“WHAT HAD HAPPENED WAS…”: A MULTI-METHOD CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF POLICE VIOLENCE NARRATIVES ABOUT BLACK WOMEN IN THE U.S.

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED ON MARCH 8, 2022

PRESENTED ON MARCH 29, 2022

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF
TULANE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND TROPICAL MEDICINE
OF TULANE UNIVERSITY
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

JESSICA JUDSON, MPH

APPROVED:

AUBREY MADKOUR, PHD (CHAIR)
KATHERINE ANDRINOPOULOS, PHD
KATHERINE P. THEALL, PHD
RACHEL HARDEMAN, PHD, MPH
TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION ............................................................................................................................................... 5

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ............................................................................................................................... 6

TABLES & FIGURES .................................................................................................................................. 8

ABSTRACT .................................................................................................................................................. 9

I. BACKGROUND & SIGNIFICANCE ........................................................................................................ 10
   A. POLICE VIOLENCE IS A PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM ................................................................. 11
   B. DETERMINANTS OF POLICE VIOLENCE .................................................................................. 14
   C. POLICE VIOLENCE IS RACIALIZED AND GENDERED ............................................................. 16
   D. THE DISCOURSE OF POLICING ................................................................................................... 18
   E. PRESENT STUDY ............................................................................................................................ 21
   F. SPECIFIC AIMS & RESEARCH QUESTIONS ............................................................................... 22

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS ......................................................................................................... 24
   A. PUBLIC HEALTH CRITICAL RACE PRAXIS (PHCRP) ............................................................... 24
      Focus 1: Contemporary Patterns of Racial Relations .................................................................... 24
      Focus 2: Knowledge Production ................................................................................................... 25
      Focus 3: Conceptualization and Measurement ............................................................................. 25
      Focus 4: Action ............................................................................................................................... 25
   B. CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS ............................................................................................. 26
      Approaches to CDA ....................................................................................................................... 31
   C. BLACK FEMINIST CRIMINOLOGY ............................................................................................... 36
   D. RESEARCH TEAM .......................................................................................................................... 38
      Primary Investigator ....................................................................................................................... 38
      Research Assistants ........................................................................................................................ 39

III. METHODS ........................................................................................................................................... 41
   A. OVERVIEW ........................................................................................................................................ 41
   B. ETHICS ............................................................................................................................................. 41
   C. AIM 1 .............................................................................................................................................. 42
      Data .................................................................................................................................................. 42
      Analytic Approach .......................................................................................................................... 44
   D. AIM 2 .............................................................................................................................................. 46
      Data .................................................................................................................................................. 46
      Analytic Approach .......................................................................................................................... 48
   E. AIM 3 .............................................................................................................................................. 49
      Procedure ........................................................................................................................................ 50
      Consent process .............................................................................................................................. 50
      Analytic Approach .......................................................................................................................... 50

IV. 20 YEARS OF KILLING BLACK WOMEN & GIRLS ................................................................. 52
   A. OVERVIEW ...................................................................................................................................... 53
      Who were the victims, Where were they killed, & When did this happen? .................................. 53
      Why did the police encounter occur? .............................................................................................. 55
      How did events unfold? ................................................................................................................... 57
      What else could or should have influenced the situation? ............................................................. 59
      Then what happened? .................................................................................................................... 60
VI. “AND SOME PEOPLE CALL HIM PIG...AND SOME PEOPLE CALL HIM PEACEMAKER.” .......................................................................................................................... 188

A. DISCUSSION ........................................................................................................................................ 188
   Lynching is a Continuum .......................................................................................................................... 188
   “A cop is a cop, and he may be a very nice man, but I don’t have time to figure that out.” ................. 190
   Seeing Problems, Not People ................................................................................................................ 195
   Perpetual Harm .................................................................................................................................. 197
   An Ethos of Punishment ....................................................................................................................... 199
B. STRENGTHS .......................................................................................................................................... 201
C. LIMITATIONS ....................................................................................................................................... 204
D. IMPLICATIONS ..................................................................................................................................... 205
   Freedom will not come Today, this year Nor ever Through compromise and fear ............................ 207
   I say, abolition now, abolition tomorrow, abolition forever. .............................................................. 209
E. FUTURE WORK .................................................................................................................................... 212

APPENDICES ........................................................................................................................................ 214

   Appendix 1: Fatal Encounter Database & Investigator Added Variables ............................................ 214
   Appendix 2: Critical Discourse Analysis Data Extraction Tool ............................................................ 216
   Appendix 3: Interview Guide ................................................................................................................ 220
   Appendix 4: Supporting Documents Referenced for Aim 1 ................................................................. 221
   Appendix 5: Articles Included for Critical Discourse Analysis ............................................................ 263
   Appendix 6: All Articles Located that Mention Alteria Woods from 2017 - 2021 ............................... 269

REFERENCES ........................................................................................................................................ 281
DEDICATION

“If you are silent about your pain, they’ll kill you and say you enjoyed it.”

-Zora Neale Hurston

This work is dedicated to Black women.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, in the (slightly adapted) words of Snoop Dogg:

I want to thank me for believing in me, I want to thank me for doing all
this hard work. I wanna thank me for having no days off. I wanna thank
me for never quitting. I wanna thank me for always being a giver and
trying to give more than I receive. I wanna thank me for trying to do
more right than wrong. I wanna thank me for being me at all times, [Jé]
you a bad motherf**ker,

There are many other people and beings who played a critical role in
supporting me throughout this process; without them I would not have been able
to engage in this heavy work. My best friend, Kyla Moore, Esq.: you provided
consistent loving support, from being my biggest cheerleader when I could not
see my own accomplishments, to being a safe space to process all of my
thoughts and emotions. My puppies, Southern Comfort “SoCo” and Rocky, as
well as my garden: for getting me out of my head and into my body and the
sunshine, and for keeping me grounded in reality. My doctoral cohort: I am so
grateful that we stuck together as we navigated this obstacle course of a
program, across every stage and throughout volatile administrations, natural
disasters, and a global pandemic. My research assistants, Sowmya, Megan, and
Kiara: your collaboration made this possible. Dr. Michelle Adams: for providing
guidance from a distance through the thick of these methods. The Louisiana
Board of Regents and Center of Excellence in Maternal and Child Health: for
providing funding the first four years of my doctoral studies and funding for
research assistants, respectively.

Furthermore, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the Woods
family for their willingness to be vulnerable and share their memories of Alteria
and deep examination of such a painful and personal issue. I would also like to
thank my parents, Drs. Horace & Gail Judson, for being both a source of bridge
funding and an extra pair of eyes in reading early drafts of these chapters. And
finally, I would like to thank all the members of my committee for supporting
me through the process of exploring non-traditional research and using non-
traditional and critical methodologies. I know there was much learning involved
on everyone’s parts.

/
TABLES & FIGURES

Tables
Table 1: Application of PHCRP Principles & Focuses p. 26-28
Table 2: Why the police encounter occurred for BWGs killed between 2000 – 2019
Table 3: Examples of Wrongful Death Payouts to Families of Killed BWGs
Table 4: Summary of sources and counts of texts mentioning Alteria Woods from March 2017 – June 2021
Table 5: Original communication and generated texts from the first days after Alteria’s murder in 2017

Figures
Figure 1: Race Consciousness, Four Focuses, and Ten Affiliated Principles: p. 23
Figure 2: Relationship Between Discourse, Society, & Cognition
Figure 3: CDA Approaches & Theoretical Connections
Figure 4: Linguistic Depth & Level of Aggregation
Figure 5 Age distribution of BWGs killed from 2000 to 2019
Figure 6: Distribution of BWGs killed by year
Figure 7: Tweet from @RS_McNeil on the police-news media relationship
Figure 8: Tweet from @_theghettomonk on the police – news media relationship
Figure 9: Word cloud from early reporting on Alteria Woods' killing
Figure 10: Images of Full Page Statements made about Black Lives Matter in the wake of George Floyd's murder in 2020
ABSTRACT
Background: In the US, police violence has been an intractable problem. Black women and girls (BWGs) in particular, are at an elevated risk of being killed by police, yet few studies have focused on the factors that increase their exposure to police and contribute to their deaths.

Objective: Using a multi-method approach, and grounded in critical theories, the purpose of this dissertation was to elucidate the mechanisms through which BWGs have been killed by police over a 20-year period, and examine the impact of discourse around their killings.

Methods: This dissertation leveraged a combination of primary data sources across three aims. In Aim 1, the Fatal Encounters database was used to identify BWGs killed between 2000 and 2019. Thematic analysis was conducted on case descriptions, supplemented by news and police reports, legal documents, and other case-relevant texts. One BWG from Aim 1, was selected for a case study in Aim 2. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) was performed on all discursive events related to her death between 2017 and 2021. A total of 194 texts were located through database and internet searches, and 72 texts underwent CDA. Finally, in Aim 3 in-depth interviews were conducted with family members of the decedent, to elucidate the impacts of media communications on their well-being and pursuit of justice.

Results: Findings from this study revealed several trends in the types of issues and sequences of events underlying fatal policing for BWGs. It further demonstrated the fortitude of police narratives over time and the commitment to using racially criminalizing language and misogynoir in service of exonerating police from blame in killing civilians.

Conclusion: This work bolsters efforts to reimagine how community safety is conceptualized, and supports the calls for adapting an abolitionist framework within public health to improve violence prevention efforts.
I. BACKGROUND & SIGNIFICANCE

Police violence (PV) has been called many names: police brutality, lethal use of force, excessive force, police misconduct, and so on. Regardless of terminology, the discussion of police officers’ use of violence on the civilian population tends to center on a debate about what constitutes “excessive” or “reasonable.” Whether force is “reasonable” or legal, however, is not the question. As demonstrated in the child abuse literature, there is no level of violence that does not cause harm despite its normative acceptance and legality (Gershoff & Grogan-Kaylor, 2016); the same is true of PV. Although much attention is given to physical manifestations of violence, particularly deadly violence, PV also presents as psychological and sexual violence, as well as neglect (Cooper et al., 2004; Krug et al., 2002).

PV has been a relatively intractable problem throughout the history of the US. Since the inception of policing in this country, it has disproportionately burdened racial and ethnic minority populations and other communities that violate ever-shifting norms of white supremacist understandings (Muhammad, 2010). This includes the LGBTQ+ community, and vulnerable populations such as the unhoused, sex workers, and people with substance use disorders (Cooper et al., 2004). For those who exist at the intersections, the impact is multiplied (Jacobs, 2017). While efforts have been made to understand and prevent PV, the inconsistent naming of the issue, historical framing of the research, and overall lack of race-consciousness has hindered meaningful evaluation of the nature and scope of the problem.

There is very little systemic monitoring of police killings (Krieger, Chen, et al., 2015). A recent study found that the National Vital Statistic System (NVSS) severely
undercounted police killings, missing over 17,000 deaths over a nearly 40-year period (GBD 2019 Police Violence U. S. Subnational Collaborators, 2021). Systemic monitoring of less than lethal PV is practically nonexistent. While understanding the true incidence and chronicity of PV is important, elucidating the determinants is paramount for the public health field’s mission to develop solutions to preventable health problems. In particular, it is crucial to understand the function of implicit biases in producing the social norms that support and ensure the continuity of PV. This research will investigate how police encounters are initiated, how they are escalated, and the racial framing of how they are discussed in communicative acts. Findings will illuminate the more concealed roots and reinforcing factors of racially disparate PV.

For this research, PV is defined as: the perpetration, by a law enforcement officer, of general abuse of power, verbal assault, psychological intimidation, threatened or actual sexual violence (including cavity searches), threatened or actual physical assault (with hands or a weapon), and neglect of duty or provision of aid (Alang et al., 2017; Cooper et al., 2004).

A. POLICE VIOLENCE IS A PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM

Police violence (PV) is a social-psychological problem with severe health consequences (Alang et al., 2017; Holmes & Smith, 2008). While there is still no official database of PV, several crowdsourced datasets have provided estimates for fatal incidents. According to Mapping Police Violence about 1,100 people are killed by police each year (Sinyangwe et al., n.d.). Fatal Encounters, which records any death resulting from an encounter with law enforcement, including suicides under police pressure and
vehicular deaths while fleeing, puts that number at about 1,400 annually (Burghart, 2017). The racial disparities in fatal PV victimization are stark—whether armed or unarmed, Black people are three to five times more likely to be victims of lethal policing than white individuals of the same status (Mesic et al., 2018; Ross, 2015). A recent study from the Lancet that examined mortality due to PV between 1980 and 2019 put the racial disproportion at 3.5 times Black to white victimization (GBD 2019 Police Violence U. S. Subnational Collaborators, 2021). Moreover, unarmed Black people are equally as likely as armed white individuals to be shot and killed by police (Ross, 2015). When disaggregating by gender there is still a pronounced racial disparity, with one study finding Black men were 2.5 times and Black women were 1.4 times more likely to be killed by police than white men and white women, respectively (Edwards et al., 2019). The differences in reported rates likely have to do with the differences in how each research team conceptualizes police violence; which encounters are included as police-caused and which encounters are excluded. Although this racial disparity is not as pronounced as it was fifty years ago, it still persists (Krieger, Kiang, et al., 2015).

These data, however, only account for those who were assaulted and killed. A study of the 50 largest police departments in the US found that between 2010 and 2016, more than 4,000 people were shot at, two-thirds of whom survived (Arthur et al., 2017). Many still suffer the psychological and physical injuries of their encounters. There is no systematic method for surveilling police sexual violence, nor for defining and surveilling psychological violence or neglect (Stinson et al., 2015).

All forms of PV cultivate adverse health outcomes whether they are acute or chronic violent exposures. Apart from injury and death, PV has been significantly associated with
an increased risk for depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and other negative mental health outcomes (Aymer, 2016; DeVylder et al., 2016; Geller et al., 2015). It has also been linked to an increased rate of suicide attempts, particularly among those who experienced a physical or sexual assault (DeVylder et al., 2017). Indirect or vicarious experiences also negatively impact health, elevating overall community-level rates of chronic illness (Sewell & Jefferson, 2016), and diminishing the mental health of Black individuals specifically (Bor et al., 2018). Most recently, PV has been found to have more sinister systems-level impacts. People who have had non-deadly negative police encounters were more likely to express mistrust in the medical system (Alang et al., 2020). This effect was found across race. In the context of living through the COVID-19 pandemic, this finding highlights the urgency for better understanding and dealing with PV.

PV has implications beyond health. It deteriorates community safety by reducing social cohesion (Gomez, 2016) and decreases trust in and perceived legitimacy of the police (Brunson, 2007; Kochel, 2017). This makes it less likely that residents, in particular Black residents, will call on the police, even when they are in need of assistance (Fedina et al., 2019). In the broader context of the social determinants of health, racialized policing is yet another facet of living in a white supremacist society, which produces heavier allostatic loads for Black individuals at all ages, and an overall diminution of health (Geronimus et al., 2006).

PV additionally creates an economic burden not only on the targeted individuals and their families, but for every member of the community they belong to. As officers rarely face legal or professional sanctions for their violence (Park, 2018), often the only
recourse families have is to sue the city. The city of Chicago alone has paid out more than half a billion dollars since 2004 for police-related abuses (Sloan & Strong, 2016) and New York City paid out over $200 million just in the 2015-2016 fiscal year (Tempey, 2016). This is all money that could otherwise be used towards improving community resources that are systematically underfunded, particularly within Black communities (Schroedter, 2014). Furthermore, because cities usually cannot afford the settlements juries award, they must depend on bank bonds with high interest rates totaling or exceeding the original settlement amount, which taxpayers are also responsible for (Sloan & Strong, 2016). Regardless of who is victimized, everyone ultimately pays.

B. DETERMINANTS OF POLICE VIOLENCE

Despite what is known about the extensive consequences of PV, the discussion of the underlying causes and correlates has remained fractured within the individual silos of academic disciplines. Sociology, criminology, anthropology, Africana studies, psychology, public health—they all have suppositions for what needs to be examined in order to tease out the fundamental causes of PV. Although there is considerable overlap between the discussions, how the issue is framed, the language used, and the particular aspects focused on differ in important ways. Generally, there have been two larger theoretical veins as to the causes of PV, one societally produced (Blalock, 1967; Green et al., 1998; King & Wheelock, 2007) and the other police produced (Holmes & Smith, 2008; Lersch & Mieczkowski, 2005; Micucci & Gomme, 2005; Smith & Alpert, 2007). There has also been a third focus on the sociohistorical elements that contextualize the problem (Alexander & West, 2012; Khoury, 2009; Muhammad, 2010). Nevertheless, the preponderance of focus on the societal- or police-produced pathways to PV is
problematic in that they are not independent of one another: police are embedded within communities, are socialized by the prevailing norms, and act in ways that are socially acceptable (Micucci & Gomme, 2005). PV is a multi-level phenomenon with individual-level, structural-level, and situationally-specific components (Holmes & Smith, 2008), yet much of the research assesses one level as having more salience than another, rather than examining the interactive effects.

The lack of accord on a definition of PV complicates delineating a theory of PV, as there is currently a near laser focus on fatal violence as the outcome of interest. There are significant hurdles to monitoring any type of PV besides fatalities, and even that surveillance has been subpar (Fyfe, 2002; Krieger, Kiang, et al., 2015). The more recent availability of crowdsourced databases has meant an ability to better validate correlations in research (Feldman et al., 2017; Krieger, Chen, et al., 2015). However, these results are based only on a subset of a subset of victims. Much of the research on fatalities is restricted to the examination of deaths caused by a shooting, to the exclusion of deaths related to conducted electrical weapons (e.g., tasers), physical assaults, vehicles, or derelict of duty. This focus is often further narrowed to only evaluate shooting deaths of unarmed civilians. Although the majority of individuals killed by police are shot, nearly 75% of individuals killed by police are armed (Sinyangwe et al., n.d.). The decision to focus on unarmed civilians reinforces the false dichotomy of “excessive” versus “reasonable” use of force. Given that police are legally permitted to use violence, the discussion around PV is often predicated on the assumption that there is an acceptable level of violence, and that the real problem is when violence is used in excess. However, there is no clear legal definition of “reasonable” (Alpert & Smith, 1994), leaving that up
to the subjective determination of the officers, prosecutors, jurors, and researchers examining the problem. Those subjective decisions will be informed by how we subconsciously assess criminality, which is not race neutral when we are embedded within a white supremacist society (Kahn & Davies, 2010; Muhammad, 2010).

Finally, while the decision to focus on fatalities makes sense as the most discrete and extreme manifestation of PV, it neglects the well understood process of violence existing on a continuum of actions (Wilkins et al., 2014). In order to reduce extreme violence it is necessary to reduce the less than lethal (non-deadly physical, psychological, sexual, neglectful) acts of violence that precede it and to understand the mechanisms that escalate encounters into deadly violence.

C. POLICE VIOLENCE IS RACIALIZED AND GENDERED

Much of the discussion on the racial inequities of PV has centered on the voices and experiences of Black men, as most victims of fatal PV are men. This focus on men, however, obscures the very grave and complex relationship Black women have with the police. The prevailing causal theories of racialized PV have largely referenced the mechanisms that Black men are disproportionately burdened with, including hyper-surveillance (Alexander & West, 2012; Cooper, 2015), implicit community fears (Khoury, 2009; Muhammad, 2010), and mass incarceration (Alexander & West, 2012). Black women are subject to these same mechanisms, yet their stories are submerged.

PV against Black women has been poorly reported in the news, and this lack of attention prompted the development of the hashtag #SayHerName (Crenshaw et al., 2015; Jacobs, 2017). Within weeks of Eric Garner and Freddie Gray being killed, Rosann
Miller and Mya Hall were also attacked. Although Miller was not killed, she was placed in the same illegal chokehold by the same police department as Eric Garner, while seven months pregnant (Ritchie, 2017). Though these cases are no less egregious, their names do not readily come to mind.

The focus on fatalities as the PV outcome of interest is one of the prime culprits for suppressing the violence that Black women experience. In general, Black women are more likely to experience less than lethal violence, particularly police perpetrated sexual violence (SV) (Clark et al., 2017; Crenshaw et al., 2015; Fedina et al., 2018; Jacobs, 2017). In addition to the pathways listed above that increase police exposure for all Black people, BWGs face increased police exposure through voluntary calls to the police for domestic and intimate partner violence (DV/IPV) (Ritchie, 2017). BWGs who are survivors of violence, past or ongoing, are faced with having to maintain a working relationship with police, even if the police themselves are another point of abuse and violence. Police control ongoing investigations, are charged with enforcing possible restraining orders, and will be the ones to respond if BWGs call for help from future violence from civilian partners (Ritchie, 2017). This leaves BWGs multiply vulnerable and unable to lodge complaints about PV should a situation arise.

There are known racial disparities in responses to DV/IPV calls with respect to mandatory arrests, another site of police aggression with the potential for deadly PV. Black women are less likely to be considered credible victims when involved in IPV and are more likely than white women to be arrested along with their male partner in cases deemed mutual aggression (Chesney-Lind, 2002; Potter, 2006; West, 2007). Further complicating the interplay between DV/IPV, PV, and racism, is that the personal can...
overlap with the professional. Women are sometimes in partnerships with police officers who are violent within that relationship, meaning that PV and IPV become one in the same.

Black women are positioned to face intersectional disempowerment, where belonging to at least two subordinated populations (gender and race) means facing pressure to prioritize one or the other agenda, despite neither fully addressing their needs (Crenshaw, 1996). Black women experience a gendered racism defined as misogynoir. They face racism and misogyny from white men, racism from white women, and misogyny from Black men (Potter, 2006). They are also subject to general sentiments of anti-Blackness from other non-Black people of color. The pressure to falsely subscribe to either their race or gender, leads to an erasure of their totality. Frameworks for understanding victimization tend to lean on either racial or gender frameworks, where Black women are not fully seen as separate from Black men while also being viewed as overly distinct from white women (Coles & Pasek, 2020), leading to discussions of solutions that do not address their needs. Understanding the magnitude of PV and developing a cohesive theory of PV requires an intersectional framework that assesses the effects of race and gender as multiplicative rather than additive (Crenshaw, 1996; Potter, 2006).

D. THE DISCOURSE OF POLICING

The difficulty in understanding PV is exacerbated by the lack of race-consciousness in all aspects of the research process. Though the legacy of slavery and Jim Crow is presented as an explanation in much of the empirical and theoretical literature, it is either
not adequately operationalized within the study, or it is effectively neutralized in the
discussion through the use of exculpatory statements. There are a few mechanisms
through which the role of racism in PV is neutralized. One is the heroizing of police
officers by alluding to the difficulty of policing, the dangers of poor communities, and the
valor of protecting and serving (Holmes & Smith, 2008; Nix et al., 2017). With little to
no inquiry into the connection between the causes of concentrated crime and the
criminalization of Blackness, the role of structural racism is obscured (Muhammad,
2010). Furthermore, there is often an unconscious assignation of blame to victims or
allusions to deservedness of the violence enacted, both in the process of specifying a
sample for study (i.e. only examining unarmed victims), or again in the discussions of
what victims should or should not have been doing.

Another undermining facet in the discourse of policing has been the framing of PV as
“relatively rare” or an issue of mutual distrust between police and (Black) citizens
(Holmes & Smith, 2008; Nix et al., 2017). Both serve to diminish the importance of the
problem as well as generate a false equivalence between actors through the removal of
the power imbalance in the equation. While deaths due to PV may, in fact, be statistically
rare, they are no less frequent than deaths due to many diseases and injuries, which
receive none of the same dismissive rhetoric, nor the lack of an infrastructure to surveil
the problem (GBD 2019 Police Violence U. S. Subnational Collaborators, 2021; Krieger,
Chen, et al., 2015). Moreover, we do not currently know the true scope of PV, since, as
previously mentioned, there is no systemic monitoring of non-lethal PV. What little is
known about fatal events is a severe undercount of the broader issue. Finally, the absolute
numbers are of less value when considering accumulated experiences theory, which has
demonstrated that oppressed groups’ repeated exposure to negative experiences accumulate over time and are passed on intergenerationally through oral histories (Brunson, 2007; Kochel, 2017). In this way, each recurrence of an event reaffirms those negative perceptions, re-opening deeply embedded psychological wounds and racial stress that, despite not having happened directly to the observer, still produce similarly negative health outcomes (Alang et al., 2017; Rosenbaum et al., 2005).

The lack of a nuanced racial analysis that cohesively crosses all levels of the social ecology, including at the level of the individual investigator, makes it easy for this type of minimizing rhetoric to seep into even the most well-intentioned writing. It re-affirms the need for naming racism in the action itself and in the processes of researching the action so as not to undermine the very goal of unraveling the determinants of PV and thus offering meaningful solutions.

Beyond the lack of race-consciousness in the internal processes of studying and defining PV, there is any externally located issue. How we learn of policing as a social and public health problem is often filtered through the discourse of media presentations of PV. Several scholars have examined the racial discourse and pathologizing implicit in the headlines and bodies of news reports. The descriptions of deadly PV are often cast in order to legitimate the violence perpetrated by police. Words and imagery are chosen to portray the police as professionals who keep the population safe, while victims are portrayed as threats that needed to be subdued (Hirschfield & Simon, 2010; Smiley & Fakunle, 2016). These analyses have been done largely around incidents of fatal PV against Black men and boys, with one study focusing particularly on how the behavior, physical appearance, lifestyle, and geographic location of a victim is used as evidence of
the deservedness of their deaths (Smiley & Fakunle, 2016). Drawing on these mechanisms to victim-blame are not necessarily calculated decisions, but again another function of being socialized within white supremacy where the entire construction of criminality and crime statistics as we know it today evolved from the legacy of slavery and a culture of anti-Blackness (Muhammad, 2010). The implications of these textual and visual portrayals are significant, shaping attitudes towards police and victims in ways that influence how culpability in these deaths are assessed (Dukes & Gaither, 2017). As we know that police are rarely held accountable for killing civilians (Park, 2018), this implication is important.

E. PRESENT STUDY

The overall goal of this dissertation was to elucidate the mechanisms through which Black women and girls (BWGs) were killed by police over a 20-year period and assess how their deaths were communicated and framed in the media. These efforts were grounded in critical theoretical frameworks that center the dynamics of racism, power, and inequity. While the overall study focused on fatal PV, the intention was to use fatalities as the starting point for building out a more complete picture of the nature of PV, its intersections with other forms of structural and interpersonal violence, and its direct and indirect consequences. This research intends to illuminate the reach of PV not just as a standalone problem, but as a risk factor for other forms of violence and negative health outcomes. The longer-term goal of this research is to elaborate on what data and methods are needed to proceed towards developing sustained improvements to community safety.
F. SPECIFIC AIMS & RESEARCH QUESTIONS

**Aim 1:** Examine the dynamics of lethal police encounters with Black women and girls

**Research Questions**

1. **How do Black women and girls experience fatal police violence?**
   1.1 How do they come in contact with police?
   1.2 What events transpired that ended with their deaths?

2. **What trends emerge in lethal encounters?**
   2.1 What kinds of issues are being policed?
   2.2 Who is involved in these encounters—both systems and individuals?
   2.3 What happens in the aftermath?

**Aim 2:** Analyze one case of fatal PV to expand understanding of the determinants of PV and the construction of racialized PV narratives in the media

**Research Questions**

3. **What are the socio-ecological, historical, and situational contexts that the victim existed within?**
   3.1 What are the salient features of the social-ecology? (e.g., the neighborhood, jurisdiction, political, racial, socioeconomic, etc.)
   3.2 What is the history of police interaction of the area generally and with the actors involved particularly?
   3.3 What are the situational features of the fatal police encounter (e.g. actors, timeline, broader discourses, fields of action, policy fields, genres)
4. How was the Black women killed by police spoken of after death?

4.1 How did the discourse in reports of Black woman’s deaths conceal or highlight the violence they experienced?

4.2 What do the emergent themes and discursive strategies indicate about public perception of the intersectional experience of PV in the US?

4.3 What is the propensity for media reports to utilize certain discursive strategies in discussing these women?

**Aim 3:** Explore the impact of fatal PV and the related discourse on the family of one victim

**Research Questions**

5. **How does the discourse of fatal PV impact the family’s well-being?**

5.1 How well did the dominant narrative align with the family’s understanding of the circumstances?

5.2 What, in their perception, was missing from the discourse?

5.3 How can outsiders do better all-around with regard to the circumstances that evolve after a police killing?
II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

A. PUBLIC HEALTH CRITICAL RACE PRAXIS (PHCRP)

Public Health Critical Race Praxis (PHCRP) is an application of Critical Race Theory (CRT) for public health researchers (Ford & Airhihenbuwa, 2010). This framework can be used alone or in combination with other theories and is characterized by four focuses (or phases of the research process) that encompass the ten principles as visualized in Figure 1. A description of the ten principles and how they were applied to this study can be found in Table 1. The 4 focuses guided the research process and interpretation of findings in the following manner:

*Figure 1: Race Consciousness, Four Focuses, and Ten Affiliated Principles (Ford & Airhihenbuwa, 2010)*

**Focus 1: Contemporary Patterns of Racial Relations** concentrates on the process of racialization as it is situated within the time period of interest. Across research aims 1 and 2, analyses will examine the pervasiveness of racism across systems and structures and how they influence other social determinants of health in relationship to PV.
Focus 2: Knowledge Production concerns understanding how social hierarchies and implicit and explicit biases play a role in the creation of the existing research base. In this study, I reflexively situate myself within my own social and familial context and subjectivities related to my disciplinary approach. Subjectivities within the discipline consider the following: (1) how racialization and gendered discourse may have already influenced the existing texts, (2) whether the preferred modes of knowledge production and dissemination influence how information is framed and communicated, and (3) whether findings center race-consciousness and racial equity.

Focus 3: Conceptualization and Measurement emphasizes defining and refining how constructs are operationalized, and accounts for the social contexts and the hypothesized relationships between them. In this endeavor, keeping the social construction of race and intersectionality in focus will be key.

Focus 4: Action prioritizes translating research into action, which can include (1) elaborating the language with which to examine or discuss race and power relations; (2) storytelling from the perspective of those in dominated positions to describe a problem; and (3) developing solutions to directly address identified injustices. This study addresses elements (1) and (2) with a particular emphasis on elaborating language about the nature of PV and the use of counter-storytelling as a mechanism of disrupting hegemonic discourse practices (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). It also intends to address element (3) in
the discussion of future solutions in conversation with the national dialogue of US policing.

**B. CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS**

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) evolved through a convergence of linguistic analysis and critical theory but differs from other discourse studies in its approach. It moves beyond merely trying to understand or describe social inequity to trying to intervene on and transform the structures that uphold social inequities (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). Discourse is broader than written or spoken language, it is a communicative event that includes body language, gestures, audio, visual, and spatial components. CDA views discourse as a “social practice,” and these practices have a role in the process of social and cultural change. To understand the function and impact of a discourse, researchers must ground that discourse within its relevant context (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). Overall, CDA is interested in how discourse produces, reproduces, and legitimizes power in order to maintain social inequities, as well as how it can subvert power and dominance in order to eliminate them. It examines how discourse is structured, utilized, produced, consumed, and distributed (van Dijk, 1993).

The three central concepts of CDA are critique, ideology, and power. Critique is the action of exposing and challenging power structures and dominant ideologies. Ideologies are the latent, normative beliefs often embedded within rhetoric, which can appear neutral or routine, particularly when they are dominant ideologies. Finally, power is the asymmetrical relationship between social groups, exercised through various
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Affiliated Focus(es)</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Conventional Approach</th>
<th>PHCRP Approach</th>
<th>Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Race Consciousness</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Deep awareness of one’s racial position; awareness of racial stratification processes operating in colorblind contexts.</td>
<td>Colorblindness: belief in the irrelevance of racism characterized by the tendency to attribute racial inequities to non-racial factors (e.g., SES)</td>
<td>A researcher clarifies her racial biases before beginning research within a diverse community.</td>
<td>Acknowledging my own racial and social positioning; examining media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primacy of racialization</td>
<td>Contemporary Racialization</td>
<td>The fundamental contribution of racial stratification to societal problems; the central focus of CRT scholarship on explaining racial phenomena.</td>
<td>Tendency to attribute effects to race rather than to racialization or racism.</td>
<td>A study on neighborhood characteristics includes factors hypothesized to reflect structural racism.</td>
<td>Centering racism in the examination of the structures and systems that lead to PV.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race as social construct</td>
<td>Contemporary Racialization</td>
<td>Significance that derives from social, political and historical forces.</td>
<td>Biological determinism: the belief that race is meaningful because it provides insights about one’s biology and propensities.</td>
<td>A study assesses race not as a risk factor but to identify a population at risk for specific racism exposures.</td>
<td>Focusing on the beliefs and attitudes that create racialized narratives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordinariness of racism</td>
<td>Contemporary Racialization</td>
<td>Racism is embedded in the social fabric of society.</td>
<td>Racial exceptionalism-defines racism as rare, discrete and overtly egregious incidents.</td>
<td>A study on racism and health operationalizes racism as routine exposures (e.g., being followed while shopping).</td>
<td>Examining the routine discursive strategies that normalize racist violence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structural determinism</strong></td>
<td><strong>Contemporary Racialization</strong></td>
<td>The fundamental role of macro-level forces in driving and sustaining inequities across time and contexts; the tendency of dominant group members/institutions to make decisions or take actions to preserve existing hierarchies.</td>
<td>Emphasizing individual or interpersonal factors.</td>
<td>A multilevel study considers policy factors that may promote residential segregation.</td>
<td>Conducting multilevel analyses against the various social and political contexts the individuals in focus are embedded within and subject to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social construction of knowledge</strong></td>
<td><strong>Knowledge Production</strong></td>
<td>The claim that established knowledge within a discipline can be re-evaluated using antiracism modes of analysis.</td>
<td>The belief that empirical research carried out properly is impermeable to social influences.</td>
<td>A disparities-related literature review compares articles published in minority vs. majority journals.</td>
<td>Examining media standards for framing PV narratives, comparing discourse by publication type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Critical approaches</strong></td>
<td><strong>Knowledge Production</strong></td>
<td>To dig beneath the surface; to develop a comprehensive understanding of one’s biases.</td>
<td>To accept phenomena or explanations at face value.</td>
<td>A researcher considers alternative explanations for findings than those previously posited.</td>
<td>Questioning primary modes of knowledge formation and language used to communicate PV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intersectionality</strong></td>
<td><strong>Conceptualization &amp; Measurement</strong></td>
<td>The interlocking nature of co-occurring social categories (e.g., race and gender) and the forms of social stratification that maintain them.</td>
<td>Additive model of co-occurring social categories (e.g., race and gender).</td>
<td>Efforts to reduce HIV risk behaviors among diverse men who have sex with men address racial stereotypes.</td>
<td>Assessing whether and how multiple identities are included; In-depth examination of racialized, gendered determinants of PV for Black women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disciplinary self-critique</strong></td>
<td><strong>Action</strong></td>
<td>The systematic examination of a discipline’s conventions and impacts on the broader society.</td>
<td>Limited critical examination of how a discipline’s norms might influence the knowledge on a topic.</td>
<td>Examining implications for using ‘health inequities’ vs. ‘health disparities’ vs. ‘health inequalities’.</td>
<td>Assessing the primacy of race-consciousness in the communication of PV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Voice</strong></td>
<td><strong>Knowledge Production</strong></td>
<td>Prioritizing the perspectives of marginalized persons; Privileging the experiential knowledge of outsiders within.</td>
<td>Routine privileging of majority perspectives</td>
<td>Responses of skepticism or anger when outsiders within speak truth to power.</td>
<td>Counter-storytelling; Privileging statements of close relatives of decedents in the analyses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
modalities, including tangibly (through physical force or acts of violence), psychologically (through threats or a reliance on authoritarian expressions), or through manipulation of resources (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009; Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

Discourse has a dialectical relationship with society, meaning that it both influences social structures and is shaped by them (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). Van Dijk postulates that discourse and society do not directly influence one another, and that the relationship is mediated by cognition, as depicted in Figure 2. We can view society as a pool of micro-structures (interpersonal interactions) and macrostructures (e.g., institutional power and social inequality). Macrostructures are maintained by macro-actors (e.g. the state, government, and policy). Macro-ideas then relate to micro-ideas, or the practice of communication, through social cognition (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 1993). Social cognition encompasses an individual’s knowledge, attitudes, beliefs (ideologies), norms, and values, and determines how they internalize various representations of certain other individuals and groups (van Dijk, 1993).

*Figure 2: Relationship Between Discourse, Society, & Cognition*
Discourse then becomes a tool to enact hegemonic power through the management of social cognitions, that is, choosing certain words, imagery, or stories in order to influence the way people think about or perceive others people in a manner that favors structural and systemic inequity (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 1993). While social cognitions are individually held, they are shared at the relevant group-level that the individual identifies with, and becomes the foundation for community-level attitudes and beliefs (van Dijk, 1993). CDA focuses not only on those discursive strategies to manipulate but also to legitimate or normalize behaviors and attitudes.

It is also a medium for confrontations (the struggle) over power. As inequity can only be rationalized by simultaneous positive representation of one group and negative representation of the “othered” (van Dijk, 1993), whoever controls the discourse has the capacity to manipulate what is known and what is obscured. One common site of the exercise of and struggle for power is mass media. "Media institutions often purport to be neutral, in that they provide space for public discourse, reflect states of affairs disinterestedly, and give the perceptions and arguments of the newsmakers" (Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

CDA is a valuable tool for public health in that we view beliefs and attitudes as programmatic leverage points for changing behaviors and policies, yet often find them to be unyielding given how firmly enshrined they are in cultural values. This method examines the construction and institutionalization of beliefs and attitudes, and how those institutionalizations reproduce the very inequities we aim to eliminate through public health practice. This is akin to the public health aim of looking at more upstream causes of health inequities, i.e., the roots of the root causes (Link & Phelan, 1995). The intention
of CDA is to gain a more fundamental understanding of complex social problems through the granular examination of how discourse reproduces inequities (van Dijk, 1993).

**Approaches to CDA**

There are multiple approaches to conducting CDA, spanning the spectrum from deductively-oriented to more inductively-oriented, as shown in Figure 3. Inductively-oriented approaches look at problems at the 'meso-level,' using more open-ended approaches including case studies and vast data collection. Deductive approaches tend to focus on problems more at the macro-level (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). Regardless, all approaches function abductively, from theory to analysis to results, back to theory.

All approaches share the same fundamental principles, which are very complementary to PHCRP framework. It takes the position that:

1. Research should deal with a problem that has social relevance and real-world implications,
2. Understanding the problem and its associated consequences happens by examining the discursive dimensions of power and dominance and how those elements create and maintain structural imbalances [PCHRP principles 1-5],
3. The approach is multidisciplinary and centered on what is actually happening, while using theory and empirical work to elaborate on that interpretation, rather than starting with theory to explain the actual [PHCRP principles 5-8],
4. The analyst must take a clear position prior to engaging with the work, make explicit that position and the accompanying values in the research aims, and engage in a process of continuous self-reflection accounting for their own
embeddedness within, and subjectivity to, the same structures they are critiquing [PHCRP principles 1, 7, 9],

5. The critique of discourse is directed at those groups and structures responsible for reproducing inequities [PHCRP principles 2-8],

6. The voices and perspectives of scholars typically held at the margins, are centered, setting aside inevitable criticisms of subjectivity. Given that all scholarship is produced through the social positioning and racial framing of the authors, calls for objectivity are not neutral, reproducing the same inequities and power imbalances [PHCRP principles 6-10],

7. The results of CDA are intended to have utility and should contribute to praxis.

*Figure 3: CDA Approaches & Theoretical Connections (Wodak & Meyer, 2009)*
CDA has no hard and fast rules or procedures. Linguistic analysis is typically a component, however, the extent of its utilization depends on the researcher. Generally, most approaches involve core linguistic concepts including actors, tense, and argumentation. CDA operates through a hermeneutic process, which in this area means that a text can only be understood within its context and the context can only be understood through its textual components. Thus, a key component of any analysis is context, including social, political, ideological, and psychological components, as well as the role of the analyst as interpreter (Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

This study employed CDA using a hybrid of two approaches: the Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) by Ruth Wodak and Martin Reisgl and the Sociocognitive Approach (SCA) by Teun van Dijk. While DHA sits on the more inductive and detailed-linguistic side of the spectrum, SCA is more deductive and uses a broad-linguistic operationalization, as conceptualized in Figure 4. These approaches were modified, to moderate the depth of linguistic analysis and to be able to do a multi-level analysis – where the agency-level focuses on how individuals might interpret discourse and the structural-level focuses more on how institutions manipulate discourse (Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

**Sociocognitive Approach**

The Sociocognitive Approach (SCA) places heavy emphasis on the aforementioned relationship between discourse, cognition, and society. It takes a structural-functional operationalization examining how text and talk are structured and function to enact power and control the mind. It differentiates between global- (macro) and local- (micro) level properties of text and context. Local properties are text-context
internal to the discursive event in view. Global properties are about how a specific discursive event relates to other discourses, history, and society more broadly.

