

'It was the right thing to do,' says man who put Sammy Yatim shooting video on YouTube

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The **Toronto** man who recorded Sammy Yatim **being fatally shot** aboard an empty **streetcar says** he's glad his **video** helped convict the **police officer** who pulled the trigger.

On **July 26, 2013**, **Martin** Baron was walking **home** with his **teenage** son when he saw **several** police **officers** surrounding a stopped streetcar. He started recording and **moments** later was shocked to see a police officer — Const. **James** Forcillo, 32, who was **found guilty Monday** of **attempted murder** — **fire** nine bullets in two **separate** volleys, eight of which hit **18-year-old** Yatim.

"**I just** watched **someone's** son get **killed**," Baron recalled thinking at the **time**.

"We just couldn't believe what we saw."

*'I think it's a little bit strange to say you didn't get a fair **trial** because **people** saw what you did.'* – **Martin Baron**, witness who recorded video of **shooting**

Baron said he believes the **jury's** decision to **find** Forcillo guilty of attempted murder, but not second-degree murder, is the **right** one.

In the wake of the decision, both the **defence lawyer** and the lawyer representing Yatim's family in a civil **case** discussed the role Baron's video played.

Peter Brauti, Forcillo's lawyer, **told** reporters that his client was at a disadvantage because his trial started as a "trial by **YouTube**."



Martin Baron says he felt he had a responsibility to post the video of Sammy Yatim being shot so the **public could** see it. (CBC)

Brauti, who is **seeking a stay** of proceedings in the case, said he's concerned the video swayed the jury in **this** case. He said the video was shared long **before** Forcillo was able to **give** his side of what **happened** the **night** he was called to Dundas **Street after** reports that Yatim had exposed himself and was brandishing a knife aboard the streetcar.

Baron, who was called as a witness at Forcillo's trial **last** November, dismissed that idea on Monday night, saying, "I think it's a little bit strange to say you didn't get a fair trial because people saw what you did."

Julian Falconer, the lawyer representing the Yatims, also criticized the idea that Baron's video was prejudicial, saying it enabled everyone to see what happened and to make **their** own assessment of the threat Yatim posed.

"The role of video evidence is absolutely crucial," Falconer said **during** an interview on CBC News Network.

Responsibility to act

Baron said the day after he posted the video he was interviewed by **Ontario's** Special Investigations Unit, which investigates all incidents **involving** serious injury, **death** or **sexual assault** involving police officers.

*'If the opportunity to be a good citizen lands in your lap you have to **take** it. You have to act.'* – Martin Baron

Baron said investigators told him his video — one of several that

captured the incident — was **important** because it captured the audio of the incident.

Baron's video has **been** viewed **more** than 680,000 times. He said he hesitated to post it, worrying he'd be perceived as an activist, or an attention-seeker, but eventually decided he had a responsibility to make public the footage of the incident.

"If the opportunity to be a good citizen lands in your lap you have to take it. You have to act," he said.

"In the end I think it was the right thing to do and I'm glad I did."

Baron said he hopes Toronto police will re-evaluate how **they deal** with people in crisis in the wake of the trial and that officers will have alternatives to lethal force so this kind of thing doesn't happen again.

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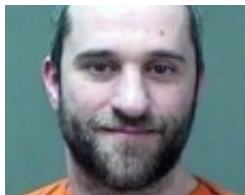
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