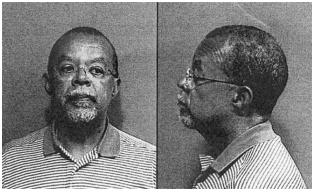


Harvard Scholar, Tongue of Blunder



On July 16, 2009, a woman reported seeing “two black males with backpacks on the porch of a home, and one of them was “wedging his shoulder into the door as if he was trying to force an entry” and officers responded.

But it turns out that the “burglar” was really a prominent black scholar Henry Louis Gates Jr., who had just returned home from a trip overseas with a driver, and found his front-door jammed and had to force it open. He was already inside, calling the company that manages the property, when the police arrived.

Police said the 58-year-old Gates, was arrested after police said he "exhibited loud and tumultuous behavior." He yelled at an officer, accused him of racial bias and refused to calm down after the officer demanded Gates show him identification to prove he lived in the home.

Gates did show his driver's license and Harvard ID — both with his photos — and then, repeatedly asked for the name and badge number of the officer, who refused. Gates followed the officer as he left his house onto his front porch, where he was arrested for disorderly conduct.

Later, prosecutors dropped the charge, with the city of Cambridge issuing a statement saying the arrest "was regrettable and unfortunate," and police and Gates agreed that dropping the charge was a just resolution.

"This incident should not be viewed as one that demeans the character and reputation of professor Gates or the character of the Cambridge Police Department," the statement said.

However, Gates, who now has a lawyer, and his supporters, including the Rev. Jesse Jackson, say that he was the victim of racial profiling. Nonsense! "The charges have been dropped, but the stain remains. ... Humiliation remains," Jackson said. "These incidents are so much of a national pattern on race."

These officers were just doing their job following up on a report from a concerned citizen about a break-in, whom the witness described the “would-be burglar” as black. That’s not racial-profiling, that’s an eye-witness account!

With Gates’ credentials, holding one of 20 prestigious "university professors" positions at the school, host of "African American Lives," a PBS show about the family histories of prominent U.S. blacks, and named by Time magazine as one of the 25 most influential Americans, you would think that he had more sense than to yell at the top of his lungs, accusing police of racial profiling while the police were responding to protect his home. Then again, maybe not. Maybe those charges shouldn’t have been dropped.