**Figure 4: Linguistic Depth & Level of Aggregation (Wodak & Meyer, 2009)**

The choice of which discourse strategies to examine is based on two layers of context: 1) the global context of the research study (underlying theory, aims, intended audience, and social relevance), and 2) the local context within which a discursive event takes place (intentions and ideologies of speakers and recipients, social roles and positions, relationships to participants, institutional constraints, etc.).

Analyzing the cognitive components of discourse must account for mental models, which interact with language users’ social representations (knowledge, attitudes, beliefs) in order to manifest in discourse (van Dijk, 2001). Individuals subjectively
interpret a social situation through mental models, and conversely, discourse is impactful when it confirms existing social representations. There are two mental models that SCA focuses on:

1) **Context models:** How a discourse is produced and framed - the properties of the situation a person interacts within (communicative domain and action, social roles of participants, beliefs/goals/values of participants in the text, lexicalization, etc.).

2) **Event models:** How a discourse is interpreted and how language users make meaning of the situation communicated about – the selection of information considered relevant, the propositions put forth, and the coherence of those supporting explanations, examples, opinions, and emotions.

The concept of mental models allows space for the subjective and for different people to interact within the same social situation and interpret it differently. Meaning of a discourse is constructed as it passes through their mental models and interacts with their individual social representations, which are connected to group-level social representations (van Dijk, 2001). SCA suggests an analytic process of texts as follows:

1. Macrostructures (discourse topics)
2. Local meanings, particularly, implicit or indirect communication
3. Analysis of the subtleties in the local meanings (implications, vagueness, omissions, polarizations)
4. Global and local discourse forms (structure, style & rhetoric)
5. Specific linguistic realizations, e.g. hyperbole, litotes
6. Local context (context models) & global and local coherence (event models)
Discourse Historical Approach

The Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) focuses on trying to establish a discourse theory by connecting discourse components. This approach has less of an emphasis on social theory and prioritizes historical analysis. DHA integrates three dimensions of critique: critique of the structure of a particular text or discourse event; critique of the text’s character and discursive strategies through the lens of known context and social theory; and critique of the methods used in the communicative event, such that guidelines can be created for improvement (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009).

DHA operates from a set of principles, many of which overlap with the general principles stated previously. However, there are a few unique to this method including the incorporation of fieldwork and ethnography, the use of historical context as the framework for interpreting discourse, and the application of results directed towards experts while still communicating to the public. DHA focuses on:

1. Nominalization
2. Predication
3. Argumentation
4. Perspectivization
5. Intensification & Mitigation

C. BLACK FEMINIST CRIMINOLOGY

Black feminist criminology (BFC) blends the tenets of Black feminist theory and critical race feminist theory (CRFT) to create a framework for understanding the criminal behavior and victimization of Black women. As part of the family of critical theories,
BFC shares many of the same principles as PHCRP and CDA. It is also action oriented, with the aim of improving upon the theories, research, and policies related to the experiences of Black women in the context of violence and safety. BFC lays a groundwork for exploring the policing of Black women through a critical lens of interconnectedness (Potter, 2006). It operationalizes interconnectedness across four levels, centering (1) Black women as individuals at the intersections of their identities, along with their lived experiences with and resistance to the constraints of (2) their intimate and familial relationships, (3) Black community and culture, and (4) social and structural oppression (Potter, 2006).

Occupying a multiply subordinated status in society leaves Black women in a devalued position, constantly faced with pressure to choose either siding with their race or their gender as mentioned previously. Any examination of Black women’s engagement with the criminal-legal system must account for how those intersections and interconnections influence how Black women navigate routine life experiences, as well as how those experiences shape responses to abuse (Potter, 2006). It is well understood that there is a pathway from being victimized to perpetrating criminal behavior, however, examinations of that process do not always account for the simultaneous racialization and gendering of individuals who are forced to interact with people and systems who practice misogynoir and oppression of any of their other identities (e.g. sexuality, fatness, skin tone, disability, etc.).

A Black feminist criminological approach would account for the layers of interactions that may shape how Black women handle having their needs met, including
the assumptions, stereotypes, family structure and responsibility, cultural norms to getting help, and systems failures to provide culturally responsive treatment.

D. RESEARCH TEAM

Primary Investigator

I am a PhD candidate with over a decade of public health experience working within non-profit organizations and academic institutions. This has enabled me to work with various community partners, grassroots organizers and activists, as well as with university students, faculty, and staff. However, the majority of my time has been within the confines of academia as an affiliate of an institution that is founded on slave-money and support for the Confederacy. An institution that did not admit Black students until 1963 and is still majority white in both its student and faculty makeup, despite its situatedness in a city that is predominately Black.

I am a 33-year-old Black cisgender woman and the daughter of two Black parents, both descended from ancestors who experienced American slavery. Although both of my parents were raised in the Jim Crow south, they each went on to earn advanced degrees and have long careers in higher education where they focused their efforts on diversity and race equity within the institutions they worked. While I belong to a racial group and gender category that faces historic and contemporary oppression, I have had the privilege of access to education, the benefits that accompany having parents who have navigated educational systems, and the feeling and promise of economic security. The collection of these professional and lived experiences inform how I both encounter and navigate through misogynoir, and influences how I approach my research and formulate questions.
Research Assistants

This study was done in collaboration with two research assistants. Each were grounded in the theoretical framework and methodologies described above and worked to develop and implement the methods described in the next chapter. These statements are in their words.

RA 1 is a 28-year-old mixed-race, cisgender woman born and raised in the US South. Her mother immigrated from India to the US with her immediate family, while her father is a white man from North Carolina. They raised her and her brother in Tennessee in a working-class neighborhood and household. Her multiracial background and southern upbringing led her to be highly interested in historical racial justice issues, especially Black history and studies. As such, she studied Black literature and film as an undergraduate, earning bachelor’s degrees in English and Psychology from the University of Tennessee. She is currently pursuing a PhD in Urban Studies at Tulane University, focusing on the intersection of race and space. Her research emerges from Black geographies and seeks to understand the lasting material and cultural effects of spatialized forms of racism (e.g. segregation, gentrification, environmental injustices, etc.).

RA 2 was raised by religious South-Asian Hindu immigrant parents. She grew up in a very culturally strict household, which ended up shaping her view of the world. She identifies as a first-generation South Asian American, who is cis-gender and heterosexual. She is from an urban area and grew up in a higher socioeconomic status, which she recognizes has enabled her to obtain access to education, housing, and health care without having to overcome barriers. As a public health professional, being a person
of color has allowed her to better connect with and relate to other individuals who identify as people of color as well or as an immigrant. However, she has seen how her background is viewed more favorably than other minority groups such as Black or Hispanic individuals. This perception of her identity has allowed her to reflect on the work that she does in this field. By recognizing this privilege, she is better equipped to understand her own implicit biases and use her voice to advocate for others. Her interpretations and analytic position stems from her privilege, which has allowed her to better understand and empathize with the struggles of marginalized communities.

**RA3** is a second year doctoral student and a birth equity researcher. She is a 28-year-old, Black Latina, cis-gender female, and first generation college graduate. She is fluent in English and Spanish and from Brooklyn NY.
III. METHODS

A. OVERVIEW

This is a multi-method qualitative exploratory study that took place in three stages. In the first stage a thematic analysis was performed on a dataset of cases of police fatalities along with related clarifying documents that were acquired during the analytic process. In the second stage, a case study was developed around Alteria Woods, a Black woman who was killed by the police in 2017, and critical discourse analysis (CDA) was employed on a sample of discursive events connected to her killing. In the final stage, semi-structured interviews were conducted with two family members of Alteria Woods.

B. ETHICS

Ethics approval was from the Tulane University Institutional Review Board (IRB). Aims 1 and 2, were determined to be non-human subjects research and were not required to go through a review. The family of Alteria Woods was contacted before beginning the analysis to ask for consent. This was ethically necessary given families of police violence victims have been exploited for monetary gain by individuals claiming community activism, as well as other researchers and authors profiting off the tragedies by reconstructing narratives without any of those monies going back to the families.

To connect with the family, I searched on Facebook to determine if there was a memorial page that might be managed by a family member. I put “Alteria Woods” in the search bar and several items returned, including what looked like her past personal FB page as well as a public “Justice4AlteriaWoods” page. The posts on the “Justice4AlteriaWoods” page looked to be voiced by a close relative and there was a link
to another website, amwmemorial.org “Alteria M. Woods Organization,” as well as a related email address. I emailed explaining who I was, what I was doing, and that I was looking for a relative of Alteria as well as consent to do this work. The younger sister of Alteria responded along with her mother giving their assent for me to proceed. They shared further resources with me, including a documentary they had created about Alteria, and requested to speak via zoom. Aim 3 was added after this initial contact, and approved after an expedited review.

C. AIM 1

The purpose of this aim is to examine the dynamics of lethal police encounters with Black women and girls (BWGs) in the US. This aim asks two research questions:

1. How do Black women and girls experience lethal brutality?
   1.1 How do they come into contact with police?
   1.2 What events transpired that ended with their deaths?

2. What trends emerge in lethal encounters?
   2.1 What types of issues are being policed?
   2.2 Who is involved in these encounters, both systems and individuals?
   2.3 What happens in the aftermath?

To answer these questions, this study undertook a thematic analysis of descriptive data surrounding BWGs who were killed through a police encounter over 20 years (2000 – 2019).
Data

The *Fatal Encounters* database was used to locate Black women and girls (BWGs) who were killed due to a police encounter. This database was chosen over the various publicly available crowdsourced databases because it employs the broadest definition of police related deaths, including any death that occurred in the presence of a law enforcement officer (Burghart, 2017). The breadth of police caused deaths provides more cases for understanding the situations in which BWGs become embroiled.

The database was downloaded from the *Fatal Encounters* website as an excel file in April 2020, and filtered for cases that occurred between January 1, 2000 and December 31, 2019. The variables contained in this dataset, along with explanations, are listed in Appendix 1. The data were sorted first by gender and then by imputed race. The imputed race variable was created by the database authors in order to address the missing racial data for the individuals listed in the dataset as “Race Unknown.” They explained in their methods notes that imputation was performed using estimates derived with Bayesian Improved Surname Geocoding (BISG) (Burghart, 2017) in order to classify individuals as belonging to one of their race/ethnicity categories. The imputed race/ethnicity variable was used in preference to the original race/ethnicity variable as it assigned a race/ethnicity classification to every named individual in the dataset, allowing capture of the greatest number of cases. The variable "Subject's gender" included male, female, "transexual" and "transgender." I first filtered out cases listed as “male,” which left 2,725 cases. Of those, 78 were listed as “name withheld by police” and therefore had an unknown gender. Another 15 individuals were labeled as “transsexual” (n = 1) or transgender. I performed a Google search of those 15 individuals to try and determine
which were transwomen and which were transmen. No one was identified as non-binary. After making that determination, I filtered out transmen and individuals with an unknown gender. I then sorted by the imputed race/ethnicity variable. Women whose race was identified as African American/Black were selected for analysis (N = 660). This database did not include multiracial categorizations, as the decedent’s race was discerned through what was reported about them rather than how the individual may have self-identified (Burghart, 2017). The final cleaned excel file was imported into Atlas.ti v.9 for thematic analysis.

**Analytic Approach**

This analysis was assisted by RAs 1 and 2. Each team member had a copy of the full dataset but the caseload was divided into thirds. Cases were read iteratively. In the first pass we focused on the information provided in the variable “A brief description of the circumstances…” and made an initial determination of what led to the fatal police encounter. Initial categories included:

- DV/IPV call for assistance
- DV/IPV with an officer
- Drug related issue
- Traffic related issue
- Call for violence in progress
- Call for non-violent crime in progress
- Suicide

The team also coded for mentions of substance use or indications of mental illness, any information regarding the officer’s identity, as well as any judicial processes in the
aftermath. Cases were flagged for follow-up if either the description was too vague or the deaths appeared to be suicides or not directly caused by a police officer.

In the second pass, cases were re-examined by clicking through to the linked news articles provided in the database. If that article still did not provide much detail, or the link to the article was broken, an internet (Google) and database (NewsBank) search was performed of the individual’s name and date of event. Cases coded “Unclear” or “Follow Up” in the first round of reading were prioritized in the second round to determine inclusion or exclusion, but most cases went through an internet search in order to verify details that would allow for categorization.

These searches turned up a variety of materials including news reports, police reports, legal documents, and blog posts. We downloaded PDFs or created screen shots of the additional information. These materials were saved and imported into the database, named with the relevant case number. In many circumstances, cases had more updated details than when they were entered into the database, particularly with related judicial rulings in the time lapse. During this round of reading, categories were altered based on the clarity of the additional information, new sub-categories were developed, and new themes emerged. For example, several cases were initially coded as “Crime: Stolen Vehicle” because the initial reports focused on that aspect of the encounter. However, upon further research, later documents would reveal that the initial reason for the encounter was that a police officer saw a person speeding and attempted to pull them over, and in the course of the encounter it became known that the vehicle was stolen. The aim was to determine the initial reason for the encounter. In this situation, the case would be recategorized as “Traffic: Speeding.” In all situations of a case being recategorized, it
was due to additional clarifying information that came from locating newer documents that provided more detail about the originating purpose of the police encounter. Additional themes and sub-categories are described in detail in the Chapter 4.

This iterative reading process took place over about three months. Once a week we met and discussed emerging trends, new suggestions for codes, and cases that were unclear for how to code. Once a month I merged each dataset, resolve duplicate codes, and reviewed the entire dataset to note differences in coding strategies. The data file was then redistributed to continue the next round of reading and coding. Coding decisions were made through consensus based on the theoretical framework and literature.

D. AIM 2

The purpose of this aim was to analyze one case of fatal PV to expand understanding of the determinants of PV and explore the construction of racialized PV narratives in the media. From the final sample of BWGs in the *Fatal Encounters* database, one woman was purposively chosen to build out a case study. Given the shift in media reporting on police brutality cases after both Eric Garner and Michael Brown were killed in 2014, cases were eligible for consideration if the BWG was killed in the year of Ferguson and onward (August 2014 – December 2019). We generated a list of names from the emergent categories in Aim 1, and then made a selection based on the amount overlap her case had across the categories and themes. The final selection criteria was the breadth of publicly available information and adequate media coverage, as many cases of police violence are never reported in the media, particularly when Black women are the victims.
(Crenshaw et al., 2015). After narrowing a list of about 15 candidates, we selected Alteria Woods. This aim addresses two questions:

1. What are the socio-ecological, historical, and situational contexts that the victim existed within?
   1.1 What are the salient features of the social-ecology? (e.g., the neighborhood, jurisdiction, political, racial, socioeconomic, etc.)
   1.2 What is the history of police interaction of the area generally and with the actors involved particularly?
   1.3 What are the situational features of the fatal police encounter (e.g. actors, timeline, broader discourses, fields of action, policy fields, genres)

2. How was Alteria Woods’ murder and the details surrounding her case spoken about?
   2.1 How did the discourse in reports of her death conceal or highlight the violence she experienced?
   2.2 What do the emergent themes and discursive strategies indicate about public perception of the intersectional experience of PV in the US?
   2.3 What is the propensity for media reports to utilize certain discursive strategies in discussing Alteria?

Data

Information to contextualize the police encounter was obtained through traditional media reports and social media postings (e.g. Facebook sites of organizations or individuals representing organizations), as well as other publicly available textual documents, and information provided by the family through secondary sources and interviews.
For the CDA, media reports including written articles, blogs, video, and audio, were obtained using Nexis Uni® (formerly LexisNexis) and NewsBank. We searched the phrase "Alteria Woods" from 2017 to June 2021, selecting for only US-based news sources. As both databases have limitations on the types of media outlets that are included, we additionally conducted a Google search of "Alteria Woods" with the same criteria of excluding internationally based news sources. Based on the distribution of news articles that turned up from the databases, the search through Google was done in time ranges to limit the number of results that emerged at one time:

- 2017: March 19 - April 30; May 1 - June 30; July 1 - Aug 15; Aug 16 - Oct 15; Oct 16 - Dec 31
- 2018: Overall (there were few to no articles published)
- 2019: Overall (there were few to no articles published)
- 2020: Overall but with caution - post-George Floyd many articles were written about police brutality at large that mention her name; Month of December specifically as there were legal case updates
- 2021: Overall

**Analytic Approach**

Combining the structural-functional components of SCA with the historical focus and layered critique of DHA, the contextual grounding of the case was first constructed, and then media articles and other discursive events about the case were analyzed.
Case Study Grounding

The contextual narrative was constructed to address the first research question of this aim, including RQ 1.1 and 1.2. The following sub-questions were used to answer the first half of RQ 1.2 (actors and timeline):

1. Where and when did the incident take place?
2. What actors were involved (civilians and officers)?
3. What incited the incident? What happened in the immediate aftermath?
4. What is known about the long-term implications as it relates to the family of the victim, the family of the perpetrator(s), and the broader community (protests, lawsuits, interviews, etc.)?

The remainder of that question (discourses, fields of action, policy fields, genres) was answered through the CDA.

Hybrid Critical Discourse Analysis: SCA & DHA

I read each article, and about half of the articles were read by RAs 1 and 3, using the extraction tool in Appendix 2. Each text was read multiple times until each discourse strategy was adequately addressed, reading from headline to body, from textual properties to contextual properties. Each coder's sheet was aggregated into one master table, with columns for each discourse strategy, and then imported into Atlas.ti v.9 for analysis. The two interpretations for each article were coded by discourse strategy.

E. AIM 3

The purpose of this aim was to gain a deeper understanding of how Alteria’s story was constructed and how both this construction and her death impacted those closest to
her. To accomplish this, semi-structured interviews were conducted with two close relatives. The aim addresses one research question:

1. How do these reports ultimately impact the family and the community?
   1.1 How well do people close to victims of PV think that media reports portray what happened?
   1.2 What aspects of reporting are missing or not included in enough detail?
   1.3 What impact do these reports have on their health and well-being?

**Procedure**

Interviews were conducted with the mother and younger sister of Alteria Woods. Both interviews were conducted via Zoom, using the semi-structured guide in Appendix 3 as a prompt. However, the participants controlled the interview; they had the space to narrate the aspects of the story that were important to them, and follow up questions were asked as they became relevant. The interviews each lasted about 75 minutes.

**Consent process**

This aim used verbal consent, with the consent script read aloud to participants. A copy of the consent form was provided to them in advance. After reviewing the form, they were given the opportunity to ask questions. Each woman provided verbal consent to the study, to audio and video recording, as well as to the use of their name in written materials.

**Analytic Approach**

Each interview was double recorded, through Zoom and through an external recorder, to ensure data capture. Once the integrity of one recording was verified, the
other was deleted. Notes were additionally taken by hand. The transcription feature on Zoom was utilized to generate a transcript of one interview, and the other was transcribed using rev.com. Both text files were cleaned through comparison to the audio file. Themes were coded by hand.
IV. 20 YEARS OF KILLING BLACK WOMEN & GIRLS

A total of 656 cases were read and coded after eliminating four duplicate entries. An additional 82 cases were eliminated after multiple rounds of reading case descriptions and supporting documents. These individuals were either misgendered, of a different racial background, or were killed in a manner not attributable to the actions or negligence of police officers. This left 574 cases for final analysis. Understanding police killings of BWGs led us to code through several questions:

1. **Who, Where, & When:** Addresses demographic and descriptive characteristics including age range, gender identity (transwoman), where they were killed (region and local setting), year of death, and cause of death (the mechanism)

2. **Why:** Addresses the reason for the police encounter, and whether the contact was wanted (voluntary), unwanted (involuntary), or unintentional (collateral)

3. **How:** Addresses how the events unfolded during the encounter – coding for themes around the behaviors of all involved individuals, issues of escalation, weapons use, victim resistance or fleeing, and the nature of the officers’ confrontation behavior

4. **What Else:** Addresses other salient factors that could or should have influenced the situation, including the health of the individuals involved, layered disadvantage, the presence of minors, family members, or other bystanders

5. **Then:** Addresses what happened in the aftermath, including processes of accountability (charges or other disciplinary actions), information reported, and whether there was any community action taken (lawsuits or protests)
A. OVERVIEW

In answering the prior questions, we located a total of 333 additional documents used to verify details and support the coding process. A table of those documents can be found in Appendix 4. While we sought to answer each question as fully as possible, due to the number of cases and volume of data, only the first two questions have codes for all 574 cases. Where information presented itself for How, What Else, and Then, it was coded for, but we did not seek out all respective codes for each case as those questions were secondary to the first two. Thus, some factors are undercounted and are likely more prevalent.

**Who were the victims, Where were they killed, & When did this happen?**

As shown in Figure 5, the 574 BWGs ranged in age from infancy (< 1 year old) to 93 years old, with 13% (n = 75) of the sample being under the age of 18. The distribution of ages peaked for women ages 20 – 24 (n = 100), and tapered off gradually from there. There were 5 transwomen who could be identified.

Across the 20 year timeframe, the number of deaths trended somewhat upward, as illustrated in Figure 6. From 2011 forward, cases were consistently at or above the average of 27 killings per year, nearing or hitting 40 deaths per year in 2003, 2013, 2018, and 2019. Only 2002 and 2004 saw fewer than 20 killings and in no year were killings of BWGs in the single digits.
Figure 5. Age distribution of BWGs killed from 2000 to 2019

Using the census defined regions of the US, BWGs primarily lived in the South\(^1\) (n = 278) followed by the Midwest (n = 171), leaving the Northeast and Western states totaling 61 and 64 cases, respectively. At the micro-level, 59% (n = 340) of these women were killed while in a vehicle, 19% (n = 110) were killed at a residence, 12% (n = 67) were killed in the street, and the rest were killed either in a public building (n = 25), in police custody (n = 17), or in some type of medical or care facility (n = 15).

There were two primary causes of death, vehicle collisions (n = 348) and gunshots (n = 176), of which 13 cases were murder-suicides. There were fewer than ten cases each involving asphyxiations, tasers, physical or chemical assaults, or other emergencies related to neglectful actions.

\(^1\) 22 of the southern cases were in MD, DE, DC which may not typically be considered the south despite the census designation, but even with them removed, the South still dominates
Why did the police encounter occur?

The team identified five primary classifications for why the fatal encounters occurred, as shown in Table 2. They are 1) traffic related offenses, 2) traditional crimes, 3) health & wellness related issues, 4) relationship conflict, and 5) negligent policing. While most of these categories are legally “crimes,” the choice of categorization under traditional crimes reflects what the team conceptualized as “criminal” based on typical discourse around criminal acts. There is overlap across these categories, particularly with stolen vehicles and traffic offenses, however, one code was assigned based on the initial reason for the police being alerted to an issue. For example, an erratic driver may catch the attention of the police, who then attempt a traffic stop. The police may discover the car was stolen, however, it would be coded as “suspicious driving,” as that what the primary reason for the encounter.
Table 2: Why the police encounter occurred for BWGs killed between 2000 – 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Subcategory</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traffic Offenses</td>
<td>Moving Violations</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DUIs &amp; Suspicious Driving</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accidents &amp; Unknown Traffic Stops</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Moving &amp; Other Minor Violations</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Crimes</td>
<td>Stolen Cars</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Crimes Against People</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drugs &amp; Sex Work</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Property Crimes (not vehicles)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Persons of Interest</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Wellness</td>
<td>Quality of Life, Wellness, and Public Disturbances</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mental Health Crises (calls for assistance)</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Conflict</td>
<td>Officer Involved DV/IPV</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civilian disputes and DV/IPV</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negligent Policing</td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Very few encounters represent voluntary police contact (n = 39), and most of those cases (n = 26) were officer-involved domestic violence deaths, where the decedent was in a consensual or familial relationship with their killer. The majority of police contact was collateral, with about 57% (n = 326) of BWGs caught up in the pursuits of other people. A large proportion of collateral cases were vehicle-related incidents, with a more nominal number of women killed by stray bullets or other cataclysmic events. Of those women, 38 were pedestrians hit either by fleeing cars or directly by police vehicles. Over 40% (n=144) involved a police chase, most of which were at high-speeds, with another 77 cases involving women who were passengers in a car being pursued by police. Involuntary contact made up another 35% (n = 203) of these cases, where the BWGs were the target of the police but the encounters were unwanted. Among these cases were
8 confirmed as calls from relatives requesting the involuntary transport of loved ones experiencing mental health crises. Finally, six cases were incidents that initially started as the serving of warrants on these women.

**How did events unfold?**

We next identified behaviors and decisions that contributed to the escalation of each encounter. This was challenging given that most of the information about each case comes from the perspective of police officers. It was common for multiple factors to co-occur within an encounter. The overwhelming factor that escalated an encounter was fleeing. About 56% (n = 324) of cases involved somebody fleeing from a police encounter. Only 13 (4%) cases involved persons fleeing on foot, with the remainder attempting to escape in a vehicle. We readily identified 56 cases (10%) of a civilian raising a weapon as the behavior which incited the use of deadly force. There were 34 cases where the sound of shots escalated the situation, however, not all shots were fired by civilians. Sometimes the sound of another officer’s gunfire elsewhere triggered an officer firing fatal shots at a BWG. There were less than a dozen physical altercations, reports of resisting arrest, or hostage situations that contributed to the tension.

Several police behaviors, which could be seen as escalating rather than de-escalating situations, were identified as contributing to the deaths of BWGs. These included aggressive behavior towards persons with mental illness as well as physically restraining civilians to subdue them. One of the most common police behaviors in nearly a quarter of cases (n = 132), was some form of negligent decision-making. These behaviors included chasing someone in a residential neighborhood, delaying or preventing the rendering of medical attention, shooting without a clear vantage point, not
using a marked vehicle, not using sirens and lights, ignoring procedures or commands from superiors, or spraying a chemical irritant into a crowd, thus inciting panic and a stampede. There were also police behaviors that were outright aggressive, including the performance of no-knock raids, the use of militaristic tactics and weaponry, and generally over-policing a situation with the use of dozens of officers, in addition to helicopters and/or K-9 to address a situation, some of which were not severe enough to warrant such a response.

Most BWGs were unarmed (n = 435; 75%), likely due to most of them not being the intended targets of police encounters. We attempted to discern whether the actual targets of the encounter were armed, but in most cases that information was not readily available. In a few of these cases, either the description in the database or the media reports characterized BWGs as using the vehicles they were driving as weapons against police officers. However, in many such cases, eyewitnesses or other actors characterized the BWG as merely attempting to flee, in which case we coded the victim as being unarmed. This left 20 cases where the weapon was the car. There were 57 cases where a BWG was in possession of a gun, 6 of which were not real guns; 45 cases where they had a sharp object like a knife or scissors; and another 5 cases where they had a blunt object like a baseball bat or candlestick. Possession does not mean they were actively using the weapon or raising the weapon, but as with the ‘car-as-weapon’ framing, disputed details and lack of witnesses often made it difficult to differentiate.
What else could or should have influenced the situation?

Although only 21 cases were specifically mental health crisis calls, where the individual or a relative called for a hospital transport or some other type of helpful assistance, there were at least 60 cases where mental health was a significant factor in the interaction. There were also 53 cases where substance use was involved. These two underlying factors overlapped, resulting in 106 cases, nearly 20% of the sample, where substance use and/or mental health issues bore relevance. This is likely an underestimation, as in many cases, underlying mental health conditions were revealed only after a family filed a lawsuit. However, it is notable that police encounters with persons in an altered mental state resulted in the death of at least 20% of the sample.

Difficulties in life do not occur in isolation. We identified 18 cases of BWGs who faced multiple marginalization. Examples may include the presence of co-morbidities (mental illness and physical disability), insecure housing, contact with more than one social service agency, or dealing with harassment or discrimination based on gender identity. Again, this is likely a gross underestimation because of the difficulty of ever knowing the fullness of someone’s life through second-hand accounts, but it is important to recognize that these events are complex and did not occur in a vacuum.

Another significant factor was the presence of minors in 95 (16.6%) of these cases. Some of the minors were BWGs included as victims in the dataset, and others were children witnessing the violence. This figure includes a handful of women who were pregnant at the time and their deaths resulted in the death of the fetus as well. Of those 95 cases, at least 9 had a youth suspect central to the encounter, which resulted in the death of another young person unrelated to the suspect. In total there were 27 cases where a
person under the age of 18 was the primary suspect of the police encounter. Finally, there were at least 11 cases where a BWG was killed in front of other family members, including siblings, parents, or adult children.

*Then what happened?*

Attempting to capture what happened in the aftermath of these cases also proved difficult. While some cases within the database had some basic information about the case’s disposition – that is whether someone was held responsible – and sometimes included some details about the officer in the description, by and large that information had to be researched through supplementary materials. The overwhelming burden of fault or accountability in these cases were placed on civilians for causing the deaths of these mostly bystander BWG victims. If a suspect was being chased, and then hit someone else, the suspect was charged with felony murder. For other non-vehicle related deaths, the majority of which were shooting deaths, if the BWG was not the target and the target lived, the BWG’s death was added to the target’s list of charges.

If only the officer could be faulted, the officer’s actions were usually found to be justified, or at most they faced internal disciplinary charges. Much of this information is not publicly reported, however, of the explicitly reported mentions of accountability we identified 15 internal investigations and 18 cases where the department either declined to take action or considered the officer’s actions justified. We coded 15 cases where the officer was placed on paid leave. However, since that is standard procedure for most departments after an officer-involved death, it is likely that for most of these cases, one or more officers were placed on paid leave or administrative duty until some form of
investigation was finished. There were 9 cases where an officer was fired, however, in at least one, the officer was able to continue volunteering in his role. In a couple of other cases the officers sued for wrongful termination, one of which resulted in reinstatement. In another case, officers resigned to avoid facing charges that likely would have resulted in guilty verdicts for DUI while on-duty and killing a civilian. We identified 36 cases where an officer faced criminal charges, but many of those cases resulted in plea deals that had few real consequences or led to acquittals. Most of the situations where police were charged, convicted, and given lengthy sentences occurred when they were involved in intimate partner violence (IPV) with a civilian. This may be a consequence of IPV being viewed, less as a line-of-duty related death, and more as a personal criminal matter.

Given that internal disciplinary mechanisms and the court system are largely not spaces of recourse for families of victims, wrongful death lawsuits become the primary mechanism by which families seek recompense. We were able to identify 98 cases where lawsuits were filed, and just under half of them (45 cases) resulted in an award. Table 3 illustrates some of those cases and the amounts awarded. Families usually file for much greater sums than they are ultimately awarded, if awarded at all. Michelle Cusseaux’s family filed a $7 million lawsuit against the city of Phoenix, but it was settled for $700,000 (CNN Wire, 2017). This happened for the family of India Kager as well, who sought $30 million in damages but was awarded $800,000 by a jury (Lee, 2018). Sometimes judges reverse jurors’ decisions on awards, as was the case with Korryn Gaines. Her family was awarded $38 million in damages, including $32 million for her son who was also shot by police in the encounter that killed her, but it was reversed by a judge’s order (Jacobs, 2019). Baltimore County recently settled on a $3 million payment
to the other members of the family (down from the nearly $6 million portion of the original award), but the settlement for the son still hasn’t been reached (Knezevich, 2021). Some cases take years to come to any sort of resolution, resolutions which often

### Table 3: Examples of Wrongful Death Payouts to Families of Killed BWGs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guanda Denise Turner</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Long Beach, CA</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>$19,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melissa Benton (&amp; injured parties)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Baton Rouge, LA</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>$3 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta Spruill</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>New York, NY</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>$1.6 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lula Bates &amp;</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Beaumont, MS</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>$228,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jo Ann McDonald</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diane Kemp</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Dallas, TX</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olivia Suydan (&amp; brother)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Washington DC</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>$1.2 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Marie Lane</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Riverside, CA</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>$395,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betty Salters</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>$3.5 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alicia Caldwell</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Memphis, TN</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>$1.2 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juhna Hardin</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>$750,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda Joyce Friday</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Kansas City, MO</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>$680,734.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice Clausell</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>Jackson, MS</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>$1.2 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reora Askew</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Philadelphia, PA</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tarika Wilson</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Lima, OH</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>$2.5 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tommye Ruth Freeman</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>$2.1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lashanna Jones Snipes</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>St. Louis, MO</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>$3.1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armetta Foster</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Cleveland, TN</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>$1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denise Gay</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>Brooklyn, NY</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna Brown</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Richmond Heights, MO</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>$568,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rekia Boyd</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>$4.5 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alesia Thomas</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Los Angeles, CA</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>$2.5 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malissa Williams (&amp; partner)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>East Cleveland, OH</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>$3 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Lassere</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>LaPlace, LA</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kendra Diggs</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Baltimore, MD</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>$850,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angel Chiwengo</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Baltimore, MD</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miriam Iris Carey</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>$150 million (filed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacqueline Nichols</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>Flint, MI</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>$7.7 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Cusseaux</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Phoenix, AZ</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>$700,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanisha Anderson</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Cleveland, OH</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>$2.25 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuvette Henderson</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Oakland, CA</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>$210,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India Kager</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Virginia Beach, VA</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>$800,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trendia Penn-Horton</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Little Rock, AR</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>$130,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bettie Jones</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>$16 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janet Wilson</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Dearborn, MI</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>$1.5 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kisha Michael</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Inglewood, CA</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>$8.6 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korryn Gaines</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Randallstown, MD</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>$38 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chequita Adams</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>$4.9 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
do not meet the families’ standard of justice. In the five years since Korryn Gaines’
death, the family still has not received the full sum they were awarded. Furthermore, a
large percentage of awards that families receive are paid to the lawyers, as was the case
of Malissa Williams and her partner. Although their case was settled for $3 million, over
40% ($1.2 million) went to the lawyers; the remaining was split between the two families
at about $865,000 each (Caniglia, 2014).

Making Meaning of the Trends

Discrete categories of fatal encounters were constructed to have a starting point
for understanding the mechanisms through which BWGs are casualties of the institution
of policing. However, salient themes cut across these categories. To illuminate the
complexity of how PV operated among this population, and analyze the implications,
cases are examined by theme in the following sections (Part B – G).

B. “RED LIGHT, GREEN LIGHT, THEY LIKE, WE LIKE, FAST CARS…”2

Chasing Tail

High-speed chases were a prominent feature across traffic offenses and traditional
crimes. Three themes emerged regarding these chases: (1) the necessity of a chase, (2)
chase anticipation, and (3) the discourse of a chase. The first theme questions whether a
chase should have happened at all given the original cause for the encounter. In many
cases, there simply were not good reasons to endanger multiple lives. The second theme
examined the actions of civilians when they either anticipated a chase that was never

---

started, or anticipated a chase continuing despite it being called off. In the first scenario, the police would initiate a traffic stop and a person would take off and almost immediately lose control of the vehicle and crash before a pursuit could begin. In the second, the chase would begin and then be terminated with police backing off and giving the person space. However, they would still be operating as if they were being chased and get into an accident. Here, the time elapsed between calling off the chase and the subsequent crash was a few seconds to a few minutes. The final theme was the discourse of chases, which dealt with the claims of police that they were not chasing someone because they either did not activate their lights and sirens, or because they followed at longer distance than directly behind their target. In these cases they were still visibly trailing the suspect, and they fled as if they were still being pursued.

*What people think police chases are...*

The high-speed police chases we see depicted in films and television are most like the situation that killed LaTanya Janelle McCoy, 24, of Sacramento, CA. She was the very first case in the dataset, killed on January 2, 2000. She was collateral death when a high-speed pursuit led to the suspect crashing into her car. This was the only case where a high-speed chase involved a suspect who had been on a murder spree (Morita, 2000). Even with this seemingly justified underlying cause, there were questions about whether LaTanya’s death could have been prevented. After the crash, the suspect took off on foot. The police chose to prioritize pursuing him, rather than render aid to LaTanya, who was trapped inside her car that was on fire. There was a shootout between the police and the suspect as she was burning to death. Her family believes that if they had stopped to put out the fire she might have survived (Morita, 2000).
What police chases really look like…

Chases, whether they are high-speed or just long-term pursuits, are not just about the officer and the suspect. They are also about the passengers in the car, the other drivers and pedestrians in the area, the witnesses to the carnage, the family members left behind, the long-term health implications for survivors, the costs of property damage, the costs of funerals and legal representation, and the costs of eroded public trust. With LaTanya’s case, she was a bystander. Her aunt, who lived in the same apartment complex that LaTanya had just left when she was hit, heard the crash, heard the shooting, and watched the fire from her window not realizing it was her niece that was dying (Morita, 2000). Even in a case like hers, where most would find the chase necessary, another life was lost, and a family irreparably changed. That exchange of accidental loss of life for the prevention of anticipated future loss of life (had the suspect not been stopped from his murder spree), seems like an unfortunate, but fair reaction. That, however, cannot be said for the majority of these cases.

Chasing Nothing

There were several cases in the traffic category that begged the question of whether the underlying offense justified the pursuit. Olivia Gross, 67, of Chicago, IL was killed in 2014 as a result of a high-speed chase that started over a driver’s headlights not being on. The driver of a separate vehicle was chased to the moment they crashed into Olivia’s car. The pursuit itself violated the department’s policy not to chase cars over equipment failures. Furthermore, the police lied in their report of the incident, claiming they called off the chase a few blocks before the crash. GPS data uncovered in a wrongful
death lawsuit found that the officer’s speed right around location of impact suggests they were still in pursuit. Additionally, two eyewitnesses gave sworn testimony that the police were right behind the van upon impact, and were on scene immediately after the crash chasing after the driver on foot (Demetrio & Ditore, 2014). Olivia’s case touches on the third theme mentioned above – the police would not have classified this as an active pursuit given their claim of calling it off. This enabled them to put full responsibility for her death on the fleeing driver, as happened in many of these cases.

Jacqueline Nichols, 64, of Flint, MI, is another key example of this theme. She was killed in a car collision with a state trooper who was chasing a man over a seatbelt violation in 2014. The trooper ran through a red flashing light, and there was a dispute over whether he had his siren activated throughout the chase, which might have alerted the driver of the car in which she was a passenger. Once again, the officer violated policy. He had a ride-along passenger (his father), who had not signed the necessary paperwork that would permit the trooper to engage in a chase with him in the car. Despite how unnecessary the underlying violation was, how many policies the trooper violated, and the fact that it was his car that collided with Jacqueline’s, the civilian who was being chased was charged for her death. The trooper, on the other hand, negotiated his meager 30-day suspension down to 20 days, with ten of those postponed such that he only had to serve them if new misconduct allegations arose. In all, this trooper only lost nine days of paid work, with the tenth day being paid out of his annual leave (Ridley, 2019). Jacqueline was killed, two other people in her car suffered injuries, the driver under pursuit was charged with a felony, and the city paid out millions in a wrongful death suit. Meanwhile, the trooper who killed her only lost nine days of paid work.
This pattern was repeated regardless of the placement of the suspect, officer, or innocent bystander. Lula Bates, age 9, of Beaumont, MS was killed in 2003 when her stepfather, who was driving the car in which she, her mother, and a family friend were passengers, fled a police stop over an obscured license plate. It is not clear why he did not pullover, but the history of policing, particularly among Black communities shows that fear is powerful driver of fleeing. Their car was chased at speeds topping 100 mph until he lost control and crashed, killing everyone in the car. Heather Jackson, 34, of Houston, TX, on the other hand was an unhoused pedestrian who was killed in 2018 as collateral in a high-speed chase. This chase originated over an attempt to pullover a driver for speeding, which evolved into a chase reaching 100 mph. The driver eventually lost control and ran over Heather, who was sleeping in front of a utility box. As with the previous cases, fault landed on the driver, who was criminally charged.

In each of these cases, everyone lost something, except the police department. Families were annihilated or at least devastated, individuals who should have received a mild fine or just let go for another day ended up with lengthy jail sentences, and the community paid out. Yet the officer faced few to no consequences despite repeated evidence of policy violations and report falsifications, on top of the unnecessary pursuit in the first place.

