

# John Dine's Death

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killed, all demanding a full and independent investigation. Everyone who spoke at the Police Review Board meeting called for an investigation into Dine's death. Yet thus far, the local ACLU has done nothing to lend support to a disabled man who often supported the cause of civil liberties for all.

## ORCHESTRATING A COVER-UP

Chief Belcher called the Dine shooting "justifiable" at a 10 p.m. press conference held the night of the shooting. Belcher was privy to all testimony from 12 witnesses, 10 of whom did not see a toy gun in Dine's hand. Now at least three are calling it murder. Yet Belcher continues to rule it a justifiable shooting. DA Danner characterized Dine as having a history of assaultive behavior and violent tendencies, yet this contradicts almost all testimony from Dine's friends and associates. The DA never asked Newman if he knew Happy John, or if he knew him to carry toy guns. Officer Over was never asked if he knew John Dine had possessed toy guns previous to the lethal shooting.

Officials at the Juan Pablo group home reported an earlier "injury incident" where Dine had hit his own head against the wall. This incident was used as evidence that Dine was violent. Yet the DA had a serious complaint filed against the Juan Pablo group home on September 5, but ignored that complaint and still relied heavily on the reports by that same group home to portray Dine as disturbed in order to make Officer Carey's killing of him more credible.

Yet the case remains closed. Officers Carey and Over have returned to duty. Chief Belcher cashes his monthly paycheck and perhaps a Christmas bonus. DA Art Danner, in spite of what is the clearest case of gross incompetence or outright obstruction of justice in the SCPD in a decade, exonerates everyone.

John Dine's ashes are all that is left of a street person who had reported frequent harassment by the police downtown. According to his former counselor, Alan Van Cleave, Dine had complained, about two weeks before the shooting, that a bouncer had barred him from the public sidewalk in front of the Catalyst, all the way up the entire block. Dine will never walk that block again.

*Robert Norse helped write this story*