# Pasadena police kill father of eight during help call

**Dan Conway, John Andrews**
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During the early hours of Friday morning, September 30, six Pasadena, California police officers dispatched to help a mentally ill, agitated black man suffering from delusions and hallucinations, tased, beat and eventually asphyxiated Reginald Thomas, Jr., in front of his pregnant common-law wife, Shainie Lindsay, and their four children.

Known as "JR," Thomas was well liked in his neighborhood, where people often referred to him as "Daddy daycare" because of the attention he paid to his children, which include four from other relationships. "He was a good father, and they didn't have to kill him," Lindsay told the WSWS. "He didn't want to die."

Police delayed potentially lifesaving medical assistance for so long that the paramedics, when they finally got to their patient, declared him dead at the scene and did not even bother transporting him to the emergency room.

The body remained in Lindsay's apartment for more than 12 hours as investigators from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and Office of the Coroner joined the Pasadena Police Department's investigation of the scene.

According to the police, Thomas was outside the apartment holding a knife and fire extinguisher when they arrived. As he opened the door to go back inside, officers tased him, ultimately shocking him at least three times with two separate tasers.

Inside, he was surrounded by officers and handcuffed. His feet were "hobbled" with a hogtie restraint. According to witnesses, officers beat him with clubs, kicked him and pinned him to the floor before noticing that he had stopped breathing.

Two officers were injured, according to Sheriff's Department spokesperson Mike Rosson. Both injuries were of the kind suffered by those administering a beating. One officer broke his hand, the other hyperextended a knee.

The Coroner's attribution of the cause of death will not be announced for several months, until the toxicology results become available. Based on witness statements, it is likely that Thomas consumed drugs earlier that evening, but he is seen on surveillance video active until mobbed by the six officers. While apologists for the police will no doubt attribute the death to "excited delirium," given the circumstances, the death clearly resulted from the multiple tasings, followed by asphyxiation from the officers holding Thomas down, rendering him unable to breathe.

As word of the death spread Friday morning, an angry crowd assembled in front of the couple's East Orange Grove apartment, located in a working class neighborhood less than two miles from the Wrigley Mansion on South Orange Grove, the traditional start of the annual Rose Parade. The number grew to about 50 by 3:00 p.m., when the body was finally removed from the premises, and by 7:00 p.m. there were about 200 protesters, who marched to the City Hall carrying candles.

The WSWS spoke to several demonstrators. Typical were the remarks of Luisa. "This has got to stop," she said. "They are killing our young men every day. You mean to tell me that six grown, highly trained male officers can't deescalate a situation with one man. They're always pulling out their guns and tasers first. It's almost like they want to kill them."

Ed said, "This effects everyone here in the community. Everyone here has to be concerned about this. It doesn't matter what side of Pasadena you live on, this affects everyone and everyone should be outraged."

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The police killed Thomas only a few blocks from where officers shot and killed Pasadena teenager Kendrec McDade in 2012, sparking significant protests after the city refused to release its consultant's report on the shooting. When the report finally surfaced, it detailed a series of reckless actions by the officers involved that led to the death.

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