

THE LITTLE BOOK OF LYNCHING

Part Two

By

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Dedicated to President Barack Obama and family.
For risking his life every day, in order to be the first.
For his service, his courage, and his grace.

And to all the martyrs
Who have given their lives and made the ultimate sacrifice
In the struggle for true equal rights.

“Human salvation lies in the hands of the creatively maladjusted.”

-The Reverend Martin Luther King,

From “The Transformed Non-Conformist Sermon

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RESEARCH NOTES: In some chapters, we have included a list of sources at the end. But for the most part, newspaper and magazine articles, books, official documents, as well as YouTube videos are cited throughout the chapters. I remember my days in academia, taking the bus to the Library of Congress to wade through microfiche and taking rolls of dimes for the Xerox machine. Let's not pretend we live in those times anymore. The information in this book is corroborated by multiple sources, and is ridiculously easy to Google—or else we would not have included it. The allegations are backed up by evidence. And it is damning.

APOLOGIA ET ERRATUM

This book has been years in the making. Not only was the research daunting, because an appalling number of newspapers fail to thoroughly cover the stories—particularly small local newspapers, whose specialty is sweeping ugly stories under the rug at the dictates of local power brokers—but worse still, every time we thought we were done, another black person was killed. Or, going with our definition of lynching as an extra-judicial, unsanctioned and unnecessary murder, **another black person was lynched**. In addition to that, we were learning as we go. There is no comprehensive list of lynching victims, in the way that we have a comprehensive list of those killed at the Twin Towers and the Pentagon during 9/11, or the soldiers killed in Vietnam—those few who are unknown being honorably remembered at Arlington National Cemetery.

Matters finally got to the point where, if we kept telling the stories of all those dead by police brutality and excessive force ...**lynching**...the book would never be finished, and the stories never released and remembered. We take some small comfort in knowing that their stories are out there, but apologize for failing to tell the full stories of victims ... victims whose names sit on a seemingly endless yet ever growing list of the dead...names like Oscar Grant, Jonathan Ferrell, Akai Gurley, Laquan McDonald, Dontre Hamilton, Ezell Ford, Dante Parker, Romain Brisbon, Jerame Reid, Tony Robinson, Phillip White, Eric Harris, Samuel Dubose, Kajieme Powell, Dante Parker, Tyree Woodson, Yvette Smith, McKenzie Cochran, Jordan Baker, Andy Lopez, Miriam Carey, Carlos Alcise, Larry Eugene Jackson, Deion Fludd, Kimani Gray, Johnnie Kamahi Warren, Malissa Williams, Reynaldo Cuevas, Chavis Carter, Shantel Davis, Sharmel Edwards, Tamon Robinson, Ervin Jefferson, Kendrec McDade, Rekia Boyd, Shereese Francis, Wendell Allen, Nehemia Dillard, Dante Price, Raymond Allen, Sgt. Manuel Loggins, Ramarley Graham, Kenneth Chamberlain, Alonzo Ashley, Kenneth Harding, Raheim Brown, Reginald Doucet, Derrick Jones, Danroy Henry, Steven Eugene Washington, Aaron Campbell, Kiwane Carrington, Victor Steen, Shem Walker, Tarika Wilson, Sean Bell, Henry Glover, Ronald Madison, James Brisette, Timothy Stansbury, Alberta Spruill, Ousmane Zongo, Orlando Barlow, Timothy Thomas, Prince Jones, Ronald Beasley, Earl Murray, Patrick Dorismond, Macolm Ferguson, Amadou Diallo, DeAunta Terrel Farrow, (just twelve years old and killed, like Tamir Rice, for carrying a toy gun down the street), and little Aiyana Jones—just seven years old.

In most of these cases, the victims were not carrying weapons. As expected, in an appalling number of the cases, the police had the wrong address, or it was a case of mistaken identity. In still other cases, the cops' best plan for dealing with persons who had histories of mental illnesses was to shoot first, and ask questions later. And often, the cops were just sure that they

saw a weapon being brandished, even though one was never found at the scene. We concede that in some of these cases, maybe the cops really did “fear for their lives.” We just don’t understand why all of these people are dead.

And yes, we cede that all of the people on this list may not have been entirely blameless.

We just don’t understand why the police took it upon themselves to serve as judge, jury, and executioner—and yet people who are sworn to “protect and serve”, such as Harrodsburg Police Officer “Jason Elder”, who commits 140 counts of rape, sodomy, and sexual abuse on children, faces a judge and gets just three years. Not death, like the long list of victims named above.

Or Pike County Sheriff Chief Deputy Clyde Franklin Sanders Junior, who repeatedly raped a three year old, pleaded no contest, and miraculously, got no prison time. Instead, he got “community service”. Not death. Like the long list of victims named above.

Yet Patricia Spottedcrow, a member of the Apache and Arapaho tribes, got a decade in prison for selling \$31 bucks worth of pot. And former United States Martin Chris Williams, who had a legal license to grow medical marijuana, and who had legally licensed and registered guns because, as he puts it “everybody hunts in Montana”, had his legal establishment raided and was arrested because of an obscure law that makes it illegal to have guns in the same location as the pot. You get a hint of the attitude that the feds were harboring against Chris when they stopped and took the time to urinate on all the lab coats in his medical processing lab before hauling him to prison for five years. (They’re angry; they wanted him to get eighty years.) We could go on and on. But this is a book about lynching. Not the cruel and capricious inequities within our legal system.

So to the thousands whose names and stories are not included here, we apologize. We cannot say it enough times: it should be a set of encyclopedias. This is only The Little Book of Lynching.

PREFACE

She was a Marine. Her job was to escort dead soldiers back home, for burial. She helped her mother through the suicide of her father, a veteran who killed himself shortly after returning from Iraq. And to honor his suffering, she volunteered for the Suicide Prevention Program. She had her pilot's license, and she loved flying vintage planes. An old soul, perhaps?

Her name was Ashley Guindon. And she was gunned down on her very first shift as a Prince William County police officer, while responding to a domestic violence call. Her first day of duty was her last day of duty. Officer Down/End of Watch, February 27th, 2016. Heartbreaking.

The story moved me very deeply, and I wanted to write a tribute to her. I set it to music: Fauré's Requiem. I posted it on our website, and let the appropriate channels know that a tribute had been posted in her honor.

After I did that, I started to worry. Would all the police officers, her friends and family, believe that I was sincere? Or would they be insulted? After all, there are a number of articles on my site that mercilessly excoriate rogue cops who have been involved in the killings of black men. How could someone who so doggedly attacks police misconduct possibly be sincere in mourning the death of an officer by the hand of a deranged veteran who just happened to be a black man?

My anxiety only increased as I considered that we had been receiving thousands of hits to our website a month, many of them drawn specifically to Pickford Studios' writings on racism. Would readers feel somehow betrayed, after I had produced numerous lengthy screeds against cops caught on video engaging in police brutality, that now I was singing the praises of the police—of their bravery, and their honor?

Happily, such censure never made it back to our comments section, but I was deeply disturbed by all of this for the days and weeks that followed, as I could track hits to the page containing Officer Ashley Guindon's tribute. And I had come to know that my fears were valid. For the last few years, we had been researching the subject of police brutality and police shootings, and the forum comments in the larger cyber world were chilling. Revelatory. But perhaps most importantly, they were emblematic of a far greater crisis that we are facing in this country: the sides have become so polarized as to make meaningful communication all but impossible.

And that truth is almost as heartbreaking as the killings themselves, for if this is to be the status quo, then fixing the problem—indeed, fixing any problem characterized by this polarized rhetoric—will be nearly impossible.

But why should this be so? It does not have to be the case. In the killings that we explore in this book, in virtually every case, the officer(s) egregiously violated the procedures in which they had been trained. That is why we choose to label them as “rogue cops”. And for their actions, they should be excoriated. As for the excuses: ***“The adrenalin is flowing ...”*** ***“I acted in the heat of the moment ...”***, ***“Monday morning quarterbacking isn’t fair ...”*** and of course, a favorite plea, ***“I feared for my life ...”***, we will examine those more fully in Chapter One, and throughout the book. Because while we realize that those statements sometimes constitute valid reasons, all too often they are just knee-jerk excuses; time honored legal strategies that will get a cop off the hook, no matter how damning the circumstances.

So yes, we go after rogue cops. But there are nearly one million men and women in law enforcement today, and we here at Pickford Studios firmly believe that the vast majority of them are good, brave people. Why do we know this? Because hundreds of thousands of police officers go out there every day, interacting with the public, and putting their lives on the line in the process. And there are not hundreds of thousands of incidents of police abuse transpiring in any given year. There are not even ten thousand such incidents. Hundreds of thousands of officers serving the people of this country, and there are maybe a few hundred really damning cases of police abuse which have been captured on video in any given year. Even if there were as many as five thousand incidents of police brutality each year, whether they were documented or never committed to video, that would still mean that a mere .5 percent of all police out there were doing anything wrong. That would mean that a mere one out of two hundred officers were using excessive force or employing police brutality, while one hundred and ninety-nine other cops risked their lives on a daily basis to secure the public safety.

So why make such a big deal of it? Because even a handful is too many, particularly if excessive force results in the death a human being. And because the Blue Wall of Silence makes it impossible for the good cops to do anything about these rogue cops. Every cop-turned-thug working the streets today makes life miserable for the dozens of police serving with that rogue cop. Under the correct circumstances, police officers are the first to admit that if there is even one bully on the force, exposing him is seen as such a betrayal of the code that the whistleblower risks losing future promotions, and more importantly, losing crucial back-up in police emergencies. That poor “snitch” also has good reason to fear both personal retaliation, and threats against his family. For a few precinct bullies to do this to dozens of other good cops is just wrong. Deeply, dangerously wrong.

So that is why I am so troubled by the current assumption that you are either pro-cop, and ready to blame the suspect, even when video evidence suggests otherwise. Or you stand by the victim, ready to curse all cops. I recognize this polarity, but I don’t understand it. Public discourse today (although that’s a mighty pretty name for it) would have you think that you either have to be in

favor of the rights of black people, and therefore be anti-cop. Or if you are pro-cop, then you dare not criticize one.

It is so much simpler than that. It could be. It should be. Honor the legions of officers who do their job well, bravely, with nobility.

Then relentlessly pursue those rogue cops who make life miserable for the citizens they target, and hell for the cops who feel they can't report on fellow officers.

All of this all brings me to a thorny subject. The title of this book: "The Little Book of Lynching, Part II."

I did not want to have to write this book. I didn't see it coming. But then, almost overnight, with the shooting of Trayvon Martin, the public radar began to focus on the killing of young black men. And unfortunately, many of those men died at the hands of police officers.

It is fairly common knowledge that there really are no longer lynchings in America. At least, damned few. But that is true only if you go by the old definition—the one which limited the lynching ritual to death by the end of a rope, with a black man hanging from a tree, perhaps in some dark woods. Or from some gruesome public scaffold, such as in the cases of Jesse Washington and Henry Smith.

At the heart of the definition of "lynching" is the notion of an extra-judicial killing, without the victim getting the proper benefit of his Constitutional rights to counsel and a fair trial. The rope may be the means and the method, but not the motive. The motive is so much more than murder; the deeper darker agenda is to spread fear and ensure submission. The "Other" must be kept obedient, compliant ... and if possible, invisible. As recently as 1998, James Byrd was killed because a truck full of racists decided to drag him by a chain behind their vehicle until his head was severed from his body. Are we really going to say that it wasn't a lynching, because no noose and no tree were involved? And in the case of Matthew Shepherd, tied to a fence, pistol whipped, and left in the cold night to die by two homophobes, just a few months after the murder of Byrd—surely we can agree that it was, for all intents and purposes, a lynching motivated by hate, even though no noose was involved?

More upsetting than the means of murder is the fact that in this great country, some person or persons decided that someone's life should end. That is what makes it a lynching. For what it is worth, traditional dictionaries concur with this more all-encompassing definition.

And just as we can say that this "extra-judicial lynching" was what happened in the case of Michael Dunn shooting Jordan Davis, and of the thugs who murdered James Craig Anderson—and, I believe we will prove, in the case of George Zimmerman attacking Trayvon Martin—so we believe you can also say that summary execution, without benefit of due process,

was what happened in the case of Officer Michael Slager shooting Walter Scott. Of Officer Richard Combs shooting Bernard Bailey. And, we will prove, in the case of Darren Wilson shooting Michael Brown. (And for those of you who are thinking, “But the Grand Jury has spoken ... the verdicts are in!”, I offer you two letters and a word: O.J. Simpson.) We would be beyond naïve if we suggested that every single trial in the United States resulted in accurate justice, and you can’t cherry pick, once you have ceded this point. If there is a strong belief that someone guilty got acquitted, then the onus is upon us, as citizens, to analyze the evidence on its own terms, so that history can be honestly served, even if justice is not.

And we also must be critical of the police in cases where it appears that a lynching was almost certainly committed by private citizens, but which the police chose to investigate not at all, such as in the tragic case of young seventeen-year-old Lennon Lacy, found hanging from a swing set the night before the big game. The expectation on the part of local police that we should believe this was a suicide is beyond absurd. It is an insult to every American who cherishes the Constitution. And one can say the same about the appalling lack of concern shown by police in the cases of dead black men found hanging from ropes—men like Timothy Lee, Keith Warren, Nick Naylor, Feraris Golden, Izell Parrott, Lamar Autery, Frederick Jermaine Carter, Raynard Johnson. And let us not forget Charles Conley and Johnny Clark, of Dover, Delaware. Even though they were both found hanging in the same area, hanging in public places, just two years apart, in areas that had been rife with Klan literature—and even though a third man escaped an attempt at lynching after the deaths of these two men—the deaths of Conley and Clark were nonetheless treated by the police as “suicides”.

And while we are on the subject, we are appalled that citizens who wave the American flag while claiming at the top of their lungs that they are patriots, are then the quickest to defend those police who have demonstrably (particularly when it is captured on video) chosen to ignore the Constitution and its sacred Amendments, and who have instead decided to serve as judge, jury, and executioner. If these patriots love their country so much, then why aren’t they offended when the laws of the land are flouted by rogue cops? Some citizens seem all too willing to defend to the death our Second Amendment (and equally vociferously, the Tenth Amendment), but show alarming apathy, and even disdain, when it comes to holding sacred the principles of the First, Fourth, Sixth, Seventh, Eighth and Fifteenth Amendments. (I am certain that if these same good ol’ boys had their Fourteenth Amendment violated in an act of the highly controversial civil forfeiture, they would be singing a different tune.)

We have said that it is our conviction that most police officers are good people. That said, it is clear that there is a small group of them who bring their racism with them, to the job. How can we prove this?

Through the words of the police officers themselves, as uncovered in the texting scandal that rocked San Francisco. An investigation uncovered that no less than fourteen officers were found to have sent texts which not only liberally threw “the N Word” around, (we will be more graphic later in the book), but also made comments such as **“we burn the cross on the field! Then we celebrate Whitemas.”** And **“Cross burning lowers blood pressure! I did the test myself!”** And **“Get ur pocket gun. Keep it available in case the monkey returns to his roots. It’s not against the law to put an animal down.”**

Through the posts of Rochester, Minnesota Officer Ben Schlag, who, among his other vile Facebook posts, showed a car running down protestors, with the caption **“No one cares about your protest, Get A Job.”** The right to protest is part of what makes America, America. It is a privilege not only denied, by punished, in less civilized societies. Was Officer Schlag also against the Boston Tea Party? Does he think that the suffragettes should have stayed home? Does he think we should still be in Vietnam, splitting our troops between the Far East and the Middle East? Or is it just black people whom he hates to see exercising their Constitutional right to protest?

And then there are the five Fort Lauderdale cops, who had to be fired for texts ranging from pro Ku Klux Klan videos laced with “the N word”, to people uploading skulls over the American flag with the word “Savage Hunter” emblazoned below it.

And then there is Officer Michael Elsbury, of the Baton Rouge Police Department, who texted that Blacks are **“nothing but a bunch of monkeys,”** and that the **“only reason they have this job is the n***** in them.”** And still more: **“I wish someone would pull a Ferguson on them and take them out. I hate looking at those African monkeys at work!”**

And then there is Detective Raymond Mott, of Lake Author, Louisiana, who is fighting being fired, in spite of the fact that there is a picture of him at a Klan rally, giving a Nazi salute.

Around that same time, two other officers were fired in neighboring Alabama, for being members of hate groups.

In Williamson County, Texas, Deputy David Gay, and Sgt. Greg Palm admitted to being members of the KKK.

Lastly, let us not forget the infamous Facebook post of the Cleveland Emergency Medical Services Captain Jamie Marquardt, who said, of dead Tamir: **“Tamir Rice should have been shot and I am glad he is dead ... I am upset I did not get the chance to kill the little criminal nigger.”** This, from a man whose entire profession is based on saving lives.

And these are all just the ugly manifestations and instantiations that have been made public. How can we assume that such officers are anything but racists, when they are proud members of the Ku Klux Klan, and when they send such texts and post such vile filth?

And no, this is not a freedom of speech issue. Freedom of speech guarantees your rights as a citizen, to say what you wish within a public forum. But for police officers, as employees for the people and paid by the people, the bar is higher. Send racist texts, post racist filth on Facebook, and guess what: we no longer trust that you will treat all citizens fairly. The bar is higher for you. You wear a badge, and more importantly, you carry a gun. The bar is higher for you, than it is for “punks” and “thugs”. Get over it.

And as for the officers actually involved with the recent spate of killings, while we cannot be absolutely sure that they are racists (although some of their records as police officers clearly offer added evidence.), we can conclude, through a review of their actions and lack of adherence to procedures, that they were certainly taking it upon themselves to decide who should live, and who should die. Their defenders would say that they acted in the heat of the moment. That is why the chapters that follow go into as much detail as possible. So that you, the reader, can decide. But it does require that you approach the stories of these killings with an open mind.

All that said, we must reiterate that we believe the vast majority of officers to be good, honest, and brave. And if you are a police officer who is reading this, please consider the following: rogue cops make your life dangerous and miserable.

Why would you have a problem with someone fighting against that?

INTRODUCTION

Police officers killing civilians. Allegations of excessive force. Graphic video proof of extreme police brutality.

May 2nd 2011, Bernard Bailey. July 17th 2014, Eric Garner. August 5th 2014, John Crawford. August 9th 2014, Michael Brown. November 28th 2014, Tamir Rice. April 4th 2015, Walter Scott. April 19th 2015, Freddie Gray. July 13th 2015, Sandra Bland. The list could go on and on.

There are those who think that if we go after the officers involved in these deaths—if we question them, condemn them, and fight to have them convicted of crimes—that those actions somehow makes us “anti-cop”. Nothing could be further from the truth. This notion does not stand up under even the most basic scrutiny.

What keeps officers safe, when they are out on the streets? Well, one factor that makes for a strong start in that direction: following the procedures in which they are trained. Those procedures are there for good reasons, and one of the reasons is that those procedures are designed to keep the officers safe. To send them home alive, instead of on to their End of Watch in a box.

What else keeps the officers safe? Having as healthy a relationship with the community as possible. And rogue cops who rewrite procedure, take the law into their own hands, and decide to act as judge, jury, and executioner create the kind of animosity that puts every cop on the beat in elevated danger.

When cops follow the laws, obey the rules, and practice proper procedures, they truly are officers of the law. When they do whatever the hell they want, invoking postgame excuses and making statements to the public penned by union lawyers, they become little more than a band of mercenaries. And the population which they are supposed to protect and serve begins to feel that they are in a guerilla war with the very armed force that is supposed to be protecting them.

THE DEAD ARE DANGEROUS?

The crisis is this: there are simply far too many instances of the cops not doing their jobs, or doing them badly, for the usual excuses to have any credibility: ... “ *I feared for my life*”... “*the adrenaline starts flowing, and you just act on instinct...*”

—What was the reason that the cops in the LENNON LACY case felt compelled to threaten the county coroner, when he was just trying to do his job, taking pictures of the crime scene: a dead black boy hanging from the swing set of an all-white trailer park? Was the adrenaline racing through their bodies? Were they in fear for their lives? I think not. They just didn't care about a dead black boy. Read the case, and you will see that there is no other possible explanation.

—What was the reason that it took officers on scene hours to call the coroner, after they found the dead body of KENDRICK JOHNSON? And why did they wait weeks, months in some cases, before questioning the relevant witnesses? Was the adrenaline racing through their bodies? Were they in fear for their lives? I think not. They just didn't care about a dead black boy. Read the case, and you will see that there is no other possible explanation.

—What was the reason that officers drove right over a crime scene at the FERARIS GOLDEN hanging, thereby destroying evidence? And why did they show so little concern for detail that they did not gather any evidence from the scene, and then changed the report from “he was hanged using a blue shirt” to “he was hanged using a green sheet”? Was the adrenaline racing through their bodies? Were they in fear for their lives? I think not. They just didn't care about a dead black boy. Read the case, and you will see that there is no other possible explanation.

—And when KEITH WARREN was found hanging from a tree, why was the crime scene not cordoned off? Why did the officer on scene wait five hours before contacting the dead boy's family, even though he had the contact information? Why did that same officer choose the funeral home himself and have the body sent there without the parents' consent? And why was the body embalmed before an autopsy was performed—in spite of the fact that the first EMT on scene just assumed it would be treated as a murder, based on the observations he wrote in his report? And why was the tree from which the boy was found hanged cut down immediately? And why were the clothes that the mother received as belonging to her son actually the wrong set of clothing? Did all of this happen, were all of these bizarre and suspicious choices made in the treatment and investigation of a dead black boy, because the cops had adrenaline racing through their bodies? Were they in fear for their lives? I think not. They just didn't care about a dead black boy. Read the case, and you will see that there is no other possible explanation.

—And why were members of the all-white hunting club, right next to the crime scene, allowed to roam freely across the wooded site of NICK NAYLOR'S hanging, but his family was told to stay away? And why did the investigators not investigate the fact that the writing in the suicide note did not match Nick's? Or the fact that fingerprints were found on the note—but they were not Nick's fingerprints?

But that's ridiculous, you may be saying, of all these hanging cases, of course the cops weren't suffering from adrenalin overload, of course they weren't in fear for their lives—these boys were dead. Precisely. That is precisely my point. These black men were dead, and the cops didn't care,

and they went out of their way to ignore protocol. Investigations into what happened to the dead young men were all but non-existent. These are stories that become a part of the lore of black life in America. And while we cannot measure the damage that such apathy on the part of police might have on the community, we must nonetheless ask ourselves: how many instantiations of complete apathy from the police have to happen before the powder keg just blows? Ask yourself—how long would whites put up with this garbage, if the victims were young white ladies?

And the performance assessment on the part of rogue cops doesn't get any better when they are dealing with the living:

“TO SERVE AND PROTECT?” ... “TO ESCALATE AND THREATEN”

There are all kinds of ways that an officer can penalize a citizen for not cooperating fully, and for not showing the proper respect. So why do we keep seeing instances of cops escalating matters past the point of all reason? Their mission is “To Protect and Serve”, not to “Bully and Harass”.

Virtually every legal analyst who has looked at the footage has said that while technically, Sandra Bland should have put out her cigarette when so ordered, and then (because Officer Encinia escalated it), gotten out of the car when so ordered, nonetheless, it is nonetheless clear to every reasonable person who has seen the video that [Encinia](#) was needling her. The question he asked her “You seem very irritated,” was the beginning of the escalation. Of course she was irritated, and he knew it; everybody who has ever been pulled over in the history of being pulled over by a cop is irritated. He asks her to put out her cigarette, and then he asks her to exit her car, because she is now under arrest. That is a lot of questioning and ordering around for someone who claims he just wanted to “give her a warning”. And if he wanted to turn punitive for her attitude, he could have stacked a couple of other charges on the ticket, costing her money and a day in court.

But threatening to Tase someone for what she did—Sandra daring to ask why she had to put out her cigarette—is simply barbaric. But why are we surprised at Encinia's sadism, poor judgement, and lack of ethics? Even while he was at school, to learn how to be a trooper, he was written up and warned about his unprofessional conduct. First red flag. The written warning said: "In the future, Trooper Encinia should conduct himself at all times in a manner that will reflect well upon himself, the Department, and the State of Texas. And yet, Encinia had not been a trooper much more than a year when he chose to ignore this directive, and clearly bully Sandra Bland. And again, not surprisingly, he has been indicted for perjury.

But the Encinia-Bland affair is just one of the more high profile ones, a shocking incident that everybody knows about. There is [a video on YouTube of an officer breaking a driver's window](#)

because she is quite willing to sign the ticket she is being given, but is nervous about rolling the window down all the way. There is a [similar video of an officer and examples below](#) who has a passenger's identification and papers, but when that passenger (a black male), who has done absolutely nothing wrong, doesn't want to get out of the car because he is afraid he will be shot, the officer shatters the passenger window with his baton, sending glass flying, even though he can see there are small children in the back seat.

And then there is the viral video of the officer who stops an ambulance—an ambulance on its way to a hospital with a cardiac victim in the back—for no good reason, and he ends up putting the driver in a chokehold.

There was the woman pulled over for talking on her cellphone while driving, and for no good reason, officers slam her to the ground. Twice.

Then there was the officer who asked a man who had gotten out of his truck at a rest stop for license and registration. Like so many of us—especially long distance truck drivers—this man had his papers in his glove compartment. So when he reached back in his truck to get them, the officer shot him.

There was the woman who wanted to wait and stop her car until she got to a more public place, so she drove under the speed limit for a few miles until she felt safe stopping. Again, instead of penalizing her (for something that wasn't really wrong on her part to begin with), by beefing up the charges on the ticket, that officer slammed her on the asphalt on the actual interstate, effectively risking her life, his own life, and the lives of drivers who would have had to swerve off the road to miss them. It is beyond not following procedure. It is beyond failure to de-escalate. It is positively suicidal behavior on the part of the officer. And if you look at the definition, it is psychopathic or sociopathic, depending on the officer's state of conscience.

The only provocation that Officer Darren Wilson had was that two jaywalkers wouldn't get on the sidewalk because they were almost to their destination; his response was to suddenly pull a dangerous stunt with his cruiser that could have injured the two young men. And what if he had hit Dorian Johnson, who hadn't even done anything wrong?

In the sphere of escalating trivial incidents, one of the most tragic stories is, ironically, one of the least known. Bernard Bailey came down to a traffic stop in the middle of the night to help his frightened daughter, who had been stopped for a broken tail light, and couldn't find her insurance information. Although there is video evidence and sworn testimony that the fifty year old church going former prison guard did not so much as raise his voice to the officer on scene, six weeks later, Bernard Bailey would be served with a felony warrant for interfering with a police officer, and the threat of prison implied therein. What happened next is one of the most astonishing acts of excessive force you will encounter in this book.

And sadly, rogue officers don't stop at just terrorizing adults.

There are abundant incidents captured and posted on YouTube of cops mercilessly bullying children.

There are abundant incidents posted on YouTube of cops shooting dogs because the officer goes onto private property, and the family's dog merely growls or barks. What renders the story even more heartbreaking is that in a number of these cases, the cop is at the wrong address. And some unsuspecting family then gets a call from the police department, with news that their dog has been shot.

Tragically, we could go on like this all day.

Rogue police officers need to realize that if they continue to engage in unnecessary escalation, the relationship between them and the public is going to be adversarial at best, deadly at worst.

More to the point, in virtually all of these incidents, there can be no doubt that there was a path of de-escalation that could have been taken, and yet the officer simply did not take it. Such a choice on the part of the officer is a violation of his training, and the officer ought to be sanctioned. Penalized. Punished. They are servants of the people. We pay their salaries.

PROCEDURE, PROCEDURE, PROCEDURE

What seems to be an escalating war between citizens and police would probably be considerably quelled if cops (and their rather rabid supporters) could simply admit that in many of these very high profile cases, rogue cops violated their own proscribed procedures. And what strikes me as bizarre is that this should not be a matter of controversy—because in many of these cases, there is video footage. In the Tamir Rice case, the officers simply got far too close, far too fast.

Although Cleveland officials were able to find some shill to state that the officers' actions were justified, several national authorities, each of whom have given decades of service as officers in addition to education beyond serving on the force, will tell you that an officer should never, ever approach a suspect in that manner. You stay at a distance, and attempt to engage the suspect. It is poignant and tragic to imagine how this would have played out: "Drop your weapon!" It takes Tamir a moment to realize that he is the one being addressed. He has seen plenty of TV in his day. He knows it's a toy gun. He drops it, puts up his hands. He is terrified. But he survives to live and laugh another day.

This business of violating procedure is just one of the elements that we will look at in-depth detail, in the chapters that follow. This crucial notion of following procedure is also why we

didn't include chapters on killings in which the officer's actions seem justified. We have no desire or need to rhetorically vilify those officers.

The officers in the Freddie Gray case violated procedure by using excessive force after the suspect was cuffed, and further violated procedure by not belting Freddie into the police van, even though police policy requires them to do so. What makes this all the more eerie is that Baltimore cops have a history of hurting and even paralyzing prisoners with their infamous "nickel rides".

The cops who killed John Crawford in the Walmart claimed that they told him repeatedly to drop his weapon. But they knew they were caught when they had to watch the surveillance video with a state investigator. One of the officers actually had to admit that they might have ordered him to drop the gun at the same time that the lead officer was firing at Crawford, aiming for center mass. The absurdity of the admission—"we might have ordered him to drop the weapon as we were firing" (a direct quote, for God's sake) — would be funny, if it weren't so damned tragic.

Daniel Pantaleo used an illegal chokehold, and then further enraged people across the nation when he mugged for the camera as Eric Garner's life was ebbing away. Pantaleo waved to the world, even as the cops on scene, and more horribly still, the EMTs that were called, all refused to give Garner proper medical aid ...and all in spite of Garner's now infamous cries that "***I can't breathe!***"

And we have already seen how egregiously officers at crime scenes all over the country refused to comply with anything vaguely resembling procedure, when investigating the suspicious deaths of young black men.

ROGUE COPS ENDANGER CITIZENS

This issue seems to have people squarely divided into two camps, and one of the most alarming aspects of this polarization is that those taking the side of the police seem pathologically incapable of ever admitting that the police have committed a wrongdoing. This inability to find any fault with the officer(s) is even more chilling when a.) those wrongdoings are captured on videotape, for the entire world to see, and b.) one result of that procedure violation is that the cop is putting himself, his partner, and the rest of the community at risk.

The world looked on in horror at the videotape of Officer Michael Slager shooting at a fleeing Walter Scott. Why? Why did Slager feel a need to do this, when the worst thing you could say about Walter Scott is that he was behind in his child support payments? The images of Slager shooting Scott is so riveting that many viewers failed to contemplate the implications of a chilling detail: Slager shot eight times. He hit Scott five times. That means that three bullets went

flying right into the community, and there is absolutely no way that Officer Slager could have known if a car was going to drive past on that street. There is no way he could know if someone was going to turn a corner walking their dog. If a kid was going to whizz by on a skateboard. Even as I write this, I still feel rage at the thought that Darren Wilson, Michael Slager, and the men who shot John Crawford in Walmart went in like a SWAT team and began shooting before they knew if there were children around. And given each of those scenes, it was not only possible, it was highly probable.

But that didn't matter; more important than NOT firing on the community was the Officer's phantom excuse that "he feared for his life"—ridiculous from Slager, given that Walter Scott was fleeing. Ridiculous from Darren Wilson because, as we will see in the chapter devoted to the killing of Michael Brown, Darren Wilson was clearly lying about virtually everything that happened. And in the case of two officers entering a Walmart and then firing on John Crawford (who was merely openly carrying a gun in an Open Carry state), before they even allowed him time to respond to their order to put down the gun, they had absolutely no way of knowing if a person—perhaps a child—was going to come toddling down an aisle, turn a corner, and get gunned down in a hail of bullets.

BAD COPS: DANGEROUS FOR GOOD COPS

Let me paint a hypothetical for you. You and your partner get a call. Some big guy is waving a dangerous gun around in a public place. You are riding shotgun (no pun intended), and you are a rookie. Your more seasoned partner is driving. His best plan, when he gets the call? He screeches up to within a foot or two of the gun wielding lunatic, meaning you both may go down any minute now, in a barrage of gunfire. Your idiot partner has put you in an impossible position: you have no choice but to jump out and shoot the dude dead. Only he isn't a big scary dude, he is a twelve year old, who was tall for his age. And it was a toy gun. Readers, here is the part I never get. The pro-cop faction defends these real life partners, Timothy Loehmann and Frank Garmback, saying that these two officers really believed Tamir to be a lethal threat—an adult, with a real gun. But that same supposedly pro-cop faction fails to take that scenario to the only next logical conclusion: Officer Frank Garmback was driving himself and his partner right into the jaws of death.

Forget Tamir. Let's say you are one of those people (who has posted so ubiquitously on the web), who doesn't give a damn about the kid. You are a cop in the passenger seat, en route to the scene of a crazy man waving a gun, and your partner's best plan is to drive you up within two feet of him, in violation of every single procedure that you learned at the academy. Let me make it cable TV for you: when the incident is over, (in the world where it actually was a big man with a big real gun), you, the cop in the passenger seat, take your wacko daredevil partner (the driver)

around the corner into an alley, you grab him by the collar, you yell “What the hell were you thinking, trying to get me killed?” And then you, the rookie partner, resist with all your might the urge to punch the snot out of your daredevil partner-driver with a death wish. Or, depending on how you write the script, you don’t resist the urge. The point is, Officer Frank Garmback put himself and his partner in lethal danger. That, dear readers, is what happens when cops go rogue. They endanger other cops. (But for those of you who know a little about Frank Garmback’s history, you are probably as unsurprised by this incident as I was. Frank Garmback brought heat on his department, and a big fat lawsuit on the city of Cleveland, when he put a woman in a chokehold and slammed her to the ground in a grotesque display of excessive force. But because Garmback was in no way personally penalized for that, the fallout from the incident obviously changed him not a whit.)

And what of Officer Michael Brelo, who was part of a sixty cruiser high speed chase? Virtually the entire police department of Cleveland, Ohio converged on the car in question, but merely surrounding the suspects along with the other officers was not enough for Michael Brelo. Brelo’s best plan was to run towards the suspect’s car, jump up on it, get on the roof, and fire down through the roof and windshield. That his life was not snuffed out in a hail of gunfire before he could get steadied on the roof is unbelievable. (The suspects in the car were completely unarmed. But Brelo did not know that.) Not only did this rogue cop put himself in danger, but he surely messed mightily with the concentration of other officers who were looking on in horror, some of who no doubt had the fraternal impulse to run to Brelo and grab him back away from the “danger”.

There are dozens of more examples of this every year: rogue cops endanger themselves. Rogue cops endanger other cops.

But the danger to other officers is not just physical. It is psychological. This has been proven ad nauseam, as is discussed in an article on the law enforcement website policeone.com. “The Dorner case: when cops turn rogue, and how to prevent it” by Dr. Laurence Miller, discusses some of the dangers and damages caused by rogue cops impacting the good and honest officers. When one cop goes rogue, and the public learns of it, police on the street sense that now, there may be a target on their back, as persons angry at a single rogue cop look for a surrogate officer to suffer the vengeance. When one cop goes rogue, other police feel that they have lost the respect of their community. And when a rogue cop ends up walking away relatively unscathed and is held unaccountable (oftentimes, even receiving back pay), officers increasingly question the validity of doing the right thing. Graft and corruption do pay better, after all.

And in case you are wondering, who the heck is this Dr. Miller, and what does he know about a police officer’s unique challenges? A quick CV: Laurence Miller, Ph.D. is a police forensic psychologist for the West Palm Beach Police Department, mental health consultant for Troop L

of the Florida Highway Patrol, a forensic psychological examiner for the Palm Beach County Court, and a consulting psychologist with several regional and national law enforcement agencies. He is an instructor at the Criminal Justice Institute of Palm Beach County and at Florida Atlantic University, and also conducts continuing education and training seminars around the country. He is author of numerous professional and popular print and online publications pertaining to the brain, behavior, health, law enforcement, criminal justice and organizational psychology. Dr. Miller is also a member of the Special Psychology Services Section of the International Association of Chiefs of Police. So I think it is safe to say that Dr. Miller knows what he is talking about, when he warns us all (as do so many of his colleagues), that rogue cops hurt other police officers.

And that is why a book attacking the acts of rogue cops is not anti-cop. It is, in fact, very PRO police officer safety. And for those of you civilians wondering what police forces around the country are doing to weed out these potentially dangerous rogue cops, the answer is not nearly enough. In Colorado, for example, only just now, in the spring of 2016, are they getting around to proposing a bill that would let a police department hiring an officer look at that officer's personnel files from previous jobs and police departments. Think about that: as of this writing, in many states, you are legally barred from looking at the previous performance history and psychological evaluation of this lethal-weapon-carrying servant of the public. In many states, that is going to require a new and special law.

PRO GOOD COP

I don't think nearly enough has been written about how hard rogue cops are on the morale and the mindset of the hundreds of thousands of good cops out there. One only needs to take a moment and imagine what it must be like to have to work with a rogue cop, to imagine the misery and danger experienced every day by the good cops, who go out of their way to serve and protect the citizens of their community.

I think that anybody who is going to write about police brutality and excessive force owes it to themselves, and to the police, to read some police officer forums. While some of them are predictable and disheartening—containing posts by cops who believe, not surprisingly, that the cops are always right no matter what—if a reader digs deeply enough, you will get a good sense of the hell that cops are going through. And this matters a lot. For the Christians out there, it is the truly Christian point of view: walk a mile in their shoes—at least in your imagination. There was a thread on Redditt which asked the question, [“Does being a police officer make you hate people?”](#) I have included this answer here, from a law enforcement officer in the UK. It is both touching and profound. And it illuminates:

Does being a police officer make you hate people?

Yes and no.

Everyone surrounds themselves predominantly with people they like; it's called having friends. Not so much when you're at work. You get on with some people, less so with others. But those you don't like? You know, Steve from marketing. You can't stand his face. Steve is a dick.

When you work in the police, you're constantly put into situations with people you will not like. It's the nature of the job, in that the only reason we're dealing with someone is because someone has done something wrong. We deal with the stressed victim, the outraged suspect, the camera-phone commentator, the abusive drunk, the remorseless criminal.

And you will hate some of them.

The victim who called you in the first place, who refuses to give a 10 minute statement, expects hours of your time, who tells you you're useless and unprofessional. You try and sympathise with their situation, but you're only human.

The suspect stopped on the street; he doesn't care that he matches the description of a mugging nearby, he shouts and screams at you, demanding names and shoulder numbers, claiming you'll be out of your job within the week.

The man with the camera-phone in hand, screaming police brutality as you restrain a stabbing suspect. No regard for who, what and why, he hates the police, he hates you, and he wants proof that he's right in doing so.

The man, who after 12 pints and a brawl, has been arrested for drunk and disorderly. He demands an explanation of how he's being disorderly, before calling you a piece of shit and threatening to kill you the second his cuffs come off, without even taking a breath.

And of course, those specimens of society whose actions stay in your thoughts for days. Any officer loves telling their civvy mates a good story, with all the excitement and danger. But there's stories you don't tell. There's an ugly side to the world, and sometimes we're unfortunate enough to get an eyeful.

So yes, we hate people. We are spat on and screamed at and abused and threatened and attacked, all by the same public we signed up to protect.

But that isn't everyone.

I didn't mention the victim who emailed your sergeant, commending you despite not recovering their stolen bike. The bloke who's out drinking with his mates, but stops for a second to

thank you for what you do. There's the nervous but friendly suspect you've just arrested for possession, who you sneak a cigarette with in the yard before booking into custody. And there's the cute young lady on a night out who asks to wear your hat.

The odds are stacked against us. We are the police, ultimately we are here to fight crime. Shockingly, the people involved in crime are often easy to hate. But in my opinion, there's just enough exceptions to the rule to at least keep me sane.

There is a fascinating article on Vox.com, written by an African-American police officer, and it gives us what seems to be a chillingly accurate assessment of the damage done by rogue cops, bully cops, and corrupt cops. Entitled “I’m a black ex-cop, and this is the real truth about race and policing”, the author explains it this way:

On any given day, in any police department in the nation, 15 percent of officers will do the right thing no matter what is happening. Fifteen percent of officers will abuse their authority at every opportunity. The remaining 70 percent could go either way depending on whom they are working with.

*That's a theory from my friend K.L. Williams, who has trained thousands of officers around the country in use of force. Based on what I experienced as a black man serving in the St. Louis Police Department for five years, I agree with him. I worked with men and women who became cops for all the right reasons — they really wanted to help make their communities better. And I worked with people like the president of my police academy class, who sent out an email after President Obama won the 2008 election that included the statement, "I can't believe I live in a country full of ni**er lovers!!!!!!!!!"*

That remaining 70 percent of officers are highly susceptible to the culture in a given department. In the absence of any real effort to challenge department cultures, they become part of the problem. If their command ranks are racist or allow institutional racism to persist, or if a number of officers in their department are racist, they may end up doing terrible things

—by Redditt HudSon, May 28th, 2015 vox.com

In terms of the points of view offered by officers who have been out there in the trenches, I think the above two perspectives offer balance and much needed insight. I find the second one even more poignant than the first one, because here a seasoned officer has spoken to the innate goodness and vulnerability of neophyte officers, and how older officers can sway them either way. We are reminded of the power that senior officers wield, for good or for harm.

So, before ending this chapter, let us look hard and fast at the truth we believe as a fundamental premise to the book: rogue officers endanger their fellow officers. And bad cops make good cops miserable.

Imagine that you are a young cop, a good cop, who loves helping people, but you have to stand by and watch as your older bully partner lets a police canine loose on a man sitting in chair with his hands up. Or letting an attack dog loose on a child in a car, because the cop acted too soon, and did not think to check if there was a child in a car that the officer thought appeared empty. Or [sicking](#) a dog on a handcuffed man, who is lying still with his face down. And later, that same young cop watches, as the cuffed suspect dies man from his bite wounds.

And speaking of canines, civilian dogs don't fare so well, at the hands of some police officers: imagine that you are a young cop, a good cop, forced to watch as a cop shoots a dog who is minding his own business, in his own backyard, who has been a part of no crime. Or watch as a cop slits a docile, collared, licensed dog by the throat, because he has gotten away from its owner, as a Baltimore cop did when Nela got away from her owner.

Imagine that you are a good cop, an honest cop, who got into policing because of all the good cops that had been your buddies in the town where you grew up, back when you were a kid. And you get stuck with a bully partner whose best strategy—regardless of the fact that it could cause death and brain damage—is to slam little girls into the ground, as the cop did at the infamous McKinney, Texas pool party, when he threw the skinny little fifteen year old girl to the ground, and then knelt with all his adult weight on her small back. Or like the cop in Phoenix, Arizona, who body slammed a fifteen year old girl onto the hard pavement, because she got into a fight in school. He could have killed her. Or like the cop in Baltimore who grabbed a fourteen year old skateboarder, threatened him repeatedly, berated him for five minutes, and then took the kid's skateboard, all because the kid was playing in the wrong place. The kid gave him no backtalk, but the cop threatened the kid and berated him at length. How can a good cop look on all of this bullying and not be alarmed? How can a good cop stand by and watch bad cops body slam children, and not know something is very wrong? What if the good cop has a daughter or a son that age? How damaging is that to his psyche?

And the good cops have very little recourse. If they complain or snitch, they know they risk censure, a loss of back-up in crucial moments, being overlooked for promotions, in addition to the more terrifying consequences such as threats to their safety, and threats to their family. Easier to just play along. And to really get along, maybe become a bit of a bully yourself.

There are good cops out there. Several hundred thousand of them. And we owe it to them to keep the environment in which they work both safe and hospitable, in as much as this is humanly possible. For better or worse, that includes going after the rogue cops.

Good cops? These are the cops we love:

The cop in Sedona, Arizona, known only as “Ty”, who bought gas for the person who had run out of gas, and then had his credit card declined.

Officer Joshua Scaglioni, who stopped a car with no car seat, and instead of issuing a ticket, went to Walmart and bought a seat for the family who had fallen on hard times.

Officer M. McAllister, who bought groceries for a cancer patient who had run out of money at the store, when trying to buy food for her children.

Officer William Stacy who, when he found a poor woman stealing eggs, bought her a trunk full of groceries.

Commander Brian Peters, who commemorated his last day on the job by stopping motorists and giving out....gift cards!

Officer Joe Hutson and his partner, Officer John Khillah, who saw a man in a wheelchair trying to mow his lawn, and decided to do the entire job themselves.

Tampa police Homeless Liaison Officer Daniel McDonald, who arranged to pay the hundred dollar wedding license fee for a homeless couple who had been together for years. He also pulled off quite a wedding for the couple, and got them on a housing waiting list for the couple and their dog.

... And the seemingly endless parade of law enforcement officers who do their part to make sure that children have a special day, when the rest of the world seems too busy for that child.

Gainesville Police Officer Bobby White, [*who stopped to visit with the group of kids*](#) playing basketball, after he got a noise complaint about them. He reminded them to keep it down just a bit if they possibly could, although he made it clear that he personally didn't have a problem with them. Then he sank a few hoops, letting them tease that his game wasn't as good as theirs. Oh, and the next day, to reinforce community goodwill, [*he brought Shaquille O'Neal by to play with his kids*](#). Class. Decency. Honor.

And there are thousands more such stories that never make it into the headlines, or even onto the world wide web, because it is just part of being a good cop. All of those men and women, we applaud. We salute.

But as for the rest: the excessive force, the police brutality, pummeling cuffed suspects, the unwarranted canine attacks, the unwarranted body slamming of kids. What would Officer Ashley Guindon have thought ... or said, or done ... if she had to stand by and watch?

I beseech you to ponder that, for a while.

As for what comes next, we ask you to remember that we write this, in part, to protect and preserve the good cops.

CHAPTER ONE

THE MYTH OF THE SUMMERS OF LOVE:

The year was 1985, and Timothy Lee was living the dream. A flamboyant, twenty-three year old gay black man living in the suburbs of San Francisco, he was attending fashion school, and over the moon about his future: he had just won a scholarship to study fashion in Milan. But just before his trip, on November 2nd, at about one a.m., Timothy "committed suicide" by hanging himself from a fig tree at a public bus stop.

Because the year was 1985, before 24 hour news was flourishing, and certainly before the rise of the internet, Timothy Lee's very suspicious "suicide" did not begin to receive the attention or investigation that it deserved. Because this particular hanging happened so very long before the glare of the ever-present media spotlight, police clearly handled it in an offhanded, incompetent, and apathetic manner.

Timothy had fallen asleep on the bus, and only woke up when the bus reached the end of its line, leaving Timothy stranded at BART station at one in the morning. He made a few calls to friends, trying to get a ride home to Berkeley.

Consider the following glaring indicators of foul play:

FIRST INDICATOR OF FOUL PLAY:

Victim Timothy Lee did leave a note, but in it, he got everybody's name wrong. And this was a note to his family. He even misspelled his own name. The police showed no interest in the bizarre and anomalous note, in spite of the fact that Timothy's family felt this was strong evidence that he had written the note under duress.

SECOND INDICATOR OF FOUL PLAY:

Timothy Lee's family was further distraught to learn not only that the mysterious strap which had been used to hang Timothy was destroyed by the coroner—an appalling and criminal act of evidence tampering—but investigators who ruled Timothy's death a suicide also chose to ignore the knife cuts that were clearly defensive wounds on Timothy's body.

THIRD INDICATOR OF FOUL PLAY:

According to FBI records and analysis, Marilyn Hannum and Bill Callison, who shared a home near the BART Station where Timothy was waiting at the bus stop, heard screams that occurred just moments after Timothy Lee had placed his last telephone call.

Associated Press New Archives, January 18th, 1985 reported the following story:

... Marilyn Hannum and Bill Callison, who share a home near the station, said they heard screams about 15 minutes later. Ms. Hannum said she thought it was some sort of hazing.

"If I would have realized such a terrible thing was going on, I would have rushed out there, or called police," said Ms. Hannum. "It didn't leap to my mind that someone's actually being murdered - and now I'm living with that."

"They were loud screams, repeated, that seemed to be coming from the BART (parking) lot," she said. "When I got up and got dressed and went outside, the screaming had stopped."

About 10 minutes later, Callison heard "three or four screams ... followed by a final scream which had a rising pitch and ended suddenly."

They say they then heard at least two or three people running and getting into a car within 30 seconds of the last scream.

But these above indicators of foul play are not the only alarming facts surrounding the death of Timothy Lee. What rendered this "suicide" even more dubious still was that it happened the same night that two hooded Ku Klux Klansmen were spotted nearby, just blocks from where Timothy was found hanging, in the unlikely suburbs of liberal San Francisco. Harold Gallant and George Harless, in white robes and hoods, stabbed two black men who were standing on the street talking to white women. The two Klansmen tried to explain away their Klan Klothung when they were arrested, saying they were just Halloween costumes, (even though Halloween was three days previous), but they had a more difficult time explaining away the Klan literature and calling cards they had on their persons. Stabbing victims Tony Lamar Hall and Jeffrey Charles Miller both survived and went on to appear in court against their attackers, and the KKK hoodlums would later plead guilty. (Clarification: police would claim that the crimes were unrelated, because the two Klansmen were in custody during the window of time in which Timothy Lee could have died. I, for one, am not mollified. The Klan does tend to do things in packs. In herds.)

And it wasn't just blacks who were up in arms about the hanging. Bill Callison, a white man, called the police and went to the FBI, saying that he had information which could challenge the coroner's conclusion that Lee had committed suicide. Soon after, he began receiving anonymous, threatening phone calls. He later spoke the reporters: ***"It's a place where the city meets the country," he said. "You have some very rural-type people, and then you have people coming out from the big city. There's friction; some people who are unable to adjust, to put it politely***

... *"There's a lot of racism in Concord. It's not right on the surface but it's not too deeply buried, either."* And at that same point in the investigation, a woman reportedly called to say she knew a man who belonged to the Ku Klux Klan and was bragging that he had *"put a gun to his (Lee's) head and made him write (the suicide) note."*

What do you think? Before you render your personal verdict, consider these additional, chilling facts about Concord, San Francisco:

Seven months later, on June 24th, 1986, the body of another black person, an Afro-American female, was found hanging from a tree in a park a few miles away from where Timothy Lee "committed suicide". Two black "self-lynchings" in the same neighborhood, in just seven months? Do we really believe that these two people took their own lives—especially when even the official police records certify that there had been Klan stabbings of black men in the area? And those on the very night that Timothy Lee killed himself? I don't believe for a moment that these two deaths were suicides.

The long road to the death of Timothy Lee,

Or

300,000 thousand reasons to stay in power

At first blush, Timothy Lee's death seems shocking, happening as it did in the suburbs of San Francisco, a city we associate with peace, love, hippies, and brotherly love. But this is only a part of San Francisco's legacy. There is also, tragically, an undercurrent of racism that has infected the city's police force for nearly a century.

Although the KKK as it first existed in the American South lost much of its power and impetus within a couple of decades after the end of the Civil War, it experienced a resurgence in the 1920's, and the resurgence was nationwide. D.W. Griffith's famous film, that shining emblem of bigotry entitled "Birth of a Nation", didn't help much. And for an extended period after the movie was shown in theatres nationwide—no kidding—a handful of racist entrepreneurs made a killing selling robes and hoods and festive accessories. This revenue and the initiation fees helped finance the enormous growth spurt of the movement: of those eligible to join, a full fifteen percent of the population of the United States were members, or about five million Americans. That's a hell of a lot of family trees with hooded ancestors. Mind the door to your hearts and minds, folks.

Sadly, racism in San Francisco spiked during World War II. With the bombing of Pearl Harbor came a glut of opportunities to help the war effort, and thousands of poor rural Southern African Americans migrated to the San Francisco area—Oakland in particular—to work in the shipyards. During this same period, however, and in the years that followed, Bay Area police departments

made recruitment efforts in the Deep South, in order to find officers to join their growing ranks, and many of those transplanted recruits had deep roots in the Ku Klux Klan. These were the men policing the black workers in the shipyards. It was a potent combination, and ugly incidents of police brutality skyrocketed. Sadly, the rampant racism has never really dissipated.

In 1983, "60 Minutes" ran a segment on the Richmond, California Police Department, Richmond being a suburb of San Francisco. The segment shined a much needed light on "The Cowboys," a group of white police officers who have made themselves an integral part of the Richmond Police Department. These "Cowboys" were known for wearing cowboy hats and boots when they did their duty. Most specifically and appallingly, they frequently engaged in brutality against blacks, other minorities, and homosexuals. The Deputy Police Chief at that time, a one Lori Ritter, whose promotion was opposed by a number of African American officers, was married to a member of the "Cowboys" and had a photo of the controversial group, which included a Confederate flag, publicly displayed in her office. These images are not as rare as you might think in Oakland, or in the governmental department offices. Even now, nearly a hundred years later, people still talk of the parade in 1924 when the Klan came out in force, nearly 750 strong, reminding Americans that this terrorist organization, then not much more than half a century old, had spread from sea to shining sea.

But the racism didn't gain public notoriety until 1983. It was in June of 1983 that the city of Richmond was forced to pay out three million dollars—the highest settlement to date—for the unlawful death of Johnny Roman and Michael Guillory, two black men gunned down in separate incidents by two City of Richmond police officers. An investigation and trial had uncovered systemic and systematic abuse of minorities and civil rights violations. The settlement stemmed from a pair of incidents which had transpired in 1982. Journalist Aya de Leon, in a March 23rd, 2014 article on fusion.com entitled: ***"Change you can't believe in: How a police texting scandal echoes San Francisco's racial past"*** recounts the details of the story":

The chickens came home to roost, so to speak, in the early 1980s, when two young African-American men—Johnny Roman and Michael Guillory—were shot to death in their beds by Richmond police. In 1982, Richmond police officers Clinton Mitchell and Samuel Dudkiewicz fired four bullets into Mr. Roman when the police came to arrest Roman on charges of harassment. (The police said that Roman had reached for a shotgun, but the coroner's testimony contradicted their version. The autopsy showed that Roman was shot when he was "in a fetal position with his legs drawn up.") That same year, Dudkiewicz shot Mr. Guillory through a window to his bedroom after police were called to Guillory's home. Though Dudkiewicz claimed Guillory had "a shiny object," no weapon of any sort was ever found. Roman and Guillory were but two of the six black men shot to death by Richmond police between 1980 and 1983.

Families of the deceased sued. Oliver Jones, staff counsel for the Western Region of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, served as the chief attorney for the plaintiffs in the civil suit; both cases had been consolidated into a single trial. Also included in the lawsuit were Deputy Police Chief Ernest Clements, and Chief of Police Leo Garfield. Even more damning, the families also named the City of Richmond, for its failure to deal with “The Cowboys” and their history of racial profiling and violence. In the trial, attorney for the plaintiffs characterized the behavior of the two police officer defendants as "reckless and unprofessional." Mr. Jones also called several black police officers to the stand. They testified that an unwritten code of conduct condoned violence on the Richmond police force.

From the De Leon article:

They introduced over 25 witnesses who testified to a systematic pattern of racist violence on the part of the Richmond PD. (While this number may seem modest, it does not include the many citizens who were witnesses or victims of brutality but were afraid to come forward. Nor does this include all of those were willing to testify.) Eventually, the defendants were found guilty in civil — but not criminal — court. Garfield resigned from his post after the scandal – only to be replaced by Clements. According to the New York Times, shortly after the verdict, “a Federal jury said it was sending a message to that city to change its ways” and the Richmond PD was forced to pay out \$3 million to the victims’ families for the two wrongful deaths, a judgment that at that point, was the largest judgment for racially motivated wrongful death in US history.

Sergeant Tony Zanotelli, president of the largely white Richmond Police Officers Association, said in a newspaper interview that the suit had damaged police morale. He blamed "blood-sucking attorneys" and fellow officers acting as "puppets for the N.A.A.C.P."

But this trial was only the beginning. The can of worms had been opened, and other instances of police brutality were now being investigated. Among them:

—Willie Lee Drumgoole, a burglary suspect in the local jail who was killed in an illegal chokehold.

—Emilio Gallegos was driving back from a high school fundraiser with his wife. He was stopped by a police officer and ended up having his arm muscles ripped apart by a police dog. Time to invoke the question: ***Would the police dog have been involved if the driver in question had been a white female?***

—Ramon Ortega and 27 others were attending a party in Ortega’s home when officers used police dogs and batons to break up the festivities. Ortega, who is in a wheelchair, was dumped out onto the ground. ***Would the man have been dumped from his wheelchair, had he been a white female?***

And a quarter century later, on December 18, 2010, another black man was found hanging from a tree in Baldwin Park. The questionable procedures and lack of transparency on the part of the police department are made abundantly manifest in a statement released by Police Lieutenant Steve Dyer:

On Friday night at 11:37 p.m. officers were dispatched to John F. Baldwin Park off Port Chicago highway regarding a possible deceased subject in the park. Officers located a 50 year old male subject deceased inside the park near the picnic benches closest to the Port Chicago Highway. The male subject's death appeared to be a suicide which was corroborated by witness statements.

Yes, sounds glossy and professional—at first glance. But take a closer look at that last statement. **“...a suicide, corroborated by witness statements”** (!) What the hell does that mean? Did they see him commit suicide? Of course not, if they had they would have rushed to cut him down, or at least some of them would. And there would have been all the panicky 911 calls. If **“suicide. .corroborated by witness statements”** means that witnesses saw him hanging from a tree, anybody with even a cursory knowledge of the history of lynching in this country knows that if you see a black man hanging from a tree; no way do you leap to the conclusion of suicide.

For the deaths of the black woman who was found hanging seven months after the hanging death of Timothy Lee, and the black man who was found hanging twenty five years later, there is absolutely no information regarding, or evidence of, an investigation into the deaths of these people: no crime scene photography, no testing for strange DNA, no coroner's report. It would appear that all those years ago, and even today, in this suburb of hep San Francisco, the police just don't give a damn.

To this day, even the young people live with the fear, and the ongoing nightmare that is the dark reality of racism: in 2002, At Clayton Valley High School in Concord, someone spray-painted a noose, and the words WHITE POWER.

Oh, last factoid: Between 2009 and 2014, forty-seven percent of all arrests made by the San Francisco Police Department were blacks. The city is only six percent black.

FAST FORWARD TO THE PRESENT: APRIL 2015.

And scandal breaks anew, confirming our worst fears: ugly and rampant racism permeates the city of San Francisco's police department. The headlines and the stories that followed shocked San Franciscans and the nation: thirteen officers are charged with sending racist and homophobic texts. Police Chief Greg Suhr has recommended the officers be fired and that others involved in a

more peripheral capacity be severely disciplined. Only one problem with that. Suhr has known about the texts since they were first sent, back on 2011. Ooops. Shouldn't Suhr be fired too?

Here's a sampling of texts those officers were sending back and forth to each other:

"Those guys are pretty stupid! Ask some dumb ass questions you would expect from a black rookie! Sorry if they are your buddies!"

- *"We got two blacks at my boys [sic] school and they are brother and sister! There cause dad works for the school district and I am watching them like hawks."*
- *"Its [sic] worth every penny to live here [Walnut Creek] away from the savages."*
- *"The buffalo soldier was why the Indians Wouldnt [sic] shoot the niggers that fought for the confederate They [sic] thought they were sacred buffalo and not human."*
- *"Gunther Furminger was a famous slave auctioneer."*
- *"My wife has 2 friends over that don't know each other the cool one says to me get me a drink nigger not knowing the other is married to one just happened right now LMFAO."*
- *"White power."*
- *In response to a text saying "Niggers should be spayed," Furminger wrote "I saw one an hour ago with 4 kids."*
- *"I am leaving it like it is, painting KKK on the sides and calling it a day!" In response to a text asking "Do you celebrate quanza [sic] at your school?" Furminger wrote: "Yeah we burn the cross on the field! Then we celebrate Whitemas."*
- *"Cross burning lowers blood pressure! I did the test myself!"*
- *"I hate to tell you this but my wife friend [sic] is over with their kids and her husband is black! If [sic] is an Attorney but should I be worried?" Furminger's friend, an SFPD officer, responded: "Get ur pocket gun. Keep it available in case the monkey returns to his roots. Its [sic] not against the law to put an animal down." Furminger responded, "Well said!"*

In response to a text from another SFPD officer regarding the promotion of a black officer to sergeant, Furminger wrote: "Fuckin nigger."

Furminger granted San Francisco's ABC News 7 an interview in which he offered an apologia:

"These were supposed to be funny, not to be broadcast on the evening news," Furminger said.

And on that note, we leave this spew of hate-laced text messages with Furminger at his ugliest: In response to a text saying ***"All niggers must fucking hang,"*** Furminger wrote ***"Ask my 6 year old what he thinks about Obama."***

It may be some small comfort that, of the thirteen officers involved with the scandal, at least Furminger is gone from the department. What is no comfort, however, is the fact that the highest ranking officer in the texting scandal not only had a history of excessive force and abuse of power, but a history of getting away with it. In 2005, Furminger, Captain Jason Fox, and Officer Simon Chan found Andrew Marconi outside of a popular gay nightclub, urinating on a brick wall. The officers proceeded to use anti-gay slurs, shouting ***"You peeing on my streets? Do you think we want your AIDS infected pee on our streets?"*** They then forced him to kneel in his waste and slammed his head into a wall, using his hair to mop up the urine. They then stripped off his shirt and used that to soak up the remaining urine. The police department never opened an investigation, in spite of the request of the victim and the cooperation of several witnesses. Nothing happened to Fox, Chan, or Furminger.

Perhaps just as alarming is what the police in San Francisco get paid for behaving like this.

You see, now there is more incentive than ever to get a job in the force and keep that job at all costs, as the salaries for police are an ongoing bone of contention in the city and state.

According to investigators at the San Francisco Chronicle, Police Officer Entry Level current annual salary for the Oakland PD is between roughly \$70,000 and \$100,000, the second highest in the country. Pay increases with ranking officers, and the average total compensation for an OPD employee is \$162,000. In 2012, about a third of the force (179 officers) took home over \$200,000 each in total compensation. Three patrol officers, a sergeant, and a captain each took home over \$300,000. In 2011 the Oakland Police Department's costs made up 44% of the city's \$400 million general budget. According to an analysis of California State Controller John Chang's database, police are eligible for two thirds of their salary when it comes time to draw a pension, and the city struggles to figure out how to keep that deal with policemen who retired 35 years ago—that portion of the city's bill alone adding up to \$40 million dollars.

Is it any wonder that in the case of the Oakland PD, the thin blue line is more like a tall blue wall, and that a cop in that town will do anything to stay on the force?

All in all, I believe that the mother of one of the authors who is quoted in this chapter said it best. Aya De Leon has a mother, Anna De Leon who is a musician, and a woman amazing enough to have raised a daughter (Aya) who entered Harvard as a freshman when she was just sixteen.

Anna De Leon said this, of the horrific police brutality and appalling text scandal that are grim facts in the history of the San Francisco Police Department:

“Those texts have revealed what we’re really up against here. We’re not talking about a little implicit bias; we’re talking about attitudes of white supremacy coming out the Deep South from fifty years ago. We’re talking about a level of hatred, contempt, and entitlement to inflict violence that will not be rooted out by nudging officers to examine their cultural assumptions.” When asked about remedies, she said: *“The only effective response is to strip these individuals of their institutional power when they exhibit racist behavior in their action, and to create a culture that never minimizes or excuses instances of racism. This means that police departments need to take every manifestation of racism—however small or seemingly insignificant—as indicative of a very large problem in that individual officer, and have disciplinary policies that put everyone on notice that racism will not be tolerated.”*

UPDATE: June 2nd, 2015. San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee unveiled a budget that includes a 3.7 million dollar increase for the city’s Police Department, mostly allocated for mandatory salary and benefit increases.

The Mayor opted **not** to fund the probe into the texting scandal and numerous other cases of police misconduct.

Among those acts of misconduct:

—An off-duty Richmond police detective was arrested May 3 and booked for drunken driving after he broke through a tollgate on the Carquinez Bridge and attempted to evade the California Highway Patrol, said Lt. Paul Fontana.

—A civilian police employee is under investigation for having logged more than 200 hours in bereavement leave, including time off work to attend her father's funeral service — twice.

—Sheriff’s deputies were caught staging gladiator type fights in the jails and betting on those fights, causing the injury of prisoners, as well as ongoing incidents of forcing prisoners to gamble for food and clean laundry.

—Other acts of misconduct include irregularities in the crime lab, such as filling in forensic and DNA evidence that may have caused the conviction of innocent persons, as well as frequently allowing the guilty to go free. Additionally over a thousand cases are being re-examined, based on their connection to officers caught in violation of procedures and protocol, including some officers who had been convicted and terminated.

Being denied the budget necessary to investigate and resolve these issues was naturally a blow to the District Attorney's office, especially given the spike in monies given to officers for increased salaries and pensions. District Attorney spokesman Max Szabo states ***“Our special prosecutions unit, which handles misconduct for the district attorney's office, was underwater, and really needed additional resources to become adequately staffed and investigate these varying issues. It's really concerning that we're not getting the adequate recourse that we need to just function normally.”***

Also denied funding were victims' services budgets, and the money needed to process rape kits.

UPDATE ON THE TEXTING SCANDAL: During the writing of this book, specifically, the last week of June 2015, attorneys for the defendants in the texting scandal had gotten all of the disciplinary actions dropped, claiming that the statute of limitations had run out for the San Francisco Police Commission to take any disciplinary action. (Perhaps this explains why Police Chief Greg Suhr sat on the information for years?)

Nine of the officers are suing the department.

None of the officers involved have been fired.

They are all back to receiving full pay.

You could say that this chapter has digressed a long way from the hanging death of a young gay black man at a bus stop in the suburbs, on an October night back in 1985. Or perhaps you could argue that we are still stuck right there, in that time and place. Or perhaps you could argue that we are right back where it all started, with a Klan parade in Oakland, during those raging 1920's.

And all of this, in the city of San Francisco, where we left our hearts. I guess the Summer of Love is a long dead dream...

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CHAPTER TWO

THE STRANGE FRUIT OF THE SCHEFFLERA TREE

May 28th, 2003. A muggy morning in Florida. It is early, not quite 7:00 a.m., so the heat is not too oppressive ... yet. Imagine that you are a mother, on your way across town to see your son. You've brought along his favorite—meatloaf. Today he is setting out in search of a new job. You want to wish him well. When you get to where he lives, you find him hanging from a tree.

Later, the all-white police department refuses to take seriously *what you know you saw*: that his hands were tied behind his back, so he couldn't have done this to himself. Your husband's eyewitness account that he was hanging by a blue-black piece of cloth, will be corroborated by the initial police reports—that indeed, Feraris was hanged with a blue-black shirt. Until the official report inexplicably changes and that blue-black shirt becomes a green bed sheet.

Really?

And so it started. The tension and division in a town that was already famous for racial strife.

According to the whites investigating the incident, Feraris "Ray" Golden was a financially troubled alcoholic, 32 years of age, who had spoken of planning to kill himself. According to family and friends, Ray's suicide reference was actually a long running joke between Ray and his grandmother, spoken with hilarity: *"I'm goin' kill you when I get my hands on you!" "Not if I kill myself first!"* But to the police—it was motive.

Ray, who had been elected class clown in high school, was known around town for being the local wit. He loved making people laugh. He was excited about a job interview, scheduled for later that day, the day of the morning he died. And he was very much involved in his kids' lives. He spoke often to his ex-wife, and just the weekend before, he had gone to his son's track meet to videotape the competitions.

As for Ray's poverty: That was the plight of virtually every black in Belle Glade, Florida, where half of the population is black, the unemployment rate for blacks is 15 percent, and the average annual income is under \$9000 a year. One out of every three people over the age of 25 isn't educated past the 9th grade. Seasonal harvesting is about the only work available. As all the black residents of the town will tell you, everybody is always broke, and nobody kills themselves over it.

Feraris Ray Golden died in 2003, and, like the other lynching victims we have covered thus far, his suspicious hanging was not really on anybody's radar, outside of the poverty stricken and powerless black population of Belle Glade, Florida. It was over a decade before that horrible summer in 2014, which saw the killings of Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Tamir Rice and others, and which would cause the world writ large to start paying attention to the controversial and untimely deaths of black men—particularly those in which police involvement either before or after the fact was highly suspect.

In 2003, the internet had its collective mind on other things. And nobody, outside of Ray's friends and family, seemed to care much about his death. Nobody that is, except for an intrepid and fearless journalist by the name of Nancy Jo Sales. All of the journalism covering the death of Ray Golden was shallow at best, inaccurate at worst, with the exception of an in-depth article by Ms. Sales. This chapter would not be possible without her dogged determination to get the facts of the case, and the deeper stories which attend it. A graduate of Yale (Bachelor's) and Columbia (M.F.A.), she is a multi-award winning reporter, who, interestingly enough, showed us the other side of the spectrum—the perils of being rich and white in America—in her book “The Bling Ring: How a Gang of Fame Obsessed Teens Ripped Off Hollywood and Shocked the World.” Ms. Sales made a journey to Belle Glade, Florida, stayed awhile, and dug in hard to get at the truth. I make due note of her because I believe without her sole voice, Ray's case would never have been heard and remembered as a part of a larger pattern of lynching in America.

For this chapter, I am to her deeply indebted.

The police in Belle Glade Florida don't give a swamp rat's ass for procedure. The investigation into the death of Feraris “Ray” Golden was compromised from the very start. Imagine this: their first response to the 911 call was to drive right up on the grass, making a muddy mess and potentially destroying any evidence that might have been under the cruiser's squealing tires ... vehicle tracks, footsteps, bits of evidence and the DNA they might carry. The police also did not seem bothered that there was no chair or other object that Ray could have kicked away when he hanged himself. Their only explanation for the suicide is that Ray must have shimmied up the tree, tied the noose to a branch, then around his neck, and jumped. But why was there a ladder leaning against a tree several yards away? Why didn't Ray use the ladder? Why didn't he use that tree? And that is just the beginning...

The events that follow are a nightmare of bungled policing, of errors and omissions born out of pure apathy: read on and you will see that there is no excuse for the mistakes made. The shoddiness of the investigation would ultimately make it impossible to find out what really happened in the wee hours of the morning under that Schefflera tree. (What also hampers an online investigation such as my own is that my computer's stupid auto correct just keeps

assuming that I am not looking for information about Feraris Golden, but Golden Feraris, and hence keeps showing me shiny pictures of sport cars, instead of photographs of the crime scene. Crud.)

The local authorities pronounced the death a suicide within a half hour of being on the scene. This is never how it is done—well, let me correct myself. It is, in fact, done all too often, as we will see in later chapters. The point is, doing it before the medical examiner has had a chance to weigh in is absolutely unconscionable—to say nothing of DNA analysis, interviews with witnesses, etcetera. Put simply: No pictures were taken of the crime scene. No evidence was collected. No DNA samples were gathered. The beer cans, cigarettes, and other bits of trash found here and there were not saved and tested, but tossed. Belle Glade’s white police chief’s response to all the citizen concerns? ***“Not to make levity of it, but I think people watch entirely too much Law and Order and entirely too much CSI.”***

So, I’m confused—the fact that ordinary citizens are starting to learn about police protocol and understand forensic science, is the reason that police shouldn’t follow procedure?

And yet, as galling as this is, the authorities seem willing to discount the one clue left by those few pictures they did take—for while there are no pictures of the crime scene per se, there are pictures of Ray’s body, once it was removed from the tree. And what a number of people found remarkable is that Ray’s clothes and shoes are completely clean. It rained through the night, on the night that Ray supposedly killed himself, and people walking the scene the next morning had mud all over their shoes. Why did Ray have none on his? Both police and journalists who attempted to climb the tree Ray was hanging from got bark and dirt all over their clothes; why were Ray’s clothes clean, as though he had just put them on? (And forget having those clothes examined by forensic analysis experts; the clothing vanished completely, as you will read below.)

But upon closer examination, it seems clear that more than just shoddy police work was at play here. The facts seemed to change depending on what story the police wanted to put out there and, quite possibly, ***who they wanted to protect***. Take, for example, the profoundly important issue of what was used to hang Ray. From Nancy Jo Sales’ article entitled “somebody Hung My Baby”:

“By June 12, however, this police story had changed, with this explanation, from Officer Mathis: ‘At the time, the cloth in question appeared to have been possibly the bottom portion of a shirt, however, after examining the cloth received from the medical examiner, it was discovered that the material was actually a bed sheet.’”

Does anybody believe this? Is anybody buying this? A work shirt and a bed sheet bear no resemblance to each other. Ms. Sales then interviewed another officer, Sergeant Sawyers:

“When I cut him down, I wasn’t even paying attention to it ... I asked Officer Mathis what he thought it was. He said, ‘Steve, I think it’s a work shirt.’ I said, OK, we’ll go with that for now.”

Again, here we have a trained police officer who identifies the means of hanging as “a work shirt.” Not just a shirt—specific enough—but “a work shirt.” How do you confuse a length of bed sheet with a work shirt? More to the point, are the officers colorblind?

Henry Drummer, Ray’s stepfather, was the first to find the body. He swore that it was “a dark blue shirt.” Ray’s mother, Bernice, was the second person to see the fabric. She also swore that it was dark blue. A witness who came on the scene, Terry Williams, was adamant: “I know I’m not crazy, he was hanging from something dark blue.”

It all gets more sinister still. Shreese Lumpkin had been kicking herself the day before, because she had hung laundry out to dry on the clothesline near the Schefflera tree, but it started to rain, undoing the sun’s work. So she decided not to take the clothes in until they had another day to dry in the sun. Next morning came the discovery of the body. Then the police swarmed the scene, with the family shooed into the house. And then the green sheet was missing from the clothesline.

(It is worth noting that for a brief period after the discovery of Ray’s body, the police were left alone with it. Ray’s mother ran in to make sure that Ray’s three year old niece did not come running out and see a dead body, and Ray’s stepfather was on the front steps of the house, on the telephone, around the corner from the scene of the hanging.)

Of course, if the police had acted in a manner that was the least bit professional, they would have taken pictures of the crime scene as soon as they got there, and the mystery would have been solved. Of course, that would mean that whoever owned a dark blue work shirt might be then identified.

And while we are on the subject of clothing—what happened to Ray’s clothing? Once again, we defer to the research of Ms. Sales, the only one investigating this tragic death who seemed to give a damn about something so very crucial in determining whether this was a suicide or a homicide. This passage from her article is disturbing, to say the least.

Ray’s clothes.

The whereabouts of the clothes became the subject of phone conversations I had all one day in September, after a source in the Belle Glade court told me, “The clothes are missing. That’s a 99 percent fact.”

“I want my baby’s clothes,” I remembered Bernice telling me. “I asked that detective, Sawyers, when my baby’s clothes was coming back, and he said ‘You’ll get ‘em back. The case is still under investigation.’ ”

The clothes were not presented in the courtroom at the inquest. Only photos of them. When I called Chief Miller, he told me that “everything we had” in the way of evidence, “we took to the court.” I then spoke with Steve Nichols, director of communications for the Palm Beach Circuit Court in Belle Glade, who said that the court did not have the clothes. “We have his cap, a blue cap.” Nichols said—another strange thing about this case, that Golden was found with a hat on his head. “We have his bracelet, his watch, and we have the sheet. We do not have his clothes. They were not submitted in evidence. They would be with the state’s attorney’s office.”

Doug Fulton then told me on the phone, “We never had physically anything in our possession. I don’t like to get into a mess of marking evidence and getting everything confused.” Fulton said he had instructed his evidence officer on the case, Richard Mathis, to “put everything into evidence.”

Mike Edmonson, the spokesman for the state’s attorney, maintained that there is a bag in the county clerk’s office which may have the clothes in it, but he’s not certain.

“Melanie Grime [of the county clerk’s office] hasn’t physically looked in the bag,” said Edmonson. “It has red tape on it and she doesn’t want to open it.”

“Judge Cohen would have to be involved in that.” said Fulton.

“If the clothes were still there,” the court source said, “And somebody wanted to reopen the investigation, they would be subject to scientific testing, to determine whether Golden had actually come into contact with the tree, or possibly, someone who murdered him.”

So, where does that put us, so far? We have police who drive over a crime scene. We have no pictures of the crime scene taken. We have no DNA testing ordered for any part of that crime scene, including no interest in scrapings from under the victim’s fingernails. We have missing clothes. And we have cops that can’t tell the difference between a green bed sheet and a dark blue work shirt. Unless, of course, the police are lying and don’t want that shirt traced back to its owner.

The tension and furor over what really killed Ray Golden would not die down. It was for that reason that a rare public inquest was held, about two months after Ray’s death, so that the public could attend and hear “the truth” for themselves. Yet the last people to see him alive and the first people to see him dead were not invited to testify: Ray’s grandmother, Juanita Lumpkin, and his mother Bernice Golden still wonder why nobody seemed the least bit interested in what they had

to say. What they saw, what they witnessed. They were prepared to speak under oath. Nobody cared.

Instead, the inquest heard from people like psychiatrist McKinley Cheshire, who said of Ray “I think he was a very sick man.” Only one problem. This doctor had never met Ray. Never talked to him, never interviewed him. Rather than discussing the lack of evidence, the lack of any substantial investigation, the officials running the inquest declared Ray’s death a suicide, and the authorities were done with the matter.

It is worth noting that at the time of Ray’s death, racial tensions were particularly high in the community. For only the second time in its long history, the town government of Belle Glade had elected three blacks to the City Commission, leaving two white commissioners only. Since then, those white commissioners had been doing everything they could think up to wrest back a swing vote, including lobbying charges of everything from sexual harassment to parking violations at the sitting black commissioners. None of the charges have stuck, though. No evidence. No proof. To quote Nancy Jo Sales:

On the night of Monday, May 27th, there was a particularly heated City Commission meeting, about whether to fire Tony Smith, the town’s first black city manager and subject of the sexual harassment allegations. The atmosphere surrounding these issues was already so tense that the local NAACP had called for the formation of a public committee to deal with race relations. The next morning, Ray Golden was found hanging.

It was around this time that Martin Luther King III decided to travel to Belle Glade, in an attempt to get local authorities to take the investigation more seriously. The Orlando Sentinel quotes King’s staff on the kind of reception he received: **“Martin Luther King Jr. hasn’t received these kinds of threats since he traveled to Georgia as officials were considering changing the state flag in 2000.”** (Orlando Sentinel, “King’s Son’s Visit to Focus on Belle Glade Hanging”, September 13th, 2003, by Robert Eckhart)

Sadly, although an excited crowd turned out to greet the inspiring man whose father had changed the course of the Civil Rights Movement, in the end, King could do little to change the investigation—or lack of it.

Representative James “Hank” Harper, a Democrat from District 84, Palm Beach County, who had taken up the cause of securing truth in the Ray Golden hanging, had equally unpleasant experiences. A little history is in order: Harper had previously called for the ousting of Police Chief Michael Miller (the Machiavellian nature of black-white Belle Glade politics could be the subject of a book itself), hence the extreme lack of cooperation from the Belle Glade Police Department when Congressman Harper arrived. According to Nancy Jo Sales’ article, **“he wears a bulletproof vest when he travels to Belle Glade, and he never goes in the same car.”** Ms.

Sales then goes on to share with her readers an email that Harper received from some anonymous little person with an agenda and an axe to grind:

On August 6th, the same day an article appeared in The Palm Beach Post regarding Harper's

call for the ouster of Chief Michael Miller, Harper received this email from someone claiming to be representing the Klan.: "if the naacp and martin luther 3 comes to town, I will issue a firey summons[sic] to the Realm of Florida and we will meet this anti-christ, communist in the streets, with a peaceful protest...Every person in Florida, black or White, knows Belle Glade is a nasty rate infested rate hold[sic] of a ghetto. " This was signed "Tommy, Grand Dragon, ORION Knights, Realm of Florida."

The tragic fact of the matter is, the investigation into the death of Feraris "Ray" Golden never resulted in any sense of justice having been achieved, much less were there any suspects questioned or corralled. From the outset, the white police force in Belle Glade had not given a damn, a harsh comment which is borne out by the ridiculously botched investigation and the egregious lack of evidence which they clearly should have gathered.

It was when she neared the end of her maddening investigation that Nancy Jo Sales made a command decision—one similar to decisions made in so many of these cases, where the local authorities just don't seem to care. She took the evidence outside of the "good ol' boy" circle for a second opinion. One of the things that Nancy Jo Sales did was take the medical examiner's report to an outside expert—a couple of outside experts, in fact, to get their opinion on the death of Ray Golden. (Below, they will be talking about petechiae, a routinely predictable feature of hangings. Petechiae simply means that when hanging by the neck stops blood flow in the head of the deceased, blood builds up in the tiniest of delicate veins, because the blood is no longer pumping; this build up causes the veins to explode, leaving tell-tale petechiae, or red bursts.)

Back in New York, I went to see Dr. Lawrence Kobilinsky, associate provost of John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Kobilinsky is a forensic scientist. He's consulted on hundreds of cases; most notably, he's the one who told The Washington Post he thought the police had made mistakes in the Chandra Levy case. ...Kobilinsky drew my attention to the question of petechiae. "When someone is strangled or asphyxiated," he said, "there are petechiae—hemorrhages in the eye. It comes from blood pressure when you stop the flow of blood. If the person was dead first and then hung, you wouldn't see the petechiae come. It would happen [in a hanging], but you're not going to see it if the person was dead first." Golden's autopsy showed no evidence of petechiae ...

...After speaking with Kobilinsky, I called Christopher Wilson, the medical examiner on the Golden case ... "It's usual to not find petechiae in hangings." [said Wilson] But, the Journal of Forensics Science reports that "conjunctival and facial petechiae ... are considered hallmarks of

asphyxial deaths. “ Consensus in the literature suggests that Petechiae are corroborative evidence of asphyxia.”

Translation: the literature and the experts—with the exception of the local Belle Glade medical examiner, who claims it is “usual” to find an absence of the tiny burst blood vessels—all agree that petechiae of the eyeball, also known as blood hemorrhaging, will be routinely and predictably present in a hanging death. Only if the death occurred in some other fashion, and then the body was hanged, or staged, will there be a lack of petechiae. Feraris Golden had no petechiae.

Dan Paige, an attorney representing the Golden family and the local NAACP, said it best, regarding the controversy: *“It shouldn’t be a question of whether it was a suicide or a lynching. It should be a question of whether there’s enough questions here to do a murder investigation.”* Feraris Golden was known as an ebullient young man who loved his children and doted on his grandmother, whom he lived with. He was always struggling to better his life. Didn’t he deserve at least that? The basics of police procedure. A decent, thorough investigation—so that we might know whether or not there are murderers on the loose?

There are those of you who might respond by asking why any white person would have a motive to kill Ray Golden. If he didn’t kill himself, who did and why? The answer to that is easy, if you talk to just about anybody who knew Ray. Ray was dating a white woman—Judi Rebecca Stambaugh. Although Judi denied that they were actually dating at the time of the murder, she acknowledged that they “hung out” together frequently, and feels strongly that Ray did not hang himself, noting that **“there are just too many unanswered questions.** (From the “Death and Doubts” article.) She doesn’t think her father did it. Big surprise. But everybody in Belle Glade, except for the police force, which denies it vigorously, believes that Ray Golden was killed, and he was killed for dating a white woman. Although, some will tell you, it also could be connected to the fact that Ray Golden had a cordial relationship with his ex-wife, the mother of his children, and spent time with her in that capacity. And she was in a new marriage, an interracial relationship—with a white police officer.

But it’s not like you need a compelling reason to go after a black man if you are white in Belle Glade. There was the famous series of incidents in the 80’s that continues to haunt the black population in that town: nine white guys—two of whom were actually guards at the local prison, Glades Correctional Institution—formed a splinter white supremacist group after hearing the famous racist Glenn Miller (not to be confused with the famous band leader) ranting and raving on the radio. This group, calling themselves “The White Patriot Party”, shot out windows in a Burger King during a drive-by in which they were gunning for blacks who worked in the restaurant because, in their own words **“too many niggers work there”** . (This poses a conundrum: whites complain if too many blacks are on welfare, yet they try to shoot them if too

many of them are willing to work at minimum wage jobs.) Next, the fledgling White Patriot Party group threw Molotov cocktails in the street. Following that they ran over a black man. And most chillingly, they then outfitted an axe handle with spikes, so that they could swing it at black people walking down the street, as they approached from behind in their car. When they were finally caught, the group's defense was that they were ***"just a bunch of young boys who made a mistake."***

Someone needs to tell these white thugs, that hey that's what you say when you are caught cow-tipping, or swimming in the town water tower. Planning to take a whack at black people with spiked ax handles as you drive by, or running over them with your car is what we refer to as "Murder in the First Degree." Not First Degree Mistake. Police Chief Michael Miller described them as ***"a group of boys who were playing a little rough."***

The leader of the ring got the stiffest sentence, a whopping three years' probation. The rest got lesser sentences.

UPDATE: Just found on highbeam.com: Four years after the supposed "suicide" of Feraris, on July 15, 2007, his neighbor was found hanging from a tree about 120 yards away. This time the noose was not a rope or belt, but the chain from the hanging man's own front porch swing. But this was not a black man who had "committed suicide"; this was nobody less than retired former Police Chief Louis Lowery.

There is virtually no coverage of this bizarre synchronicity on the web. But increasingly, I am not surprised. Because that is the way of it in many small towns: if local papers cover it as minimally as they can get away with, then dump their web archives, it never leaks out to the world.

Perhaps, someday, the internet will change all of that. A kind of Abolitionist-Spring, like the Arab Spring. For are not the lynchings of today as much the purview and passion of modern abolitionists as was slavery in days gone by?

So, what happened to Police Chief Louis Lowery, anyway, with this coincidental "suicide"? Was it a true suicide, wrought out of guilt at the end of a man's life—a man who may have participated in the lynching of another human being? Or was he ready to confess all, then silenced before he could? I suspect we will never know.

Yet another unanswered question, in the mystery that is the death of Feraris "Ray" Golden.

But we are not quite done yet, with the sad story of Ray Golden.

I have saved "the best for last". Best for last may be an odd way of phrasing it, for there surely is nothing superlative about this sad story. But when I say "best", I mean the best example of the

police doing everything in their power to avoid investigating the death of just one more poor black man and—almost certainly, being pro-active in the efforts to protect a killer:

Police Chief Michael Miller has always hinged his conclusion that this was a suicide largely on his assertion that Ray's parents and grandmother were wrong when they claimed that Ray's hands were tied behind his back when the body was found. Ray's hands being tied behind his back would, of course, be certain evidence of an old fashioned lynching. And what did Miller proclaim loudly and repeatedly as proof that Ray's hands were, indeed, hanging free?

The fact that there is actual video on a cruiser dash cam which proves that: the footage clearly shows that Ray's hands are dangling free. So let's take one last visit to the writing of that summa cum laude prize winning journalist, and have her recount exactly what she saw on that supposedly vindicating dash cam footage:

“Chief Miller shows me the video. Shot by a camera installed in a police car, it shows a fast, rainy drive north up Southeast Third Street. There are already two other police cars parked in the road in front of Juanita's place. The car with the video pulls hard to the right and into the yard, stopping some 20 feet from the tree. Ray is hanging there, slowly swaying; it's hard to look. His long arms come down, his hands at his side, not bound in any way.”

(emphasis by underline added)

Alright, stop. Did we all just read the same thing? The Belle Glade police are already on scene when the dash cam cruiser arrives? Two cruisers are already there. Seriously? **Seriously?** But this is supposed to be ironclad proof that no, most certainly no, no cop interfered with the evidence, or cut free Ray's hands in an attempt to make this all go away quickly and quietly, just another black lynching himself?

Indeed, the Belle Glade police must think that we are as stupid as they are.

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The Neo Nazi Group information courtesy of:

7 Belle Glade Neo-Nazis Held in Plot Against Blacks, “The Sun-Sentinel Newspaper, July 4th, 1985 by Sally Geston

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CHAPTER THREE

SECURITY GUARD. GUARDIAN ANGEL. DOWN AND DEAD.

Eutawville, South Carolina. March 25th, 2011.

It started out simply enough. A panicky girl called her father because she had been pulled over late at night for a faulty tail light, and she needed her father to come and help her with the insurance information. And, Briana Bailey told her father, she did not feel safe around this particular law man.

Her father, fifty-three year old Bernard Bailey, is one of the good guys. A Walmart manager, he had recently retired from a lifetime of service to his government as a guard at the Department of Corrections. He was a 1978 graduate of Tennessee State. He had no criminal record, was admired and respected in the community (as the outpourings from hundreds of mourners at his funeral would clearly attest), and Bernard was also father to a large and loving family of five kids. He and his wife Doris had been married for twenty-five years. They were a devoted, churchgoing family. Bernard had been a lifelong member of Springfield Missionary Baptist Church.

Bernard Bailey's daughter was pulled over by a man named Richard Combs. It is worth noting that Police Chief Richard Combs was the lone cop—did you get that?—the **only cop** working for the tiny town of Eutawville. As in, he wasn't technically "Chief of" anybody. Perhaps the townspeople would not have been so quick to let him be the only person in charge of law and order, had they known that he had been fired from his last job in law enforcement.

Bernard Bailey—a black man—came to the rescue of his daughter, and what happened after that was all captured on the cruiser's dash cam. The local paper, The Daily Herald, offers an analysis of the dash cam footage of that traffic stop:

"No physical confrontation is seen and most of the video simply shows Bernard Bailey on his cellphone or standing by his daughter's car. Briana testified that her father was calling her mother [it was her birthday] and the Orangeburg County Sheriff's Department to have a deputy come to the scene."

Yet, in spite of this video evidence of the almost boring traffic stop, Police Chief Combs would later write the following in his official statement of events:

“Because Mr. Bailey was so aggressive at his daughter’s traffic stop, I felt confident Mr. Bailey would become physically violent and combative if he was approached at his home with a felony arrest warrant.” (Emphasis added)

Interesting: by the end of this entire incident—this minor tail light traffic stop—more officers had appeared, per the phoned in requested of both Bailey and Combs, yet none of these officers saw anything troubling in Bernard Bailey’s behavior. They saw no need to warn him, restrain him, or arrest him. It is also worth noting, as came out in the murder trial that erupted out of all of this, that Bernard Bailey was able to fix the tail light just by jiggling it, causing some to theorize that the Police Chief himself had sabotaged it while walking from his patrol car to Briana’s car.

May 2nd, 2011. Six weeks later, Bernard Bailey went down to the courthouse, the day before his daughter’s court date, to see if he could just pay the ticket then and there, or at least get the court date for the ticket changed: his daughter had not been able to make it back from college for the hearing. And yet, perversely enough, Police Chief Combs refused to discuss the matter with Bernard Bailey. He said he would only discuss it with Bailey’s daughter.

Seriously? A father goes down to say his daughter is in college and isn’t able to get away, and instead of the officer just handling it, like most other normal people in his position in any other jurisdiction in the entire country would, he refuses to even discuss it with concerned father Bernard Bailey? Is it just me, or are we getting the feeling that this guy is a total jerk, not suited for law enforcement? Whatever happened to community good will? **Not only** was Briana **not** expected in court for anything criminal, it was a tail light fix-it ticket. It’s not even a moving violation. Seriously? **Seriously?** But according to witnesses who worked in the courthouse, Police Chief Combs wouldn’t even discuss a change of date with Bernard Bailey, nor would he let Bernard pay the ticket. We have to consider what would have happened had it been the white mayor’s daughter.

It was then that Combs told Bailey he was under arrest: Felony Obstruction of Justice, for the incident on the side of the road a month and a half earlier. Arrested. As in, Combs intended to cuff Bailey and throw him in jail, right then and there. It was then that a dumbfounded Bernard Bailey had had enough, refused to accept the warrant, huffed out the door, through the parking lot, and to his truck, Combs following behind.

(Whoa. Back up. The father comes down to sort out a traffic stop involving his daughter ...the dash cam footage from that traffic stop six weeks ago with Bailey’s daughter showing no physical confrontation between Bernard Bailey and Chief Combs, absolutely no profanity or threats of any kind, even the other officers called in as back-up clearly seeing the tail light imbroglio as a non-event ... and this cop swears out a **felony arrest warrant?** The very essence of law enforcement’s job, which is to first of all de-escalate and diffuse, has been completely

ignored and disrespected by Combs's ridiculous and arrogant actions. Instead, this cop's plan is a felony warrant for a dad who came to help a frightened daughter.)

It is worth noting that Combs had just completed his police chief's training in Eutawville four days before the fatal shooting. Even more damning, according to the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy, Combs was discharged from the nearby Orangeburg County Police Department in 2007 for "unsatisfactory performance".

But back to the drama unfolding that day at the courthouse.

It is agreed that Bernard Bailey got in his truck. It is agreed (even by Combs himself) that Combs got right up in Bernard Bailey's face, in the truck cab, as Combs stood just outside the truck. And it is agreed that Combs shot Bailey dead. The particulars: Combs testified that he reached into Bailey's truck and tried to turn off the ignition. But (according to Combs) Bernard was in the process of backing out of the parking space when Combs attempted to get the keys—Bernard's truck moving at a measly three miles per hour, according to forensics experts—so Combs felt his life was threatened, and he shot Bailey three times.

There you have it.

Now, even if I play devil's advocate, and argue in favor of the police officer—I would have to ask Chief Combs: if you think this man is so dangerous, so volatile, as you have sworn in a written statement, why are you following him to his car, and then aggressively leaning into that car, where Bernard Bailey could have easily retrieved a weapon and shot you? He has refused to accept your arrest warrant, so this is precisely the time to call for back-up and serve him in a different context, a different location. Instead, your decision is to open the door of his truck and place yourself between the truck door and the now moving vehicle. Unprofessional—no, stupid. Your next decision is even worse. Finding yourself off balance with your adrenalin pumping, you discharge your weapon three times, in a public place, on a busy day. Stupid. Stupid, dangerous, and deadly.

To quote Circuit Court Judge Edgar Dickson, when Combs's defense asked for immunity from prosecution on the shooting charges: ***"There was no need for Mr. Combs to act as he did on May 2nd, 2011, when Mr. Bailey refused service, as Mr. Combs expected would happen. Mr. Combs should have allowed Mr. Bailey to leave and then enlisted the assistance of other officers or served the warrant at court as he originally planned."***

It is worth pointing out one other small detail regarding the endgame of that tragic morning in front of the court house: Combs claimed that Bailey was backing up when he chose to shoot him three times. Yet forensic analysis told the sad and simple truth: Bernard Bailey was found with

his foot on the brake. According to experts analyzing the scene, Bernard had started to back out, but then stopped as soon as the altercation began.

There is ample evidence that Combs was not telling the truth about the nature of the shooting; and this is the crux of the matter, because Combs claimed that he had fallen down and that Bailey was “coming towards me” when Combs fired the three shots. But Combs’s story, like the magic Kennedy-Connally bullet, requires that we suspend the laws of physics. The forensics evidence, the ballistics, simply don’t support Combs’s version of reality. He claims that Bailey was coming at him, yet the bullet that killed Bailey entered through the left shoulder, shot through the jaw, and lodged in Bernard Bailey’s skull. Impossible to do, if somebody is looming over you.

