

THE POLICE CRITIC

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The National Police Association's free Law Enforcement education series is designed for home school, classroom, or independent learning. As part of our nonprofit educational mission, it prepares you for careers in public safety. This series is authored by [Chief Joel F. Shults, Ed.D.](#)

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Police need to recruit candidates with ESP

Yes, ladies and gentlemen, it is time for a new breed of police officer. The antiquated idea that police officers must use split-second observations to respond to potentially lethal threats will no longer reign. The simple answer is to recruit only police officers who are clairvoyant.

Officers with the skill of seeing into the minds of others with extrasensory perception (ESP) along with other psychic abilities will be tested under real-world conditions. These new officers, to be known as PsychCops, must qualify with a new testing program in order to pass muster.

First, they must be able to see and identify objects under low light conditions. According to a federal publication on firearms training, at least 90% of officer-involved shootings happen in less than daylight conditions. Non-psychic law enforcement officers (NPLEOs) can only use their natural senses to determine if a suspect is carrying a deadly weapon or a cell phone. The NPLEO has less than a half-second to decide if they must use force to avoid being killed. The PsychCop will know even before entering a dark building or approaching a car at night whether a weapon is present and how many adversaries they might be facing. They'll also sense that bystanders are either friendly or hostile and will know exactly when a backup officer will arrive.

Second, to be a PsychCop, a candidate will have to be able to predict the trajectory of a person fleeing from a crime. The NPLEO can't predict whether a suspect will be going into a populated area, will seek refuge in a home of innocent occupants and potential hostages, or will conceal themselves to prepare to ambush the officer. The PsychCop will be able to predict whether a fleeing felon or disturbed person will be a threat to others or not. This will be exceptionally useful in vehicle pursuits, no longer requiring an officer to decide whether to let an offender speed away or whether to do their best to apprehend them before anyone else is harmed.

Third, with new demands that police be able to diagnose mental illness and substance use, the PsychCop is the perfect candidate. Knowing whether a person's attitude will turn violent or not will be a great convenience. The new mind-reading police officer will know how many voices are inside the head of the citizen they encounter. They'll know if weapons are nearby, and if the person is willing and able to use them. Is the citizen suicidal? Do they want the police to kill them? How will they react if I ask to talk with them, or ask if I can move a little closer? The NPLEO can never know, but the PsychCop can.

Fourth, the PsychCop candidate must be able to telepathically know the mood of members of the public to succeed in the public relations area. Even before stopping a vehicle, the PsychCop will know if a driver is suspended or wanted for a crime. They'll know if the person is already having a bad day if they knew their headlight was out, and if they are late for work or a very

important person who pays their taxes and knows the Chief.

Predicting the future has already become a requirement for police officers as some courts have blamed officers for provoking suspects into fleeing or fighting, as though the suspect is no longer accountable for their own actions. Officers have been disciplined and even prosecuted for not knowing if a dangerous suspect was incapacitated after three shots or required four to stop the threat or attack. They also are blamed when any active shooter is found to have had reports of odd behavior or contact with the police since law enforcement should have known that this person, out of the hundreds or thousands of suspicious person complaints, will actually do harm.

The American public is excited by watching sports where well-trained athletes scramble to respond in split seconds to opponents' movements. The crowd may groan when a play is missed, but that's just an expected part of the game. Police officers must make those decisions under uncontrolled and unpredictable circumstances where the suspect is not constrained by rules and no referee is near. But police officers must be psychic.

Small Agencies Deserve Respect

There are nearly 19,000 law enforcement agencies in the United States employing an estimated 700,000 police officers. Exact numbers fluctuate as new agencies are added and others dissolve. There are many part time and reserve officers, as well as correctional officers who are sometimes counted as certified peace officers and sometimes not. The number of correctional officers is estimated at 400,000, and adding probation and parole staff there are over a million government agents on the front lines.

While about a third of the number of police officers are employed by about 70 state and local agencies that have over 1000 police officers. Only 5% of agencies employ more than 100 police officers. Most police departments across the country have fewer than ten police officers, including almost 20% of all agencies that employ only one officer or only part-time officers.

Even in agencies that have large numbers, the geographic areas covered by some state and county law enforcement can cover hundreds of square miles per officer assigned. Small agency officers and those in remote assignments often work face unique challenges compared to their urban colleagues. Support services are not just around the corner. Cases may be worked by a single officer from start to finish. Help may be miles away.

Small agencies must develop good relationships with other law enforcement partners in major cases and

events. Many share dispatch duties with larger agencies, since communications personnel and equipment is a big expense and highly regulated. While best established through formal mutual aid agreements and memoranda of agreement, many times the help comes because the shape of the badge becomes irrelevant when the call for help goes out.

Many communities have chosen to contract for police services with larger agencies rather than bear the expense of having their own police department. Most communities choose to maintain control over their own fate and hang on to their local department, even if it consists of only one or two officers. The advantages of knowing who will be coming to one's home to answer the call for help may be one reason why a higher percentage of crimes in small jurisdictions are solved than larger, better resourced agencies. Personal relationships are key to community policing, and that's a skill long practiced in small agencies.

Small town officers often know perpetrators by name and may know their parents and family. These officers may be accustomed to being called at home rather than through dispatch because everyone knows their phone number. Most police officers never know the end of the story they helped write. If these small agency officers can accept the typically lower wages of small departments, lack of resources, hand me down patrol cars, and stay with the agency over time, they have the immeasurable rewarding experience of watching how their influence in the community plays out over time.

