



Written by [Steven Yates](#) on July 27, 2009

Obama, Gates, Crowley Likely to Meet

President Obama is likely to meet at the White House with black scholar Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and police officer Sgt. James Crowley, who arrested Gates at his house on July 16 on a disorderly conduct charge, a charge the department has since dropped.



A woman had called police from a neighboring office when she saw two men (Gates and his driver) — race unknown — trying to force their way into the home, which Gates leases from Harvard University. Gates contended later that the door had jammed. By the time police had arrived, he had entered through the back. He and his driver had forced the door open; his driver had brought in his luggage and left. Gates was inside the house when police arrived. Crowley, who is white, asked Gates for identification and proof that he lived there. He reported that the scholar became increasingly enraged at the police intrusion, following Crowley outside, accusing him of racial profiling, and demanding his name and badge number.

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Last week President Obama weighed in with the opinion that Cambridge, Massachusetts police had “acted stupidly” when Crowley arrested Gates to end the confrontation. Gates later threatened legal action against the Cambridge Police Department.

Crowley, a decorated officer of 11 years who teaches a course in how to avoid racial profiling at a local police academy, has the support of his fellow officers including their minority members, and the support of his superiors.

The president found himself under fire from police organizations for expressing an opinion while admitting he didn’t have “all the facts.”

No witnesses to the confrontation between Crowley and Gates, including at least one minority officer present at the time of Gates’ arrest, have suggested that Crowley acted improperly.

Last Friday, doing damage control, Obama telephoned both men. He came away from the conversation that he had with Crowley newly impressed, saying Crowley is “an outstanding police officer and a good man.”

Obama’s [statement](#) included an invitation, at Crowley’s suggestion, that the three men — Obama, Gates, and Crowley — meet at the White House and have a beer. Gates has accepted the invitation.

Obama, who disagrees with claims that he should not have spoken out, called the incident a “teaching moment, where all of us, instead of pumping up the volume, spend a little more time listening to each other and try to focus on how we can generally improve relations between police officers and minority communities, and that instead of flinging accusations, we can all be a little more reflective in terms of what we can do to contribute to more unity.”

Gates stated on his Internet newsletter, [TheRoot.com](#), that “if meeting Sgt. Crowley for a beer with the president will further that end, then I would be happy to oblige.”

No date or time for the meeting has been set as of this writing.



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