

Police Shoot Unarmed Black Man, Again

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Keivon Young

My cousin called to tell me that his neighbor, an 18 year old black man, was shot multiple times by law enforcement deputies in a case the deputies admit was one of mistaken identity. The deputies involved are with the San Bernardino Sheriffs Dept (SBSD). They were trying to apprehend a murder suspect when they encountered 18 yr old Keivon Young. That encounter resulted in Keivon being shot — seven times! Fortunately the young man survived but then things got really strange...

After the shooting, even after admitting they'd apprehended the wrong person, the deputies take the 18 year old to the hospital to be treated for his wounds but then immediately afterwards, they take him into custody! And it gets worse.

My cousin then tells me that four months after this incident, the kid is still in sheriff's custody and still has at least one bullet in his body. He (Keivon) says they tried to get him to cop a plea but he refused and is awaiting trial.

So now I'm intrigued and confused. If he was mistaken for the murder suspect, why would he have to cop a plea and why is he behind bars, and why haven't the bullets been removed and oh yeah – why was he shot in the first place?

My cousin gave me the contact information for Keivon's father, Mr. Claiborne Young. I called Mr. Young. Here is his account of the evening that the shooting occurred:

On the evening of January 29, 2014, my 18 year old son Keivon Young and his girlfriend left our home. Keivon took his girlfriend to the busstop where he waited for a while. He then stopped at a friend's house. While at the friend's house, Keivon needed to use the restroom but the bathrooms were occupied. Unable to wait, he went outside looked for spot that could give him some privacy and just as he finishes he sees lights coming towards him and hears men yelling something incoherently. Almost simultaneously as they yelled, these men began to fire on him. They fired 13 rounds hitting Keivon seven times.

Keivon fell to the ground. The men turned out to be undercover San Bernardino Sheriff deputies Musella and Tollefson. Claiborne Young, who lives 3 minutes away from the location where the shooting took place was alerted to the shooting because Keivon's grandmother lives two doors away from the location where the incident occurred. She heard the gunshots and could hear Keivon yelling out in pain. She ran outside and saw Keivon lying on the ground. She immediately telephoned his parents and Claiborne Young, Keivon's father, rushed to the scene. He said, "it took me three minutes to get there". I asked Mr. Young if Keivon was still at the scene when he arrived. Young said his son was lying on the ground and that it took 35-40 minutes before he was taken away on a stretcher. "They were slow to get him help. I think they wanted him to bleed out," said Young.

Claiborne explained that the reason he wanted to talk to me was that he is trying to get the word out about this case. He believes his son's civil rights have been violated but even more important, he is concerned about his son's well being. Claiborne has retained legal counsel but says, "I can not afford to pay all of these legal expenses and I'm scared that my son will not get the representation nor the medical attention he needs".

Keivon was shot seven times. Three of the seven bullets were lodged in his body – four exited. One of the bullets was removed by the medical team at the hospital said Young but, "two of the bullets were in him when he was booked." I asked Young why they arrested Keivon. Young explained that he believed the arrest was done to coverup the deputies' wrongdoing. "My son told me that the sheriffs did not identify themselves before shooting him. He says they came up from behind, yelling at him and instantly shot him. They didn't even give him a chance to respond. He hadn't even turned around. He was shot from behind", said Young.

When Young and other family members asked the officers how Keivon was shot, their response was that Keivon was hiding on the corner of the house acting suspiciously. Young later learned that the house was under surveillance because murder suspect Robert Pope had some connection to the house. But the information leading the SBSD to watch that house was either inaccurate or old because none of the current residents know or have any connection to Pope.

Young said, "Initially, the sheriffs told me they were taking Kevion to the hospital. They told me that we could pick Keivon up from the hospital after he was treated for his wounds. Then at some point they changed their minds." Keivon Young was arrested as he was released from

the hospital. The SBSD first charged him with two counts of assaulting a peace officer, then they dropped those charges and charged him with two counts of felony resisting arrest and possession of daggers.

Daggers?! When I asked Young about this he said, "These were kitchen knives from our kitchen. Keivon is 18 years old. He is 5' 4" and weighs 135 lbs. He told me he had them because someone in the neighborhood had threatened him. So it is true that he had two knives in his waistband at the time of the shooting. It even says so in the police report. I think that explains why the deputies dropped the initial charge of two counts of assaulting a peace officer. Because their own report clearly states that the knives were in Keivon's waistband at the time of the shooting and weren't removed until after Keivon had been shot. This contradicts the version of the story the SBSD put out in their press release. Their own report doesn't support the story they are handing to the press."

