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An autopsy was performed on the body of **Nicholas Howard**, at the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner for the State of Maryland on the 18th day of March, 2009.

EXTERNAL EXAMINATION

The body was that of a well-developed, well-nourished Black male clad in jeans, socks, boots, boxer shorts, sweat jacket, T-shirt and a sleeveless T-shirt. The body weighed 255 pounds, was 5'9" in height and appeared compatible with the reported age of 26 years. The body was cold. Rigor was present to an equal degree in all extremities. Lividity was present on the posterior surface of the body. The scalp hair was brown and braided into dreadlocks. Facial hair consisted of a moustache and beard. There was white granular material covering the face and upper chest. There were multiple firearm injuries to be described below. The irides were brown. The corneae were clear. The conjunctivae were pink. The sclerae were white. The external auditory canals, external nares and oral cavity were free of foreign material and abnormal secretions. The nasal skeleton was palpably intact. The lips were without evident injury. The teeth were natural and in good condition. Examination of the neck revealed evidence of injury to be described below. The chest had injuries also to be described. No injury of the ribs or sternum was evident externally. The abdomen likewise had injuries to be described. Healed surgical scars were not noted. The extremities showed injuries. There were old surgical scars of the right lower leg and ankle. There was an old skin graft site of the antero-lateral right upper thigh. Tattoos were noted on the right side of the neck and the posterior right forearm. Needle tracks were not observed. The external genitalia were those of a normal adult male. The posterior torso had injuries to be described. No evidence of medical intervention was noted.

EVIDENCE OF INJURY:

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STATE OF MARYLAND
DATE 3/1/09

PELLET WOUND A:

A pellet entrance wound was noted to the right superior occipital scalp. The wound was located 1" below the top of the head and 1" right of the posterior midline. It measured 1/2" x 3/8" in greatest dimension and had a typical abrasion margin noted. There was no evidence of close range firing on the surrounding scalp. The pellet entered the head through the right superior occipital scalp and skull and entered the right superior occipital lobe of the brain, traversing to the frontal lobe. A deformed, copper gilded pellet was recovered from the right frontal lobe of the brain. The direction of the pellet was from back to front and without significant left/right or up/down deviation.

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PELLET WOUND "B":

A pellet entrance wound was noted to the right occipital scalp, located 2-1/2" below the top of the head and 1" right of the posterior midline. The wound measured 1/2" in diameter and had a 3/8" laceration associated at the inferior margin at 6 o'clock. The abrasion margin appeared typical. There was no evidence of soot or gunpowder stippling on the surrounding scalp. The pellet entered the right occipital scalp and skull, entering the right occipital lobe of the brain, traversing to the right cerebellar lobe and the right superior spinal cord at the level of the oblongata. A deformed, copper gilded pellet was recovered just adjacent to the medulla oblongata. The direction of the pellet was from back to front, downwards and slightly leftwards.

PELLET WOUND "C":

A pellet entrance wound was noted to the right occipital scalp, located 3-1/2" below the top of the head and 1" right of the posterior midline. The wound measured 1/2" x 3/8" in greatest dimension and had a typical abrasion margin noted. There was no evidence of soot or gunpowder stippling surrounding the scalp. The pellet entered the skin and subcutaneous tissues and muscles of the right side of the upper neck where a deformed, copper gilded pellet was recovered from the right side of the neck. The direction of the pellet wound was from back to front, downwards and without significant left/right deviation.

PELLET WOUND "D":

A pellet entrance wound was noted to the right inferior occipital scalp, located 4-1/2" below the top of the head and 2" right of the posterior midline. The wound measured 1/4" in diameter with a 1/4" laceration associated at the inferior border at 6 o'clock. The abrasion margin appeared typical. There was no evidence of soot or gunpowder stippling on the surrounding scalp. The pellet entered the skin and subcutaneous tissues and muscles of the right side of the neck where a deformed, copper gilded pellet was recovered. The direction of the pellet wound was from back to front, downwards and slightly rightwards.

