





Hide, hide your golden light! She sleeps! Our lady sleeps! DIANA RIGG, 1938-2020



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Dear God, let this be the last time I have to talk about Donald Trump with fear...

It won't be. I've already innured myself to the idea of his victory – probably a popular minority Electoral College win like 2016. “Innure” is probably the wrong verb, because the idea of Trump's victory is conducive to nothing short of rage.

This summer we saw the virtual Republican National Convention abandon all pretense of party policy to embrace a practical *fuhrerprinzip* – enthusiastically supporting any insane idea this manic and unstable creature advances. These include his most recent horrors, ignoring Russian bounties on US troops, Russian trolling in our election, advancing whackadoodle conspiracies straight from the Q-Anon playbook, the assault on the post office and mail-in voting, and right-hand Nazi Steven Miller's revealed cabinet hand-vote to separate children from their refugee parents. (Cruelty established as national policy and an acceptable tactic. It knocks the plaque away from Lady Liberty's base: *Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free – and we'll steal and jail their children.*) In brief, dictatorship is embraced – with terror as its tactic.

This election day could be the last time I think of my countrymen with any kind of pride. And I certainly don't want that. I continue to think on the most important word my first shrink taught me, and it was just that: *important*. People's lives are important; it doesn't matter if they're smart people or fools. They are still ... *important*.

I watched *The 3 Faces of Eve* on the tube the other night, and through JoAnn Woodward's inspired performance saw the miracle as her schizoid personalities merged through the recovery of personal memories. The mere recital of her grade school teachers' names brought her soul-enforcing joy. Her memories – her self. It's universal, a part of the Commonality of mankind, a sense



that our memories matter and that *we* matter.

But that's the average Trumpy I'm visualizing, an unsophisticated, less-educated person gullible to his bullshit but personally non-psychotic and non-violent. What about the others? The gun-toters, the militia, the Boogaloos? Again: cue Kenosha, where, in late August, American Hell broke loose, in the pudgy form of 17-yr-old Trumpy Kyle Rittenhouse.

With apologies and full credit to the author, here's a professional's view of the first shooting, stolen from the Net. I broke up the paragraphs a bit.

Michael Sellers

Kyle Rittenhouse defenders in the media and social media are promoting the narrative that everything he did was in self-defense. Much has been written about the SECOND shooting sequence, which happened when he was running away from the first shooting and fell down, then shot protesters running toward him. But what motivated the FIRST shooting has been unclear. Now we have a clearer picture of how the first shooting happened. As most of you know, I'm a criminal defense investigator in my regular work --so I'm used to evaluating evidence like this and assessing what the defense prospects are, then reporting those findings to the defense attorneys, and eventually presenting findings to the prosecution and/or at trial.

In this case, based on the complaint, which itself is based on the videos and eyewitness testimony, I would rate the defense chances of succeeding with a self-defense strategy to be "fair" on the SECOND shooting, when he fell down in the street while running away and being pursued. But on the FIRST shooting, there is virtually no chance of succeeding with a "self-defense" strategy. Based on the videos and eyewitness testimony cited in the complaint -- there was nothing that a reasonable person would have perceived as a serious threat. That's just my opinion, but it's a professional opinion, based on close analysis of the videos and the complaint. But you can do your own analysis. Following are the details, taken from the criminal complaint. You can view the whole complaint at this

link: https://drive.google.com/.../1m9sDjYr1Nj_fpFr9bTycWPG8tS.../view

FROM THE COMPLAINT

On August 25th at approximately 11:45 pm a shooting occurred at Car Source which is located at the northwest corner of 63rd St. and Sheridan Road in the City and County of Kenosha, State of Wisconsin. The man who was shot at this location was identified as Joseph Rosenbaum. Rosenbaum was transported to a local hospital where a doctor declared him to be deceased on August 26, 2020

at 12:47 am. In the course of investigating this incident, law enforcement reviewed and shared with your complainant multiple videos that appeared to be recorded on cell phones.

In the first video, a male who was later identified to be Kyle H. Rittenhouse, DOB: 01/03/03 (hereinafter “the defendant”), is running southwest across the eastern portion of the Car Source parking lot. The defendant is a resident of Antioch, IL. The defendant can clearly be seen holding a long gun, which was later recovered by law enforcement and identified as a Smith & Wesson AR-15 style .223 rifle. The recovered magazine for this rifle holds 30 rounds of ammunition. Following the defendant is Rosenbaum and trailing behind the defendant and Rosenbaum is a male who was later identified as Richard McGinnis, a reporter.

