

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 3, 2015

STATEMENT OF INNOCENCE ON BEHALF OF NOELLE VELENTZAS  
By Sean M. Maher

Noelle Velentzas is a loving 28-year-old mother and wife who is innocent of the sensationalistic charges manufactured by the U.S. government.

While certain members of the press appear to have judged Noelle guilty before her own attorney has been provided even a scrap of substantive evidence, it should be remembered that Noelle is presumed innocent. The history of our country is littered with the shattered lives and reputations of innocent people who were smeared, maligned, and destroyed by unsubstantiated criminal accusations that never were borne out. We should not add Noelle to that shameful list.

Whenever the citizens of this nation accept the uncorroborated word of government officials, we suffer. Sadly, the FBI and NYPD have a long and sordid history of abusing the public trust.

From illegal spying on law-abiding Muslims, civil rights leaders, and peace activists, to extracting false confessions from innocent people, to planting evidence, to using barbaric acts of violence, to illegal stop and frisk, to entrapment, to flat-out false and malicious prosecution, the list of abuses gives great pause that any accusations levelled by the FBI and the NYPD should be accepted without careful, searching, and methodical scrutiny.\*

In the coming days, weeks, and months we will conduct our own unbiased and untainted investigation into the true facts and into the potentially unethical, untrustworthy, and illegal means used by various law enforcement officials and agencies to concoct this case against Noelle.

This is not a case that should be tried in the press. Rather, I ask that members of our community respect the dignity of our Courts and legal process, respect the privacy of Noelle and her family, and keep Noelle in your thoughts and prayers.

\*See attached Appendix.

APPENDIX

**ILLEGAL SPYING ON LAW-ABIDING MUSLIMS, CIVIL RIGHTS LEADERS, AND PEACE ACTIVISTS**

Documents show that NY police watched devout Muslims ( Sept 2011)

<http://www.ap.org/Content/AP-In-The-News/2011/Documents-show-NY-police-watched-devout-Muslims>

With No Evidence of Wrongdoing, NYPD Treats Entire Mosques as Terrorist Groups (August 2013)

<https://www.aclu.org/blog/national-security-religion-belief-technology-and-liberty-criminal-law-reform/no-evidence>

New York Drops Unit That Spied on Muslims (April 2014)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/16/nyregion/police-unit-that-spied-on-muslims-is-disbanded.html>

Muslim Students At Rutgers University Fearful For Future In Wake of NYPD Surveillance (March 2015)

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/03/09/muslim-students-nypd-surveillance\\_n\\_6832062.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/03/09/muslim-students-nypd-surveillance_n_6832062.html)

More About FBI Spying (ACLU)

<https://www.aclu.org/spy-files/more-about-fbi-spying>

COINTELPRO and the History of Domestic Spying (Jan 2006)

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5161811>

The FBI COINTELPRO Program and the Fred Hampton Assassination (Dec 2013)

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/g-flint-taylor/the-fbi-cointelpro-progra\\_b\\_4375527.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/g-flint-taylor/the-fbi-cointelpro-progra_b_4375527.html)

FBI Audit Exposes Widespread Abuse of Patriot Act Powers (March 2008)

<https://www.aclu.org/national-security/fbi-audit-exposes-widespread-abuse-patriot-act-powers>

NYPD Oversight Board Still Sits on Sideliens Despite Controversial Police Spying (April 2014)

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/04/14/nypd-oversight\\_n\\_5147265.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/04/14/nypd-oversight_n_5147265.html)

Handschu v. Special Services Division (Challenging NYPD surveillance practices targeting political groups)

<http://www.nyclu.org/case/handschu-v-special-services-division-challenging-nypd-surveillance-practices-targeting-politica>

Handschu Guidelines govern how NYPD Can Monitor Groups (Feb 2012)

<http://www.nydailynews.com/news/handschu-guidelines-govern-nypd-monitor-groups-article-1.1027761>

Nobel Prize-Winning Writers Say NSA Surveillance Power 'Is Being Systemically Abused' (Jan 2014)

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/12/09/nobel-writers-nsa- n\\_4414951.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/12/09/nobel-writers-nsa- n_4414951.html)

### **EXTRACTING FALSE CONFESSIONS**

5 Exonerated in Central Park Jogger Case Agree to Settle Suit for 40 Million (June 2014)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/20/nyregion/5-exonerated-in-central-park-jogger-case-are-to-settle-suit-for-40-million.html>

