

July 22, 2013

We're cursed with a president who can't shut up. [Jennifer Rubin](#) has a couple of posts on his Zimmerman/Trayvon comments.

... *Even his analysis of African Americans' troubles seemed condescending and defensive:*

"Now, this isn't to say that the African American community is naïve about the fact that African American young men are disproportionately involved in the criminal justice system; that they're disproportionately both victims and perpetrators of violence. It's not to make excuses for that fact — although black folks do interpret the reasons for that in a historical context. They understand that some of the violence that takes place in poor black neighborhoods around the country is born out of a very violent past in this country, and that the poverty and dysfunction that we see in those communities can be traced to a very difficult history."

The violent past is responsible? Perhaps Obama might concede that a breakdown in the family, a coarsening of the culture and a host of other facts might be responsible. But today was all about seeing things, you see, from the narrow perspective of race.

The president acknowledged partway through his remarks that the conversation about race he and his attorney general are urging is better done without politicians. Precisely. So why was he there? Anti-racial bias is at an all-time low, interracial marriage is rising and, as he pointed out, with each successive generation race becomes less of a big deal.

The presidency is not a parochial office, yet Obama fosters a view of America that says African Americans can't help but see the country in terms of race. That is a sad and depressing view of our country. It suggests that African Americans can't judge their fellow citizen individually, by the content of their character. It doesn't require that we grow beyond the past or that we see things as they are now.

The president at the very end argued that "those of us in authority should be doing everything we can to encourage the better angels of our nature, as opposed to using these episodes to heighten divisions." Too bad he doesn't follow his own advice.

Ms. Rubin has more.

... Despite his background in constitutional law, the president seems to have little sense of the division between politics and law. It is all one big blur, and when convenient, legal cases are simply another opportunity to stir his base. He feels no compunction about running roughshod over defendants' right to due process. Every case is just fodder for the cause of the moment, a way of winking at his base. (Yeah, we know he's guilty. We're on the same side.) And if the country is all the more polarized, well, so be it.

It is one and the same with Obama's desire for Supreme Court justices who operate with "compassion." Once again, the impartial administration of justice is sacrificed at the altar of progressive politics. Never mind that justices' oath of office compels them to treat rich and poor alike.

General issues (race, gender, gun rights) don't necessarily fit specific legal cases. We try individuals, not causes. Great societal issues should not displace the particular facts and law at

issue in each case. (Hence the media infatuation with the “stand your ground” statute, which was entirely irrelevant in a case of simple self-defense.)

In this administration we have seen unprecedented efforts not, as the president lamely called for after the trial, to “widen the circle of compassion and understanding in our own communities,” but to tear them asunder. Someday maybe we’ll get that post-racial presidency.

Peter Wehner on why this trial and its aftermath is so discouraging.

... What we’re seeing from the left is post-modernism on full display. The facts, the truth and objective reality are subordinate to the progressive narrative. In this particular instance many liberals so want the killing of Trayvon Martin to be driven by bigotry—which would serve as both an indictment of racial attitudes in America and turn a horrible mistake into a [“modern-day lynching”](#)—that they will make it so, even if it requires twisting the truth into something unrecognizable. What matters, after all, is The Cause. And everything, including basic facts, must be bent to fit it. This kind of systematic deconstruction of truth is fairly common in college liberal arts courses all across America. But when it becomes the primary mode of interpretation in a murder trial, it is something else again.

Most of us, when we hear the words “justice must be done,” believe that what is right, reasonable, fair and in accordance with the facts be done. But some on the left have something else in mind. For them, justice is a tool in a larger political struggle, a means to an end. Justice can be at odds with reality if reality is at odds with liberalism. Which is why the efforts to turn the Zimmerman verdict into a racial miscarriage of justice is so discouraging and so damaging.

William Jacobsen says the Feds want Zimmerman any way they can get him.

This no longer is about George Zimmerman, it’s about a Department of Justice serving political interests.

There’s a reason we stand up for the rights of individuals like George Zimmerman against an overreaching State.

It’s not just about the individual. It’s about all of us, and the reality that there but for fortune could go you or I.

The highly politicized Department of Justice desperately wants to bring federal charges to placate the race-agitators, and has joined in the witch hunt.

Via The Orlando Sentinel, [DOJ solicits email tips in Zimmerman civil rights probe](#) (h/t readers and commenters):

"The U.S. Department of Justice on Monday afternoon appealed to civil rights groups and community leaders, nationally and in Sanford, for help investigating whether a federal criminal case might be brought against George Zimmerman for the shooting death of Trayvon Martin, one advocate said.

The DOJ has also set up a public email address to take in tips on its civil rights investigation...."

Power Line gives us a view into the freak show in the Ivy League.

It should come as no surprise that some of the very worst rants about George Zimmerman's acquittal are coming from an Ivy League professor. The competition is stiff, but will be hard-pressed to keep up with Anthea Butler, an associate professor of religious studies at the University of Pennsylvania.

The Zimmerman verdict has caused Butler to conclude that God is "a white racist god with a problem" who "is carrying a gun and stalking young black men."

There are conclusions Butler could have reached short of equating her caricature of Zimmerman with God. She could have settled for the less flamboyant view that there is no God. But flamboyance, one suspects, is what landed Butler the Ivy League gig and appearances on CNN and MSNBC.

Butler might also have concluded, years ago, that God is a black god with a problem who guns down young blacks. After all, there is a near-epidemic of shootings of young African-Americans by other African-Americans. ...

