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# Jury finds McNeill not guilty in 2007 shooting death

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Posted: Friday, August 14, 2009 12:00 am | Updated: 5:28 pm, Mon Nov 22, 2010.

By Howard Roden | 25 comments

After more than three hours of deliberation Thursday, a Montgomery County jury found William Thomas McNeill not guilty of murdering the 19-year-old son of his former girlfriend.

Valdo Mata Jr. died July 27, 2007, from a single shotgun blast to his torso as he entered McNeill's home in West Montgomery County and threatened to kill the 46-year-old McNeill, defense attorney Stephen Jackson said.

"It was a clear-cut case of self-defense," Jackson said after the verdict was announced. "You don't force your way into a man's house high on (methamphetamine) and threaten to kill him. He (McNeill) did what anyone else would've done."

The seven-woman, five-man jury voted unanimously in the 410th state District Court of Judge K. Michael Mayes to absolve McNeill of the murder charge, but only after it



watched an hourlong police dash-cam video and re-examined other evidence Thursday.

"I think the jury wanted to make certain the evidence conformed to our testimony," Jackson said.

Trial testimony earlier in the week said Mata, after he was shot, ran next door to McNeill's parents' home in Tri-Lakes Estates and collapsed in their yard. Medical examiner Dr. Patricia Moore testified an autopsy of Mata found a high level of methamphetamine in his system.

Mata's uncle, Cruz Mata, of Houston, said the issue of methamphetamine in his nephew's system had an impact on the jury's verdict.

"I'm very upset," he said after the verdict was read. "Justice was not served. They (defense attorneys) used that (drugs) against him. We will never see my nephew again."

Mata's father, Valdo Mata Sr., declined comment, while Mata's grandmother sat nearby, sobbing on a bench in the courthouse.

Assistant District Attorney Nancy Hebert was unavailable for comment following the trial.

Jackson said McNeill declined comment on the verdict.

"He's hoping to have his life back," the attorney said. "He's happy to move forward."

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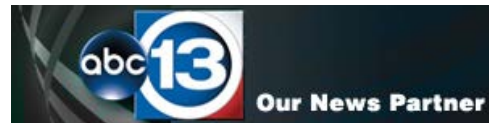
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### 25 comments:

Kimberly09 posted at 2:25 pm on Wed, Oct 14, 2009.



Posts: 0

I am the VICTIM'S ex girlfriend and mother of his son. i knew this man who shot him and valdo actually lived there so there is no way he broke in when this was pre-meditated. i knew valdo like the back of my hand and he never did any harm to anyone unless he felt threatened. i dont see how this man got off just because valdo was under the influence but so was the man who shot him.two wrongs dont make a right.but i do know my son is 3 and growing up without his father.and valdo died to young behind someone who was enfacuated with his mother.and he is truly guilty of this and god will take care of this since justice was not served.

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A Conroeite posted at 5:43 pm on Fri, Aug 14, 2009.



Posts: 0

If you want to meet me at McDonalds and discuss this like adults fine, but I am finished arguing with a nameless freak who hides behind her computer and hurls her attacks without answering for her actions. Name the day and hour and I will buy your lunch and you can pray for me and lay hands on me (wash them first) and we can smile and call it quits. Otherwise if you choose to remain an annoying childish buttwipe then you will be ignored like I should have done at fist signal you were a little bit mental.

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A Conroeite posted at 5:34 pm on Fri, Aug 14, 2009.



Posts: 0

I do not want a dialogue with you. Are you completely insane? I do not need a bible school lesson from you. I do not want to be bothered by you at all. What part of leave me

the hell alone don't you get besides all of it? The only thing you are proving is you cannot let it go. Nobody on this board gives a rubber rats butt about our differences, they just want to post their opinions just like me, so don't feel you owe anyone an apology, least of all me. We all just want you to stop being so annoying. We do not come to this board for life's lessons by yours truly. Don't you get it? Shut up already.

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**headsup2** posted at 4:56 pm on Fri, Aug 14, 2009.



