

# Notes on police violence: Multiple killings the same week Derek Chauvin convicted

Warren Duzak, Cordell Gascoigne  
21 April 2021

## Father of 10 shot dead in North Carolina

Forty-year-old Andrew Brown, father of 10, was fatally shot Wednesday morning by a Pasquotank County sheriff's deputy in Elizabeth City, North Carolina. Few details are known about the police shooting at this time, but the Pasquotank County Sheriff's Office states the shooting occurred around 8:30 a.m. while deputies were serving a search warrant.

According to a witness, Brown got into his car and started to drive away. Neighbors said the deputy fired his weapon between 6 and 8 times into Brown's vehicle. The North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation has been called in to take over the investigation.

Lydia Brown, grandmother of Andrew Brown, said she was in bed when her daughter delivered the news that her grandson had been shot and killed. "He was just here two or three days ago picking up his mail. We want to know why. We want to know what [happened]. And we want to know who," she said about the investigation into the shooting, concluding, "He was my grandson and I love him."

Brown's aunt Clarissa Gibson said she heard about the shooting on the news before finding out it was her nephew. "He had children and he cared and loved for them," she said.

Pasquotank Sheriff Tommy Wooten held a press conference on the incident, giving virtually no details on the shooting outside of the unnamed officer having been placed on leave during the course of the investigation. Meanwhile, a crowd had gathered in the area to mourn Brown, protest the police shooting and document the crime scene.

In September, the Pasquotank Board of Commissioners approved the purchase of the county's first 33 body-worn cameras for deputies, but it is unclear if deputies have been issued the cameras. Keith Rivers, President of the Pasquotank NAACP, said, "If the body cameras were on that information needs to be disseminated as quickly as possible in order to make sure justice is served." He added that the police were in "riot mode."

## Detroit police kill a mentally ill, self-harming man

On Tuesday, Detroit police responded to a mental health call near 8 Mile and Hanna. Two officers approached a man who appeared to have self-inflicted wounds from a large knife he was wielding. When they tried to subdue him, he allegedly stabbed one of the officers in the leg several times, and the other officer fired a salvo of bullets into

him, killing him and wounding his partner.

Detroit Police Chief James Craig nonetheless said it was too early to know the true cause of death. "He could've not only succumbed from the shots that were fired to protect the officer, part of it might have been the injuries he sustained, the self-inflicted injury, we're just not certain," he said.

The suspect's mother informed police she believed her son was having "a situation based on drug usage," Craig said. The officer who was stabbed and shot in the hand by his partner was in stable condition.

## Columbus police release footage of killing of 16-year-old girl

In an unprecedented move, Columbus police have released body-camera footage of a Columbus police officer shooting 16-year-old Ma'Khia Bryant, a foster child in the custody of Children's Services. The shooting occurred Tuesday, only 20 minutes before a guilty verdict was announced in the trial of Derek Chauvin for the killing of George Floyd. Columbus police stated that the Bureau of Criminal Investigation is leading the investigation and had released the footage.

The footage shows an officer approaching a driveway where a group of young people are standing. In the video, Bryant is seen pushing another female to the ground, whereupon a male individual runs up and kicks the woman on the ground as the officer draws his weapon, shouting, "Get down! Get down! Get down! Get down!"

Between the first and second "Get down!" Bryant runs towards a car where she appears to assault another female. Immediately after the fourth "Get down!" the police officer discharges his weapon four times into Bryant. She would die a short time later.

Hazel Bryant, Ma'Khia's aunt, told the *Dispatch* that her niece got into an altercation with someone else at the home. Hazel Bryant said her niece had a knife, but maintained that she dropped the knife before she was shot multiple times by police.

Dozens of anti-police protesters displaying Black Lives Matter signs, equipped with megaphones and a loudspeaker, joined the crowd gathered behind crime scene tape about a half-block away from the shooting scene.

## Group arrested for protesting Knoxville police killing

A group protesting the refusal of legal officials to release bodycam video of the shooting of a Knoxville, Tennessee, high school student were arrested Monday night, April 19, at a Knox County Commission meeting. Seven of a group of between 30 to 40 demonstrators were demanding video of the shooting of 17-year-old Anthony J. Thompson Jr. at Austin-East Magnet High school.

Many residents of this east Tennessee city, home to the University of Tennessee, are angry over the police killing April 12, in an incident which involved four police officers. Police claimed the incident was a school shooting and said that officers had shot and killed the youth only after he shot at them. None of that proved to be true and now the family, community and even high-ranking city officials have called for making the video public.