The Daily Caller has more from this "professor."

... As Campus Reform notes, Butler doubled down on her comments with a tweet on Monday saying, "y'all take care of the KKKlan Twitter egg avi's till I return. I see my sheet they don't like me calling out their racist god #toobad."

She's been tweeting incessantly since, mostly about elections in 2014 and how she blocks people from her Twitter feed.

At Rate My Professors, Butler does not fare well. The sample size is small, but the reviews are abysmal.

"Pathetic," reports one unhappy student. "This teacher is pathetically bad at her supposed job. Do not give this untalented instructor any more classes."

Another student describes her as a "loudmouth idiot with crazy Don King hair" and "poorly substantiated and academically unsound" opinions. ...

National Review piece on the crazy prosecutor at the center of the Zimmerman trial.

Angela Corey, by all accounts, is no Atticus Finch. She is "one hell of a trial lawyer," says a Florida defense attorney who has known her for three decades — but the woman who has risen to national prominence as the "tough as nails" state attorney who prosecuted George Zimmerman is known for scorching the earth. And some of her prosecutorial conduct has been, well, troubling at best.

Corey, a Jacksonville native, took a degree in marketing from Florida State University before pursuing her J.D. at the University of Florida. She became a Florida prosecutor in 1981 and tried everything from homicides to juvenile cases in the ensuing 26 years. In 2008, Corey was

elected state attorney for Florida's Fourth Judicial Circuit, taking over from Harry Shorstein — the four-term state attorney who had fired her from his office a year earlier, citing "long-term issues" regarding her supervisory performance.

When Corey came in, she cleaned house. Corey fired half of the office's investigators, two-fifths of its victim advocates, a quarter of its 35 paralegals, and 48 other support staff — more than one-fifth of the office. Then she sent a letter to Florida's senators demanding that they oppose Shorstein's pending nomination as a U.S. attorney. "I told them he should not hold a position of authority in his community again, because of his penchant for using the grand jury for personal vendettas," she wrote.

Corey knows about personal vendettas. They seem to be her specialty. When Ron Littlepage, a journalist for the Florida Times-Union, wrote a column criticizing her handling of the Christian Fernandez case — in which Corey chose to prosecute a twelve-year-old boy for first-degree murder, who wound up locked in solitary confinement in an adult jail prior to his court date — she "fired off a two-page, single-spaced letter on official state-attorney letterhead hinting at lawsuits for libel."

And that was moderate. ...

Right Turn

[President Obama's sad view of America](#)

by Jennifer Rubin

President Obama's extensive remarks in the White House Briefing Room this afternoon were as surprising as they were gratuitous. He had already made one statement asking citizens to respect the George Zimmerman verdict. Today he did so again but offered no specific policy recommendation with regard to race (although he used it as a forum to assail "stand-your-ground" legislation that ultimately was not at issue in the case).

In fact, Obama undid some of the closure he provided in his earlier written statement by intoning: "If a white male teen was involved in the same kind of scenario, that, from top to bottom, both the outcome and the aftermath might have been different." So the jury was biased? The trial unfair? I can't fathom why the president of the United States would stoke that sort of second-guessing.

The media seems fixated on "how personal" the speech was. I am baffled by that response. He is the president of the United States, the only elected leader there to represent us all and to provide cohesion, but here he was channeling Oprah Winfrey. He cheered for emotionalism and for the perspective that insists it is always about race:

And I don't want to exaggerate this, but those sets of experiences inform how the African American community interprets what happened one night in Florida. And it's inescapable for people to bring those experiences to bear. The African American community is also knowledgeable that there is a history of racial disparities in the application of our criminal laws

— everything from the death penalty to enforcement of our drug laws. And that ends up having an impact in terms of how people interpret the case.

What about the proposition that we regard individuals and their actions on the merits, that we view criminal defendants with the presumption of innocence and that we avoid pouring our own biases into a judgment about a fellow citizen? The jury system is all about rising above past grievances, grudges and suspicions. The Zimmerman jury put down its historical baggage, but the president asks that we sympathize with and encourage those who won't.

Perhaps he is laying the groundwork for the obvious: After stirring emotion, the president can't deliver a civil rights prosecution of Zimmerman because the facts aren't there. "I know that Eric Holder is reviewing what happened down there," he said, "but I think it's important for people to have some clear expectations here. Traditionally, these are issues of state and local government, the criminal code. And law enforcement is traditionally done at the state and local levels, not at the federal levels." And of course his own FBI found no evidence of racism. Odd that he didn't mention that.

Even his analysis of African Americans' troubles seemed condescending and defensive:

"Now, this isn't to say that the African American community is naïve about the fact that African American young men are disproportionately involved in the criminal justice system; that they're disproportionately both victims and perpetrators of violence. It's not to make excuses for that fact — although black folks do interpret the reasons for that in a historical context. They understand that some of the violence that takes place in poor black neighborhoods around the country is born out of a very violent past in this country, and that the poverty and dysfunction that we see in those communities can be traced to a very difficult history."

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The president acknowledged partway through his remarks that the conversation about race he and his attorney general are urging is better done without politicians. Precisely. So why was he there? Anti-racial bias is at an all-time low, interracial marriage is rising and, as he pointed out, with each successive generation race becomes less of a big deal.

