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# The Campaign to Destroy Renee Nicole Good

After an ICE agent shot and killed the Minneapolis mother, conservative media launched an all-out attack on her reputation. Her identity as a queer woman was central to it.



PHOTOGRAPH: KEREM YUCEL/GETTY IMAGES

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On January 7, ICE agent Jonathan Ross shot Good through her car windshield and window in Minneapolis. She appeared to have four gunshot wounds, according to The New York Times, which cited a Minneapolis Fire Department report. Hours after the shooting, Department of Homeland Security secretary Kristi Noem accused Good of “[weaponizing] her vehicle.” President Donald Trump claimed the 37-year-old had “[violently, willfully, and viciously ran over] the agent who killed her. Vice President JD Vance called her death “[a tragedy of her own making.]”

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Bystander videos showed something different: Good trying to drive away when the shots were fired. Minneapolis mayor Jacob Frey called the self-defense narrative “bullshit.”

Despite the video evidence, conservative media fell in line immediately. Good was “100 percent to blame” for her own death, according to Matt Walsh of the Daily Wire. Megyn Kelly said it “was her own doing.” The verdict felt unanimous: She deserved it.

But the reasons used to justify her death have gone far beyond what she did or didn’t do with her car. Much of it has centered around Good’s identity as a queer woman.

Walsh called Good a “lesbian agitator.” Ian Miles Cheong, a right-wing commentator with millions of followers, called her a “rug munching leftist.” On Fox News, Jesse

Good was in a relationship with Becca Good, and the two had recently moved to Minneapolis looking “to make a better life” for themselves, according to a statement Becca released after her death. They left Kansas City, Missouri, for Canada following Trump’s 2024 election victory before heading back stateside, Xtra reported.

A couple days after Good was killed, footage that appears to be from Ross' cell phone leaked to conservative Minnesota outlet Alpha News. It shows the moments before the shooting. Good is behind the wheel and calmly tells the person filming, “I’m not mad at you.” Her partner, Becca, is outside the car, confronting Ross. Becca appears to be defiant and unafraid, telling the person behind the camera, “Go get yourself some lunch, big boy.” As Good tries to drive away, Ross fires several shots. Then, just before Good’s car crashes, a voice is heard saying: “Fucking bitch.”

Whoever leaked that video could have edited the slur out. They didn’t. And judging by reactions from right-wing influencers, they didn’t need to.

“There’s a real sense of disgust with women in the way that conservative media is talking about these kinds of protests,” says Courtney Hagle, research director at Media Matters for America, who has tracked the right-wing response to Good’s death. “They’re clearly very angry at the presence of women, and especially white women, liberal women.” The video, as Hagle puts it, “confirmed for them that this is not a human being that they should care about.”

Some of the commentary, including references to Becca as Good’s “so-called wife” also felt like an insidious way to delegitimize the Goods’ relationship.

Speaking to reporters aboard Air Force One, President Trump repeatedly referred to Becca Good as Renee’s “friend.” “The woman and her friend were highly disrespectful of law enforcement,” he said. Leigh Finke, a Minnesota state legislator and the state’s first openly trans elected official, says this kind of erasure sends a message. “All that they will portray it as is disrespectful lesbian women who are not obeying men in power.”

“my lesbian homies,” wrote one user in a widely shared post, “what IS the appeal of a woman who looks exactly like a very small and weak man?”

The reverse engineering of a justification for Good’s death has parallels to how Black people are treated when they are killed by authorities.

After George Floyd’s murder at the hands of police in 2020, right-wing media circulated his criminal history and toxicology report to argue he was no martyr. After Trayvon Martin’s death in 2012, they fixated on his hoodie and his school suspension. With Good, gender and sexuality have replaced race, but it’s the same takeaway: They weren’t innocent enough to mourn.

Good was white. She was Christian. She grew up in middle America. She had three children and started having them young. She was once married to a military veteran. On paper, her life looked like something the right might celebrate. And perhaps that accounts for some of the rage being directed at her now.

The attacks on Good’s motherhood fit this pattern. Newsmax’s Carl Higbie referred to Good as the “worst mother of the year” and said she should have been “at home with her kids.” A Fox News column about the shooting claimed “organized gangs of wine moms” are using “Antifa tactics” to interfere with ICE operations. The message has been clear: A good mother would have been home.

According to on-the-ground reporting, Good’s death is now being used to scare others who oppose the government’s actions.

ICE agents in Minnesota have been heard saying that protesters need to “learn” from what happened to her, according to the Intercept. On January 11, protester Patty O’Keefe told progressive independent outlet Status Coup News a federal agent detained her and said, “You guys need to stop obstructing us. That’s why that lesbian bitch is dead.” Another protester named Skye said they were detained and asked, “Have you not learned? This is why we killed that lesbian bitch.” A trans woman in St. Cloud, Minnesota, told independent journalist Marisa Kabas she and her girlfriend, who is also trans, were arrested by ICE on Monday; while detained, she

“brought up on federal charges.”

What the public is meant to “learn” from Good’s death seems unambiguous: Get in our way and this could happen to you.

Finke puts it simply. “This is the authoritarian value of Renee’s queer identity,” she says. “She was the warning.”

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