

As Obama whitewashes Ferguson police killing

## Wisconsin cop guns down unarmed teenager

**Zaida Green and Andre Damon**  
**9 March 2015**

Hundreds of people participated in protests over the weekend in Madison, Wisconsin after a police officer gunned down an unarmed nineteen-year-old on Friday.

Anthony Terrell Robinson, Jr. died after Matt Kenny, a twelve-year veteran of the Madison Police Department (MPD), forced his way into Robinson's home and fatally shot him.

Just hours after the shooting, at least 150 demonstrators gathered near Robinson's home. The crowd was addressed by relatives of the youth, who said that they were barred from seeing him at the hospital.

"They won't let his mother in to see him," declared Lorien Carter, Robinson's aunt. "They told her that because he's evidence, she cannot see him... The next time she sees him he'll be in a casket with embalming fluids."

Sharon Irwin, Robinson's grandmother, demanded to know why police responded with lethal force. "He was unarmed. Why would you shoot him five times? What happened to your taser gun?" She shouted at police cordoning off the scene of the shooting, "You're not protecting us! You're killing us!"

Kenny was involved in another fatal police shooting in 2007, which was declared to have been a "suicide-by-cop." The officer received a commendation of valor for his participation in the 2007 shooting.

According to his family, Robinson was preparing to attend Milwaukee Area Technical College to study business.

Authorities declined to reveal how many shots were fired or other details of the incident pending the release of a report by Wisconsin's Division of Criminal Investigation.

"He was unarmed," MPD Chief Michael Koval admitted Saturday morning. "And that's going to make

this all the more complicated... for the public, to accept, to understand, and to wait patiently for what other circumstances, if any, were there... such that deadly force had to be used."

Police said Kenny was investigating calls that Robinson was jumping into traffic and had "hit one of his friends." Police Chief Koval claimed that Kenny heard a "disturbance" coming from within Robinson's upstairs apartment, forced entry, entered "mutual combat" with Robinson in which Kenny received a "blow to the head," and then drew his pistol and shot Robinson multiple times. Following the shooting, Kenny was placed on paid administrative leave.

Andrea Irwin, Robinson's mother, said in an interview with a local television station that the police killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri last August had deeply affected her son. "[He] was so into watching everything that happened in Ferguson, and he was one of the people who spoke out about this constantly. And he—to turn around and have him die of the same thing that he was so fearful of, it's not, it's not fair, it's not right... My son is now another statistic of the things that are happening all over the United States. Another black kid shot by the police for no reason."

Robinson is the 192nd person to be killed by police in the US so far this year. Just since his death, four more people have been killed by police, according to [killedbypolice.org](http://killedbypolice.org), a site that tracks media reports of police killings.

This reign of police violence, which has prompted popular outrage nationwide, has been sanctioned at the highest levels of the state. This has taken the form of a refusal of officials at the local, state and federal levels to prosecute officers responsible for the deaths of unarmed individuals, overwhelmingly poor and

working class.

Robinson's murder came just two days after the US Justice Department said it would not bring charges against Darren Wilson, the Ferguson police officer who killed unarmed teenager Michael Brown on August 9, triggering weeks of protests in the St. Louis suburb and around the country.

On Friday, the same day Robinson was killed, President Obama declared that he had "complete confidence" in and stood by "the decision that was made by the Justice Department" not to bring federal civil rights charges against Wilson.

Speaking before students at a town hall event in Columbia, South Carolina, Obama said, "Officer Wilson, like anybody else who is charged with a crime, benefits from due process and a reasonable doubt standard. And if there is uncertainty about what happened, then you can't just charge them anyway just because what happened was tragic."

Obama, a former professor of constitutional law, knows full well that the standard for charging someone with a crime is "probable cause," a far lower bar than the proof "beyond a reasonable doubt" required to convict a defendant.

The fact is, Wilson and other police involved in recent killings have *not* been charged, and the standard Obama set forth—certainty of guilt, something that under the US Constitution is to be determined at trial—all but precludes the prosecution of any killer cop.



To contact the WSWS and the  
Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](http://wsws.org/contact)**