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The president at the very end argued that "those of us in authority should be doing everything we can to encourage the better angels of our nature, as opposed to using these episodes to heighten divisions." Too bad he doesn't follow his own advice.

Right Turn

Obama can't stop politicizing the courts

by Jennifer Rubin

The president weighed in on the acquittal of George Zimmerman.

President Obama's statement on the George Zimmerman verdict was a bit awkward, almost plaintive:

The death of Trayvon Martin was a tragedy. Not just for his family, or for any one community, but for America. I know this case has elicited strong passions. And in the wake of the verdict, I know those passions may be running even higher. But we are a nation of laws, and a jury has spoken. I now ask every American to respect the call for calm reflection from two parents who lost their young son. And as we do, we should ask ourselves if we're doing all we can to widen the circle of compassion and understanding in our own communities. We should ask ourselves if we're doing all we can to stem the tide of gun violence that claims too many lives across this country on a daily basis. We should ask ourselves, as individuals and as a society, how we can prevent future tragedies like this. As citizens, that's a job for all of us. That's the way to honor Trayvon Martin.

After stirring the pot by publicly identifying with the victim and helping to ignite a feeding frenzy and outburst of racial animosity, Obama now calls for calm — on behalf of Trayvon Martin once again. Even in trying to stuff the racial genie back in the bottle, he can't help but take up sides once again (getting in a plug for gun control). He couldn't bring himself to mention by name George Zimmerman, the man arrested and put through a trial brought on by the political anger Obama amplified.

And yet, the agitators keep pounding away, demanding the Justice Department prosecute Zimmerman for a civil rights violation. Consider that the prosecution could not come close to proving even manslaughter. Consider the trial was devoid of any evidence of racial animus on Zimmerman's part. *Where do they find legal grounds for a second show trial?* They know race is at the bottom of it, you see. They are in an endless loop of racial confrontation — create political pressure to bring a weak case and then create outrage when the weak case fails.

Will Obama's administration keep at it, creating yet another cause célèbre? You see, it's not so easy to end the racial politics once it's begun.

It is interesting that the president's predilection for weighing in on legal matters did not extend to Kermit Gosnell. But neither is it isolated. You recall he opined with no factual basis on the Cambridge police incident. And more recently he politicized another set of legal proceedings, this time to grandstand on gender. [The New York Times reported:](#)

When President Obama proclaimed that those who commit sexual assault in the military should be "prosecuted, stripped of their positions, court-martialed, fired, dishonorably discharged," it had an effect he did not intend: muddying legal cases across the country.

In at least a dozen sexual assault cases since the president's remarks at the White House in May, judges and defense lawyers have said that Mr. Obama's words as commander in chief amounted to "unlawful command influence," tainting trials as a result. Military law experts said

that those cases were only the beginning and that the president's remarks were certain to complicate almost all prosecutions for sexual assault.

Oops.

Despite his background in constitutional law, the president seems to have little sense of the division between politics and law. It is all one big blur, and when convenient, legal cases are simply another opportunity to stir his base. He feels no compunction about running roughshod over defendants' right to due process. Every case is just fodder for the cause of the moment, a way of winking at his base. (*Yeah, we know he's guilty. We're on the same side.*) And if the country is all the more polarized, well, so be it.

It is one and the same with Obama's desire for Supreme Court justices who operate with "compassion." Once again, the impartial administration of justice is sacrificed at the altar of progressive politics. Never mind that justices' oath of office compels them to treat rich and poor alike.

General issues (race, gender, gun rights) don't necessarily fit specific legal cases. We try individuals, not causes. Great societal issues should not displace the particular facts and law at issue in each case. (Hence the media infatuation with the "stand your ground" statute, which was entirely irrelevant in a case of simple self-defense.)

In this administration we have seen unprecedented efforts not, as the president lamely called for after the trial, to "widen the circle of compassion and understanding in our own communities," but to tear them asunder. Someday maybe we'll get that post-racial presidency.

Contentions

Deconstructing Reality and Zimmerman

by Peter Wehner

On Monday, Attorney General Eric Holder, in addressing the verdict in the George Zimmerman trial, reiterated that the Department of Justice is considering filing federal civil rights charges against Zimmerman in the aftermath of his acquittal. Mr. Holder went on to [say](#), "I want to assure you that the Department will continue to act in a manner that is consistent with the facts and the law. We are committed to standing with the people of Sanford, with the individuals and families affected by this incident, and with our state and local partners in order to alleviate tensions, address community concerns, and promote healing. We are determined to meet division and confusion with understanding and compassion – and also with truth... We will never stop working to ensure that – in every case, in every circumstance, and in every community – justice must be done."

What an ironic formulation for Mr. Holder to use. Set aside the fact that Attorney General Holder, who considers America to be a ["nation of cowards"](#) on race, has done more than his fair share to divide us along racial lines. Set aside, too, the fact that Mr. Holder's relationship to the truth is often tenuous, including when he's testifying before Congress on matters ranging from the [Fast and Furious gun-running program](#) to the Department of Justice's [investigation of Fox's James Rosen](#).

