

Notes on police violence in America

Chicago police officer accused of jamming gun down throat of suspect acquitted

Gabriel Black
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Notorious Chicago judge Diane Gordon Cannon acquitted veteran Chicago police officer Glenn Evans Monday following a bench trial. Evans, who has worked for the Chicago Police Department (CPD) for 30 years, was found not guilty of official misconduct and aggravated battery.

Evans was accused of shoving his gun down the throat of Ricky Williams in 2013, who was 22 at the time, as well as threatening to kill him while holding a Taser next to Williams' groin. Both Williams and Evans are African American.

Evans, who refused to testify, claimed in police reports that he saw Williams holding a gun in January 2013 on the south side of Chicago, a primarily poor, working class area. According to this version of events, Williams resisted arrest and Evans chased him down, but Evans never threatened him with a gun or a Taser.

Williams claimed that he never had a gun and, after Evans chased him into a house, Evans tackled him and then shoved the barrel of a handgun down his throat demanding to know where he had put his alleged gun. Additionally, Williams claims that the police officer put a Taser next to his groin and threatened to kill him.

No gun belonging to Williams was found on the scene. Evans' gun was found to have DNA on it but the judge decided this was of "fleeting significance" because it was "touch" DNA, even though the police officer claimed he never used his gun.

Judge Cannon found Evans not guilty on all charges. She accused Williams of being "eager to change his testimony at anyone's request." As evidence, she pointed to the fact that Williams described Evans' gun as black when it was silver-black, and that he changed his story about whether Evans was in police or civilian

clothes.

Cannon has a long history of outrageous and abusive convictions, and lack thereof. According to David Protess, president of the Chicago Innocence Project, Cannon "wrongfully jailed a Serbian immigrant who was freed when high-ranking judges intervened; berated and locked-up a young mother of three for using a cellphone from a washroom to check on her disabled child; harshly sentenced exonerated death row inmate Anthony Porter to a year in prison for shoplifting four sticks of deodorant; and, repeatedly delayed a hearing for an innocent man until he died alone in his prison cell."

Additionally, Cannon refused to convict three men who violently assaulted a gay man for aggravated battery or a hate crime, despite there being a cell phone video of the incident. She claimed because the video was taken by a reputed drug dealer it could not be relied on.

Evans, meanwhile, has had dozens of complaints filed against him in the past decade by civilians. He is still under review by the Independent Police Review Authority.

NBC News reported that Commander Evans, 53, is the highest-ranking CPD officer to go on trial in years. Stephan Blandin, William's attorney, stated "Judge Cannon went out of her way to put the victim on trial in this case."

State's Attorney Anita Alvarez, who has been under public scrutiny for waiting 13 months to file charges against Officer Jason Van Dyke for murdering 17-year-old Laquan McDonald, stated, "This case underscores the reality that it is extremely difficult to convince judges or juries in Cook County [Chicago's county]

and around the country to convict police officers of misconduct in the line of duty, despite the fact that this victim made an immediate outcry and we had DNA evidence to support our case.”

21-year-old University of North Texas student shot four times by campus police officer

Ryan McMillan, a 21-year-old student at the University of North Texas (UNT), was shot and killed by UNT police early Sunday morning.

McMillan was walking around campus smashing cars with an axe when, according to witnesses, he was shot four times point blank by a UNT police officer.

His fellow students described him as “Charlie Brown” for his calm demeanor. However, Saturday night, after turning 21, he may have been drunk.

Matthew McDermott, a childhood friend of McMillan, told the *Dallas Morning News*, “I can’t really put into words how I feel about the fact that one of the nicest people I ever met was shot because an officer felt threatened. I want to drive to Denton and scream at the top of my lungs at the police department, but that’s stupid and irrational. But it just really angers me.”

At the time of writing, 1139 people have been killed by police in the United States this year, according to *killedbypolice.net*.



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