The video shows that as they cross the parking lot, Rosenbaum appears to throw an object at the defendant. The object does not hit the defendant and a second video shows, based on where the object landed, that it was a plastic bag. Rosenbaum appears to be unarmed for the duration of this video. A review of the second video shows that the defendant and Rosenbaum continue to move across the parking lot and approach the front of a black car parked in the lot. A loud bang is heard on the video, then a male shouts, “Fuck you!”, then Rosenbaum appears to continue to approach the defendant and gets in near proximity to the defendant when 4 more loud bangs are heard. Rosenbaum then falls to the ground.



The defendant then circles behind the black car and approaches Rosenbaum. Rosenbaum remains on the ground. McGinnis also approaches, removes his shirt, and attempts to render aid to Rosenbaum. The defendant appears to get on his cell phone and place a call. Another male approaches, and the defendant turns and begins to run away from the scene. As the defendant is running away, he can be heard saying on the phone, "I just killed somebody."

Detective Cepress interviewed McGinnis and indicates the following: Before the shooting, McGinnis was interviewing the defendant. The defendant told McGinnis that he was a trained medic. McGinnis stated that he (McGinnis) has handled many ARs and that the defendant was not handling the weapon very well. McGinnis said that as they were walking south another armed male who appeared to be in his 30s joined them and said he was there to protect the defendant.

McGinnis stated that before the defendant reached the parking lot and ran across it, the defendant had moved from the middle of Sheridan Road to the sidewalk and that is when McGinnis saw a male (Rosenbaum) initially try to engage the defendant. McGinnis stated that as the defendant was walking Rosenbaum was trying to get closer to the defendant. When Rosenbaum advanced, the defendant did a "juke" move and started running. McGinnis stated that there were other people that were moving very quickly. McGinnis stated that they were moving towards the defendant. McGinnis said that according to what he saw the defendant was trying to evade these individuals.

McGinnis described the point where the defendant had reached the car. McGinnis described that the defendant had the gun in a low ready position. Meaning that he had the gun raised but pointed downward. The butt of the gun would have been at an angle downwards from the shoulder. McGinnis stated that the defendant brought the gun up. McGinnis stated that he stepped back and he thinks the defendant fired 3 rounds in rapid succession. McGinnis said when the first round went off, he thought it hit the pavement. McGinnis felt something on his leg and his first thought was wondering whether he had gotten shot. McGinnis was behind and slightly to the right of Rosenbaum, in the line of fire, when the defendant shot.

McGinnis stated that the first round went into the ground and when the second shot went off, the defendant actually had the gun aimed at Rosenbaum. McGinnis stated he did not hear the two exchange any words. McGinnis said

that the unarmed guy (Rosenbaum) was trying to get the defendant's gun. McGinnis demonstrated by extending both of his hands in a quick grabbing motion and did that as a visual on how Rosenbaum tried to reach for the defendant's gun. Detective Cephress indicates that he asked McGinnis if Rosenbaum had his hands on the gun when the defendant shot. McGinnis said that he definitely made a motion that he was trying to grab the barrel of the gun. McGinnis stated that the defendant pulled it away and then raised it. McGinnis stated that right as they came together, the defendant fired. McGinnis said that when Rosenbaum was shot, he had leaned in (towards the defendant). McGinnis stated that after the defendant shot he ran back towards the hospital towards the middle of the road. McGinnis stayed and turned his attention to Rosenbaum.

McGinnis stated that he then heard other shots really soon after. The third video that your complainant reviewed shows the defendant running northbound on Sheridan Road after he had shot Rosenbaum. The street and the sidewalk are full of people. A group of several people begin running northbound on Sheridan Road behind the defendant. A person can be heard yelling what sounds like, "Beat him up!" Another person can be heard yelling what sounds like, "Hey, he shot him!" Your complainant reviewed a fourth video that showed a different angle of the defendant running northbound. In this video a person can be heard yelling, "Get him! Get that dude!" Then a male in a light-colored top runs towards the defendant and appears to swing at the defendant with his right arm. This swing makes contact with the defendant, knocking his hat off. The defendant continues to run northbound. On the video a male can be heard saying something to the effect of, "What'd he do?" Another male can be heard Responding something to the effect of, "Just shot someone." Then a male can be heard yelling, "Get his ass!" The defendant then trips and falls to the ground.