What I had in mind is that in this case the facts, the truth, and the law all point in the same direction: George Zimmerman was not guilty of second-degree murder or manslaughter—and racism was not a factor in the death of Trayvon Martin. The prosecution team said as much. (Angela Corey, the special prosecutor in the case, [conceded](#), “This case has never been about race.”) So did the jury. (One of the jurors in Zimmerman’s state trial [told CNN](#) on Monday that she did not think Zimmerman racially profiled Martin. “All of us thought race did not play a role,” said the juror.) And so did Chris Serino, the Sanford Police Department detective who headed the shooting probe. He [said](#) the fatal shooting was not based on Martin’s skin color, nor was Zimmerman considered to be a racist. That doesn’t mean what Zimmerman did wasn’t misguided or a tragic error (see William Saleton’s piece [here](#)). But it does mean that (a) he wasn’t guilty of a crime according to Florida law and (b) the Department of Justice needs to give up meddling in this case since there was not a shred of evidence presented in the trial showing Zimmerman is racist or that his shooting of Martin was driven by racial bigotry.

But that hardly seems to matter to some of those on the left and in the media, who are determined to turn this case into an example of a hate crime. Consider NBC News, which [doctored recordings](#) by Zimmerman in order to make him appear to be a racist. Here’s how NBC’s March 27, 2012 *Today* show’s abridged version of Zimmerman’s comments (made the evening of February 26, 2012) went: “This guy looks like he’s up to no good. He looks black.” And here’s how the real conversation went:

Zimmerman: This guy looks like he’s up to no good. Or he’s on drugs or something. It’s raining and he’s just walking around, looking about.

Dispatcher: OK, and this guy — is he black, white or Hispanic?

Zimmerman: He looks black.

So what’s going on here? Part of the answer is that liberals long to use a case like this to transport them to an Atticus Finch-Tom Robinson, Edmund Pettus Bridge moment. They want things like the Zimmerman trial to be at core about a great civil rights struggle, even if it’s actually not. Which leads to my second observation.

What we’re seeing from the left is post-modernism on full display. The facts, the truth and objective reality are subordinate to the progressive narrative. In this particular instance many liberals so want the killing of Trayvon Martin to be driven by bigotry—which would serve as both an indictment of racial attitudes in America and turn a horrible mistake into a [“modern-day lynching”](#)—that they will make it so, even if it requires twisting the truth into something unrecognizable. What matters, after all, is The Cause. And everything, including basic facts, must be bent to fit it. This kind of systematic deconstruction of truth is fairly common in college liberal arts courses all across America. But when it becomes the primary mode of interpretation in a murder trial, it is something else again.

Most of us, when we hear the words “justice must be done,” believe that what is right, reasonable, fair and in accordance with the facts be done. But some on the left have something else in mind. For them, justice is a tool in a larger political struggle, a means to an end. Justice can be at odds with reality if reality is at odds with liberalism. Which is why the efforts to turn the Zimmerman verdict into a racial miscarriage of justice is so discouraging and so damaging.

Legal Insurrection

Feds want Zimmerman, any way they can get him

by William A. Jacobson

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It's not just about the individual. It's about all of us, and the reality that there but for fortune could go you or I.

The highly politicized Department of Justice desperately wants to bring federal charges to placate the race-agitators, and has joined in the witch hunt.

Via The Orlando Sentinel, [DOJ solicits email tips in Zimmerman civil rights probe](#) (h/t readers and commenters):

The U.S. Department of Justice on Monday afternoon appealed to civil rights groups and community leaders, nationally and in Sanford, for help investigating whether a federal criminal case might be brought against George Zimmerman for the shooting death of Trayvon Martin, one advocate said.

The DOJ has also set up a public email address to take in tips on its civil rights investigation.

Barbara Arnwine, president and executive director the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law – who earlier in the day joined calls for federal civil rights charges against Zimmerman, said that later in the afternoon, she joined a U.S. Department of Justice conference call to discuss the prospects.

“They were calling on us to actively refer anyone who had any information,” that might build a case against Zimmerman for either a civil rights violation or a hate crime, Arnwine said. “They said they would very aggressively investigate this case.”

Arnwine said the call was convened at about 3:30 p.m. by Tom Perez, Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Justice, and included representatives from the FBI, and several federal prosecutors, she said. DOJ officials also said they would open a public email address so people could send in tips on the case.

That email address, which is now in operation, is Sanford.florida@usdoj.gov.

In addition to Arnwine's group, Sherrilyn Ifill, President and Director-Counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund; Laura Murphy, Washington Chapter head of the ACLU; and several national, Florida and Sanford-based “human relations” groups participated, Arnwine said.

During the call, DOJ officials announced they had set up a way for people to send email tips that could help aid in their investigation. The email address will be operational later this week.

This no longer is about George Zimmerman.

It's about a Department of Justice which does not deserve our trust and is a threat to our liberties.

Update: Hey, call me old-fashioned. I don't think the government should be in the business of identifying political targets first, trying to figure out if a crime was committed second. In an era in which everyone is guilty of something, this is a prescription for prosecutorial tyranny, as Prof. Glenn Reynold wrote in [Ham Sandwich Nation: Due Process When Everything is a Crime](#). See also my prior post, [Racialized prosecutorial indiscretion in the Zimmerman case](#).

Power Line [God and man at Penn](#)

by Paul Mirengoff



It should come as no surprise that some of the very worst rants about George Zimmerman's acquittal are coming from an Ivy League professor. The competition is stiff, but will be hard-pressed to keep up with Anthea Butler, an associate professor of religious studies at the University of Pennsylvania.

The Zimmerman verdict has [caused Butler to conclude](#) that God is "a white racist god with a problem" who "is carrying a gun and stalking young black men."

