

I have a twitter account, but I hardly use it.

The pressure to say something pithy or meaningful in 140 characters or less renders me generally blank. But last night I was so furious, my thoughts were coming out in short bursts, like gunfire. I was not surprised but was still outraged. It left me sputtering mentally. As each thought arose 140 characters at a time was all I could manage to say about the decision not to indict the police officer, who fired six bullets, one of which took off the top of

looking down at him. Wilson has said in his official statement that he never stood over the body. The authorities have yet to ask him about the picture, or if they have, they have ascertained that this lie is not a big one. That this lie does not indicate that Officer Wilson is capable of telling other lies or spinning a yarn that places the blame squarely on Michael's shoulders. Which is what he has appeared to have done, convincing a jury of his peers, nine white, three black (and all you need is nine jurors to make a final decision), that he should not be indicted.

Some of the residents and protesters in Ferguson had no trouble expressing their fury. Buildings were

is safe to say that America's credibility has always been in question, especially internationally. African Americans by and large have never bought into the American dream. They aim for it, sure, fight for it, even die for it, but it's always there, the inherent mistrust of those in authority, the innate understanding that the law is not on their side, and never has been.

When I saw looters storm a liquor store after the decision was announced, my first reaction was frustration that these idiotic actions would obfuscate the real issues. Michael's parents pleaded calm, his stepfather, the moment he heard the decision, urged that

willfully relegated to second-class status for three hundred plus years? But the fact is now, more than ever, the chasm between the rich and the poor is growing, hence the chasm between the races (I need to find a better word than race, as the concept is a false social construct) is growing. Those in power sense that social unrest on a larger scale is very possible and that is why we are seeing so much more police activity, and will be seeing an exponential increase over the coming years. The threat of social unrest in no way seems to be arresting the GOP's deeply bigoted and classist economic and social agendas that strive to undermine millions of its

NO JUSTICE JUST THE LAW

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the victim's head, into an unarmed child named Michael Brown. I sent out a barrage of tweets that went unnoticed for the most part except to my small, but loyal band of followers. It was my way of yelling into the ether: what will it take America? How much more injustice has to be borne?

The scenario is sickeningly familiar, quintessentially American. Michael was black and Darren Wilson is white, a baby faced cop, not much older probably than the person he killed. Wilson was questioned about his actions on that August day and made himself out to be the victim, even though he was the only one armed. He insisted he was the one in imminent danger at all times. He described Michael as a "demon". He shot him six times and then left the body on the street for hours. There is a picture of Wilson standing over Michael's dead body,

burned down, a police car was set on fire, others were overturned. There was looting, shouting, rocks thrown. The authorities entreated peace but then sent in armoured vehicles and kept tear gas canisters at the ready. Police officers dressed in khaki riot gear, armed to the teeth, walked in front of armoured vehicles as buildings burned behind them lighting up the night sky. There was broken glass everywhere, trash, and bits of rock and concrete. It looked like a war zone. It could have been anywhere. Gaza came to mind at once for me, helped along by Wilson's insistence that he was merely defending himself with his gun against someone who was unarmed. But this was America, the most self-righteous democracy in the world, a nation that regularly holds other nations to task for their various human rights violations, for the way they deal with civil unrest or disobedience. It



A YouTube grab shows Michael Brown bleeding after being shot by Darren Wilson; a policeman looks on.

buildings be burned. He was criticized for that. It was irresponsible and dangerous to be sure, but it was impassioned and heartbroken.

I posted that the anger should be more productively directed, and taken to task by some of my friends. "Where has that gotten them?" a friend asked. Well, nowhere; 50 plus years after Selma and Dr. King's movement, nowhere, not inherently.

Throughout the evening I watched the footage of the mobs—the ones who are genuinely outraged—not the morons who grin into the cameras as they pelt reporters with rocks and run out of a store, clutching a huge bottle of vodka that they have just stolen. The collective anger is real and is much bigger than Ferguson and Michael's death. America is at a critical crossroads socially—actually it always has been. How can it not be with so many of its citizens

citizens' civil rights and economic stability. There is an arrogance that is palpable, a sense of entitlement that is inculcated amongst those who are in power—predominantly white males—and it shows its sinister, ugly face with alarming regularity as it did last night.

Michael Brown will not be the last black child killed by cops. A 12 year old black boy was shot and killed in Cleveland two days ago for brandishing a TOY gun that he did not even point at the officers who showed up to investigate. 12 years old. Americans, especially those not directly affected, need to hold these deaths as self evident that every American life is not viewed as equal. They need to hold these deaths close to their hearts, to keep the embers of a righteous anger glowing until there is real change. ■