The Central Park Jogger Case is Settled For 40 Million, But What About Justice for Other Black and Latino Teens? (June 2014)

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/natalie-byfield/the-central-park-jogger-c\\_b\\_5530995.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/natalie-byfield/the-central-park-jogger-c_b_5530995.html)

Men Wrongly Convicted in Central Park Jogger Case Reportedly Reach Settlement (June 2014)

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/06/19/central-park-five\\_n\\_5513529.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/06/19/central-park-five_n_5513529.html)

Several Murder Confessions Taken by Brooklyn Detective Have Similar Language (June 2013)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/13/nyregion/several-murder-confessions-taken-by-brooklyn-detective-have-similar-language.html>

### **PLANTING EVIDENCE**

Stephen Anderson, Ex NYPD Cop: We Planted Evidence, Framed Innocent People to Reach Quotas ( Oct 2011)

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/10/13/ex-nypd-cop-we-planted-ev\\_n\\_1009754.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/10/13/ex-nypd-cop-we-planted-ev_n_1009754.html)

Detective Is Found Guilty of Planting Drugs (Nov 2011)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/02/nyregion/brooklyn-detective-convicted-of-planting-drugs-on-innocent-people.html>

In Brooklyn Gun Cases, Suspicion Turns to the Police (Dec 2014)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/12/nyregion/gun-arrests-with-2-things-in-common-the-officers-and-unidentified-informers.html>

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## BARBARIC ACTS OF VIOLENCE

Staten Island man dies after NYPD cop puts him in chokehold (July 2014)

<http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/staten-island-man-dies-puts-choke-hold-article-1.1871486>

The Chokehold is Banned by NYPD, But Complaints About Its Use Persist (Dec 2014)

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/12/05/nyc-police-chokeholds\\_n\\_6272000.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/12/05/nyc-police-chokeholds_n_6272000.html)

At Diallo Trial, Justice is Weighed in Different Measures (Feb 2000)

<http://content.time.com/time/arts/article/0,8599,39427,00.html>

Unarmed Amadou Diallo is killed by four police officers who shot at him 41 times in 1999 (Feb 2015)

<http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/unarmed-amadou-diallo-shot-killed-police-1999-article-1.2095255>

Nationwide Protests Condemning Police Brutality Continue With No End in Sight (Dec 2014)

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/12/06/protests-police-brutality\\_n\\_6281624.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/12/06/protests-police-brutality_n_6281624.html)

Thousands march to protest against police brutality in major US cities (Dec2014)

<http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2014/dec/13/marchers-protest-police-brutality-new-york-washington-boston>

## **ILLEGAL STOP AND FRISK**

Stop-and-Frisk Data

<http://www.nyclu.org/content/stop-and-frisk-data>

NYPD Can't Just Stop And Frisk People For the Hell of IT Anymore, Says Department Memo (March 2015)

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/03/05/nypd-memo-stop-and-frisk-restriction\\_n\\_6807710.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/03/05/nypd-memo-stop-and-frisk-restriction_n_6807710.html)

NYCLU Lawsuit Challenges NYPD's Illegal Stop and Frisk of Livery Cab Passengers (March 2011)

<http://www.nyclu.org/news/nyclu-lawsuit-challenges-nypds-illegal-stop-and-frisk-of-livery-cab-passengers>

Victim of Illegal Stop-and-frisk gets 14 G settlement from city after his NYPD manhandling is caught on tape (March 2013)

<http://www.nyclu.org/news/nyclu-lawsuit-challenges-nypds-illegal-stop-and-frisk-of-livery-cab-passengers>

Judge Rejects New York's Stop and Frisk Policy (August 2013)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/13/nyregion/stop-and-frisk-practice-violated-rights-judge-rules.html?gwh=FCEE179E9A9E280BB6B8D95BA424E62B&gwt=pay>

## **ENTRAPMENT**

Informant: NYPD paid me to 'bait' Muslims (Oct 2012)

<http://www.ap.org/Content/AP-In-The-News/2012/Informant-NYPD-paid-me-to-bait-Muslims>

NYPD 'Lucky Bag' Tactic, used to Fight Theft, Comes Under Criticism (April 2013)

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/04/14/nypd-lucky-bag-tactic-use\\_n\\_3080644.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/04/14/nypd-lucky-bag-tactic-use_n_3080644.html)

## **FALSE AND MALICIOUS PROSECUTION**

Bomb Case Against Lawyer Is Rejected

<http://www.nytimes.com/2004/05/25/us/bomb-case-against-lawyer-is-rejected.html>