

Media lying, kids dying

Letter to the editor, [Brunswick Beacon](#), 04.27.23

Parents have plenty of worries as their teenagers navigate the perilous straits between childhood and adulthood. Along with simply attending school, the list of perils in 2023 includes existing while black and making an honest, harmless mistake.

On April 13, a simple error — [mistaking](#) “115th Street” for “115th Terrace” in Kansas City, Missouri — reaped 16-year-old Ralph Yarl a bullet in the head and one in the arm. [Andrew Lester](#), age 84, shot first and never asked questions. Living on a steady diet of Fox “News” and other right-wing fearmongers telling him to “Be Very Afraid,” Lester glimpsed Ralph and pulled the trigger.

According to Lester’s [grandson](#), Fox and OAN convinced Lester enemies are everywhere: people of color, LGBTQ folks, “Antifa.” Radicalized by unrelenting right-wing alarmism, Lester was locked and loaded, ready for whichever bogeymen (bogeykids, really) might ring his doorbell. Lester, a white man, is out on \$200,000 [bond](#), facing two felony charges. Expect Missouri’s ["stand your ground"](#) law to be invoked in his defense.

Ralph Yarl wasn’t the only young shooting victim last week. In upstate New York, 20-year-old [Kaylin Gillis](#) was shot and killed by 65-year-old Kevin Monahan. Kaylin was a passenger in a car that mistakenly turned down Monahan’s driveway. Monahan opened fire as the car drove away.

A [cheerleader](#) in Elgin, Texas accidentally tried to get in Pedro Rodriguez’s car at a supermarket, where her group met to carpool. Realizing the error, she returned to her friend’s car. Rodriguez followed and shot her and another cheerleader, leaving one in critical condition.

Young people can’t risk a single misstep in a world filled with guns, racism, anger, and ginned-up fear. In Dominion’s lawsuit, Fox acknowledged spreading conspiracy theories they knew were false. How many more innocent kids will be killed by people made paranoid by Foxes’ lies? The media’s lying leads to our kids dying. Do they even care?

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