Posts: 0

Keep at it. You're proving my most recent point. Sorry this is so painful for you. I tried open dialogue at first. Now, I'm just letting you prove you have your own issues - which was not actually what I intended to do. Sorry about dragging it out in public - I didn't even consider the possibility of someone reacting so wildly to grace, which is what I've tried to talk about from the beginning. Just weird it brings this out in someone. (Sorry to you folks who didn't see what this was originally about... Really just tried in the very beginning to talk about God's unstoppable grace and love in another story. Bizarre to me that it came to this.)

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**A Conroeite** posted at 4:47 pm on Fri, Aug 14, 2009.



Posts: 0

And you did not state your opinions, you addressed me specifically and told me how my view of God's plan was WRONG and how my religious beliefs were those of a Deists and even told me I should go to Wiki to research the areas you felt I was lacking. The subject was a family that lost their children in a car wreck. How in the world do you see that as a chance to pounce on me? Idiot! I am considering legal action against you at this point. You have been told to stop enough times.

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**A Conroeite** posted at 4:42 pm on Fri, Aug 14, 2009.



Posts: 0

Oh give it up you psychotic freak. You were eliminated because you are hopelessly stupid, you are a stalker and a useless sack of worm ridden garbage. I am not the topic of discussion, and yet you relentlessly go after every comment I make and try to disprove my opinions. You are a troublemaker and a childish whiner. Crybaby. If this is all the action your little mind gets is this relentless following my comments and attacking then you need psychiatric intervention. It is just a comment board, get over yourself and trying to make it into your pitiful imaginary world where you are the messenger of God. Get over yourself.

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**headsup2** posted at 2:35 pm on Fri, Aug 14, 2009.



Posts: 0

COURIER: You should screen what you delete when people use the "report as abuse" button. I've been nowhere near abuse. Have you read the nasty language StephenP has written toward me? THAT is abuse. People should be able to read for themselves what I've \*\*\*actually written\*\*\* - NOT what this loose-cannon says I've written. Sad...

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**headsup2** posted at 2:31 pm on Fri, Aug 14, 2009.



Posts: 0

StevenP: I never attacked you. I stated my opinions/belief and you attacked me because of those statements, then had my post removed. I've never called you a name, I've only commented on your comments. I'm sad that my comments ignite such fire in you. The only thing I would have done different is not comment on you 'being on the sauce/kool-aid'. That was a low blow, but so goes it. Go back and read your own posts and take a second look at mine. Then cool off. Sheeesh. Too bad we don't have the original one that started all of this. It was actually grounded deeply in love. You just mis-read it.

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A Conroeite posted at 2:09 pm on Fri, Aug 14, 2009.



Posts: 0

headsup for someone who claims to be a Christian you are the most hateful un Christ like commenter on this board. You insist everything you believe about God should be what I believe, you attacked me first with no provocation, you have been unrelenting in following every word I write and trying to dispel everything I comment on, all without even addressing the subject of the post. You are stalking me and you are a freak in the way you are conducting yourself. If all you do is come on this board to attack other people then you should open up your Bible instead and try to apply some of that religion you so easily espouse on others on yourself. You are not Christ like, you are more like Satan. Your sickness does not affect me in the least, I do not know you I will never meet you and I am not going to waste any energy even feeling sorry for you because you are just a common low life trying hard to be somebody at the expense of others. If you had a fraction of the Love of God in you then you would not behave like you do, and so there is nothing about religion you can teach me or anyone for that matter, you need to grow in the word of God and you need yo become humble if you want to teach the word. Satan can speak the passages but he does not follow them any more than you do. Freak of nature, get off my back.

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A Conroeite posted at 2:09 pm on Fri, Aug 14, 2009.



Posts: 0

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A Conroeite posted at 1:55 pm on Fri, Aug 14, 2009.



Posts: 0

headsup are you going to follow me around sniffing what I leave behind and comment on my comments or are you going to comment on what was written in the article. You really seemed concerned about my opinions and trying to cast your shadow on me, but I just read your weak attempts at putting me down and laugh at your immature attempts. Get a life and get the hell away from me. I am happy you love God, but it is transparent you

spew the gospel in the same fashion as the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essences and that is to glorify yourself and make yourself seem knowledgeable and superior. I am one person among many who that does not work on because I go to church to learn and to have fellowship, not to Lord my knowledge of the written word of God on others. You are one sick individual.