FIREARM INJURY "E":

An entrance wound was noted to the right superior posterior neck, located 6" below the top of the head and 3-1/2" right of the posterior midline. The wound measured 1/2" x 1/2" in greatest dimension and had an abrasion margin that appeared typical. There

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was no evidence of soot or gunpowder stippling on the surrounding skin. The wound track proceeded from this injury passing through the skin and underlying subcutaneous tissues and musculature of the neck, to exit the right anterior neck, 9" below the top of the head and 1-1/2" right of the anterior midline. The exit wound appeared slit-like measuring 3/8" in length. There were no projectiles recovered from the wound track. The hemorrhagic wound track was from back to front, downwards and without significant left/right deviation.

FIREARM INJURY "F":

An entrance wound was noted on the right inferior neck, posteriorly. The wound was located 8" below the top of the head and 1" right of the posterior midline. The wound measured 3/8" in diameter and had an abrasion margin that appeared typical. There was no evidence of soot or gunpowder stippling on the surrounding skin. The wound track penetrated the skin, subcutaneous tissues and muscles of the neck, to exit the right side of the neck, 9" below the top of the head and 3-1/2" right of the anterior midline. The exit wound appeared irregular and ovoid, measuring 3/8" x 3/8" in greatest dimension. There were no projectiles recovered from the wound track. The hemorrhagic wound track was from back to front, without significant left/right or up/down deviation.

FIREARM INJURY "G":

An entrance wound was noted to the right inferior neck, posteriorly. The wound was 8-1/2" from the top of the head and 2" right of the posterior midline. The wound measured 3/8" in diameter and had an abrasion margin that appeared typical. There was no evidence of soot or gunpowder stippling on the surrounding skin. The wound track proceeded from the skin and underlying subcutaneous tissues to penetrate the muscles of the right side of the neck and exit 9" below the top of the head and 3-1/2" right of the anterior midline. The exit wound appeared irregular and ovoid, measuring 1/2" x 3/8" in greatest dimension. The hemorrhagic wound track was from back to front and without significant left/right or up/down deviation.

PELLET WOUNDS "H":

A cluster of approximately fifteen entrance wounds was noted on the superior portion of the right shoulder, located 9" to 12" below the top of the head and 2-1/2" to 8" right of the posterior midline. The various wounds ranged in size from 1/4" x 3/8" to 1-

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1/4" x 1/2" in greatest dimension. There was no evidence of soot or gunpowder stippling on the surrounding skin. The wound tracks converged and commingled penetrating the skin and underlying subcutaneous tissues and musculature of the shoulder and right upper back where five shotgun pellets were recovered from the posterior right chest, behind the ribs. There was an associated cluster of exit wounds noted to the posterior right upper arm, axilla and right lateral chest, located 12" to 19" below the top of the head and 10" to 15" right of the posterior midline. The exit wounds ranged from 1/4" x 1/4" in greatest dimension to 5/8" x 5/8" in greatest dimension. Hemorrhage was present throughout all wound tracks. The direction of the cluster of wounds was sharply downwards and without significant left/right or back/front deviation.

PELLET WOUNDS "I":

There was a cluster of four shotgun pellet entrance wounds on the postero-lateral right arm at the level of the elbow. These wounds were located 8" to 11" below the top of the right shoulder. They were irregular and ranged in size from 1/2" x 1/2" to 1" x 3/4" in greatest dimension. There was no evidence of soot or gunpowder stippling on the surrounding skin surface. The wound tracks penetrated the skin and underlying subcutaneous tissues and musculature of the arm, to exit through multiple exits of the right elbow, located 10" to 13" below the top of the shoulder and ranging from 1/4" x 1/4" to 1-1/4" x 1/2" in greatest dimension. There was also recovery of one shotgun pellet measuring 1/4" x 1/4" on the elbow. When viewed in the anatomic position, the wound tracks were from front to back, right to left and without significant up/down deviation. Hemorrhage was present throughout all tracks.

FIREARM INJURY "J":

A graze wound was noted to the right cheek. The wound was located 4" to 7" below the top of the head and 1-1/2" to 2-1/2" right of the midline. It measured 3" x 1" in greatest dimension with skin tags pointing superiorly. There was no evidence of soot or gunpowder stippling on the surrounding skin surface. The wound track involved skin and underlying subcutaneous tissues and muscles of the right cheek. The direction of the wound track was slightly rightwards and sharply downwards, without significant front/back deviation. There were no projectiles recovered.