There are conclusions Butler could have reached short of equating her caricature of Zimmerman with God. She could have settled for the less flamboyant view that there is no God. But flamboyance, one suspects, is what landed Butler the Ivy League gig and appearances on CNN and MSNBC.

Butler might also have concluded, years ago, that God is a black god with a problem who guns down young blacks. After all, there is a [near-epidemic](#) of shootings of young African-Americans [by other African-Americans](#).

But Butler didn't land that Ivy League gig and those cable news appearances by calling out blacks.

Speaking of the Ivy League gig, what do Butler's students think of her teaching? According to the [Daily Caller](#), her student reviews are abysmal:

"Pathetic," reports one unhappy student. "This teacher is pathetically bad at her supposed job. Do not give this untalented instructor any more classes."

Another student describes her as a "loudmouth idiot with crazy Don King hair" and "poorly substantiated and academically unsound" opinions.

And that was before her latest epiphany.

Whatever her shortcomings as an academic, though, Butler is a marketing genius. Thus, she's actually a perfect fit for left-wing cable outlets and, regrettably, for the back bench of the Ivy League.

Daily Caller

[Irate Ivy League professor calls God 'a white racist god' after Zimmerman verdict](#)

by Eric Owens

In light of a Florida jury verdict finding George Zimmerman not guilty, a professor at an Ivy League university has now concluded that God is "a white racist god with a problem" who "is carrying a gun and stalking young black men."

The fulmination is part of an [epic blog rant](#) by Anthea Butler, an associate professor of religious studies at the University of Pennsylvania and a frequent guest at media outlets including MSNBC and CNN.



In the diatribe, Butler cites a book she first read as a seminary student called [Is God a White Racist?](#) by William R. Jones. She found the book surprising then, but says she understands it now, particularly as she contemplates the death of Trayvon Martin, who died on February 26, 2012.

“God ain’t good all of the time,” Butler declares. “In fact, sometimes, God is not for us. As a black woman in an [sic] nation that has taken too many pains to remind me that I am not a white man, and am not capable of taking care of my reproductive rights, or my voting rights, I know that this American god ain’t my god.”

Butler is particularly upset at what she views as the conservative Christian conception of the Creator.

“Whatever makes them protected, safe, and secure, is worth it at the expense of the black and brown people they fear,” she rages. “Their god is the god that wants to erase race.”

Butler also complains about the Three-Fifths Compromise, which essentially treated slaves as three-fifths of a person, and which was part of the Constitution when it was originally ratified in 1789.

In 1865, almost 150 years ago, the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery, thus nullifying the notorious compromise.

“Religious conservatism of the 21st century is in bed with the prison industrial complex, the Koch brothers, the NRA—all while proclaiming that they are ‘pro-life,’” Butler also claims. “They are anything but. They are the ones who thought that what George Zimmerman did was right.”

As Campus Reform [notes](#), Butler doubled down on her comments with a tweet on Monday saying, “y’all take care of the KKKlan Twitter egg avi’s till I return. I see my sheet they don’t like me calling out their racist god #toobad.”

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Butler [holds](#) graduate degrees from Vanderbilt University and Fuller Theological Seminary. Her bachelor of arts in marketing is from the University of Houston–Clear Lake.

National Review

Angela Corey's Checkered Past

Her peers describe an M.O. of retaliation and overcharging.

by Ian Tuttle



Angela Corey

Angela Corey, by all accounts, is no Atticus Finch. She is “one hell of a trial lawyer,” says a Florida defense attorney who has known her for three decades — but the woman who has risen to national prominence as the “[tough as nails](#)” state attorney who prosecuted George Zimmerman is known for scorching the earth. And some of her prosecutorial conduct has been, well, troubling at best.

Corey, a Jacksonville native, took a degree in marketing from Florida State University before pursuing her J.D. at the University of Florida. She became a Florida prosecutor in 1981 and tried everything from homicides to juvenile cases in the ensuing 26 years. In 2008, Corey was elected state attorney for Florida’s Fourth Judicial Circuit, taking over from Harry Shorstein — the four-term state attorney who had fired her from his office a year earlier, citing “long-term issues” regarding her supervisory performance.

When Corey came in, she cleaned house. Corey fired half of the office’s investigators, two-fifths of its victim advocates, a quarter of its 35 paralegals, and 48 other support staff — more than one-fifth of the office. Then she sent a letter to Florida’s senators demanding that they oppose Shorstein’s pending nomination as a U.S. attorney. “I told them he should not hold a position of authority in his community again, because of his penchant for using the grand jury for personal vendettas,” she wrote.

Corey knows about personal vendettas. They seem to be her specialty. When Ron Littlepage, a journalist for the *Florida Times-Union*, wrote a column criticizing her handling of the Christian

Fernandez case — in which Corey chose to prosecute a twelve-year-old boy for first-degree murder, who wound up locked in solitary confinement in an adult jail prior to his court date — she “fired off a two-page, single-spaced letter on official state-attorney letterhead hinting at lawsuits for libel.”

And that was moderate. When Corey was appointed to handle the Zimmerman case, Talbot “Sandy” D’Alemberte, a former president of both the American Bar Association and Florida State University, criticized the decision: “I cannot imagine a worse choice for a prosecutor to serve in the Sanford case. There is nothing in Angela Corey’s background that suits her for the task, and she cannot command the respect of people who care about justice.” Corey responded by making a public-records request of the university for all e-mails, text messages, and phone messages in which D’Alemberte had mentioned Fernandez. Like Littlepage, D’Alemberte had earlier criticized Corey’s handling of the Fernandez case.

