

Other people saying things, Zimmerman verdict edition

By [Steve Thorngate](#)

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I don't have any brilliant insights on the George Zimmerman verdict. Some say the story's about racism; others say it's about guns; others say it's about Florida's horrible self-defense laws. Pretty sure it's all of the above. Each part of this episode—even just the stuff we know for sure—is deeply troubling, from the fact that Zimmerman saw Trayvon Martin as a threat to his vigilante response to the way his legal deadly weapon upped the ante to the fact that holding him guiltless is a plausible interpretation of Florida law.

That's about all I got. Others have a good deal more:

"The most damning element here is not that George Zimmerman was found not guilty: it's the bitter knowledge that [Trayvon Martin was found guilty](#)."

"No one could name the nightmare like Malcolm, the nightmare he saw all around him, the nightmare of America that ended up killing him, [the nightmare from which Trayvon Martin didn't wake up](#)."

"[I could almost feel the physical strain of members of my almost all white congregation](#)—we're the only black family—trying not to look at me and my daughters as the pastor talked about 'who is my neighbor' in the sermon without saying anything about the young man killed on the side of the road in Florida."

"To lose sight of Zimmerman's racial self-identification is to lose sight of how race has worked in this country, how [whiteness was never about biology](#)."

"[What we do know](#) is that one night an unarmed teenager with no history of violence walked home from the store after buying some candy. What we know is that a stranger with a gun, expressing an immediate hostility that's clear from the gunman's own recorded words, and despite later claims of being 'terrified' and admonitions by a police dispatcher not to get out of his car and follow the boy, got out of his car and followed the boy. We know that five minutes later the armed man shot the unarmed boy to death."

"There's a reason George Zimmerman felt confident enough to confront Trayvon Martin *and* tell police that he feared for his life. In the America we've constructed, blacks are like the minions in a bad action movie. [They're both disposable and dangerous.](#)"

"[What once conveyed a vision of virtuous citizen-soldiers](#) now evokes a world full of private contractors, a tremulous and bellicose mass of individuals, each with his particular grievances and shadowy comprehensions of threat, fully empowered to use lethal force."

"Some people are on the lookout for muggers or rapists. You need to be [on the lookout for profilers who are judging you.](#)"

"[It's not against any rules](#) to ask a white woman if the black man in the car with her is attacking her. It's not against any rules to humiliate someone in a darkened parking lot in front of the person they love."

"[We are tired of hearing](#) that race is a conversation for another day. We are tired of pretending that 'reasonable doubt' is not, in every sense of the word, colored."

"It's worth remembering that what caused a national outcry was not the possibility of George Zimmerman being found innocent, but [that there would be no trial at all.](#)"

"The thing to understand here is that Stand Your Ground laws do not exist in some segregated section of Florida's criminal code. They are not bracketed off from the rest of Florida's 'standard' self-defense laws. [Stand Your Ground laws are integral to the very meaning of self-defense in the state.](#)"

"I still don't understand [what Trayvon was supposed to do.](#)"