Here is an excerpt of transcripts from Combs’s trial. In this part of the trial, Prosecutor David Pascoe questions Combs about his recounting of the shooting, and it is clear from his tone that he doesn’t believe Combs:

(<http://www.youtube.com> OR YOUTUBE: “Stand Your Ground pretrial hearing for former Eutawville Police Chief”, on the Time and Democrat channel.)

PROSECUTOR PASCOE (to Combs): Alright. First two shots are going to be to the chest area, correct? And that’s consistent with the autopsy report that you’ve looked at, correct? One shot, almost point blank range, right here in the chest. Alright? Another shot right down here, near the abdomen, near the chest, correct? Those obviously are going to be your first two shots. Now the third shot goes through the shoulder, right here, correct, goes into his jaw, correct? Through his jaw, and is found back here in the back, towards the back of the head.

COMBS: I wasn’t aware of that.

PROSECUTOR: Well, if that’s true, then none of the slugs would have caused that. The other thing I’d like for you to tell me is how that shot occurred if he’s coming toward you?

COMBS: As far as what? I mean, you’re standing, I’m below him, I’m not on the ground at that point.

PROSECUTOR: Well, I’ll be right here, (Prosecutor Pascoe gets on the floor, near the man who is posing as Bailey in the courtroom re-enactment). So I’m below him. And you’re saying he rose up toward you?

COMBS: When I fired, he was coming towards me, yes.

PROSECUTOR: (incredulous) You’re telling the court that he’s coming towards you after you shot him two times at point blank range with a forty caliber pistol, in the chest?

COMBS: Yes sir.

PROSECUTOR: That didn't knock him back? He came toward you?

COMBS: He came towards me.

PROSECUTOR: (Sarcastic) Gotcha. Good. That makes sense. Now tell me also how you got the third shot in?

COMBS: Like I said, I mean he was coming back at me, that's when I fired the third shot.

PROSECUTOR: (clearly skeptical) I just wanna make sure. Double check. Are you sure the third shot didn't happen as you've already stuck two bullets in his chest forty caliber, which would knock him back that way, (Pascoe indicates Bailey's body slumped away from the door, towards the passenger seat), that third shot didn't go through his shoulder, through his jaw and into the back of his head?. .. (Sarcastic) That's not how it happened?

Note that the autopsy contradicts Combs's assertion that Bailey was coming towards him in a threatening manner, while Combs was knocked down on the ground. Also, the third shot that killed Bailey came from the side, went through his left shoulder, through his jaw, and lodged in his skull, suggesting that Bailey was not looming over him, as Combs alleges. Combs clearly did not need to fire "the kill shot". Bernard Bailey surely was slumped over at that point. Bernard Bailey died needlessly.

It is also worth noting that Combs was tongue tied and inarticulate when the prosecutor tried to make sense of why Combs would serve up a felony warrant in the first place, carrying with it a possible ten year prison sentence, for a man who simply came down to help his confused and frightened daughter with a traffic stop at 2:15 in the morning. Below are the direct trial transcripts, and a link to the action:

(<http://www.youtube.com> OR YOUTUBE "Former Police Chief Takes The Stand", Times and Democrat channel.)

PROSECUTOR: Exactly when was Mr. Bailey obstructing justice?

COMBS: During the traffic stop, sir.

PROSECUTOR: Was he obstructing justice when he fixed the tail light that you said was broken?

COMBS: I don't know that he fixed the tail light, sir.

PROSECUTOR: Was he obstructing justice when he called 911 because he didn't trust you? Was that obstructing justice?

COMBS: I didn't know that he called 911.

PROSECUTOR: Or was he obstructing justice when he said thank you, sir, have a good night?

COMBS: I don't recall that he said that.

PROSECUTOR: It's on the video. You didn't hear it?

COMBS: I didn't recall that.

PROSECUTOR: Is it possible that you didn't recall a lot of things from that night? And that's why you made the bad decision to get the Obstruction of Justice Warrant?

(Unintelligible from other lawyers in background.)

PROSECUTOR: Let me ask you this? What were you thinking? Charging someone with the ten year crime of Obstruction of Justice over a broken tail light?

COMBS: Sir, the events that occurred that night fit the charges of Obstruction of Justice

PROSECUTOR: That's right, I forgot. You actually took the time to look at the statute of Obstruction of Justice.

COMBS: I checked the statutes.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: And, just for the record. South Carolina has no "statutes" regarding "obstruction of justice." It is common law, and, one might add, common sense. It is hard to believe that there is a reasonable and just police officer out there—and I believe there are many such men and women—who would think that a father visiting his daughter at a traffic stop at two a.m. rises to the level of obstruction of justice, much less a felony. Both the dash cam, as well as the other officers who arrived on scene, corroborate the fact that Bernard Bailey's presence there was, for all intents and purposes, a non-event.

What happened out of all this? Was justice meted out? I leave it to you:

—The United States Department of Justice investigated the shooting, but chose not to file charges.

—On December 3rd, 2014, a grand jury indicted Combs for murder. On January 13th, 2015, a mistrial in the murder trial against Combs was declared, as a jury could not come to a unanimous

decision about Combs's guilt. Nine people of the twelve person jury (seven blacks, five whites) found him guilty. But ultimately, all twelve could not agree on a verdict. Combs was once again a free man. And Bernard Bailey was still a dead man.

—In the summer of 2015, the prosecution decided to re-try Combs. Again, a hung jury.

—In September of 2015, rather than go through a third trial, Combs agreed to a plea deal. The murder charge was dropped and he pled guilty to misconduct with a penalty of one year house arrest.

Disappointing, of course, in fact “disappointing” does not begin to describe it. One wonders what these two and a half trials cost the taxpayers. And much of the public has been quick to ask why everything took so long. A homicide in 2011, and a mistrial in 2015? As it happens, the Prosecutor Pascoe (who, if you study the video of the trial, actually is doing everything in his power to hold Combs accountable for killing Bernard Bailey) will tell you that it took seemingly forever to get Combs's first defense thrown out. Are you ready for this? Combs's first defense was ... wait for it ... “Stand Your Ground”. He issues a felony warrant, pursues the guy out to his truck, leans in, grabs for the keys, but then defends the three gunshots he fired that killed the man as “Stand Your Ground.”

AUTHOR'S ASIDE In cases like this, the lily white among us, of whom I am one, are quick to engage in Monday morning quarterbacking and say “Well, just don't resist arrest.” Sounds like good advice at face. But in a world of camera phones, where evidence of excessive force, police brutality, and even the planting of evidence are all rampant, anybody who doesn't understand the yawning terror that a black man experiences at the thought of submitting himself to a pack of white officers just isn't using his imagination, his sense of history—or, perhaps most importantly, his compassion. But we will cover this more in a chapter on “resisting arrest” containing some very enraging YouTube footage. Hey, I'm not saying resisting arrest is a good idea. I'm just saying that the system's failure to ever—or at least, almost never—convict police for anything is a travesty. It is disingenuous, and it has disinspired certain factions of minorities from obeying the law. Why should they, when the law doesn't seem to apply to authority figures? There is abundant proof that some police officers think they can get away with just about anything. And if you don't believe me, just ask Isaac Woodard.

Oh, and here is one last question that is needling me. Did we really have to shoot Mr. Bailey dead with a 40 caliber weapon? Had Mr. Combs never heard of mace? Pepper spray? A Taser? Some cops seem in love with their Tasers, and while I think it sounds like a ghastly experience, to be on the receiving end of a Taser shot, I think we would all agree that it is not as ghastly as being dead. The town of Eutawville bemoans that their struggling small town budget is

inadequate to properly outfit their tiny police force, but I looked it up, and a Taser is about sixty bucks. Mace is twelve. You can even get a lipstick size mini shot for eight bucks.

Eutawville did not have eight dollars to save a black man's life. To give their police chief an option other than a 40 caliber weapon. I find this odd, because in the years since Bernard Bailey's shooting, what they *have* had money for is: \$455 bucks for a village wine tasting, a town administration annual budget totaling \$131,988 dollars, \$135,000 dollars for a park and walking trail, \$2500 dollars for (what must be a glaringly ugly) LED sign that flashes and tells you when the next town council meeting is, and lastly, an undisclosed sum to be spent on a public address system with eight microphones for the members of the town council to use at their meetings. We should note that the population of Eutawville is 307 people. So assuming that the entire population attends the scintillating town council meeting (which has never happened in the history of town council meetings in the entire history of the world, town council meetings being about as interesting as watching a scab form), and further assuming that 8 of those 307 are on the speaking person's side of the mic, that is basically one microphone for every 37.375 people. Really? You need a microphone so that 37 people in the first two rows can hear you? Seriously? It would have been much easier and cheaper to just have the local drama teacher come in and give everybody in the town council a few lessons in how to project your voice.

So. Money for microphones and parks and wine tastings.

But, no money for non-lethal weapons. Not even that hot pink lipstick shaped one from Amazon for eight bucks...

Although, an examination of the Eutawville town minutes (or town minuets, as they are sometimes typed) may suggest that the Eutawville Town Council are a few frogs short of a healthy pond ecosystem: While all the investigation and preliminary trial proceedings relative to the Richard Combs's case were making headline news, Council Member Roger Adkins stated ***"We have some of the finest police force I have ever known."*** This regarding his one police officer, who was at that moment being investigated by the Feds.

Then again, these are the same May 2013 minutes in which the Eutawville Town Council proudly and unanimously announced, in honor of their fine police force, that all ***"Fags to be flown at half-staff."***

Interesting image. Interesting image indeed.

Five hundred people attended Bernard Bailey's funeral. (In a town of 307 people, keep in mind.) There were friends from work, people who knew him from his days as a Tennessee State Tiger ... and lots and lots of family. There was his wife, Doris, his mother, Annie, his sisters Dorothy,

Margaret, Shirley, and JoAnne, his brothers William, Archie, and the Reverend Dr. Kenneth Bailey ... there were, of course, his children, Briana (who will no doubt forever be haunted by her decision to call her father out that night), Kayla, Porcha, Charity, and Bernard, and lastly, his growing family of grandchildren: Kamero, Ryann, McKenzie, and Brooklyn. Now, they all must grow up without this warm and wonderful man in their lives, because of a malicious felony obstruction warrant, and a cop whose best plan was to shoot Bernard Bailey in cold blood rather than take any other available option. To gun down one more black man.

Rest in Peace, Bernard Bailey.

SOURCES:

Mistrial Declared for Ex-Police Chief Who Killed unarmed South Carolina Man” by Alan Blinder, New York Times, January 13th, 2015

“White South Carolina x-police chief charged with murdering unarmed black man”, by Glenn Smith and Thad Moore, December 4th, 2014 Post and Courier, Charleston, South Carolina

“Defense begins its case in ex-police chief’s murder trial” by Stacy Jacobson, January 8th, 2015 KOKH TV, Oklahoma City

Judge declares mistrial in murder case of white South Carolina police chief who shot dead black unarmed man 2011, AP and Daily Email Reporter, January 13th, 2015 “Daily Mail, O.K.

YOUTUBE: Search “Richard Combs Trial” particularly “Times and Democrat” Channel

EPILOGUE TO THE BERNARD BAILEY SHOOTING:

WHO IS RICHARD COMBS?

Since the trial(s) of the disgraced Richard Combs took over four years and God knows how many taxpayer dollars, it is only natural—and gratifying—that some reporters dug in hard, and got some illuminating and gratifying deep background. (“Pascoe: Open Chief’s record at murder trial”, by Martha Rose Brown. Times and Democrat. June 12th, 2015.) And while I could put this information about the history of Richard Combs back in the beginning of the chapter, somehow it seems more appropriate that I add it here, as a kind of Post Script, since it comes from an article published more than four years after the killing. More importantly, however, it reminds us that while the lives of the victims end, end hard and fast, the incompetence within police and

sheriff departments that begins with the horrifically botched hiring practices seems to go on, and on, and on, with no end in sight.

With that said: Six incidents in Richard Combs's career should have served as red flags. SIX. Six in six years. You'd think this might have tipped his superiors off, that a disaster was impending. That tragedy was an inevitability. Kind of the way we are all waiting to see what happens to George Zimmerman, and that infamous temper of his. The sins and follies of Richard Combs were laid out in a document filed by the case prosecutor, David Pascoe, referred to earlier in this chapter. (And it turns out that Combs's deadly encounter with Bailey wasn't the first time he'd inappropriately pulled his service weapon on an unarmed person inside of a vehicle.)

Let's go in reverse chronological order, shall we, because it shows with increasing intensity the obvious extent to which Richard Combs was always a problem. Always, from the very beginning. And also, I assure you, it's the most fun:

1. Eutawville Mayor Jean Atkins issued Combs a reprimand (the report does not say what for) in March of 2011, just a couple of weeks after he had been appointed "Chief of Police" (aka, "Chief of Nobody"). This means that it was right around the time that the Bailey incident began, with the bizarre taillight stop that ended in a man's death. We can only wonder what the hell that reprimand was about.
2. Same Mayor gave the same fool, Cop Combs, another reprimand a couple of months before that. The reprimand was issued because Combs became angry and threw a fit about not being consulted over a design change to the town's police vehicles.

Ah, but what about his august tenure while working as a deputy at the Orangeburg County Sheriff's Department, prior to his being fired from there and then being named police chief of Eutawville? Again, we must state that if anybody had looked at Combs's record, they never would have hired him as police chief. Three—THREE times—Combs had to be suspended from his duties for his behavior, before the Orangeburg Sheriff's Department finally had the good sense to suspend him on August 8th, 2007.

On Aug. 17, 2006, Combs was reportedly suspended for threatening to "***kick the Sergeant's ass***" during a training exercise.

On April 4, 2007, Combs was placed on administrative leave and ultimately suspended for reporting to work intoxicated and driving his county-issued vehicle while under the influence of alcohol, the filing said. Combs "***drove and reported to duty with a blood alcohol level of .089.***"

On Aug. 8, 2007, Combs reportedly received another reprimand after becoming irate with a supervisor during a disagreement over an office chair.

But I have, as promised, saved the best for last.

Combs was a deputy with the Orangeburg County Sheriff's Office, he was once suspended for three days (*wait till you read this and you'll go "only three days?!?"*), back in 2005, after he chased down a person and ordered the driver of the vehicle out at gunpoint. Combs was off-duty when he used a county-issued vehicle to chase the person. Orangeburg County Sheriff's Office records show that Major Barbara Walters conducted an internal investigation of Combs's actions of June 23, 2005 and stated, "***I found no evidence or reason that would have caused Sgt. Combs to believe that someone was so perilously in danger that it would necessitate a response in the manner he gave it.***" But it gets richer still: According to the report, Combs was only wearing only bedroom slippers and boxer shorts when he pulled the person over and demanded that they get out of the car. (Now just picture that in your head, and see if you don't bust out laughing.) (But on the other hand, think how unbelievably grateful the driver of that car is, right about now, that he isn't dead.)

And that, ladies and gentlemen, is Richard Combs, the man who gunned down Bernard Bailey. That, ladies and gentlemen, is the man who was empowered to carry and use a deadly weapon.

And they wonder why we are all, always, so very angry.

CHAPTER FOUR

TRAYVON MARTIN MEETS THE ANGEL OF DEATH

It was a story that gripped the nation. Or, as I have been forced to say too many times in this book, a story that gripped the people in the nation who care. A seventeen year old boy, Trayvon Martin, had gone to the store to buy some Arizona Ice Tea and Skittles. An overzealous neighborhood watch volunteer, now infamously known as George Zimmerman, didn't like the looks of this kid. He called the cops. The cops told him to stay safely planted in his vehicle, and they would be there in a matter of minutes. George Zimmerman, not a man prone to following good advice, ignored the police and started following Trayvon.

What happened next is a matter of great debate, although we will prove in this chapter that, when it comes to George Zimmerman's version of events, he is lying. He must be lying. To prove this point we will use the tools that we employ throughout this book: logic, forensic evidence, and the laws of physics. And of course, there are Zimmerman's own words, which damn him for all time in the eyes of many enraged citizens, even if he was found Not Guilty by a jury. (We will touch on that as well.)

The single most important fact to come out of that night is that a seventeen year old unarmed black boy who was looking forward to having some snacks and playing video games with his friend ended up dead in the middle of a Florida condominium complex because a bully named George Zimmerman lacks self-control, reason, and compassion.

This is what we will undertake to prove in this chapter. Because if we do not, we have no doubt that George Zimmerman will come after us and sue us for everything we've got. Suing people is what George Zimmerman does, since apparently he is not interested in holding down a job to make a living.

THE LIES OF GEORGE ZIMMERMAN

LIES ABOUT HIS PAST

George Zimmerman is a liar. It seems pathological with him. He lies so much that it would appear he can't help but lie. Let's go over the lies of George Zimmerman, as we ponder why the hell the jury chose to believe him, and not convict him of murder. It is worth noting that Zimmerman went into this confrontation with a documented record of acting like an irrational

kook. Specifically, Zimmerman had called the local Emergency Response Services forty-six times with complaints, problems, and petite paranoias.

In fact, just for fun, let's look at the complaint history that George Zimmerman had with the police, prior to the famous 911 call that he made about Trayvon Martin on that rainy February Florida night. For it is impossible to fully appreciate the kind of bizarre psychosis one is dealing with, in the person of George Zimmerman, until one has seen his call history, in his self-titled role as Community Watchman Extraordinaire.

(Any abbreviations or misspelling come directly from the police reports; read as *[sic]*.)

General Terms:

TEL = non-911 police number (answered by 911 dispatcher)

BM = black male

LSW = last seen wearing

46. Feb. 26, 2012 – 7:20 p.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Suspicious activity

Report: Repeats prior report

45. Feb. 26, 2012 (night of Martin shooting) – 7:11 p.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Suspicious activity

Report: Black male “late teens lsw dark gray hoodie jeans or sweatpants walking around area”
... “subj now running towards back entrance of complex”

44. Feb. 2, 2012 – 8:29 p.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Suspicious activity

Report: "BM lsw: black leather jacket, black hat, printed PJ pants, he keeps going to this" location

43. Jan. 29, 2012 – 5:38 p.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Disturbance

Report: Children "running and playing in the street"

42. Dec. 10, 2011 – 5:29 p.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Disturbance

Report: "At the club house" ... "Male subject [arrived on scene] that thought he was employed by" Zimmerman ... "Subj is expected to get paid for serving food." ... Zimmerman "said that he didn't wish him to serve at the [event]" ... Zimmerman "hired someone else, subj sounded upset and wants to get paid"

41. Oct. 1, 2011 – 12:53 a.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Suspicious activity

Report: Two black male suspects "20-30 YOA in [white] Chevy poss Impala at the gate of the community." Zimmerman "does not recognize subjs or veh and is concerned due to recent" burglaries in the area

40. Sept. 23, 2011 – 11:08 p.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Neighbor/Suspicious activity

Report: Zimmerman reports “open garage door” ... Describes “neighborhood watch mtg last night with Sgt Herx who [advised] to report anything [suspicious]” ... Zimmerman “is part of neighborhood watch” and is concerned because of recent burglaries in the area

39. Aug. 6, 2011 – 10:20 p.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Suspicious activity

Report: Two black males, one wearing a black tank top and black shorts, the second wearing a black t-shirt and jeans ... “Subjs are in their teens”

38. Aug. 3, 2011 – 6:45 p.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Suspicious activity

Report: Black male last seen wearing a white tank top and black shorts ... Zimmerman “believes subject is involved in recent” burglaries in the neighborhood

37. May 27, 2011 – 9:18 a.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Alarm

Report: Zimmerman “has a self-responding alarm that just notified him of” an alarm at this location

36. April 22, 2011 – 7:09 p.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Suspicious activity

Report: Juvenile black male “apprx 7–9” years old, four feet tall “skinny build short blk hair” last seen wearing a blue t-shirt and blue shorts

35. March 18, 2011 – 9:26 p.m.

Type: 911

Subject: Animals

Report: Zimmerman requested an officer meet him regarding a pit bull in his garage

34. Nov. 26, 2010 – 2:54 a.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Alarm

Report: Zimmerman was out of town and a motion alarm he monitors himself went off

33. Nov. 8, 2010 – 6:54 p.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Maintenance

Report: Zimmerman reports “trash in roadway”

32. Oct. 2, 2010 – 1:55 p.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Disturbance

Report: Zimmerman reports “blue jeep grand Cherokee female driver yelling at elderly passengers ... windows are tinted” ... “the vehicle was rocking back and forth and he could hear the female yelling”

31. June 26, 2010 – 11:00 p.m.

Type: 911

Subject: Disturbance

Report: “Loud party ... approx 50 subjs & blocking the street”

30. June 12, 2010 – 11:13 p.m.

Type: 911

Subject: Disturbance

Report: Subject “at the clubhouse & pool areas having a party”

29. April 28, 2010 – 9:02 p.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Disturbance

Report: “White older model four-door Buick or Oldsmobile” obstructing road

28. Feb. 27, 2010 – 4:46 p.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Suspicious activity

Report: “Residence w/a lot of [suspicious] activity” ... “multiple vehs are constantly coming to the” location ... “unk subs run out to the vehs and run back inside” ... “the subjs are always outside w/the garage open” ... “the subjs hang out towards the st all night//ongoing problem”

27. Jan. 12, 2010 – 10:25 p.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Neighbor

Report: Open garage door ... Zimmerman says “this is very unlike his neighbor” ... “there is a lot of electronics in the resd and posb in the garage”

26. Jan. 1, 2010 – 4:34 a.m.

Type: 911

Subject: Disturbance

Report: Zimmerman reports reckless driver in “purplish Ford Ranger single cab”

25. Nov. 3, 2009 – 5:04 p.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Disturbance

Report: White Ford F350 that was “cutting people off”

24. Nov. 21, 2009 – 2:26 p.m.

Type: 911

Subject: Unclear

23. Oct. 23, 2009 – 9:18 a.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Animals

Report: “Aggressive white and brown pitbull” sitting outside Zimmerman’s home

22. Sept. 22, 2009 – 6:00 p.m.

Type: 911

Subject: Disturbance

Report: "Yellow speed bike ... was speeding and weaving in and out of traffic and doing wheelies"

21. Sept. 7, 2009 – 9:01 p.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Maintenance

Report: "Pot hole in the road" ... "it is deep and can cause damage to vehicles"

20. Aug. 26, 2009 - 8:35 p.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Suspicious activity

Report: "Gold Caprice ... male driving with no headlights ... speeding"

19. Aug. 21, 2009 – 6:57 p.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Conflict

Report: "Landlord is trying to take [Zimmerman's] money for rent ... and home in foreclosure"

18. June 16, 2009 – 3:50 p.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Disturbance

Report: Persons in the pool area playing basketball, "jumpin over the fence going into pool area and trashin the bathroom"

17. June 10, 2009 – 1:55 a.m.

Type: 911

Subject: Alarm

Report: Fire alarm going off

16. May 4, 2009 – 4:07 p.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Suspicious activity

Report: Reports a blue Audi A4

15. March 12, 2009 – 6:58 p.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Patrol

Report: Patrol request between March 13 and March 22

14. Jan. 5, 2009 – 10:53 p.m.

Type: 911

Subject: Alarm

Report: Fire alarm going off

13. Nov. 25, 2007 – 12:40 a.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Disturbance

Report: "Ex roommate is letting people that [Zimmerman] don't like in the" house

12. Nov. 25, 2007 – 12:21 a.m.

Type: 911

Subject: Disturbance

Report: White male ex-roommate last seen wearing a red Florida State University shirt

11. Oct. 14, 2007 – 4:10 p.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Suspicious activity

Report: Possible criminal mischief to the tire of Zimmerman's black Dodge Durango

10. June 24, 2007 – 12:48 a.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Suspicious activity

Report: "By the pool", two Hispanic males and one white male with "slim jim"

9. Nov. 4, 2006 – 2:37 a.m.

Type: TEL

Subject: Suspicious activity

Report: A call regarding a "late model red" Toyota pickup "driving around the neighborhood and apt complex for the past 5 min"

8. Sept. 23, 2005 – 7:03 p.m.

Type: 911

Subject: Suspicious activity

Report: Zimmerman's "little sister just call him from above" his address and advises "there was a" suspicious person "at the front door"

7. Sept. 21, 2005 – 9:00 p.m.

Type: 911

Subject: Animals

Report: Reports a stray dog

6. April 27, 2005 – 12:40 a.m.

Type: 911

Subject: Neighbor

Report: Open garage door

5. March 17, 2005 – 7:21 p.m.

Type: 911

Subject: Maintenance

Report: Pothole "that is blocking the road"

4. Oct. 20, 2004 – 9:13 p.m.

Type: 911

Subject: Disturbance

Report: Drunk pedestrian walking in the road

3. Aug. 20, 2004 – 11:33 p.m.

Type: 911

Subject: Neighbor

Report: Reports an open garage door

2. Aug.12, 2004 – 10:03 a.m.

Type: 911

Subject: Suspicious activity

Report: Repeats earlier report

1. Aug. 12, 2004 – 9:59 a.m.

Type: 911

Subject: Suspicious activity

Report: Places a call reporting a male in a green Ford pickup

But now, let's begin with the lies. Keep in mind that Zimmerman knew nothing about "Stand Your Ground" laws going into this tragic confrontation. I know this because that is what he told Sean Hannity during a July 18th, 2012 interview.

ZIMMERMAN LIE NUMBER ONE: Oh wait. That is his first lie. George Zimmerman knew everything about "Stand Your Ground." He knew damn well that he could kill the kid and have a good chance of getting away with it. How do we know that? One of Zimmerman's Seminole County State college professors, Alexias Carter, who taught a criminal law course involving extensive Stand Your Ground laws where Zimmerman was a student in 2010, testified that he remembers Zimmerman for being one of his better students who got an A grade in the course. Apparently Zimmerman knew the Stand Your Ground law better than most others, perhaps well enough to try and get away with murder.

ZIMMERMAN LIE NUMBER TWO: George Zimmerman's next lie about his past. He tried to pass himself off to the policeman as a good guy, a choirboy, an upright citizen. After George Zimmerman was arrested that night for shooting Trayvon, the police asked him point blank if he

had a record. Zimmerman said he did not. Liar. Liar. He had a record from 2005. There were two different incidents. Two different acts of violence:

— July 2005, Zimmerman was arrested and accused of resisting an officer with violence near the University of Central Florida campus after a scuffle with police. The charges were eventually dropped after Zimmerman entered an alcohol education program.

— August 2005, Zimmerman's former fiancé filed for a restraining order against him, alleging domestic violence. Zimmerman responded by requesting a restraining order against her. Both requests were granted. No criminal charges were filed.

If taken as individual events, we could minimize them—a harmless drunken brawl in the first place, a “he said she said” in the latter. Only one problem with that. In the years that would follow, George would build up quite a record for violence, particularly against women.

THE LIES OF GEORGE ZIMMERMAN

A DEADLY NIGHT

(Note: I could certainly understand if people who are deeply familiar with the case would feel that this list was not complete. There seems to be no end to George's lies.)

ZIMMERMAN LIE NUMBER THREE: The fatal clash of those two lives started with Trayvon Martin circling the vehicle of a passive, frightened George Zimmerman, who was minding his own business, just sitting in his car. Imagine how terrifying this would be—a swarthy faced, hooded man, circling your car. We know this happened because George Zimmerman told the police that's what happened. Later that night. And he made sure that the news outlets all knew, because this made Trayvon look like one bad dude. who needed to be shot. Except one problem. In his initial call to police (not 911, but non-emergency, since he was already getting a reputation with the police for being a crackpot, having called forty-six times before with some perceived threat or nuisance), George Zimmerman *did not* mention this. Again, George Zimmerman did not bother to mention, during the prolonged six minute conversation he initially had with the police (a call which recounts in excoriating detail every single thing George sees Trayvon doing), that even as George was talking to the police, Trayvon was circling his car

for a good portion of the conversation. Keep in mind that the first part of the conversation took place while George was sitting in the car. Eerie black man circling your car as you talk, but you don't bring that up. Lie. Lie, lie, lie.

ZIMMERMAN LIE NUMBER FOUR: The entire strength of Zimmerman's Stand Your Ground defense is predicated upon the legal lynchpin that Trayvon attacked him. If he was stalking Trayvon, everything would fall apart. That is why the "T" version of the story is so important to Zimmerman. But like everything else about the murder, it does not hold up to scrutiny. The "T" version of the murder has been written about at length; there are many analyses of it on the web. Essentially, it goes like this.

- a.) Zimmerman was just innocently sitting in his car when Trayvon popped up in his neighborhood, acting suspiciously. Suspicious apparently, because he was black, and wearing a hoodie. (And of course, a crazed and dangerous Trayvon started circling George's car.)
- b.) Although he was expressly told by the police not to, George got out of the car to follow Trayvon and then, when Trayvon disappeared, George continued walking down the sidewalk to get to the front of some of the townhouses, ostensibly so he could have a street name to give to the officers—or so that's what George told police. Try not to laugh at the fact that George Zimmerman was a big neighborhood watch guy in his townhouse development of three streets, but he did not know the names of those streets.
- c.) While George Zimmerman was "innocently" returning to his car, Trayvon leapt out of bushes and attacked; a fight ensued which led to Trayvon's death.

THE "T": According to Zimmerman, his car was parked at one end of "The T". (Think two cement sidewalks intersecting in the shape of a "T".) The sidewalk that George stepped onto, out of his parked car, constitutes the top bar or line of "The T". Zimmerman continued on the sidewalk, which would be him going from the left of that horizontal bar to the far right of that horizontal bar, which constitutes the top of "The T". Try to picture it: only if Trayvon attacked him along that path, going from the left to the right of "The T", does the crucial "Stand Your Ground"—which might be all that stands between Zimmerman and a murder conviction—have any credibility. As soon as George steps off of the top of "The T", he is no longer the victim. George Zimmerman becomes the aggressor.

He is actively pursuing Trayvon Martin.

But here is the great problem, one that strangely enough was never made into enough of an issue during trial. The deadly fight did not take place anywhere along George Zimmerman's walking path, from the car to the place where he could get an address; i.e, traversing the top of "The T" from left to right. The fight took place forty feet down the sidewalk. Forty feet from the intersection of "The T". Not only was that where Trayvon's body was found, but also the detritus of the death: cellphone, flashlight, etcetera. George Zimmerman wants it both ways, which in his case coalesces into a lie: he tells investigators that at the intersection of "The T", Trayvon sucker punched him in the nose, and knocked him down. But then, when talking to the police investigators and realizing that the location of Trayvon's body makes this fairy tale impossible, George invents a lame story about staggering around for yards and yards down the leg of "The T", presumably as the hyper aggressive Trayvon just stops attacking him for a moment, and idly watches? Bull. Lies.

Here it is recounted by Susan Simpson, Associate at the Volkov Law Group and graduate of George Washington University Law. Ms. Simpson tracked all pertinent documents, videos, and the trial in excoriating detail:

"Zimmerman's initial police statements and interviews are all clear, direct, and consistent with one another. Zimmerman states, in three separate statements given in the days following the shooting, that after Trayvon punched him in the nose he "immediately" "fell backwards." Those statements were Zimmerman's 2/26 written statement, ("the suspect punched me in the face. I fell backwards onto my back. The suspect got on top of me"), the 2/26 Singleton interview ("And he punched me in the nose. At that point I fell down."; "I fell to the ground when he punched me the first time."; "As soon as he punched me, I fell backwards, um, into the grass"; "He punched me in the face and I fell backwards"), and the 2/27 Serino interview (Zimmerman: "... And then he punched me in the face." Serino: "Oh, so he said, OK, you have a problem now. OK, he punched and you fell?" Zimmerman: "Yes, sir."; "He punched me in the face and I fell backwards.").

On the afternoon of February 27, after the interview that occurred that morning, Zimmerman then performed a walkthrough with police. During that walkthrough, [Zimmerman started to describe the altercation with Trayvon in the same way as in his first three statements.](#) Zimmerman describes that he was on the west prong of the "T" junction, walking west towards his car, having hung up with the non-emergency number approximately 1.5 minutes prior. Zimmerman then describes that Trayvon was to the south of him, and walking north along the path towards the junction, towards Zimmerman.

Also of interest is the fact that this description directly contradicts Zimmerman's prior claims that "[Trayvon] jumped out from the bushes." There are no bushes Trayvon could have come out from, and Zimmerman never mentions the bushes again. But there is a bigger

inconsistency with Zimmerman’s statement: as seen in the walkthrough video, Zimmerman’s claim that he “fell backwards” after Trayvon “sucker punched him” cannot be true. This is where Zimmerman claims to have been standing when he was punched and fell backwards: There’s a problem here. Trayvon’s body was found 40 feet south of where Zimmerman is standing in this screenshot – and in front of him, not behind him.

Note: There are those who might argue that Zimmerman’s defense team did not technically argue “Stand Your Ground” as a defense, but it was clear that the general philosophy was operative throughout the trial. With or without a formal declaration of “Stand Your Ground”, jurors were constantly being presented with information, and being asked to consider whether or not George Zimmerman was victim or aggressor. Even more significantly, jurors admitted to considering the Stand Your Ground verdict during deliberations. Therefore, it was crucial to the defense that this business about Zimmerman not moving off the top part of “The T” be believable.

ZIMMERMAN LIE NUMBER FIVE: Trayvon Martin “leapt out of the bushes” to attack George. This business of how Trayvon “leapt out of the bushes” is just one of many different versions of what happened that night, versions that Zimmerman told to assorted parties. In one version, Trayvon surprised him by leaping out of the bushes and knocking him down, but not, apparently, before George staggered about forty feet. In another version, George turned around and Trayvon was walking towards him on the sidewalk. I have all the respect in the world for PTSD, but these are two wildly different versions. But what is the main reason we know that both versions—the leaping from shrubbery, and Trayvon striding forward to sucker punch poor George—are complete lies? Because Trayvon was on the phone the entire time. Objective, verifiable phone records confirm this; the conversation started when Trayvon left the 7-11 to buy the now famous tea and skittles, and the call connection continued even after the confrontation, as the person on the other end of the phone with Trayvon testified to hearing conversation between GZ and TM.

And here is how we know George is lying: Nobody, nobody ever in the entire history of robberies, hold-ups, muggings, or other thuggery has just been chatting it up with their girlfriend on the cellphone until the very millisecond that they attack somebody. That’s just not how attacks work. That is, in a word, stupid. But perhaps George thinks we are as stupid as he is.

It is also worth noting that screams heard on the 911 call constitute more damaging inconsistencies. Zimmerman wants the world to believe that the screams for help on the 911 call are his voice. Yet, when he was questioned by Detective Serino, George Zimmerman told a different story. Detective Serino asks him if the screams on the 911 tape were his voice...stating ***“the screams are yours right?”*** Zimmerman responded ***“they don’t sound like me”*** . And

witness Jane Surdyka, who lived in a nearby townhouse, testified that she heard the screams of a boy screaming for help immediately before the shot occurred.

THE LIES OF ZIMMERMAN

DNA DOES NOT LIE

For the record, I believe that George Zimmerman faked or exacerbated his injuries. Let's take a close look at the facts. These forensic details will not only pick apart Zimmerman's claims about the injuries he supposedly sustained, but also his claims about how the fight went down that fateful night:

ZIMMERMAN LIE NUMBER SIX: TRAYVON WAS GRABBING ZIMMERMAN'S SKULL AND BANGING IT ON THE HARD CEMENT PAVEMENT. Let's look at Zimmerman's own words, when he was being interviewed by a detective the next day. : ***“And then's when he grabbed me, oh I tried to sit up and that's when he grabbed me by the head and tried to slam my head down ... my head was on the cement and he just kept slamming and slamming...I tried to squirm again because all I could think about was when he was hitting my head against it, it felt like my head was going to explode and I thought I was going to lose consciousness.”***

How do we know that this was a lie? Several pieces of irrefutable evidence point to this. Firstly, there was absolutely none of George Zimmerman's DNA found on Trayvon's hands or under his fingernails. Zimmerman sported a shaved head, and in order for Trayvon to get a grip on GZ's head, he would surely have to get some microscopic bit of Zimmerman's DNA on himself: blood, skin, something. According to GZ, Trayvon managed to slam Zimmerman's head against the cement over, and over, and over again, bloodying his skull. He would describe it later to Sean Hannity as happening a couple of dozen times. Just imagine the scene that George describes (and trust me, this will take some imagination): Trayvon Martin uses both hands to slam George Zimmerman's skull into the pavement, and at the same time, according to George, Trayvon's third hand is clamped over George's mouth, while Trayvon's fourth hand presses on Zimmerman's nose, as he continues to beat George with his fifth and sixth hands, while pinning the gallant watchman's body to the ground with hands seven and eight.

Yet throughout this brutal octo-assault, absolutely not one tiny bit of skin, not a drop of blood, not one trace of DNA, (except for a single drop of blood found on Trayvon's shirt hem), was transferred from George to Trayvon. The autopsy also states that none of Zimmerman's DNA is under Martin's nails, which dispels Zimmerman's claim that Trayvon Martin grabbed his bald head with such a tight grip that he slammed Zimmerman's head onto the sidewalk over a dozen times. (***“Exhibit ME-2, fingernail scrapings from Trayvon, only showed the presence of blood***

from his right hand. No DNA results foreign to Trayvon Benjamin Martin ...were found... . Translation: Zimmerman's blood isn't present." From an article by Jonathan Capehart, "George Zimmerman's bloody mess" Washington Post 9/28/2012)

Another way we know it was a lie—that Trayvon supposedly slammed his head into the sidewalk again, and again and again—is that medical experts don't believe Zimmerman's story. In the words of Deborah Moore, a nurse with over two decades in a Level 1 Trauma Center, ***"His head does not resemble a crushed watermelon, by no means. He would have had contusions, lacerations, not to mention blood splatter on his clothes and the sidewalk."***

The following transcripts are taken directly from the trial:

PROSECUTOR: *Are the injuries to the back of the head consistent with having been repeatedly slammed into a concrete surface?*

DR. VALERIE ROAD: *No.*

PROSECUTOR: *Why not?*

DR. VALERIE ROAD: *Because if you look at the injuries are so minor that to me the word slammed implies great force and this, the resultant injuries are not great force.*

The fact that the police and the prosecutors did not make a gigantic deal of this is unbelievable, and unconscionable.

Which leads me to the next lie.

ZIMMERMAN LIE NUMBER SEVEN: ZIMMERMAN CLAIMED THAT WHEN TRAYVON PUNCHED HIM, HE BROKE HIS NOSE. Zimmerman told detectives that Martin punched him in the nose so hard that he *"fell to the ground when he punched me the first time"* and that he was *"punched in the nose 25 to 30 times."* Looking at the picture of Zimmerman's nose, with *no blood at all coming from the nostrils*, it is easy to figure out why Detective Serino told Zimmerman right to his face that *"the 25 to 30 punches"* he claimed he took from Trayvon Martin *"were not consistent with Zimmerman's injuries."* (Or lack thereof.) Zimmerman was lying about this, pure and simple.

First, Zimmerman refused to go to the ER or get any kind of hospitalization on the night of the incident. It seems implausible that he would make a hue and cry about these terrible injuries, but would turn down immediate medical treatment—holding off, cleverly enough, until he could conveniently go to his family doctor—or as it turned out, "physician's assistant". As one nurse put it, "broken noses bleed like a stuck pig." Zimmerman's nose didn't bleed much at all. [If you look at the pictures of Zimmerman's "bloody nose", taken by Officer Wagner when he arrived on scene, it looks like no other bloody nose you've ever seen.](#) The bleeding seems to be from the

philtrum of the nose, and the blood seems as though it might have been daubed on him, or applied. There is almost no blood flowing from the inside of the nostrils, and anybody who knows anything about broken noses will tell you that blood would have been flowing directly from his nostrils. And, as so many have pointed out, there appears to be not one drop of blood on George's jacket or t-shirt, [when we see him emerge from the police cruiser at the station](#), and when his [clothes are photographed by forensic photographers](#).

Even more revelatory are the pictures of Zimmerman's [nose taken later at the station](#), after he has been cleaned up. Where, we must ask, are the beginnings of the two black eyes, which would clearly accompany a broken nose, if you had been punched "25-30 times"? But Zimmerman's nose looks perfect. Not broken. There is no more swelling on the right-side bridge of Zimmerman's nose forty-five minutes after Zimmerman killed Trayvon Martin. I think it's pretty clear that the only part of Zimmerman's nose that is bleeding is the very tip of his nose. Except for one thing, you can see two pinholes on the tip of Zimmerman's nose, which is exactly the location of the bleeding shown in the pictures taken by Officer Wagner on scene, right after the shooting. What kind of punch to the nose causes two tiny pinholes, and nothing else? It is also worth noting that neither pictures taken of GZ the next day, nor for the rest of that week, showed anything resembling black eyes or a broken nose.

But let's get clarification from a medical professional, someone who does this all the time. (Although I am guessing that for many of you, your own experience with bloody noses has made it clear that the pictures of George Zimmerman, both before and after his nose was cleaned up, show no evidence of a broken nose, no true bloody nose, and no black eyes.) To prove that Zimmerman lied about being "told" by the EMS that he had a broken nose, [the EMS report](#) does *not* state he has a broken nose. The EMS report simply says his nose is "tender" and "*the mucous membrane is normal*". It is important to emphasize that the EMS wrote that, regarding Zimmerman's nose: "*mucous membrane is normal*". He observed that there was "*no blood and no swelling*" of the mucous membranes that line the sinus cavities. Dear readers, this fact alone should have warranted a national headline, and this alone should have swayed the jury: nobody can get punched in the nose so hard that they allegedly go from standing to flat on their back, then get punched, allegedly, 25-30 times, have blood on their face from an alleged bloody nose, and then have a professional trained EMT say "*mucous membrane is normal*". And let's face it. If Trayvon did not attack George Zimmerman, then Zimmerman had no business pulling his weapon. Much less murdering the kid.

Zimmerman also lied to his Family Physician's Assistant, because the EMS never stated that Zimmerman had a broken nose. Zimmerman was forced by his employer to get medical clearance before he could return to work. Zimmerman went to see his family Physician's Assistant, Lindzee E. Folgate, about nine hours after he was released from the Sanford Police Department, about sixteen hours after he killed Trayvon Martin. His family Physician's

Assistant took Zimmerman's word for it, when Zimmerman falsely claimed he was "told" by EMS he had a broken nose. But Ms. Folgate did not take x-rays to independently verify. (Why not?) The Physician's Assistant wrote "*We discussed it was likely broken.*" The Physician's Assistant also wrote Zimmerman "*refuses to be seen an ENT (Ear Nose and Throat doctor)*" and they discussed the "risks" of him not being seen by an ENT. Gosh, after all that alleged pummeling to his nose and head, why would Zimmerman refuse to go see an ENT? Who knows? Note also, on page 3 of Zimmerman's Family Physician's Report, the Physician's Assistant did not note any dried blood in the nostrils (nares) and wrote "*does not appear to have septal deviation*". To date, George Zimmerman has not released any x-rays showing that he had a broken nose, nor has any licensed medical doctor ever diagnosed Zimmerman with a broken nose. And Zimmerman has never released a medical report from an Ear Nose and Throat Doctor. And again, if GZ was not punched 25-30 times ... if, in fact, he was not even punched once, then he had no business killing a child.

TRAYVON'S TRUTH: Contrary to what some people would have you think, The Dead can speak. Trayvon can tell the truth. I have saved what I believe to be the most damning evidence against the whole "25-30 times" story for last: *Trayvon had absolutely none of Zimmerman's blood on his hands.* Work with me, people. Trayvon supposedly hit Zimmerman "25-30 times", leaving Zimmerman with "a bloody nose." Yet there is none of Zimmerman's blood on Trayvon's hands. The autopsy report on Trayvon Martin did not mention any blood or dirt on Martin's fists. Seriously? Most of us have seen the bloody nose picture of George; how the hell could Trayvon have done that without getting a drop of blood on his hands, on his knuckles? I have been over it a thousand times in my mind. How can Zimmerman be anything but a homicidal liar? And just to gild the lily, there was none of Zimmerman's blood on Trayvon's clothing, either (except for the aforementioned tiny drop at the very hem of Trayvon's shirt). Trayvon's tragic and infamous hoodie had NONE of Zimmerman's blood on it? How could that be, with Zimmerman claiming that Trayvon was attacking and that he, Zimmerman, was experiencing multiple injuries? "Exhibit ME-12," Trayvon's hoodie, had no traces of Zimmerman's blood on it.

"No DNA results foreign to Trayvon Benjamin Martin...." (Jonathan Capehart "George Zimmerman's bloody mess" Washington Post 9/28/2012)

Another interesting factoid that came out of GZ's medical report: According to the family physician's assistant report, prior to the shooting Zimmerman had been prescribed Adderall and Temazepam, medications that can cause side effects such as agitation and mood swings. Nobody is alleging that these medications caused George Zimmerman to kill Trayvon Martin, but it is interesting that the police didn't bother to test GZ for drugs, which is a violation of their own

prescribed procedure. And certainly, abusing these drugs and overdosing on them can cause exactly the kind of behavior that might have led George Zimmerman to stalk and kill Trayvon.

ZIMMERMAN LIE NUMBER EIGHT: ZIMMERMAN WAS ON THE GROUND AND TRAYVON WAS ON TOP OF HIM, beating his head mercilessly. Oh George. No he wasn't. Trayvon wasn't. We have all bled at one time or another in our lives, and everybody in the world knows that blood flows in the direction of gravity. Just look at the direction that the blood is [flowing in the wounds that poor George sustained](#). (Or GOOGLE IMAGES GEORGE ZIMMERMAN'S BLOOD INJURIES) George tried to look so pitiful in the pictures. But we can all see from the pictures of the back of George's head, there is no way that George Zimmerman was injured while on his back, his skull being smashed against the pavement—but then the blood flows against the direction of gravity? If George was on his back, the blood would be flowing away from his face, converging towards the very back of his head. Big problem, George: the picture shows dried blood flowing from the back of your skull, towards the front of your skull.

And that is only one reason we know that Zimmerman lied about Trayvon smashing his head against the pavement over and over again. Here is another shocker, a damning detail: none of Zimmerman's blood was found on the pavement that it was slammed into so many times, the very pavement that supposedly caused Zimmerman to bleed. The medical technician on site after the murder did a thorough analysis of the death scene, and found NO BLOOD BELONGING TO ZIMMERMAN on the sidewalk. Medical technicians now know how to find and analyze an amount of blood that is almost microscopic, and it is a pure defiance of the laws of science that, as George Zimmerman testified, the slamming of his head against the pavement would cause those injuries, yet there is not one drop of blood on said pavement.

Let's add to this the fact that two of the four witnesses to the event said that Zimmerman—the man in the red jacket—was indeed on top.

And, as we have already observed, police station cameras show him apparently having no injuries or very minimal injuries, and a stunning lack of blood on his body or his clothing. Nor do the back of his clothes reflect a man who has been struggling on the pavement and grass.

ZIMMERMAN LIE NUMBER NINE: GEORGE TOLD HIS FRIEND MARK OSTERMAN—WHO HAD HIMSELF BEEN A COP FOR OVER 20 YEARS—THAT HE WAS IN A DESPERATE STRUGGLE WITH TRAYVON FOR ZIMMERMAN'S GUN. Zimmerman never said this to police. But Osterman wrote in a book, and it was entered into evidence, that Zimmerman said, *"somehow I broke his grip on the gun where the guy grabbed it between the rear site and the hammer. I got the gun in my hand, raised it towards the guy's chest, and pulled the trigger."* How do we know George is lying? DNA evidence ruled out any real possibility that Trayvon ever touched Zimmerman's gun. The only DNA evidence on the gun's grip was that of George Zimmerman. None was Trayvon's. Zimmerman also claimed that

Trayvon went for Zimmerman's holster. Anthony Gorgone, a DNA lab analyst for the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, testified as an expert witness that “*Zimmerman's holster tested positive for only Zimmerman's DNA.*” And, of course, it is worth noting that once again, Zimmerman is telling wildly different versions to different people. And these versions were far too wildly different from one another to simply be explained away by stress, PTSD, or memory playing tricks. As some pundits have artfully pointed out, poor George had a lot to worry about, as the time after the crime crept by: there was what the person on the other end of Trayvon’s phone heard, what witnesses heard, what witnesses saw, what might have been recorded by 911 when witnesses were on the phone reporting a fight, what the evidence would show, what George Zimmerman needed to make people think happened, if he was going to walk away a free man ...and then, of course, the thorny issue of what really happened that night.

ZIMMERMAN LIE NUMBER TEN: ZIMMERMAN, FLAT ON HIS BACK AND IN FEAR FOR HIS LIFE, GRABBED HIS OWN GUN AND SHOT TRAYVON, WHO WAS LOOMING OVER HIM. We devote the entire next few pages to experts who explain how this is basically physically impossible. But since we are now focused on blood and DNA evidence, let’s look at what kind of story the clothing tells:

I believe we have already established that Trayvon could not have been on top of Zimmerman. Nothing about that claim by Zimmerman makes sense: not the lack of any serious injuries to the back of GZ’s head, not the direction of the dried blood flow on Zimmerman, not the broken nose claim....there is no blood of Zimmerman’s on Trayvon’s hands, under his fingernails, and almost zero blood on his clothes (a tiny droplet), and absolutely no Zimmerman blood around Trayvon’s cuffs. This simply does not jive with having someone on top of you, beating your bloody nose “25-30” times and slamming your head against the pristine bloodless sidewalk a dozen times. But neither could Zimmerman have been on top of Trayvon during the shooting. Some have posited this, but I think that theory is impossible. Why? Ballistic evidence does not lie. This is part and parcel of the laws of physics. Forensic experts on every side of the issue observed that the bullet holes in the clothing do not line up with the bullet hole to Trayvon’s body. Quite simply, either Trayvon’s clothing was hanging loose from his body, because he was leaning over Zimmerman’s body—which the lack of exchanged blood evidence clearly disproves. OR, as some forensic experts suggest, Zimmerman might have been grabbing onto Trayvon’s clothing and pulling it away from his body.

TWO POSSIBLE THEORIES: George Zimmerman did indeed confront Trayvon. He was angry, sick of what he perceived as problems in his little neighborhood (as evidenced by his lengthy history of bizarre and petty calls). He had previously, and has since demonstrated his short fuse and violent temper. **THEORY ONE:** Zimmerman had a screaming Trayvon on the ground, and shot him from a standing position. Or **THEORY TWO:** As both men were standing, Zimmerman grabbed Trayvon and shot him in the chest. I know it may fly in the face of what you, the reader,

might have envisioned up to this point. But ask yourself this—what other explanation can there be for facts such as the almost complete lack of Trayvon’s blood on Zimmerman’s person? Or the lack of Zimmerman’s “injury” blood on Trayvon? It explains why the gunshots through the clothing do not align with the shot to Trayvon’s heart. And unlike the tragedy in Ferguson, where fifteen witnesses testified that they saw Darren Wilson shooting at a fleeing Michael Brown, there were only two witnesses who “thought” they saw one man on top of another man—and Zimmerman, by his own admission, was straddling Trayvon, immediately after he was shot. That is what the witnesses were remembering.

THE LIES OF GEORGE ZIMMERMAN

SHOOTING TRAYVON

We have looked at the DNA evidence. But now let’s look at the sheer physicality of the shooting. Could it have happened the way that Zimmerman said it did? Highly doubtful. Experts in both martial arts and gun training have gone to great lengths to demonstrate the impossibility of Zimmerman’s version of events. One of the clearest explanations, I believe, is offered by Mr. Thom Hartmann, in his blog article logorrheically entitled “Zimmerman flat-out lied about the shooting event, but no one called him out on it,” published July 19th, 2014 on the author’s website, thomhartmann.com. In his explanation, Hartmann takes us through the “re-enactment” of the shooting that Zimmerman conducted with a police detective, the morning after it happened. Hartman quotes Zimmerman, describes for the reader exactly what Zimmerman is demonstrating to the detective, and then Hartmann will explain to us the real world impossibility of it:

ZIMMERMAN: I said “No, help me, I need help!” And I don’t know what they did, but that’s when my jacket moved up. I had my firearm on my right-hand side hip.

(Z places hand back on hip to show the location of his firearm and then slides his hand back up his rib cage again to demonstrate how firearm was exposed. Then he talks about Trayvon supposedly spotting the gun)

ZIMMERMAN: He saw it. I feel like he saw it...he looked at it, he said, “You’re going to die tonight motherfucker!” And he reached for it. He reached...like I felt his arm going down my side. I grabbed it!

(Z demonstrates how he trapped Martin's hand/lower arm under his own upper arm by tightly squeezing it to his side)

ZIMMEMRMAN: And I just grabbed my firearm and shot him...somehow."

(While saying these last few lines, Zimmerman demonstrates his quick draw technique, but of course does so while standing, without a real firearm, and without a real live struggling person's hand/arm trapped beneath his own)

Consider this: In order to draw a gun on your dominant side, you must extend your arm (at the elbow) a significant distance behind your back, which is impossible to do while flat on your back on the ground. When presented with this argument, I have heard some claim that Zimmerman must have arched his back enough to give him room to extend his arm far enough backwards to reach his gun in this manner. However, this argument is unconvincing due to the fact that:

—According to Zimmerman, Martin was on top on him, and had him, more or less, pinned to the ground (i.e., “ground and pound”). At the very least, he was unable to get out from underneath Martin or throw him off. As Zimmerman's own MMA trainer testified, Zimmerman was “soft” and even after a year of regular training, only rated a 0.5 on a scale of 1 to 10 in terms of fighting skills, but now he suddenly has the strength to lift up his body with an added 170 pounds on top of him. Really?

—Zimmerman never claims to, nor demonstrates, how he performed this maneuver (i.e., arch his back enough to reach his gun). He just pulled his gun out in a quick draw maneuver and shot Martin...“somehow”.

Of course, it is also possible to draw a gun from your dominant side by extending your elbow straight out sideways from your rib cage. This is a much more awkward maneuver, but it can be done. However, there are some serious problems with this scenario as well.

In the police video Zimmerman demonstrates how he trapped Martin’s hand between his upper arm and rib cage by squeezing his own arm tightly to his side... If Zimmerman had extended his arm away from his body at his elbow, Martin’s trapped hand would have been instantly freed to grab the gun (and Martin was in a much better position to do so).

So exactly how did Zimmerman draw his gun and shoot Martin as he demonstrated in the police video?

Answer: He didn’t, as it was physically impossible for him to do so in the manner in which he described in the police video, or in any other reasonable scenario for that matter. (In other words, Zimmerman concocted the whole story in order to save his sorry ass.)

Conclusion: Zimmerman already had his firearm drawn and at the ready before Martin attacked him (assuming that such was the case) which means that Zimmerman was totally and irrevocably culpable for shooting Martin, and a honest (or at least intellectually astute) jury would have found him guilty of manslaughter.

And the real problem here (aside from racism) is that George Zimmerman flat-out lied about the shooting event itself, **and for whatever reason (i.e., racism, stupidity) no one - not the police, not the prosecution, and certainly not the jury - either saw through his lies or had the intestinal fortitude to stand up and call him on them.**

Note: If you doubt the credibility of the above analysis, just try this simple experiment out for yourself...

Lay flat on your back and act as if you are drawing a handgun from a side hip holster on your dominant side; that is, the same side as you would shoot with. (Of course if you have a holstered handgun at your disposal you can do this with your weapon for added realism, but obviously please make sure your weapon is completely discharged before doing so).

You will find that it is impossible to draw your weapon while lying flat on your back.

Malia Litman's blog page offers further insight from a retired police officer, detailing that officer's opinion on the feasibility of the shooting, as Zimmerman recounts it ("[A Retired Police Officer's Perspective on the Killing of Trayvon.](#)" July 19th, 2012):

From Zimmerman's own account, he was lying on his back, shoulders pinned down and head against the concrete, at the time he pulled the trigger on Martin ... He raised his elbow back and clinched his arm toward his own body, representing that he pinched Martin's arm against his torso. After Trayvon reaches for Zimmerman's weapon unsuccessfully, Zimmerman pulls it out, with no recollection of resistance from Martin.

It is unimaginable why Zimmerman, in the name of self-defense and firearms training, would... introduce a firearm in the midst of a close counter ground fight, in which you are not in a dominant position? One would assume that keeping a gun out of the fight for as long as possible would be the key to self-preservation. As Zimmerman explains, he is the one on the ground, pinned down and being knocked around. If this is the way things actually happened, he is either extremely lucky or well trained in close combat firearms. It takes repetitive training just to learn how to draw from a side holster when the person in possession of the firearm is in a ground position.

Any firearms instructor will tell you that it is virtually impossible to draw while lying flat on your back. Because the withdrawal of a gun from a holster requires a backward motion of the arm, and the ground prevents that, it seems unlikely that Zimmerman could draw his weapon while pinned to the ground. You have to roll over to the side, creating enough distance from the ground and your hips to draw your arm back and reach your weapon. Even after reaching a gun, there is an additional requirement of additional space in which to withdraw the firearm out of its holster.

Even if you can manage doing this while someone is overpowering you, as Zimmerman explains was the case, it would not be wise to pull out a weapon without creating ample distance between you and your attacker. If you have the ability to freely draw a weapon, you might have the ability to control the situation without deadly force. Zimmerman said he had a flashlight with him, but there is no mention of any attempt to hit Martin with the flashlight.

—Book author’s emphasis added

But the absurdity of Zimmerman story—that he “somehow” drew his gun from its holster with the same arm that he was using to pin Trayvon’s hand—is rendered even more ridiculous when we think about how one person straddles another in order to take control of them. Here that point is almost comically made in an article from by Evan McMurry in Mediaite, ‘Prosecutor Grills Zimmerman Expert; Re-enacts Shooting Using Dummy to Attack Self-Defense Story’, July 10th, 2013:

During cross-examination of defense [Zimmerman] witness Dennis Root, prosecuting attorney John Guy reenacted a potential scenario of the Trayvon Martin killing using a dummy, attempting to show that George Zimmerman’s story that he had fired while Martin was straddling him was not believable.

Root, who had approached the Zimmerman defense about testifying, was on the stand as an expert on self-defense issues. Guy immediately began to attack Root’s credentials, noting that Root could gain financially from appearing on national television to advertise his company, and that his investigation of the incident was less than thorough. (For instance, Root went to the scene of the crime in early June, during the day, despite the fact that the event had occurred in February after sundown.)

Guy put the dummy, representing Zimmerman, down on the floor and straddled it, and had Root locate where Zimmerman’s gun would be. Guy pointed out that in a position straddling the waist—which Root had testified Martin was in during the struggle ... according to Zimmerman’s account to his friend, Martin’s knees were more up to Zimmerman’s armpits, rendering the gun inaccessible. In this case, Zimmerman would only have been able to reach his gun had Martin been backing up from him, i.e., disengaging from the struggle. This would be contrary to the [forensic expert’s testimony yesterday](#) that Zimmerman shot Martin while Martin was straddling him, i.e., still engaged in the fight ...

As an aside, Guy asked if Root had had Zimmerman act out the incident: “Did you have the defendant do this?”

“No, sir,” Root said.

Meanwhile, defense attorneys stared in fascination.

—End article excerpt; book author’s emphasis added

And if you have any doubt about this, have a friend straddle you (no jokes, this is serious now), as any person would who was trying to get control of you. Now imagine that your gun is where George Zimmerman said his was—down at his waist. You would have to dig in past the inside of your friend’s thigh, which is pressed against your torso. This is the stupidest lie I’ve heard from you yet, George.

There is one plausible way that the shooting could have happened, though. In his blog, Frederick Leatherman observes: “All of these problems are avoided if Zimmerman is on top, straddling Trayvon with his knees and shins pinning Trayvon’s arms to the ground. He could take his time, draw his gun, taunt Trayvon, aim and pull the trigger.”

WHAT DID THE WITNESSES SEE?

Well, regarding all this, that is very interesting.

Witnesses Mary Cutcher, Selma Mora and “the teacher” all said that the shooter stood up immediately after the shot, leaving the victim lying on the ground.

(And yes, we have our doubts about this theory, because of the disparity between how Trayvon’s shirt lays on his body, and the position of the bullet holes. But maybe George was holding the shirt, or maybe it was akimbo on Trayvon after being shoved to the ground. We feel our job here is not to prove definitively what happened, but simply to make the point that George must have lied about a great deal. And the “good guys” didn’t work nearly hard enough to prove that fact, or to get at the truth.)

THE STRANGE STORY OF JONATHAN MANALO

Told, appropriately enough, in “bullet list” form.

The first witness actually on scene, immediately after the shooting, was a neighbor named Jonathan Manalo. His wife and daughter were helping him build a coffee table in their townhouse, very near the scene of the murder. His wife heard the struggle, ran to the window, and Manalo urged her away from the window. When a shot was fired, he grabbed a flashlight, ran out his front door, and made his way to the scene. His first act was to ask if he needed to call 911; Zimmerman responded that the police were already on their way.

Now begins the bizarre and inexplicable:

—Manalo, without being asked by Zimmerman, takes pictures of the “injuries” on the back of Zimmerman’s head, and of a flashlight lying in the grass. And of Trayvon’s body. But Manalo did not know whether or not Trayvon was dead at that point. The medical examiner would later testify that Trayvon may well have lived ten full minutes in agony, prior to dying. But Manalo did not make another call to 911, attempt to administer any kind of CPR, or stop the bleeding. Nor did he call out for anyone who might be able to help. Instead, he took pictures of a boy who might very well have been in the agonized throes of drawing his last breath.

—Keep in mind that a few minutes later, a police officer will also thoroughly document Zimmerman’s injuries, but only takes a picture of Zimmerman’s face from the front.

—Good citizen? Hardly. Manalo does not turn his cellphone, or even copies of the pictures, over to the police. Instead, he hides the knowledge that he has them. FOR TWO MONTHS.

—The picture of Zimmerman’s “injuries” appears a couple of months later, on ABC News. It is billed as a big exclusive story; nobody else but ABC has this new picture. (Specifically April 20th, 2012.) While any monies paid to Manalo for the picture are not reported, it is a logical conclusion that, given the magnitude of the story, Manalo was paid a great deal. I say this because by now, the story was explosively huge, and the pictures were worth a great deal. Manalo chose to not turn his evidence over to investigators, but to make sure that ABC had exclusive rights.

—Now go back to the night of the murder, and consider this: the “injuries” that Manalo took a picture of were neither seen, nor recorded, by the officer who arrived just minutes after the shooting. Officer Wagner examined Zimmerman, and saw only one place on Zimmerman’s person where there were injuries which needed to be documented: Zimmerman’s face, and the infamously unconvincing “bloody nose”. (And Zimmerman’s claim of two black eyes, which, mysteriously, we cannot see on Zimmerman’s face when he is being interviewed by a detective the next morning and “recreating” the crime scene for us.)

MY CONCLUSION: I could be wrong, but I see no other explanation, given the above facts: Manalo Photoshopped the pictures of the injuries. And he had plenty of time to do it. As I have said elsewhere, I don't generally think of myself as a "conspiracy nut", but how could a police officer examining Zimmerman miss large rivulets of blood running down his skull, when he is full aware of the bloody injuries on his face? This simply makes no sense. And we already know that Manalo had financial incentive to Photoshop the injuries; he clearly had no civic zeal to turn over the pictures to the police on the night of the murder, or for weeks thereafter. Here is a fascinating picture and [YouTube video](#) that someone has pulled from the internet. Could this be a part of the [Photoshopping?](#)

These, then, are the further conclusions which we can deduce. It could be any of the three:

Manalo is a heartless (taking pictures as Trayvon is dying) and greedy (selling the pictures instead of giving them to the police) opportunist. And we know that he chose to take the pictures, even before interacting with Zimmerman. Zimmerman, who had a bizarre and violent history prior to the killing, threatened Manalo. Manalo essentially reacted to "the carrot and the stick"—Zimmerman approach him with a choice: terrifying threats of some kind (perhaps against his family), or to collaborate together, in order to fabricate corroborative and exculpatory evidence, and then to profit greatly from it. AND AS THEY SAY IN INFOMERCIALS;

Wait. There's more.

Jonathan Manalo further chose to enrich himself from the shooting of a boy by writing a book about it. It was a Kindle Book, available on Amazon. It was 9.99, and it was an in depth piece of journalism that weighed in at 13 pages. Including the bigfont title, and such. The title: "With a Flashlight and a Cellphone...MY TRUTH." Tragically, it is no longer available for download.

But wait, it gets better.

The police interviewed Manalo a number of times, as one might expect, given that he was the first witness actually on the scene. And during those interviews, they asked Manalo a number of questions about Zimmerman, including his prior knowledge of the shooter. According to Manalo, he had no knowledge whatsoever of Zimmerman. Only one little problem with that. That is a lie. And it is a lie, according to Manalo himself, who, AFTER the Not Guilty verdict was finally rendered, decided to garner himself even more publicity by appearing on the Joy Ann Reid Show.

It was on this show that he made another big reveal. He shared with us that George Zimmerman allegedly pulled a gun on a UPS driver in November 2011. And for no good reason, other than, apparently, Zimmerman likes to pull his gun out, at the slightest provocation.

Here is a transcribed excerpt of his interview with Ms. Reid.

REID: *Now, let's go back and talk about your testimony. There were some other things that didn't come up that you have since talked about. You have written a book, we should say that you've written and is available on Amazon.*

MANALO: *Yes.*

REID: *And, in that, one of the stories you tell is about another interaction with a colleague of yours at UPS between him and George Zimmerman. Tell me a little about that.*

MANALO: *Um. It was about November.*

REID: *This is the November before the shooting? November of eleven.*

MANALO: *Before the shooting...3 or 4 months before the actual shooting. He was just...one of the biggest trucks that we have.....daylight....he knocks on the door so the driver can just leave it at the door....and he walks back to his truck. When he turns around, George Zimmerman is just standing there with his gun in his hand, and then just says, "Oh, I didn't know who it was." But, clearly, there's a big, brown truck in front of your house with a UPS logo on it...and you don't know who it is. It kind of makes you wonder what his mind was thinking at that moment.*

REID: *And, was that incident reported to your supervisor?*

MANALO: *Yes, it was.*

REID: *Okay. And, when did you learn about that incident?*

MANALO: *I learned about it a few weeks before the trial, um, so I didn't really get a chance to elaborate on it, but, um, it was in the back of my mind.*

REID: *Now, why didn't you mention that on the stand. I mean, you were asked at one point if you had known George Zimmerman before or had ever seen him before. At that point, why not say, "Well, I didn't know him, but a colleague of mine at UPS had this interaction with him. That might have actually made a big impression on that jury.*

MANALO: *I understand, but, you know, it's just one of those things in court, or yeah, in trial, it's...it's...What they ask you is they want a direct answer. So, they didn't exactly ask me to elaborate on anything, his demeanor, if I ...you know, it really didn't get in depth of what actually what I had experienced. I do hope that the FBI finds this driver and interviews him before the DOJ closes its case on George Zimmerman.*

Manalo would also tell Reid that Zimmerman had lied during the walk-through. Zimmerman was very emphatic that he had asked Manalo to help restrain Martin, by helping to pull Trayvon's arms away from his person and spread them out lengthwise (like a crucifixion). But Manalo made it clear that such an exchange never happened. Manalo also stated that he did not believe that justice had been served at the trial, and that he believed Zimmerman was guilty. That is all very strange, given that Manalo had abundant opportunity to tell the authorities about Zimmerman's penchant for gun brandishing during the UPS incident.

And yet he chose not to.

Until the trial was over—and his fifteen minutes of fame, his moment of basking in the ray of Florida sunshiny publicity, were at last dwindling. That was when he decided to tell another ugly truth about George Zimmerman.

When it was too late.

ZIMMERMAN, HIS WIFE, AND THE BAIL BOND LIE

Zimmerman lied to get out of jail.

It was breaking news, and it was delicious to those of us waiting to have a little Schadenfreude at Zimmerman's expense.

JUNE 1st, 2012 CNN: "Judge Revokes Zimmerman's Bond".

Seminole County Circuit Judge Kenneth Lester Jr. ordered Zimmerman to surrender to the county sheriff no later than Sunday afternoon. Lester accused Zimmerman of having misrepresented how much money he had when his bond was originally set in April. Prosecutors say he had \$135,000 at the time Zimmerman's wife, Shellie, told the court, under oath, that they were indigent.

Zimmerman did not want to sit behind bars for shooting Trayvon. This would mean posting bail. Only problem, Zimmerman did not want to let go of the tens of thousands of dollars in donations that were pouring in. Kelley Phillips Erb outlines the Zimmerman fundraising extravaganza in a June 12, 2012 article published in Forbes Magazine:

Nearly \$200,000 has been raised for Mr. Zimmerman's defense. Of that amount, Zimmerman's attorneys say that \$150,000 is now in a trust fund for the defense. Nearly \$30,000 has been used "to make the complicated transition from private life in Sanford, Florida, to a life in hiding as a defendant in a high-profile court case" – a taped jail conversation suggests that the money was used to pay bills including American Express and

Sam's Club credit cards. The remaining \$20,000 will be used to provide living expenses for the Zimmermans up to and during the trial. The original web site used to raise money, therealgeorgezimmerman.com, is now defunct. Last month, a new site was created at www.gzdefensefund.com. That site raised about \$15,000 in its first two weeks of operation, [according to Zimmerman's attorneys](#). Most of the donations to the fund ranged from \$25 to \$100 with the largest donation received being \$3,000. According to the site, the money donated will be used for "Zimmerman's ongoing living expenses, legal costs, and fees."

—“The Zimmerman Defense Fund: Donations and Taxes: Sorting It All Out”

Forbes gives us the big picture, but the Schadenfreude snapshot is this: picture good old George Zimmerman, in his orange prison jumpsuit, trying to talk in the now infamous “code” that he thought would keep prosecutors from figuring out what he was really up to: trying to get his poor old wife Shelley to tell him how much money was in the online defense fund. Here are further excerpts from the above noted CNN article:

The prosecution cited as evidence recorded telephone conversations that Zimmerman had with his wife prior to the hearing. The conversations were recorded while Zimmerman was being held in the Seminole County Jail after being charged with second-degree murder on April 11.

There are numerous places on the web where you can read the transcripts or, more entertainingly (I suggest accompanying cocktails), you can listen to the six jailhouse conversations that are released. It is delightfully amusing to hear George whispering throughout so much of them, as if he is too great of a dolt to understand that the way authorities exercise their right to hear what prisoners say on phone calls is not to lurk just around the corner like Barney Fife, but rather to simply listen to the recordings. Why are you whispering, George? But the most hilarious part of the phone calls is what he has come up with that he thinks passes for code between him and his wife Shellie. After talking about sharing passwords and learning how to get into the appropriate online accounts, they speak of taking “twenty dollars out of an account at a time” (code for \$20,000), and splitting that 20 dollars between two people, so that each gets 10 dollars (code for \$10,000), and as if that is not bad enough, they talk about getting money every day from Peter Pan. This is how they intend to outsmart the prosecutors: by talking about money every day from an online account that Peter Pan has set up. As though everybody can't figure out that Peter Pan is Pay Pal.

And ridiculous as this all is, remember that in some way, Zimmerman and his team (funded by so many generous donations) ***did*** outsmart the prosecutors. Zimmerman is a free man today.

In fact, for what it's worth, he is really free, meaning his wife divorced him, expressing fear of him. As has every woman he has been involved with since; all three have made domestic violence calls.

Shellie Zimmerman would later reveal her personal observations and opinions about George in a November 21st, 2013 interview with Katie Couric. Just days after George Zimmerman's new girlfriend had made a call to police, reporting that George had attacked her, Shellie Zimmerman revealed to Katie Couric that after the arrest, George had turned into **"a ticking time bomb"**. And Shellie went on to say, **"I certainly hope that there are no casualties. I hope that there is no violence ... I know I am certainly afraid. I just hope that he can get the help that he needs to deal with his situation and that no one else will be hurt."**

Let's leave this section on bail with something that will really make your blood boil.

The records also show that the second-degree murder charge was a big money-maker for Zimmerman: on the day of his arrest, contributions surpassed a \$75,000 in a single day. He quickly paid off about \$1,800 in bills and then after his release from jail spent nearly \$5,000 in one day paying off Sam's Club, Target and other credit cards, bank records show.

"Ah man, that feels good," he said to his wife in a recorded phone call the day after his arrest. **"That there are people in America that care."**

His wife told him so many contributions arrived to his online PayPal site on the day of his arrest that the site kept crashing.

"People were just trying to give you, you know, words of support and kindness," Shellie Zimmerman said.

"Good. Wow, that is awesome," he said.

Later he told her: **"I'm so happy to know that you're gonna be okay."**

His wife assured him, **"After this is all over, you're gonna be able to just, have a great life."**

Too bad Trayvon and his family can't look forward to a great life together.

DID THE PROSECUTION THROW THE CASE?

This is going to sound peculiar, given that this is largely a book about racism, and justice denied, but here it is: I can understand the verdict that the jury rendered in the case of The State V. George Zimmerman: NOT GUILTY.

Now, before you scream, swear, throw your Kindle reader or a hard copy, hitting the cat and ruining your day (and the cat's), please stay with me. For a horrible dark spectrum of reasons, the defense in the George Zimmerman homicide trial was able to create just a glimmer of doubt, thereby thrusting upon the jurors the moral and legal responsibility to render a NOT GUILTY verdict. For a brief moment, let us get right into the head of one of the jurors—the one who wanted, more than any other juror, to find Zimmerman guilty of second degree murder. Soon after the verdict, she spoke to ABC's Robin Roberts about her decision:

JUROR B29: My first vote was second degree murder. In between that nine hours it was hard. A lot of us had wanted to find something bad something we would connect to the law. For myself, he's guilty. Because the evidence shows he's guilty...

ROBIN ROBERTS: He's guilty of...?

JUROR B29: Killing Trayvon Martin. But as the law was read to me, if you have no proof that he killed him intentionally, you can't say he's guilty.

It is also worth noting that half of the six women on the jury voted to convict on the first vote: two for manslaughter, one for second degree murder. But in the end ... reasonable doubt, and all that. It is this kind of conscience-contorting-conundrum on the part of (some) jurors which impels me to examine a truly ugly side of the Trayvon Martin killing: did the prosecution purposely "throw" the trial? Let me state clearly from the outset: yes, I believe that they did. I believe there is convincing evidence of that chilling charge. So rather than rage on the jurors and their decision, let us take a closer look at the dialogue that erupted among and between some of the finest legal minds in this country: Did the prosecution purposely throw the Trayvon Martin case?

Certainly, the issue is not without precedent or logic. As we will see in a later chapter (the murders being in chronological order), during grand jury testimony, Police Officer Darren Wilson was allowed to testify for forty-five uninterrupted minutes, reciting what was clearly a well-rehearsed speech regarding his role in the killing of Michael Brown, written by the best lawyers that the Ferguson Police Union's slush fund could buy. There were no interruptions, no requests for clarifications, and no incisive questions designed to probe the witness's veracity, memory, or credibility. In fact, prosecutors have a long history of not acting like prosecutors when they are prosecuting cops. After all, they all work for the same guy. The government. Many prosecutors see it as working against their best interests and future careers, to give the "Boys in Blue" a black eye. Certainly, there is abundant discussion of this all over the blogosphere. Many of the best legal minds in the country are appalled at the all too frequent failure of prosecutors to get convictions, and the twisted goings on within many a grand jury.

Naturally, this begs a question, *why would the authorities help George Zimmerman, who is not a police officer?* There are several possibilities.

It could be because George Zimmerman's father was a magistrate. Understanding that requires a much closer look at George Zimmerman's father, Robert Zimmerman—and at the bizarre history of George Zimmerman's relationship with the Sanford Police. And with trouble, in general.

DID GEORGE ZIMMERMAN'S FATHER INTERVENE?

HAS HE BEEN INTERVENING ALL ALONG?

There are those who claim that George Zimmerman's father was a judge, and there are those who become irate at this, claiming that GZ's father is no such thing. The truth lies somewhere in the middle. And in this middle ground one suspects, there lies the possibility for influence peddling within the Sanford Police Department.

THE FACTS: [George Zimmerman's father](#) served as a Supreme Court magistrate in the Virginia court system from 2000 to 2006, serving as a court officer who dealt with criminal cases. Magistrates perform judicial functions such as conducting “probable cause” hearings on criminal complaints brought by police, and determining whether a person who has been arrested is eligible for bail.

From the [Virginia judicial website](#), it's clear that Zimmerman's duties had much to do with dealing with people under arrest: In many instances, a citizen's first contact with Virginia's Judicial System comes through the office of the magistrate. A principal function of the magistrate is to provide an independent, unbiased review of complaints of criminal conduct brought to the office by law enforcement or the general public. Magistrate duties include issuing various types of processes such as arrest warrants, summonses, bonds, search warrants, subpoenas, and certain civil warrants. Magistrates also conduct bail hearings in instances in which an individual is arrested on a warrant charging him or her with a criminal offense. Magistrates provide services on an around-the-clock basis, conducting hearings in person or through the use of videoconferencing systems.

So, dear reader, to paraphrase a former president, you be “the decider”. Did Robert Zimmerman have an “in” with the Sanford PD? Could he have used his influence when his son George got in trouble, from time to time? Those who have dealt with Sanford PD say most certainly; but that is hearsay, and we won't go there.

So now, with the shadow of the father, Robert Zimmerman, in mind, let's take another look at the history of George Zimmerman.

2001 through 2005: [George Zimmerman](#) was fired from his job as an under-the-table security guard for **“being too aggressive,”** a former co-worker told The New York Daily News. Zimmerman ... worked for two different agencies providing security to illegal house parties between 2001 and 2005, the former co-worker said. **“Usually he was just a cool guy. He liked to drink and hang with the women like the rest of us,”** he said. **“But it was like Jekyll and Hyde. When the dude snapped, he snapped.”** The source said Zimmerman, who made between \$50 and \$100 a night, was let go in 2005. **“He had a temper and he became a liability,”** the man said. **“One time this woman was acting a little out of control. She was drunk. George lost his cool and totally overreacted. It was weird, because he was such a cool guy, but he got all nuts. He picked her up and threw her. It was pure rage. She twisted her ankle. Everyone was flipping out.”**

September 2003: Zimmerman called police and reported that another motorist spat on him. According to reports, Zimmerman followed the man in his car until the police arrived. Daniel Osum, the other driver, told police that Zimmerman was tailgating and that he spit his gum out the window **“out of frustration.”** Osum said that Zimmerman then pulled alongside of him, and the two argued. In a police report of the incident, Osum said **“at one point, he thought Mr. Zimmerman was going to attack him.”** No charges were filed against either man.

July 2005: Zimmerman was arrested and accused of resisting an officer with violence, near the University of Central Florida campus after a scuffle with police. The charges were eventually dropped, after Zimmerman entered an alcohol education program.

August 2005: Zimmerman’s former fiancée, Veronica Zuazo, filed for a restraining order against him, alleging domestic violence. The couple had split up at the time of the incident. Zuazo stated that she saw Zimmerman near her home, and when she asked why he was there, he claimed he was there to “check up on her.” Zimmerman responded by requesting a restraining order against her. Both requests were granted. No criminal charges were filed. Zuazo said that three years earlier, in 2002, Zimmerman attacked her while the two were driving to a counseling session. Zuazo said she popped her gum in his face and he repeatedly smacked her in the face. Also in January 2002, she added, Zimmerman became enraged that she had come home late. They wrestled and he threw her on the bed, smacking her, according to the newspaper.

Let’s sum that up, then:

According to a records search on George, he was previously arrested for domestic violence, resisting an officer without violence and most shockingly, resisting an officer with violence — a felony charge, that surely could have landed him in prison. All three of those arrests, however, were mysteriously closed with no semblance of charges for the Florida resident. So

how was someone with a violent past including that of battery against an officer able to carry a 9 mm handgun? Maybe that's a question Robert Zimmerman should answer.

—“George Zimmerman, Son of a Retired Judge, Has 3 Closed Arrests”, from “Rolling Out” Magazine, by Danielle Canada, (March 27th 2012)

But it isn't just women that Zimmerman has a history of pushing to the brink. Some of Zimmerman's neighbors said he had a history of being overly aggressive, and that he followed people whom he thought appeared suspicious back to their homes. At a meeting of neighbors in Zimmerman's community, days after the killing, ***“one man was escorted out because he openly expressed his frustration because he had previously contacted the Sanford Police Department about Zimmerman approaching him and even coming to his home,”*** a resident who spoke on the condition of anonymity told the Huffington Post. ***“It was also made known that there had been several complaints about George Zimmerman and his tactics”*** in his neighborhood watch role. The former co-worker quoted by The New York Daily News said he had not recently been in touch with Zimmerman, but his latest troubles came as a shock nonetheless. ***“He definitely loved being in charge. He loved the power.”*** he said.

Now, we have to take a break from the creepy history of George Zimmerman and ask ourselves—could George really have escaped all these incidents without being charged by the police, if there were not someone who had some kind of sway or influence over the local police?

Now, let us fast forward to what happened the morning after George Zimmerman had shot Trayvon Martin. George made sure that his daddy stayed close by when things got scary. According to an article in “The New York Times”:

The day after the shooting, George Zimmerman, according to his father, returned with at least three police officers to the Retreat at Twin Lakes, back to that grassy area where plaintive cries for help had gone unanswered. The investigators, accompanied by someone with a video camera, wanted him to re-enact the events of the night when the two strangers had stood their ground. Mr. Zimmerman's father watched from nearby.

—“Race, Tragedy and Outrage Collide After a Shot in Florida” by [Dan Barry](#), [Serge F. Kovalski](#), [Campbell Robertson](#) and [Lizette Alvarez](#), April 1, 2012

Anybody can see that this is extremely unorthodox, and very bizarre. How would the average detective, who has worked hard to achieve his rank, feel about that? Having a former magistrate watch you question his son, and possibly advise his son on what to say and how to answer questions? Possibly non-verbally? A look, a glance, a gesture? At the very least, if Robert Zimmerman did not interfere with that morning's questioning, he could have analyzed it, and

told George how to proceed in the weeks and months that followed. \And this could have a huge impact on how matters finally came together for Zimmerman. The Sean Hannity interview was the most orchestrated thing I have ever seen. And I have seen Handel's Hallelujah chorus performed at Prince Albert Hall with full chorus, orchestra, and dance troupe. I actually have.

And when political analyst Lawrence O'Donnell asked Sanford City Manager Norton Bonaparte about any influence that Robert Zimmerman's father was having on the investigation, and also asked why proper police procedure wasn't followed at the crime scene, O'Donnell received only a non-answer from the uncomfortable city official:

Bonaparte replied, extending "on behalf of our city our deepest sympathies and condolences" to Martin's family, and adding that "I've always called for a review of the investigation of what they did... so people know that what they did was either appropriate or not appropriate." O'Donnell also asked if police officials spoke to George Zimmerman's father on the night of the shooting, or if there was a connection there, which Bonaparte said he did not have an answer to, but said "that would come out in the investigation."

We can never know the answer with any degree of certainty: did Robert Zimmerman intercede to help his son?

Or it could be that it was not so much a matter of "helping" George Zimmerman, as much as it was an attitude, on the part of the police and the prosecution, of not caring too much about Trayvon Martin? In the final pages of this chapter, we will take a disturbing look at the racist history of Sanford, Florida: seen through that filter, the apathy shown towards the crime scene, the investigation, and the prosecution becomes almost expected. Par for the course.

Note: this chapter is not suggesting that every single person on the legal team was "in on it". Or, perhaps the "desired outcome" was subtly suggested, and persons who might have fought harder for a conviction backed off, because of the impact they felt it might have on their career. I say this because a.), throughout much of the trial, it does appear that certain members of the prosecution are doing a decent job, and b.), any ongoing overt efforts to throw the case would no doubt just blow up in everybody's faces down the road. But bear with us—I think that you will find the following points alarming.

EVIDENCE THAT THE PROSECUTORS WANTED TO LOSE

A FEW POINTS OF PROOF TO CONSIDER

THEY OVERCHARGED GEORGE ZIMMERMAN: this strategy is simple enough to understand. Charge the suspect with something worse than he did, create an impossibly large

burden of proof, and the jury will have no choice but to acquit. We just saw this strategy played out in “The Little Book of Lynching, Part I”, with the horrific abuse of Cequan Haskins on the school bus in Appomattox: charge the sweet little old lady with felony child abuse, and there is no way that jurors from her small home town of less than 1700 people—many of them folks from her church—will find her guilty of something so heinous. In the case of *The State of Florida V. George Zimmerman*, legal minds across the country flooded the airwaves and the internet with their shocked and appalled reactions, after Special Prosecutor Angela Corey charged Zimmerman with second degree murder. In the words of Jonathan Turley, Professor of Law at George Washington University, ***“This was clearly a challenging case even for manslaughter and the decision to push second-degree murder (while satisfying to many in the public) was legally and tactically unwise. The facts simply did not support a claim beyond a reasonable doubt that Zimmerman acted with intent and a ‘depraved mind, hatred, malice, evil intent or ill will.’ Had Corey charged manslaughter, the case might have been closer but would have still been a challenge.”***

But charging Zimmerman, who acted in the heat of the moment, with something that requires behavior as intense as “evil intent” while in a “depraved mind” was the ideal charge for a prosecutor who, in truth, did not wish to win the case. Turley goes on to comment, ***“There was never a basis for a second degree murder charge. There is a high standard for proving that, and it did not fit the facts or the evidence. By overcharging, she played into the hands of the defense.”***

THE PROSECUTION DID NOT OBJECT TO SOME TRULY OBJECTIONABLE JURORS. It was a jury of six people, all women. And the consultant to the Zimmerman defense wanted it that way, because he knows that women consistently score as better listeners. More to the point, the prosecution did not use its power of veto to get rid of jurors who were clearly pro Zimmerman. Juror B37, for example. During questioning, she referred multiple times to “riots” in Sanford after Trayvon Martin was killed. ***“I knew there was rioting, but I guess [the authorities] had it pretty well organized,”*** she says at one point. Truth: there were no riots in Sanford. There simply were none. (The protestors, perennially in trouble with Fox News, were, I imagine, doing the right thing and waiting for an actual verdict, before they got upset—trusting the justice system to do the right thing, and all.) She referred to the killing of Trayvon Martin as ***“an unfortunate incident that happened.”*** And when asked by George Zimmerman’s attorney to describe Trayvon Martin, she said, ***“He was a boy of color.”*** Cripes. That has been politically incorrect for about half a century. And while I am not a left of center rigorist on matters PC, I think we pretty much know where she stands on all of this.

THE JUDGE AND THE PROSECUTION ALLOWED, FOR DAYS AT A TIME, THE VIOLATION OF WITNESS SEQUESTRATION RULES: Witness for the defense John Donnelly was in the courtroom during the trial several weeks before he testified, which is a

violation of witness sequestration rules. A judge ruled against the request to strike his testimony, after a defense attorney said he didn't know about the rule. ***“On one hand the court is very very, very, very, very concerned — that’s four ‘very’s’ for those who want to know — about the rule of sequestration and the witnesses and counsel abiding by them, the question becomes whether the witness themselves had knowledge ...”*** Judge Debra Nelson said. OK, Debra. But everybody else knew. Surely the prosecutors and the defense team knew. You knew. I almost don't know what to say. I have never heard a judge, holding some position of importance, excusing illegal behavior by resorting to using the word “Very” not four times, Debra, but five times. What is she anyway, a ‘tween texting?

THE JUDGE WOULD NOT EXPLAIN, WHEN ASKED FOR A CLARIFICATION: The purpose of jury instructions is to make complex points of the law understandable to the layperson. Why, then, when the jury asked for clarification of the manslaughter charge, did the Judge refuse to provide them? It happened after the jurors had been sequestered for three weeks, and were weighing the lesser charge of manslaughter. Specifically, their question was, ***“May we please have clarification on the instructions regarding manslaughter?”*** Rather than aiding the jurors, as one might expect, she first spoke with the attorneys, then called a recess, and then, the judge then sent a note back to the jury that read: ***“The court can’t engage in general discussion but may be able to address a specific question regarding clarification of the instructions regarding manslaughter. If you have a specific question, please submit it.”***

But legal pundits would say that the entire matter of clarification, and the Judge's refusal to do her part went much farther and served a more cynical purpose. For more on this, read “The Zimmerman Verdict and the Initial Aggressor Exception” by Professor Jeffrey A. Fagan, [Columbia Law School Magazine](#)

AT TIMES, THE PROSECUTION JUST ACTED JUST PLAIN BIZARRELY: When nothing else seemed to be working (because they had done such a lousy job), they asked Judge Nelson if the jury would consider finding George Zimmerman guilty of “child abuse.” Felony murder based on child abuse. And yes, of course it is more complicated than that. That, of course, is the point. Baffle and confuse the jury completely, until the jurors have no recourse but to find reasonable doubt.

6.), LAST, AND TO MY MIND MOST IMPORTANTLY, THEY STARTED THIS WHOLE TAILSPIN BY APPOINTING A “very, very, very, very, very” BAD PROSECUTOR.

It started roughly a month after Trayvon had been killed. On March 22, 2012, Florida Governor [Rick Scott](#) announced his appointment of [Angela Corey](#) as the Special Prosecutor in the Martin investigation. Let me just say it. She is an abysmal prosecutor. But that is not merely

my opinion, it is the opinion of some of the best legal minds in the country. Just listen to this rant from the august Alan Dershowitz, in an interview with Mike Huckabee:

MIKE HUCKABEE: *You have said that you thought the prosecutor ought to be disbarred, that's a pretty serious type of violation to get a person disbarred. It is that serious to you?*

ALAN DERSHOWITZ: *Right, it is. She submitted an affidavit that was, if not perjurious, completely misleading. She violated all kinds of rules of the profession, and her conduct bordered on criminal conduct. She, by the way, has a horrible reputation in Florida. She's known for overcharging, she's known for being highly political. And in this case, of course she overcharged. Halfway through the trial she realized she wasn't going to get a second degree murder verdict, so she asked for a compromised verdict, for manslaughter. And then, she went even further and said that she was going to charge him with child abuse and felony murder. That was such a stretch that it goes beyond anything professionally responsible. She was among the most irresponsible prosecutors I've seen in 50 years of litigating cases, and believe me, I've seen good prosecutors, bad prosecutors, but rarely have I seen one as bad as this prosecutor, [Angela] Cory. (Huckabee, July 14, 2013)*

-exchange from Angela Corey should be Disbarred, RealClearPolitics

And in case you are still unclear about the vitriol some feel for Angela Corey, here are a couple more examples:

In 2009, Ronald Thompson, a disabled 65-year-old army veteran fired two shots into the ground to scare off teenagers who were demanding entry into his elderly neighbor's house, in Keystone Heights, Florida. Before we talk about Prosecutor Corey's role in all this, here is a little more about Ronald Thompson, from FAMM, Families Against Mandatory Minimums. I think you could definitely call Ronald one of the good guys.

Ronald Thompson is a 100% disabled veteran who spent 14 years in the Army (1966-1980). After his service, Thompson remained active in veterans' affairs. In addition to acting as a Deputy Representative for AMVETS, Thompson accumulated 5,532 hours volunteering at the VA hospital in Lake City, Florida, primarily acting as recreational therapy coordinator at the VA's nursing home. Thompson was 62-years-old in September 2009 when he visited a friend of his, an elderly woman in Keystone Heights, Florida, at the woman's daughter's home. During his visit, his friend's 17-year-old grandson, who had been violent toward her in the past, came by with three friends, and wanted to go into his mother's home. Having been instructed by her daughter not to let him into the house, Thompson's friend refused them entry. Her grandson began yelling and cursing at his grandmother. Events escalated to the point where Mr. Thompson felt his friend

was in danger. He grabbed his pistol (for which he had a concealed-carry license) and fired two warning shots into the ground to scare off the 17-year-old.

I suppose you could argue that firing two warning shots into the ground was too aggressive, but we weren't there to see just how scary those teenagers were behaving. More to the point, just how much would you punish that man, who only fired shots into the ground? Here's what Corey would do.

Corey prosecuted Thompson for aggravated assault, and after he refused a plea agreement with a three-year prison sentence, Corey won a conviction that would carry a mandatory 20-year sentence under [Florida's 10-20-Life statute](#). The trial judge, Fourth Circuit Judge John Skinner called the 20-year sentence "a crime in itself" and declared the 10-20-Life statute unconstitutional. Skinner gave Thompson three years instead. Corey appealed the 3-year sentence and won, sending Thompson to prison for 20 years. A veteran. Shooting warning shots into the ground to warn off some very threatening teenagers, and Corey sends him to prison, effectively for the rest of his life. (Yes, there was an appeal, and it was partially successful. But that doesn't change the unconscionable viciousness of Prosecutor Corey. It is also worth noting that this veteran was denied his proper medications during the year he did spend in jail, and his diabetic condition worsened to almost total irreversible blindness.)

She has also charged two twelve-year-olds, on two different occasions, as adult murderers, which could send them to jail for the rest of their lives. While I do believe these children need to be punished, and treated, I find it curious that Angela Corey does not seem disturbed at the fact that she is in violation of the United States Supreme Court, which recognizes that on all kinds of levels—emotionally, physiologically—a twelve year old brain is not the same as an adult brain. But Corey apparently feels she knows better than the United States Supreme Court.

And lastly, there was the nationally publicized case of Marissa Alexander. Marissa was in the home of her estranged husband Rico Gray, when Marissa stated that Gray threatened to kill her via texts on Marissa's phone. Gray had previously abused Marissa, giving her reason to believe that her life was in danger. According to Marissa, she tried to escape through the garage, but the garage door would not open. This account was confirmed by Gray in a sworn deposition. Marissa retrieved her gun from the car, went back into the kitchen, and fired a "warning shot" towards Gray, which hit the wall near Gray at the height of his head, then deflected into the ceiling. The single shot did not injure anyone. Marissa had fired the warning shot because of Florida's [stand-your-ground law](#), a law that allows self-defense, such as lethal force, in life-threatening situations. Thanks to Angela Corey, Marissa Alexander, who tried to use the Stand Your Ground defense, was given 20 years in jail. Hundreds of people each year get off using the Stand Your Ground defense. But not Marissa.

And so now you know more than you probably ever wanted to, about prosecutor Angela Corey. And as a last note, regarding this strange woman, I have included a [link to the press conference](#) where Corey announces that she (the prosecutor) and her staff have lost the case of The State V. George Zimmerman. She seems positively jubilant! And everybody who was following the case, hoping that the ghost of Trayvon might finally get some justice, was to notice her curious, thinly veiled elation. As you watch, notice her rather perverse wording, given that she is announcing her loss of a big, high profile case: ***“We are so proud to stand before you ... we announced that we would seek the truth for Trayvon Martin ... to the dead, we owe the truth ...and we believe that we brought out the truth, on behalf of Trayvon Martin.”*** Apparently, Corey believes that Trayvon Martin is guilty. Which is bizarre, since it was her office that decided to charge Zimmerman and bring him to trial. Her office which felt they had enough evidence to prove that Zimmerman had committed second degree murder. And that what she says in just the first minute of an incoherent, rambling, twenty minute press conference.

There is one last, very disturbing and impossible to explain detail, which has made me ponder deeply just how much the police and prosecutors—possibly with pressure applied from George Zimmerman’s magistrate father—were “proactive” in doing everything possible to make sure that George Zimmerman was found Not Guilty.

