

OPINION

THE CHRONICLE

ERNEST H. PITT
Publisher Emeritus
1974-2015

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Our Mission

The Chronicle is dedicated to serving the residents of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County by giving voice to the voiceless, speaking truth to power, standing for integrity and encouraging open communication and lively debate throughout the community.

Change in law enforcement action begins with a blink

It has happened again. A police officer shot an unarmed black man. This time the officer is Latino, and the situation is utterly unbelievable. As CNN reports it, in North Miami, an African-American caregiver, who was lying in the street trying to help an autistic patient, was shot in the leg after he yelled out what was happening, saying that no guns were needed and asked police to back down.

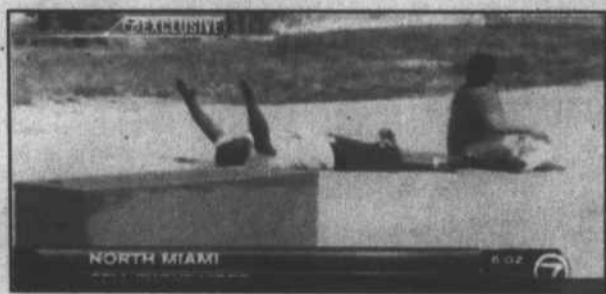
African-American Charles Kinsey, a behavior therapist, was shot Monday, July 18, by police as he was on his back with his hands up and was yelling to police that the autistic patient he was trying to help did not have a gun and that he was trying to help the patient. A video post on Wednesday, July 20, showed Kinsey in that position.

But a North Miami police officer still shot Kinsey in the leg. Police said it was a mistake; the officer was trying to shoot the autistic man because they thought he had a gun and was about to harm Kinsey (even though Kinsey told them otherwise).

"The [union] is now trying to say they intended to shoot my client, and instead they shot my employee," Clint Bower, who employs Kinsey at the facility where the autistic man lives, told CNN's "New Day" on Friday, July 22. "To me, that's just outrageous."

Officer Jonathan Aledda, who has been placed on administrative leave, issued a statement in the form of a text message: "I took this job to save lives and help people. I did what I had to do in a split second to accomplish that, and hate to hear others paint me as something I'm not."

But maybe that's not quite true.



WSVN-TV viewer photo

Charles Kinsey holds his hands in the air and tells police they can stand down in North Miami, Florida. Instead, police shoot him

Author Malcolm Gladwell says in his stellar book "Blink: The Power of Thinking without Thinking" that what we think of as decisions made in the blink of an eye are much more complicated than assumed. He used the example of the shooting of Amadou Diallo, which happened on Feb. 4, 1999. Amadou Diallo, a 23-year-old immigrant from Guinea, was shot and killed by four New York City Police Department plain-clothed officers, who fired a combined total of 41 shots, 19 of which struck Diallo, outside his apartment in The Bronx. All four officers were charged with second-degree murder and acquitted at trial in Albany, New York. Diallo was unarmed at the time of the shooting.

Gladwell draws on cutting-edge neuroscience and psychology to show how the difference between good decision-making and bad depends on how people focus on the details before them. The Diallo shooting sparked a number of experiments that were conducted with both undergraduate volunteers and police officers playing a computer game where they must choose whether to shoot or not to shoot a target who may be white or black, on the basis of whether or not they are armed. Such studies find that participants made slower and less accurate decisions on whether to shoot an unarmed black target than an unarmed white target, and were quicker and more likely to correctly decide to shoot an armed black target than an armed white target.

The decision-making depends on what is in the psyche at the time. So, it does have something to do with the background of a person. People might not be painting Aledda something he is not.

According to Kinsey's attorney, Hilton Napoleon II, Kinsey was on the ground handcuffed for 20 minutes after he was shot before an ambulance arrived.

"We really need to look at how policing is approached today, because this should not happen in our country," Napoleon said.

