



# THE GOOD CITIZEN

BY BENJAMIN RASMUSSEN

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April 7 - May 25

Friday, April 7th 5pm - 8pm

6:30pm Artist Talk



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*The Good Citizen* explores how society in the United States came to be what it is today. Who was freely invited into this space and who wasn't? In what ways are the ripples of our past seen in our present? How can we engage more honestly with our history?

Over a period of eight years, photographer Benjamin Rasmussen travelled to 43 states and photographed over 500 people as he investigated the impact of the country's complex history on contemporary society.

In the book version of *The Good Citizen*\*, Rasmussen's photographs are combined with essays by Frank H. Wu. Collectively they seek to provoke thought and conversation around the complicated nature of US identity.

A monograph of *The Good Citizen* was published in 2023 by [GOST books](#) with essays by Frank H. Wu.

1 Crew 174 on an EVA in Lith Canyon. *Mars Desert Research Station, Hanksville, Utah*  
"In reaffirming our heritage as a free nation, we must remember that America has always been a frontier nation. Now we must embrace the next frontier: America's manifest destiny in the stars,"

President Donald Trump's State of the Union Address, February 4, 2020

2 The view from where Colonel Chivington and his men began their attack on Sand Creek. *Kiowa County, Colorado*

3 The view from where Arapahoe and Cheyenne women and children watched themilitia riding towards them. *Kiowa County, Colorado*

Chivington attacked the village [of Sand Creek] early in [the] morning. I had not got out of bed when I heard soldiers were coming. I looked towards Black Kettle's lodge and he had [an American] flag on [a] pole in front of his lodge. Just then the soldiers opened fire from all sides of the Village. We past (sic) good many men women and children. Killed. Good many of these were scalped. I suppose you have read how some women were cut up and the men also. Chivington's men did not leave us until 5 in evening. Chivington's men took 2 girls and a boy with them. The government got the boy back from [a circus] show. This boy, of course now man, is living. Name Tom White Shirt.

Bent, George. (March 15, 1905) [Letter from George Bent to historian George E. Hyde about Bent's recollection of the Sand Creek Massacre].

4 Thirty-five descendants of Tom White Shirt. *Eads, Oklahoma*

5 A chest piece looted from the body of an Arapahoe brave in Sand Creek and kept in the killer's family for 150 years. *Kiowa County, Colorado*

6 Bald eagle before necropsy. *National Eagle Repository, Commerce City, Colorado*

- 7 Eleven-year-old Ashlynn Mike's last view before being murdered.  
*Shiprock, Navajo Nation, New Mexico*
- 8 "With the faith and courage of their forefathers who made possible the freedom of these United States" - Statue of Liberty replica dedication plaque. *Garden City, Kansas*

- 9 A makeshift mosque in a Somali apartment complex. *Garden City, Kansas*
- Stein then texted Brian that he was emotionally prepared to carry out an attack. "I will just tell you the game plan... They have taken some of the apartments and converted them into their mosques. So we were going to use trashcan's (sic) that were modified on the inside to make a directional blast and set them on the outside of the mosque both sides of the building set them off at the same time and throw a fucking party! LOL"

United States v. Stein, No. 19-3030 (10th Cir. 2021)

- 10 President Donald Trump enters his private living room. *White House Executive Residence, Washington, DC*
- 11 Community members reenact the Moore's Ford Lynching to create pressure for the case to be reopened. *Walton County, Georgia*

**The Place:** Moore's Ford Bridge across the Apalachee River that divides Walton and Oconee Counties in North Georgia - approximately an hour's drive from Atlanta.

**The Time:** July 25, 1946, nearing sunset.

**The Victims:** All black Americans

Roger Malcolm - age 24

Dorothy Malcolm - age 20 (common-law wife of Roger Malcolm and sister of George Dorsey)

George Dorsey - age 28

Mae Murray Dorsey - age 23 (common-law wife of George Dorsey)

The four occupants of the car never reached their destination on that fateful afternoon.

It was rumored that George Dorsey, after he came home from the Service in World War II, became more bold in his social attitude... Was this a possible motive, the reason why the mob had included him the massacre? But why should the wives of Roger and George become victims? They may have recognized one or more members of the mob.

Georgia Bureau of Investigations. (2000, December). Investigative Case Summary (No. 44-HQ-1421).

