



**“Challenging People to Shape a Better Future Now”**

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**SUSAN FRIED**  
Photographers



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415 N. Killingsworth St.,  
P.O. Box 5455, Portland, OR 97228.  
Telephone (503) 285-5555.

E-mail: [info@theskanner.com](mailto:info@theskanner.com)  
World Wide Web site:

<http://www.theskanner.com>  
Fax: (503) 285-2900

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## Trayvon's Death Takes Toll on Family

Sybrina Fulton knows what she will be doing tomorrow. It is the same thing she did yesterday. And the same thing she will do today.

"I cry every day," she said Sunday on TV One's Washington Watch with Roland Martin. "I just don't understand. My son's gone and this guy has never been arrested."

Her son, Trayvon Martin, an unarmed 17-year old high school junior with no record of trouble, was killed in Sanford, Fla. on Feb. 26 by George Zimmerman, a neighborhood watch captain. Zimmerman was questioned by police and released after authorities took his word that he was acting in self-defense, a version of events contradicted by witnesses and calls to 911.

Martin, an honor student who lived in Miami with his parents, was visiting in the gated community of Twin Lakes in Sanford, 20 miles northeast of Orlando, with his father when the incident took place. He had gone to a nearby 7-Eleven store to pick up a bag of Skittles and a can of iced tea during halftime of a televised NBA game.

Walking back, he was spotted by Zimmerman, who was driving a SUV. Zimmerman, a wannabe cop, dialed 911 to report seeing a "very suspicious" Black male in the neighborhood.

Under pressure, Sanford police released 911 tapes that clearly show that Zimmerman disobeyed police instructions that he avoid making contact with Martin.

### THE CURRY REPORT

George E. Curry



Zimmerman told the 911 dispatcher, "This guy looks like he is up to no good. He is on drugs or something." He also claimed Martin had his hand in his waistband and was looking at homes as he walked.

weighing 200 pounds and confronts this kid, weighing soaking wet 140-150 pounds, who has only a bag of Skittles. George Zimmerman has a red sweat shirt and jeans on. We believe Trayvon Martin went to his grave not knowing who was this strange White man confronting him."

Sanford Police Chief Bill Lee has defended his department's decision not to charge Zimmerman.

"We are taking a beating over this," he said. "This is all very unsettling. I'm sure if George Zimmerman had the opportunity to relive Sunday, Feb. 26, he'd

wouldn't have stopped. If you're hurting, you're hurting."

Sanford, Fla. has a checkered race relations record.

In 2005, two parking lot security guards, one the son of a Sanford police officer, fatally shot a Black teenager, Travares McGill, in the back. They, too, claimed self-defense and had their case dismissed in court.

Last year, Police Chief Brian Tooley was forced from office after the son of a lieutenant was caught on camera beating a defenseless homeless Black man. The department refused to prosecute the officer, Justin Collison, until after the footage was posted on YouTube.

Tracy Martin told Roland Martin that his son saved his life in 2004.

"At the time, he was 9 years old," the father recounted. "We had just come from the Little League football park. We fell asleep while the stove was on. A grease fire started. I went into the kitchen to try to put the grease fire out. The grease splattered all over my leg. My body went into shock and by me and him being in the house, I started calling out his name."

"He finally woke up and, at 9 years old, he pulled me from out of the kitchen, where the kitchen cabinets were on fire. He pulled me out of the kitchen onto the balcony. He actually went back into the house and got the cell phone and called 911."

'We believe Trayvon Martin went to his grave not knowing who was this strange White man confronting him'

"These \*\*\*holes. They always get away," Zimmerman told the dispatcher. When the 911 dispatcher asked Zimmerman if he were following Martin, he replied yes.

"OK, we don't need you to do that," the dispatcher told Zimmerman. Not only did he disobey, Zimmerman got out of this SUV, confronted Martin, and fired the deadly bullet into his chest.

Benjamin Crump, the family's lawyer, also appeared on Roland Martin's show with the parents.

"He [Zimmerman] gets out of that car with a 9 millimeter gun,

probably do things differently. I'm sure Trayvon would, too."

Several witnesses have disputed the idea that Zimmerman was acting in self-defense.

"I heard someone crying – not boo-hoo crying, but scared or terrified or hurt maybe," Mary Cutcher told the Miami Herald. "To me, it was a child." She explained, "This was not self-defense. We heard no fighting, no wrestling, no punching. We heard a boy crying. As soon as the shot went off, it stopped, which tells me it was the child crying. If it had been Zimmerman crying, it

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## 'KONY 2012' and Visible Black Children

Whether it is in the southern United States or in northern Uganda in Africa, Black children are not "invisible." Black children throughout the world should be given the same respect and sense of dignity that all children should be given no matter what might be the contemporary circumstances of poverty, injustice, war or inequality. The simple truth is Black children are the "visible" gift and manifestation of God's creative love and grace bestowed on all children everywhere.

Of course here in the Black Press of America and in Africa and across the Pan African world, we have a responsibility to give voice to the sentiments of the vast majority of Black people who are justifiably very alarmed once again at the misguided so-called good intentions of filmmakers who overtly portray the pathological stereotype that African children and people are hopeless victims of self-destructive home-grown, evil villains who will continue to engender a living hell for African people until the "saintly" intervention of Western military might and power are mercifully poured out to save Black people from Black people.

More than 75 million viewers over the last several days have already watched "Invisible Children's Kony 2012" film that

### EDUCATION SERVICES

Benjamin F. Chavis Jr.



exposes the violent wrath and utter misery perpetrated on Black children, women and men as a consequence of the rampage of the

inflicted on thousands of people in Africa at the cold ruthless hands of Kony and his band of LRA victimizers. But for me and many others who study how African people are courageously continuing to challenge and end this type of suffering and fratricide in Uganda and in other troubled places in Africa, while at the same time striving to build a better sustainable African economy and democracy to improve the quality

that Black youth in particular were misunderstood not just by the circumstances of Black life but also undervalued and under-recognized by the systemic, yet dialectical forces of racism, discrimination and inequality. In other words Black youth and people were perceived as being "invisible" in a society that discerned race and ethnicity as fundamentally determinative of the character and worth of a human being. We have come a long way since the early 1950's. Yet, to our collective dismay the so-called invisibility of Black children, women and men is still too prevalent in too many places and even in the spectrum of the post-modern film industry as evidenced in "Invisible Children."

According to an account reported in the Christian Science Monitor, "Invisible Children, and Kony2012's director, Jason Russell, have been criticized for over-simplifying the conflict's causes and for spending more money on management, media, and movies than on grass-roots projects." This is more than a question of where the money raised has gone. Beyond the money, this film will have a lasting impact on the consciousness of young people all over the world about Africa and about Black people.

This 'Kony 2012' film is just the latest example of possible good intentions that end up seeding counterproductive and turbulent clouds of misunderstanding and disgust about Africa and Black people in general

Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) led by Joseph Kony in northern Uganda. Although this brutal conflict in Uganda has been going on for almost three decades, it has now captured the momentary attention of the world community as the result of the "Invisible Children" 30-minute film.

For some it took the sheer boldness of film director Jason Russell to wake up the rest of the world to the atrocities that have been

of life for all across the African continent, this "Kony 2012" film is just the latest example of possible good intentions that end up seeding counterproductive and turbulent clouds of misunderstanding and disgust about Africa and Black people in general.

I recall that noted author Ralph Ellison in his award-winning novel *Invisible Man* published in 1952 often challenged the stereotypical popular view at that time

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