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PELLET WOUNDS "K":

There was a cluster of at least three entrance wounds noted to the top of the right shoulder. The wounds were located 9" to 10-1/2" below the top of the head and 4-1/2" to 6" right of the anterior midline. The wounds ranged in size from 1/4" x 3/8" in diameter to 1" x 1" in greatest dimension. There was no evidence of soot or gunpowder stippling on the surrounding skin surface. The wound tracks proceeded from these injuries to penetrate the skin and underlying subcutaneous tissues and musculature of the shoulder and right arm where two shotgun pellets were recovered from the musculature of the right arm. There was an associated exit to the posterior right axilla. The exit appeared slit-like, measuring 1/2" in greatest length. It was located 12" below the top of the head and 12" right of the posterior midline. Hemorrhage was present throughout the wound tracks. The direction of the wound tracks were from back to front, left to right and downwards.

FIREARM INJURY "L":

There was an entrance wound to the right lateral abdomen. The wound was located 23-1/2" below the top of the head and 9" right of the anterior midline. The wound measured 3/8" x 1/4" in greatest dimension with an abrasion margin that appeared greater at the superior border. There was no evidence of soot or gunpowder stippling on the surrounding skin surface. The wound track proceeded from this injury passing through the skin, underlying subcutaneous tissues and fat of the abdomen remaining superficial and exiting from the right lateral abdomen, 26-1/2" below the top of the head and 8-1/2" right of the anterior midline. The exit wound appeared slit-like measuring 3/8" in length. The direction of the hemorrhagic wound track was sharply downwards, without significant front/back or left/right deviation. There were no projectiles recovered.

GRAZE WOUND "M":

There was a graze abrasion of the right lateral abdomen, located 24" below the top of the head and 9" right of the anterior midline. The wound measured 1-1/4" x 1/2" in greatest dimension with skin tags pointing superiorly. There was no evidence of soot or gunpowder stippling on the surrounding skin surface. The wound track involved the skin and underlying subcutaneous tissues. The direction of the wound track was sharply downwards, without significant left/right or front/back deviation.

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PELLET WOUND "N" :

There was a pellet entrance wound to the left antero-medial upper leg. The wound was located 26-1/2" above the naked left heel and measured 3/8" x 1/4" in greatest dimension. It had an abrasion margin that appeared typical. There was no evidence of soot or gunpowder stippling on the surrounding skin surface. The wound track penetrated the skin, underlying subcutaneous tissues and fat of the leg where a shotgun pellet, slightly deformed, was recovered. The direction of the hemorrhagic wound track was from left to right, downwards and from front to back.

GUNSHOT WOUND "O" :

An entrance wound was noted to the left antero-lateral arm. The wound was located 7-1/2" below the top of the shoulder and measured 5/8" in diameter. There was an abrasion margin that appeared typical. There was no evidence of soot or gunpowder stippling on the surrounding skin surface. The wound track proceeded from this injury passing through the skin, underlying subcutaneous tissues and musculature of the arm, to exit the antero-medial left upper arm, 6-1/2" below the top of the head. The exit wound appeared round, measuring 1" x 1-1/4" in greatest dimension with a slight abrasion. The direction of this wound track was from left to right, slightly upwards and without significant front/back deviation. The bullet then continued to re-enter the left lateral chest through an atypical entrance wound, located 14-1/2" below the top of the head and 7-1/2" left of the anterior midline. The atypical entrance wound measured 1" x 3/4" in greatest dimension with a slight abrasion margin. The bullet continued to pass through the skin and underlying subcutaneous tissues of the left chest, entering the musculature of the anterior chest wall and crossing to the right side of the chest where a large caliber, slightly deformed, copper jacketed bullet was recovered from the right anterior chest wall musculature. Hemorrhage was present throughout the wound track.

GUNSHOT WOUND "P" :

An entrance wound was noted to the left chest. The wound was located 17" below the top of the head and 4-1/2" left of the anterior midline. The wound measured 3/8" in diameter and had an abrasion margin that appeared typical. There was no evidence of soot or gunpowder stippling on the surrounding skin surface. The wound track proceeded from this injury passing through the skin and underlying subcutaneous tissues of the chest, passing through the left hemidiaphragm and stomach. The bullet continued to pass

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through the pancreas and left adrenal gland. The bullet continued to pass through the superior pole of the left kidney and fractured the left 12th rib adjacent to the vertebral column. A copper jacketed bullet was recovered from the muscles of the back. The direction of the hemorrhagic wound track was from left to right, front to back and without significant up/down deviation.

