

The Supreme Court Should Watch 'The Fall of Minneapolis'



Protesters gather in front of a liquor store in flames near the Third Police Precinct in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on May 28, 2020. (Kerem Yucel/AFP via Getty Images)

by Roger L. Simon

Maybe I missed something, but I just viewed the recently released "[The Fall of Minneapolis](#)" documentary (free online) and came away with little doubt that Derek Chauvin was innocent of his several charges in the death of George Floyd.

The film—written and directed by Dr. JC Chaix, a man with a rather [extraordinary background](#) (I had to look up "[intersemiotic complementarity](#)") and produced by [Liz Collin](#),

who also conducts the riveting interviews—might at first appear a bit of right-tilting propaganda, but it's clearly evidence-based, as their website helps verify.

We see virtually non-stop prevarication in the court as well as the suppression of key evidence by the judge, while outside masses of violent demonstrators cry for Mr. Chauvin's head.

We see the demonstrators burn down a police station with the almost deliberately unprepared officers having to flee out the back door.

Perhaps most telling is that Mr. Chauvin, who was convicted and sentenced to 22.5 years, was following explicit procedural instructions from the Minneapolis Police Department's own manual in his treatment of Mr. Floyd.

This was denied, as we see in the documentary, in testimony by their chief of police. Nevertheless, the film shows us the passages from the manual while several other officers attest all received such instruction. It was pro forma for that force. Mr. Chauvin had his knee properly placed on Mr. Floyd's shoulder.

Also unseen by the jurors—not that it may have mattered in the over-heated atmosphere—was Mr. Floyd's extensive record of theft and drug-dealing as well as much footage of him with the officers struggling to get the heavily narcotized and recalcitrant six-foot-six former bouncer to at least come out of his car. He had just allegedly tried to pass counterfeit money at a store.

In the midst of this, we see a close-up of him swallowing some form of drug (Meth? Fentanyl?), evidently to hide it.

Emergency medical aid, we learn, had been called in six minutes into the encounter, well before Mr. Chauvin was even involved. Unfortunately, it was late.

Mr. Floyd has since been made into a kind of secular saint in our sick, race-obsessed society.

Speaking of which, one of the most moving moments in the documentary is when Ms. Collin interviews J. Alexander Kueng, one of three other officers convicted with Mr. Chauvin, two of whom, including Mr. Keung, were “of color,” to use a particularly reactionary and divisive phrase the left seems to appreciate.

How ironic.

It was the first time Mr. Keung had spoken to the media from inside, doing so via a prison phone to Ms. Collin’s cellphone. Amazingly calm for someone doing 3.5 years for a crime he didn’t commit, he’s the picture of what we would want a police officer to be—fair, decent, and measured, a true public servant, also clearly a nice guy.

We realize, listening to him, that what we have witnessed in the George Floyd affair is a veritable tragedy of our times, one that keeps on ricocheting with Mr. Floyd’s image plastered everywhere and streets named after him.

Meanwhile, obviously after the film was completed, Derek Chauvin was stabbed in prison, his parents, at first, not even informed.

This was just after the Supreme Court rejected an appeal from his lawyers that his conviction be overturned.

That the Justices did this without comment, without explaining their decision, is distressing.

One wonders to what degree they were familiar with the facts of the case. It’s unlikely that any of them had seen the documentary, though who knows?

Just as it did with the original case, I fear the atmosphere of our extremely parlous times played a role in their decision

and in the opaque manner in which it was handed down.

No questions, please. We don't want trouble (or court-packing).

SCOTUS may not be as brave as we would like it to be. They may have had enough backlash with *Roe v. Wade*.

Or perhaps Mr. Chauvin had inept lawyers. I don't know.

Nevertheless, this is indeed distressing. It doesn't augur well for electoral battles almost certain to come.

With Donald Trump ahead in the presidential polls but facing at least four legal and extra-legal indictments, with who knows how many yet to come, our country is likely going to face lawfare in the coming year the likes of which we have never seen.

The seeming miscarriage of justice in the Derek Chauvin case—and there's considerably more than there was room for in this short article—should only remind us how necessary it is for We the People to make our voices heard loud and clear as this lawfare is conducted, almost always behind our backs.

It will certainly end up in the Supreme Court again. But it won't just be about "hanging chads" this time. It could be about hanging us—metaphorically, anyway.

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