

Life in black and blue

By [Dennis Sanders](#)

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Crime is increasing  
Trigger-happy policing  
Panic is spreading  
God know where we're heading  
Oh, make me wanna holler  
They don't understand  
- "Inner City Blues," Marvin Gaye

For the second time this week we have heard of another police shooting of an African American. Tuesday saw the killing of Alton Sterling in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and Wednesday night [Philando Castile](#) in the St. Paul suburb of Falcon Heights, Minnesota. While all of these shootings have bothered me, the Falcon Heights shooting hit closer to home, and not just because it was only a few miles from me.

What makes this one more real to me is that Mr. Castile could have been me.

What has been unnerving and infuriating is that as far as we can tell, this was a regular guy. [He worked in the lunchroom at a St. Paul Montessori school](#). When he was pulled over for a busted tail light, he told the officer that he had a permit to carry a concealed weapon. He seemed to be doing the right thing.

And he still got shot.

From what we know, he did all the right things one should do as a concealed-carry holder and as an African American and he still ended up dead.

My husband wrote an anguished Facebook post about the shooting and his fears that I could be pulled over and killed for no reason by someone who is supposed to keep the peace. The thing is, I can't tell him not to worry. I can't tell him that as long as I am careful then nothing will happen.

The thing is, I have Aspergers Syndrome, and I tend to miss social cues. What if I miss a social cue and the officer draws a gun? Can I trust the police to do the right thing? What will happen the next time I'm pulled over?

I never used to be scared of the police. I can remember sitting in elementary school in Flint, Michigan, back in the '70s and being taught that the police were there to help. I've believed that since then, but the steady drumbeat of police shootings has eroded my childlike trust and replaced it with fear, and the police should not be the people I fear.

The sad thing is, these killings will continue. Too much of white America doesn't see this as a problem. Many mistakenly believe that the shooting victim deserved it. None of this means it can't change, but until people can see the injustice happening, until it tugs at their own sense of fairness and justice, the values that we as Americans believe in, a lot of white people in America will remain unmoved to act.

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

*Originally posted at [The Clockwork Pastor](#)*