**Chasing Explanations**

Many of these cases were not considered chases in the initial reporting of events. However, a follow up of subsequent reports and lawsuits revealed disputed details and overall questions about how “chase” was being defined. As was discussed earlier, Olivia Gross’s case exemplifies this point clearly, where reports claimed to have called off the
chase, but GPS data and eyewitness testimony contradict what was said. A couple of other cases illustrate how the definition of what constitutes a chase is often splitting hairs. Generally speaking though, once people are being pursued, they are going to act like they are being chased, even if the police actually stop the pursuit. In those cases where officers “called off” the case, meaning they turned off their lights and slowed down but continued following, if a person can still see the police behind them, it is unlikely their flight reaction will turn off and allow them to slow down.

Margaret Stephens, 53, of Jackson, MS, was killed in 2001 as chase collateral. A car she was riding in was hit by another car being chased by the police for suspicious driving. The officer violated protocol – he was told to terminate the chase by his superior, and he instead turned off his siren and lights and continued to follow the driver until the collision occurred. The family filed a wrongful death suit that upon bench trial found the city 100% liable for her death. But the city appealed, claiming immunity and that the officer did not act recklessly based on a ten point criteria for recklessness. The judgment was reversed. One of those criteria considers the definition of “chase.” Because he turned off his lights and siren, their legal standard of chase is not met. This standard has no meaning for a civilian, who still feels they are under the pressure of being caught by the police.

This scenario was repeated across different cases in different cities in different years. It showed up in the 2019 death of 17-year-old Aniyah Briona Taylor of Rock Hill, SC, who was a passenger in a stolen car driven by a 19-year-old being chased by police. The police used the same logic of not calling it a pursuit because of the lack of sirens and lights even though they were still following them. In this case they were also being followed by a helicopter.
Returning to the lawsuit surrounding Margaret, it states, “The factor examining the seriousness of the offense for which police are pursuing the suspect does not weigh in the City’s favor, as violating a traffic ordinance is hardly serious enough to trigger the initiation of a pursuit.” This goes back to the question of whether the chase should have happened at all. A question that could also reasonably be asked regarding the stolen car at the center of Aniyah’s death, where two people were killed, another person was injured, and the car was destroyed (Tinoco, 2019). However, when the driving force behind police activity is getting the person for any wrongdoings, which of course is not a race-neutral drive, then rationalizations have to be made. In Margaret’s case they found it necessary to continue the pursuit because, “…it is unlikely that there were any available alternatives that would have led to Butler’s apprehension, as Officer Jackson did not know Butler’s identity at the time of the pursuit, which would have helped him locate Butler later” ("City of Jackson, Mississippi v. Lee B. Lewis, Oda Mae Green, and Sonya Stephens, on Behalf of the Wrongful Death Beneficiaries of Margaret E. Stephens, Deceased," 2013). Letting him go for the sake of public safety, however, was apparently not an acceptable alternative.

**Chasing the Boogeyman**

What seems to be the unaddressed issue at the heart of so many of these encounters is the level of fear involved. Fear is taken for granted as a legitimate cause for why people do not act in the manner the police expect of them, yet it is one of the primary reasons officers give for killing a civilian (“I feared for my life”). For Black people and other communities of color, police have largely never been representatives of
safety (Pickett et al., 2022). Instead they have been equated with a long history of disrespect, harassment, and brutality. The mere presence of police can induce panic. Just because a verbal command or another direction is given does not mean that people are able to process that information. Just because the police officer felt they handled the situation professionally or according to protocol does not mean that those on the other end perceive that as professionalism. Just because officers know who they are, does not mean that civilians recognize them, particularly where plainclothes officers or unmarked vehicles are involved.

When people are afraid they can become disoriented, which likely played an integral part in the death of Miriam Iris Carey, 34, of Washington, DC. She turned into a secure area near the White House, which has happened before, and several officers tried to stop her, but ended up blocking her path out of the secure area. One was a uniformed officer and another was off-duty and in plainclothes. She started panic-driving trying to get out of the area, and after a series of wrong turns was eventually gunned down. Her 13-month old was in the backseat, but was uninjured (Montgomery, 2014). Before even factoring in mental health complications, substance use, and general life stress and mind preoccupation people have going throughout the day, we ask of civilians to exercise calm and rational behavior in highly volatile, fearful, armed situations that have potential life-altering consequences.

Racial profiling and over-policing certain neighborhoods also make for volatile scenarios, particularly if police are not in uniform or in marked cars. Chequita Adams, 27, of Chicago, IL was killed in 2017 as collateral in a high-speed chase. An off-duty officer was driving home in his personal vehicle, which other on-duty officers claimed
matched a description of a stolen car. These on-duty officers in unmarked cars started chasing the off-duty officer in his personal vehicle, at speeds topping 100 mph, without sirens or lights. The off-duty officer crashed into Adams’ car, killing them both. In the end, his car was not a match for the suspected stolen vehicle. The police did not understand why he fled. The officer being chased likely did not know the police were behind him, as they were not in official vehicles. His instinct, even as an officer himself, was to flee in much the same way that so many of the civilians in these chases fled. Even after they supposedly turned on their lights and siren, he continued. Moreover, the off-duty officer killed was also a Black man, which raises questions as to how much of this pursuit came down to racial profiling, given that he looked like any other civilian, without his uniform or official vehicle. On-duty officers dealt with him like a regular member of the community, which raises questions about what professionalism really means when even an officer trained in the same tactics did not perceive the officialness of this encounter to then pullover.

Our current criminal-legal system is a system of punishment. Punishment that is not equitably distributed across race, class, or gender. Fear in tangent with potential traffic stops may lead some people to flee what should only be a citation-worthy offense. For others, the urge to flee comes down to doing the mental calculus of whether a person can get away from a police encounter and avoid going to jail. The conditions of incarceration and the potential for long-sentences are so untenable and likely, that for some it become worth the risk. For people who are on parole or probation, something as simple as a drug violation or association with the wrong person can mean reincarceration. This can occur even when they have otherwise been in compliance with the terms of their
supervised release. Marquita Bosley, 25, of Oakland, CA was killed under such a circumstance. She and her 19-month-old son were chase collateral in a high-speed chase that began with suspicious driving. She was killed and her son was left with severe brain damage, leaving him with a lifelong disability. The driver, who was on probation at the time, is assumed to have fled because he did not want to be reincarcerated. He went to prison for her death. Despite the police role in the accident, given the chase occurred in a residential area, the officer faced no real consequences. However, the city changed their chase protocol to one where they can only pursue if the suspect is wanted for a violent crime (Villalon, 2019). Unfortunately, that change came too late for Marquita.

**Chasing Logic**

Pursuits of individuals suspected of driving under the influence (DUI) was another recurrent theme. The premise of stopping people for DUls is that their judgment is so impaired that they cannot be trusted to drive safely. However, it is a flawed premise. It operates under the assumption that a driver who is in an altered state of mind has the ability to exercise sound judgment and stop for the police. When the only outcome from a DUI is punitive, many people are going to be hesitant to stop. When you add in the layers of race, other substance use, and carceral history, as mentioned previously, the fear of police, the fear of punishment, and the fear of amplified charges in connection with a DUI make a “logical” response all the more unlikely.

Ebony Radford, 35, of Dayton, OH was killed in 2018. She was a passenger in a car driven by a man suspected of driving under the influence. He fled a police stop and was chased in a residential neighborhood. The car lost control and crashed into a utility pole.
Her family struggled to get details about what happened. The police were slow to release details instead telling them to get a copy of the police report from another city. Their lack of transparency and willingness to inform the family about what happened suggests a latent understanding that the sequence of events did not make much sense. One of Ebony’s relatives said, “We keep hearing that they thought he was impaired…if he was, why pursue him? It’s irrational.” She left behind a 14-year-old son (Breaking News Staff, 2018).

For the case of Ronda Lashawn Brown, 48, of Port Royal, SC, she was killed along with her 7-year-old son. Again a suspected DUI and a failed traffic stop evolved into a high-speed chase topping 100 mph. In this case the police terminated the pursuit, but the driver was still in flight mode, running a red light and crashing into Brown’s vehicle. It could be debated that the police were not responsible here, because they terminated the pursuit, but this goes back to the point about the logic of chasing impaired drivers at all. The driver was eventually incarcerated, but in a statement made he reveals that he was blacked out during the entire encounter. He was physically incapable of responding rationally.

Joy Tyus, 28, and her boyfriend died under similar circumstances where police were only questionably responsible. They were both killed in a car crash caused by a man fleeing a police stop for DUI. He initially pulled over for the police, but tried to manipulate the situation so he could escape. He waited for the officer to get out of his car and get to his window before taking off, promptly colliding with Joy’s car. There wasn’t enough time for the officer to get back in his car and chase the man, so in reality it was not the actions of that individual officer that ultimately led to the collision, however, this
goes back to the larger question of the function and effectiveness of policing institutionally. The driver presumably knew that he was wrong for DUI, and knew that if he were caught that it would lead to a cascade of punitive measures; hence, the likely reason for his speeding off recklessly and killing two people. While this is not specifically the fault of an individual officer, it is an indictment of the entire system for the way it handles substance use and motor vehicle operation.

Intoxicated drivers are a danger to other people on the road, that is not in dispute, but this method of trying to prevent one danger while creating an equal or greater danger in these pursuits makes no sense. Across these three cases of pursuing DUIs, five people who were not the suspect died. This form of intervention can never truly be successful because of the negative associations with the police and prison-industrial complex (PIC). The punishment that results from such an offense is not meted out equitably or even reasonably in many cases. Intervention to prevent an acutely dangerous situation could only be successful if the authority was either positively perceived or at least neutral. There has been little discourse as to good alternatives.

**Chasing Cars**

Stolen vehicles were a singular major factor in deaths of BWGs, comprising just over 30% of all the traditional crimes. This category has significant overlap with the traffic category given the nature of being in a vehicle. Cases were coded as stolen vehicles only when the original cause of the police encounter dealt with spotting a known stolen vehicle. As seen with Aniyah’s case above, the pursuit of stolen vehicles has questionable merit particularly when high-speed pursuits endanger the community and kill other people. No one wants their property taken, let alone something that can be as essential to
daily life as access to a vehicle. In an ideal situation stolen cars would be recovered and returned to the owner, but this mechanism not only leads to injury and death, but complete destruction of the object that started the encounter.

Trendia Penn-Horton, 39, of Little Rock, AR was killed in 2015 when she was hit by a driver of a stolen car while walking with her 18-year-old daughter. The pursuit of this reported stolen car quickly turned into a high-speed chase reaching speeds of 70-90 mph. The driver lost control and drove over the sidewalk where Trendia and her daughter were, killing her and injuring the daughter. Revisiting the theme of how to define a chase, the pursuing officer was cleared of responsibility because he supposedly was not close enough to the vehicle when it crashed, even though he was still actively in pursuit (Staff Writer, 2015). Notably, the Little Rock Police Department policy on pursuits states that they should be immediately terminated when there’s “unreasonable danger” to any other person, including the person fleeing, but that policy was not adhered to (Petrimoulx, 2015). The blame for this encounter was laid entirely on the 25-year-old driver of the car, despite the police violation of policy and the unreasonableness of the underlying cause. He pled guilty to first degree murder and received a 30-year sentence. He took a plea in order to have an additional heroin charge dropped. With a 30-year sentence it is hard to imagine what that additional charge may have done except potentially remove the possibility of parole (Lynch, 2017).

**Chasing Children**

The danger of chasing after stolen vehicles is heightened by the fact that a good portion (18%) of them are driven by adolescents. When solely examining the cases with youth offenders, over 50% were encounters that started with reported stolen vehicles.
Inexperienced or unlicensed drivers on top of adolescent brains and fear of the police compound to increase the likelihood of poor outcomes. A few such cases involved both youth offenders and unrelated youth victims. Tamia Chapman, 13, of East Cleveland, OH and Amirah Kinlaw, 14, of Baltimore, MD were two such cases. Both girls were pedestrians who were hit by stolen cars driven by teenagers being chased by police officers at high-speeds in low speed zone areas. Amirah was crossing the street in a school-zone. In Tamia’s case police were supposed to have ended the chase; it reached 90 mph in a 35 mph speed zone. After their deaths, consequences for the officers were light or nonexistent. Of the officers in Tamia’s case two faced disciplinary actions ranging from a verbal reprimand to a 5-day suspension, and six others were cleared outright (Noll, 2021). The officer in Amirah’s case faced no disciplinary action (Duncan, 2018).

In both cases the youth suspects were charged with the deaths. The 16-year-old driver involved in Tamia’s case was charged as an adult and faced a prison sentence of 15 to 58 years, while his passenger pled out in juvenile court and received a 4-year sentence (Bingel & Mazur, 2021). The 14-year-old involved in Amirah’s death was charged with vehicular manslaughter but was charged as a juvenile (Duncan, 2018). Tamia’s family publicly stated they felt the police were responsible for her death because they initiated the chase. The recommended discipline for the involved officers did not come from the police department, but instead came from a civilian review board. Despite how inconsequential the disciplinary actions those officers faced were, the police department publicly expressed their disdain for the recommendation stating, “…they [the civilian review board] do their job sometimes without common sense. This is an unfortunate tragedy caused by violent teenagers that carjacked a lady on the west side. It is
unfortunate that we still try to blame the police for individuals committing violent crimes” (Noll, 2021). Stolen cars lead to high-speed chases, until one or more person is killed or injured. Drivers are sentenced to long prison terms regardless of age, and the officers who initiate these chases are considered to have done their jobs. It is unclear how this sequence of events benefits the community when nothing can be recovered, not the object of the pursuit, the lives lost, or the times lost to incarceration.

C. “NO-KNOCK, THE MAN WILL SAY. TO PROTECT PEOPLE FROM THEMSELVES...”

As was seen with Breonna Taylor, 26, of Louisville, KY and most recently with Amir Locke, 22, of Minneapolis, MN, war on drugs policing is frequently about surprise drug raids that often go wrong and result in casualties of unintended targets. Lynette Gayle Jackson, 29, of Riverdale, GA, Tarika Wilson, 26, of Lima, OH, and Alteria Woods, 21, of Vero Beach, FL were all killed in botched drug raids. Lynette and Alteria were killed in pre-dawn, no-knock raids to residences where police were looking for men with whom they had relationships, much like with Breonna Taylor. Like Breonna Taylor, these women’s deaths were blamed on either their immediate behaviors or their associations with the wrong people. Lynette’s death was blamed on her gun possession. At the time of the raid, she was holding a gun because she had recently been robbed and the sudden noise of the raid startled her, so she reached for a weapon in self-defense (Balko, 2006a). Alteria was killed when her boyfriend woke up to what he thought were intruders, grabbed his own gun to shoot at them, and they returned fire. This very much

---

3 Lyrics from “No Knock” On Free Will (1972) Written & Performed by Gil Scott-Heron
aligns with both Amir Locke’s and Breonna Taylor’s situations and raises important questions of who gets to defend themselves in their own homes and under what circumstances. Tarika, on the other hand, was fully compliant during the raid, but was shot and killed by an officer who got spooked by the sounds of gunfire coming from another room and just opened fire on her. Tarika was holding her infant son at the time, and he had his index finger shot off. The shots that spooked the officer were gunshots of a fellow SWAT team member, who was in another room killing the family’s dog. The officer was acquitted of any wrongdoing.

Even when the raids “go right,” meaning they find their intended target, they still serve a questionable purpose. They are really not about interrupting the larger drug trade infrastructure but about getting anyone, and often means continuous harassment of individuals and terrorizing the community. Annette Green, 37, of St. Louis, MO was killed in 2001 during another botched drug raid. Green had been a drug user, and police had routinely surveilled her home and the surrounding area, at times using informants. A prior drug raid of her home only turned up a gun, which Annette voluntarily gave to them, and a small quantity of a substance that could not be identified as a controlled substance. She was arrested and then released. The raid that ultimately killed her was authorized because an officer exaggerated the outcome of that prior raid in a sworn statement and added it to the statements of one of his informants. Nine police officers descended on her home in militaristic fashion. They wore Kevlar, were armed with submachine guns, and choreographed their entry with an announcement immediately followed by a battering ram to force the door open. As this was happening, Annette was coming down the stairs. Before she could respond to their commands they shot her four
times in front of her 12-year-old son. The only items this raid produced were half an ounce of cannabis and a few weapons, not enough for a prosecutor to file any charges against anyone in the household had she not been killed. The prosecutor admitted that the warrant was based on false information and that it should never have been issued. Although the department expressed sympathy, they refused to apologize, blaming her death on her lack of compliance (Rushton, 2001).

“We Like to Keep the Car Runnin’…”

War on drugs policing is not limited to household raids, it also shows up as hyper-surveillance of public places. That is what lead to the death of Reniece Randall, 38, of St. Louis, MO, who was killed in 2019 as chase collateral. SWAT officers witnessed what they characterized as a suspicious exchange between two different cars and tried to pull one of them over. They claimed they called off the chase, however, the car immediately thereafter ran a red light and crashed into the car Reniece was in, killing her. This connects to the second theme in Part B of what it means to call off a chase if cars are already in momentum in highly populated areas. It often seems like a mechanism to shift responsibility of the harm it eventually causes away from the police.

Another mechanism of war on drugs policing is pretextual car stops. When police suspect someone of being in possession of drugs, they will stop them on the pretext of a minor traffic violation in order to coerce a drug search. Angel Chiwengo, 46, of Baltimore, MD was killed in 2013 when the car she was riding in was hit by another car being chased by plainclothes police in an unmarked car because they smelled weed. Several witnesses reported never hearing police sirens, and the car they were in was a

---

rental vehicle that was not recognized by the state as a permissible emergency vehicle (MacArthur, 2015). The chase reached speeds of 100 mph, and despite being ordered to stop the chase, officers continued anyway. Two people in the car being chased were killed in addition to Angel, and the driver of her vehicle sustained injuries (MacArthur, 2015). Angel’s sister was quoted as saying: “They need to look into another way to chase them bad people. These people have got tags. Why not take the tag and look for them little by little? Why chase them and kill other people?” (MacArthur, 2015). Angel was on the way to her daughter’s house who gave birth later that day (Davis & Fenton, 2013). Three people were killed, one person was severely injured, and a daughter was devastated on what should have been the happiest day of her life, giving birth to a child that will never meet their grandmother, all because of the scent of weed.

D. “ALL WE WANTED WAS A CHANCE TO TALK, ‘STEAD WE ONLY GOT OUTLINED IN CHALK…”5

Police are called for all sorts of reasons grounded in crime including violence, burglaries, conflict resolution, and nuisances. Police are entrusted to be the arbiters of community safety, but as seen with the high-speed chases and drug policing, there are real questions of who this helps, if anyone, and who this mostly harms. Charleena Lyles, 30, of Seattle, WA was killed in 2017 in front of her children after she voluntarily called the police to report a burglary. When police arrived they realized they were already familiar with her home as they had been called there before. They knew she had children and they knew she had mental health issues. An audio recording of the encounter

---

5 Lyrics from “The Charade” On Black Messiah (2014) Recorded by D’Angelo and the Vanguard
demonstrated that one officer was taking a statement when another started shouting at her to get back. She was holding a knife, but it is unclear whether she was using it in a threatening manner. Only 15 seconds elapsed between the order to get back and their shooting her. She was pregnant at the time. Despite having foreknowledge of her struggles, and going to the call with two officers instead of the typical one officer required for a burglary report (per that department’s practice), they were still unprepared. She called for their assistance, and her distress likely was exacerbated by her mental health issues. Instead of helping her, they killed her and her unborn child, also traumatizing young children present who had to step over her dead body to get out of the house (Levin, 2017).

There was a demonstrated pattern of deficits in conflict resolution and de-escalation among law enforcement. Kiwi Herring, 30, of St. Louis, MO was a transwoman facing continuous harassment from a neighbor, who repeatedly threatened her and made homophobic remarks. Police were called to the conflict with reports of violence in progress. Kiwi had cut this neighbor. When police arrived on scene, she was still distraught and ended up slashing one of the officers. In turn, he shot at her at least 7 times. The officer who was cut had superficial injuries, but this was used as justification for the killing. It is unclear if there were any attempts at de-escalating the dispute or using less than lethal force prior to shooting her.

This disproportionate reflex shows up again for Erica Collins, 26, of Cincinnati, OH who was killed in 2012 just outside of her home. She called 911 over a family dispute allegedly over gas money between her and her sister. Erica had a knife and was preparing to slash her sister’s tires. Her sister was sitting in the car. Police told her to stop, and
when she did not they shot her. They claimed she stood up and moved towards them with the knife, thus “The officer was faced with an immediate threat to his life” (Staff Writer, 2012). But Erica’s sister recalls the encounter happening differently. When Erica bent over to start slashing her tires, the officer told her “Don’t slice her tires,” Erica stood up to face the officer and said “No,” and she was immediately shot. Witnesses heard Erica tell the police he would have to shoot her to stop her from slashing the tires, but that at no point was she a threat to the officer (Staff Writer, 2012). This was a petty family argument with an overreaction from police and an immediate move by the police department to create a narrative that justified and rationalized this action.

In each of these three encounters the weapon inciting deadly force was a knife. Knives are generally considered cause for using deadly force in the US, but that is a choice rather than a necessity of safety. Police in other countries disarm people with knives without resorting deadly force. The United Kingdom experiences knife attacks at a similar rate as the US and yet only shot two people in all of 2021 (Sinyangwe et al., 2021). Erica was merely using the knife against tires; the police were not being threatened. Charleena had a knife directed towards the police, but again considering the distress she must have been in to report her crime victimization, coupled with known mental illness, there were likely other options to shooting her. There were no attempts to de-escalate or disarm her. Kiwi was actively harming other individuals. The wounds were superficial, but an intervention was necessary. A taser would have been an appropriate, albeit imperfect alternative, given what is known about the health impacts of less than lethal force. Realistically, this situation probably should never have come to fruition. As a transwoman facing sustained threats, police, in the system we imagine exists, would have
provided protections for her before it came to a head. Yet we know, Black queer and transgender women are routinely denied protection by the police, blamed for their victimization, and often have their victimization inverted into perpetration when they try to defend themselves (Ritchie, 2017).

E. “THE DOCTOR BLAMED HER FOR THE GRAVEYARD HER BODY HAD MADE OF ITSELF”

   When George Floyd and Eric Garner were murdered, the initial and even later discourse was about their underlying health conditions being the real cause of their deaths. Prior to the video coming out of George Floyd’s murder, his health was the primary discourse in the coroner’s report (Crawford-Roberts et al., 2020). For Michael Brown, his physicality became the primary discussion, with allusions to his weight and size being an important factor in how Darren Wilson perceived him, to justify his statement that he “feared for his life.” This phenomenon of blaming health or even alluding to health or physicality in descriptions of PV victims shows up among women as well. It is sometimes used to shift blame, and sometimes as an implicit judgment about her character. It also shows the complicity of the medical establishment in masking a complete understanding of police brutality by attributing victims’ deaths to health issues while not including the most proximal violence inflicted on their bodies.

   Shirley Andrews, 38, of Cincinnati, OH, died in 2005 after repeatedly being tasered by the police. Andrews was living in a group home for the mentally impaired and was in a state of crisis, destroying property and assaulting staff. They called the police, and

---

6 Poem by Jasmine Mans, “Mourning” from *Black Girl, Call Home* (2021)
although one of the responding officers was trained as part of the mental health response team, his strategy to de-escalate the situation was to repeatedly warn her and then repeatedly use the taser to subdue her. After several rounds of tasing her – one officer for a total of 98 seconds, and another for a total of 32 seconds (Williams, 2018) at 50,000 volts – she was arrested and taken into custody, dying eight days later. When she was taken to the hospital, physicians had to remove three of the taser barbs from her body that Shirley had not already removed herself. Her autopsy report listed cause of death as pulmonary thromboembolism and that her obesity was a major factor. They went on to say that there is no possibility of delayed death due to a taser, and that it was only her health that killed her, excluding the taser as having any role. In the news article, the description of Andrews, the “5-foot-7-inch black female, weighed about 270 pounds,” is used as a way to reinforce how her size (fatness) caused her death (Flannery, 2005). The death of Talia Barnes, 29, of Erie, PA, was similar to Shirley Andrews. She was killed in 2011 after being tasered by police, but her cause of death was attributed to factors beyond the use of a taser. However, in this case, police did not inform the coroner that they had used a taser on her, so the coroner’s report attributed her death to drug use. The last reported information about her case was about her family suing the city, and the manufacturer of the weapon, on behalf of her eight surviving children (Staff Writer, 2013).

Jean Hankins, a woman in her 50s from Bedford Heights, OH was killed in 2004 after the police responded to a call about her lighting her home on fire and shooting at her neighbors’ property. She was described as possibly having an underlying mental illness and was intoxicated at the time. She refused to drop her weapon when police arrived and
actually reloaded and aimed at them, so they shot her. What was notable about this case was not the use of force but the reporting about it afterwards. The news article chose to describe her weight, calling her “a heavyset woman about 50 years old” when there was no relevance of her weight to the story (Tinsley & Flournoy, 2004). In this case the description was not used to redirect blame for her death as it has been used in several other cases, but it revisits the tactic of suggesting a character flaw given the state of societally accepted fatphobia.

The death of Vanessa Facen, 35, a transwoman from San Diego, CA, was another example of unnecessary physical descriptions after death. Not because those factors were not important, but because the importance of those factors did not register with those reporting on her death. Vanessa died four days after a physical assault between her and multiple sheriff’s deputies while in custody, after being arrested for an attempted burglary. Her actual cause of death was not determined but they were looking into toxicology reports while asserting that it could not have been due to their use of physical force. This assertion is questionable, as the news reports about her death describe the physical struggle between her and deputies as the most proximal cause of her breathing stopping and the reason they called an ambulance. Throughout the descriptions of her case we learn that she was HIV+ and we learn that she was a transwoman. Despite initially cooperating with the police, according to these reports, we later learn that during the transfer process she became violent and uncooperative. On the one hand they state not understanding the source of her rage, but on the other, they noted that the final fight with deputies occurred during intake. Intake is when she would have learned that they planned on booking her into the men’s area of the jail. “Although Facen had breasts and lived as a
woman, the Sheriff’s Department was treating her as a man because she had male genitalia, Lt. Tom Bennett said,” (Hazle, 2005).

There is largely no utility in being descriptive about her HIV status, her gender identity, or her genitalia in the course of this encounter. Her HIV status in the context of her injuries was information that police needed to know, but it did not need to be communicated to the general population, and suggests a desire to imply something negative about her. There is a phenomenon termed “classification anxiety” that leads police to treat transgender people with more hostility, because their existence challenges the underlying heterosexist and hypermasculine subculture of policing (Ritchie, 2017). We do not know the nature of the interaction between Vanessa and the police, however, it is worth questioning how she may have been treated over the course of the encounter that could have led to the escalation and her death.

If there were to be any utility in describing all of the aforementioned aspects of her life, it would be to discuss how misgendering a person might be rage inducing. There are potentially severe dangers for housing a transwoman in the men’s area of the jail (Neus, 2021), to the point where some counties have changed their policy to jail people in the section that aligns with their identity rather than their genitalia (Wilson, 2021). However, that was not a feature of the discussion, and like the allusions to fatness with Jean or Shirley, or the unknown but “other causes” for Talia, it becomes a way to subtly suggest something else was either inherently wrong with them or made them deserving of their deaths.

With the case of Anna Brown, 29, of Richmond Heights, MO, rather than a post-death medicalization and blaming, we see a pre-death complicity between the medical
complex and the police in denying her lifesaving care. In 2011, Anna Brown was experiencing a period of homelessness when she went to the hospital for pain. She had been to two other hospitals recently, also complaining of pain (Byers, 2012). Physicians suspected she was only seeking drugs and refused to treat her. When she would not leave the hospital, physicians called the police saying that she was trespassing. Physicians gave the police medical clearance to have her arrested, saying nothing was wrong with her. She was arrested and transported to jail. When they arrived at the jail, she told police she could not get out of the car because she could not walk. They then dragged her into a jail cell, and left her on the floor where she was clearly in physical distress, and ignored her pleas for help (Byers, 2012). She was found dead within the hour. An autopsy revealed she had blood clots in her legs, which broke loose while she was in custody and travelled to her lungs. She left behind two children, 3 and 12 years old (Byers, 2017).

“One day, all them bags, gon’ get in your way…”

Many of the women in this sample, probably more than can be accounted for, faced layers of marginalization and were exposed to multiple institutional failures. Probing further into the case of Anna Brown, her death came after a devastating sequence of events. Her home had been destroyed by a tornado, and after moving to a new location, she lost her job, resulting in having her electricity, gas, and water shutoff. Anna eventually lost custody of her children due to neglect, and her second home was condemned. Although Anna’s mother was willing to house her, the judge in Anna’s custody case ruled that she could not cohabitate with her children. This left Anna’s

---

7 Lyrics from “Bag Lady” On Mama’s Gun (2000). Recorded by Erykah Badu
mother with the choice to either house her daughter or house her grandchildren. Anna’s mother took in her grandchildren, leaving Anna homeless. On top of this, caseworkers suspected she may have had an undiagnosed cognitive delay or some type of mental illness. Despite not being evaluated, she started attending a support group for people with mental illnesses and began markedly improving. It was then that an accident led to the sequence of events that eventually killed her. She fell and injured herself, the injury led to the blood clots, pain, and cursory medical treatment, which led to that final set of encounters where she was disbelieved and denied care (Byers, 2012). A natural disaster led to displacement. Job loss led to shutting off critical utilities. Lack of utilities led to child neglect and interaction with the child welfare system. That system interaction demanded separation and resulted in the loss of her last potential support, in order to prioritize her children. A missed childhood diagnosis likely contributed to many of the difficulties she faced as an adult. Just as she was potentially turning things around, a rolled ankle ended it all. If at any point in this cascade of events she had received supportive care, she might still be alive.

Meagan Hockaday, 26, of Oxnard, CA was killed in 2015 during an IPV incident. Her fiancé called the police because she had been drinking, had hit him, and he felt unable to control her in the presence of their three small children. When police arrived, they killed her seconds after seeing her armed with a knife, despite the fiancé shouting at them not to shoot her. This couple had three kids under age five. The District Attorney’s report of the case reveals that she and her fiancé had a difficult relationship. He had pled guilty to abusing her in the past and she had also reported him for molesting their children, which they could find no physical evidence of. She suffered from depression and anxiety after
her second child and had a confirmed diagnosis of post-partum depression after her third, who was only 7-months-old. The combination of post-partum depression, a history of being abused, and her recent increased alcohol consumption made her extremely vulnerable. In the months before this encounter she started regularly hitting him (Totten, 2016). Whether she had become the primary aggressor or there was bi-directional abuse is unknown. Regardless, this family needed long term help and the only tools that seemed available to them were the police, who were unequipped to address the mental health and social circumstances of the family in an effective, compassionate way.

The death of Decynthia Clements, 34, of Elgin, IL, was a more complex scenario. She caught the attention of police when she was parked on a dead-end street with the motor running. As they approached, she started to pull away but they yelled at her and she stopped. He questioned her, but noticed she had a knife on the front passenger seat and took her name to run a check and call for backup. He thought she might be on drugs and called for a canine unit. It is not clear if he ever communicated that she was under suspicion for anything, but by the time backup arrived, she had driven off. They followed her and observed her run a stop sign, which then gave them cause (pretext) to pull her over. They activated their lights, but she did not stop, instead accelerating with the police following in pursuit. Police were directed to stop chasing her, which they did, but a little while later another officer noticed Decynthia parked on the shoulder of a road and called it in. The first officer and his backup returned and surrounded the vehicle.

They noticed drug paraphernalia in the car and that her car was damaged. She was ordered out of the car, but she did not get out. Several officers arrived. Two were members of the SWAT team, one of whom was notified that she had a history of
suicidality and explained that she must be having a mental episode. One of the sergeants on scene was trained in negotiation, but likely not specifically for mental illness. Nevertheless, they claimed they were going to try and give her some space and negotiate with her. All their de-escalation tactics were rooted in policing/militarism, and not in mental health standards. They considered boxing her in and physically pulling her out of the car. They eventually shut the highway down and agreed that if she got out of the car and looked like she was going to cut her own throat, they would either tase her, use a pepper ball launcher, or use a 40 mm impact weapon to stop her. Eventually her car caught fire and she could be seen harming herself. They approached her car one final time and told her to get out. She did, but with a knife in each hand. She ran at them, and though one officer used the taser as planned, the other shot her three times – once in the head. Despite their observation of behaviors indicating she was in a mental health crisis and a plan to use less-lethal (but still violent) force, ultimately one officer abandoned the plan and went straight for the use of deadly force (Hillard Heintze, 2019).

“If you develop an itch there are no salves to cover the area in need of attention…”

The mental health condition of schizophrenia emerged repeatedly, which suggests a particular vulnerability to experiencing violence for individuals managing this illness. For most of the women who were identified with schizophrenia, the police were informed ahead of time either to their diagnosis or to the fact that they had an unmanaged mental illness. Police largely were not engaging with these women without some foreknowledge, and yet they were still killed. A recurring aspect of encounters with most of the women

---

with mental illnesses, not just schizophrenia, was engaging them already in a state of agitation, armed with a sharp object, and treating them as someone willfully disobeying police commands. When these women did not put the objects down, attempts to de-escalate or negotiate ended, and the almost immediate response was most always the use of physical violence.

Martina Brown, 58, of Jersey City, NJ, had stopped taking her medication and was behaving erratically. Her husband called 911 for ambulance assistance after she grabbed a knife, but they sent the police. When police arrived they escalated an already volatile situation. Her husband was locked out of the apartment. They threw him on the ground and handcuffed him when he tried to prevent them from further agitating her; they were trying to tape over the peephole so she could not see them coming. In other words, they were trying to surprise her upon entry. Seven officers entered the apartment and tried to “subdue her” with their batons. When she lunged at them with the knife, slashing two officers, they shot her (Clark, 2009).

Brenda Williams, 52, of Scranton, PA was an Air Force Veteran living with schizophrenia. Her mother called the police to do a wellness check, informing them of her illness. Four police officers went to her house where they found her naked and agitated. She had been off her medication for days. Although there was an ambulance on site, they decided she did not need to go the hospital, but that she did need to be punished for yelling and cursing at people. They all stood around her home, writing up a citation for disorderly conduct. An article that summarizes the details of the internal investigation discussed how Brenda was surrounded by police in her living room, while still nude, and that she likely felt cornered and the need to defend herself. They allowed her to go into
her kitchen, and when she came back she had a knife, at which point they shot and killed her. They claimed she was out of control, thus necessitating deadly force. However, this calls into question their earlier decision to not take her to the hospital. They also made no attempt to restrain her. This inaction was due to a prior incident with the same police department – where they also improperly cited someone for disorderly conduct in their own home, and which resulted in a huge public scandal and a lawsuit (the girl, 2009).

Thus, they both over and underreacted to this scenario. They also came unprepared. They could not use less-lethal force because apparently none of the four officers arrived to the house equipped with anything other than their service weapons (the girl, 2009). The entire encounter was negligent and demonstrated an unwillingness to provide assistance or allow a dignified response to someone they were forewarned may be in crisis.

Suicidality

The speed with which police pull the trigger is so well understood that some of the most vulnerable members of society know that police can serve as a mechanism for suicide. Morgan Rankins, 30, of Austin, TX was killed in 2017 after police responded to two 911 hang-ups to do a wellness check. When they arrived she was pulling out of the driveway in her car, and they alleged that she tried to run them over. This initiated a car chase in a residential neighborhood. She eventually crashed, got out of the vehicle, and ran at the officer with a knife. He shot her. Her friend said she had mental health issues and was a recent cancer survivor (Road & Lane, 2017). Though it is not explicitly mentioned in the article, it is possible this was a desired suicide by cop. It is likely that suicide by cop is ultimately what fueled Decynthia Clements’ final charge at police in the description above.
In addition to this case, where suicide is a suspected motivation, there were an additional six confirmed cases of suicide by cop, two of which were mental health calls where police were explicitly called to help prevent someone from self-harm, and instead killed them. A third was a mental health crisis. Marnell Villarreal, 42, of Houston, TX ran into the police department in 2007, armed with a knife, begging to be killed. They stunned her first, but when she continued to advance on them, they shot her. Two other women were experiencing mental health crises and encountered police due to perpetrating violence. LaVeta Jackson, 36, of Dorchester, MA died by suicide by cop in 2002. Her case was another multiplicity of system failures, where she struggled with schizophrenia and was working to maintain custody of her children. She had stopped taking her medication and was hiding it from people that may have helped, because she was afraid of losing her children again. Rather than being able to get the help she needed, her crisis reached a pinnacle, and she killed both of her children. By the time police arrived, she lunged at them to be sure they killed her as well (Gelzinis, 2007). The sixth woman was confronted right after a bank robbery. She pointed what looked like a gun at officers who then shot and killed her. It turned out to be an air pistol, and reports say that she left a note behind suggesting it may have been a planned suicide by cop (Houston Police Department, 2006).

**Crisis Intervention**

Crisis intervention team (CIT) training is relied upon as the primary solution for addressing the intersection of mental illness and policing to reduce injuries and fatalities. Yet there is little evidence for its effectiveness in preventing the violence it aims to
reduce. The main benefit of CIT training goes to the officers, helping them to feel more knowledgeable and confident about handling people with mental illness. There is not a solid base of evidence that it reduces arrests or injuries due to use of force (Rogers et al., 2019).

Shukri Ali Said, 36, of Johns Creek, GA was in the midst of a crisis when her sister called 911 for help. Shukri, who was diagnosed with bipolar disorder, depression, and schizophrenia, had left the house that morning on foot with her purse, passport, and a knife. Her sister tried to stop her but when she could not, she called in hopes that medical professionals would catch up with her, sedate her, and take her into care. The two officers who ultimately shot her were trained in negotiation, crisis intervention, and de-escalation and both took a class on how to interact with the Muslim community. Yet, when she did not put the knife down and allegedly threatened them, they immediately defaulted to deadly force.

As was mentioned above, there is a pattern of police spending little time engaged with de-escalation and thereafter escalating to the use of deadly force. They often report seeing this as their only option; and they say as much. After police killed Meagan Hockaday it was reported that, “the officer had no choice,” (Carlson & Diskin, 2016). Yet before her fiancé called the police, he had already successfully disarmed her multiple times. After they killed Martina Brown, the official statement was that they were left with “no choice but to shoot her,” (Clark, 2009). Even when less than lethal force is used, as seen with Shirley Andrews who was repeatedly tasered, this often only further agitates and raises tensions. In some cases, deadly force is really the only option after they have escalated the situation, given the limitations of their training. Linda Hicks, 62, of Toledo,
OH was killed in this exact pattern. She was off her medication and “armed” with a pair of scissors, and when police arrived, they tasered her. This only further frustrated her, so she lunged at them and they shot her in the head. Both Shirley Andrews and Linda Hicks were living in residential group homes for people with mental health issues. Both facilities called the police instead of handling the crisis themselves. In Shirley’s case, CIT officers did show up. In Linda’s they did not, despite knowing where they were heading and why they were called. Regardless, both sets of officers used violent tactics as their primary form of “de-escalation,” and all officers were cleared of any wrongdoing. Even if CIT is determined to one day be effective, most of the time they are not dispatched, as seen with Linda Hicks, or they do not know to dispatch them, as seen with Meagan Hockaday.

Relatives call the police seeking help, and then must live with wondering what could have happened if they had not. Martina Brown’s husband stated, “If I knew they were going to shoot my wife, I never would have called. I thought they were going to take her to the hospital…” (Clark, 2009). Shukri’s sister said, “There’s nothing I can do to change the outcome. If I hadn’t called 911, what would have happened that morning? I wish I knew about other alternatives, someone else to call or another way of dealing with it, but I didn’t. … At that point, what was needed of me was to take action,” (Poole, 2018).
F. “YOUR LOVE SAID YA NEEDED ME. YOU ABUSED MY LOVE, SET ME FREE.”

Domestic and intimate partner violence (DV/IPV) is not typically included in the framing of police perpetrated violence. When examining police misconduct dashboards on city websites, DV/IPV is also typically not included because these are considered issues relevant to their private lives and not violence as a part of duty. Generally speaking, we do not know the rate of fatal police-involved DV/IPV on a national scale. However, there are multiple notable cases just within this data subset.