[HERE is a picture of what George Zimmerman’s famous orange-red jacket looked like](#) when first [photographed at the police station](#), about an hour after Zimmerman shot Trayvon—with everybody’s blood allegedly flying everywhere....bloody nose, punching fists, gunshot, etcetera.

OR GOOGLE IMAGES GEORGE ZIMMERMAN JACKET

[HERE is a picture of what George Zimmerman’s famous orange-red jacket looked like by the time it got to trial](#), and the prosecution presented it as evidence that GZ had been attacked:

OR GOOGLE IMAGES OF GEORGE ZIMMERMAN’S JACKET, SCAN PICTURES:

Excuse me. But what the hell happened to that jacket while it was in the chain of custody? Something horrible. Something very crooked...

GEORGE ZIMMERMAN, ALONE AGAIN, NATURALLY

As if the public writ large (with the predictable exceptions), didn't find George Zimmerman repulsive enough after he killed Trayvon Martin, he has managed to continue offending us, all over again, on multiple occasions, in chilling affronts, all without consequence.

First, there was the ugly end to his marriage, just a couple of months after he was acquitted for the murder of Trayvon. In a New York Daily News article by Carol Kuruvilla, "George Zimmerman's estranged wife speaks out: My ex is a 'ticking time-bomb' ", we get a recap of a Katie Couric interview where Shelly Zimmerman spoke in frighteningly candid terms about the true George Zimmerman:

[Shellie Zimmerman](#) says her estranged husband George Zimmerman is acting "like a ticking time-bomb." ... Shellie Zimmerman admitted to Katie Couric that the man has "snapped" and is behaving "[like a monster. I don't know who George is anymore.](#)"

The murder trial and all the national media attention that came with it, have turned the 30-year-old man into a "pacing lion," she said. This week, he was arrested on charges that [he threatened his girlfriend, Samantha Scheibe](#), with a gun ... ***"I certainly hope that there are no casualties. I hope that there is no violence. I know I am certainly afraid. I just hope that he can get the help that he needs to deal with his situation and that no one else will be hurt."***

In September, just roughly two months after his acquittal, Zimmerman was accused by Shellie Zimmerman of smashing an iPad during an argument at the home they had shared. Shellie Zimmerman initially told a dispatcher her husband had a gun ... Shellie Zimmerman said that she hopes to be an inspiration to other women who want to ***"leave a dysfunctional relationship. I hope to be a warning to other woman, that if somebody shows you who they really are, that you should believe them."***

Shellie Zimmerman wasn't home on the night Zimmerman shot Martin. She went to her father's house the night before because she said Zimmerman had humiliated her publicly after she complained about not feeling well when they were out. ***"I do wish that the night before when I had left ... that he had just let me go and didn't call me back into his life and that I didn't play the role I played as a supportive wife. Because my life would be very different now."***

— ***End article excerpt:***

And also not to be missed, there is a fascinating article in GQ by Amanda Robb (September 28th, 2014) about the Zimmerman's family's life after the Trayvon shooting. And it is creepily titled "Meet George Zimmerman's Family." And danged if you don't almost expect to see a picture of the Munster Family, or the Addams Family, when you click on the link ...

It is worth noting here that George Zimmerman's family, with the exception of his brother, seem to be victims in all of this; George's sociopathic vigilante antics, along with his frightening

behavior since the shooting of Trayvon, has left his family in fear for their lives, as they live out their days impoverished, and in hiding. George doesn't seem to feel particularly guilty or phased by that—certainly his determination to keep pulling newsworthy stunts suggests that he doesn't care how much they suffer, or if they stay on the internet's radar. Or even if he has put them in danger.

Here is an excerpt from the above mentioned GQ article, in which we get a glimpse into another aspect of George's character—his unquenchable greed:

(Note: references to “Robert” are references to George's brother, Robert Zimmerman, Jr.)

The Univision appearance went smoothly enough—no gotcha questions... so emboldened, George agreed to another media stop, this time on CNN. It would tape at the Ritz-Carlton in Miami. The network agreed to pay for two hotel rooms for three nights and, according to Robert, “everything” they wanted during their stay. (For this article, George refused to speak with me on the record unless GQ provided a similar hotel room—he asked for a week's stay—but the magazine declined.)

The Zimmerman family seized on their brief stint of subsidized luxury. They ran up a big room-service bill, cleaned out the minibars, got their clothes laundered, made several trips to the spa, treated a party of ten to dinner at the hotel restaurant, and bought swag—from bracelets to bath fizzies—at the gift shop.

Toward the end of their stay, according to Robert, a manager presented him with a bill for \$3,600. He says he called CNN, outraged, only to have the producer accuse them of splurging shamelessly on CNN's dime. “You and your brother are evil!” he remembers her screaming. The hotel manager threatened to call the police. Alone in his room, Robert started shaking. He wrapped all the blankets around him, ordered shrimp, chain-smoked cigarettes, got roaring drunk. Nothing helped. He called his mother in a panic. “I can't get warm,” he sobbed. “I just can't get warm.”

Unconsoled, Robert called the only person he could think of: Dr. Drew, who'd been kind to him when he went on Drew's TV show shortly before George's trial. He reached a producer, who told him Dr. Drew wasn't available. But the guy was nice, at least. He stayed on the phone awhile and talked Robert down. Eventually CNN agreed to pay the bill, and the next morning Robert returned the only purchases he could: a bottle of Mercedes-Benz cologne and a Ritz-Carlton wallet that George had bought him to say thanks.

ZIMMERMAN THE DIRTBAG

None of the following will be any revelation to those who have been paying attention to headlines since the death of Trayvon. The incidents simply confirm our worst fears: George Zimmerman is a powder keg, a ticking time bomb. Pick the cliché of your choice.

Since the arrest:

July 28th, 2013. Forney, Texas. Zimmerman is pulled over for speeding, and blithely informs the officer that he has a gun in his vehicle. When asked where he is going, George replies, ***“Nowhere in particular.”*** George wants to know if the officer recognizes him from TV; the officer lets him off with a warning, and the officer reminds him, ***“Don’t play with your firearm, OK?”*** (Not an electric incident, I will grant you, we just want to keep the running tally of encounters and incidents, accurate. Frankly, the officer looked in a mighty hurry to get away from old George. (As would we all.)

August 22nd, 2013. Zimmerman visits the Kel-Tec factory. Kel-Tec is the company that manufactured the gun that killed Trayvon. He was reportedly inquiring about the legality of buying a tactical shotgun, and was given a tour by the owner’s son. You could say that Kel-Tec is as big a villain in this as Zimmerman, as they state that they don’t give tours: “Special arrangements can sometimes be made for Military, Law enforcement, or Educational purposes only.” So what the hell is so “special” about citizen George Zimmerman that he gets a tour? It is a public relations nightmare, and Zimmerman’s legal team basically said as much. This incident is not to be underrated in its importance as a glimpse into the psychopathy of George Zimmerman: what kind of person, knowing the story would go viral, would rub the death of Trayvon in his parents’ faces by visiting a gun factory, knowing that story will make headlines? [The dopey picture of George posing with the owner’s son](#) with a big shit-eating grin on his big fat face made its way around the internet. Disgusting.

September 3rd, 2013. Lake Mary, Florida. George is pulled over for going 60 in a 45, and gets a ticket for \$265 bucks. Yee-hah!

September 9th, 2013. Z’s estranged wife, Shellie, called 911 to say that Z had threatened her and her father with a gun. ***“I don’t know what he’s capable of, I’m really, really scared. He punched my dad in the nose, my dad has a mark on his face.”*** Police said that Zimmerman smashed an iPad that had recorded the encounter. I’m guessing that she didn’t press charges for one reason: contrary to her 911 call, I think she knows exactly what he’s capable of. Dirtbag. Then, a month later, George nailed a marksman’s target to the wall of their home with seventeen bullet holes in it—an eerie reminder that he had taken care of that seventeen year old troublemaker. Again, Dirtbag.

November 18th 2013. Zimmerman is arrested after allegedly pointing a gun at his new girlfriend, Samantha Scheibe. ***“You just broke my sunglasses and you put your gun in my friggin’ face,”***

*she says to him, [as it is captured on audio](#). “He pushed me out of my house and **locked me out... He knows how to do this, he knows how to play this game,**” she told the dispatcher. Officers found and confiscated an arsenal of weapons belonging to George: .38 caliber handgun, a 9-mm handgun, a Glock 19 handgun, a Kel-Tec 12-gauge shotgun and an AR-15 assault-style rifle. Police also recovered more than 100 rounds of ammunition. Major Dirtbag.*

Over the next few months, Zimmerman starts painting. He sells one for over \$100,000 dollars on eBay. Then he gets a Cease and Desist letter from the AP, whom he is apparently ripping off. Loser.

March 8th, 2014, Zimmerman [signs autographs](#), and [shakes hands with people](#) at a gun show, and lets them take pictures of him posing with his dog. Then organizers have to frantically change the location of the gun show because so many people are pissed off. I am wondering if the dog had any say in all of this. Narcissist.

July 28th, 2014. A police officer finds Zimmerman sitting in his parked car outside of a business called “Pampano Pat’s Motorcycles”, and when asked why he has been sitting there for so long, Zimmerman tells the officer he is a security guard for the company. The owner of the company later denies that Zimmerman is an employee, and states that Zimmerman is certainly not on the payroll. Creepy creep.

September 9th, 2014. Lake Mary, Florida. A 911 call comes in from a man claiming that Zimmerman tried to kill him during a road rage incident. He said that while stopped at a light, Zimmerman, in the next car over, began lashing out with threats and profanities and name calling. As if this is not terrifying enough—to have George Zimmerman threatening you—Zimmerman shows up the next day at the man’s place of work. Chilling.

January 2015. George is dating his dental hygienist, Brittany Brunelle. Police are called when they get into a huge fight; he throws a wine bottle at her, and destroys her cell phone. Oddly enough, a few days later she recants her story, claiming none of this happened. Dirtbag.

May 11th, 2015. Lake Mary, Florida. The same man, who was threatened and stalked by George Zimmerman, takes a shot at Zimmerman while Zimmerman is in his car. Seems to me this guy was trying to neutralize the threat. He is currently awaiting trial. Weird.

And of course, no list of George Zimmerman’s bizarre antics would be complete, without mentioning the March 2015 YouTube clip of CNN’s Don Lemon playing George Zimmerman, seated next to a potted plant, blaming his life’s troubles on one particular man: “Barrack Hussein Obama”. Yes, it is the President who has inflamed the nation against poor George. What the President said during a press conference, in a moment of thoughtful reflection, is to George Zimmerman, a clear “dereliction of duty”, and an attempt by the President to inflame the nation against the unfortunate Zimmerman. Here’s another way to look at this. It was George

Zimmerman shooting down a black kid, and getting away with this crime by lying his ass off, that heightened racial tensions, not the statements of the President.

Zimmerman has also managed to infuriate the Twitter Universe. In late August 2015, Zimmerman enraged many when he twittered a picture of a [Confederate flag](#) “backed by an American flag” (in his words). In another August Twitter, Zimmerman called Obama an “ignorant baboon”. There was another tweet in which he posted an image of Vesper Lee Flanagan, an African-American former news reporter who [shot and killed two ex-coworkers during a broadcast](#), and wrote, “If Obama had a son...” And yet another in which Zimmerman typed, in response to people who wanted him killed, that the United States understands “how it ended for the last moron that hit me” (in reference to [Trayvon Martin](#)). In September 2015, Zimmerman retweeted a photo of [Trayvon Martin’s](#) slain body posted by another Twitter user with the caption “Z-Man is a one man army”. Several days later, Zimmerman posted a letter in which he said that the photo in the original tweet was marked as “sensitive” and was blocked, so he retweeted it because of the text message without seeing the photo.

And last but certainly not least, as of this writing, George’s most recent creepy antics again had to do with harassing and terrifying an innocent woman. A December 4th, 2015 USA Today article by reporter Michael Harthorne broke this grotesque Zimmerman story: “Infamous Florida man [George Zimmerman](#) has been [kicked off Twitter](#), at least temporarily, after managing to fit harassment, slut shaming, Islamophobia, misogyny, and bigotry into 140 characters or less.” The USA Today article goes on to say how Zimmerman tweeted two topless photos of a woman he says is his ex-girlfriend, to his more than 15,000 followers on Thursday. **“This is Heather. She cheated on me with a dirty Muslim. She’ll sleep with anyone,”** the first tweet says; the tweet included a phone number apparently belonging to Heather. In a second tweet, Zimmerman accused Heather of stealing cash and a gun from him, and included an email address.” Dirtbag Redux.

And finally, there are some of the choice words that Zimmerman offered when he was on the Sean Hannity Show. Not surprisingly, it was worse than a softball interview; as I watched the creepy tone of it (the only time I have ever seen Hannity, casual, sans tie,) I almost expected Hannity to offer George a neck massage. But even worse than the lies and manipulations, that spew from George Zimmerman’s mouth, are his answers, when asked to give his deepest insights and beliefs, about his choices that night.

HANNITY: Is there anything you regret? Do you regret getting out of the car to follow Trayvon that night?

ZIMMERMAN: No, sir.

HANNITY: Do you regret that you had a gun that night?

ZIMMERMAN: *I feel that it was all God's plan and for me to second guess it or judge it...*

HANNITY: *—Is there anything that you would do different?*

ZIMMERMAN: *No sir.*

What a demon. What a pair. One of the particularly galling parts of the exchange—apart from the obvious killer line—is that Zimmerman claims he had no regrets about getting out of the car that night. This is particularly perverse, since “given hindsight”, George now knows that Trayvon had no plans to burglarize a home, rob a person, nor was he carrying a weapon. But George Zimmerman doesn't regret that he stalked, and then shot dead a kid who was on his way home, with a can of Arizona iced tea and a bag of Skittles.

Not surprisingly, Trayvon's father had a response to Zimmerman's take on the wants of the almighty: ***“We must worship a different God, because there is no way that my God would have wanted George Zimmerman to kill my teenage son.”***

“It was all part of God's plan.”

Really, George? I think God might have something to say about that.

THE TROUBLED HISTORY OF SANFORD, FLORIDA

There are those who are not the least bit surprised that all of this should happen in Sanford, Florida. The place has a history of racial ugliness. It would be unfair to suggest that racism pervades the city, or the people. But it is, unfortunately, an ingrained part of Sanford's legacy.

The founder had dreams of shipping Florida Negroes back to Africa. Sanford's racist beginnings are uncovered in an article by Adam Weinstein in “Mother Jones”:

Long before the live oaks and Spanish moss gave way to interstate highways and box stores, Sanford began as a citrus town in the 1870s, conceived by a New England tycoon. Henry Shelton Sanford, who had ingratiated himself to Abraham Lincoln and served as Lincoln's ambassador to Belgium for eight years, had the town built by Swedish laborers. Though the citrus empire he dreamed of didn't exactly flourish, Sanford proved instrumental to promoting trade with the Belgian-controlled territory of Congo—which included his vision of promoting Congo as a place to ship America's freed blacks. The African locale, he said, represented an outlet “for the enterprise and ambition of our colored people in more congenial fields than

politics." A Congo peopled with African Americans could be "the ground to draw the gathering electricity from that black cloud spreading over the Southern states."

—*"Trayvon Martin's death extends Sanford's sordid legacy." Mother Jones, March 28th, 2012*

Flash forward several decades.

The town was less than welcoming, when Jackie Robinson came to practice with the Montreal Royals, in preparation for leading the Brooklyn Dodgers to new heights. Journalist David Zirin, writing in "The Nation" just a month after the Trayvon killing, revisits that sad chapter in Robinson's life, and in Sanford's history:

Before Robinson broke Major League Baseball's color line in 1947 as a member of the Brooklyn Dodgers, he spent a season desegregating the minor leagues, playing for the Dodgers AAA team, the Montreal Royals. The Royals held Spring Training in Sanford. Dodgers' general manager Branch Rickey, after so many years, thought he knew Florida. He believed that Robinson's presence could go over if efforts were taken to ruffle as few feathers as possible. Robinson, on Rickey's instructions, didn't try to stay at any Sanford hotels. He and his wife didn't eat out at any restaurants not deemed "Negro restaurants." He didn't even dress in the same locker room as his teammates. Rickey thought that would be enough. He thought he knew Florida. But he didn't know Sanford...As Jean West, a school teacher in Florida, [wrote](#), "Branch Rickey had miscalculated the degree to which Jim Crow was entrenched in Sanford. As an example, an inanimate object, a second-hand piano, purchased in 1924 from the courthouse for use in a segregated school in nearby Oviedo, was filed as a 'Negro Piano' in the school board's record; living human beings challenging segregation certainly would not be tolerated." It wasn't. The mayor of Sanford was confronted by what the author describes as a "large group of white residents" who "demanded that Robinson...be run out of town." The Mayor caved. On March 5th, the Royals were informed that they would not be permitted to take the field as an integrated group. Rickey was concerned for Robinson's life and sent him to stay in Daytona Beach. His daughter, Sharon Robinson, [remembered](#), "The Robinsons were run out of Sanford, Florida, with threats of violence." This was a low moment for Jackie. The man whose number, 42, is retired throughout Major League Baseball almost quit and rejoined the Negro Leagues.

— "Jackie Robinson, Trayvon Martin, and the sad history of Sanford, Florida", The Nation, March 23rd, 2012

It was an ugly moment in a city with a racist history. The Ku Klux Klan was so infuriated at the thought of a Negro (we can be sure that is not the word they used) playing with a white team that Jackie had to slip out of town, in fear for his life.

But the Klan was not done. Around this same time, the NAACP was making itself felt in the state of Florida, and in the city of Sanford. Educator and black activist Harry T. Moore had sued the state, in an attempt to get black teachers the same pay as white teachers. Then, in an act that further enraged the Klan, Moore, along with his wife (also a teacher) opened up the first NAACP office in Sanford. The Moore's were also instrumental in growing black voter registration by thirty-one percent. The local Klan was reaching a boiling point. They also didn't care for Moore's dogged determination to hold a Sheriff accountable for shooting two prisoners in cold blood, according to a surviving witness—those prisoners having been found guilty in a highly questionable trial.

As punishment for Moore's activism, the Klan firebombed the Moores' home. The Klan, which has always loudly and proudly espoused its Christian values, firebombed the Moore family home on Christmas Day. This also happened to be the Moores' 25th wedding anniversary. Harry Moore died in the ambulance on the way to the hospital. His wife died in the hospital nine days later.

This is a memory that their two daughters would carry with them for the rest of their lives, and every Christmas thereafter.

This undercurrent of white supremacy has continued for decades, and it erupted again in 2010, just fifteen months before Trayvon's killing. It is an enraging and convoluted story, which we will reprise here.

SANFORD FLORIDA, 2010. The story goes essentially like this: For no apparent reason, Justin Collison, 22, sucker punched a black homeless man outside of a bar. He beat the poor man repeatedly and then left him, sprawled on the sidewalk with a broken nose. Then Justin Collison walked away—but then, inexplicably, punched another stranger on the street. The entire incident was captured on video, which the responding patrolmen then sat and watched. The officers wanted to charge Justin, but their superior, a one Sergeant Anthony Raimondo, didn't want Justin charged. Remember the name "Raimondo". That will be interesting later on.

The reason Raimondo didn't want Justin charged is that after being detained, a panicky Justin called his dad, a police lieutenant, and Raimondo decided not to press charges, at the urging of Justin's father. Justin walked away, a free man. It took the NAACP's complaints and seven long weeks to get the arrest warrant. Justin Collison quickly posted bail, and was released. The Seminole County Sheriff's Office had to step in, and began an internal investigation which found

so much corruption that the Chief of Police was forced to resign—although he was the only casualty of that investigation.

At trial, Justin Collison was given probation, even as the courtroom watched the video of him attacking that man. Observers say that Justin turned beet red with rage while being forced to watch it. Interestingly enough, it was the second fight Justin had been in that night. Earlier, he had attacked the DJ inside the bar.

It was also not Justin Collison's first bout of violence, or brush with the law. Justin had been arrested four years earlier, accused, along with another man, of shooting a motorist in the chest after a beer bash at his grandfather's ranch in Volusia County.

Prosecutors dropped that case, though, after they failed to determine which of the two young men pulled the trigger. A year previous to that incident, at age seventeen, Justin was charged with beating and choking his girlfriend, and damaging her home. Prosecutors dropped those charges after his family paid for repairs and the girl “stopped cooperating”.

The sucker punching and beating of a black homeless man may not seem like a horrific crime to some people. But it would seem obvious that Justin Collison has a vicious and violent road ahead of him—and that Sanford police are happy to turn a blind eye, when a white man attacks a black man.

Oh, and that sergeant who refused to press charges, in spite of the damning video evidence? Just a little over one year later, Sergeant Raimondo was the first officer to show up at the shooting of Trayvon Martin. The man whose job it would be to try to save Trayvon's life, and to correctly document the scene, and catalogue the evidence. Hmph.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE GUNNING DOWN OF JORDAN DAVIS

“Quicker than a flash, I had a round chambered in it, and I shot ... I shot four times, and the SUV pulled out, and like I said, in my mind, they’ve got a gun ...and I was still scared ... and I shot four more times. They were fleeing...trying to keep their heads down, not to catch any return fire.”

—*Michael Dunn, being interviewed by police detectives the morning after he killed Jordan Davis*

Life is perfect. You are in love with a beautiful woman. You always introduce her as “the love of my life”. You are a successful software engineer, as evidenced by the fact that you spend your weekends flying your vintage airplane to new breakfast spots that you target, up and down the Florida coastline—that is, when you are not cruising the beaches on your beloved motorcycle. Life couldn’t be sweeter, or richer. You and your fiancé even have a new puppy, and you decide to take it with you to the wedding of your first born child, your son, and you make plans to spend the wedding weekend at an elegant and pricey Bed & Breakfast.

The wedding happened to be on the Friday after Thanksgiving. It was everything you hoped it would be, and more. On the way home from the wedding, you decide to get some wine and snacks to take back to the B&B. You pull into a convenience store parking lot, much annoyed to see that you have pulled up next to a Durango full of black kids blasting their rap. **“I hate that thug music,”** you bitch to your girlfriend. Your girlfriend offers to run in the store, and as you sit and wait, you are much annoyed at the thumping rap music still blasting from the car, so you ask them to turn it down. They obey. Then, after a moment—kids will be kids—they turn it back up again, just as loud. You get into a swearing match with one of the kids. “F bombs” are dropped. You don’t like it. Nobody disrespects you. So you grab your gun from the glove compartment and unload four rounds at the kids, through the doors. As they speed away in terror, you shoot at the fleeing vehicle a few more times, for good measure. Punk ass thugs.

You showed them.

At this point, you could do the humane thing, and call 911. After all, you scared the thugs away, but you might have hit one of them. And in this country, even thugs get medical treatment when they are in distress. But you do not. You yell for your girlfriend to **“Get the fuck in the car!”** and you screech off, back to your sumptuous lodgings. Then you order pizza. Next morning, you go

home. And never once—not in the tense drive back to the B & B from the gas station, not as you linger over pizza, not on the long drive back home the next day ... never once do you tell the love of your life that you shot them because you saw a weapon in their car. Because you thought they were going to shoot you. You apologize for the drama, you declare your love to you fiancé over and over again, but you never once mention seeing a gun.

Oddly enough, that detail only comes up after you have been arrested. To which the detective retorts that there was no gun in that red Durango. There was no stick, no bat, no weapon of any kind. Just four kids with squeaky clean records, coming back from the shopping mall. And, the detectives also tell you that you are lucky, everybody is lucky, that you only managed to kill one of them, after emptying eight bullets into that car parked next to you.

It was a case that gripped the nation—or perhaps we should say, the people in the nation who care. It was the story of a kid who got killed because of loud music. And because, apparently, he mouthed off to the wrong white man. Yes, in case you have forgotten the sad story of the shooting of Jordan Davis ... Jordan and the three friends in that Red Dodge Durango, were black.

The events, as agreed upon by all parties:

Friday, November 23, 2012

The time was about 7:30 in the evening. The red Dodge Durango arrived first. Four black teenage males—Leland Brunson, Jordan Davis, Tommie Stornes, and Tevin Thompson—were making a quick stop at the gas station for gum and cigarettes. Tommie Stornes, the driver, was the only one who exited the vehicle to go make the purchases. It was seconds after he went in the store that Michael Dunn and girlfriend Rhonda Rouer pulled and parked in the spot next to the Durango. Rouer testified that Dunn told her, "***I hate that thug music***" before she left the car for the store, although Dunn claims he used the phrase "rap crap". Then Rhonda went into the store to get some white wine and chips.

The loud music playing in the teens' SUV was annoying Dunn, who asked for it to be turned down. Front seat passenger Tevin Thompson initially complied, but then Jordan Davis objected and Thompson turned the music back up. According to the other teens, Davis and Dunn continued to argue. Meanwhile, Stornes returned to the vehicle. According to Dunn's testimony, Davis threatened to kill him, then opened his car door and pointed what appeared to be a shotgun at him. Dunn, who had a concealed weapons permit, took a handgun out of his glove compartment and started firing at Davis' door. One single bullet entered his right side, and damaged his ribs, diaphragm, aorta and lungs. According to Stacey Simons, the medical examiner who performed the autopsy, this was the bullet that killed Jordan. He was also shot

twice in the leg. As the SUV backed up to evade his gunshots, Dunn opened his own door and continued firing at the car, later testifying that he still feared for his safety as well as that of Rouer, who was to return to the vehicle imminently. Investigators later searched the SUV and found no weapons. Dunn's attorney claimed that detectives did not search the area for a weapon for several days after the shooting. Davis' friends testified that he could not have opened his door because the child lock was set. Contrary to Dunn's claim that he mentioned the shotgun to her several times, Rouer testified that he never mentioned a gun either that night or the next day.

While Dunn was still firing, Stornes frantically backed the SUV out of the parking space, drove a short distance, and parked in an adjoining parking lot. The boys in the car were panicked when they discovered that Jordan had been hit, and began yelling for people running towards them to dial 911. At this same time, Rouer, who had heard the shots, came running up to the car and Dunn yelled at her to get inside; they screeched off. Dunn elected to leave the scene without calling the police.

When they got back to the hotel and were safe in their room, Dunn still did not call the police. Instead, they called for pizza delivery. Dunn, who would later testify that he was still afraid for his life, took the puppy outside for a walk. It is worth noting that he did not have his gun with him; it was now back in the glove compartment of his car. Dunn did not contact the police at all that night. The next morning, Rouer saw a report about the shooting on the news, indicating that Jordan Davis had died. Dunn still did not call the police, even though he had caused a death by homicide.

They decided to abort their vacation plans and return home, a drive of about three hours. Upon returning home, Dunn still did not call the police. Dunn testified he called a neighbor who works in law enforcement to arrange to speak to him about the shooting, but phone records indicate that the neighbor actually called him, and Rouer testified that the shooting was never mentioned during the call. Dunn was arrested the next day, his license plate number having been seen by several witnesses at the scene.

THE DETECTIVES

Watching real police detectives interview actual suspects is something of an acquired taste, I will grant you, but once you get in the groove, it's better than anything on television. No CSI show or legal drama can match it, because you are watching real life. Many of the interviews that you will watch when researching the subject of this book can be both depressing and maddening, because of the infuriating good ol' boy "wink-wink, nod-nod", semi-conspiratorial nature of the interviews. As in, "We whites get it. You did what you had to do. These uppity blacks have to be kept in line." The phrases "pater familias" and avuncular come to mind. Not so with the

interview of Michael Dunn. I recommend it, if you can tear yourself away from your TV; up your game a little.

(Please note that times below refer to “minutes into the interview”, not military time. Most copies of the Dunn-Detective interview are about the same length; the shorter ones have a few seconds redacted here and there for personal information given, or Dunn sitting alone. Therefore, the minutes below should be considered approximations, and the minutes below are taken from [this version of the interview.](#))

Michael Dunn, comfortable and casual in his summer shorts and his guayabera shirt, is ushered into the small cramped questioning room at the police station, where he sits down with two policemen for his interview. Watch how the detectives slowly circle and close in...in a book full of profoundly depressing chapters, this one is gratifying.

They begin by establishing the basics: when Dunn got to town, the particulars about his lodgings and his son’s wedding, his plans to stop at the gas station for snacks, etcetera. Then, Dunn explains his version of events. It is at this point that the more pointed questions begin. Dunn has no idea that he will not leave the room as a free man. At the end of the interview, he will be handcuffed and arrested for murder.

DETECTIVE #1: I know you're in a strange town, and you had this traumatic event happen to you, and I can understand that. The problem, I can tell you where we start wondering is, by the time you get to your hotel room, you're calling to order pizza. Why aren't you calling us?

DUNN: I wanted to come back to my hometown to do that, and get our dog and everybody where they needed to be. I didn't want to bring a shitstorm down on them in Jacksonville.

DETECTIVE #1: OK. Well, they haven't done anything to be worried about. She doesn't—you know, it's not like—she's there. There's nothing she did wrong.

DUNN: I was uh, you know, I shouldn't even have left the scene. But I left the scene because I was still afraid.

DETECTIVE #1: OK, I can live with that. I can live with that. You don't necessarily want to hang around right where the shooting happened, 'cause you don't know if these guys are coming back. I'm good with that.

DUNN: Or if there are more.

DETECTIVE #1: But once you leave, and you are away from that scene, and you have even gotten to a hotel room. and inside your hotel room at that point ... you know now it doesn't—it makes me wonder, you know, cause if you make a phone call, we find out a lot quicker what's going on. The reason he and I haven't been to sleep since sometime yesterday is because we're

trying to figure out—all we know is we got a guy, we got a dead kid in a car. OK? And we got a guy who shot and hauled ass. That's all we know. See what I'm saying?

DUNN: I do, and I was meaning to call you guys last night, and I was insistent on waiting until we got around people we knew.

DETECTIVE #1: I mean, that's where we start to get a little concerned ...

At this point, they start to talk about other cases, as examples of how Dunn could have handled himself. Then they have Dunn recount what happened, one more time, to check him for consistency. We resume the transcripts at the point where the detectives begin to question Dunn's veracity:

DETECTIVE #2: There are other problems we have too ...when you begin to shoot. Can you honestly tell us that you ever saw a gun inside their vehicle?

DUNN: I saw a barrel come up on the window, like a single shot shotgun, where there's a barrel. I didn't see this part of the barrel, I saw that part of the barrel. It was either a barrel or a stick. But sir, they're, they're, they're like "We're gonna kill you." And then they said "You're dead bitch." I mean, I—I didn't wait to look to see if they were going to point it at me. He reached down and picked it up. And then—

DETECTIVE #2: When you say he—who reached down?

DUNN: Well hopefully it's the guy that I hit.

DETECTIVE #2: Where was he sitting?

DUNN: He was sitting in the rear passenger side. That's the guy that was really agitated. And then that's the guy that I asked, "are you talking about you're gonna kill me"? Like I said, I didn't know—My window was up, he was saying a lot, but that's what came through, and I put my window down to ask him—

DETECTIVE #2: And the music is still playing at this time?

DUNN: Yes, the beat is really loud and really animated

DETECTIVE #2: Louder than the music that's bothering you?

DUNN: Well the music was a nuisance at first, with my car shut and the window up and you can hear the heavy bass and like I said, I just said "Hey, would you mind turning it down?" And then they did shut it off which I said thanks. But it really wasn't an issue of loud music, it was an issue of them threatening my life.

At this point, they confirm the whereabouts of the girlfriend, who is still in the store. The dialogue is not applicable. RESUME:

DETECTIVE #2: Like we said, there's some issues that we have. I'll be the first to tell you, there were no weapons in that car. I don't know what you saw.

DUNN: Is it possible when they drove off they dumped it?

DETECTIVE #2: They never left the parking lot.

DETECTIVE #1: Yeah, they drove out, circled back around, and came right back to that spot ... They circled around until they saw you leave and then they drove right back.

DETECTIVE #2: They saw you leave and realized their friend had been hit. They circled round and never left the parking lot.

DUNN: I don't know what to tell you.

DETECTIVE #2: Here's what has to happen. I know that from your position right now that you're going to do everything to protect yourself. And I can't say that I blame you for that. But we're gonna need the total, total truth as to what happened, not this story that I've had from 7:30 last night till 12:00 today to accept. Because the only thing that's gonna make sense to us is the truth matching the scene. And the biggest problem we've got, the first hurdle we've got to get over is that there's no weapon in that car.

DUNN: Did he have a stick? Because he stuck something up.

DETECTIVE #1: I'll go check it. I don't recall seeing anything like that. But I'll go check it.

DETECTIVE #2: The second problem we have is that the last set of rounds, when the truck is backing away from you, you put four more shots into it. That's an issue. Because when it's backing away, it's no longer a threat.

DUNN: Yes sir, I understand that, but in my mind, they had a weapon.

DETECTIVE #2: I can't shoot someone because in my mind they had a weapon. That's the problem. I mean if I walked up to someone right now, and I have a confrontation and I think they have a weapon the law doesn't allow me to shoot them because I think they had a weapon.

For a moment, they have him repeat, once again, his version of the shooting.

DUNN: I do remember getting out of my car...

DETECTIVE #2: Once again, once again if you think they have something, you think they have a shotgun, are you gonna get out of your car so they can get good aim on you? Doesn't make any sense.

DUNN: Well, at the time, I was doing everything on adrenalin.

DETECTIVE #2: We're trained, if we think something is there to get out of the way, to seek cover or concealment. You're telling me that you thought they had a shotgun but you got out of your car, so they could get a good aim at you, is what you're telling me.

DUNN: But I thought maybe they'd shoot at the car and I wouldn't be in it.

DETECTIVE #2: Your car's not shooting at them. You are. Why would they shoot at your car?

DUNN: Honestly, sir, I'm at a loss to justify what I did...

Dunn's rambling, and repeating his rationalizations, begins at 23:00. The ensuing cat and mouse game, as they find inconsistencies in Dunn's story, is well worth watching. Gratifying. I highly recommend the viewing experience.

The transcripts below begin again at 29:31, about a half hour into the interview.

DETECTIVE #1: It makes no sense, because what he's gonna do? He's not armed. What's he gonna do—"Oh I'm gonna kill you!" And get out of the car? And we're talking about a kid—you know how many times that kid's been to jail? NEVER. He has no history of violence. It's not like we're dealing with street thugs.

DETECTIVE #2: Only thing this kid has is a truancy at school.

DETECTIVE #1: We're not talking about a violent kid here. He's has no track record. There are guys in Jacksonville, I'd go, OK, I believe that. Cause they got track records. But this kid ain't got no track record. The kid sitting next to him doesn't have a track record. The kid sitting in front of him doesn't have a track record. None of them do. The guy in front of them has a little thing, he stole a car when he was younger. That's it. These aren't violent guys. They pull up so the guy can go buy cigarettes. That's the only reason they're even there. They just got back from going to the mall. That's it. So I have a hard time buying how he—and now I can totally see him talking shit to you, I can see that. But to take it to a level where he's threatening to end your life—when he can't. There's no way he can. He doesn't have anything!

DUNN: I didn't know that.

DETECTIVE #2: Your not knowing that is all the more reason you took your next step too far.

DETECTIVE #1: The problem is, you went from zero to a hundred, without ever getting to fifty.

DETECTIVE #2: And there's people in the parking lot that can hear what's going on too.

DETECTIVE #1: We have what we call independent witnesses...

And on, and on, it goes.

Again, I highly recommend viewing these two detectives interview the shooter, Michael Dunn. Let me say this: over the last months and years, there has been little justice in the matter of blacks, being killed by cops failing to follow procedure, and that makes this video oh so

satisfying—especially the last few minutes, where Michael Dunn realizes that he is being arrested for murder, and that his days as a free man are over.

THE LOUD MUSIC MURDER TRIAL

Unlike so many of the tragic stories contained in this book, there was some justice in this case. I say “some” because nothing, of course, can bring back a young man cut down before his life has really even begun, whose future looked so rich and promising. But it is a start. The trial was painful and complex: Dunn had to be tried not only for the murder of Jordan Davis, but for the attempted murder of the other boys in the vehicle as well.

On February 15, 2014, after deliberating for over thirty hours, the jury found Dunn guilty on all four of the lesser charges, including three counts of attempted second degree murder. A mistrial was called on the first-degree murder charge when the jury was unable to reach consensus. Sentencing on the first four charges was withheld until the retrial, sought by Florida State Attorney Angela Corey.

Jury selection for the retrial began on September 22nd, 2014, with opening statements commencing on September 25th.

On October 1st, Dunn was found guilty. On October 17th, Dunn was sentenced to life without parole. He also received an additional ninety years of prison for three counts of attempted murder and for firing into a vehicle. As of this writing, Dunn is appealing the verdict, and the appeal is moving through the legal system.

It is worth noting that the speech given by the trial judge was rare and inspiring in its eloquence. He addresses the matter of “Stand Your Ground” face on, and implores citizens to refrain from using the statute as “carte blanche” to murder other citizens:

SENTENCING OF MICHAEL DUNN

THE JUDGE'S STATEMENT

By the Honorable Judge Russell L. Healey

“This is a parent’s worst nightmare. And Mr. Dunn, your life is effectively over. The jury found that you senselessly and deliberately took a life, and attempted to take three others. In the process, you’ve ruined your life, and detrimentally and permanently damaged the lives of many others. What is sad is—and this is something that we judges see—is that this case demonstrates and exemplifies that our society seems to have lost its way. Its moral compass, if you will. And what is right, and what is wrong, on many different levels. Our thoughts and discussion ought to be about how we *should* treat one another. It’s not whether we *can* do something or act in a certain way, or whether we have a right in our minds to do it—but whether it’s proper, sensible, prudent, necessary, and neighborly.

You hear people talk about the debate, the right to “Stand Your Ground”. There’s such a huge misunderstanding among the general public about that term. Self-defense, justifiable homicide, and excusable homicide are very complicated legal documents and laws—laws that differ from state to state. And while that debate will continue I’m sure, we should remember: there’s nothing wrong with retreating or de-escalating the situation. Mr. Dunn, this tragedy could have and should have been avoided. How you went from a joyous time at the wedding of your son, in the time it took you to drive from Orange Park, Florida to the intersection of Dade Meadows and South Side Boulevard, and kill someone is something people will never understand.

Before I pronounce sentence, however, I do want to mention a couple of things. The first is positive I guess, if we can take away from this horrible tragedy something positive. And that is that our justice system works. Some criticize our system. But this case demonstrates that our justice system does work. And while it may not be perfect—nothing is—it is the greatest and the fairest system in the world. And while this was demonstrated in this case in our community and beyond, let it be known that our system works like this every week, every month, throughout every year, here in Jacksonville. It’s not just with this case, it’s with many, many cases that are not reported on or covered, as this one was. Additionally, to demonstrate how our system works, our citizens, you, your friends and neighbors, while initially not always thrilled or anxious to come down and serve as a juror—once here, those folks understand jury service is their civic duty, and they take that duty seriously and embrace it. They embrace the opportunity to be not just a part of our justice system, but the backbone of our justice system. Both juries in this case, made up of different genders, ages, races, and ethnic backgrounds came together and spoke with one voice, as Mr. Davis suggested and alluded to; they did not allow race to become a factor. So I want to thank those jurors that are here again today for their service in this case, and to all the other

citizens of Jacksonville who come down each and every week to serve as jurors on cases here in Jacksonville.

Mr. Dunn, please stand.

Mr. Dunn, you, having been found guilty by a jury of your peers on February 15th, 2014 as to Counts Two, Three and Four of the indictment of attempted second degree murder, which is a first degree felony punishable by a maximum of thirty years in the Florida State Prison, and carrying a twenty year minimum mandatory sentence, and you having been found guilty by the same jury of Count Five—shooting into an occupied vehicle—a second degree felony punishable by a maximum of fifteen years, I hereby adjudicate you guilty in each of those four offenses.

As to Count Two, the attempted second degree murder of Tevin Thomason, I hereby sentence you to serve thirty years in the Florida State Prison, with a twenty year minimum mandatory sentence.

As to Count Three, attempted second degree murder of Leland Brunson, I hereby sentence you to serve thirty years in the Florida State Prison, with a twenty year minimum mandatory sentence. This sentence will run consecutively with the sentence imposed in Count Two.

As to Count Four, attempted second degree murder of Tommie Stornes, I hereby sentence you to serve thirty years in the Florida State Prison, with a twenty year minimum mandatory. This sentence will run consecutively with the sentences imposed in Count Two and Three.

As to Count Five, shooting into an occupied vehicle, I hereby sentence you to serve a term of fifteen years in the Florida State Prison. This sentence will run concurrently with the sentence imposed in Count Four.

Mr. Dunn, you having been found guilty by a jury of your peers on October 1st, 2014, of the premeditated murder in the first degree of Jordan Davis, which carries a minimum mandatory life sentence without parole, I hereby sentence you to serve that minimum life sentence without the eligibility of parole. This sentence will run consecutively with the sentences imposed in Counts Two, Three, Four and Five. I will impose court costs of six hundred and sixteen dollars.

DUNN: THE TRUE VICTIM

Bad news for Dunn, surely, but Dunn just doesn't do remorse. A few days later in prison, he said this in a phone call to his girlfriend:

“You know, I was thinking about that today, it’s like, like I’m the fucking victim here. I was the one who was victimized. I mean, I don’t know how else to put it. It’s like they attacked me. I’m the victim. I’m the victor. But I was the victim too. So not to wallow in, you know, despair or anything, but you know I was thinking a lot about this today and I was like I’m, I’m the victim here,” Dunn told Rouer. *“I was the one that was being preyed upon and I fought back.”*

“And then, you know, it’s not quite the same, but it made me think of like the old TV shows and movies where, like, how police used to think when a chick got raped, ‘Oh, it’s her fault because of the way she was dressed.’ Yeah, and I’m like, so it’s my fault because I asked them to turn their music down,” he said in a laughing voice. *“I got attacked and I fought back because I don’t want to be a victim and now I’m in trouble. I refuse to be a victim and now I’m incarcerated.”*

Friends, I find this last rant of his to be fascinating. Understandably, most people glom onto the word “victim”; I will admit that I did at first. Comparing himself to a rape victim—can we imagine anything more disgusting? Yet more and more, I find myself focusing on his choice use of the word “victor”. There are people who have posited that people like Michael Dunn and George Zimmerman are psychopaths, and then they read off the list of qualities that a psychopath possesses.

Among some of the qualities:

- Superficial charm and average intelligence.
- Delusions and other irrational thinking.
- Absence of nervousness or neurotic manifestations.
- Untruthfulness and insincerity.
- Specific loss of insight.
- Lack of remorse or shame.
- Antisocial behavior without apparent compunction.
- Poor judgment and failure to learn from experience.
- Pathological egocentricity and incapacity to love.
- General poverty in major affective reactions.

Their arguments are compelling. These lists are compelling, and the extent to which the personalities of Zimmerman and Dunn seem to manifest qualities on said lists is an eerie reality, indeed. So think about this, as you wonder whether or not Dunn fits the description of a psychopath: He has killed a child. He did so for no other reason than that he was not obeyed. The

result is that he is now going to spend the rest of his life in jail, never again being allowed to kiss the love of his life, hug his son, hold his grandchild, or walk his puppy, Charlie. He is hated and reviled. As the judge put it, **“Your life is effectively over.”** And yet...unbelievably, in a raw act of psychopathy, he calls himself “the victor.” Why? Because he killed a loud black person.

Allow me to leave you with Dunn’s own words to the detective, back during that first harrowing interview:

DETECTIVE: Do you think you overreacted?

DUNN: I don’t want to sound like an asshole, but if it happened again tomorrow, I would do the same.

FLORIDA STAND YOUR GROUND LAWS

“Under Florida law, I do not have to prove self-defense. The State has to prove it was not.”

—Michael Dunn, in a letter from prison

This book constitutes a brief and all too incomplete history of lynching in America, and to have an in-depth discussion on the subject of “Stand Your Ground” laws would require a book in itself. However, a chapter about yet another Florida homicide in which “Stand Your Ground” was invoked is the appropriate place for this author to give an opinion on the subject, and to defend that opinion. So, before we leave the sad story of Jordan Davis, let’s take a look at these “Stand Your Ground” laws that many sources say have caused a spike in shootings, and in killings.

First, we must ask ourselves, what is the fundamental difference between the long existing self-defense laws and the new rash of “Stand Your Ground” laws?

Put quite simply, the essence of it has to do with “duty to retreat.” The laws established prior to “Stand Your Ground” place a much greater emphasis on de-escalating and diffusing the situation before using lethal force. However, the laws preceding “Stand Your Ground” laws still afforded people the right to use lethal force, if their lives were in danger.

Specifically, the Florida “Stand Your Ground” statute reads:

“A person is justified in using or threatening to use deadly force if he or she reasonably believes that using or threatening to use such force is necessary to prevent imminent death or great bodily harm to himself or herself or another or to prevent the imminent commission of a

forcible felony. A person who uses or threatens to use deadly force in accordance with this subsection does not have a duty to retreat and has the right to stand his or her ground if the person using or threatening to use the deadly force is not engaged in a criminal activity and is in a place where he or she has a right to be.”

—Florida Statutes 776.012 (underlined emphasis added)

I would like to be wise here. I would like to be prescient. I would like to be many things, but my gut tells me that all I can do right now, all I should do, is speak from the gut: I believe that now, with the law putting so little emphasis on de-escalating violence, on diffusing it, we will certainly see an escalation in violence and murder. Those increased killings will come because:

So many people have crappy judgment, and don't understand what it actually means to "reasonably believe" something.

So many people hold a prejudicial hatred in their heart, and so they will either consciously or subconsciously use "Stand Your Ground" to carry out the thoughts that come with profiling, and they will inflict unnecessary harm. More pointedly, there will be more killings.

And indeed there have been.

Stand Your Ground laws are frequently criticized and called "shoot first" laws by critics, including the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence. In Florida, self-defense claims tripled in the years following enactment.

(“Deaths Nearly Triple Since 'Stand Your Ground' Enacted". CBS Miami. 2011-03-20. Retrieved March 23, 2012.)

—In a 2007 National District Attorneys Association symposium, numerous concerns were voiced that the law could increase crime. This included criminals using the law as a defense for their crimes, more people carrying guns, and that people would not feel safe if they felt that anyone could use deadly force in a conflict. The report also noted that the misinterpretation of clues could result in use of deadly force when there was, in fact, no danger. The report specifically notes that racial and ethnic minorities could be at greater risk because of negative stereotypes.

—A study by Texas A&M economics professors found that the adoption of Stand Your Ground laws caused a statistically significant increase in the raw homicide rate, and had only a very small positive effect on deterrence of crime. (Cheng, Cheng; Hoekstra, Mark, 2012. "Does Strengthening Self-Defense Law Deter Crime or Escalate Violence? Evidence from Castle Doctrine" PDF. Retrieved September 19, 2012.)

—Another analysis of stand-your-ground laws by economists at Georgia State, using monthly data from the [U.S. Vital Statistics](#), found a significant increase in homicide and injury of whites, especially white males. They also analyzed data from the [Health Care Utilization Project](#), which revealed significantly increased rates of emergency room visits and hospital discharges related to gun injuries in states which enacted these laws. (McClellan, Chandler; Tekin, Erdal (June 2012). "Stand Your Ground Laws, Homicides, and Injuries". Bulletin on Aging and Health. NBER Working Paper No. 18187.)

—A new study in the Journal of Human Resources claims that Stand Your Ground laws in states across the U.S. contribute to 600 additional homicides a year. (Coleman, Christina. "Kill At Will: Stand Your Ground Laws Contribute To 600 Additional Homicides A Year ". Retrieved 1 December 2014)

—Politifact Florida statistics showed that, from 2005-2007, the number of violent crimes actually rose and the once-declining crime rate stalled after the law took effect. ("Half true: Crime rates in Florida have dropped since 'stand your ground,' says Dennis Baxley". Politifact. March 23, 2012. Retrieved March 24, 2012.

—In Stand Your Ground states, the use of the defense by whites in the shooting of a black person is found to be justifiable 17 percent of the time, while the defense when used by African-Americans in the shooting of a white person is successful 1 percent of the time. (Jonsson, Patrik August 6, 2013. "Racial bias and 'Stand your ground' laws: what the data show". *Christian Science Monitor*. Retrieved May 3, 2014.

According to the Urban Institute, in Stand Your Ground states, white-on-black homicides are 354 percent more likely to be ruled justified than white-on-white homicides. In cases with black or Hispanic victims, the killings were found justified by the Stand Your Ground law 78 percent of the time, compared to 56 percent in cases with white victims. (Flatow, Nicole. "5 Disturbing Facts About The State Of Stand Your Ground". Retrieved 1 December 2014.)

But let's put a more human face on it: And as you read—please, take no comfort in the fact that Stand Your Ground did not always work as a defense. The carnage has still occurred. The dead are still dead.

CLEARWATER, FLORIDA: June 5th, 2006. Yes, Jason's loud music had been a problem. But the fight that morning erupted because Jason put out eight garbage bags instead of the allowed six. Confrontation. Gunshots. The shooter, Kenneth Allen, claimed that his next door neighbor was storming into his house. Jason Rosenbloom claimed he only stood on his neighbor's front lawn, ten feet from the door. Kenneth Allen shot his neighbor in the stomach and in the chest, then watched him bleed. "He meant for me to be dead, and he never called 911." Said Rosenbloom, thirty-six, adding that the sixty-five year old Allen told him not to "tangle with an

x-cop.” Happily, Jason survived. According to Reuters, when the shooter was contacted to get his side of the incident, Kenneth Allen said he had “no regrets” about shooting Rosenbloom, and described him as “a little punk” who was “lucky to be alive”. Defense: STAND YOUR GROUND. Kenneth Allen is, indeed, a former police officer, and his friends on the force wrote up the reports. The ex-cop walked away scott free.

HUDSON, FLORIDA: May 13th, 2008 Anthony Boglino, sixty-four years old, was standing in a neighbor’s yard when a fight erupted between him and neighbor Haigh Frank Kopoain. Boglino claimed that he felt unable to defend himself because of his arthritis. So he shot and wounded Kopoain. The Defense argued STAND YOUR GROUND, and Boglino was acquitted.

DADE CITY, FLORIDA: Oct. 18, 2009. Michael McAdams fatally shot his estranged wife and her lover, after he found them together at the former family home. McAdams claimed William Ryan Andrews insulted him and challenged him to a fight. McAdams refused and said he left the house only to see the new couple having sex through a window. Enraged, he grabbed a gun that he said he stored under a milk jug by the front door and shot his wife in the face and her boyfriend in the head. He buried the bodies in the woods in Hernando County. McAdams claimed self-defense, saying Andrews wanted to fight and his wife was hitting him when he fired. Forensic evidence ran counter to the details McAdams provided, however, and a jury found him guilty. At trial, Defense attempted to argue STAND YOUR GROUND, but Circuit Judge Susan Gardner denied it. But resist the urge to take any comfort from that. If Michael McAdams hadn’t felt certain that his jealous rage would be excused by the Stand Your Ground laws, two murdered people might be alive today.

PINELLAS PARK, FLORIDA: April 15, 2009. Rachel Wade, nineteen, and Sarah Ludemann, eighteen, were romantic rivals. Wade broke up with her boyfriend, yet grew enraged when Ludemann began dating him. It escalated into the epic cat fight to end all catfights—public scenes, stalking, texts, and generally insane behavior on both sides. The night of the stabbing, Ludemann drove the family van to where she knew Wade would be. Ludemann got out of the van, fists balled, arms flailing. But Ludemann was not the killer. Wade was ready. Wade walked toward her and jabbed a kitchen knife into her left shoulder, then pulled it out and thrust it into Ludemann's heart. At trial, the Defense argued STAND YOUR GROUND, but the jury found Wade guilty of second-degree murder charge. Wade was sentenced to twenty-seven years in prison.

CITRUS COUNTY, FLORIDA: June 14th, 2009 Oscar Delbono, fifty-three, shot Shane Huse, thirty-four, in the neck and shoulder after an argument between the neighbors, the result of a long-running dispute over Huse's two pit bull terriers. Huse's two small children were in his truck nearby when Huse approached the shooter's yard after midnight. A witness said the two were arguing and Huse, who had previously threatened Delbono, was "flailing his arms." A witness

who saw the fatal shooting said Huse was turning to leave when Delbono shot him, and bullet entry wounds supported that account. Defense argued STAND YOUR GROUND. Delbono said he thought Huse was "going for something. I feared for my life." Not guilty.

WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA: Sept. 17, 2006. Christopher Cote, nineteen, was walking his dog on his new neighbor's property when the neighbor, sixty-two year old Jose Taponés, complained and an argument ensued. Soon after, Cote returned to Taponés' property and knocked on his door to confront him about the dispute. Taponés answered the door with shotgun in hand. Taponés said he fired after Cote tried to come in his house. But prosecutors said if Taponés was scared, he could have stayed inside and called 911. Instead, as Cote's family watched, Taponés stepped outside and shot the unarmed teen twice, killing him. Assistant State Attorney Andrew Slater argued that the second shot should not have been fired. "Cote is stumbling. He is no longer a danger, and the defendant can see what is going on. Why fire a second time?" The victim's mother testified that ten to fifteen seconds passed between shots. A judge denied immunity under "stand your ground." In his first trial, a jury found Taponés guilty of manslaughter and he was sentenced to fifteen years. But—wait for it— 2009, an appeals court overturned the conviction on the grounds of jury misconduct and ordered a new trial. The STAND YOUR GROUND defense was triumphant. The second trial ended Dec. 2011 in acquittal.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS: October 9, 2012. Michael Griffin, forty-eight, was gunned down by his own father. He was with his father that fateful night, in his dad's apartment. And after his father, James Griffin, a retired Chicago policeman dozed off, Michael went out for a quick errand. When the elder Griffin woke up, he heard someone at the back door, so he shot and killed the figure at the door. As will also be the case with our next story, it's scary that someone who has so much experience with guns does not even give the "intruder" a chance to identify himself.

OLD FORGE, NEW YORK: July 21ST, 2012. A father and son outing. Michael Leach and Matthew Leach were on vacation together. When the elder, fifty-nine year old Michael awoke to find someone poking around in the motel room, he assumed it was an intruder and shot his son dead. Not surprisingly, the death has divided the family. Interestingly enough, the man who shot his own son was a retired cop who had caused outcry and protest when he shot an African American woman who was running down the street, trying to escape from her estranged husband.

COLORADO SPRINGS: December 23rd, 2013. Kiana O'Neil was shot by her own stepfather, just two days before Christmas. She was sneaking in at dawn, and rather than getting a clear visual on who it was coming into his house, this seasoned military man shot first, and identified later. Kiana was fourteen years old. Some Christmas. Colorado's Castle Laws (aka Stand Your Ground, known in Colorado as "Make My Day" laws) will protect him, if he is charged. Thus far, no charges.

As for the preceding three cases, in which the accused pled Stand Your Ground, they all beg the obvious question: they couldn't refrain from opening fire long enough to even get the person to vocally identify themselves? It would have saved a life. It would have stopped a tragic spiral of lives being shattered. And these shooters: two cops and a soldier. Shocking.

WESLEY CHAPEL, FLORIDA: January 13th, 2014. Seventy year old Curtis Reeves shot thirty-six year old Chad Oulson in a public movie theater because Oulson threw popcorn at him. This recent incident made national headlines, and many of us remember with horror the incident that started because Chad Oulson had gotten a text from his daughter's babysitter and was returning the message. Reeves was annoyed, and told Oulson as much. The argument escalated, Oulson threw some popcorn and then Reeves pulled out a .380, firing three times directly at Oulson. His wife, grazed by the bullets, screamed and cried in horror as her husband died in her arms. The shooter's wife reacted with horror of her own: "That was no cause to shoot anyone." She told her husband, to which he responded: "You shut your fucking mouth and don't say a word." (This exchange was witnessed by an off duty sheriff who had come to see the movie and was sitting close to the shooting.) Oulson, a former U.S. Naval Petty Officer, leaves behind a wife and a two year old little girl.

WALKER COUNTY, GEORGIA: November 27th, 2013. This one really pulls at your heartstrings: an old man with Alzheimer's was shot—for seeking warmth and shelter. Joe Hendrix, 35, admitted to shooting a 70-something man early on that fateful morning. The man was wearing a light coat and a straw hat in near 20 degree weather when he knocked on Mr. Hendrix's door at four in the morning. After Hendrix's girlfriend called police, Hendrix retrieved his handgun and walked into his backyard, where he says he saw the other man in silhouette. After the man didn't respond to several verbal commands and began walking toward him, Hendrix shot him four times, once fatally. Ronald Westbrook, the slain man, was clutching a sheaf of mail when police found his body. According to family, Mr. Westbrook had been suffering for two years from Alzheimer's. He had been walking in the cold for four hours with his dog before he approached the home, perhaps drawn by a lit porch light, police said. The prosecutor got it right on this one: Hendrix should have called 911 and sat tight, staying safe inside. Did a 70 year old man in a straw hat in winter, walking his dog, really look that threatening? Joe Hendrix faced no charges. We would also like to give a Forrest Gump "Stupid is as Stupid Does" Award to the deputy who saw the 72 year old Ronald walking along the road at 2:30 in the morning with his dog. When the deputy asked the senile old man what he was doing, he replied he was looking for his mailbox. The deputy let him go on his way. When the police came to get Ronald's body, his dog was standing guard over it.

"It's not a matter of taking people's guns. It's never been about that. We want his legacy to be one of tolerance ... that people tolerate people who don't look and think and act like them."

—Jordan Davis’s Mom.

SYMPHONY OF SADNESS

In the words and phrases that follow, we offer the thoughts of Jordan Davis’s mother and father, that we may keep the spirit of Jordan alive—in counterpoint to the jailhouse rantings of Michael Dunn, that we may keep our righteous indignation and anger alive. May Jordan Rest In Peace. May Michael Dunn Roil in Jail.

DUNN: “YOU’RE NOT GONNA KILL ME, YOU SON OF A BITCH!” –from his courtroom testimony, as Michael Dunn recreates the shooting for the jurors.

The following statements by Dunn come from the letters that he is writing to people while in jail.

DUNN: “And, of course, the daddy of the thug I had to defend myself against raised an immaculate child who could do wrong...”

JORDAN’S DAD: “I think back to when he was little, and we had the first snowfall in Atlanta, Georgia. And in the front yard there was snow, and we put this little snowsuit on him and we took him outside. And the first time he looked at the snow and it looked like ice cream I guess, and he bent down and picked it up and he put it in his mouth and he liked it. And all of a sudden he started frowning because the snow was in his hands, and it was getting colder and colder, so I wiped it and I put his hands in my mouth to warm his hands up, and that was his first snowfall. I remember his first Christmas and the little train set, and the kid is sitting by the Christmas tree ... and little kids, when the train goes by, they just light up and I remember those times...I remember when he got large and he played baseball, in the Pony League, and I remember when he wanted to show off, and he’d turned a single into a double, and the double into a triple, and the pride he had when he was fast...I also remember when he played baseball, when he was satisfied, because he was in control and all the eyes were on him. We would go to Jacksonville Beach, we had a certain spot under the pier where we would always go, and our fondest memory was, who could stand up under the waves? You’d see the waves coming, we’d turn our backs to the waves, and whoever stood up to the waves the most out of ten times won...And sometimes we tied, and sometimes he won, even though he’s a little smaller than me.”

DUNN: “As you can imagine, I'm not getting much sympathy from the press. They're a bunch of liberal bastards...North Florida is more like the Deep South. They seem to have a lot of racial guilt, or at least the prosecutor’s office does.”

JORDAN’S MOM: “My mission is to do everything possible to help change the legislation, so that other families and victims aren’t affected by the violence the way we’ve been affected.”

DUNN: “I am clearly in the minority with my thoughts on making a counter-claim in the civil suit ... I called (name deleted) and told her I was not going to make any claims against the family. She was relieved that I was able to let go of the hurt feeling I’ve been harboring.”

JORDAN’S MOM: People look at me like I’m crazy, and ask how could you forgive him? I forgave him a long time ago. I have forgiven him because I cannot do what I’m called to do if I carry that like an albatross around my neck.

DUNN: “If I can find a law firm that will take my case, I want to sue Duvall County for discrimination.”

JORDAN’S DAD: “When Trayvon Martin was killed, Jordan, he said ‘Dad, he looks like me,’ he looks like me, Dad, and Jordan had a brown hoodie that he put on and he said ‘Look at that, Dad,’ and he came out of his room with the brown hoodie, and he said ‘That could have been me, Dad.’ And I thought about that. And so that’s why we contacted Trayvon’s parents, we let them know how we felt. And so I had a talk with Jordan. I said ‘Jordan’, I said, ‘we’re having this talk, and you’ve heard this before.’ I said, ‘The way you talk to your friends is fine. But when you talk to adults, there’s all kinds of adults out there with all kinds of problems. They have mortgage problems, they have family members that are sick, and they have things on their mind that you as a child don’t understand, and so when you talk to an adult, you have to talk to an adult differently than you talk to your friends.’ And we would have that conversation. I think a lot of African American parents have that conversation, because there’s this fear about African American teenagers, and that’s one thing that we should have a conversation in this country about. That they’re just teenagers, just because they’re African Americans.

DUNN: “They sure have made a mess of things. I’m going to take them to task and sue the pants off of them once the trial is over. Not that I’m bitter or anything. Have I mentioned recently how much I dislike our government? Something tells me this corruption is very widespread. So sad in this day and age we’re still divided by race.”

JORDAN’S DAD: “He wanted to either go in the Marines, because his first cousin was in the Marines, and he was very close with his first cousin. Also my brother was 26 years Air Force and so he thought about the Air Force also. We had him in ROTC in school.

DUNN: “The jail is chock full of blacks and they all appear to be thugs, ...I’m sitting here, stewing in my own juices, waiting for my day in court and plotting my revenge.”

JORDAN’S MOM: We want his legacy to be one of tolerance...that people tolerate people who don’t look and think and act like them.”

DUNN: “I sure miss my recliner and comfy bed, not to mention my “heater” that’s you ... I do have a five year plan, though. Today is 1-30. Very soon we will request a bond hearing....the

judge will grant me bond which I can afford...I will return home ... The trial will be in 12-18 months from now I will be acquitted or found not guilty ... After the trial I will bring a law suit against the state. They will settle and I will save a portion of that settlement for a down payment on a house ... I will use the bulk of the proceeds by investing in Dunn and Dunn. With the rebounding economy, business will be booming and I will use my share of the profits to buy or build our house on the river. This will be a two story house constructed in a manner where I can park a seaplane underneath and then take off or land on the river. That's my five year plan. . What's your five year plan?"

JORDAN'S MOM: I just want him to know that even though I have the freedom to live my life, I don't have who I love. And even though he does not have the freedom to live his life, he still has in his life who he loves. That's never been taken away from him. He didn't just murder Jordan, he murdered my future. I'll never have grandchildren, I'll never have a daughter in life, and I'll never have great grandchildren; all that future has been taken away ...

DUNN: "I just got off the phone with you and we were talking about how racist the blacks are up here. The more time I am exposed to these people the more racist I become. I suppose the white folks who live here are pretty much anti-black, at least the ones who have been exposed to them. I sure am looking forward to coming home. I am also looking forward to moving out of the south and away from the scourge of the country. Does Colorado Springs still sound good to you?"

JORDAN'S MOTHER: (at Jordan's grave) "When I come out here, I know that God has given me a whole new life, a whole new job as a gun safety advocate. And I guess I come out here to get rejuvenated, I come out here to get strength. I come out here to talk to him. I talk to God."

*DUNN: "This jail is full of blacks and they all act like thugs ...This may sound a bit radical but if more people would arm themselves and kill these **** idiots when they're threatening you, eventually they may take the hint and change their behavior."*

JORDAN'S MOTHER: "I still can't wrap my mind around it. The boys weren't threatening his family, trying to steal his property. Nothing. They were in the car, arguing. And all he had to do was roll up his window and drive away."

DUNN: "I'm glad I don't live here in Jacksonville, the murder capital of Florida! ... It's spooky how racist everyone is up here and how biased toward blacks the courts are."

JORDAN'S DAD (about his rush to the hospital that night): "When I go there they didn't have him registered. And when I go to the back, they said well just wait, because of the Hippo laws we can't tell you who we have, because the patient we have doesn't have a wallet on him. Apparently it had dropped at the scene. And I had a whole hour not knowing whether Jordan was dead or alive ... and finally the Chaplain came in with two policemen and a doctor. And the first words out of the doctor's mouth were "I'm sorry Mr. Davis, I was not able to revive ... And he

said a whole lot of other things, but that was the only thing that my mind heard. And something came out of me that was, apparently that was so ...I think you have a sound inside of you that when it comes out, and people hear it, they know something's wrong. And the policeman, who is 6'5, 250 pounds started crying. And the chaplain, she started crying. So the sound must have been something else. And I wanted to see my son, and they told me not to touch him, because it was a homicide. And they had a sheet pulled up, because he had gotten shot in the body and he had a little blood on his ear and his eye was just barely open. But he was still Jordan. And so they told me not to touch him, but I did anyway. And I hugged him, and I talked to him, and one thing I remember doing is I smelled him. You know when you're a parent you tend to smell your children. I smelled Jordan, and I didn't want that smell to ever leave ... 'cause right then and there, he was still Jordan. And I told him that God's going to take care of him now, and I'd done all I could for him on earth, and I had to let him go."

DUNN: "You know, I was thinking about that today, it's like, like I'm the fucking victim here. I was the one who was victimized. I mean, I don't know how else to put it. It's like they attacked me. I'm the victim. I'm the victor. But I was the victim too. Hey so, not to wallow in despair or anything, but I was thinking about this today and I'm the victim here. I was the one that was being preyed upon, and I fought back. And then you know, it's not quite the same but it make me think of the old TV shows and movies where like how the police used to think when a chick got raped, you know 'it's her fault because of the way she was dressed.' So it's my fault because I asked them to turn their music down. It's like I got attacked and I fought back, because I didn't want to be a victim and now I'm in trouble. I refused to be a victim, and now I'm incarcerated."

JORDAN'S WORDS TO HIS MOTHER: "Thanks for being my number one cheerleader, my number one fan, and for never giving up on me. You believed in me when nobody else did. Even though I don't let you kiss me anymore, I love you, and you have been the best mother." –The Last Mother's Day Card that Jordan's mother ever received from him. She had sent him to live with his father in Florida, as her breast cancer had returned, and she wanted to spare him seeing her second round of treatments.

JORDAN'S MOTHER: Once the laws are changed, then that completes the closure, because then we will really receive justice for Jordan... justice for Trayvon ... and justice for all the children at Sandy Hook ... and Virginia Tech ... and Aurora...

JAMES CRAIG ANDERSON

The case of Jordan Davis and Michael Dunn is rare in this book, and in the spectrum of "black lives matter" stories, because there was finally some justice for Jordan. That is why we also include here the murder of James Craig Anderson. It is an unspeakably tragic story, revealing

terrifying hatred and ugliness in souls so young—but it does at least remind us that sometimes, a modicum of justice can be achieved.

As a parent, you worry like crazy when your kids stay out till dawn.

You worry that your underage kid may be out getting drunk at a party, or worse, doing drugs.

You worry that your son has been in a terrible car accident.

You worry that your daughter is out there, doing something that you don't even want to imagine, and you're afraid she'll come home pregnant.

You worry that the police will call with some kind of bad news—or, what is worse, that they will come knocking on the door, with somber faces and hats in hand.

What never, ever crosses your mind, though, is that your kid and his friends will decide to **“go fuck with some niggers”**, get himself arrested, and get sentenced to life in prison—avoiding the death penalty only because the family of the victim begged the judge to spare the life of their son's killer.

This is not something that even the most fretful parent worries about. It is not something that society worries about. Unless there is something deeply troubling about the way the child was raised, or possibly, the place where the child was raised. Or maybe those elements are not to blame; maybe the child is just a bad seed. But I personally believe it is one, or both of the above: parents and environment.

So many uncertainties. What is fairly certain is the account of what happened that night.

The date was June 26th, 2011. The place: Rankin County, Mississippi.

A bunch of kids who had been partying all night were not ready to end the evening's festivities. **“Let's go fuck with some niggers!”** said the group's long established ringleader, a one Deryl Dedmon, and their two vehicles took off. Their journey in the wee hours of the morning was from the small town of Puckett, down the country roads and freeway for fifteen minutes, to the predominantly black area of Jackson, Mississippi.

It was about five in the morning when they spotted their prey: a black man in the parking lot at the Metro Inn, right near the interstate. The teens pulled their two vehicles into the parking lots, got out, and began to beat James Craig Anderson, one of them thrusting his arm in the air and yelling “White Power” as the job appeared to be finished. Several of the teens screeched off in one of the vehicles, a white Jeep Cherokee. But Deryl Dedmon was not through. As a beaten,

bloodied, dazed Anderson staggered around on the side of the road near the hotel, Deryl Dedmon took his green 1998 Ford F-250 truck, and ran Anderson down.

He then drove to rejoin the rest of the gang in a nearby McDonald's parking lot, bragging repeatedly: ***"I ran that nigger over!"***

And lest we think that this is some kind of isolated incident, the Justice Department dug in after the murder of James Craig Anderson, and found a disturbing pattern of ongoing racial harassment and hate crimes.

From a Newsweek article, entitled "Mississippi sends its first Hate Criminal to prison", by Tony Dokoupil, dated April 9th, 2012:

On at least five prior occasions, starting last Easter, the gang had gone on similar trips, according to prosecutors. At first they merely drove through blighted black neighborhoods, drinking and yelling racial epithets. But the behavior escalated. One night a driver gunned the engine, driving toward a black man, forcing him to jump out of the way. Another night Dedmon and Rice slung beer bottles at black pedestrians, striking one in the head, one in the crotch. On yet another night the weapons were marbles and a sling shot. Finally, Dedmon and others began to pursue seemingly homeless or intoxicated black men on foot, beating and stomping one man until he begged for his life, according to court documents.

The trials of all the people in those trucks dragged on for years. Although none of Dedmon's accomplices received life in prison, they each received heavy sentences, each in relative accordance with his or her participation in the crime.

Deryl Dedmon has apologized. Deryl Dedmon was found guilty, and is now serving a life sentence.

None of this, of course, will bring back the dead.

CHAPTER SIX

“TO AN ATHLETE DYING YOUNG ... ”

January 10th, 2013. Lowndes County High School. Valdosta, Georgia. Perhaps you remember it. It was a polarizing death. Investigators claimed that a strong teenage athlete "accidentally suffocated" because he crawled inside a rolled up gym mat to retrieve his sneakers. [Photographs from the crime scene—a high school gym—are chilling.](#)

OR GOOGLE IMAGES: KENDRICK JOHNSON GYM MAT

I highly advise viewing the pictures as you let this story unfold before you. It makes the injustice seem oh so much more appalling, and the authorities oh so much more corrupt.

A COMPROMISED CRIME SCENE:

NOTE: The names of juveniles are not used here, for their privacy and protection. But it is well established that a group of students found the body on the morning after the day that Kendrick disappeared. On a particularly tragic note, at the time that the body was found, Kendrick's mother was on campus, looking for him, meeting with one of the school officials about her son's disappearance. He had not come home the night before.

A little background: for those students who could not afford to rent lockers, it was common to share specialized sneakers for basketball, track, etcetera, and to stash them in or around the vertical rolled up gym mats in the gym. With that in mind, imagine the unfolding horror in the following scenario:

It is 7:15 in the morning, and you are in the gym, waiting for class. You find a corpse in a gym mat. So what do you do? You call 911. Sheriff's detectives Lieutenant Stryde Jones and Sergeant Jack Winningham race to the school, getting to the gym a few minutes before eleven—more than three hours since the discovery of the body. Their immediate conclusion? A tragic accident. Because, according to all the students there, they remember watching in horror as their dead friend was taken out on stretcher by paramedics. And so now we have the first enraged question: why the hell are you doing this to a crime scene? It's not like the paramedics hurried off with Kendrick's body in a mad dash to possibly save his life. [Here is what he looked like when they unrolled that gym mat:](#)

GOOGLE IMAGES: AUTOPSY PHOTO KENDRICK JOHNSON HEAD

Then, when Andy and Barney (Stryde and Jack) realized that they hadn't yet gotten in touch with the coroner, they had the body wheeled back in. The authorities deny this. All the students are lying. Apparently, the official County Coroner and his assistant are lying too, because they were livid that the body had been removed and then replaced—AND that they had not been called for four hours—inexplicably and inexcusably.

Of course, the officials on site deny that the body was ever moved. But the students all swear differently. One of them later tweeted: ***“The body was definitely moved, before I walked out [of] the gym [prior to noon]. He went by in a stretcher with paramedics,”*** one student later tweeted on October 10, 2013, on what would have been KJ's eighteenth birthday.

And in case you are prepared to discount tweets and all of the students' sworn testimony, perhaps you can explain this: The EMT who was immediately called to the site, who saw the beatings and bruises on Kendrick's face and said that the gym should absolutely be treated as a crime scene, was fired. Although Nick Tomlinson had been awarded for his work in the past, he was fired, and no explanation has ever been offered to the public. And let me explain what is particularly odd about this firing: if the authorities had had a good reason (i.e., the paramedic failed a drug test), surely they would have announced that, because this paramedic is one of the most well known in the country, given the fact that he was the first medical authority to see the body of Kendrick Johnson. Yet if the reason for his firing was unjust or specious, it seems that this much respected EMT would have spoken out. It surely seems that something highly suspicious and unorthodox is the cause for everybody's silence: was Tomlinson threatened?

Bill Watson, the Lowndes County Coroner, was livid when he arrived on the crime scene. Why? Because he should have been called immediately, but the sheriff and deputies took over six hours to call him. And in that time (why are we not surprised), they thoroughly compromised the crime scene—so much so that their acts will most likely keep us from ever knowing what really happened to Kendrick Johnson. In his January 22nd report, Watson wrote:

“I was not notified n (sic) this death until 15:45 hours. The investigative climate was very poor to worse when I arrived on the scene. The body had been noticeably (sic) moved. The scene had been compromised and there was no cooperation from law enforcement at the scene. Furthermore the integrity of the evidence bag was compromised on January 13, 2013 by opening the sealed bag and exhibiting the dead body to his father ... I do not approve of the manner this case was handled. Not only was the scene compromised, the body was moved. The integrity (sic) was breached by opening a sealed body bag; information necessary for my lawful investigation was withheld.”

Interestingly enough, a **second version** of that coroner's report was then issued by the Lowndes County Sheriff's Office. It was not nearly as critical as the first, and it was not signed and dated by the official coroner. Yet oddly enough, the Lowndes County Sheriff's Department considers this second edited, censored, and unsigned report to be the official report. They wouldn't talk about it further because, according to them **"It is an open investigation."** Reporters were persistent, but they were always told the same thing: it is an open investigation. (Finally, months later, when investigative reporters went to the Lowndes County Sheriff's Department, again seeking clarification, they were told to go away, and that there would be no comment because **"The investigation is closed."**)

But back to the "investigation"—and I use that word loosely. Another huge problem, indicative of the fact that Valdosta authorities weren't that interested in finding out what happened to Kendrick: Investigators took their mint-julep sippin' sweet time, interviewing most of the involved parties—72 out of 111—four months after the death occurred. Coincidentally, they only finally, reluctantly, decided to conduct the interviews right at the same time that the eyes of the world turned to watch this investigation in the sleepy town of Valdosta, Georgia—a town made infamous a century earlier by the grisly lynching of Mary Turner and her unborn baby, along with some several dozen other innocent blacks whose names will never be known. Again, it was **four months** before they bothered to ask most of the potential witnesses (and suspects) the important questions. Not four hours, not four days, not four weeks, but four months.

CNN examined the 522-page police file and found that investigators spoke to a total of 111 people. Breaking it down: only 18 of those interviews occurred on the day Johnson's body was found, and another 15 people were interviewed later that month. Investigators then spoke to 5 more people in February and March, before conducting interviews with 72 people in April, about the time that media coverage of Johnson's death gained momentum. One person was interviewed in May, according to the investigative file. All told, it took investigators several months—about a third of a calendar year—to question witnesses and suspects.

Among the witnesses they chose **not** to interview at all were the students last seen in the gym with Kendrick. Nor did they question the gym's janitor till long after the fact: Kendrick died January 11th, and the janitors who cleaned up the crime scene were interviewed on April 26th. The first paramedic on the scene, who saw the deceased Kendrick's face, the massive bruising, just assumed it would be treated as a homicide. But nobody was interested in the observations or detailed memories of the first responders; they weren't interviewed until April 17th and 18th. More than three months after the boy was found dead. What other conclusion can we possibly come to? The Sherriff's Department just didn't give a damn.

THE SCIENCE

Those who would have you believe that Kendrick died while crawling into that gym mat to retrieve his sneakers proudly point to forensic science as their proof. Taken at face value, a sound strategy: you see, at the risk of being morbid, all of Kendrick's bodily fluids, primarily blood, drained down into his head, and out of his skull orifices. It is called "hypostasis", and it is that phenomenon whereby, when the heart stops beating, the blood collects at the lowest point of gravity. And, as eyewitnesses and first responders will attest, Kendrick's fluids most certainly had drained into his head, with a large quantity of fluid draining out of his skull orifices. Investigators claim that this fact of science proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that Kendrick died while upside down in a vertical rolled up gym mat.

Only one problem with that theory. Hypostasis, also known as puddling or lividity, doesn't begin for about twenty minutes to a half hour. At the risk of sounding like a CSI episode, the simple medical truth is that a person or persons could have killed Kendrick, then quickly rolled the body up in a gym mat and propped it upright; the final effect and symptoms would have been the same. Except, perhaps, regarding one small area: the very tiny veins and capillaries in the body that fill with blood and then burst. Hey, has anybody out there seen *Body Works*, the wonderful, fascinating, slightly ghoulish show where you can see the human body and innumerable animal bodies in all their glorious veins, patterns, and musculature? You may recall how breathtakingly small and delicate some of the veins were. We depend on our hearts to keep blood moving through these delicate veins, but with the onset of death and the ruthless effects of gravity, blood gathers in these veins and can burst the vein. And where is this particularly evident, almost immediately after death? In the body's organs.

So, it is not the draining of fluids out of poor Kendrick's body that would tell us whether he died in that gym mat, or somewhere else, but the state of his organs.

Oh wait. His organs disappeared. Went missing. The funeral home never received them, and so instead, they stuffed poor old Kendrick with newspaper and then buried him. The pathologist hired to do a second, independent autopsy found the boy stuffed with—wait for it—J.C. Penny ads and Black Friday circulars.

Oh, and in case you are thinking that it might be useful to check Kendrick's clothes for DNA, or to do at least the basic check under his fingernails for any matter that might reveal the presence of foul play, yes, you should know that both the clothes and the fingernail clippings disappeared. Nobody seems to know what happened to them.

THE CAMERAS

Just as troubling as the forensics evidence—or lack thereof—is the trouble with the surveillance videos that the world should have been able to view, so that we could all get a better idea as to just what happened to poor Kendrick Johnson. Let's get right to it: Someone is lying—either the Valdosta Daily Times or the Sheriff's Department. Given the way that the Sheriff's Department treated protocol and evidence, my money is on the Sheriff's Department. The Valdosta Daily Times, in the November 21st, 2013 article, “Kendrick's Final Walk”, stated ***“The footage from those 59 cameras was exported by Scott Forthe, senior technology officer with the Lowndes County Schools, and given to detectives on an external hard drive the afternoon Kendrick's body was found.”*** Not true. The apathetic Sheriff's Department could hardly have been more casual about this crucial aspect of evidence gathering; they were as lackadaisical about this area as they were about accounting for the clothes, the organs, the fingernails, the interviews, and a variety of on-scene evidence. The Sheriff's Department waited five days before they picked up the surveillance video. Five days. Five days for all the interested parties, including the school officials and the latest suspects (see below) to have their part in manipulating, and eliminating, key evidence. How do I know that it took the Sheriff's Department five days to gather the evidence, when the Valdosta Daily Times said it was one day? I have looked at the Lowndes County Sheriff's Department Property Evidence Forms. They list a variety of items—shoes, school folders, etcetera—being taken from the scene on the date of the finding of the body January 11th, but then five full days transpire before they bother to pick up the surveillance video. This clearly indicates that they don't really care about getting a good look at what happened, or they are allowing the school to manipulate the evidence in order to protect itself and certain parties, or some combination of both. Why? Why, when a child is found dead, quite possibly at the hands of a murderer, would the authorities wait almost a week to gather the single piece of evidence which could tell them what happened?

Small bit of good news: although it may not bring justice for Kendrick, CNN was all over this. Reporter Victor Blackwell consulted with Grant Fredericks, a forensic video analyst who consults with the Department of Justice, and who also serves as a consultant and instructor for the Federal Bureau of Investigation National Academy in Quantico, Virginia. He watched more than 290 hours of material from all 35 cameras inside and outside of the gym. In CNN's November 21st, 2013 article entitled, ***“Kendrick Johnson footage released' expert finds it 'highly suspicious”***, by Blackwell, they raise all kinds of holy hell, regarding what happened to the surveillance footage during those ridiculous five days—five crucial days, during which the school was holding the surveillance footage after Kendrick's death. Below, the interview is transcribed:

FREDERICKS: Those files are not original files. They're not something that an investigator should rely on for the truth of the video. They've been altered in a number of ways, primarily in image quality, and likely in dropped information. Information loss. There are also a number of files that are corrupted because they've not been processed correctly, and they're not playable.

So, I can't say why they were done that way. But they were not done correctly, and they were not done thoroughly. So we're missing information.

BLACKWELL: Fredericks says that's likely due to how investigators acquired the surveillance video.

FREDERICKS: Right now what they've done is they've left it up to the school district to define what it is they want to provide the police. And I think that probably is a mistake.

BLACKWELL: According to Lowndes County Sheriff Office Incident Reports, a detective watched a portion of the surveillance video the day Kendrick was found. Then he asked the School Board's Information Technology worker for a copy of the surveillance video, for the entire wing of the school with the old gym, for the last 48 hours. Five days later, that IT worker provided a hard drive. And according to the incident report, the detective verified that it contained the requested surveillance video.

FREDERICKS: The investigator's responsibility is to acquire the entire digital video recording system, and then have their staff define what they want to obtain. You don't want somebody who might be party to the responsibility to make the decision as to what they provide the police.

BLACKWELL: And after hours of analysis, Fredericks questions where Lowndes County Schools provided all of the surveillance video from the old gym to investigators.

FREDERICKS: There is a hole of time where none of the cameras provide any record that I've been provided.

BLACKWELL: Fredericks has all the camera angles and all the video provided by the Lowndes County sheriff's office.

FREDERICKS: There are four cameras in the gym that record motion from when the lights turn on in the morning, till when they turn off at night. Except for the area of interest

BLACKWELL:The moments before Kendrick Johnson enters the gym. Look at what happens to the recording from these four cameras in the gym. The time is recorded with the video. The first camera captures images from the start of the day until 12:04 pm. Then nothing. And it picks up again at 1:09 pm. There's consistent surveillance from the second camera until 11:05 am, and then it stops and picks up again more than two hours later at 1:15 pm. The third camera also drops at 11:05 am, it picks up again at 1:16 pm. And from the final camera, there's surveillance until 12:04 pm, no recording for more than an hour, then it picks up again at 1:09 pm.

FREDERICKS: I would absolutely expect there would be some record of that activity, and we don't have any here.

BLACKWELL: Here's why Fredericks would have expected the motion activated system to record during that time. During that hour and five minutes, several students are seen walking into and out of the old gym from the surveillance camera just outside the gym door. We count seven male students and three of them walk into the gym within three minutes prior to Kendrick Johnson walking in.

FREDERICKS: I can't tell you whether there was no information recorded in the digital video system, or whether someone made an error and didn't capture it, or whether someone just didn't provide it.

BLACKWELL: When surveillance in the gym resumes at 1:09, we see just these few frames of Kendrick Johnson running in the gym. Here's that moment from all of the cameras in the gym, although there's a record from only two, and the camera just outside the door. Notice the hall camera time stamp appears to be ten minutes behind, and there's no confirmation either time matches the exact time of day. It is the last time his image is captured on video. For the next hour there are gaps in the video surveillance in the gym ...And that's crucial, that's a really important time.

FREDERICKS: Well, that really is the only option, to answer the question what happened.

BLACKWELL: And there's no video showing the initial discovery of a body in the gym. The next time we see Kendrick Johnson is the following day, when we see him wheeled out of the gym in a body bag.

BLACKWELL (to Fredericks): Do you believe it's a coincidence that that time period in the gym is missing?

FREDERICKS: (sighs) Oh Boy. Investigators are always suspicious, and should be suspicious. And it's suspicious that that time period is not there. So yes, I would be suspicious. And until I have the video system in my hands, until I can say where an investigator can say, everything is intact, this is what was recorded, I would still be highly suspicious of this.

There ends the interview. You decide.

THE TWEETS AND EMAILS

Any cursory internet search reveals a plethora of tweets and emails uncovered by federal authorities in relation to the death of Kendrick. These communications were largely from students. This is surprising, as young people are so very good at keeping secrets. Here is an example of one alarming email (names changed to protect juveniles):

My best friend was at a party, Saturday night with Jane and she was upset about something that Joe had said to her and my best friend started talking and by the end of the night, Jane had told my friend everything that the whole nation has been wondering for the past year. She told my friend what really happened to Kendrick Johnson.

She said that about a little over a year ago, she had sexual intercourse with Kendrick Johnson, while she was dating 'Joe.' 'Joe' found out and threatened KJ. KJ told Joe to meet him in the old gym after third block and he would have his knife ready. Joe and Joe's friend met KJ and killed him.

Joe has also been heard admitting to killing KJ more than once over the phone. His brother also got drunk at a party on the fourth of July and told many people that Joe killed KJ and that Joes' brother was tired of keeping it a secret."

Not surprisingly, the local authorities were quick to dismiss the credibility of these tweets, texts, and emails, since they were written by juveniles. Only one problem with this: there is no good or logical reason to believe that students were lacking in knowledge about what happened. It's a high school, filled with kids, why wouldn't somebody know something about the death of Kendrick? And the bottom line is this: the very officials denouncing the students' communications as having no credibility have themselves lost all credibility. At least they have in the eyes of credible people.

THE SUSPECTS

Heads up: If you discuss, in print, some of the current suspects, you get sued. That's the latest. That's the truth. Having recently recovered from losing everything in the crash of 2009 and finding myself basically homeless, I have no desire to invite a lawsuit. Instead, if you are interested, I shall leave you to that unique phenomenon that Regis Philbin repeatedly referred to as a passing fad: the Internet.

Some news outlets have decided not to name the two suspects in question, as they are minors and have not yet been charged. But I suspect that the real reason many people are treading so lightly is because their father works for an extremely powerful organization. Extremely powerful.

There are more theories about the death of Kendrick, involving friendships, feuds, the location of school buses, the tracking of cell phones, the GBI, the FBI, the DOJ, scholarships, subpoenas, whispers, warnings, witness intimidation ... it is all very cloak and dagger, like something out of a movie or a CSI episode. But I am really too afraid to discuss it in detail:

RATHER CHILLING: <http://www.youtube.com>

JUSTICE

The Kendrick Johnson tragedy occurred about two and a half years ago, as of the writing of this second edition. Naturally, some of you may be asking, “Has there been any justice in this case?” The answer is yes; **finally** two people were arrested in connection with the murder of Kendrick Johnson.

Kendrick’s parents, Kenneth and Jacqueline, were arrested and found guilty of civil disobedience for blocking courthouse access during a protest related to questions over their son’s death.

Justice. Valdosta Georgia, style. The same town where Mary Turner had her unborn baby cut from her womb.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

THE STRANGE HOUDINI DEATH OF VICTOR WHITE III

March 3rd, 2014. Iberia Parish, Louisiana.

You are getting ready to buy a new car, and move into a new place, where you will raise your new child. You are twenty-two years old, and considering your career options—vocational school? Or maybe a lucrative job on one of the oil rigs off the coast. [You're a pretty good kid.](#) A regular church goer, you attend your dad's church where sometimes you play the drums. And last Christmas, much to everyone's hilarity, you played Santa Claus.

It is a Friday night, and you are with a buddy en route to get a cigar. While at the gas station, you witness a fight, and sure enough, within five minutes, the cops come. When they try to arrest you, you explain that it was two other guys—a story that the evidence will corroborate, once the surveillance footage comes out. A fact that the clerk at the gas station also corroborates. But the cop isn't having any of it. He pats you down, finds a little weed, and throws you into the back of his squad car. But you have a plan. While you are in the back of the cruiser, you fumble for your secret hidden gun that you always carry, and you kill yourself.

Wait.

But that doesn't make sense. The officer patted you down thoroughly. Twice. He was able to find a flat little baggie of pot, but not a gun? Makes no sense.

And wait. You were handcuffed with your hands behind your back when you were in that cruiser. How could you have possibly found your hidden gun, and then contorted your body enough to shoot yourself in the back?

No wait. You didn't shoot yourself in the back. Oh, that's what the cop said when he reported your "suicide". But it was the coroner's report that would tell the truth: that you were shot in the chest. By your own hand, while your hands were handcuffed behind your back? But as bizarre as it may seem, even the coroner, while certifying that you were shot in the chest while your hands were handcuffed behind your back, ruled your death a "suicide".

Of course, nobody tested to see if your hands had powder burns on them. Nobody did a blood splatter analysis in the cruiser. And most importantly, none of the cops had their hands tested for powder burns. And why would we do that, after all? That would imply that we don't trust these officers sworn to uphold the law.

Too bad that the officer forgot to turn on his dash cam during those crucial few moments. Too bad that Victor White shot himself in a parked car, in one of those few places at the police station parking lot that wasn't covered by a surveillance camera. Too bad, too bad.

It is a short chapter. It was a short life. It feels like it should be a much longer chapter, full of "sturm und drang", but the brevity of the chapter seems an apt metaphor for a life snuffed out so tragically young. Victor White was walking to the gas station with a friend to buy some cigarillos. As fate would have it, two other people were involved in a fight at that same gas station that Victor and his pal had just patronized. But Officer Justin Ortis was not interested in clearing up the matter; he was interested in questioning the boys, frisking them, and then, taking Victor into custody. Minutes later, Victor would be dead.

Since the night it happened, the family of Victor White has been seeking justice. And answers. Victor's father, the Reverend Victor White Senior, was worried on that chilly March night, when his son didn't make it back from the convenience store. Calls to the sheriff were no help. The sheriff's department told him that no, there was no Victor White in custody, and nobody by that name had been arrested. It wasn't until the next morning that he got a call from his other son, saying that the police had come to question him, and that Victor was dead. A stunned, horrified father then drove in shock from his home in Alexandria to New Iberia Parish, where absolutely everybody he talked to absolutely stonewalled him. When they realized that this angry man wasn't going to leave, he was allowed to see his son's dead body for one brief moment. Only the face and head, though, the rest was covered with a sheet. The Reverend was told nothing. Absolutely nothing. Imagine his horror, then, when a friend called him the next day and told him about a press release on the Louisiana State Police Facebook page announcing Victor's death, and finally giving the Reverend the horrific details. These are the times we live in: you learn about a murder from Facebook.

Of course, there was the usual ritual ... a heartbroken and enraged family, the rallying of family and friends, and the shock and outrage that naturally attended the autopsy report: not only did it prove the police were lying about where the bullet entered, but it indicated that Victor White had received trauma to his face. And, more damning to the police, there was an absence of gunpowder stippling around the entry point of the bullet: stippling is the hallmark of a close range, near contact shot. Stippling is virtually always present in a self-inflicted wound. Could the powder residue have been on Victor's clothing, rather than his skin? Of course. That is why standard procedure would have been to analyze the clothing, which of course did not happen.

Tragically, yet predictably, a year and a half has passed since the killing of Victor White III (as of the writing of this chapter), yet neither his family nor the public are one bit closer to knowing the truth about what happened in the back of a police cruiser on that March night. But in spite of all

the questions that have been asked, in spite of the glare of the media spotlight being focused on the small police station, the police brutality rages on:

September, 2014. There was an incident at the Iberia Parish Sugarcane Festival that went viral: Iberia Parish police repeatedly kicking a handcuffed suspect as he's lying on the ground.

December, 2012. An incident in the Iberia Parish Prison garnered national attention: an Iberia Parish Deputy in the jail slams a prisoner to the cement floor for no reason, then sets a vicious police dog on him, and he lets the dog attack and bite the prisoner over and over again. [The attack lasts for several minutes.](#)

OR YOUTUBE SEARCH: IBERIA PARISH INMATE POLICE DOG ATTACK

"Unfortunately, the people of Louisiana are not racists." -Dan Quayle

But surely, you are saying to yourself, this is a freak occurrence. How often could a cop be expected to get away with saying that the handcuffed suspect shot himself in the chest?

Oddly enough, terrifyingly enough, it's happened before. It happened just three and a half months before, in Durham, North Carolina. The date: November 19th, 2013. Jesus Huerta was a young Latino kid, [just seventeen years old](#), who was stopped by a cop, and then taken into custody because he had a trespassing warrant sworn out against him. How did this kid respond to being detained for trespassing?

He killed himself.

This child managed to shoot himself in the mouth while his hands were cuffed behind his back as he sat in the back of a police cruiser. We are asked to believe that. And if you were to ask the logical question, where did the kid get the gun? Well, that's a very good question. A very good unanswered question. The cop patted down the kid and checked him for weapons when he arrested him, but happened to miss the 45 caliber weapon he was carrying.

And if you were to ask the logical question, were the boy's hands tested for gunshot powder residue? Were the cop's hands checked for gun powder residue?

The answer, unbelievably, is as follows: the arresting officer apparently allowed Jesus to keep wearing, all through his arrest and while he was in the back seat of the cruiser, a pair of white baseball style gloves. Yes, Jesus was allowed to keep these gloves on, even though they could have been hiding contraband, a knife, a blade, etc.

But here's the fascinating thing: the gloves Jesus was wearing had gunpowder residue on them. The policeman's hands did not. And don't you dare suggest that the cop shot the kid while

wearing the gloves and then put the gloves on the kid: because that's not what the cop's report said.

Oh, and in case you are wondering if anybody took crime scene photos of what it looked like, for a kid to take his handcuffed hands and use them to shoot himself in the mouth, there are none. You see, when the officer allegedly heard the gunshot in the backseat, he got so scared he leapt out of his cruiser and crashed his cruiser.

Oh, and forget about dash cam footage. The officer turned on the dash cam when he logged on for his shift, as required. But, dang it all, somehow it got turned off after he arrested the kid.

When the Sean Hannitys of the world ask why so many people, both blacks and whites, are so upset with the cops these days, here's one more reason, beyond the more obvious tragedies: you are treating us like morons. Stop treating us like we are a bunch of fucking morons, and we will stop treating you like a bunch of brutal fucking pigs.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

“I CAN’T BREATHE!”

... AS DANNY-PANTS WAVES TO THE CAMERA

I am not going to be so arrogant as to claim that I can speak new truths or offer heretofore unseen chapters on the tragedies of Eric Garner and Michael Brown. But headlines become history. Ever so slowly and surely, they morph from breaking news, to textbook footnote. And in spite of our most heartfelt promises, regardless of our very best intentions, history has a tendency to slip from memory. So chapters on the infamous deaths of Michael Brown and Eric Garner—and so many, too many, others—are included here so that, as this book emerges to serve as a kind of textbook, or grim encyclopedia of those dead at the hands of racism, we can and will remember these men. (And in some cases, boys. And in some cases women.)