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**hsc** posted at 1:06 pm on Fri, Aug 14, 2009.



Posts: 0

FORCE YOUR WAY INTO A HOME, HIGH ON DRUGS AND MAKE THE PROPERTY OWNER FEAR FOR HIS LIFE, GET SHOT IN THE FACE!!!!!! ITS THAT SIMPLE.... YOU MUST BE ABLE TO PROVE BEYOND ALL REASONABLE DOUBT THAT YOUR LIFE, OR YOUR FAMILY WAS IN DANGER BY THE INTRUDER OR STONED BUTTHEAD WAS THREATNING YOU!!!!!! THAT IS ALL IT TAKES ... HOPE HE DIDDNT MEET THE LORD WITH CRACK SMELL ON HIS BREATH... MC NIEL SHOULD RECIEVE COMPENSATION FROM THE DA'S OFFICE IN THE SUM OF 160.000 THOUSAND DOLLARS FOR WRONGFULL IMPRISONMENT. THAT WHAT THAT FELLOW JUST RECIEVED FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS AFTER SERVING 22 YRS IN PRISON, HE WILL RECIEVE 80 THOUSAND DOLLARS A YR FOR EVERY YEAR HE WAS LOCKED UP, NOW THAT IS JUSTICE TO THE UNJUST. HIT BRETT UP FOR YOUR MONEY AND TIME TAKEN AWAY MR. MC NIEL... AND FOR THE DEAD MAN, THERE WAS HELP FOR PEOPLE WITH ADDICTIONS , YOU WOULD HAVE TO JUST WANT IT!!!!!!

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**go4it** posted at 11:48 am on Fri, Aug 14, 2009.



Posts: 2

Now, I wonder who the idiot in the DA office that wanted an indictment and prosecution? You can bet your bippy, if this punk came in my house the way he did, the result would be the same. A large hole in him even if I had to go to trial. We have enough criminal trials that need attention and not some stupid waste of tax dollars like this one was. It never should have thought about for prosecution. Just plain waste of money for the county and the defendant. Pitiful.

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**ppwrtr** posted at 10:49 am on Fri, Aug 14, 2009.



Posts: 57

It is a shame that if a man is innocent, he has to pay all the fees associated with a trial and maybe stay in jail until the system finally gets around to trying him. Surely, he made bond, even if he wasn't in Suzanne Stovall's court! Or was there anyone to post his bond? Two years is definitely NOT a speedy trial! I guess that sometimes all you can do to protect yourself is kill someone. Some people can live with that and some could not. I don't know what kind of person McNeill is, but he should think twice before he gets mixed up with a woman whose son is a dope addict. I agree with StevenP, who says he has never taken dope, never will, and never will be in the same room with someone who does. That is a decision each person makes and he has to live with the consequences. A person can't get hooked on dope if he doesn't take the first hit, shot, (or whatever you call doing meth). letitbe, you are in serious need of getting your head straight! Your logic is ridiculous!

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**A Conroeite** posted at 10:42 am on Fri, Aug 14, 2009.



Posts: 0

Mrs Do Gooder, I don't think the defendant ever said he did not mean to kill the dope head. That is what self defense is all about. You kill the other person before they can kill

you. It is a simple concept, why do you struggle with it? If a person wants to argue all day long then fine, no weapon needed in that scenario. But, if a person is high on meth and his coming at you with rage in their eyes and death on their clutching hands do you want a shotgun or a ping pong paddle in your hands? Too late for a spanking. I like all your posts, I can tell you are a thinker, think on this one a little bit more.

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**Habib Marwan** posted at 9:59 am on Fri, Aug 14, 2009.



Posts: 0

I am shocked that 12 jurors in Montco found a person innocent. Having said that, it would be a shame if he did rot in jail the last 2 yrs. I doubt he did but I'm sure if so, he'd have lost his house & car by now. I'd think if a jury in Montco was that certain that he was innocent, then ADA Nancy Hebert should pay his attorney fees which would surprise me if not over \$25K

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**A Conroeite** posted at 9:56 am on Fri, Aug 14, 2009.