**Officer & Civilian**

Angele Marie Jackson, 40, of Birmingham, AL was killed by her police officer husband in 2005. Angele had just arrived home from visiting a relative when she was met in the driveway by her husband who was holding a shotgun. He shot her in the face and chest while his daughter was in her bedroom. He was arrested and tried in court. Although officer convictions are rare, DV/IPV deaths seem to be the one area where convictions are met with lengthy sentences. What was notable about this case relates to the earlier theme of medicalizing violence. Instead of using the medical histories of victims to exonerate police from responsibility in their deaths, in this case the officer’s medical history was used to try to exonerate him from culpability. His defense was that his judgment was impaired due to a combination of chronic pain medication, insomnia, and sexual enhancement drugs that he was taking to address his impotence that resulted from high blood pressure and uncontrolled diabetes. Several physicians testified that he likely blacked out before shooting her. During his sentencing, a colleague spoke on his

---

behalf, saying that he had merely made a mistake and was a good person. He was sentenced to life in prison (Velasco, 2006). Medical issues are raised to exonerate police officers; in this case it did not work.

Chanda White, 33, of Woodworth, LA was killed in 2011 by her husband, who held her captive and tortured her for several days before killing her and driving her to the hospital where she was pronounced dead. He was arrested that day and a grand jury indicted him for second-degree murder. There were few articles about this case. After the articles in early 2012 discussing his indictment and announcing that a trial would begin in April, there was no more news. Nothing turned up in NewsBank or NexiUni databases, or through an internet search. The first article about this case is titled “Katrina hero, former law enforcement officer charged with wife’s murder.” It was a brief article, 180 words, that spent the first four sentences vaguely describing that his wife had died and he was a suspect, and the last three sentences describing his heroism during Hurricane Katrina, and his work with the U.S. Marines, the Louisiana National Guard, the sheriff’s office, and the local police department (Staff Writer, 2011). It was more important to highlight his accomplishments than his horrendous actions. The last time his name surfaces, is in a legal document, which an appeal from 2016. This appeal discusses his petition for sole custody of his and Chanda’s child against her parents, the maternal grandparents. They had been granted full custody of the child since her murder. Based on this petition, one can assume that whatever murder charges he was indicted for were either dropped or he was acquitted. If he instead took some sort of plea deal, that would he mean he was released from custody in fewer than four years ("Pickney v. White," 2017).
Of the 43 DV/IPV cases that involved an officer, 13 of them, about 30%, were murder-suicides. Rose Cobb, 47, of Detroit, MI, is a 14th case but with a delay. She was killed in 2007 while sitting in her car waiting for her husband, a sergeant, to come out of a store. He had hired a hit man to shoot her, manufacturing this scenario with the help of the son of a woman he was having an affair with. The hit man eventually confessed to the killing and exposed everything. However, when they arrested the hit man and the son of the sergeant’s mistress, they decided not to arrest him as well. Not too long afterwards he was found hanging from a tree; he died by suicide. This case raises the question of whether he would have gotten the same freedom, not being arrested with the other two men, if he had not been a police sergeant.

Another three cases happened under suspicious circumstances, where questions arose as to whether a woman died by suicide or was murdered by her husband. Karla Parker, 29, of Florissant, MO, died in 2001. Her husband, a police officer, said she died by suicide. He had gunshot residue on his hands, but he claimed that came from trying to stop her bleeding. Although her death was officially ruled a suicide, during a civil trial there was testimony from a firearms expert (who was a retired police officer) who stated that the only way he could have had gunshot residue on his hands is if he handled the weapon himself. This is a case where the larger criminal-legal system declined to charge him; the police put out a warrant for his arrest, but it was rejected by the prosecutor.

Another murky scenario involved two police officers with a history of DV. The initial reports about Tabitha McCree, 37, of Detroit, MI, were that her husband killed her. Later it was ruled a suicide. Although the overall police narrative and major media narratives settled with this conclusion, there were still lingering questions. Suggestions were made
by her family that this was a coverup, given how her death occurred (Harrington, 2007). Police claimed that she drove herself somewhere secluded and shot herself in the stomach. Officers who responded to the scene decided not to wait for an ambulance, and instead drove her to the hospital in the back of their SUV (Esparza et al., 2007).

**Officer & Officer**

This privileging of giving police officers the benefit of the doubt was not limited to occurrences where a power imbalance existed between the officer and their civilian intimate or familial partner. It extended into relationships between officers, which proves interesting given the amount of energy police departments devote to apprehending civilians who kill officers. Similar efforts were not applied when officers killed other officers. Emma Mae Horton, 38, of Goodman, MS, was killed in 2000 by her brother-in-law in a domestic dispute. Emma was the Assistant Police Chief of the department where her brother-in-law also worked. He was angry with her because she scheduled him to work at a time that conflicted with his working a second job with a different police department. When she stopped by his house to visit with her sister and niece, he went into a rage, demanded she get out of his house, and then shot her. She ran into the bathroom to call for help and he shot her through the door with his two service weapons an additional 36 times; 13 of those bullets hit her. He was arrested and later acquitted by a jury who bought his self-defense claim, even though she never fired a shot (Officer Down Memorial Page Inc., n.d.). He killed his sister-in-law in front of his wife (her sister) and daughter, and got away with it.
There are some extremes cases at opposite ends of culpability. Some of these cases were the only ones where officers faced long jail sentences; others, where officers’ egregious behavior was only attributable to them, resulted in no consequences. Despite DV/IPV not being considered line-of-duty misconduct, it is difficult to separate the benefits accrued from officers’ relationships to important people within the criminal-legal system and their lack of consequences. Emma Mae Horton’s case was particularly egregious as she outranked the officer who killed her. It might be expected that the system would exact maximum punishment for a subordinate killing a higher ranking officer. Yet even with his subordinate status, he was acquitted. It raises the question of whether and how much gender played a role in this situation; whether the question of who should have been occupying the role of assistant police chief subconsciously factored in.

Similar questions arose from my experience doing a ride-along with New Orleans Police Department (NOPD) officers in 2018, as part of a prior study. I listened to two male officers, one higher ranking than the other, spend an hour trash-talking a woman sergeant while we took a dinner break during shift. This woman was the superior to the officer I was riding with, and may have been either a superior or a peer of the other who joined us. All of these officers were Black; however, what they dwelled on was how much she did not belong in her position, leaning on gender stereotypes of fitness to carry out the work. My fieldwork experience is corroborated by multiple studies that have found that women in general are seen as being out of place in an occupation that is viewed as a man’s world. The hypermasculine subculture within policing can create a hostile environment for women who may face stigma, discrimination, and sexual
harassment for deigning to be in this man’s world (Brown et al., 2020). These attitudes and the accompanying behavior is taught and encouraged from the moment they enter the police academy (Prokos & Padavic, 2002). For Black women officers in particular, there has been a noted phenomenon of Black male peers leveraging the little social capital they have in a racial and gender hierarchy to denigrate Black women in particular. They see Black women’s advancement as an opportunity that should have been theirs. In a space with limited opportunities for advancement, this can create hostility (Martin, 1994).

Although I cannot discern what the jury’s rationale was for acquitting Emma Mae’s brother, I think about that ride-along experience in my understanding of what possibly could have justified a self-defense claim in terms of the tactics lawyers may have drawn upon to undermine her character, to position her as an aggressor. This case, like the earlier unmarked car chase of the off-duty officer, illustrates how routine and rationalized PV also works against other police officers who occupy a minoritized status within their respective departments.

G. “THEY HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO KILL A MINORITY”

Across these cases, civilians who were criminally charged in the deaths of these BWGs faced significant sentences, usually nothing less than five years in prison, but often 20+ years and even life sentences were imposed. Most of the blame in these cases was assigned to civilians. Even when police officers repeatedly violated policy in the cascade of events resulting in death, they were not held responsible. Decynthia Clement’s case is a pointed example of this. The administrative review found that multiple officers

---

10 Lyrics from “Fuck tha Police” On Straight Outta Compton (1988). Recorded by N.W.A.
violated important policies more than once. They repeatedly turned their body cameras on and off meaning there is no linear, gap-free account for the hour-long encounter. The lead officer was also found to be out of compliance when he was informed that she had a mental illness and decided to handle it himself instead of calling an ambulance. By the time that all these policy failures coalesced to escalate a situation to the point that deadly force was considered, the use of deadly force then became justified. In other words, you can be wrong for staring the conflict, but be right for ending it. The administrative review found the use of force for both the tase and the guns followed protocol because they were considered to be in imminent danger; danger they created for themselves. Even though he neglected to render aid after he shot her (another policy violation), neither he nor any of the other officers involved were found to have violated policy to the point at which criminal charges would arise (Hillard Heintze, 2019).

The relevance of victim wrongdoing in assigning blame to civilians can go back as far as their criminal history can be referenced. The relevance of officer wrongdoing in assigning blame to officers starts with the most proximal set of circumstances as perceived by the officer.

**Shifting Blame**

Blame shifting after a death was a common occurrence, and in many cases this dealt with allusions to bad parenting either as the true cause of death or at least representative of the poor character of the person already dead. Both veins served to shift the blame away from the police officer and onto the civilian. Demetra Boyd, 11, of Louisville, KY was killed in 2007 as a casualty of police chasing someone for a nominal amount of
stolen money in a purse snatching. When the suspect was spotted, he fled and was chased until he ran through a red-light and t-boned the vehicle in which Demetra, five other children, and her father were riding. Two other passengers sustained serious injuries. The suspect was charged and sentenced to 15 years for her death, while the officer was cleared. Additionally, the city was sued for wrongful death and so was Demetra’s father who was driving the car. There were more children in the car than there were seatbelts, so no one was wearing a seatbelt at the time of the accident. At the center of this case was a police chase over less than $20. The chase never should have happened, which never would have put that family in danger. Although seatbelt use is definitely a safety issue, everybody was punished for Demetra’s death except for the officer who chose to pursue something frivolous (English, 2008).

This happened as well in the death of Seyaira Stephens, 1 (an infant), of Baton Rouge, LA. An off-duty officer was driving twice the speed limit when he plowed into the car carrying Seyaira. Her 21-year-old mother was arrested for negligent homicide due to not having Seyaira in a car seat. Police claimed she would never have been ejected from the car had she been properly restrained. Eventually, the prosecutor decided to call it even, dropping the charges against her and filing no charges, not even a speeding ticket against the officer. It should be noted that the force of the impact was so great that the mother’s injuries rendered her unable to care for herself up to three months after the collision. The 15-year-old in the car became a wheelchair user and had a brain injury so severe it prevented his returning to school; and two other children in the car were also injured (Geanous, 2019). Thus, even if Seyaira had been restrained, she still likely would have sustained serious injuries. At the very least, the officer should have been responsible
for the injuries of the remaining passengers, but was not. Across the sample, if other individuals could be considered to have a role in officer-involved deaths, then blame was partitioned. Yet when officers had a role, it was all or nothing; blame rested entirely on the civilian, regardless of the number of protocols they violated or the recklessness of their behavior during these events.

This pattern continued in the death of Olivia Collins, 25, of Columbus, OH. She was a passenger in the car her brother was driving with her two young children (1 and 2 years old) in the backseat. He fled a traffic stop over speeding, which turned into a high-speed chase, reaching speeds of 108 mph. The car lost control and crashed into a house. Both the driver and Olivia were thrown from the car and killed but the children were fine. The rhetoric post-event was heavily focused on all the things the decedents did wrong: the driver was under the influence of THC and the children were not in car seats. When the Sheriff’s office was questioned about their responsibility for initiating a chase over a minor violation, they focused on the driver as being completely at fault. At the same time, they changed their chase policy to no longer pursue “solely minor violations,” similar to what was seen in Marquita Bosley’s case above (McEntyre, 2019). What for others are construed as youthful mistakes - speeding and smoking weed - became a catastrophe: two siblings killed and two children left without a mother. This case highlights the pathologizing and victim blaming rhetoric used by police and media who report on these events, when a high-speed chase over a minor traffic infraction never should have happened, and revisits the earlier theme of the illogic of chasing people under the influence and expecting rational behavior.
Rewriting the Ends to Justify the Means

Exonerating officers sometimes requires some extreme reframing to criminalize civilians. The above cases demonstrate attempts to shift blame by questioning one’s character, which is often subtle. More often, shifting blame is done through character assassination to justify the violence that police subjected them to. During the research process of determining the original cause of police encounters, a disturbing trend emerged, where the narrative around the reason for the police encounter was rewritten to justify the outcome. Conducting this work retrospectively allowed for us to document the encounter’s changing rationale over time, including contradictions between later proposed reasons for the encounter and the original discourse in the immediate aftermath of these deaths.

News reporters on these cases tended to structure their articles with non-linear storytelling, jumping from one sensational piece of information to the next, with many vague details in between. This made it difficult for the reader to discern what actually happened. This was particularly salient for purported stolen car cases, where – had we not been able to see the evolution of the discourse over time – many more cases would have been coded as emanating from this reason than was ultimately true.

Many of these articles read something like the following convergence of facts as storytelling, with the parenthetical describing the purpose of those statements:

A suspect driving a stolen car (illegal action), fled from police after an attempted stop (resisted capture), killing an innocent woman (horrific outcome). In the car was drug paraphernalia, cocaine, and a gun (details to enhance criminality). Police are checking to see if the gun was used in any other
crimes (highlighting their potential danger to society) Suspect has a litany of prior felonies (confirming their danger to society). He’s charged with vehicular manslaughter, drug possession with intent to distribute, and unlawful possession of a weapon for a felon. Suspect is being held on bond for $500,000 (danger has been neutralized).

After searching out additional information in many of these cases, it would later be revealed that the reason for the encounter reported above, was due to a traffic infraction like speeding, erratic driving, or some other non-moving minor violations (i.e., window tint). The facts of the car being stolen or a suspect having a prior criminal record would only be known to the police after the resultant catastrophe, and usually had nothing to do with their calculations to pursue many of these cars. The story then becomes an after-the-fact justification for a chase that never should have happened.

This disjointed storytelling also appeared in cases outside of the stolen car category, particularly when its effect could be to highlight how bad a person inherently was, and thus deserved the violence they received. Ailiana Siufana, 18, is discussed both in the dataset and in several articles through a lens of her past criminal history, and her and her boyfriend’s connection to a robbery and homicide. This is true, they were wanted for those crimes. However, the reason for the police encounter that killed her was speeding. She was in a car with her boyfriend who was speeding, and he refused to stop for highway patrol when they attempted to pull him over. They had no knowledge that these were wanted individuals, and yet chose to engage in a very long high-speed chase that resulted in an accident. They were killed in California, but they were wanted in Washington, and police did not identify who they were until days later. The articles noted how their deaths meant police in Washington would never have clear answers to the open
criminal case they were suspects in. Their reason for fleeing the traffic stop surely had to do with their being wanted individuals, but the reason for the stop was simply because they were speeding.

Shelia Ann Feagins, killed in 2004, was a 40-year-old passenger in a car driven by someone who was wanted on parole violations. However, the cause of the police encounter was an attempted traffic stop because the car had been sitting at a traffic light through various light cycles, which caught the officer’s attention (Jordan, 2004). As with Ailiana’s story, the reports on Shelia’s case are written in a manner that make it nearly impossible to directly determine the order of events. As it is written, the police officer, who was apparently the only one on duty that night (implying a small jurisdiction), did a background check showing that the car was both stolen and that the driver was wanted on parole violations. But there is no indication of whether this officer just ran a license plate (which would only reveal the information about the car and not the driver if he had stolen the vehicle) or if he had pulled this driver over and gotten a license to then compare his information along with the information about the car. What these reports chose to focus the reader’s attention on was all the crimes he had committed in the past, framing the story in a way that a reader would see this man’s apprehension as urgent.

The driver was both on parole and probation. They focused on the underlying crimes he was on parole for, which were all violent crimes. However, if he was on parole that means he had likely already served enough of his sentence and exhibited good enough behavior to be released by a judge. He was also on probation related to a drug charge. He had both a parole and a probation violations, and the probation violation could have been the cause of the parole violation, or they could have been separate. In either
case, the reason for those violations are not known to the reader. Most people who have violations, have technical violations, such as breaking curfew, not reporting to a parole officer, or failing a drug test (Cornerstone Legal Group, n.d.). The focus on this person’s criminal background without regard to whether he had adequately served his time, and leaving the violations hanging without explanation, encourages the reader to assume the worst. To punctuate the description of the encounter, the article reports that after they crashed, police found drugs and a weapon in the car.

As discussed earlier, there are many reasons people flee the police, only one of which involves actual wrongdoing. In some cases, the wrongdoing is not relevant to the current events, but this type of framing only permits a reader to see the totality of these situations as justifiable. In Shelia’s case, the exclusive focus on the driver’s criminal history meant her complete erasure in the overall narrative; she simply became collateral damage, with the inference of her being someone who associated with “bad” people. Some may judge these cases based on the perceived moral character of the victims, and assert they should not be categorized alongside the “real” victims of police brutality. However, the important consideration is that the police often knew nothing of these individuals’ criminal histories until after they were dead, choosing to take on very aggressive tactics for underlying reasons that do not justify such a response. For Ailiana’s and Shelia’s cases, they both died in single car accidents, but throughout the dataset we see how these aggressive tactics also cost the lives of multiple bystanders. How we understand the utility of policing is often through a narrative that has been edited after the fact, oftentimes with the intent of either absolving police for their actions or justifying them. In some cases valorizing the police, giving them more credit for how they protect
the community than they actually do, where in Ailiana’s case, wanted suspects are killed by a fluke.

**Rules for thee and not for me**

In the few instances where officers were convicted, their sentences were usually not congruent with the crime. Even in the DV/IPV cases described above, it was a tossup between whether officers were acquitted or they were sentenced to life in prison. In other deaths that were clearly officer-caused, with no other person to shift blame onto, there were still paltry consequences.

Joann Burton, 48, of Cincinnati, OH, was an unhoused woman sleeping in a park when a police officer decided to take a shortcut through the park and drove over her, killing her. There was no reason for the officer to drive through a park, but he did, and he faced no charges. The Ohio State Highway Patrol determined he did not act recklessly, but called it “a tragic case.” The Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless said what was probably on other people’s minds, that if a civilian had done this, they most definitely would have been found reckless and charged with her death (Staff Writer, 2010), but the police got special treatment. Vionique Valnord, 32, of Brooklyn, NY was killed when she was hit by two off-duty officers who were drunk. The officer driving was indicted, but in a plea deal with the prosecutor, was only sentenced to 90 days in jail and 5 years of probation. He also was ordered to go to rehab, had his license revoked, and resigned from the NYPD (Sherman & Siemaszko, 2010). Contrast this outcome with the dozens of DUIs turned fatalities discussed earlier, where civilians received sentences upwards of 5 years, and usually closer to 10 years, for vehicular homicide.
Contrast should also be drawn with the tone around what the consequences should have been. Vionique’s father and husband both stated they were satisfied with the 3-month sentence, forgave him, and wished him well (Sherman & Siemaszko, 2010). Katarria Renay Moyer, 29, of Eden, NC was killed when her boyfriend, who was intoxicated, engaged in a high-speed chase with police after refusing to stop and crashed the car. He was convicted of felony death and sentenced to a minimum of 15 years and 8 months in prison (Fox8 Digital Desk, 2021). The judge’s comments during sentencing were, “You murdered your girlfriend and you’re lucky you didn’t murder five other people. I’m going to give you as much time as I can,” (Fox8 Digital Desk, 2021). That same pattern emerged for Michelle Parker, 54, of Rockford, IL who was killed when her car was hit by another car that was being chased for suspected DUI. That man was also convicted and sentenced to 15 years in prison, but the family was not satisfied with this sentence because he could have potentially been sentenced to up to 40 years (Nicks, 2015). When you examine the variety of these situations and the outcomes, it becomes clear that consequences are not a reflection of the magnitude of recklessness, community endangerment, or the severity of injury. In each of these cases, one life was unnecessarily and avoidably taken, but when the blame rested solely with the police, there were either non-existent or minimal consequences, which sometimes the family supported, at least in Vionique’s case. Whereas when the blame was on a civilian, there were minimum sentences over a decade long, with utterances of disgust and disappointment.
“Who police the police when they get out of line?”

Attempts to hold police accountable for their wrongdoing are often undermined. Among the calls for police reforms are the formation of community or civilian review/oversight boards. The understanding is that there is a need for an external third party composed of community members to review police misconduct rather than it occurring in secret through confidential internal investigations. As mentioned previously, there is tension between what a police department thinks should be the disciplinary outcome and what these review boards believe. In some cases, the police can override the review board recommendations.

Summer Lane, 25, of Riverside, CA was killed in 2004 outside of a supermarket where she was accused of being an accomplice in a check cashing scheme. As she was trying to leave the area in her car, she supposedly used her vehicle as a weapon to try and hit police officers, which led to them shooting and killing her. However, those details are in dispute (Welsh, 2004). What is notable about this case is that a community oversight commission investigated this case and unanimously agreed that the shooting violated department policy because he chose to walk behind her vehicle. The department rejected this finding and exonerated the officer. The officer in turn sued the commission and the city to get them to clear his name, which was denied. Lane’s family settled with the city for $395,000 in a wrongful death claim (Shelton, 2008).

Revisiting the death of Chequita Adams, 27, of Chicago, IL (high-speed chase between unmarked on-duty officers of an off-duty officer in his personal vehicle), a civilian police accountability group recommended the pursuing officer be fired. However,

---

the police superintendent had the power to override their recommendation, and he did.

The pursuing officer was instead placed on administrative duties in the immediate aftermath. She was eventually fired by a unanimous vote from the Chicago police board (Schuba, 2021), but this scenario illustrates the impotence of many oversight committees in comparison to the power the police wield.

**Accountability & Apologies**

Lack of accountability was a recurring theme across the underlying causes of police encounters. The death of Jessica Williams, 29, of San Francisco, CA presents more of the same, but with a slightly different angle. She was killed in 2016 after police found her asleep in a car. She was unhoused (Farrell, 2020), and presumably either living in this car or using it as temporary shelter. Officers were on the hunt for stolen vehicles in the area, and when they saw her they approached with guns already drawn and knocked on the window to wake her up. This startled her awake and she immediately started the car and tried to drive away but crashed. The two officers chased after her and as she reversed the car to get away, one of the officers shot her through the window. The Department of Police Accountability recommended the officer be fired, but they made a deal. His discipline was reduced to a 45-day suspension and 18-month probationary period in exchange for him admitting wrongdoing. On the one hand, these admissions almost never happen. On the other, what is the purpose of this admission when it leads to the person retaining their position to do wrong again, and could cost someone else their life? Jessica posed no threat to them. Even as she was attempting to flee they had the option to retreat to safety and instead chose to shoot her. They never verified whether the car was actually
stolen, they never called for backup, and the officer who shot her did not consult with their partner before taking these actions; a long list of policy violations. The Chief of police resigned immediately after this shooting as it was the latest in a string of shootings by his department. The prosecutor chose not to file charges reasoning that the officer’s perception of her using the car as a weapon justified his use of force despite his actions, which created this unsafe scenario, being unjustified (Mark, 2020).

Families of slain individuals have expressed wanting an apology, or some indication that police take responsibility for their contribution to their loved ones’ deaths. The family of Deloise Epps, 54, and Mackala Ross, 13, of Memphis, TN, voiced this sentiment, “That’s all we want is an apology… Even if ya’ll still doing the investigation at least call to say that,” (Scurlock, 2012). Their deaths were caused by police negligence: an officer was speeding without his sirens or emergency lights and he crashed into their cars. His plea deal resulted in a 6-month sentence, even though he killed two people and injured a third (Staff, 2013). There was no apology. Revisiting the death of Marquita Bosley, 25, of Oakland, CA, her family felt similarly. They wanted an apology from both the driver being pursued and the police who chased him, particularly after it left a child with a permanent disability (Villalon, 2019).

Since apologies are admissions of guilt, most police departments do not allow for this most basic interaction, because it opens them up to lawsuits or other legal actions. This was supposedly what was so notable about Jessica Williams’ case above, that the officer admitted wrongdoing. However, he did so only with the understanding that he would lose nothing. Even if we concede that carceral solutions or other legal actions deter taking responsibility, an apology needs to have more substance than a simple statement.
He lost nothing, neither his job nor his pension, which means he retained his power and privilege. She lost her life.

Civilians, however, are not remiss in apologizing to the police. Latoya Grier, 22, was killed in 2008 after a traffic stop related to speeding. She did pullover, but then she fled on foot because she was driving without a license. She was caught, and as police were walking her to their car she pulled out her own gun and shot at the officer. He in turn shot her seven times and killed her. This is one of the few situations where the use of force made sense given the scenario that the officer was presented with. Returning to this theme of apologies, her family apologized to the arresting officer, who was actually not injured. This is not to say that families and other civilians should not apologize on behalf of others’ wrongdoing when it is directed towards the police, it is to note where civilians are often more apt to take responsibility for these situations while police departments and individual officers rarely do. They instead usually take a passive and exonerative tense of acknowledging that “mistakes were made” or they send condolences to the family for their loss, disassociating themselves from the act of taking someone’s life.

**The perfect victim does not exist**

Much of the discourse around fatal police brutality centers on attempts to locate perfect victimhood. That is largely why there is a hyper-focus on only those victims who were unarmed, even though most police brutality victims are in possession of some kind of weapon. It is also why so many of the descriptions of individual deaths narrate the behavior, appearance, and location of the victim, as if to either create or disconfirm reasons why the police would have killed them. There is no perfect victim, and if there
were, it would have been Jameela Yasmeen Arshad, 51, of Kenner, LA, who was killed in 2005. Dr. Arshad, a neurologist, witnessed a boy get hit by a car, and stopped to help him with his injuries. The police showed up and demanded she prove that she was a physician. She did not have her ID on her person; it was in her car. When she could not immediately produce the identification they needed to verify that she was in fact a physician, they arrested her, accusing her of interfering with their investigation. They handcuffed her, sitting on top of her to do so, and then left her in their car. She had a heart attack. Her death was blamed on her health, despite her not having any underlying health conditions. The family was never able to get any accountability, not even through a civil suit. Her husband, also a physician wrote an article this past year as the Derek Chauvin trial was occurring. This excerpt is particularly relevant:

We were living in a nice subdivision in a supposedly ‘safe’ neighborhood. Jameela had an MD attached to her name. All of these factors didn’t save her from being stereotyped as a black woman. The officer apparently couldn’t conceive of a black woman in private clothes being a doctor. I question whether her fate would have been the same if she were not black. I even question my decision to move to America 40 years ago. What America am I living in, where a black physician can’t even be a Good Samaritan without putting her own life at risk?

Watching the Derek Chauvin murder trial reminds me of my civil case against the Kenner Police for Jameela’s wrongful death, which produced no results in our favor except for Arshad vs. the City of Kenner, a landmark ruling by the Louisiana Supreme Court that prohibited the City
of Kenner from waiving its prohibition of jury trials for a single case. Still, no one paid any price or was held accountable for Jameela’s death. The government claimed that her death was a result of heart problems, even though she had no history of any heart issues. During the trial, they engaged in victim-blaming and assassinated her character. Derek Chauvin’s trial seems like a re-run of my case. The language, the tactics by the defense, the medical terminology by experts seem to be a part of the same script as in my wife’s wrongful death trial. I feel strongly that the outcome in that case would be different if we had mobile phone and body cam videos.

I am reliving my grief and am filled with anger, guilt, frustration, and tears. My son has suffered immensely as a result of his mother’s death. As a biracial American, he has personally experienced unfair and unjust treatment by police. I live in constant fear for my son’s safety, where any law enforcement encounter could cost him his life.

As a psychiatrist and from my personal life experience, I am keenly aware of what trauma can do to the human psyche. Any reminder of the traumatic experience can cause worsening of post-traumatic stress and complicate grief resolution. What my son and I are experiencing is not unlike the millions whose wounds have been refreshed by repeated incidents of police killings.
Police brutality against Black people in America is truly blind. This brutality and injustice does not care whether you are an unemployed black man across from a convenient store, a black EMT technician asleep at home, or a black physician engaged in a Good Samaritan act (Arshad, 2021).
V. “HELL YOU TALMBOUT”\textsuperscript{12}

The initial search of media surrounding Alteria Woods’ death produced 187 separate texts. Three additional texts were found when an exploratory search was run on Andrew Coffee IV, another individual involved in the case. These texts were the earliest ones produced after the shooting, before Alteria’s name was publicly released. Finally, throughout the articles, there were several embedded videos and other multimedia, including key interviews that were source materials for many of the print media, links to other pertinent texts, and mentions of interviews that were located on social media, bringing the total to 194 texts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Text Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Database Search: Nexis Uni</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Database: NewsBank</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial Google Search</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Internet Search</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>194</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After eliminating duplicate articles (same content published on different outlets) and materials that were either secondary to the case or merely invoked Alteria’s name, 72 texts (print, video) were included for critical discourse analysis (CDA) listed in Appendix 5. The full list of all texts uncovered in the search process, and reviewed for contextual information, can be found in Appendix 6. After the document review and CDA, two

\textsuperscript{12} Lyrics from single “Say Her Name (Hell You Talmbout)” (2021) Recorded by Janelle Monáe, Alicia Keys, Zoë Kravitz, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Chloé x Halle, Tierra Whack, Brittany Packnett Cunningham, Alicia Garza, Beyoncé, Brittany Howard, MJ Rodriguez, Nikole Hannah-Jones, Jovian Zayne, Asiahn, Angela Rye, Isis V.
interviews were conducted with family members of Alteria Woods: her mother, Yolanda Woods, and her younger sister, Alexus Woods.

A synthesis of the emergent themes elucidated through the analysis, the confirming and disconfirming evidence gleaned from the secondary materials (texts not included in the CDA), and the perspectives of Alteria’s relatives are discussed below in the chronological order of events. Part A is a grounding of who Alteria Woods was, followed by a five part (B – F) narrative of how Alteria’s case unfolded over the past five years, and concluding in Part G with more global thoughts of Yolanda and Alexus as they have navigated Alteria’s loss. Parts B through F, include a timeline of important events, an overview of the relevant source materials, and a discussion of the key actors, dominant narratives and perspectives, and counternarrative. Themes focus on the emergent discourses and how they were framed and utilized in service of reifying power. Part B – The Shooting – contains the most detailed analysis of the discourse patterns and rhetorical devices, whereas Parts C – F will more summarily address important themes, shifts in discourse, and their relevance to the overall narrative.
A. SAY HER NAME: ALTERIA WOODS

The setting is Gifford, FL: an unincorporated town on the Treasure Coast of Florida with a population of just over 10K people (World Population Review, 2022). The Treasure Coast consists of three counties: Indian River, Martin, and St. Lucie. Gifford is located in Indian River County sitting between Winter Beach and Vero Beach. Gifford was established in the mid-1800s as a settlement for formerly enslaved Black people. The region has a long history of racial and police violence. Vero Beach was a sundown town well into the mid-twentieth century; they rang a bell every evening to tell Black people to get out of town. The violence of the Indian River County Sheriff’s department is documented as far back as the 1940s and 50s, with Black residents being incarcerated over minor violations. On a more structural-level, Gifford remained under-developed until the mid-1970s, without water, sewer, or paved roads, and the end of segregation meant the closure of their one high school (Thomas, 2022). Although Gifford is historically a predominately Black town, the population presently is about 50% Black and white (World Population Review, 2022), which could be due to the region’s popularity as a tourist destination and creeping gentrification. Regardless, the rates of poverty and educational attainment reflect stark racial inequities, suggesting perpetual resource deprivation within the community (World Population Review, 2022).

Alteria Woods was a 21-year-old Gifford native. She was an honor roll student with aspirations of becoming a pharmacist (Jones, 2017c). She was Yolanda Woods’ daughter and Alexus Woods’ older sister. She was Andrew “A.J.” Coffee IV’s girlfriend. She was loved by a large family and a large circle of friends. According to her sister and her mother, she was loved by everyone she met, always going out of her way to bring joy
to someone else’s life; going out of her way to care for other people and animals. Yolanda described Alteria as someone who liked to play jokes, to bring a smile to someone’s face. She remembers the time they spent together, cuddling and watching movies. She remembers her daily calls, just to check in. Most of all she recalls Alteria’s smile, her caring nature, and her compassion.

Alexus described their relationship as, “sisters by chance, friends by choice.” She described how Alteria always went out of her way to be present in her life, scheduling her work breaks so she could drive Alexus from high school to her college classes. They constantly made time for each other, catching up on each other’s day over lunch or other sisterly outings. Similar to Yolanda’s recollection, Alexus experienced Alteria as someone who valued making sure people felt loved and cared for. Alteria was Alexus’s biggest supporter, making sure she always felt empowered and like she belonged.

Alteria’s boyfriend, Andrew, is someone who both Yolanda and Alexus have positive feelings towards. They both said that he genuinely loved her and would never have wanted anything to happen to her. Alexus recalls spending time with Alteria and Andrew together, and sometimes Andrew would pick her up from school by himself. Andrew treated Alexus like a little sister, and she felt like he cared for her the same way that Alteria cared for her. He was generally a part of their family unit; when he faced disappointment, he turned to them for comfort. He expressed his love and gratitude for their support of and belief in him in ways that he had not always experienced. Andrew had been through some trials but was getting his life on track. He wanted to do better for himself and do better for Alteria. Alexus recalls Alteria saying to him that no matter what
they went through or how other people viewed their relationship, that they would always have each other and be there for each other.

On Saturday, March 18, 2017, Alteria and Yolanda went to the movies to see ‘Get Out.’ That was the last time she saw her daughter. After the movies Alteria went to the county fair and then went to Andrew’s house (Samuel, 2019). They had only been asleep a few hours by the time the Indian River County Sheriff’s Office conducted a no-knock raid.

B. THE SHOOTING

The Actors

- Alteria Woods
- Andrew Coffee IV, 23-year-old boyfriend to Alteria
- Andrew Coffee III, father to Andrew Coffee IV, target of the warrant
- Vivian Scott & Kaitlynn Brown, two other women in the house during the raid
- Arlene Cooper, Alteria’s aunt
- Towanna Ruffin, Andrew Coffee IV’s mother
- Deryl Loar, Sheriff of Indian River County
- Kelsey Zorc, a deputy wounded in the raid
- Three unnamed deputies, involved in the raid
- Demonstrators, community members who showed up after the shooting to protest

Timeline

Sunday, March 19, 2017: At 5:30 AM the Indian River County Sheriff’s SWAT team carried out a pre-dawn, no-knock raid at the Coffee residence. The warrant was for
Andrew Coffee III, the father of Andrew Coffee IV. He was suspected of possession of and intent to distribute (within 1,000 ft of a church) cocaine and various other substances (Jones, 2017a). The police entered through the front door and arrested Coffee III without much difficulty. However, they also went around the side of the house and broke the window of the bedroom where Andrew (Coffee IV) and Alteria were sleeping. Andrew thought someone was breaking into his home (Jones, 2017a) so he reached for his own gun and shot in that direction several times. The remaining deputies returned a dozen or so rounds. Deputy Kelsey Zorc was hit by one of the bullets. Alteria was shot and killed. After Andrew realized it was the police, he put down his gun and was arrested.

**The Dominant Narrative**

The Indian River County Sheriff’s Office (IRCSO) gave a 15-minute press conference from their office and then posted a press release to their Facebook page that morning. In both the press release and press conference IRCSO characterized this raid as a “high-risk search” of a “known drug house.” The press release began by describing an officer (Deputy Garry Chambliss) being killed in the same town (Gifford, FL) over a month ago, and how that led to their creating Operation Safe Streets, a special detail to find “wanted fugitives, the removal of guns and drugs from the streets, and to ultimately solve the murder of Deputy Chambliss” (Indian River County Sheriff’s Office, 2017). Only then did they describe the raid on the Coffee home. They concluded their written statement by describing how they are acting according to procedure by putting the three unnamed deputies on leave while the raid is investigated. This was followed with a brief history of IRCSO to reiterate their professionalism, claiming to have done these high-risk
search warrants hundreds of times. It concluded with an enumeration of each Coffee’s arrest history.

In the press conference video, there were two minutes leading up to the official start where Sheriff Deryl Loar is on camera providing background information to the attending media representatives. He is seen standing behind a podium, in uniform. To his right is a bulletin board with five dual mugshots (front- and side-facing images) pinned to it. From left to right, clockwise, is a photo of a Black woman, an older Black man, a younger Black man, and below, a younger Black woman, and a younger lighter skinned, possibly white woman. In this introduction to the media, the Sheriff points to the images of the Black men, identifying them as Andrew Coffee III and Andrew Coffee IV, going into great detail about their criminal history. He then introduces that Andrew Coffee II, the grandfather, is incarcerated for allegedly attempting to kill one of their deputies in 2015. He runs through the names of the people again, this time noting that the younger Black woman pictured is Alteria Woods and is deceased, the older Black woman is Vivian Scott, and the third woman is Kaitlynn Brown. He provides no context for who these last two women are except to say, “Obviously, with criminal histories in the females as well.”

This conversation is meant to be the “behind the scenes” before the press conference begins. When he does officially start, his demeanor rapidly shifts from someone telling an interesting story to close friends into a more serious and emotionless person acting in an official capacity. He describes the events of the raid in very militaristic terms, giving what seems like a play by play of each movement and decision. Interlaced within this are vivid descriptors of the setting and the people. He spends much
time discussing how small the house was and how small and compact the rooms were, detailing the layout of the house as a schematic. He discusses the Coffee home as being a “known drug house.” Andrew Coffee IV’s shooting at the deputies was “ambush style.”

His rhetoric was confident, spoken in certainties of what they “know” to be true, as in they know that Coffee IV was ambushing them, and offering details of how Coffee IV positioned himself in his room to attack the police. He also created a positionality of us v. them, where “our” SWAT team, our deputies, and our community was juxtaposed against the inferred “them” of the Coffee family. Alteria then became the “innocent person,” or innocent bystander, caught in between the good guys and the bad guys. It is in these first moments that the phrasing of “career criminals” and “cowards” becomes the primary discourse. This is also where Loar accuses Coffee IV of “using her as protection,” and where we hear an enumeration of shots fired. Loar states they know that Coffee IV fired “no less than four rounds,” and in their return of fire, one bullet hit Alteria and killed her.

He repeats the criminal history of the Coffees now that he is officially on record, going through the charges that resulted from this raid. He then proceeds to recount every recent incident he can think of where either Coffee III or Coffee IV had a negative police encounter, to solidify this concept that they are “career criminals.” Here, he brings up again Andrew Coffee II’s police encounters and his incarceration, and tells a story of how Coffee IV, in a recent encounter, claimed to have said that he plans to “finish what my grandfather tried to do.” Here, Loar insinuates that Coffee IV’s alleged ambush on police in this current raid was an attempt to finish killing deputies that his grandfather was not able to. From there he offers a brief statement of condolences for Alteria’s family and
segues from focusing on the criminality of the Coffee family into the criminality of the community at large. He states that the rationale for Operation Safe Streets is to “curb the crime, and the nastiness that’s going on in the streets of Gifford.” Here he ends his official, approximately 3-minute-long prepared statement, opening the floor for questions.

Throughout these questions he reiterates much of the militaristic and tactical rhetoric of what they did, the criminality of the Coffees, the need for Operation Safe Streets (OSS), and the innocence of Alteria. He supports his claim that OSS is needed by describing the community of Gifford as the place with the most calls for service in their jurisdiction, with the highest concentration of IRCSO’s resources. Which is to say, that Gifford is a high crime area. When asked about people protesting outside of the crime scene, he remarks that there is a small group of people that “likes to protest over these things. It’s a very isolated group. We know who those players are and we recognize them.” During the question and answer process, Loar gives the first description of Deputy Kelsey Zorc as not only someone injured in the raid, but as the first female SWAT member in the history of IRCSO. In this exchange, he describes with certainty (“no doubt about it”) that her life was saved because of her bulletproof vest. Later in the questioning, a reporter asked Loar what parts of her body the bullet may have injured if Kelsey had not worn her vest. Here, Loar clarifies that she was shot on the top of her shoulder, nowhere near her heart or any other vital organs. Finally, when asked if they contacted the family, he describes sending out victim’s services to meet the family and make notification, again offering condolences.
In the post-conference, all the reporters got up, many of them to take pictures of the mugshots posted on the bulletin board and to follow up with spellings and other details with Loar, who is still standing by the microphone such that all of these exchanges can be heard. In one conversation, Loar can be heard detailing all the charges against the Coffees, lamenting that he did not announce them during the conference, and explaining that when Coffee III answered the door he held “two large bags of cocaine,” later described as no more than 5 grams each. The video then cuts out.

