

Notes on police violence in America:

Independent autopsy finds Zambrano-Montes was shot twice from behind

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On Thursday, the results of an independent autopsy of Antonio Zambrano-Montes, 35, revealed that he was shot up to seven times, with at least two entrance wounds on the back of his body, while he was unarmed and running away from police in Pasco, Washington on February 10. This revelation contradicts the official story from local authorities and police, who had insisted that officers had not fired at the unarmed man while he was running away.

The day before the release of the independent autopsy, Kennewick Police Sgt. Ken Lattin, a spokesman for the special unit investigating Zambrano-Montes' death, stated that he was shot five or six times, but "there were no shots in the back."

The independent autopsy found that one bullet struck the victim in the back of his right arm, and another in the buttocks, along with five more to the front of his body, including in the face, stomach, chest, arm and scrotum.

From the start, police have claimed that one officer attempted to use his Taser twice before firing on Zambrano-Montes, but this assertion has come under continuous scrutiny. The official police story had already been made doubtful by a video taken by a passerby that plainly revealed that officers fired a series of bullets with their pistols as Zambrano-Montes first began to run away, which was evidently when he was shot from behind. Moments later during the chase he stopped running and turned around with his hands up, seemingly to accept his arrest, before the police brutally killed him with another fusillade of gunfire.

On Wednesday, police revealed that a total of 17 bullets were fired by three different officers at Zambrano-Montes. He was running away from the

police after they began chasing him for allegedly throwing rocks at a police car nearby, and died as up to seven bullets ended his life at the scene of the shooting.

Large protests in Pasco, as well as in Seattle, over the police killing of Zambrano-Montes, have continued in the two weeks since his death, with further demonstrations planned for Saturday. There is no doubt that the demonstrations will grow significantly as news spreads of the attempted police cover-up. As of this writing, police have killed at least 165 people in the US since the start of 2015.

Schizophrenic youth killed by police in Miami Gardens, Florida

On February 15, police killed 25-year-old Lavall Hall in Miami Gardens, Florida. Hall leaves behind an 8-year-old daughter, Riah Hall.

Hall's mother, Catherine Daniels, called the police at 5:00 a.m. to report that her son was having another schizophrenic episode, to which police had responded multiple times since they moved to the neighborhood in 2012.

Miami Gardens Police Chief Stephen Johnson said that the two officers who responded to the call, Peter Ehrlich and Eddo Trimino, fired their Tasers at Hall, which they claim had no effect. Following a brief foot chase, Hall was gunned down by Trimino, who had previously been involved in a fatal shooting in 2013, for which he was not indicted.

According to the official statement from Miami Gardens Police, Hall was holding "an object," which they claim he used during the altercation, and "as a result, the individual was shot and subsequently died on the scene."

The "object" that prompted police to kill the young

man was a broom, according to a neighbor who witnessed the killing. The witness, who asked Local 10 News to be identified as Regina, claimed that Hall was armed with “a red broom with straws. (It was an) old red broom. What (is) he going to do with that? With a whole bunch of cops with guns?” Regina says she was inside her house when she first heard officers shouting at Hall, and went to watch the scene unfold.

Subsequently, police have admitted that the weapon that prompted them to shoot Hall five times was indeed a broom. Police allege that Hall used the broom’s metal handle as a weapon against the two officers, sending one to the hospital with a minor head injury.

Johnson said, “They made every progressive effort to contact him, calm him down.”

The Hall family’s attorney, Glen Goldberg, told NBC Miami that “Mr. Hall was 5-foot-4, 150 pounds. It was 5:00 a.m. when this happened. How much of a danger to the community could he have been running up a residential street at 5:00 a.m.?”

Daniels’ cousin said, “You can do other things besides killing him. Taser him, spray him with mace, they’ve got two men on a little boy, and you can’t detain him? They didn’t want to.”

Dozens of residents and relatives held a rally this Wednesday outside the city hall meeting, to protest the unjustified police violence and bring awareness to the shooting.

Unarmed man killed by police in Omaha, Nebraska

Daniel A. Elrod, 39, was killed by police in Omaha, Nebraska on Monday, February 23. He is survived by his wife, Amanda Elrod, and their 5-year-old son Jacob.

Four officers responded to a report of a robbery at a local Family Dollar store, and witnesses told them that the robber had walked northward. The officers approached Elrod in the parking lot of the Sports Car Garage at 1461 13th St.

Omaha police issued an official statement on Tuesday, claiming that officers initially shouted at Elrod to raise his hands and lie on the ground, to which he refused. Elrod then allegedly climbed on the hood of a car, prompting Officer Nicole Geyza to fire a stun gun at him, which the officers claim had no effect.

Officer Alvin Lugod, 31, then fired his gun multiple times, critically wounding Elrod, who died later that night at the Nebraska Medical Center.

Multiple witnesses heard Elrod loudly shout, “I’m unarmed,” and Tom Ayala, 57, told the Omaha World-Herald that he heard Elrod scream, “I don’t care, go ahead and shoot me.”

Ayala commented, “It just seemed like he was distraught.”

Amanda Elrod, who was at a friend’s apartment nearby and overheard her husband screaming, said “As soon as he said, ‘I’m unarmed,’ threw his hands up, that’s when they shot at him. Period. Point blank. With my own eyes I saw it, and it happened so fast.”

Lugod was previously involved in another fatal shooting in 2012, killing suspect Jermaine Lucas as he allegedly reached for a gun. He was not indicted by a grand jury, with no charges filed after that death.



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