Notes on police violence

Ohio police beat man during a traffic stop

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On August 12, 25-year-old Richard Hubbard III was pulled over in the Cleveland suburb of Euclid, Ohio, for allegedly running through an intersection. A search of the vehicle Hubbard was driving showed the owner to have a suspended license.

The encounter was supposed to be a routine traffic stop, but escalated to violence when an officer threw Hubbard to the ground and punched him repeatedly before arresting him on charges of driving with a suspended license and resisting arrest.

A bystander captured a video of the incident, which has had over seven million views on Facebook. A child can be heard asking his mother, "What are they doing?"

The Euclid police have said little of the incident. In a local statement, they claimed that a "violent struggle" ensued after Hubbard refused orders to face away from the arresting officer.

The dash-cam footage released shows an entirely different story. It opens with a squad car pulling over Hubbard and a female passenger. After a brief conversation about the car and Hubbard's license, the officer tells Hubbard to step out and "face away from me."

Seconds later, without clear provocation, the officer shoves Hubbard against the car and grabs him by the arms. The two tumble into the center of the street, falling onto the pavement. A second officer is seen rushing to help his partner. The passenger gets out and asks Hubbard to "let them do what they do."

After slamming Hubbard to the ground, the arresting officer can be seen punching him several times. In contrast to the police statement about Hubbard resisting arrest, the footage shows Hubbard only lying on the ground attempting to block the officer's blows with his arms.

The video continues with Hubbard telling officers he didn't have a gun on him when one comments about him "reaching down." As Hubbard lies on the ground in handcuffs, one officer presses Hubbard's face against the asphalt while the arresting officer punches him in the back of the head. Moments later, more police officers arrive and handcuff the passenger. "What am I under arrest for?" she asks. The video ends with the two being taken away.

Police officials have not identified the officer, but said he has been placed on paid administrative leave pending an investigation.

Maplewood, New Jersey police seen "herding" teenagers

A New Jersey teenager has filed a lawsuit after claiming he became the victim of police brutality even while following officers' orders.

Jason McDougal, a recent high school graduate, said he was following orders when Maplewood police slammed him to the ground, sprayed him with mace, and punched and kicked him, all while using racial slurs.

The incident occurred early in the morning on July 5, 2016, after McDougal and his friends had been out watching a firework show. A video of the incident was only released this year, after the community went to court to demand it be made public.

The video shows dozens of officers surrounding a group of teens, forcing the group to move in a particular direction. An officer can then be seen violently shoving McDougal, 16-years-old at the time,

to the ground, while other officers are seen rushing to help apprehend him.

The group of teens complained that officers were attempting to force them into the neighboring community of Irvington.

Police reports from the night of the incident include charges of disturbing the peace and resisting arrest, but those reports came after the confrontation. McDougal's representatives say there is nothing to suggest the cops had to be called to the scene, because the teens were walking home and not causing trouble.

McDougal and his family are filing a federal civil rights complaint, claiming that their past efforts to get justice have been unsuccessful.

The Essex County Prosecutor's Office looked into the case, and decided not to pursue charges against the officers after an eight-month investigation.