**Discourse Patterns**

The contents of the press conference and press release, as well as an additional interview with Towanna Ruffin on March 20, 2017, became the basis for 16 texts (news reports, editorials, blogs) published over a four-day period (March 19 – March 22), which focused only on what happened in the raid. There were an additional three personal interest stories published between March 21st and March 31st. The titles of these texts along with publication date and distribution type can be found in Table 5. Notably, only two of these publications were nationally distributed. One came through the Associated Press State Wire and the other, a Huffington Post piece (“Pregnant Woman Killed By Police Used As Shield By 'Coward' Boyfriend: Cops”). Most of these articles were published either through local affiliates of major corporations, including CBS12 News and WPTV NewsChannel 5, West Palm Beach, or through papers owned by the company Treasure Coast Newspapers. Treasure Coast reports on three counties, including Indian River County, and includes TCPalm (the web edition), The Stuart News, The St. Lucie Tribune, and the Indian River Press Journal. Many of these articles were reprinted across all the Treasure Coast Newspapers verbatim, at times with slightly different titles.
Table 5: Original communication and generated texts from the first days after Alteria’s murder in 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mar 19</td>
<td>Press Conference</td>
<td>Video (16:35) - WATCH: Indian River County Sheriff Office updates on deputy involved shooting during SWAT home search. Video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 19</td>
<td>Press Release</td>
<td>One deputy injured, one person killed during early morning SWAT Team search warrant. Indian River County Sheriff’s Office Facebook page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 20</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Video (0:52) - Towanna Ruffin, mother of Andrew Coffee IV, speaks out about son’s arrest.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Media pieces generated from original communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mar 19</td>
<td>Local news</td>
<td>Pregnant woman used as shield from bullets by father, killed in Gifford SWAT raid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 19</td>
<td>Local news</td>
<td>Video (06:42) – Embedded in above news article</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 19</td>
<td>Local news</td>
<td>Woman killed deputy injured in Gifford as SWAT Team attempted to serve warrant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 19</td>
<td>Local news</td>
<td>IRCSO: 1 innocent woman killed, 1 deputy injured in “career criminals” firefight with SWAT.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 20</td>
<td>Local news</td>
<td>1 killed in SWAT shootout - Deputy also injured in early morning drug raid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 20</td>
<td>Blog</td>
<td>Pregnant Woman Died When Boyfriend Allegedly Used Her as Human Shield.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 20</td>
<td>Blog</td>
<td>Alteria Woods: Pregnant woman killed by SWAT team: Did her boyfriend use her as a shield?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 20</td>
<td>Local news</td>
<td>Sheriff: Woman killed as suspect used her as shield.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 20</td>
<td>Local news</td>
<td>Indian River County Deputy injured, one person killed in Gifford.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 21</td>
<td>Local news</td>
<td>Video: Gifford shooting kills 21-year old pregnant woman.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 21</td>
<td>Local news</td>
<td>Mother defends son accused of trying to kill deputy in shootout.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 21</td>
<td>Local news, not FL</td>
<td>Pregnant woman killed in SWAT raid; Sheriff says her boyfriend used her as shield.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 21</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Pregnant Woman Killed By Police Used As Shield By 'Coward' Boyfriend: Cops.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 21</td>
<td>Local news, not FL</td>
<td>S.W.A.T. Team Kills Pregnant Woman, Sheriff Claims Boyfriend Used Her As A Human Shield.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 22</td>
<td>Blog</td>
<td>Black drug dealer uses pregnant girlfriend as human shield in shootout with the police.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Personal interest pieces

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mar 21</td>
<td>Local news</td>
<td>Woods liked to 'joke around, laugh,' cousin recalls after shooting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 26</td>
<td>Local news</td>
<td>Drug raid: 2 little girls, 2 outcomes. (Reprinted in 4 newspapers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 31</td>
<td>Local news</td>
<td>Shooting death of SRHS graduate rattles county.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The majority of the perspectives across these articles were either direct quotes from the IRCSO press conference, their press release, or secondary reiterations of what he said. A text search of the documents of words, including “said,” “stated,” “described,” or “explained,” as well as their inflection forms and relevant synonyms was performed. Across the 17 articles produced after the original communication of the press release and press conference, there were 89 direct quotes from, and 15 indirect statements attributed to, either Sheriff Loar or some representative of IRCSO. This can be contrasted to the amount of space given to the perspectives of any of the victims or their families. Towanna Ruffin was directly quoted 10 times, and her statements were paraphrased another two times. However, all but two of these mentions appear in one article (“Mother defends son accused of trying to kill deputy in shootout”). Coffee III has only one statement directly attributed to him, while any representation of the Woods family came from one source, Arlene Cooper, who is quoted 15 times and referenced once. She was interviewed one time on the day of Alteria’s murder among the crowd of protestors. This statement was broken up into pieces, so that a viewer never hears her full uninterrupted thoughts, and then reused across multiple articles as a reflection of how the Woods family felt. In the first two weeks of reporting at least 78% of what was reported came directly from the police.

This is an under-measurement. Many of these articles are structured to present information as objective recounting of facts when in actuality they are verbatim statements that were made by Sheriff Loar during the press conference, or full sentences lifted from the IRCSO press release. For example, in “Indian River County Deputy
injured, one person killed in Gifford,” published on March 20th, the first four paragraphs read as follows:

GIFFORD - At approximately 5:45 A.M. this morning, the Indian River County Sheriff’s Office Special Weapons and Tactics (S.W.A.T.) Team attempted to serve a search warrant in the 4500 block of 35th Avenue in Gifford near Vero Beach, Florida.

The search warrant, signed by the Honorable Robert Pegg in Vero Beach, was for illegal narcotics and served in conjunction with our Special Investigations Unit as part of Operation Safe Streets.

The S.W.A.T. Team approached the house under the cover of darkness. As they positioned themselves to execute the search warrant, Andrew Coffee III (38), exited the residence and, upon seeing law enforcement officers, attempted to flee back inside.

As deputies struggled to take Coffee III into custody, shots were fired from inside the residence at deputies (Hodges, 2017).

The press release published to IRCSO’s Facebook page reads:

At approximately 5:45 A.M. this morning, the Indian River County Sheriff's Office Special Weapons and Tactics (S.W.A.T.) Team attempted to serve a search warrant in the 4500 block of 35th Avenue in Gifford. The search warrant, signed by the Honorable Robert Pegg, was for illegal narcotics and served in conjunction with our Special Investigations Unit as part of Operation Safe Streets.
The S.W.A.T. Team approached the house under the cover of darkness. As they positioned themselves to execute the search warrant, Andrew Coffee III (38), exited the residence and, upon seeing law enforcement officers, attempted to flee back inside. As deputies struggled to take Coffee III into custody, shots were fired from inside the residence at deputies (Indian River County Sheriff’s Office, 2017b).

Yet, in the news article, those sentences are not credited to the IRCSO press release. A reader would have no way of knowing that this is the police perspective unless they looked across sources.

This phenomenon shows up repeatedly across these articles. The practice of simply reproducing the police press release has become so commonplace that in recent months there has been considerable discussion across social media. Figures 7 and 8 below are images of tweets captured about how the media essentially work for the police by reprinting police statements without interpretation. Within the replies to the second tweet, there was a discussion about how factors like the speed at which the media is expected to get stories out often means there is little to no fact checking (“Image of Butterfly”, 2021). Another commenter responded that there is a need for journalists to at least disclose the source as part of the article so people are not misled in to believing these are the facts (Ugh what a drag., 2021)
Without having a side-by-side of primary materials and news articles it is nearly impossible to see this pattern. Across the 17 articles, several of the same paragraphs appear repeatedly with no attribution to who said it and that it is a perspective rather than an objective truth as it is presented.

“No one knows what it means, but it’s provocative…”

A common tactic of communicating police killings is the use of past exonerative tense. This form of language construction has also become a central point of discussion.

---

over the last two years in the wake of George Floyd’s murder. It is said to have originated from the Iran-Contra scandal when President Reagan needed to acknowledge something went wrong without apologizing: “Mistakes were made” (Broder, 2007). The importance of past exonerative tense is that it is a mechanism for upholding power dynamics, and white supremacy in particular, such that no one is responsible for an outcome. In the context of the current study:

The past exonerative tense transforms acts of police brutality against Black people into neutral events in which Black people have been accidentally harmed or killed as part of a vague incident where police were present-ish (Blachor, 2020)

Past exonerative construction shows up both in the headlines surrounding Alteria’s case,

“Pregnant woman used as shield from bullets by father, killed in Gifford SWAT raid.”

As well as in the body of the articles,

Unfortunately, one of the rounds fired by a SWAT team member struck and innocent person that Andrew Coffee IV cowardly was using as protection...while firing on law enforcement (Indian River County Sheriff's Office, 2017c).

This statement, as well as many of the descriptions used in the news articles that exhibited past exonerative construction, were the verbatim words of Sheriff Loar from his press conference. Thus, the prepared statements of officers start off in this tense and it is replicated across all news sources such that a reader never gets a direct interpretation of what happened. The events are disconnected from the subject, allowing police to
exonerate themselves from what happened. In this presentation, the police/SWAT team are not active participants in Alteria’s shooting death, which would read “police killed,” or “police shot.” Instead, an inanimate object becomes the subject and the structure is inverted. In the statement by Loar, the “rounds” become the actor or the cause of her death, and the only other active construction is in how Coffee IV used Alteria. This is replicated in the headline. The idea that Alteria was used is prioritized in the ordering of events, and there is no actor for who killed her, she is just passively killed.

The vagueness is created by focusing on this human shield theory and appears again in the characterization of her death as being “struck” by rounds rather than being explicitly killed by those rounds. In none of these descriptions is it clear what actually happened. This also serves the purpose of neutralizing what happened. This, and the repeated use of “unfortunately” in this one example of Loar’s statements, and heard throughout his press conference, sets up the framing of her death as an accident.

Finally, the most important use of past exonerative tense here is the strategic utilization of the vagueness and the selective use of passive v. active voice to redirect responsibility for what happened. In other words, it is not just about exonerating the police but blaming someone else, in this case Andrew Coffee IV. This tactic eventually became the central strategy for the subsequent legal proceedings described in Part F.

**Emergent Discourse Themes**

*Alteria as Supporting Actor*

Alteria largely went unnamed or under-named in this initial set of texts. A typical reason for not naming a victim is that the family has not been notified of the death. However, in the press conference, which was the primary source of media information,
Loar indicated that family notification had already been made, and he used her named several times, including in his pre-press conference where he points to her mugshot and identifies her as the deceased. Throughout these 22 texts (including the original communications) Alteria’s name is largely overshadowed by the naming of Andrew and the Coffees overall, illustrated in Figure 9. In fact, the descriptor “woman” appears more (n = 75) than Alteria’s first name (n = 52).

Figure 9: Word cloud from early reporting on Alteria Woods’ killing

Overall, Alteria’s function in explaining the raid was largely as a prop, a way to support the villainy narrative of Andrew and the Coffee family as a whole, and a way to exonerate IRCSO. She was characterized as innocent but her innocence was conditional on who it was in relationship to. She was both to blame for her death and martyrized in the pursuit of Andrew. From the outset she was implicitly blamed for her own death through the use of her mugshot on the bulletin board. This unspoken victim blaming
occurs simultaneously with Loar’s repeated statements of condolences, and essentially belies those statements as her mugshot sits as visual marker of her unknown criminality throughout the entirety of his press conference. This photo that was then offered to media for use in their articles.

His statements of condolences were almost always closely followed by a mitigation or justification. One was to rationalize OSS:

As we mourn the loss, of Ms. Woods today, we remain vigilant we will REMAIN in our Operation Safe Streets at our Indian River County Sheriff’s Office (Indian River County Sheriff's Office, 2017c).14

A second was to allude to the need to apprehend Andrew and his family as part of the overall violence and criminality of the community at large:

Today, we mourn the loss of Alteria Woods, and our thoughts and prayers go to her family, of a HORRIBLE, criminal act, by EXTENSIVE, CRIMINALS, in our community (Indian River County Sheriff's Office, 2017c).

The third was to mitigate her experience by redirecting focus back onto how bad Andrew and the Coffee family were while also subtly blaming her for her association with him. Midway through the press conference Loar was asked by a reporter if there was anything he wanted to say to the Woods family. He offered,

14 Direct quotations from the press conference are written to capture cadence and tone. Commas denote actual pauses taken and do not reflect grammatical accuracy. The absence of periods reflect the run-on communication/stream of consciousness of the speaker. Italicized words indicate stress he placed on the word. Capitalized and italicized words indicate both stress and a change in volume. Discourse markers, or filler words (e.g., um, uh), are retained.
Well first of all our thoughts and prayers are with the Woods’ family, it is an unfortunate situation that she was in a bedroom with Andrew Coffee the FOURTH, um, who, in a way, used her as protection, um, while firing AT armed law enforcement officers...And again, he had made statements in the past, the he was gonna finish something that his grandfather started (Indian River County Sheriff’s Office, 2017c).

The thoughts and prayers, condolences, and mourning all essentially say that he is sorry she was with him, sorry that she was with “career criminals,” rather than sorry for her lost life. The tragedy was who she associated with and not what they did to her. This was not a one-time misstatement; he says it again towards the end of the press conference when asked if his office had made contact with the family:

Our victim’s advocate services, uh, met with the family, uh, made the notification of next of kin it is truly a tragedy, uh, of this young lady, um, being in that residence, um, with career criminals, selling crack and cocaine and powder cocaine (Indian River County Sheriff’s Office, 2017c).

He could never simply offer condolences as a stand-alone statement. It was always predicated on reinforcing the criminality of Andrew and his entire family. Throughout all of this, there is an affectation of empathy and concern for the Woods family, and concern about the safety of the community. In reality, this is part of a long strategy of shifting blame away from IRCSO and on to Andrew.

Loar solidifies this blame by suggesting that he “used her as protection.” This becomes the foundation for the human shield discourse that permeated the majority of
early texts and later became the crux of the argument for the criminal charges against him. The concept of Alteria as pregnant seems to have emerged with an article written by Luli Ortiz, who was at the crime scene interviewing protestors. It was through her reporting that the pregnancy was first mentioned. It was attributed to a statement made by a relative, but it was really unclear who originated this narrative. Loar’s suggestion that Andrew used Alteria, or hid behind her, his repeatedly calling Andrew a “coward,” and this rumor of her being pregnant, coalesced into a proliferation of articles discussing Andrew as a career criminal and coward who hid behind his nameless, pregnant, innocent girlfriend. This was a sensational concept designed to generate outrage. It was effective.

_The Coffees as Main (Evil) Characters_

As mentioned, the primary discourse throughout these texts was how the Coffee family was a family of criminals, from grandson to grandfather. This narrative began in the pre-conference part of Loar’s press conference and became the dominant discourse throughout. This situation seemingly had nothing to do with Andrew Coffee II – he was already in jail. Yet, he was centrally featured in both the press conference and the press release, and the entire argument of the criminality of the family required his inclusion. In one of the video news segments aired on the night of Alteria’s murder, the anchor visualized all aspects of Loar’s press conference, with pictures of the crime scene, neighborhood maps, and the inclusion of mugshots. Additionally, as the reporter replayed the portion of Loar’s conference where he references Andrew Coffee IV claiming to be getting revenge for his grandfather, as well as his description of who Andrew Coffee II is, the reporter overlaid dash camera footage of one of Andrew Coffee II’s encounters with police from 2015. This served as a visual representation of his criminality to accompany
both the written statements and the voiceover of Loar speaking to this fact, as though to engage all the senses for how bad these people were.

Across the press conference, press release, and the majority of texts published and videos produced, was the refrain of how many times the Coffee men had been arrested in their lifetimes. In communities that experience hyper-surveillance, as Gifford does, arrest figures will always be high for people who become targets of the police. Arrests are simply a function of both how often contact with police occurs and how often they can find a reason to make an arrest. The number of arrests do not always align with the number charges or convictions, but given enough arrests, the success of charges sticking and convictions being made inevitably increases.

Us v. Them

Throughout the press conference and the generated texts was an “us v. them” framing. CDA considers the process of positive representation of self with simultaneous negative representation of other as the primary rationalization technique. Andrew and the entire Coffee family were represented as the villains, which required the police to then characterize themselves in opposition: as heroic and brave.

Bravery is both explicitly and implicitly referenced: explicitly in the words of IRCSO throughout the press conference and press release, and implicitly through Loar’s descriptions of their actions - facing people they described as dangerous. Loar’s characterization of the raid is that not only were they under attack because Andrew ambushed them, but that the entire situation was dangerous before they went inside. The raid was called a “high-risk” warrant, and the entire family, from grandfather to grandson, was accused of having a vendetta against the police. This rhetoric was
positioned against the backdrop of a dangerous neighborhood. He highlights how Gifford is their highest call for service area within the county, which implies that the area experiences more violence and more crime. In order to make Gifford safe it needs a heavy and aggressive police presence and it needs things like Operation Safe Streets (OSS). The purpose of OSS was to solve Deputy Chambliss’ murder by a civilian and their tool was crackdown policing, suddenly increasing the number pedestrian and traffic stops, as well as drug raids. The effectiveness of OSS was connected to the number of arrests made. However, again, arrests made are a better indicator of the quantity of policing and not the quality of safety.

Kelsey Zorc was also positioned as a prop. Her utility was in reinforcing the negative presentation of “them” and exemplifying the danger of Andrew given her injury. She is the only named officer involved in this raid, and the presentation of her injuries alongside the rhetoric of gunfire “exchange” between IRCSO and Andrew is meant to suggest that it is a closed loop between Andrew and Kelsey. However, that example proves to be misleading (detailed in Part F). Her utility was also in reinforcing positive representation of “us,” with heavy emphasis on her trailblazing as the first woman SWAT team member. This also serves the purpose of insinuating a progressivism among IRCSO, that they care about and highlight their woman officer.

The article from March 26th, “Drug raid: 2 little girls, 2 outcomes,” further perpetuates the narrative, but this time utilizing both Alteria and Kelsey in tangent. This article, which was published in four separate newspapers, portrays them as two upstanding women both victimized in the course of encountering Andrew. The article is structured to set up a parallel between Alteria and Kelsey, but it does so by both
infantilizing Kelsey and minimizing Alteria’s death, all through a racialized lens. Kelsey is ten years Alteria’s senior and the two are portrayed as feminine equivalents growing up on opposite sides of the proverbial track.

Two little girls grew up about a decade apart in Indian River County. They lived in different neighborhoods and graduated from different high schools…Last Sunday, their lives crossed paths. One ended up in the hospital; the other in the morgue…It was an awful day for the families of women whose childhoods graced the pages of the Press Journal (Reisman, 2017).

It is meant to seem as a positive profile of these two women in contrast to the negativity of Andrew. However, this quickly falls apart as Kelsey’s positive attributes come from a checklist of accomplishments that could only be attained by living long enough to reach her thirties, whereas Alteria’s become this list of child-like good qualities of hugging elders and making quirky statements about tasting new foods (Reisman, 2017). The above quote and the following also both highlight how the violence Alteria experienced is minimized while over-exaggerating what happened to Kelsey.

It was an incendiary situation no matter how you look at it. And it cost the life of an innocent woman in the wrong place at the wrong time. It nearly cost the life of a courageous woman who risked her own life trying to save other people’s lives (Reisman, 2017).

In the press conference, Loar dramatizes Kelsey’s wounds, discussing how her life was saved by a bullet proof vest. Later when questioned about it, it is revealed that she was grazed by the bullet in her shoulder, were a bullet proof vest would have had no effect. Regardless, this raid was not about saving any lives, it was about a man dealing
recreational amounts of drugs. This intersection of Kelsey and Alteria through this raid is racialized not only in how they talk about their backgrounds but in the convergence itself, where Kelsey is coming to save someone and Alteria is in the “wrong place at the wrong time,” – her boyfriend’s house becomes the wrong place, and sleeping before the sun is up becomes the wrong time.

Gifford as a unit was also leveraged in the us v. them argumentation. Loar took the stance that he speaks for the people of Gifford in conducting this raid: “The Gifford community is tired of this behavior,” yet only includes those community members who align with IRCSO. There were people demonstrating at the Coffee house the morning of the shooting, holding signs saying “no justice, no peace.” When he was asked about them, Loar portrayed them as a fringe or minority group calling them players in an unspoken game. What is not challenged in that depiction is that many of those “players” were members of Alteria’s family and close personal relations. Arlene Cooper is only seen as she stands outside with those demonstrators. Later articles pulled footage and quotes from Alteria’s cousin, who was also out there holding signs. This directly contradicts Loar’s attempts to subsume the Woods family in the “us” group he was trying to construct. He is able to separate people into factions without question, keeping the sympathetic actors in his corner and casting those actors who challenge his framing as troublemakers, allowing him and IRCSO to maintain their appearance as good and upright, with the rest as social disruptors aligned with criminals. He is supposedly concerned with getting justice on her behalf, but in reality it is on behalf of IRCSO, which requires blaming Andrew.
Overall, there was a silencing of Towanna and a caricaturizing of her. In early articles, there were allusions to her making a statement in response to Loar accusing her son of using Alteria as a shield. Finding footage of the actual interview that kept being quoted took some time. A 0:53 second video of her speaking at the court house after Loar’s press conference was eventually located on YouTube through one of the news organization’s YouTube pages. What was made available is not the entirety of what she said; the news station cuts it short. In the interview, they never interpreted or followed up on what she said, instead leaving her raw emotion and rage on display. She becomes a depiction of an irrationally angry Black woman. She says in her justified rage:

> But y’all was upset because of the lawsuit. Y’all was upset because he was putting harassment charges on y’all. Y’all was upset because he was asking to speak to somebody. And y’all was upset because when y’all pulled him over he goes \textit{LIVE} on y’all. You pulled him over for \textit{nothing} (Jones, 2017b).

The “he” here is Andrew Coffee IV, and the “y’all” are the police. Towanna is communicating that Andrew has been repeatedly harassed by the police to the point where he was planning on making a formal complaint. That when he was last pulled over, the same incident where Loar claims Andrew threatened them, that yes, he was enraged because he was tired of being pulled over for no reason. This also goes back to the use of Andrew Coffee II to exemplify their family criminality. It is in the one other article that centers the statements of Towanna where it is revealed that when Coffee II shot a deputy, it was after being pulled over at 3 AM for riding a scooter without a tag. Because he had repeatedly been pulled over on minor traffic violations as a form of harassment, that time
he snapped. He hit the deputy, and then shot him in the leg (Jones, 2017a). In Part C and Part E, this community harassment is corroborated by statements made by other residents and in my interview with Yolanda.

**The Counternarrative**

*Empty Gestures & Hollow Words*

I interpreted the Sheriff’s words of condolences as disingenuous both due to what he said and how he said it (tone, body language, cadence). In my interviews with Yolanda and Alexus, this sentiment was confirmed. Loar’s statement that they sent victim’s services to make notification of Alteria’s death is a half-truth. It sounds benevolent. What Yolanda and Alexus recount is much less kind. As Alexus remembers it, Yolanda woke her up to say she was getting calls that there was a shooting at A.J.’s (Andrew) house and she could not get a hold of Alteria. Alexus was trying to call Alteria, but was not getting a response. Suddenly everyone was calling her trying to figure out what was happening. Alexus and Yolanda drove by their grandmother’s house to see if her car was there. It was not. Alexus remembers her grandad calling and saying they should go to the jail, because he heard they were taking people there. Yolanda remembers being called by Sheriff’s deputies saying they had taken Alteria to the jail. Regardless of who told them to go, they went to the jailhouse and sat there for over an hour waiting for Alteria to come out.

When they started to question where she was, they were told by the Sheriff’s office staff that she must have walked out already, but this was impossible because they had been sitting at the entrance. Yolanda’s father called and told her to check the
hospital. They went, and asked if there was a Jane Doe, but they could not get a straight answer. They were sitting and waiting at the hospital, distraught, when one of their family friends suddenly started screaming. She had read on Facebook that Alteria was killed in the raid. It was no less than 20 minutes later that Sheriff’s deputies called saying they should come back to the crime scene. Yolanda refused, saying they needed to come to her. At the hospital three people arrived, a police officer and two other people, one of whom Alexus described as a grief counselor. They asked the hospital for a private room, and it was then that they informed the Woods family that Alteria had been killed. Of course, by then they already knew. Both felt like they had been given the run around that morning, being purposefully misled. Ultimately they found out the news that changed their lives through a Facebook post.

Dangerous Community

The portrait of Gifford as a dangerous community is a dog-whistle. Gifford has the highest Black population in the region, despite it currently being about 50% Black and white as mentioned earlier. The history of racism, racial violence, and resource deprivation is as long as the town’s existence. The framing of Gifford being dangerous based on volume of service calls, conflates the actual amount of violence or criminal activity with the amount of police presence. In 2017, Gifford had a comparable crime rate to neighboring, predominately white Vero Beach (Boogie12Films Production, 2021); a comparison that holds presently for both overall crime and violent crime in particular (Crime Grade, n.d.-a, n.d.-b).

The area is not more dangerous, it is hyper-surveilled. Yet, the presentation of Gifford as a place overrun with drugs, and illegal weapons, and fugitives, and dangerous people on
the whole, goes largely unquestioned in the press conference and unchecked in any of the news reports. Gifford experiences what is known as Broken Windows Policing.

*Depictions of Alteria*

Yolanda was clear that at no point did she believe the human shield theory, nor did she believe that Alteria was pregnant. She expressed confusion at where the rumor even started. Alexus recounts that the Sheriff’s Office was overly concerned with the idea that she was pregnant, at one point sitting down with her, Yolanda, and an aunt to explain their plan to conduct an autopsy to determine if it was true. Alexus was outraged saying that she wanted to tell them, “You don’t have a right to her body,” but at 16-years-old, did not have the ability to say that out loud. She did not think they really cared about whether Alteria was pregnant inasmuch as they cared about what that could mean for them if her death was blamed on IRCSO. If she was pregnant, that would be two deaths they were at fault for. At the same time, if they were able to blame it on Andrew, then “We can pin this on someone else and someone who already in their eyes…they can depict as a criminal as deserving of a charge.”

The use of her mugshot was also a massive pain point for them both. It was a juvenile mugshot taken when she was in eighth grade. A group of girls tried to jump Alteria’s cousin and she went outside to help her. She was never charged with anything.

…they did that to victimize, to victimize. They victimized Alteria that day. I told them, I said, they victimized her. I said…they went on…national TV and told all these lies to cover up what they had done. And I wasn't gonna sit back and allow that to happen (Yolanda Woods).
Alexus talked about how seeing her sister’s mugshot was angering, but that she also knew how powerful of an image it would be. She knew that putting up those mugshots would send a message, because people gravitate towards pictures. She characterized it as “criminalization of blackness” knowing that the associations with the photos would justify for others what happened. They would have their narrative.

**Media Coverage Overall**

Overall, Yolanda expressed disdain at how the media covered Alteria’s death. She pinpointed TCPalm in particular for the harm they created by constantly repeating the human shield language, and by minimizing the violence Alteria experienced in repeating that she was only shot once. She largely stayed away from the news until she could determine which reporters and which outlets she could speak to without their manipulating her words. She explained that Towanna had given up on speaking to the media because of the way they had portrayed Andrew, manipulating his words and his story. Yolanda was clear that dealing with the media had to be strategic because there were certain outlets that supported the Sheriff’s office and would report in ways that painted them in a favorable light to the exclusion of their side of the story. She and Towanna are now working together to get the record set straight. Part of setting the record straight includes highlighting what Towanna was alluding to in her interview and the profile piece written about her, that this raid was about targeting the Coffee family after Andrew Coffee II shot one of their deputies. The harassment Coffee III and Coffee IV were now experiencing was largely about getting back at them, killing Alteria in the process. Andrew (Coffee IV) had never met his grandfather, yet he was accused of ambushing the police during the drug raid to get vengeance for him.
One thing about Indian River County is they are very malicious. They are very...if you do something to one of them, or somebody they know, they're going to come after you no matter what. It could have been your father that did these things, the entire family has to pay for what someone else did (Yolanda Woods).

C. POLICING & THE COMMUNITY

Actors

- Deryl Loar, Sheriff IRCSO
- Tom Bakkedahl, Chief Assistant State Attorney overseeing deadly force investigations in the 19th Judicial Circuit
- Geoffrey Alpert
- Garry Chambliss
- Tony Brown, President of Indian River County Branch of the NAACP
- Merchon Green, spokesperson of Pioneering Change, a community action group
- Community Oriented Policing Enforcement (COPE), a public outreach arm of IRCSO

Timeline

There were three primary issues discussed around policing: 1) community safety at large, 2) community-police relations, and 3) the use of body cameras.

- From March to April 2017 community safety articles started emerged with a discussion of the police shootings in neighboring jurisdictions including Vero Beach Police, St. Lucie County Sheriff’s Office, Martin County, and Okeechobee County (Holsman, 2017). Treasure Coast Newspapers had been investigating police
encounters dating back to 2000, finding that law enforcement agencies across the region had spent $1.6 million to settle claims related to six deaths. More than double that amount was spent to settle non-fatal misconduct claims. Almost $1.4 million was spending in Indian River County alone. Part of that settlement came from a botched drug raid by IRCSO in 2012, where they went to the wrong house. Tom Bakkedahl discusses the use of deadly force in the region, saying it is a small number relative to the number of encounters police have with civilians, “infinitesimally small” (Holsman, 2017). The discussion then shifts to the need for Operation Safe Streets (OSS), where the article moves between statements of IRCSO representatives about the utility and success of OSS, and statements by the residents who report being stopped while driving or walking.

- From March & May 2017, several articles began to highlight the perspectives of community organization representatives and individual community members on the state of policing in Gifford and Indian River County at large. These articles centered the voices of Tony Brown from the NAACP, Merchon Green and attendees of Pioneering Change meetings, and conversations held at COPE meetings.

- From June 2017 through July 2020, there were recurring conversations about the use of body cameras. IRCSO did not have them when Alteria was killed. These texts focused on the budgets for body cameras and whether they were of any real value. This topic remained a focus throughout the summer of 2017, re-emerging in the summers of 2018 and 2020 across the entire Treasure Coast region. Fort Pierce police added them in July 2017 and Sebastian Police added them July 2018. By July 2020, IRCSO still would not budget for them (Wixon, 2020).


**Shifting Discourses**

*Normalizing & Downplaying Police Violence*

The concept of relative rarity, mentioned in Chapter 1, arises in these articles. In that first article on the lack of body cameras among IRCSO, the statement is innocently presented: “Law enforcement-involved shootings are exceedingly rare in Indian River County, and on the Treasure Coast as a whole.” (Smart, 2017). It crops up again with the statements by Bakkedahl. The idea of relatively rarity coupled with the idea of an objective grand jury system demonstrates a resistance to acknowledging the racial bias implicit throughout the criminal-legal system. As Bakkedahl speaks to the objectiveness and incorruptible character of the system, he also speaks from an us v. them positionality, equating the questioning of law enforcement with a “nationwide assault” on their integrity. He then resorts to an oft-used fear-mongering tactic in stating, “These are the people who are standing between us and anarchy” (Holsman, 2017).

This discussion of relative rarity from individual representatives of law enforcement and the larger criminal legal system seems to be in tension with the newspaper investigation into the legal payouts for police misconduct in the area. It also reveals the manipulation of information. In IRCSO’s press release on the day of Alteria’s murder there was a concerted effort to explain their professionalism, grounding it in an historicization of the force, which dates back to 1984. They wrote, “This is the first deadly force incident for the Indian River County Sheriff’s Office S.W.A.T. Team.” While Alteria’s death may have been SWAT’s first, it certainly is not the first in the Sheriff’s office as a whole, or across the numerous police agencies that have jurisdiction in a relatively small region. The relative amount of money spent on civil suit payouts for
misconduct indicates a level of over-policing that makes an encounter like Alteria’s inevitable. In fact, a $30,000 payout from a botched drug raid by these same SWAT members demonstrates a habit of over-aggression. Luckily, that raid had no fatalities, but it indicates the importance of looking at police violence on a continuum and of the potentialities, rather than separating deadly encounters as discrete incidents disconnected from the overall pattern of community abuse.

**The Value of Crackdown Policing**

Loar is quoted in one of these articles about the need to defend themselves against lawsuits, once again positioning the police in an adversarial relationship to the community.

There have been mistakes made by law enforcement, absent intent, but just mistakes…and we see that…Our philosophy is simple. With frequency comes efficiency. We preach that every day…because we believe the more frequently we do a particular task, presumably the more efficient we will be (Holsman, 2017).

There is a commitment to not only continuing to engage in these practices but a belief that practice makes perfect. There were repeated civilian accounts of being stopped for minor infractions and then received stacked charges as a way to crackdown on the community. One man was stopped for not wearing eye protection while riding a scooter that also did not have a tag light, but he was arrested on charges for fleeing the police, knowingly driving with a suspended license, and attaching an unassigned tag (Greenlee, 2017). The value of Operation Safe Streets was always enumerated in the number of arrests made, regardless of what those arrests were in connection to (usually minor traffic
violations), as a way of evidencing that they were making the area safer and creating a pathway to solving Chambliss’ murder. IRCSO essentially confirms their aggression with Eric Flowers saying “A lot of those folks…are either of interest to us or they have some sort of connection back to the people who we believe are involved in the Chambliss homicide,” (Greenlee, 2017). This is a nice way of explaining a community shakedown. Anyone with a warrant ever, in an already over-policed community where more-than-average numbers of people may have some kind of warrant, is subject to further harassment and criminal-legal processing at any time.

**Body Cameras & Technology**

The use of body cameras was initially proposed after Alteria’s shooting and became a central issue in understanding what happened in the raid. In 2017, the Indian River County Sheriff’s Office (IRCSO) did not have body cameras, so it was their word versus the Coffees’ words. The power imbalance of police word versus civilian word already relegates the perspective of civilians. That the Coffees were considered and labeled career criminals meant their word would be even further relegated to the margins. An editorial was published at the outset of the conversation about IRCSO having body cameras that took a curious tone, saying it would “feel vaguely impotent, perhaps even insulting to police,” if body cameras were used to monitor their behavior (Smart, 2017). Throughout this he largely takes an apologist position for the police, conflating the request for body cameras with the demand for their perfection amidst a highly demanding job. George Floyd’s murder, three years later, reinvigorated calls for body cameras. This time the Sheriff’s Office directly addressed the matter, stating it was not considered a priority.
**Quelling Dissent**

Articles about community-police relations tended to focus on one community organization that was focused on the types of community-building tactics that align with the perception of a police force that can be reformed, and the ideas that increasing familiarity between the police and residents would decrease violence. This position greatly overshadowed the hints of community disdain for the police departments in the region that emerged across the body of texts. Protests were cursorily written about, or only emphasized in the visual materials rather than written materials. They were allowed to be characterized as a fringe group by IRCSO without comment or exploration by journalists. The perspective that police in the region consistently harassed Black residents was largely submerged and not given coverage, as with statements made by Towanna Ruffin, Andrew Coffee IV’s mother. When such perspectives were represented, they were consistently bookended by statements of people who believed the police were reformable, statements alluding to the overall danger of the community, or statements by residents who felt the best course of action was personal responsibility and more social uplift programming.

Personal responsibility emerged as a victim blaming tactic, with Merchon Green taking a more community-level blame approach in stating “We have to hold ourselves accountable,” and suggesting an interpersonal monitoring of young people as well as what is happening in the homes. This focus on individual-level solutions for problems emerging from structural-level resource deprivation often follows these types of violent events, where the locus of responsibility to prevent violence lands on residents who are already struggling to make ends meet under the weight of constant harassment. The type
of violence that becomes worth addressing is that of the community, much of which is a function of this structural-level, generational resource deprivation, rather than the violence of the system itself. This attention away from structures onto individuals also showed up in the articles about policing efforts with one expert in police conduct, Geoffrey Alpert, stating, “You handle yourself properly, and courteously, and even if you totally disagree with what the (officer) is doing, you deal with it later…You don’t deal with it on the streets” (Holsman, 2017). In other words, it is the personal responsibility of harassed civilians to de-escalate the police to avoid being killed. The personal responsibility angle also was one of blaming Alteria, with one resident stating that Alteria “probably knew (Coffee IV and his father) had to be doing something wrong.” and another man, a Reverend, stating, “Why was this young lady (Woods) in the house?” (Jones, 2017a).

The discourse became focused on the tension between those who support law enforcement and those who felt harassed. But these perspectives were not given equal weight. The richness of the storytelling where those voices and values that were in better alignment with the status quo were afforded more depth and physical space across each article, whereas those that contradicted the claims of the police structure were narrated in standalone sentences with little to no probing about events that led them to feel the way they do. The aim of appearing “objective” meant that these conflicting ideas are presented adjacent to one another as though they were equivalent thoughts just on different sides of an issue. No interpretation was offered on the part of the authors. However, the disproportionate space and detail afforded to personal responsibility rhetoric belies the presentation of narrating all sides of an issue neutrally.
Much of the early apologia for the police came from Tony Brown. He was the only other civilian quoted in some of the first articles about the shooting aside from Arlene Cooper despite mentions of demonstrations taking place in the immediate aftermath. While Arlene Cooper’s statements were curated to focus almost exclusively on the grief she was experiencing, cutting short the demands for justice, Tony Brown was quoted early on as urging people to “stay calm and wait and see,” (Jones, 2017a). In these follow up articles his advocacy is trained on dissuading people from jumping to conclusions and waiting to hear the results of the investigation. He also wrote a letter saying that he supports the facts as the police presented them and insinuates that because of the drug dealing at the house, that their actions were justified. He then goes on to say, “We knew Alteria well, and we share in the grief that attends a life cut short so young,” (Jones, 2017a).

**Counternarrative**

Looking back at the first press conference, when Loar was asked about the protestors, he cast them as some sort of fringe group: ‘we know who they are.’ In his us v. them framing, he enveloped the Woods family in the “us” wanting justice, by way of blaming Andrew, and “them” as the criminals and those who support efforts to undermine safety efforts (protestors). However, the protestors were family members and supporters of the Woods. Much of the discourse was about creating a narrative to keep police in power and unscathed, since there was little questioning of what they said. The police worked overtime, casting dissent as illegitimate and seeming empathetic towards the family’s legitimate grief, all the while working to undermine their quest for truth and
justice. This effort can only be successful when a community is so repressed they cannot collectivize or fight back. And repression cannot simply come from an outside force, there must be dissension within.

**Fear**

Yolanda discussed at length the depth of fear within the community. People came up to her empathizing with her grief but explaining they could not publicly support her because of what might happen. Retaliation is an expectation, not a threat.

I told him I said you guys have no voice. When will you guys finally realize if we come together as numbers they can't they can't do anything to us? We have to be unified in order to take a stand (Yolanda Woods).

After Alteria was murdered, traffic stops sharply increased over the most minor violations from missing tag-lights to window tint violations on brand new cars. A reminder that they are everywhere at all times, watching. People took that as a sign to stay away from the Woods family. A couple of people who were helping her and working with the Justice 4 Alteria movement were stopped and arrested by the police repeatedly. That example effectively deterred others. IRCSO has successfully harassed and intimidated the community into suppression. Yolanda said it was like that even when she was growing up, and, based on the history of Gifford discussed in Part A, it seems to be a feature of IRCSO rather than a fluke.

**Victim-Blaming**

That fear, for many, was externalized, creating rationalizations for not supporting the family. Primarily this came through victim-blaming. They blamed where she came from, “…she lives in Gifford, which is a predominant black community; who cares.”
They blamed her for associating with Andrew, “‘You lay down with dogs you get fleas…‘Why was she there?’…” They blamed her parenting, “‘She shouldn't blame the police, she should blame herself for allowing her daughter to hang around people like that family.’” These comments were left on social media, quoted in news reports as discussed above, and spoken directly to her. She had to learn to stop reading the comments and to stop paying attention to what others were saying, but she still heard them.

Alexus spoke about the connection between the victim-blaming and respectability politics, how the internalization of racism then gets outwardly projected onto other members of the community. She saw it as a survival strategy, the need to learn from an early age what it means to be Black in this country, having to prepare how to act for the inevitable encounter; how to stay calm and appear non-threatening during a police encounter. She also expressed frustration and sadness, because prevention is not always within an individual’s locus of control. Alteria was asleep and did not have the chance to react “appropriately” to police presence, and yet was still blamed for her own death.

What is it when a system puts a knee on our neck, giving us no chance to do anything and we're still taught that we have to respond a certain way? What way? How are we even give the chance to respond? Our blackness is weaponized (Alexus Woods).