FIREARM INJURY "Q":

An entrance wound was noted to the left upper shoulder. The wound was located 8-1/2" below the top of the head and 3" left of the anterior midline. The wound measured 1/2" x 3/8" in greatest dimension with an associated contusion measuring 5/8" x 1/2". There was no evidence of soot or gunpowder stippling on the surrounding skin surface. The wound track proceeded from this injury passing through the skin and underlying subcutaneous tissues and fat of the upper shoulder for a depth of approximately 1-1/2". The track blind-ended without a projectile. The direction of the wound track was from front to back, right to left and slightly downwards in a tangential manner. Hemorrhage was present.

There were abrasions noted to the lateral right upper hip ranging from 1/4" x 1/4" to 3/4" x 5/8" in greatest dimension. There were two abrasions present on the right side of the abdomen adjacent to the aforementioned gunshot wounds "L" and "M". The abrasions measured 1/4" x 3/8" and 1/2" x 1/4".

A shotgun pellet and a fragment of bullet were recovered from the clothing jacket. One pellet was recovered from the body bag. Five pellets were recovered from the autopsy table. A shotgun was recovered from the body bag.

INTERNAL EXAMINATION:

BODY CAVITIES:

The body was opened by the usual thoraco-abdominal incision and the chest plate was removed. No adhesions were present in any of the body cavities. All body organs were present in the normal anatomical position. There was no internal evidence of blunt force injury to the thoraco-abdominal region.

HEAD: (CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM)

Please see "Evidence of Injury." The scalp was reflected revealing subgaleal hemorrhage associated with the aforementioned injuries. The calvarium of the skull was removed. The dura mater and falx cerebri were intact with the exception of firearm injuries. There was no epidural or subdural hemorrhage

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present; however subarachnoid staining was noted over both hemispheres. The leptomeninges were thin and delicate. The cerebral hemispheres were not symmetrical due to the above-mentioned injuries. The structures at the base of the brain, including cranial nerves and blood vessels appeared intact. Coronal and transverse sections through the cerebral hemispheres, brainstem and cerebellum revealed no non-traumatic lesions. The brain weighed 1470 grams.

NECK:

Please see "Evidence of Injury." Examination of the soft tissues of the neck, including thyroid gland and large vessels revealed no abnormalities. Muscles of the neck had injuries as described. The hyoid bone and larynx were intact.

CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM:

The pericardial surfaces were smooth, glistening and unremarkable; the pericardial sac was free of significant fluid and adhesions. The coronary arteries arose normally, followed the usual distribution and were widely patent, without evidence of significant atherosclerosis or thrombosis. The chambers and valves exhibited the usual size-position relationship and were unremarkable. The myocardium was dark red-brown, firm and unremarkable; the atrial and ventricular septa were intact. The aorta and its major branches arose normally, followed the usual course and were widely patent, free of significant atherosclerosis and other abnormality. The venae cavae and their major tributaries returned to the heart in the usual distribution and were free of thrombi. The heart weighed 380 grams.

RESPIRATORY SYSTEM:

The upper airway was clear of debris and foreign material; the mucosal surfaces were smooth, yellow-tan and unremarkable. The pleural surfaces were smooth, glistening and unremarkable bilaterally. The pulmonary parenchyma was unremarkable. The pulmonary arteries were normally developed, patent and without thrombus or embolus. The right lung weighed 360 grams; the left 410 grams.

LIVER & BILIARY SYSTEM:

The hepatic capsule was smooth, glistening and intact, covering dark red-brown, moderately congested parenchyma with no focal lesions noted. The gallbladder contained a scant amount of green-brown, mucoid bile; the mucosa was velvety and unremarkable. The extrahepatic biliary tree was patent, without evidence of calculi. The liver weighed 1710 grams.

ALIMENTARY TRACT:

Please see "Evidence of Injury." The tongue exhibited no evidence of recent injury. The esophagus was lined by gray-white, smooth mucosa. The gastric mucosa was arranged in the usual rugal folds and the lumen was empty. There

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was a gunshot wound to the stomach as mentioned above. The small and large bowel were unremarkable. The pancreas had injuries as described.