Not many people are willing to cross Corey. A Florida attorney I spoke with declined to go on record because of “concerns about retaliation” — that attorney has pending cases that will require Corey’s cooperation. The attorney mentioned colleagues who have refused to speak to the media for the same reason. And to think: D’Alemberte crossed Corey *twice*. He should get a medal.

But what these instances point to is something much more alarming than Corey’s less-than-warm relations with her peers.

In June 2012, Alan Dershowitz, a well-known defense attorney who has been a professor at Harvard Law School for nearly half a century, criticized Corey for her affidavit in the Zimmerman case. Making use of a quirk of Florida law that gives prosecutors, for any case except first-degree murder, the option of filing an affidavit with the judge instead of going to a grand jury, Corey filed an affidavit that, according to Dershowitz, “willfully and deliberately omitted” crucial exculpatory evidence: namely, that Trayvon Martin was beating George Zimmerman bloody at the time of the fatal gunshot. So Corey avoided a grand jury, where her case likely would not have held water, and then withheld evidence in her affidavit to the judge. “It was a perjurious affidavit,” Dershowitz tells me, and that comes with serious consequences: “Submitting a false affidavit is grounds for disbarment.”

Shortly after Dershowitz’s criticisms, Harvard Law School’s dean’s office received a phone call. When the dean refused to pick up, Angela Corey spent a half hour demanding of an office-of-communications employee that Dershowitz be fired. According to Dershowitz, Corey threatened to sue Harvard, to try to get him disbarred, and also to sue him for slander and libel. Corey also told the communications employee that she had assigned a state investigator — an employee of the State of Florida, that is — to investigate Dershowitz. “That’s an abuse of office right there,” Dershowitz says.

What happened in the weeks and months that followed was instructive. Dershowitz says that he was flooded with correspondence from people telling him that this is Corey’s well-known M.O. He says numerous sources — lawyers who had sparred with Corey in the courtroom, lawyers who had worked with and for her, and even multiple judges — informed him that Corey has a history of vigorously attacking any and all who criticize her. But it’s worse than that: Correspondents told him that Corey has a history of overcharging and withholding evidence.

The Zimmerman trial is a clear case of the former and a probable case of the latter. Zimmerman was charged with second-degree murder, also known as “depraved mind” murder. The case law for that charge, an attorney who has worked in criminal prosecution outside Florida tells me, is near-unanimous: It almost never applies to one-on-one encounters. Second-degree murder is the madman who fires indiscriminately into a crowd or unlocks the lions’ cage at the zoo. “Nothing in the facts of this case approaches that.” Which Angela Corey, a veteran prosecutor, should have known, and a grand jury would have told her. In fact, both the initial police investigation and the original state attorney in charge of the case had determined exactly that: There was no evidence of any crime, much less second-degree murder

But that did not stop Corey from zealously overcharging and — the facts suggest — withholding evidence to ensure that that charge stuck.

Still, by the end of the case it was clear that the jury was unlikely to convict Zimmerman of second-degree murder; hence the prosecution’s addition of a manslaughter charge — as well as its attempt to add a charge for third-degree murder by way of child abuse — after the trial had closed. “In 50 years of practice I’ve never seen anything like it,” says Dershowitz. It’s a permissible maneuver, but as a matter of professional ethics it’s a low blow.

Corey’s post-trial performance has been less than admirable as well. Asked in a prime-time interview with HLN how she would describe George Zimmerman, Corey responded, “Murderer.” Attorneys who spoke with me called her refusal to acknowledge the validity of the jury’s verdict everything from “disgusting” to “disgraceful.”

But will Corey ever be disciplined for prosecutorial abuses? It’s unlikely. State attorneys cannot be brought before the bar while they remain in office. Complaints can be filed against Corey, but they will be deferred until she is no longer state attorney. The governor can remove her from office, but otherwise her position — and her license — are safe.

Meanwhile, those who speak out against her continue to be mistreated. Ben Kruidbos (pronounced CRIED-boss), the IT director at Corey’s state-attorney office, was fired last week — one month after testifying during the Zimmerman trial that Corey had withheld from defense attorneys evidence obtained from Trayvon Martin’s cell phone. Corey’s office contends that Kruidbos was fired for poor job performance and for leaking personnel records. The termination notice delivered to Kruidbos last Friday read: “You have proven to be completely untrustworthy. Because of your deliberate, wilful and unscrupulous actions, you can never again be trusted to step foot in this office.” Less than two months before this letter, Kruidbos had received a raise for “meritorious performance.”

