

Notes on police violence in America

## Former Buffalo police officer sentenced to probation for beating handcuffed suspect

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A former police officer in Buffalo, New York was sentenced Monday in federal court to one year of probation for beating a suspect after he had been placed in handcuffs.

John Cirulli pled guilty to two civil rights charges in May after he was caught on bystander video slapping and kicking John Willet in the head during a drug-related arrest in April. In the video, Willet is lying defenseless, face down, and with his hands cuffed behind his back.

The bystander, who spoke with local media on condition of anonymity for fear of police reprisals, alleges that police then confronted him and demanded he delete the video from his cell phone or have it confiscated as evidence. Anticipating this, he had already switched phones with a friend, and pretended to “delete” the video on his friend’s phone while the officer watched.

Cirulli could have faced up to two years imprisonment and \$200,000 in fines.

### Cleveland officers who shot two black youth 137 times sue city for racial discrimination

Nine officers involved in the 2012 shooting deaths of two unarmed black youth have filed suit against the city of Cleveland, alleging discriminatory practices and preferential treatment of the city’s black police officers. The suit came only four days after a local police officer shot and killed 12-year-old Tamir Rice. Eight of the nine officers are white, and one is

Hispanic.

Timothy Russell and Malissa Williams were shot at 137 times after a high speed car chase involving over 100 officers. Russell and Williams were struck 23 and 24 times respectively by 13 officers, including the nine involved in the lawsuit. The city of Cleveland settled with their families for \$3 million earlier last month.

The suit claims that the officers were unfairly assigned to restrictive duty for more than 16 months after the shooting, denying them opportunities for promotion, overtime, and lucrative part-time patrols. The “traditional” length of this “cooling off period” is 45 days. The officers claim that, in addition to lost earnings, this has caused them “humiliation, emotional distress, mental anguish, and other serious damages.”

### Surveillance video showing Darrien Hunt’s last moment released

Surveillance video from the Utah strip mall where police gunned down 20-year-old Darrien Hunt was released last month showing the harrowing last moments of the young black man’s life.

The video, which was patched together from security cameras from several storefronts, starts by showing Hunt strolling down the sidewalk, dressed as a character from a popular anime show. The next clip shows Hunt running in a panic from pursuing officers who chase him on foot with their guns drawn. He passes by a woman walking in the other direction, clearly unfazed by his replica samurai sword. Soon

after Hunt passes out of view, an officer can be seen approaching him. He and another officer catch up with him at the end of the parking lot, where he is finally gunned down just out of view.

The officers have not been charged with any crime. Meanwhile, Hunt's mother, Susan Hunt, was charged on four misdemeanor counts last Tuesday for an alleged confrontation with police.



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