



Written by [Patrick Krey](#) on May 8, 2017

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Exercising the Right

Ended by an AR-15

Tulsa World reported on March 30 out of Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, about a self-defense shooting story that would eventually gain national attention due to the unique details of the case. The fact that it involved an AR-15, three deceased suspects who were relatively young, and a getaway driver charged with the murder of her accomplices made it newsworthy. The deceased suspects, 18-year-old Maxwell Cook, 18-year-old Jacob Redfearn, and 15-year-old Jaykob Woodruff, allegedly had already burglarized the homeowners once earlier that day and were returning to steal from them a second time. Investigators say the crime was planned by 21-year-old Elizabeth Rodriguez, who acted as the getaway driver for her criminal accomplices.

In the house was 23-year-old Zach Peters, who was home when he heard the sound of the intruders returning. Peters grabbed an AR-15 and confronted the intruders. Fearing for his life, Peters fired at the intruders, hitting all three men. Two of the suspects fell to the floor in the kitchen, where they later died, and a third suspect was able to exit the home but collapsed outside in the driveway. Peters called 911 to report the home invasion and subsequent shooting and told the dispatcher that he believed he only shot two of the suspects. "Three men — two I've shot in my house," Peters can be heard saying to the 911 operator.

"Two are still in my house.... I shot two of them and now I'm barricaded in my bedroom," Peters told the 911 operator. Deputies arrived on the scene and found the lifeless bodies of the suspects. Police also found a knife on one suspect and brass knuckles on another. Rodriguez fled the scene in her car as soon as the shooting occurred but then turned herself in shortly thereafter. Police arrested Rodriguez for planning the burglary and driving her accomplices to the scene of the crime on two separate occasions for the intended purpose of stealing from the homeowners. Rodriguez was booked into the Wagoner County Jail without bail on three charges of first-degree murder under the state's felony murder rule. In Oklahoma, a defendant who was involved in the commission of a felony can be charged with murder for any deaths that occur during the felony, even if the defendant was not directly responsible for the death. Rodriguez likewise was charged with three counts of first-degree burglary.

Rodriguez later confessed to police that she was the ringleader of the burglary and that they stole alcohol and electronics from the Peters' detached garage earlier that morning before returning to steal more items. Rodriguez also admitted that she and the trio of burglars stole from other houses in the area that they believed were not occupied. Rodriguez said that when they returned the second time, the three young burglars broke in to the house through a rear glass door.

Rodriguez gave an interview to News9 in Oklahoma where she made a half-hearted apology for her actions and seemed to be upset with Peters for defending himself. "I'm sorry we broke into his house. I'm sorry we scared him or whatever, but I'm not going to be sorry he shot somebody. He could've shot them boys in the leg. I understand he was scared, had every right, he has his rights, has his rights, I'm understanding of him. I affected his life, I'm sorry, but am I compassionate for him? He's on the bottom of my list to be compassionate for," Rodriguez told News9.

A grandfather of one of the deceased suspects made similar comments to the ABC affiliate in Tulsa. KTUL interviewed Leroy Schumacher, who is the grandfather of Jacob Redfearn. "What these three



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boys did was stupid.... They knew they could be punished for it but they did not deserve to die," he said. Schumacher questioned whether Peters truly was afraid for his life: "Brass knuckles against an AR-15, come on, who was afraid for their life?" Schumacher felt that the homeowner's son should be charged for his role in the shooting.

Despite the complaints of Rodriguez and Schumacher, Peters will not be charged for the shootings. Assistant District Attorney Jack Thorp held a press conference where he told reporters that Peters acted in accordance with the laws of the state. "It is the opinion of this office that Zachery Peters acted justifiably and in accordance with his rights as an Oklahoma citizen when he used deadly force to defend his home from the first degree burglary perpetrated by Maxwell Cook, Jaykob Woodruff, and Jacob Redfearn, and allegedly Elizabeth Rodriguez."

Untied

The *Athens Daily Review* out of Athens, Texas, reported on March 15 about a Lake Athens-area homeowner who shot two intruders. The homeowner and his wife had placed an ad on the Internet to sell a dog, and police believe the criminals interacted with the couple online in an elaborate ruse solely to burglarize their house. Henderson County Sheriff Botie Hillhouse told the newspaper that the victims had agreed to meet with the suspects to discuss the sale of a dog at their home, but the suspects arrived wearing masks and broke in to the house. The masked men, who were armed, tied up the couple while they ransacked the house looking for valuables. At some point, after the burglars discovered a locked safe, the male homeowner convinced the two men to untie him so he could open the safe. The burglars agreed, and as soon as the man was free, he immediately grabbed a nearby handgun and fired at the suspects, fatally wounding them both. The man untied his wife and called 911. Authorities soon arrived.

The deceased suspects were later identified as 49-year-old Steven Kelley and 31-year-old Cecil Spain. An interesting twist was that Kelley was later confirmed to be the ex-husband of the female victim. "We didn't know it until we confirmed it through fingerprints, but one of the suspects was the ex-husband of the female that was there," Hillhouse told the *Athens Daily Review*. Investigators believe that the ex-husband might have masterminded the home invasion scheme since he knew the couple had expensive items and money in the house. Police also believe the deceased suspect wore a mask so his ex-wife would not recognize him. "I'm still pretty certain that he came to rob them.... He wanted his identity left unknown, because he was wearing a mask. That's why they didn't know who he was. He knew they had money there, and he was coming to get it."

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