

**1/18/23** A contested 2020 traffic stop that resulted in one officer's firing for using excessive force against an uncooperative motorist had a mixed ending in a Federal civil trial, with jurors awarding very small sums to the driver. Circumstances the officers faced were undeniably complex. Caron Nazario was (legally) armed, refused to pull over when police tried to stop him for no license plate, then refused to exit his vehicle. A Federal judge had previously found the officers' actions reasonable (see 1/1/22 update).

**11/16/22** Both L.A. County deputies who shot and killed Dijon Kizzee two years ago were cleared of criminal wrongdoing. According to prosecutors, sheriff's deputies Christian Morales and Michael Garcia "reasonably believed, based on the totality of the circumstances, that force was necessary to defend against a threat of death when they initially fired their weapons." Our post reported that Kizzee had two prior convictions for felon with a firearm, and that a gun was recovered at the scene of the shooting.

**9/12/22** In May police in Childersburg, a city of 4,750 pop. in central Alabama, were informed by a caller that a stranger was at a home whose occupants were away. Officers (they were White) encountered Michael Jennings, a middle-aged Black man watering the flowers. Mr. Jennings said he was a Pastor and a neighbor, and had been asked to help. All this turned out to be true. But the officers didn't know him. He refused to provide ID, and after a protracted back-and-forth they arrested him for obstruction. Charges, however, were ultimately rejected. He has now sued for civil rights violations. [Video](#)

**1/12/22** Dominick Black, the 20-year old who bought the AR-15 rifle for his friend, Kyle Rittenhouse, because Rittenhouse was at 17 too young to purchase the gun himself, pled guilty to a non-criminal local infraction. He was originally charged with a state violation, felony delivery of a dangerous weapon to a minor, but an accommodation was reached as the judge was skeptical that the law covered rifles.

**1/1/22** Virginia's A.G. is suing the Town of Windsor (pop. 2,600) for racially discriminatory policing. Its action was spurred by a nighttime 2020 traffic stop in which then-officer Joe Gutierrez (he's since been fired) pepper sprayed Caron Nazario after the uniformed Army officer failed to promptly exit his vehicle when asked. Fearing the dark, Lt. Nazario drove on for a mile after Gutierrez and his partner tried to pull him over for no license plates. And when he stopped in a well-lit area, both cops pulled their guns (see 1/18/23 update).

**11/23/21** In "Does racial congruence between police agencies and communities reduce racialized police killings of civilians?", Shytierra Gaston, Matthew J. Teti and Matheson Sancheza studied the relationship between the racial composition of 1,988 local police agencies and their use of force against Blacks. They found that forces with larger

proportions of Black officers used significantly less force against Blacks, and that the use of force against Blacks was more common in areas with fewer Blacks.

**11/20/21** After three days of deliberation, Kenosha (WI) jurors acquitted Kyle Rittenhouse on each of the five counts of reckless and intentional homicide and reckless endangerment that he faced for fatally shooting Joseph Rosenbaum and Anthony Huber and wounding Gaige Grosskreutz during street protests against the police killing of Jacob Blake. Rittenhouse, then 17, was armed with an AR-15 rifle he got through a friend. He took the stand and testified that each shooting was motivated by self-defense.

**11/17/21** To prevent sheriff's deputies from using bicycle violations as pretexts to detain members of minority groups, L.A. County Supervisors approved a measure that legalizes riding on a sidewalk in unincorporated areas should no bike lanes exist. [An investigation by the Los Angeles Times](#) revealed that 85% of cyclists stopped by deputies are searched, and seventy percent are Latino.

**11/9/21** [During the summer and fall of 2020](#), Beverly Hills police deployed a specialized police unit on tony Rodeo Drive to combat a reported surge of hooliganism that was driving off a desirable clientele. Their focus soon shifted to unemployment fraud, which was supposedly funding buying sprees by lower-income persons. Of the ninety persons arrested by the team, eighty were Black, four were Latino and only three were White. Using these and more recent examples, [a lawsuit has been filed](#) alleging that during 2020-21 BHPD discriminated against Blacks and used excessive force in minor situations.

**10/30/21** [In June 2020](#) eight Shreveport (La.) police officers - five White, three Black - were indicted on State "malfeasance" charges for punching and brutalizing two Black men who fled when officers tried to stop their vehicle for seat belt violations. During the chase the suspects, both with extensive criminal backgrounds, allegedly threw drugs and a stolen gun out the windows. But when they stopped and tried to peacefully surrender officers beat them, inflicting serious injuries. [On October 29, 2021](#) one of the White officers and two of the Black officers were indicted on Federal civil rights violations.

**10/9/21** On October 8 DOJ announced that Federal charges will not be filed against the Kenosha (WI) officer who shot Jacob Blake. According to DOJ, "insufficient evidence exists to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the KPD officer willfully violated the federal criminal civil rights statutes," and that neither "accident, mistake, fear, negligence, nor bad judgment" are enough to suffice.