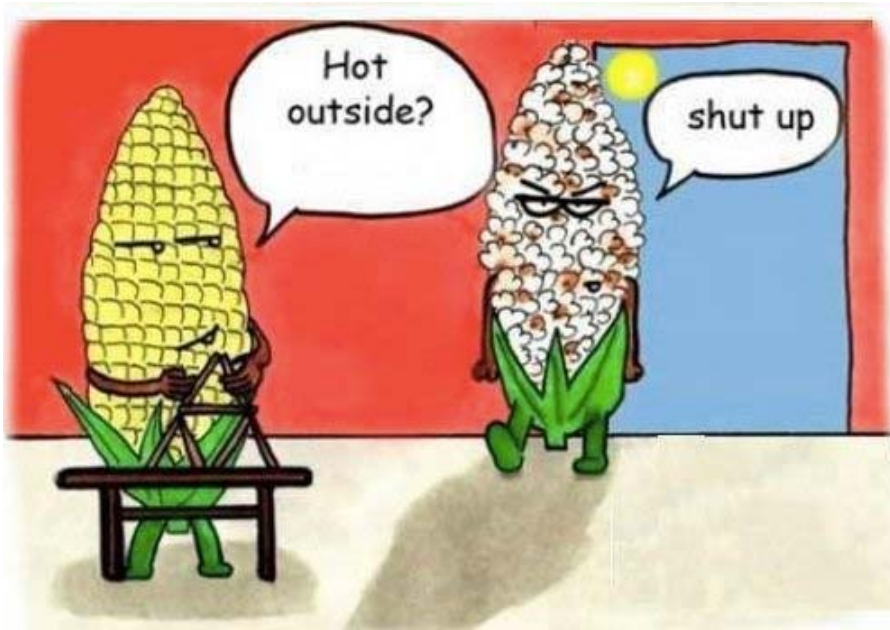
The records in question — Kruidbos maintains he had nothing to do with leaking them — revealed that Corey used \$235,000 in taxpayer money to upgrade her pension and that of her co-prosecutor in the Zimmerman case, Bernie de la Rionda. The upgrade was legal, but Harry Shorstein, Corey’s predecessor, had said previously that using taxpayer funds to upgrade pensions was not “proper.”

Meanwhile, while Kruidbos has been forced out of the state attorney’s office, the managing director who wrote his termination letter — one Cheryl Peek — remains. In 1990 Peek was fired from the same state attorney’s office by Harry Shorstein’s predecessor, Ed Austin, for jury

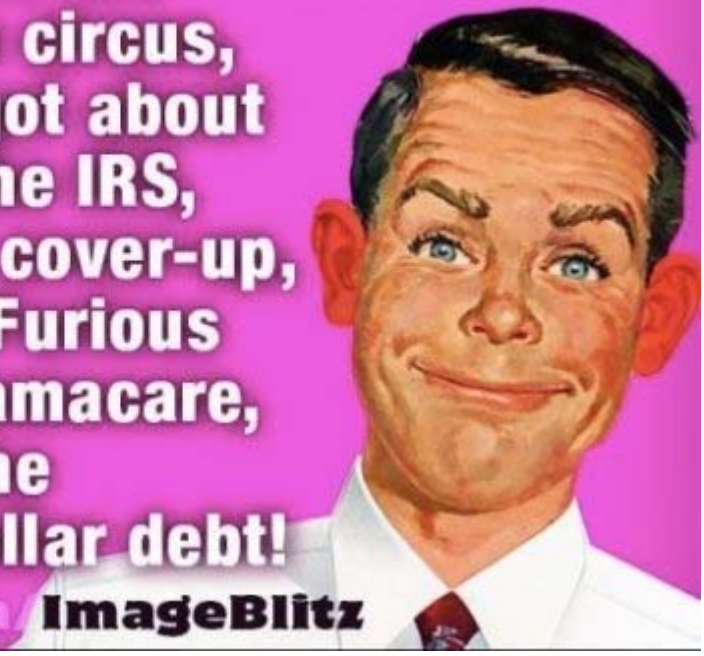
manipulation. Now, as managing director for that office, she trains lawyers in professional ethics.

Since her election, Corey seems to be determinedly purging from the ranks any who cross her and surrounding herself with inferiors whose ethical scruples appear to mirror her own. Meanwhile, those she chooses to victimize — most recently, George Zimmerman — far too often have little recourse.

“Make crime pay,” Will Rogers once quipped: “Become a lawyer.” Angela Corey seems to be less interested in making crime pay than in making her critics pay.