As the defendant is on the ground, an unidentified male wearing a dark-colored top and light-colored pants jumps at and over the defendant. Based on the sounds of gunshots on the video and the positioning of the defendant's gun, it appears that he fires two shots in quick succession at this person. It appears that that person was not hit as he then runs away from the defendant. A second person who was later identified as Anthony Huber approaches the defendant who is still on the ground, on his back. Huber has a skateboard in his right hand.

When Huber reaches the defendant it appears that he is reaching for the defendant's gun with his left hand as the skateboard makes contact with the defendant's left shoulder. Huber appears to be trying to pull the gun away from the defendant. The defendant rolls towards his left side and as Huber appears to be trying to grab the gun the gun is pointed at Huber's body. The defendant then fires one round which can be heard on the video. Huber staggers away, taking several steps, then collapses to the ground. Huber subsequently died from this gunshot wound. After shooting Huber, the defendant moves to a seated position and points his gun at a third male, later identified as Gaige Grosskreutz, who had begun to approach the defendant. When the defendant shot Huber, Grosskreutz freezes and ducks and takes a step back. Grosskreutz puts his hands in the air. Grosskreutz then moves towards the defendant who aims his gun at Grosskreutz and shoots him, firing 1 shot.

Grosskreutz was shot in the right arm. Grosskreutz appears to be holding a handgun in his right hand when he was shot. Grosskreutz then runs southbound away from the defendant screaming for a medic and the defendant gets up and starts walking northbound. The defendant turns around facing southbound while walking backwards northbound with his firearm in a ready position, pointed towards the people in the roadway.

As a retired public defender, I'm always faced with one question when considering a case: *How would I defend that fool?*



Unless I could, like the Greensboro Klan/Nazi lawyers or Johnny Cochran, pack the jury with prejudiced pinheads, I'd go lightly on the self defense issue. A fair and unboasted jury would look at the facts –Who started the fracas? Rittenhouse. Who loses the “but-for” test? Rittenhouse. Also, like Sellers suggests, Rittenhouse brought the weapon across state lines, without legal justification, with no

conceivable purpose other than using it – and blow off that idea. No, my philosophy in such situations has always been to *turn the rage*.

The wrong people would be on trial: Kyle fired the shots, but he's 17, as witless and as manipulable as a balloon in the wind. His mother raised him in a winger gun nut culture, and drove him – and the gun she had illegally gifted him – to Kenosha. Trump inspired him; he had been photographed at a Trump rally and was under that monster's violent sway. He had been keyed to kill by his family and by his President. And yes, he was probably frightened out of what we can charitably call, his mind.

Manslaughter.

Believe me, as September, 2020 blossoms like a toadstool in the pitch darkness of our mass quarantine, I would much rather be talking about science fiction fandom. I'd rather be boasting of the success of my WOOF mailing, available on eFanzines.com. (Largest ever at >170 pages, it's colorful, witty, broad in scope, with a lot of newbies – and a Tim Kirk cover!) I'd rather be arguing that George RR Martin and Bob Silverberg did a terrific, fun job toastmastering the Hugos, gripes be damned, and that my only real disappointment with the awards was seeing Jeanette Ng's nasty comments on JWC rewarded. Get this: the same convention gave the late *Astounding/Analog* editor a Retro-Hugo, recognizing, perhaps, that accomplishment, attitude and honor should be evaluated in their time and in their place.

Indeed, I'd rather be arguing against such "cancel culture" – the insidious wider scope of political correctness, directed not just against individuals but against society, deriding and erasing achievements of the past because a flaw has been found in the person making the achievement. Of late, "cancel culture" has even gone after Flannery O'Connor, the author of "A Good Man is Hard to Find" and *Wise Blood* and *The Violent Bear it Away*, great and challenging work, apparently because she used the "n" word her stories. The sickening spectacle is reminiscent of the attempted bowdlerization of Mark Twain because *Huckleberry Finn* was written in redneck vernacular. I can see them going after Faulkner next. "That Evening Sun", my favorite short story, is set in the old South and deals with relations between and within the races. How dare the characters not talk like attendees at *next year's* Wiscon?

