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how to know what to believe

Lesson 10: Hands Up, Don't Shoot!

Hands Up, Don't Shoot?

Department of Justice Report (excerpted)

“Although there are several individuals who have stated that Brown held his hands up in an unambiguous sign of surrender prior to Wilson shooting him dead, their accounts do not support a prosecution of Wilson. As detailed throughout this report, some of those accounts are inaccurate because they are inconsistent with the physical and forensic evidence.... Certain other witnesses who originally stated Brown had his hands up in surrender recanted their original accounts, admitting that they did not witness the shooting or parts of it, despite what they initially reported either to federal or local law enforcement or to the media. Prosecutors did not rely on those accounts when making a prosecutive decision.

“While credible witnesses gave varying accounts of exactly what Brown was doing with his hands as he moved toward Wilson...they all establish that Brown was moving toward Wilson when Wilson shot him. Although some witnesses state that Brown held his hands up at shoulder level with his palms facing outward for a brief moment, these same witnesses describe Brown then dropping his hands and ‘charging’ at Wilson.”

Excerpted from “Department of Justice Report Regarding the Criminal Investigation into the Shooting Death of Michael Brown by Ferguson, Missouri Police Officer Darren Wilson, March 4, 2015.”

“It remains not only valid but essential to question how such a strong alternative version of events was able to take hold so swiftly and to be accepted so readily.”

—Attorney General Eric Holder