- 12 Flowers and stuffed animals placed at the site of Micheal Brown's killing.  
*Ferguson, Missouri*
- 13 A memorial wall for Micheal Brown. *Ferguson, Missouri*
- 14 Twelve of the hundreds of people who came out to West Florissant Avenue in Ferguson, Missouri, to protest the killing of Michael Brown; Three miles south on West Florissant Avenue is Calvary Cemetery, where Dred Scot is buried.  
*Ferguson, Missouri*
- 15 A rose handed out to protestors. *Ferguson, Missouri*
- 16 Franklin Knight. *Ferguson, Missouri*

This is the stuff that I have learned in history class about what happened to our people. To be living it again makes you ask, "Did it ever go away?"  
Melissa Miller

- 17 1958 Roger B. Taney revenue stamp Department of Internal Revenue
- The long trumpeted decision of the Supreme Court in the Dred Scott case was pronounced by Judge Taney yesterday... This decision, we need hardly say, is entitled to just so much moral weight as would be the judgment of a majority of those congregated in any Washington bar-room.  
Horace Greeley, New York Tribune, March 7, 1857
- 18 Border surveillance tower photograph with artificial intelligence identification.  
*Jeff Davis County, Texas*

- 19 Sonoran Desert crossing corridor in the Growler Valley.  
*Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge, Arizona*
- If we use six liters as a minimum adequate intake for adults walking several miles a day during hot summer months, a person would need to consume approximately 1.6 gallons a day to prevent dehydration. If someone walks for three days, which is the approximate time it takes to get from the border to one of the common rendezvous locations in southern Arizona (e.g., Three Points), they minimally need to carry 4.8 gallons. A gallon of water weighs 8.35 pounds, which means that someone carrying four gallons starts their trip with 33.4 lbs of liquid. This weight would be augmented by food, extra clothes, and other supplies. Based on my observations and interviews, the maximum amount of water an adult can carry is four gallons, with many opting to bring between one and two.
- De León, J. (2012). "Better to Be Hot than Caught": Excavating the Conflicting Roles of Migrant Material Culture. *American Anthropologist*, 114(3), 477-495.
- 20 Abandoned gallon water jug #1-5.  
*Growler Valley, Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge, Arizona*
- 21 Shelves of files on the unidentified remains of 1192 people who died in Sonoran Desert while attempting to cross the border. *Pima County Morgue, Tucson, Arizona*
- 22 Personal effects of an unidentified border crosser, ML#: 18-2014  
*Pima County Morgue, Tucson, Arizona*
- 23 Part of rural northern Vietnam targeted by the United States Air Force and Navy during Operation Rolling Thunder, when 864,000 tons of bombs were dropped between 1965-1968. *Black River, Vietnam*
- 24 Herb 'Moon' Kurima was a Nisei, or second generation Japanese American. Of the 120,000 Japanese Americans who were placed in internment camps in America during World War II, 80,000 were Nisei. *Sacramento, California*
- 25 A Nisei soldier of the Japanese American 442nd Infantry Regiment, the most decorated unit in US Military history. *Germany*
- 26 Veterans from WWII through Operation Iraqi Freedom VFW Branch 1.  
*Denver, Colorado*
- 27 A boot and helmet recovered and returned in fifty-five boxes of unearthed remains of soldiers missing in action during the Korean War.  
*Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, Honolulu, Hawaii*
- 28 Khalaf Hesso and Salman Haji in the field that will become the first Yazidi cemetery outside of Iraq. *Lincoln, Nebraska*
- 29 Memorial mural reading, 'Ashlyne M., Forever In Our Hearts.'  
*Shiprock, Navajo Nation, New Mexico*
- 30 Baian Taleb, Miss Arab USA 2016-2017. *Melbourne, Florida*
- 31 Juri Watanabe, Miss Asia USA 2016. *Palos Verdes Estates, California*
- 32 Gboea Flumo, Miss Liberia US 2016. *Fort Washington, Maryland*
- 33 Kalea Pitel, Miss Philippines USA 2016. *San Diego, California*
- 34 Jessica Mustelier, Miss Cuban American 2017. *Miami, Florida*
- 35 Ritika Singh, Miss India Florida 2015. *Fort Lauderdale, Florida*
- 36 Lola Abeni Adeoye, Miss Nigeria USA 2016. *Bowie, Maryland*
- 37 Jasmine Cho, Miss Korea USA 2016. *Los Angeles, California*
- 38 Monika Cavanagh, Miss Texas Czech-Slovak 2016-2017. *Flatonia, Texas*
- 39 Slides each holding the DNA profiles of 24 customers Family Tree DNA.  
*Houston, Texas*

## CURATORIAL NOTE

The photographs in *The Good Citizen* stretch across the wall like a timeline in a history book. Rather than chronologically, the works unfurl thematically, with each subject bleeding into its neighbor on the wall. Benjamin Rasmussen holds our gaze on parts of the history of the United States that are hard to digest. The accompanying captions in this booklet provide insight into the specific situations pictured and the ways that they link together. Every photograph voices a piece of a larger whole, of the overlapping patterns of exclusion, violence, and injustice within the United States.

## ARTIST BIO

Benjamin Rasmussen was raised in the Philippines by a North American mother and a Faroese father. Since moving to the United States 20 years ago, he has grappled with his North American citizenship and the privilege inherent within it.

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