The first reports were that police officers responded to a report of a student with a gun “holed” up in a bathroom. When they arrived, according to the first police reports that proved wrong, the youth had supposedly shot an officer named Wilson in the hip and the youth was then shot and killed by police who had returned fire. The Tennessee Bureau of Investigations (TBI) issued the erroneous story and later retracted it.

According to the *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, “The TBI account changed dramatically when it released a new statement (that) ... Thompson had a gun but said preliminary tests showed the bullet that hit Wilson did not, in fact, come from Thompson’s gun.” The account continues: “The new statement said officers struggled with Thompson, and that Thompson’s gun ‘was fired’ during the struggle. It did not say who fired the gun.” Police then fired twice, and Wilson was apparently hit by friendly fire.

Police had come to the school at the request of the mother of a 16-year-old student who had dated Thompson. The girl told her mother, Regina Perkins, she wanted to come home after getting in an argument and “scuffle” with Thompson, Associated Press reported. Perkins also said she was sorry she had called police. “I never meant for anything to happen to him,” she told AP. “We are mourning, my daughter is grieving the loss of her first love and we also want answers and justice in this case.”

### **Police sued over beating of 73-year-old with dementia**

A federal civil rights lawsuit has been filed against Loveland, Colorado, police over the June 26, 2020, arrest of 73-year-old Karen Garner. The lawsuit alleges that officers Austin Hopp (arresting officer), Daria Jalali (assisting officer) and Sergeant Philip Metzler used excessive force when arresting Garner, spraining her wrist, dislocating her shoulder and fracturing her arm, all on suspicion of stealing \$13.88 worth of merchandise from Walmart.

Garner suffers from dementia and sensory aphasia, impairing her ability to not only verbally communicate, but understand others. Such elderly people, according to the Alzheimer’s Association, often unknowingly walk out of stores with merchandise they have not paid for.

Garner’s attorney Sarah Schielke presented footage to the media showing employees confronting Garner outside the store, whereupon she re-enters the store and returns the merchandise. According to Schielke, Garner attempted to pay but was not permitted to do so and asked to vacate the premises.

Walmart called police to report the incident, according to the lawsuit, but “informed Loveland [police] that Ms. Garner was elderly, small, and petite,” further reporting, “that she was headed eastbound, and that they had suffered no actual loss because they had retrieved the merchandise from her.”

Officer Hopp responded to the call. In the bodycam footage, Hopp encounters Garner walking in the grass along the side of a road on her way home. Hopp pulls his vehicle over and asks Garner to stop as he approaches her. Garner pauses, looks at Hopp, and then continues walking. Nine seconds later, he then grabs Garner’s arms, twisting them behind her back, forcing her to the ground, all the while Garner repeats, “I’m going home.”

Jalali arrives on scene to assist Hopp in detaining an elderly, 4’ 10”, 80-pound woman. Both officers ask her questions, but Garner is only heard repeating “I’m going home.” As both Jalali and Hopp struggle to get Garner into the back of Hopp’s police vehicle, a bystander is seen in the body-camera footage asking Hopp, “Do you have to use that much aggression?”

Hopp responds to the witness saying, “What are you doing? Get out of here; this is not your business,” further stating, “She just stole from Walmart and refused to stop, refused to listen to lawful orders and to fight me.” Hopp justifies his brutality by also stating, “This is what happens when you fight the police. I have to use force to safely detain her.”

The witness asked Hopp for his supervisor’s name. Metzler, Hopp’s supervisor, who later arrives on scene, proceeded to speak with the witness directly. The lawsuit alleges Metzler intimidated the witness, but deactivated his body-camera to cover up the brutalization of Garner.

Furthermore, the lawsuit alleges Garner was denied medical care for the nearly six hours after she was detained because officers told deputies at the jail she had not sustained any injuries. Upon the deputies’ discovery that Garner was in fact injured, they took her to the hospital.

“This is not community policing. This is community terrorism,” Schielke wrote in a statement. “Ms. Garner is one of the most vulnerable members of our community—a mother, a grandmother, a tiny, frail human with cognitive disabilities—and they treated her like an animal.”

According to court records, considering the extent of the brutality and Garner’s cognitive disabilities, the district attorney’s office dismissed all charges against Garner in August 2020. The three policemen have been assigned to desk jobs or placed on paid leave.



To contact the WSWs and the  
Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](https://wsws.org/contact)**