

THE NIMROD LITERARY AWARDS
The Pablo Neruda Prize for Poetry



SEMI-FINALIST
MICHAEL WARR

*What Not To Do . . . (an unfinished poem
after Michael Harriot at The Root)*

Breathe: **Eric Garner** (choked)

Sell. (loosies)

Resist. (to) (death)

Stare: **Lamont Hunt** (shot.)

(back of head)

Make: **Akai Gurley** (a jarring sound) (shot.)

("accidentally")

Walk: **Rekia Boyd** (shot.)

(back of head)

Stand: **Amadou Diallo** (in vestibule) (after walking)

Loiter. (shot.)

Act. (suspicious) (nineteen. bullets.)

Look. (out of place) (forty-one fired.)

Walk: **Terence Crutcher** (hands in air)

Have. (a "very hollow look")

Appear. (intoxicated) (shot.)

(in back)

Drive: **Samuel DuBose** (without)

(license plate) (shot.)

(in head)

Drive: **Levar Jones** (without)

(seatbelt)

Reach. (for driver's license) (shot.)

(in hip)

Sit: **Donta Dawson** (quietly)

(in car) (engine) (idling)

Raise. (left hand) ("abruptly") (shot.)

(in eye)

Crawl: **Daniel Shaver** (toward officers) (as instructed)

(pull) (loose gym shorts) (too suddenly)

Beg. (not to be shot) (shot.) (anyway)

Fail: **Korryn Gaines** (to appear) (in) (traffic court) (shot.)

(in standoff)

Approach: **Oscar Grant** (the police)

Beg. (not to shoot)

Kneel. (shot.) (anyway)

(in back)

Fail: **Sandra Bland** (to signal) (too uppity)

(arrested.) (found. hanging. in. cell.)

Run: **Dominique White** (shot.)

(in back)

Drive: **Walter Scott** (with broken taillight) (shot.)

(in back)

Move: **Kendra James** (into driver seat) (after driver arrested)

(shot.)

(in head)

Sit: **Jordan Edwards** (unarmed in car) (shot.) (with rifle)

Reverse: **Diante Yarber** (suddenly) (behind wheel) (thirty. bullets. fired. ten. kill.)

Park: **LaTanya Haggerthy** (on side of road)

Talk. (on cell)

(on side of road) (shot.)

(on side of road)

Drive: **Philando Castile** (with broken brakelights)

Tell. (you have a gun)

Shout. (not reaching for gun) (shot.) (five bullets.)

(two. to heart.)

Face: **Michael Brown** (the police)

(shot.) (six bullets) (two. to. head.)

Sell: **Alton Sterling** (DVDs) (in a parking lot)

(shot.) (in. chest.)

(and back)

Carry. (illegal .38 in pocket) (shot.)

(in back)

Carry: **Philando Castile** (legal firearm) (five. bullets.)

(two. to. heart.)

“Carry” (planted weapon): **Anthony Lamar Smith** (shot.) (five. bullets.)

Carry (toy gun): **Tamir Rice** (shot.) (near navel)

Carry (BB gun): **Cameron Tillman** (shot. with. real. bullets.)

Carry (iPhone in the dark): **Stephon Clark** (shot.) (eight. bullets.)

(“primarily in the back”)

Carry (“perceived” weapon): (eight. bullets.)

Carry (prescription bottle): **Rumain Brisbon** (shot.) (two. bullets. to torso.)

Carry (wallet): **Amadou Diallo** (nineteen. bullets.) (forty-one fired.)

Carry (“knife in the middle of the road”): **Laquan McDonald** (shot.)

(sixteen. bullets.)

Not have (a gun): **Keith Lamont Scott** (when told to drop it)

Point: **Saheed Vassell** (a metal pipe) (shot.) (ten. bullets.)

Sleep: **Aiyana Stanley-Jones** (one. bullet. to seven-year-old head.)

(on couch)

Try: **Brendon Glenn** (to stand) (shot.)

Ramble: **Adam Trammell** (naked in hallway) (tased. to. death.)

Be. (“loud or obnoxious”) (shot.)

(in back)

Be. (schizophrenic): **Natasha McKenna**

Be. (shackled) (in custody)

Be. (stunned) (to death.) (50,000 volts)

Be. (bipolar): **Tanisha Anderson** (head slammed to pavement)

Be. (off meds): **Shereese Francis** (suffocated.) (four. police. bodies.) (on bed.)

Be. (suicidal): **Aaron Campbell** (not possessing gun) (shot.)

Be. (“armed”): **Yvette Smith** (when not armed) (shot.) (on front porch)

Be. (“too large”): **Michael Brown** (same height as shooter) (shot.)

(six bullets.) (two. to. head.)

Be. (an “imminent threat”): **John Crawford III**

Shop. (carry Walmart air rifle)

Talk. (on cell phone. while shopping)

(shot.) (with. real. bullets.)

Pose: **Ezell Ford** (an immediate threat) (shot.)

(while schizophrenic)

Display: **Manuel Loggins Jr.** (a “mean expression”) (shot.)

(in front of daughters)

Call: **Charleena Lyles** (the police) (while mentally ill) (shot.)

(seven. bullets.)

Fit: **Jordan Baker** (“the description”) (shot.)

Flee: **Freddie Gray** (“unprovoked”) (spine severed in custody)

Run: **Tashii Brown** (choked. to. death.)

Run. **Stephon Clark** (through grandmother’s yard) (shot.)

(twenty. bullets. fired.) (six.)

(in back)

Run: **Walter Scott** (shot.)

(in back)

Breathe