

## **TEEN, 17, TO BE TRIED AS AN ADULT IN BOY'S DEATH - LAWYER SAYS GUNSHOT IN PAL'S FACE WAS ACCIDENT**

Detroit Free Press (MI) - Thursday, August 29, 2002

Author: SUZETTE HACKNEY FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

In one moment, **Arnell Bowden** was laughing and chatting with his best friend and two other buddies on an east-side Detroit porch.

Minutes later, the best friend, 14-year-old Gordon Watson, was fatally wounded from a gunshot to the face. Police say **Bowden**, 17, of Detroit has admitted pulling the trigger.

Now, a jury must decide whether **Bowden** meant to kill his friend. At a Wednesday preliminary examination, a 36th District Court judge ordered **Bowden** to stand trial as an adult in Wayne County Circuit Court on first-degree murder and felony firearm charges. If convicted, **Bowden** would face life in prison with no chance of parole.

Watson is one of 15 metro Detroit children 16 or younger to die this year from gun violence.

According to police statements and witness testimony, the incident started when the four teens left a porch in the 3100 block of Palmer and moved next door to **Bowden**'s backyard. **Bowden** told his friends he had to use the bathroom, and went inside his grandmother's house.

Jeffery Gill, 14, testified that Watson asked if he could listen to music in **Bowden**'s upstairs bedroom, but **Bowden** said no. Watson fiddled with the back door handle until **Bowden** emerged.

Gill said **Bowden** pointed a gun at Watson's shoulder and said in a joking manner: "I got you now."

Gill said Watson tried to pull back, but " **Arnell** pulled the trigger and got him between the eyes."

Randall Upshaw, **Bowden**'s defense lawyer, sought to convince Judge Izetta Bright that the shooting was accidental, and the gun's safety may have even been on.

But Wayne County Assistant Prosecutor Donna Pendergast said the act of pointing a gun, making a statement and then firing is criminal.

**Bowden** will remain held without bond in the Wayne County Juvenile Detention Facility, pending a Sept. 4 arraignment.

Contact SUZETTE HACKNEY at 313-222-6672 or [hackney@freepress.com](mailto:hackney@freepress.com).

Edition: METRO FINAL  
Section: NWS

Page: 6B

Index Terms: ARNELL BOWDEN; SHOOTING ; HOMICIDE ; JUVENILE ; GORDON  
WATSON ; COURT ; RULING

Record Number: 0208290450

Copyright (c) 2002 Detroit Free Press