We agree. Try retraining law enforcement officers to do the right thing in the blink of an eye.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We have to work together to end racial profiling, Jim Crow policies

To the Editor:

With much sorrow, I learned of the recent deaths of Mr. Alton Sterling in Louisiana and Mr. Philando Castile in Minnesota, again involving racial profiling.

Then, as our city and nation were sharing this great grief together, the cycle of racial profiling and violence came full circle with tragic five officer deaths in Dallas on July 7.

As a young African-American male from a low-income neighborhood, I can relate to being harassed by local police officers who would shadow my car because of its tinted windows and flashy car rims looking for some type of assumed illegal activity.

I quickly learned how to divert the police officers by driving into well-lit shopping areas to stop the racial profiling.

I have been blessed to date because I have never been stopped and brutalized, arrested or killed.

As a faith-based leader, I hear a persistent Cry for a Great Awakening to end the senseless racial profiling of the hardworking, everyday people of color. It is time to forge a new path of justice, trust, and integrity for our country's law enforcement agencies.

We have to work together to end this systemic racial profiling as well as the silent and hidden Jim Crow policies perpetuating institutional racism throughout our city and nation.

If not, we will continue to eulogize too many more of our black brothers and police officers. A city or nation that accepts prejudice and racism as the status quo cannot

continue to thrive, because every human life must matter.

Rev. Robert Leak III
President, New South Community Coalition
President, Easton Neighborhood Association
Winston-Salem

Trump's visits to N.C. won't make up for incompetency

To the Editor:

It's no surprise that [Donald] Trump has run his campaign like his failed businesses: incompetently and with no regard for anyone but himself.

Donald Trump's second visit to North Carolina this month can't make up for the fact that he lags far behind Hillary Clinton and the Democratic Party in fundraising, campaign infrastructure and, as we've seen at the RNC, party unity.

Winning elections takes hard work, and while Democrats have and will continue to do that work through November, Trump seems content to pop in for a visit every couple of weeks.

Dave Miranda, spokesman
North Carolina Democratic Party
Raleigh

2016 presidential politics feels like a roller coaster



Ron Rogers

Guest Columnist

I've been following politics since I was 10 years old. Over the years I've seen some pretty wild stuff.

The 1968 Democratic Convention comes to mind. All the turmoil in the world and in Chicago made it a perfect storm that paved the way for Richard Nixon to narrowly win the election that November.

The 1992 race also was unusual with George H. Bush's re-election bid overshadowed by the Ross Perot Factor. Things

occurred that people had never seen. Clinton went on to win that election. Ross Perot received 20 percent of the votes casted.

2016 is off the chain with Donald Trump in the mix. I have to rate this year's presidential election race the topsy-turvy one. Trump has surged to becoming the GOP nominee on the foundation of hate, ignorance and absurdity. His convention last week was horrible, showing everyone how divided the GOP is. It was the darkest convention I've ever witnessed. Those who think it was a great success (including candidate Trump) should get some sort of free mental health care treatment.

Trump's campaign reminds me of other race-

based presidential campaigns: Barry Goldwater in 1964 and George Wallace 1968 and 1972. I remember those campaigns clearly and the fear that ran through my mind back then. The good news is that according to a CNN Survey Monkey poll that came out this morning (July 26), Trump did not get a convention bounce in the polls. Let's hope it means that America rejected the hate and darkness that came out of the GOP Convention last week.

I'm really proud of Hillary Clinton's pick for vice president: Sen. Tim Kaine of Virginia. I'm a native Virginian, born and raised in Richmond.

Kaine was elected to City Council, mayor, lieutenant governor, governor

and U.S. senator.

During his 2012 bid for the U.S. Senate, I ran into Kaine at the Richmond Public Library. He was there donating books. I got to talk with him for a few minutes about the campaign that year. He told me it was a tough campaign, but that he was confident he and President Obama would win in the end, and they did.

Ron Rogers creates political cartoons for The Chronicle. He has worked at several newspapers nationwide. He was documented as the only African-American political cartoonist on the staff of a daily newspaper in the United States when he worked at the South Bend Tribune in Indiana.