There were rumors of idiots who want to tear down the Washington Monument and Jefferson Memorial since the honored men had owned slaves. So far, such insanity has no traction. So far.

Let's do some reading and watching ...

Squeeze Me by Carl Hiaasen – the perfect antidote to Trump fatigue: inspired mockery of him and his world by a Florida master, hiding his considerable offense behind a sheen of satire. The book seems kind of slapdash, mentions of the virus like penciled-in editorial additions. But language, glorious language, hilarious language ... and the snakes! Cue Jefferson Parker!

A Private Cathedral by James Lee Burke. Talk about a switch in tone ... Burke's newest novel is as grim as Hiaasen's is light-hearted. If there's a flaw with Burke's novel it's that this is not the first time we've heard its main character, off-and-on cop Dave Robicheaux, expound from the gut on the horrors of alcoholic life. He's described the pits of addiction and violence – brilliantly – for decades. He's invoked the ghosts and phantoms of life in southern Louisiana since his first books. What's fairly new here is a taste of fantasy, of an immortal villain with a serpentine face straight of Eden, and an ending I can only describe as Mickey Spillane on LSD. I'm not sure these ideas work. What *does* work, and magnificently, is Burke's language – his

powers of description, of metaphor, of evocation are unmatched and possibly unmatched. The novelist repeats himself, but the man is a poet.

The Living Dead by George Romero and Daniel Kraus is thick but light – it's printed on paper so cheap it almost qualifies as newsprint. Alas, so far that seems like an apt metaphor for the book. I'm not deeply into it yet, and I will keep trying, but so far it's wordy and unexciting – fatal flaws for a zombie novel. Compare the initial corpse-awakening-shock with a similar scene in *Salem's Lot*. King's storytelling ability --his pacing, his ability to involve the reader – makes for a terrifying moment. Reading *The Living Dead*, I kept wishing they'd just get on with it. Like I say, I'll keep at this work, but this strongly-anticipated novel is off to a bad start. And yes, the co-author, who died while the book was in progress, was the creator of the great *Night / Dawn / Day of the Living Dead* series.

Devolution by Max Brooks. Moving away from zombies, here's the author of *World War Z* with a horror novel based around another popular myth – Bigfoot. It's literally and figuratively a thin work, eyewash – but readable and diverting.

Then She Vanished by T. Jefferson Parker. Parker is one of my five demigods in current thriller writers, along with Don Winslow, James Lee Burke, Michael Connelly and Carl Hiaasen. His current series of novels is more standard stuff than his Charlie Hood series, which concentrates on the Mexican cartels – haunted hero, colorful sidekick(s) – but reliably and deeply entertaining. But I have a question. *What is with the snake and scorpion collecting?* The gruesome hobby appears time and again in his books.

Big news re *The Three-Body Problem*: Cixin Liu's beloved series will be adapted into a Netflix series by David Benioff and Dan Weiss, who brought *Game of Thrones* to HBO. Hugo budget! (What a typo!) On deck: Greg Benford's new collaboration with Larry Niven, *Glorious*.

I really miss movie theatres, but we've decided to forego them until a vaccine is ready. So we haunt Netflix and its like for movies, and there we find some treasure ...

Da 5 Bloods by Spike Lee is possibly the best film I've seen in this horrible year, the account of four black Vietnam vets (and one son) revisiting the site of their worst war moment, in search of peace of mind, and gold. As can be expected of Lee, it's funny, violent, angry, and extremely effective. The lead actor, Delroy Lindo, is phenomenal.

The Torture Report deals with the efforts of Senate staff members to bring before the public the truth about the “enhanced interrogation techniques” employed by the Bush/Cheney administration in the wake of 9/11, and as you can imagine, it simply tells the truth: if you want reliable info, torture is not only obscene, it doesn't work. Adam Driver, escaping *Star Wars* and embracing the mainstream career he brought to life in *Marriage Story*, leads the fine cast – Annette Bening, Ted Levine, Michael C. Hall, Jon Hamm. Excellent stuff.

Away is SF soap opera, nicely acted by the great Hilary Swank, with excellent and accurate FX – Joe Green would never let a show get away with bad science – but manipulative to the max. I can stand an episode every other day. Hey, guys – those spacesuits are already 30 years out of date.