Just as importantly, though, these chapters give us a chance to continue the drumbeat ...to reiterate the two themes that form a pivotal part of this book: firstly, that some police officers have a pattern of grossly and criminally ignoring and/or violating police procedure, when it comes to their treatment of black men, or the investigation of their highly suspicious deaths. And secondly, we must ask ourselves the nagging question that arises constantly, if we are truly to consider ourselves citizens of a nation of just laws: *“Would these stories have gone differently if the person in question were a white female?”*

Firstly, let’s lay out the facts in the case of the death of Eric Garner:

On July 17, 2014, Eric Garner, age forty-three, died in Staten Island, New York City, after a police officer put him in a chokehold for fifteen seconds. The New York City Medical Examiner’s Office concluded that Garner died, partly as a result of the chokehold. New York City Police Department (NYPD) policy prohibits the use of chokeholds.

THE INCIDENT: Officers of the New York City Police Department approached Garner because they suspected him of selling “loosies” (single cigarettes) from packs without tax stamps. Garner told the police that he was not selling cigarettes, and that he was tired of them harassing him. The police decided to arrest Garner. When Officer Daniel Pantaleo took Garner’s wrist behind his back, Garner swatted his arms away. Pantaleo then put his arm around Garner’s neck from behind pulled him down onto the sidewalk. Pantaleo then pushed Garner’s face to the concrete while four officers physically restrained Garner. All during this time, Garner was repeating, over and over again, **“I can’t breathe.”** Clearly in distress, Garner said this eleven times before he lost

consciousness. Officers turned him onto his side to ease his breathing, but it is worth noting, and beyond dispute, that the officers never offered Garner CPR, in spite of the fact that they were trained to do so, and in spite of the fact that it was their obligation, as instructed in their training, to give Garner CPR. Garner remained lying on the sidewalk for seven minutes while the officers waited for an ambulance to arrive. The EMTs also did not perform CPR on Garner at the scene.

Eric Garner was pronounced dead on arrival at the hospital approximately one hour later.

Medical examiners concluded that Garner was killed by "compression of neck (choke hold), compression of chest and prone positioning during physical restraint by police." The medical examiner ruled Garner's death a homicide. According to the medical examiner's definition, a homicide is a death caused by the intentional actions of another person or persons. This does not automatically mean that a crime has been committed. (The definition will serve as a motif throughout the book. That fact is not meant to be freighted with any meaning or partisan opinion. It merely means that once the killing is declared a homicide, the burden is on those who serve justice to determine if the person who committed the homicide should be charged and tried.)

On December 3, 2014, a grand jury decided not to indict Pantaleo. The event stirred public protests and rallies with charges of police brutality. As of December 28, 2014, at least fifty demonstrations had been held nationwide specifically for Garner while hundreds of demonstrations against general police brutality counted Garner as a focal point. The Justice Department announced an independent federal investigation.

WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH THE CHOKEHOLD?

The media has expended a lot of cyber ink on this one, but, as is often the case in a world of bloggers who seem to favor speed of publication and quantity of output over the actual quality of their writing, most of them are just saying the same thing, and dwelling on the superficial.

The nitty gritty of chokeholds is a far trickier matter.

In layperson's terms: there are chokeholds which cut off the blood supply to the brain by applying pressure to arteries for a short time; this causes the suspect to go unconscious and is generally harmless. This means applying pressure to the arteries on the sides of the neck.

In the other kind of chokehold, pressure is applied to the trachea, also known as the windpipe, directly in the center of the neck—this cuts off oxygen, and as we saw in the case of Eric Garner, can kill a person.

Here is the Barney Fife truth of it: when Goober and Gomer are deputized, and are practicing these different kinds of chokeholds in the driveway of the filling station, the distinctions are all

very fine and good and theoretically workable. But in a real life situation, where the primal panic of the suspect/victim comes in to play, what begins as a legal chokehold to the arteries can quickly become a blocking of the trachea.

This, my friends (if you don't trust my opinion,) is specifically why the NYPD has wisely banned ALL kinds of chokeholds—to avert to ensuing confusion and, of course, tragedy.

Bit of course, Officer Danny Pantaleo doesn't give a shit about the law. The code. Rules and regulations.

WHY THE HELL DIDN'T THEY HELP?

Hey, I get it. Eric Garner had a criminal record. He had been arrested thirty times. He had been warned about selling cigarettes in that location. And he resisted arrest. This wouldn't be a fair look at the story if this chapter didn't include those facts. But nothing can mitigate the fact that Officer Pantaleo violated police procedure by using a chokehold and, perhaps even more unforgivably, nothing can explain or forgive the decision on the part of the NYPD to NOT administer CPR.

Even more shocking is the fact that the EMTS who arrived on the scene also did not administer CPR or administer oxygen to Eric Garner. They just spent the first couple of minutes doing basically nothing. They did not even feel for his pulse at the correct location on this neck. But don't listen to me, ask the experts—specifically, Dr. Alexander Kuehl, who led the Emergency Medical Services in New York City during the 1980's. Kuehl said the of the female paramedic who was the first medical assistant on scene, and who, inexplicably, did nearly nothing: *“It was like she either didn't want to be there, which is hard to understand, or police basically told her to just let him alone. She certainly didn't do her job.”*

And Israel Miranda, the president of the Uniformed EMT'S, Paramedics, and Fire Inspectors FDNY Local 2507, when asked for his analysis, was unwavering and unafraid to be critical of his own: *“There was a lack of initial intervention,”* Miranda said. *“They were not aggressive. If they're not breathing, assist with their ventilation. This is something that is ingrained in your training.”* This willingness to tell the truth, in spite of his job description, is important, gratifying, and precedent-setting. He is to be applauded.

Police and EMTS don't get to pick and choose whose life they are supposed to try and save, once crisis has set in. But Pantaleo and his cronies did choose. They decided not to attempt to save a man's life—merely because this was not the first time they had warned him about selling cigarettes.

WHO IS OFFICER DANIEL PANTALEO?

Officer Daniel “Danny Pants” Pantaleo is basically a guy who, from all indications, frequently violates the civil rights of black men. (The “Danny Pants” is my own nickname, since I can’t really see him as anything but a squirt, a small-time mobster, given his behavior.) Consider the cases brought against him—cases which were apparently damning enough against Pantaleo that the NYPD decided to settle, rather than fight, the cases. Danny Pants ends up being a very expensive cop to have around, when it comes to lawsuit settlements paid out to victims of civil rights violations.

1. Darren Collins and Tommy Rice: Collins and Rice sued Pants and other police officers in 2012. They allege that Pantaleo and three other cops pulled them over one morning, saying they saw a hand-to-hand drug transaction, according to court documents. The cops then allegedly strip searched the men and touched their genitals, right out in public, saying they were searching for drugs. Pantaleo even slapped the genitals around, his victims sated. Collins and Rice didn’t have any drugs on them. Criminal charges against Collins and Rice were dismissed, and they settled the lawsuit for a payout of \$15,000 each.

2. Rylawn Walker: Walker sued Pants in February of 2014. Pantaleo falsely arrested him in 2012, even though he wasn’t doing anything wrong or behaving suspiciously. Walker was charged with marijuana offenses, but the charges were eventually dismissed and the case sealed by the court. The lawsuit against Danny Pants is still pending.

3. Kenneth Collins: Collins sued Danny Pants and other officers in November of 2014; this lawsuit stemmed from his claim of false arrest stemming from a marijuana offense in 2012. According to court papers, Pantaleo “subjected [him] to a degrading search of his private parts and genitals.” The suit alleges that the officers charged Collins because they wanted to get overtime pay to process legal paperwork. The charges against Collins were dismissed and sealed by the court. The fact that the charges against Collins were dismissed make these disgusting charges against Pantaleo all too believable.

Consider this: all these lawsuits have transpired within a two year period. Any other reasonably run business probably would have fired Pantaleo for being too great a liability. Not the NYPD. And isn’t it interesting, that Danny Pants seems to take an inordinate and excessive interest in fondling the genitals of other men.

IN SUMMATION: I have tried to take a balanced point of view in the judgment of Pantaleo. I listened carefully to those few voices who asked the reasonable questions “Where is the absolute proof that Pantaleo did these things” and “How many arrestees sue the department every year?”

implying that these specious arrests and searches may just be phantom accusations on the part of thugs.

But the evidence had stacked up too fast and too high against Pantaleo. And what Pantaleo cannot change is the fact that in the case of the Garner arrest, there is a video. Three things are clear, crystalline, and very, very damning:

1. Pantaleo uses a chokehold against Eric Garner, and chokeholds are illegal. It is a violation of police procedure.
2. Pantaleo, nor any of his fellow officers, offered Garner CPR. Even if a Grand Jury did not indict Pantaleo for the chokehold—in order to indict, they would need to prove that Pantaleo intended to kill Garner with the chokehold—they could have indicted him for failing to offer CPR, and for withholding medical attention, causing the death of a human being.

Lastly, Danny Pants seems to show no remorse over what he has done to this human being. Watch the video: once Garner is down on the ground, and in physical distress, and fighting for his life, Danny Pants steps into the background and just watches it all, sometimes with a visible smirk on his face. Later, he smiles and waves at the camera, as a human being is dying at his feet.

OH, THOSE EUPHAMISMS

Are police across the country learning the lessons from the tragedy caused by one incompetent and corrupt precinct? Just a few short weeks after New York police placed Eric Garner in a chokehold, causing Garner to gasp ***“I can’t breathe”***, and causing the judgment of homicide to be determined by the medical examiner, a new training program was initiated among Sheriff’s Deputies in King County, Washington: the “Lateral Vascular Neck Restraint”. ***“A person’s neck is placed in a V between the officer’s forearm and upper arm, while pressure is applied to the carotid arteries on the sides of the neck.”***

We can only reiterate what we have said before. The difference between temporary vascular restriction of the blood to the brain, causing temporary unconsciousness, and restricting the breathing by applying pressure to the trachea, can be the difference between life and death. The two forms of takedown are not the same thing. The looming problem arises with the panic of the moment, and the improperly trained officers. Police and Sheriff’s Departments all over the country bemoan a lack of proper funding, (and rightfully so), and yet they are one hundred percent sure of the training of their officers in this nuanced life-and-death technique.

“Lateral vascular neck restraint.” Seriously?

That's a great one.

And now, from the Orwellian Newspeak that brought you that one, here are a few more euphemisms from the special language of law enforcement:

CREATIVE REPORT WRITING: Doing whatever you have to do with a report to keep your numbers up, to get overtime, or to make a suspect look guilty.

AMBULANCE MONKEY: Derogatory term for Medic, used because they interfere with a cop's business.

HOSE MONKEY: Derogatory term for Firefighter, used because they interfere with a cop's business.

PEDSPREAD: The end result of a pedestrian vs. vehicle accident, especially one occurring at a high rate of speed.

KEISTER BUNNY: A suspect who hides contraband in their rectum.

LAWN ORNAMENT: (I actually like this one; in the name of fairness, it is worth pointing out that they are not all offensive.) A drunk person passed out on their, or somebody else's, lawn.

ORGAN DONOR: Motorcyclist without a helmet.

HAM SANDWICH: Unregistered firearm kept in a plastic bag to plant on suspects.

UNREPORTED STOLEN: A creative term for pulling a car over with thin probable cause. A more "Politically Correct" explanation than "the car was pulled over because the people inside just looked out of place, or somehow wrong, or up to something, or fit a certain type.

GUTTER TAG: Writing a citation after you have allowed the suspect to leave, and placing their copy in the gutter, while submitting the complaint to court. Usually results in a warrant for "Failing to Appear". Nice, and so professional.

ALUMINUM SHAMPOO, FLASHLIGHT THERAPY, FLASHLIGHT SHAMPOO, DURACELL SHAMPOO: To beat a suspect with a flashlight

KIWI SHAMPOO: Named after most cops' favorite shoe polish, KIWI, a KIWI SHAMPOO means to kick a suspect in the head repeatedly.

BUTT HUTT: Jail

HOT LEAD INJECTION; LEAD POISONING: Shooting someone

“A DOG RAN IN FRONT OF MY CAR: When you have a total Asshole prisoner in the back of your patrol car, and you hit the brakes suddenly, causing the prisoner to smack his face on the cage/ screen. He accuses you of brutality and you reply, "A dog ran in front of my car. (“WAFFLE FACE” is also a term for a prisoner who you’ve pulled this stunt on.)

FRISBEE CAT: A cat that has been run over and is flat and hard and can be thrown like Frisbee

EYE SOCKET STABILIZATION: Gouging the eyeballs

EDISON MEDICINE: Tasing someone.

ELECTRIC SLIDE: When a suspect stops running and slides cross the ground, due to being Tased.

LIQUID JESUS: Pepper Spray

FLOPPY CRAPPY: Term used to describe the actions of a person being Tased while they are on the ground.

TAKING A HOT SQUAT: Dying in the Electric Chair

The English Language is a mystical thing.

STOP AND FRISK:

The Hunted and the Hated

The tragedy of Eric Garner is the reflection of a much great anger boiling up in New York’s minority community, and it all started with a nasty little NYPD policy called “Stop and Frisk”. The idea behind “Stop and Frisk” was not inherently terrible. It was about crime prevention: you stop and frisk people who look suspicious, who look like they’re up to no good. The problem, obviously, comes in how we define “suspicious” and “no good”. Stay tuned for a creepy discussion of how the NYPD has chosen to interpret those terms. A look at who they choose to pick on. Which includes, by the way, just about every young man who is black.

SPOILER ALERT: You can be stopped, grilled, and body searched for offenses as minor—and as ambiguous—as “furtive movements”. Furtive movements have included, and frequently include, actions such as looking over your shoulder and/or crossing the street, and/or changing direction while walking to move in a direction away from the police, and these actions are all reasons for the police to stop a “suspect”. Continuing to walk towards the police and making direct eye contact with an officer is also reason to stop a “suspect.” Then again, avoiding eye contact is also an often invoked reason to stop a “suspect”. (Two words: Freddie Gray.) And as if

that isn't Gestapo enough, it turns out that "Furtive Movements" were used as the reason for the stop over sixty percent of the time. So basically, the cops have you, either way. If you avoid eye contact, or cross the street, or turn to go the other way, you are avoiding them, and you have something to hide: Bam, Stop and Frisk. But if you look them in the eye, and keep approaching in their direction, you are behaving confrontationally: Bam, Stop and Frisk.

Another diabolical trick: marijuana has been de-criminalized in New York, as long as you don't publicly display it. So people are stopped, frisked, their pockets emptied—and then, when the doobie rolls out, it's on display, isn't it? BAM! You're busted!

BOOZE—AN INEXCUSABLE DOUBLE STANDARD

By the way: NYPD cops enjoy quite the double standard when it comes to their abuse of a drug called alcohol. For pretty much the entire history of the NYPD, a cop has been able to drive drunk, secure in the knowledge that if stopped by a pal—or by another officer he doesn't know, for that matter—he is legally allowed to refuse a sobriety test. Seriously?

Sometimes the incidents come in waves, like Sasquatch or UFO sightings: In April of 2011, in the Big Apple, there were officer-related drunk driving accidents two nights in a row. First, Officer Christine Mazarakes was [driving drunk](#) and [smashed her car](#) at the corner on 81st Street and West End Avenue. The following night, a drunk Detective Thomas Handley flipped his car while driving on the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway near midnight. (Sorry, no pictures of the accident released to the public.) And only a few weeks before that, on March 15, Officer Sergio Gonzalez was arrested for driving under the influence, after crashing his car into the back of a cab, injuring the driver. It didn't stop there, though. Gonzalez then sped away from the scene of the accident, and then smashed into a police car further down the street. It didn't stop there, though. The force of hitting the cruiser caused his car to spin round, and [hit yet a third car](#). Officers in the cruiser that was hit were treated for head, neck, and back injuries. The cabbie had a deep gash to the forehead, requiring stitches. Two hypodermic needles were found in Gonzalez's car, and a witness reported him trying to get rid of a small white plastic bag. But Gonzales turned down the request that he take a Breathalyzer. Not interested, apparently.

And then there is the tragedy caused by yet another officer sworn "to protect and serve", that of NYPD Officer Andrew Kelley who got drunk, drove, and killed a preacher's daughter, striking her with his car. When he left the bar, witnesses said he had been drinking all night, and even the officer himself admitted to drinking all night. When officers arrived at the scene to find Vionique Valnord dead, they also found Kelley slurring and glassy-eyed, and reeking of booze. Because Kelley, being a cop, could legally refuse a sobriety test, it took seven hours and twenty minutes to get a judge to rule that he must take one. But by then, he blew 0.0. He got just 90 days in jail.

After all, the defense argued, how do we know he was drunk? Prove it. I guess his admission that he had been drinking wasn't enough.

When NYPD Officer Kevin Spellman, obviously drunk at the end of his shift (yes, he was working as he got drunk), and was allowed by his colleagues to drive home, he killed a grandmother while she was crossing the street. When other police arrived on the scene, twice he refused a Breathalyzer, refusal being a legal act for that cop. It took other officers five hours to get a judge to issue a court order, and to make the Breathalyzer happen, at which point, ***even though five hours had passed***, Kevin Spellman blew 2.1, over twice the legal limit. Happily for justice, he eventually got sentence to 3-9 years, but unhappily for justice, that took four years. But the biggest injustice of the Spellman story is that any fool could have seen this murder by drunk driving coming a mile away, no pun intended.

But this wasn't the first time Officer Kevin Spellman was drinking and driving. A few years previous to killing the grandmother, in 2004, Spellman had been caught driving the wrong way down a one way street while on the job, and yet kept his job. Bizarrely, two other officers were in the car with the very drunk cop when this happened, and they just let him keep driving. The wrong way, down a one way street. He was only stopped because he stopped his car and got out to stagger into a bodega for more alcohol. Citizens noticed him staggering and reeking of booze. Spellman was not arrested.

But this wasn't the first time Officer Ken Spellman was drinking and driving. Wait, didn't I just write that? Yes, in still another incident in 1997, Spellman hit a family of three with his car while he was drunk. The shaken and furious father insisted that a Breathalyzer be administered to Spellman, but Spellman refused, and was within his rights to do so. And still, no stop right there, ***I want you to put yourself in the shoes of that enraged father***. This pathetic excuse for a human being, after driving drunk and crashing into a family's car, has the arrogance to refuse to face the consequences of his actions. And still, he kept his job as a cop. As a policeman sworn to "Serve and Protect". As an officer empowered to "Stop and Frisk", and bust kids carrying weed.

Only in 2013 did the courts finally make it mandatory for cops to take Breathalyzers, just like everyone else suspected of driving drunk...

NYPD Officer Joseph DeMarcos is a piece of work. In 2007, cops found him leaning over his girlfriend's car with bloody hands (yes, she was fine), but he had slashed all her tires and smashed all her windows. When he saw cops approaching in their cruiser, he jumped into his own car and sped away. When he finally stopped, he flailed and kicked and bit when they tried to extract him from his vehicle. He was wildly inebriated. And he is still working as an Officer of the NYPD.

Why this brief epistle on cops and drinking? Not only to show the hypocrisy of “Stop and Frisk”, but perhaps more importantly, to explain to those legions of people who still just don’t get it why blacks, other minorities, and a hell of a lot of white people are so damned angry. There is a double standard, and there is no justice in that.

Think about all these drunk cops, destroying property and running down innocent victims, leaving death and destruction in their wake—some of them then being allowed to return to the force. And then think of Eric Garner, killed for selling loosies. And of Sandra Bland—threatened with a Taser for refusing to put out her cigarette, and then slammed to the ground and beaten, even after pleading that she was epileptic. And Officer Brian Encinia’s response to her claim of epilepsy? “Good”.

BACK TO THE STOP AND FRISK...

To put it bluntly, young men who are a members of a minority, young men of color, live every day on the streets of New York in fear and with a growing rage—I believe rightfully so. And what are they being stopped for? Here is a list of reasons, of “probable cause” that legally allow a cop to stop you, search you, and, in many cases, brutalize you (with our interpretation of what that actually means to the NYPD, according to the public history of their Stops, Frisks, and Arrests):

—“CASING A LOCATION”. (Or, looking around at a place for more than a few seconds. It could be a restaurant whose menu posted in the window you are perusing. A movie theatre whose marquee you stop to read. A building whose address you’re squinting to read. A store window whose display you are admiring. Need I go on?)

—“ACTING AS A LOOKOUT.” (Or, looking for a friend, a bus, a taxi—a cop who wants to harass you for no reason.

—“ACTIONS OF A DRUG TRANSACTION.” (Notice it doesn’t say anything about “witnessing” a drug transaction, but merely “actions of”, which means that shaking hands, handing somebody something, or exchanging money—hey, it could be for Nicks tickets—all are “Stop and Frisk” offenses.)

—“CARRYING A SUSPICIOUS OBJECT.” (As you will see below in one of the most famous: “Stop and Frisk” busts, a backpack can be considered a suspicious object.

—“FITS A RELEVANT DESCRIPTION.” (Hey, look. He’s black!)

—“CLOTHES COMMONLY USED IN A CRIME.” (A hoodie! Just like Trayvon! Let’s shoot him too!)

—“SUSPICIOUS BULGE.” (I’m saying nothing.)

And the bald truth of it is this: in the great majority of cases, “suspects” aren’t just questioned and patted down. They are screamed at, sworn at, called names, ridiculed, slammed into walls and against cruisers, and often arrested on bogus charges. Are innocent people getting caught in the NYPD’s ever-widening crime fighting net? Court data suggests a strong possibility. In 2008, city courts handled 382,000 misdemeanor criminal summonses, such as disorderly conduct and loitering. Out of those, over 193,000 were tossed out by the courts. 51 percent of all summonses dismissed.

Even if the charges are thrown out in court, the cop has done his job—to meet the secret NYPD quota which, although being unlawful, has by now been well documented. More and more police are finding ways to make the truth known, offering the public specific details, but keeping their identities anonymous: they are afraid of the repercussions, and rightfully so. Officer Adhyl Polanco is an exception, though. He became a cop because he wanted to be one of the good guys, but when he saw too much corruption, he went public and called them out:

“Our primary job is not to help anybody. Our primary job is to get those numbers. And come back with them. You have to meet the quota.” —NYPD Officer Adhyl Polanco, to an ABC News Reporter, in 2010. (abc7y.com)

Also secretly recorded by Adhyl Polanco are daily orders from his superior:

“Things are not going to get any better. It’s going to get a lot worse. And if you think 1 and 20 is breaking your balls, guess what you’re going to be doing? You’re going to be doing a lot more, a lot more than what you think.”

“Next week, you could be 25 and 1, you could be 35 and 1. And guess what? Until you decide to quit this job and become a Pizza Hut delivery man, this is what you are going to be doing until then. Do we understand each other?”

And the cops aren’t content to just harass black men and black teenagers. Tweens, kids on their way to school, are often stopped and harassed. And police aren’t around to suffer the consequences or embarrassment of the child having to explain why he was missed first and second period.

WNYC News, a radio station out of New York, carried this story on its website:

Anthony Henry, also an eighth grader from P.S./I.S. 323, was walking to school before 8 a.m. last month when a big jeep pulled up alongside him. Five cops jumped out, he said. “And they were

all like, ‘Put your hands up’ and stuff,” said Anthony. “They checked me, checked my book bag. They threw all my books on the floor.” The police started questioning him about drugs and gang members. He said he didn’t know anyone in a gang. They took him home, and his mom started yelling at the cops, telling them they had the wrong guy. At that point, Anthony said one officer just patted him on the head, and said, “My bad.” By the time his mom drove him back to school, Anthony had already missed first and second period. “It made me feel, I dunno, retarded,” said Anthony. “Like a gangbanger. Because only gangbangers get stopped for nothing, just for walking.”

And this covert confession, from an officer who wished to remain anonymous:

INTERVIEWER: You’re telling me that they’re just stopping people without a reason, is that what you’re saying?

OFFICER: We’re stopping kids walking from school. We’re stopping kids walking upstairs to their house. We’re stopping kids from going to the store. Kids. Young Adults. In order to keep that quota.

(NBC News, August 7th, 2013)

ALVIN IS NOT A MUTT. ALVIN IS NOT A CHIPMUNK.

Alvin Cruz wanted to be a police officer, probably because he deeply admired his father, who was an officer in the NYPD. But then he became a victim of “Stop and Frisk” over, and over, and over again. This last incident was the last straw. But this time, Alvin was ready, he recorded the entire incident that transpired when two cops pulled him aside and went into full bullying mode.

OFFICER: (grabbing Alvin) Our job is to look for suspicious behavior. When you keep looking at us like that, looking back—

ALVIN: ‘Cause you’re always—I just got stopped like two blocks away.

OFFICER: Listen to me. When you’re walkin’ the block, with your hood up, and you keep looking back at us like that—

ALVIN: I just got stopped, like, two blocks away.

OFFICER: Do you wanna go to jail?

ALVIN: What for? For what?

OFFICER: Shut your fuckin’ mouth, kid.

ALVIN: What am I getting arrested for ?

OFFICER: Shut your mouth!

ALVIN: What am I getting arrested for?

OFFICER: For being a fuckin' mutt.

ALVIN: That's a law? Being a mutt?

(scuffling can be heard)

ALVIN: Why you push me like that for?

OFFICER: Shut your fucking mouth before I slap you.

ALVIN: Why you push me like that for?

OFFICER: TAKE A FUCKIN' WALK!

ALVIN: Why you push me like that?

OFFICER: You fucking hear me, you fucking piece of shit?

ALVIN: Why you touch me like that?

Scenes like this play out every day on the streets of New York City.

And then—and then—the police carp and complain that the people they arrest don't show them enough respect.

If these particular heart wrenching stories don't convince you, perhaps the statistics will:

Even though Blacks and Hispanics are a minority here—Blacks 23%, Hispanic 29%—a majority of people stopped, around 84%, are young men of color ...The reason given for most stops is either a high crime neighborhood or a suspect engaged in furtive movements.”

—ABC Nightline, Terry Moran.

And here's the pay-off:

- The likelihood that a stop of an African American New Yorker yielded a weapon was half that of white New Yorkers stopped. The NYPD uncovered a weapon in one out every 49 stops of white New Yorkers. By contrast, it took the Department 71 stops of Latinos and 93 stops of African Americans to find a weapon.

- The likelihood that a stop of an African American New Yorker yielded contraband was one-third less than that of white New Yorkers stopped. The NYPD uncovered contraband in one out every 43 stops of white New Yorkers. By contrast, it took the Department 57 stops of Latinos and 61 stops of African Americans to find contraband.

Look, just in case I need to remind people, I am white. I take no joy in those statistics. What I do take joy in, however, are facts. Accuracy. And them's the facts.

ADRIAN SCHOOLCRAFT: A GOOD COP

Now, the good news is that the situation has greatly improved. Incidents of “Stop and Frisk” are way down in New York. But the price was high. Not only did it require massive protests and marching in the streets—anathema to so many law and order fanatics—but the cause had its martyrs as well.

And few martyrs in the “Stop and Frisk” imbroglio are as well-known as a former cop named Adrian Schoolcraft. Adrian Schoolcraft is a name known to many in the realm of people fighting against draconian “Stop and Frisk” policies. (Adrian is white, if it matters.) Clearly, Adrian is one of the good guys. He was born in Texas, he's a Republican, and he grew up admiring his dad, who proudly wore the blue uniform. Adrian went into the Navy, and when he left the Navy a few years later, it was with a slew of medals and commendations. He moved to New York in 2002 to become a cop for two reasons: firstly, he wanted to be there to help the city. He had watched in horror on that infamous day on September 2001, as 911 unfolded, but Adrian felt helpless, living so far away in Texas. And becoming a member of the NYPD seemed as good a way as any to try to do his part in taking care of the city. In healing the city. And the second reason for his move to the Big Apple: his mother was dying of cancer, and he wanted to be there for her. In fact, he drove her to every one of her chemotherapy sessions, until the day she died.

Now—as is so often the case in this book—one can write an entire book about the Schoolcraft saga. At the very least, it would make a hell of a great movie. Very “Serpico”, but with some even more horrific twists and turns. Here is his story told in broad strokes, and see if you aren't filled with equal parts of outrage and stark disbelief:

As an officer who took his oath seriously, Adrian Schoolcraft was sick of all the sub rosa arrest quotas and threats from superiors—you could be fired, harassed, denied promotions, all for failing to get the supposedly non-existent quotas. So he took the recorder that he had originally carried around to document assorted street incidents (with the intent of protecting himself from bogus accusations—something that will prove wickedly ironic, given hindsight), and Adrian started to use it to record the illegal directives and sickening “pep talks” he was getting about quotas. He documented all the different ways that cops could go after certain ethnic types who

had made the mistake of showing their faces in public. Schoolcraft recorded no less than 117 roll calls over a 17 month period, from July 1st, 2008, to October 31st, 2009. The material he gathered was far more than enough to establish a pattern.

Some recordings are of roll call supervisors advising officers not to take certain robbery reports, in order to manipulate crime statistics. There are also references to superior officers placing calls directly to crime victims, in which they try to intimidate the victims out of making complaints. (We are setting aside the disturbing and childish issues that also frequently arose, such as the need for officers—*the officers*—to stop painting graffiti all over the inside and outside of the station, as well as a request that they stop drawing penises in each other's notebooks, which are official instruments of the state, and possibly to be used in the court.

But there is more, so much more.

One of the darkest villains in this story is Precinct Commander Steven Mauriello, who spewed vitriol like this, captured by Schoolcraft's recorder. But he had his evil minions as well. Months later, when the story exploded, the Village Voice would publish an explosive, multi-article story about the entire imbroglio. Here is a direct transcript from Part Two of the Village Voice story, and it will give you a damned good idea about why a good cop like Adrian Schoolcraft was so angry:

EXCERPTED FROM THE VILLAGE VOICE:

Mauriello would often roam the precinct in his car. When he saw groups on particular corners, he would call in officers to arrest the people on low-level charges. These collars came to be called "Mauriello Specials."

[From later in the Village Voice article: One problem with the "Mauriello Specials" was that the officers were at times being ordered to make arrests for misconduct that they hadn't actually witnessed—legally, a questionable practice. In an October 14, 2009, roll call, a police union delegate warns officers about this: *"Make sure you don't sign anything that says you witnessed the arrest if you didn't,"* he says. *"There's been a lot of cases overturned, and officers now being brought up on perjury charges."* In another roll call from October 31, 2009, an officer warns other officers: *"The D.A.'s Office is watching supporting depositions. They have one cop up on, like, eight counts of forging."*

—On June 12, 2008, a sergeant tells the precinct's officers to make the arrests even if they have to cancel the charges at the end of their shift. *"Guy's on the corner? You gotta leave. Bounce. Get lost,"* he says. *"You'll void it later on in the night so you'll all go home on time."*

—On July 1, 2008, a sergeant tells his cops: *"Be an asshole. They're gonna do something, shine a light in their face. Inconvenience them. It saves trouble later on. Some of you with good activity are going to be moving up."*

—The following day, a precinct supervisor orders cops to make an arrest, when in the past, a dispute might have been talked out. "The days of mediating between a perp and a store owner are over," a sergeant says on July 2, 2008. *"If the guy is in the back with five sticks of deodorant, you gotta collar him,"* the sergeant says. *"There's no more mediating."*

—By that July, Mauriello was a fixture in the roll calls at the start of the evening tour. *"They wise off, they fucking push you, I expect them handcuffed, all right?"* he says in a July 15, 2008, roll call, adding later, *"Anybody gets stopped and it's a summonsable offense, I want them handcuffed and brought into the precinct...zero tolerance."*

—Mauriello tells them that day that he wants block parties shut down after 8:30 p.m. *"After 8:30, it's all on me and my officers, and we're undermanned,"* he says. *"The good people go inside. The others stay outside."*

—Mauriello also targeted certain troubled buildings, such as 120 Chauncey Street, which he repeatedly said he wanted *"blown up."*

—*"I'm getting rocked today,"* Mauriello says on another day. *"Since the midnight [shift], I've got five fucking robberies already and burglary assaults. So the game plan tonight is Operation Zero Tolerance. If they fuckin' break the law on the corner, I'm scooping them all up, putting them in the cells."*

—In the roll call on Halloween night 2008, Mauriello ordered the troops to pay special attention to 120 Chauncey. *"Everybody goes. I don't care. You're on 120 Chauncey and they're popping champagne? Yoke 'em. Put them through the system. They got bandanas on, arrest them. Everybody goes tonight. They're underage? Fuck it."*

—He added: *"You're on a foot post, fuck it. Take the first guy you got and lock them all up from 120 Chauncey. Boom. Bring 'em in. Lodge them. You're going to go back out and process it later on."* Later in the roll call, a lieutenant adds, *"Jump out, ground-and-pound, 'cuff 'em up, and hand 'em off to somebody."*

As the campaign went on into the winter of 2008, Mauriello seemed to be aware that there was some resentment in the community, but he justified the campaign by saying the "good people" were supportive. *"Fuck 'em, I don't give a shit,"* he says on November 8, 2008. *"They are going to come to a community council meeting, yell at me, whatever, I know the good people over there are happy we have officers there."*

A lieutenant follows up, telling the cops to be more aggressive. "If they don't move, they are going to get out of control and think that they own the block. They don't own the block. We own the block. They might live there, but we own the block. We own the streets here."

A similar order was given by a sergeant on November 23, 2008: *"If they're on a corner, make 'em move. If they don't want to move, lock 'em up. Done deal. You can always articulate [a charge] later."*

On December 9, 2008, Mauriello orders the officers to focus on a pizzeria. *"No one hangs out there. Nobody. I want a ghost town. I want to hear the echo from one end of the street to the other...That's your mission."*

On March 13, 2009, a sergeant says, *"Make 'em move. If they won't move, call me up, and lock them up, discon [disorderly conduct], no big deal. Leave them out there all night and come get them. The less people on the street, the easier our job will be."*

On April 27, 2009, Mauriello tells officers to make the arrest, drop suspects at the precinct, go back out, and then come back later to process the arrests. *"You bring 'em in here, leave 'em in the cells for a little while, go back out, do your job, and come back and release them outta there,"* he says. *"If they're acting like assholes on the street, why should I rush them out of here?"*

On July 21, 2009, Mauriello once again talks about destroying a troubled building: *"I'm gonna burn that motherfucking place down...Listen, let them shoot each other and we'll go clean up."*

I cannot stress enough that Adrian Schoolcraft's story not only could be a riveting movie, but it really ought to be the next "Serpico". Just read this climactic ending to his fight for justice. (As documented in depositions, trials, the New York Times, the Village Voice, and, most damningly for the villains of our story, by Adrian Schoolcraft's own audio recordings.) The story began moving towards its climactic finish with a meeting that seemed, at first glance, innocent enough. It was the 7th of October, 2009, and Schoolcraft found himself sitting in a meeting, the purpose of which was to discuss his observations, particularly the "Stop and Frisk" policies, quotas, and the downgrading of felonies. It was a three hour meeting, and it seemed as though everybody had shown up to see what Schoolcraft had to say: there was a lieutenant, an inspector, and three sergeants with the Quality Assistance Division—the NYPD unit responsible for "policing" the integrity of all incident reports. They told him they would launch a major investigation.

And apparently they did. Into him, and the big, dangerous, ugly stink that Schoolcraft could make for the New York Police Department, if he so chose.

CUT TO: A couple of weeks pass. It is, aptly enough, October 31st. Schoolcraft's memo book is confiscated again, removed by a Lieutenant Timothy Caughey, who spirits it away to a private office and begins copying frantically, for hours. Then he returns the book. Caughey then calls

Schoolcraft's supervisor, Sergeant Rasheena Huffman into his office. And when she re-emerges, she is furious. Schoolcraft is sick at the thought that they have copied all of his voluminous notes; he tells Huffman he feels sick, fills out the paperwork, and she gives him formal permission to leave.

Adrian goes home, and at about 4:30, swills a little Nyquil and crawls into bed. At 6:00, the phone rings. It's his father, telling him that there are police lights flashing in the street just outside his apartment. When Adrian checks his messages, he listens to one from Sergeant Huffman claiming she DENIED his request to go home early on sick leave, and that he needs to report back right away.

Adrian makes the decision to keep his father on the phone; this goes on for hours. At 9:00 p.m., the nightmare explodes: boots stomping up the stairs. A key jiggles in his lock. Later, Adrian will learn that police got a copy of his key because they told his landlord that he was suicidal, and had "barricaded himself in his apartment."

But Adrian has a plan. Per his father's advice, he pretends to be asleep when they enter his apartment, and he can clearly hear the sound of them going through everything he owns. Not trying to help Adrian, because he is supposedly "suicidal." But instead going through all of his property, obviously looking for the bounty of evidence Adrian has amassed that could incriminate the police department. Adrian sees that one officer is recording everything with a video camera.

Then, the invasion becomes even more personal. Our villains, Precinct Commander Mauriello and Deputy Chief Michael Marino, come into Adrian's bedroom, where he is lying in shorts and t-shirt on his bed, and they accuse him of stomping out of the precinct without permission. They order that he return immediately. Adrian, of course, explains that his early departure was approved by his supervisor.

By now, the paramedics have arrived, and they start checking Adrian's vitals. Adrian tries to explain that he left the station because of a simple onset of the flu, stomach pains, a bug ... and that these twelve supervisors —there are now about a dozen cops of rank in his small apartment—are trying to make it into some major mental malady, which it clearly is not.

Virtually everyone who heard and saw the documented evidence of this 'home invasion' later agreed that Schoolcraft behaved in a perfectly rational and relatively calm manner for the entire incident. But in Schoolcraft's tiny apartment, Marino is the boss, and he is determined to bully and threaten Schoolcraft until the poor man breaks. Here is a direct transcript of the conversation, which Adrian Schoolcraft entrusted to The Village Voice:

"Listen to me, I'm a chief in the New York City Police Department. So this is what's going to happen, my friend. You've disobeyed an order. And the way you're acting is not right." rified Marino.

"Chief, if you were woken up in your house ..." Schoolcraft replies.

"Stop right there!" Marino says.

"... how would you behave?" Schoolcraft asks.

"Stop right there, son. I'm doin' the talkin' right now. Not you," Marino thunders.

"In my apartment," Schoolcraft says. "What is this, Russia?"

"You are going to be suspended," Marino says.

It is at this point that the paramedic chimes in, saying that Schoolcraft's blood pressure is very high. Adrian agrees to go to a hospital, thinking they are taking him to his hospital in Queens. He walks downstairs with the paramedics, but then, he's told he's being taken to Jamaica Hospital. That is when Schoolcraft literally stops in is tracks. That is where cops took psych emergencies: people damaged by drugs, homeless in the throes of an episode, 72 hour holds for "evaluation". That's when Schoolcraft realizes that he is not being taken to a hospital to have his vitals checked, he is being taken to the local asylum for mental cases. Adrian announces, "I'm RMA." ("Refusing Medical Attention,") and then he walks back up the stairs and gets back in bed. Again, the Village Voice brings it to life:

"It was then that Chief Marino lost his temper, according to the tape. "Listen to me, they are going to treat you like an EDP [emotionally disturbed person]," he says. "Now, you have a choice. You get up like a man and put your shoes on and walk into that bus, or they're going to treat you as an EDP and that means handcuffs."

Schoolcraft tells the chief that he is the one pushing the confrontation.

Marino then orders Schoolcraft placed in handcuffs. "All right, just take him," he says. "I can't fucking stand him anymore."

At that point, various officers grab him.

"So they pulled me off the bed, stomping on me," Schoolcraft says. "They had me all twisted up, hands all over me. Someone grabbed my hair...Marino stepped on my face with his boot. That's when he said it didn't have to be like this. They basically beat the shit out of me."

—DIRECT TRANSCRIPT, VILLAGE VOICE

Finally, Adrian was handcuffed and watched helplessly as the cops finished ransacking his apartment. The goon squad finally found the recorder that he had hidden, to record the entire encounter, per his father's advice.

But *what they didn't find* is the second tape recorder that he had also hidden, as a back-up.

So basically, Schoolcraft risks everything to obtain recorded evidence of the worst kind of police corruption, and the response of the people who are supposed to protect us is to rough him up and have him hauled off to an asylum for the mentally ill. And then give Schoolcraft the bill for over seven thousand dollars.

And here is one of the crucial lessons to take away from the Schoolcraft saga: many whites, and many people who hold the reins of power, are quick to wonder why blacks and their white sympathizers must sometimes go to such radical lengths to get the media's attention. The public's attention. Perhaps that is because reasonable lengths all too often go unnoticed. Or even worse, get punished—punished in the most evil of ways.

THANKS TO STOP AND FRISK—CRIME IS DOWN!!!

And for those of you who believe the Mayor and the Police Chief when they crow about violent crimes going down, just google NYPD POLICE DOWNGRADE FELONIES. This new phenomenon is directly linked to the problem of "Stop and Frisk", which is directly linked to Eric Garner's fed up disgust with being hassled on the streets. You see, police officials justify an aggressive, ruthless "Stop and Frisk" policy by presenting statistics to the world which "prove" beyond a shadow of a doubt that as a result of "Stop and Frisk", crime is going down.

But herein lies the paradox: officers of the NYPD must tell outrageous lies and manipulate the facts of the case—of hundreds of cases—in order to achieve those statistics. Every day, mountainous stacks of felony cases stare them in the face. But with one swift move of the pen (always mightier than the sword), the felony becomes a mere misdemeanor.

For example, back in 2010, according to a study by an official external monitoring group, the Crime Reporting Review Committee, grand larcenies (crimes in which persons had more than \$1000 dollars taken from them), are downgraded to misdemeanors. Specifically, 417 felony robberies—you know, someone sticks a gun in your face or breaks into your home, and demands that you hand over every valuable thing you own—were downgraded to misdemeanors. 1033 burglaries were downgraded from felonies to misdemeanors. Think about this for a moment: Someone breaks into your home, your private home, steals all those things you hold most dear,

all those valuable things you have worked so hard to attain, and that thug has committed “a misdemeanor”. Perhaps most frighteningly, though, 782 felony assaults on persons were downgraded to misdemeanors. The same as swearing loud at a Pee Wee football game. Seriously.

And the accounts are legion. Lou Ellen Davis is 75, and looks for treasures discarded on the streets of New York that she sells on eBay. When a young woman grabbed her and slammed her to the ground, she was taken to the hospital and treated for a concussion. According to New York law—which also takes into account the fact of a young person attacking someone over 65, with the intent to cause grievous bodily harm—it was clearly a felony attack. Police knew who the assailant was, but refused to press charges. When they finally did succumb to the pressure, they charged the assailant with a misdemeanor. How would you feel if it was your mother, or your grandmother?

When John Jewett was attacked by a crazed man in a public tavern who threw a table at him and threatened him with a knife, the victim was taken away in an ambulance. Police were on scene, but wouldn’t file a report. Doctors treated Jewett for broken ribs, broken teeth, as well as numerous cuts and bruises. Again police refused to take any action at all. Jewett made numerous trips to the police station, trying to get the man charged with a crime. The police ignored Jewett until his attacker committed a new slew of crimes, and they couldn’t ignore him any longer: that same attacker was arrested a year later in Connecticut, for threatening people with knives, stealing a car, and leading the cops on a high speed chase.

But the cops will do whatever they must to prove that “crime has gone down”, pointing to the success of the bigoted and draconian policy of “Stop and Frisk”.

For example, sexual assault on a stranger becomes a mere misdemeanor. The idea that a sexual assault would be downgraded to make the numbers look good is appalling, almost inconceivable. But in the case of one particular sexual assault, NYPD’s attempt to downgrade it to a misdemeanor did not work. Why? Because the sexual assailant—and the scumbag cops who downgraded the crime—had chosen to wrangle with a female journalist. Fifty-nine year old Debbie Nathan feared for her life when a stranger grabbed her in a public park, dragged her into the bushes, and told her that he intended to rape her. When the police finally did arrive at the scene of the assault (it took them over two hours to respond to her three 911 calls; obviously they were out conducting urgent “Stop and Frisks”), they listened to her story about being dragged into the woods while a creep held her down and masturbated on her. And then they said that it was merely a misdemeanor. “Forcible Touching”, it’s called. But our heroine would have none of it. She pursued it to the highest channels, and it ended up in the hands of the local state assemblyman, Adriano Espaillat. The story has a rare, gratifying ending: The commander of the 34th Precinct, Deputy Inspector Andrew Capul, was forced to apologize publicly to Nathan in a community hearing.

And in a review conducted just last year, in July of 2015, nineteen officers of the NYPD's 40th Precinct were found to have downgraded 55 felonies and seriously minimized the crimes. Those charged include a lieutenant, eight sergeants, nine police officers and a detective. Is it any surprise that none of them have been placed on modified duty or suspended without pay? It is all business as usual. Their big boss, Deputy Inspector Lorenzo Johnson, has been temporarily assigned to a non-patrol services command pending further review. But he's still raking in the chubby bucks. And this is just one review of 19 police officers, out of a total of 35,000 in the NYPD. 35,000 officers, under pressure from their superiors to turn violent, ugly assaults, home invasions, robberies, and rapes, into the merest of misdemeanors.

So—it would appear, at first glance, that we have meandered away from the sad story of Eric Garner, but the ugly truth is, crimes, arrests, resisting, punishment, death—these phenomenon do not transpire in a vacuum. Eric Garner was sick of being harassed, but he was no doubt sick of so much more. The protesters who took up signs and began chanting slogans after his death, and after the failure of justice, were sick—and still are sick—of so much more than the death of just one man.

A New Yorker who might bear the vaguest resemblance to someone who once committed a crime somewhere—because he's black, because he's brown, because he's wearing a hoodie, because he's wearing Air Jordans—is suddenly hassled. He's hassled for standing, for walking, for getting on the subway, for getting off the bus, for driving in his car, for sitting in his car.

Hell, you can't even ride a bike without putting your life at risk, thanks to the boys in blue. Thanks to the NYPD. Let's end this chapter with one of my favorites:

<http://www.youtube.com>

Now, assuming you have watched it—a cop ramming his body into a bicyclist, and sending the rider slamming onto the concrete—it is worth noting that a jury found the officer not guilty of assault.

SOURCES:

For abundant “Stop and Frisk” statistics, see May 9th, 2012 Briefing from the New York Civil Liberties Union, (pdf on web).

THE WISDOM OF GRAHAM WITHERSPOON

The Police Reform Organization Project held a [symposium in the fall of 2012](#). The goal was to find men and women who had served as police, who had seen—to invoke understatement—a need for reform, and who had some very definite ideas about how those changes might come about. Although each member of the panel was informative and inspiring in their own way, it was Graham Witherspoon who stole the show. I watched him over and over again. His story—his vision—is infused with candor, wisdom, and heartfelt energy. It is this kind of honesty and passion that we must have, if we are to bring about meaningful and lasting change.

Here is his speech. But you owe it to yourself to watch him, in the flesh.

TRANSCRIPT OF GRAHAM WITHERSPOON'S SPEECH

I was born in east New York, and raised there. I had a negative encounter with a police officer in 1957, maybe '56. I was struck in the face by a cop, a white cop, with his night stick, outside of the school where Danny Kaye was doing a concert for the kids in East New York, because he grew up around the corner from where I lived. I was very much disturbed, because my father had died a few years prior, and I knew that if my father was alive and I told him that this cop hit me in the face with his nightstick, my father would have broken his neck.

When I was sixteen, my mother worked for the Board of Ed, and back in the Sixties, you could go to school at night, and you could learn. The Board of Education was about educating people. And we went to pick up the payroll slips for the people working in the schools at night and I was kicked, right at the base of the coccyx bone, which is at the base of your spine. Kicked very hard with a hard shoe. And someone said, "I say get on the wall" and I turned around and there's a white guy in a sports jacket and an overcoat, and I had no idea who he was. At age sixteen I could snatch 130 pounds off the ground with either arm, do reverse curls with 140 without breaking a sweat. As I turned and looked at this guy, before I could take him, he was punched in the mouth by my mother. She told those detectives to get out of the building. She said "This is a school! You don't come in here kicking anybody, let alone my son. Get out of this building!" I told my mother at age 16 the next cop that touched me, I would kill him. And I meant that, and she knew I meant that. And she had no problem with my mindset. My father and grandfather gunned down the Ku Klux Klan in Georgia in the 1930's.

In 1973 I took a walk-in exam for the transit police department. I figured, if I take that job, there's one less psycho that can get the job. And I said I can't do anything about that system if I don't go into it and try to effectively make some changes. NYPD called me two months later, I turned them down. That was during the Knapp Commission, for those of you who are old enough to remember the Knapp Commission. I said "I don't work with bigots, and I don't work with

criminals.” I went into the transit police, which at that time was almost 30 percent black, and I was taught by some very astute black men, not just about policing but about the community, but about protecting the people.

As a Christian, I saw police work as a form of ministry. It wasn't a job; it was something you needed to be called to. This isn't hamburgers and French fries, or anything like that. Because you are dealing with the critical issues of people's lives. I wasn't drafted, I volunteered to do it. So I can't have a bad day, at your expense. I volunteered; I wasn't drafted, so I can't be afraid of you because of what you look like. I cannot kill you, and, as they say, if you can articulate it, ***that's the code word*** ... If you can articulate the reason for doing what you did, don't worry about it.

I worked in the top plainclothes unit of the New York Transit Police. I went into the transit police 1974. And we worked in a unit called the Black-Hispanic squad, and we did the entire city. Homicides, kidnapping, everything. The transit police. All of us got promoted. Detectives Sergeants, Lieutenants. I went to the squad as a detective, and in my tenure as a detective I sent cops to prison for raping young girls. Black cops. I sent white cops to prison for brutalizing people because they thought they were just beatin' up niggers. And that individual was a PBA delegate.

There's no grey area. You're either walking the road correctly, or you're part of the problem. All through my career, I was involved ...we were at 370 J Street when Calvin Alexander had the idea for an organization to do even more than what the Guardian's Association was doing. I was the vice president of Transit Guardians. And we formulated 100 Blacks in Law Enforcement Who Care. And during my twelve years with them, our objective was to inspire younger cops to take up the gauntlet.

You have to know who you are before you go into policing. You cannot allow them to define you. If you don't know who you are going in, they've got your mind. The psychological exam is only to protect the city in lawsuits. They're not looking to weed out any problems. ***”And as a man thinketh, so is he.”*** So the actions of the officers are the outcry of how they're thinking.

END GRAHAM WITHERSPOON SPEECH TRANSCRIPT

“As a man thinketh, so he is.”

—From “As a Man Thinketh,” motivational and spiritual classic by James Allen, praised and recommended by scholars and thinkers for decades:

“Men do not attract that which they want, but that which they are.”

“The dreamers are the saviors of the world. As the visible world is sustained by the invisible, so men, through all their trials and sins and sordid vocations, are nourished by the beautiful visions of their solitary dreamers.”

“He who would accomplish little need sacrifice little; he who would achieve much must sacrifice much. He who would attain highly must sacrifice greatly.”

“Cherish your visions.

Cherish your ideals.

Cherish the music that stirs in your heart, the beauty that forms in your mind, the loveliness that drapes your purest thoughts.

For out of them will grow all delightful conditions, all heavenly environment, of these, if you but remain true to them, your world will at last be built.”

Thank you, James Allen.

Thank you, Graham Witherspoon.

Rest in Peace, Eric Garner.

CHAPTER NINE

OPEN CARRY ... UNLESS YOU'RE BLACK

Before we begin this chapter, we should note that Ohio is an Open Carry State. This means that you can carry your semi-automatic rifle into the Wendy's, the Baskin Robbins, the Piggly-Wiggly. Hell, technically, you can take it into a day care or to church or the gym, if you jump through the right hoops. Granted, if you are not used to this, it is an odd thing to attempt to get accustomed to—the sight of people carrying firearms into seemingly peaceful places of work, play, and worship. But the law is the law. And the Second Amendment is the Second Amendment. [Caution: if you haven't seen them before, and if you have never lived in an open carry book, the images are startling.](#) Or go to Google Images and type in “OPEN CA

You are a young man, just twenty-two years old, looking forward to spending the next day with your girlfriend and her kids. You have plans for a barbecue, to make S'mores. She is off at one end of the Walmart, shopping for uniforms for her job in senior care. You are browsing. While in the sports department, you casually pick up a BB gun, where it is on display for shoppers in an open box. Not behind glass, just available there for anybody's hands-on perusal.

You carry it with you, down at your side, while you browse. You are carrying it openly, just as literally thousands of Ohioans do every day. You chat casually on the phone as you stroll the aisles from the sporting section to the pet section.

And then the cops come in and shoot you dead.

It was a killing that electrified the nation—at least, it electrified that portion of the populus which believes that black lives do matter. The date was August 5th, 2015. A young man, just twenty-two years old, was roaming the aisles of the Beavercreek, Ohio Walmart, waiting on his girlfriend who was shopping in another part of the store. He made the mistake of carrying the gun that he was interested in from the sporting goods department, where he had picked it up, to the next aisle over, where he was browsing in the pet section. A witness saw this, completely misinterpreted Crawford's casual carrying of the gun, and called the police, who then rushed in and shot John Crawford dead. One murder, seven points of view. And it involved quite a cast, each with their own version: the 911 caller, an innocent bystander, the “eye in the sky”, two police officers, a girlfriend, and the victim. A sort of “Rashomon” effect, if you will. There is only one point of

view we cannot share here. Only one version of this horrible reality which we can never know. And that, of course, would be the words of the dead. The Victim.

THE RONALD RITCHIE 911 CALL

The double tragedy which occurred on the night of August 5th, 2014 began with the now famous 911 call from a smirking little liar by the name of Ronald Ritchie. It should be noted that Ronald Ritchie likes to lie, to serve his own ends and inflate his own sense of self-importance. After being dubbed “a hero” and “brave” by investigators, Ritchie repeatedly lied that he was an x-Marine. As the daughter of an Air Force Colonel who is buried in Arlington Cemetery, your humble author does not like people lying about military service. Ritchie was never a Marine. As soon as he enlisted, he was almost immediately thrown out because he lied about medical issues. So we know that Ritchie is a practiced liar.

His lies, exaggerations, and big-manisms would result in two deaths on that humid August night. Here is a breakdown of the 911 call he placed; please watch the YouTube link below. (Should this particular link be broken, the footage of the Crawford shooting, synced with Ritchie’s 911 call, is Youtubiquitous. My invented word for the day.)

On the video, you will see a clock marking the time; in the transcripts below, the first time notation that you will see is the actual time on the Walmart Security Video: the incident began about twenty minutes after eight in the evening. The second number, the “smaller” minutes, refers to where you can find the dialogue in the YouTube video itself. I highly recommend that you watch the dangerous, malicious 911 call and the accompanying footage.

<http://www.youtube.com>

8:21:45 /// 13 seconds into the linked YouTube video: Dialing the phone, phone ringing.

DISPATCHER: Beavercreek 911, where is your emergency?

RONALD RITCHIE: I’m at the uh, Beavercreek Walmart. There’s a, uh, gentleman walking around with a gun in the store.

DISPATCHER: Has he got it pulled out?

RITCHIE: Yeah, he’s, like, pointing it at people

(THIS IS ONE OF RITCHIE’S FATAL LIES: YOU WILL SEE THAT HE IS ABSOLUTELY NOT POINTING IT AT PEOPLE. NOBODY IS EVEN NEAR HIM.)

There is then some identifying conversation, where Ritchie gives his own name, and proceeds to describe the suspect. The next lie comes at 8:22:33

RITCHIE: "He's like loading it right now ... looks like he's just trying to load it."

If Ritchie has the vast military experience with firearms that he claims to have, he should be asking himself this: why would a man with a plot to shoot crowds of people in a Walmart come into the store without having already loaded his gun? Has anybody ever planned and perpetrated a shooting, and then waited until they were actually on site to load the gun? Never, I suspect. This should have signaled to Ritchie that Crawford was not here for ill purposes, rather that he was just a guy who didn't apparently know much about guns fiddling around with one, trying to familiarize himself with it

8:23:2 RITCHIE ...It looks like he's aiming the thing ...I don't know what he's trying to do, he's, like, pointing at things...

8:24:17. DISPATCHER: Sir, what's going on now?

RITCHIE: I don't know, he's just looking around, waving it, waving it back and forth.

(And now, the lie that gets John Crawford killed: Walmart: 8:25:40 /// YouTube 3:56)

RITCHIE: He just, like, pointed it at two children.

This is a complete and utter fabrication. If you are watching the video, you see that John Crawford is doing no such thing. You now see the police enter the scene.

And at 8:26:56, John Crawford III is gunned down.

The next day, Ronald Ritchie was interviewed by the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation. Although it is evident throughout the hour long interview that Ritchie is beginning to squirm, awkwardly aware that his story doesn't match up with the Walmart security video, Ritchie nonetheless continues to lie, and condemn the character of John Crawford. Here are some selected transcripts of the Ohio BCI investigator interviewing Ritchie. As early as one minute and eleven seconds in, we hear the investigator say something shocking:

DETECTIVE (reference to an innocent person having a heart attack in the other part of the store.) That was probably the most tragic part of the situation. The other guy deserved it.

RITCHIE: No kidding!

The "other guy" is a reference to John Crawford. Already, the idiocy, apathy, and bigotry spews. This interview took place the day after the shooting. By this time the cops clearly knew that Crawford was holding an empty air rifle that he had just taken out of a box at Walmart. And the

best the detective can come up with is that ***“The other guy deserved it.”*** What we should be seeing is a mad scramble on the part of the police to explain how they were going to explain to the public that they had ignored protocol, and that their choice ended in John Crawford’s death.

Six minutes into the interview, Ronald Ritchie invokes what can only be called a double standard, a deadly hypocrisy. Even though Ronald Ritchie is himself a gun hobbyist, and knows that Ohio is an Open Carry state—and more importantly, even though anyone watching John Crawford can see that he is casual, non-threatening, and engaged in a phone conversation—nonetheless, Ritchie makes a great deal of it.

6:10 RITCHIE: It’s for sure that he has a gun in his hand, broad daylight... so I immediately get on the phone with 911, getting officers there.”

(Note how unlike the Tamir Rice 911 call this call is. In the Tamir Rice call, the caller made certain to reiterate several times that Tamir was probably a youth and that the gun was probably a fake. Not that it did Tamir much good. But at least one cannot blame that 911 caller for ratcheting up the hysteria.)

Just a minute later, Ronald Ritchie, who is so aghast at Crawford carrying a gun in an Open Carry state, brags about his collection and its many uses:

7:50—DETECTIVE: You’re familiar with AR15s?

RITCHIE: I have three of ‘em

DETECTIVE: I won’t ask you why you need three right now.

RITCHIE: Long range close quarters. Have a good time! (laughs wickedly) Hee hee hee!

If Mr. Ritchie is as familiar with firearms as he brags to be, he not only knows that Ohio is an Open Carry state, but this should be quite a familiar sight to him—a man carrying a gun “in broad daylight.” I’m guessing that Ritchie’s problem is that the kid is black. Had the man Ritchie spotted in the Walmart looked just like him—a white man, wearing his plaid pajama bottoms in the store along with tattoos and a skull shirt—then I’m guessing that Ronald Ritchie would have had no problem with him.

8:35 RITCHIE: I hear what I can recall is click loading, just clicking clicking, clicking, and what looks like he’s cocked the weapon, so at this point it’s getting a little serious, and he’s just pointing it back and forth, just strolling it, at one point there’s a family that goes across with two young children, I’d say about five years old, and he muzzle checked both of them, and that kind of concerned me right there.

Again, all of this is an outright lie. Crawford never held the gun with both hands, and he never pointed it. The video contains the truth.

DETECTIVE: Where are you at when, uhm, you're making the call? Where are you hiding out?

RITCHIE: We actually moved up closer to him, which I know is kind of retarded but we was probably halfway up the aisle.

This dings his credibility: Ronald, what, you think he's a dangerous crazed gunman, but you allow your wife to move closer, along with you moving closer?

RITCHIE: You're dumb enough to point any kind of weapon at a police officer, you get what's coming to you. Like I said, I'm x-military, I'd a done the same action the police officer done."

12:58. At this point, when Ritchie can see that the surveillance footage clearly proves him a liar, he backpedals on the idea that John Crawford was aiming his gun at people.

And then, finally, as if to solidify his legacy as a heartless bastard, he references seeing Crawford's girlfriend in the parking lot, after the shooting:

16:56 DETECTIVE: Did he look like he was with anybody?

RITCHIE: I don't know, we got outside and there was that woman that was trying to find her boyfriend ... it was weird though, cause she said that exact description he had ... I'm like eh, he ha! He's probably dead now! Tough shit!

And then, later:

33:40 (as they watch Crawford, shot and struggling)

Detective: You don't feel as bad now; do you?

Ritchie: No he he he he he he!

Dear Ronald Ritchie: You can now go on with your life. Even though a variety of charges could be levelled against you—you lied, and those lies led to a human being's death ... and a young man was murdered in cold blood, because of a call you made. You can go on with your life, have children, enjoy the world with them. John Crawford can do none of those things any more. And you have robbed his family of the love and privilege of growing up with their son, brother, father. Shame on you. John Crawford's blood is on your hands.

AND NOW, A LITTLE BACKGROUND:

KILLINGS IN BEAVERCREEK

Beavercreek, Ohio is a friendly, comfortably sized little burg, neither too small to provide the amenities of life, nor so large as to seem impersonal. At about 45,000 people, it is either a largish small town or a tiny city. Not surprisingly, it doesn't have much of a crime problem. There have only been five killings there since the year 2000, in the last decade and a half. That's pretty good.

What is very bad is that almost half of them—well, 40% of those deaths—are by the same hand. You guessed it. Officer Sean Williams. You see, there have been three murders outside the hands of the police department, and two deaths-by-cop in those fifteen years. Both bullets came from Williams' gun. And the shootings took place just four years apart. Are you starting to get a bad feeling about this? Let's take a closer look at Sean's first killing:

The call comes in. A domestic violence dispute. Officer Sean Williams and his partner respond to the call. When they get to the scene of the fight, an apartment building, they hurry up the steps and knock on the door of the apartment where the incident is reported to have happened. The wife has left. The seventeen year old son, Christian, is still there with his father, Air Force Master Sergeant Scott A. Brogli, but Officer Williams hustles the boy out the door. Christian crouches just outside of the apartment, listening.

According to Williams and his partner, Brogli was sprawled on the ground, drunk; he would turn out to be very, very drunk, his blood alcohol level at twice the legal limit.

As the drunk staggers to feet, according to Williams, he grabs a knife, so Williams fires with intent to kill. And kill Brogli he does.

Now, Williams will tell you that he feared for his life, and normally, I don't like to go around questioning the words or intentions of police officers. But for me, like for so many Americans, it is increasingly hard to believe the words of some cops. Particularly as this is becoming a mantra with cops who find themselves in the middle of a thorny investigation. Williams, for me, is one of these cops.

The Beavercreek Police Chief was disturbingly cryptic about the entire drama. According to the Springfield News-Sun, June 28th, 2010, ***“The chief would not divulge ... from what range the shot was fired, where Brogli was shot or whose blood was spilled on steps heading down to the parking lot.”***

Let's look at it through an objective filter. A big fat man is terribly inebriated. Lying prone on the floor. (A disgusting sight, I'll grant you, but if we murdered everybody who got drunk and used poor judgment, we'd have to gun down millions of people right now.) So, he's nearly passed out,

stinking drunk. And the only way that Officer Williams can diffuse the situation is to shoot him dead? What about Tasers? Pepper Spray? Shooting to disable? Williams said he felt that his life and the life of his partner were in danger. But that's also what he said four years later about a young guy in a Walmart who was holding a store BB gun with one hand, barrel to the floor, while he meandered through the pet section and chatted on the phone. This man, too, needed to be gunned down because there was no other way to stop him? Stop him from what? Browsing the bowls of goldfish?

SERGEANT DAVID DARKOW

I am pulling no punches. Let's get this clear from the outset. Both officers lie about what John Crawford was doing when they encountered him. Both of them make no acknowledgement of the fact that John Crawford was talking on his cellphone the entire time. This is ridiculous, because everybody, and I mean everybody, can clearly see that John Crawford is, in fact, casually talking on his cellphone the entire time. The Walmart eye-in-the-sky can see it. The store witnesses had observed it. The person to whom he is talking to can prove it, from the time stamp on their cell phone records. Even the fetid Sack-O-Sh*t Ronald Richie, who lied about almost everything, including his Marine Corps service, noted that Crawford was talking on the phone. But the cops did not acknowledge this. Why? Because it would have dirtied their kill. So synchronous are their statements, it seems as if they must have rehearsed it afterwards. It is no surprise to learn, then, that the two were together for a prolonged time after the incident—an egregious violation of police procedure, as it creates an opportunity for collusion. And of course, I suspect that they both relied on the advice of their lawyers, instead of their memories and their honor, to tell them what to say in their official statements.

Let us begin with the statement not of the shooter, but of the second officer at the incident, Sergeant David Darkow. Below we will pull excerpts from both his official statement to the public, and from his interview with the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigations.

Sergeant Darkow's first lie:

At 00:43 DARKOW: *There was reports coming from dispatch that a male that was armed was in the back, near the pet food aisles, and he was in the corner. As I was responding, dispatch kept us updated from callers who were calling in, saying that they believed he was armed with some sort of rifle, that he was, uhm, either waving it or pointing it at people ... (underlined emphasis added)*

Correction. Not "callers". Not "reports". No "they". Not plural.

“Caller.” “Report.” “He.” Singular. (AKA, Ronald Ritchie, the lying Dirtbag.)

And you might call Darkow’s failure to make this distinction, his lack of concern for accuracy, to be a fatal error. There were not multiple people calling in, there was just one lone person calling in, making allegations. And the fact that, in a crowded store, only one single person called about an allegedly creepy crazed person waving a gun and pointing it at children should have told the cops something significant; it should have been a major mitigating factor in the situation. Doesn’t that mean something? There is only one concerned person in the entire vast and bustling Walmart store? Only one opinion, one perspective, one point of view?

Even Officer Darkow himself, upon entering the store, comments on a complete lack of drama or hysteria, given the hyperbole expressed in Ronald Ritchie’s inflammatory call: (Interview, 2:29) *“We entered there, and it appeared business as usual and it seems as though nobody really knew that anything was going on. The greeter, I remember that the greeter was still there, saw us, gave us a shocked look. I was telling people as we went by, and they saw us carrying our rifles, I was telling them to seek cover and get out...so I was yelling at people, and we both made our way back...”*

Furthermore, during their official interviews, Officers Darkow and Williams will both point out that the Walmart greeters seemed completely unaware of this “danger”. The Walmart clerks were all completely unaware of this “danger”. Perhaps most importantly, the shopping population was calm. In an open carry state, entering a store that sells guns, this should have tipped the cops off that maybe this was not the danger that the one, lone, single caller had made it out to be.

And now, we move on to the two officers’ encounter with the doomed John Crawford. Below, find excerpts from both the shorter statement by Darkow released to the general public, as well as from the longer, two hour interview that was conducted by the State of Ohio, as a part of their criminal investigation.

STATEMENT AT 3:28 DARKOW: *...I saw a black male, looked like he had dreadlocks. He was standing in the corner of the store. He had the rifle, it was a black AR style rifle, I believe. He was holding it in what we would call kind a low rider type position. He was, I don’t know what he was trying to do with the rifle, but he was looking down with it. He had his left hand on the stock portion and then he was messing with the rifle with his right but I couldn’t—he was turned in such a way I couldn’t see what he was doing with the rifle.*

INTERVIEW AT 15:14 (Interview) *And I see a male that fits the description ... he has a rifle that looks very similar to what I know to be an AR 15 assault weapon he also has it in what I would refer to as a low-ready type position where his left hand is on the fore grip of the rifle and his right hand is near the action portion of the rifle ... And he was more or less facing us at this point ... I started giving him verbal commands to drop the gun...it was either drop the gun or drop the*

weapon but I was very loud and very clear. ... I'm focused in on the suspect, I'm giving commands, I remember Sean also yelling commands...I yelled at one point for him to get on the ground...And I remember despite our repeated attempts to tell him to put the gun down and get on the ground, he didn't...At that point, despite our repeated attempts to tell him to put the gun down and get on the ground, he started moving.

This statement is so full of lies that I do not know where to start. Poor John Crawford had one hand on a cellphone which was planted in his ear. And, not to put too fine a point on it, but it happened to be a black male with black hair holding a white phone; other witnesses to the incident confirmed how apparent this was. The cell phone was easily visible from the Walmart eye-in-the-sky, and the officers were closer than that vantage point to Crawford. Yet Darkow chooses to “remember” that Crawford supposedly had both hands on the gun in a low-rider type position. Darkow claims that Crawford had both hands on the gun. I ask you to think about it, as a person who has shopped at Walmart. It is clear from the footage of the incident that John Crawford is talking on the phone, and more importantly, that he is only about 20-25 feet away from the police when he is talking on said phone. Now, if you are a police officer, and you cannot tell, from a distance of 20-25 feet, whether somebody is holding a rifle with both hands and ready to shoot, or talking on a cell phone while holding the gun with one hand, with the barrel pointed at the ground, then you need not to be a cope any more. And yes, I have respectfully considered the objections that police have to “Monday morning quarterbacking”—perhaps, you say, Darkow wasn't lying, he just didn't see it accurately, or remember it right: to that I reply, if you can't pause before shooting long enough to see that the suspect is not in fact pointing a gun, but talking on a cellphone—a black man with black hair holding a stark white cellphone to his ear—thereby rendering the “suspect” far less dangerous—then you are shooting far too quickly. You are trigger happy. You shouldn't be in law enforcement. Oh, and forensic analysts are curious to know that if he was facing you at this point, why did you bullets penetrate him from the side?

There is also the damning matter of the fact that they didn't give John Crawford any time at all to respond to their alleged commands. Although Darkow's interview with the Ohio investigator is over two hours long,, it is worth watching to the bitter end. It is only during about the last fifteen minutes that the very understated investigator gives Darkow an opportunity to actually watch the security footage recorded by the Walmart eye-in-the-why, and it is vaguely gratifying to watch Darkow squirm uncomfortably at being force to watch the truth: that he and Williams did not repeatedly order or plead with John Crawford to drop the gun, and they certainly did not wait for him to comply. They did not even allow a couple of seconds. The interview that Darkow must undergo with the Ohio state investigator is available online; if one forwards it to the end, nearly the completion of the second hour, you can see Darkow subtly backpedaling and scrambling to explain the fact that how he says the killing happened bears no resemblance to what really

happened, or how quickly it actually came down. Here are Darkow's thoughts, as he watches the actual security video from the Walmart eye-in-the-sky.

DARKOW) (1:53:50) He does a lot of waving of the gun while he is apparently on the phone. The only thing I can tell you is when I came around the corner, I never saw any phone in his hand. He appeared to me to be holding the gun, and I thought he had his right hand near the action part of the gun when I saw him. So I don't know, uhm...

INVESTIGATOR: Clearly his body was turned, when you first saw him. He was turned facing this aisle, this way, your vantage point is this way, so you're not getting a clear picture of what's going on with the other arm... so whether he's on the phone this way, you're looking at a hot response, your eyes are going to focus necessarily on the weapon, so it's not entirely as you recall., you thought he might have both hands on the weapon?

DARKOW: I know the right hand, I couldn't see what he was doing with it. I know the left hand was on the gun, I remember that distinctly. The right hand, I couldn't—it happened very quickly. I couldn't see what his right hand was doing.

INVESTIGATOR (155:45) When did you realize a phone was involved? Did you ever—?

DARKOW: No ... I don't know what this right hand was doing. I recall his right hand seeming like he was messing with a rifle of some kind...it appears as if he had a phone in his right hand, based on the video, but I can tell you as we rounded the corner it looked like he was messing with the rifle, it look like he was doing something with his right hand. But I couldn't see as well as I could his left hand.

Lastly, as a part of the standard interviewing protocol, Darkow is asked point blank why he felt a need to fire his weapon. This is standard operating procedure, and it is glaringly apparent that Darkow has rehearsed this speech well, with all the legal and criminal ramifications having been considered and addressed. (Certainly, one does not begrudge an officer the right to make a statement that he feels will defend his actions. But the problem in the case of officers Williams and Darkow is that they are forced to stick to their lies.) Let's look at Darkow's statement. And then, I will offer my annotated version of Darkow's statement.

INTERVIEW AT 12:20 DARKOW: ... Because we had a suspect who I felt posed a serious threat of serious physical harm or death, to ourselves and everyone else in Walmart, by having in his control or possessing a deadly firearms, or what we believed could be a deadly firearm, AR style rifle , we had dispatch tell us one person thought he was loading it, so we possibly had a suspect with an AR style rifle, who was not obeying our commands to put it down, who was not obeying out commands to get down on the ground, and was startled by our presence and was trying to either take come kind of position of advantage or cover, or was trying to get out of our line of sight or line of fire so that he could do whatever his plan was to do. But I knew one thing and

that was there was no way we could allow him to be uncontained in that area and get out into this very populated store with a rifle.

INTERVIEW AT 12:20 DARKOW: ... Because we had a suspect who I felt posed a serious threat of serious physical harm or death, (No, Donny Darkow, you just had a young man carrying a gun, holding it with only one hand, in an open carry state) ...to ourselves and everyone else in Walmart, by having in his control or possessing a deadly firearms, or what we believed could be a deadly firearm, an AR style rifle, (yes, a gun that he had just picked up from the gun section of a store that sells guns, something which you admitted to being well aware of.) we had dispatch tell us one person thought he was loading it, so we possibly had a suspect with an AR style rifle (yes, you had one person, out of a Walmart full of dozens, maybe hundreds of shoppers, along with greeters, clerks, managers, and store security, all of whom, except for Ronald Ritchie, were calm, going about their business, and seeing no reason to call 911. The fact that this was not a red flag for you is appalling, and calls your judgement into serious down.) ...who was not obeying our commands to put it down, who was not obeying our commands to get down on the ground, (because you gave him absolutely no time to, you trigger crazy Nazi) and was startled by our presence (what normal person wouldn't be startled by the presence of a mini-Swat team in Walmart, you Storm Trooper) and was trying to either take some kind of position of advantage or cover, or was trying to get out of our line of sight or line of fire (that's the normal, human reaction to being shot at, Donny Darkow), or that he could do whatever his plan was to do. (like maybe, live another day?) But I knew one thing and that was there was no way we could allow him to be uncontained in that area and get out into this very populated store with a rifle. (Because he is a threat. But you, you're not threat to civilizations. Just a Storm Trooper doing his job...Watch the video. Judge for yourself.)

Last but not least, while it may seem a bit anti-climactic, it is worth noting that Officer Darkow and Officer Williams broke protocol by going together to the hospital, giving them a chance to coordinate their statements. This may seem harsh, but they again violated procedure:

16:55 "I ended up going in the medic with Sean, though and having to leave my vehicle, I mean, I secured my vehicle

INVESTIGATOR: Why'd you ride the medic, just curious? For yourself, or for Sean?

DARKOW: For Sean. And I think I told (person's name, unclear), 'Hey I'm leaving my car here, I'm not gonna have a car', I'm riding in the medic with Sean, so he knew...

So not only did Darkow violate protocol, but he told someone his plans and that person allowed him to violate protocol. He should have been ordered to separate himself from Williams. Yes, the impulse to protect your partner is touching but firstly: Darkow and Williams were not partners. It was Kismet that threw them together on this shooting. And secondly: Williams was not in some

kind of pain or experience a mortal wound. He had not been shot, he was not wounded, he was just going to a standard protocol check-up—blood pressure, etc., because he had just been involved with an officer involved shooting. And since Williams had actually done this kind of thing before—killed a man while on duty, because “he feared for his life,” he was something of an old hand at this. To put it baldly, this was not his first time to the rodeo. And yes, it would have been excellent protocol to put Williams with someone who could help him through the aftermath of an officer involved shooting—a senior officer or a counselor—but not another cop who had also been both witness and shooter. Procedure was grossly violated. That time together in the ambulance gave Darkow and Williams time to get their stories synched. Again, they should have been separated.

Guess who thinks that this was a lousy idea? None less than Police Chief Magazine. Not protestors, not Negroes, not hippies, no scofflaws. The most important and powerful police sorts that there are. Police Chief Magazine, understanding that people should not be colluding on make statements that jive, makes clear that when officers are involved in a shooting, they need to be immediately separated.

“After the scene is stabilized and medical attention is rendered to the injured, it is necessary to thoroughly investigate the facts to determine whether charges should be placed. Each potential witness, including each officer and civilian, must be separated from all others before questioning begins. It is important to explain to the officers that the reason they, too, must be separated during questioning is to avoid an attorney challenge on this issue in the criminal or civil case. Studies have shown that when several officer witnesses get together, their team recollection is better than individual recall, but this strategy also subjects their testimony to additional scrutiny and allegations of collusion.”

The Police Chief Magazine, May 2015, Handling Officer Involved Shootings, by Drew J. Tracey, Assistant Chief, Investigative Service Bureau, Montgomery County, Maryland, Police Department. The International Association of Chiefs of Police mentions the same procedure, urging that officers involved in a shooting be given council in the form of a trusted peer, trained support staff, or even spiritual counsel, but specifically refers to said officer as “separated from others pending investigative procedures” . 45:53 again the shooting

At about 45:36 Darkow admits he didn’t even admit to saying POLICE, identifying themselves.

51:28 *At one point, I told him to get on the ground. Now whether that was as the shots were going off or before the shots were going off I do remember saying that...*

INTERVIEWER: Did the suspect immediately comply with your demands.

DARKOW: he didn’t comply with anything.

OFFICER SEAN WILLIAMS

Officer Sean Williams snuffed out the life of an innocent person literally in the blink of an eye. Citing the following excerpts of Williams's account of what happened, we will see how he both lied, and behaved in a manner so egregiously incompetent and aggressive that it cost two people their lives. This is a long chapter, and it is a complicated killing. But, as reprehensible as the infamous Ronald Ritchie 911 call may be, with all its lies and hyperbole, at the heart of this tragedy is a matter is a simple truth: the officers involved did not begin to give John Crawford any time to react to their commands.

By sheer coincidence, Williams happened to be in the Walmart parking lot, finishing some paperwork, when the call came in. From the first few seconds that Officer Williams got the alert, he bungled the entire crisis, seemingly on purpose:

2:05 (shorter statement?) OFFICER WILLIAMS: *As I was waiting for the second officer, I confirmed with dispatch, 'cause dispatch said at one point that he was pointing the gun at people, so I got on the radio just to confirm, because Walmart does have guns and they sell guns, you know, it could just be a person who just bought a gun, walking around the store. I confirmed with dispatch, I asked them, I said, I asked if the subject was pointing the gun at people, and they confirmed. They said yes.*

This comment from Williams makes sense at first glance, but it does not hold up under closer scrutiny. Yes, it would seem to be a good thing that Williams' thinks about that fact that Walmart sells guns and that there might be an innocent explanation for why someone who is carrying a gun around the store. But then he drops the ball, and it costs young John Crawford his life.

Three grave mistakes made by Williams thus far:

1.) 911 dispatch cannot actually see what is going on. They have to take the word of a person calling in to 911, and every study ever conducted has proved that witnesses can be wildly inaccurate in their observations. Officer Williams should know this, and should already be taking that into consideration. Which leads me to my second point.

2.) During the incident, nobody in the chain of command at the fatally incompetent Beavercreek Police Department comments on the fact, or makes much of the fact, that in a crowded Walmart, in eight minutes, from the time John picks up the gun from the sporting section, to the time he is killed, only ONE SINGLE PERSON is alarmed enough to telephone the police. In an era of universal cellphone ownership, when a dog on a median strip or a kid wielding a soaker generates a firestorm of 911 calls, one finds it difficult to believe that John Crawford was behaving in a manner that was the least bit threatening, for nobody but one lone

man—established after the fact as a chronic liar—took notice of him and felt threatened. As common sense dictates, and as analysts have pointed out, if a black man were moving through a Walmart, waving a gun, loading it, cocking it, and pointing it at children, the 911 dispatcher would have been besieged by frantic calls from cellphones all over the store. But nobody in the store even gives an employee or a manager a heads up, much less calls 911. Why was this not a big, fat flapping red flag, a flag that should have caused the Beavercreek Police to take Ritchie's call with a massive grain of salt? (It is worth noting that when Darkow and Williams actually did enter the Walmart, they commented in their debriefing that nobody seemed alarmed: the oblivious greeter was happily greeting, the clerks clerking, the customers shopping ...)

3.) By far the most important point: the fact the Williams knows Walmart sells guns should have given him the idea for a strategy that not only might have saved Crawford's life, but in fact would have provided Officer Williams with the only safe way of neutralizing the threat that Williams supposedly represented: why didn't Officer Williams, as soon as he got the alert, then call Walmart Security and insist that they immediately put their eyes-in-the-sky in the pet section? Then, Officer Williams could have immediately learned what everybody who has watched the video now knows: that for a full six minutes (and in the separate video that shows Crawford picking up the gun from its open box and ambling out of Sporting Goods), poor John was doing nothing but "meandering" (to use the 911 caller's own casual descriptor) down the aisles and browsing, with the gun almost always pointed directly to the ground and never raised in a threatening manner, with Crawford not looking for people, not the least bit interested in anybody else in the Walmart. Completely non-threatening. John never even put both hands on the gun; he was yakking on the phone the entire time.

If a man is wielding a gun, the first thing an officer should want to know is the arrangement of innocent civilians around the person with the gun. Are there lots of customers around him? Children? People who could be taken hostage? People who could be accidentally shot by police? People who could be wounded or killed by ricocheting bullets? The only way to get a sense of that in a place like Walmart is to immediately have security inform the officer of conditions via the eye-in-the-sky. But Officer Williams showed no interest in that, in understanding what he was walking into. His behavior upon approaching the suspect will prove that.

There are those who have argued that in a case like this—shooter in a public place—such steps would not be feasible. Fair enough. But that still means that in order to classify Crawford as a "shooter", the fact that this could simply be a case of "Open Carry" has been disregarded, as well as ignoring the fact that there is only one 911 call in a store crowded full of shoppers. Lastly, even if a look by Walmart security at the "eye in the sky" would have been unfeasible, it would have taken about two minutes for Williams to call a manager and ask him to check if there was a gun missing from open display. The only kind of gun that a shopper could have casually picked

up would have been a relatively harmless pellet gun, or something like it. And this, in turn, would have saved a man's life.

Now let's take a look at Williams's statement about the actual shooting: 13:30-17:00

5:04 OFFICER WILLIAMS: *"I heard him (Darkow) say drop the weapon ... And as he said that I just panned down the aisle. I saw a black male and I saw a rifle in grasp. Uhm. The male would not drop the rifle, uhm, it looked like a typical assault rifle in hand. Uhm, like I say he didn't drop the rifle, Darkow said it again, to drop the rifle, and at that point he made...he was looking right at us. So he didn't drop the rifle after Darkow repeatedly told him to drop it ...He had the rifle within his body and he made what I can only describe as, like, an aggressive stance with it as he was starting to make like a movement, like, to the right or left, like he was going to do something with the rifle.*

Just as in the case of the Darkow statement/interview, here we have Officer Williams, lying. Either that, or at twenty feet, a man on a cell phone looks to him exactly like a man preparing to shoot a rifle. We have already belabored the fact that anyone could see that Crawford was not in an aggressive posture, ready to fire his weapon. Just as we stated in the chapter about Trayvon Martin that nobody, ever, in the history of attacking people, has jumped out of the bushes to ambush at the same moment that they are sweet talking their girlfriend on the phone—which was the case, according to the time stamps—similarly, it seems preposterous to say that Crawford would be idly talking on the phone at the same instant that he is getting ready to attack innocent shoppers in a Walmart.

Officer Williams knew he had plenty of time to either order Crawford to drop the gun. Keep in mind, this is an Open Carry state, meaning there is nothing illegal about what Crawford is doing; there is not even anything startling or surprising in what Crawford is doing, not if you come from Ohio and hang out in Ohio. Officer Williams even mentioned repeatedly that he was used to seeing men carrying guns, especially in stores where guns were displayed, purchased, returned, handled. But then again maybe, just maybe, it's different in this cop's mind when it's a black man carrying the weapon. Maybe Williams is only accustomed to seeing white people carrying weapons while invoking Open Carry laws. Maybe the historically trigger happy Officer Williams just doesn't like the idea of a nigger toting a gun through a Walmart.

Just as we saw with Officer Darkow, the interview with the State of Ohio investigator grows awkward when Williams is confronted with an obvious procedural omission"

INVESTIGATOR (30:04): Sean, do you recall either of you identifying yourselves as police, at any point during that response?

WILLIAMS: I don't recall that being said.

(Think about that for a moment. It is a crowded Walmart, and like all Walmarts, there is chatter, bustle, maybe the occasional raised voice—I often hear raised voices towards unruly children at our Walmart—but these police do not even identify themselves. It is their expectation that John Crawford will look up

INVESTIGATOR: Are you basing that on—is that something you would normally do?

WILLIAMS: It depends on the speed of what's going on. When we reached the end, you're talking about the final—

INVESTIGATOR: —When you confronted him.

WILLIAMS: When we confronted the suspect, my sergeant was already giving commands to him, and that's what drew my attention to him. He was giving commands, and I didn't really have time to say anything myself to him, before I shot him.

INVESTIGATOR: Stick on that for a minute ... Do you recall, if we're up to the point where we're at the subject, do you recall Darkow saying, "Drop your weapon, drop your weapon." Did you say something further to the subject?

WILLIAMS: I did not.

Then there is the even greater lie than the matter of the cell phone. There is the lie that is the matter of police communication with Crawford, and any effort they might have made to talk to the “perp”. Putting it quite simply, they shouted for him to drop his weapon, and then immediately opened fire upon him, without giving him a chance to comply. Science has long known that the human brain cannot process more than about six syllables per second—and that is if the listener is attuned to the message. So if the officers were both shouting at John to **“Drop your Weapon”**, it would have taken John at least a second to understand the meaning of the words—but keep in mind, in a crowded and noisy Walmart, where John didn't think he was doing anything wrong, and where he was talking on the phone, it might easily have taken him a few seconds to even realize that the words were directed at him. The witnesses disagreed with the cops' version of what happened; they were in accord that the orders were given and shots were fired at virtually the same time: forensic analysis of the shooting specifically breaks it down that a mere .36 seconds passed in between the shouting of the orders to drop the gun, and the firing of the shots that killed John.

And still the lies about: the officers testified that John Crawford was turning towards them in a threatening way. Not true. The dead body tells the truth. Forensics pathologists all over the world—the world watches us, in these matters—were quick to ask, if he was facing you as a threat, pointing and staring and confronting, that why did the bullet enter his side, which could only happen if he was turned away from you? And, of course, the camera tells a different story.

We can see the last seconds of his life in film, and they show that John Crawford was clearly not being an aggressor towards the officers.

Experts have analyzed the videotapes (and any layperson can as well), and have determined that Crawford was given **one third of a second** to comply. If you do a frame by frame breakdown of the shooting video, it could (could) be just under three seconds that John Crawford was given to react. The reason for the disparity—and a tiny one, by the way, is because we don't have audio from the eye-in-the-sky, and it is impossible to synch the order to “put it down” (head on the other end of the phone Crawford was talking into) with the actions on the surveillance video. But it is certainly under three seconds, for that is when the police come into the frame, the first occasion when they could have spotted John to yell a command.

Now given what we know about the human brain, (whether you as Harvard Medical School, the magazine Scientific American, or the Society for Neuroscience, they will all tell you that six syllables per second is about all the human mind can comprehend. So, if Crawford hears PUT IT DOWN PUI IT DOWN three times, it means he needs a second or two first, understand what was being said. And that assumes that he knows that it is HE who is being addressed in a loud and crowded place, from people an aisle away. And that assumes he knows what “It”- of course he could figure it out. But he literally needs a second or two. Then another second or two to comply.

In addition to which, the person he was talking to on the other end of the phone testified that she heard John say frantically “It isn't real”—a logical reaction and an attempt to diffuse the situation. Was John Crawford refusing to drop his weapon? Of course not. I am sure, given the gravity of the situation, if the officers had allowed John a few more seconds, of course he would have dropped it. John Crawford wasn't given a chance. Again I say, watch the vide

14:05 OFFICER WILLIAMS: *“He made—I've been trying to find words to describe this for the last few days—uhm, he did to drop the weapon, he made a movement that I interpreted as aggressive, as he was moving with the rifle but not dropping it, I felt at that time he had a rifle and a position where he could have raised it up and shot either me or Sergeant Darkow.”*

At 1:08 Williams lies outright, (FBI profiler 101, hands over mouth, locked feet, rubbing legs)

OFFICER WILLIAMS: When he dropped, I could see he was bleeding...I tell him to roll over onto his belly and put his hands behind his back. Uhm, he was kinda squirming and yelling and screaming, stuff that I couldn't understand. He wasn't immediately cooperative as far as putting his hands behind his back. I had to get on top of him and kind of hold his hands together to cuff him. When I cuffed him I could see he had a very serious injury to one of his elbows and he had another wound to his other arm”

This tells us something all too creepy about Williams. Setting aside for a moment the fact that they shot first, asked questions later...Williams admits that he can see how badly Crawford's arms and elbows are wounded—yet he brutalizes Crawford further when Crawford fails to immediately “comply” by putting his hands behind his back. But Williams is not so heartless than he fails to offer cheerful words of encouragement after he has shot Crawford, then yanked his body around cuffing the poor bastard:

WILLIAMS (19:15): He was still making noises and moving, uhm, as we stood over him, so I kept giving him words of encouragement, telling him to stay awake, stay awake, uhm, there were a couple of times where it seemed like he passed out or fell asleep, and I was kind of tapping him on the side of the face, trying to get him to wake up, Wake up wake up wake up, trying to keep him awake and keep him alive.

TASHA'S TRAGEDY

As the tragedy of the shooting of John Crawford was coming to a climax at one end of the Beavercreek Walmart, there was another tragedy amping up just a few departments over. John Crawford's girlfriend, Tasha, had been buying the ingredients for S'mores. She and John were going to have a barbecue for the kids the next day. But as soon as Officer Williams fired his weapon, pandemonium ensued in the Walmart, as police and store security hurried all of the customers out of the store. Tasha was among the people directed out to the parking lot. But after frantic searching, she was the only person not able to find the person she came with. She described him to the police—a black man wearing blue jeans and a black shirt. They immediately recognized the description, and hustled her brusquely into a cruiser without explanation. Later that night, she found herself in a brutal interview with a detective—still knowing nothing whatsoever about the fate of John.

Now, as the author, I am going to do everything I can to see it from the detective's point of view, out of the respect which I hold for police in general, as I have discussed earlier. In the following interview of John Crawford's girlfriend, the detective does a relentless, highly aggressive, brutal job of trying to find out what Tasha knows about that rifle John had in his possession while in the Walmart.

And under different circumstances, I can see how the detective might defend his harsh treatment of Tasha. Up to that point, he might **claim** that he had every reason to believe that John had the rifle with him when he entered the Walmart. And that would have meant that John surely must have had it with him in Tasha's car. And it is impossible to believe that John could have a formidable rifle in the car with him—particularly as Tasha stated that the only bag he was carrying with him was a small white grocery bag—without Tasha being fully aware that he had a

gun. Hence, the detective is thinking, she must have been complicit. Hence, not only must he be ruthless in his approach to finding out what she knows, the detective also probably found himself morally justified in the terror tactics which he employed.

No. No, no, no.

Here is why I cannot justify the detective's vicious and brutal questioning: It is a detective's job to find things out. **To detect.** And therefore, the first thing that he should have attempted to find out, to detect, is where the gun came from. All of the officials on the case have made it clear that that they knew full well that Walmart sold guns, and that in an open carry state like Ohio, seeing a man in a Walmart, in a place that sold guns, is absolutely nothing unusual: <http://www.google.com>

Or, just go to Google Images and type in: OPEN CARRY WALMART

Get an eyeful? These are the kinds of Ammosexuals that get away with dragging their knuckles and their semi-automatics around Sam Walton's pride and joy, but John Crawford gets gunned down?

The detective's first job, before he even walked into the interview, should have been to ask detectives and officers who were still on the scene and who had returned from the scene what they knew about the gun. As I have stated earlier, it is impossible to believe that anybody trained in firearms, including Officers Williams and Darkow, didn't immediately examine the "weapon" by dead John's side and immediately realize that it was not a semi-automatic, but a store BB gun.

By the time the detective has Tasha cornered in the interview, ***over an hour has gone by***, and the entire Beavercreek Police Department must surely be buzzing with the tragic and embarrassing news that they shot a man carrying an empty pellet gun which John picked up while in the Walmart—and all of this in an open carry state, no less. By the time this poor girl is terrorized in the interview, it will have been completely clear to the police, from viewing Walmart's security tapes, that John picked up the BB gun from a box in the sporting goods department, and that poor Tasha had no idea about any of this. For the detective in the interview to be so cruel, accusatory, insensitive, and vicious is absolutely unforgivable.

The detective's relentless questioning goes on for an hour, but this six minute clip is enough to give the reader a sense of what the terrified young woman endured. It is worth noting that in the interview, he threatened her both with jail, and with the possibility of losing her children. A partial transcript is offered below the link.

DETECTIVE CURD: Did he have a weapon?

TASHA: No, not that I know of.

DETECTIVE CURD: Now I want to be very clear, OK, that man's got a weapon, at some point I understand, ok, that man produced that weapon. That man had a weapon when you picked him up, you had it in your car or something. You understand that we're investigating a serious incident? You lie to me, and you might be on your way to jail. So I wanna be very clear about this.

TASHA: I swear to God, I swear to God, on my kids, I have a job, and a family, on everything I love—

DETECTIVE CURD: Where did he get the gun?

TASHA: I don't know, I swear to God, Sir, I swear to God, on everything that I love, you can give me a lie detector test. I swear to God, I swear to God.

DETECTIVE CURD: You lie to me, and you might be on your way to jail .. I wanna be very clear with you that I am not playing games here...I don't know all the details ...you need to tell me the truth...Don't tell me "not that you know of", 'cause that's the first sign that somebody's not telling the truth...this might be your last chance... .And the truth is you knew at some moment that he did carry a gun. Did he ever mention "shoot that bitch" or something like that?...Your statement to me is you didn't know he had a gun, is that what you're telling me?...I'm ,uh, shew!... .Are you under the influence of anything? Have you been drinking? Drugs? See, I know your eyes are a kinda messed up looking, and you seem a bit lethargic at times and I don't know if it's cause you upset or what..."

The tragedy goes on. Detective Curd has made no effort to learn what everybody else involved in the investigation knows by now—that it was a BB gun, owned by Walmart, and that John Crawford casually took it from the display box while he was in the store and chatting on his phone. And nobody involved in this shoddy, incompetent investigation has thought to knock on the door and tell the detective what they have learned. Instead, everybody is OK with a cop terrorizing this poor black girl, who is really just another victim of the Beavercreek PD.

