

Accountability is a Two-Way Street

"WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY"

by [Joseph DeMaio](#), ©2021



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(Apr. 22, 2021) — Even before the verdict in the Derek Chauvin trial was announced in Minneapolis, another police shooting – this time in Columbus, Ohio – [took place](#). In the Ohio incident, police body cam video shows that the officer was called on scene as a result of a 911 “stabbing in progress” call.

When he arrived, he exited his police car and approached several people who were fighting. He then shouted at a black female assailant – who was wielding a knife and threatening to stab two other females – to stop and “get down.” When she refused and continued swinging the knife, he fired at her to end the attack. Sixteen-year-old Ma’khia Bryant died.

Almost immediately, the media jumped in; Al Sharpton jumped in; and NBA basketball player LeBron James “tweeted”: “YOU’RE NEXT [insert of an hourglass icon draining sand and a photo of the Columbus Police Officer] #ACCOUNTABILITY.” That threatening message – fired off by the technical-fouling basketballer before it was revealed that the officer had likely saved the life of at least one other black teen – was

soon deleted by him, replaced with another [tweet](#) and an explanation ending: “I am so desperate for more ACCOUNTABILITY.”

Seriously? *Seriously??*

Memo to Monsieur James: since the commonly-accepted definition of the term for which you claim to be so desperate is not found in the NBA rules of professional conduct – indeed, online access to the code is specifically restricted to NBA employees who have been issued private intranet [usernames and passwords](#) – [here it is](#) for your edification: “Accountability – the quality or state of being accountable; *especially an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one’s actions.*” (Emphasis added)

Translation: accountability is a two-way, rather than a one-way, street. This means that when someone does something wrong – like wildly swinging a knife at others; like ignoring orders for court appearances and attendant arrest warrants while driving a car with expired license tags; and most often, like resisting arrest, ignoring police commands to stop and attempting to flee – they should “man-up,” “woman-up” or “[xe-up](#)” and “accept responsibility or account for [their] own actions.”

Distilled to its simplest concept: when a police officer tells you to stop doing what you are doing..., **stop**. If the officer’s actions are wrong or excessive, you can file suit later. But at least you will be alive to file that suit.

Intentional or consciously-made bad decisions — including shooting at police, fleeing your crime scene or threatening to kill or injure others — nearly *always* produce bad outcomes or results. Most frequently, they are minor: sometimes they are moderate to severe; but occasionally, they are fatal. The mainstream media has become maniacally obsessed of late with the occasional fatal forms of bad decisions and their outcomes. And this is particularly so when a black person is shot by a non-black police officer. Soooo..., has anyone checked lately on the statistics for black-on-black [homicides](#)?

With rare exception, the mainstream media itself has become one of the primary cheerleaders for the rejection of accountability as to those who may perpetrate crimes, but scream for strict accountability when a police officer acts to enforce the law or prevent its breach. In the most recent Ohio event, for example, that paragon of non-yellow journalism, NBC, selectively [edited](#) the 911 call and video of the scene lest it detract from the narrative that, once more, a white police officer shot and killed a defenseless black person.

Interestingly, there are some furtive indicators of liberal recognition that accountability is not a one-way street and that unbiased reporting may be returning in some sectors, including – surprisingly – [CNN](#). Let us hope that this is the beginning of a trend toward objectivity in reporting instead of a “flash-in-the-pan” anomaly. Time will tell.

In the meantime, LeBron James could use some “manning-up” as well before composing more incendiary tweets and accepting responsibility for his own actions. The best way to

fortify a demand for accountability is to practice self-accountability first. If you are wrong and you know it, stop it. It might help as well if Mr. James waited for the facts to emerge to avoid the need for deletion of improvident comments hastily posted to the Internet..., and appearing to be a dunce in the process. A rich dunce, maybe, but still a dunce.

And as for Al Sharpton, as they say in Philly: “fageddaboutit.” Sharpton is very likely well beyond any reasonable hope of reason or rehabilitation.