**Abandonment from Community Orgs**

Suppression is aided by a lack of community representation in positions of power, and that situation is by design. Black people do not hold positions on the school board or among county commissioners. People attempt to run for office but Yolanda explains that white people in power send other influential Black leaders to dissuade them from running
for county-level positions. There is a concerted effort to keep Black people out of office in Indian River County. Repression from outside and dissension within.

The Black community representatives who were often quoted or profiled in the news reports were leaders of organizations who actively refused to help the Woods family. Yolanda reached out to what she termed the “five pillars” in her community: NAACP, the Pastor’s Association, the Front Porch Community, COPE, and the Civic Progressive League. She sent each one of these organizations a letter requesting support in working towards justice for Alteria. Each one of them turned her away. The NAACP went so far as to deny her membership in the organization, returning her membership fee to her in cash. They claimed she brought turmoil to the community, made Gifford look bad, because she had reached out to “outsiders” (activists not from the community) for help. The outsiders were the only people who helped her take a stand and help her organize the Justice 4 Alteria movement.

Not only did the NAACP and others refuse to support a community member, they publicly demonstrated their support for the Sheriff’s office. While never actively saying they believed the Sheriff’s word over the community’s, they made statements in service of dissuading community resistance. The NAACP president discouraged people from participating in rallies and protests, even after George Floyd and Breonna Taylor were killed. He made statements to the effect of needing to “take the cuffs off the police.” In other words, stop preventing the police from doing their jobs, and stop blaming them. He used due process rhetoric claiming that rallying against police brutality was akin to the community acting like the judge and jury. This helped weaken any movement building
momentum the Woods family was working towards, helping to cast her as the fringe minority that Loar alluded to in the initial press conference.

Yolanda suggests that much of these leader’s support for the Sheriff’s office is due to what they likely promise them in quiet agreements, but most of the hesitation to collectivize emanates from fear of being the next target.

D. PRE- & POST-INDICTMENT

**Actors**

- Yolanda Woods
- Michael Marsh, Woods family friend and spokesman
- Andrew Coffee IV
- Chris Taylor, Assistant State Attorney
- Towanna Ruffin, Andrew’s mother
- Kaleasha Johnson, Alteria’s cousin
- Joe Wild, Indian River County Judge presiding over Andrew’s post-indictment first appearance
- Jacob Noble, public defender representing Andrew
- Richard Lee Allen, Attorney for the Woods family

**Timeline**

- **March 22, 2017**: Within a few days of Alteria’s shooting, the Sheriff announced that he was not going to bring in an outside investigator and would instead conduct their own internal investigation. The State Attorney’s Office would hold their own parallel investigation (Jones, 2017b).
Early June, 2017: Yolanda Woods, the Woods family, and family supporters began to speak publicly about the case, holding rallies, and again calling for an outside investigator. This continued throughout the month until the grand jury convened.

June 9, 2017: It was announced that the officers who killed Alteria were returned to active duty after being put on paid leave. Another article published the same day provided more detail stating that these officers were actually returned to active duty as of March 31st. In this same article the names were finally disclosed: Sergeant Patrick White, Detective Christopher Reeve, and Officer Richard Sarcinello (Blandford, 2017).

July 19, 2017: a grand jury considered charges against two of the three officers but failed to indict them. Instead, they indicted Coffee IV for second degree murder of Alteria, three counts of attempted murder of a law enforcement officer, possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, and for shooting or throwing a deadly missile. This information was announced with a press conference held by Sheriff Loar from IRCSO. A few days later Andrew had his first appearance in front of Judge Joe Wild where he was arraigned on an additional count of first-degree attempted murder of law enforcement and now second-degree murder with a firearm, bringing his total charges to six. Bond was set on every charge ($840,000) except the new attempted murder charge on law enforcement.

Early August 2017: the autopsy report revealed that she was shot, not once as was initially reported, but ten times, from head to foot. It also confirmed that she was not pregnant.
• **End of September, early October 2017:** IRCSO completes their internal investigation, finding that no policies or procedures were violated and recommended that no administrative action be taken. “When fired upon, SWAT team members reasonably believed their actions in returning fire were necessary in defense of their own life and in defense of the lives of other agency personnel who were in imminent danger of serious bodily injury as they were being fired upon,” (Moore, 2017). Attention then shifts to the defense strategy for Coffee IV and his possibility for making a self-defense claim.

**Shifting Discourses**

This timeline involved three primary sources, including the post-indictment press conference with Sheriff Loar on July 19th, an interview with Towanna Ruffin about her son’s indictment given around that time, and an interview with Michael Marsh, a Woods family friend, given at Coffee IV’s first appearance. Before the indictment there were 11 texts produced about the investigation and the demonstrations. Post-indictment there were at least another 12 texts about the autopsy results, its contradictions to the initial police statements, and about the closure of the case with regards to holding police accountable. During this time another news source, Vero News, becomes a prominent voice for what is happening, largely being one of the only sources to provide more space to the Woods family and Towanna Ruffin than to the police public relations.

**Coffee is to Blame, Remixed**

The narrative of using her as a human shield directly played into the consideration of his being at fault for her death. The prosecutor made their case by describing how
when an armed robbery takes place and someone is killed, even if the robber did not kill them, they can still be charged with second degree murder for creating the scenario in which their death occurred. The difference, however, is that while there is an active decision and intentionality behind participating in an armed robbery, Coffee IV was asleep at his house and awakened to the noise of a no-knock raid. There was no pre-planning. This recalls IRCSO’s initial narrative that he ambushed them, in what was supposed to be a surprise raid; this logic does not compute.

Throughout Loar’s post-indictment press conference he reiterated the story that Andrew was to blame for Alteria’s death, doubling down on the criminalizing rhetoric and the dehumanization through the absence of explicitly naming Andrew as anything other than a “career criminal.” When asked his opinion of the indictment he states,

This has been a TOUGH case, for…every party involved. Unfortunately, these things do occur. Uh, I will tell you that our hearts and thoughts and prayers go out to the Woods family. Uh, this was an unfortunate situation that could’ve been, could’ve been avoided. Unfortunately, a career criminal, with a violent past, initiated this entire event. Our deputies and our crime scene unit and our detectives, uh, worked COUNTLESS HOURS to resolve this case. And ultimately, the grand jury, again, heard from over TWO DOZEN sworn witnesses, on exactly what happened. And they concluded that the charges brought forth were appropriate (Indian River County Sheriff’s Office, 2017a).

As with his initial press conference, all condolences expressed were spoken perfunctorily, as if this were a statement that had to be made rather than one that came from any place of feeling. What was absent in this discussion was that the two dozen sworn witnesses
were all Sheriff’s deputies. When asked to explain how Andrew could legally be blamed for Alteria’s death he stated,

Certainly we look at causation factors…It is our belief…uh…that Coffee 3 and Coffee 4, uh, knew that we were approaching the house, and I personally believe that Coffee 4 intended to ambush our deputies. This could’ve been a horrific (moves head to punctuate the word), scenario…unfortunately, um, it ended the way that it did, which is not good for anyone. Um (less animated and quieter now), but at the end of the day, uh, we believe that justice, has been accomplished (nodding head) (Indian River County Sheriff’s Office, 2017a).

The argument of blame was predicated on his belief that they knew the deputies were coming, his belief that Andrew had intentions to “ambush” them. The horror of the scenario that could have happened was centered on the potential damage done to the officers eclipsing the actual horror of Alteria’s death. The refrain became how Andrew’s conviction would equate with justice, and that since the Woods family wanted justice, then justice had been served. However, this overshadows the actual justice that the Woods family wanted. When reporters spoke to them, Towanna blamed the media for publicizing the “human shield” narrative, saying that it influenced the jurors. Kaleasha Johnson viewed this outcome as an elaborate police cover up (Jones, 2017c). Michael Marsh points out the flaw in IRCSO’s ambush argument:

I fully understand that reasoning if that was the case. If right now we can prove that Andrew Coffee IV KNEW that that was law enforcement, and they identified themselves, then I wouldn’t be here to support Andrew Coffee, AT ALL. However, how do we know, because guess what? We don’t have body
cams in Indian River County. So it is their word versus Coffee’s and guess what? His last name’s Coffee, so who are we gonna believe (Samuel, 2017)?

Here he alluded to what Towanna had suggested from the beginning that the entirety of this raid was about the ongoing animosity between IRCSO and the Coffee family.

The Sheriff was here today, at that hearing, but yet, why won’t he come out and say, ‘You know something, I should’ve never used this mugshot.’ Okay? ‘I should’ve never told the media she was pregnant,’ ‘I should also never lied that it was a single shot that killed Alteria Woods, cause it wasn’t, and I released that.’ Numerous shots. And when the autopsy comes out, that will be made public. It was not a single shot. She was not pregnant. And *HE* used a mugshot, to victimize Alteria Woods a second time (Samuel, 2017).

When the internal investigation was completed and the officers were officially cleared from any disciplinary action, the language used echoed much of what was seen in Chapter 4 and what has been seen more broadly among the higher profile cases. Their exoneration hinged on defining the relevant time frame for assessing “reasonable fear” and “imminent danger” as from the moment they are shot at. It does not consider the decisions the police made that endangered lives, nor the conditions they created under which someone might shoot in fear of being attacked. The clock starts from when they can be considered the victim.
Counternarrative

Revealing Contradictions

Yolanda recalls how the autopsy release started the shift in how people understood the case and interacted with her. She expressed feeling some relief. The results directly contradicted much of the early dominant narrative, revealing that she was not pregnant but that she also had been shot nearly a dozen times. It did not necessarily dispute the human shield theory but it did weaken it substantially when the pregnancy element was taken away. They did not benevolently come to have those results, however. They had to threaten to sue the State Attorney’s Office in order to get the original report, likely because they knew those results released in full would raise questions about what the police had been saying. Up until then, the police released bits and pieces of information to the media. Once they as a family were able to control the information and release it in full, Yolanda explained that at least one journalist apologized to them. Up until then they had been taking the Sheriff’s word, and when they realized that significant facts were simply untrue, one of them attempted to confront the Sheriff for comment. He of course would not make himself available.

E. BLACK LIVES MATTER & COVID-19

Timeline

After the close of 2017, there was very little news coverage or conversation about Alteria’s case. She largely came up in reference to newer cases of police brutality. In late March and early April 2018, her name emerged in three articles that were written after Stephon Clark was killed by police in Sacramento, CA. And in October 2019, she again
was discussed in an article about Black women victims of police violence after Atatiana Jefferson was killed in Ft. Worth, TX. She was also referenced in a Treasure Coast local editorial about the ethics of owning a gun (Gifford, 2018).

There was one article specifically about her on the second anniversary of her death, published by Vero News in March 2019. But it was not until the murder of George Floyd in 2020, when public consciousness was also alerted to the killings of Ahmaud Arbery, by white vigilantes, and Breonna Taylor, by police, that Alteria’s name re-emerged in popular discourse. As mentioned in Chapter 4, Breonna Taylor’s case is almost identical to that of Alteria’s and yet neither of their names reached public consciousness until the standstill of the COVID-19 pandemic in combination with the horror of George Floyd’s death caught on video circulated. Almost all the articles written about the Black Lives Matter protests that summer had lists of names of people who had been killed by the police. It started simply with editorials and articles about specific subjects and turned into full page statements that were re-published across locally distributed newspapers nationwide. Then there were three full page statements, shown in Figure 10, that were distributed across newspapers nationwide. We found at least 30 citations in the database.
Towards the end of the summer, in August, one article was locally published specifically about Alteria, another tribute to her life published in the Vero News. In September 2020, two more articles were published highlighting the police killings of Black women more broadly, one of which was published in the Washington Post:

“Nearly 250 women have been fatally shot by police since 2015.” Given the dearth of news coverage by national outlets to this point, this was significant. By the end of 2020 there was one more notable mention. The NFL’s #SayTheirStories campaign tweeted out a picture of Alteria Woods along with a link to highlight her story.
Counternarrative

The utility of #BlackLivesMatter as a movement

Yolanda expressed gratitude specifically for Colin Kaepernick because he recognized her back in 2017 through his ‘Even More Names’ campaign, printing her name on the shirt. She spoke about how that, plus the NFL recognition and eventual BET recognition motivated her to continue fighting for Alteria. Moreover, to be brave enough to be the first person in her community to stand up to IRCSO. She still faced harassment from IRCSO, getting pulled over for unnecessary traffic stops just to be issued warnings.

Community for George Floyd & Breonna Taylor, but not for Alteria

In the early Justice 4 Alteria rallies in June 2017, the Woods family received very little community support. Regardless of how many flyers they handed out, the majority of people who showed up were family and family friends. Yolanda had even circulated a petition when Alteria was first killed to push for an outside investigation, and people refused to put their name on it because they were terrified of the potential backlash. But the outpouring of support for the rallies for Breonna Taylor and George Floyd in 2020 was shocking and enraging for both Yolanda and Alexus. They spoke at two of these rallies explaining the betrayal of forgetting about Alteria.

…you had your own Breonna Taylor and George Floyd in your own Community and you did nothing…I told them how they turned their backs on my family. I told them that, basically, they had no backbone because they couldn’t take a stand for the [in]justice that took place here in our own community (Yolanda Woods).
Fear was again the primary impediment to the community rallying for Alteria the way they did for George Floyd and Breonna Taylor. It was less risky to show support for people who lived hundreds of miles away than to come out for the murder of someone from their own backyards. The marches for George Floyd and Breonna Taylor were well attended and went on for days. At one of them there was an attempt to bring the white and Black communities together. They explained that it ended up being an exercise in performativity on the part of white community members who did the George Floyd moment of silence and then apologetically said they were unaware of how bad things were in Gifford. Yolanda did not feel like this was sincere or was it an apology.

F. TRIAL & LAWSUITS

Relevant Actors

- Yolanda Woods
- Andrew Coffee IV
- Andrew Coffee III
- Christopher Reeve, Sergeant, shooter in the raid
- Pat White, Lieutenant, shooter in the raid
- Richard Sarinello, Indian River Shores Public Safety Office, shooter in the raid
- Kelsey Zorc, Deputy, shot in the raid
- Robert Ryan, Deputy, shot in the raid
- Vivian Scott, Andrew’s grandmother
- Adam Chrzan, Andrew’s attorney
- Julia Graves, Andrew’s attorney
• Dan Vaughn, Indian River County Circuit Judge presiding over his case
• Donald Richardson, Assistant State Attorney prosecuting this case

Timeline

• December 2020: Andrew Coffee IV filed a claim that all charges should be dismissed under the Stand Your Ground laws. He stated that he did not know he was “shooting at police officers because they did not announce themselves where they could be heard to him” (Holsman, 2020). It is revealed that Andrew Coffee III, the target of the drug raid, was charged with multiple drug offenses related to this raid, and after a plea deal made in 2018, served 30 months in prison and was released in May of 2019 (Holsman, 2020).

• January 2021: Yolanda Woods filed a lawsuit against Christopher Reeve, Pat White, and Rick Sarcinello in their individual capacities. Here several details are revealed for the first time. There were a total of 20 officers involved in the raid on a home that allegedly had about 0.5 ounces/14 grams of cocaine. The suit alleges that this entire operation was grounded in an attempt to target the Coffee family because of Andrew Coffee II’s prior encounter with the police, where in 2015 he shot and wounded an IRCSO deputy. Two of the deputies involved in this raid had previously been involved in investigations of Coffee II and a prior traffic stop of Coffee IV. The same stop that Sheriff Loar alleges that Coffee IV said he planned on finishing what his grandfather started. It details the order of events and reveals that multiple flashbang devices were used, one through the front door and the other through the window of the room where Andrew and Alteria were sleeping at the order of Pat White. The “exchange” of shots were between Andrew and Christopher Reeve. Richard
Sarcinello, armed with an assault rifle, then began shooting inside the window “indiscriminately.” He shot Alteria 10 times. Kelsey Zorc (mentioned previously) and Robert Ryan (another deputy) were positioned on the other side of the house, and both of them were shot by Richard Sarcinello. None of the shooting officers were interviewed by investigators until 11 days after the shooting. The internal investigation was conducted by their co-workers, the results of which were presented to the grand jury who ultimately exonerated them based on that information. None of the officers were disciplined.

- **March 2021:** Hearings began to assess the Stand Your Ground claim, where Andrew’s defense team argued that since his use of force was reasonable under the circumstances of not knowing who was entering his home, that he should be immune from prosecution (Holsman, 2021a). The three officers (Reeve, White, and Sarcinello) testified, as did Vivian Scott and Andrew Coffee IV. Vivian’s mugshot was used in the original press conference as someone who was in the home and who had a criminal record. Though her relationship early on was not addressed, in her testimony she is identified as Andrew’s grandmother (Holsman, 2021b). The three officers testified that they were positioned outside of Andrew’s room and because they could hear the deputies announce themselves from the front of the house, that Andrew should have been able to hear it as well. It is here that their use of flashbang devices is described in public forum for the first time. Police stated they heard the announcement of a search warrant and then detonated a flashbang through Andrew’s window, and then heard Andrew’s gunshots. Andrew’s testimony explained that he and Alteria had been asleep for about four hours when she woke him up pointing
towards the window. When he went to check out who was there, the TV in front of
the window police were breaking open, fell on top of him. He never heard law
enforcement announce themselves but heard a loud bang and thought someone was
shooting a shotgun at him. He thought he was being robbed when he saw a rifle
sticking through the window pointed at him, so he reached for his own gun, crawled
under the window and fired out of the window continuously. He was scared.

- **June 2021**: Judge Vaughn denied the Stand Your Ground defense stating, “This court
finds as a factual matter by clear and convincing evidence that law enforcement did,
on several occasions, sufficiently announce their presence and the purpose of their
presence,” (Arwood, 2021). He explained that he made this conclusion because the
people inside the home had inconsistent testimony so he concluded that “the
testimony of the law enforcement officers is significantly more credible than the
defendant’s and his father’s testimony.” Further, Vaughn wrote that Andrew was
“confrontational” during his testimony, that he lacked “candor and honesty,” and that
“He is simply unworthy of this court’s belief, as is his father’s testimony,” (Arwood,
2021).

- **November 15, 2021**: Andrew’s trial began. He was charged with one count of second-
degree felony murder (for Alteria’s death), three counts of attempted first-degree
murder on a law enforcement officer, shooting a missile (a gun) within a building,
and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon.

- **November 19, 2021**: Andrew was found not guilty of all charges except for the
possession charge. Typically the maximum sentence for that charge is 15 years,
however, given past offenses, the prosecutor announced they were going for a 30 year
enhanced sentence. The Coffee defense team planned to refile a Stand Your Ground claim. In the five years of court proceedings, Deryl Loar retired and Eric Flowers, who was serving as a Lieutenant and IRCSO spokesman when Alteria’s shooting happened, has assumed the role of Sheriff. In response to the verdict Flowers said, “It is disappointing that this jury did not see that the tragic death of Alteria Woods occurred as a direct result of the actions of Andrew Coffee IV. Our deputies were there as a result of drug complaints and sales and took fire from Coffee upon which they had no choice but to protect themselves and others…Our hearts go out to the Woods family as they still suffer from the loss of their daughter, but we stand by our statement that she would still be here had Coffee simply complied with law enforcement,” (Samuel, 2021).

- February 14, 2022: Andrew Coffee IV was sentenced to 10 years in prison for the weapons charge. Yolanda Woods spoke to the judge on his behalf asking for leniency saying, “Andrew has already suffered enough, just as much as my family.” The prosecutor was trying to get a 30 year enhanced sentence while the defense attorney was asking for time served. Judge Vaughn made his decision based on his being a “habitual felony offender” and told him to change his ways. The five years he has already been incarcerated will count as time served so he could be out in 5 years (Shainman, 2022).

**Shifting Discourses**

The final texts uncovered for this study were through June of 2021, however, as I continued monitoring the status of this case, I reviewed but did not analyze any of the
more recent texts regarding Andrew’s trial and sentencing. There were four articles specifically about the trial, one primary document of the civil suit filed against the police and two articles written about that, and finally four articles written from the perspective of Black Lives Matter and particularly about Black women.

Lawsuit Revelations

It is important to contrast the details revealed within the lawsuit with the narrative that was put forth by IRCSO. It then becomes clear how excessive the entire scenario was. For a drug bust of a low-level drug offender, 20 officers participated, some of whom had prior involvement with the family. In Loar’s press conference he oddly focused in on how small the Coffee residence was. He said it repeatedly. Twenty officers likely could have joined hands and stood in a circle around the house, which highlights the absurdity of the raid. Furthermore, the hyper-focus on Kelsey Zorc as heroine and victim of Andrew entirely collapses. She was shot by “friendly fire.” The same officer who shot and killed Alteria, fired so many bullets that he shot through to the other side of the house where Kelsey was and shot her. It is possible Loar did not know who shot Kelsey in all of that gunfire, but in the same way he chose to withhold details of the investigation, including those three officers’ names, he could have chosen to say nothing about her shooting. That he highlighted her and said nothing of the other officer who was also shot by Sarcinello reveals again that her profiling was strategic. The discourse around the first woman SWAT team member is meant to preemptively counter accusations of bias.

Strategically absent from much of the early discourse on the raid was the use of flash-bang grenades. Flash-bangs are designed to disorient people. They produce a bright
light and a dangerously loud sound from about 165 – 180 decibels, designed to temporarily blind and deafen (Angwin & Nehring, 2015; Kamb, 2020). A Pro-publica article found that flash-bang devices have the capacity to cause severe burns if they make contact with a person, and that they have been responsible for maiming or killing at least 50 people since 2000, a likely undercount (Angwin & Nehring, 2015). Yet, two flash-bangs were detonated in the Coffee residence at the same time that Andrew was supposed to have been able to hear police announce themselves. The entirety of the dismissal of his ‘Stand Your Ground’ case came from the judge’s decision that he reasonably could have heard police announce themselves. Had ‘Stand Your Ground’ rightfully been applied, he would have been immune from all charges, including the weapons charge for which he was just sentenced to ten years. However, as the judge stated, the word of the police in stating their timeline of events held more value than anything Andrew or people testifying on his behalf could have said.

Looking across the timeline at how discourse was utilized to construct this narrative of Andrew as pre-meditatively attacking police from his bedroom, using Alteria as a shield from his bullets, and painting the entire family as criminals had the intended effect. While he was not convicted of her murder, the focus on him provided easy cover to exonerate all the police officers that were involved and responsible for her death. Despite the numerous points at which significant pieces of their story fell apart, the media outlets covering this case never once went back to make a retraction, to apologize, or to correct the narrative to the same extent that they ran with the initial stories of IRCSO. Those shifts become footnotes that over a five-year time frame would largely go
unnoticed to the casual observer of these events. However, for those living it, every single twist and turn and revelation feels enormous.

**The Counternarrative**

*The officer and his nightmares*

There was very little focus on the three officers responsible for Alteria’s death. Hardly any background information, and certainly no endearing profile like the one written about Kelsey Zorc, was provided about Richard Sarcinello. He was the deputy who fired all the shots at Alteria and the two deputies (Kelsey & Robert). Despite his being exonerated twice, by a grand jury and then by internal affairs, he apparently is wracked with guilt. Yolanda was approached by someone who knew Sarcinello well. They asked her to sit down and have a conversation with him because he was having nightmares about killing Alteria.

I was angry. Because I told him, what do you think me and my family go through? What do you think we go through? I take medication to go to sleep at night…in the beginning, I couldn't even close my eyes, all I did was see my child and hear my child calling for me. And she's been shot 10 times. I'm hearing her calling for her mother and I wasn't even there to help her. But you want me to sit down with this cop, that murdered our child and have a conversation?! What do you expect me to say to him? (Yolanda Woods)

She was expected to appease his guilt, to connect with him on a human-level, when he would not even take responsibility for killing her. He lives as a free man, still employed, still collecting his police pension. Andrew has already spent five years incarcerated in the
middle of a pandemic for a murder he did not commit. He will spend at least another five more for a situation entirely of Sarcinello’s and the SWAT team’s doing.

**Feelings about the trial**

Even though Andrew was found not guilty, Yolanda talked about how people still believed the human shield theory. She felt that the adherence to the human shield theory simply came down to who said it. Because the Sheriff said it, they believed it. This really highlights the importance and power of discourse particularly when it comes from people viewed as an authority figure. The Sheriff made an unfounded, and strategic statement that became the foundation for all the legal arguments, who was blamed and who was not. In this case, Andrew’s jurors luckily did not believe the evidence, saying that it all seemed one-sided, but in many of these situations, particularly the examples from Chapter 4, the word of the police is gold-standard.

Yolanda suggested that much of the adherence to the word of authorities is connected to the political leanings of the region. It is republican territory with people who still believe that Trump is the rightful president. But even among the Black folks in Gifford, who are not necessarily politically conservative, they needed to hear from another authoritative body to disbelieve the first authoritative figure. In other words, they did not disbelieve what the Sheriff said until the jury disagreed and found Andrew not guilty. Had he been found guilty she believes that most of them still would have believed the dominant narrative without question. Until the verdict was read, there were plenty of negative comments and confidence that Andrew would go to prison for the rest of his life. After the verdict was read, there was no retractions of negative commentary or apologies, just silence.
Ultimately, Yolanda blames the police for what happened and calls this a cover up. She goes back to the original point that if the arrest warrant was for Andrew Coffee III and they already had him in custody, then there was no need to go through the window where Andrew (Coffee IV) and Alteria were sleeping. However, the cruelty was the point.

*Feelings about the sentencing*

Andrew was sentenced in between the time that I interviewed Yolanda and Alexus. Yolanda alluded to her feelings in our interview, and was also was seen in the media coverage of the event asking the judge for leniency (Shainman, 2022). Alexus expressed happiness when Andrew was found not guilty of Alteria’s murder but was angered by the sentencing with the weapons charge. She felt it should have been time served, and that he should have been free to go home. That is also what Yolanda asked the judge for. Alexus had been thinking a lot about what freedom would even mean for him, empathizing with what it must have felt like to go through that raid, witness someone he loved die, and then be incarcerated for the next five, soon to be ten, years. She wondered what it would even mean to be free after all of that. It is a question that is not often considered in the scope of all the trauma that is experienced across the course of one police killing.

From this one event, Alteria’s family is irrevocably changed, managing their grief on a daily basis, still fighting for justice, still fighting for people to know her name. A mother buries a child. A sister grows up without her big sister. Andrew witnesses the death of a loved one and is blamed for her death. He will be incarcerated for most of his 20s and early 30s. He will struggle with the implications of having multiple felonies when he is released. This all was supposed to stem from drug sales, yet Coffee III, the
focus of the warrant, served his time, was released, and went back to doing what he was
doing. He was arrested months later on more drug charges, this time connected to a buy
orchestrated by IRCSO (Holsman, 2020). However, they were not urgently getting him
off the street as they claimed in all the rhetoric surrounding Operation Safe Streets,
because he was only arrested three months after the drug sale set up. It truly begs the
question of what all of this was for because it could not have been about getting the drugs
off the street, and it could not have been about community safety.

Feelings about Andrew

Neither Yolanda nor Alexus expressed any bad feelings about Andrew. Yolanda
visited him in jail prior to the trial to reassure him that they were there for him and to let
him know that they knew everything said about him was a lie. He was worried that she
would hate him, but she told him, “Alteria wouldn’t have wanted me to hate you. My
heart will not allow me to hate you and God won't allow me to hate you. Because I knew
that you wouldn’t want anything to happen to Alteria, and I don't believe any of the
stories they're saying about you.”

Alexus spoke about how goodhearted he was and lamented that people would
never see that side of him because of how he was portrayed. She valued their sibling
relationship and was sad that she had not been in touch with him throughout the trial.

It is like everyone has been through things and done things that they're not
proud of but why are we so willing to…allow others to be redeemed and for
others not to be? I feel like every turn in life, he just never got the moment for
someone who had the power to do so to believe in him [and] give him a chance.
I always believe wholeheartedly he deserved that (Alexus Woods).
She firmly believed that he should have been granted a Stand Your Ground defense but conveyed that the most likely reason it was not granted is because he was Black and because the laws were not designed to be equitably applied. She felt that he must have been in “survival mode” when the raid happened and believes that he was trying to protect Alteria and everyone else in the household, which included his father and his grandmother.

G. JUSTICE 4 ALTERIA WOODS

Alteria would have turned 26 on February 2, 2022 had this raid never happened. Her birthdays are hard for Yolanda because they always did something together to celebrate, whether it was a day of self-pampering or going out for dinner. Birthdays and holidays are now spent at Alteria’s grave. Yolanda finds comfort she finds in visiting, knowing that Alteria’s body is there even if she is not present with them anymore. Those visits also motivate her to keep fighting for justice on her behalf, because it is a reminder of the negligence and recklessness of the police that put her there. It is a reminder of their cavalier attitude that Alteria’s life did not matter, because they had done this to people in the community before and had gotten away with it.

You took someone's child that was loved. You took someone’s, sister, daughter, cousin, grandchild. And you thought it was okay. But it’s not and I’m going to remind them every day, that it’s not okay (Yolanda Woods).

Alexus spoke of the difficulty of coming into adulthood without her older sister, discussing the pain of realizing the plans that would never materialize, advice she would never receive, and milestones that they would never reach together:
She’ll no longer be physically present to be able to celebrate those small moments and big moments. She will never be able to hold my kids. She will never be able to see me on my wedding day and the same goes for her (Alexus Woods).

**Implications for Families**

The long-term impacts of police violence, particularly fatal police violence, on the surviving families and loved ones is often not part of the conversation about the harms of policing beyond the initial distress and grief. Their pain does not end when the news cycle ends, but there is an end to the empathy and support of the people around them. Everyone else moves on while, as Yolanda explained, they relive her death repeatedly. It could be in the midst of pending court cases or a random memory crossing their minds; they constantly wonder what she would be doing if she was still here.

**The Whispers**

In addition to what was discussed in Part C with the lack of community support, both Alexus and Yolanda recall what it felt like to hear the whispers in the immediate aftermath of Alteria’s death. To be talked about rather than comforted. Alexus described already feeling out of place in attending a predominately white high school. Alteria was killed around her spring break, and she went back to a school, there was an added loneliness due to the whispers and hushed tones when she entered a room. People talked about her rather than to her, adding to her hypervisibility. Yolanda had a similar recollection. Her workplace, which had once been an emotional refuge where she got to work with kids who took her mind off of things, became unsafe as her co-workers whispered and talked about her.
Early on, Yolanda described feeling like an outcast in her own community and how painful that was in the wake of Alteria’s death. The most routine tasks, like going to the grocery store, became a reminder that she had been abandoned. People she knew, people she had grown up with, would avoid her. They told other people to stay away from her. Nevertheless, there have been some moments of renewed faith, particularly as she has continued her fight for justice. Since filing the lawsuit against the three officers, she has received more words of encouragement from members of the community. Likely, seeing her courage and seeing the progress she has made offered hope in a place that has been historically beaten down by the criminal-legal system.

*The Emotions*

In detailing the intricacies of what happened, Yolanda alludes to feelings of guilt. Alteria had plans to leave the area to go back to school, but Yolanda had convinced her to stay until after Alexus went off to college. She now lives with the wonder of whether she would still be alive if she had let her leave. Alexus spoke about guilt in a different way. The feeling of not having a right to publicly grieve, or outwardly feel as broken by Alteria’s loss as her mom. She said, “Yeah, I lost a sister but my mom lost a daughter. So I'd be like, if anyone has the right to have a space to grieve and be heard, it is my mom."

Both alluded to the need for mental health support. While Yolanda had more consistent access to care, Alexus discussed the difficulty of that resource as a college student. Campus counseling at her institution is conducted by graduate students overseen by professionals, and as they graduate, student care becomes a revolving door. As soon as she would build a relationship and breakthrough her own barriers to allow herself some vulnerability, her counselor would transition out. She also expressed a desire for a
counselor from a similar racial background, which is a challenge for Black and other minoritized individuals nationwide (O’Malley, 2021), let alone at a predominately white institution.

Anger was the primary emotion that came up in our discussions. Yet the relationship between Black women and anger is fraught. Alexus explored whether she was even allowed to be angry despite feeling so, and how she felt the need to suppress both her anger and her grief.

I feel like we're expected to move on and brush things under the rug. Angry doesn't achieve anything. It just kind of reinforces what they believe about you, the stereotype of being an angry black woman or angry people or violent. So it’s like…even in moments of pain and grief and hurt, where anger deserves a place, it’s like you shouldn't be. You should be everything but. You should still come to them calmly and listening. It’s like but where are you listening to us?

(Alexus Woods)

**Fighting for Justice**

Yolanda spoke often about how she would be Alteria’s voice, not just in our interview, but in the in the interviews she gave with the media. She credits God for her strength and courage to stand up for Alteria even when she felt she was standing alone. She has found purpose and healing in doing this work. She started the Alteria M. Woods Memorial Organization, a 501c3 non-profit dedicated to alleviating poverty and eliminating injustice. They also created a documentary about her life, “The Legacy of Alteria Woods,” which can be found on YouTube. This documentary contextualizes the history of Gifford – the over-policing and under-resourcing of the community, provides
details about her death, and focuses on the beauty of her life. For Yolanda, justice means the deputies who killed Alteria go to prison. It also means the abolition of laws that uphold police immunity as well as the statewide “Back the Blue” policies.

Despite the discouragement she has received, she has not backed down. A lawyer once said to her, ‘I don’t know why you’re trying to change things here in Indian River County. Things will always be the same here, no matter what you try to do.’ In other words, this would always be the situation for Gifford’s Black community, so she should give up. Other Black community members told her to go away. As mentioned previously, the NAACP blamed Alteria’s death on her parents’ negligence of care. Yet, Yolanda said she has already proved them wrong, and she wants people to understand that police brutality is real, that it happens in small communities, and that it happens to Black women.

…we’re in a predominately Black community called Gifford. And…this is not the first time that this has happened here. The other families chose to walk away and they got scared. But I chose to take a stand. Even when they were told that her family didn’t care by the Black community. I chose to take a stand, because that was the only way that we could get justice, and that people would hear our story (Yolanda Woods).

For Yolanda, silence is not an option, and justice is not just about Alteria, but about making sure no other family has to experience what she did. She reminds people that the next time it could be your family.
Moving Beyond Performativity

Justice also requires moving beyond performativity and re-examining all our discourse. Alexus started college a year after her sister’s death and had a class that created an exercise out of assessing how marketing companies capitalize off of social justice movements—in this case the Black Lives Matter movement. The conversation devolved into an insensitive debate, as most of the students could only conceive the root issue in the hypothetical. We normalize and even gamify people’s lived experiences with little regard to who is impacted by what is under examination. When Alexus disrupted the intellectualization of an issue personal to her, the instructor shirked her responsibility, instead shutting down and attempting to smooth over the conversation. Doing so belittles the real trauma of those who were already carrying a heavy burden in order to appease the discomfort of those who cannot, and do not, want to understand. As Alexus put it, for the purposes of “comforting whiteness.”

Before 2020 she had to field offhand comments of her taking things too seriously or not being able to take a joke. After George Floyd’s murder, some people seemed to shift into a new level awareness. However, the concern remains as to whether that change was momentary or sustained. People are easily moved by sensationalism, but the sustained action that must follow often does not materialize. Alexus does not mind sharing her story but has had to be selective about when and with whom she shares it. Some people respond with silence; they are unsure how to respond. Others get really invested in the drama of what happened, asking her to bare her soul for their consumption. However, once they finish draining her emotionally and energetically, there is little follow through.
For her, support means learning the names of other Black women. It means immersing yourself in the literature to understand what intersectionality and multiple jeopardy is. It means resisting the urge to center yourself in conversations despite where you might see the commonality of experiences. It means sitting in the discomfort of the unfamiliar and unpleasant. More importantly it means recognizing your axes of power and speaking up in rooms where you have that power to make the necessary policy changes. It means the difference between being race neutral (passive) and being anti-racist (active).

**Black Women Deserve More**

I asked Alexus more specifically what tangible support might look like at a personal-, rather than structural-level. After a long pause, she spoke about realizing how her fight always turned outward, leaving little space for personal healing. It was difficult for her to conceptualize what real self-care or interpersonal care might look like in a world where Black women typically are not afforded the space to even imagine it.

The conversation turned to Black women and Black mothering and her anger around how much Black women give and how little they in turn receive. She questioned where that fight for Black women was and where they were or were not represented in positions of leadership, or even access to the rooms where decisions are made. Her final thoughts in our interview spoke to much of what is being discussed in popular discourse.

I want to say something for Black women. I do think it’s important that we care for ourselves and we recognize that caring for ourselves is like, as Audre Lorde says, self-preservation. I think if anyone needs to be preserved in this society,
it’s us because we carry so much weight and burden that’s imposed on us and that we feel the need to carry. I think we should always be mindful of ensuring that we are centering and placing ourselves in groups and people who are also willing to extend that care to us. That we also find ways to extend that care to ourselves…I’ve really leaned into the fact that caring and resting is resistance. It’s our way of disrupting…systemic oppression. So I think we just need to be so mindful and leaning into the fact that caring and resting is so important for ourselves. That we deserve access to that as much as anyone else. That's a right not a privilege (Alexus Woods).
VI. “AND SOME PEOPLE CALL HIM PIG…AND SOME PEOPLE CALL HIM PEACEMAKER.”\textsuperscript{15}

A. DISCUSSION

This study examined the experiences of Black women and girls killed by the police, and explored how discourse was utilized to communicate those deaths. Overall, the problem with how we understand PV is that we rely on subjective forms of information masquerading as objective. What needs to be known in order to understand the magnitude and depth of the problem, requires a labor-intensive effort, as exemplified in this studied. The average person likely never will know. That is by design.

\textit{Lynching is a Continuum}

Police killings are a form of lynching. Lynching by definition is the public killing of a person who has not received any due process; a method of social control meant to terrorize (NAACP, n.d.). All of these women were not killed publicly, but they were all killed without due process. They were killed in front of their partners, in front of their children, and in front of their families, to their terror. They were almost all killed with impunity. Ida B. Wells-Barnett wrote the \textit{Red Record} to document at length the atrocity of lynching in the late 1800s. She opened her pamphlet with this statement:

\begin{quote}
The student of American sociology will find the year 1894 marked by a pronounced awakening of the public conscience to a system of anarchy and outlawry which had grown during a series of ten years to be so common, that scenes of unusual brutality failed to have any visible effect upon the
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{15} Statement (at 22:01) from a conversation between Nikki Giovanni & James Baldwin on \textit{Soul!} (1971). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Jc54RvDUZU
humane sentiments of the people of our land [emphasis mine] (Wells-Barnett, 1895).

Over a century later, we are still as a nation having periodic moments of “awakening” to the horrors of racial violence: in 1991 with Rodney King, in 2014 with Michael Brown, and in 2020 with George Floyd. This violence is largely intractable because, as the end of the sentence intimates, we are so accustomed to it that the brutality has no effect. The advent of new ways of recording a lynching, from camcorder to cell phone, largely has no sustained impact on making changes.

Like the Red Record, studies of police brutality require a deeper dive into the complexities and longevity of the atrocities. It also requires revealing the complicity of institutions to submerge these stories through communication strategies that muddle the details and disperse responsibility. The predominant discourse up until Michael Brown was that police violence was relatively rare and therefore, not a social problem worth resources and attention. This discourse of relative rarity submerges the complex truths about how policing functions in the US, how it sustains itself over time, how it works within the machinery of the criminal-legal system, and how it collaborates with healthcare, social services, and even with research institutions of higher education. The harms are much broader than we are able to calculate right now, particularly as we choose to circumscribe our focus to police shootings or just unarmed victims, as though they were the only “true” victims that did not deserve the violence they experienced. The discourse on what is excessive is premised on there being a reasonable amount of violence, and in a public health framework, there is no acceptable quantity of police violence.
Although I set out to understand how discourse is leveraged in the case of Black women and girls, much of the conversation ended up refocusing on the criminality of Black men, with Alteria’s portrayal oscillating between victimized and blameworthy. The other 573 women in the broader sample were not under examination through a CDA, yet in reading through media reports to better understand each case, it was revealed that many of the same tactics used to criminalize Black men were also used to criminalize Black women. This is unsurprising, as anti-Blackness is a constant.