A few months later, Tasha would be dead in a car accident. She was the passenger in a car that was travelling between 90 and 100 miles an hour. If this was just an accident based on the poor driving skills of the person behind the wheel, then it would be tragic enough. However, after years of conducting research into the suspicious and untimely deaths of victims whom powerful people wish to see dead, I find it impossible not to wonder if Tasha was the victim of foul play, of a car cyber-attack.

Yes, I know that sounds terribly far-fetched at first blush. But firstly, Tasha was a loving mother with a good job in senior care, and it would have been wildly out of character for her to allow herself to be in a car driven by someone who would go 100 miles an hour through suburbia in the middle of the afternoon. More importantly, Keep in mind that not only was Tasha responsible for

helping to humiliate Beavercreek police, Tasha's testimony was going to be key, with the power to sway the jury in the wrongful death federal lawsuit filed by John's family against Walmart, the city of Beavercreek, and the Beavercreek Police Department. And far too many witnesses and whistleblowers have suffered suspicious deaths for me, personally, to deny that possibility thus far. According to the Centers for Disease Control, your chances of dying in a car accident are about 1 in 6700. We do not find it odd that witnesses, whistleblowers, and others seen as undesirable by governments, corporations, another powerful entities suddenly beat those longshot odds and become winners in the death lottery?

I realize that the above comments have a very polarizing impact on readers. But I ask you, spend a few minutes watching and reading the information below. It is a strange new world. Remember, in order for someone's car to be cyber hacked and controlled remotely, all that needs to happen is that someone needs to want to cyber hack your car and control it remotely.

<http://www.salon.com/>

<http://www.youtube.com>

<http://www.youtube.com>

<http://fellowshipoftheminds.com>

<http://rt.com/usa/michael-hastings-cyber-car-218/>

<http://www.davidicke.com/forum>

ANGEL ANGELA

Before we leave this sad chapter about a shooting in a Walmart, we must add yet one more death to the list of casualties that came from the gunning down of John Crawford.

Imagine this, if you will ...

You are a mom. You have four beautiful kids. You work as a nurse in a senior care center. You love your job helping people. The seniors love you. What would we do without you, says your staff. Your boss knows you as competent, caring, very hard working, a heart of gold, a free spirit, full of life. You make some small difference for the better in this world. And you know it.

You are also getting ready to be married for the second time. A fresh start, a new day.

You are at Walmart, buying school supplies for the new school year. Your kids, sick of summer, can hardly wait. You have a teenage son in tow, and also shopping with you is your beautiful ten

year old daughter. And, you are buying things for your upcoming nuptials. The kids back in class, and soon, a handsome new husband! Life is glorious.

Today is Tuesday. You are getting married on Saturday. So much to do, so little time.

Much less time, even, than you can possibly imagine.

Shots ring out. In an instinctive maternal panic, you grab your kids and run. You are terrified.

Then you have a heart attack, you fall to the floor of the Walmart, your big heart failing right in front of your children.

And then you are dead.

The coroner ruled her death a homicide, brought about by the chaos which ensued after the SWAT like approach that the police employed, based on one vague and rambling phone call.

Angela Williams left behind four children.

Shame on you, Ronald Ritchie. Shame on you, Beaverton PD.

It didn't need to go down the way that it did. The victims' blood is on your hands.

CHAPTER TEN

FIRESTORM IN FERGUSON

He was at the center of the citizen vs. cop lightning rod incident that turned into a firestorm for the city of Ferguson, Missouri. He was a young man with his whole life ahead of him, but he committed a felony on that now infamous day in August of 2014. And as the press dug into his past, they learned that he had, indeed, come from a troubled home. His mother was a thief and a forger. She committed numerous financial crimes throughout the boy's youth, usually in the form of writing bad checks. She married one of her teachers as soon as she got out of high school, gave birth to a son, and then left her husband for another man. She promptly put that man \$20,000 dollars in debt. Among the items she purchased with the many credit cards that she claimed "someone else had opened in her name": thousands of dollars' worth of candles. Finally, this young man—who it seemed never really had a chance—lost his mother, who died of "natural causes" when he was just sixteen. He fumbled his way through his teen years, but his life was not untroubled. That hot summer day in Ferguson was not the first time he bullied someone, in violation of the law. There is even video evidence of him doing so.

I can guess what some of you might be thinking right about now: sounds pretty typical for a black kid from the 'hood; no surprise that he got gunned down in the street like that. It was a modern day "High Noon" shooting. But. But. I am not talking about Michael Brown. The above paragraph describes Officer Darren Wilson. And while it may seem like a low blow, to paint such a negative picture of an officer in blue, perhaps now those on Darren Wilson's side understand what it feels like to be on the receiving end of this vicious quality that certain people, and certain entities, relentlessly manifest—this persistent obsession with making villains of the victims. To blame the dead for getting dead. Just to be perfectly clear, all those things about Darren Wilson's mother are true. Now, perhaps, the Sean Hannitys of the world can see how cruel it is to taint a person's character by bringing in surrounding stories that have no true bearing on a person's character, or on what ought to happen to him. Again, villainizing the victim. But we know Hannity and his ilk better than that. He must follow the ideological line. Michael Brown must be at fault. Truth be damned.

It is also true that Darren Wilson had a history of using his power as a police officer to bully, such as when he threatened to arrest [a young black man for recording an encounter](#)—even though Wilson knew perfectly well that it is completely within the bounds of the law to film a police encounter from a reasonable distance.

The incident is captured on the PINAC site (photographyisnotacrime.com), in an article entitled “Video Emerges of Ferguson Officer Darren Wilson Arresting Man for Recording as Grand Jury Decision Nears” dated November 17th, 2014:

A video emerged Friday showing Wilson arresting a man for recording him, telling him, **“If you wanna take a picture of me one more time, I’m gonna lock your ass up.”** The man holding the camera, Mike Arman, told Wilson he was recording, not taking photos, which (not surprisingly) got him locked up anyway, after he insisted on asking for Wilson’s name. He was charged with failure to comply charges that were all dropped, according to The Guardian, which stated that the incident took place in 2013. **Do I not have the right to record?”** Arman asks. **“No, you don’t!”** Wilson responds.

END ARTICLE EXCERPT

So Wilson has a history of flouting the law, and being a bully.

As for accusing Darren Wilson of a felony? A shocking charge I know, but I am merely citing facts: Darren Wilson admitted to bagging his own gun after the killing of Michael Brown, and more importantly for definitional purposes, destroying blood evidence. Then, all that is left is a reading of the Missouri Code 575.100. 1.

A person commits the offense of tampering with physical evidence if he or she:

- (1) Alters, destroys, suppresses or conceals any record, document or thing with purpose to impair its verity, legibility or availability in any official proceeding or investigation; or
- (2) Makes, presents or uses any record, document or thing knowing it to be false with the purpose to mislead a public servant who is or may be engaged in any official proceeding or investigation.
- (3) The offense of tampering with physical evidence is a Class A misdemeanor, unless the person impairs or obstructs the prosecution or defense of a felony, in which case tampering with physical evidence is a class E felony.

And, for those of you who say that it is wrong of me to accuse Darren Wilson of committing a felony, allow me to nitpick for a moment: I did not say he was **charged** with the felony of destroying evidence, nor did I say he was **convicted** of the charge. I am simply assuming that Darren wants us to believe him: he admits to bagging his own gun, and he admits to washing off the blood. Given the gravity of what Darren did—committing a homicide—I think his actions could very well be raised to the level of a Class E felony, destroying evidence pertaining to the prosecution of a felony, i.e., the commission of a homicide. And yet here is the great circular

joke: for those who defend Darren Wilson and say he did not commit a felony, I would have to respond reasonably, factually—and yet with circular logic: because the investigation into Brown’s death was botched at so many levels, and because Darren Wilson chose to destroy evidence, we will never know whether or not Darren Wilson committed a felony homicide.

Welcome to Kafkaville.

THE PHYSICS OF MURDER

You can destroy evidence. You can “forget” to photograph the crime scene. You can fail to take measurements at the crime scene. You can decide not to record the testimony of the shooter. You can let the shooter process his gun. You can suppress facts. You can discredit witnesses. You can question their credibility. You can cherry pick the evidence that you show to the grand jury. You can put known liars and mentally ill persons in front of the people charged with determining the killer’s fate, and encourage those liars to sway the outcome. You can carelessly, or intentionally, give twelve well-meaning citizens instructions which are absolutely wrong. You can mislead the public. And you can manipulate the press.

There is only one thing that you cannot manipulate, mislead, suppress, cherry pick, or destroy.

The Laws of Physics. Those pesky, irrefutable, immutable Laws of Physics.

Here, we look at “The Physics of Murder”. As regards the shooting of Michael Brown.

SIXTEEN SECONDS

The Physics of Murder begins with 16 seconds. Sixteen seconds, from the time that Darren Wilson communicated through the police radio system, until he began shooting at Michael Brown. This is a matter of physics, and this cannot be debated by anybody, except for somebody who is in denial of the Laws of Nature. Somebody who is in denial of reality.

I will, of course, explain how we know all of these things to be a matter of fact.

Let’s begin with the first time stamp: Officer Darren Wilson’s communication with his dispatcher. Wilson radios for back-up at 12:02 p.m. UTC (Universal Time Clock) time. August 9th, 2014, just two minutes after noon. That is according to the Ferguson Police Department’s own records. If you have doubts and wish to check the accuracy of the UTC time stamp as it is rendered in police and emergency records, as well as computer devices such as laptops, tablets, and cellphones, I assure you the evidence is abundant.

(This is how accurate a UTC time stamp is. The people managing the Universal Time Clock in Colorado even add a leap second periodically, to keep it absolutely accurate. This, from the National Institute of Standards and Technology at nist.gov: “A leap second is a second added to Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) in order to keep it synchronized with astronomical time. Leap seconds are added in order to keep the difference between UTC and astronomical time (UT1) to less than 0.9 seconds. The International Earth Rotation and Reference Systems Service (IERS), measures Earth's rotation and publishes the difference between UT1 and UTC. Usually leap seconds are added when UTC is ahead of UT1 by 0.4 seconds or more. At the time the corrections started in 1972, a necessary correction of ten seconds was made to UTC, and there have been leap seconds about every year and a half, on average.”)

A little more than sixteen seconds later, Michael Brown would be dead. How do we know that?

THOSE PESKY LAWS OF PHYSICS: UTC VS. GPS

Just as Michael Slager was no doubt horrified to learn that someone had been recording his murder of Walter Scott, and his placing of the Taser near Scott's dying body, so Officer Darren Wilson was probably alarmed to hear that his shooting had been recorded. (Sadly, it ended up being a moot point, in regards to the grand jury, but history remembers.)

As most of us know by now, a man in an apartment nearby was chatting with a lady friend—nothing x-rated, just a sultry voice complimenting how she looks. That recording began at exactly 12:02:14. Then, in horrific contradistinction, the sound of gunfire cuts into the conversation. At the heart of this damning evidence—damning for Darren Wilson's version of the events, that is—is a technology called Glide. As Glide brags in their description:

Because Glide is the only messaging application using streaming video technology, each message is simultaneously recorded and transmitted, so the exact time can be verified to the second.

It is worth noting that Glide, and virtually all software driven modern devices, such as laptops, tablets, cellphones, etcetera, are accurate to a tiny fraction of a second. They get their time from the nation's official atomic clock in Colorado at the National Institute of Standards and Technology; it is part and parcel of their connection to the outside world, to the internet. To the cell phone tower that connects your calls. That is what makes modern technology accurate within a fraction of a second. So that should take care of the accuracy issue.

Back to the shooter, Darren Wilson. Wilson's shots began two seconds into the Glide tele-chat recording, so that would be 12:02:16.

Now it is only natural that readers would want to confirm the level of accuracy in the time stamps here; i.e., were the two systems—the telechat Glide App, and the emergency dispatch system that Darren Wilson was using—were they “in sync”? The answer is that emergency dispatch always operates on official State/US clock time, which is, of course, set to UTC standards. According to a reporter who goes only as “heckphilly.com”, who interviewed everybody from the people at Glide to assorted members of the police and emergency services, ***“Radio transmissions are usually saved and recorded via a recording device on a computer that saves everything in order”*** . He said. ***“Every agency around here runs 2400 clock just set to the state’s clock so everybody is running at the same exact time ... I’ve visited several, and I haven’t noticed any agency that does it differently. It’s only like that so people don’t get confused when it comes to records and such.”***

Make no mistake, down-to-the-second accuracy is easy and free to obtain, and it is the gold standard for policing. There is, then, only one more concern that needs to be addressed, and that is with regard to the time stamp on the Glide App. Was the Glide App on UTC time? Or perhaps on GPS time? Different devices track time in different ways, most by UTC, and some by GPS. Some cell phones, for example, give GPS timestamps. That means, as any rocket scientist knows, that we then have a 16 second difference between UTC time and GPS time, with GPS being 16 seconds ahead of UTC. (That has actually changed to 17 seconds, given that in summer of 2015, a leap second was added to the UTC, to keep everything completely accurate. But for the year in question, 2014, it would have been 16 seconds.) If we know that the Glide telechat began at the internal device’s GPS time of 12:02:14, with the shots beginning two seconds in, at 12:02:16 (GPS), then we only need to subtract 16 seconds from the hypothetical GPS time stamp to adjust it to a UTS time stamp. That would put the bullets beginning at exactly 12:02:00 (UTC), the precise time that Darren Wilson is on the phone and hasn’t even had the physical altercation with Brown. So we know that the Glide app cannot have been on GPS time, it had to be on the same clock as the police equipment and software: UTC time.

All of that boils down to some very damning numbers for Darren Wilson. It means that he was talking with dispatch at exactly 12:02:00 UTC time, and that he began shooting at 12:02:16, just 16 seconds later. (And that is assuming that it wasn’t 12:02 and “some seconds”; that is assuming that the police department doesn’t round off in their records, which indeed they might. Which would give Darren Wilson even less time for all the following to happen.) Sixteen seconds, for a hell of a lot to happen.

A VERY BUSY QUARTER OF A MINUTE

Within the fleeting space of just 16 seconds—a quarter of a minute—a whole slew of events had to transpire, IF we are to believe Darren Wilson’s version of reality. Let’s just look at everything that had to happen, if Darren Wilson’s story is to be believed.

Darren Wilson called in for back-up at exactly 12:02 UTC time, according to official records. So, he had to finish up that request for back-up, put his cruiser in reverse, then back up, and swerve around so that it stopped right in front of Brown and Johnson. He then he had to stop the cruiser and turn off the ignition. Then he called Michael Brown over to his vehicle to have words with him.

This verbal exchange set off the first of two scuffles. Beginning with the now famous door episode, in which Darren Wilson said he attempted to open the door, but Michael Brown slammed it shut on him, while Johnson told a different story—that the door bounced off of Brown because Officer Wilson had screeched up so close to them.

Then began the second scuffle, this one also having two conflicting versions, in which Darren Wilson claims that Michael Brown reached inside the cruiser to get his gun (apparently having been struck with some bizarre desire to commit Death by Cop), a gun that was holstered at Wilson’s right side, a fact which therefore required Brown to duck into the police cruiser, and then stretch his body across that of an armed police officer. Getting that gun was, according to Darren Wilson, apparently Michael Brown’s plan.

And this one is the corker—since it was later established that Brown had run 170 feet away from the police SUV before Darren Wilson started shooting, that means that this jog of 170 feet also had to take place during the same 16 seconds during which all of the action in points 1,2, and 3 allegedly transpired. (By the way, The Ferguson Police lied about this matter initially, saying the Brown was about 30 feet from Wilson and the cop’s SUV when the shooting began. That is not a tiny amount to be “off by”. There is no plausible explanation for this lie, except that they imagine that we are as stupid as they are deceptive.)

Let’s go over all that again, in a little more detail—***the goal of which is to show Darren Wilson’s version to be impossible, given the Laws of Physics.*** And using those same laws, we will show Wilson to be—for lack of a better term—a liar.

Alright, a mere sixteen seconds transpired between the call to the station and Michael Brown being shot.

Darren Wilson finishes his call to the station for back up, signs off, and then decides to confront Brown and Johnson. He puts his vehicle in reverse, screeches back, swerves around, then slams on his breaks and turns off the ignition. Wilson then calls Michael Brown over, saying he wants

to talk to him. They exchange words. LET'S SAY THAT ALL OF THIS HAPPENED IN 3 SECONDS.

Then the first fight, the fight with the door begins. More words are exchanged. Darren Wilson opens his door to get out. It is shut again, either by Mike's hand or by bouncing off of Mike. Then, it opens again; same dueling theories as above. Then it is shut again. LET'S CALL THIS THREE SECONDS. (Darren Wilson says this fight over the door and the beginning of the fisticuffs took 10 seconds, which would put us at a total of 13 seconds, but that would leave only 3 seconds remaining for the fight in the car that took many long minutes for Darren Wilson to describe in his grand jury testimony, and for Michael Brown's run for his life. So let's give the officer the benefit of a doubt, and just call the door altercation THREE SECONDS.)

The prolonged fight in the car. In order to understand everything that happened in the front seat of that cruiser, *let us go right to Darren Wilson's own words in front of the grand jury, so we can accurately and explicitly glean from the officer himself all the things that happened during that fight in the front seat of his SUV.* Keep in mind that before the second scuffle begins, we have already used up 6 (3+3) seconds of the 16 seconds, leaving just 10 seconds left.—and that Michael Brown also will need to run 170 feet before the shooting starts. (If, of course, we are to believe Darren Wilson's version of events.) The following is the verbatim testimony from Darren Wilson, as he described the events that happened within the car to the grand jury:

BEGIN DARREN WILSON'S GRAND JURY EXCERPT:

(grammar uncorrected)

... And they kept walking, as I said, they never once stopped, never got on the sidewalk they stayed in the middle of the road. So I got on my radio, and Frank 21 is my call sign that day, I said Frank 21 I'm on Canfield with two, send me another car. I then placed my car in reverse and backed up and I backed up just past them and then angled my vehicle, the back of my vehicle to kind of cut them off kind to keep them somewhat contained. As I did that, I go to open the door and I say, hey, come here for a minute to Brown. As I'm opening the door he turns, faces me, looks at me and says, "what the fuck are you going to do about it", and shuts my door, slammed it shut. I haven't even got it open enough to get my leg out, it was only a few inches. I then looked at him and told him to get back and he was just staring at me, almost like to intimidate me or to overpower me. The intense face he had was just not what I expected from any of this.

I then opened my door again and used my door to push him backwards, and while I'm doing that I tell him to, "get the fuck back", and then I use my door to push him. ... He then grabs my door again and shuts my door. At that time is when I saw him coming into my vehicle. His head was higher than the top of my car. And I see him ducking and as he is ducking, his hands are up and

he is coming in my vehicle. I had shielded myself in this type of manner and kind of looked away, so I don't remember seeing him come at me, but I was hit right here in the side of the face with a fist. I don't think it was a full on swing, I think it was a full on swing, but not a full shot. I think my arm deflected some of it, but there was still a significant amount of contact that was made to my face. ... I believe it was his right, just judging by how we were situated. But like I said, I had turned away, had my eyes, I was shielding myself. ... After he hit me then, it stopped for a second. He kind of like, I remember getting hit and he kind of like grabbed and pulled, and then it stopped. When I looked up, if this is my car door, I'm sitting here facing that way, he's here. He turns like this and now the Cigarillos I see in his left hand. He's going like this and he says, "hey man, hold these." ... And he reaches back and he says, "hey man, hold these." I'm assuming to Johnson, but I couldn't see Johnson from my line of sight. ... And he said, "hey man, hold these." And at that point I tried to hold his right arm because it was like this at my car. This is my car window. I tried to hold his right arm and use my left hand to get out to have some type of control and not be trapped in my car any more. And when I grabbed him, the only way I can describe it is I felt like a five year old holding onto Hulk Hogan. ... Hulk Hogan, that's just how big he felt and how small I felt just from grasping his arm. And as I'm trying to open the door is when, and I can't really get it open because he is standing only maybe 6 inches from my door, but as I was trying to pull the handle, I see his hand coming back around like this and he hit me with this part of his right here, just a full swing all the way back around and hit me right here.

After he did that, next thing I remember is how do I get this guy away from me. What do I do not to get beaten inside my car. I remember having my hands up and I thought to myself, you know, what do I do. I considered using my mace, however, I wasn't willing to sacrifice my left hand, which is blocking my face to go for it. I couldn't reach around on my right to get it and if I would have gotten it out, the chances of it being effective were slim to none. His hands were in front of his face, it would have blocked the mace from hitting him in the face and if any of that got on me, I know what it does to me and I would have been out of the game. I wear contacts, if that touches any part of my eyes, then I can't see at all. Like I said, I don't carry a Taser, I considered my asp, but to get that out since I kind of sit on it, I usually have to lean forward and pull myself forward to the steering wheel to get it out. Again, I wasn't willing to let go of the one defense I had against being hit. The whole time, I can't tell you if he was swinging at me or grabbing me or pushing me or what, but there was just stuff going on and I was looking down figuring out what to do. Also, when I was grabbing my asp, I knew if I did even get it out, I'm not going to be able to expand it inside the car or am I going to be able to make a swing that will be effective in any manner. Next I considered my flashlight. I keep that on the passenger side of the car. I wasn't going to, again, reach over like this to grab it and then even if I did grab it, would it even be effective. We are so close and confined. So the only other option I thought I had was my gun. I drew my gun, I turned. It is kind of hard to describe it, I turn and I go like this. He is standing here. I said, "get back or I'm going to shoot you." He immediately grabs my gun and says, "you

are too much of a pussy to shoot me." I believe gun was basically pointed this way. I'm in my car, he's here, it is pointed this way, but he grabs it with his right hand, not his left, he grabs with his right one and he twists it and then he digs it down into my hip. I felt that another one of those punches in my face could knock me out or worse. I mean it was, he's obviously bigger than I was and stronger and the, I've already taken two to the face and I didn't think I would, the third one could be fatal if he hit me right. He grabs my gun, says, "you are too much of a pussy to shoot me." The gun goes down into my hip and at that point I thought I was getting shot. I can feel his fingers try to get inside the trigger guard with my finger and I remember envisioning a bullet going into my leg. I thought that was the next step. As I'm looking at it, I'm not paying attention to him, all I can focus on is just this gun in my leg. I was able to kind of shift like this and then push it down, because he is pushing down like to keep it pinned on my leg. So when I slid, I let him use his momentum to push it down and it was kind of pointed to where the seat buckle would attach on the floorboard on the side of my car. Next thing I remember putting my left hand on it like this, putting my elbow into the back of my seat and just pushing with all I could forward. Like I said, I was just so focused on getting the gun out of me. When this point, he is still holding onto it and I pulled the trigger and nothing happens, it just clicked. I pull it again, it just clicked again. At this point I'm like why isn't this working, this guy is going to kill me if he gets ahold of this gun. I pulled it a third time, it goes off. When it went off, it shot through my door panel and my window was down and glass flew out of my door panel. I think that kind of startled him and me at the same time. When I see the glass come up, it comes, a chunk about that big comes across my right hand and then I notice I have blood on the back of my hand. After seeing the blood on my hand, I looked at him and he was, this is my car door, he was here and he kind of stepped back and went like this. And then after he did that, he looked up at me and had the most intense aggressive face. The only way I can describe it, it looks like a demon, that's how angry he looked. He comes back towards me again with his hands up. At that point I just went like this, I tried to pull the trigger again, click, nothing happened. ... Last thing I saw was this coming at me. ... I just saw his hands up, I don't know if they were closed yet, on the way to going closed, I saw this and that face coming at me again, and I just went like this and I shielded my face. ... Went like this and shielded my face ... So I pulled the trigger, it just clicks that time. Without even looking, I just grab the top of my gun, the slide and I racked it, and I put my, still not looking just holding my hand up, I pulled the trigger again, it goes off. When I look back after that ... It went off twice in the car. Pull, click, click, went off, click, went off. So twice in the car. ... When I look up after that, I see him start cloud of dust behind him. I then get out of my car. As I'm getting out of the car I tell dispatch, "shots fired, send me more cars." We start running, kind of the same direction that Johnson had pointed. Across the street like a diagonal towards this, kind of like where the parking lot came in for Copper Creek Court and Canfield, right at that intersection. And there is a light pole right there, I remember him running towards the light pole. We pass two cars that were behind my police car while we were running. I think

the second one was Pontiac Grand Am, a green one. I don't know if it was a two door or four door, I just remember seeing a Pontiac green Grand Am.”

HERE ENDS DARREN WILSON’S GRAND JURY TESTIMONY.

(Above from Case: State of Missouri v. Darren Wilson, Grand Jury Volume V, September 16, 2014, Section V, 209-216, and pages 223 – 226)

So, of the 16 seconds between the radio call and the shooting, we had assigned 3 seconds to Darren finishing his call to dispatch, and then maneuvering his vehicle back and around, then addressing Michael Brown and turning off the ignition. And then another 3 seconds, paring it down considerably from Wilson’s own estimate, to the back-and-forth opening and slamming of the door repeatedly. That’s 6 of the 16 seconds, not counting the time that Michael Brown will need to run 170 feet before “turning” and “looking like a monster”, the apparent provocation for Darren Wilson to start shooting.

So, let’s say that the above several pages of description, dialogue, fighting, attempts at firing, firing, etc. took only 6 seconds. Personally I find that ridiculous, improbable, impossible, outrageous. But let’s say it took only 6 seconds.

That is:

3 seconds for Wilson to end precinct call, then car reversing, swerving around, and Wilson then addressing Brown.

3 seconds for the back and forth door altercation.

6 seconds time for all the action in Wilson’s above grand jury excerpt to take place.

That means 4 seconds left for Michael Brown to cover 170 feet. Which basically makes him the fastest man in the world. In 2009, Usain Bolt set an unbroken record of running the 100 meter dash in 9.58 seconds. That translates to 10.4384133612 meters per second. A meter is 3.28084 feet. That means—and we are rounding off here—that Usain Bolt was running at over 30 feet per second. But Michael Brown only has 4 seconds left, in our 16 seconds and ticking clock, 4 seconds to run 170 feet. All of this means that Michael Brown had to run over 40 feet per second, in order for Darren Wilson’s magical mystery math to work. Michael Brown, overweight and out of shape (sorry, Big Mike), and running barefoot (he lost both shoes as he fled), had to run 25 percent faster than Usain Bolt, in order for Darren Wilson to be telling the truth.

Assuming of course, that the Laws of Physics are still in place.

I thank you for hanging in there with me, but now we know everything that would have to have happened, from the time of Darren Wilson calling the station, to the time he began firing shots, all within 16 seconds, if Officer Wilson's version of events is to be believed.

Or wait ...

...Maybe it is as 15 witnesses said. Maybe the reason that so much happened in such a short time is that Michael Brown did not run 170 feet before the bullets started flying; **maybe Darren Wilson started firing as soon as he got out of the car.** (Only five witnesses answered the Michael Brown was NOT shot while fleeing.)

2960 CANFIELD DRIVE

The Laws of Physics present one other little problem for Darren Wilson's version of events. Darren Wilson claimed to have fired **two bullets** while inside his Tahoe, struggling with Brown. No wait, I meant **"one bullet"**. Right after the incident was over, he said he only fired **"one"** bullet. Even though we are talking about his firing his own weapon, just inches from his heart, and even though he described the events to another officer on scene, just minutes after it happened, Darren Wilson actually **"forgot"** one of the shots he got off. (It would become **"two bullets"** by the time he testified in front of the grand jury, months later.) And this is mighty troublesome, because all of the bullets and casings are accounted for—and one of those two initial bullets ended up in a very problematic place.

2960 Canfield Dr. Let's be clear about this. The ten bullets that Darren Wilson discharged after Brown was running, and Darren was chasing him, have been accounted for. But the "two" that Wilson (eventually) claimed were discharged while he was inside the car? Both casings were found near the car. And both bullets were found as well, but unfortunately for Darren Wilson, while one of the two initial bullets did indeed lodge in his car, the other—The Forgotten Bullet, shall we call it—very inconveniently lodged in the exterior wall of a building known as 2960 Canfield. Why inconvenient? Because any view of the trajectory from Darren Wilson's SUV (keep in mind that he claimed to have shot from INSIDE the vehicle) to the place where it lodged in 2960 Canfield makes the physics of the shot—well, for lack of a better word, impossible. Oh wait, here's a better word. Horseshit.

What makes much more sense is that fifteen witnesses of the twenty applicable witnesses were right. An off-balance Darren Wilson, furious at being disrespected, jumped out of his car and shot at a fleeing Michael Brown. Michael Brown logically ran to his right, towards the trees, and then veered back into the street when a bullet hit the building he was running towards. And please, let us not recidivistically slide back to that flawed statement that Michael Brown "was not shot in the back". While he may not have literally been shot in his back, there are two bullets

whose points of origin are considered impossible to determine by the [medical expert performing the autopsy](#). One was the baffling bullet which entered his forearm. Try this quick experiment: run, walk, move about to see that this human appendage, your forearm could be in any number of positions to receive a bullet dorsally: to put it curtly, that bullet could have entered his forearm as he was fleeing. The second bullet, a mere light graze to the exterior side of his upper right arm, could have also been shot at him when he was fleeing. I don't claim that. The autopsy states it.

BEGIN EXCERPT FROM GRAND JURY TESTIMONY OF THE MEDICAL EXAMINER
VOL XXIII: (Pg. 37)

M.E.: One of the [bullet] tracks was a graze of the biceps of the arm, and that came across the arm and didn't do any significant damage to Mr. Brown, and it is very difficult to be able to tell direction from that.

And later, on page 65, in reference to the second bullet, which also could have entered Michael Brown from behind, as he was fleeing:

M.E.: This is the entrance, behind, and the exit, and this bullet went through a bone in the forearm ... I interpret that as being from behind...I know there's some controversy as to whether or not he was shot while his back was to the officer...this would support being shot from behind....

Q: You're saying that this injury to his forearm could have occurred with his hands up?

M.E. Yes.

Q: Or with him running and someone shooting him from behind?

M.E.: I'm saying at the time of the shooting, the gun was pointed at the back of his arm, that's all.

END GRAND JURY EXCERPT

Why are these distinctions so crucial? In order to understand that, we must return to one of the few hard pieces of evidence regarding exactly what happened on that fateful day—the audio recording that we heard on the tele-chat. Audio experts have analyzed it, but any layperson can hear it: the bullets came in clusters of six, pause, and then four. Michael Brown was shot or struck six times. Given the fact that two of the bullets which struck Michael Brown could have come from the back, that means that only four needed to hit him in the front. Then the ballistics and the forensic evidence make logical sense: six bullets were shot at Brown as he was

fleeing—one entering him, one grazing him, and four went God knows where. This makes sense, given that Darren Wilson was running, and his aim would have been compromised. That accounts for the first six bullets heard on the telechat. Then, a pause. And then the audio cluster of four came after Michael Brown turned to give up, facing Darren Wilson. Officer Wilson was standing still, and his aim was dead on.

Michael Brown, realizing that a policeman was shooting at him—and had hit him—turned. Surely, he must have been terrified.

Not only does the evidence fit this scenario, but I assert that this explanation fits the evidence far better than the unbelievable and bizarre scenario offered by Darren Wilson, in which a complex and completely improbable series of intricate events all happened in a mere sixteen seconds.

And in the name of all that is sacred, let us please, finally, finally put to bed this disagreement of whether or not Michael Brown had his hands up in surrender. The deepening polarity which seems to have taken over this country seems to be both exemplified and magnified in this particular debate: It is quite possible that neither side is completely right. No, it is not as the Sean Hannitys of the world say it is—that Michael Brown put his head down and charged Darren Wilson—a bizarre and suicidal move from a young man who had no reason to bring on “Death by Cop”. But Michael Brown also did not necessarily have his hand raised up high over his head, the way that Opie Taylor might look if he was seven years old, and playing cops ‘n robbers with his friends. *The way any child might, who is imitating the behavior of grown-ups caught in hellish situations.* No, no, probably not. Most likely, given that Brown was now wounded, terrified, and exhausted from having run as fast as he could, he turned in a gesture that was more Frankensteinian than anything else—with his arms half raised and/or flailing, trying to find his balance, gasping for breath. When it comes to what Michael Brown was doing, nobody is absolutely right, and nobody was absolutely wrong, because they are looking for a sensible, reasonable gesture from a wounded and terrified man who was losing blood, and losing his mind.

And if, as “The Physics of Murder” seem to prove, Darren Wilson was shooting at a fleeing Michael Brown, then it would seem that he was committing a grave crime of his own: in the act of shooting at a fleeing, unarmed man, he was shooting into a neighborhood full of innocent citizens, and full of potential victims. Darren Wilson is lucky that more people aren’t dead by his hand.

THIS ISN’T A TELEVISION EPISODE

(TV does it better...)

Now that we have examined “The Physics of Murder”, Ferguson style, let us take a few pages to wrap up the murder and the crime scene, before we move on to “The Many Lies of Darren Wilson”, the travesty of the grand jury, and finally, the report from the United States Department of Justice on the egregious miscarriages of justice that go on every day in Ferguson, Missouri.

First, we should answer the question posited by so many: why didn’t Darren Wilson employ non-lethal methods to stop Michael Brown? That one is easy.

Mace. Why didn’t Darren Wilson use mace on the “attacking” Michael Brown? (Although this author is not at all sure that such an attack took place; many witnesses report that Wilson grabbed Brown by the shirt and wouldn’t let go.) Darren said he didn’t employ his mace because Michael Brown “had his hands in front of his face”. I find this odd, because throughout most of his testimony, Darren Brown describes Michael Brown’s hands as reaching, grabbing, punching, swinging, flailing, and handing off cigarillos to his pal...for almost all of Darren Wilson’s testimony, Michael Brown’s hands are doing anything but covering his face for protection.

Taser. Why didn’t Darren Wilson use his Taser on Michael Brown, either while he was in the car, or while Brown was fleeing? Because Darren Wilson doesn’t fancy a Taser. He finds them “uncomfortable”. God forbid that carrying a non-lethal option, make anybody “uncomfortable.” Either stop whining, or stop being a cop, please. (Me, I vote the latter.) Page 205 of Volume V, Darren Wilson’s grand jury testimony: ***“They are very large, and I don’t have a lot of room in front for it to be positioned,”*** says the six foot four, 210 pound cop. ***“It is not the most comfortable thing”*** . Is the Taser too heavy, Darren? Well, here’s a heads up: according to assorted police officer forums, fully outfitted police belts weigh from 13 to 25 pounds. Here’s a tip: You can buy a good Taser that weighs half a pound. For hardly any more weight on your belt, you can carry a non-lethal option. Eight ounces, to avoid killing an 18 year old kid. Or, could it be that you didn’t want a non-lethal option?

“It is not the most comfortable thing” . Wuss. Note to Darren, from the ghost of Michael Brown, shot (among other reasons) because you won’t carry a non-lethal option: ***“Being shot is not the most comfortable thing.”***

Then, of course, there is the controversial and inexcusable matter of the way that the crime scene was handled. Neighbors and the local black community were enraged that Michael Brown’s body was left lying there for four hours. But even if we buy the police department’s explanation—that they called in “County” on this, and were waiting for all the requisite experts to arrive—that proclaimed desire for rigorous adherence to procedures is belied by the frankly crappy job that they did, regarding everything else. Assorted so called “professionals” and “experts” on the team flat out refused to do their jobs. Officer statements and witness statements were not compiled and

filed, audio recordings were not made, measurements and photographs were not thoroughly taken and entered into evidence. And, as we have said repeatedly, even the bullet from 2960 Canfield was not taken into evidence. This is absolutely shocking. Worse still, everybody acts as though that mystery bullet doesn't exist. In terms of trajectory, it simply cannot have come from inside the car, which means that Darren Wilson must have shot it at a fleeing Michael Brown. So...we all just pretend that it didn't exist in the first place.

And then there is the problematic matter of testing Officer Wilson's weapon for fingerprints. In terms of lab work, the experts will tell you that when it comes to a gun, you can either test to see whose blood is on the gun, or test for fingerprints. These "experts" chose to test for blood, thereby losing the opportunity to check the gun for prints. But checking for blood was a stupid move, frankly; even a layperson can see that. Everybody, even Michael Brown's friend and "hostile" police witness Dorian Johnson admits that Michael Brown's arm was shot while it was inside the car, so the fact of Michael Brown's blood being on the gun is no big revelation. BUT, in destroying the opportunity to test for prints, **they get to ignore the possibility that Michael Brown's prints were not even on Darren Wilson's gun at all.** What if Wilson is lying? What if Wilson grabbed Brown by the shirt through the window, as so many witnesses said he did, AND/OR what if Michael Brown never touched the gun? The complete lack of Michael Brown's prints on the gun might have provided strong evidence that Michael never touched the gun. But oh, they didn't test for prints. They instead chose to test for something that didn't need to be tested for; they chose to confirm what everybody already knew.

That just leaves us to remind the reader that Darren Wilson's next move, after he had killed Michael Brown, was to go back to the station and destroy evidence, all of this a complete violation of procedure and protocol.

Then, a trip to the hospital where Darren Wilson's injuries could be photographed. Considering that Darren Wilson claimed a 300 pound man had wailed on him, punched him, beat him, pummeled him, he certainly looks to have not a mark on him.

Here: <http://vignette2.wikia.nocookie.net>

Oh. Excuse me. My bad. I meant Here:

<http://cdn.theatlantic.com/assets/media/img/posts/2014.jpg>

And for those of you who would posit that everything I say is ridiculous, let me suggest this: I get to posit my theories, because the Ferguson police seemed to go out of their way to purposely conduct a shoddy investigation. To spin stories, and omit facts, and destroy evidence. And that is not a matter of physics, just human nature: Apathy combined with contempt, mixed up with fear. A potent cocktail.

THE MANY LIES OF DARREN WILSON

It is very simple. It is fact. This reality will no doubt enrage the pro-Wilson, anti “black lives matter” crowd, but here is the God’s truth of it: Wilson’s superior officer, Sergeant of Police William Mudd, who took Officer Darren Wilson’s initial statement as to what transpired between Wilson and Michael Brown—a statement taken just minutes after the shooting—offers a version of events that differs in every significant way from the version told by Darren Wilson to the grand jury, months after the shooting.

Again, just to make this clear: Darren Wilson recounted all of the events to his superior officer, just minutes after the killing of Michael Brown. However, by the time Darren Wilson had to face the grand jury, Wilson, under oath, had changed his story around completely, to create a narrative of events that would best vindicate him, and allow Wilson to walk away a free man. And while I certainly would acknowledge that adrenaline and shock might alter one’s memory of events, so that the officer’s story differs somewhat from verifiable reality, we are faced with two glaring problems. First: the two versions are dramatically different. Second: Darren Wilson’s initial version of the events, given just minutes after he committed the homicide, stayed consistent for weeks over several retellings, including interviews with the F.B.I, and the Department of Justice. This was the version given to the media, and this was the version that created a public perception which has stubbornly remained, long after the transcript of Wilson’s grand jury testimony, or alternate reality, had been released. Which version are you going to believe? The detailed statement that Officer Wilson gave right after the incident? Or the radically different and completely sanitized version that he gave to the grand jury, after he’d had weeks and weeks to consult with attorneys, ballistics, forensic experts, other officers in the department, and yes, more lawyers.

Here are some of the differences. And because I believe that there is simply no other explanation, I refer to them as: DARREN WILSON’S LIES.

THE MARKET ROBBERY: DID WILSON KNOW?

FIRST BIG LIE: Darren Wilson told his supervisor, Sergeant Mudd, that HE DID NOT KNOW about the robbery. He then later told the grand jury under oath that HE DID KNOW about the robbery.

This distinction is critical, of course. If Wilson didn’t know anything about the robbery, then he had no reason to allow the jaywalking incident to escalate into a killing. Instead of engaging in the very dangerous maneuver of screeching backwards in his cruiser and swerving the vehicle

around, almost hitting the two men, he simply could have verbally threatened them with a ticket if they didn't get on the sidewalk. (A hilarious after-joke to the tragedy: Wilson justified this dangerous maneuver with his big police Tahoe, by saying that his plan was to ***"contain the two suspects"*** . Yeah. Because two black men from the 'hood, would be completely flummoxed about how to escape Wilson, while standing on an open street, outside of a car parked in front of them.)

But back to Wilson's lies. More importantly however, and much more damning for Wilson, if Wilson DID NOT KNOW about the robbery, as he told his supervisor was the case, then Wilson had no credible fear that Michael Brown may have just committed a crime, and might even be armed. (Which of course, Brown was not.)

In Darren Wilson's original version of events, as told to his superior just minutes after the incident, Michael Brown posed no credible threat. Throughout this section, we will be offering up direct grand jury transcripts, as proof of Wilson's many lies.

GRAND JURY SUPERVISOR TRANSCRIPT:

("Q" represents the questioning agent in the grand jury, and an "S" represents Sergeant Mudd, who was the direct supervisor, to whom Darren Wilson gave his version of events immediately following the shooting.. A series of dots indicates that some dialogue or wording has been left out, but not any verbiage that would change the meaning of the question-and-answer exchange. Bold italics are this author's emphasis added. If missing dialogue troubles you, just Google "Darren Wilson grand jury vol 5" to get a copy of the official 286 page unabridged document.)

PAGE 52:

Q: Did he talk about anything about the stealing that occurred at a Ferguson Market, that he was stopping these two to investigate that?

S: He said he did not have that call....

Q: Did he know about it, did he talk about knowing about the stealing?

S: He did not know anything about the stealing call.

Q: He told you he did not know anything about the stealing?

S: He did not know anything. He was out on another call in the apartment complex adjacent to Canfield Green.

END GRAND JURY TRANSCRIPT EXCERPT

And again, MORE GRAND JURY TRANSCRIPTS, on page 57, from another cross examiner:

Q: ...You testified that when Sheila asked you some question...that Officer Wilson did not know about the stealing that was going on or that Officer Wilson did not know about the stealing that was just going on or had just occurred at the Ferguson Market.....***Has he ever told you, "I didn't know anything about what happened up at the Ferguson Market?"***

S: *Yes, he had told me that in subsequent conversations.*

Q: *He told you he didn't know about there being a stealing at the Ferguson Market?*

S: *Correct.*

END GRAND JURY TRANSCRIPT EXCERPT

So let's get clear about that. Darren Wilson had no reason to believe that Michael Brown was a threat, or armed. And hey—because I can hear some of you shrieking from here—nobody is saying that Michael Brown was a choir boy. But I do know this: Darren Wilson had no reason to believe that Michael Brown was a criminal, or even dangerous. We know Michael Brown had never been charged with a felony. In his own words (if we are to believe a veteran police sergeant, with 38 years on the force), Darren Wilson knew nothing about the robbery.

Darren Wilson simply decided to escalate an incident of jaywalking into an ugly confrontation that ended with him shooting, and killing, an unarmed 18 year old kid.

But here is Wilson's grand jury version, after months of consultation with attorneys:

GRAND JURY EXCERPT, DARREN WILSON TESTIMONY:

D.W: While on the sick case call, a call came out for a stealing in progress from the local market on West Florissant, that the suspects were traveling toward QT ...I did hear that the suspect was wearing a black shirt and that a box of Cigarillos was stolen...When I started looking at Brown, first thing I notice is his right hand, his hand is full of Cigarillos. And that's when it clicked for me, because I now saw the Cigarillos....I looked in my mirror, I did a double check that Johnson was wearing a black shirt, these are the two from the stealing...

END GRAND JURY TRANSCRIPT EXCERPT

Now, let us set aside for a moment the damning fact that, according to police records, there was no description given about Dorian Johnson wearing a black T-shirt. In his zeal to provide details to his lies, Darren Wilson added that baseless lie to gild his testimony. But as we return to the

difficult problem of the dueling versions, allow me to ask: Who do you believe? An officer with 38 years on the force, who tells the story he was told by the shooter right after the incident ... a version that benefits Sergeant Mudd and his department not at all? Or do you believe Darren Wilson's *new* story, changed weeks after the murder, which would almost certainly assure that Wilson walked away a free man?

It is worth adding here that regardless of which version one chooses to believe—that Darren Wilson knew he was dealing with a thug who had just committed some kind of robbery, or that this was just a rather insolent jaywalker—either way, Darren Wilson has proved himself to be a dangerous and ridiculous officer of the law. If Wilson is dealing with just a jaywalker, then the decision to throw his vehicle into reverse, screech backwards, and swerve around, braking right in front of the two young men and nearly hitting them, means that Wilson is guilty of risking bodily injury to citizens, and escalating an incident for no reason. Or, alternatively, if Darren did know about the robbery, (which I believe we have proven he did not), and suspected that he might be approaching an armed felon, that this is the stupidest way in the world to approach a man who is potentially packing a gun, and isn't afraid to use it. I guess Darren Wilson was, by his reckless and unprofessional behavior, "teaching" his northern Cleveland Police brothers the best way to approach a "suspect" like 12 year old Tamir Rice: drive up fast and get right next to him; then you will feel threatened, and have to kill him.

TWO SHOTS IN THE CAR? OR SHOT AT A FLEEING SUSPECT?

SECOND BIG LIE: Darren Wilson told his supervisor that ONE SHOT WAS FIRED in the vehicle. He told the Grand jury, under oath, that TWO SHOTS WERE FIRED. The importance of this discrepancy is virtually impossible to overstate. I find it hard to believe that Darren Wilson was "confused" about this. While I understand that officers sometimes miscount how many shots they fire, in the fury and flurry of a chase, or standoff, Wilson testified that his own gun was often pointed toward his chest during the fight. I find it hard to believe that this man, in a fight for his life, while trapped in the confines of his own front seat, and with the gun often pointed towards his own chest (or so Darren testified)—"can't remember" whether there were one or two shots fired during a life threatening struggle.

But it's even worse than that. Because in this case, he remembered events very clearly just after the incident, and stuck to that version for weeks. The fact is, Darren Wilson stated after the incident that one shot was fired. The police department said in press conferences for weeks that only one shot was fired, and the news reports of major outlets reported as much. Then, mystically and magically, when Darren Wilson testified in front of the grand jury, there were two bullets fired inside that police SUV. Why?

As we have written earlier, if only one bullet was fired, as he told his supervisor, then the location of two shell casings just outside of his Tahoe, and a bullet lodged in 2960 Canfield, meant that Darren was shooting at a fleeing Michael Brown. And as we examined in the preceding section, “The Physics of Murder”, there is really no way that the 2960 Canfield bullet could have maneuvered that magical trajectory from inside the car. The bullet became lodged there because Darren Wilson was, in fact, as three-fourths of the witnesses testified, shooting at a fleeing Michael Brown.

For those who would just love to not believe all of this is so—as well as those who have an antiquated affection for first hand sources, as opposed to third and fourth hand internet versions, or the musings of television pundits—please just read the direct transcripts from the grand jury. Sergeant Mudd testified, under oath, that Darren Wilson said the following, when questioned by his supervisor just minutes after the fatal shooting of Michael Brown:

BEGIN GRAND JURY TRANSCRIPT (Volume V, Pg. 32-33):

S: ...And he said he was still getting hit with one hand at times, and there was a struggle over the gun. He said the weapon was, he didn't get control of the weapon, but he was able to turn the weapon away from himself and the firearm discharged. He said the gun went off.

Q: Is that how he described it, the gun went off?

S.: The gun went off.

Q: Or did he say “I fired a shot”?

S: No, he said *the gun went off*.

Q: OKAY.

S: He said at that point the individual backed up away from the car and Darren thought he actually got shot, he said “I think I shot him in the stomach”. And I looked at the side of the car door, and there was no exit on the door, it was just a dimple in the sheet metal. So I said “***What happened then?***” ***He said “He started running; I got out of the car to chase after him.”***

END GRAND JURY TRANSCRIPT EXCERPT

And then again, on page 47, when a second questioner revisits the incident—a typical strategy in all cross examinations, to check for consistency—the sergeant remains consistent in his answer that Wilson told him only one shot was fired. More importantly, however, is this crucial point:

this *reiteration by Wilson of only one shot being fired* came in another conversation, a second conversation that took place weeks after the shooting:

BEGIN GRAND JURY TRANSCRIPT (Pg. 47)

Q: Have you and he, ever since that day, had a detailed conversation about what happened?

S: After his interview and my interview with Justice and FBI and U.S. Attorney and St. Louis County, he asked if he could tell me everything that happened.. I told him, yeah....

Q ...Was there anything inconsistent with what he had told you previously?

S: No ma'am.

Q: Now, just to summarize, that day on the scene, he told you that he fired, or that the weapon went off?

S: Correct.

Q: *One time while he was sitting in the vehicle?*

S: *Correct.*

END GRAND JURY TRANSCRIPT EXCERPT

So, there we have it. Multiple conversations between a veteran supervisor and Darren Wilson, in which Wilson confirms over and over again that just one bullet was shot inside his vehicle—meaning that the second bullet, lodged in the apartment building at 2960 Canfield Dr., with the casing coming to rest near Wilson’s vehicle, had to have been shot from outside the car, at a fleeing Michael Brown. There is no other explanation that is logical, or that fits with the Laws of Physics.

As for the lies of Officer Wilson, and the long fiction about the struggle in the car that resulted in “two” bullets shot—we have already included Darren’s pleonastic epistle of fiction in our earlier section, “The Physics of Murder.” I am sure you remember it, as it is quite unforgettable.

HOW FAR DID MICHAEL BROWN RUN—BEFORE TURNING ...

THIRD BIG LIE: As Michael Brown’s body lay on the ground, going into the fourth hour, on that humid August afternoon, Darren Wilson was telling his supervisor that Michael Brown ran a mere 30 feet from his police vehicle before turning around to “charge him”. Meanwhile, high

tech forensic experts were coming in from the county with state of the art tape measures which would reveal that the true distance from Wilson's Tahoe to the body was 150 feet.

Back to Wilson's lie: There is no reasonable person, I repeat no reasonable person, who is confused about the difference between 30 feet and 150 feet. However—a cagey, manipulative, dishonest person might indeed say that it was 30 feet or less, because coincidentally, that is the small distance within which an officer can reasonably claim to have felt threatened, and in danger for his life. That is what officers are taught.

Sure enough, the next day, at the first of many press conferences, the authorities began peddling this blatantly insulting lie, one of a series of such lies, as part of a carefully crafted strategy.

“The entire scene, from approximately the car door to the shooting is about 35 feet.”

“The entire scene is about 35 feet, during the whole time....this is not a very big physical scene at this point.”

And it didn't stop with that press conference. For 104 days following the shooting, the public was told whatever was necessary to turn the spotlight away from the truth.

Again, this lie was absolutely necessary. Because if Michael Brown turned and charged from only 30 feet, then Darren Wilson can reasonably say he feared for his life. But if Brown had run 170 feet, Darren Wilson looks like a cowboy cop, shooting into a crowded neighborhood. And yes, Darren Wilson ran after Michael Brown, thereby narrowing the distance. But that just leads us to the thornier issue of what happened—did he shoot a fleeing man? I believe the evidence proves that to be true. Most importantly, we have proven that Darren Wilson told so many lies, that it is very difficult to pry out what he has said that we can believe.

Here is what has so many people rightfully, and righteously outraged.

Darren Wilson's vehicle remains at its location for hours, because it is part of the crime scene.

Michael Brown's dead body lies in the street for four hours, because the county is getting involved and needs to bring in all its experts.

Hundreds of people had studied the crime scene at that point: the family, the neighbors, strangers, reporters, police, other officials, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera.

And after all of that, the Ferguson Police Department would have us believe that nobody noticed the distance from Darren Wilson's big white police SUV, to the body of Big Mike. Shameful. Insulting. We are still angry. And this, we should point out, is why so many people have trouble believing anything that the Ferguson Police Department says.

BEGIN GRAND JURY TRANSCRIPT (Pg. 32-33):

SERGEANT: (directly quoting Darren Wilson after the shooting): “He started running, I got out of the car to chase after him.” ***He said he got down about 30, 40 feet from where the car was parked and for some reason***, the individual stopped and turned toward him ... He said, at that point he said something to the effect of, you’re too much of a pussy to shoot me and turned, he had faced him and started to charge at Officer Wilson.

(Author’s observation: We are ignoring for now the fact that Darren Wilson also changed his story about this for the grand jury: Wilson claimed that Michael Brown made the pussy remark while fighting in the car. All in all, one can say that virtually nothing he told his sergeant immediately after the shooting matches what he told the grand jury.)

END GRAND JURY TRANSCRIPTS

Later in the grand jury proceedings, Darren Wilson would testify under oath that Michael Brown had run “to the light pole”, and the grand jury would be given visual evidence that the light pole was more than a block away. As Darren Wilson walked back to his police vehicle after killing Michael Brown, he would pass by a parking lot and the entire length of a large, sprawling apartment building—and declare that to be thirty feet. Darren Wilson thinks that thirty feet—about the length of your car when a U-Haul is attached—is the same length as a parking lot plus an apartment building. Darren Wilson is a liar.

THE TRUTH OF “HANDS UP, DON’T SHOOT”

FOURTH BIG LIE: Last, but perhaps most shockingly, *Darren Wilson told his supervisor that Michael Brown did have his hands up.*

Again, as for “Hands Up, Don’t Shoot”, that narrative was NOT started by Dorian Johnson, or Black Lives Matter, or an angry crowd, or a liberal press. It was started by Darren Wilson. Darren Wilson told his supervisor that Michael Brown’s hands were up.

BEGIN GRAND JURY TRANSCRIPT (Pg. 64):

Q: *You still stay with the fact that Michael Brown had his hands up and was charging?*

S: *That’s what Darren told me.*

END GRAND JURY TRANSCRIPT

And again on page 72:

Q: I have one last question. In your statement...that was recorded, I believe you said in the statement that Officer Wilson told you that Michael Brown took off running, and then stopped, and **raised his arms**, and charged him?

A: Yes ma'am.

Q: *Did he indicate to you, how Michael how he raised his arms Brown raised his arms.*

S: *May I stand up?*

A: *Sure*

S: ***It was like this***, like he was going to charge him.

A: Okay, so **he raised his arms** in a charging motion?

S: *Correct.*

Q: *Did he say at that time he shot him?*

S: He told me *when he took a step forward.*

Q: He shot him?

S: He knew he couldn't fight this man.

Q: Okay, so at the time when he had his hand raised and he was charging at him, he shot...

END GRAND JURY TRANSCRIPT EXCERPT

And yet, in spite of Officer Darren Wilson stating to his superior officer on repeated occasions, that Michael Brown did have his hands up as he stopped and turned, this is how Darren Wilson completely changed his story when it was time to testify in front of the grand jury: ***“His hand was in a fist at his side, this one is in his waistband under his shirt, and he was like this. Just coming straight at me.”***

So we see that Darren Wilson's story flat out changes. There is a very big difference between hands up and taking a step forward, and one hand is in a fist, while the other is reaching for the waistband on his pants, and “just coming straight at me”. (That hand reaching for the waistband, by the way, is a time honored excuse used by legions of cops, even when the suspect turns out to have been unarmed.)

And lest there still be any doubts in our brains, as to whether or not Michael Brown did have his hands up, let us turn to the scientific testimony of the esteemed forensic pathologist Cyril Wecht: (video embedded, and available on YouTube:)

Forensic Pathologist Dr. Cyril Wecht on CNN: I don't like to be dogmatic, but there is only one way that this scenario plays out when you analyze the bullet wounds. There were two wounds of the arm, one in the forearm, entering dorsally and exiting in the front, and the other in the upper arm, entering in the front and exiting in the back. Both had an upward trajectory. Michael Brown was 6'5". Officer Wilson is 6". The only way that you have an upward trajectory is with the arm like this [Holds his hand up to shoulder height, palm facing forward] and the shots fired. And you have two shots that strike Michael Brown in the chest, and they both have a downward trajectory. How do you get that with a 6'5" guy being shot by a 6' guy? And then you have two wounds in the head that are parallel to the ground. When you put the body on the table, they're perpendicular. The only way you can get that is that his body is continuing to fall. The scenario is that Michael Brown was shot first in the arm, then as he is beginning to fall he is shot in the chest, and as he continues to fall he is shot in the head. And then he falls prone. He's 30-35' away. What happened at the car is significant mostly of all because, and no one talks about this, for what was Officer Darren Wilson's attitude? Was he teed off? "This kid has just struggled with me with my gun" and the kid is now 30-35' away. He's unarmed, he's in short pants and a t-shirt. Where is this imminent threat? If he believes that this kid is a threat to his life then how in the world can he be out there as a police officer, dealing with people that have weapons, people that are really berserk, and people that really pose a serious threat? No, this is an absurd scenario as far as I'm concerned, in terms of Wilson's defense."

So let's step back a moment and examine this business of "hands up." Yes, Darren Wilson may have stuck to his story that Michael Brown was charging. But it seems like that must have been a lie, or the product of a fevered imagination. Nobody puts their hands up—while charging. And, to go to other versions spun by Darren Wilson, nobody puts their hands up while having one in a fist while reach in one's waistband for a gun that isn't there, while having their head down and charging.

You'd fall over.

You would look stupid.

And then, Darren Wilson would shoot you dead anyway.

A NOT VERY GRAND JURY

One of the drumbeats throughout "The Little Book of Lynching" is that each chapter could be a book. In the case of the killing of Michael Brown, you could go so far as to say that the entire saga of the Darren Wilson Grand Jury, could be a book unto itself. Students of the killing argue that there is abundant evidence that Prosecutor McCulloch should have recused himself. Let's

take a cursory glance at a few of the reasons, culled from pages and pages of material penned by legal experts, regarding why Prosecutor McCulloch should have recused himself:

The Missouri prosecutor overseeing the investigation into the fatal shooting of 18-year-old Michael Brown has deep family roots among police: his father, mother, brother, uncle and cousin have all worked for the St. Louis Police Department.

His father was killed while responding to a call involving a black suspect.

When the county police were clearly overreacting in handling the protests immediately following the killing, and Governor Jay Nixon called in the state highway patrol to calm the situation down, McCulloch loudly and publicly criticized him for "denigrating the men and women of the county police."

Back in June of 2000, protesters questioned his objectivity when grand jurors returned no charges against two officers who fired 21 bullets into a vehicle, killing two black men during an attempted drug arrest. (The details: " In 2000, in the so-called 'Jack in the Box' case, two undercover officers, a uniformed officer and a Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) officer, shot and killed two unarmed black men in the parking lot of a Jack in the Box fast-food restaurant in Berkeley, Missouri. In 2001, the officers told a grand jury convened by McCulloch that the suspects tried to escape arrest and then drove toward them; the jury declined to indict. McCulloch told the public that every witness had testified to confirm this version, but [St. Louis Post-Dispatch](#) journalist Michael Sorkin reviewed the previously secret grand jury tapes, released to him by McCulloch, and found that McCulloch's statement was untrue: only three of 13 officers testified that the car was moving forward. A subsequent federal investigation found that the men were unarmed and that their car had not moved forward when the officers fired 21 shots; nevertheless, federal investigators decided that the shooting was justified because the officers feared for their safety. McCulloch also drew controversy when he said of the victims: 'These guys were bums.'" —this excerpted from the Wikipedia entry on Prosecutor Robert McCulloch.)

But in spite of all the above points, Prosecutor McCulloch announced that he felt no need to recuse himself, and the powers that be in Ferguson thought that was just fine.

The grand jury proceedings were so filled with mistakes, document dumping, willful misleading of jurors, and a shockingly apathetic prosecutorial attitude towards extremely problematic witnesses, that it is amazing anybody took the grand jury proceedings seriously. It is worth noting that *one of the jurors is suing*.

But for the purposes of this chapter, let's just focus on two appalling, overwhelming, almost unbelievable acts on the part of McCulloch which make it fairly clear that he had no intention of seeking justice in this case, or of seeing to it that the truth came out. Darren Wilson was never

going to see an indictment. If anybody was going to have their character assassinated during the long ordeal of the Grand Jury, Prosecutor McCulloch seemed determined that it would be Michael Brown.

Perhaps the most eloquent “indictment” of Prosecutor McCulloch was aired by Lawrence O’Donnell of MSNBC. But, first, let us give you the corruption in a nutshell.

As you probably know, the grand jury is to be given instructions before they begin their work. *Now imagine that it serves your agenda for the jury to go by a thirty year old statute that is so corrupt and unjust that it has long since been struck down by the United States Supreme Court.* But, while Lady Justice naps, an old, dusty book of statutes just happens to fall off the shelf, containing the three-decades-old statute, so “cruel and unusual” that it was struck down by the highest justices in the land ...and then quite “by accident”, your assistants Xerox off a stack of copies of this now-void statute and distribute it to the jurors as “their instructions”, just, oh, not noticing that what you (the prosecutor’s office) are doing is quite illegal, and drastically lowers the bar for Officer Darren Wilson—thereby rendering it nearly impossible for him to be indicted for homicide.

Political analyst Lawrence O’Donnell provides us with a thorough analysis of the mind-bogglingly unethical “mistake” that the prosecution made by giving the jury the wrong instructions, prior to beginning the weeks-long proceedings. (And no, neither myself, Lawrence O’Donnell, nor any reasonable person would or could believe that this act was a true “mistake.”)

LAWRENCE O’DONNELL TRANSCRIPTS

Before Officer Darren Wilson testified before the grand jury investigating his killing of Michael Brown, the assistant district attorney handling the case said this to the grand jurors:

"I'm going to pass out to you all, you are all going to receive a copy of a statute. It is section 563.046, and it is, it says 'Law enforcement officers' use of force in making an arrest.' And it is the law on what is permissible, what force is permissible and when, in making an arrest by a police officer."

The Assistant District Attorney Kathy Alizadeh then handed the grand jury a copy of a 1979 Missouri Law that was **ruled unconstitutional by the United States Supreme Court in 1985**. She was handing them something that had not been Law in Missouri during her entire legal career.

But it was very helpful to Officer Darren Wilson that the assistant district attorney handed the jury an old unconstitutional law **which said, incorrectly, that it is legal to shoot fleeing suspects simply because they are fleeing**. By handing the grand jury that unconstitutional law, the

assistant district attorney dramatically lowered the standard by which Darren Wilson could be judged.

She was telling the grand jury with that document that Darren Wilson had the right, the legal right, to shoot and kill Michael Brown, as soon as Michael Brown started running away from him.

She was telling the grand jury that Darren Wilson didn't have to feel his life was threatened at all by Michael Brown. She was taking the hurdle that Darren Wilson had to get over in his testimony and flattening it. She was making it impossible for Darren Wilson to fail in front of this grand jury. She was doing all of that by handing the grand jury a "so-called law" that has ***never been the Law of Missouri during her entire legal career.***

The portion of the Missouri Law (Chapter 563.064) that has been ruled unconstitutional says that a police officer is "...justified in the use of such physical force as he or she reasonably believes is immediately necessary to effect the arrest or to prevent the escape from custody."

That was ruled unconstitutional by the US Supreme Court in 1985. It was legal to shoot and kill fleeing suspects in most states, until the Supreme Court made it illegal in 1985. And everyone in law enforcement knows that. Everyone except the two ADA's who were presenting the evidence to the grand jury in one of the most important cases of police use of deadly force in this country since 1985.

There is nothing more helpful the ADA could have done for Officer Darren Wilson before, right before his testimony, than show that incorrect, outdated, unconstitutional Law to the grand jury. The grand jury then listened to Officer Wilson's testimony with the belief that anything he did to Michael Brown would be fully justified legally, simply because Michael Brown at some point ran away from Officer Wilson.

There was a time when that's all you had to do in America to be legally shot and killed by a police officer; just run away from the officer. In those days American police were summarily executing people in the streets for suspicion of crimes that, if they were convicted for, they would not have gotten the death penalty, and in many case, not even gone to jail.

Kids jumping out of stolen cars and running away from cops could be legally shot in the back and killed in those days for a crime that obviously did not carry the death penalty. There was actually one case of a man who spit on a police officer, then ran away from the police officer and was legally shot and killed by the police officer. Spitting on a police officer was a crime in that state but it did not carry the death penalty, unless you ran away from the officer.

The District Attorney's Office allowed the grand jurors to travel back in time to the 'good ol' days' of American law enforcement, when the cops could shoot people for running away. Before Darren Wilson was born; that's how far back in time they went. The ADA's did that by using the old unconstitutional law as the window through which these grand jurors would evaluate Darren Wilson's conduct.

The grand jury listened to the officer's testimony believing that, according to the law, Michael Brown did not have to pose any kind of threat to Officer Wilson, to justify Officer Wilson shooting him dead.

Weeks after Officer Wilson testified; several weeks after that, just as the grand jury was about to consider what charges they might vote for, the ADA Kathy Alizadeh knew that she had better amend the record of these proceedings by introducing to the grand jury the real law. The accurate law on "Police Use of Deadly Force in Missouri."

And so she told the grand jury ...

Grand Jury Instructions, November 21, 2014:

MS. ALIZADEH, ASSISTANT PROSECUTOR: "Previously, in the very beginning of this process, I printed out a statute for you that was, the statute in Missouri for the use of force to affect an arrest. So if you all want to get those out. What we have discovered and we have been going along with this, doing our research, is that the statute in the state of Missouri does not comply with the case law. This doesn't sound probably unfamiliar with you that the law is codified in the written form in the books and they're called statutes, but courts interpret those statutes. And so the statute for the use of force to affect an arrest in the state of Missouri does not comply with Missouri supreme, I'm sorry, United States Supreme Court cases. So the statute I gave you, if you want to fold that in half, just so that you know don't necessarily rely on that because there is a portion of that that doesn't comply with the law."

She then handed out to the Grand jury a new document explaining the Law on police officers use of force, and then said, *"That does correctly state what the law is on when an officer can use force and when he can use deadly force in affecting an arrest, okay? I don't want you to get confused and don't rely on that copy or that print-out of the statute that I've given you a long time ago. It is not entirely incorrect or inaccurate, but there is something in it that's not correct, ignore it totally."*

A grand juror then asked. *"The Supreme Court, federal court overrides Missouri statutes?"*

Now we all learned the answer to that in high school, it is one word - Yes

That is why we no longer have segregated schools in this country. The Supreme Court said it was unconstitutional and illegal to have segregated schools, and that is the only reason states like Mississippi and Alabama and yes, Missouri no longer have segregated schools.

But the ADA, when asked the simplest question that she could possibly be asked by a grand juror – ***"does the Supreme Court override Missouri statutes?"*** - couldn't bring herself to say a simple truthful - Yes. Instead she actually said, quote, ***"just don't worry about that"*** . Her full reply word for word was, ***"As far as you need to know, just don't worry about that"***.

The other ADA in the room added *"We don't want to get into a law class."*

America already had a "law class" on this when Alabama governor George Wallace stood in the doorway to prevent the first black students from attending class at the University of Alabama because the United States Supreme Court had ruled states' segregation laws to be unconstitutional. The federal government crushed the little, powerless, angry governor of Alabama when he needed to be crushed in that doorway by the righteous power of the US Supreme Court and the federal government.

It doesn't take a 'law class' to explain to a grand juror that Yes, the United States Supreme Court does indeed override Missouri statutes.

It takes one word: Yes.

But that is not the worst, most unprofessional aspect of ADA Kathy Alizadeh's presentation to the Grand jury about this law. The very worst part of it is that she never, ever explained to the Grand jury what was incorrect about the unconstitutional statute that she had given them, and left with them as one of their official papers for weeks and weeks and weeks.

You will not find another legal proceeding in which jurors and grand jurors are simply handed a law, and then weeks later handed a correction to that law; and then the grand jurors are simply left to figure out the difference in the laws ... by themselves. That is actually something you would do in a law class - figure it out by yourself.

With prosecutors like this, Darren Wilson never really needed a defense lawyer.

(end of Lawrence O'Donnell transcript)

Now, rather than spending countless pages analyzing the travesty that took place during the grand jury proceedings, all nefariously guided by the biased and bigoted hand of Prosecutor McCullough, we will just offer you this one shining example, in addition to those bogus instructions exposed above. As you read about this witness that McCulloch groomed and then allowed to testify, keep in mind, many of the witnesses to the killing of Michael Brown had been “discredited” by the time that the grand jury convened.

THE BIZARRE STORY OF WITNESS #40

Witness Number #40. Infamous. Ridiculous. Dangerous. And as clear an example of proof of the corruption within the system that we can offer up to a witnessing world. That McCulloch even let this bizarre, perjuring, and mentally unstable woman taken the stand is nearly impossible to grasp.

Here’s what you need to know about her. About Sandra McElroy:

—She lives about 30 miles from Ferguson, so naturally people were curious about what she happened to be doing on Canfield Drive, at that fateful hour. At first, she told police that she happened to be there to visit an old friend, whom she knew from decades ago. Uh, OK. But then she admitted that she had lied about that. (When pressed, she admitted she had no address or phone number for her “old friend.”) So she changed her story: she was really in town to learn about “niggers”. Uhuh. She back peddled, and said that she considered herself “an amateur anthropologist”, and that she was just in the area to study the dark skinned people who clustered there. So that was her first lie.

Details: Sandra McElroy explained her random, surprise visit to Michael Brown’s turf (lucky neighbors!) in a journal she kept, which is the first of many glimpses into her racism, and into her psychosis. According to her [special little journal](#), which she somehow managed to present to the grand jury without actually dying of shame:

“Well Im gonna take my random drive to Florissant. Need to understand the Black race better so I stop calling Blacks Niggers and Start calling them people.”

And she’s the one who considers black people inferior.

What is interesting about her special little journal is that in numerous interviews, including interviews with the police, two Department of Justice prosecutors, and the F.B.I. (who were very skeptical of her entire interview, and reminded her of the penalties for perjury), she didn’t

mention the journal. She only brought it up when talking to the grand jury, and was able to produce it for them eleven days later.

Posting racist comments on social media is kind of a hobby for McElroy, the way some people enjoy Candy Crush or Farmville. Once, she saw a video showing two black women passing out after being sentenced for murder, she wrote, ***“Put them monkeys in a cage.”*** On another occasion, she saw a YouTube about a woman who had gone missing. This woman just happened to have a black husband. McElroy commented: ***“See what happens when you bed down with a monkey have ape babies and party with them.”***

On September 14, she commented on a Facebook post about the Michael Brown case: *“But haven’t you heard the news. There great great great grandpa may or may not have been owned by one of our great great great grandpas 200 years ago.”*

Sandra McElroy is just a fountain of racism. And you would have thought that this would make Prosecutor McCulloch somewhat dubious about using her as a witness. But no ... she was in fact kind of a “star witness”, getting to testify twice.

Oh, and in case you’re wondering, don’t imagine that cops were talking to McElroy on the sidewalk just minutes or hours after the fateful shooting. Nope. She waited a month (September 11th) to contact the police with “her version” of what happened between Wilson and Brown, long after Wilson’s account was all over the internet. In point of fact—and at this juncture, I admit to possibly being guilty of burying the lede:

THERE IS NO EVIDENCE WHATSOEVER THAT SANDY MCELROY, AKA WITNESS # 40, WAS ANYWHERE NEAR THE SHOOTING OF MICHAEL BROWN BY DARREN WILSON.

Consider this: in an environment swarming with officers, witnesses, and bystanders, nobody saw her there. The police did not see her there, to approach her as a potential witness. And she did not approach an officer to give her version of events, even though in subsequent weeks, it would become obsessively important to her.

And also consider these following points of fact:

—On September 13th, Sandy McElroy [*posted a collage*](#) on a pro-Wilson Facebook page, of her own making, showing the picture of Darren Wilson receiving the aforementioned award (for doing to a suspect exactly what witnesses claim he did to Michael Brown), and to the right of that picture, a picture of Michael Brown’s dead body laid out on the street. The caption boldly read: **[*“MICHAEL BROWN ALREADY RECEIVED JUSTICE, SO PLEASE STOP ASKING FOR IT.”*](#)**

—McElroy has a criminal record. She pleaded guilty to two counts of check fraud, once in 2007, and once in 2004.

—McElroy admits to having been diagnosed as bi-polar, and also admits that she elected to stop taking her medication. She also testified that she had been in a car accident back in 2001 which severely damaged her memory. Why someone would admit to such a thing, when they had such a clear zeal to be a champion for celebrity Darren Wilson, who knows—but then again look at whom we are dealing with.

—She concocted an in-depth and bizarre story about her connection to an actual kidnapping that took place in 2007. It involved the kidnapping of Shawn Hornbeck, who was kept prisoner for four years by Michael Devlin, who is now serving a life sentence. Sandra McElroy told the police she had valuable information, and had seen Shawn with Michael. It was all lies. Lies, and self-aggrandizement, and a chance for the limelight.

The police were fully apprised of all the above grotesqueries, bigotries, and lies, as was Prosecutor McCulloch, when they groomed her to be one of their star witnesses.

And that is when Lady Justice Wept.

This person, this mentally unstable bundle of hatred and dark fantasies, who seems pathologically incapable of telling the truth, is the person whom Prosecutor McCulloch chose to put on the stand as a “witness”, to corroborate Darren Wilson’s account of events. Her story, you see, most closely dovetailed with Darren Wilson’s version of the killing—a version which both the laws of physics, and Wilson’s direct superior, contradict in the extreme: on even more than one occasion, the august Federal Bureau of Investigation questioned McElroy thoroughly, and caught her up in dozens of lies, but this did not dissuade McCulloch.

She had been thoroughly discredited by the time she was asked to speak in front of the grand jury. And Prosecutor McCulloch knew all of this. Nonetheless he groomed her, and propped her up in front of well-meaning jurors, and then she proceeded to do exactly what McCulloch had wanted her to do all along: she thoroughly corroborated Darren Wilson’s version of events—no big feat, as Darren Wilson’s story had been all over the news for weeks now.

SANDRA MCELROY, AN AFTERWARD

It quickly became a viral matter that McElroy, in her generosity of spirit, had started a Facebook page to raise money for The Cause. Under oath, she was a touch vague about exactly what that cause was, explaining that it was not for Darren Wilson per say, but really just for all the fine boys in blue, out there in Ferguson, who had been through so much and put in such long hours.

And, not being anti-cop myself, as I explained in the introduction to this book, I don't even think that's such a bad idea, fundraising for police in general. Only a couple of problems. McElroy's "non-profit", which she advertises as being one, is not registered with the state of Missouri. They have no record of it ever existing. Nonetheless, for a time there, she was advertising it and hyping it all over the internet. The other problem with McElroy's "First Responder's Support" fundraising cause is that it has had zero accountability. Nobody was able to find out how much she raised, and—of course you see this one coming—nobody knows what she did with all that money.

And now, pray tell, I am begging you, Bob McCulloch, what the hell did the other witnesses have to do, to actually get discredited? Was it that they were discovered to have actually been in Thailand in a seedy brothel having sex with minors while feeding baggies full of drugs to donkeys to be shipped back for distribution to preschoolers, at or around the time they claimed to have witnessed the killing of Michael Brown?

Or were those witnesses just...oh...perhaps....black?

THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE VISITS FERGUSON

One of the many consequences of the shooting of Michael Brown, and the civil unrest that followed, was that the United States Department of Justice decided to step in and conduct a thorough investigation of the practices and alleged abuses of the Ferguson Police Department, and the Ferguson Municipal Court system. On March 4th 2015, the D.O.J. released their report, which concluded that the Ferguson Police had willfully and deliberately engaged in a pattern of misconduct against the citizens of Ferguson, particularly in regard to African-Americans, and the more impoverished and powerless of its citizens.

Below, please find excerpts from the D.O.J. investigation into the Ferguson Police Department. Everything below is verbatim from the transcripts, with the exception of capitalized words at the beginning of each entry, which suggest to the reader a topic, for future reference. I personally believe that there is enough evidence in the D.O.J. report to convince any reasonable person that there is systematic and systemic racism operating within the Ferguson Police Department, as well as an ongoing modus operandi within the Ferguson government to use to citizens, most especially the poor, as the city's personal "ATM" machine. A link to the full report follows this paragraph.

DOJ Report on City of Ferguson

EXCERPTED FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE REPORT OF March 4th 2015

POLICE PRACTICES

AFRICAN AMERICANS vs. NORMAL PEOPLE: Some city officials and residents we spoke with explicitly distinguished Ferguson's African American residents from Ferguson's "normal" residents or "regular" people." (p.76)

SUNDOWN TOWN: Until the 1960s, Ferguson was a "sundown town" where African Americans were banned from the City after dark. The City would block off the main road from Kinloch, which was a poor, all-black suburb, "with a chain and construction materials but kept a second road open during the day so housekeepers and nannies could get from Kinloch to jobs in Ferguson." During our investigative interviews, several older African-American residents recalled this era in Ferguson and recounted that African Americans knew that, for them, the City was "off-limits." (p. 76)

YEARS OF MISTREATMENT AND MISTRUST: Our investigation showed that the disconnect and distrust between much of Ferguson's African-American community and FPD is caused largely by years of the unlawful and unfair law enforcement practices by Ferguson's police department and municipal court described above. In the documents we reviewed, the meetings we observed and participated in, and in the hundreds of conversations Civil Rights Division staff had with residents of Ferguson and the surrounding area, many residents, primarily African-American residents, described being belittled, disbelieved, and treated with little regard for their legal rights by the Ferguson Police Department. (p. 79)

WHITE RESIDENT CONFIRMS HARASSMENT: One white individual who has lived in Ferguson for 48 years told us that it feels like Ferguson's police and court system is "designed to bring a black man down ... [there are] no second chances." We heard from African-American residents who told us of Ferguson's "long history of targeting blacks for harassment and degrading treatment," and who described the steps they take to avoid this—from taking routes to work that skirt Ferguson to moving out of state. An African-American minister of a church in a nearby community told us that he doesn't allow his two sons to drive through Ferguson out of "fear that they will be targeted for arrest." (p. 79)

TRAFFIC STOP STATISTICS: In 2001, for example, African Americans comprised about the same proportion of the population as whites, but while stops of white drivers accounted for 1,495 stops, African Americans accounted for 3,426, more than twice as many. While a white person stopped that year was searched in 6% of cases, a black person stopped was searched in 14% of cases. That same year, searches of whites resulted in a contraband finding in 21% of cases, but searches of African Americans only resulted in a contraband finding in 16% of cases. Similar

disparities were identified in most other years, with varying degrees of magnitude. In any event, the data reveals a pattern of racial disparities in Ferguson's police activities. That pattern appears to have been ignored by Ferguson officials. (p. 77)

AFRICAN AMERICANS CHARGED IN HIGHER PROPORTIONS: While African Americans make up 67% of Ferguson's population, they make up 95% of Manner of Walking in Roadway charges; 94% of Failure to Comply charges; 92% of Resisting Arrest charges; 92% of Peace Disturbance charges; and 89% of Failure to Obey charges ... These disparities mean that African Americans in Ferguson bear the overwhelming burden of FPD's pattern of unlawful stops, searches, and arrests with respect to these highly discretionary ordinances. (p. 67)

PROPORTION OF POPULATION: From October 2012 till July 2014, African Americans comprised 85 percent—or 30,525,— of all charges brought by the FPD.—including traffic citations, summonses, and arrest (p. 66)

MULTIPLE CITATIONS PER INCIDENT HIGHER AMONG BLACKS: The substantial racial disparities that exist within the data collected from traffic stops are consistent with the disparities found throughout FPD's practices. As discussed above, our investigation found that FPD officers frequently make discretionary choices to issue multiple citations during a single incident. Setting aside the fact that, in some cases, citations are redundant and impose duplicative penalties for the same offense, the issuance of multiple citations also disproportionately impacts African Americans. In 2013, for instance, more than 50% of all African Americans cited received multiple citations during a single encounter with FPD, whereas only 26% of non-African Americans did. Specifically, 26% of African Americans receiving a citation received two citations at once, whereas only 17% of white individuals received two citations at once. Those disparities are even greater for incidents that resulted in more than two citations: 15% of African Americans cited received three citations at the same time, whereas 6% of cited whites received three citations; and while 10% of cited African Americans received four or more citations at once, only 3% of cited whites received that many during a single incident. Each of these disparities is statistically significant, and would occur by chance less than one time in 1,000. Indeed, related data from an overlapping time period shows that, between October 2012 to July 2014, 38 black individuals received four citations during a single incident, compared with only two white individuals; and while 35 black individuals received five or more citations at once, not a single white person did. (p. 66)

CONTRABAND: Despite being searched at higher rates, African Americans are 26% less likely to have contraband found on them than whites: (p. 4)

INFORMATION IS OMMITTED or FABRICATED ON CITATIONS: Many times, FPD officers omit critical information from the citation, which makes it impossible for a person to determine the specific nature of the offense charged, the amount of the fine owed, or whether a

court appearance is required or some alternative method of payment is available. In some cases, citations fail to indicate the offense charged altogether; in November 2013, for instance, court staff wrote FPD patrol to “see what [a] ticket was for” because it “does not have a charge on it.” In other cases, a ticket will indicate a charge but omit other crucial information. For example, speeding tickets often fail to indicate the alleged speed observed, even though both the fine owed and whether a court appearance is mandatory depends upon the specific speed alleged. Evidence shows that in some of these cases, a person has appeared in court but been unable to resolve the citation because of the missing information. In June 2014, for instance, a court clerk wrote to an FPD officer: “The above ticket ... does not have a speed in it. The guy came in and we had to send him away. Can you email me the speed when you get time.” Separate and apart from the difficulties these omissions create for people, the fact that the court staff routinely adds the speed to tickets weeks after they are issued raises concerns about the accuracy and reliability of officers’ assertions in official records. (pp. 45-46)

COURT FOR LAWN & LEAVES: Ferguson requires far more defendants to appear in court than is required under state law. Under Missouri Supreme Court rules, there is a short list of violations that require the violator’s appearance in court: any violation resulting in personal injury or property damage; driving while intoxicated, driving without a proper license, and attempting to elude a police officer ...The municipal judge of each court has the discretion to expand this list of “must appears,” and Ferguson’s municipal court has expanded it exponentially: of 376 actively charged municipal offenses, court staff informed us that approximately 229 typically require an appearance in court before the fine can be paid, including Dog Creating Nuisance, Equipment Violations, No Passing Zone, Housing – Overgrown Vegetation, and Failure to Remove Leaf Debris. (p. 48)

OLD PEOPLE & POOR PEOPLE: Ferguson’s municipal court practices combine to cause significant harm to many individuals who have cases pending before the court. Our investigation has found overwhelming evidence of minor municipal code violations resulting in multiple arrests, jail time, and payments that exceed the cost of the original ticket many times over. One woman, discussed above, received two parking tickets for a single violation in 2007 that then totaled \$151 plus fees. Over seven years later, she still owed Ferguson \$541—after already paying \$550 in fines and fees, having multiple arrest warrants issued against her, and being arrested and jailed on several occasions. Another woman told us that when she went to court to try to pay \$100 on a \$600 outstanding balance, the Court Clerk refused to take the partial payment, even though the woman explained that she was a single mother and could not afford to pay more that month. A 90-year-old man had a warrant issued for his arrest after he failed to timely pay the five citations FPD issued to him during a single traffic stop in 2013. An 83-year-old man had a warrant issued against him when he failed to timely resolve his Derelict Auto violation. A 67-year-old woman told us she was stopped and arrested by a Ferguson police officer for an outstanding warrant for failure to pay a trash-removal citation. She did not know

about the warrant until her arrest, and the court ultimately charged her \$1,000 in fines, which she continues to pay off in \$100 monthly increments despite being on a limited, fixed income. We have heard similar stories from dozens of other individuals and have reviewed court records documenting many additional instances of similarly harsh penalties, often for relatively minor violations. (p. 42)

WOMAN PARKING TICKETS: We spoke, for example, with an African-American woman who has a still-pending case stemming from 2007, when, on a single occasion, she parked her car illegally. She received two citations and a \$151 fine, plus fees. The woman, who experienced financial difficulties and periods of homelessness over several years, was charged with seven Failure to Appear offenses for missing court dates or fine payments on her parking tickets between 2007 and 2010. For each Failure to Appear, the court issued an arrest warrant and imposed new fines and fees. From 2007 to 2014, the woman was arrested twice, spent six days in jail, and paid \$550 to the court for the events stemming from this single instance of illegal parking. Court records show that she twice attempted to make partial payments of \$25 and \$50, but the court returned those payments, refusing to accept anything less than payment in full. One of those payments was later accepted, but only after the court's letter rejecting payment by money order was returned as undeliverable. This woman is now making regular payments on the fine. As of December 2014, over seven years later, despite initially owing a \$151 fine and having already paid \$550, she still owed \$541. (p. 4)

PAUSING FOR COPS, TICKETED: We spoke with one woman who received three citations during a single incident in 2013 in which she pulled to the side of the road to allow a police car to pass, was confronted by the officer for doing so, and was cited for obstructing traffic, failing to signal, and not wearing a seatbelt. The woman appeared in court to challenge those citations, was told a new trial date would be mailed to her, and instead received notice from the Missouri Department of Revenue several months later that her license was suspended. Upon informing the Court Clerk that she never received notice of her court date, the Clerk told her the trial date had passed two weeks earlier and that there was now a warrant for her arrest pending. Given that the woman's license was suspended only two weeks after her trial date, it appears the court did not send a warning letter before entering a warrant and suspending the license, contrary to purported policy. Court records likewise do not indicate a letter being sent. The woman asked to see the Municipal Judge to explain the situation, but court staff informed her that she could only see the Judge if she was issued a new court date and that she would only be issued a new court date if she paid her \$200 bond. (pp. 50-51)

DOMESTIC ABUSE: In one instance, for example, a woman called FPD to report a domestic disturbance. By the time the police arrived, the woman's boyfriend had left. The police looked through the house and saw indications that the boyfriend lived there. When the woman told police that only she and her brother were listed on the home's occupancy permit, the officer

placed the woman under arrest for the permit violation and she was jailed. In another instance, after a woman called police to report a domestic disturbance and was given a summons for an occupancy permit violation, she said, according to the officer's report, that she "hated the Ferguson Police Department and will never call again, even if she is being killed." (p. 81)

VERBAL ABUSE / INTIMIDATION: At times, the constitutional violations are even more blatant. An African-American man recounted to us an experience he had while sitting at a bus stop near Canfield Drive. According to the man, an FPD patrol car abruptly pulled up in front of him. The officer inside, a patrol lieutenant, rolled down his window and addressed the man:

Lieutenant: Get over here.

Bus Patron: Me?

Lieutenant: Get the f*** over here. Yeah, you.

Bus Patron: Why? What did I do?

Lieutenant: Stop being a smartass and give me your ID.

The lieutenant ran the man's name for warrants. Finding none, he returned the ID and said, "get the hell out of my face." These allegations are consistent with other, independent allegations of misconduct that we heard about this particular lieutenant, and reflect the routinely disrespectful treatment many African Americans say they have come to expect from Ferguson police. That a lieutenant with supervisory responsibilities allegedly engaged in this conduct is further cause for concern. (p. 17, 18)

CHURCH & PIZZA: In another case, an officer investigating a report of a theft at a dollar store interrogated a minister pumping gas into his church van about the theft. The man alleged that he provided his identification to the officer and offered to return to the store to prove he was not the thief. The officer instead handcuffed the man and drove him to the store. The store clerk reported that the detained man was not the thief, but the officer continued to keep the man cuffed, allegedly calling him "f*****g stupid" for asking to be released from the cuffs ... In still another case, a lieutenant of a neighboring agency called FPD to report that a pizza parlor owner had complained to him that an off-duty FPD officer had become angry upon being told that police discounts were only given to officers in uniform and said to the restaurant owner as he was leaving, "I hope you get robbed!" The allegation was not considered a complaint and instead, despite its seriousness, was handled through counseling at the squad level. (p. 85)

ABUSIVE TREATMENT OF LOVED ONE'S AT ACCIDENT SCENES: We also reviewed many instances in which FPD officers arrested individuals who sought to care for loved ones who had been hurt. In one instance from May 2014, for example, a man rushed to the scene of a

car accident involving his girlfriend, who was badly injured and bleeding profusely when he arrived. He approached and tried to calm her. When officers arrived they treated him rudely, according to the man, telling him to move away from his girlfriend, which he did not want to do. They then immediately proceeded to handcuff and arrest him, which, officers assert, he resisted. EMS and other officers were not on the scene during this arrest, so the accident victim remained unattended, bleeding from her injuries, while officers were arresting the boyfriend. Officers charged the man with five municipal code violations (Resisting Arrest, Disorderly Conduct, Assault on an Officer, Obstructing Government Operations, and Failure to Comply) and had his vehicle towed and impounded. In an incident from 2013, a woman sought to reach her fiancé, who was in a car accident. After she refused to stay on the sidewalk as the officer ordered, she was arrested and jailed. While it is sometimes both essential and difficult to keep distraught family from being in close proximity to their loved ones on the scene of an accident, there is rarely a need to arrest and jail them rather than, at most, detain them on the scene. (p. 81, 82)

MISTAKEN IDENTITY: In another case from March 2013, officers responded to the police station to take custody of a person wanted on a state warrant. When they arrived, they encountered a different man—not the subject of the warrant—who happened to be leaving the station. Having nothing to connect the man to the warrant subject, other than his presence at the station, the officers nonetheless stopped him and asked that he identify himself. The man asserted his rights, asking the officers “Why do you need to know?” and declining to be frisked. When the man then extended his identification toward the officers, at their request, the officers interpreted his hand motion as an attempted assault and took him to the ground. Without articulating reasonable suspicion or any other justification for the initial detention, the officers arrested the man on two counts of Failure to Comply and two counts of Resisting Arrest. (p. 21)

DON'T PASS OUT MOTHERFUCKER: This documentary evidence of explicit racial bias is consistent with reports from community members indicating that some FPD officers use racial epithets in dealing with members of the public. We spoke with one African-American man who, in August 2014, had an argument in his apartment to which FPD officers responded, and was immediately pulled out of the apartment by force. After telling the officer, “you don’t have a reason to lock me up,” he claims the officer responded: “N*****, I can find something to lock you up on.” When the man responded, “good luck with that,” the officer slammed his face into the wall, and after the man fell to the floor, the officer said, “don’t pass out motherf****r because I’m not carrying you to my car.” Another young man described walking with friends in July 2014 past a group of FPD officers who shouted racial epithets at them as they passed. (p.73)

FALSE ARREST AND BATTERY: In a January 2014 incident, officers attempted to arrest a young African-American man for trespassing on his girlfriend’s grandparents’ property, even though the man had been invited into the home by the girlfriend. According to officers, he resisted arrest, requiring several officers to subdue him. Seven officers repeatedly struck and

used their ECWs against the subject, who was 5'8" and 170 pounds. The young man suffered head lacerations with significant bleeding. (p.34)

TRUCKTASER: In January 2013, a patrol sergeant stopped an African-American man after he saw the man talk to an individual in a truck and then walk away. The sergeant detained the man, although he did not articulate any reasonable suspicion that criminal activity was afoot. When the man declined to answer questions or submit to a frisk—which the sergeant sought to execute despite articulating no reason to believe the man was armed—the sergeant grabbed the man by the belt, drew his ECW, and ordered the man to comply. The man crossed his arms and objected that he had not done anything wrong. Video captured by the ECW's built-in camera shows that the man made no aggressive movement toward the officer. The sergeant fired the ECW, applying a five-second cycle of electricity and causing the man to fall to the ground. The sergeant almost immediately applied the ECW again, which he later justified in his report by claiming that the man tried to stand up. The video makes clear, however, that the man never tried to stand—he only writhed in pain on the ground. The video also shows that the sergeant applied the ECW nearly continuously for 20 seconds, longer than represented in his report. The man was charged with Failure to Comply and Resisting Arrest, but no independent criminal violation. (p.34)

BASKETBALL PEDOPHILE: Even relatively routine misconduct by Ferguson police officers can have significant consequences for the people whose rights are violated. For example, in the summer of 2012, a 32-year-old African-American man sat in his car cooling off after playing basketball in a Ferguson public park. An officer pulled up behind the man's car, blocking him in, and demanded the man's Social Security number and identification. Without any cause, the officer accused the man of being a pedophile, referring to the presence of children in the park, and ordered the man out of his car for a pat-down, although the officer had no reason to believe the man was armed. The officer also asked to search the man's car. The man objected, citing his constitutional rights. In response, the officer arrested the man, reportedly at gunpoint, charging him with eight violations of Ferguson's municipal code. One charge, Making a False Declaration, was for initially providing the short form of his first name (e.g., "Mike" instead of "Michael"), and an address which, although legitimate, was different from the one on his driver's license. Another charge was for not wearing a seat belt, even though he was seated in a parked car. The officer also charged the man both with having an expired operator's license, and with having no operator's license in his possession. The man told us that, because of these charges, he lost his job as a contractor with the federal government that he had held for years. (p. 3)

UNNECESSARY AND ABUSIVE USE OF CANINE UNITS BY POLICE: FPD currently has four canines, each assigned to a particular canine officer. Under FPD policy, canines are to be used to locate and apprehend "dangerous offenders." When offenders are hiding, the policy states, "handlers will not allow their K-9 to engage a suspect by biting if a lower level of force could reasonably be expected to control the suspect or allow for the apprehension." The policy

also permits the use of a canine, however, when any crime—not just a felony or violent crime—has been committed. This permissiveness, combined with the absence of meaningful supervisory review and an apparent tendency to overstate the threat based on race, has resulted in avoidable dog bites to low-level offenders when other means of control were available.

In December 2011, officers deployed a canine to bite an unarmed 14-year-old African American boy who was waiting in an abandoned house for his friends. Four officers, including a canine officer, responded to the house mid-morning after a caller reported that people had gone inside. Officers arrested one boy on the ground level. Describing the offense as a burglary in progress even though the facts showed that the only plausible offense was trespassing, the canine officer's report stated that the dog located a second boy hiding in a storage closet under the stairs in the basement. The officer peeked into the space and saw the boy, who was 5'5" and 140 pounds, curled up in a ball, hiding. According to the officer, the boy would not show his hands despite being warned that the officer would use the dog. The officer then deployed the dog, which bit the boy's arm, causing puncture wounds. According to the boy, with whom we spoke, he never hid in a storage space and he never heard any police warnings. He told us that he was waiting for his friends in the basement of the house, a vacant building where they would go when they skipped school. The boy approached the stairs when he heard footsteps on the upper level, thinking his friends had arrived. When he saw the dog at the top of the steps, he turned to run, but the dog quickly bit him on the ankle and then the thigh, causing him to fall to the floor. The dog was about to bite his face or neck but instead got his left arm, which the boy had raised to protect himself. FPD officers struck him while he was on the ground, one of them putting a boot on the side of his head. He recalled the officers laughing about the incident afterward. (p. 31-32)

MUNICIPAL COURT PRACTICES

Ferguson has allowed its focus on revenue generation to fundamentally compromise the role of Ferguson's municipal court. The municipal court does not act as a neutral arbiter of the law or a check on unlawful police conduct. Instead, the court primarily uses its judicial authority as the means to compel the payment of fines and fees that advance the City's financial interests. This has led to court practices that violate the Fourteenth Amendment's due process and equal protection requirements. The court's practices also impose unnecessary harm, overwhelmingly on African-American individuals, and run counter to public safety.