Posts: 0

Letitbe do you even understand what you have written? You seem to be on the side of the dope heads, and since your brain seems to be fried to the point that you can no longer write a coherent sentence neither do you retain the simple 5th grader's skills to spell any word longer than 4 letters correctly then it is no giant leap to surmise you defend the meth heads because you must be one yourself. Today is a good day to dry up and get some help, and in between counseling sessions you might clean up your trailer and study for some night school classes. You come right out and say say I cannot criticize the dope takers and dealers life because I have not walked in that person's shoes. Bullcrap. I would not step in their shoes, I step over them, and yes I am better than any of them and you because I have made better choices in life. I do not take dope I have never taken any dope and I have never been in the same room with other people taking dope because I do not even allow dope heads near me. These people are lowlife scum who endanger everyone around them with their chosen path of destruction. There are wonderful remarkable clean alternatives to getting high on drugs, such as running a marathon or creating your own work of art or building a home and excelling at your job and raising a family and providing them with the best in life, all these things will get you high, and unlike meth and illegal pills and alcohol and all those other waste your life

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**CherokeeToo** posted at 7:59 am on Fri, Aug 14, 2009.



Posts: 0

letitbe - your many attempts at posting as tho you are ignorant has become horribly boring. If you truly could not spell you would not be so wise as to post spelling in phonetic correctness. Your logic also resembles another. Please stop. Use the faith you profess and volunteer your time to a worthy cause, not the blogs.

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**Mrs Do Gooder** posted at 7:10 am on Fri, Aug 14, 2009.



Posts: 6

It must of been very convincing, but the other side of the story is dead to talk. My only question, who shoots someone (even self defense) up close with a shotgun unless they meant to kill? Everyone knows how deadly shotguns are.

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letitbe posted at 6:57 am on Fri, Aug 14, 2009.



Posts: 0

harsh comments...most of us don't want to see a meth-head nor have a part in the overall drug crimes and dealings but my goodness what is with the EGO bashing??? some how or another the roots of the evil doings has stemmed somewhere rather it was the weak minded individual who became the perpetrator or the victim... the underlining cause stems far beyond the drugs! why do people turn to drugs any way? not every body has had the opportunity to get it right... and nobody has any business expressing they no it ALL when they don't even have a clue. Mark my words.... your not GOD so try figuring it out with out him and lets see where that gets YOU. did you think you were any better than the other??? you may have a better mind set than the accusers but you are not the perpetrator or the victim so what gives YOU the right say YOU appreciate LIFE? normally someone has a reason to believe it was murder in order to press forward... if it takes two years than they have some evidence or they would not be holding them (should not be) the Jury only gets to see and here Facts but some of the most important facts are circumstantial evidence and that gets thrown out and that can make a murderer set free... yes, we have a right to our opinion - but not to walk in their shoes...

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kiser1 posted at 5:10 am on Fri, Aug 14, 2009.



Posts: 3

Mata broke into McNeill's home. Mata threatened to kill McNeill. McNeill shot Mata in self defense. How in the world did McNeill ever get indicted in the first place. This should have been stopped back at the Grand Jury phase of this incident. As far as Mata's family is concerned, they need to realize that it was Mata's decision to go break into McNeill's home and put this event in motion. I'm sorry he died, but if he had woken up that morning and decided to go to work, or go find help to get off of drugs, he might still be alive. It is time for people to become responsible for their own actions instead of trying to place the blame on others.

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1wyrdhipychk posted at 4:32 am on Fri, Aug 14, 2009.



Posts: 2

Justice and Steven, I agree wholeheartedly.

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tallred67 posted at 3:46 am on Fri, Aug 14, 2009.



Posts: 1

While the article makes no mention of this, I can only hope that Mr. McNeill has not had to sit behind bars these last 2+ years waiting for justice to be served for HIM. What is appalling to me is that it took this long to resolve what was clearly a case of self-defense. I can't help but wonder what the outcome would have been had this been tried in Stovall's court...I wish Mr. McNeill the best of luck as he moves forward, knowing that it will be a tough road.

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feestureyes posted at 3:43 am on Fri, Aug 14, 2009.



Posts: 2

Glad he was found innocent. I love that Castle Doctrine. However, he is guilty of a major bad hair day!

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