Lovecraft Country – Despite the presence of a preternaturally cool blonde, worthy of Hitchcock, this series is much more BLM than HPL, and I don't believe the denotations mesh well. The problem is the storyline – it's confused and pointless. Rosy compares director Jordan Peele to M. Night Shyamalan: each produced an initial masterwork – *Get Out* is Peele's *Sixth Sense* – then less-and-less successful missteps. Peele's *Us* is baffling. His *Twilight Zone* reboot is lame. This mess is *meh*.

Here's a fun thing to do when desperately bored: go to YouTube and watch their collection of **Jimmy Connors** commercials. Some are pretty funny. Not bad for my favorite athlete, a fellow sufferer of OCD. Doesn't that sound like fun? Hello?

As I complete this *Spartacus*, all voices bespeak the recent *Atlantic* article exposing Trump's offhand remark, that dead soldiers were "suckers" and "losers." I particularly note Charles Pierce's *Esquire* column of September 4, and its baffled question – why did Trump's veteran advisors stay on instead of decking the old turd? A constipated sense of patriotic decorum? Surely not the *fuhrerprinzip* I mentioned before. Such men should be immune to the awesomeness of Trump's office, able to see through the pomp to the squalor beneath, to the overt attempts at voter suppression, to the ludicrous conspiracy theories, to the agents provocateur on the streets with BLM demonstrators, to the raw sewage coursing through the veins of this administration. Shame on them.

Thomas Friedman, a commentator everyone should respect, came forth with a revelation the other day: many Trump voters support the toad not because they like him but because they hate us – liberals who look down on them. They cheer for that freak in the White House because they know we loathe him, and want to teach us a lesson.

God knows we need a lesson, a course in humility and humor, and it's very true: the best man I've ever known had an 8th grade education and I've met professionals and Ph.D.s I wouldn't pee on if they were on fire. (I take it back: I *would* pee on them if they were on fire ... or weren't.) A sneer is a bully's tool as surely as a punch. That's why empathy is an essential part of any decent human being – and why Joe Biden is seventy times the man Donald Trump is. (The simple smile on his face when he was nominated told me much.)

Of course, decent people will always "look down" on "blood and soil" bigotry, the provocation of violence for political ends, cruelty as a weapon of policy, and ignorance, dishonesty and hypocrisy, all staples of Trump's life and administration. The man is a personal sleaze and a presidential catastrophe. When a character in an Icelandic TV show proclaimed that "America is finished!" in a commercial sense, I knew exactly what he was talking about. China is a comer. America has chosen decline. We need to make that clear, and convince the people to reverse course.

"If you would conquer us," Phil Dick's Timothy Archer advises bitter feminists, "show us love and not scorn. Faith moves mountains; love moves human hearts." Pray God we have time to bring this to be.

The other day we watched a taped tour of the magnificent art museum, bewailing our fate and, to an extent, softening its sting. We walked with the cameraman through the huge labyrinth, awestruck at the artwork, amused that the *Venus de Milo*, though on a pedestal, is still touchable, just like the *Winged Victory of Samothrace*. Both, of course, are preliminaries for the main event. Hung in her own long gallery, safely behind impenetrable glass, humidity and temperature well-controlled, she regards thick crowds mashed before her, ushered before her and away in 20-second intervals– cellphones high, silly selfies common, expressions on their faces of, well, awe. There she is, 15 feet from you. The most famous and beloved work of art ever created by the hand of man. Smiling at you, as if to say, *No one has ever known what I'm thinking, but I know what you're thinking.*



There's a tour that hits the Louvre very near closing, so you can avoid the throngs normally packed in front of the *Mona Lisa*. We'll try for that one. There was a shot of a guy standing alone with her. That would have been us w/o this bastard virus. That *will* be us in the future.



This is a 14-year-old girl named Braga Nossi, in a photo taken at Auschwitz in February 1943. Her lip is split because a female guard just smacked her in the face. She is moments from being sent to the gas chamber.

The day will come when the separation of immigrant children from refugee families will be spoken of in the same breath as Auschwitz, when the cruelty of Stephen Miller and his addled boss are equated with the efforts of Heydrich and Eichmann to realize the toxic vision of *their* master. Count on it: it will happen. And what will the people of that future say? Will they say we – you and I, American citizens, supposedly the true sovereigns of our nation – made excuses for it happening? Turned away? Allowed it?

Stop those words before they're voiced. Vote blue, people. We owe.