

# Who fired fatal shot is unclear

NYPD says tests don't pinpoint friendly-fire source

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NYPD investigators probing the fatal friendly fire incident that took the life of Det. Brian Simonsen earlier this month cannot tell which officer's gun fired the fatal shot, even though the round that killed him was recovered, police said Friday.

"The ballistics examination was inconclusive, i.e. we are not able to determine which firearm it came from," NYPD spokesman Chief Patrick Conry said. Simonsen, a 19-year police veteran, grew up in Jamestown and had lived in Calverton for the last decade.

In addition, the round that struck Simonsen's partner, Matthew Gorman of Seaford, in the thigh has not been recovered during the firearms discharge investigation, Conry said.

The inability of police to determine from ballistic examination which gun fired the bullets that struck the two during the botched robbery essentially leaves all the officers who survived, including Gorman, facing uncertainty about who fired the fatal shot.

The police Firearms Investigation Division is still sorting out details of the shooting and has examined the police guns involved, Conry said. Officials said body-camera and surveillance video was being reviewed and might eventually shed more light on the events.

It was unclear why the particular fatal round in the Simonsen case couldn't be matched to a gun. Police and forensic experts said it is common to match a bullet to the gun that fired it, except when a round strikes a concrete or metal surface or is damaged by a ricochet.

"It takes a great deal to deform a bullet," said Jon Shane, a former Newark police captain who is an associate professor of police management at John Jay College of Criminal Justice.



Police responding to the Richmond Hill robbery fired a total of 42 times. Det. Brian Simonsen was killed.

Certain human bones, such as the femur or pelvis, can deform a bullet, but not the relatively thin sternum or chest bone, said former New York City Medical Examiner Michael Baden. Simonsen was hit in the middle of his chest, officials have said.

Conry, however, said that ballistic evidence sometimes can't be matched to particular guns. "It is not that unusual for us not to know which gun fired [a] bullet," Conry said, but he didn't elaborate.

Simonsen, 42, and Gorman were struck by police rounds after they responded to a robbery at a T-Mobile store in Richmond Hill the evening of Feb. 12.

They arrived at the store simultaneously with six uniformed cops. Officials said Gorman entered the store with two of the officers while Simonsen

was outside the front door. The three inside retreated when the robbery suspect, Christopher Ransom, approached with an imitation handgun, police said.

Ransom rushed the officers and simulated firing, NYPD Chief of Department Terence Monahan said after the shooting.

In response, all of the cops, including Simonsen and Gorman, fired at Ransom a total of 42 times in about 11 seconds. In the fusillade, Simonsen was hit by a single police round and Gorman was wounded in the leg, according to Deputy Chief Kevin Maloney, who is heading the police firearms investigation. Ransom was hit several times and was hospitalized. Neither Simonsen nor Gorman was wearing one of the protective vests that are required under police procedures in such operations, Maloney said.

Ransom, 27, and a suspected accomplice, Jagger Freeman, 25, face murder, robbery and other charges in connection with the incident.

Edward Mullins, head of the Sergeant's Benevolent Association, said the inconclusive result likely means no one will ever know which cop fired the shots that struck their colleagues.

"If it's true that they can't determine it, then you have to live with it," Mullins said. "I just think the department is so locked in on this they just don't think they will change from inconclusive."

The real issue now, Mullins said, is how the NYPD looks into firearms training and determines what can be changed.

"All we can do now is move forward," Mullins said.

## PARENTS PLEAD GUILTY TO TORTURE

RIVERSIDE, Calif. — A California couple pleaded guilty Friday to torture and years of abuse that included shackling some of their 13 children to beds and starving them to the point they stopped growing.

David and Louise Turpin will spend at least 25 years in prison after entering the pleas in Riverside County Superior Court to 14 counts that included cruelty toward all but their toddler daughter, and imprisoning the children in a house that appeared neat outside, but festered with filth

and reeked of human waste.

The couple was arrested in January 2018 after their 17-year-old daughter escaped from the home and called 911 in the city of Perris. The children, ages 2 to 29 at the time, were severely underweight. They described being beaten, starved and put in cages.

Louise Turpin began crying at the hearing. Her husband appeared stoic. They will be sentenced to up to life in prison April 19, Riverside District Attorney Mike Hestrin said. — AP

## Cuomo ranks Amazon 'tragedy'

The Associated Press

ALBANY — Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo again blasted fellow Democrats on Friday over Amazon's backing out of a deal to put one of its second headquarters in New York City, calling the internet retailer's rejection the "greatest tragedy" he has seen since he's been in government.

Cuomo also said during an interview on public radio station WAMC that losing the Amazon deal makes him sick to his stomach. His public comments were Cuomo's first on the topic since his office issued a statement Feb. 14, the day Amazon announced it

was backing out of an agreement to redevelop a site in Long Island City, Queens.

Democrats who control the state Senate bear much of the blame, Cuomo said, including Sen. Michael Gianaris, who represents the Long Island City neighborhood where Amazon wanted to base 25,000 jobs, with the potential to expand to 40,000 jobs over two decades.

Cuomo called the collapse of the Amazon deal "the greatest tragedy that I have seen since I have been in government."

Cuomo, 61, a third-term governor whose public service career started in the 1980s, said the state

Senate made the "misguided decision" to treat the Amazon agreement as a local political issue. As such, Democrats led by Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins gave Gianaris, the chamber's No. 2 lawmaker, too much influence over approving or rejecting a deal that would've put \$27.5 billion in state coffers over the next 30 years, the governor said.

Gianaris and others opposed to the Amazon deal say they mainly objected to the \$3 billion in state and city tax incentives the company stood to receive for reaching its job creation goals.