GENITOURINARY SYSTEM:

Please see "Evidence of Injury." The renal capsules were smooth and thin, semi-transparent and stripped without difficulty from the underlying smooth, red-brown cortical surfaces of both kidneys. There was a gunshot wound to the left kidney as described. The cortices of both kidneys were delineated from the medullary pyramids, which were red-purple to tan and unremarkable. The calyces, pelves and ureters were unremarkable. The urinary bladder mucosa was gray-tan and trabeculated. The testes and prostate gland were without note. The right kidney weighed 140 grams; the left 160 grams.

RETICULOENDOTHELIAL SYSTEM:

The spleen had a smooth, intact capsule covering red-purple, moderately firm parenchyma; the lymphoid follicles were unremarkable. The regional lymph nodes appeared normal. The spleen weighed 160 grams.

ENDOCRINE SYSTEM:

The thyroid was unremarkable. There was a gunshot wound injury to the left adrenal gland as described above. The right adrenal gland was unremarkable.

MUSCULOSKELETAL SYSTEM:

There were no non-traumatic muscle, bone or joint abnormalities noted.

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PATHOLOGIC DIAGNOSES

- I. Multiple firearm injuries:
- A. Shotgun pellet wounds (27) of head, right shoulder, right arm and left leg
 - B. Gunshot wounds (2) of left arm and left side of chest with injury to the diaphragm, stomach, pancreas, adrenal gland and kidney
 - C. Non-specific firearm injuries (7) to the right side of the Neck, face, abdomen and left shoulder

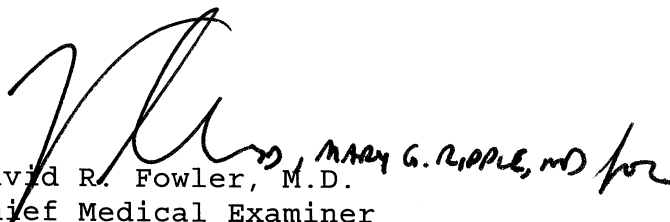
OPINION:

This 26 year old Black male, **NICHOLAS HOWARD**, died of multiple firearm injuries to include twenty-seven shotgun pellet wounds, two gunshot wounds and seven firearm injury wounds (non-specific). There was no evidence of close range firing noted on the skin surrounding any of the entrance wounds. Two of the wounds from the shotgun pellets caused extensive injury to the brain. The remaining pellet wounds struck non vital structures but caused extensive tissue disruption and would have contributed to blood loss. One of the gunshot wounds injured the diaphragm, stomach, pancreas, adrenal gland and kidney which would have caused bleeding. The remaining seven wounds (labeled non-specific) did not strike vital structures but would have contributed to blood loss. Thirteen shotgun pellets and two bullets were recovered from the body. Seven shotgun pellets, a fragment of a bullet and a shotgun wad were recovered from the clothing, body bag and/or the autopsy table. The manner of death is **HOMICIDE**. The deceased had been consuming alcoholic beverages and using cocaine prior to death.

Mr. Howard was shot by police.



J. Laron Locke, M.D.
Assistant Medical Examiner



David R. Fowler, M.D.
Chief Medical Examiner

Date signed: 7/27/09

dw

TOXICOLOGY

REPORT OF FINDINGS

Case # **09-02162** Lab # **09-0873**
Deceased Name **Howard, Nicholas**
If Previous Unknown
Medical Examiner **Laron Locke MD.**
Autopsied by **Laron Locke MD.**
Jurisdiction **Prince George's**

Specimen Submitted	Test	Results
Blood Heart	Volatiles	Ethanol 0.26 % (w/v)
Urine	Volatiles	Ethanol 0.35 % (w/v)
Urine	Drug Test (comprehensive)	Cocaine and Metabolites Positive
Urine	Drug Test (comprehensive)	Other Drugs Negative
Blood Heart	Drug Test (Individual)	Cocaine 0.5 mg/L
Blood Heart	Drug Test (Individual)	Benzoylcegonine 1.1 mg/L

Toxicologist



Medical Examiner

