breaking news and also co-reported an inmate abuse scandal in upstate New York. Prior to that, she was a web editor at the *Ithaca Times*. Before becoming a reporter, she served time in New York State correctional facilities, including in solitary confinement.

Chandra Bozelko served more than six years in Connecticut's York Correctional Institution for non-violent crimes that remain on appeal. While incarcerated, she published "Up the River: An Anthology," a book of poetry. Princeton University graduate Bozelko was the first inmate to write a regular newspaper column for a non-prison newspaper. That column, "Prison Diaries," now a weekly blog, won her two Webby Awards and first place in the National Society of Newspaper Columnists' 2016 contest. Bozelko's commentary has appeared in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *The New York Times Sunday Magazine*, *USA Today*, *US News & World Report*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Lily*, *Forbes*, *Elle*, *Ms.*, *Quartz*, *The Guardian*, *The Huffington Post* and *Wired*. Bozelko has been a John Jay/Harry Frank Guggenheim Criminal Justice Reporting Fellow. She has been named a Journalism and Women Symposium Emerging Journalist Fellow, a JustLeadership USA Leading with Conviction Fellow, a Pretrial Justice Institute Pretrial Innovation Leader and to the junior board of the Women's Prison Association.

Sonia Chopra is a freelance journalist based in Cincinnati, Ohio, where she is a regular contributor to the editorial page of *The Enquirer* and other media outlets. Her work has appeared in *The New York Times*, *New York Newsday*, *The New York Post*, *The Orlando Sentinel*, *Redbook*, *Salon.com*, *Rediff.com*, *India Abroad*, *India Today*, *Indian Express*, *Firstpost.com* and *The Quint*, among others. Throughout her career Chopra has covered breaking news and written explanatory and feature articles about immigrants, culture, women's rights, children rights and human rights. She was born and raised in Calcutta, India and earned a bachelor's degree in English literature from St. Xavier's College in Calcutta and a master's degree in communication arts from the New York Institute of Technology. She is working on her first novel, a love story about Indian immigrants.

Joan Cook is a trauma psychologist, Yale School of Medicine associate professor who is morphing from part-time journalist to full-time journalist. Since 2015, she has been written more than 50 op-eds on trauma and mental health, including a piece on the extreme stress of shackling female prisoners during childbirth. Cook is a regular contributor to *Time*, *The Hill* and *The Conversation*, and has had her byline published in *CNN*, *The Washington Post* and *USA Today*, among others. Clinically, she has worked with a range of trauma survivors, including combat veterans and former prisoners of war, men and women who have been physically and sexually assaulted in childhood and adulthood, and survivors of the World Trade Center bombing.

Cheryl Corley is an NPR correspondent who works for the network's national desk and is based in Chicago. She's traveled throughout the Midwest and beyond, reporting on a wide range of issues and events—from hurricanes in the Gulf Coast to the shooting death of Philando Castile in Minnesota to a revamp of the juvenile justice system in Illinois. She also has served as a fill-in host for NPR shows. Currently, Corley is one of three NPR reporters on a newly formed criminal justice team that works in collaboration with reporters at local public radio stations throughout the country. Prior to joining NPR, Corley was news director at Chicago's public radio station, WBEZ. She's also been a frequent panelist on television news-affairs programs in Chicago.

Cameron Dodd has been reporting full-time since 2015, when she earned her master’s degree from the University of Missouri School of Journalism. She worked with *Al Jazeera English* before joining a newspaper on the Texas-Mexico border. In June 2017, she joined the staff of *The Frederick News-Post*, in Frederick County, Md., where she is the courts and justice reporter. She has reported on efforts to expand access to menstrual products in prisons and has begun an in-depth project involving hundreds of court cases against the health care provider for Maryland prisons. And she brought a local prisoners’ rights advocate onto a podcast to discuss the use of solitary confinement in Maryland.

Brittany Hailer is a freelance reporter and educator based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In 2017, for *PublicSource*, she wrote a 10-part series—“Voices Unlocked”—exploring how the U.S. penal system has shaped identity and life of Pittsburgh residents. That series also aired on the NPR affiliate, WESA. For *PublicSource*, she has also covered stories on drug addiction, race, development and motherhood. She graduated with a master of fine arts degree from Chatham University in Pittsburgh. She taught creative writing classes at the Allegheny County Jail and Sojourner House as part of Chatham’s Words Without Walls program. She has won several awards for her creative work.

Michael Harriot is a staff writer for *The Root*, where he covers news arising from the intersections of race and economics. He uses the fundamentals of economics and data analysis to explore various topics, including mass incarceration, education disparities, economic inequality and police brutality. Harriot has appeared on CNN, MSNBC and other TV news networks and is a recurring guest on the news network Cheddar. His journalism also has been published in *Vice*, *Ebony* and *The Birmingham News*. He earned a bachelor’s degree in mass communications from Auburn University and a master’s degree in international business and economics from Florida State University.

