

Case study of police shooting of Christian Hall ripe for good discussion

The Bethlehem Gadfly Christian Hall, George Floyd killing March 31, 2021

 *Latest in a series of posts on Christian Hall* 

ref: **Recent news about troublesome “first contact” situations involving the police**

ref: **Molly Bilinski and Peter Hall, “Family of teen fatally shot by state police on Poconos overpass announce lawsuit, are being represented by civil rights attorney Benjamin Crump.” Morning Call, February 3, 2021.**

It was another riveting day yesterday in the Chauvin trial.

But let me focus your attention on a fairly local example of police behavior that Gadfly feels raises great points for discussion about the nature of police training in mental health calls.

Gadfly **earlier** called your attention to a December 30, 90-minute “first contact” situation involving the Pennsylvania State Police and 19-year-old Christian Hall, who was apparently intent on committing suicide, that took place on an overpass on Rt. 80.

Police killed Hall.

A cell phone video by a motorist stranded on Rt. 80 showed Hall’s hands up (see the video **here**), though holding what was thought to be a gun, when he was shot, sparking characteristic debate about police propensity for violence and ability (or inability) to handle mental health situations.

Yesterday the Monroe County District Attorney ruled the shooting justified.

At the press conference yesterday, the D.A. showed a video of the incident created by his office to bolster the ruling in a move that even the reporters noted as extraordinary.

Gadfly thinks we can say with confidence that the D.A. took the unusual step of creating that video to get out in front of the controversy bound to result from the ruling.

For here was another instance of police cleared from wrong-doing in a tragic situation involving a mentally distressed person.

And — drum-roll, please — the celebrity lead attorney for the family is none another than Benjamin Crump, attorney for the George Floyd family and other families in similar high profile police shootings.

Hall's family is holding a press conference today. It will be interesting to see if Crump is there.

But close your ears and eyes.

Resist learning anything about the family press conference today. We can pick it up later.

Instead, spend some time — and it will take a bit of time — watching the D.A.'s press conference and video from the links below.

Remember that Gadfly always encourages you to go to the primary sources yourself and form your own opinions.

Do that.

For Gadfly will want to talk with you about what you find there.

He finds much food for thought and discussion.

Much that relates to reimagining public safety.

Dig in, and meet him back here in a day or two to share perspectives, questions, and judgments.

Sarah Cassi, “Troopers legally justified in fatally shooting man on Route 33 overpass, DA says.” March 30, 2021.

a 30-min. video of the incident from beginning to end from police

cameras prepared by the Monroe County District Attorney's office is linked to this article

Video presentation from Christian Hall use-of-force press conference

This is the 30-min. video on YouTube

March 30 press conference by the Monroe County District Attorney's office

1:13:46 mins. (contains the 30-min. video)

Start at min. 5:07

D.A. introduction mins. 5:07-12:30

The 30-min. video runs from mins. 12:30-45:30

D.A. presentation mins. 45:30-1:00:15

Q & A with reporters mins. 1:00:15-1:13:46

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