Most strikingly, the court issues municipal arrest warrants not on the basis of public safety needs, but rather as a routine response to missed court appearances and required fine payments. In 2013 alone, the court issues over 9,000 warrants on cases stemming in large part from minor violations such as parking infractions, traffic tickets, or housing code violations. Jail time would be considered far too harsh a penalty for the great majority of these code violations, yet Ferguson's

municipal court routinely issues warrants for people to be arrested and incarcerated for failing to timely pay related fines and fees. Under state law, a failure to appear in municipal court on a traffic charge involving a moving violation also results in a license suspension. Ferguson has made this penalty even more onerous by only allowing the suspension to be lifted after payment of an owed fine is made in full. Further, until recently, Ferguson also added charges, fines, and fees for each missed appearance and payment. Many pending cases still include such charges that were imposed before the court recently eliminated them, making it as difficult as before for people to resolve these cases.

The court imposes these severe penalties for missed appearances and payments even as several of the court's practices create unnecessary barriers to resolving a municipal violation. The court often fails to provide clear and accurate information regarding a person's charges or court obligations. And the court's fine assessment procedures do not adequately provide for a defendant to seek a fine reduction on account of financial incapacity or to seek alternatives to keep those people that simply don't have the money to pay their fines from constantly being arrested and going to jail, only to be released and do it all over again.

Together, these court practices exacerbate the harm of Ferguson's unconstitutional police practices. They impose a particular hardship upon Ferguson's most vulnerable residents, especially upon those living in or near poverty. Minor offenses can generate crippling debts, result in jail time because of an inability to pay, and result in the loss of a driver's license, employment, or housing. (pp. 3-4)

EVIDENCE OF RACIAL STEREOTYPING

Several Ferguson officials told us during our investigation that it is a lack of "personal responsibility" among African-American members of the Ferguson community that causes African Americans to experience disproportionate harm under Ferguson's approach to law enforcement. Our investigation suggests that this explanation is at odd with the facts. While there are people of all races who may lack personal responsibility, the harm of Ferguson's approach to law enforcement is largely due to the myriad systemic deficiencies discussed above. Our investigation revealed African Americans making extraordinary efforts to pay off expensive tickets for minor, often unfairly charged, violations, despite systemic obstacles to resolving those tickets. While our investigation did not indicate that African Americans are disproportionately irresponsible, it did reveal that, as the above emails reflect, some Ferguson decision makers hold negative stereotypes about African Americans, and lack of personal responsibility is one of them. Application of this stereotype furthers the disproportionate impact of Ferguson's police and court practices. It causes court and police decision makers to discredit African Americans' explanations for not being able to pay tickets and allows officials to disown the harms of

Ferguson's law enforcement practices. The common practice among Ferguson officials of writing off tickets further evidences a double standard grounded in racial stereotyping. Even as Ferguson City officials maintain the harmful stereotype that black individuals lack personal responsibility—and continue to cite this lack of personal responsibility as the cause of the disparate impact of Ferguson's practices—white City officials condone a striking lack of personal responsibility among themselves and their friends. Court records and emails show City officials, including the Municipal Judge, the Court Clerk, and FPD supervisors assisting friends, colleagues, acquaintances, and themselves in eliminating citations, fines, and fees. For example: (pp. 73-74)

In October 2013, Judge Brockmeyer sent Ferguson's Prosecuting Attorney an email with the subject line "City of Hazelwood vs. Ronald Brockmeyer." The Judge wrote: "Pursuant to our conversation, attached please find the red light camera ticket received by the undersigned. I would appreciate it if you would please see to it that this ticket is dismissed." The Prosecuting Attorney, who also serves as prosecuting attorney in Hazelwood, responded: "I worked on red light matters today and dismissed the ticket that you sent over. Since I entered that into the system today, you may or may not get a second notice – you can just ignore that."

In August 2013, an FPD patrol supervisor wrote an email entitled "Oops" to the Prosecuting Attorney regarding a ticket his relative received in another municipality for traveling 59 miles per hour in a 40 miles-per-hour zone, noting "[h]aving it dismissed would be a blessing." The Prosecuting Attorney responded that the prosecutor of that other municipality promised to nolle pros the ticket. The supervisor responded with appreciation, noting that the dismissal "[c]ouldn't have come at a better time."

Also in August 2013, Ferguson's Mayor emailed the Prosecuting Attorney about a parking ticket received by an employee of a non-profit day camp for which the Mayor sometimes volunteers. The Mayor wrote that the person "shouldn't have left his car unattended there, but it was an honest mistake" and stated, "I would hate for him to have to pay for this, can you help?" The Prosecuting Attorney forwarded the email to the Court Clerk, instructing her to "NP [nolle prosequi, or not prosecute] this parking ticket."

In November 2011, a court clerk received a request from a friend to "fix a parking ticket" received by the friend's coworker's wife. After the ticket was faxed to the clerk, she replied: "It's gone baby!"

In March 2014, a friend of the Court Clerk's relative emailed the Court Clerk with a scanned copy of a ticket asking if there was anything she could do to help. She responded: "Your ticket of \$200 has magically disappeared!" Later, in June 2014, the same person emailed the Court Clerk regarding two tickets and asked: "Can you work your magic again? It would be deeply

appreciated.” The Clerk later informed him one ticket had been dismissed and she was waiting to hear back about the second ticket.

DIRECT EVIDENCE OF RACIAL BIAS

Our investigation uncovered direct evidence of racial bias in the communications of influential Ferguson decision makers. In email messages and during interviews, several court and law enforcement personnel expressed discriminatory views and intolerance with regard to race, religion, and national origin. The content of these communications is unequivocally derogatory, dehumanizing, and demonstrative of impermissible bias.

We have discovered evidence of racial bias in emails sent by Ferguson officials, all of whom are current employees, almost without exception through their official City of Ferguson email accounts, and apparently sent during work hours. These email exchanges involved several police and court supervisors, including FPD supervisors and commanders. The following emails are illustrative: (p. 72)

A November 2008 email stated that President Barack Obama would not be President for very long because “what black man holds a steady job for four years.”

A March 2010 email mocked African Americans through speech and familial stereotypes, using a story involving child support. One line from the email read: “I be so glad that dis be my last child support payment! Month after month, year after year, all dose payments!”

A June 2011 email described a man seeking to obtain “welfare” for his dogs because they are “mixed in color, unemployed, lazy, can’t speak English and have no frigging clue who their Daddies are.”

A May 2011 email stated: “An African-American woman in New Orleans was admitted into the hospital for a pregnancy termination. Two weeks later she received a check for \$5,000. She phoned the hospital to ask who it was from. The hospital said, ‘Crimestoppers.’”

An April 2011 email depicted President Barack Obama as a chimpanzee.

An October 2011 email included a photo of a bare-chested group of dancing women, apparently in Africa, with the caption, “Michelle Obama’s High School Reunion.”

THE UNREST IN FERGUSON

No chapter on Michael Brown would be complete without a look at the protests-turned-riots which set the city of Ferguson on fire.

Yes, we all remember the unrest. The violence. The visuals. One, in particular, was repeated over and over again: a row of activists, or perhaps a lone protestor, standing with his hands up, invoking the phrase ... reinforcing the image: HANDS UP. DON'T SHOOT. The unrest began on the night of Michael Brown's death, and recurred intermittently, with a resurgence on the anniversary of the killing. But please notice, we carefully and consciously use the word "unrest". And that is because it is important to discern how, when, and why the initial peaceful vigils turned into something else.

We have chosen to address the Ferguson unrest as the final part of this chapter, since the incidents, collectively speaking, are perhaps the most memorable part of this entire nightmare, apart from the killing itself. And, apart from the killing itself, the protests were no doubt the most controversial aspect of the Michael Brown tragedy.

"HANDS UP, DON'T SHOOT"

I personally find it satisfying at this point that we have established the truth: None other than Darren Wilson himself said that Michael Brown had his hands up. At least, that is what he told his superior (an officer with 38 years on the force), on more than one occasion.

Many detailed accounts and searing exposés have been written by an assortment of conservative pundits, condemning and morally indicting the Ferguson protestors for their mob escalation into riots and violence.

In return, I would like to offer my own in-depth analysis of the works of those conservative pundits. Here it is:

Shut the fuck up.

As you might have guessed, the work of these holier-than-thou pundits has inspired me to heretofore unseen levels of eloquence. Allow me to explain.

Civil language is no longer appropriate or adequate, when addressing pundits who have made it their business to always rationalize the actions of the police, and always demonize legal protest, no matter how confrontational those police actions might be, and no matter the extent to which belligerent police actions might seek to escalate peaceful protest into violence.

Permit me to posit my defense:

There are many first hand communiqués and eye witness accounts which suggest that the Ferguson police took what started as a primarily peaceful protest, and then provoked and physically attacked those peaceful protestors, thereby causing the event to erupt into riots. To those who say that they don't believe these eyewitnesses and their first-hand accounts, I respond with this: well, I, in turn, have trouble trusting the Ferguson police. I have proven exhaustively in this chapter why we cannot trust large numbers of the Ferguson police. You, by contrast, have not proven that the eyewitnesses who reported police attacks on peaceful protestors are liars. In a larger sense, it is all a matter of the credibility of the parties involved.

Just to give a few examples: a memorial sprang up where Michael's body had been left lying in the street for four hours. According to people standing vigil, and representatives of the community (such as Alderman Antonio French), when one of the first officers arrived for crowd control, the first thing the officer did was allow his dog to urinate all over the memorial. Then, police cars purposely drove over the memorial, spraying flowers, teddy bears, candles, and notes with prayers everywhere. It was as though they were trying as hard as they could to antagonize the crowd. It would have taken a cop with a modicum of intelligence five minutes to move the items to the nearby sidewalk, if its location in the street was such a big issue. But as we learned from the previous section in the DOJ report, most Ferguson police don't seem to give a f#ck about blacks in their city.

Later that night, Officer Ray Albers approached members of a peaceful vigil with his gun pointed and yelled, ***"I will fucking kill you."*** Those people who had the officer's gun pointed at them were terrified. When protestors understandably asked for his name, he responded ***"GO FUCK YOURSELF"***. And this kind of behavior from the police continued.

Ten days later, representatives from the United States Congress arrived at the scene of a peaceful protest, and were doing nothing more than talking to the crowd, when they were personally approached by officers who had their mace drawn, ready to spray. The representatives were astonished, as they were doing nothing but talking to the crowd, and they shamed the police into backing down.

There is abundant evidence that the police were constantly antagonizing vigil keepers and peaceful protests. Even Don Lemon from CNN got a good shove from an officer. And a couple of weeks after the killing of Michael Brown, one cop, officer Matthew Pappert, posted on his Facebook page, calling Ferguson protesters ***"a burden on society and a blight on the community"*** and said they ***"should have been put down like a rabid dog."*** Once he was caught—stupidly not aware of the fact that Facebook is, you know, a public kind of thing, he made a statement that he was ***"deeply remorseful"*** and that he ***"hopes to lead by example in the fight for social justice."*** His lawyer said ***"He's an emotional mess right now...He's embarrassed and very sorrowful ... He wants to make right with the community."*** What

Pappert actually was, after the incident, was fired. And so far there is nobody on the planet, including other cops, who believe anything that he or his lawyer said.

Secondly, even if there were persons in the mob who burned, pillaged, and looted, I would assert this: opinionators who blithely assume that those thugs characterize the entire spirit and goal of the peaceful protests, are clearly myopic and incorrect; they are guilty of stereotyping. Virtually every large protest, often involving church members, religious leaders, grieving families, dedicated activists, and members of the community, is invariably, eventually joined by opportunists, vandals, scofflaws, and criminals, all soiling and staining the fringes of the quilt that is peaceful protest. That is true of virtually all great protests and protest movements. For that fact to sully to our perception of the motivation of the majority of protestors is just wrong. Of course there were people in Ferguson taking advantage of the situation, to score some free bottles of booze and a couple of widescreen TVs.

During the French Revolution, there were gold thieves prying fillings from the teeth of the dead. During the fragile years of our country's nascency, during the opening salvos of the Stamp Act and the Boston Tea Party, there was extensive rioting and looting. (i.e., The Liberty Affair, the looting of Andrew Oliver's home and warehouse, the total destruction of Chief Justice Thomas Hutchinson's house, etcetera.) Does that mean that conservative columnists who pillory the Ferguson protestors also wish there hadn't been a French Revolution? Or a United States of America? If you push, and push, and push people, and cruelly, stupidly teach them, through a series of police killings, and attendant lies and intolerable injustices, that neither the laws nor the truth matter, then one day, you are going to see a psychotic mob exploding, right in front of your eyes. And how can you criticize them? You, leaders of Ferguson, and you, Ferguson Police Department, have taught your citizens that the laws apply differently to different groups of people. And if that was not enough, the United States Department of Justice came into your town and proved that beyond a shadow of a doubt. The truth has come out: in Ferguson, if a cop wants to serve as judge, jury, and executioner, that's fine. No indictment. No charge. Administrative paid leave. Fishing on the taxpayer's dime.

Finally, and I would ask you to lay your eyes, once again, on my profanities above—here is why anybody who criticizes the protestors does not get their precious few minutes on the podium: because during those very controversial protests/riots, Ferguson police were quick to arrest the reporters covering the story. And these reporters were not breaking the law, they were not interfering with the police doing their duties; those reporters were only exercising their First Amendment Rights. ***And yet, while sitting quietly in a McDonald's charging their cellphones, they were arrested by the Ferguson equivalent of Storm Troopers who also ordered them to shut off their recording devices,*** presumably so there would be less and less evidence of what was actually going on during those riots.

And so perhaps now you see why nothing—NOTHING—but profane invective quite suits the gutter into which we have devolved: when the police arrest those journalists who are charged with telling the United States citizenry what is going on at the scene of a mass protest, then nobody with a criticism of the protestors—not the police, nor those who side with the police—gets the right to voice their opinion, for that opinion can no longer be defended with facts ... with evidence gathered directly from the scene. The opportunity to document the truth has been denied and destroyed. You have silenced those whose job it is to bear witness.

And for what it is worth, we are not talking about a couple of “uppity” reporters from Ebony or Essence or the Daily Kos. [We are talking about no less than 24 reporters](#), cuffed and put in the back of police wagons, night after night after night, from publications as varied as Huffington Post, The Washington Post, and Sports Illustrated to London’s The Telegraph, Germany’s newspapers Die Velt and Bilt, and even Breitbart News. You cannot stomp on the First Amendment, shackle those exercising it, and then expect to pick up that flattened, dirtied First Amendment and try to wear it like some kind of conservative pundit Superhero Cape, with a picture of a fox emblazoned on the satin, and a big “F.U.” on your chest.

Let’s take a look, shall we, at those countries who deal with the scandal, corruption, torture, and bloodshed within their counties by simply arresting the journalists who report on it (as though, if the story doesn’t get out, the humanitarian crisis and injustice just doesn’t exist). According to Reporters Without Borders, those countries are Tajikistan, Syria, Egypt, Afghanistan, Iraq, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Chad, Uzbekistan, Algeria, Turkey, Burundi, Angola, Bahrain, Belarus, Burundi, United Arab Emirates, Eritrea, Tunisia, Tonga, Rwanda, Ukraine, Russia, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Yemen, East Timor, Philippines, Vietnam, Montenegro, Chile, Peru, Mexico, China, North Korea.

And now, add to those shining examples, the shadowy, third world kingdom of Ferguson, Missouri.

So at last, we have come to the end of the sad, sordid, tale of the death of Michael Brown at the hands of Darren Wilson. Except for this last, detail:

As for the money being raised by the Ku Klux Klan for Darren Wilson’s legal defense and living expenses, we will never know how much was raised, and if it got into the hands of Darren Wilson, who has subsequently dropped off the face of the earth.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

LENNON LACY: IMAGINE...

“Imagine all the people living life in peace...a brotherhood of man...You may say I’m a dreamer, but I’m not the only one. I hope one day you will join us, and the world will live as one ...”

“Imagine”, by John Lennon

Imagine the scenario: You are a young man. A youthful black athlete, living the dream. Tomorrow night, you are the starting linebacker for the West Bladen Knights against the West Columbus Vikings in the first game of the season. Friday night lights. You dream of playing college ball, hopefully on scholarship, then on to the NFL. Over the summer, in addition to joining an interracial youth group at the church, you have worked out rigorously at the gym, adding muscle. Your weight is up to 207 pounds. And your grades are up.

You have meticulously laid out your football uniform on your bed, then you proudly don your brand new Air Jordans, which match your uniform—steel grey with neon green soles—and then you head out for your ritual evening run. The air is cooler at night for working out, easier on your asthma. You say a cheerful goodbye to your mom, saying you’ll be back shortly.

And then you go hang yourself from a swing set.

Seventeen year old Lennon Lacy’s body was found on August 29th, 2014, hanging from the swing set in a predominantly white trailer park in Bladenboro, North Carolina. Authorities responded to a 911 call that came at 7:35 in the morning; then, within five short hours, and without following protocol or procedure, they leapt to the conclusion that Lennon Lacy committed suicide. After conversing with Lennon’s mother and learning of the recent death of Lennon’s eighty year old great uncle, they determined that Lennon was depressed to the point of suicide over the relative’s passing.

One would be hard pressed to find an investigation so fraught with bungling, disinterest, and intentional omissions. From the very beginning, details were left purposely murky. Local authorities were apathetic from the outset. Aside from the appalling investigative errors and omissions listed below, it is worth noting that the Lacy family had to pen a plaintive written request to have investigators speak with them about the investigation; detectives initially refused all contact with the Lacy’s, beyond informing them that their son was dead.

What we do know is that Lennon, who had no history of drug use, alcohol use, or gang affiliation, and who had no criminal record, was dating a thirty-one year old white woman, about which his mother had expressed extreme disapproval. I don't think any reader needs to be told that the fact of a black man dating a white woman has long been a motivating factor in lynchings. We may question the judgment of Lennon in dating a thirty-one year old white woman, but did Lennon deserve to hang for that? If the poor judgment of youth were the criteria for execution, few of us would have survived into adulthood.

We know a little about the last hours of Lennon's life, and the events certainly don't point to suicide. According to official reports documenting that final night of his life, ***"Lennon had an argument with his girlfriend. After that time he went to a mobile home located in the park where he was found. Family has expressed concern about one male that resided at the mobile home. He had a history of violence so severe that he could not live with either of his parents, and was staying with the people who resided there."***

What is also well known is that on the property directly behind the trailer home where Lennon Lacy lived with his family, there resided a couple known as Dewey Sykes and Carla Hudson, a white couple who for many years had a number of Confederate flags displayed, as well as a large sign in the front yard stating "NIGGERS KEEP OUT", which remained in place until they were asked by the police to remove it.

Whether or not the place that Lennon visited before his death (apparently trying to sort out the drama with his girlfriend) was the same residence with the history of the "NIGGERS KEEP OUT" sign has not been revealed by investigators. What has been proven is that someone from the evening's altercations sent threatening texts to Lennon's cellphone that night, following a loud and heated argument. But of course, the police traced the sender of those texts, you may be asking? Hell, no.

Here is a small detail which seemed to bore local authorities: according to the forensic pathologist's report, one of the two belts used to hang Lennon ***"was consistent with"*** belts found in the home where this extremely violent man resided—for it was certainly not Lennon's own belt. Here are the exact words of the forensic pathologist's report: ***"The blue belt is reported to be consistent with a belt worn by a male who resided in the mobile home where Lennon was last known alive."*** (The previous statement is a direct quotation from the report by Dr. Christina L. Roberts, expert pathologist retained to investigate the death of Lennon Lacy; this report was created in consultation with the pathologist who conducted the original autopsy, Dr. Deborah Radisch, the State's Chief Medical Examiner.)

At the request of the Lennon family, Dr. Christina Roberts was retained by the local NAACP, in an attempt to learn more than was uncovered in the bungled investigation by local and state authorities. Here are some of her more dramatic findings, regarding this so called “suicide”.

The state’s Chief Medical Examiner, Dr. Deborah Radisch, was not provided with photographs of the crime scene. However, a trip to the site of the hanging made the physical impossibility of suicide painfully clear. A newspaper article provided excerpts of this chilling report:

“Dr. Radisch was not provided with photographs or the dimensions of the swing set, without which she would have been unable to determine the feasibility of a scenario in which Lacy could have hung himself. Roberts’ report notes ‘there was no item present at the scene that Lennon could have stood on, applied the noose and then kicked away,’ and there were no swings hanging from the swing set that Lacy— who was 5 feet, 9 inches tall and weighed more than 200 pounds—could have used to elevate himself to the seven-foot crossbeam of the swing set.”

—Excerpted from “Expert challenges investigation of scene of Lennon Lacy’s death,” November 21st, 2014, Indy Week Newspaper, Raleigh-Cary, Durham-Chapel Hill

The County Coroner who was assigned to the case, a Mr. Hubert Kinlaw, stated that the officers on scene would not allow him to take pictures of the crime scene, and threatened to confiscate his camera if he did take any pictures of the hanging. Taking pictures of the crime scene is the County Coroner’s sworn duty. The officers offered Kinlaw no explanation for their decision or their threats.

Kinlaw also noted that the officials on scene refused to bag Lennon’s hands, a standard protocol to preserve any trace evidence which might help prove foul play.

Kinlaw further observed that Lennon was wearing white sneakers, with no laces, in a size 10.5. The athlete Lennon was actually a size 12, and the new Air Jordans he was seen wearing when he left his home were nowhere to be found. After later inquiring about them, Kinlaw was subsequently removed from the case for questioning and clashing with authorities. In the words of Lennon Lacy’s incredulous brother: ***“He’s gonna walk a quarter mile from his house in a pair of shoes that’s two sizes too small, after he takes off his new pair of shoes, and this is a seventeen year old black kid with a brand new pair of Jordans on! He’s gonna take those Jordans off and just get rid of them, and put on some shoes that’s not his, we don’t know where he got them from, there’s no laces in them, and continue to walk down this dirt road late at night to a swing set in the middle of a white trailer park and hang himself?”***

Dr. Radisch noted that when the body got to her office for post mortem analysis, even the white shoes were now missing, with no explanation—a highly unorthodox omission—thereby making it impossible to check the shoes for prints or DNA, or any other trace evidence.

The noose used to hang Lennon was fashioned from a belt and a dog leash, neither of which was recognized by Lennon's family. And for what it's worth, the Lacy's don't own a dog.

Dr. Radisch confirmed that the medical evidence sustains the possibility that Lennon was killed by strangulation and then hanged post mortem. According to Dr. Roberts' report, ***“It should be noted that there are variations of the choke hold. The variation called the lateral vascular neck restraint, (LVNR), is where the anterior neck is held in the antecubital fossa (front of the elbow); the forearm is pulled towards the arm, compressing the vessels on both sides of the neck. This is basically a pincher movement with both sides of the neck between the arm and forearm... during our conversation with Dr. Radisch, she agreed that one would be unable to tell at autopsy if death occurred via this type of choke hold, and then the body was placed in a suspension noose.”*** And for those of you who doubt whether or not a chokehold like this could have been used to kill Lennon Lacy, his dead body then being transported to the trailer park swing set and hung for display, I suggest you study the video of the chokehold that killed Eric Garner.

Various witnesses who saw the body from the time it left police custody, to the time it was buried, observed what they felt was clear evidence of a brutal physical altercation. His family was horrified at the bruises on his face and the knot on the side of his head, and his mother said that his face had been completely unmarked and unmarred when he left for his run that fateful night. Even undertaker F.W. Newton Jr., a man of twenty-six years' experience in preparing bodies, was aghast at the sight. He made a statement to the newspaper “The Guardian”, observing that ***“when he received Lacy's body two days after he died, he was struck by the abrasions he saw across both shoulders and down the insides of both arms. He also noted facial indentation over both cheeks, the chin, and nose, adding further, ‘the state of the body reminded him of corpses he had embalmed where the deceased had been killed in a bar-room fight.’ ”***

Police told the family that those injuries were caused by ants.

One last observation: in an age where a pimple outbreak warrants extensive social media outreach and chatter, Lennon—whose last social media communication just hours before his death was a selfie showing off his new muscles in his new football uniform—then chose to leave not one text, not one Instagram, and not a single Facebook post, hinting of his plans to “commit suicide.” Local and state authorities did not search Lennon's room, computer, cellphone, etcetera, for evidence of his plans to commit suicide. Nor did they look for evidence that there might have been bad blood between him and somebody else in the community, neighborhood, high school,

sports teams, et al. (Although one could argue that this would have been a moot point: evidence of deep hostility between the dead young black athlete Kendrick Johnson and another team member was abundant, yet his death was also ruled “an accident.”)

As for me, personally ...after researching this exhaustively, I don't even know where to start. Why weren't Lennon's room and his personal possessions searched for more evidence of what really happened? Why weren't Lennon Lacy's hands bagged for evidence, per standard protocol? What happened to the brand new grey Air Jordans? Who took the white shoes Lennon was found wearing—which clearly never belonged to Lennon—and why? Why was the County Coroner threatened when he tried to take pictures? Who was this mysterious angry man, and what was his name? Was he questioned? Was he asked to take a polygraph? Perhaps most importantly, was his DNA tested against DNA found on the dead body? Oh wait, that's right, they didn't test the deceased or the noose for foreign DNA. Why the hell not? What is wrong with these cops?

Rumors began to fly after Lennon's death—and with them, the conversations about which rumors were to be believed. Problem is, when the police behave with such apathy and incompetence, it's hard to see the rumors as significantly less credible than the cops. Investigators from outside the county learned that Lennon and two friends had been robbed about a year earlier by two white men who told them **“be glad we're not doing worse.”**

What is not disputed is the fact of Klan activity in North Carolina, and in Lennon's part of the state in particular. In the 90's, a teacher at the high school was investigated for handing out Ku Klux Klan literature to students. And as for recent events, all the major news outlets covered the big KKK rally that took place just a couple of counties over, just weeks before Lacy's death.

There was also the eerie Facebook posting from one of Lennon's cousins: *“Everyone that is from Bladenboro can truly say we stay in a town where the KKK is alive in well and some are on the force. It's ashamed a family member of a police officer approached me a few nights after my cousins death and say that the police are not going to do anything.”*

Again, I must ask the question that has become a drumbeat in this compendium: If it had been a white cheerleader instead of a black football player, would the authorities have been so cavalier? So damnably apathetic?

I think not.

To quote William Barber, president of the North Carolina Chapter of the NAACP,

“The call was made so quickly, and what concerns us about that, if Lennon Lee Lacy was white, and was found hanging in a predominantly black trailer park that has been known to have some drug involvement and other things, we just don't believe there would have been this quick rush to

say it was a suicide. There would have been a very, very, very, very, intense investigation.” (from “The Katie Couric Interview”)

After Lacy’s body was discovered, the coach of the West Bladen Knights called the team together. He had the sad job of breaking the tragic news to the kids. He asked them what they wanted to do. The vote was unanimous. They decided to go ahead and play that night, dedicating the game to their lost brother, Lennon Lee Lacy. They won, 57-22.

Not all were so respectful of the dead, however. Lennon Lacy’s grave was desecrated shortly after the burial. The flowers were dumped near the road some forty feet from the grave, Lennon’s precious football jersey was stolen from where it had been lovingly placed in tribute, and the beginnings of a hole were dug in the grave, as though someone was trying to get to the coffin and was interrupted.

Even in death, it seems that Lennon can’t get any peace.

Imagine that.

SOURCES:

“FBI Investigates Hanging Death of Teen in North Carolina”, by Katie Couric. Yahoo News/ABC News. December 12th, 2014.

“Expert Challenges Investigation of Scene of Lennon Lacy’s Death”, by Jane Porter. Indy Week Newspaper, Raleigh-Cary, Durham, Chapel Hill. November 21st, 2014.

“The Death of Lennon Lacy: Salacious Rumors and Disturbing Facts”, by Expat Girl. The Daily Kos. December 27th.

“N.C. Teen’s Hanging Death Ruled a Suicide”, by Victor Blackwell. CNN. December 15, 2014.

“The Strange Death of Lennon Lacy: Another Lynching Mistaken for Suicide”, by Sue Sturgi. Southernstudies.org. December 5th, 2014.

“FBI Investigates Suspicious Death of North Carolina Teen Lennon Lacy”, by Todd C. Frankel. Washington Post. December 19th 2014

Perhaps most importantly, the full pathologist’s report can be found here: (while a direct Google search will not locate it, it is available at southernstudies.org, and is contained in an NAACP statement that is archived at the Southern Studies website:

http://www.southernstudies.org/sites/default/files/naacp_pathologist_report_lacy.pdf

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE TOO SHORT LIFE OF TAMIR RICE

He was twelve. He was just twelve years old. He was a little boy, doing what all kids his age do: he was at the park where he loved to play, fooling around with a toy gun, sometimes acting like a bigshot ... then almost immediately bored again, sticking it in his pants and plopping down on a park bench, trying to think of what interesting thing he might do next.

Within seconds, he would be dead.

His name was Tamir Rice. And here is the bitter irony of hindsight: this child playing imaginary cops and robbers seemed to be evenly matched, because the enemy behaved about like a twelve year old would act in such a situation, except for that the Cleveland Police Department had made the mistake of issuing this manchild a deadly weapon.

I have said previously, and will say again now, that nothing in this book is meant to be an indictment against police officers writ large. Hundreds of thousands of police officers, from sea to shining sea, take their duties seriously, perform them excellently, do everything they can to foster good relations within the community—and most importantly, put their lives on the line for our safety, on a daily basis.

That said, as is the case so often in this book, these cops screwed it up completely. In fact, the Cleveland Police Department screwed it up on every possible level, from dispatcher to middle management right up to the police union. Let's list the errors in judgment on the part of the Cleveland PD that cost poor Tamir Rice his life. I will even go so far as to say—because I believe the evidence bears it out—that more than just poor judgment was at play in this tragedy. At the heart of this homicide was a trigger happy cop whose best plan was to shoot first, and ask questions later.

Let's start with the fact that the officer who killed Tamir was unfit for duty, and had no business wearing a uniform, much less carrying a lethal weapon. This is not my opinion, arbitrarily or alone. It is not even the opinion of the Rice family lawyer, or an angry mob, or MSNBC. It is the professional opinion of the police themselves. Less than two years before Cleveland police officer Timothy Loehmann shot and killed a twelve year old boy, he was trying to become an officer for the Independence, Ohio Police Department. The mentor officer assigned to him described Loehmann as “distracted and weepy” and “emotionally immature.” More appalling still, “his handgun performance was dismal.” Offered in the link below is more verbatim

information from an actual internal memo, all 62 pages, regarding the circumstances under which Loehmann shamefully left the Independence, Ohio Police Department. The 62 page document discussing Loehmann's dangerous incompetence is actually frightening.

GOOGLE: "The outrageous and tragic hiring of Officer Timothy Loehmann by the Cleveland police." The Daily Kos. The article contains the complete internal memo.

The memo shows the officer who shot Tamir—the man who murdered the boy—to be weepy, an emotional wreck, and incompetent with equipment, particularly the deadly kind. On a trip to a store to get some of the young recruit's equipment which had just come in, Loehmann began sobbing so badly he could not go into the store. When his mentor officer took him for a bite to eat, the hysterical recruit made some very bizarre comments: ***"Maybe I should quit." "I have no friends." "I've cried every day for four months."*** And my personal favorite: ***"I only hang out with 73 year old priests."***

And what the hell is with the psych eval that Loehmann had to take, in order to get hired by the Cleveland PD? I'm thinking it was the rigorous intellectual equivalent of those old art school ads that asked "Can You Draw Winky?"—you remember the ones that used to appear on cereal boxes with funny names like Wheatina and Maypo and Twinkles and Pep and Corn-fetti? For those of you who don't know what I'm talking about, these lures to send money in for a correspondence course in drawing featured cloyingly sweet animals with double entendre names like Cuddles and Winky and Tiny and Spunky; if you drew them, you had a chance to enroll in the school. I'm thinkin' that's the kind of scam psych eval Timmy Loehmann passed.

A Sergeant Greg Tinnirello, who worked with Timothy Loehmann when he was trying to become an officer for the Independence, Ohio Police Department, became so worried about the crying recruit that he even asked Loehmann if "he was thinking about hurting himself". Tinnirello went so far as to contact Loehmann's mother, who was not surprised about what she heard. Tinnirello wrote in his report, "She informed me that as Ptl. Loehmann was going through the Cleveland Heights Police Academy, his study papers would be soaked in tears nightly for three months, because of problems with his girlfriend." And elsewhere in the report, Tinnirello wrote: ***"As we talked about being emotionally ready for duty and the events of the morning, Ptl. Loehmann became agitated. He stated to me, as if he was thinking out loud, 'WHAT I WANT IS FOR YOU TO SHUT UP.' Ptl Loehmann wasn't even looking at me when he made the statement and seemed to be distracted, as if the statement came out under stress."***

This is the man that Cleveland Police would later decide was capable of carrying a lethal weapon, of making life and death decisions in a heartbeat.

And last but not least, Tamir Rice's killer was also an opportunistic liar, who bent the rules and manipulated his own stories and versions to fit what his superiors wanted to hear. Loehmann could possibly have gotten over the "distracted and weepy" part—apparently he was getting over a romantic crisis, and not very well—and he possibly could have improved his marksmanship. But the lying and manipulating? Read the excerpted memo at the link above, and you will find yourself doubting every single thing that Officer Loehmann said in relation to the shooting of Tamir Rice.

Here is an extended excerpt from that report:

EMOTIONAL IMMATURITY

"Ptl. Loehmann's inability to perform basic functions as instructed, and his inability to function because of a personal situation at home with an on again off again girlfriend leads one to believe that he would not be able to substantially cope, or make good decisions ... This ongoing personal relationship should not have personally consumed him that he would not be able to follow simple direction, especially after being given a reasonable amount of time to collect himself.

CIRCUMVENTING DIRECTION:

It appears from the pattern developing within our short time frame with Ptl. Loehmann that he often feels that, when told to do something, that those instructions are optional, and that he can manipulate them if he so feels it better serves him ... he just appears to have the mindset that if he thinks he knows better, then that is the course he follows.

RECOMMENDATION

Due to his dangerous loss of composure during live range training and his inability to handle personal stress, I do not believe Ptl. Loehmann shows the personal maturity needed to work in our employment. Unfortunately, in law enforcement, there are times when instructions need to be followed to the letter, and I am under the impression, that Ptl. Loehmann, under certain circumstances, will not react in the way instructed. ... For these reasons, I am recommending that he be released from the employment of the city of Independence. I do not believe that time, nor training, will be able to correct these deficiencies.

It is surreal that this man got a badge and a gun from another police department after his shameful departure from the Independence Police Department. The Cleveland Police Department should have done a decent background check before they hired him. Had the least bit of caution, responsibility, protocol, or common sense been exercised during the hiring process, there is no

doubt in my mind that Tamir would be alive today. It is a simple but tragic truth: Tamir Rice's blood is on their collective hands.

But give him a job they did. And a badge, and a gun. But only after Timothy Loehmann had applied and been turned down by Akron PD, Euclid PD, Parma Heights PD, and the New York Police Department. Also, Loehmann took a stab at becoming the sheriff of Cuyahoga County. He took a test and scored 46 out of 100. 70 points is failing.

But all of this didn't stop Cleveland from hiring him. After Tamir was dead, they admitted that they hadn't looked at his personnel files. Why? Because, according to police Sgt. Pillow, they **"previously had no policies about reviewing personnel files."** They say they are going to change that, though. In light of everything.

Oh, in case you are wondering about Loehmann's partner: Loehmann's partner, Frank Garmback, had been sued in federal court for use of excessive force. According to the lawsuit brought against him and the Cleveland Police Department, on August 7th, 2010, Tamela Eaton returned to her home after work and then called the police about towing a car that was parked in front of her driveway. She did not know that two officers were already in the area, searching for possible robbery suspects in an unrelated incident. When Tamela saw the police preparing to arrest a male passerby, Tamela mistakenly thought that the police were going to arrest the man for parking in front of her house. When she tried to explain to the police that she did not want him arrested (not realizing the confusion), the argument escalated and, in the words of the lawsuit, **"Garmback rushed Eaton and placed her in a chokehold, tackled her to the ground, twisted her wrist and began hitting her body."** His partner, Officer Guerra, rushed over and proceeded to punch Tamela Eaton in the face multiple times. There is no video of the incident, but the city clearly felt that the accusation had enough merit to shell out \$100,000 in settlement.

But back to the death of Tamir Rice,

2.) THE DISPATCHER botched it. Training, training, training. These dispatchers are the first line of communication in a police crisis, and the importance of what they do is not to be underrated. Just because they don't carry a weapon does not change the fact that civilian lives lie in their hands. And there is no clearer example of this than the 911 call made by a concerned citizen about the boy he saw in the park: yes, there was someone in the park with a gun, but the caller went out of his way to **repeatedly** emphasize that the gun might very well be a toy and that Tamir might have been just a kid. It is worth noting that the 911 caller was NOT hysterical, and the 911 caller even stopped at the beginning of the call to exchange pleasantries: *"Hey, how are you?"* was how he started out his call to the operator. Clearly, this did not have the almost crazed tone of some of the people who call 911. *"Hey, how are you?"* Not exactly the tone of a person in crisis. Nor was the caller trying to hide from Tamir, or run from the park. He sat on a park bench, watching the boy. And the caller also

made sure to note that he thought, from his observations, that the person in the park he was calling about could have been a juvenile, and the gun a toy. Had these two simple but crucial pieces of information been passed along to the police officers, Tamir might be alive today.

Here is an excerpt from an article in the Daily Kos, expansively entitled “Whoever failed to pass on that Tamir Rice’s gun was fake is the Second Worst Person In The World” by Christian Dern:

“Last week, Cleveland officials revealed that the 911 operator who took the original call was Constance Hollinger, and the dispatcher who sent police to the scene was Beth Mandl. It’s not immediately clear who failed to pass the information on. WEWS-TV quotes city officials as [seemingly putting the blame on Hollinger](#). However, WOIO says that Hollinger transferred the call to Mandl [via a computer screen](#)—raising the possibility that Mandl may have simply failed to pass all of that information on to police.

Here’s what we do know about Beth Mandl, police dispatcher, though: she has an arrest record herself. She was arrested in September 2008 for carrying a concealed weapon. She took it into a bar with her, where she had some cocktails. Nothing ever came of the arrest, though. Except for the police did hire her to work as a dispatcher shortly thereafter. Maybe this was her innovative form of networking.

UPDATE: During the time that “The Little Book of Lynching, 2nd edition” is in its final editing stages, a 224 page report has been issued which claims that the information about Tamir’s age and the possibility of the gun being a fake gun was never relayed from Hollinger to Mandl. Hollinger lawyered up, thanks to help from her union, and she remains mute on why she did not send on these crucial details which may have saved Tamir’s life. But I left the above prose intact, because I think the world needs to know that Beth Mandl is no prize either—at least, not a person whom we should have working in law enforcement, since laws apparently don’t mean much to her, or apply to her.

Further investigation has provided us with more information about Ms. Hollinger, who didn’t think it was at all important or worth mentioning to the police that the 911 caller had repeatedly mentioned that the gun might be fake, and that the person carrying it might have been a juvenile. Apparently, a supervisor noted in her personnel file that **“Hollinger tends to be abrupt, and disconnect the caller when they are providing additional info.”** And yes, I understand that perhaps Hollinger is anxious to get what is inherently urgent news to the next person in the chain. But modern technology makes it simply a matter of pushing a button to relay preliminary information to the dispatcher, while keeping the 911 caller on the line, so as to glean more information that might help save lives on the scene, and give the officers a better idea of what they are walking into. And the experts agree: Seth Stoughton is a former police officer who now teaching at the University of South Carolina School of Law. His criticism of Hollinger is clear: **“A witness’s description of a weapon as ‘probably fake’ combined with a description of the**

suspect as a juvenile , is very different than a description of an adult holding a firearm that the witness is sure is real. Officers may take a very different approach.”

Hmm. A person taking 911 calls is not interested in getting all the info that the witness/victim/911 caller has to offer? Let me put it crassly: her ass should be fired. And here is one last important detail, in case you don't already have profound doubts about the hiring and firing policies of the Cleveland Police Department: Hollinger had worked previously as a police dispatcher, and she had been fired from that job. She had already proved herself incapable and untrustworthy at the job of police dispatch, yet the same people who hired a dishonest and emotionally immature officer also hired an incompetent and law-breaking 911 operator.

I say shame on you, Ms. Hollinger. Some of Tamir's blood is on your hands.

3.) POLICE PROCEDURE NIGHTMARE: Forget public opinion. I get it, they are rioting in the streets. A lot of pre-judgmental people don't care what the public thinks or has to say. So let's consult the experts. Well, experts from all over the country have seen the video of the shooting and they agree: proper police procedure was repeatedly ignored. One has to wonder if the two officers would have ignored protocol so completely, had they known that a community center security camera would be capturing their actions for the entire world to see. It is worth nothing that at the time of the Tamir Rice shooting, none of the Cleveland PD officers or cruisers were equipped with dash cams.

Specifically, surveillance footage shows a cruiser driven by sixth-year Officer Frank Garmback cut across the grass in front of a gazebo at the West Side Cleveland Park and roll within a few feet of Tamir; two seconds later, first-year officer Timothy Loehmann is shooting Tamir from his open passenger door.

This, incidentally, is the same garbage that transpired in Ferguson. Even the Ferguson officer in question admits as much. Rather than interacting with the individuals at a safe distance, in both the Michael Brown shooting and the Tamir Rice shooting, the officers sped right up to the suspect and engaged. Even from a purely self-preservationist point of view on the part of the officer, this makes no sense. You are driving right up to a guy holding a gun? That action puts the officer in clear and present danger; the cop is practically asking to be shot. This reckless behavior could not be more opposite the procedure and protocol in which officers are trained. But let's hear from several experts:

David Klinger, 30 year veteran of the LAPD, as well as professor of criminology and criminal justice at the University of Missouri, St. Louis, had this to say about the Tamir Rice shooting: ***“The issue is that the vehicle, the police vehicle, never should have been there. And we have a problem in American policing, and that is that in many places, officers get too close to people too fast. And if you read the transcript of the Darren Wilson testimony, and then you piece***

everything together with other testimony, that's where I think the situation went sideways ... Darren Wilson got too close too soon. And we could have a long discussion about this, but what it boils down to is this was a tactical failure on the driver officer. I do not understand why he put the other officer and himself so close...The problem is that vehicle never should have been so close and therefore, the officer never should have been so close. They should have found a position of cover at some distance, got out, addressed with verbal commands ... This is a tragedy for everyone ...

David Thomas, 20 year veteran police officer, PhD in Forensic Psychology, and Senior Research Fellow for The Police Foundation, watched the footage of the killing, and was unequivocal: ***"The tactics were very poor. If the driver would have stopped a distance away, so that the primary officer wasn't right there to get involved in shooting, it may have played out differently. The Cleveland officers should have been trained to take cover when dealing with someone who might be armed, and to tell the individual to drop the weapon."***

Hubert Williams, 30-year veteran police officer and former president of the Police Foundation, was appalled: *"Garmback should not have pulled the police car so close to where Tamir was standing if they believed he was armed — as they were told by a [9-1-1 dispatcher](#). By doing so, Garmback put Loehmann in a more vulnerable position to be shot by Tamir, in turn making it more likely that he would fire his own gun in self-defense. If a guy has a real gun, you're definitely pulling into the line of fire. .. approaching Tamir from a distance would have not only put the officers at an advantage for firing at Tamir if he was a threat to them, but also would have given them an opportunity to communicate with the boy. It occurred too soon, and that's going to be the biggest problem that the city of Cleveland is going to be faced with."*

The evidence is clear, and the opinions are in accord: in spite of Cleveland Police Union President Jeff Follmer's lame defense of Tamir's killers, nonetheless, the best and brightest in the field of policing agree that both officers' behavior was unacceptable, unprofessional, and resulted in the death of a child.

4.) SHOOT FIRST, ASK QUESTIONS LATER: The Tamir Rice killing is eerily reminiscent of the John Crawford killing, and these two killings are sadly similar to countless shootings that happen in this country every year. The cops claim that they tell the suspect to put down their weapon, the suspect does not comply, and so they are left with no choice but to shoot. But the ugly fact is this: they did not give Tamir any time at all to comply. The video of the killing does not lie: 1/1/2 to 2 seconds pass from the arrival of the police car to the shooting of the boy. Just as in the case of the John Crawford Walmart shooting, the command for Tamir to show his hands or, in the case of the Walmart shooting "drop you weapon", was almost concomitant with the shooting. It was practically synchronized.

Science has long known that the human brain cannot process more than about six syllables per second—and that is if the listener is attuned to the message. So if Officer Loehmann said **“Drop your Weapon”** three times, it would have taken Tamir about two or three seconds to even understand:

a.) That the shouting was directed at him and

b.) What he, Tamir, was supposed to do.

In fact, even the first command, **“Drop your weapon”** would have taken Tamir about a full second to comprehend, and to understand that it was meant for him to hear. This crucial one second does not then take into account the reaction time it would take for him to comply. In fact, since Tamir didn’t think he was doing anything wrong—playing with a toy gun—it might have slowed his understanding of what was being asked, and of whom it was being asked. Tamir might have thought, for a crucial split-second, that they were talking to someone else. You don’t have to have a fancy-ass PhD level education in Communication (which I do have, by the way), to understand what is so very painfully obvious just from watching the video: The cops open fire at almost the same moment that they opened their mouths.

5. Once Tamir was on the ground dying, they made no attempt to administer first aid. Four minutes would pass before anybody arrived to try and save the boy’s life. What else is there to say about that?

6. When Tamir’s sister went running to him, because she saw her brother had been shot, she was slammed to the ground and handcuffed. Later, his mother was put in the back of a cruiser.

Sadly, for the Cleveland Police Department, this is just another day. Business as usual. We spoke earlier in the chapter of the folly, the screw-up, the egregious and tragic nightmare which was the decision to hire Loehmann in the first place. He is a childish, immature, and emotionally retarded man. And he is a liar. And yet, somebody made the decision to hire him, after a nearby police department had the good sense to fire him.

And not surprisingly, the local Cleveland Police Union rushed in to vigorously defend the cop who killed a child. Rather than doing his sworn duty to make policing safer by getting the dangerous cops out, head of the local union Jeff Folmer decided that lying was the best approach, when speaking publicly about the Tamir Rice killing.

FOLLMER: The officers were begging and pleading for this young man keep his hands up.

REPORTER: So it wasn’t just a one time “Put your hands up!”? It was an extended thing?

FOLLMER: No, they knew where that gun was located ...they’re telling him to keep his hands up...they did not want his hand to go down to his waistband. They wanted—one of the partners

probably would have gone up and taken the gun out of his waistband. That's how we do things. There was a lot of begging and pleading to keep his hands up. (emphasis added)

Follmer had seen the Tamir Rice killing video at this point. So we know that on top of him being insensitive, and a meathead, he is a liar. Who thinks we are stupid, and can't watch the video for ourselves, and see that Follmer is apparently constitutionally incapable of telling the truth. On a last note, it is interesting that in all of his statements about the incident, he never once apologizes on behalf of the police, nor does he even express sadness, or remorse. To Follmer, Tamir is not a human being, not a twelve year old, not a little boy. He is "a male suspect." Suspected of what? Playing in the park?

So there you have it. The local union boss doing everything in his power to keep a dangerous man on the force, and on the streets, so he can do his own perverted version of "to protect and serve." Before we leave the tragic story of Tamir Rice, let us take a closer look at the corruption and incompetence and Clockwork Orange violence that is The Cleveland Police Department.

Ironically, even as I write this (May 19th, 2015), a verdict is coming any hour now for an incident that happened three years ago. I refer to the famous high speed chase involving no less than one hundred of Cleveland's finest in sixty patrol cars, all in hot pursuit, trailing a single car at reckless speeds through the streets of the city. A helicopter video of the insanity looks for all the world like the final few minutes of "The Blues Brothers".

But this is not a comedy movie, this is real life, and the danger these cops put citizens in was simply unconscionable. Inexcusable and unforgivable. It ended in gunfire, with 137 shots being fired into the suspects' car. The suspects, by the way, were unarmed. In case you think that the police might have been justified, no less than sixty-three officers were put on suspension for violating department rules and direct orders. One captain and one lieutenant were demoted, and a sergeant was fired over the incident. Nine sergeants were suspended.

And yes, this Blues Brothers climax had a star. The star was a one Officer Michael Brelo.

Michael Brelo was a part of the pursuit, but he was not content to merely fire from behind the safety of his cruiser, as officers are trained to do. His best plan was to run to the suspects' stopped car, jump on top of it, and empty forty-nine bullets into the car, through the windshield, into the two passengers. (Actually, he only fired fifteen times into the car, through the windshield, while standing on the roof of the unarmed suspects' car. The rest he shot while approaching. Keep in mind, he had to keep re-loading. There was some thought involved here.)

Again, as before, it is not just a bunch of angry protestors or loony liberals or CNN pundits who have determined that Brelo—like Tamir's killer—acted like an idiot. Even the police experts do.

W. Ken Katsaris, for example, has decades worth of experience, first as a decorated officer, then as a consultant with a PhD in the field: and he testified under oath at Brelo's trial for voluntary manslaughter that Brelo was "completely foolish" to move from a position of cover to jumping on the suspects' car, in order to continue firing directly down on them. ***"It's not how you're trained."*** he said. ***"It's not appropriate. It's taking yourself out from behind cover, and you're putting yourself in crossfire."*** And later added, also while under oath: ***"It's bizarre. It doesn't make any sense."***

Brelo was found not guilty of all charges.

Let's be honest: Brelo needs to not be a cop, ever again. Why? For the same reason that the cops who were responsible for the deaths of Tamir Rice and Michael Brown need to never be cops again: even if you didn't care at all about the suspect, the truth is that these cops put themselves in such danger through their bad judgment that they shouldn't be allowed to have a job that puts themselves in that position. It's like having a macho death wish. And in the case of Brelo, only two options exist: either the two suspects in the car were not a threat, in which case this was an outrageous use of excessive force, or they were armed, and Brelo risked his life by choosing to climb on the car and stand there like someone with a Rambo complex. Idiot. Again, I say, he should not be a cop ever again.

Brelo told investigators that he didn't remember standing on top of the car and shooting. Listen, I have all the sympathy in the world for people suffering from PTSD. But perhaps if a man whose job is to be a police officer cannot remember climbing on top of a car, he needs to get another job. Perhaps working security for the local Piggly Wiggly, or get a job as a school crossing guard.

What the hell goes on over at Cleveland Police Department? What kind of training are these guys getting?

Here is my favorite part of the story: a few days after Michael Brelo was acquitted of all charges—not one of the hundred cops got convicted of anything—he went out, got stinking drunk, got into a fight with his brother which was so violent that the police actually did see fit to swear out a warrant for Officer Brelo's arrest and charge him with assault ... but not before a drunken Brelo staggered around the neighborhood at three in the morning wearing only one shoe, knocking on people's doors, and generally scaring the hell out of them, and prompting a terrified female neighbor to call the police. That matter is as of yet unresolved. (It's tragic. When a young black girl named Renisha McBride tried this, it got her shot dead. Brelo does it, and it creates a wave of hero-worshippers defending him all over the internet.)

UPDATE: It seems like nobody in Cleveland, who deals with the law, has any idea what the hell they are doing. The two twin Brelo brothers were arrested on May 27th, 2015 for drunk and

disorderly ... but the wheels of justice grind slow in such a complex matter of jurisprudence as this; their trial date was on July 30th. And guess what? Their lawyers asked for postponements, because they need more time to prepare the case. Precedents must be researched. Legal experts must be called upon to study the Amendments to the Constitution. They'll take this all the way to the Supreme Court.

September 10th is the big day. And that, by the way, is just a pre-trial hearing.

Not only are the twin brothers boobs, their lawyers are boobs, and the judge is a boob for putting up with this crap. If the judge gave a rat's ass about the way the taxpayers of Cleveland have their money spent, he would have gotten it all over right then and there. But no, a half a year will go by, and we won't even be to the trial yet.

A postponement. Sheesh.

It is worth noting, before we leave this entire bizarre incident of the high speed chase, that four people were ultimately arrested as a result of the 60 cruiser pursuit that took the lives of two unarmed people, when their backfiring car was mistaken for gunshots. They were protestors, protesting the Michael Brelo verdict.

And lest you think that Keystone Cops hijinks like the high speed chase is an isolated incident for the Cleveland PD—well, this and the shooting of Tamir Rice—you should also know about the tragic killing of Tanisha Anderson.

Tanisha Anderson was a mentally unstable woman who was, at the time of her death, under the care of her loving family. One day, when she was particularly agitated, her family called the authorities, to have her escorted to a mental health facility for evaluation. When Tanisha Anderson panicked about getting into a police car, one of the cops slammed her to the ground, hitting her head against the concrete. According to witnesses, she was begging him to stop and reciting the Lord's Prayer, as he pressed his knee into her back. Finally she stopped struggling and passed out. Although her dress had come up over her waist, police would neither cover her back up, nor would they administer CPR, in spite of her brother begging them to do both. Her next stop was not the psychiatric hospital, but the county morgue. According to the medical examiner, ***"Tanisha Anderson died as a result of being physically restrained in a prone position."***

And these three cases—the shooting of an innocent boy playing with a toy gun, the murder of an equally innocent terrified mentally ill girl, and the 60 cruiser high speed chase that ended in the slaughter of two unarmed people—are hardly unique in the day-to-day operations of the Cleveland PD. The United States Department of Justice decided to investigate, and the results

were appalling. The 58 page findings were published on December 4th, 2014, and its contents were damning indeed. Over six hundred incidents were examined. All of them together were enough to give the Cleveland Police Department a black eye, but some were particularly outstanding in their stupidity and cruelty. Among the victims:

—The thirteen year old shoplifter who, while handcuffed and sitting in the back of a police cruiser, was punched in the face until he was beaten and bloody.

—The man they repeatedly Tasered...while he was strapped into a gurney in the back of an ambulance.

—Brian, a man who was stopped by the police for walking while carrying a can of beer. When officers asked him to stop, he went and sat on a nearby porch. As he was sitting, one officer saw a gun in Brian's waistband, and shouted "GUN" to which Brian, raising his hands above his head in surrender fashion, responded that he had a concealed handgun license. One officer went to cuff him, asking him to lower his arms and put his hands behind his back. When Brian lowered his arms, the officer claimed that Brian was reaching for his weapon, and so shot him.

—Nathan, who was shot by a policeman who could not even offer investigators a reason for why he pulled his gun in the first place. Nathan was leaving a club at 2:30 in the morning at the same time that a nearby concert let out, causing a traffic snarl. Nathan tried to make a right onto a street that had apparently been closed by police, but which Nathan had seen many drivers traversing in the preceding few minutes. An officer approached his car, reached in the driver's side with his weapon drawn, and shot Nathan.

—Gwendolyn, a girl handcuffed to a chair as one officer groped her chest and choked her, while another officer stood on and watched, doing nothing to stop it. Bizarrely enough, upon viewing the security camera footage of the incident, the Cleveland Supervisor deemed it a necessary use of force.

—The man who was being held hostage in a home invasion-abduction. Cleveland PD surrounded the house. And when a man ran from the house wearing only his boxer shorts, waving his arms about and yelling, the cops shot him—because they presumed he was the kidnapper. In the kind of intrepid analysis that one simply cannot expect from policing on a state or local level, the Feds sagely advised: ***"The man fleeing the home was wearing only boxer shorts, making it extremely unlikely that he was one of the hostage takers."***

Other memorable anecdotes from the Department of Justice investigation into the Cleveland Police Department include Tasing suspects who are already handcuffed on the ground, kicking and beating suspects who are already handcuffed, using pepper spray on a handcuffed, mentally ill man, Tasing a man who was both deaf and suicidal as he cowered in his own bathroom, and shooting 24 rounds at a suspect walking through a neighborhood, instead of following alternate,

prescribed protocols. In doing so, the police endangered an entire community and are lucky they didn't kill an innocent citizen: they managed to hit fourteen vehicles and six houses in the process. And I have no doubt that after each of these incidents, there was no reflection or uttering of mea culpas on the part of the Cleveland Police. Just Officers Winky, Spunky, Cuddles, and Tiny all heading out for donuts, or maybe a beer and a bump.

CLEVELAND PD, FIX YOURSELF

But it is doubtful if they ever really will. And in spite of all of these incidents and excesses, the Cleveland Police Union stands firmly behind their actions. All of their actions. When Cleveland Browns receiver Andrew Hawkins played during the month of December wearing a shirt that said "Justice for Tamir Rice & John Crawford", it created a bit of a stir.

What did Cleveland Police Patrolman Union President Jeff Follmer have to say about it? *"It's pretty pathetic when athletes think they know the law. They should stick to what they know best on the field. The Cleveland Police protect and serve the Browns stadium and the Browns organization owes us an apology."* And when asked by a reporter what he thought about the growing fear in the country about police brutality and abuse of power, Follmer replied: *"How 'bout this? Listen to police officers' commands. Listen to what we tell you, and just stop. That eliminates a lot of problems ... The nation needs to realize, when we tell you to do something, do it, and if you're wrong, you're wrong, and if you're right, the courts will figure it out."* Except Jeff, only problem is, in the case of Tamir and John Crawford and dozens of others, they're dead, so they won't have their day in court. Andrew Hawkins' response to Jeff Follmer is one of the most eloquent statements ever to come from an athlete, a Black Lives Matter advocate, or for that matter, any person concerned with the First Amendment, and it is transcribed in full at the end of this chapter.

I suppose there is so very much more that I could say. I could tell you more about Tamir Rice—that he was still very much a little boy, who loved Legos and comics, who played in the school band and who loved driving his teachers crazy by bursting into song and getting the rest of the class to join in. Hundreds of pages have been written about the all too short life and tragic death of Tamir Rice. But if history just accepts that grim truth of the above compendium of evidence, then future generations will know the truth : innocent blacks are still used for target practice in this country.

ANDREW HAWKINS, Cleveland Browns Receiver

In response to local police union president Jeff Follmer

Who demanded an apology from the Browns when Haskins wore a

Justice for Tamir Rice & John Crawford Shirt on the football field

“I was taught that justice is a right that every American should have. Also justice should be the goal of every American. I think that’s what makes this country. To me, justice means the innocent should be found innocent. It means that those who do wrong should get their due punishment. Ultimately, it means fair treatment. So a call for justice shouldn’t offend or disrespect anybody. A call for justice shouldn’t warrant an apology.

“To clarify, I utterly respect and appreciate every police officer that protects and serves all of us with honesty, integrity and the right way. And I don’t think those kind of officers should be offended by what I did. My mom taught me my entire life to respect law enforcement. I have family, close friends that are incredible police officers and I tell them all the time how they are much braver than me for it. So my wearing a T-shirt wasn’t a stance against every police officer or every police department. My wearing the T-shirt was a stance against wrong individuals doing the wrong thing for the wrong reasons to innocent people.

“Unfortunately, my mom also taught me just as there are good police officers, there are some not-so-good police officers that would assume the worst of me without knowing anything about me for reasons I can’t control. She taught me to be careful and be on the lookout for those not-so-good police officers because they could potentially do me harm and most times without consequences. Those are the police officers that should be offended.

“Being a police officer takes bravery. And I understand that they’re put in difficult positions and have to make those snap decisions. As a football player, I know a little bit about snap decisions, obviously on an extremely lesser and non-comparative scale, because when a police officer makes a snap decision, it’s literally a matter of life and death. That’s hard a situation to be in. But if the wrong decision is made, based on pre-conceived notions or the wrong motives, I believe there should be consequence. Because without consequence, naturally the magnitude of the snap decisions is lessened, whether consciously or unconsciously.

“I’m not an activist, in any way, shape or form. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred I keep my opinions to myself on most matters. I worked extremely hard to build and keep my reputation especially here in Ohio, and by most accounts I’ve done a solid job of decently building a good name. Before I made the decision to wear the T-shirt, I understood I was putting that reputation in jeopardy to some of those people who wouldn’t necessarily agree with my perspective. I understood there was going to be backlash, and that scared me, honestly. But deep down I felt like it was the right thing to do. If I was to run away from what I felt in my soul was the right

thing to do, that would make me a coward, and I can't live with that. God wouldn't be able to put me where I am today, as far as I've come in life, if I was a coward.

“As you well know, and it's well documented, I have a 2-year-old little boy. The same 2-year-old little boy that everyone said was cute when I jokingly threw him out of the house earlier this year. That little boy is my entire world. And the No. 1 reason for me wearing the T-shirt was the thought of what happened to Tamir Rice happening to my little Austin scares the living hell out of me. And my heart was broken for the parents of Tamir and John Crawford knowing they had to live that nightmare of a reality.

“So, like I said, I made the conscious decision to wear the T-shirt. I felt like my heart was in the right place. I'm at peace with it and those that disagree with me, this is America, everyone has the right to their first amendment rights. Those who support me, I appreciate your support. But at the same time, support the causes and the people and the injustices that you feel strongly about. Stand up for them. Speak up for them. No matter what it is because that's what America's about and that's what this country was founded on.”

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

SHOT A MAN IN THE BACK: SLAGER'S SHAME

DRAGNA: You wouldn't shoot a man in the back, would you?

RIVKA: A man, no. But you're not a man.

—The Bag Man

ODO: You'd shoot a man in the back?

GARACK: Well, it's the safest way, isn't it?

—Deep Space Nine

RABBIT: Only a big, fat rat would shoot a guy in the back.

(Fudd shoots; a cloud of smoke appears where the rabbit stood.)

ELMER FUDD: So I'm a big, fat rat.

(Rabbit appears, shoves a wedge of cheese in Elmer's mouth.)

RABBIT: So have some cheese, rat!

—Bugs Bunny cartoon

No. I am not including a Bugs Bunny quotation to trivialize the shooting of Walter Scott by cop Michael Slager. Quite the opposite. I include it to make the point that ***not shooting a guy in the back*** is one of the human rules instilled in us since childhood. In a wicked world determined to make war with itself, the rule about not shooting a guy in the back is inculcated from the earliest days of kids watching Westerns. I have had children as neighbors my entire life; I've babysat for about ten thousand of them, and never once, when watching little boys play at war, cops and robbers, or cowboys and Indians, have I ever once seen one kid shoot another kid in the back. John Wayne made over 250 movies, and often bragged that his character never once shot anyone in the back. It has something to do with fairness. And it has everything to do with honor. Officer Michael Slager has no honor. Then again, what would we expect from someone who would plant evidence at a crime scene? Then again, what would we expect from someone who would deny a dying man CPR?

This is the brief story of the shooting of Walter Scott, an African American, by the white police officer Michael Slager. The incident occurred on April 4th, 2015 in North Charleston, South Carolina. It was a beautiful spring day.

If this chapter seems short, or somehow incomplete, that is because the most important part of the chapter has yet to be written. Those who care—about law, about justice, about the way black men are treated by police officers, about humanity in general—are all wondering what will happen to the cop who [shot a fleeing man in the back five times and left him to die in the dirt—after planting something \(presumably that now infamous Taser\) on the ground by the dead man’s feet.](#)

For those who read this as history (in case we are already starting to forget), here is what happened. It is worth noting that two pieces of crucial video footage tell us about the beginning of the incident, and the end of the incident. What happened in between is a matter of some confusion. We know that Walter Scott was pulled over for a broken tail light. We know that he told the officer he didn’t have all the appropriate papers on him at the time, as he didn’t own the car yet and was planning to purchase it the following Monday. We know that after the officer returned to his cruiser to run the license check, Walter Scott made the foolish mistake of bolting from his vehicle. Officer Slager got out of his car and gave chase. We do not know for certain what happened immediately after that. But we do know that Walter Scott began to flee again, and then was shot in the back five times by Officer Slager. Slager fired eight times, three bullets missing Scott. We also know that in talking with a senior officer a few moments later about the shooting, Slager actually laughed as he commented about how his adrenalin was pumping. (Oh, excuse me. Is this the part where I get to point out that since the shooting took place in a public park, and since three of Slager’s bullets missed Walter Scott and went God knows where, Officer Scott could have just as easily wounded—or killed—up to three innocent bystanders, possibly children, with his stray bullets.)

Slager still lived in the arrogant world of an earlier time, before police officers lived with the reality that their actions could be recorded for all the world to see. Clearly Slager never imagined that a terrified passerby had captured the entire incident on his cell phone. Had the cocky Slager stopped to imagine the possibility that he was being recorded, he surely never would have picked up the Taser from the ground, walked it over to a dying Walter Scott, and planted it near his feet. Then again, had he known his actions were being recorded, one doubts he ever would have shot his weapon over and over again at a fleeing man.

OFFICER MICHAEL SLAGER: WHAT WE KNOW

At the time of the shooting, Slager had only been with the North Charleston Police Department for five years. And yet, like so many other officers in this book, he had managed to rack up a number of complaints, charges, and lawsuits in a relatively short period of time. I take citizen complaints and litigation with a grain of salt, just like any other savvy news junkie. But when the incidents stack up, it is hard to deny the impact of numbers. And as for credibility: there was a time when I would have believed an officer of the law over a private citizen with some kind of a checkered record. Increasingly, that is difficult for me to do. And I know I am not alone. After all, in so many of these cases, we have found the cops to be lying, so where is their credibility?

Here is what we know about Slager: twice prior to shooting a man in the back, he has been involved in excessive force cases. Include the shooting of Walter Scott, and that is three excessive force charges in five years. Add to that the time he refused to come to the aid of a citizen, and the two reprimands he received from a superior officer, and that is six black marks against Slager in five years. Excuse me—why is he still working? Well, actually, he isn't anymore. He is sitting in jail. The more precise question would be, why was he allowed full powers and permission to carry a gun after the first several incidents? If the North Charleston Police Force had taken the problem of Michael Slager more seriously, Walter Scott might be alive today.

Let's take a look at those incidents—in order of increasing severity.

Incidents one and two involved a supervisor on the force having to talk with Slager about his behavior while on duty. Frustratingly few details are provided, but according to departmental reports, on two separate occasions, a supervisor ***“spoke with Slager in reference to certain procedures in reference to conducting motor vehicle stops and citizen contacts.”***

Incident three involved a mother who turned to the police to help her, because her children were being constantly harassed by certain individuals in the neighborhood, and she was afraid for their safety. Officer Slager answered the call, and decided to take no action. The mother was an African American woman.

Incident four was yet another traffic stop. And yes, the driver was an African American. According to the law firm of Loevy and Loevy, who are handling the excessive case force for the victim (the incident is caught on videotape): ***“During what should have been considered a routine traffic stop, Julius Wilson, of North Charleston, South Carolina, was forcibly pulled out of his car and restrained on his stomach by the officer that pulled him over and those that then responded to the scene. After being forced to the ground, Mr. Wilson placed his hands above his head, palms facing down. Two officers then started to place him in handcuffs. At that point, although Wilson was compliant and about to be handcuffed, the third officer stood and fired his Taser gun at Wilson's back. ...the officer who used a Taser against Wilson was***

Michael Slager, the same North Charleston Police Officer who fatally shot Walter Scott in the back as he ran following a traffic stop.”

The fifth incident was perhaps the most alarming event, prior to the Scott shooting. As you read, imagine what would have happened if Officer Slager had been removed from service, forced to undergo major retraining, or otherwise penalized—would he have thought twice about shooting Walter Scott?

It was September of 2014 when a man named Mario Givens was awakened by a pounding on his door in the early hours before dawn. Givens was naturally alarmed; he looked out and saw Patrolman Slager standing on his porch. Slager was at the house looking for Givens’s brother, Matthew. It turns out that Matthew’s ex-girlfriend, Maleah Kiara Brown, had sworn out a complaint against him. Maleah Brown and her friend went to the Givens home with the police, and they both watched in horror as the officers’ attack on Givens unfolded.

Givens opened the door as the officers stood on the front porch, and Maleah Brown immediately yelled to the officers that the person who answered the door was not the suspect. ***“He looked nothing like the description I gave the officers,”*** Brown told Associated Press. She noted that she had provided the two officers with a very detailed description of her ex-boyfriend, who is 5 feet, 5 inches tall, while Givens is 6 feet, 3 inches in height.

Givens then asked the officer why he was at the house, and Maleah Brown said Givens asked very nicely, and was very polite to the officers. Slager told Givens to step outside. Givens then asked ***“Why do you want me to step outside?”*** Slager then barged inside and grabbed him, yelling, ***“Come outside or I’ll Tase you!”*** Givens told the Associated Press, ***“I didn’t want that to happen to me, so I raised my arms over my head, and when I did, he Tased me in my stomach anyway.”***

Givens said the pain from the stun gun was so intense that he dropped to the floor and began calling for his mother, who also was in the home. At that point, he said another police officer came into the house and they dragged him outside and threw him to the ground. He was handcuffed and put in a squad car. Givens was not resisting when he was Tased, Maleah Brown told AP. She said she kept yelling to the cops that they had the wrong man, but they wouldn’t listen, and used the stun gun on him again. ***“He was cocky,”*** she said of Officer Slager. ***“It looked like he wanted to hurt him. There was no need to Tase him. No reason. He was no threat - and we told him he had the wrong man.”***

The internal investigation the police department opened after Givens filed the complaint exonerated Slager, but Givens and Brown both dispute the conduct of the probe. Givens told AP he was never contacted during the investigation, and only learned the case had been closed after he went to the police station six weeks later to ask what happened. Brown said that her statement

in the final complaint included none of the details she had given police about Slager shocking Givens while he was on the ground and clearly not resisting arrest. There was no mention in the final report of the fact that she kept repeating that Givens didn't fit the description, and that she kept telling officers through the Tasing that Givens was the wrong man. She also said she was not contacted during the investigation. Though initially accused of resisting the officers, Givens was later released without charge.

So there you have it. The low down on Michael Slager. Six incidents in five years, four involving Afro-Americans, and two persons whose race the police will not disclose. And three of the four Afro-Americans were victims of excessive force. Is Michael Slager a racist?

What happened after the horrific shooting does offer some small glimmer of hope that there can be justice in cases of excessive force—oh, let's say it. Cops killing blacks.

Initially, Slager's supervisors and the local authorities were sympathetic to Slager's story of why he had to kill this man. Then, the world rocked on its axis a little when the bombshell came out: a citizen had recorded the entire killing on his cellphone. A young man name Feidin Santana, walking to work as he did every day, heard the commotion and started to record. Many, many people wonder what would have happened of all this if Santana had not had the courage to record the police murdering a man.

The authorities in North Charleston, in a refreshing change from the usual narrative in these chapters, were quick to state that Michael Slager, fired from the force, would be held accountable. Stated Mayor Keith Summey ***"As a result of that video and bad decisions made by our officer, he will be charged with murder ... When you're wrong, you're wrong ... When you make a bad decision, don't care if you're behind the shield or a citizen on the street, you have to live with that decision."***

On June 8th, 2015, a grand jury indicted Slager on a charge of murder after just a few hours of deliberation. Separate investigations are being conducted by the FBI, the U.S. Attorney in South Carolina, the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, and the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division. Slager's lawyer quit on him. A [GoFundMe](#) campaign was started to raise money for Slager's defense, but it was quickly shut down by the site. Sometimes, things go a little bit right, eh? Slager is sitting in jail, denied bond thus fair and awaiting a trial date.

In the meantime, another black family tries to move on without one of its own.

Who was Walter Scott? He loved his four kids, two of them in their twenties at the time of his death. Walter Scott had served in the Coast Guard. He was taking courses in massage therapy because he wanted to help lessen people's stress. He was newly engaged. And he came from a

close knit family. He had previously seen all of his brothers a few months earlier, when they all planned a surprise party for their parents' anniversary.

Yes, it's true—Walter Scott was far from perfect. He'd tried several careers, and as a result of his struggles he was behind on his child support payments. In fact, that's the suspected reason for his fleeing—our justice system locks up fathers who are behind in child support, so they can't work a job to make it right and pay it back. Now, Walter Scott's children have zero chance of getting any back child support.

His children did have a chance to express their love at the funeral, though. One of his daughters read a poem: *"I had your love from the start... You brought so much joy into my life ... I will always be your little girl. But I know I need to grow up and move on. But I will never move on from you."* And a Dallas Cowboys flag was placed in the casket with Walter, as his father, brother, and sons remembered watching games together through the friendly family rivalries. The Star and Stripes covered his coffin, as tribute to his status a United States veteran.

Was Walter Scott wrong to have fled from the car? Of course. And that surely would have been reflected in the charges levied against him.

But we do not execute people for being behind on their child support, or fleeing in a panic. Although Michael Slager does. That is exactly what he does. How is he not a murderer?

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SEE WIKIPEDIA “References” for an extensive listing of article also used.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

FREDDIE GRAY AND THE NICKEL RIDE

THE ARREST: Baltimore. The Gilmore Homes housing project. April 12th, 2015, 8:39 a.m.

While on bicycle patrol, Lieutenant Brian W. Rice, Officer Edward Nero, and Officer Garrett E. Miller spotted Freddie Gray and "made eye contact" with Gray. Gray proceeded to flee on foot; police pursued Gray on foot and quickly apprehended him. Gray was then taken into custody **"without the use of force or incident,"** according to the statement of Officer Garret Miller, who, at the time of arrest, noticed a knife clipped in Gray's right front pocket. The weapon that Gray was carrying was not an illegal weapon under Maryland law. But a police task force said the knife was a violation of the Baltimore code, under which Gray was charged.

Gray's arrest and take-down was videotaped by [*two different parties*](#). The [*videos show Gray screaming in pain*](#) and officers dragging him to a police van, with Gray then stepping into the van. One of the witnesses stated that the officers had been **"folding"** Gray—with one officer bending Gray's legs backwards, and another holding Gray down by pressing a knee into Gray's neck, subsequent to which most witnesses contemporaneously commented that he **"couldn't walk", "can't use his legs", and "his leg look broke and you all dragging him like that."**

This certainly rings in contradistinction to Miller's claim that Gray was arrested without force or incident.

OFFICIAL TIMELINE:

The following timeline is pulled from both The Baltimore Sun and The New York Times, in order to create as complete a timeline as possible, in spite of the fact that the officers involved consciously omitted crucial details about the entire arrest process. Ms. Marilyn Mosby, the State's Attorney in Baltimore, comments throughout the timeline, regarding the illegal and malicious actions of the officers. (Emphasis added originates in above-cited articles.)

8:39:52 a.m. *"I Got Him!"* Mr. Gray surrendered to Officers Miller and Nero in the 1700 block of Presbury Street. "I got him," one officer stated, according to Jerry Rodriguez, the Police Department's Deputy Commissioner. *Inhaler Requested.* The officers handcuffed Mr. Gray and placed him face down. Mr. Gray said that he could not breathe and requested an inhaler, but did

not receive one, Ms. Mosby said. The officers then placed Mr. Gray down on his stomach and restrained him until the police van arrived. *No Seatbelt Used.* The police van arrived.

Eyewitness testimony and video show Freddie Gray screaming in pain, and unable to move his feet and legs. The officers put Mr. Gray into the van, but did not secure him with a seatbelt, as required by department regulations, observes Mosby.

8:46 a.m. *Stop No. 1 Mount Street and Baker Street.* Ms. Mosby said Lieutenant Rice directed the van driver, Officer Caesar R. Goodson Jr., to stop so that they could complete paperwork. She said Officers Miller and Nero and Lieutenant Rice removed Mr. Gray from the van and placed him in leg restraints. Mr. Gray was loaded head first onto the floor of the van, Ms. Mosby said. Residents report that the police were violent and were beating Freddie Gray, and cell phone video from the incident shows Freddie Gray to be [motionless, almost lifeless.](#)

8:54 a.m. *Stop No. 2 THE FAMOUS “PREVIOUSLY UNKNOWN STOP”—AS IN, UNKNOWN BECAUSE THE POLICE FAILED TO REPORT IT OR SUBMIT FULL AND ACCURATE RECORDS.* Deputy Commissioner Kevin Davis said police determined that the police wagon transporting Gray had made a previously unknown stop. Investigators scoured the area for surveillance footage, and found a private camera showing the van stopped at Fremont and Mosher streets after picking up Gray. *Freddie Gray is suffering a Critical Neck Injury.* Officer Goodson stopped the van at Fremont Avenue and Mosher Street and went back to observe Mr. Gray. *“Despite stopping for the purpose of checking on Mr. Gray’s condition, at no point did he seek nor did he render any medical assistance for Mr. Gray,”* Ms. Mosby said. With Mr. Gray still unsecured by a seatbelt, Officer Goodson returned to the driver’s seat and continued on to Central Booking, as directed by Lieutenant Rice, Ms. Mosby said. *“Following transport from Baker Street, Mr. Gray suffered a severe and critical neck injury as a result of being handcuffed, shackled by his feet and unrestrained inside the B.P.D. wagon,”* Mosby said.

8:59 a.m. *Stop No. 3 Druid Hill Avenue and Dolphin Street.* A few blocks later, Ms. Mosby said, Officer Goodson called dispatch for help checking on his prisoner. Officer William G. Porter arrived, and he and Officer Goodson went to the back of the van. *“Mr. Gray at that time requested help and indicated that he could not breathe,”* Ms. Mosby said. She said Mr. Gray *“indicated at least twice that he was in need of a medic.”* Officer Porter helped Mr. Gray from the floor of the van to the bench, she said, but neither officer belted him in, nor requested or rendered medical assistance. *Picking Up Another Person.* A call went out for a van to pick up and transport another person who had been arrested at the 1600 block of West North Avenue. *“Despite Mr. Gray’s obvious and recognized need for assistance,”* Ms. Mosby said, *“Officer Goodson, in a grossly negligent manner, chose to respond.”*

Time Not Known? Stop No. 4 Ms. Mosby said Officer Goodson was met here by Officers Nero, Miller and Porter. The additional prisoner was loaded into the van on the opposite side. Sergeant

Alicia D. White and Officers Porter and Goodson observed “*Mr. Gray unresponsive on the floor,*” Ms. Mosby said. Sergeant White spoke to the back of Mr. Gray’s head, and he did not respond. “*Despite Mr. Gray’s seriously deteriorating medical condition, no medical assistance was rendered or summoned for Mr. Gray at that time by any officer,*” Ms. Mosby said. *For the fifth time in 40 minutes, Officer Goodson failed to restrain Mr. Gray with a seatbelt.*

9:24 a.m. Final Stop—Arrival at Police Station. When the van arrived at the Western District police station, Ms. Mosby said, Mr. Gray was not breathing. Paramedics were called and remained on the scene providing patient care for twenty-one minutes before taking him to the University of Maryland’s Shock Trauma Center.

In the week that followed, Gray would suffer from total cardiopulmonary arrest at least once, and though doctors were able to resuscitate him, Freddie never regained consciousness. In spite of extensive surgery to save his life, he remained in a coma. Freddie had three fractured vertebrae, injuries to his voice box and, most catastrophically, his spine was 80% severed at his neck. Police confirmed that the spinal injury led to Gray's death. Gray died on April 19, 2015, a week after his arrest.

STINKS. The whole thing stinks.

—It is a TWO MINUTE ride to the police station, yet it took forty minutes, even with Freddie Gray in acute distress from the beginning of the ride. What was going on with the unknown stop, and why didn’t police call it in, as required?

[Check this hyperlink and study the circumlocutous route of the police van.](#)

OR GOOGLE IMAGES: FREDDIE GRAY POLICE VAN ROUTE

—Cops lied about the route of the van, failing to document one of the stops, and Freddie’s condition. And given that they lied about these matters, why should we believe them about anything else?

—Oh, and how many times in this book must I write this: the camera in the police wagon was not working. Why am I not surprised?

—Apparently, in answer to the above question I just asked, “at least one more time”, is how many times I have to write this, about cameras not working. (They hardly ever are, in these instances, it seems—Kendrick Johnson, Victor White III, the second cop car in Sandra Bland, etcetera, and etcetera.) There were eight, count them EIGHT security cameras on the street where Freddie Gray was arrested and thrown down, but guess what: none of them were working during the arrest of Freddie Gray. Or so we are told.

—Were they trying to give him one of their famous “nickel rides”, also known as rough rides, to teach him a lesson?

BALTIMORE LIMOUSINES AND THEIR “NICKEL RIDE”

Brutalizing prisoners while en route to booking may be many things, but what it is not, in Baltimore, is rare. It is not unusual at all. And sometimes, the consequences are tragic.

Baltimore police are famous for not keeping records of these sorts of things, and coverage before the age of the internet is spotty, but there was one case recorded in 1980. John Wheatfall, 58, broke his neck and became paralyzed during a ride to Baltimore's Southwestern District. He was seated on a bench with his hands cuffed behind his back, when he was thrown to the floor and hit his head against the wall. He would never walk again. Wheatfall sued for \$3 million, and was awarded \$20,000 for his injury.

Now that more watchdogs are in place, the news is getting worse:

In 2004, Jeffrey Alston was awarded \$39 million by a jury after he became paralyzed from the neck down, as the result of a van ride in which he wasn't properly strapped in.

And then, a year later, in 2005, it happened again: Dondi Johnson, a 43-year-old plumber, was arrested for public urination, handcuffed and placed in a transport van in good health. This kind of crime should not carry with it a death sentence; it is even a beloved Seinfeld episode.

Here is an excerpt from a May 2nd, 2015 CNN article by Sara Ganin, “Rough Ride Lawsuits Echo Freddie Gray Case”:

Dondi Johnson Sr., a Baltimore plumber arrested in 2005 for public urination, died two weeks after he was injured in a "rough ride," in which a police van is deliberately driven erratically ... no charges were filed against the three police officers involved, and the three still work for the Baltimore Police Department. The driver of the van, Nicole Leake, was featured in March, in a Baltimore police promotional video, looking into the camera and saying, "I am the BPD." ... Johnson was arrested in 2005 for urinating on a sidewalk. He was put in the van without a seat belt ... when police arrived at the barracks and opened the door, he was lying on the floor with a broken neck. He told an officer, "The bitch was driving like an asshole. I fell and I can't move." He was paralyzed. The officers never called an ambulance.

Later, as he languished in the hospital, paralyzed, he told doctors of the violent treatment he experienced at the hands of police. As described in The Baltimore Sun:

...The police van "made a sharp turn," sending him "face first" into the interior of the van, court records state. He was "violently thrown around the back of the vehicle as [police officers] drove in an aggressive fashion, taking turns so as to injure [Johnson] who was helplessly cuffed," the lawsuit stated.

Excerpted from "Freddie Gray not the first to come out of Baltimore police van with serious injuries." April 23rd, 2005 Baltimore Sun, by Doug Donovan and Mark Puente.

Johnson died two weeks later, from complications of his paralysis. Johnson's family sued the Baltimore Police Department. During the trial, Leake testified that she wasn't driving erratically, and didn't strap in Johnson because he said he had to urinate, and she didn't want to cause his bladder discomfort with a seat belt. The Johnson family was asking 7.4 million dollars for the death of Dondi. They got exactly 216,500 dollars. That is what a human being's life is worth in Baltimore. A couple hundred thousand. And when the Baltimore Police are involved, the punishment for the crime of peeing on a building is death.

And still, as recently as 2012, the police had not learned. This time it was a couple throwing a party in their home that was arrested. Reports The Baltimore Sun:

The incident occurred in June 2012 after police responded to a party at the house of the woman, Christine Abbott, and her now-husband, Jake Masters, in Hampden. According to the lawsuit, which named Officer Lee Grishkot and Officer Todd Edick as defendants, police exchanged words with Masters after telling him to put out a cigarette, and Abbott tried to intervene. "They pulled out a Taser, then pulled us both down, put us in handcuffs and everything," Masters said. "And my wife, they ripped her dress, so she was exposed, and they wouldn't cover her up and she was screaming." According to her lawsuit, Abbott was injured and the officers refused to allow her to conceal herself, then forcefully threw her and Masters into a police van in handcuffs and not strapped in properly. "They would just slam on the brakes every 100 feet or so to make sure we slammed into something in the back," Masters said. ... "I was just sliding around in there," Abbott told CNN. "It was all metal. I couldn't hold on to anything because my hands were behind my back, and I wasn't strapped down. It was really quite scary." "I think it was completely intentional. They didn't have to drive like that. I don't think there was even any reason for us to be in that van in the first place."

("Baltimore settles police van 'rough ride' suit." The Baltimore Sun, October 8th, 2015, by Jayne Miller and Kai Reed.)

And there are many more such lawsuits that have been filed against the Baltimore Police for their pattern of abusive behavior, when it comes to transporting prisoners. One of the good guys, a former Baltimore cop by the name of Charles J. Key, testified at a trial, stating that such illegal and vindictive moves were common. They are known on the force as **"rough rides"** , an

"unsanctioned technique" in which police vans are driven to *"cause injury or pain"* to unbuckled, handcuffed detainees.

This is what critics outside of Baltimore simply don't understand. The Freddie Gray death was not some isolated incident. This is just what the Baltimore Police do. This is their modus operandi.

Are you starting to understand why some of the citizens of Baltimore have such a short fuse?

No examination of the Freddie Gray tragedy can be complete without also acknowledging the tragic and violent Baltimore Riots which took place after a paralyzed Freddie Gray finally succumbed to his injuries and died.

But first, for complete context, we must take a look back, deeper into the troubled history of the Baltimore Police Department, and what truly sparked those infamous days of rage and flame...

AND HOW FAR WERE THEY PUSHED?

Shame on Baltimore.

Conservative pundits, along with a large swath of American citizens, all watched the Baltimore Riots in judgmental horror, and then were quick to claim that the rioters in Baltimore were thugs and criminals. And yes, their point of view has merit. After all, property was destroyed, businesses were looted, and fires were started. But this is a city of people who feel powerless, and who long ago had been pushed to the breaking point. Long before Freddie Gray died as a result of injuries cause by a BPD "nickel ride", Mark Puente of *The Baltimore Sun* wrote a scathing exposé of police brutality within the Baltimore Police Department. A few of the horror stories in Puente's article are recounted below. And keep in mind, Puente's article only goes back to 2011. Prior to that, there were decades and decades of further abuses.

Some alarming statistics, before we move on to the stories: Since 2011, Baltimore Police have faced 317 lawsuits for civil rights and constitutional violations. From 2011 to 2014, the city of Baltimore alone paid out 5.7 million dollars in lawsuits claiming police brutality. Add to those settlements the 5.8 million dollars spent in legal fees, and that means Baltimore has spent well over 11 million dollars to settle cases of excessive force and police brutality. Also, bear in mind that these staggering figures do not come from a small number of high figure payouts. Settlements in Baltimore are capped at \$200,000.

And, if you can imagine, it gets worse. Those court judgments do not include pending cases.

And, if you can imagine, it gets worse. The Baltimore Police Department doesn't keep track of any of this. Even though many of these lawsuits come from the same evil coterie of officers committing acts of police brutality over and over again, the Baltimore Police Department can't be bothered to jot that down. Doesn't take action. For example, neither the police department nor the city's legal department even realized that Officer Michael McFadden was a defendant in more than one lawsuit at the same time. It turns out that McFadden has been the subject of lawsuits on five separate occasions, which ended up costing the taxpayers 624,000 dollars. And sometimes, believe it or not, the administrative response to police brutality cases that end up in whopping payout because of excessive force—is to *promote* the officer involved. Later in the chapter, we will take a closer look at these repeat offenders, and we can all marvel that they are still on the force.

Who the hell is running this show? Is it any surprise that Baltimoreans, blacks in particular—for they are by far the largest victim pool—are furious, and just cannot control their anger anymore? And why should they? The cops make no effort to control their rage.

(And please, do keep all of those above settlement figures in mind when you hear people carp about how luxuries like “body cameras” are unaffordable. Visual documentation would go a long way to increase personal officer accountability, as well as quashing greedy untrue claims about “police brutality”, thereby saving cities all over the country huge pots of settlement money.)

“TO PROTECT AND SERVE”

Cops are supposed to protect victims, not create them. Here are just a few of the more notable victims of the Baltimore Police Department.

—A 26 year old pregnant accountant, witness to a beating, and then beaten herself by officers of the Baltimore Police Department, sworn to “Protect and Serve.”

—A 50 year old woman, beaten by officers of the Baltimore Police Department, sworn to “Protect and Serve”, because she committed the crime of selling raffle tickets.

—A fifteen year old boy, riding a dirt bike.

—A 65 year old church deacon.

—An 87-year-old grandmother, giving aid and comfort to her wounded grandson.

The following excerpts are from a lengthy article in the Baltimore Sun, published in 2014—half a year before the now infamous death of Freddie Gray. But before we look at their stories, it should be noted that getting these stories is no small achievement. You would think that the

victims of police brutality would be anxious to tell their stories, yes? And so they are. But the attorneys (ah yes, the attorneys, it's always the attorneys, unless of course it is the unions) ...the attorneys have written into all brutality settlements a clause that prohibits the victims from talking about what happened to them. If they do talk—if they do violate the “non-disparagement clause”—they risk losing half or more of their settlement. This is a very bad thing for Truth, Justice, and The American Way. Taxpayers have a right to know how their tax dollars are being spent, and they have a right to know about the law breaking, the corruption, and the felonies being committed by those whose salaries are paid by the taxpayers. And so, reporters and investigators are left to piece together the stories from a salad bar of sources.

Here is the Baltimore Sun report about Starr Brown, a Morgan State University graduate whose September 18th, 2009 encounter with those officers sworn to “Protect and Serve” left her, face down, bruised, and bleeding. She was pregnant at the time:

THE PREGNANT WOMAN

Returning home with her young daughter as the sun set, 26 year old Starr Brown was on the front steps of her brick house, when she spotted two girls walking along North Luzerne Avenue.

Suddenly, a group of about twenty girls came from the other direction and attacked the two girls. Brown, who went into her house to avoid the fighting, watched the beating through a window.

Other neighbors called 911, but by the time officers Karen Crisafulli and Andrew Galletti arrived, the attackers had fled. Brown could hear the officers yelling at the victims, and came outside to urge the officers to chase the girls who had fled. An argument started, and Galletti lunged at her, she later testified in court. She grabbed the iron railing, but Galletti wrapped his arm around her neck. She said she screamed that she was pregnant, but Galletti responded, “**[We] hear that all the time.**”

“He comes and grabs my arms,” Brown testified. *“He’s like, ‘You’re getting arrested. You’re coming with me. They slammed me down on my face,’”* Brown added, her voice cracking. *“The skin was gone on my face ... I was tossed like a rag doll. He had his knee on my back and neck. She had her knee on my back, trying to put handcuffs on me.”*

It is worth noting that Starr Brown had absolutely no criminal record when the officers arrested her for obstruction, disorderly conduct, resisting arrest and assault. She fought the charges in District Court in March 2010. The officers minimized the incident and Brown’s injuries, telling the judge that her screams drew a crowd and she refused to go back in her house.

“Mrs. Brown was standing up in her doorway,” said neighbor Ruby Lee. *“They threw her to the ground, and [Galletti] put his knee in her back.”*

The judge acquitted Brown of all criminal charges. She sued in April 2010, and settled the case in March 2011 for \$125,000.

JERRIEL LYLES ATTACKS HIMSELF

It was a cold afternoon in January, 2009, and Jerriel just wanted some hot fried chicken. He was coming out of the PJ Carry Out, food in hand, when two plainclothes officers blocked the door and demanded that he sit down on the greasy floor. When he objected, he was whacked with a police radio. States Lyles: ***“The blow was so heavy, my eyes swelled up. Blood was dripping down my nose and out my eyes.”*** That is Lyles’s version of things, of course. The officers had their version too: they couldn’t come up with a reason for stopping Lyles, who was doing nothing wrong. But they offered the explanation for his injuries: the injuries came from Jerriel poking himself in the face. Apparently, that is how he got the broken nose that he suffered as a result of the encounter. You think it can’t get any worse? It can. Two weeks later, just after Jerriel submitted a formal complaint about the incident, as he was leaving his apartment, two other officers stopped him, ordered him to drop his pants, then his underwear, and subjected him to a full cavity search. Jerriel Lyles never ended up being charged with anything—perhaps because he hadn’t done anything wrong in the first place? (Parts of this story courtesy station KXAN, “Tumultuous relationship between Baltimore, police didn’t start with Freddie Gray” by Matt H Jaworowski April 28th, 2015)

LORNEL FELDER

Baltimore, April 2009: Lornell Felder, 65 years old, liked a good, old fashioned hand rolled cigarette, and that is just what he was doing—rolling some tobacco into some paper—when an unmarked sports utility vehicle pulled up in front of Felder’s house and two plainclothes cops leapt out and lunged at Felder. They ran towards Felder, who yelled to his wife to ***“call the cops.”*** The cops continued beating Felder and said ***“We are the cops!”*** Felder was arrested, then hospitalized for injuries he sustained as a result of the beating. He was kept handcuffed to the bed for several days, not allowed to leave. After learning that it was not a marijuana cigarette, and that this man was a pillar of the community—a church deacon with absolutely no record—they finally let him go. Their bullying tactics cost the taxpayers \$100,000 in settlement. The two officers involved in the beating suffered absolutely no consequences, and are still out there, keeping the streets of Baltimore safe (for bullies), and are enjoying full pay on active duty.

GRANDMOTHER GREEN, FOSTER MOM

Eighty-seven-year-old Venus Green heard the scream while rocking on her porch on Poplar Grove Street in West Baltimore's Walbrook neighborhood. ***"Grandma, call the ambulance. I been shot,"*** she heard her grandson say, on that morning in July, 2007. As he lumbered closer, she spotted blood from a wound in his leg, and she called 911.

The retired teacher was used to helping others. Green had moved to Baltimore decades earlier from South Carolina, after working at R.J. Reynolds and Westinghouse. Once she settled in Baltimore, she began working at Fort Meade and earned two degrees at Coppin State University. The mother of two and grandmother of seven dedicated her career to teaching special-education students, but she just couldn't sit still in her retirement years. She had two hobbies: going to church and raising foster kids. Dozens of children funneled through her home. They, like her own grandchildren, called her "Grandma Green."

Paramedics and police responded to Venus Green's emergency call, but the white officer became hostile. ***"What happened? Who shot you?"*** Green recalled the officer saying to her grandson, according to an 11-page letter in which she detailed the incident for her lawyer. ***"You're lying. You know you were shot inside that house." The police told her grandson. "We ain't going to help you because you are lying!" "Mister, he isn't lying,"*** replied Green, who had no criminal record. ***"He came from down that way running, calling me to call the ambulance."***

The officer, who is not identified in the lawsuit, wanted to go into the basement, but Green demanded a warrant. Her grandson kept two dogs downstairs and she feared they would attack. The officer unhooked the lock, but Green latched it. He shoved Green against the wall. She hit the wooden floor. ***"Bitch, you ain't no better than any of the other old black bitches I have locked up,"*** Green recalled the officer saying as he stood over her. ***"He pulled me up, pushed me in the dining room over the couch, put his knees in my back, twisted my arms and wrist and put handcuffs on my hands and threw me face down on the couch."*** After pulling Green to her feet, the officer told her she was under arrest. Green complained of pain. ***"My neck and shoulder are hurting,"*** Green told him. ***"Please take these handcuffs off."***

An African-American officer then walked in the house, saw her sobbing and asked that the handcuffs be removed, since Green wasn't violent. The cuffs came off, and Green didn't face any charges. But a broken shoulder tormented her for months. ***"I am here because of injuries received to my body by a police officer,"*** Green wrote on stationery stamped with "wish on a star" at the bottom of each page. ***"I am suffering with pain and at night I can hardly sleep since this incident occurred."***

In June 2010, she sued the officers; an April 2012 settlement required the city to pay her \$95,000. Green died six weeks later.