Jon Iannacone is an independent filmmaker focusing on what he deems as “hidden stories in need of a voice.” He spent four years living in Indonesia where he filmed his first feature documentary, “From Two Sticks,” which will be released in late 2018 and explores a grassroots superfood movement among the poor and marginalized in what is the world’s fourth most populated country. Prior to his time in Indonesia, Iannacone spent seven years working for the Migrant Education Program in Pennsylvania, supporting undocumented students’ efforts to be admitted to colleges throughout Pennsylvania. Currently, Iannacone is co-director of “They Threw Away the Key,” a film about Arthur Johnson’s solitary confinement. Iannacone has studied documentary film at UnionDocs, Scribe Video Center and Humanika ArtSpace.

Daryl Khan is New York bureau chief of the *Juvenile Justice Information Exchange*, the only national news publication entirely dedicated to covering the juvenile justice system. He writes longform investigative pieces and feature articles and oversees a freelance staff. He has done in-depth coverage of the 2014 raids of a Harlem housing project that upended the lives of its residents and of the New York Police Department’s handling of alleged and actual crimes committed by poor youths. Khan began his career in New York City covering courts, crime, the war on terror and incarceration as a reporter for the *Boston Globe*, *The New York Times* and *New York Newsday*. He runs the urban reporting program at the City University of New York Graduate School of Journalism and recently finished his first feature-length documentary, a film that solved an 80-year-old lynching while exposing the racist legacy of a notorious reform school in Florida’s panhandle. Khan is in post-production on his second documentary, exploring the legacy of Emmett Till’s murder in Mississippi in 1955.

Victoria Law is a freelance journalist whose writings about incarceration have appeared in *The Nation*, *Bloomberg Business Week*, *Wired*, *Village Voice*, *Truthout* and other outlets. Her journalism has shed light upon oft-overlooked aspects of mass incarceration and spurred concrete changes on the policy level. In 2014, Law was one of several journalists who exposed the practice of placing teenagers in solitary confinement at Rikers. That

cumulative media attention influenced public opinion and political action, leading New York City to ban the practice. In 2016, her coverage of incarcerated domestic violence survivors resulted in clemency for Valerie Seeley, an abuse survivor imprisoned for defending herself. On Dec. 30, 2016, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo commuted Seeley's sentence, making her the third abuse survivor to receive clemency since the 1990s. One of the governor's communications staffers told Law that her story, which received widespread attention, "shined a light on the issue of domestic violence survivors incarcerated in state prison."

Marie Myung-Ok Lee has written about a range of health topics, including ones focused on her son and other children with autism. Her news stories and essays have been published in *The Atlantic*, *The New York Times*, *Slate*, *Salon*, *Guernica* and *The Guardian*, among others. She was the first Fulbright Scholar to Korea in creative writing. Her honors include a Best Book Award from the Friends of American Writers. Lee authored the novel "Somebody's Daughter." Her next novel, "The Unfilial Son," is forthcoming from Simon & Schuster. Lee graduated from Brown University, where she was a writer-in-residence, and now teaches fiction at Columbia University. She has served as a judge for the National Book Award and co-founded of the Asian American Writers' Workshop.

Jolie McCullough reports on Texas criminal justice issues and policy for *The Texas Tribune*. She covers all aspects of criminal justice, including policing, courts, incarceration and the death penalty. For the *Tribune*, she previously worked on the data visuals team, creating interactives and news apps. She created *Tribune* apps that track death row inmates and execution drugs, and she led the charge on the organization's investigative project on police shootings in Texas. Before joining the *Tribune*, she worked for four years on breaking news and data-driven projects at the *Albuquerque Journal*.

Michael Montgomery is a senior reporter/producer at the Center for Investigative Reporting (CIR), covering criminal justice and marginalized populations. His stories appear frequently on CIR's weekly public radio broadcast and podcast, *Reveal*. Montgomery has reported extensively on the U.S. prison system. His investigation into long-term solitary confinement in California was cited by plaintiffs in a major class-action lawsuit that led to a historic settlement. Previously, Montgomery was a senior reporter at American Public Media and an associate producer at "60 Minutes." He got his start in journalism after completing a Fulbright Fellowship in Eastern Europe where he covered the fall of communism and wars in former Yugoslavia for *The Daily Telegraph* and the *Los Angeles Times*. Montgomery's honors include an Overseas Press Club Award, Investigative Reporters and Editors Certificate, Edward R. Murrow Award, Peabody Award and Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Gold and Silver Batons.

