

White Cop Who Won Settlement From City After He Shot a Black Man Faces Manslaughter Trial

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Canyon Boykin (left) in 2017. Photo courtesy of WCBI.[/caption]

Summary: A white police officer who killed a black man won a financial settlement from the city, saying he was racially discriminated against.

Police officer Canyon Boykin is awaiting trial for the killing of Ricky Ball in October 2015. In September of 2016, he was indicted on manslaughter charges, but [Buzzfeed News](#) stated that if history is any indicator, Boykin is more than likely going to escape punishment. Additionally, Boykin has profited from the death.

Shortly after Boykin shot Ball as he ran away during a traffic stop, the police officer sued the city for racial discrimination. Boykin argued that he had faced discrimination because he was a white cop who killed a black man. Instead of going to trial, the city settled the case for an undisclosed sum.

Buzzfeed News said that although the shooting of Ricky Ball resulted in public outrage, insiders believe that Boykin will ultimately not be convicted of a crime.

"That's what really made me realize how much is stacked against us," Ernesto Ball, Ricky's cousin, told BuzzFeed News. "That's the moment I began to think that maybe these cops can really get away with whatever."

The publication discovered that over the past 10 years at least 25 white police officers have filed racial discrimination cases, and about nine of those cases were settled for money. These cases involved allegations of not being promoted for being white or for facing reprimands for doing something considered racist.

The Boykin case was unique because it was the only racial discrimination case that involved a fatal shooting. Throughout the country, numerous black people have been killed during a police encounter, and about eight police officers, including Boykin, have been indicted. However, the seven other officers were all found not guilty during trial.

The police officers who were let go all said that they used force because they felt fear for their lives, the excuse Boykin gave. However, on the police radio, Boykin was recorded saying, "God, please still be in the car motherfucker. Please still be in the fucking car. If I get my fucking hands on him...Goddamn it, motherfucker," referring to the man he would eventually gun down.

Buzzfeed News said that the law requires police officers to show cause before firing, but standards of cause differ from state-to-state.

"As of 1984, it was legal in most states for an officer to fatally shoot any suspected felon attempting to flee. That year, a Memphis police officer killed 15-year-old Edward Garner. The officer, Elton Hymon, said he assumed Garner was unarmed but fired anyway because he spotted the boy running from the scene of a reported burglary attempt. The officer was not charged, but Garner's father sued the city, and the case reached the Supreme Court, which ruled in 1985 that Garner's Fourth Amendment rights had been violated. An officer can't shoot somebody running from them unless they have "probable cause to believe that the suspect poses a significant threat of death or serious physical injury to the officer or others," the 6-3 majority opinion stated," BuzzFeed News said. "That standard, paired with another ruling four years later saying use of force must be "objectively reasonable," set constitutional limits, but it doesn't dictate criminal code."

In Boykin's case, he faces trial in Mississippi, which BuzzFeed said had updated police deadly force statutes which may confuse jurors.

"People are outraged when juries return an acquittal, and they don't realize jurors may have had genuine reasons to be divided or confused," said Brandon Garrett, a law professor at Duke University.

Boykin's trial was originally set for October 2017 but it was postponed due to media attention.

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- [Graphic Videos Show Tragic Death of Alton Sterling](#)
- [Dallas Police Sergeant Sues Black Lives Matter for Igniting Race War](#)

What do you think of Canyon Boykin? Let us know in the comments below.

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