

Video shows another unarmed youth killed by Chicago police

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On Thursday, a Chicago judge released video of the deadly 2013 shooting of 17-year-old Cedrick Chatman by Chicago police. The video was concealed by the Chicago Police Department for three years, and an investigator was fired for opposing police claims that the killing was justified.

Chicago is one of many major American cities where police terrorize the working class population with impunity. The video footage of Chatman comes just weeks after a judge ordered the release of video showing police killing 17-year-old Laquan MacDonald by police officer Jason Van Dyke.

A report in Thursday's *Chicago Tribune* revealed that high-ranking staff of Democratic Mayor Rahm Emanuel knew of the video of MacDonald's death, despite Emanuel's prior claims of ignorance. Chicago police also operate a black site facility at the Homan Square detention facility where detainees are beaten and refused the right to legal counsel.

Chatman, the one of many victims of Chicago police violence, was shot by Officer Kevin Fry in on the afternoon of January 7, 2013, near 75th Street and Jeffery Boulevard on Chicago's South Side. Fry and his partner, Lou Toth, were in plain clothes and responding to a call of a carjacking at approximately 1:46 p.m. and shortly after stopped Chatman's car. According to a police report, Chatman jumped out of his car when officers approached and proceeded to run south on Jeffery street. As Chatman ran, Fry told the court, he "...approaches the corner, he makes a slight turn, a subtle turn to the right with his upper body. I see in his right hand a dark gray or black object." Claiming he feared for his life, Fry fired four shots towards Chatman, striking him on the right side of his body and right forearm.

The "dark gray or black object" would turn out to be

a black iPhone box. Chatman would later die from his injuries.

Brian Coffman, the attorney for Chatman's mother, stated, "the video shows Mr. Chatman running as fast as he possibly can away from these police officers. It's a sunny day, not dark, he's not carrying any kind of weapon and he makes no movements toward these police officers. ... [Fry] got out of his car and he was ready to shoot. And he did."

Chicago's Independent Police Review Authority (IPRA) found the officers' actions to be justified, claiming they reasonably believed that Chatman was armed. However, Lorenzo Davis, the IPRA supervisor who oversaw the Chatman investigation, ruled that the lethal shooting of Chatman was not justifiable. His supervisors would overrule his decision, and Davis was subsequently fired from IPRA. He later filed a federal lawsuit against IPRA alleging he was fired for his findings on several cases—including Chatman's—in which he found that officers had unjustifiably used lethal force.

"I was fired not just for that case but for several cases including officer-involved shooting cases and other excessive force cases," Davis told CNN. "But I refused to change my findings in a number of cases. That was simply the last one."

Commenting on the video of the shooting of Chatman, he said, "I pay most attention to Officer Fry. Mr. Chatman is simply trying to get away. He's running as fast as he can away from the officers. Officer Toth is right behind him; he's doing the right thing. He's pursuing him. He's trying to capture him, while Officer Fry, on the other hand, has both of his hands on his weapon. He is in a shooter's position. He is looking for a clear shot."

Speaking to the *Chicago Tribune*, Davis further

stated, “Cedrick was just running as the shots were fired. You’re taught that deadly force is a last resort and that you should do everything in your power to apprehend the person before you use deadly force. I did not see where deadly force was called for at that time.”

US District Court Judge Robert Gettleman, who ordered the release of the video, stated that Fry had potentially put his partner’s life in danger, arguing that Toth was so close to the teen when Fry opened fired that “you might say he was in the line of fire.” Indeed, the video shows the intersection where the shooting occurred having significant traffic. Moreover, people are seen walking and standing nearby. The fact that Officer Fry chose to fire four rounds with so many people around reveals the utter recklessness of his decision. However, no new criminal investigations have been filed against the officers and both officers remain on full-time duty.

This is not the first major incident for Fry. He has had 30 complaints filed against him, with 10 allegations of excessive use of force. All complaints were deemed unwarranted by the Chicago Police Department.

In 2007, Fry and his partner shot a 16-year-old boy after they saw a shiny object along his waist, assuming it was a weapon. It was in fact a “shiny belt buckle.” According to CNN, the city of Chicago settled with the teen and his family by offering a \$99,000 settlement package. The shooting was deemed justifiable.



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