

Local Politics Matter

# Stop Violating Our Rights

## You Don't Own This Space



I recently read an article about Ving Rhames. He was held at gunpoint in his home by the police. One of his neighbors called 911 and reported a large black man breaking into the home across the street (his home). The police knocked on his door. When he opened the door, they had guns pointed at his chest (4 policemen, a police dog and the precinct captain). The cap-

tain recognized him as the father of a student who'd recently played basketball against his son and quickly de-escalated the situation. The captain, Mr. Rhames and an officer questioned the neighbor about the call and she denied making it. This particular incident ended without a physical confrontation or physical injury, but it could have easily ended

differently. What is it with white folks that they automatically assume the worse when they see a black person where they don't expect to see them (certainly not in what they consider their neighborhoods). They think nothing of the real threat that police confrontations pose to people of color. When will this stop. Why are we perceived as a threat in our own homes, in our own neighbor-

hoods?

I have some ideas about how to put an end to the harassment. Treat these calls like the police treat nuisance burglar alarms, fine the caller. Maybe they won't be so quick to dispatch the police. Maybe they'll take the time to know, at least by site, the people who live in close proximity to them. Another more drastic action would be to post signs in the neighborhood, don't be alarmed, people of color live in this neighborhood. Do not call the police if you see us walking in the community or entering our home. Call them out for the racists that they are, that might just do the trick!

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