CORRUPTION: “CORRUPTIO OPTIMI PESSIMA”

But the troubles of the Baltimore Police Department don't stop with harassing innocent citizens. Scandals writhe around the Baltimore PD like snakes:

—Officer Daniel Redd was convicted of re-selling heroin held out from busts.

—A total of 32 officers were caught up in an extortion scheme, directing accident involved vehicles to a private towing company, then getting involved in repair and insurance fraud. One of the officers, for example, made over \$14,000 dollars on the scheme.

The Police Commissioner's response when the feds stripped said officers of their badges and placed them under arrest was absolutely precious: ***“I don't think it's a setback at all. And for anyone to believe this is a defeat or a setback or a smear, I think this is an absolute affirmation of our commitment to policing.”*** Oh yeah. (Covered by the Baltimore Sun and WBALTV, or visit fbi.gov “Baltimore Police Officer convicted in towing extortion scheme”.)

AND THE FEDS GET INVOLVED...

The Federal Bureau of Investigation's own website has more scandalous graft and corruption information regarding the Baltimore boys in blue—or in this case, a girl in blue. In the FBI's own words:

According to her plea agreement, beginning in the fall of 2012, Ashley Roane and her roommate Erica Hughes engaged in a scheme whereby they provided the names and Social Security numbers of persons arrested by the Baltimore Police to an individual who could file false tax returns to obtain fraudulent tax refunds. Roane obtained the personal information of more than 30 people from law enforcement databases, through her position as a Baltimore Police officer. Roane and Hughes provided the information to the individual, whom they believed worked as a tax preparer, in addition to being a large scale heroin trafficker in Baltimore. Roane admitted that she also provided protection for the individual's purported drug trafficking. After Roane agreed to provide protection during drug transactions, on April 30, 2013, the FBI set up a controlled purchase by the individual of white powder that resembled a kilogram of heroin. The FBI watched while Roane, in uniform, armed with her service gun, and in a marked police car, provided protection while the individual purportedly retrieved heroin from a vehicle provided by the FBI. Shortly thereafter, at a prearranged meeting, the individual paid Roane \$500 for her

protection. Roane agreed to provide such protection again in a future transaction involving multiple kilograms of heroin. During the course of the schemes, Roane and Hughes received \$5,250 from the individual in what Roane believed was proceeds of fraudulent tax refunds. Roane also received a total of \$1,000 in exchange for providing protection to the individual during what Roane believed were kilogram-level heroin transactions.

(<https://www.fbi.gov/baltimore/press-releases/2013/baltimore-police-officer-accused-of-working-for-heroin-dealer> or visit fbi.gov, “Baltimore Police Officer accused of working for heroin dealer.”)

THE CHRONIC OFFENDERS

...AND A CAMEO AT THE BALTIMORE RIOTS

The above diary of misdeeds constitutes an alarming accumulation of incidents indeed. Even more alarming, however, are those officers who seem to show a pattern of brutality, and yet who continue to work—and get promotions. Worthy of note:

“SOME BALTIMORE POLICE OFFICERS FACE REPEATED MISCONDUCT LAWSUITS”

Excerpted from The Baltimore Sun, Mark Puente, October 4th, 2014 (pre-Freddie Gray)

DETECTIVE DANIEL HERSL; 44 YRS., JOINED FORCE IN 1999

2010: Charles Faulkner said Hersl broke his jaw and nose with his fists and a police radio after the man fled. He later received probation before judgment for drug charges. The man sued Hersl; the city settled the lawsuit last month for \$49,000.

2008: Taray Jefferson accused Hersl and another officer of breaking her arm when they searched for a drug suspect in a carryout store. The city settled the case in 2009 for \$50,000.

2007: Lillian Parker (you will see her name again under Detective Calvin Moss’ rap sheet), was selling church raffle tickets when Hersl and Detective Calvin Moss accused her of selling drugs. She spent two days in jail, but prosecutors dropped the charges against her when they realized that she was, in fact, selling church raffle tickets. She sued in 2010; the city settled the case in 2012 for \$100,000.

AUTHOR’S NOTE: I thought I was done with this bully, until I was wading through footage of the Baltimore Riots, watching a particular video of Baltimore Police slamming a reporter to the ground for lawfully exercising his First Amendment rights—and sure enough. That officer

slamming one of the press to the pavement, after seeing the reporter's lawful credentials, was none other than Detective Daniel Hersl. One is inclined to ask, what are the odds of Hersl showing up on camera, with all of the people and all those police out that night—unless Hersl was engaging in this kind of activity all over town, thereby making the odds more believable that he would be caught on video. And keep in mind, the above incidents are only the ones we know about—the victims of police brutality who were brave enough to come forward. Detective Daniel Hersl needs to not be a policeman any more.

DETECTIVE CALVIN MOSS; 46 YRS., JOINED FORCE IN 2004

2013: Marque Marshall did make a mistake when he attempted to flee from a traffic stop. But a review determined that Marshall's actions did not justify what happened next. The officer shot Marshall's left hand when he tried jumping a fence. Marshall lost most of his small finger and part of the adjoining finger. Nerve damage to his remaining fingers and hand was extensive. Marshall's lawsuit says another officer falsely told Moss that Marshall had a gun. Marshall faced several charges, including assault, but prosecutors dismissed them, records show. The civil suit is ongoing.

2010: Darrel McGraw accused Moss and his partner of beating him before and after being handcuffed. A jury in the civil case cleared Moss, but a judge found the partner liable for \$7,500.

2007: Lillian Parker, a longtime city cafeteria worker at Leith Walk Elementary School, encountered Moss after decorating her church. She was distributing raffle tickets for a weekend prayer breakfast, according to a lawsuit she brought against Moss, Daniel Hersl and other unnamed officers. Moss and Hersl approached her and accused her of selling drugs. She spent two days in jail, but prosecutors dropped the charges against her because there was no evidence that she had been doing anything but selling raffle tickets. She sued; the city settled the case for \$100,000.

PATROLMAN DAVID REEPING, 44, JOINED FORCE IN 2007

2010: Jamal Butler accused Reeping of false arrest and false imprisonment, testifying that the officer said he was being arrested "for being a black smart ass" while standing on an East Baltimore Street. A jury awarded Butler \$272,790 this year; the verdict is under appeal.

2010: Sophia DeShields accused Reeping of pulling her from the back of a car and breaking her wrist under the Jones Falls Expressway. The police said that the reason she fell was that she was wearing high heels. The city settled the case in February 2014 for \$24,000.

2009: Frank Snell II, a Randallstown dentist, and his friend, Brian Holmes, accused Reeping and two other officers of beating them while handcuffed on East Baltimore Street. The city settled the lawsuit in 2011 for \$47,500.

DETECTIVE MICHAEL MCSPADDEN, 43YRS., JOINED FORCE IN 1993

2012: Bolaji Obe and Akinola Adesanya accused McSpadden of beating them in a Water Street parking garage. The city settled the lawsuit in July 2014 for \$62,000.

2012: After driving under the influence, John Bonkowski accused McSpadden and another officer of breaking his wrist and ankle. The city settled the lawsuit in April 2014 for \$75,000.

1999: Lacey Burnette accused McSpadden and other officers of beating him unconscious during a domestic incident. The city settled the case for \$152,500.

1996: Robert O'Neil Jr. accused McSpadden of breaking his wrist in Fells Point. A jury awarded the man \$1 million, but a judge reduced it to \$100,000. The man appealed; a second jury awarded him \$335,000.

1995: Mary Forrest accused him of dragging and stomping her while handcuffed during a domestic incident. Court records show the case shows settled, but no payout is listed. The city could not find financial records about the settlement.

TO PROTECT AND SERVE: TO KIDNAPP AND HARASS

It seems that a few Baltimore Police are given to kidnapping children for sport. SPOILER ALERT: The District Attorney found enough credibility in the allegations to bring charges, and the jury found enough evidence during the trial to find the officers guilty, so in this case, at least, some small measure of justice was meted out. You should also know that the child in question here, referred to as “Mr. Johnson”, who was kidnapped by the cops, was only fifteen years old at the time. (It is also worth noting that the Gilmor area is where the Freddie Gray incident took place. Is it any wonder, then, that young blacks around Gilmor flee in terror, just at the sight of white cops?)

According to the direct court transcripts:

On Thursday May 4th, 2009, at approximately 6:30 p.m., Mr. Johnson was in front of his cousin's house at 1648 North Gilmor Streets with a group of teenagers. A BCPD van pulled up, and an officer inside the van told the group: “Keep it moving.” The teens left the area and walked around the block to the playground. After some time, they returned to 1648 North Gilmor Street.

The BCPD van came back, and the police officer sitting on the passenger side of the van, Detective Hellen, rolled down the window and told Mr. Johnson to come over to his van. Mr. Johnson did so, and the driver of the van, Detective Francis, commented on his “nice watch.” A third police officer in the back of the van, Detective Smith, stated: “If you look at me the wrong way again, I am going to ram this stick up your ass.” Mr. Johnson responded, “Man, you ain’t going to do nothing.” And he walked away.

Detective Francis then backed up the van and Detective Smith got out, grabbed Mr. Johnson and pulled him into the back of the van. Detective Smith began hitting him in the legs with his police baton, and he placed his hands around Mr. Johnson’s neck, choking him. Detective Smith then took Mr. Johnson’s cell phone, broke it in half, and threw it out the window. Detective Francis told Detective Smith that he would “keep driving until you say stop.” Detective Smith did not tell Detective Francis to stop until they have arrived in Ellicott City, Maryland.

Detective Francis told Mr. Johnson to give him his shoes. Detective Hellen told Detective Smith to “take his socks too”. Mr. Johnson replied “and it is cold and raining”, to which Detective Smith responded, “We don’t care.” Detective Smith then took off Mr. Johnson’s socks, opened the door to the van, and pushed Mr. Johnson out on the grass.” Mr. Johnson walked to a gas station and called 911. The Howard County Police Department (HCPD) responded and contacted BCPD, asking to meet at the county line to transfer Mr. Johnson.

The BCPD responded that it did not do transfers to take people home. The HCPD drove Mr. Johnson back to his home in Baltimore City.

Dear Reader: you are angry, yes? Particularly as the officers openly admitted to doing what they did, although they claimed they were only doing it in the context of “trying to get Johnson to work as an informant” and to learn what he might know about crimes in the area. Even if it were true—which one doubts—this is no excuse for torturing a child. And you are about to get angrier. During the appeals process, one of the strategies that the counsel for the police officers attempted to use was a blocking of a reference to the abduction of Shawnquin Woodland, because it would prejudice the officers’ cases, and hurt the defense. Translation: these three officers, while in this same van, had done the same thing to another young Afro-American man, only an hour before they abducted young Michael Brian Johnson.

Also taken directly from the Court of Special Appeals of Maryland transcripts:

Mr. Woodland was Mr. Johnson’s first witness. He testified that, on May 4th, 2009, he was 15 years old. He lived on Pennsylvania Avenue in Baltimore, approximately three blocks from North Gilmor Street, where he would sometimes “hang out” with his friends. That day, Mr. Woodland was outside standing on North Gilmor Street talking to his friend when he observed a blue car with tinted windows pull up. He could see three people in the car. Mr. Woodland was laughing at

a joke that his friend had made, and when the van pulled up, the driver of the van, Detective Francis, asked him “What was funny.” Mr. Woodland did not respond. The three officers then got out of the car and asked Mr. Woodland for his name. Again he did not respond because he “wasn’t doing nothing wrong. “The officer sitting in the back of the van, Detective Smith, said that Mr. Woodland “thought [he] was tough” and asked him “what was [he] laughing at.” Detective Smith then placed Mr. Woodland in handcuffs, told him that he “needed to learn respect” and placed Mr. Woodland in the van. Mr. Woodland went to sit down on the seat and Detective Smith told him that he “wasn’t good enough to sit in a seat” and that he “had to sit on the floor.” When the van drove away, Detective Francis stated that he wanted to “see [Mr. Woodland] dead there in three years,” and he wanted to “scrape [him] off the street. Detective Francis and Detective Smith joked that they were going to take Mr. Woodland to Ocean City, strip him naked, and take him to the train tracks and leave him there. Detective Hellen, who was sitting in the front passenger seat of the van, did not say anything. After approximately twenty-five minutes of driving, the van slowed down. Detective Smith took off the handcuffs, and without waiting for the van to come to a complete stop, pushed Mr. Woodland out of the van near a group of men standing on the corner, yelling “thanks for the information.” Mr. Woodland had not given the officer any information. Mr. Woodland, who had no money and no cellphone, got up and began walking back to West Baltimore. It took him approximately 45 minutes to walk home.

I do not know what to say about the above two incidents. I cannot possibly imagine what I might add.

For the last few pages, we have looked at police harassment and brutality committed against innocent individuals. We have looked at widespread graft and corruption rampant in the force, which has now been made public to the citizens of Baltimore and beyond. Lastly, we have heard stories about Baltimore police officers kidnapping and terrorizing children.

The connection between all of these shocking revelations and the death of Freddie Gray could not be clearer: the Baltimore police, at this juncture, have no more credibility than the thugs they’re supposed to be protecting us from: to wit—don’t you think it’s just possible, as some allege, that something far more sinister happened to Freddie Gray in the back of that police wagon than just bouncing around without a seatbelt?

We have waited until this point in the chapter to say it, but we will firmly posit it again at the chapter’s end. Yes, the Baltimore Riots were a War Zone, in every sense of the word.

But the larger question is this: who was it that declared the War, in the first place?

THE BALTIMORE PEACEFUL PROTESTS

All right, folks, first, nobody gets to call them “The Baltimore Riots”. Not yet. Not right at first.

Yes, I’ve seen all the footage: the breaking of windows, the setting of fires, the burning, the looting, the destruction. But nobody gets to call them “The Baltimore Riots”. They are now officially called, PART TWO, THE BALTIMORE RIOTS. Why?

Because PART ONE was: “THE PEACEFUL PROTESTS”. Everybody seems to want to ignore this—even the press, which is supposed to have this liberal bias, so you’d think they’d know better than to basically ignore this. What exactly is “this”?

THE REASONABLE REQUESTS

The protests began a few days after the arrest of Freddie Gray, as he lay languishing in the hospital, paralyzed for life, and slipping in and out of consciousness. The protestors first gathered peaceably outside the police station on April 18th, 2014, to be specific. By all accounts, ***even according to the police***, these protests were peaceful. They continued to be peaceful for a week, a full week, during which leaders of the black community and representatives of major civil rights organizations asked a number of very reasonable questions, and made some very reasonable requests. What they got in return was a series of lies, obfuscations, refusals, and gobbledygook.

And so now, let me ask you this: If a man who has been chased without probable cause, and who has been arrested for a minor crime, ends up paralyzed and then dies—and if, as a result of these events, hundreds of people gather together every day for a week, and peacefully petition their government for information, and for steps to be taken—and if those hundreds of people are then basically told by the “powers that be” to GO F&*&CK YOURSELVES, what exactly are these protesters supposed to do?

Say, “*Oh well, we tried, let’s all go back to being brutalized by the cops.*” (?)

The fact is, the protestors remained peaceful for a full week. Even the governor of the state admitted that the protests had been peaceful:

Maryland’s Governor Larry Hogan echoed that plea in his own statement on Twitter Friday which chiefly praised protesters for their civilized behavior. “To date, the nature of these demonstrations has been a testament to Baltimore’s strong character and our common commitment to peace and justice. It is my hope that events planned for this weekend continue to reflect positively on the community,” he stated in part.

—*New York Daily News, April 24th, Jason Silverstein, Nina Golgowski.*

These protestors, represented in meetings primarily by established and respected organizations such as the NAACP and the ACLU (liberal, perhaps, but hardly the Black Panthers), asked a variety of questions about the Freddie Gray incident. They also had a variety of specific requests, given that in just four short years, from 2010 to 2014, 109 people had died, while in the custody of the Baltimore Police.

Here are the answers that they were given. Here is the respect that they were (or more accurately, **were not**) given. Here is what happens when you **peacefully** seek information from the powers-that-be, in the city of Baltimore.

WHY PROTESTORS WERE NOT GETTING INFORMATION ABOUT THE DEATH OF FREDDIE GRAY:

REQUEST: Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake has been *trying to change the law which effectively ties her hands in quickly distributing information about police-involved incidents and disciplining officers.*

RESPONSE : ***Legislation to change that law failed*** during the session this year.

MY RESPONSE: I smell the Union. Blame the Fraternal Order of Police, along with the Law Enforcement Officer's Bill of Rights, which not only makes it difficult to get information about officer involved shootings, the LEOBR also makes it such that ***it can take up to 16 months to fire an officer.*** (Note: I am not anti-Union. I am not against the LEOBR. Just abuse of the system. 16 months is abuse.)

REQUEST: “ ***...A coalition of civil rights groups implored the governor to intervene.***” The coalition, which included the ACLU and the NAACP, asked the governor to address some of the broader problems that the Freddie Gray case highlighted about poverty, police brutality and inequality. ***"Freddie Gray's death is part of a larger systemic problem that we see across Maryland,"*** said Sara Love, public policy director for ACLU of Maryland. ***"There is a serious problem with policing practices here in Maryland."***

RESPONSE : The governor did not directly respond to the requests, but a spokesman issued a statement saying that *"Given the circumstances surrounding the tragic death of Mr. Freddie Gray, the frustration and concerns being expressed by citizens and community groups are both valid and appropriate."*

MY RESPONSE : Of course they are. The protestors know they are. So what the hell are you going to do about it?

REQUEST: The Maryland Coalition for Justice and Equality met with Governor Larry Hogan's top staff Friday in Baltimore and asked him to ***“call the legislature back to Annapolis to enact more comprehensive laws about body cameras.”***

RESPONSE Hogan said Thursday he would sign legislation passed by the General Assembly this year to ***“encourage police departments to launch body camera programs”***, but the ACLU and others criticized those measures for not going far enough.

MY RESPONSE: This is the stupidest thing I have ever heard. I believe that we have demonstrated both in this chapter and in this book that in many cases, such as in the case of the Baltimore Police Department, “encouraging” them to do something that might hold them accountable, such as wearing body cameras, doesn’t amount to a hill of beans. In that case of troubled cities like Baltimore, body cameras must be mandated by law. Not “encouraged.”

REQUEST: The coalition (NAACP, ACLU, and other civil rights groups) also *requested Governor Hogan direct Attorney General Brian E. Frosh to conduct an independent investigation into all deaths of people while in police custody.* An ACLU report released in March found 109 people died after police encounters in Maryland between 2010 and 2014.

RESPONSE: *“A spokesman for Frosh did not immediately respond to a request for comment on whether the attorney general would launch a state-wide probe of deaths in police custody.”* Hogan said earlier this week that *“he would NOT direct Frosh to conduct a review of the Gray case ...”*

MY RESPONSE: Ok...these protestors are trying to do this peacefully, and this is what you give them?

REQUEST: ***“What happened to Freddie was unnecessary and uncalled for,”*** the Reverend Jamal Harrison Bryant of the Empowerment Temple boomed to protestors who marched from Gilmore Homes to the police station. ***“All of those police officers involved need to be held accountable and answer for what they did, and need to be terminated from their positions.”*** (Please keep in mind that it was a clear violation on Baltimore PD policy to NOT strap in a prisoner with a seat belt. These men knew it. They knew the history of nickel rides. That is why the protestors made this demand.

RESPONSE: Deputy Police Commissioner Jerry Rodriguez released no additional information Saturday but said *police have commissioned a “blue-ribbon” panel to review the case once the investigation has been handed over to prosecutors.*

MY RESPONSE: “Blue Ribbon” is code for “White Deciders.” By the time Rodriguez made this comment, it had already been established that the police involved had egregiously violated procedures. They should have been removed from their positions immediately, even if that removal was only temporary.

REQUEST: The group would also like lawmakers to “*Consider changes to the Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights, which spells out how police can be disciplined.*”

RESPONSE: “*The Hogan administration will continue to be engaged with leaders in the community and remains supportive of the Mayor and the State's Attorney,*” Hogan spokesman Matthew Clark said.

MY RESPONSE: No it won't. Clearly, the Hogan administration couldn't be less engaged. And so far we have heard nothing to convince us that anything is going to change.

REQUEST: The groups *asked Governor Hogan to deploy his Office of Crime Control and Prevention to form a task force to come up with more ideas to improve relationships with the police.*

RESPONSE: Spokeshole Clark said *Governor Hogan was evaluating the requests, which he considered legitimate, and he was "very seriously" considering all the concerns.*

MY RESPONSE : The protestors are “very seriously” considering flooding out into the streets and breaking some shit, given how completely they are being condescended to and utterly blown off.

A QUICK RECAP

Let's be clear about this: police arrest a man with no probable cause. A black man, making nervous eye contact with the police in a poor part of town, (a part of town from whence the cops have previously kidnapped kids), does not constitute probable cause.

The police then find a knife that may or may not be illegal in the city, although it is legal in the state. And then they use extreme force to subdue him, even though he does not resist arrest.

They show no concern when he cannot walk to the police van, but instead has to be dragged.

They ignore his requests, and then his begging, for an inhaler.

They ignore his requests, and then his begging, for emergency medical attention.

They ignore their own procedures and rules, and fail to strap a cuffed man into their police vehicle, leaving him to bounce around against bolts and sharp edges.

They make a stop to leg shackle him, claiming he is irate, although a video taken by a citizen will show Freddie to be motionless and possibly unconscious.

A two minute ride takes forty minutes, and when asked for an explanation, the police flat-out lie about the number and location of their stops.

They finally get to the police station and find Freddie unconscious, and then they call an ambulance. Freddie is paralyzed.

In a few days, Freddie will be dead.

And the cops are upset that people are upset.

THE BALTIMORE RIOTS

Were the Baltimore Riots a horrific thing? Of course they were. But at this juncture, I can only refer back to the chapter on the Ferguson Riots which erupted after the killing of Michael Brown, and reiterate those points.

The protestors tried for days to make the smallest bit of headway with their very reasonable requests. When they could not get answers or action, they took action of their own. Is it really any surprise that the public anger erupted into mob violence? It's strange ... we, the white folk, tend to embrace, even relish, civil disobedience when we engage in it: as protest against the Stamp Act (1765), during the Boston Tea Party (1773), during the New York City Draft Riots (1863), during the Wilmington Insurrection (1898), the Atlanta Race Riots (1906), the Pacific Coast Race Riots (1907), the East St. Louis Massacre (1917), the Knoxville Tennessee Race Riots (1919), the Washington D.C. Race Riots (1919), the razing of the Greenwood, Oklahoma, aka "Black Wall Street" (1921), during the destruction of Rosewood (1923) ... somehow, we always find "justification". History finds righteous reasons. (And I haven't even started on what we did to Native Americans.) But when the rioters are black, it's a different matter... Don't get me wrong. I would never begin to condone the destruction that went on during the Baltimore Riots. It is simply a question of how far people can be pushed. How far **a people** can be pushed?

The thugs, looters, and arsonists of the Baltimore riots do not represent the cause of Freddie Gray. Should these criminals be arrested and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law? Absolutely. Do they have anything to do with a valid and reasonable right to answers from the police, and justice for Freddie Gray? Absolutely not. Virtually all just protests have opportunists who latch on to the fringes and take advantage of the situation; to confuse them with the cause is

intellectually dishonest and rhetorically feeble. History is fat with examples of this. If all movements which had fringe incidents of violence associated with them were discredited, then we would have to determine that the American Revolution, the storming of the Bastille, the Abolitionist Movement, and the mass protests to end the Vietnam War were all Very Bad Things. Wrong Things.

As was the case with Ferguson, the cops also did their part to incite the violence that the world watched. Raw footage does not lie; there are several video accounts of [police en masse throwing stones at protestors, inciting them to riot](#). And read these eyewitness accounts from parents and teachers at the school where some of the riots first broke out, as recounted in this article from "Mother Jones":

According to eyewitnesses in the Mondawmin neighborhood, the police were stopping buses and forcing riders, including many students who were trying to get home, to disembark. Cops shut down the local subway stop. They also blockaded roads near the Mondawmin Mall and Frederick Douglass High School, which is across the street from the mall, and essentially corralled young people in the area. That is, they did not allow the after-school crowd to disperse.

Meghann Harris, a teacher at a nearby school, described on Facebook what happened:

Police were forcing buses to stop and unload all their passengers. Then, [Frederick Douglass High School] students, in huge herds, were trying to leave on various buses but couldn't catch any because they were all shut down. No kids were yet around except about 20, who looked like they were waiting for police to do something. The cops, on the other hand, were in full riot gear, marching toward any small social clique of students...It looked as if there were hundreds of cops. The kids were "standing around in groups of 3-4," Harris said in a Facebook message to Mother Jones. "They weren't doing anything. No rock throwing, nothing...The cops started marching toward groups of kids who were just milling about."

A teacher at Douglass High School, who asked not to be identified, tells a similar story: "When school was winding down, many students were leaving early with their parents or of their own accord." Those who didn't depart early, she says, were stranded. Many of the students still at school at that point, she notes, wanted to get out of the area and avoid any Purge-like violence. Some were requesting rides home from teachers. But by now, it was difficult to leave the neighborhood. "I rode with another teacher home," this teacher recalls, "and we had to route our travel around the police in riot gear blocking the road...The majority of my students thought what was going to happen was stupid or were frightened at the idea. Very few seemed to want to participate in 'the purge.'"

A parent who picked up his children from a nearby elementary school, says via Twitter, "The kids stood across from the police and looked like they were asking them 'why can't we get on the

buses' but the police were just gazing...Majority of those kids aren't from around that neighborhood. They NEED those buses and trains in order to get home." He continued: "If they would've let them children go home, yesterday wouldn't have even turned out like that."

Meg Gibson, another Baltimore teacher, described a similar scene to Gawker: "The riot police were already at the bus stop on the other side of the mall, turning buses that transport the students away, not allowing students to board. They were waiting for the kids...Those kids were set up, they were treated like criminals before the first brick was thrown." With police unloading busses, and with the nearby metro station shut down, there were few ways for students to clear outThe Baltimore Police Department did not respond to requests for comment.

4. As in the Ferguson riots, Baltimore police arrested reporters covering the story, for no good reasons other than that the world would then know about the kinds of things that the police were doing during the protests. Reporter J.M. Giorgano, of the Baltimore City Paper, was tackled and beaten by half a dozen cops, in spite of having his press credentials visible. Even as people on the fringe of the police yelled "He's a reporter!", the police kept beating him. They eventually released him, but Giorgano later reported in an article that Reuters photographer Sait Serkan Gurbuz, who was standing nearby, did get arrested and taken away in the police van. But these aren't the only reporters who were harassed and beaten and arrested. A twenty one year old University of Maryland student, who was also a fully credentialed reporter, was approached from behind and knocked to the ground simply for filming the police from distance. And in spite of the fact that one police officer acknowledged seeing the credentials, and announced to the other police "It's OK, He's with the press", another officer still knocked Ford Fischer to the ground. (And lest you be inclined to write off this college student reporter from American University, my alma mater, here's a little about him: According to his bio that is all over the web, his news site is News2Share.com, and his video work has been featured on CNN, FOX, NBC, MSNBC, The New York Times, The Washington Post and several other major outlets. He also had the dubious honor of being arrested in Ferguson as well. He works with reports in hot spots around the world. But he doesn't work at the Baltimore Riots, not if gestapo style cops have anything to say about it.

And guess who it was that knocked down poor Ford—that assclown cop who has already engaged in so much brutality, cost the city so much money, and made Baltimore cops in general (and unfairly) look so very bad—Detective Daniel Hersl. He just won't go away. Of all the thousands of people on the streets that night, of all the hundreds of cops sent out to manage them, only Hersl is obnoxious enough that he gets famous once again, for arresting a brave young college student who operates as an official member of the press, and just want to exercise his First Amendment rights.

THEY MADE EYE CONTACT

The police made eye contact with Freddie Gray, and Freddie Gray began to run. We are not for one moment attempting to paint Freddie Gray as a choir boy. Nor is that the image we are trying to paint of victims like Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Laquan McDonald, and others we could name. What we are trying to drive home, with as much clarity and urgency as we can muster, is this: police don't get to decide who lives and dies. Nor do they get to indulge in police brutality, excessive force, or physical torture, just because they don't like something about the guy. Or gal. Most of the people who defend these officers past all reason, and with a blind eye towards the damning evidence, claim to love this country, and call themselves patriotic Americans. And yet what could be less patriotic than watching the system defiled by thuggish bullies taking the law into their own hands? Wearing a uniform neither exonerates nor expunges that.

We cannot tell the story of Freddie Gray without talking about the events leading up to it, and there is simply no other way to interpret them, other than to say that the police did a hell of a lot to push the people to a breaking point. I said I would put forth this thought again near the close of this chapter, and I would hope that folks would ponder it long and hard:

Yes, the Baltimore Riots were a War Zone, in every sense of the word. But the larger question is this: who declared that War, in the first place?

I will leave this chapter with two incidents of police brutality which, for some reason, haunt me perhaps more than all of the other incidents of cruelty by cop that we have seen in this sad, ugly chapter.

First of the two is the famous skateboarding kerfuffle, in which a tubby bully, disguised as an officer of the peace, frightens and physically assaults and basically goes all Vlad the Impaler on a child who is probably the quietest, most terrified, least back-talking fourteen year old boy I have ever seen. [And let me say in advance, nice job, cop, of instilling a fear and hatred of authority in an impressionable young kid.](#) Click on the hyperlink, and be aghast. Or simply YouTube search SKATEBOARDER BALTIMORE COP; it's everywhere. (Oh, and it's worth noting that once this video went viral, a soft spoken artist came forward and recognized that cop as the same Baltimore Storm Trooper in short that terrorized him as well, kicking his little art project across the boardwalk and making the same kinds of bullying threats.)

And if you were to ask me why this skateboard story haunted me so, even though it does not end in paralysis or death, I would say that incidents like this embody the way in which we start to lose our connection with a younger generation. I mean, to put it baldly: how messed up do you have to be, to pick on a little kid?

BALTIMORE AFTERTHOUGHTS: IT'S A DOG'S LIFE

And then there are the stories that really break your heart, just when you thought your heart couldn't be broken any more:

Nala was a seven year old Shar Pei who had gotten away from her owner. Look at the pictures: clearly Nala was tame, healthy, and well-loved. Nala always wore a collar and an ID tag, so this dog was obviously no dangerous stray. Nala escaped her home by accident one day, and trotted a few blocks from her house. Sandy Fleischer saw the dog looking disoriented, and approached Nala; she was hoping to help the lost Shar Pei find its way home. The dog nipped. Fleischer, who later testified that this act did not upset her, called animal services in hopes of enlisting some help. Oh goodie. Ten officers—yes, ten officers—arrived at this international crisis.

Jeffrey Bolger and Thomas Schmidt were among those dispatched to the scene. Fleischer heard them refer to the dog as “a vicious stray”, although they could clearly see the little bone shaped ID tag on its collar, and the dog was also calm by now. They took it down with a dog pole, and then Sandy Fleischer heard Officer Bolger say ***“I’m going to fucking gut this thing!”*** His partner Schmidt then held the dog down, while Bolger did exactly that: he slit Nala’s throat. ***“You could hear the dog screaming and crying in pain,”*** said Fleischer, horrified that she’d had any part in bringing this on. She had trusted the police to do the right thing. Although Officer Bolger was temporarily taken off duty, he used as his defense that the dog had strangled itself already, prior to Bolger’s slitting its throat. This, of course, is ludicrous, since this would render it unnecessary for the cop to slit the dog’s throat. He has subsequently received 45,000 dollars in back pay. And he is back on the streets, no doubt terrorizing humans and canines alike.

Nala was adorable. A heart breaker. And now the owner’s heart is truly broken.

Dear Baltimore Police Department: What in the name of all that is sacred is your problem?

Why the hell don’t you fix yourself?

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

SMOKING CAN KILL YOU: THE SANDRA BLAND STORY

She was pulled over for failing to use a turn signal. Officer Encinia ran her information, found nothing damning, and decided to give her a warning. Three minutes later, he was pointing his Taser within inches of her, threatening to “*Light you up!*” Three days later, Sandra Bland was found dead in her jail cell.

The Sheriff in charge of the jail where Sandra Bland died is actually so stupid he’s interesting.

That’s the way of it, sometimes. Among those of us following the story, there is a kind of morbid curiosity to find out what boneheaded thing he will say next.

The first bizarre thing that Sheriff Glenn Smith did is call a big press conference to announce to the watching world that there is no race relations problem in his little empire, and how he really cares about African-American people. When asked if he thought there was racism in Waller County, he stated: “*The average citizen goes about their life seven days a week enjoying it, everybody working together, eating in restaurants together and socializing...I just don’t think it exists...*”

This rings not quite true. In fact the statement stinks of lies and hypocrisy, for a couple of reasons. For one thing, Sandra Bland was just going about *her* life, enjoying the day, looking forward to a rich, full future and the new job that came with it, when a cop broke the law by speeding up behind her, egregiously breaking the speed limit by not using lights and sirens. And when she quickly got out of the way for him, to let him pass, he pulled her over, picked a fight, threatened to give her electric shock, and a couple of days later, she was mysteriously dead. So yeah, since Sandra was black, and the deputy (who had just given a nice white student a traffic violation warning) was not black, I’m thinking there’s some racism here.

But let’s not stop there; another thing that makes me think there is racism in the Sheriff’s beloved Waller County is that—wait for it—they still practice segregation *on the dead*. It’s an ingenious way to get your point across, about how your folks still love the idea of segregation, without actually breaking the law. You see, all those pesky Supreme Court decisions pretty much only apply to pulse people—i.e., the living. But when a white woman with no known identity tragically turned up deceased and had to be buried, and when the black judge in charge of the disposition of the body ordered her to be buried in a cemetery of his determining, a hue and a cry

arose to the heavens: you see, a black judge by the name of DeWayne Charleston had ordered the white Jane Doe to be buried in a Negro cemetery. But the good Christians of Waller County would not have it. What happened next? A white judge reversed the black judge's order. So even if you are dead, you are segregated in Waller County, Texas. Which is pretty weird if you think about it, since we are all skeletons sooner or later, which are all that same beige color. Of course, this particular graveyard incident did happen a long time ago, not too long after the Civil War. It happened back in 2007, which is not too long after the Civil War—at least, if you are from Waller County, Texas. But Sheriff Glenn Smith will tell you that there is no racism in Waller County. Yeah, right. And there are no cats in America, Fievel. Glenn Smith even announced a special press conference so he could refer to himself in the third person and announce to a curious press corps that **“Black lives matter to Glenn Smith”** . If I had access to Sheriff Glenn Smith, I would put this cheerful Post-It on his desk: “Note to Self: When you have to call a press conference to announce to the world that you aren't racist, it's a pretty sure bet that you are.” But, as they say in the infomercials—WAIT, THERE'S MORE! What other wacky hijinks has the good Sheriff Glenn Smith been up to? Well, about a month after Sandra Bland mysteriously died in her jail cell, he cut down a big, beautiful tree just outside of the jail. The protestors, who had been standing in peaceful and quiet vigil ever since Sandra died, used to stand under it and pray. Until big Sheriff Smith cut it down. The reason he gave: it was **“a security issue”** . Huh? He was threatened by the tree? The safety of the good people of Waller County was threatened by a tree? What did he think it was, an Ent? As my editor pointed out, of the tree murder, “this was not some heated reaction offered after some protestor flipped him the bird. (Although there is no record of any of these extremely docile protestors flipping him or anyone else the bird.) “Think about it,” my editor continued. “He had to plan this. He had to look at that beautiful old stately tree, which had offered shade to the good citizens of Waller County as they moved through the town square for decades, and he had to decide that those protestors weren't going to enjoy any of his Texas shade, by gum, and he had to get his chain saw and fill it with gasoline and come back to the tree and start sawing away.”

SHERIFF GLENN SMITH: *“I suppose the tree has been there for probably a long time, but it needed to be cut down today, because we've never had a security issue like we have today...There were birds making a mess on cars, it was blocking the view from the parking lot.”*

See what I mean? He is so stupid he's funny. When this news story cycles away for good, I am going to miss him. I suppose a straw poll would tell us that those of us following Smith's shenanigans have a favorite comment, and that is when he called the people standing vigil **“Satanists”** . Apparently, because he did not recognize them as coming from his particular little congregation, then they must be the spawn of Satan. (Cue echo chamber, cue SNL Church Lady dancing with gusto.) Hanna Bonner is a soft-spoken, sincere Methodist pastor who made the mistake (in the sheriff's eyes, no doubt) of videotaping a smart ass remark made by Smith. As he passed her (under the hot Texas sun, as the shade from the Ent Tree was no longer an option), he

said ***“GO BACK TO THAT CHURCH OF SATAN THAT YOU RUN.”*** When asked why he would say such a vile thing, he responded: ***“My Grandmother used to tell me, if you’re not doing godly things, then you must be working for the Devil, because there is no in-between.”*** And in case that wasn’t clear enough, he elaborated: ***“I have been a sheriff for a long time, and I have actually seen Satan worshippers wearing collars.”*** Here, your humble author must defer to the experience and expertise of the Sheriff. I, myself, have never seen Satan worshippers wearing collars. Only dozens of leaders of peaceful flocks from a variety of religious denominations.

But hey, everything about Sheriff Glenn Smith is not so amusing. In fact, most everything about him is damned creepy. Let’s examine, for example, the history of Glenn Smith before he became the Sheriff. Not once, but twice, he was disciplined for behaving like a big, fat racist. And those are just the incidents that we know about. The ones that came to light.

What made the ugly incidents even more horrifying, in hindsight, were the implications that they held for the future: imagine what would have happened if the people of Waller County had done the right thing, and decided that such a man was not the right kind of man to be sheriff. Imagine if he had not been elected. The entire tone at the Waller County jail might have been different, and, for all kinds of reasons, Sandra Bland might be alive today. Waller’s racism first went public in 2007, when it was covered by an article in The Houston Chronicle. February 21st, 2007: (Excerpted from “Hempstead Police Chief disciplined in racially charged arrest”.)

The Hempstead City Council voted to suspend Smith for two weeks without pay after viewing videotapes and hearing the allegations against him from local black residents stemming from the arrest of 35 year old Cory Labba on Jan. 8th Hempstead Mayor Michael Wolfe Sr. said Labba, who is black, claimed Smith hit him in the chest during his arrest. “He (Smith) took responsibility for being unrestrained, and based on his own admission, he pushed the suspect ... and used profanity,” Wolfe said. “In this case, the young man has no bruises and he was not physically abused in any way whatsoever,” the mayor went on to say...

The attitudes expressed in the article reveal a lot. Too much. The article exemplifies one of the many reasons that Texas has a poor reputation for race relations. And it is also clear that the incident happened long before our national radar was attuned to the issue of the treatment of blacks at the hands of white authority figures: how incredibly bizarre is it that both Glenn Smith (then the police chief, not the sheriff) and the mayor both acknowledge that a suspect was sworn at and shoved, but also claim that no physical abuse took place. And also notice how neither of them suggests that the suspect was in any way being violent or resisting arrest. Apparently, it’s OK to get physical with a suspect and hit him in the chest, as long as you don’t leave a mark, as long as the man “has no bruises”. Interestingly, that is the same logic used by wife batterers. And

yes, I will acknowledge that there is a vast difference between giving a suspect a push, as the sheriff claimed, and punching him hard, as the suspect claimed. But you know what—the credibility of the Texan police, the Texan sheriff and deputies, the Texan politicians, and the Texan press, have all been compromised by their own behavior. At this point, I’m going with the suspect. If he says he was hit, I’m going with the suspect. Another reason why I’m believing the suspect at this point: apparently there was a videotape of it, viewed by the City Council. If it’s exculpatory of Glenn Smith, then why can’t we see it? What are you hiding? But it’s not as though Glenn Smith faced no consequences. The article continues:

“After a lengthy closed door council meeting that lasted until 2:00 a.m., the six member council also placed the police chief on probation for six months and ordered him to take anger management classes...”

So. What came of Officer Glenn Smith’s probation and anger management classes? Apparently, they didn’t exactly take. About a year later, on March 17th of 2008, Glenn was fired in a 3-2 vote by that same City Council. Apparently, he went on a botched drug raid where he accused and arrested the wrong people, strip searching a bunch of innocent Afro-American youths. What further punishment was in store for this man, who had a growing record of harassing African Americans? What more, besides losing his job? The path ahead was clear: no longer a police officer, he was now free to be elected Sheriff of Waller County. And so the good citizens of Waller County did just that.

I think it is fair to assume that anybody who is reading this book remembers the indignity and the horror of the escalating traffic stop which led to the death of Sandra Bland. As for the incident and its aftermath, I wish I could tell you something that you don’t already know, but the Waller County Sheriff’s Department has made it clear that *that* won’t be happening. However, because this book is not just being written for my contemporaries—we all say we will never forget, yet we do—but also for future generations who wish to learn about this history of lynching in America—I recount it again here. Infamous links and all. July 10th, 2015 was, by all accounts, a beautiful day in Waller County, Texas. Sandra Bland, a twenty-eight year old gal from Chicago with a big loving family of five sisters was on her way to Prairie View A&M University, to begin a new job as a summer program assistant. She had graduated from Prairie View with a degree in agriculture. For several years she had been a summer counselor, she had played in a band, and she had volunteered for a senior citizen’s advocacy group. Hardly the portrait of a troublemaker who deserved what she got in the end. In a poignant series of videotapes on YouTube entitled [Sandy Speaks](#), her self-proclaimed moniker, she speaks of her concerns about violence against African Americans. In “Sandy Speaks”, she also expresses her hopes that technology and social media, in concert with a renaissance of concern and social passion, might finally make a

permanent change in the way Afro-Americans are treated in this country. (How ironic that the ugly traffic stop which led to her death was captured on this new technology, and while it may never bring Sandra complete justice, it has assured that the arresting officer will face some unpleasant justice of his own.) State Trooper Brian Encinia had just finished giving a cordial warning to a white student whom he had pulled over; he then saw Sandra Bland pass in her car. That's when he pulled a U-Turn, and sped up behind her. In doing so, he was breaking the speed limit and breaking the law, as he was neither on his way to a police emergency, nor did he have his lights and siren on. Not surprisingly, he has never been charged for this. Sandra Bland immediately did the logical and safe thing—she got out of the officer's way, pulling into the right lane, failing to use her turn signal. The officer then pulls her over, and then, in a conversation that must be actually heard to be believed, the cop asks her why she seems annoyed. Sandra answers politely, and then the cop tells her to put out her cigarette. Sandra declines, saying that she is simply smoking in her car, at which point your best plan, Officer Brian Encinia, is to take her to jail. For failing to use a turn signal. When she quite naturally protests, you order her out of the car; when she again protests, you threaten to **"Light Her Up!"** By this, of course, you mean you are getting ready to Tase her, causing this citizen agony and quite possibly permanent damage. Officer Brian Encinia then proceeds to physically take Sandra Bland down, careful to make certain that it happens outside of the range of his dashcam. Within about a minute, help shows up in the form of a black female officer. Here is my burning question: Why the hell haven't we seen the dashcam footage from her cruiser? That would illuminate a great deal. The particular dialogue I leave to your viewing of the graphic and grisly video, which, I suspect, given the immortal ubiquity of footage once it goes viral, will always be around. Sandra Bland is then taken to the jail where she is booked and fingerprinted. Three days later, on Monday morning, she is found dead in her cell.

Here are the first questions, out of many, many questions, which demand answers:

The sheriff's department said she was suicidal. But why is it that one form, filled out by someone's hand other than Sandra's, said she **was** suicidal, but another form, filled out into a computer, said she **was not** suicidal? An autopsy conducted by the Harris County Medical Examiner ruled Bland's death a suicide, and said it found no evidence of a violent struggle. The result from a second independent autopsy requested by her family has not yet been released. But let's back up a little. The Harris County Medical Examiner is a part of the system, and given the systemic and systematic racism in Waller County, it is hard to believe that they are not tainted. Case in point: virtually all forensic experts agree that in asphyxiational hangings, petechiae occurs. Petechiae is the bursting of tiny blood vessels in the eyes (and other places) that occurs because the blood has stopped flowing freely, and the sudden buildup of blood stoppage in a very, very small vein causes the vein to burst, and for red blotches or red pinpoint to appear. It is simple: hanging equals petechiae. Sandra Bland had no petechiae. What do you think? Most forensic authorities would tell you that this is a good clue that Sandra was killed by some other

means, and then the scene was staged to look like a hanging. Why wasn't Sandra Bland seen by a doctor, since she suffered from epilepsy and had her head slammed into the ground? And why was she denied her epilepsy medication during her long days at the jail? Could her head injuries have led to her death? Some think she was murdered, but many feel that she died as a result of injuries (concussion) that she sustained during the traffic stop, and that the implausible "hanging" was Waller County's way of covering up what certainly would have been an exponentially growing lawsuit against them. Lastly, large amounts of THC, the active ingredient in marijuana, were found in Sandra's body at autopsy. But this is a virtual physical and medical impossibility, unless she was force fed THC, possibly in liquid form, and possibly when she was in a coma from head injuries (see above). Here is the problem with the coroner's finding of the THC: it was too large an amount in her system to have lingered for the three days she was in jail. So the sheriff's department's explanation that she was stoned when she was stopped, or—as some have bizarrely advanced, that she ate some pot she had in her possession while Encinia was running her license—simply is not medically plausible. And she could not possibly have gotten marijuana while in a cell by herself in a jail where she knew nobody, and after she had been body searched. Nobody is buying it. And nobody is buying that she could have smoked marijuana in jail without the people in the cells next to her, or the jailers, smelling it. Nothing adds up. Will there ever be justice for Sandra Bland? After a brief recap via a public memo to Sheriff Glenn Smith, we will take a look at the Waller County Prosecutor, and see just how dim that hope for justice truly is ...

NOTE TO SHERIFF GLENN SMITH: You always seem riled by these uppity protestors hanging around your jail, always asking questions, questions, and more questions. Well, I've got a little tip for you. I can shed some light on all that. Here's the situation from the protestors' point of view: It starts back nearly a decade ago, when you smack some black guy around, punching him in the chest and swearing at him and calling him names—except for one problem: according to your arrest report, he wasn't resisting arrest. He posed no threat. But still, you punched and poked him. And yet, you and your superiors claimed that it had nothing to do with racism. The lack of bruises or permanent marks seems to indicate to you and your superiors that what you did was OK. Again, this is the same logic as wife batterers. Then, after some anger management therapy, which clearly didn't take, you harass the wrong group of African American boys, adding to their false arrest a humiliating strip search. You get fired. Now, you have indicated that you are a church goer, a religious man (?!), so instead of going off by yourself and pondering what is wrong with this picture—instead of asking "What Would Jesus Do?"—your best plan is to run for sheriff, get yourself in a position of even more power, and then you proceed to run a jail. Meanwhile, as if to prove the presence of the cancer that is police brutality in the state of Texas, a state trooper pulls a young African-American woman over for a minor traffic infraction and no, Sandra did not use her turn signal, although the act would have been

meaningless, even if she had. The entire point of a turn signal is to give drivers in the lane you plan to enter a heads up, as it were. The cop came up behind her so suddenly, there wasn't time to leave the blinker on long enough for it to be a valid warning to other drivers. Let's face it. Someone was breaking traffic laws here, but it wasn't Sandra. It was the dickish, bullying Officer Brian Encinia who sped up fast behind her, tailgating. Experts who see the video of the traffic stop unilaterally agree: it was Encinia who escalated the traffic stop. We all know the story by now: he asks her to put out her cigarette, but she doesn't want to, stating that it's her car, and she can do what she wants. Within a few minutes of pulling her over, in all violation of procedure and decency, he threatens to **"Light her Up!"** For her simple choice to not put out her cigarette, she gets manhandled, her wrists and arms bruised and bloodied, and her head slammed to the ground—an act which can kill, as any person with a brain knows. Within a couple of days, she is found dead in her cell. Suicide? Murder? Or perhaps the simple horror of that slam to the head catching up with her epileptic brain? Naturally, people get upset. So authorities release the footage of what happened: but it is a tape so obviously doctored that a ten year old could see the same car going by over and over and over again. Then you release tapes from inside the jail, of Sandra Bland's booking, and her arrival, and her perp walk to the cell, and more—all of which were also obviously doctored, with time stamps missing, and jump cuts. And experts in the field of CCTV all are in agreement: the bullshit reasons you give for these anomalies are just that—bullshit. And when the autopsy comes out, among many other things, we learned that poor Sandra still had plant debris in her healing cuts, cuts that she got from being slammed on the ground, because Waller County jail staff never even let her take a shower. When things continue to not go the way you want, you chop down trees and label anyone who doesn't go to your church a Satanist. All of this could have been prevented at so many steps along the way, and oh, as if your Assholiness has not made enough of an idiot of himself, when you are asked on camera, you assure the viewers that what the Trooper did was legal. So that, Sheriff, is why we are all a bit peeved.

JUST A FEW QUICK QUESTIONS...

Now, there were a few things that happened from the time Sandra was arrested, through her death, that have reasonable people confounded. I believe most of those concerns and curiosities are captured in the few quick questions I have outlined below: **DEAR WALLER COUNTY: JUST A FEW QUICK QUESTIONS...**

(Many of these unanswered questions are bolstered by hyperlinks to YouTube. In many cases, several links of the same footage occur in a sentence or two, in case a link were to end up being dead, YouTube accounts are closed, or crucial footage otherwise "goes missing": some of the footage put up by [Waller County](#) itself is actually the most damning, if examined closely. One

wonders just how long this incriminating footage will remain on YouTube. In cases where there are dozens or hundreds of the same image on YouTube—such as the arrest itself—we have eliminated hyperlinks, as these links are ubiquitous on the web, and very easily found.

QUESTIONS PART ONE: [SANDRA BLAND, TRAFFIC STOP](#)

—Encinia was clearly speeding when he came up behind Sandra Bland, although he was not on his way to an emergency, and he was not employing siren and lights. Why hasn't he been charged with this?

—Why did Encinia threaten Sandra Bland with arrest for Sandra smoking inside her own car? And why did he threaten to Tase her?

—Why was Encinia so careful to get Sandra Bland out of the range of vision of his dash cam?

—When Sandra Bland told Encinia that she was an epileptic, why was his response **“Good”**?

—Why didn't Encinia arrange to have Sandra medically checked out, after slamming her head into the ground, especially when she had told him she has epilepsy?

—Encinia stated under oath that he was removing Sandra Bland from her car to make the stop safer. What is safe about slamming her head into the ground? Autopsy results reveal extensive bruising and laceration on various parts of her body, as a result of the stop.

—Why haven't we been able to see the dashcam video of the female officer who pulled up to help Encinia? Is it because then we could have gotten a very good look at the confrontation?

—Waller County, why did you edit the dashcam video? Everybody caught it. The same cars kept driving by over and over again. What are you hiding?

QUESTIONS PART TWO: BOOKING ROOM VIDEO

or YOUTUBE SEARCH Sandra Bland Waller County Booking Room

—Who is the black male prisoner strolling freely around the booking room, without a jailer accompanying him? And why is he putting on black gloves in at 1:50? These are not work gloves, by the way, bulky or layered. They are “I don't want to leave behind fingerprints” gloves. Then he goes out a door that leads to the garage not too long before Sandra enters the booking room to go through booking. And why is a male prisoner allowed all of this wandering freedom, including the gloves, and garage access?

QUESTIONS PART THREE: [INPROCESSING VIDEO](#)

—Why does the black female in the official Waller Inprocessing Video have a different body type, being stouter and shorter than Sandra Bland?

[COMPARE THE TRAFFIC STOP VIDEO](#), at around 10:38 as the officer makes her exit her car, as opposed to the Waller County Inprocessing Video, at around ten seconds into that video (see link above).

—Why does the black female in the official Waller Inprocessing Video have different hair than Sandra?

—Why does the person in the official Waller County booking video have such darker skin than Sandra?

—Why does the person in the booking video who is supposedly Sandra Bland make certain to cover his/her face when walking right by the camera? For example, at about four seconds into the video, “she” conveniently covers her face for a few seconds just as she walks by the camera.

—Why does the wall in Sandra Bland’s booking video look different than the wall in other booking videos? Why is there no brick mortar line in the wall?

—Why are the pictures in the official booking shots so [dark](#), and then why is there another one that is so light? <http://www.youtube.com>

—Are the Sandra Bland pictures so dark and blurry because you were trying to hide the fact that Sandra had been beaten so badly and slammed against the ground during the traffic stop?

—Are the Sandra Bland pictures so dark and blurry because you were trying to hide the fact that those are not pictures of Sandra Bland, but someone pretending to be her throughout the booking video?

—Why is she wearing a pink shirt in one booking shot, and an orange shirt in another booking shot?

—Why does the INPROCESSING VIDEO FREEZE at 22:51? It stays frozen until 23:18. What happened that you are not letting us see? <http://www.youtube.com> (at 1:50)

QUESTIONS PART FOUR: [WALLER COUNTY CELL ASSIGNMENT VIDEO](#):

Who is the gloved prisoner hiding behind a partition near Sandra Bland’s cell for the entire unedited tape? He suspiciously stays hidden in the same place for about half an hour. We first see him for a split second at 1:19 (one minute and nineteen seconds into the video) when part of his torso, his arm and his gloved hand come into view briefly, then he secrets himself behind a large cabinet or wall, away from where he seems to know the camera is. He appears to be the same black prisoner who was roaming freely around the booking room. Why does he stay hidden for a half an hour? Is he Sandra’s murderer? (DON’T MISS JOHN S.’s WORK ON THIS. Find him on YouTube, Channel “JOHN S.”, “[THE NIGHT SANDRA BLAND WAS MURDERED, PART 2.](#)):

—From **20:59** to **23:12**, the prisoner in the cell on the left “freezes”, indicating missing footage, glitches, editing, etc.—what did you cut out? (Meanwhile ...BACK IN WALLER COUNTY INPROCESSING VIDEO (see QUESTIONS, PART III.), the two men leave the room/screen at **22:34**. Yet they don’t appear in the CELL assignment, video, i.e., the camera that covers the area they are walking right into from the previous INPROCESSING camera view, until the camera FREEZES AT **22:52**. What are they doing during this time? What footage is missing?)

—And why is the next thing we see (**23:19**) two deputies going down the hall towards Sandra’s cell? Who walked through the area before that that we missed, because of the frozen screen?

—What is the one deputy pulling out of his pocket?

—Why does the deputy with him close the barred hallways door, and then stand in front of it, obscuring any action from the camera? (At approximately 23:40)

—When the two men leave, they go past some cells and then they both go out a door to the left. Where are they going? Are they circling around so that they can come in that rear door near Sandra Bland’s cell; was it left open a few seconds earlier, when one approached that back door and the other stood between the camera and that rear hall action?

—The black “prisoner” with the gloves is still hiding at this point. What is it that the two men signal to him as they back out?

FREEZES ALSO 23:41 24:04=23 SECONDS NOT 26 SECONDS

—Why does the prisoner in the cell to the left freeze at **24:04**?

—Why does the camera FREEZE at the end of the CELL ASSIGNMENT VIDEO? Watch the prisoner in the cell on the left freeze at 27:40 and stayed frozen until 27:56, about 16 seconds and long enough for a killer—the man lurking with the black gloves—to be let into Sandra Bland’s cell.

—At 27:55, why is there footage missing?

—At 27:56, right after the video has been frozen for a while, a fat female jailer suddenly “pops” into the frame and slams Sandra’s door shut with her body weight? Why does she close it that way? Is someone in there with Sandra?

HEY, WALLER COUNTY SHERRIF’S DEPARTMENT: Why did you cut crucial information out of the CELL ASSIGNMENT VIDEO at the end when you posted it on YouTube? [Someone got a copy of the unedited version](#), where the female jailer is unpleasantly startled and surprised (exactly 4:11 into the video) to see the black man with the gloves hiding and waiting? Why is this guy lurking? What are you hiding? You must be hiding something, because in the “official”—now code for edited to hide evidence—[WALLER COUNTY CHANNEL CELL ASSIGNMENT VIDEO](#), if one scrolls to the very last minute of the video, we see the same footage as above, with the female jailer leaving Sandra Bland’s cell after putting Bland behind bars—but you, Waller County, choose to cut it off right before she sees the “suspicious” black man. Too many questions?

QUESTIONS PART FIVE: MONDAY MORNING DEATH VIDEO & AUTOPSY

—In the scene where Sandy has been found dead and the EMTs arrive, why did you cut out the shot of a [police officer throwing something away](#) in a [suspicious manner](#)? It can be found by a YouTube search [“throwing something away” Sandra Bland](#)” or some similar variation.

—Why, instead of letting us see the raw footage of the guards finding Sandra dead and the EMTs arriving, do you choose to have [a cell phone record it off the monitor](#), and you choose what we are allowed to see by [guiding the cell phone camera](#)? Is that because the raw footage—which someone recorded from a news conference, early in the crisis where you let it slip—shows a guard suspiciously throwing something away, while looking around furtively, just seconds before the EMTs arrive? You came up with two solutions: use a cell phone to zoom in on the monitor with the raw footage, so that the zoom cuts out the footage of the cop suspiciously throwing something away. And then, when everyone started to say that looked like you were trying to hide something, by using a cellphone recording of the monitor, you just show the raw footage, but started it just seconds AFTER the cop threw something away, just as the EMTS arrived.

—Why is there a [50 gallon outdoor/industrial type trash can](#) with a humongous trash bag placed in Sandra Bland’s cell? No jail would ever get such a trash can for such a cell. Other cells seen in the videos do not have such trash cans. Was it because you couldn’t stage a hanging with the tiny little trash bags that go in those tiny little cans?

OR GO TO GOOGLE IMAGES, SEARCH “SANDRA BLAND’S CELL”

—Why is the [Bible](#) in Sandra’s cell [closed in one post mortem crime scene shot, and open in another shot?](#) Crime scenes are supposed to remain uncontaminated.

—Why did Waller County lie about the time stamps? It is very suspicious that in the CELL ASSIGNMENT VIDEOS, Waller claimed there was no time stamp because they are raw AVI files. But in the Monday Morning death videos, where you have nothing to hide, there is a time stamp, and these are also raw AVI files.

—Is a video without proper time stamps any kind of evidence or proof at all?

—Why did page 2 of the [Sandra Bland autopsy](#) speak of the ligature being removed from Sandra Bland at 12:14 p.m., whereas the report written by Marc Langdon, Waller County Jail investigator, said that the ligature was removed at about 9:00 am. That’s what we call in the investigative lingo “a big fat discrepancy”. Others would call it a lie.

—Lastly: if Sandra Bland hanged herself, why isn’t the lividity shown in extremities—as in, if she died in a hanging position, the blood would have puddled, via gravity, into her feet and hands. The autopsy describes the lividity as dorsal—on her back. And with a hanging comes petechiae, which was absent in the autopsy.

And by all means, folks, don’t hold out any hope for the investigation that is to follow the tragic death of Sandra Bland. Don’t imagine that we will be seeing much in the way of justice. Here’s a little glimpse into the heart and soul of the local Waller County Prosecutor Elton Mathis, whom we are entrusting with the sacred job of investigating Bland's death. Not so very long ago, Mathis got very angry and threatening in a series of bizarre and frightening text messages, when a black pastor at Pendleton Chapel Baptist Church requested information on prosecution rates by ethnicity. That smashed opened the hornet’s nest, it would seem. The Reverend Walter Pendleton said he received "threatening and belligerent text messages" from Mathis:

"Don't ever call me again. You went over the line," the prosecutor wrote. Mathis took issue with the pastor's use of the term "selective prosecution" and sent additional, hostile messages. "You are too stupid to know what that word means." "My hounds ain't even started on yer dumb ass. Keep talking. When I talk people will listen. Keep talking and I will sue your ass for slander. It works both ways. 'Dr.' Take your fake Dr. Ass and jump off a high cliff."

This is the man entrusted to mete out justice in Waller County. Though Mathis admitted that he sent those texts "in anger," the prosecutor said he stands behind them nevertheless. That is

unbelievably creepy. And arrogant. Mathis is carrying on a proud Texas tradition of racism. In 2004, his predecessor, Oliver Kitzman, made sure that the black students of Prairie View were ineligible to vote. He then threatened to prosecute the students if they did try to vote. He even did this in spite of the fact that there had been a Supreme Court ruling granting students the right to vote where they attended college. But you know how uppity that Supreme Court can be. It's even integrated now and everything. Rest in Peace, Dear Sandra.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

“STOP RESISTING!”

When the dialogue plays out in the Greek Tragedy that is police brutality in America, there can also be heard the ritualistic, sine qua non Greek Chorus chanting intermittently ... but it is a Chorus made up of Caucasians. (One thinks of Michael Moore’s “Stupid White Men”, and Al Franken’s “Rush Limbaugh is a Big Fat Idiot”.) And that chorus is chanting, in irritating repetition throughout the play “***Just don’t resist arrest ... Just don’t resist arrest.***”

The likes of Sean Hannity, Rush Limbaugh, Bill O’Reilly, and actually the entire circus troupe of performers under the Fox News Big Top, like to say this all the time: they said it about Eric Garner, Freddie Gray, Walter Scott and Bernard Bailey (although tragically, everybody, even black activists, seems to have forgotten about him). In the words of these conservative pundits, it was not the ballistic cop manifesting crazed excessive force and sadistic brutality that caused the tragedy; it was the black man’s quirky persistence in resisting arrest. Hell, they are even quick to point out that Sandra Bland would be just fine, right now, if she had just put out that damn cigarette. Elizabeth Hasselbeck even sunk to a new Fox low in suggesting that Sandra was scheming to use her cigarette as a weapon against the police officer.

But matters are never that simple, and we all know it. When white people picture getting arrested and going to jail, this is what they picture: the guy who drinks too much at the office party is mortified when he attempts to drive home, sees the cherry top, and wakes up in the drunk tank—knowing he faces court, a slew of fines, and possible loss of his license. The white domestic goddess who is a pillar of the community, but decides to help herself to a free lipstick at the Rexall, is humiliated when the eye in the sky sees her, and she finds herself arrested for shoplifting. The kids who take Halloween too far and are arrested for vandalism, the parent who gets too passionate at Pee Wee Football and slugs another parent ...in essence, the middle class, Abba-loving Caucasian who colors outside the lines for one brief moment may worry about the ramifications of being booked: public humiliation, financial penalties, trouble at work, loss of license, loss of stature ...but not loss of life. Never do white folks worry that they will get the crap beaten out of them by the police while in custody. And never, ever, in their worst nightmares, do they imagine that they will leave County in a coffin.

But black people do worry about this. They worry about this a lot, and with good reason. All over the country, in small towns and in big cities, blacks find themselves the victims of all kinds of unnecessary violence: there is battery, abuse, torture—and sometimes they just don’t make it

home alive. And no, I can't give you figures, because guess what, surprise surprise, cops don't report their own use of excessive force against suspects in custody. Most of the suspects don't even report it, so terrified and beaten down are they. But it does go on. Acts of Police brutality are like roaches: where you see just one, be confident there's a hundred more. And be assured that when the Department of Justice does go in to investigate, as we saw in both Ferguson and Cleveland, **be assured**, the news is ugly and grim. In this chapter, we include just a few examples of why blacks are understandably terrified of being taken into custody—and though it may not seem like a good idea, why they are often times driven to “resisting arrest”.

TWO TOURS OF DUTY IN IRAQ COULDN'T KILL HIM.

A WEEKEND IN COUNTY DID.

If you don't know the story of Sergeant James Brown, then you are going to ask yourself the same question that I asked myself when I first heard the story, a full three years after it happened: why was this story not viral? Why has this story not caused demonstrations, protests, riots, even—where is the media firestorm, the social networking campaign aimed at making the responsible parties answer for what happened?

I don't know why this story is not viral. Yet.

I do know this, though. Everybody who has spoken of the story, from news professional to small time blogger to forum poster, all seemed to have the same reaction: Sergeant James Brown, a proud black veteran, managed to survive two tours of duty in Iraq, but two days in the county lock-up killed him?

The story may move you to tears. Sergeant James Brown is one of the good guys, a decorated war hero with a beautiful wife and two children. When he was a young man of twenty-six, he returned from overseas, and was assigned to Fort Bliss, Texas. He got in a little bit of trouble when he hit stateside, a DWI, so he was given the option of paying a fine or spending a weekend in jail. He chose the latter. One Friday afternoon, he walked out of his house, and into the jail, self-reporting to serve his weekend sentence. He would come home in a coffin.

The video of the last minutes that Sergeant James Brown spent alive—struggling and in agony, begging for mercy—can be seen in all its horror on YouTube. You must watch this important piece of video, and I urge you to share it as well. It is a terrifying example of police neglect, abuse, and torture.

<http://www.youtube.com>

OR YOUTUBE SEARCH: SGT. JAMES BROWN

Specifically, the events are as follows: The place, the El Paso County Jail. The date, May 2012. Brown suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder, and filled out a form to that effect when he surrendered himself, as part of a weekend in jail to serve his DWI sentence. And you know what—this is as good a time as any to say that you’d think the guy would have received a certain modicum of respect, being a veteran, having served his country and risked his life for our freedom and all that. But no. Nope.

As soon as he got to the jail, he was told that he would have to serve seven days instead of two. I have never been able to find out what this was about. After spending one night in jail, Brown called his mother and asked her to pay the fine, not wanting to serve the rest of the week. For reasons that still are not understood, at some time during the second day, Brown can be seen on the video thrashing in his cell; immediately, a squad of officers in riot gear force their way into his cell to subdue him. A SWAT team. In riot gear.

Brown repeatedly tells them that he can't breathe. He appears to offer little resistance as officers hold him down—again this is important: ***Brown appears to offer little resistance, making their excessive force cruel and unnecessary.*** Eventually, the officers lift Brown over their shoulders and carry him into another room, where his face is covered with a “spit mask.”

Officers inject him with two shots of lorazepam, a sedative. Brown begs for water, telling officers, ***"I've got problems."*** He continues to beg, repeating over and over again: ***"I can't breathe! I can't breathe! I can't breathe!"*** They eventually give him a small cup half-filled with water. He begins repeating: ***"I'm choking on my own blood."*** It is heart wrenching to watch. After the officers take Brown back to his cell, his breathing worsens. He can be seen on the floor, unresponsive.

He was declared dead a short time later.

Everybody who sees the video agrees that it raises more questions than answers. Why in the hell did the officers feel they needed to use excessive force? Why didn't they give him more water, or help him when he couldn't breathe? What about his plea that he was choking on his own blood? Why weren't emergency medical personnel called until after Brown lost consciousness, 35 minutes after the incident began? The El Paso County Sheriff's Office released a statement to CNN, blaming Brown's death on natural causes: ***"Mr. Brown's death was an unfortunate tragedy... after a thorough investigation it was determined that his death was caused by a pre-existing medical condition."*** That is their official statement on the incident.

Brown's mother, Dinette Robinson-Scott, told KFOX she doesn't understand why her son was in the county jail instead of a military jail in the first place. ***"I pray that new laws protecting soldiers in custody will be implemented, that the military adopt new policy procedures in***

regards to their soldiers being held in custody by an outside agency," Robinson-Scott told CNN in a statement. *"If these changes can be made and our soldiers are protected, and another family never has to experience what my family has, then my son's death would not be in vain."*

It is worth noting that Brown had no criminal history. He had committed a minor violation of the state code, he accepted his punishment, and he peacefully walked in and surrendered himself to serve his two days. And then, Sergeant James Brown left jail in a coffin.

This is how we treat our veterans?

POSTLUDE: An autopsy revealed no drugs in his body except for those administered by jail officials. Brown, proud president of The Soul Motorcycle Club, was buried with his club's leather vest. He leaves behind a loving wife, a twelve year old son, and a five year old daughter.

THE SODOMY BY COP OF ABNER LOUIMA

Abner Louima came to the United States six years before he was attacked by Americans sworn "to Serve and Protect". He didn't want any favors, he didn't need any handouts: he was working two jobs to support his wife, Micheline, and their two children. He had studied electrical engineering in Haiti, and his goal was to get a college degree here in the United States.

August 8th, 1997. It was a Friday night that would change his life; it was a nightmare Louima never could have imagined. He had just finished his nine hour shift as security guard at a water and sewage treatment plant in Brooklyn; after that he and his wife had a date to go to Club Rendez-Vouz where one of his favorite Haitian bands, The Phantoms, was playing. It was about three in the morning when the music finally ended and the club emptied out. Outside the club, folks were still feeling rowdy, and a fight broke out. It was, by all accounts, basically just a cat fight between two women. In no time at all, the cops showed up in force, and, as Louima would later testify, the racist remarks began: *"They said, 'Why do you people come to this country if you can't speak English?' They called us niggers."* And then, they started roughing people up. They seemed to have no interest in who was actually fighting, and who was trying to stop the fight. Louima would further tell investigators he was one of the people trying to stop the fight. Officer Justin Volpe shoved Louima to the ground and put handcuffs to him.

Later, even officers that Volpe worked with would describe Officer Volpe's demeanor that night as *"sweating profusely and exhibiting a murderous rage that was most probably the effects of 'Roid Rage'"*. Volpe was a buff cop, and often liked to use his strength to intimidate and beat up on prisoners. He was known for the grisly collection of dreadlocks he kept in his locker, a souvenir of the blacks and browns that he had arrested along the way. He was also known for

sitting in the passenger seat of the cruiser and driving with his outstretched foot and arm, but that is another story.

Louima testified as to what happened in the harrowing driving to the station, and in the nightmarish hours that followed. *“Two cops put me in their patrol car and drove me to the corner of Glenwood and Nostrand. There was another car there. They kicked and beat me with their radios. They were yelling, ‘You people can’t even talk English, I am going to teach you to respect a cop.’ None of the cops had their name tags on. They put me back in the car and drove me to the corner of Glenwood and Bedford. They met two other cops and beat me again, this time in the leg.”*

But the hell was just beginning. The real torture started when they got to the station: *“They threw me to the ground and started beating me up. And then one of them—there was two of them—one picked up something from the floor. I don’t know what it is, but it looked like a plunger to me, and just, you know, push it on my ass, and then it came out with shit and blood... They put it in my mouth. He said that’s my shit.”*

Officer Volpe’s version of events is chillingly recounted in an article with GQ magazine:

“I grabbed him by the arm and threw him onto the ground... He fell in between the toilets. I don’t know how to explain it. I can’t put it in words. It was the combination of frustration, anger, pain, and confusion. He’s on the ground now, his belt was off, his pants were baggy and they were off, and that’s when I saw the crack of his ass—his whole ass... Now, all these feelings come up in me, like this guy can’t give me an answer. I saw the stick, and the next thing I know, the stick is in my hand and I’m thinking, How can I get an answer from him I placed the stick near his ass and thought he would react—he would finally answer me—but he didn’t say anything. I was so wound up, I felt things I never felt before. I was so upset. I had the stick; I was putting pressure on it. I had the stick in my left hand, and I wanted to see his face. I wanted to see if there would be a reaction. And I said to him, “Do you want to tell me now why you hit me in the head” He looked up. He seemed angry. He seemed to have contempt; he didn’t seem scared, he didn’t seem sorrowful, and he mumbled a curse at me, and I couldn’t believe it. The next thing I know, the stick was in his ass...”

I threw the stick in the garbage. I couldn’t believe there was feces on the stick... The ugliness of the situation, my actions, his actions. He didn’t say a word. I grabbed him by his arm and stood him up. He was quiet. There was no words. I remember saying to him, “Look what the fuck you made me do.” I said to him, “You’d better not say a fucking word. If you do, I’ll kill you.”

And throwing Louima handcuffed and seminaked and selfsoiled into a cell: Get the fuck on your knees.

(“Say a Prayer for Justin Volpe”, by Robert Draper, GQ Magazine, December 31, 2004)

Other officers found Louima in his cell shortly thereafter, obviously in profound physical distress. They had an ambulance take him to a local ER. It was hospital personnel that alerted the authorities as to the sexual crime that had been perpetrated on Louima, in spite of the police trying to pass it off as a homosexual encounter that Louima had engaged in with another prisoner. Fortunately, one of the ER nurses knew immediately that a ruptured colon and a punctured bladder were not the result of gay sex. Louima would later tell investigators of the threat Volpe had issued after the torture was over: ***He [Volpe] tell me if I talk to anyone about what he done to me, he'll kill me, and he'll kill everyone in my family.***

The entire Louima story is much longer, much more elaborate, and a worthwhile read for any person who cares about civil rights in America. But for our purposes, we think it stands as an excellent, if bone chilling example of why a black man in this country has every reason to be terrified of arrest. Every good reason to want to resist arrest.

Lastly, in keeping with our theme that a picture is worth a thousand words, we offer you a few more videos:

Watch this deputy beat the daylights out of this poor man who is already cuffed and very docile. The dangerous crime for which he was arrested in the first place: having some weed in his car, and driving on a suspended license. Note how the deputy beats him till he can't stand up, then beats him for not getting up after he collapses. The deputy broke the suspect's leg, and possibly his spirit, perhaps for all time.

<http://www.youtube.com>

OR YOUTUBE SEARCH: BEATING SOUTH CAROLINA CHARLES SHELLEY

Officer Wiley Willis can't handle one little drunk woman who is a fraction of his weight. His best plan is to beat this woman until we see her lying in a pool of her own blood:

<http://www.youtube.com>

OR YOUTUBE: ANGIE GARBARINO SHREVEPORT

Officers Joe Brinson and Ed Lasseigne suffered no penalty or censure when [they decided to beat the crap out of this poor](#) unsuspecting prisoner in an elevator:

<http://www.youtube.com>

Watch as Officer Mark Magness terrorizes a man who is already cuffed and in custody: He slams his suspect into doors and metal surfaces, punches and pummels him relentlessly, pokes and pinches his body, even though the suspect is docile and compliant. Magness had a history of using brutality against civilians. In an earlier incident in 2009, he had pleaded guilty to reckless endangerment against a person. But the Federal Heights Police Force let him come back to work.

<http://www.youtube.com>

OR YOUTUBE SEARCH; POLICE MARK MAGNESS BRUTALITY

A Hillsborough County, Florida sheriff's deputy did not believe that Brian Sterner, a 44 year old quadriplegic, really needed that wheelchair. So the deputy dumped him out onto the floor at the sheriff's department. Sterner, who has a specially outfitted vehicle and can legally drive, was at the station for a driving infraction. Deputy Charlette Marshall-Jones thought he was faking, and decided to test him by dumping him from his chair—it banged him up badly and broke his ribs.

<http://www.youtube.com>

OR YOUTUBE SEARCH: POLICE WHEELCHAIR QUADRIPLAGIC

Hope Steffey was arrested in a case of mistaken identity. In fact, she was the one who had actually called the Stark County police, to settle a family altercation. Ironically, it was she who was ultimately taken to jail, where she was then handcuffed and stripped search by several male officers. There were female deputies in attendance, but the males signaled the females to leave, and they did.

<http://www.youtube.com>

OR YOUTUBE SEARCH: POLICE BRUTALITY HOPE STEFFEY

And after using excessive force during the strip search, they left her to sit naked in a cell for six hours. Later, Steffey was given only a sleeveless vest to wear when she was taken to booking, and she was forced to remain naked from the waist down as she was paraded through a police station full of men. Sheriff Tim Swanson stood by his deputies' actions. An Ohio Grand Jury subsequently declined to indict the county deputies involved.

From an interview with the Sheriff:

ANCHOR: Would you want your wife handled like that inside a jail cell?

SHERIFF: If they deemed it necessary, or she was out of control.

So there it is. Look, we could do this all day long. All year long, for that matter. The things that happen to people when they get caught up with the wrong cop are terrifying and sometimes deadly. And taken together, all of these incidents comprise the reasons that so many blacks are terrified of being put in custody, and hence “resist arrest.”

Nobody is saying that these people in custody are innocent. Many will have a debt to pay to society. But beatings, being dumped out of wheelchairs, brutal strip searches by the opposite sex, women paraded naked through police stations, vaginal penetration, sodomy by broomsticks—that’s not how we do things in America. That sounds more like ISIS.

SOURCES:

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Final Moments Of Army Sgt. James Brown's Life Captured In GRAPHIC Jail Video”, by Andy Campbell. Huffington Post Black Voices. May 18th, 2015.

Army soldier repeatedly screamed ‘I can’t breathe’ before dying in Texas jail: video”, by Jessica Chasmar. Washington Times. May 19th, 2015.

KFOX14 exclusive: video obtained of Fort Bliss soldier shows moments before his death while in custody”, by Erika Castillo. KFOX 14. May 13, 2015.

“Outrage Absent ... in Cop Horror”, by Jeff Runfeldt. The Chicago Tribune. 1997

“NYC Officer Arrested in Alleged Sexual Attack on Suspect”, by Maria Hinojosa. CNN. August 14, 1997

”Louima trial: New York cop pleads guilty to immigrant's torture By Bill Vann 31 May 1999

“Demonstrators in New York Protest Police Brutality”, by Peg Tyre and Jonathan Karl. CNN. August 29th, 1997.

“Say a Prayer for Justin Volpe”, by Robert Draper. GQ. December 31st, 2004

And of course, the Wikipedia end notes on the subject offer a wealth of articles.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

THUGS: THEY'RE EVERYWHERE

“He’s a thug who deserved what he got.”

I don’t have to tell you, variations on this theme have been hovering over the public dialogue since we started paying collective attention to the notion that black lives matter. Sean Hannity likes to say things like this. He and his herd like to make snarky remarks about the likes of Michael Brown, Trayvon Martin, Eric Garner, and the rest of the tragic parade. Even Sandra Bland, who did nearly nothing wrong, but was then dragged from her car after a threat to “LIGHT YOU UP”, to a spot that the cop knew was conveniently outside the range of his dashcam ...even that poor girl would be alive today, wise whites opine, if she had just obeyed Massa’ Trooper.

To this I say, get a grip. Are some of these people thugs? Yes, possibly. A thug (while being an ancient East Indian term, oddly enough) is generally viewed as someone who sometimes skirts the law, and who sometimes uses bullying tactics or physical violence to get their way. Michael Brown was no violent criminal—his juvenile records were of course sealed, but felonies committed by juveniles enjoy no such protection, so if he was a violent thug, we would have known it. (And Michael Brown did not rob the store. The store never called in such a crime. He is seen giving money to the clerk, the clerk gives him the cigarillos, then they get into some kind of argument. Yes, Michael Brown shoves the clerk. But did he deserve to die for that?)

Garner had a long arrest record, but it was for non-violent crimes. We all know the grim truth by now: he died for selling loosies. And here are some other people who don’t qualify as thugs in any way, shape, or form: Tamir Rice. Jordan Davis. Sandra Bland. Lennon Lacy. John Crawford III. Victor White III. Bernard Bailey. The list is endless. Yet they are dead because of incompetence, apathy, the use of excessive force by police officers, and probably a good dose of old fashioned evil. Still think black lives matter is about “thugs who deserved what they got”, Mr. Hannity? So, since you claim to take your Bible so seriously, let me suggest that you revisit Matthew 7:1.

Ok, then and what about the likes of a Freddie Gray, who did have a bit more of a record. He deserved to die, then? He is a thug who deserved to die? If you are one of the legions who hear of the deaths of the powerless, the poor, or petty criminals at the hands of police, and you assume

or announce that “they deserved what they got”, congratulations: you are now a member of several powerful orders and organizations: ISIS. Advocates of Sharia Law.

Here is what they do with thieves, homosexuals, adulterers, and anyone else who violates Sharia law in the Middle East:

<http://www.youtube.com>

<http://www.youtube.com>

<http://www.youtube.com>

<http://www.google.com>

OR GO TO GOOGLE IMAGES: SHARIA LAW CUTTING OFF THE HAND

<http://www.google.com>

OR GO TO GOOGLE IMAGES: SHARIA LAW STONING (OR STONING TO DEATH)

<http://www.google.com>

OR GO TO GOOGLE IMAGES SHARIA LAW PUNISHMENT BY CRUCIFIXION

<http://www.google.com>

OR GO TO GOOGLE IMAGES SHARIA LAW HOMOSEXUALS THROWN BUILDING

Maybe we could even add Nazis to the list. Sturmabteilung. They certainly killed with impunity. And certainly without regret.

THUGS WHO DESERVE TO DIE?

Now, let’s look at a few kids and young people who sure as hell looked like they were heading for a life of thugdom. As you read the following, ask yourself if these juveniles deserved to die as result of doing these things.

How about this for a profile: this kid had been in trouble with the law about two dozen times by the young age of thirteen. By fifteen, he had a civil action filed against him for two different incidents of harassing African-American children, calling them names and throwing rocks at them. His substance abuse problems—mostly alcohol and cocaine—were full blown by the time he was midway through his teen years. When he was 16, he beat a middle aged Vietnamese man, knocking him unconscious in the middle of the street, using a wooden stick. He also attacked a different Vietnamese man on the same day and blinded him in one eye. The thug was charged

with attempted murder, but ended up pleading guilty to assault. He was sentenced to two years in the Suffolk County Deer Island House of Corrections.

Who is this “thug” who would have clearly deserved what he got, had some cop decided to play judge, jury, and executioner. Hint: this two time Academy Award nominee is now actively involved in a number of charities. More than just a guy who has his accountant give the tax deductible limit, or who slaps his name on a cause and then walks away, Mark Wahlberg is actively involved in his charities. Wahlberg established the Mark Wahlberg Youth Foundation in May 2001 for the purpose of raising and distributing funds to youth service and enrichment programs. Wahlberg is active with The Good Shepherd Center for Homeless Women and Children. Wahlberg has also served on the honorary board of the children’s charity “The Second Mile.” He is a big supporter of the Wounded Warriors Project, and has visited our troops overseas. He also supports A Place Called Home, the Elevate Hope Foundation, the Felix Organization, LIVESTRONG, Los Angeles Police Memorial Foundation, Red Cross, and St. Francis Food Pantries and Shelters. Do you still think that because he was a kid who committed crimes, he would have “deserved what he got”, had some cop decided to gun him down—instead of just arresting him, which is his job, and letting the courts sentence the young Wahlberg to pay his debt to society. Which it did. And which he did.

Next thug on this list: The first arrest came in 1996 when he was arrested for driving drunk and possession of cocaine, heroin, crack and a revolver. He was sentenced to three years’ probation, but while he was out on probation, he violated parole and was sentenced to six months in prison. In 2000 he was at it again, arrested for possessing cocaine, and in 2001, he was arrested again for being under influence of drugs. A lot of people remember the famous incident when he wandered into somebody else’s Malibu beach property, and they came home to find him sleeping in their bedroom. Since then, he’s done a lot of 12 Stepping, and has kept his nose clean. You might say he has an iron will. You might say he’s Iron Man—that’s right, this is the checkered past of actor Robert Downey Junior. And he doesn’t just act and receive awards. Among his favorite charities to support: Clothes Off Our Back, March Of Dimes, Midnight Mission, Motion Picture and Television Fund Foundation, Orca Network and the Robin Hood Foundation. He recently raised, almost singlehandedly, 1.38 million pounds for Julia’s House, a home in England for terminally ill children. Still think he’s a thug who would have deserved what he got, had he been gunned down?

What about that thug whose charity bio reads like this:

He has generously donated funds and volunteered his time to dozens of charitable organizations. He is actively involved in the national YMCA, and played a key role in refurbishing the YMCA facility in Hollywood. Some of his favorite charities, which he has worked with for years, are Lighthouse of Oakland County, Wheels for Humanity, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Special

Olympics, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, St. Vincent's Foundation, Toys for Tots, Forgotten Harvest, Salvation Army, American Red Cross, and Target House. He has also participated in many programs including Nickelodeon's "Big Help-a-thon", Habitat For Humanity, and most recently, he auctioned off his prized 1955 Chevy Nomad on eBay for the September 11th/Twin Towers Fund. But why do I call this do-gooder a "thug"? Because so many others would call him a thug, given his record: two years in the penitentiary for drug dealing, 1.4 pounds of cocaine to be specific. Surely this guy was a thug. And if he had been gunned down by a cop, would he have deserved it? This "thug" is America's favorite "Home Improvement" hero, Tim Allen. (That beloved Chevy Nomad was featured on "Home Improvement".)

What about the 17 year old party girl, known for taking corners so fast in her sleek new Chevy Sedan that her car went up on two wheels, and what about all the drinking her family did? They were known around town as the partying family. It was a clear night in November when she ran a stop sign and T-Boned a 1962 Corvair Sedan, and killed the local high school's golden boy. He was an upstanding young man who was not only known around town as a star athlete, but he was an outstanding student as well. He was even voted Most Popular by the kids at school, even though he was a junior when he received the title, which was usually reserved for a senior. The incident ripped the town apart. Tragically, the boy's father was driving in the car just behind, and witnessed his son's horrible death. No breathalyzer was taken, but the cop noted in his report of the accident that the young lady—her name was Laura Welch—had clearly been drinking. No charges were made, but this senseless death was most certainly caused by the drunken young lady in question, who fully admitted her part in it. Is she a thug? Would she deserve to be gunned down by the first cop on site? This young woman later changed her name to Laura Bush. She went on to be the First Lady of the United States.

This list of celebrities who walked the razor's edge, but have turned their lives around to become inspirations—this list could go on and on. But let's look at another category of "thug", and ask ourselves if they deserved to die:

GANG BANGER NO MORE

"We locate ourselves with the poor and the powerless and the voiceless. At the edges, we join the easily despised and the readily left out. We stand with the demonized so that the demonizing will stop. We situate ourselves right next to the disposable, so that the day will come when we stop throwing people away.

~ Tattoos on the Heart by Jesuit Priest Gregory Boyle, founder of "Homeboys" .

Steven Kim was a gang member in Orange County, California who hit rock bottom after years of gang involvement. One day he decided, "No more." He walked away from the big money and big bling of gangs, juggled several minimum wage jobs, and put himself through school. In

2014, he created Project Kinship, a non-profit that specializes in reintegrating former gang members and the incarcerated into the community. Hundreds of youth have turned away from crime, and now are making meaningful contributions to the community. In partnership with the University Of Southern California School Of Social Work (Kim is now a proud alumnus), these kids work towards certificates that offer them all kinds of opportunities to grow.

(projectkinship.org,

<https://news.usc.edu/83279/alumnus-spreads-kinship-among-former-gang-members> , also see Steven Kim at LinkedIn or Google his name)

Think Steven Kim's life ended up being worthless?

He wears black leather boots, sunglasses, and a long black coat with a red bandana—he looks barrio. He looks cool. He looks way too old to be wandering the halls of this high school, though. His father abandoned his mother when he was three months old; she died a few months later. From then on, it was all about the gangs. His uncle, a convicted felon, introduced him to hard liquor when he was in the seventh grade. His gang buddies told him how great it was to have lots of women, and be high all the time. He spent way too much of his childhood attending the funerals of his friends. Oh yes, I forgot to mention: Richard Santana also has a Master's Degree from Harvard University, specializing in child psychology. Think someone can't turn his life around? He wanders the halls of high schools, turning heads, and then telling each new audience of kids to stay out of gangs, stay in school and you don't need to be pregnant to be a real woman. You can learn more about him at his site, homeboygoestoharvard.com, or at the very prestigious Fisher Agency Speakers. Also Nancy Vogel Speakers Bureau. Or Google "RICHARD SANTANA HARVARD" to see the wide array of colleges and universities that sing his praises. A thug who deserved to die? Shame on any cynic who would have said that of him, back in the day.

<http://www.youtube.com>

OR YOUTUBE SEARCH "HOMEBOY GOES TO HARVARD" Great stuff!

Or what about the hundreds of former prisoners and gang-bangers that have passed through the doors of Homeboys, a foundation that teaches baking skills to former felons and gang bangers, who then find their ways to places like Bouchon in Beverly Hills, where they bake delicacies that can make you weep with joy. The pastries melt in your mouth, and their stories melt your heart. Among their specialties: a Rouge Batard—bread made with merlot and cranberries. Banana Praline Cake. Jalapeno Corn Bread. Homegirls also run a café and learn catering services, and

make signature apparel available on their website. 10,000 gang members and former prisoners come through the doors of Homeboys every year. Many of them take advantage of a Homeboys program that allows them to get their tattoos removed. Among other classes, they can get certificates in photovoltaic energy, becoming ambassadors of green—their classes have a 90 percent graduation rate, with over 70 percent being placed in jobs within the first 90 days of graduation. And now, they have created the Global Homeboy Network, spanning the globe from South America to Scotland.

(I thought I would mention that the Homeboys website (homeboyindustries.org) also sells their glorious baked goods; it is all I can do as I write this to not slap down my credit card and order up the Caramel Peach Pie, their Red Velvet Whoopie Pies, or their Double Cinnamon Raisin Bread—maybe tomorrow with coffee. Breakfast is, after all, the most important meal of the day. And they have lovely holiday fare; as I write this, there is a lovely Christmas assortment: Holiday Sugar Cookies, Fudge Rum Balls, or Chocolate Fruit Cake Bites. Wouldn't you be a star, if you ordered some of this up for someone special, along with a copy of the Homeboy's story, *Tattoos on the Heart*—now **that's** a true gesture of love. The gift that keeps on giving.

Oh, but what about back when they were still “thugs”? Would it have been fine with you, if they had been gunned down? Or don't you believe in Christ's message of Redemption?

YOUR CHILDREN

Thugs. “*He was a thug.*” “*They were thugs.*” “*They deserved what they got.*”

Many pundits and activists are beginning to think that “thug” is the new code word for “nigger”, and given the context in which it is used, I believe that they are probably right. Sean Hannity called Michael Brown a thug, even though Michael Brown didn't even have a criminal record. Those who claim they saw Michael Brown's arrest record on the internet and that yes, it did include felonies, should know that they fell for an obvious and stupid mistake: the felony record of a Michael Brown circulated for a while after the shooting was for a **different** Michael Brown. Different address, different middle name, etcetera. It's not an uncommon name, after all. And as for the Michael Brown in question, yes, he might have shoved someone in a convenience store, but are we really going to line up all of our children who have shoved somebody and shoot them dead? And what about Garner? All the guy was doing was selling loose cigarettes. Did he deserve what everybody agrees was an illegal police chokehold that caused his death by homicide? Did a man named Walter Scott who ran fast because he owed child support deserve to be shot eight times in the back? If your answer is yes, they are thugs, they deserved what they got, then be prepared to sentence your own children to death as well.

The possibility ... the potential ... is there. Your children. The children of your extended family. Your neighbor's children, your co-worker's children, the children who attend your church. The children you have met in your lifetime.

Why do I say that?

Because kids commit crimes. More specifically, kids accounted for 16% percent of all violent crime arrests and 32% of all property crime arrests in 1999. They accounted for 54% of all arson arrests, 42% of vandalism arrests, 31% of larceny-theft arrests, and 33% of burglary arrests. Think all of them should be shot by cops, if they give the cops lip or 'tude? According to the D.O.J., in 2014, about 150,000 kids were arrested for violent crimes. Think it would be just as good an idea to shoot them, save society trouble in the future?

Well, think twice.

Because the people we have talked about in these chapters...the people shoving people, selling things illegally, the chick who refuses to put her cigarette out, the guys involved in petty thefts, dealing in drugs—these people could well be your sons and daughters.

That daughter of yours who shoplifted, maybe many times. She has an arrest record. Maybe felonies, if she stole more than five hundred dollars' worth. Doesn't she deserve what she gets, if some mall security cop guns her down as she tries to run down the escalator? (One out of every three girls steal, does that mean they should suffer some terrible fate?)

That son of yours, who engaged in wanton and willful destruction of property, just for the sheer unadulterated hell of it: he is a thug, and quite possibly, depending on the amount of property damage, a felon—although you can bet that if it is a white kid from suburbia, the cops will treat him better than if it was a black kid from the hood.

You, when you misbehave at the office Christmas party, or after your team wins big at the sports bar, and you weave home, and you see the sirens, and you are charged with a DUI—you may just be slapped with the label “felon”. If this is not your first DUI, or if you injure another person in an accident while under the influence, or, God forbid, if you kill them, count on wearing the “felon” badge of honor. You sound like a thug to me. Do you deserve to be shot?

The point here is obvious: lots of kids do all kinds of ridiculous things growing up. Up till nearly his dying day, my father bragged about the synchronicity of the Dean's List coming out at Georgia Tech, and he was on it—and it happened on the same night that he was arrested for being involved in a panty raid. In fact, nearly all of the people one meets at 12 step meetings, all of whom I respect, have some terrifying and marvelous criminal records. Records that are fascinating, frightening, funny, humiliating—and ultimately, sobering. In the most literal sense of

the word. They all were ... ***we all were*** ... criminal. And none of them—***none of us***—I assure you, deserved to be shot.

America does not shoot people for getting in a little trouble with the law, Mr. Hannity. I believe you are confusing us with ISIS.

DEAR DEVOUT CHRISTIAN: At the core of our faith is a belief in the power of redemption. Is that not, after all, the very reason that Christ died on the cross for us? You do the Lord a great disservice if you casually say of a soul, “He’s a thug who got what he deserved”, instead of doing your part to bring about his redemption.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

BAD COPS

As a personal aside, we have a bear roaming our neighborhood right now. Apparently, according to a neighbor who has observed him, he sleeps under a big tree at the far end of our backyard. He rips through everybody's big trash cans at night. We have a neighbor a few houses down who says the bear ate all of his chickens. The bear took our dog. And no, no, we don't let our old dog out to roam all night alone. It was just a tragic accident, the dog got out for a few moments one evening. The bear is getting more brazen. It hangs around during the day; our next door neighbor was taking out the trash at about eight in the morning and suddenly found himself a few feet from the bear. And mindful parents with toddlers who love to bolt are getting worried. We have all spoken to the authorities, but it is illegal for us to shoot the bear. The authorities say that they will come deal with it—if the situation escalates. Escalate, what the hell? Are they waiting for it to take a kid? We are all increasingly nervous. Afraid. Even to go to our cars, at certain times of the day or night.

Why that odd story now? Well, it is one bear. Just one bear. But...

Bad cops. We have said before that we believe most police officers are good guys. Trustworthy, gutsy, follow the rules, and try to be helpful. But there is that bear...

The following stories are here to show you that the problem of rogue cops is happening all over the country. And the infuriatingly creepy part of it is that over and over again, they get away with it. They are protected by their departments, their unions, often even the very prosecutors who are supposed to be going after them. (This is because prosecutors must work with the police on lots of civilian cases, and it doesn't help their case or their cause to have pissed off the cops.) We examine some potential fixes in our chapter called, simply "SOLUTIONS".

