

## Book Review: 'Stand Your Ground' Explores Laws

By Kam Williams  
For *The Skanner News*

*Stand Your Ground: Black Bodies and the Justice of God*

By Kelly Brown Douglas

Orbis Books

Paperback, \$24.00

256 pages

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"Why is it becoming increasingly acceptable to kill unarmed Black children? Why are they so easily perceived as a threat? How are we to keep our Black children safe?"

As the mother of a Black male child, I find these to be urgent questions. The slaying of Trayvon [Martin] struck a nerve deep within me. After Jordan [Davis], then Jonathan [Ferrell], then Renisha [McBride], I was practically unnerved.

I knew I had to seek answers. This book reflects my search for those answers."

-- Excerpted from the Prologue (page ix)



of the shooting of Trayvon Martin. She also heard President Obama say that, if he had a son, he would look like Trayvon.

That made Kelly think, "I DO have a son, and he DOES look like Trayvon." So, for her, the crisis was more than a matter of mere rhetorical speculation. Not wanting her son to become the next statistic, she heeded an urgent inner call to action.

As a Professor of Religion at Goucher College, she decided her skills could best be put to use researching the burgeoning phenomenon. And the upshot of her research efforts is *Stand Your Ground: Black Bodies and the Justice of God*, an enlightening examination of the deep-seated roots of the racist reasoning relied upon in the course of snuffing out African-Americans lives so cavalierly.

It seems that once a month or so, with painful regularity, another unarmed Black person is gunned down by a white civilian or white police officer. What is the reason for this escalating epidemic? Is it really a recent development or merely a long-hidden aspect of America's social structure that's come to light because of the proliferation of cell phones in circulation among the population?

That's what Dr. Kelly Brown Douglas found herself wondering in the wake

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## Film Review: 'Faith of Our Fathers'

Faith-Based Film Finds Believer and Doubting Thomas Bonding En Route to Vietnam War Memorial in D.C.



Kevin Downes and David A.R. White in 'Faith of Our Fathers'

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GI's Steven George (Sean McGowan) and Edward Adams (Scott Whyte) became best friends while serving behind enemy lines in Vietnam, despite the fact that the former was a devout Christian while the latter was definitely a Doubting Thomas. Sadly, both the atheist and the believer perished in battle in 1969, with each leaving behind a child he never got to know.

Fast-forward a quarter century and we discover that the apples didn't fall far from their patrilineal trees. Steven's offspring

still-grieving groom-to-be informs his very patient fiancée that, before he walks down the aisle with her, he needs to repair the hole in his soul by learning all he can about his dearly-departed dad. That quest leads to Wayne, who just happens to have a stash of letters his father mailed home from the jungles of Southeast Asia.

The two soon hatch a plan to read the letters while making a pilgrimage to Washington, DC where they plan to visit the Vietnam War Memorial. What ensues is a very eventful road trip in which Christ and the devil do battle for the heathen's soul. The flashback-driven drama proceeds to alternate between the sons' spiritually-oriented sojourn and recreations of their dads similar discussions of the virtues of Christianity over the course of their fateful tour of duty overseas.

Thus unfolds *Faith of Our Fathers*, a faith-based modern parable directed and co-written by Corey Scott (*Hidden Secrets*). Fair warning: while the movie does feature wholesome family fare, its occasional proselytizing ("Know that Jesus loves you and that you can trust Him.") is distracting, but not so overpowering as to spoil the experience.

Look for Born Again Baldwin Brother Stephen in a scene-stealing performance as Sergeant Mansfield, the only character to appear both in the past and in present scenes. In 1969, we find him chastising Steven for preparing the men in his unit to die. But, he's singing a different tune 25 years later when he conveniently intervenes in a *deus ex machina* moment.

A good versus evil morality play providing proof that God still works in mysterious ways.

Very Good ★★★

Rated PG-13 for brief violence

Running time: 95 minutes

Distributor: Pure Flix Entertainment

What ensues is a very eventful road trip in which Christ and the devil do battle for the heathen's soul

John (Kevin Downes) has been blessed with a strong faith like his late father, and Edward's son Wayne (David A.R. White) has somehow developed his own dad's disdain for organized religion.

This gulf in attitudes has ostensibly had a profound effect on the orphans' respective fortunes. John is stable and successful and on the brink of tying the knot with the love of his life, Cynthia (Candace Cameron Bure). By contrast, Wayne is an under-achieving ne'er-do-well who has had more than his share of run-ins with the law.

Since John lives in California and Wayne in Mississippi, the two never met until the

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**R** PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED. Some Material May Be Inappropriate for Children Under 17

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