

Anderson Cooper – Witness to Trayvon Martin Shooting
3/29/12

What we do have tonight is a new set of eyes and a new voice. Only on this program tonight, someone who saw the shooting and the aftermath. We're not disclosing this person's identity and as you will hear, we have distorted the person's voice. We spoke earlier.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

COOPER: Can you tell me what you saw and what you heard the night Trayvon Martin was killed?

UNIDENTIFIED WITNESS: Well, it would have been to starting with hearing voices, but not seeing, and then after the voices, opening a window and then seeing with -- two men or two people on the ground, one on top of each other.

COOPER: You say you heard voices. What made you pay attention to the voices? Were they loud? Were they argumentative? What kind of voices?

UNIDENTIFIED WITNESS: Yes.

At first, I heard the voices with my window closed. And pretty much back in that area, people will walk their dogs. And you will hear people talking. And you can hear them very clearly, even when they're not talking loud. So I thought it was rather loud, but I had just shut my window, because it had just started pouring out rain.

And then and I thought, oh, my gosh, who's out there walking their dog in the rain? And I didn't look, and then I went in and did something else and then I heard the loud voices again. And I thought, let me see who that is, and I opened up my window with the screen, and yes, it definitely was a very loud, predominant voice.

As I kind of I couldn't hear the words, but it was like, OK, this is not a regular conversation. You know, this is someone aggressively, you know, yelling at someone.

COOPER: And how much time do you estimate had passed between the first time you heard the voices and the second time when you opened your window?

UNIDENTIFIED WITNESS: Well, I don't think it was that long, but I definitely would say that there was a gap of time, and the reason for that is because if they kept on arguing, I probably would have opened the window the first time.

(CROSSTALK)

COOPER: I'm sorry. You said you went and did something else. That didn't take a long time?

UNIDENTIFIED WITNESS: Not at all. But there was a time of not hearing the voices.

COOPER: After you opened your window, after hearing the voices the second time, what did you observe? What did you hear?

UNIDENTIFIED WITNESS: I saw two men on the ground, one on top of each other, obviously thinking, OK, something really horrible is happening.

And at that point, not looking out the window, I heard the yell for help, one yell for help, and then I heard another, as I described, this excruciating kind of yell. It didn't even almost sound like a help, it just sounded so painful.

But I wasn't watching out the window during that. And then the next time I looked out the window, there same thing, two men on the grass, one on top of each other. I kind of felt like that I couldn't see a lot of movement, because it was very dark, but I felt like they were scuffling. And then I heard the gunshots, which, to me, were more like pops than they were like a bang.

COOPER: You say gunshots, plural. Was there more than one, to your memory, or was there just one?

UNIDENTIFIED WITNESS: Well, the sound that I had from where I was walking, it was more like a pop, and it definitely was more than one pop noise. So I don't know if it was an echo or anything else, but it definitely made more than one pop.

COOPER: And I know you said it was dark. I don't want to ask you how far away you were, because I don't want to give any identifying sense of where you were, but were you able to observe who was on top, who was on bottom? Were you able to see faces or any details of the people scuffling?

UNIDENTIFIED WITNESS: No, just that it was dark.

I mean, the only reason I can say, if I was to have to say who do you think it was, I would have to say only the larger man, because after the larger man got off, then there was a boy that is obviously now dead on the ground, facing down.

COOPER: What did you observe after the shot?

UNIDENTIFIED WITNESS: As I said, it was dark. But after the shots, obviously, someone -- the one man got up, and it was kind of like that period of him -- I can't say I actually watched him get up, but maybe only within like a couple seconds or so, then he was walking towards where I was watching.

And I could see him a little bit clearer and see that it was a Hispanic man, and he was -- he didn't appear hurt or anything else. He just kind of seemed very -- I guess -- very worried or whatever, walked like on the sidewalk at that point, and put his hand up to his forehead. And then another

man came out with a flashlight.

COOPER: And that would be a police officer?

UNIDENTIFIED WITNESS: No, actually...

COOPER: So there was another person with a flashlight.

UNIDENTIFIED WITNESS: Yes.

COOPER: Do you know -- did you actually see the gunshot? Were you looking at -- were you looking at the struggle when the shot went off, or were you not looking at the struggle when the shot went off?

UNIDENTIFIED WITNESS: I was looking when the shot...

COOPER: So did the shot go off during a struggle?

UNIDENTIFIED WITNESS: I can't say if there was a lot of movement or not. I mean, the first time I looked, I could see the two men had kind of seemed like they were scuffling, but I couldn't see that clearly.

I wouldn't say it was a lot of movement when I heard the pop noises and the gunshots.

COOPER: Did you see a flash?

UNIDENTIFIED WITNESS: No.

COOPER: Earlier, you had said it was two people on the ground, I believe, when you first saw what you described as two people on each other. When the shot went off, were both people on the ground as well?

UNIDENTIFIED WITNESS: Yes.

COOPER: And one was still on top of the other?

UNIDENTIFIED WITNESS: Yes.

COOPER: Did you see the person being shot? Did you see the person that you now know as Trayvon Martin being shot? Did you see him falling backward or anything?

UNIDENTIFIED WITNESS: Well, when you're looking, you can only see one person on top of each other. You can't really see the person underneath.

COOPER: So you -- so just so I'm clear, you believe the person who shot was on top? You

believe the shooter was on top?

UNIDENTIFIED WITNESS: I can't really say, because it was just -- it was so dark, but, I mean, I'm just saying, in your head, you're thinking, when you see when all of this is now a couple seconds later, you see that person that's alive walk away, you know, you obviously think, OK, he must have got up and he walked away, where the other person is still laying there face down.

COOPER: But it's not clear to you whether he was on top and got up after shooting Trayvon Martin, or if he was on the bottom of the struggle and shot and Trayvon Martin fell or slid off him or he slid out from Trayvon Martin? You're not clear?

UNIDENTIFIED WITNESS: I did not see any of that, like, who slid.

Just kind of from watching as they're both down there and hearing, and watching the shots, and then, you know, there might have been sort of darkness, or the fading, because there were porch lights on. I will just say a little bit of that time, from the time he got up, which isn't very much time, probably a couple of seconds, you know, then I saw him walking, saw it was a Hispanic man.

I mean, I'm just saying, you only think, OK, the boy, in my mind, I think that the boy's laying down dead on the ground, face down. And the other person got up. You know, I'm thinking that it would be (INAUDIBLE) but I can't say for sure, because I didn't actually watch him get up.

COOPER: Was the -- you saw, essentially, two different struggles, you said. Or two different -- you saw one initially and then you saw a second one. Were they both in the exact same location?

UNIDENTIFIED WITNESS: Yes.

COOPER: And was that location grass or was it sidewalk, was it concrete? Do you know?

UNIDENTIFIED WITNESS: It was grass.

COOPER: It was grass. Was there a sidewalk anywhere nearby here, concrete, or was this all on grass or ground?

UNIDENTIFIED WITNESS: Well, there's grass on both side let's as you know with a sidewalk down the middle. But they were definitely closer on the area where it was all grass.

COOPER: And to your memory, George Zimmerman, after the shooting, did he appear injured to you? Did you see any blood or did you see him walking differently?

UNIDENTIFIED WITNESS: Not that I know how he walks, just that, you know, it was kind of slow. You're thinking, wow, I'm looking at the person that just shot someone. It was dark, like I said. I could see from a side view that it was an Hispanic man.

And, no, as far as like me seeing any blood or anything else, no, just from a side view.

COOPER: I know this is very difficult for you to talk about, and I appreciate you taking the time to do that. Thank you. (END VIDEOTAPE)