

LETTERS

# Unarmed Drivers Killed by Police in Traffic Stops

Readers discuss a Times investigative report and offer suggestions to reduce the fatalities.

Nov. 13, 2021

**To the Editor:**

Your article refers to officer-created jeopardy, when the police unnecessarily take risks in dealing with a driver and then argue that the risk required use of force. Officer-created jeopardy does not occur only in traffic situations.

A well-known example: [Tamir Rice was killed](#) in 2014 after officers, who had been notified that he held a gun, drove up very near to him, exited their vehicle and then shot the 12-year-old boy at close range on the basis that he posed immediate danger to them. Officers in that situation should have parked and exited their vehicle at some distance and used the vehicle as cover while they told him to drop his gun.

Officers need not place themselves in such danger in these situations, even where the gun is real, which was not the case for Tamir Rice.

Terrie Gale  
Washington

*The writer teaches criminal law in the sociology department of George Washington University.*