But for now, if you didn't believe the bears were out there, here are some BAD COPS:

CLARENDON COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA. January 8th, 1996. When State Trooper Harvey Beckwith wanted to pull over Sandra Antoin Antor for an infraction, the twenty-six-year-old nursing student wanted to wait until she got to a more populated area to pull over, not being certain that the unmarked car was really a police officer. She was particularly sensitive to this issue because she was a Floridian driving north, and criminals in her home state had been using blue lights (29 bucks, Radio Shack) to commit rapes and robberies on women driving alone. It had gotten so bad that everybody from the governor on down to local police

were warning drivers not to stop for unmarked cars. Sandra was black, the trooper was white. After eight miles of driving under the speed limit with him following, she pulled over. Trooper Beckwith approached her with his gun drawn, and when she didn't get out of the car fast enough because she had her seatbelt still buckled, Sandra observed the trooper draw his mace with his other hand, and he then screamed that she was "about to taste liquid hell". Sandra? (as in "Bland"?) Are we getting that feeling of "deja vu"? Sandra spent the night in jail, and got out the next morning when a local church posted her bail. The trooper was fired. (My favorite part is that the trooper is too stupid and jacked up on adrenalin—and who knows what else—to even watch out for his own ass—he is happy to have this all play out right on a busy South Carolina interstate. <http://www.youtube.com> Post Script: Many news outlets carried the story and its aftermath, but the version carried by policemag.com is both chilling and illustrative: not only does the article strangely choose to omit the dashcam footage of the stop—something virtually every other online article includes—but one is also struck by the complete absence of any comments from readers, virtually all of whom are police officers. Their unwillingness of one single person to even agree that the trooper acted dangerously and unconscionably tells us how completely police officers feel censored and muzzled, when it comes to criticizing one of their own.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA. August 21, 2012. Michelle Jordan was talking on her cellphone while driving, which was a violation of code in the state of California. LAPD pulled her over, and then, because Michelle Jordan gave them back-talk, they grabbed her and slammed her to the ground. Michelle Jordan, thirty-four years old, a registered nurse, and mother to a toddler, admits to swearing at the police, but that does not in any way justify the excessive force used when they slammed her to the ground once, and all over again after she was in handcuffs. Then, disgustingly, the cops exchanged a fist-bump type high five. <http://www.youtube.com> or search LAPD NURSE BRUTALITY

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS. February 19th, 2007. Officer Anthony Abbate is off-duty, but that doesn't stop him from using all of his brute cop force to beat the crap out of a petite little bartender who had the audacity to cut him off. Part of what made the story so scandalous, of course, was that other officers and officials higher up the chain of command tried desperately to suppress the story and make light of the injuries she sustained. What do you think: <http://www.youtube.com>

COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA. September 4th, 2014. Levar Edward Jones was stopped at a gas station and was leaving his vehicle. He had done nothing wrong. Officer Sean Groubert, also stopped at the station, asked to see his license and registration. When Jones reached back in his vehicle to get those things that the officer requested, the officer shot him. In a rare moment of serendipitous good fortune, Levar did live to tell about it.

<http://www.youtube.com> Or search LEVAR EDWARD JONES.

FUN UPDATE: The officer who shot Levar Edward Jones was later arrested for shoplifting from a Walmart. Hee hee.

KING'S COUNTY, WASHINGTON. February 11, 2012. A better soul than I: This is what Dustin Theoharis said in an article: he “doesn't hate the police”, even though they rushed into a room where he was sleeping and shot him sixteen times while he was lying in bed because they thought he was someone else. A King's County, Washington Sheriff's Deputy and a State Department of Corrections Officer went to the house to serve a warrant on the homeowner's son for failing to check in with his Department of Corrections Officer. Theoharis had the misfortune to be renting a room in the home. The cops burst in, and began shooting. Of course, their excuse was that they thought the sleeping Dustin was “going for his weapon” and “they feared for their lives.

DOLTON, ILLINOIS. May, 2009. The poor kid did nothing but walk down the hall with his shirt tail hanging out. And yet, Officer Christopher Lloyd slammed Marshawn Pitts to the ground without any provocation, making it impossible for the boy to breathe, for a few scary seconds. This is heartbreaking; what renders it even more painful is that the incident happened to a fifteen year old student in a special education school; he has faced mental challenges ever since being in a car accident as a child. “Bully” does not begin to describe the officer shows in the video below. He was pressured to resign, but no charges were ever filed against him. Imagine this frightened boy being told that he can trust the people at this special school—then being betrayed like this. <http://www.youtube.com> or search POLICE BRUTALITY SPECIAL ED STUDENT

UPDATE: Three years after the incident in 2012, Officer Christopher Lloyd finds himself behind bars, for threatening a woman with a knife in her Indiana home while raping her as he smothered her with a pillow. A further search reveals that in 2008, Officer Lloyd gunned down his ex-wife's new husband in front of their children. Though an autopsy showed he shot the man 24 times, he was not charged because the Chicago Police Department accepted his explanation that he had acted in self-defense.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS. February 19th, 2007. Officer Anthony Abbate is off-duty, but that doesn't stop him from using all of his brute cop force to beat the crap out of a petite little bartender who had the audacity to cut him off. Part of what made the story so scandalous, of course, was that other officers and officials higher up the chain of command tried desperately to suppress the story and make light of the injuries she sustained. What do you think: <http://www.youtube.com>

PHOENIX, ARIZONA. January 25th, 2011. Officer Patrick Larrison was called to the scene of an altercation at a high school where a fifteen year old school girl was intoxicated. His way of

dealing with this grave threat (did he “fear for his life?”) was to body slam her into a brick wall and then onto the ground. <http://www.youtube.com> He could have caused the poor girl permanent brain damage—we know this because this is exactly what happened in a case of mistaken identity for poor Christopher Sean Harris:

KINGS COUNTY, WASHINGTON. May 10, 2009. It was a case of mistaken identity. Christopher Sean Harris was reaching for his wallet to prove who he was when Deputy Matthew Paul, running at full speed, body slammed Harris into a cement wall. <http://www.youtube.com>. Harris was in a coma for months and though he has finally come out of it, he will probably never eat, walk, or talk on his own, due to the brutality of one vicious cop. His wife, who said Chris was her childhood sweetheart and the first boy she ever kissed, is now his permanent caretaker. <http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/1-year-after-officer-tackled-him-man-is-bedridden-wife-is-caretaker/> (Update: he died in 2015.)

WEST JORDAN, UTAH. March 24th, 2013. A dangerous criminal terrorizes the tiny, peace-loving town of West Jordan by burning a Christmas tree in a trashcan in his backyard. The police sure taught him a lesson he will never forget. Caution when you watch this graphic video of a police dog being sicced on a man who has both of his hands up, high in the air, and is clearly no danger to police. (Of his reluctance to stand up even though his hands were up, Martin said: ***"I've always been very cordial and very respectful to any officer. I was just in shock the whole time. I did nothing but try to make it easy for them. I thought I would not be a threat sitting down,"*** he recalled. While it may be true that Martin did have a minor rap sheet with the police—some misdemeanors, caused by his having gone off of his anti-depression medication and acting out. It is also true that now, he has a hell of a lot more to be depressed about. <http://www.youtube.com>

VINELAND, NEW JERSEY. March 31st, 2015. And while we are on the subject of police using their poor police dogs as death machines, take a look at the policeman siccing this k-9 on a man who is on the ground, compliant, and motionless: The man being attacked died soon after. He was the 290th person to be killed by police 2015. <http://www.youtube.com>

CHORLEY, LANCASHIRE, UK. October 12, 2012. Police arrived when they heard that a man was roaming around with a samurai sword. It was a long white stick, and the “Samurai Warrior” in question was a feeble, 61 year old blind man on his way to the local. He described himself, when the police encountered him, as “walking at a snail’s pace” because of the two strokes that he had recently suffered. Still the police Tased him. Even as he screamed that he was blind, they kept Tasing. How do you mistake a long white stick used by a blind person for a Samurai sword?

TACOMA, WASHINGTON. April 6th, 2012. Lashonn White, who is deaf, calls for help because her partner is becoming abusive. Speaking to a special software set-up in her computer, she calls 911, and the dispatcher tells her to leave the apartment and the danger, and go wait outside her

apartment building. The dispatcher mentions several times to the police that the caller (the victim) is deaf and won't be able to hear them. When she gets outside, a cop pulls up, gets out, and begins to Tase her repeatedly. A witness nearby screams that the girl they are Tasing is deaf and can't speak. The cops ignore the witness. Instead, they put the deaf woman in jail for three days, with no deaf interpreter. She was covered in her own blood, and yet they didn't take her to a hospital or let her see a doctor. The right side of her face had become swollen, her knuckles were bloodied, and she had further injuries to her neck, arms, and ribs from the Taser fall. They charged her with assault, and interfering with a law enforcement officer. She sued, and won. The judge found in favor of Ms. White. And then, the judge awarded the victim one dollar.

LOMA LINDA, CALIFORNIA. May 25th, 2011. 65 year old Jonathan Montano was a dialysis patient who usually received his treatment at the VA hospital in Loma Linda, California. But sometimes the hours he had to wait became physically unendurable for him. One day in May, he had waited four hours and couldn't take it anymore. However, there is a clause somewhere in some stack of regulations which says that he can't leave once checked in. So the Department of Veterans Affairs Police came in and beat him to death ... Of course, there is a little more to the story than that. His wife, Norma, had gone to fetch the car, and when she returned he was bloodied and bruised. A staff member explained that he had experienced a stroke. When Norma started digging around, she found a nurse who would tell the truth: when Jonathan Montano announced that he was leaving, hospital staffers summoned the on-site enforcers from the Department of Veterans Affairs Police Department. They were told to physically prevent him from leaving. Five officers physically restrained him, slamming the 65 year old dialysis patient to the floor. Mr. Montano was hospitalized for two weeks, but he never recovered, and an autopsy confirmed that "Somebody put enough pressure on the left side of his neck to crush the inside part of the carotid artery. It broke off into little pieces, and formed the blood clot, that formed the stroke, that killed Mr. Montano." A widow after 44 years of marriage, Norma's lawsuit claims that that police assaulted Montano by "tackling him to the floor, slamming his head on the floor, and kneeling and stomping on his neck, and otherwise brutalizing and restraining him." The VA investigated itself and said it did nothing wrong. Jonathan Montano. He survived the Vietnam War. But not the Veterans Administration.

A HIGHWAY IN OKFUSKEE COUNTY, OKLAHOMA. May 24th, 2009. Trooper Daniel Martin decided to pull over an ambulance for failing to yield right of way. He also later claimed that he did it because the driver flashed him an obscene gesture. Watch the video below in all its glory; not only does the trooper scream profanities at the driver, he also refuses to let the ambulance continue on its mission—to take a patient to the emergency room. In spite of the husband begging the officer to allow his wife to be taken to the hospital, Martin drags out the traffic stop, and, for no apparent reason, puts the driver in a chokehold. The consequences: the

trooper was put on paid administrative leave (code for paid vacation), and no charges were ever filed. Google AMBULANCE POLIICE BRUTALITY or <http://www.youtube.com>

HOUSTON, TEXAS. May, 2014. Darial Gass, Reserve Deputy Constable with Precinct Six, opened his front door in the middle of the afternoon and just began firing on tree trimmers who were there working for the county. (The fact that nearby, neighbors were picking up their children from the bus stop did not deter Gass.) The workers Gass was shooting at were dressed in neon county uniforms. They had been in the neighborhood with their large green trucks for eight hours, and in Gass's back yard for thirty minutes, trimming branches away from power lines. One of the workers, Dionne Hernandez, had to beg for his life. "Please don't kill me. I am a good man." Gass later explained that he thought the men were behaving suspiciously, but with the big truck and the neon vests, their purpose was pretty hard to confute. Deputy Gass has been put on administrative leave, which means that now, the taxpayers will be paying him to sit around his house and wait for people to come into his yard. <http://www.click2houston.com/news/>

THE RUDY SIMPSON STORY

MONROE COUNTY, MICHIGAN. June 2008. Rudy Simpson was in his house practicing with his band when cops raided his house on a tip that there was marijuana there. Although they only found a quarter ounce of pot, a few seedlings in a pot, and half a pain pill for which Rudy had a prescription, that did not stop Lieutenant Luke Davis from helping himself to a houseful of Rudy's possessions, including a 52 inch wide screen TV, a DVD player, two computers, a camera, a bunch of DVDs, four hundred dollars in cash, and a gold ring. They also raided the refrigerator while Rudy and his band mates looked on.

The most terrifying part of this story is that this is all quite legal in the state of Michigan, which has some of the worst drug forfeiture laws in the country. Cops don't even need charges, just probable cause to take all your property and sell it. Problem was, Luke Davis was keeping it all for himself, pulling this same thuggish heist over a series of years. When Michigan State Police raided Officer Davis's house, they found a variety of stolen property, including 2008 Vicodin, OxyContin, steroids, a wall covered with a large quantity of men's and women's jewelry, 30 designer purses, 22 cell phones, computers, televisions, motorcycles, and a golf cart, among other property.

The disgraced Officer Davis ended up being charged with 24 Counts: one count of Conducting Criminal Enterprises (Racketeering), a felony punishable by up to 20 years in prison and/or a \$100,000 fine; Thirteen counts of Embezzlement by a Public Official, a felony punishable by up to 10 years in prison; Five counts of Misconduct in Office, a felony punishable by up to five years in prison; Three counts of Possession of a Controlled Substance, a felony punishable by up to

two years in prison; One count of Use Tax violation, a felony punishable by up to five years in prison; and One count of Forgery, a felony punishable by up to 14 years in prison.

BUT....WAIT FOR IT:

All 24 charges against Officer Davis were dropped except one, Racketeering. He was found guilty, and required to serve two-twenty years. He ended up being sentenced to two years. This made Davis eligible for a "Boot Camp". It lasted 90 days; if he completed that without incident, he would be home for the holidays. He did. He was.

Rudy Simpson did time for the quarter ounce of weed, and for the pain pill, for which he had a prescription. He did about the same amount of time as Luke Davis.

<http://www.youtube.com>

FALLBROOK, CALIFORNIA. June 13th, 2015. A cop was looking for a boy who, his mom told police, had just run away from home again. San Diego Sherriff's Deputy Jeremy Banks spots the kid skateboarding with his friends. (The kid cannot have run far, he was with his pals in a park the cop knew well.) This kid is the smallest of the bunch, thirteen years old, but this doesn't stop the cop from choking and Tasing the boy. Then, he confiscates all of the cellphones from kids determined to get evidence of the attack. Except this one cellphone.

<http://thefreethoughtproject.com/> Let's just hope this cop has gotten a vasectomy; he should never be around kids. Hell, he should never be around the public. The boy was charged with felony assault. Here is something you will never see again in America; <http://www.best-norman-rockwell-art.com> (OR GOOGLE Norman Rockwell's "The Runaway.")

VICTORIA, TEXAS. December 11th, 2014. Pete Vasquez was driving a car that came from a car lot, Adams Auto Lot, where he worked, on an errand for his boss. Because this car was the property of the lot, car inspection requirements did not apply. When Officer Nathaniel Robinson pulled him over for a dead inspection sticker, Vasquez politely explained to the officer the situation, walking with the officer to the back of the car and pointing at the dealer plates. The officer's response to the calm and controlled Vasquez is to grab him for no reason, slam him against the car, and Tase him. Twice. It should be noted that Vasquez, who stands 5 feet five inches and weighs just 145 pounds, is also 76 year old man. <http://www.click2houston.com/news/>

EL RENO, OKLAHOMA. December 22nd, 2009. When a worried grandson called the authorities because he believed his grandmother may have overdosed on her meds, he called 911 and asked for an ambulance. EMTs. Instead, ten cops barreled their way into her room and one stood on her oxygen line until she went into distress. She pulled a knife out from under the bed and told them

to back off. So they Tased her. Twice. Because they feared for their lives. Oh, and when the grandson yelled, “Don’t Tase my grandmother”, they threatened to Tase him, then slammed him to the ground, cuffed him, arrested him, and threw him in a squad car. Even though the Tasing had caused the old woman to black out, they still grabbed her hands, cuffed her, tore her flesh in the process, and took her to the psych ward for a few days.

MIAMI, FLORIDA. August 14th, 2013. Israel Hernandez was misbehaving. He was painting graffiti on an empty building, a boarded up McDonald’s. The police came, Israel ran, so the police Tased him. Witnesses say that there were over two dozen cops converging on Israel, and that they were laughing and high fiving each other. Israel was taken to the hospital, where he died. It also doesn’t help that, as is so typical, the officers lied in their original report. Yeah, I know he did a bad thing. Just like you have. Just like your kids have. And now, this budding artist is gone: <http://wlrn.org/post/israel-hernandez-life-local-artist-cut-short> Also: <http://canadianbeerandpostmodernism.tumblr.com>

TACOMA, WASHINGTON. May 24th, 2014. Fifteen year old Monique Tillman and her older brother are carefree, riding their bikes through a shopping center mall parking lot. They had just dropped off some clothes at a consignment shop, had a snack at McDonald’s, and were heading home. An off-duty cop, Jared Williams, moonlighting as mall security, follows them in his vehicle, so they stop. Monique asks the officer why he is driving so close behind them, dangerously so. He tells them they are being “trespassed” (banned) from the mall, for causing a disturbance. He tells them to leave. As she is getting ready to peddle home, he grabs her by the hair, tosses her against a vehicle, presses his arm against her chest, then tosses her to the ground and Tases her, as arriving back-up keep her brother from coming to her rescue. Appalling. Monique was charged with resisting arrest and assaulting on officer. Watch this sadistic cop here: <http://newyorktimes.com>

ASHLAND, OREGON. June 15th, 2013. Sometime around 4:00 a.m. An autistic eleven-year-old girl snuck out of her house while her parents were asleep and took off on an adventure. Naked. When a cab driver saw her, he pulled up to her, asked if she needed help, and called 911. The police arrived. You would think they would assume the worst—that this child had been abducted, then dumped, or some other horrific thing, to be wandering around naked at this hour. You would also therefore assume that they would treat her with the utmost concern and compassion. They did not. They called twice to the autistic child. When she didn’t stop, they Tased her twice. Then, when she still didn’t comply (being autistic), they slammed her head on the hood of the car, cuffed her, and eventually called her parents.

TUCUMCARI, NEW MEXICO. July 2nd, 2010. Kailee Martinez had been a bad girl. Just as many fourteen year olds do bad things. She had been texting inappropriate pictures of herself so, in an attempt to teach her daughter a lesson, Kailee’s mother took her to the police station, so that

the officers could explain the dangers of this. That is when frightened and embarrassed Kailee bolted from the station to a nearby park. Police Chief Roger Hatcher ran after her. When she did not stop, the cop Tased her. This is what he did to her:

<http://www.google.com> It is worth noting that the barbs entered her brain. Particularly alarming, as Kailee is an epileptic, and as a result of the Tasing, she is shaky and having seizures.

PINELLAS PARK, FLORIDA. September 19th, 2013. 267 pound Officer Daniel Cole Tased 100 pound Danielle Maudsley who was handcuffed, and tried to make a run for it in cuffs. You can see she only gets a few yards away from the officer. (Obviously, she would not have gotten very far. He could have apprehended her by some other means.) As a result of the 50,000 volts hitting her body, she fell into a coma. She remained in a vegetative state until she died approximately one year later. <http://www.youtube.com>

ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO. May 4th, 2012: It was career day at Tularosa school, and Officer Chris Webb asked a bunch of ten year old boys if they would like to wash his patrol car. One boy refused, so the cop Tased him, joking with the other children that, "This is what happens when you don't obey the police." The boy blacked out. The boy's parents were upset that the paramedics, onsite nearby for the career day event, were not immediately called over. The boy described what happened when he came back to consciousness and saw the police officer leaning over him. "He grabbed the wires, he yanked them and it came out of the prongs, and then he went up to me and he ripped the prongs out of my chest," R.D. (name withheld) told ABC News in September. The boy said the officer then took him to the restroom to wash off and then to the nurse's office. The cop argued in court that it was "an accident", and nothing came of the incident. Even on the very outside possibility (and I mean, outside, as in the farthest reaches of the solar system) that this cop is telling the truth, can we point out that on the very outside possibility that it was an accident, any cop stupid enough to point a Taser at a child out to be fired for that alone. But of course, nothing happened to the officer, the case was settled behind closed doors, and the cop is back on the beat.

BRANSON, MISSOURI. July 27th, 2008. Mace Hutchinson, just eighteen-years-old, was walking near the interstate, a little too close to the road. Although no drugs or alcohol were in his system, according to tests taken later, Mace appeared disoriented, so drivers called 911. By the time police got there, Hutchinson had fallen 30 feet and was lying on the ground with a broken back when the cops found him. So the police Tased him 19 times. (As a point of science, this caused his white blood cell count to spike and a fever to set in, thus delaying urgent back surgery for two days. Way to snuff out danger, Branson PD.) The Christian County Prosecuting Attorney said the officers did nothing wrong. They faced no charges or punishment, and they are back on the beat.

ST. LOUIS COUNTY, MISSOURI. 2012. Not too far from the Michael Brown shooting. (It is worth nothing that the victim here is black, and the neighborhood where it happened is literally 97 percent white.) A woman is in the South County Center Mall Victoria's Secret when the police come in, prepared to arrest her for outstanding traffic violations that are unresolved. (How and why they knew she was there to arrest her I have not been able to discover, but it boggles the mind.) They slam her to the floor to cuff her. Naturally, her twelve year old daughter gets upset and runs to help her mother. So the cops Tase the twelve year old. Now she has two permanent scars, on her chest and abdomen. And a terror of police officers, no doubt.

MOUNT STERLING, OHIO. March 6th, 2012. A nine-year-old boy is in trouble for school truancy, and his mother has been unable to force the child to go to school. So when Officer Scott O'Neil arrived to serve the boy with a truancy charge, the kid acts out by lying down on the floor. Then he was told that he was about to be handcuffed, so the boy started flailing his arms around. So the cop Tases the kid. The kid is still on the floor; won't get up. So the cop Tases him again. Then they call an ambulance—which takes the kid not to the hospital, to see if the repeated Tasing on the child's body has done any damage—but straight to the sheriff's department, where they added resisting arrest to the nine-year-old's truancy charge.

PIERRE, SOUTH DAKOTA. October 4th, 2013. Police were called to the scene of a home where a Sioux girl had a small paring knife and was threatening to kill herself. Four officers arrived. Instead of using any of the tactics in which they had been trained (i.e., talking her out of it, physical intervention, kicking the knife out of her hand), they Tased her. Did I mention that she was eight years old?

AND WHILE WE ARE ON THE SUBJECT OF BAD COPS, let's not forget the predators masking as police, so that they can use their positions of power and trust to commit sexual crimes. Some of these monsters made national news, as we all remember watching in horror:

—Officer Daniel Holtzclaw, who was charged with 36 counts, and convicted of 18, including four counts of first-degree rape and four counts of forced oral sodomy. <http://www.youtube.com>

—And let us not forget the 2013 conviction of Hemingford, Nebraska Police Chief Mark Lindburg, sentenced to 20-24 years for raping a fifteen year old girl.

—Minneapolis police officer Bradley Schnickel, who lured his eighteen known rape victims via the internet, one of whom was as young as fourteen, although he admitted on the witness stand to being attracted to twelve year olds. He was sentenced to 30 months, minus time served (197days), so with good behavior he will only serve fourteen months.

—“Officer” Abraham Joseph”, who had been raping waitresses for years after stalking them at their places of work.

—“Officer” Ladmarald Cates, who responded to a 911 call by raping the woman who had called 911. By the time the ordeal was over, it would come out that this was the fifth time he had been named in such a crime, one of them being the rape of a sixteen year old

—Colorado Springs Police “Officer” Joshua Carrier, convicted of abusing twenty children. 70 years-to-life.

—Putnam, Florida Police “Officer” Paul Joseph Blair pleaded no contest to rape charges, and admitted to raping 300 girls in their early teens. He got 25 years.

We could go on, of course. But we feel our point has been made.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

GOOD COPS: THE WHISTLEBLOWERS

The country is filled with great cops, and the news—social media—is filled with great stories about those great cops doing great things. Buying groceries for the hungry, buying gas for the poor schlump who runs out on the side of the road. Going to the birthday parties of little children when nobody shows up, doing all kinds of things with Make-A-Wish, and making the lives of young cancer patients happier.

There is no doubt in my mind that a large league of cops absolutely will not believe a word that I have just said, and all I can say to that—and I mean this—is that you can hook me up to a lie detector, and I will answer your questions, and tell my truth, and hopefully that should pretty much settle things. For the record, I have never had a bad experience with a police officer in my life, and—like most of you—I’ve had my share of encounters. Broken taillight, going a little over the limit, expired tags, sobriety checkpoint. Nothing but great experiences.

Then again, I am a white, middle-class, middle-aged female. I drive like a Q-tip and I always drive some ten year old car that I got for a couple thousand dollars. Why would anyone want to bother with me?

But that, you see, if my point precisely.

Here is how and when we will have true justice in the United States of America, vis-à-vis policing: when black men get treated like middle-aged white ladies.

But justice will also elude us as long as those good cops who attempt to report acts of brutality and corruption find themselves censured, ignored, ostracized, blackballed, harassed, and threatened with the most terrifying consequences imaginable.

Here are a few of the brave. And here are some of the consequences they have suffered. And as is the case so often in this book, this subject could be a book unto itself. There are hundreds, perhaps thousands of good cops out there, trying to do the right thing. And we owe it to them, and the citizens they risk their lives to protect, to make that process less terrifying for them.

WHISTLEBLOWER: OFFICER CARIOL HORNE

BUFFALO, NEW YORK. November 3rd, 2006. Officer Cariol Horne (a black female officer) entered a home that she had been called to regarding a domestic disturbance. When she got there, a fellow officer by the name of Gregory Kwiatkowski (white) had an Afro-American man on the ground and handcuffed, but that didn't stop the officer from pummeling Neal Mack, as Mack begged for mercy. Horne testified that when she entered the home, Mack had already been handcuffed by Kwiatkowski. Horne saw what was going on, and later testified ***“He was handcuffed in the front and he was sideways and being punched in the face by Gregory Kwiatkowski.”*** But the officer didn't stop there. Cariol described the brutality she witnessed: ***“Gregory Kwiatkowski turned Neal Mack around and started choking him. So then I'm like, ‘Greg! You're choking him,’ because I thought whatever happened in the house he was still upset about so when he didn't stop choking him I just grabbed his arm from around Neal Mack's neck.”***

It was then that she claims Kwiatkowski assaulted her. Witnesses heard the officer call her a ***“black bitch”*** .

“He comes up and punches me in the face and I had to have my bridge replaced,” she said.

Keep in mind what we are describing here: a duly sworn peace officer sees another officer beating and choking a handcuffed man. Then, when she tries to stop her colleague, he turns around and punches her.

And then, in an even more shocking turn of events, it was the black female officer, Cariol Horne, who was interceding on behalf of the victim being beaten by another officer, who was charged. The list of charges stemming from the incident included thirteen counts, including obstruction of justice.

Then she was fired.

This Kwiatkowski is a real prize. As recently as 2014, the Federal Bureau of Investigation website posted that a federal grand jury had returned a five count indictment against officers Kwiatkowski, Raymond Krug, and Joseph Wendel. The five counts all pertain to violations of the civil rights of four black teens. According the FBI, the officers fired on four black suspects repeatedly with a BB gun—and this while the suspects were sitting in the back of a squad car, handcuffed. The charges carry a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000. The outcome of the trial is still pending.

Oh, Kwiatkowski had also been put on suspension for an earlier assault he committed on July 15th, 2013; this was another assault on a fellow officer. Kwiatkowski grabbed an officer by the neck during an altercation in the briefing room of the Northeast District Station. He was reportedly upset over officers who were requesting transfers out of his platoon.

As for Officer Horne, she appealed her case repeatedly but lost each time, finding herself out of work after nineteen years on the force. Nineteen years.

Former Officer Horne (who is black) learned that she could not collect pension, because she was just two months shy of the twenty years she needed to collect a pension, in spite of nearly two decades on the force. When she asked the mayor to intervene he did nothing.

And what ever happened to the cop who punches and chokes? Kwiatkowski later filed and won a defamation suit against Horne, and was awarded \$65,000 in damages. It is also worth noting that Kwiatkowski (who is white) was promoted to lieutenant before being allowed to retire with full pension, in spite of the long list of violent incidents scarring his record.

As for brave Cariol Horne? Now, the mother of five works as a truck driver.

And, you just knew that the last sentence would be about Kwiatkowki. While the above named trial is pending, he made it a point to go out and get drunk and get into an accident with two ATV's. What a dirtbag.

<https://www.fbi.gov/buffalo/press-releases>

WHISTLEBLOWER: CAPTAIN HILTON BURTON

Captain Hilton Burton, Commander of the Special Operations Division of the District of Columbia Metropolitan Police Force, testified in front of the D.C. Council about the alarming pattern of the Washington D.C. Police Department's chronic and ongoing abuse of discretion: they were using cruisers and manpower to usher famous personalities around town, using high speed "lights and sirens" type escorts to rush impatient celebrities from the airport to their hotels, to their stand-up gigs, to their concerts, and even shopping.

Following his testimony, Burton was demoted two full ranks and removed as Commander of the Special Operations Division.

During the trial, which can only be called a travesty, Police Chief Cathy Lanier denied knowledge of such escorts, when in point of fact, from 2002 to 2006, while she headed the Department's Special Operations Division, such escorts were common—and authorized by her. Burton was concerned that these escorts were all conducted at the taxpayer's expense, and that they always involved significant risk to the public's safety—high speed escorts have an inherent danger. Among the parties escorted: Christine Aguilera, Paul McCartney, John Wall, Billy Joel, Justine Timberlake, Bill Gates, and Jay Z, these escorts going as fast as 80 miles an hour.

Burton sued to get his rank back, lost as a result of crossing the Thin Blue Line.

He lost.

<http://www.nbcwashington.com/news>

<http://www.nbcwashington.com/news>

WHISTLEBLOWER: STATE TROOPER DONNA WATTS

It was a police cruiser's dashcam video that went viral, as well it should have. Trooper Donna Jane Watts was working patrol on the highway when she clocked a Miami P.D. squad car tearing through Broward County at 120 miles per hour—with no lights and no sirens.

Trooper Watts followed the police cruiser for seven minutes; it took him this long to obey her directive for him to pull over.

When he finally stopped, she approached the vehicle with her gun drawn, arrested him, and put him in the back of her car.

Surely any right thinking person would believe that Watts was more than justified in pulling over the trooper. In point of fact, she said the same thing about the arrest as I thought when I first encountered the story: ***“Watts told state investigators that she continued to follow his squad car because she feared the vehicle was stolen, since she believed no officer would drive so fast and so dangerously.”***

It is also worth noting that an internal investigation reported that Lopez has a habit of driving like this. Lopez was issued a reckless driving citation and was ultimately fired by the Miami Police Department.

The majority of people who encountered the story cheered on the principled female trooper who ticketed the officer who, it should be noted, was not only going nearly twice the speed limit while weaving in and out of traffic in a perilous manner—but his big “emergency” was that he was going to his “other job”. Going 120 in a cruiser, to get to his part time job.

That's when it started. The stalking. The harassment. The threats. The police cars sitting outside her house, and the endless phone calls from anonymous callers offering threats and ridicule. Message boards frequented by police officers were filled with long rants against Watts. And even more ridiculous, it became a feud between the Florida State Troopers versus local Miami cops. Retaliation ensued. A trooper was stopped by a Miami officer on a traffic infraction. Another high profile trooper had his car covered in human excrement. Terrified for her own safety, Watts started researching and learned that hundreds of police officers had logged into a proprietary database and run her name through the system, discovering where she lived, what she looked

like, and checking to see if she had ever gotten any speeding tickets. They also gained access to her home address and cell phone numbers, as well as her social security number.

Watts is suing, but she lives in terror. Imagine what your life is like when you have pissed off an entire state full of cops.

WHISTLEBLOWER: J.T. SHAW

After eight years of service with the Carroll County, Kentucky Sheriff's Office, J.T. Shaw was terminated, out of nowhere, one fine Thursday morning. ***"I grabbed my personal things out of the vehicle, and then he told me to leave."*** Shaw says he was not given a reason for his termination, but believes that it has everything to do with his role in Kentucky State Police's investigation of Sheriff Jamie Kinman, and the grand jury testimony Shaw provided. Sheriff Kinman had been indicted on charges of tampering with physical evidence and official misconduct earlier that week, on Monday. ***"I am positive that is part of it. He is upset that he was indicted and that I cooperated with the Kentucky State Police, but I had to stand up for what is right,"*** said Shaw.

Shaw says this all started in December 2013 when he was a whistle-blower who reported Sheriff Kinman's alleged misconduct to Kentucky State Police. The story went something like this: Deputy Shaw and a newly hired deputy were asked to go out and inspect the car of a third deputy, Senior Deputy Clay. During the inspection, they found an illegal bag of prescription drugs. But Shaw knew it had been planted in Clay's patrol car. How did he know? Because Shaw had himself been involved in a previous arrest, in which the suspect had that same very bag of prescription pills, and Shaw himself had put it in a locked evidence box.

Apparently, the authorities agreed with Shaw. The Sheriff was indicted.

In January 2014, Shaw says the sheriff began retaliating by allegedly giving his shifts and days off to the newly hired deputy. Then came a physical confrontation in the Sheriff's office. Shaw has since filed a civil lawsuit against Kinman, because of this alleged retaliation.

The attorney for Sheriff Kinman gave this statement about the firing: "Sheriff Jamie Kinman terminated JT Shaw this morning for multiple unexcused absences from work and insubordination. The termination had absolutely nothing to do with JT Shaw's lawsuit or the election and was based solely on Shaw's actions and conduct." Shaw denies any insubordination. Shaw says he and his attorney will likely add his termination to the lawsuit he has filed against Kinman. Shaw wonders what his future holds: ***"I had to stand up for what's right. I was***

stunned. It devastated me. How do I pay my bills now? What do I do for my family? It's almost Christmas."

WHISTLEBLOWER: DETECTIVE MAX SEIFFERT

Kansas City, Kansas. It's like something out of one of those edgy cable shows: *Weeds*, or *Breaking Bad*, or *Sons of Anarchy*. A guy with the very TV name of Barron Bowling is driving down the street when this car comes out of nowhere, speeds up, and tries to illegally pass him. Bowling speeds up. The other car speeds up. The two cars smash into each other.

Hang on: it hasn't even started to get nearly as bad as this story is going to get. The driver of the aggressive car trying to illegally pass Bowling suddenly jumps out, unhurt by the accident. He is waving a gun at Bowling and charging at Bowling. The passenger of the other car also came running out of the car. And here's the kicker. The guys jumping out of the aggressor car—they're DEA agents. Agent Timothy McCue took the shirtless Bowling and slammed him, face down, on the cement pavement, in the 98 degree heat. When Bowling tried to get up, McCue punched him with over and over again his fists. He also kicked Bowling repeatedly and pummeled him with the butt of his gun. McCue then shouted a number of insults at Bowling, including referring to him as an "inbred hillbilly." To quote Mandy Oaklander, blogging on the subject: "Whoa. All this, just because Bowling didn't let a car cut him off.? McCue does know that DEA agents aren't supposed to smoke the crack they confiscate, right?"

The first police officer on the scene, as the beating was winding down, was Officer Robert Lane, who told Bowling, in essence, to prepare to be arrested, since DEA officers could pretty much do anything they want.

Enter Detective Max Seifert—our whistleblower in this story. He was the only person to show up at the accident scene that day who had a shred of integrity. Rather than going along with the version of the accident that he was told, he dug in. But his superiors wanted no part of Seifert's thoroughness and honesty. He was told by his boss to investigate only the "assault" on Agent McCue. Seifert investigated everything, and told the District Attorney not to prosecute Bowling. His superior, Deputy Chief Steven Culp, pushed for prosecution after playing golf with the DEA special agent in charge.

So what happened to all of the players in this drama?

Officer Robert Lane, who attempted to help with the DEA cover-up, went on to become a councilman for the town of Edwardsville; he was later convicted of participating in a ticket-fixing scheme and sentenced to 10 days in jail plus probation.

The beaten man, Barron Bowling, was left with PTSD and severe brain damage.

And yes, of course after such an atrocity, the appropriate charges were filed: Barron Bowling was charged with leaving the scene of an accident.

Whistleblower Detective Seifert was forced into retirement before his retirement benefits were fully vested. He was even denied a routine commission that would allow him to work as a security guard. For crossing "the thin blue line," U.S. District Judge Julie Robinson wrote, Seifert was forced into retirement. *"Seifert was shunned, subjected to gossip and defamation by his police colleagues and treated as a pariah,"* Robinson wrote. *"...The way Seifert was treated was shameful."* Seifert also lost part of his pension and his retirement health insurance.

Ronald Miller, then Kansas City's police chief, is now the police chief in Topeka.

Steven Culp, then Kansas City's Deputy Police Chief, is now, incredibly enough, executive director of the Kansas Commission on Peace Officers' Standards and Training.

And because you were wondering...

Special Agent McCue is still with the DEA.

WHISTLEBLOWER: OFFICER JAMES BARROW

Hilldale, Kentucky. February, 2014. Officer James Barrow files a whistleblower lawsuit against the city, Mayor James Eadens, Police Chief Glenn Caple and Police Major Kenneth Straugh, with Barrow claiming he is being punished for reporting wrongdoings by the chief.

During the previous year, Barrow had reported to the FBI that he had evidence that Chief Caple "caused evidence" of a meth lab to be moved from Hilldale Mayor James Eadens' home to an adjacent property. In October of 2013, Chief Caple was indeed indicted by a federal grand jury, and charged with lying about moving a mobile meth lab from the property.

We don't know what will become of whistleblower Barrow's lawsuit against the above named parties, but, if this means anything, shortly after filing suit, our whistleblower Officer Barrow was given a ticket by a fellow officer for speeding in the police department parking lot.

Seriously?

It is really quite odd that in the eyes of the department and in the opinion of his colleagues, Barrow is suddenly, apparently, doing such a bad job. Not long before the meth lab incident, he was given an award by the Kentucky Office of Highway Safety. The Governor's Occupant Protection Enforcement Award is given to an officer who, according to the evaluation of his

superiors, is doing his job well and helping to protect the public. At that time, his boss, Hilldale Police Department Major Ken Straughn(sp.) said of Officer James Barrow, “**Barrow takes his job seriously ... he takes initiative ... he gets a lot of things done ... this award is a way to recognize and individual doing his duty.**” Then Barrow got invited to a big fancy state dinner.

And then, he found the meth lab.

<http://www.wave3.com/story/>

<http://www.wdrb.com/story/>

WHISTLEBLOWER: SERGEANT RANDY HENRY

Iowa police officer Sergeant Randy Henry couldn't keep quiet about what he knew. It had been his job to question the police officer who was responsible for the death of Brandon Ellingson.

May 31st, 2014. Brandon was a healthy, happy twenty-year-old college student who was pulled over by a cop for suspicion of driving while intoxicated. How did Brandon come to die in this cop's custody, you may ask?

What Brandon was driving, was a boat. Trooper Anthony Piercy, who had not been properly trained to be a cop on the water, pulled his police boat up next to Brandon's and arrested him. Then he put Brandon in the police boat, handcuffed him, and put a life vest on Brandon, tying it loosely—but not bothering to put Brandon's arms through the life vest's armholes. Also—Brandon was handcuffed. The image is chilling, is it not?

Then, Piercy, who was with another trooper, took off so fast that Brandon fell off the boat. The officers didn't notice. Brandon drowned. (This is the police officers' version, of course.) As if this isn't appalling enough, witnesses came forward to say that the boat was already moving, and that Brandon was still on it, standing and talking to the officers—then, suddenly, he was in the water. And, the witnesses observed, the officers did not seem in a hurry to rescue Brandon. They took a long time getting to him in the water, watching him flail and sink under the water.

Sgt. Henry, who has researched all of this, conducted interviews, and tried to get justice for Brandon, has paid the price for crossing the Thin Blue Line. First, he was ordered by his department to see a mental health professional. Perhaps his brain was the problem. Since the incident, he has been demoted and reassigned far from where he lives, in Lake of the Ozarks, over to Truman Lake. He will probably have to sell his home, leaving the house he has lived in for nineteen years, because he wanted the world to know the truth. About a drowned boy.

WHISTLEBLOWER: ANONYMOUS.

MAY, 2012. Imagine that you are a police officer for the city of Richmond. And that the President of the United States is coming to town. And then, imagine that you hear a man you thought you respected, a twenty year police veteran, joking about “taking a couple of shots” at the President. As told by Shelby Brown, CBS News. Richmond, Virginia:

There was an officer providing exterior security to the President on that day on the phone with the supervisor. The supervisor said to that particular officer, “you’re down there right? So, you can take a couple of shots, you might have to kill yourself, but you can take a couple of shots.” The RPD source also told Jones that the supervisor said that to a sharpshooter while on the phone during the department’s roll call on the day of the president’s visit. The source also said that “another officer in the background started talking and he said, ‘yeah, somebody should plant a bomb underneath the stage while they’re on there and blow it up.’” And the police source also said comments were allegedly made about Michelle Obama. “Nobody wants to see her anyway — unless she gets undressed or get naked,” the source told Jones was what one officer said.

—“Richmond cops fired after alleged Obama, first lady threats” by Shelby Brown, Channel 6 CBS News Richmond, July 13th 2012

Naturally, you report this incident. A threat to the President of the United States, and all.

And then, you are fired.

How the whistleblower came to be fired is almost as creepy as the threats themselves. You see, the whistleblower knew there would be unthinkable blowback for going public with the statement. (He wished to go public, in addition to reporting it to the proper authorities, so that accountability would be assured.) So the whistleblower requested an electronic veil be used when he went on the news with his story. Here’s how it all fell out:

“According to WTVR/CBS in Richmond, the Richmond Police reverse-engineered the whistleblower’s identity, when he appeared on the local news, by removing the electronic veil the station put to hide who he really was.” “Richmond Cop Fired For Blowing the Whistle on Death Threat Against Obama,” by John Aravosis, 2/22/13. Americanblog,.com

This is what happens to cops who are good guys. It is time to erase the Thin Blue Line. It is time to tear down the Blue Wall. It is time to make duty safe, and jobs secure for police officers who do the right thing.

CHAPTER TWENTY

SOLUTIONS

It's been a long journey. We began, hundreds of pages ago, in "The Little Book of Lynching Part I", with large crowds of people relishing the torture and execution of black men—men whose guilt was questionable at best. We have attempted to define, and to re-define, the notion of lynching. While the traditional image may be that of a noose, the truth of it is that any extra-judicial execution really is a lynching, since the important concept behind lynching is that it takes place outside of our legal system. More importantly, a lynching sends a message of fear. It is a warning. That the "Other" must remain obedient. Subservient. Compliant. Invisible.

And even those earlier killings, from "The Little Book of Lynching, Part One" (killings which were "sanctioned" by the courts after coerced confessions, the defendant receiving no legal representation, thirty minute jury deliberations, etcetera), were carried out with levels of glee and torture which have absolutely no place in a civilized justice system.

Tragically, part of the re-defining of the word "lynching" has required us to focus rather intensively on police who choose to serve as judge, jury, and executioner, in instances where de-escalation, and/or better adherence to the most basic police procedures would have avoided these tragic killings. And so now, in this chapter, we will be focusing on the solutions to these problems within policing, in particular.

If there is one chapter in this book, more than any other, which both implies and requires a book unto itself, it is this chapter on solutions. It is a conundrum, and a quagmire: it hardly seems right to fill readers' heads with these horrific stories, videos, points of evidence, proofs of guilt, and lastly, stories about justice denied, without offering something in the way of solutions. But nobody is kidding anybody; all of the solutions listed below are complex, and require the unflagging commitment of citizens, in order to understand, enact, and enforce these solutions.

After a book filled with enraging horror stories, though, these certainly should be seen as fertile jumping off points for discussion. I will spend a little time looking at what I believe to be urgent solutions, some of them long overdue. The rest, while equally important, I will relegate to list form, and pass the torch on to the readers. This book has consumed my life, and I have become sad and weary.

One last caveat, before we begin: I play down the "touchy-feely" approach to solutions, although you are certainly free to embrace them. Specifically, I have heard far too many police speak

candidly about the corrupt and racist culture within their departments to believe that “sensitivity training”, and those seminar packages conducted by “Outsiders” would be particularly effective. (I used to sell and oversee such programs, and frankly, I agree with the police.) While I have no evidence to believe that a culture of racism exists within most departments, once it has taken hold within a department—or within a human being, for that matter—no mini-course filled with trust exercises and New Age aphorisms is going to root that out. If I may quote, once again, Anna De Leon, when she responded to the ghastly racist texts being sent back and forth among members of the Cleveland, California (not Ohio) Police Department:

“Those texts have revealed what we’re really up against here. We’re not talking about a little implicit bias; we’re talking about attitudes of white supremacy coming out the Deep South from fifty years ago. We’re talking about a level of hatred, contempt, and entitlement to inflict violence that will not be rooted out by nudging officers to examine their cultural assumptions ...The only effective response is to strip these individuals of their institutional power when they exhibit racist behavior in their actions, and to create a culture that never minimizes or excuses instances of racism. This means that police departments need to take every manifestation of racism—however small or seemingly insignificant—as indicative of a very large problem in that individual officer, and have disciplinary policies that put everyone on notice that racism will not be tolerated.”

Now, to business. The business of solutions.

POLICE BODY CAMERAS

This is not new. We know the debate, and it is time for the debate to be over. The technology is getting increasingly lighter and cheaper, and once the right companies see that thousands of these bodycams will soon be in demand, the quality, practicality, and affordability of the technology will advance at lightning speeds. Any argument that the cops or the union have against them is easily quashed by the fact that this cuts down on bogus, lying claims of “police brutality” made by people who just want to make a quick buck off the city. (Data storage, for example, is presented by some anti-camera voices as an almost insurmountable expense. Not true. Costs of storage drop by as much as 60 percent if stored on the Cloud. Oh, but the Naysayers cry, but most Cloud computing platforms don’t meet the FBI’s Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) requirements. But oh, I say to the Naysayers: Microsoft has now developed cloud storage that meets those FBI requirements. Did we really think they wouldn’t?)

As for the cost factor in general, use the money that you will save from no longer having to pay out millions in lawsuits, as frivolous claims are debunked and police become more accountable.

As for the police cry that being accountable to a camera might inhibit them or paralyze them in a crisis, three words: get over it. You carry a gun, you’re authorized to use lethal force, **you are**

accountable. There are plenty of checks and balances, laws and codes, to protect you that are firmly in place.

And the evidence is starting to roll in that body cameras work; we cannot be daunted by the outcomes in cases like the Eric Garner tragedy. (Keep in mind that laws need to be changed and prosecutions handled differently, in conjunction with the use of body cameras.) But disappointing judicial outcomes notwithstanding, when programs using body cameras are put into place, the outcome is pleasing to everyone:

According to an article in The Atlantic, by Uriel Friedman, “Do Police Body Cameras Actually Work?” (December 3rd, 2014):

Barak Ariel, a criminologist at the University of Cambridge, recently co-authored a [study on the practice](#) in Rialto, California, where he found that police officers who weren't wearing cameras were twice as likely to use force as those who were. During the 12-month experiment, the police department also saw a reduction in citizens' complaints compared with previous years. The researchers concluded that the benefits of wearing cameras trumped the costs.

Later in the article, the journalist Uriel Friedman says;

I asked Ariel why the concept of body-worn cameras has caught on in the absence of definitive proof of their value. Police officers, he explained, see a means of verifying, via a third-party technology, that they responded to incidents in an appropriate fashion. Governments see an opportunity to save money on things like litigation costs. Citizens see a way to ease chronic tensions between the public and police ... There's an appeal to [the camera] because it makes logical sense.

And there are other studies from across the pond (Europe often embarrassing Yanks with their effective progressive policies) which demonstrate the benefits of body cameras to all parties, including the police. According to an article on nbcnews.com, “Britain straps video cameras to police helmets”, 7/13/2007, by the Associated Press, ***“In a report on the Plymouth pilot project published by the Home Office on Thursday, policemen praised the head-held cameras for deterring bad behavior and providing excellent evidence against crooks ... They said rowdy youths quickly calmed when they realized they were being filmed, and those arrested for drunkenness seldom challenged police when shown videos of their behavior. Prosecutors credited the cameras with emboldening victims of domestic violence to press charges against their partners...”***

To keep the discussion going, and for a thorough look at all sides, here is just one excellent article, published in [The Harvard Law Review](#), “[Considering Police Body Cameras](#)”, April 10th,

[2015](#). Not surprisingly, the article offers some negative aspects to the use of body cameras, but none seem like objections that cannot be overcome once sincerely addressed. May I simply point out that if humans were daunted every time a list of problems was associated with some new technological advance, we wouldn't have any kind of cameras, period. Or most of the other inventions and comforts that make our lives superior to those of our ancestors. Again, to detractors I say, Get Over It.

RANDOM DRUG TESTING

Let's begin with the basics. It is a well-established fact that about 1 out of 12 Americans abuses alcohol, and studies have further shown that the rate is triple that for the very high stress occupation of police officer. Look, we want to think the best of cops. We want to respect them and trust them. We don't want to think of them as strapping that gun on, after they've had a snootful. But these are human beings that we have authorized to use deadly force. It's simple: all police officers ought to be tested randomly for drug and alcohol use. In spite of the fact that police unions make great objection to this, there can be no conscionable explanation as to why this should not be standard operating procedure.

Let's be blunt: you have to survive random drug testing if you want to sell cow manure mulch and caulking tubes at the Home Depot. You have to pass a random drug test if you want to don the lauded blue smock of a "Proud Walmart Associate". You have to take random drug tests if you want to work as a cashier at the Piggly Wiggly. Why the hell shouldn't people authorized to fire a deadly weapon have to be checked to see if they're tipsy, high, or enjoying a serious bout of 'roid rage?

But wiser minds than mine have commented on this matter:

In a landmark study of alcohol abuse among police officers, authors Davey, Obst, and Sheehan discovered: *"Twenty-five percent of officers reported having drunk while on duty ... An alarming portion of the sample (30%) scored in the 'at risk of harmful consumption' category."*

And the profession knows all of this to be the case. Cops know cops have problems with chronic alcohol abuse. According to "Police Chief Magazine", in an article by Dr. Robin Kroll, Clinical Psychologist and Director of Interventions, ***"Law enforcement officers drink in greater quantities and have higher rates of binge drinking compared to non-officers."*** Dr. Kroll also comments on the anomalously high suicide rate among police officers, and the connection to alcohol: ***"Alcohol and suicide in law enforcement are also closely linked. A 2010 study found the presence of alcohol in over 95 percent of police suicides. It is estimated that a peace officer commits suicide every 17 hours."*** Some say that figure seems a bit high—studies differ in their methodologies, and gathering statistics becomes harder when suicides are possibly categorized as

“accidental.” But even the low end studies put the death at about 125-150 per year. An officer committing suicide every two days is an appalling and tragic statistic.

Dr. John Violanti, in his seminal article “Dying from the Job: The Mortality Risk for Police Officers”, notes *“Twenty-five percent of police officers have been found to be dependent on alcohol, and a significantly strong positive relationship was found between stress and alcohol use among police. Alcohol is an important problem in police work, and may lead to other work problems such as high absenteeism, intoxication on duty, complaints by supervisors and citizens, and unwillingness to officially report their dependence.”* And Dr. Violanti should know. Not only is he a Research Professor in the Department of Epidemiology and Environmental Health, School of Public Health and Health Professions, University at Buffalo, as well as having served as a full professor and the Rochester Institute of Technology Department of Criminal Justice, he is also a police veteran who served as a New York State Trooper for twenty-three years, criminal investigator, and coordinator of the Psychological Assistance Program for the State Police. So when he tells us that one in four cops has a problem with alcohol, and that twenty-five percent of cops actually admit to drinking on duty—which means that you have a one in four chance of getting stopped by an pseudo functioning alcoholic carrying a gun—we should believe him. Scary to think that this many police officers who drink on the job are out there en masse, “enforcing” the law.

Statistics on drug abuse among the force are somewhat harder to pin down. The same reluctance to seek professional help, for obvious reasons, is even greater when the substance they are using is illegal—they are police officers, after all—but it most certainly does go on. It goes on partly because drug testing, random or otherwise, is simply not required in vast numbers of police departments across the country. And where drug testing does go on, the results are scary indeed:

In 1999, Boston introduced drug testing: seventy-five officers have failed the test, out of about two thousand officers. That may not sound like a huge percentage, but it is seventy-five officers out there who may well be high while on duty. And by the way, here’s how you know that there are far more than seventy-five police officers in Boston that are trolling around high: the drug testing isn’t random. They let you know when it is. It is annually, within thirty days of your birthday.

Seriously? Seriously? That little factoid just slays me.

And guess who arranged that sweet deal? You guessed it. The Union.

Gene Sanders is a police psychologist, executive director of the Police Stress Institute, and a retired officer with twenty years of experience as a Los Angeles street cop. He speaks from lengthy experience and research about the particular problem of steroid use, stating that, in his estimation, **“up to 25 percent of all police officers in urban settings take steroids.”** And

according to Sanders, all police departments routinely turn a blind eye. And the impact of steroids on the job is not to be underestimated. According to Sanders, ***“They can go from being calm and collected to raging bulls ... Even short term use of steroids can cause damage to brain tissue, which never grows back”***

So—knowing now, as we do, this estimate that one in four city cops take rage inducing drugs, and may have suffered brain damage, don’t the events of the last few months and years start to make so much more sense? A horrible explanation, yes, but a possible explanation, none the less. It’s simple. It’s clear: we need to test cops for drugs. And the Fraternal Order of Police, their beloved union? It can just go fuck itself.

And for those of you who were wondering, here is what the United States Supreme Court has to say about the matter:

“National Treasury Employees V. Von Raab is a landmark U.S. Supreme Court case in which employees carrying fire arms were required to submit to drug testing. The Court approved the testing program due to the extraordinary hazards of drug use in these officers. No specific guidelines for testing were put forth, but purely random testing is constitutional according to the various courts.”

—Police Chief Magazine “Anabolic Steroid Use and Abuse by Police Officers: Policy and Prevention by Commander Kim R. Humphrey, Professional Standards Bureau, Photic Arizona Police. Violanti, J. M., (1999). Alcohol abuse in policing: Prevention strategies. FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, 16-20. Department.

(Jeremy D. Davey, Patricia L. Obst, and Mary C. Sheehan, Developing a Pattern of Alcohol Consumption Patterns of Police Officers in a Large Scale Sample of an Australian Police Service, published in European Research Addictions.)

INDEMNITY INSURANCE FOR OFFICERS

The notion that police should be required to carry indemnity insurance, as a way of de-incentivizing the use of excessive force and cutting down on police brutality, is the quintessential example of an idea whose time has come. And why shouldn’t they? Dozens of other professions basically have to buy it: doctors, lawyers, insurance agents, brokers, engineers, architects, accountants, contractors, carpenters, plumbers, personal trainers, real estate agents, consultants of all kinds—even people who paint faces at kiddie parties buy indemnity insurance. And just to be clear, ***the issue of legions of hard-working, honest officers having to now pay a monthly or annual insurance premium will be addressed below.***

Having officers buy insurance would serve two important purposes.

Firstly, by cutting down on incidents of police brutality and use of excessive force, it would cut down drastically on the settlements, awards and judgments currently being paid out by the governing bodies: it would take the burden off the towns, cities, counties, and states, basically all of whom are already ridiculously strapped for money. That cash could then flood into public services, schools, emergency divisions, parks, and etcetera. Just how much money in awards and settlements are we talking about? Dallas has paid out 6 million dollars since 2011. Baltimore has paid out 11 million. Since 2011. Los Angeles paid out 54 million in 2011. Chicago has paid out half a billion over the last decade, and forked over 84.6 million just last year (2014), in fees, settlements, and awards. This list could go on and on. (And obviously, those numbers are climbing every day. The above paragraph was written in 2015.)

But with insurance in place, the insurers would have to pay the brunt of that, and our cities could breathe a bit.

Secondly, it would force officers to be held accountable. To consider their own behavior. And yes, I am fully aware of the argument put forth by unions, and others who are against the idea, that this would essentially be putting mental shackles on the cops, making them second guess themselves in emergency situations, and not being aggressive enough because they fear the insurance ramifications. And that is a valid point. But if one considers the fact that cops are very rarely charged, and almost never convicted, the evidence suggests that officers who should be given the benefit of a doubt are—they are, and more. To put it in the vernacular, you have to be a pretty bad ass cop who has done something pretty nasty to be convicted, and so insurance troubles simply wouldn't become an issue for any cop who used even vaguely justifiable aggression in the line of duty.

Now, just so you know, I can hear the hue and cry arising from officers and unions as they read this. And let me state clearly—these insurance premiums should not come out of the officers' salaries. Indeed, as we will note later in this chapter, many police officers are not paid enough as it is. There is a WIN-WIN scenario here: in places where use of body cams are becoming routine, claims against police officers decline, and cities find themselves paying out far less in settlements. This savings would go to pay the officers' premiums, and only when repeated instances of excessive force became a problem would the officer have to begin paying his own premium. This would also serve as a way to track “problem” cops.

And with all due respect to the police, it may be in the best interest of the police to engage in a dialogue with citizens of their city or town, over this matter of carrying insurance, and to then work out the assorted objections. Because while police unions do wield a great deal of power via their funding of elections, given enough frustration and inaction, the vox populi will take the matter into their own hands. While the good people of Ferguson and Cleveland and New York

were taking to the streets, the citizens of Minneapolis were quietly laying the groundwork to take the matter to the ballot box. An intriguing webpage from balletopedia.org, “City of Minneapolis Police Brutality Personal Insurance Charter Amendment”, lays it out quite clearly:

A City of Minneapolis Police Brutality Personal Insurance Charter Amendment” ballot question may be on the ballot for [Minneapolis](#) voters in [Hennepin County](#), [Minnesota](#), in [2016](#) ...A group called the Committee For Professional Policing (CFPP), is collecting signatures to qualify this [initiative](#) charter amendment for the ballot. If its petition campaign is successful, which requires the collection of 6,869 [valid signatures](#), voters will decide on a measure that was designed to require all city police officers to carry personal liability insurance comparable to malpractice insurance for those in the medical profession. The amendment, if approved, would allow the city to pay for base insurance rates covering all officers, but police would be individually responsible to pay for any additional insurance premiums caused by improper, overly violent or "risky" conduct. According to the CFPP website, the city had spent \$20 million to cover successful lawsuits against police officers over the seven years preceding 2014. Dave Bicking, the Chair of CFPP, spoke about the current city policy saying, “Right now, the city covers pretty much all acts of misconduct by police officers, but it's not actually required to do so.” Michelle Gross, President of CUAPB said, "Statistics about police brutality [are] not collected by the police. No cities keep this data in any real way. The FBI is mandated to keep this data, but no one really does it. So it's this big problem that everyone knows about, but nobody wants to quantify.”

And here is what forcing cops to buy insurance would do. Like the dash cam, the presence of insurance accountability would lead cops to know that the next time they are tempted to smash somebody’s car window with a baton, just because the young female driver is cooperating in every respect, except that she [doesn't want to roll her window down all the way](#): OR GOOGLE SEARCH: POLICE SMASH WINDOW STUDENT REFUSES ROLL WINDOW GIRL (In this case, the driver was found guilty, not the officer.)

Or because a black man who is a **passenger**, and has given the cops his information, and has done absolutely nothing wrong has [a window on his side smashed, even though the officer can clearly see there are kids in the back seat](#): OR GOOGLE SEARCH: POLICE SMASH WINDOW HAMMOND INDIANA

And yes, I am familiar with the argument which says that the difference between all the other professions who routinely elect to get liability insurance and police officers, is that police are not private sector; they work for a government—the city, the town, etc. And yes, usually the government indemnifies them, thereby relieving the officers of the burden and freeing them to do their jobs. But this is purely and simply, an antiquated idea. There is too much proof of police abuse of power:

—Whopping amounts paid out by cities for credible charges of police brutality

—Shocking recorded instances of police brutality that seem to go viral on a daily basis

—Statistical evidence of alcohol and drug abuse provided by experts who are police officers, who have been police officers, who have been educated to the highest degree in these specialized fields of study.

—Skewed arrest records regarding minorities.

—And lastly, an abundance of evidence of incidents of police brutality from the Department of Justice's investigations into the procedures practices in police departments such as Ferguson, Cleveland, Albuquerque, Portland, New Orleans, Seattle, Puerto Rico, and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. The Justice Department has launched a total of sixty-seven investigations since the Rodney King beating in 1994.

So yes, while I realize that these officers are government employees, and are traditionally indemnified by the government for which they work, it is time to change the rules.

Because here's what: most government workers don't do anything that dangerous. They don't pose much of threat to anybody, they don't rack up big bills for the city or town in lawsuits, and most importantly: they aren't packing lethal weapons.

Because when the man charged with enforcing city ordinances comes around because I was illegally burning a Christmas tree in my back yard, I know that the ordinance guy [*won't sick a police attack dog in my face.*](#)

Because the school employees in my tiny town of Covington don't go viral YouTube, because they have [*broken children's arms on the school bus,*](#) or [*body slammed them in the school halls.*](#) As cops have been known to do.

Because when the school crossing guard helps kids safely across the street, they don't feel a need to terrorize the children and call in a SWAT team if one kid deviates a little from a crosswalk: [*http://www.youtube.com*](http://www.youtube.com)

Because when the town dog catcher comes around our neighborhood, looking for that terrier mix white dog that knocks over trash cans, I know that the dog catcher knows how to handle the problem of [*a frightened dog without killing it.*](#) AND [*https://puppycidedb.com/*](https://puppycidedb.com/)

It's very simple. Cops have guns. So police officers need to be indemnified. They need to have dashcams (that they remember to turn on, by the way), and body cameras (that don't fall off in a scuffle, by the way). And last but not least, they need to pee in a cup.

And yet more solutions: After the events of the last few years, a number of activist and civic organizations have come up with lists of potential solutions to the problems of police brutality. Not surprisingly, the items on these lists overlap, simply because they are good ideas: obvious, tested, and in many cases, not overwhelmingly expensive. In other cases, the cost could be borne by savings that would come from fewer lawsuits and settlements. There are two non-profit organizations in particular who have collaborated in an attempt to find serious solutions to these serious problems: Center for Popular Democracy and Policy Link have created an advisory report, titled “Building From the Ground Up: A Toolkit for Promoting Justice in Policing”. Zak Cheney Rice, in his July 1st, 2015 article on mic.com, “15 Things Your City Can Do Right Now to End Police Brutality” summarizes that in depth report. And although we find his article title, referring how to end police brutality “right now”, to be a bit on the optimistic side, we nonetheless have excerpted part of that excellent fifteen point list here:

ENDING POLICE BRUTALITY: THE FIRST STEPS...

Stop criminalizing everything. You may have gotten the impression that everything is a crime these days. That's because it probably is. The state of California, for instance, has created 1,000 new crimes in the past 25 years, while Michigan currently has 3,102 crimes on the books. New York City alone has 10,000 crimes, rules and codes the police can enforce. In many cities these crimes include innocuous activities like being in a park after hours, panhandling, spitting, and sleeping on the subway. Some cities have even criminalized the wearing of saggy pants (true story). This is absurd. The report estimates that police officers spend 90% of their time dealing with minor infractions like these and just 10% on violent crimes, resulting in a system where people of color are disproportionately summoned to court for low-level offenses — 80% of these summonses are for blacks and Latinos, to be specific ... [we need to] push police departments and district attorneys to de-prioritize enforcing and prosecuting low-level offenses. Change city charters to limit the health, park, tax and administrative offenses that police are responsible for enforcing. Reclassify misdemeanors as civil infractions, whenever possible.

Stop using poor people to fatten city budgets. Most courts can issue an arrest warrant if you don't show up for your court date for a summons or ticketed violation. The result is people spending time in jail for not paying parking tickets. To make matters worse, the practice is incentivized. Court fees and added fines for not appearing in court or paying the original ticket often supplement city budgets, not to mention these warrants make it really hard to get a job in order to pay the fines you weren't able to pay in the first place because you had no job, and hence no money. Pressure lawmakers to eliminate "failure to appear" charges in municipal court ... Offer alternatives to monetary payment — community service is an option. Implement a system

where fines are dictated by people's specific income level. And cap the amount of money a city budget can pull from these fines and fees.

Treat addicts and mentally ill people like they need help, not jail. Jail is not a "one size fits all" prescription. Some issues — like acting erratically due to mental illness or possessing and using drugs due to addiction — are actually better served by medical attention, not incarceration. The report suggests training law enforcement officials to address these issues at their discretion, with the aim of guiding addicts and people who live with mental illness into treatment programs instead of jail ... Also train police to better identify and confront these problems using de-escalation tactics, and keep track of results through frequent data collection and analysis.

Obey the Fourth Amendment ... prohibiting "unreasonable searches and seizures," which often lead to unnecessary (typically drug-related) arrests. These arrests tend to be marked by severe racial disparities. In 2013, blacks and Latinos in Chicago were four times more likely to be searched during a stop than whites. To rectify this problem, the report says that police should have to alert people to their right to refuse a search — much as they are required to read arrestees their Miranda Rights. Officers should have to present documentary proof of consent — whether in written, audio or video form. They should also guarantee that there will be no negative consequences if a person refuses a search ... officers [should be required to] articulate clearly why they want to conduct a search. Make them present documentary proof of search consent — and if they don't, the presumption should be that the search was unconstitutional. Last but not least, there should be consequences for officers and departments who do not obtain objective proof of consent.

Involve the community in big decisions. Communities should have significant say in how they are policed. Current civilian oversight commissions — maintained in more than 100 jurisdictions — often feel like they lack meaningful control in this respect ... Every city should have an adequately funded community oversight board with significant investigatory and disciplinary powers. They should reflect their communities, especially the elements of their communities most affected by police abuse. The majority of these committees should be democratically elected. And if at all possible, they should avoid having former or current police officers to avoid a conflict of interest.

Collect data obsessively. Data is the lifeblood of effective police reform. You can't solve a problem without knowing its scope ... cities and departments should maintain a transparent and searchable database on every stop, frisk, summons, use of force, arrest and killing they conduct. The database should be regularly updated. It should be public, but implement measures to protect the privacy of those it involves as well. It also should include all relevant info for each interaction — race, gender, time, place, reason and any other consideration that could help detect bias. And it should be available online.

Don't let friends of the police prosecute the police. Cases against police officers should be tried by independent prosecutors, not the district attorneys who work with them all the time. Each state should establish a fully authorized and independent Office of Police Investigations, with the authority to prosecute police officers in criminal court. The report says should also be equipped with sufficient and independent resources. In the absence of such an office, independent prosecutors should be assigned to all cases where police conduct leads to the death of a civilian. In cases involving state police departments, attorneys general should assign an independent prosecutor.

Oversight, oversight, oversight. So you've caught the police doing something wrong. Now what do you do? Even if you successfully prosecute an officer or department for wrongdoing, there isn't much infrastructure in place to promote any follow-through — i.e., measures that can implement broader, long-term change. That's why external oversight committees — ones that oversee the implementation of reforms and proactively identify issues in police operations and practices — are important. These should be independent, and instituted at the city or county level, the report suggests. They should regularly analyze data and identify disparities. They should have full investigatory powers into the police: access to relevant documents, subpoena power, ability to compel testimony. The budget should be consistent and sufficient. And the police should be required to acknowledge and respond to their recommendations.

No more military equipment. One thing we learned from Ferguson, Missouri, last year is that our police are disturbingly well-armed. Through a federal program called 1033, local police departments in all 50 states have been requesting (and receiving) military-grade weapons and equipment from none other than the Pentagon since the early 1990s. More than 100 colleges and universities and over 20 school districts have access to this equipment as well. Its cumulative worth today stands at \$727 million. Municipal solutions to this problem aren't easily forthcoming, the report says. It's really up to the federal government to decide whether to make it available or not. President Barack Obama did recently issue an executive order prohibiting police departments from obtaining specific equipment — namely tracked armored vehicles, grenade launchers, large caliber weapons and ammunition and bayonets (yes, bayonets). But few states have restrictions regulating how the equipment already obtained should be used.

Establish a "use of force" standard. Consider this: Maybe it's so hard to legally determine whether a police officer used excessive force in a given situation because there's no national standard for what constitutes excessive force. How can we solve the problem if we can't agree on what the problem looks like? This standard needs to be better defined and enforced. The report says that all departments should issue a statement affirming that their officers should use minimum force to subdue people. They should develop clear and transparent standards for reporting, investigating and disciplining officer who do not comply. They should develop

policies that let other officers intervene when fellow officers are using excessive force. And their training should be adjusted to emphasize de-escalation.

Train the police to be members of the community, not just armed patrolmen. Police are trained to handle some rough situations: people with guns, people with knives, car chases, foot pursuits. The *Washington Post* writes that new recruits usually spend about 60 hours learning how to handle a gun. It's all very tactical. But guess how much time they spend learning how to de-escalate tense situations, or properly handle the mentally ill? Eight hours apiece, according to the Police Executive Research Forum. This is a problem. Police should be trained on how to develop better relationships with their communities. This training should incorporate culture, diversity, mental illness training, youth development, bias and racism. The report recommends that recruits should be thoroughly and professionally trained on procedural bias and fairness, implicit bias, institutional bias, relationship-based and community interaction, crisis intervention, mediation, conflict resolution, appropriate engagement with youth based on science of adolescent brain development, de-escalation and minimizing use of force, coping with mentally ill individuals, increasing language proficiency and cultural competency, appropriate engagement with LGBTQ, trans and gender-nonconforming people and documenting, preventing and addressing sexual harassment, abuse and assault.

Sounds hard? Welcome to being a police officer.

So that about wraps it up. A glance at the big topics of conversation in the world of solutions to police brutality: use of body cameras, random alcohol and drug testing (including testing for steroids), and the indemnification of police, with good officers not being held responsible for the paying of premiums. And then, a much longer laundry list of workable and urgent solutions.

And yes, we fully admit that we have focused, in this “Solutions” chapter, on police brutality. If we thread back to the book title, “The Little Book of Lynching”, one could argue that solutions to the problem of racism in general should be covered. But that topic has been covered so thoroughly and so frequently in the literature, and on the web by proxy, that we are not going to pretend we can offer something new in just a few pages. To those of you who have been moved by the contents of the preceding chapters, we can only say that you must commit yourself, in whatever personal way seems feasible, to doing your part in conquering racism. There are grandiose gestures, and there are tiny steps. Only you can choose for you.

There is one last point, however, belonging at the end of this solutions chapter, which is not subject to debate. It is an action which is obvious, unoriginal, and yet ignored by millions of people every year. It is a solution which even some of the most fervent “activists” somehow manage to forget.

You must vote. You must vote in every election, even the smallest, most localized ones. In point of fact, you could argue that those are the most important ones, for while you may not feel as though your particular vote in the presidential election was the ballot that determined the outcome, American politics are rife with stories of local officials who won or lost by a handful of votes.

In Ohio, in 2010, in the matter of the Lakeview Local Schools tax levy, the levy passed by two votes. Yes, two votes.

And in case you thought that “two votes” freak occurrence couldn’t happen twice on one country, it did: in 1839, Marcus Morton won the governorship of Massachusetts by just two votes.

And in case you thought that “two votes” freak occurrence couldn’t happen three times in one country, it did happen again—in an even more powerful electoral realm: according to the website senate.gov, the closest election in Senate history was decided on September 16, 1975. The 1974 New Hampshire race for an open seat that pitted Republican Louis Wyman against Democrat John Durkin led to a contest that lasted eight months and came down to a margin of victory of just two votes.

And for those of you who are saying, “But awe shucks, my one single vote doesn’t matter ...” As recently as 2008, in Alaska’s District 7, incumbent Republican Mike Kelly defeated Democratic challenger Karl Kassell by one vote, to go on and become a member of the Alaska House of Representatives.

[And if those factoids](#) still have not convinced you of the importance of voting in less-than-presidential elections, consider this staggering story, [as covered by the New York Times:](#)

In Mississippi on Friday, luck smiled on a Democratic state representative, Blaine Eaton II, who had been forced, by state law, to draw straws for his seat after his race for re-election ended in a tie. On Friday afternoon, in a short, strange ceremony here presided over by Gov. Phil Bryant and Secretary of State Delbert Hosemann, Mr. Eaton and his Republican challenger, Mark Tullos, each removed a silver box from a bag. Mr. Eaton opened his box to reveal a long green straw. And with that, a mathematically improbable tie for the House District 79 seat — each candidate had received exactly 4,589 votes — had been broken, though not by the voters.

—“Democrat Wins Mississippi House Race After Drawing Straw”,

by Richard Faussett, November 20th, 2015.

And the part of the “drawing straws” story that may shock you the most is that this took place not in some charming Victorian turn of the century election, not some backroom from the

smoke-filled days of Prohibition and Depression, but as a result of a tie in the November 2015 election.

So seriously. Vote. Get out and vote.

Vote even in the tiniest elections, for sheriff and clerk of the court, city comptroller and property appraiser and tax collector, and for the school board and the board of supervisors. And don't just vote, but know whom you are voting for, and why. Become informed, and wield that knowledge like a weapon, because that is precisely what it is. Knowledge is power, and your ballot is the delivery mechanism. Voting is the ultimate turf war in a civilized society. Because it is not the President of the United States who is determining matters such as who will be the prosecutor in your community's cases, or how your jails are run, or to whom things like tickets and fees and fines are outsourced. There are hundreds of issues impacting your own life on a very personal level that are determined by local politicians, and if you didn't vote, you have no right to complain.

When the family of Tamir Rice faced the sham of an investigation into the shooting death of that twelve year old boy, and the joke of a prosecution against the Cleveland police, all conducted by prosecutor Tim McGinty, Tamir's cousin, Latonya Goldsby then made it her business to spearhead a campaign to get McGinty out, no matter what the cost. She won: McGinty lost. And Mike O'Malley was voted in as the new Cuyahoga County prosecutor. It may not bring Tamir back. But it is a step towards justice.

In fact, if you truly care, I would go so far as to suggest that you make this a part of your personal dialogue: when you start talking to somebody who seems very passionate about politics, and issues like police brutality, ask them if they voted, voted for every issue and office on the ballot in the last local election. And if they didn't, then firmly abort your conversation with them, telling them that life is short, you must choose your battles, and you can only converse with people who have shown that they care. If you don't vote, you don't care. How can your failure to exercise this crucial right be interpreted any other way? Stepping into that voting booth is the most practical, real way you have of expressing how you feel. If you don't do it, you give away power to the people who do show up to cast their ballot. You give away your power to the bully in the booth who sure as hell is doing everything in his power to get his guy in. And keep your guy out.

For what it is worth, I have volunteered on more than one political campaign. And in all honesty, certain aspects of the job were among the most boring volunteering tasks I have ever taken on. But I had no regrets, and I would do it again. The price for failing to participate is just too high. And after all, it is not the purpose of volunteering work to entertain you. It is your purpose in undertaking volunteer work to make the world a better place, in some small way.

Without a doubt, it is an exciting, historical, and adrenaline infused moment, when you drop to your knees against a background lit by the flames of protest, thrust your hands in the air, and cry, or announce with signage, “Hands Up, Don’t Shoot!” But even as you do that, powerful people in back rooms are planning your demise. And your defense against them begins with your casting a vote for all that is good.

EPILOGUE

(Dear Reader; As we were writing these closing thoughts and feelings, about the book, it would seem that somewhere in Texas, the assassination of a number of Dallas Police Officers was being carefully planned. We can only reiterate the sentiments articulated in “Ashley’s Dove’s”, a tribute to a fallen officer written to honor the sacrifice of Officer Ashley Guindon. It resides on our website, moviesforyourmind.net. The sheer magnitude of people that this sniper’s act of carnage will impact, and the heartbreak that they will have to live with for the rest of their lives, is simply beyond words. Beyond imagining. All that said, the events that took place in Dallas on July 7th, 2016, seem to live in some strange synchronicity with the epilogue to this book. We mourn with a stunned nation. Our hearts are broken.)

It has been a long journey, starting from the century-old lynching deaths of Henry Smith and Jesse Washington and Mary Turner, all carried out in front of thrill seeking, bloodthirsty mobs. A long journey to the evil and ugly forum comments and social media rants of today, where it feels eerily as though many with a mob mentality would happily watch a modern lynching, if such atrocities were still around—failing that, they will spew their bile onto the world wide web. It has been a morbid and dreary series of sad stories, as we have gone from one tragic killing to another, starting in “The Little Book of Lynching, Part One” to “The Little Book of Lynching, Part Two.”

And for what it is worth, I think you can make a valid argument that this second book could be more aptly named, “An Examination of Police Brutality in America” or “Excessive Force: Deadly Epidemic or Necessary Evil?”—or some other annoyingly academic sounding moniker.

But we are sticking with “The Little Book of Lynching, Part Two”. Why? Because there is a common thread here: that vengeance, masking itself as justice, has been running rampant in this country since we became a country—long before, in fact—and all too often, law enforcement and some perversion of the judicial system is either involved, or hovering on the fringes of tragedy, but choosing to look the other way. Just as a bunch of thugs associated with local law enforcement orchestrated the killing of three civil rights workers back in the turbulent 1960’s, so now we have police officers who choose to ignore the most important parts of their training, and escalate situations until someone is needlessly shot, or, just as chillingly, Tased to death. And just as there was precious little effort put towards bringing justice to Emmett Till’s killers, or the mob that lynched Mary Turner, so current law enforcement officers who should know better choose to be unconscionably casual when it comes to investigating the homicide of an innocent human being. The 2014 death of young Lennon Lacy, of Bladenboro, North Carolina, who was found

hanging from a swing in an all-white trailer park in a way that the medical examiner said he could not possibly have engineered himself, was a joke to local cops: they took the coroner's camera when he tried to document the crime scene, and threatened him with the direst of consequences if he even took one picture for the evidence files.

So, to quote Jean Baptiste Alphonse Karr, "Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose." Yes, the more things change, the more they stay the same. Except for the cellphone and its ability to record events. Old Jean Baptist may have invented the dahlia and been ahead of his time in his campaign to abolish capital punishment, but he didn't see smart phones in the future.

So, for all of these reasons, this book remains stubbornly titled, "The Little Book of Lynching", with the most compelling reason of all remaining as sadly true as it was a few hundred pages ago: There are only a couple of dozen names of the dead here. There should be thousands.

Until the day I die, I will remember coming across one long list of lynching victims, one of which was only known as "JOHN THE SLAVE." Here was a human being who lived, laughed, loved, but more than anything else, he suffered. He may have been dragged from his home across an ocean to a strange and frightening place. He probably had a wife and children. He no doubt had hopes and dreams and prayers, which pushed hopelessly against a wall of greed and cruelty that he just could not overcome. And that is all that will ever be known of his life. He was John. And he had been purchased by another human being.

So yes. This is "The Little Book of Lynching."

AN OPEN LETTER TO POLICE OFFICERS EVERYWHERE

Stop it. Just stop it.

Stop saying that YOU "FEARED FOR YOUR LIFE", when you were clearly in no danger. And no, I am not vilifying officers for using that defense when they really did have reason to fear for their lives. That is precisely why examples of officers who employed deadly force when clearly threatened have not been included in this book.

I am talking about cops who use "I feared for my life" as an excuse to engage in the worst kind of brutality:

—Officer Michael Slager claimed he feared for his life when he shot Walter Scott, and will surely testify that there was a small portion of the interaction that we did not see: the fight which took place after the first dash cam footage, and before the covertly documented murder in which Slager shot eight times at a fleeing Walter Scott. Only one problem with that: virtually everything in Michael Slager's statement is a lie, so why should we believe his excuse? He did

the unthinkable when he planted a Taser at Scott's body, and neither he nor his fellow officers attempted CPR, as they claimed they did. Of course, Officer Slager could not possibly have known when he spewed his pack of lies called an "Officer Statement" that the truth was being covertly taped by a terrified bystander—imagine what might have happened if Slager had looked over and realized that a stranger was recording the entire incident? Lastly, regarding Slager's aiming at a fleeing man and firing eight times, nothing that had happened justifies shooting into a crowded neighborhood, especially when three of your bullets have missed their intended target and flown off into suburbia.

—"I feared for my life?" I don't believe that Tamir Rice's killers feared for their lives, because if you really did fear for your life, driving up to within two feet of a maniac wielding a gun is the last thing a couple of cops would do. They would instead barricade themselves behind safe cover and start negotiating. Or shooting. But never, never if they truly feared for their lives from a maniac wielding a rifle would they speed right up to his line of fire.

—The man who gunned down Bernard Bailey can't have feared for his life. Bernard Bailey was a well-known fixture in the teeny tiny town of Eutawville, population 300, where Bernard, fifty years old and patriarch to a large and loving family, served the state as a prison guard for twenty years and attended the local church every Sunday. He just stopped by the courthouse to pay his daughter's broken taillight ticket. Five minutes later, he would be dead. Because a weasely little man named Chief Richard Combs (who had just been fired from his last policing job, by the way), would later claim that he "feared for his life."

Oh, and here's another thing that the citizenry would like to see changed immediately:

Stop being so casual about investigating the deaths of young black men. Like in the case of Keith Warren. Where officers waited five hours before notifying his parents after they found him hanging from a tree. And to make matters worse, they sent his body for embalming before the family could say goodbye, choose a funeral home, and most importantly, before an autopsy could be conducted. Officers, stop being so casual about the death of young black men like Feraris Golden, where you literally drove over the crime scene, then changed the official description of the noose from "a blue work shirt" to "a green sheet." Officers, stop being so casual about the death of young black men, like in the case of Kendrick Johnson, where you stupidly and inexcusably waited for a week to take possession of the crucial security footage, and months ... **months** ...before you interviewed the witnesses. And when CIA consultants noted strange evidence of footage missing from all relevant cameras, your response was to claim that the investigation was closed, and then you literally slammed the door.

And Officers, stop this immediately: stop ignoring the procedures in which you have been so carefully trained, at my expense, at the taxpayer's expense, just because you have some kind of Rambo fixation. And stop shooting so quickly, so cavalierly, that under questioning, when seeing

the actual video actions of your evidence, you are forced to say “*We **may** have told him to drop the gun while we were firing.*” As was the case with the officers who gunned down Michael Crawford III, for casually carrying a weapon in public, in an open carry state—the definition of which meaning that you can casually carry weapons in public. But, maybe not if you are black.

Oh, and while this may not seem as earthshaking as the other items on my list, stop killing dogs. Stop murdering people’s pets. Like poor Geist, of Utah. Dozens of police were combing the neighborhood searching for a missing toddler that ended up being right where he belonged, in his own home, sleeping. But in the process of searching the area, cops entered several city blocks’ worth of backyards, calling for the child. When two-year old puppy Geist approach a cop who stepped into Geist’s backyard, the cop just shot him. And in Oklahoma: When a cop was giving his brother in law a ride-a-long, they got lost and stopped at a family home to ask directions. When the family dog, Bruiser, came out wagging its tail and barking, they shot it dead. And in Baltimore: When Nala, a domesticated Shar Pei with a nametag, was grabbed by Officer Jeffrey Bolger, his best plan was to slit her throat. It didn’t help that witnesses nearby heard the officer say “I’m going to gut this fucking thing.” And here’s something else, with the dog killing—this “wrong address” business is getting old. Your excuse often sounds something like this: you showed up at the wrong address, and then felt threatened by this innocent family’s pet, so you shot it. **FIRSTLY**, when a person makes a complaint on a neighbor, such as domestic violence, you should start out with the assumption that you might have the wrong address, since the person calling in the complaint could very well have gotten the address wrong. So when you show up at a place that you think might be the location, nobody at the house, including the dog, deserves to be treated badly from the get-go. It is one thing to take care for your own safety as an officer, it is quite another to assume when you knock on the door that whoever is on the other side of the door is guilty of something. Including the family dog. **Secondly**, carry a little seven dollar bottle of mace. That way, if the family dog does act in an aggressively protective way, the beloved family pet experiences a few moments of pain, instead of eternal death. **Thirdly**, if you can’t handle most of these dogs without putting a bullet through their brain, you are pussies. Some police in Ohio felt so terrified of the family dog that they first Tased poor Jack, then shot him three times. The family came home, slipped in the dog’s blood on their front porch, and found his lifeless corpse along with a note to call the police. What you should know about Jack is that he was a five pound Chihuahua. And yes, I called them pussies. What other word could possibly apply in examples like these? There are dozens of such stories on the internet. It is heartbreaking.

And oh, Officers? Since you are so hung up on obedience to the law, how about respecting peoples’ First Amendment rights to say what they want, even if it offends you. So when an all-around great guy like Cleveland Browns Receiver Andrew Hawkins wears a shirt pleading for “**JUSTICE FOR TAMIR RICE, JUSTICE FOR JOHN CRAWFORD**”, how about if the local Union beefhead not retort with some twaddle about how the entire Browns team owes the local cops an apology, just because Hawkins wants justice? How can anybody have read the full

chapter on Tamir Rice in this book and not see what a gross miscarriage of justice was perpetrated from the moment Loehmann was hired, till the last hurrah, when the prosecutor chose to parade a mentally unstable witness in front of the grand jury. And here's another thing about the First Amendment: the people of this country have a right to peaceful protest. Yes, matters do get out of control, and when they do, arrests should be made. But they only tend to get out of control when the powers-that-be ignore peaceful protests and reasonable requests, as authorities did in Baltimore for an entire week, after Freddie Grey died of his injuries at the hands of cops who again, ignored procedures. Dear police: you don't get to celebrate the American Revolution, and all the protests and upheaval our Founding Fathers engaged in, and then refer to every gathering of dark skinned people as "uppity thugs". Or worse. And when it comes to how you deal with peaceful protests, how about NOT acting like cop Ray Albers who, for no reason, began pointing his high powered rifle at protestors who, it can clearly be seen in the video, are just milling around. That didn't stop this cop from raising his assault rifle and pointing it at people who were doing nothing wrong, just days after Darren Wilson had shot Michael Brown. Albers, when respectfully asked to identify himself, gave his name and badge numbers as "Officer Go Fuck Yourself." And they wonder why *we* have trouble respecting *them*?

And here's something else about which we feel very, very strongly:

STOP TAZING CHILDREN. It can kill them, and you know it. In fact, stop Tazing anybody unnecessarily—for example, when they are already handcuffed and subdued. And stop Tazing them many, many times over the prescribed limit. Because if you do, as "Officer" Scott Nugent Tased Baron "Scooter" Pikes nine times in fourteen minutes (that's 9 X 50,000 volts, interrupting the heart's electrical activity), you might kill someone, as Nugent killed Pike. Pike was acquitted though, of course, even though there is irrefutable evidence that he violated a number of rules and procedures. Or, if you are an officer who is "Tase-Crazy", you might cause brain damage to an innocent young boy, as did Independence, Missouri Officer Timothy Runnel when [*he made a conscious choice to torture seventeen year old Bryce Masters*](#), not once, but four times, the Taser pressed cloth against Bryce's chest, effectively destroying the boy's mental health, along with his entire future. "Officer" Runnels, you Tased the boy for 23 seconds, then lifted him up several feet and dropped his face and skull hard, on the concrete sidewalk. You left him medically dead for eight minutes, and caused permanent brain damage. This is not the action of a policeman. This is the behavior of a sadistic psychopath. And no, like millions of other Americans, I don't believe that you are sorry. Why? Because a person capable of that kind of torture is not capable of remorse. That is, in essence, the definition of a psychopath. Oh, and to the Independence, Missouri Police Department. You had a chance to condemn this torture, caught on video for the world to see, but instead, your first words about the incident were flat out lies. So I guess that makes the officials in charge and the spokesholes at the Inde-Mo police departments a bunch of dirt bags as well.

Oh, and Officers, STOP RAPING. STOP SODOMIZING. Stop sexually assaulting trusting citizens, and prisoners who are under your watch. And yes, although we touched on those who use the power of the badge to prey on innocent victims for their sexual gratification in an earlier chapter, it is worth noting a few more, if for no other reason, because these crimes are almost impossible to believe.

A partial list of the damned:

Foster “Pete” Bowen, Huntington West Virginia Police Captain, sentenced to between three and six centuries in prison for the known rape of seven boys, although according to evidence that came out in his trial, to quote the judge, “You may have committed more acts of child rape and abuse than any person in the history of West Virginia, sir,” Judge Farrell said. "In fact, you may have committed more crimes against persons than anybody in the history of West Virginia."

Christopher Bowersox, a Bakersfield police officer sentenced for possessing child pornography, according to federal prosecutors. The FBI case against him alleged he had child pornography images on his home computer and took part in online chats in which he discussed raping, mutilating and killing, and eating young boys and infants. He got just 48 months.

Columbia County Oregon Sheriff’s Deputy John Lawrence Hinckle. Initially indicted on more than thirty counts, he was eventually pleaded guilty to two counts of first-degree rape, two counts of first-degree sodomy, one count of first-degree sex abuse and one count of incest. 75 months. The victim was his daughter. He molested her from the time she was ten, to the time she was seventeen. Perhaps he was losing interest as she got older.

Once head of Immigrations and Customs Enforcement in South Florida, Special Agent Anthony Mangione led a double life, fighting child pornographers even as he was building his own special collection of brutal child porn, some of the victims as young as three. He was busted when he stupidly emailed some to a school bus driver (chilling thought, that), and feds linked the emails back to Mangione. Who only got six years for his evil.

“Officer” Gary Dale Baker, who raped a seventy five year old woman who had trouble communicating to her family what had happened because of a stroke which had severely debilitated her speech. And he didn’t just do it once. He did it four times, the first time while she was actually having the stroke—and the fourth time under the watchful eye of a hidden camera her family had installed. His charged included not only rape but also sexual battery, forced oral copulation, and robbery.

Wichita Kansas Police Officer Greg T. Nicks was given four life sentences for sexually abusing a fifteen month old, and sending the pictures to his girlfriend, who, horrifically enough, did not turn him in. She is in jail on similar charges.

Chief Deputy of the Pike County Sheriff's Office Clyde Franklin Sanders Jr., pleaded no contest to raping a three year old. Twice. She was his daughter.

Boyce Officer Stephen Young purposely engineered positions that would put him in close proximity with children, where he spent years and years sexually abusing them. Officials investigating the case believe that he raped about twenty toddlers, five of them being mere infants.

Benton County, Washington Deputy Sheriff Kenneth John Freeman enjoyed the dubious distinction of being the most wanted man on the U.S. Marshall's list. He was finally found in China, and brought home to face trial for raping his daughter from the age of ten to the age of fifteen. Deputy Sheriff Freeman (ironic name) got fifty years, and also has a second dubious distinction: the film he uploaded to the internet, of him raping his own daughter, is the most downloaded and viewed piece of child pornography every tracked.

This is just a partial list of the long, long scroll of the damned.

And let me make this crystal clear: I do not list this long litany of crimes and horrors so that we can somehow learn to hate and distrust the police even more. I said that I believe the vast majority of officers to be good, brave, and honest, and I believe that those officers are smart, ethical, and noble enough to finally admit that there are cops worthy of condemnation.

And most importantly, officers, if the above manifesto does not apply to you, then don't get angry at an increasingly outraged populus; don't claim you have the Blue Flu and fail to show up, to do your duty. That isn't showing fellow officers loyalty. That is aligning yourselves with cops who have turned criminal. And to stand by them would betray everything you claim to believe. Everything you have sworn to uphold.

It's very simple, officers: if none of these grim and ghastly charges apply to you, then don't take it personally. What you should take personally is how seriously officers who violate procedures, engage in police brutality, and commit heinous crimes threaten to put you in a bad light, and make your job infinitely more dangerous. Direct your rage and righteous indignation where it belongs—at them, not at the concerned citizen.

And finally, officers, for God's sake, in the name of all that is sacred, stand up loud and proud, and repudiate these actions on the part of rogue officers. Distance yourself; call out and criticize and condemn these men: officers who use excessive force are breaking the law just as much as the criminals you arrest, and officers who body slam, who punch and pummel the handcuffed

suspect, officers who torture through Tazing, and who rape, are sadists who are not worthy of wearing the uniform.

Think about it.

We expect conservatives and right-to-lifers to clearly repudiate people who bomb abortion clinics.

We expect people who believe in free speech to draw the line at the likes of Fred Phelps, especially if his ilk shows up at a soldier's funeral.

We expect the Muslim community to stand up and loudly repudiate people who commit violence in the name of Islam.

So here's the thing, officers—you don't get a pass.

The thin Blue line needs to be erased now, and the tall Blue wall needs to come down today, with all the same drama and outrageous indignation that brought down the Berlin Wall.

Because to all of the hundreds of thousands of good, brave, honest cops out there—if you don't name these vile violations of proper procedure and egregious engagements in police brutality for what they are ...acts of war, committed by a mercenary band of Storm Troopers—then mark my words:

It sure as hell feels like you have declared war on us, the citizens of these United States..

And boys in blue—you just know that is not going to end happily.

Declaring war on the citizens of these United States? That has never gone well for anybody.

(During the time that we were putting together this final epilogue to the book, two more black men, Alton Sterling and Philando Castile, were killed at the hands of white police officers. Whether or not those two men needed to be shot will no doubt be at the center of heated debate and intense investigation for months, perhaps years. We had to end the book at some point, and commit these stories to history, since clearly there is no natural end point to the project. It seems as though the killings will never end.)

THE REVEREND DOCTOR MARTIN LUTHER KING
ON BEING “MALADJUSTED”

Pickford Studios was delighted to discover this gem, one we confess we had not yet heard or read in our ongoing discovery of the works of Martin Luther King:

“Human salvation lies in the hands of the creatively maladjusted.” -From MLK’S “The Transformed Non-Conformist Sermon.”

In a sermon given at Temple Israel of Hollywood on February 26th, 1965, Dr. King expands on that wonderful quotations. And his words remind us that, as in the case with all true wisdom, it has never been truer than it is, right at this very moment in history. The Reverend’s own words:

“...There are certain technical words within every academic discipline which soon become stereotypes and clichés. Every academic discipline has its technical nomenclature. Modern psychology has a word that is probably used more than any other word in psychology. It is the word ‘maladjusted.’ Certainly we all want to live the well-adjusted life in order to avoid neurotic and schizophrenic personalities.

But I must honestly say to you tonight my friends that there are some things in our world, there are some things in our nation to which I’m proud to be maladjusted, to which I call upon all men of goodwill to be maladjusted until the good society is realized. I must honestly say to you that I never intend to adjust myself to segregation and discrimination.

I never intend to become adjusted to religious bigotry.

I never intend to adjust myself to economic conditions that will take necessities from the many to give luxuries to the few.

I never intend to adjust myself to the madness of militarism and the self-defeating effects of physical violence.

And I say to you that I am absolutely convinced that maybe the world is in need for the formation of a new organization: ‘The International Association for the Advancement of Creative Maladjustment’ — men and women who will be as maladjusted as the prophet Amos who in the midst of the injustices of his day would cry out in words that echo across the centuries: ‘Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream;’

As maladjusted as Abraham Lincoln who had the vision to see that this nation could not survive half slave and half free;

As maladjusted as Thomas Jefferson who in the midst of an age amazingly adjusted to slavery would etch across the pages of history words lifted to cosmic proportions: ‘We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights and that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness;’

As maladjusted as Jesus of Nazareth that said to the men and women of his day: 'Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you.'

And through such maladjustment we will be able to emerge from the bleak and desolate midnight of man's inhumanity to man into the bright and glittering daybreak of freedom and justice."

-Martin Luther King

THE END