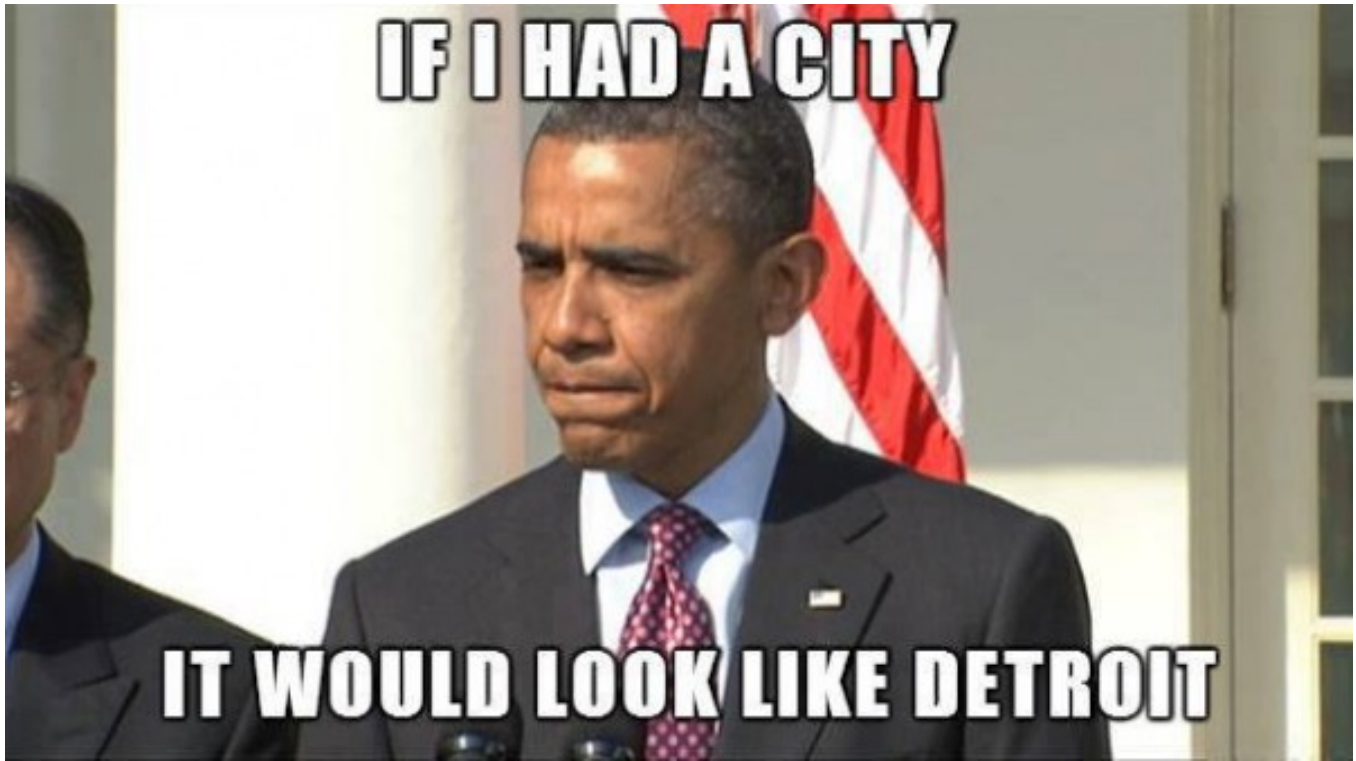


**Gosh, while I was
focused on the
Zimmerman circus,
I almost forgot about
the NSA, the IRS,
the Benghazi cover-up,
the Fast & Furious
scandal, Obamacare,
and the
17 trillion dollar debt!**

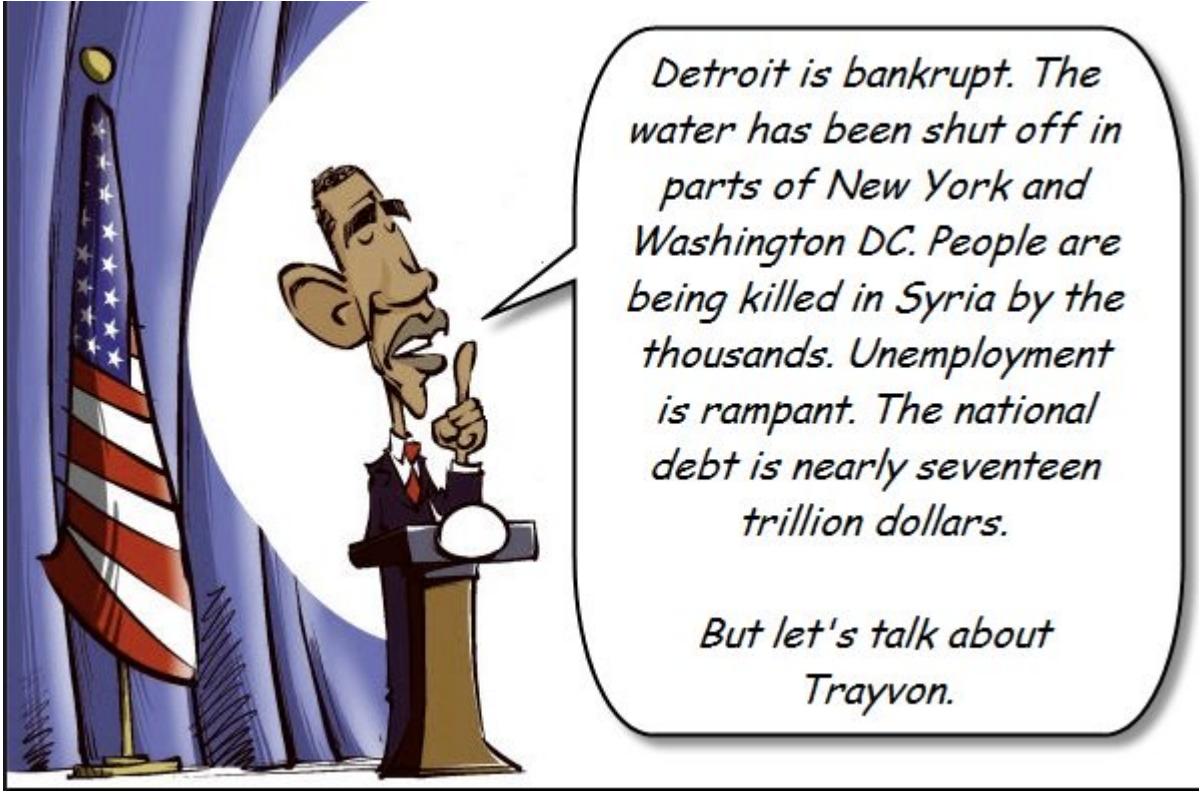


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IF I HAD A CITY



IT WOULD LOOK LIKE DETROIT



**IF I HAD A RACE-BAITING PRESIDENT
HE WOULD LOOK JUST LIKE THIS**

