

Beat: Local

South Carolina cop charged with murder in shooting of unarmed man

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USPA News - A South Carolina police officer was arrested Tuesday and charged with murder after a shocking video surfaced that showed him repeatedly shooting an unarmed man in the back as he tried to flee. Michael Thomas Slager, 33, had been placed on administrative duty after Saturday's incident, in which he fatally shot 50-year-old Walter Scott after a traffic stop in North Charleston for a broken taillight.

The officer had initially claimed that Scott had grabbed his taser following an altercation, after which Slager opened fire. That changed Tuesday when a witness turned over a video that showed Slager firing eight times as Scott tried to flee. The video, which also showed Slager dropping an unidentified object near Scott's body as a fellow officer assesses the situation, was later published on the New York Times' website. Slager was arrested by agents of the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED) on Tuesday afternoon and charged with one count of murder, which carries a maximum penalty of 30 years to life in prison. He was booked into the Charleston County Detention Center at about 5:49 p.m. local time. Investigators allege that Slager killed Scott "knowingly and unlawfully with malice aforethought," according to an affidavit released by SLED. "The Defendant did shoot the victim multiple times in the back after an altercation. All this is true based upon video evidence and the investigation of the State Law Enforcement Division," the affidavit adds. The release of the video immediately sparked outrage on social networking websites, with many highlighting the fact that the accused officer is white and the victim black. It is unknown, however, whether race may have played a role in the shooting. South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley, who called it "a sad time for everyone in South Carolina," urged everyone to work together to help the community heal. "We have many good law enforcement officers in the field. What happened in this case is not acceptable in South Carolina, nor is it reflective of our values or of the way most of our law enforcement officials act, and I assure all South Carolinians that the criminal judicial process will proceed fully," she said. A spokesman for the North Charleston Police Department said Patrolman First Class Michael Slager has been employed with the department since December 2009.

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-3777/south-carolina-cop-charged-with-murder-in-shooting-of-unarmed-man.html>

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