**8/28/21** In March Austin (TX) police officer Christopher Taylor, who is White, was charged with murder for [shooting and killing an unarmed Black/Hispanic man](#) during an encounter in April 2020. [He now faces another murder charge](#), for shooting and killing a mentally ill Black man in July 2019. That victim, who was threatening suicide

with a knife, was well known to police from prior encounters. A second officer, who also fired, has also been charged.

**8/21/21** One year after gunfire from a White cop - he was officially exonerated and is still on the force - paralyzed Jacob Blake, a Black man, Kenosha's stark divide remains. While some better-off areas thrive, storefronts in the racially-mixed, economically downtrodden Uptown area where the shooting and follow-up rioting took place remain boarded up. And there is considerable anxiety about what will happen in November, when the trial of Kyle Rittenhouse takes place.

**8/19/21** Parents of Anthony Huber, who was murdered by counter-demonstrator Kyle Rittenhouse as Huber and others protested the police shooting of Jacob Blake ([see 11/1/20 update](#)), are suing Kenosha city leaders and members of its police force. According to the plaintiffs, police "walked away from their duties and turned over the streets of Kenosha to Kyle Rittenhouse and other armed vigilantes."

**7/17/21** A study in which non-police volunteers listened to brief body-cam excerpts from routine traffic stops revealed that they found the tone of White cops' voices ("prosody", scaled 1-6) significantly less respectful and friendly when motorists were Black (mean 3.50) than when they were White (mean 3.72.) These scores were found to correlate with volunteers' pre-existing trust in and feelings about the police. Even so, the authors concluded that the responses "attest to the role everyday interactions play in building or eroding police-community trust across race."

**7/15/21** In 2017 St. Louis police officer Luther Hall, who is Black, was viciously assaulted by four White uniformed officers as he worked undercover monitoring a protest over a cop's acquittal for a 2011 killing. Hall was left physically and emotionally disabled. In 2019 one of his assailants, former cop Randy Hays, pled guilty to Federal charges, and two days ago he was sentenced to four years imprisonment. Two of Hays' colleagues will also soon be sentenced. (See 4/19/24 update)

**5/28/21** On March 3, 2020 Manuel Ellis, a 33-year old Black man, died after being forcefully subdued by three Tacoma, Washington police officers who encountered him on the street. Although passers-by said that Ellis was respectful and didn't resist, officers used a chokehold and a Taser and ignored Mr. Ellis' pleas that he couldn't breathe. Police said they moved in because Mr. Ellis, a former resident of a sober-living facility, was "in the middle of an intersection, hassling a passing car." On May 27 State police arrested the officers: Matthew Collins, 38, and Christopher Burbank, 35, for 2nd. degree murder and 1st. degree manslaughter, and Timothy Rankine, 32, for first-degree manslaughter.

**1/14/21** Jacob Blake [told ABC News](#) that he dropped a pocketknife on the ground while returning to his car. He picked it up and was about to put it in the car and surrender

when he was shot. “I shouldn’t have picked it up, only, considering what was going on...at the time I wasn’t thinking clearly.”

**1/5/21** D.A. Michael Graveley announced that his office will not charge Kenosha, Wis. officer Rusten Sheskey for shooting Jacob Blake, a wanted man whom police claim was armed with a knife. According to officer Sheskey, he fired in self-defense as Mr. Blake “started turning toward him with the knife.” Police are on high alert and the Wisconsin National Guard has been mobilized. [A Federal Civil Rights investigation](#) of the shooting is underway.

**12/17/20** [California data](#) reveals that between 2016-2019 state residents made about 3,500 allegations of racial profiling by police. Agencies upheld a total of forty-nine complaints. LAPD sustained two out of 883, while the L.A. County Sheriff sustained two out of 146. According to LAPD, nearly eight out of ten complaints (its criteria go beyond race) were simply false. LASD reported that it took more actions against deputies than it seems, but most of the faults uncovered were not about race.

**11/12/20** Prosecutors dismissed charges of third-degree sexual assault and criminal trespass against Jacob Blake. In exchange, he pled guilty to two counts of disorderly conduct. His alleged sexual assault victim was reportedly “not cooperating” with prosecutors.

**11/1/20** Kyle Rittenhouse, 17, an Illinois youth, took an assault rifle bought for him by an eighteen-year old friend to a security gig they performed for a Kenosha, Wisconsin business during the protests over the police shooting of Jacob Blake. He has now been extradited to Wisconsin on charges of using that gun to kill two protesters and wound a third who allegedly chased and threatened him.

**10/16/20** A review by the *Los Angeles Times* revealed that sixteen bicycle riders stopped for bike violations were shot by police in Los Angeles County since 2005. Eleven were killed: each was Black or Latino. Eleven of the riders were reportedly armed with guns, and a twelfth with an airsoft pistol that looked like a gun.

**9/18/20** In a 9/17 news conference Los Angeles County Sheriff’s officials said that Mr. Dijon Kizzee was stopped because he had been riding his bike on the wrong side of the street. They added that Mr. Kizzee picked up the gun after dropping it and had it in hand when the deputies opened fire.