

Notes on police violence

Louisiana police release video of officers killing six-year-old Jeremy Mardis in 2015

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On Wednesday, a Louisiana judge ordered the release of a body-cam video showing police officers firing 18 bullets into a parked SUV, severely injuring unarmed Chris Few and instantly killing his six-year-old son, Jeremy Mardis.

The incident occurred almost one year ago on November 3, 2015 in Marksville, Louisiana. Norris Greenhouse Jr. and Derrick Stafford, the two deputy marshals who fired upon Few's SUV, were both moonlighting as state marshals the night of the shooting.

According to multiple media reports, Chris Few and his girlfriend had gotten in a fight prior to the shooting at a nearby bar. Upon leaving the bar, the couple separated, at which point Few was spotted by Greenhouse and Stafford, who then pursued him until he was penned in by the officers two miles away. They were then joined by officer Jason Brouillette and Sgt. Kenneth Parnell.

The recently released video, taken from Parnell's body-cam, shows officers getting out of their vehicle and approaching Few's parked car with guns in hand. Few is seen multiple times raising his hands up outside the driver's side window. Moments later, his car is fired upon. The time passed between the officers exiting their cars to the exiting of multiple bullets from their pistols is only a few seconds.

Minutes later, Few is seen crawling out of his car, bloodied and injured. Not a single officer is seen providing any help to Few in the video. As officers approached the car, they discovered six-year-old Jeremy Mardis. Audio from the video reveals a short conversation between Parnell and Stafford. "Is he hit at all?" Stafford asks Parnell. "Who?" replies Parnell.

"The driver," says Stafford. "Yeah," responds Parnell. "I never saw a kid in the car, man," Stafford says. "I never saw a kid, bro."

Paramedics are later seen announcing six-year-old Jeremy Mardis is dead. Five bullets had torn through his head and chest. A haunting moment is seen in the video where Parnell prods Jeremy's body in hopes of a sign of life. There was none.

According to the *Washington Post*, investigators found 14 shell casings that matched with Stafford's semiautomatic handgun, while another four shells matched Greenhouse's gun. Four of the five bullet fragments taken from Jeremy's body matched with Stafford's weapon, while the last could not be sourced to either.

Stafford and Greenhouse both await trial for second-degree murder and attempted second-degree murder charges respectively.

Defense attorneys have argued that both officers acted in self-defense. Few, they claim, endangered officers as they pursued him whilst, they allege, he drove recklessly on a two-mile chase. Moreover, they then claim Few rammed his car into Greenhouse's vehicle.

"Christopher Few was a suspect before they knew that child was in the car," argued Christopher LaCour, a defense attorney for Stafford. However, Court Judge William Bennett, who is presiding over the case, stated, "That car was not being used as a deadly weapon at that time. I daresay it was not even close to being used as a deadly weapon at that time."

The killing of six-year-old Jeremy Mardis is neither an isolated nor a random event. So far in 2016 police have killed at least fourteen people under the age of 18,

including 13-year-old Tyree King, shot to death by police earlier this month in Columbus, Ohio. Mardis's killers, moreover, are not anomalies. The 858 people murdered by police so far this year, as reported by killedbypolice.net, point to the exact opposite.



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