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Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

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Our Weekly Roundup of News and Views on Solitary Confinement

by [Aviva Stahl](#) | August 27, 2017

New York City has agreed to pay out nearly \$5 million to people who were placed in solitary confinement immediately upon arriving Rikers under the old time policy, whereby former prisoners who were released before completing disciplinary solitary sentences, were forced to finish them if they were rearrested. According to the [New York Daily News](#), 470 men, women and adolescents were subjected to [the policy] between Nov. 23, 2012, and Sept. 16, 2015, when it ended.

[A local outlet](#) reported on a lawsuit filed against New York's Broome County earlier this summer, which alleges that the jail is violating the Constitution through its practices of placing children in isolation. The suit paints a bleak picture of solitary confinement in the county jail, alleging juveniles are held for weeks and even months on end in cells that reek of urine and feces, and are covered in graffiti.

The Arkansas governor announced plans to commute the death sentence of one man, Jason McGehee, while setting a November 9 execution date for another individual, Jack Greene. A lawyer for Greene argued that it was unconstitutional to execute someone who cannot rationally comprehend the punishment, according to [the Miami Herald](#). [The lawyer] also noted Greene has been in solitary confinement for more than two decades.

A man who has been in solitary for ten years is facing many additional years on the inside for allegedly putting urine and feces in a squirt bottle and spraying it into the face of a guard at the Ohio State Penitentiary. After agreeing to continue allowing a lawyer to represent him instead of representing himself, Bryant Murphy [told the judge in his case](#), I'm fighting for my sanity, my integrity and my dignity to stay intact.

President Trump pardoned the former sheriff of Arizona's Maricopa County, Joe Arpaio. As [New York Mag](#) noted, Arpaio ran a tent city for prisoners he proudly called a concentration camp in which he held pretrial detainees in unbearably hot conditions and put prisoners in solitary confinement because they couldn't speak English, among many other abuses of power.

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.

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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