**CLAYTON •** A stream of eyewitnesses has been testifying in secret before a grand jury considering whether to indict police officer Darren Wilson in the fatal shooting of **Michael Brown** near the Canfield Green apartments in **Ferguson**.

One Canfield resident — who said he saw the killing of Brown from start to finish and talked to the grand jury recently — has given the Post-Dispatch an account with some key differences from previous public statements from other witnesses.

Among the recollections of the witness, who agreed to an interview on the condition that his name not be used, were:

• After an initial scuffle in the car, the officer did not fire until Brown turned back toward him.

• Brown put his arms out to his sides but never raised his hands high.

• Brown staggered toward Wilson despite commands to stop.

• The two were about 20 to 25 feet apart when the last shots were fired.

He would not detail what he had told the grand jury but said the members seemed fair and asked a lot of questions.

Witnesses have given differing accounts since the white officer killed the unarmed black teen Aug. 9, triggering protests, riots and national attention.

[**READ POST-DISPATCH COVERAGE OF THE CASE**](http://www.stltoday.com/news/special-reports/michael-brown/)

Some have said that Wilson first fired as Brown ran away from him, then pumped off more shots after Brown turned around.

Some have said Brown raised his arms high in surrender, giving rise to a common protesters’ chant of “Hands up, don’t shoot” while mimicking the move. But this witness said Brown never put his hands straight up, but held his elbows straight out from his torso, with palms turned up in a sort of gesture of disbelief.

Perhaps the most widely quoted witness has been Brown’s companion that day, Dorian Johnson, who said Wilson had grabbed Brown by the throat through the open window of the officer’s police SUV. Johnson, 22, also said Wilson shot Brown at the car, then ran after Brown, who put his hands up in surrender, and then shot him again.

This latest witness, who is black, told the Post-Dispatch that Johnson took off running toward West Florissant Avenue after the first shot went off inside Wilson’s police SUV.

**HONEST ACCOUNTS CAN DIFFER**

Differences in witness accounts are no surprise to researchers, who even have a name for it: the Rashomon effect. It’s derived from the title of a Japanese movie in which four witnesses’ accounts of a rape and murder differ notably.

“That’s why anyone who wants to put complete faith in his statements is foolish and anyone who wants to completely discount what Dorian Johnson saw, is foolish,” said David Klinger, a University of Missouri-St. Louis criminologist. “It is entirely possible that multiple witnesses will recall different things. That’s why it’s critical to wait and see what all the evidence shows.”

Klinger, who has testified as an expert witness in numerous police shooting cases, recalls one in Houston in which one eyewitness said she saw an officer handcuff a teen, hogtie him and shoot him. Another witness, standing in nearly the same place, testified that the officer handcuffed the teen after he was shot, but the witness did not see him shot again or hogtied. “They’re not lying; they just have different stories,” Klinger said.

**WITNESS SAW ENCOUNTER FROM START TO FINISH**

In the latest account of the Brown killing, the witness said he saw Wilson’s police SUV stop near Brown and Johnson as they were walking in the middle of Canfield Drive. He said he heard Wilson say something to them, but not what. He said Wilson drove past them, then backed up.

The witness said he had been on the right side of the police SUV and did not have a clear view of what happened on the opposite, driver’s side. “There was a tussle going on,” he said, adding that he believes he saw Wilson’s hat fly off.

He then heard a shot and saw Brown run, followed by Wilson. He said Wilson aimed his handgun at Brown and yelled: “Stop! Stop! Stop!”

The witness said Brown did stop, mumbled something he could not clearly hear and took a step toward Wilson.

“When he stepped foot on that street, the officer told him to stop again, and he fired three shots,” the witness recalled. “When he (Brown) got hit, he staggered like, ‘Oh,’ and his body moved. Then he looked down.

“His hands were up like this (he gestures with arms out to the side and palms upward), and he was looking at the officer and was coming toward him trying to keep his feet and stand up. The officer took a few steps back and yelled, ‘Stop,’ again, and Michael was trying to stay on his feet.

“He was 20 to 25 feet from officer, and after he started staggering, he (Wilson) let off four more rounds. As he was firing those last rounds, Michael was on his way down. We were thinking, ‘Oh my God, oh my God, brother, stop, stop.’ He was already on his way down when he fired those last shots.”

The witness said Wilson didn’t have to kill Brown. “It went from zero to 100 like that, in the blink of an eye. ... What transpired to us, in my eyesight, was murder. Down outright murder.”

Ferguson police asked St. Louis County police to investigate the shooting. The county police have released no details about the physical evidence.

The Post-Dispatch confirmed that the witness did tell his story to police investigators. He said he testified about two weeks ago for about an hour to the St. Louis County grand jury deciding whether to indict Wilson.

Brown’s family hired Dr. Michael Baden, a nationally renowned forensic pathologist, to conduct a private autopsy after the one performed by the St. Louis County medical examiner. Baden said Brown was shot six times from the front, including once in the top of the head.

“It can be because he’s giving up, or because he’s charging forward at the officer,” Baden said.

The official autopsy has not been released.

Two men from outside the area who were working outside the apartment complex [previously told the Post-Dispatch](http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/workers-who-were-witnesses-provide-new-perspective-on-michael-brown/article_14a3e5f8-6c6a-5deb-92fe-87fcee622c29.html) that Wilson chased Brown on foot away from the car after the initial gunshot, and fired at least one more shot in Brown’s direction as he fled. They said that Brown stopped, turned around and put his hands up, and that the officer killed him in a barrage of gunfire.

The men also said they never heard the officer say anything to Brown before opening fire, and that they heard Brown scream, “OK! OK! OK! OK! OK! OK!”

The man who spoke recently to the newspaper said those witnesses were about the same distance from the action as he was.

The witness also said he previously had seen Brown walking around Canfield Green, near the shooting scene, several times and knew that a friend of Brown’s lived nearby. He said that he was surprised by a video showing Brown stealing from a convenience store minutes before he was killed and shoving a store clerk who tried to stop him.

“Everyone has a little dark secret, but all I know is that anytime I’ve been in his presence, he was very cordial,” the witness said. “He was one of the few in all the years I’ve lived out here with all these young guys who ever addressed me as ‘sir’ and asked me how I was doing instead of, ‘What’s up, dog?’ ”