The officers didn't identify themselves as officers until after they shot my son. They fired at least 13 times. Bullets hit the car, the home and could have struck the family inside which included a baby.

"The suspect the sheriff's were out to apprehend that night is a 6' tall, 200 lb man named Robert Pope. They have since arrested Pope". When I asked Mr. Young if he believed the officers could have mistaken Keivon for Pope he said that was laughable. "I don't think they even tried to find out who Keivon was. The officers didn't identify themselves as officers until after they shot my son. They fired at least 13 times. Bullets hit the car, the home and could have struck the family inside which included a baby. The officers didn't identify themselves as officers until after they shot my son. They fired at least 13 times. Bullets hit the car, the home and could have struck the family inside which included a baby. Now Keivon has been in jail for four months with a bullet lodged in his hip very close to his spleen and we are doing the best we can to help him. The deputies werereckless."

Claiborne Young, who has retained legal representation for his son, insists his son is innocent of any wrong doing yet is being held at great risk to his health and considerable cost to the family. "Our legal expenses are taping us out. This has been going on for months.", said Young. Briefly discussing some of the other costs associated with this incident, Mr. Young said they'd received something in the mail regarding \$32,000 for the helicopter because Keivon was airlifted and taken to the hospital by helicopter. Keivon's attorney has gotten five court orders demanding that the Sheriff department release Keivon for medical treatment but to date, they haven't.

I asked Mr. Young how his son was holding up. He told me that Keivon is 18 years old and is learning first-hand how our justice system treats young black men who don't have money. Keivon's 19th birthday is just around the corner. Mr. Young is hoping that this will be coming to a conclusion soon but fears that without placing the spotlight on this, the SBSD will charge Keivon and this will be just another "justified" law enforcement related shooting.

Mr. Young granted permission to have his phone number included in this article. For anyone seeking to provide support to the Young family, they can contact him at 424-229-0264. You can also help the Young family by providing financial support via PayPal. To do this, go to PayPal, click "Send" (on the top menu), enter Mr. Young's email address JRBOY984@gmail.com and enter the amount you'd like to send, then click the button that says "Continue". Start by clicking this [PayPal link here](#).

This case is getting some attention in mainstream media as well as online. KNBC's channel four news has done several reports on this story, each time, the San Bernardino Sheriff's Department has declined to weigh in. The only response KNBC has gotten from SBCD is a copy of the San Bernardino Sheriff's Department press release. You can see and hear audio and video captured at the shooting here (scroll down to the lower section of the post to see the video).

But as troubling as this story is, we all know it could have been so much worse. All of the people listed below lost their lives when they encountered law enforcement who erroneously thought the victim was reaching for a weapon.

Marquis Jones — Jordan Baker — Zikarious Jaquan Flint — Jonathan Ferrell — Kimani Gray — Leon Ford — Malissa Williams — Timothy Russell — Tyler Comstock — Anton Barrett — Kendrec McDade — Ramarley Graham — Rekia Boyd — Wendell Allen — Alonzo Ashley — Aiyana Jones — Danroy Henry — Steven Eugene Washington — Victor Steen — Kiwane Carrington — Oscar Grant — Tarika Wilson — James Brissette — Kathryn Johnston — Sean Bell — Ronald Madison — Travares McGill — Timothy Stansbury Jr — Deandre Brunston — Kendra James — Orlando Barlow — Ousmane Zongo — Patrick Dorismond — Amadou Diallo — Tyisha Miller

Police involved shooting statistics are hard to come by. As I prepared to write this article, I came across an article whose writer, Jim Fisher, claims that the U.S. Government does not have a national database dedicated to police involved shootings. I certainly couldn't find evidence of one as I prepared to write this article so I can't dispute his claim but what I found particularly interesting was the conclusions Fisher has drawn by virtue of analyzing his own database.

According to Fisher:

A vast majority of the people shot by the police in 2011 were men between the ages 25 and 40 who had histories of crime. Overall, people shot by the police were much older than the typical first-time arrestee. A significant number of the people wounded and killed by the authorities were over fifty, some in their eighties. In 2011, the police shot two 15-year-olds, and a girl who was 16.

Fisher didn't mention the number of shootings involving instances where the officers claim they shot for their own protection because they thought the suspect was armed. In the case of Keivon Young, we have a 135 lb, 5'4" 18 year old who is shot at 13 times. It's hard to understand how that couldn't have been handled differently.

Now here is my ask — Right now, all I'm asking is that you will share this story with someone you know. Please use Facebook or Twitter to share. We've embedded share icons at the top and bottom of this article. We have to share this story far and wide if we are to make a difference.

Thank you.

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