

Audio recording sheds light on the murder of Michael Brown

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CNN published an audio recording Monday indicating that police officer Darren Wilson paused in between barrages of gunfire as he killed 18-year-old Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri on August 9.

The sounds of gunfire were recorded unintentionally by a Ferguson resident while he was video-chatting in his apartment near the site of the shooting.

The recording reveals that Wilson fired at least ten shots at Brown. At least six shots can be heard in rapid succession, followed by a brief pause, and then four more shots.

“I was very concerned about that pause ... because it’s not just the number of gunshots, it’s how they’re fired. And that has a huge relevance on how this case might finally end up,” said the man’s attorney Lopa Blumenthal, speaking on CNN.

An independent autopsy of Brown’s body conducted by retired New York City medical examiner Dr. Michael Baden and forensic pathologist Shawn Parcels on August 17 confirmed that Brown had been shot at least six times.

Four of the bullets fired by Wilson struck Brown in the right arm and shoulder, while two bullets struck his head. A bullet wound to his right forearm indicated that he was hit either walking away from the cop or had his arms raised in a “don’t shoot” position, as attested by eyewitnesses.

Dr. Baden said that only the final bullet, which was fired directly into the top of his head, was “not survivable.” Given that Brown was six feet five inches tall, the bullet wound to the top of the head indicated that he was bent over or kneeling when Wilson fired the final shot, execution-style.

A grand jury has been impaneled to examine the evidence in the case and make a decision on whether to bring an indictment against Wilson. It is expected that

it will take at least two months for the twelve jurors to reach a decision on charges. If the grand jury decides that the evidence presented supports a criminal case the state prosecutor could bring charges of murder, manslaughter, or a lesser charge of assault against Wilson.

Missouri Democratic Governor Jay Nixon threw doubt on the possibility of charges being brought against Wilson in an interview with CNN on Sunday. “All of those things could happen,” he responded when asked about a range of possible outcomes, including the possibility of no charges being brought down.

Nixon also defended the prosecutor, Robert McCulloch, who failed to convince a grand jury to indict two officers who killed two unarmed African American men while undercover in the infamous “Jack in the Box” case fourteen years ago. “He has the office that people here have elected him. And, you know, you don’t want to pre-judge any of this,” Nixon said.

“I don’t think he can get a conviction,” said Attorney Chris Chestnut, lawyer for the family of Jonathan Ferrell, a young unarmed black man killed by a white police officer in North Carolina last year.

“The grand jury is relegated--or limited--to the evidence put before them, and I’m just not confident that they’re going to put all of the evidence before the grand jury.”

The Justice Department has also opened a federal civil rights investigation into Brown’s murder. To reach a conviction on federal charges the government would have to prove that Wilson acted with racial hostility towards Brown in order to willfully deprive him of his civil rights.

There remains a small possibility of a federal indictment and trial in relation to potential violations of Michael Brown’s civil rights. But according to the

Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse at Syracuse University, more than three-quarters of referrals on federal civil rights violations were closed without court action last year.



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