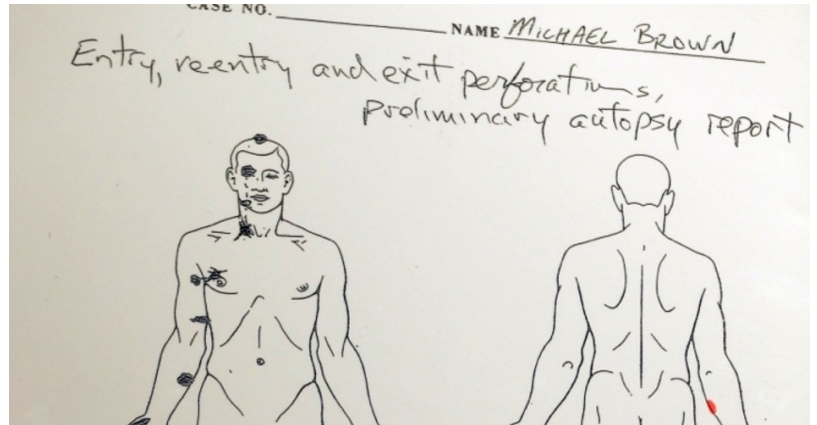




Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on August 20, 2014

Ex-Marine Gunner: Ferguson Shot Pattern Vindicates Officer Wilson

Does the unusual shot pattern in the Michael Brown shooting incident tell the tale of whether or not Ferguson Police officer Darren Wilson fired in self-defense? Ex-marine and video blogger Michael Wilson (no relation) certainly thinks so. And he has created a [presentation explaining](#) the significance of the pattern and why he thinks the Brown family autopsy ultimately will vindicate Officer Wilson.



Relating his background in marksmanship, Michael Wilson says, “In the Marines I was a corporal; I was a squad leader and the gunner on a 60-millimeter mortar. And in that position I had to qualify with a pistol.” He then points out that whether you’re in the military or on a police force (or anytime anyone is trained in the use of handguns, for that matter) you’re taught to aim for center mass, the torso, as it’s the easiest target to hit and is where most vital organs are located. For this reason, Michael Wilson was immediately struck by the Brown family autopsy report. He said:

The autopsy showed that Officer Wilson was pulling his shots to the left — his left....

You can see that the shots are going down the right side of Mike Brown’s body, hitting his arm, in fact; if Officer Wilson had pulled his shots any further, he would have missed him altogether. So why was Officer Wilson pulling his shots to the left?

Note also here that the 6’4”, 290-pound Brown’s torso was a very large target.

Having said this, it’s harder hitting targets with a handgun than most people think (it’s not like in the movies), and, when under the stress of a life or death situation and facing a moving assailant, hitting your target is more difficult still. Yet if this were the cause of Officer Wilson’s inaccuracy, or were he just a bad shot, his off-target grouping would be random. But this was not the case — again, there was a *definite pattern*. What does it mean?

Michael Wilson explains. He mentions “Josie,” the friend of Officer Wilson who [called into](#) *The Dana Show* on NewsTalk 97.1 KTFK, gave the officer’s account of events, and said that Brown had punched Officer Wilson in the face. This certainly explains the injury Officer Wilson suffered, an orbital blowout fracture of the left eye. Michael Wilson then connects the dots further, saying that if Brown was right-handed, and most people are, the left side of the face is precisely where he would have struck the officer. He then gets down to brass tacks:

So, here’s why his shots went off to the left. They have the fight, he [Officer Wilson] gets punched in the face, and if you’ve ever had a black eye, you know that not only does it hurt, but your vision automatically gets blurry. And you start squinting.... And so in order to see straight, you kind of tilt your head and cock it a little bit to the side. You can’t help it; it’s automatic; it’s just part of being human. And that means that when you’re firing a pistol, it’s automatically going to pull the pistol in the same direction. In this case, *to the left*.



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Michael Wilson proceeds to fill in the blanks: Officer Wilson, with a painful and blurry left eye, is shooting at a charging Brown. But he's pulling his shots left and starts hitting Brown in the arm with vertical variation "because when Brown is running ... his arm is going up and down, right about in line with the middle of the chest [center mass], where Officer Wilson would have been aiming." To clarify, the shots are random in terms of height — some higher on the arm and some lower — because the arm is moving up and down, as it does when one runs. So when a given part of the arm passed through chest-height range, where Officer Wilson was aiming, it was in the line of fire. But while the height varied, all the arm shots were virtually the exact same distance left. This is consistent with a shooter with Officer Wilson's left-eye injury: Left-right aim is affected negatively but uniformly, while up-down aim is unaffected and only varies in accordance with the target's movement. Conclusion? Officer Wilson was a good, but injured, shot.

Michael Wilson continues, "As Brown gets closer, the shots start moving in closer to the center of his body." This is because the closer your target is, the less time the bullet has to go off course (it's a major reason why it's easier to hit a golf green from 100 yards than from 200 yards). Then there was the fifth shot, which struck Brown around the right eye, which not only is closer to the center of the body, but, points out Michael Wilson, is consistent with "the way you normally run — you start leaning forward." Note that the shots moved up even higher, from arm to head, possibly because a shot and increasingly frenzied Brown might have dropped his head even lower into more of a bull-rush posture.

Then there was the final shot, which hit Brown in the forehead or middle of the head and is "exactly what you would expect," said Michael Wilson. In other words, after having been shot around the eye, it makes sense that Brown would have started falling forward in the direction he was running, bringing the upper part of his head into the line of fire.

Michael Wilson's point is that all the shot-pattern evidence is consistent with the police's story, with an injured but good marksman firing in self-defense at a charging and aggressive target. Note also that it takes only a couple of seconds to fire six shots with a semi-automatic handgun. It all happened very, very quickly.

The Brown family's private autopsy, Michael Wilson concludes, "actually works to Officer Wilson's advantage. It might be the final piece of evidence he needs to show that he's vindicated, to show that his story is true, and he should not be charged with anything."

Photo of diagram showing shot pattern from Michael Brown autopsy results: AP Images



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