Russell Morse started writing at 15, while incarcerated at San Francisco's juvenile hall. In the years since, he has covered youth riots in France, juvenile justice reform in California, issues along the U.S.-Mexico border and three presidential elections. His work has appeared in *Rolling Stone*, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, *Salon.com* and *NewAmericanMedia.org*. In 2013, Morse was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in Criminal Justice. He was placed with the Prison Visiting Project in New York City, where he worked on a comprehensive study on the inadequacies of medical care for New York State prison inmates with HIV/AIDS. He has also worked for the Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem, a public defense organization, where he prepared comprehensive mitigation biographies for people facing criminal prosecution. Morse was featured as *Huffington Post's* Person of the Day for his work with homeless LGBT youth in New York City.

Alan Prendergast's reporting on the justice system has appeared in a wide range of publications and anthologies, including *Rolling Stone*, *Outside*, *Los Angeles Times Magazine*, "The Best American Crime Reporting 2008" and "Best Alternative Longform Journalism." He is the author of a book about the Richard Jahnke child abuse and parricide case, "The Poison Tree," and is a longtime contributor to the Denver weekly *Westword*. Prendergast served as principal reporter for a CBS News one-hour documentary about the Columbine shootings, which aired on 60 Minutes and was nominated for an Emmy for outstanding investigative journalism. His

investigations of life and death inside high-security prisons have also received national recognition, including two Sigma Delta Chi awards from the Society of Professional Journalists. Prendergast has a master's degree in journalism from Ohio State University, where he studied as a Kiplinger Fellow. He teaches journalism at Colorado College and lives in Denver, Colorado.

Katie Rose Quandt is a freelance criminal justice journalist and 2017 Soros Justice Media Fellow. Her stories have appeared in *Mother Jones*, *Slate*, *The Outline*, *Village Voice*, *In These Times*, *Broadly*, *Brooklyn Magazine* and other publications. As a contributing writer at *Solitary Watch*, she has reported extensively on solitary confinement and authored a report on solitary confinement in Nevada, which was jointly issued by the ACLU of Nevada.

Connor Sheets is an experienced journalist based in Birmingham, Ala., where he is a statewide investigative reporter for *Reckon* by AL.com. Sheets' journalism has appeared in several publications, including *The Guardian*, *The Washington Post* and *Newsweek*. His honors include the New York Press Association's Writer of the Year award and a Society for Professional Journalists' Green Eyeshade first place award for investigative reporting. Since 2012, he has reported from four continents, publishing in-depth journalism about issues in countries including China and Nigeria. A 2007 graduate of the University of Maryland's Philip Merrill College of Journalism, he has written a book of poetry and two novellas, all of which are yet to be published.

Clarissa Sosin is a multimedia journalist concentrating on justice issues and civil and human rights abuses. Her current work focuses on policing and the criminal justice system in New York City and beyond. She regularly contributes stories to the *Juvenile Justice Information Exchange*. She's worked in five countries outside of the United States and most recently returned from Liberia where she spent two months covering elections and illegal mining. Sosin attended the City University of New York Graduate School of Journalism. Prior to studying at CUNY, she worked for Film at 11 Media on an independent, feature-length documentary film about the first trial to prosecute rape as a war crime, "The Uncondemned."

Tennessee Watson is an award-winning radio journalist and documentary producer. Her investigative reporting on the prosecution of child sexual abuse won her the 2017 Edward R. Murrow Award, and her personal-narrative documentary on the subject earned her a spot as one of 60 Peabody Award finalists in 2017. As a journalist she explores problems and injustice through the stories of those working to find solutions. Watson is now Wyoming Public Radio's education reporter and, as a former youth radio educator, she prioritizes hearing directly from young people about the policies impacting their lives. Watson is a 2017-18 Solutions Journalism Network grantee. Her work has aired on *Reveal*, *The Heart*, *Hear and Now*, *Latino USA*, *Across Women's Lives* from PRI and American Radioworks.

Since leaving her pharmacist practice four years ago, **Frieda Wiley** has written health news articles for consumer publications and special content for, among others, the Arthritis Foundation, AARP, the History Network and the National Institutes of Health. As a sixth-generation native of Huntsville, Texas, and as a daughter of a now retired correctional employee, she has had an up close-and-personal look at that town's eponymous, well-known prison. Her understanding of various aspects of health care is fed by her membership in the Association of Health Care Journalists, National Association of Science Writers and the American Medical Writers Association. During summer 2018, while continuing her health journalism, she will be completing a research fellowship on herbalism in modern integrative medicine at the Lloyd Library in Cincinnati, Ohio. She sees the Solitary Confinement symposium as an opportunity to investigate the impact of solitary incarceration on inmates' health, wellness, neurology and so forth.