

Hundreds protest fatal shooting of unarmed man in Dallas, Texas

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Shouting for justice in English and Spanish, several hundred protesters converged Monday evening at the Jack Evans Police Headquarters in Dallas to speak out against separate fatal shootings of two men.

Local activists organized the rally to protest the killing of 26-year-old Botham Shem Jean, who is African American, by off-duty officer Amber Guyger, while he was unarmed and inside his own apartment on September 6. Guyger, who is white, was arrested and charged with manslaughter on Sunday evening, three days after the shooting.

Other protesters also came to denounce the shooting of 38-year-old Jorge Olguin, who was killed September 1 by a security guard after an argument broke out at a family party in Red Bird.

A group of protesters broke off from the initial demonstration and marched through downtown chanting Jean's name and demanding justice. Members of the group of more than 100 people said they were opposed to the fact that Guyger was being charged with manslaughter, rather than murder. They said the lesser charge, together with the fact that Guyger was left free for 72 hours after the shooting, were due to preferential treatment of an officer.

Dallas police closed off streets and blocked traffic as protesters marched toward the Dallas Police Association (DPA) office, about half a mile away. There the protesters were met with police repression.

Officers mounted on horseback stopped the group as it neared DPA. At least one officer then fired a pepper ball gun into the crowd. After a video of the incident was posted online, Dallas police chief Renee Hall sought to limit public opposition by announcing an internal review.

According to the *Dallas Morning News*, Jean worked at the Dallas office of the accounting firm

Pricewaterhousecoopers, and had graduated from Harding University in Arkansas. He was a native of the Caribbean island nation St. Lucia.

The affidavit for Guyger's arrest released by the Texas Rangers on Monday provides a narrative of the incident based on Guyger's own account. Attorneys for Jean's family have stated that the affidavit contradicts accounts of the shooting from neighbors. Benjamin Crump, an attorney for Jean's family, called the affidavit "very self-serving."

Guyger, who is 30, lives in the apartment directly above Jean. According to the affidavit, Guyger was returning home from her shift, still dressed in her police uniform, when she accidentally entered Jean's apartment instead of her own, not realizing that she was on the wrong floor. Guyger claims that the door was ajar, which is why she was able to enter without the right key, and that the room was dark when she entered.

The affidavit states that after seeing a "large silhouette," Guyger "withdrew her firearm, gave verbal commands that were ignored," and then "fired her handgun two times."

This account was contradicted by Lee Merritt, an attorney for Jean's family, who told a press conference Monday evening that two independent witnesses said they heard knocking on the door in the hallway before the shooting. A witness reported hearing a woman's voice saying, "Let me in! Let me in!" The witnesses said they heard a man's voice say, "Oh my God! Why did you do that?" Merritt said he believed these were Jean's last words.

The family has questioned why it took three days for Guyger to be charged, after admitting to entering Jean's apartment and shooting him. They also questioned why, based on news reports of what happened, Guyger was so quick to use deadly force.

Guyger has since been released on bail of \$300,000 and placed on paid administrative leave.

Botham Shem Jean's mother, Alison Jean, said officers still haven't given her an accurate account of what transpired in her son's apartment. At a news conference on Monday evening, she said: "The number one answer that I want is what happened. I have asked too many questions and I have been told there are no answers yet."

Alison told NBC News on Friday, "I couldn't believe it when we got that call. It just feels like a nightmare. I wish I could wake up. He impacted the lives of many. I'm getting calls from all over the world. My country St. Lucia is impacted."



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