

Police Captain: Ferguson Police Will Continue To Arrest Journalists

"Some of you may just have a camera around your neck, so yes, we are -- we may take some of you into custody," he says

By [Kit Daniels](#)

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Riot police in Ferguson, Missouri, will continue to arrest journalists for simply walking down the street while covering the riots, according to a police captain early Tuesday.

Missouri State Highway Patrol Capt. Ron Johnson made the startling statement [at a press conference in Ferguson](#) when asked if the 31 people arrested at the protests last night included journalists.

"...Some journalists are walking around, and all you have is a cell phone because you're from a small media outlet," he said. "Some of you may just have a camera around your neck, so yes, we are — we may take some of you into custody."

"But when we do take you into custody, and we have found out you're a journalist, we've taken the proper action."

The proper action for the police, however, would be to respect the freedom of the press guaranteed under the First Amendment. No where does the First Amendment state that members of the press are subject to arrest if their cameras are "too small."

Unfortunately, that's not what happened last night in Ferguson when a cop reportedly ripped a press badge off of a Vice News reporter while proclaiming, "this doesn't mean ****."

Cop just ripped a press badge off the Vice streamer and threw it to the ground. Just because he could.

— Drew Coombs (@random_tangent) [August 19, 2014](#)

This harassment of the press by police has been going on in Ferguson for the past week and even made international news when a St. Louis Co. SWAT team intentionally gassed an Al-Jazeera America news crew, forcing them to flee, and began dismantling their camera equipment before realizing that other media was capturing everything on tape.

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equipment before realizing that other media was capturing everything on tape.

“Al Jazeera America is stunned by this egregious assault on freedom of the press that was clearly intended to have a chilling effect on our ability to cover this important story,” Kate O’Brian, president of Al-Jazeera America, [wrote in a statement](#). “Thankfully all three crew members are physically fine.”

“We believe that this situation must be investigated along with those involving our colleagues at other media outlets.”

Infowars reporter Joe Biggs was [also wounded that night when police shot him in the kidneys](#) with a rubber round and not long before that, two journalists were [arrested in the nearby McDonald’s](#).

At the press conference, Capt. Johnson suggested he didn’t want more violence in Ferguson, but when Infowars asked him why the police were dressed like the military if that were the case, he refused to respond.

On August 9, Michael Brown, 18, died after being shot by a Ferguson police officer, the shooting of which sparked off ongoing mass protests in the St. Louis suburb of around 21,000, to which the police responded with military tactics and gear.

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