“A cop is a cop, and he may be a very nice man, but I don’t have time to figure that out.”\(^\text{16}\)

We default to believing the police record as the truth. Police are synonymous with “officials” and “authorities,” words that are synonymous with concepts of legitimacy and truth. This renders any competing version of events illegitimate or invisible. As we saw across multiple cases in Chapter 4 and with Andrew Coffee IV’s case as the target of blame in Alteria Woods’ murder, the narrative that police construct early on in the case is the most valuable in assignations of responsibility. The absence of a civilian on which to plausibly shift the blame for a police killing, did not mean that police were held responsible. In many of those cases either the victim was blamed for their own death or the entire encounter was ruled an unfortunate accident. The results of many of these cases mirrored what has already been found in multiple previous studies of how rarely police are charged with, let alone convicted of, the deaths of those they kill.

\(^{16}\) Statement (at 21:40) from a conversation between Nikki Giovanni & James Baldwin on an episode of *Soul!* (1971). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Jc54RvDUZU
What we do know about police killings generally comes from the mouths of the police, which means we do not really know that much. The police have the power and privilege to set the narrative of what happened. They are in control. What is spoken at the press conference or written in the press release becomes the news. The news is how the general population is educated about police encounters. In the articles written immediately after Alteria’s death, nearly 80% of the perspectives referenced came from representatives of the Sheriff’s office. For articles that were written without direct quotes, they were largely verbatim text from the press release presented as objective facts about the situation. The average reader will not realize that it is entirely the voice of the police departments communicating to us what happened.

In cases where there are no other civilian witnesses, there is no one to dispute the details. If there are other police officers witness to an incident, there is largely no impetus for them to contradict a narrative that exonerates them of responsibility. Even if they were not the officer who killed a civilian, likely some series of procedural failures implicates them in that death. In a case like Alteria’s where there were surviving witnesses, one was blamed for her death (Andrew) and the rest were intermittently under carceral control. When individuals are charged, they cannot speak freely to tell their side of the story, and the length of time that elapses before a case goes to trial allows for a significant cooling off period where most people have turned their attention elsewhere in the news cycle. The dominant narrative becomes the only narrative, and victims and families of victims face an uphill battle to change the narrative.

Following one case from start to finish over a number of years as was done with Alteria’s, enables a longitudinal view of how discourse and information shifts over time.
It also clarifies how early assertions were actually theatrics. The theatrics are plausible enough that people believe them. The plausibility is rooted in a long arc of criminalizing Blackness and pathologizing Black culture through policy, practice, and media portrayals. It is rooted in a long history of television copaganda (police propaganda) where the proliferation of long running scripted police dramas inform what the average viewer believes is the day to day of police work in this country (Donovan & Klahm, 2015; Vakil, 2020). Many of the early statements in Alteria’s case were outright falsehoods, not possible mistakes. There is no way the human shield theory could have come into existence without making it up. The police entered through windows after lobbing flashbang grenades; they could not see into the room to be able to see Andrew hiding behind Alteria. Her autopsy report also contradicted that story. Yet, the value of the ability to craft a good story outweighed the potential of it being discovered false.

When it was discovered to be untrue there was no impact on the Sheriff’s office, because the media could never issue a retraction to the magnitude that they presented the original story. Retractions are not sensational. They would have to have a headline equally as salacious, such as ‘Sheriff Deryl Loar Lies in Massive Cover Up,’ for it to have had the same impact. Instead they simply shifted the discussion, likely knowing no one would notice. The nature of police investigations as ongoing, means they can always claim that initial details simply changed. There is always plausible deniability of the intentionality behind releasing false information. Furthermore, it does not benefit the media, who rely on access to the police in order to get the sensational stories that keep their respective outlets in business, to turn around and publicly accuse them of lying.
But the impact of these narratives are damning. Andrew by all accounts should have been immune to prosecution under ‘Stand Your Ground’ laws. However, that dominant narrative rendered his words meaningless. The judge said as much, that the police were more believable than him. He was incarcerated throughout a pandemic over the death of his girlfriend, who he did not kill but had to watch die. He will be incarcerated for at least the same amount of time going forward for using a weapon he was not supposed to have to defend his home against people he thought were intruding in the middle of the night.

What mattered was that he was a felon, regardless of what the felonies were for. In a community that is hyper-surveilled, the accrual of felonies is an easy feat. In a state like Florida, which is a three strikes state, the issuance of punishment disproportionate to the underlying crime is also a low barrier. Once labeled a felon, your criminality becomes your identity, regardless of the circumstances. It becomes justification for even harsher punishment, and it becomes an easy rationalization for why police acted so aggressively in a drug raid. We cannot work on preventing police and other carceral violence without addressing the social norm of labeling members of society as discardable. A belief in disposable people, under certain but ill-defined guidelines, in a society founded on oppression in general, and anti-Blackness in particular, puts anyone who might be “othered” at risk. As the commodity and protection of whiteness ebbs and flows based on class, ethnicity, nationality, language, color, and current event, someone who may feel disaffected by the state of police violence today, may be in the crosshairs tomorrow.
Changing the Narrative

It is understood that the negative statements made by police can have a huge impact on public opinion given the position they occupy (Dukes & Gaither, 2017). They are likely aware of the power they wield as there is a pattern seen here and within the broader discourse of US policing. Guidelines have been proposed for how media should communicate these events in a manner that would lessen that influence on readers, who may be called to serve on juries. Guidelines include avoiding the use of racial or ethnic stereotypic information of either the victim or the suspect, and balancing negative aspects with more positive character traits (Dukes & Gaither, 2017). These suggestions are made with the idea that less biased media coverage could lead to less inequity in the accompanying criminal-legal processes by not having a tainted jury pool.

In a fundamentally racist society, I am not convinced there is an effective way to balance coverage. When the lexicon of “criminal” is very much synonymous with “Blackness” (Muhammad, 2010), it would be difficult to balance negative and positive coverage about an individual as a way to minimize racial bias, as the mind subconsciously generates images of Black people as criminal before any other details have been provided. It would essentially be a game of catchup to try and preempt the default assumption. Furthermore, it might be a leap to assume that the internalized and subconscious racism of potential jurors could be counteracted through better media portrayals of the victims. Jurors are guided through their understanding of cases and the decisions they have to make by prosecutors and judges, many of whom work with police, and work to uphold these systems that are inherently racist. That is not to say the media
should not utilize that guidance, it would absolutely be a step in the right direction, but it would not be a salve to the more systemic roots of the problem.

There have also been suggestions to limit the release of information to only those details that are pertinent, avoiding descriptions of clothing, locations, social life, and irrelevant past history (Dukes & Gaither, 2017). However, even if that were limited in media reports about a case, this information is considered evidentiary in courtrooms, altering the outcomes of trials (Vitale, 2018). This strategy may not have the expected value.

**Seeing Problems, Not People**

One of the few concerns that most people agree deserves a non-police response is mental health issues. Yet, as a society we do not take mental health seriously, seeing it as a personal weakness or individual flaw. We have little infrastructure in place for supporting people who live with diagnosed mental illnesses, and little tolerance for their not managing well enough to appear and behave “normally.” Many people have undiagnosed conditions because they lack access to providers. In the context of police encounters, there is typically only an acknowledgment of acute mental health crises as a valid reason someone should not have been killed or that a non-police response should have been used. Yet, we know observances of who is in crisis versus simply being willfully disobedient is not race neutral. We also know that mental health is conceptually much more complex than one person, with a diagnosed illness, missing their medication at one point in time. It is chronic, cumulative, and sometimes undiagnosable.
If this consideration is going to be made, it should extend to all manifestations of deteriorated mental health whether temporary or chronic, as well as substance use disorders. However, broadening that scope would include the majority of the population. Nearly 20% of this sample had either substance use or mental health issues as a relevant underlying factor. As mentioned, this is an underestimate given that for many of these cases that information only became available if a lawsuit was filed. For victims who were isolated from family or concerned and supportive community members, or for older cases in the dataset where information was not freely available, what we know about decedents’ mental state is based only on police information, thus there are likely many more cases.

If the COVID-19 pandemic taught us nothing else, it is that most of us are on the edge in one way or another, and that our edges are a confluence of all of our current and past direct and collective life circumstances. The accumulation of past traumas known and unacknowledged. This includes our strained interpersonal relationships, even if they never meet a threshold of abuse, our one paycheck away from financial collapse, and our unexplained malaise that we do not have the capacity to determine the cause of either due to lack of health insurance or the stress of navigating the health care system. The conversation about focusing on surviving police encounter by simply complying, is predicated on behavioral perfection within that encounter. It requires superhuman ability for many to overcome whatever acute stress the confrontation itself dredges up, and the assumption that police officers will view the actions of every civilian in the same way.

Police are not trained to recognize mental illness. Not everyone who calls the police is going to disclose they have mental health issues. If someone calls about another
person, there is no way to know what that person is going through to prepare police to hopefully respond with more care. Furthermore, in a country with abysmally terrible access to mental health screenings, there are many undiagnosed individuals who are perceived as disruptive or as troublemakers and not people in need of resources. This is especially true for Black and other minoritized individuals, who were labeled as “bad kids” or people with an attitude problem. They are instead viewed as individuals contributing to social disorder that need to be contained. In this sample, even when police were made aware ahead of time that they may be encountering someone with mental illness, they did not necessarily dispatch someone with CIT training, and if they did, that CIT training was not necessarily injury preventative. While CIT training has been heavily called for, there has been little evidence for its being effective (Rogers et al., 2019). The majority of any benefit goes to making the police feel more self-efficacious, while not reducing unnecessary arrests or injuries. Ultimately, focusing on improving police behavior or increasing the availability of crisis response teams would be an inadequate response, because the base of the iceberg on which fatal PV rests is unmet need for chronic care. Acute crises will happen, but correcting the multitude of systems failures earlier is in alignment with preventive public health practice, and should be the focus.

**Perpetual Harm**

Seen throughout this study and several prior investigations, police are rarely held accountable for the harm they cause, either criminally or even interpersonally through something as humane as an apology. The system is not setup to support apologies because they are essentially admissions of guilt that open them up to prosecution, which is something to avoid at all costs. Criminally, there are massive barriers to both
indictments and eventual prosecution. Prosecutors have strong relationships with police departments out of necessity for successfully prosecuting civilians (Vitale, 2018). They are disincentivized to put forth the same effort to gain a grand jury indictment against police as they do for civilians. The District Attorney, who is typically elected to their position, is loath to be seen impeding the police (Vitale, 2018). Judges are also biased entities in this process for many of the same aforementioned reasons. *Mapping Police Violence* found that when police officers did face charges, it was usually when there was a Black prosecutor, specifically a Black woman (Sinyangwe et al., 2021). However, Black women only make up 1% of prosecutors nationwide, which reaffirms how structurally entrenched this problem is.

Recourse then comes in the form of lawsuits. The time it takes to go through these processes, with the families of victims having to constantly relive their trauma and grief, likely deteriorates the health of surviving relatives and loved ones in ways that have not been well measured. In addition the examples in this study, Erica Garner, Eric Garner’s daughter, died at 27 after suffering a heart attack (Levenson, 2017). She was forced to take up the battle of fighting for justice on her father’s behalf in ways she should not have had to. Yolanda and Alexus both spoke of the need for mental health care in the wake of Alteria’s murder and the stress of having to constantly relive her death. Mental health resources are difficult to come by in general, and the type of consistent and trauma-informed care they need leaves few providers equipped with the expertise. With scarcity comes more expense. Even when wrongful death settlements are reached, a significant portion of that money goes to lawyers, particularly when cases drag on for years, which they often do.
An Ethos of Punishment

The societal commitment to punishment undermines most of the potential value that policing is supposed to carry. The criminal-legal system is designed to be punitive, and punishment is not meted out equitably across race, class, gender, or region, among many other factors. The majority of traffic stops were for minor violations, but many people do not want to stop because it unleashes a cascade of punitive measures that potentially upend your entire life. This is true for DUIs, which is also a health issue, and the majority of traditional crimes and car thefts, where the underlying reason for even perpetrating the original crime often connects back to individual- and community-level resource deprivation. The system never forgives or forgets and is designed to compound punishment. Given the role of three-strikes laws and systems like sex-offender registries, once people are marked a criminal they no longer have the ability to make even an innocuous mistake without risk of being thrust back into carceral control (Vitale, 2018).

This is not a feature of policing that can be trained away. In fact, training may be at the core of the issue. Police carry a “warrior mentality” viewing the community as adversarial to their mission of law and order (Vitale, 2018). Some of that training involves repeat exposure to scenarios police could encounter. The framing of those scenarios is that at any moment a routine interaction could turn deadly, as with traffic stops, and the repetition of that ideology means that police are trained to go into every situation as if it could kill them and every slight movement is viewed as a provocation (Stoughton, 2015). Furthermore, police have increasingly become more militarized both in weaponry (receiving transfers of surplus military equipment) and through tactics, as with SWAT (Balko, 2006b). While the need for SWAT is often discussed in the context
of hostage situations, the majority of their time is spent conducting the types of drug raids seen in Alteria’s case (Alexander & West, 2012). If most of your tools and training are grounded in force, that will be the approach taken most often. Hostile attribution coupled with a socialization to view Blackness and “othered” groups with suspicion means that this warrior mentality will disproportionally impact certain populations.

Race neutrality under the guise of procedural justice, also holds little promise because it fundamentally operates similar to regressive tax structures. Poorer people will be punished more proportionally (Vitale, 2018). In a fee-based structure, everyone may get the same $75 ticket for a broken tail-light but $75 affects people very differently. It also ignores that the reason someone’s tail-light might be broken is because they could not afford to fix it in the first place. Unpaid fines and fees lead to warrants, lead to further encounters and escalations, lead to potential PV. This can be extrapolated. Everything in the country is pay to play: mental health care access, housing, primary health care access, drug rehabilitation, etc. If you cannot afford those things, the consequences result in situations and behaviors that can become more costly and eventually criminalized, which then become the responsibility of the law enforcers. If you have a prior criminal history, your choices to do the “right” things are redacted by limitations associated with the legal ability to discriminate against people with felonies, especially within hiring and housing.

Although only a portion of people are killed by police, the routine over exposure to police for minor issues (that belong in the hands of trained professionals), over conflict management, or over structural-level resource deprivation (i.e. the drug trade) heightens risk of fatalities. The pathways leading to death are overwhelmingly preventable, and not through more resources diverted to policing, but through resources into the systems and
structures that support the social determinants of health. Looking backwards into the cascade of events that lead to a death are important for understanding how to prevent a death. It also reveals how much police-related morbidity could be eliminated through support of more meaningful, helping structures and not punishment structures. The number of people who are physically or mentally injured and/or traumatized by police but not killed is ten-fold higher than the number of people killed, but the pathways of those encounters are the same. We simply do not hear about them as much because they do not rise to the level of sensationalism to garner public scrutiny, which again is the point.

B. STRENGTHS

A major strength of this study is the use of multiple methods to examine PV as it relates to two populations rarely focused on. Although many studies highlight the multi-level causes and consequences of PV, very few look at individual actors and how they are nested in and relate to various contexts. While there is an abundance of literature appraising broader factors for why police routinely face no consequences, there is a dearth of literature on the actual processes and rhetoric for specific cases in the aftermath. Finally, there is scant research on Black women as victims of PV, and the emerging literature has yet to examine the determinants of fatal PV for this population.

This study is one of few to apply CDA to the issue of PV. By moving from the contextual and situational narrative down to the granular analysis of the discourse around these individuals, it permits the generation of rich data that elucidates complex processes masked at more aggregate levels of analysis, which can inform future research directions. Although this study does fall into the trap of focusing on fatalities, it moves beyond
counting and analyzing causes of death and uses fatal incidents as a launching point for exploring the long-term impact of PV. Particularly, it illuminates the indirect violence experienced by surviving relatives and communities in which these incidents take place as well as the mechanism for reproducing systems and environments that allow for the next act of police violence.

Furthermore, by taking a more longitudinal approach to understanding the shift in discourse over the course of once incident of police violence, it becomes more apparent how discourse is weaponized. Discourse has the power to influence the attitudes and behaviors of relevant bystanders who also have the collective power to change policies and practices. If their understanding of a phenomenon is based in what those who enact the violence are saying, then it becomes clearer why the issue of police violence and other similar forms of structural violence are seemingly so unyielding.

To minimize bias and establish the trustworthiness of qualitative analysis, it is recommended that at least three strategies be employed (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This works leans heavily on triangulation, as well as thick description and audit trails. Triangulation is employed in layers, drawing from multiple sources, several methods and theories, and leveraging multiple and diverse investigators (Korstjens & Moser, 2017). The DHA approach to CDA views triangulation as examining the (1) the discourse of a singular text, (2) the interdiscursive relationship between texts or discourse events, (3) the text’s local context, social variables, and institutional frames specific to the situation of the text, and (4) the broader sociopolitical and historical context within which the discursive practices under examination are embedded within and related to (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009).
Rigor (reliability) is not as heavily emphasized in various qualitative methods given that the subjective interpretation of the researcher is central to the theoretical principles underlying the study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017; van Dijk, 1993). However, within CDA, the SCA approach used measures rigor by the accessibility of its findings to the social groups most impacted by it. Audit trails are a measure of dependability and confirmability (another frame of reliability) (Korstjens & Moser, 2017). Here they were used to detail the decisions made during the research process, sampling rationale, choice of research corpus, preliminary findings, and data management process. While there were multiple coders, inter-rater reliability was not calculated, as the coding process was more about consensus and refinement to make sense of what was happening than creating a specific coding schema.

Transferability is the measure of external validity or generalizability. Since many police violence cases never make headlines, a case study was purposively selected from relatively high profile cases. While this seemingly reduces the generalizability of results to other incidents of comparable status, the use of a high-profile cases was necessary to have a substantive enough volume of texts to create a research corpus for analysis. What is more important, however, is that high profile does not mean more egregious—Alteria’s case is not an outlier in the level of violence enacted nor in the discourse surrounding her case afterwards. That her case so closely mirrored that of Breonna Taylor’s from the reason for the encounter, the mechanism of its unfolding, and the victim blaming of her associations in the aftermath, demonstrates the importance and the value of looking at just one case for making recommendations for practice and future research.
C. LIMITATIONS

This study did have some limitations with data and process. In Aim 1, I relied on the Fatal Encounters dataset to locate BWGs who had been killed. There were like many more cases than I was able to pull through the imputed race variable. Many cases had missing racial data, while others were likely mis-identified through the imputation formula used by the database creator. In a cursory look through names that were assigned a non-Black racial categorization through the imputation process, I found a few names that would suggest the woman was, in fact, Black (e.g. “Ebony”). A quick internet search confirmed my suspicions for those handful of checks. It was not feasible to double check the race of all 2,725 women in the database to locate the full list of Black women and girls. However, with a sample of nearly 600 women, there was more than enough to observe important trends.

Generally speaking, none of the publicly available datasets are exhaustive; all have their own inclusion and exclusion criteria. Fatal Encounters was chosen because it is perhaps the most expansively defined dataset, but even here, important names will not show up. Sandra Bland, who died in 2015, is not included in this dataset because when she died she was fully booked into custody, rather than waiting in holding, and Fatal Encounters does not count deaths in (full) custody.

The second aim relied on being able to access source news articles in order to analyze not just the textual material but the visual and auditory and spatial arrangement of communication. Many articles were behind complete paywalls or had limited access every 30 days. Rather than waiting out the paywall, this study chose to source the textual information from the databases and forgo much of the other visual data. Many free
articles had multiple embedded videos. As video content required transcription and simultaneous analysis of body language and surroundings; this could not be done for all the video material available.

More generally, CDA is a team-based analytic process and one that is labor and time intensive. With a team, a fuller analysis of the sampled texts along with all of the communicative features could have been possible, accounting for the complexities of where perspective converged or diverged. While there is no such thing as a complete discourse analysis, inadequate person resources meant a more abridged process.

D. IMPLICATIONS

The implications of this work are many, but one key take away is the need to focus on the smaller interactions and events on the pathway to extreme outcomes like fatal PV as the leverage points for intervention. In 2018, the American Public Health Association (APHA) passed a policy statement on Law Enforcement Violence as a Public Health Issue. This statement had five recommendations, including the elimination of policies and practices that lead to disparate violence (including those laws that criminalize certain identities), investment into the social determinants of health, and the creation of community-based alternatives (American Public Health Association, 2018). More recently, the APHA adopted the policy statement, “Advancing Public Health Interventions to Address the Harms of the Carceral System.” In it they recommend, “moving toward the abolition of carceral systems and building in their stead just and equitable structures that advance the public’s health” through five tactics. One of them is committing to non-carceral measures for public safety and wellbeing and another is
evaluating the determinants of exposure to the carceral system, which includes the police (American Public Health Association, 2021).

Police are not a salve for socially constructed problems. The resistance to substantial changes in how we structure our safety nets often comes from the “what ifs” and “what abouts” of murder, sexual assault, and domestic violence. Firstly, the police on average only spend about 4% of their time focused on any violent crime (Asher & Horwitz, 2020). They spend even less time on serious violent crime, under which murder, sexual assault, and domestic violence fall. For context, in New Orleans, a city constantly broadcasting the level of gun violence, police only spent 0.7% of their time working on this issue in 2020 (Asher & Horwitz, 2020). Secondly, the police are reactionary rather than preventive. In the process of cleaning this subset of data, 82 cases out of the 656 BWGs in the Fatal Encounters database were excluded from analysis. The police were present, but they could not be considered responsible for the death. Out of those 82 cases, 33 were situations where police could not have prevented the ensuing violence, the majority of which were DV/IPV. Meaning, they showed up as one partner killed the other. There are few to no systems in place to seriously address interpersonal conflicts before they rise to the level of extreme violence. Police come after violence has already occurred or risen to a level where enforcement of a law can begin, which is usually after someone has already broken a law.
If we understand the history of policing and racial violence in the US, then we should be able to understand why calls for reform are like clinging to an illusion. The criminal-legal system is not broken. As Mariame Kaba notes, discussions centered on the brokenness of the system imply that it can be fixed (Kaba, 2021). Calls for the dissolution of policing have been met with a vitriol focused on the stupidity or naivety of the concept without commitment to alternatives. The reality is, the overarching vitriol (rather than the localized and valid safety concerns) are more about retaining a system that effectively controls a portion of the population, a system that upholds white supremacy and anti-Blackness (Kaba, 2021). There are legitimate concerns about safety, and what safety could look like, which are addressed in the next section.

The War on Drugs is commonly cited as the foundation for aggressive policing and hyper-surveillance. However, putting policing into historical context shows the long arc of violence in Black and immigrant communities since the inception of formalized policing (Muhammad, 2010). The War on Drugs is merely a continuation of the routine violence of policing, and every 30 to 40 years, another commission is assembled to investigate it. The Lexow Committee of 1894, the Wickersham Commission of 1931, the Kerner Commission of 1967, the Independent Commission on the LAPD and the Presidential Task Force on Los Angeles Recovery of 1991 – 1993, and most recently, the President’s Taskforce on 21st Century Policing of 2015. Each of these determined that corruption is rampant and violence is disproportionately enacted against Black and other marginalized populations. The conclusions are almost always the same: more training,

17 Poem by Langston Hughes, "Freedom” from The Collected Works of Langston Hughes.
better community relations, more restrictive policies and procedures, and sometimes a call for community oversight. All of these conclusions lead to more money spent on the institution of policing, which means less money budgeted for other aspects of community well-being.

Commissions do not result in meaningful reductions in violence and instead are a tool of placation, or in the words of Mariame Kaba, they are counterinsurgent (2021). They are meant to put out the fire among a population moved to take their rage into the streets, to label protestors and community activists as a fringe minority that should be ignored and ridiculed, much like what Sheriff Loar did in the aftermath of Alteria’s murder. Two years after George Floyd’s murder, the ridicule of defunding the police is still part of the national discourse, yet the supposed counterclaims that reform is better are hollow. The George Floyd Justice in Policing Act has all but been abandoned, which begs the question of whether it was really about reform being the better solution, or if it was about quelling dissent and restoring social order.

Even when some semblance of reform-oriented policies are passed, there are countless loopholes and shoddy enforcement mechanisms. Furthermore, there is always some clause that allows for discretion in these decisions. Many of the national reforms called for post-George Floyd had already been instituted in Minneapolis. Derek Chauvin had seventeen misconduct complaints, indicating a pattern of violent behavior, and yet was still employed (Kaba, 2021). No-knock raids were supposed to have been banned in Minneapolis when Amir Locke was most recently killed. Early warning systems become toothless because many of the attitudes and behaviors that would suggest a problematic officer are normalized; they are an aspect of police subcultural norms (Lersch &
Mieczkowski, 2005; Micucci & Gomme, 2005). They are also justified, particularly in
the context of policing Black and other minoritized communities that are inherently
viewed as more violent and criminal. Even when misconduct complaints are validated,
they rarely make it to public record because of shielding laws in certain jurisdictions
(Collins, 1998; Taggart & Hayes, 2018). Finally, as evidenced in several cases in this
sample, recommendations from civilian review boards after a violent encounter, have the
ability to be rejected.

I say, abolition now, abolition tomorrow, abolition forever.

Local movements are pushing for defunding the police and reinvesting into
communities, which is a core value of public health – the need for addressing the root
causes of inequities. Defunding the police and redirecting that money into neglected
systems of education, mental health, recovery services, and housing are not only in line
with the aims of achieving health equity, but are the primary solution to creating safe
communities. It is important to at least begin to give ourselves the space to imagine what
could exist and what could be built if that inordinate amount of funding we devote to
policing, the equivalent of small countries’ entire military operations, were re-invested
into improving the systems listed above. The role of public health is to imagine and
design systems and practices for violence prevention. To do so, we must be willing to
step outside of a carceral and punitive mindset to create solutions that do not re-enact
more violence.
**Imagining New Futures**

Our approaches must be systems-level and historically grounded, otherwise we risk further entrenching these violent regimes. We must use a different, abolitionist framework, if we ever hope to seek a pathway out of cyclical violence. Abolition is not a naïve dream, but a focused practice of envisioning what a restructured society might look like and how that could be implemented (Kaba, 2021). An abolitionist vision includes thinking through how to have everyone’s physical, mental, emotional, and environmental needs met, including access to food, housing, clean water, safety, health, and leisure. It is very much aligned with the principles that public health proclaims yet does not always operationalize. It is also not about an absence of responsibility or accountability when harm is perpetrated but a commitment to practicing models of justice that allow for transformation, restoration, and reparation (Kaba, 2021).

As one example, a TikTok video came across my ‘for you page’ where several civilians noticed someone was driving erratically and assumed they may be drunk. The video was filmed inside one of the driver’s cars narrating what was happening. They chose to drive in a perimeter around this potentially drunk driver, keeping a distance, but turning on their hazard lights so other drivers would drive around them. This somewhat contained the swerving driver and they followed that person home in this formation. These individuals thought about how to create the safest conditions in an unideal situation. Prevention is the ultimate goal, but we also need interventions that do not alarm disoriented people or trigger a flight response in the immediate. They were likely able to box him in in this way because they were regular cars as opposed to a representative of an institution that is punitive. The goal is not an absence of consequences for the
offender, but a way to apply those consequences after the safety hazard has been neutralized without seriously harming other people. This type of creative thinking could be applied to the myriad other social problems that arose in this dataset, which would set us on a true pathway to developing safer communities.

Returning to the issue of mental health, a reworked approach could include equipping partners and family members of mentally ill people with a toolbox of skills to rely on to help calm persons in crisis; and trusted resources to call if initial interventions failed. This could include working towards creating community cohesion where neighbors are aware of each other’s challenges, so if someone is running around naked or exhibiting other precarious behaviors, they know who to contact. Then another layer could become involved, such as a social worker or psychological professional who is on-call, familiar with each person, and comprehensively trained on complex situations; and so forth up the escalation of humane care. The search for solutions should be focused on envisioning new modalities rather than relying on stopgaps, which disproportionately hurt those most marginalized. People should be able to access humane resources that can get their loved ones the care they need without them dying in the process.

This process of re-envisioning is complex and requires a commitment to not falling back into the ease of what is probable rather than what is possible. Our current systems do not work, and the interaction of the dysfunction is disproportionately continuing to kill Black people and other minoritized population. This process, however, must be done with intentionality. As we are a product of these systems, we are bound to replicate them if we engage in research and practice in the same modalities we always have.
First, when we set about trying to transform society, we must remember that we ourselves will also need to transform. Our imagination of a what a different world can be is limited…Second, we must imagine and experiment with new collective structures that enable us to take more principled action, such as embracing collective responsibility to resolve conflicts…Third, we must simultaneously engage in strategies that reduce contact between people and the criminal legal system…Fourth…building a different world requires that we not only change how we address harm but also that we change everything (Kaba, 2021).

E. FUTURE WORK

Thinking about the fifth recommendation from APHA’s statement on law enforcement violence, to “comprehensively document law enforcement contact, violence, and injuries,” future work would include continuing the process started here for other minoritized populations. Particularly among Indigenous victims of PV of all genders. Given their statistically small numbers, their stories and concerns are usually missing from the conversation, yet a few studies have noted that their rates of PV are sometimes higher or a close second to the rates for Black Americans (Edwards et al., 2019). It would also include collecting primary accounts of non-lethal PV, particularly how sexual and psychological PV manifests and impacts individuals across race and gender.

There is also a continued need for a full financial analysis, not just which entities take up the majority of municipal and state budgets, but the full scope of which hands dollars are flowing through and they are being expensed. Scholars and activists, myself included, have already begun looking at the true cost of funding police and jail systems –
beyond the clear line items. This includes digging into other department budgets that house components of the larger PIC, including surveillance mechanisms and other privatized entities. Finally, a further analysis would include a more regional examination of how much it would take to fully fund the institutions known to promote health and well-being, in contrast with how much it costs to continuously fund the police and jails; how much savings could be forecasted in totality when considering the costs of prevented morbidity and mortality connected with resource deprivation compounded by the impacts of the criminal-legal system.
## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Fatal Encounter Database & Investigator Added Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fatal Encounters Database &amp; Investigator Added Variables</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unique ID</td>
<td>A Unique ID number assigned to each case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject’s Name</td>
<td>Names of decedents retrieved from police records, media, obituaries, and social media.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject's Age</td>
<td>Numeric age at time of death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject’s Gender</td>
<td>Male, Female, Transgender, or empty cell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject’s Race</td>
<td>Based on visual evidence or official reports. [African American/Black, Asian/Pacific Islander, European American/White, Hispanic/Latinx, Middle Eastern, Native American/Alaskan, Race Unspecified]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject’s Race Imputed</td>
<td>A combined column with both non-imputed race codes and imputed race codes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imputation Probability</td>
<td>Shows whether a race was imputed or not imputed and the probability of accuracy in the imputed races</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URL of image of deceased</td>
<td>Used to help in establishing race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of injury leading to death</td>
<td>MM/DD/YYYY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location of injury (address)</td>
<td>Best street address of the location where the injury causing death happened found using public documents, news reports, and videos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location of injury (city)</td>
<td>Best city location where the injury causing death happened found using public documents, news reports, and Google Maps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location of injury (state)</td>
<td>Best state location where the injury causing death happened found using Google Maps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location of death (zip code)</td>
<td>Best zip code location where the injury causing death occurred found using Google Maps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location of death (county)</td>
<td>County where injury causing death occurred provided by the National Association of Counties using zip codes. Manually corrected when zip codes crossed county lines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Address</td>
<td>Address, City, State, Zip Code, County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latitude</td>
<td>From Google Maps API. Locations for which there is not a street address are hand coded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longitude</td>
<td>From Google Maps API. Locations for which there is not a street address are hand coded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agency responsible for death</strong></td>
<td>Name of law enforcement agency(ies) involved in death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cause of death</strong></td>
<td>(Asphyxiated/restrained, beaten/bludgeoned, burned/smoke inhalation, chemical agent, drowned, drug overdose, gunshot, medical emergency, other, stabbed, tasered, undetermined, vehicle)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brief description of the circumstances surrounding the death</strong></td>
<td>Text description of what happened in the moments before the fatality. This was used as the basis for categorization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disposition/Exclusions</strong></td>
<td>INTERNAL USE, NOT FOR ANALYSIS: description of how the case was determined from the criminal legal side (justified, criminal, unreported, pending investigation, civil suit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Variable intended to include many of the details we created additional variables for, however, the existing variable hasn't been kept up with the changing dispositions</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Link to news article or photo of official document</strong></td>
<td>URL to news article or other documentation of the death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Symptoms of mental illness</strong></td>
<td>Were police aware of symptoms of mental illness before interaction? INTERNAL USE, NOT FOR ANALYSIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We manually searched for this information during the coding process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Video</strong></td>
<td>Empty value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date &amp; Description</strong></td>
<td>MM/DD/YYYY: Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unique ID formula</strong></td>
<td>Empty value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unique identifier (redundant)</strong></td>
<td>Redundant Unique ID variable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year</strong></td>
<td>Year of death (YYYY)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional variables this study added to the Fatal Encounters dataset**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Lawsuit Filed</strong></th>
<th>Did the family file a wrongful death lawsuit or other civil suit (Y/N/Unknown)?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lawsuit Amount Awarded</strong></td>
<td>Dollar amount of lawsuit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Officer Information</strong></td>
<td>Details: names, ranks, description of any consequences they faced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Notes</strong></td>
<td>Other relevant case updates revealed through the search process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Appendix 2: Critical Discourse Analysis Data Extraction Tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Guiding Questions</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Textual Properties</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Macrosemantics:** Identify main discourse topics | What are the thematic topics of the text? | Summarize what is going on as higher-level or abstract principles | • List the discourse topics  
• Repeat for various levels of abstraction  
  o Move from title/headline to body,  
  o Multiple points should drill down to one overall point |
| **Nomination & Style** | What are the thematic topics of the text? | List membership categorization devices:  
• Deictics (I, you, we, they),  
• Anthroponyms (names/abstract titles of people/groups/places) | Identify tropes:  
• metaphors,  
• metonymies (sub word to mean something else: e.g. “crown” = royal person)  
• synecdoche (a part of something used to rep the whole: e.g. new wheels = new car)  
List verbs, nouns used to denote processes & actions |
| **Predication** | What are the thematic topics of the text? | Considering quality, stereotypical or evaluative attributions, negative or positive traits, examine how the following are discussed:  
• social actors,  
• objects, phenomena, events,  
• processes & actions | Examine:  
• Adjectives used,  
• Collocation - habitual/purposeful juxtaposition of 2+ words (“heavy drinker”) to import meaning  
• Explicit comparisons, similes, metaphors and other rhetorical figures (metonyms, hyperboles, litotes, euphemisms)  
• Allusions, evocations, assumptions, implications |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Argumentation</strong></th>
<th><strong>Dissertation</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • What arguments are employed?  
• What strategies are employed to communicate the point?  
• Coherence: How much do the sentences topically relate to each other or not?  
• What contradiction, denials, or other concessions are present and what purpose do they serve? | • **Identify the principle claims (conclusions)** being made/argued  
  ○ Not always explicit but can be conditional or causal paraphrases, such as ‘if x, then y’ or ‘y, because x’  
• List arguments (evidence) used to justify those conclusions  
• List strategies used to make the point: (e.g., rhetorical questions, parallelisms, alliterations, contrasts, and comparisons)  
• Determine if arguments/strategies are reasonable or fallacious |
| Examine the central arguments, i.e., justifications and challenges of the claims of truth and normative rightness |  |

| **Perspectivization:**  
Framing or discourse representation |  |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| • Who is the speaker representing (actually & ideologically)?  
• What is implied about the primary speaker’s point of view and power?  
• How are sentences structured? | Examine  
• Deictics (I, you, they)  
• Ideological framing  
• **Active v. passive language**  
• Use of direct quotations, discourse markers (e.g. ‘so,’ ‘well I mean,’ ‘anyway,’ etc.)  
• Metaphor use |
|  |  |
### Intensification & mitigation
- Are statements articulated overtly or modified?
- How much detail are events described in? What types of information is provided in over-detail and under-detail?
- What implications, presumptions, or vagueness is added through the use of modifiers?

Examine whether & how statements are modified to either intensify or mitigate what is being said and determine how that impacts what is known/valid (epistemic) and what is considered necessary (deontic).

Look for/list:
- **Strategies of ‘positive self-presentation and negative other presentation’** including:
  - Emphasize “our” good and “their” bad
  - De-emphasize “our” bad and “their” good
- Providing many details about good actions and few details about bad actions
- Vague expressions
- Diminutives or augmentatives
- Hyperboles & litotes (over-exaggerations v. ironic understatements)
- Indirect speech acts (e.g. question instead of assertion)
- Verbs of saying, feeling, thinking, etc.

