

Las Vegas single mother charged with murder, child abuse, after five-year-old daughter found dead in hot bedroom

Jacob Crosse
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In a tragic incident on Monday in Las Vegas, Nevada, a five-year-old girl was found dead in a sweltering and allegedly locked bedroom. Her two-year-old sister survived and was taken by Child Protective Services.

Kemaya Taylor, 23, the mother of the two children, was charged by prosecutors on Thursday with one count of open murder and two counts of child abuse. “The two children were found locked inside a bedroom,” Clark County Prosecutor Steven Rose asserted in a Thursday morning court hearing.

Four days after the tragic incident, Rose could not confirm to *Las Vegas Review-Journal* reporters if the air conditioning in the house had been disconnected by the utility company. Rose also could not confirm the cause of death; the Clark County coroner’s office is still investigating. According to the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, (LVMPD), the temperature in the room where the body of the deceased child was discovered was 101 degrees Fahrenheit.

Like much of the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia, which have been experiencing deadly triple-digit temperatures leading to hundreds of deaths, in the desert city of Las Vegas on Monday, temperatures exceeded 106 degrees Fahrenheit. Despite the deadly heat, utility companies such as Nevada Energy have been disconnecting “delinquent” customer accounts since October 2020 after a brief coronavirus-induced hiatus.

Speaking to reporters Monday evening, LVMPD stated they received a phone call at 7:02 p.m. requesting assistance at a home in the Silverado Ranch southcentral Las Vegas subdivision. According to local CBS news reporters, neighbors called police after

witnessing a clearly distressed Taylor outside her house, throwing rocks at parked vehicles.

In an interview with the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* on Wednesday, the landlord of the property, who wished to remain anonymous, claimed that after not receiving June’s rent payment from Taylor, the landlord, in her words, “texted her to make sure she was ok.”

“She put her notice in, saying she would be leaving in another month after [Taylor] paid in full,” the landlord told the newspaper. The landlord then said she decided to “check on” Taylor again and stopped by the residence.

“[Taylor] was in a mess,” the landlord continued. “Her hair was all a mess, the whole house was a mess, and she was packing. That’s when I said, ‘You know, I think it is not good. You are all by yourself with two kids. You should get in touch with [y]our family,’ and she said, ‘I have no one.’”

In addition to resuming utility shutoffs as part of the ruling class’ homicidal drive to “move on” from the pandemic, Nevada Democratic Governor Steve Sisolak lifted a statewide eviction moratorium on May 28, leaving only the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) federal eviction moratorium, which is set to expire at the end of the month. A June 24 analysis from Zillow estimated that 35,147 renter households in Nevada are at risk of eviction. The online real estate marketplace company reported that of those behind on rent, “23.9 percent believe they are very likely and 28.3 percent somewhat likely to be evicted.” A University of California, Los Angeles study last year estimated that unnecessary evictions during the pandemic led to nearly 11,000 preventable deaths.

The landlord also claimed that Taylor's neighbors had informed her that Taylor was acting strangely before police arrived. "(The neighbors) saw her out front, all her clothes out in the driveway," she added.

While there are many unanswered questions about this terrible episode, the instantaneous response of the authorities, as in every social tragedy in America, unless it involves the very rich, is to throw someone in jail—in this case, the clearly mentally distressed Taylor. In any event, one fact is indelibly clear: that economic stress exacerbated Taylor's mental health issues.

Like Taylor, there are millions of workers, single parents, students and retirees struggling to keep the utilities on, a roof over their heads, feed their families and maintain their sanity during the worst biological disaster to impact the working class in over 100 years. For broad layers of the population, the pandemic has meant mass death, unemployment and deteriorating mental health.

Last December, the Kaiser Family Foundation estimated that within the first six months of the pandemic, between 2 and 3 million people lost their health insurance. And some 16 months after, over 22 million jobs were wiped out following brief pandemic-related lockdowns. Roughly 6.8 million jobs have yet to return, according to June's job report.

As of May 2021, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that Nevada has the 5th highest unemployment rate in the country at 7.8 percent. This figure is a gross underestimation as thousands of hotel, entertainment and casino workers have been laid off for more than six months and therefore do not count in the official government statistics.

Exacerbating the mental anguish of millions of people has been the steady rise in consumer prices, which has cut into workers' stagnant wages and poverty-level unemployment benefits, which for thousands have taken months to arrive, if they have at all.

In Nevada, where casinos posted a single-month record in May of \$1.23 billion in gaming revenues, the Delta variant has continued to spread unchecked, becoming the most dominant strain in the state as of June. According to the Nevada Health Department, June coronavirus hospitalizations nearly doubled from 266 to 424, and on Thursday, the Nevada State Public Health Laboratory identified three cases of the "delta

plus" strain. This new strain features an additional spike mutation and is expected to be categorized as a "variant of concern" by the CDC shortly.

Ignoring the "science," Vice President Kamala Harris is expected to travel to Las Vegas on July 3 as part of the administration's "America's Back Together" tour, which is "celebrating" the alleged progress of the government's response to the pandemic, which has resulted in over 620,000 deaths, the most in the world.



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