

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](#) | October 9, 2016

[Vice News](#) spoke to prison strike organizer Bennu Hannibal from his solitary confinement cell at the William E. Donaldson Correctional Facility in Alabama. The action, which started on September 9th, is said to involve over 24,000 people and constitute the biggest prison strike in the nations history.

A grandmother is [suing the Utah Department of Corrections](#) (UDC) after her grandson allegedly spent 154 days in solitary confinement and subsequently committed suicide. Brock Tucker was 19 when he died; the lawsuit alleges that Tucker had mental health issues and that his mistreatment by UDC staff constituted cruel and unusual punishment.

Jay Z has announced plans to [make a six-part documentary about Kalief Browder](#), the 16-year-old who spent two years in solitary confinement on Rikers Island after being arrested for allegedly stealing a backpack. Two years after his release, in June 2013, Browder committed suicide.

[Shadowproof](#) reports on the how prisons have been moving to undermine the prison strike. In the high security Holman Correctional Facility in Alabama, guards were said to have gone on strike too, which prompted some people in solitary confinement to be allowed out of their cells. These are people who are supposed to be confined on 24 hours lockdown but that can be relaxed if you'll work for free, said inside organizer Kinetik Justice. If you'll come out and clean up the feces, urine, the paper and trash, and everything that accumulates throughout the unit, then you're given a reprieve to run around, so to speak, like you're free, in order to work for free.

A Bronx man who committed suicide in an upstate prison was harassed by facility staff in the days leading up to his death, [according to a witness who spoke to NY1](#). The witness, who said he was in solitary confinement with Hamilton at the time of his death, said corrections officers stripped Lonnie Hamilton of his clothes, sprayed him with a fire extinguisher and taunted him, even though Hamilton was already on suicide watch. The New York Departments of Corrections and Community Supervision (NYDOCCS) failed to notify Hamilton's family of his March 2016 death the family only learned about it months later when they searched Hamilton's name on the NYDOCCS website.

Nikko Jenkins, who killed four people after being released directly from solitary confinement into the outside world, was back in court as his trial moves towards the death penalty phase. Jenkins defense counsel had planned to withdraw his no content plea to the murders, but their client rejected that plan. According to local site [WOWT](#), Jenkins stated that he wants to be sentenced so that he can get out of solitary confinement even if it means being sent to death row.

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 [Caitlin Konya](#)

October 19, 2022

by [Mirilla Zhu](#)

October 12, 2022

by [Caitlin Konya](#)

October 5, 2022

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