### Contextual Properties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access Pattern</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Genre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who controls the discourse?</td>
<td>What is the physical setting or social location of where the text takes place?</td>
<td>What form of communication is utilized?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where are they socially located?</td>
<td>Understand power dynamics of distribution and agenda-setting of communication</td>
<td>What privileges are afforded access to that form?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand how power or authority is signaled via elements of the setting</td>
<td>Identify the ‘where’</td>
<td>Identify communication type &amp; privilege:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify the ‘who’</td>
<td>E.g., is a press conference held in front of city hall? What items are visible?</td>
<td>Type: debate, press release, official statement, academic article, legislation, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People or organizations that control the occasion, time, place, setting of discourse</td>
<td>Presence or absence of participants</td>
<td>Privilege: parliamentary debate = political decision-making; academic article = scientific agenda setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power or presence of participants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicative acts &amp; social meanings</td>
<td>Understand how power is enacted through rules and norms of engagement within a communicative arena</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How does communication proceed; what rules of engagement are present?</td>
<td>Identify:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is talked about, why?</td>
<td>Expressions denoting rules of turn-taking (press conference: delivery then questions)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What larger thematic elements are present in the dialogue and what do they mean within this context?</td>
<td>What may be considered relevant or appropriate to discuss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Understand why certain power tactics are implemented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are the titles and roles of the participants in the text?</td>
<td>Identify:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What significance do they hold?</td>
<td>Titles/positions of speakers and referents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whose voices are elevated or silenced?</td>
<td>Race, gender, &amp; other relevant demographics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speech Acts</th>
<th>Understand the effectiveness and ‘authority’ of their communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What broad tactics are employed (e.g., assertions, accusations, intimidations)?</td>
<td>Identify broadly:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do they function?</td>
<td>Tactics: assertions, accusations, intimidations?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Their purpose with full context in view</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3: Interview Guide

Family & Close Acquaintances
Interview date:
Respondent identification number:
Name of interviewer:
Informed consent given? Yes ___  No ___

1. Tell me about your relationship to Alteria
2. What memories or experiences with her can you share?
3. Describe the community of Gifford.
   a. What do the neighborhoods look like?
   b. Are people close to each other?
   c. How is the community resourced, policed?
4. The day of the raid, the sheriff gave a press conference describing what happened. How did you feel about what he said?
   a. How did you feel about the general media coverage in the days after?
   b. What kind of impact has it had on you?
5. What was missing from the coverage?
   a. What parts of the story?
   b. Whose voices and perspectives?
   c. What background information?
6. What do you wish had been said or done differently?
## Appendix 4: Supporting Documents Referenced for Aim 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case #</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Newspaper or Publisher</th>
<th>Section/URL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Morita, Jennifer K.</td>
<td>2000, Jan. 9</td>
<td>Family remembers victim of fiery crash</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Recordnet.com</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Gross, Gregory Alan</td>
<td>2000, Feb 19</td>
<td>Border agents pull out of police anti-drug unit</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>San Diego Union-Tribune, The (CA)</td>
<td>B-3:7B-4:1B-3:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Hughes, Joe and Repard, Pauline</td>
<td>2000, Feb 5</td>
<td>Female prisoner killed by undercover agent in City Heights identified</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>San Diego Union-Tribune, The (CA)</td>
<td>B-2:1B-4:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Eckard, J. Eric</td>
<td>2000, Mar 29</td>
<td>Passenger in fatal wreck identified as Castalia woman</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Rocky Mount Telegram (Rocky Mount, North Carolina)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Gaar, Brian</td>
<td>2000, May 3</td>
<td>Car chase preceded crash that killed girls: Riesel Mart officers pursued auto carrying 3 Waco teen-agers</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Waco Tribune-Herald (TX)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case/Article ID</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Date(s)</td>
<td>Title/Description</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>URL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>Fracassa, Dominic</td>
<td>2019, Nov 9</td>
<td>‘Uphill battle’ for shorter sentence</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>San Francisco Chronicle (CA)</td>
<td>C1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event/Story Details</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>URL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>Gutierrez, Pedro Ruz</td>
<td>2000, July 27</td>
<td>SWAT sniper is trying to cope - Orlando Police officer who killed hostage awaits inquiry</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Orlando Sentinel, The (FL)</td>
<td>D1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Fooksman, Leon and Allen, C. Ron</td>
<td>2000, July 29</td>
<td>Police crash victim recalled as caring, doting mother</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Sun-Sentinel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>Othon, Nancy L. and Brochu, Nicole S</td>
<td>2001, Feb 7</td>
<td>Inquiry clears officer in traffic death</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Sun-Sentinel</td>
<td>1A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td>2004, Jan 13</td>
<td>Nick Bazemore v. Commonwealth of Virginia, No. 0103-02-1 (Court of Appeals of Virginia, Circuit Court of the City of Suffolk Jan 13, 2004).</td>
<td>Case</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Minai, Leonora</td>
<td>2000, Aug 24</td>
<td>Teen girls in fatal wreck had tangled with the law</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>St. Petersburg Times</td>
<td>6B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Celona, Larry</td>
<td>2000, Oct. 24</td>
<td>Cop kills woman in tragic ending to families' feud</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>New York Post</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Year, Month</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>URL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Rushton, Bruce</td>
<td>2001, May 23</td>
<td>Who's Next? Annette Greedn didn't have to die. Her death was a tragedy waiting to happen in St. Louis County's reckless war against two-bit drug dealers and addicts</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Riverfront Times</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Lee, Henry K.</td>
<td>2001, Apr 5</td>
<td>Crash Victim's Son Confronts Suspect In Fatal Police Chase / $500,000 bail set for Richmond man, 29</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>SFGate (CA)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/Crash-Victims-Son-Confronts-Suspect-In-Fatal-2934957.php">https://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/Crash-Victims-Son-Confronts-Suspect-In-Fatal-2934957.php</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Smith, Kati Cornell</td>
<td>2003, Nov 12</td>
<td>$44M suit hits trooper in drug slay</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>New York Post</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Year, Date</td>
<td>Event/Description</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>URL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Perlstein, Michael</td>
<td>2001, Aug 23</td>
<td>N.O. woman killed in car crash while visiting daughter in Atlanta - Man booked with theft, vehicular homicide</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Times-Picayune, The (New Orleans, LA)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
<td>2013, May 28</td>
<td>City of Jackson, Mississippi v. Lee B. Lewis, Oda Mae Green, and Sonya Stephens, on Behalf of the Wrongful Death Beneficiaries of Margaret E. Stephens, Deceased, No. 2011-CA-00787-COA (Hinds County Circuit Court, Court of Appeals of the State of Mississippi May 28, 2013).</td>
<td>Case</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Doege, David</td>
<td>2001, Dec 28</td>
<td>Court hearing set for man in chase that killed girl</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Milwaukee Journal Sentinel (WI)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>Graham, Troy</td>
<td>2001, Dec 22</td>
<td>NN Officer killed woman - victim is shot after ignoring order by police to drop gun</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Daily Press (Newport News, VA)</td>
<td>A1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>The Associated Press</td>
<td>2002, Apr 30</td>
<td>Two killed in Indianapolis police pursuit</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Northwest Indiana</td>
<td><a href="https://www.nwitimes.com/article_eae08df4-6354-510e-9470-b05096ef40f.html">https://www.nwitimes.com/article_eae08df4-6354-510e-9470-b05096ef40f.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>Shannon, R.E.</td>
<td>2005, Mar 15</td>
<td>[Recommendation to authorize City Attorney to pay sum of $19,000.00 in full settlement of lawsuit entitled Shirley Turner vs. City of Long Beach].</td>
<td>Press Release</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>Bowes, Mark</td>
<td>2002, Sep 10</td>
<td>Man indicted in fatal wreck - Henrico crash followed high-speed chase</td>
<td>Newspaper Article Richmond Times-Dispatch</td>
<td>B1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>2002, Aug 21</td>
<td>Car fleeing police kills child; driver is arrested</td>
<td>Newspaper Article Detroit News, The (MI)</td>
<td>16E</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>Richter, Officer Jack</td>
<td>2003, Jan 2</td>
<td>News Release: Driver and passenger of stolen vehicle die as a result of traffic collision</td>
<td>Newspaper Article Los Angeles Police Department</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Page</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83.1</td>
<td>Angelette, Adrian</td>
<td>2003, Feb 19</td>
<td>BR police sued in woman's death - Suit claims officer caused fatal wreck</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>9A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>2003, July 30</td>
<td>Trooper, Wife shoot each other; both die</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>WLTX News 19</td>
<td><a href="https://www.wltx.com/article/news/trooper-wife-shoot-each-other-both-die/101-384271696">https://www.wltx.com/article/news/trooper-wife-shoot-each-other-both-die/101-384271696</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>112</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>2003, Nov 24</td>
<td>2 die in crash as they fled East Cleveland police</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Plain Dealer, The (Cleveland, OH)</td>
<td>B3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121</td>
<td>Eiserer, Tanya</td>
<td>2006, Aug 19</td>
<td>City plans to pay $250K in mentally ill woman's death</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>The Dallas Morning News</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Date(s)</td>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>Source Type</td>
<td>Source Title</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>123</td>
<td>Tinsley, Jesse and Flournoy, Tasha</td>
<td>2004, Feb 19</td>
<td>Gun-toting woman shot dead in Bedford Hts. Trailed park - She went on rampage, ignored police orders to drop weapon</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Plain Dealer, The (Cleveland, OH)</td>
<td>B1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>130</td>
<td>Bartlett, Chainee</td>
<td>2014, Mar 4</td>
<td>Deadly Memphis police chase goes before supreme court</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>5 News Online (Fayetteville, AR)</td>
<td>A1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>133</td>
<td>Stephens, Scott and Sangiacomo, Michael</td>
<td>2004, Aug 7</td>
<td>Crash after police chase kills 2 - Third person is critical; police had ended high-speed pursuit</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Plain Dealer, The (Cleveland, OH)</td>
<td>A1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>138</td>
<td>Daker, Susan</td>
<td>2004, Oct 20</td>
<td>Chase started after domestic incident - Suspect faces more charges in chase, fatal collision</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Mobile Register (AL)</td>
<td>p. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>138.1</td>
<td>Danborn, Joe</td>
<td>2004, Oct 21</td>
<td>Salter bond set at $100K</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Press-Register (Mobile, AL)</td>
<td>p. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>140</td>
<td>Staff Writer</td>
<td>2004, Nov 20</td>
<td>Two killed in high-speed chase</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Tuscaloosa News, The</td>
<td>B04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>141</td>
<td>Welsh, John</td>
<td>2004, Dec 9</td>
<td>Woman shot, killed by officer identified - REACTION: Family members of a Moreno Valley woman say they want answers</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Press-Enterprise, The (Riverside, CA)</td>
<td>B04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>URL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 141.1 | Shelton, Mary     | 2008, Feb 21 | Consultant's report findings to be finalized in Coming Weeks        | Newspaper Article    | Black Voice News
https://bvn.flywheelsites.com/2008/02/21/consultants-report-findings-to-be-finalized-in-coming-weeks/ |
| 144  | Bebbington, Jim    | 2005, Mar 25 | Outside probe pleases mother - Daughter was slain by police officer husband | Newspaper Article    | Dayton Daily News (OH)
B3 |
| 144.1 | Behind the Blue Wall | 2005, Mar 9 | [OH] Slain cop's wife Niema's mother: Don't let her die in vain      | Newspaper Article    | Behind the Blue Wall
| 144.2 | Grieco, Lou        | 2005, Feb 25 | Cop's wife charged in 1996 - Ex-boyfriend didn't pursue case against Niema Thompson | Newspaper Article    | Dayton Daily News (OH)
A1 |
| 144.3 | Bennish, Steve and Mong, Cathy | 2005, Aug 12 | Police handling of shooting death termed 'thorough' - Dayton officer claimed self-defense in shooting of wife | Newspaper Article    | Dayton Daily News (OH)
A1 |
| 145  | Flannery, Gregory | 2005, Mar 9 | Janitorial wages and other cruel realities                          | Newspaper Article    | CityBeat Cincinnati
| 145  | Williams, H.E.     | 2018       | Taser Electronic Control Devices and Sudden In-custody Death: Separating ... - Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas. | Webpage               |                                                                 |
| 149  | Staff Writer       | 2005, May 15 | 4-year-old hit during car chase - Driver was fleeing police in Gentilly | Newspaper Article    | Times-Picayune, The (New Orleans, LA)
p. 1 |
| 149.1 | Staff Writer       | 2005, July 9 | Suspect arrested in hit-run death                                  | Newspaper Article    | Advocate, The (Baton Rouge, LA)
4B |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Year, Date</th>
<th>Article Title</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>151</td>
<td>Velasco, Eric</td>
<td>2006, June 17</td>
<td>Ex-officer gets life for killing wife - Said sex drugs, other medication</td>
<td>Newspaper Article Birmingham</td>
<td>3B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>clouded mind before he shot her</td>
<td>News (AL)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>165</td>
<td>Darden, Bob</td>
<td>2005, Oct 13</td>
<td>Family wants more details on death of Moorhead woman</td>
<td>Newspaper Article Greenwood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Commonweal th, The (Greenwood,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>168</td>
<td>Hazle, Brian</td>
<td>2005, Nov 29</td>
<td>Authorities say transsexual woman who died had fought with deputies</td>
<td>Newspaper Article San Diego</td>
<td>B2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Union-Tribune, The (CA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>174</td>
<td>Llovio, Louis</td>
<td>2005, Dec 29</td>
<td>Police mourn two dead officers</td>
<td>Newspaper Article Baltimore</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Messenger (MD)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>174.1</td>
<td>Staff Writer</td>
<td>2008, Mar 27</td>
<td>Ex-policemen sentenced to life in shooting of two Baltimore police officers</td>
<td>Newspaper Article Daily Record,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The (Baltimore, MD)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>175</td>
<td>Bryan, Bill and Currier, Joel</td>
<td>2006, Jan 24</td>
<td>Two die when stolen car runs light, rams vehicle - Third person is</td>
<td>Newspaper Article St. Louis</td>
<td>A1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>hospitalized; no chase was on, say police, who are holding suspects</td>
<td>Post-Dispatch, The (MO)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>177</td>
<td>Rubenstein, Steve</td>
<td>2006, Apr 24</td>
<td>Oakland woman who led cops on chase dies after April 7 crash</td>
<td>Newspaper Article SFGate (CA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>179</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>2007, Apr 27</td>
<td>Phenix City man gets 28 years after girl's death in police chase</td>
<td>Newspaper Article Decatur Daily,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>183</td>
<td>Associated Press</td>
<td>2006, June 24</td>
<td>Man to stand trial in double fatal after police stop</td>
<td>Newspaper Article Erie Times-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>News (PA)</td>
<td>p.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>186</td>
<td>Thomas, Wendi C.</td>
<td>2006, July 23</td>
<td>There's grief but no denial of daughter's troubled path</td>
<td>Newspaper Article Commercial</td>
<td>B1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Appeal, The</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Year, Date</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td>Source Type</td>
<td>Source Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>186.1</td>
<td>Perkins, Pamela</td>
<td>2006, June 17</td>
<td>Driver charged in fatal crash - Charges include robbery, carjacking vehicular homicide</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Commercial Appeal, The (Memphis, TN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>189</td>
<td>Graham, Ricci</td>
<td>2006, July 6</td>
<td>Baby injured in crash taken off life support</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>East Bay Times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>191</td>
<td>Staff Writer</td>
<td>2006, Aug 25</td>
<td>Victims identified in high-speed wreck</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Fayetteville Observer, The (NC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>194</td>
<td>Bryan, Bill</td>
<td>2006, Sep 28</td>
<td>2 who fled police are involved in fatal crash - Authorities wanted to question them about shooting of officer</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>St. Louis Post-Dispatch, The (MO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>196</td>
<td>Wright, Danielle</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>#SayHerName</td>
<td>Blog</td>
<td>daniellewright.t.info</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201</td>
<td>Staff Writer</td>
<td>2006, Dec 3</td>
<td>Tickfaw woman dies after highway chase</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Advocate, The (Baton Rouge, LA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>202</td>
<td>English, Lindsay</td>
<td>2008, Feb 8</td>
<td>Police officer and victim's father named in lawsuit over 2007 crash</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Wave 3 News (Louisville, KY)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>203</td>
<td>Harrington, Renee</td>
<td>2007, Jan 19</td>
<td>January 19, 2007: Officer Tabitha McCree, Detroit Police Department. MURDER OR SUICIDE?</td>
<td>Blog</td>
<td>OIDV Project of Michigan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source ID</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>203.1</td>
<td>Esparza, Santiago; Sinclair, Norman and Hansen, Ronald J.</td>
<td>2007, Jan 20</td>
<td>Cop shoots self after argument - Off-duty Detroit officer fights with her husband, also on force, before killing herself</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Detroit News, The (MI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>204</td>
<td>Staff Writer</td>
<td>2007, Jan 26</td>
<td>Texas Ranger leading investigation into police shooting</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Plainview Daily Herald (TX)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>204.1</td>
<td>Staff Writer</td>
<td>2007, Mar 26</td>
<td>Grand jury no-bills police in shooting</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Plainview Daily Herald (TX)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>208</td>
<td>Staff Writer</td>
<td>2007, Apr 23</td>
<td>Woman dies when fleeing suspect vehicle hits her car</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>WDAM 7 (Moselle, MS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>208.1</td>
<td>Staff Writer</td>
<td>2009, May 27</td>
<td>Judge says Jackson police partly to blame in crash</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Picayune Item (MS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>209</td>
<td>Sentementes, Gus and Shields, Nick</td>
<td>2007, Apr 26</td>
<td>City officer fires taser, fatally injuring woman who had attacked him</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Sun, The (Baltimore, MD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>215</td>
<td>Spielman, Fran and Herman, Eric</td>
<td>2007, July 17</td>
<td>Woman killed by cops had violent history</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Chicago Sun-Times (IL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>219</td>
<td>Staff Writer</td>
<td>2007, Oct 3</td>
<td>Woman, 71, killed in car, truck collision</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Advocate, The (Baton Rouge, LA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>240.1</td>
<td>Staff Writer</td>
<td>2008, Aug 12</td>
<td>Girl fired shots, aimed at officers, Norfolk police say</td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>Virginian-Pilot, The (Norfolk, VA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>251</td>
<td>Staff Writer</td>
<td>2009, Mar 26</td>
<td>Crime Reports</td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>Birmingham News (AL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>256</td>
<td>Nozar, Robert</td>
<td>2009, Sep 4</td>
<td>Man gets 20 years for April vehicular homicide in crash that took place as he fled police</td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>Sun Press (Beachwood, OH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>256.1</td>
<td>Staff Writer</td>
<td>2009, Apr 25</td>
<td>Shaker Heights Police Chase Ends in Crash, 1 dead</td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>FOX - 8 WJW (Cleveland, OH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>257</td>
<td>Bell, Daryl</td>
<td>2009, Apr 28</td>
<td>1 sent to hospital after collision with cop car responding to call</td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>Delta Democrat Times (Greenville, MS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>258</td>
<td>the girl</td>
<td>2009, Jul 24</td>
<td>Mentally ill woman killed by cops to avoid another toilet curser lawsuit</td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>Daily Kos, Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Headline</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>267</td>
<td>Clark, Amy Sara</td>
<td>2009, Jul 23</td>
<td>Husband: 'They didn't have to kill her'</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Jersey Journal, The (Jersey City, NJ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>269</td>
<td>Villalon, Debora</td>
<td>2019, Aug 27</td>
<td>Community rallies around boy, 11, who was killed after police pursuit in Oakland</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>KTVU Fox 2 (Oakland, CA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>279</td>
<td>Staff Writer</td>
<td>2018, Jun 22</td>
<td>Family of Toledo woman killed by police sues city, officer</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>WTOL 11 (Toledo, OH) <a href="https://www.wtol.com/article/news/family-of-toledo-woman-killed-by-police-sues-city-officer/512-5e5a0e16-15fd-4e0e-92be-875af70e85b6">https://www.wtol.com/article/news/family-of-toledo-woman-killed-by-police-sues-city-officer/512-5e5a0e16-15fd-4e0e-92be-875af70e85b6</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>282</td>
<td></td>
<td>2012, Feb 27</td>
<td>Sanders v. the State, No. S12A0255 (Supreme Court of Georgia February 27, 2012).</td>
<td>Case</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>Media Type</td>
<td>Link</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>296</td>
<td>Staff Writer</td>
<td>2010, Sep 2</td>
<td>Officer who ran over woman will not face felony charges</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td><a href="https://www.fox19.com/story/13088065/officer-who-ran-over-woman-will-not-face-felony-charges/">https://www.fox19.com/story/13088065/officer-who-ran-over-woman-will-not-face-felony-charges/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300</td>
<td>Hales, Donna</td>
<td>2010, Oct 5</td>
<td>DA asks for OSBI assistance in fatal shooting investigation</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td><a href="https://www.muskogeeephoenix.com/archives/da-asks-for-osbi-assistance-in-fatal-shooting-investigation/article_af2fbc36-905a-5b7b-86d1-2b2d1abd4c73.html">https://www.muskogeeephoenix.com/archives/da-asks-for-osbi-assistance-in-fatal-shooting-investigation/article_af2fbc36-905a-5b7b-86d1-2b2d1abd4c73.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>305.1</td>
<td>Staff Writer</td>
<td>2011, Jan 4</td>
<td>Hayward woman killed by San Leandro police is identified</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td><a href="https://www.mercurynews.com/2011/01/04/hayward-woman-killed-by-san-leandro-police-is-identified/">https://www.mercurynews.com/2011/01/04/hayward-woman-killed-by-san-leandro-police-is-identified/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>317</td>
<td>Staff Writer</td>
<td>2016, Oct 27</td>
<td>900K settlement reached for woman shot by sheriff’s deputy</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td><a href="https://apnews.com/article/7a80634d805348e59660a7e46bd7b774">https://apnews.com/article/7a80634d805348e59660a7e46bd7b774</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

237
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Source Type</th>
<th>Source Link</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>330</td>
<td>Staff Writer</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>Officer recovering from wreck that killed 2 students</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td>Source Type</td>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>373</td>
<td>Staff Writer</td>
<td>2012, Oct 16</td>
<td>Columbus police cruiser hits and kills woman, family hires attorney</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>WTVN-TV (Columbus, GA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Date, Month</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Source Type</td>
<td>Source Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>401</td>
<td>Russell, Matt</td>
<td>2013, Jun 13</td>
<td>Selma police stunned that off-duty officer killed two, then self over the weekend</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>WTSA 12 News (Montgomery, AL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>410</td>
<td>Haydon, Tom</td>
<td>2019, Mar 29</td>
<td>Newark man pleads guilty in wild car chase, crash that killed girlfriend</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>NJ.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Authors</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>URL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>416</td>
<td>Staff Writer</td>
<td>2013, Dec 3</td>
<td>Charges filed in wake of fatal crash in Fort Myers</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Lehigh Acres Citizen <a href="https://www.lehighacrescitizen.com/2013/12/03/charges-filed-in-wake-of-fatal-crash-in-fort-myers/">https://www.lehighacrescitizen.com/2013/12/03/charges-filed-in-wake-of-fatal-crash-in-fort-myers/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>422</td>
<td>Robinson, Carol</td>
<td>2019, Jan 14</td>
<td>Babies 'R' Us shoplifting suspect killed in crash identified as Birmingham woman</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>AL.com (AL) <a href="https://www.al.com/spotnews/2013/12/babies_r_us_shopliftingSuspect_1.html">https://www.al.com/spotnews/2013/12/babies_r_us_shopliftingSuspect_1.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Year, Date</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td>Source Type</td>
<td>Source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>431</td>
<td>Robinson, Carol</td>
<td>2019, Jan 13</td>
<td>Man charged in deadly crash following Tarrant chase</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>AL.com (AL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>434</td>
<td>Bee Staff Reports</td>
<td>2014, Apr 26</td>
<td>Woman killed, man held in suspected DUI crash.</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Modesto Bee, The (CA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>435</td>
<td>First Coast News (WTLV)</td>
<td>2014, May 2</td>
<td>Woman killed in 4-vehicle crash identified</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>First Coast News (Jacksonville, FL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Source/Website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>455</td>
<td>Gargis, Jon</td>
<td>2014, Oct 24</td>
<td>Teen driver accused in fatal wreck will be charged as adult</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Atlanta Journal-Constitution, The <a href="https://www.ajc.com/news/teen-driver-accused-fatal-wreck-will-charged-adult/7TgztDo7oq7mVOxb4hLCM/">https://www.ajc.com/news/teen-driver-accused-fatal-wreck-will-charged-adult/7TgztDo7oq7mVOxb4hLCM/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Year, Date</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>455.1</td>
<td>Staff Writer</td>
<td>2015, Apr 9</td>
<td>Tiffany Madison, 29, killed, five injured, after car accident involving a stolen vehicle in East Point, GA; Quidarius Boddie, 15, accused of stealing vehicle, DUI, and several other charges</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td><a href="https://accidentdatacenter.com/us/georgia/atlanta-ga/east-point/14/10/19/tiffany-madison-29-killed-five-injured-after-car-accident-involving-stolen-vehicle-east-point-ga">https://accidentdatacenter.com/us/georgia/atlanta-ga/east-point/14/10/19/tiffany-madison-29-killed-five-injured-after-car-accident-involving-stolen-vehicle-east-point-ga</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>456</td>
<td>Demetrio, Michael K. and Ditore, Michael D.</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>Corboy &amp; Demetrio Uncovers Key Evidence In Police Chase That Killed Chicago Woman</td>
<td>Webpage</td>
<td>Page Deleted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>461.1</td>
<td>Dean, Michelle</td>
<td>2015, Jun 5</td>
<td>Black women unnamed’: how Tanisha Anderson's bad day turned into her last</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td><a href="https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/jun/05/black-women-police-killing-tanisha-anderson">https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/jun/05/black-women-police-killing-tanisha-anderson</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>462</td>
<td>Fretland, Katie</td>
<td>2017, Mar 31</td>
<td>Former MPD officer Jaselyn Grant gets 20 years for killing her wife</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td><a href="https://www.commercialappeal.com/story/news/courts/2017/03/31/former-mpd-officer-jaselyn-grant-sentenced-20-years/99841778/">https://www.commercialappeal.com/story/news/courts/2017/03/31/former-mpd-officer-jaselyn-grant-sentenced-20-years/99841778/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>Media Type</td>
<td>Source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>464</td>
<td>Lee, C.</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>“Nobody got hurt that day but her”: Remembering Yuvette Henderson.</td>
<td>Radio Station</td>
<td>94.1 KPFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article ID</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Publication Date</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Publication Type</td>
<td>Reference Link</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Year, Month</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Source Type</td>
<td>Source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>493</td>
<td>Staff Writer</td>
<td>2019, Jan 28</td>
<td>City of Metter Pays $500K to Settle Fatal Police Chase Lawsuit</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Yahoo! <a href="https://www.yahoo.com/now/city-metter-pays-500k-settle-fatal-police-chase-lawsuit-044723005.html?guccounter=1&amp;guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xlLmNvbS8&amp;guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAKJuTtH4gFB0LD6XfM5IcJTTUH6hqrHZJLUduMuQXcfIL4bFump5QyJa8hiOdUKR_D1s0oKn80GRFDBQTeurGgorTErSvwZC7b2GctZHnmPoOH3x0xFLiZPMCwqMOQUHZG9XFJRBbYgadAwm7tH0bvY44_1pB1DF7JjmG9VTn">https://www.yahoo.com/now/city-metter-pays-500k-settle-fatal-police-chase-lawsuit-044723005.html?guccounter=1&amp;guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xlLmNvbS8&amp;guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAKJuTtH4gFB0LD6XfM5IcJTTUH6hqrHZJLUduMuQXcfIL4bFump5QyJa8hiOdUKR_D1s0oKn80GRFDBQTeurGgorTErSvwZC7b2GctZHnmPoOH3x0xFLiZPMCwqMOQUHZG9XFJRBbYgadAwm7tH0bvY44_1pB1DF7JjmG9VTn</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>First Name</td>
<td>Last Name</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>News Description</td>
<td>News Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>501</td>
<td>House, Samantha</td>
<td></td>
<td>2019, Mar 22</td>
<td>Syracuse woman fatally shot by police officer identified</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

248
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>URL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>507</td>
<td>Lane, Jamel</td>
<td>2016, Apr 11</td>
<td>Mother gives her side of story in St. Pete pond crash that killed 3 teens</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td><a href="https://www.wfla.com/news/mother-gives-her-side-of-story-in-st-pete-pond-crash-that-killed-3-teens/">WFLA News Channel 8</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>509</td>
<td>Yankova, Dessislava</td>
<td>2016, Apr 8</td>
<td>Daughter: Woman shot by Gallatin police 'was the best mother'</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td><a href="https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/local/sumner/2016/04/08/daughter-woman-shot-gallatin-police-best-mother/82771328/">Tennessean</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>513</td>
<td>Mark, Julian</td>
<td>2020, Jun 10</td>
<td>Officer who shot Jessica Williams was recommended for firing. Instead, he was suspended 45 days</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td><a href="https://missionlocal.org/2020/06/jessica-williams-justin-erb-sfpd-shooting/">Mission Local (CA)</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Last Name Initial</td>
<td>Last Name</td>
<td>Year, Month Day</td>
<td>Title of Article</td>
<td>Article Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>525</td>
<td>Mazza</td>
<td>Sandy</td>
<td>2017, Sep 6</td>
<td>Woman shot to death by Torrance police was struggling with bipolar disorder, family says</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>URL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>529.1</td>
<td>Willett, Preston and Billmyer, Ben</td>
<td>2017, Jan 14</td>
<td>UPDATE</td>
<td>Hospital says police never filed paperwork for suspect in deadly crash</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>533</td>
<td>Road, Manchaca and Lane, Keilbar</td>
<td>2017, Feb 23</td>
<td>Morgan London Rankins</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td><a href="https://apps.statesman.com/homicides/victim/morgan-london-rankins/">Austin Homicides Project</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>544</td>
<td>Lawson, Brian</td>
<td>2017, Jun 12</td>
<td>Huntsville Police Department officer was speeding before hitting pedestrian</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td><a href="https://whnt.com/news/huntsville-police-department-officer-was-speeding-before-hitting-pedestrian/">WHNT News 19 (AL)</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Last Name, First Name</td>
<td>Date, Time</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>550</td>
<td>Leonard, Connie</td>
<td>2017, Jul 17</td>
<td>Family has more questions than answers in fiery crash that killed 2 teens</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Wave 3 News (Louisville, KY)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>552</td>
<td>Lohr, David</td>
<td>2017, Sep 7</td>
<td>Transgender Woman Killed By Police Was ‘Harassed And Executed,’ Relative Says</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Huffington Post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>558</td>
<td>Geanous, Jacob</td>
<td>2019, Nov 18</td>
<td>Off-duty cop who killed baby after crashing into her at 94mph won’t be charged</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Metro.co.uk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>URL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>568</td>
<td>Grimwood, Harrison</td>
<td>2018, Jan 29</td>
<td>Video: Suspect begs police to see his mother who was fatally shot by oicer in Bartlesville during raid</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Tulsa World (OK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>573</td>
<td>Smith, Andrew</td>
<td>2019, Mar 26</td>
<td>Judge grants Bellport man's request to consider plea deal in crash that killed 5</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Newsday (Long Island, NY)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>578</td>
<td>Goudie, Chuck and Tressel, Christine</td>
<td>2019, Sep 5</td>
<td>Elgin policeman fully cleared in fatal tollway shooting, will be reinstated</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>ABC7 Chicago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Author/Name</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Link</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>583</td>
<td>Poole, Shelia M.</td>
<td>2018, Jul 26</td>
<td>Who was Shukri Ali Said? How did she end up dead at hands of police?</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td><a href="https://www.ajc.com/news/crime-law/who-was-shukri-ali-said-how-did-she-end-dead-hands-police/x7DjMMkK36FMdZITUxHxQP/">https://www.ajc.com/news/crime-law/who-was-shukri-ali-said-how-did-she-end-dead-hands-police/x7DjMMkK36FMdZITUxHxQP/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>585</td>
<td>Jones, Will</td>
<td>2018, May 13</td>
<td>Man charged in South Side hit-and-run that killed woman picking up granddaughter from daycare</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td><a href="https://abc7chicago.com/pedestrians-struck-hit-pedestrian-killed-woman/3466596/">https://abc7chicago.com/pedestrians-struck-hit-pedestrian-killed-woman/3466596/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Year, Month</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Author/Staff Writer</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td>Source Type</td>
<td>Source Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>592</td>
<td>White, Wayne</td>
<td>2018, Jul 9</td>
<td>Two killed near Melvern in rollover during police pursuit</td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td><a href="https://www.osagecountyonline.com/archives/30172">https://www.osagecountyonline.com/archives/30172</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>594.1</td>
<td>Breaking News Staff</td>
<td>2019, Feb 15</td>
<td>Dayton man indicted on new charge in chase that led to passenger’s death now in jail</td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td><a href="https://www.daytondailynews.com/news/local/dayton-man-indicted-additional-charge-chase-that-killed-passenger/hdRUkOCmSgFF6fFq9wsq5M/">https://www.daytondailynews.com/news/local/dayton-man-indicted-additional-charge-chase-that-killed-passenger/hdRUkOCmSgFF6fFq9wsq5M/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source Code</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Date(s)</td>
<td>Event Details</td>
<td>Source Type</td>
<td>Source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>609</td>
<td>McEntyre, Glenn</td>
<td>2019, Jul 1</td>
<td>Investigation of Franklin County sheriff's pursuit, deadly crash clears deputy of wrongdoing</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>WBNS-TV (Columbus, OH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>615.1</td>
<td>Staff Writer</td>
<td>2019, Jan 31</td>
<td>Mississippi deputies involved in fatal wreck resign</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Associated Press: Hattiesburg Metro Area (MS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>620</td>
<td>Ferguson, Lana</td>
<td>2019, Mar 5</td>
<td>2 separate crashes during police chase leave 1 dead, 2 injured in Hampton County</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Herald-Sun, The (Durham, NC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Year, Date</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>621.1</td>
<td>Hendrickson, Matthew</td>
<td>2019, Mar 7</td>
<td>Man Charged in Crash that Killed Daughter While Fleeing Cops</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Chicago Sun-Times (IL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>622</td>
<td>Breaking News Staff</td>
<td>2019, Mar 20</td>
<td>VIDEO: RTA bus driver jumps to help passengers after fatal Trotwood crash</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>CBS – 7 WHIO: Web Edition Articles (Dayton, OH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>623</td>
<td>Suriani, Mike</td>
<td>2019, Mar 12</td>
<td>Family grieving after mom of four dies in crash involving Sardis police officer</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>CBS – 3 WREG (Memphis, TN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Headline</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>626.1</td>
<td>Inklebarger, Timothy</td>
<td>2019, Mar 25</td>
<td>Austin family sues Oak Park police over fatal car crash</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Austin Weekly News</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>628</td>
<td>Staff Writer</td>
<td>2019, May 10</td>
<td>All five victims in April 1 crash on I-10 have now been identified</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Gulf Coast Media (Foley, AL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>630</td>
<td>Ripley, Joe</td>
<td>2019, Apr 15</td>
<td>Man who ran off after chase, car bursting into flames, left 1-year-old in car to die, investigators say</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>WYFF 4 News (Greenville, SC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>632</td>
<td>Stapleton, Erica</td>
<td>2019, Apr 26</td>
<td>He Didn’t Stop For Police. Now He’s Charged With the Murder of a Mother of 3</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>WFMY News 2 (NC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Link</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>634</td>
<td>Whitehurst, Kelvin</td>
<td>2019, May 17</td>
<td>Roanoke woman killed after crashing into pole following a police chase</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>WDBJ 7 (Roanoke, VA) <a href="https://www.wdbj7.com/content/news/Woman-killed-in-crash-following-police-chase-510067021.html">https://www.wdbj7.com/content/news/Woman-killed-in-crash-following-police-chase-510067021.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>URL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>650</td>
<td>Staff Writer</td>
<td>2019, Oct 9</td>
<td>DPD: People in Tuesday crash that killed 2 were in local street gang, part of summer smash and grabs</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>Fox 2 Detroit (MI)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Appendix 5: Articles Included for Critical Discourse Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pub Date</th>
<th>Reader(s)</th>
<th>Distribution</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Embedded video, 06:42 min.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 19, 2017</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>Social Media</td>
<td>Indian River County Sheriff’s Office. (2017, March 19). One deputy injured, one person killed during early morning SWAT Team search warrant. Indian River County Sheriff’s Office Facebook page, @ircsheriff</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 20, 2017</td>
<td>J &amp; S</td>
<td>Blog</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Articles</td>
<td>Pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 26, 2017</td>
<td>J &amp; S</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Board, E.</td>
<td>Our view - The perils of overly aggressive policing - In the wake of lawsuits and the shooting death in Gifford, law enforcement should review its policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 31, 2017</td>
<td>J &amp; S</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Winikoff, M.</td>
<td>Shooting death of SRHS graduate rattles county.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 27, 2017</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Craven, J.</td>
<td>For Black Women, Police Violence And Reproductive Injustice Often Intersect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 20, 2017</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>Video, Local</td>
<td>Samuel, N.</td>
<td>IRC Sheriff Deryl Loar speaks to media about grand jury decision on fatal drug raid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>URL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Article Details</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 6: All Articles Located that Mention Alteria Woods from 2017 - 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Distribution</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Embedded video, 06:42 min.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Media</td>
<td>Indian River County Sheriff’s Office. (2017, March 19). One deputy injured, one person killed during early morning SWAT Team search warrant. Indian River County Sheriff’s Office Facebook page, <a href="https://www.facebook.com/ircsheriff">@ircsheriff</a></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 20, 2017</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>(2017, March 20). Towanna Ruffin, mother of Andrew Coffee IV, speaks out about son’s arrest. <em>TCPalm.</em> Video – 0:52. <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WpM1R6Q61Ic">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WpM1R6Q61Ic</a></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>URL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 21, 2017</td>
<td>Local, not FL</td>
<td>Staff Writer. (2017, March 21). Pregnant woman killed after boyfriend uses her as shield during Florida SWAT raid. CBS - 17 WNCN (Raleigh-Durham, NC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Paragraph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 21,</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>(2017, March 21). News: Pregnant woman killed in SWAT raid after boyfriend uses her as a shield. BET.</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 20, 2017</td>
<td>Local, not FL</td>
<td>Staff Writer (2017, June 20). Police Shoot and Kill Pregnant Black Woman After She Called 911 For Help.</td>
<td><em>Our Weekly (Los Angeles, CA)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>URL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td></td>
<td>Staff Writer (2017, June 20). Police Shoot and Kill Pregnant Black Woman After She Called 911 For Help.</td>
<td><em>Our Weekly (Los Angeles, CA)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Details</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Author, Year, Month</td>
<td>Article Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Link</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2, 2020</td>
<td>Local, not FL Editorial</td>
<td>The Shorthorn Editorial Board. (2020, June 2). Editorial: The secret to ending a protest is really no secret at all — listen to the protesters. Shorthorn, The: University of Texas - Arlington (TX)</td>
<td>Shorthorn, The: University of Texas - Arlington (TX)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 9, 2020</td>
<td>Local, not FL Editorial</td>
<td>The Editorial Board. (2020, June 9). EDITORIAL; Say their names; George Floyd, who will be buried today in Houston, is only the latest in a long line of unarmed black Americans killed by police. Houston Chronicle (TX), p. A013</td>
<td>Houston Chronicle (TX), p. A013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Range</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 28 – July 5, 2020</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Name mentioned, at least 25 times in local newspapers across the country</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>URL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 3, 2020</td>
<td>Social Media</td>
<td>(2020, December 3). “Say Her Name: Alteria Woods...#SayTheirStories.” NFL Twitter Account @NFL. <a href="https://twitter.com/NFL/status/1334512750438002688">https://twitter.com/NFL/status/1334512750438002688</a></td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REFERENCES

“Image of Butterfly” [@PashasMommy]. (2021, Sep 29). They were taught (forced) to due to deadlines and they are never even given enough time to fact check. Twitter.


back to the thesis [@_theghettomonk]. (2021, 9/29/2021). “Local news basically work for the police department”Twitter. https://twitter.com/_theghettomonk/status/1443227105081364496?ref_src=twsrc %5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Cref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.notion.s o%2FFollow-Up-Reading-4b172036ca2941089ca4b9fd280ea2b1


Boogie12Films Production. (2021). *Triumph Over Tragedy: The Legacy of Alteria Woods* [YouTube]. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bEJoRs6BHg0&t=1262s


City of Jackson, Mississippi v. Lee B. Lewis, Oda Mae Green, and Sonya Stephens, on Behalf of the Wrongful Death Beneficiaries of Margaret E. Stephens, Deceased, No. 2011-CA-00787-COA (Hinds County Circuit Court, Court of Appeals of the State of Mississippi 2013).


Farrell, W. (2020, Aug 6). "I have the memories. They just stay in my head": Remembering Jessica Williams, 94.1 KPFA. [https://kpfa.org/blog/remembering-jessica-williams/](https://kpfa.org/blog/remembering-jessica-williams/)


Indian River County Sheriff's Office. (2017a, Jul 20). *IRC Sheriff Deryl Loar speaks to media about grand jury decision on fatal drug raid* Nick Samuel YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8CoXg_h6TLk.


https://www.haymarketbooks.org/books/1664-we-do-this-til-we-free-us

https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430210374609


https://doi.org/10.1080/14725840802583314

https://doi.org/10.1353/sof.2007.0045


https://doi.org/10.1177/0887403416684923

https://doi.org/10.1080/13814788.2017.1375092 PMID - 29202616

https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1001915

http://harvardpublichealthreview.org/190/

www.sciencedirect.com


http://scholar.google.com/scholar?q=Social conditions as fundamental causes of disease&btnG=&hl=en&num=20&as_sdtp=0%2C22


Mark, J. (2020, Jun 10). Officer who shot Jessica Williams was recommended for firing. Instead, he was suspended 45 days. *Mission Local (CA)*. https://missionlocal.org/2020/06/jessica-williams-justin-erb-sfpd-shooting/


Neus, N. (2021). Trans women are still incarcerated with men and it's putting their lives at risk | CNN. CNN.  

Nicks, C. (2015, Feb 17). Drunk Driver Sentenced to 15 Years Following Deadly Accident. *WTVO Channel 17 (Rockford, IL)*.  

https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9133.12269


https://www.insightintodiversity.com/addressing-the-lack-of-black-mental-health-professionals/#:~:text=The%20shortage%20of%20psychiatrists%20and,reported%20having%20a%20mental%20illness.

Officer Down Memorial Page Inc. (n.d.). Assistant Chief Emma Mae Horton, Goodman Police Department, Mississippi.  
https://www.odmp.org/officer/15447-assistant-chief-emma-mae-horton


https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9125.12298

https://advance-lexis-com.eu1.proxy.openathens.net/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=f868384f-3c8c-4c5e-a4ba-39e7695d998a&pdfdownloadfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fcases%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A5MTX-G4D1-F04G-H009-0000-00&pdfcontentcomponentid=320114&pdshepid=urn%3AcontentItem%3A5MTM-GBF1-J9X5-T1KV-000000-00&pdteaserkey=sr0&pditab=allpods&ecommerce=wzvink&eargs=sr0&prid=8225c9ae-baf9-4d16-9f1a-9aacb5fd2a2


Rushton, B. (2001, May 23). Who’s Next? Annette Green didn't have to die. Her death was a tragedy waiting to happen in St. Louis County's reckless war against two-bit drug dealers and addicts. *Riverfront Times*.


the girl. (2009). Mentally ill woman killed by cops to avoid another toilet curser lawsuit. https://www.dailykos.com/stories/2009/7/24/757426-


Ugh what a drag. [@tsukihomie]. (2021, Sep 30). *Then they need to disclose that they did not perform a full fact check, it needs to be a normalized for sureTwitter.*


https://www.versobooks.com/books/2426-the-end-of-policing


https://books.google.com/books?id=AkQaCAAQAQBAJ&pg=PA112&lpg=PA112&dq=shirley%20andrews%20cincinnati%20tasered&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiiYD8qdfsXVmiGqEztMI1RSNFAQIQflw6B9fMAovO6AF6BAgREAM#v=onepage&q=shirley %20andrews%20cincinnati%20ohio%20tasered&f=false


