

H A R L A N R I C H A R D S

December 7, 2014

A Poster Child For Police-Instigated Murder

There have been mass demonstrations over several high profile instances of police unnecessarily killing black citizens. Some of the circumstances are ambiguous and it can be seen that the police were justified in taking some action - but in every case it was still an unjustified use of excessive force - murder in my opinion.

But the worst, most egregious case of all, is nowhere to be found in the national news media. The December 2, 2014, Wisconsin State Journal reported the details of the shooting of 31 year-old Dontre Hamilton by 38 year-old police officer Christopher Manney.

Hamilton, a black, mentally ill, homeless person, was sleeping on a Milwaukee park bench when white officer Manney woke him up. Manney proceeded to harass Hamilton, made him turn around and began to grope (i.e., frisk) him from behind. Hamilton objected and a struggle ensued. Officer Manney claimed that Hamilton took his baton away from him and hit him which forced Manney to pull out his gun and shoot Hamilton - 14 times. That's probably how many bullets his clip holds.

The devil is in the details, as they say, and new details were included in the recent article. First of all, there were no apparent injuries to Manney after the killing. Secondly, of the 14 shots, one was in Hamilton's back and half were traveling downward (which indicates that Hamilton was falling or on the ground when he was shot). And finally, there was no gun powder residue near any of the wounds (which means that Manney was not close to Hamilton when the shots were fired).

Officer Manney was fired for failure to follow proper police procedure but that firing may be transformed into an early disability retirement. Manney may end up being paid 65% of his police salary for the rest of his life. He is claiming that the trauma of shooting Hamilton 14 times has rendered him incapable of working. If he wins his claim the Milwaukee Police Department will be paying Manney \$25-30 thousand dollars per year for the next 50 years (assuming he lives to be 88).

Let me rephrase this: Manney provoked Hamilton into resisting, murdered him by emptying a 14-shot clip into Hamilton and stands to be rewarded with a paycheck for life while never having to work again. Pretty good payoff for state-sanctioned murder, don't you think?

As usual, I like to contrast situations like this with what happened to me. I was attacked without provocation by a man who outweighed me by 85 pounds. He trapped me in a deadend hallway and began beating me. I pulled out a knife with a 3" blade and fought back. After 17 superficial cuts and 4 stab wounds, I managed to break his grip on me and flee. He died, and since I'm not a police officer, I ended up with life in prison for murder.

As I've said numerous times on this blog, we are living in a fascist police state. If you are one of the elites, you have nothing to fear from our government. If you are one of the peons (like Hamilton or me) you are faced with death or prison if you dare to stand up for yourself.

As another interesting aside, a friend of mine was recently paroled after 30 years in prison. He was serving life plus 60 years for murder and armed robbery. How did he get paroled, you may ask? It's all a matter of who you know. He had several pillars of the community advocating for his release and the parole commission responded to the external political pressure. Good for him, he changed his life and deserved a parole. But so do thousands of other Wisconsin prisoners who do not have the same connections he had. But sadly, like all other fascist regimes, it is who you are or who you know that determines what happens to you.

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