One thing small department officers have to live with is the perception that they have little exposure to “big city” crime and danger. The criminal element may have that same outlook as they choose to hide out or operate from small towns and the hoped for anonymity of isolated spaces with limited law enforcement. Officer deaths are as frequent in lesser populated areas as in urban settings. Banks are robbed, children are abused, lovers are murdered, and businesses are burglarized in every size jurisdiction. Fraud victims are just as easily found in the country as in the city. Criminal elements avoid highly policed trafficways for transport of stolen goods and drugs. Vehicles crash, trains wreck, buildings burn, planes fall, and people have psychotic breakdowns in places other than New York City. The small agency officer is the responder, scene commander, and emergency services coordinator. They may be waiting for the volunteer ambulance crew and the volunteer fire department to gather at the station before heading out to help. The state crime scene team or the FBI specialists are more than willing to help, but perhaps not until tomorrow. The closest SWAT team or bomb squad may be hours away. Despite the additional perception that small agency officers are not well trained, they’ve often handled more on their own than their urban colleagues who have special units to take over on a call.

When we salute America’s police officers, we should never forget the men and women who work in the not so uncommon obscurity of small agency policing, and the community of law enforcement that supports them.

Recruitment Video Showing Police Work Deemed Offensive

I recently went for my annual eye exam. I should have asked the optometrist if I have suffered any permanent damage from rolling my eyes so much.

Brooklyn Center, a suburb of Minneapolis, posted a recruiting video on its website that has raised the ire of a few dozen citizens, some of whom actually live in Brooklyn Center. The video is an action-packed invitation to join the crime fighters of Brooklyn Center. With scenes of officers mounting up for duty, weapons ready, to the tune of some hard-driving music, the voice-over talks about the challenges of the job. It ends with a video of an armed suspect being stopped. It's a video of police doing police work in all of its offensive glory. If I were a young person thinking about a career it would definitely grab my attention.

The ghost of George Floyd is all over Brooklyn Center, as is the fresh memory of an officer firing her service weapon which she mistook for her Taser while subduing a resistive driver at the end of a pursuit. No question that was tragic and will remain a stain on the department for the foreseeable future and beyond.

Another suspect death seems much more forgivable but anti-police narratives faulted officers. Officers were called by the grandparents of an emotionally distressed relative in their home in fear of the subject. According to prosecution reports, "the four Brooklyn Center police officers who initially responded to the scene used

de-escalation tactics and seemed to have calmed down (the subject). Even when he sprang from his chair, grabbed a knife and attempted to stab one of the officers, three officers fired their Tasers, with no effect. Then, and only then, did they fire their guns” and “Both officers saw (the suspect) attempting to stab (an officer) with a knife,” according to the prosecutor’s report. “Officers attempted to subdue (the suspect) with tasers to no avail. With all less lethal options exhausted, officers were justified in resorting to deadly force.”

After the recruiting video was released, several citizens stated that it was “triggering” and full of “police propaganda” and that the video did not reflect the diversity of the community which is 67% black. The video ends with the challenge “be the change”.

As a critical part of the democratic experience, the law enforcement structure in the U.S. is intentionally local. Rather than an oppressive central police agency affiliated with the military as is the model around the world, local governments form their law enforcement agencies. It is the people of the area served – whether state, country, city, or special districts – who determine what their police agency should be. This is usually left to elected and appointed officials whose specialized knowledge and accountability to voters make choices in the best interests of their constituents.

So the question for Brooklyn Center is whose voice do they listen to in their recruitment efforts? Certainly, every voice should be heard. There may be merit or a kernel of truth in even extreme views. But the silent are often those who need to be heard the most. One must

wonder if wholesale policies and strategies should change because fifty people show up at a city council meeting. And how many of those protesting Brooklyn Center's video are residents of Brooklyn Center? Reports on the objections cite people and groups who may have an interest in police reform but don't have to live and work in Brooklyn Center. It's entirely possible that a significant majority of residents would be very happy to have crime fighters hired for their police department. Perhaps when they see these images they see men and women headed toward a danger no one else cares to face. That the final scene of the video showing a man with a gun call resolved by an arrest and the seizure of the weapon might be greeted with applause. On the other hand, perhaps the citizenry wants clips of officers playing basketball with neighborhood kids, petting puppies, doing lip-sync dance moves, and weeping along with a homeless person.

The reality is that all of those soft compassionate skills are going to be part of those who are inspired to do things that make people safer, not merely feel better about themselves. Officers who arrest armed criminals are the same officers who can cradle a child, comfort a crime victim, care for a lost pet, and counsel a suicidal person. Of course, a few minutes of video cannot portray all that an officer will be called upon to do, but recruits deserve to know about the hard things. As BCPD Chief Kellace McDaniel, while responding to the criticism, said "Guaranteeing safety and security is the main thing we do at the Police Department."

Erasing Excited Delirium- Science or Politics

From a Force Science Institute report: “In a move strongly supportive of law enforcement, a special investigative task force of the American College of Emergency Physicians has formally declared that the violent and sometimes lethal phenomenon known as “excited delirium” really does exist.”

From the American College of Medical Toxicology: “Although we support discontinuing the use of the term “excited delirium,” we believe that it is useful to have terminology describing the clinical condition of a patient with dangerous psychomotor hyperactivity and agitation while the final etiology and diagnosis are being determined. We prefer the term “hyperactive delirium with agitation” to describe this initial undifferentiated presentation of patients with altered mental status who are aggressive or have vital signs suggestive of excessive adrenergic activity. “Hyperactivity,” “delirium,” and “agitation” are clear and established medical terms.”

From the Psychiatric Times: “There is universal confusion around excited delirium syndrome (ExDS): What is it and how should it be treated? The short answer is we do not know the answers, and there are no comprehensive treatment guidelines or formal criteria, according to a panel presenting at the 2021 American Psychiatric Association (APA) Annual Meeting.”

From the National Center for Biotechnology: “Although more research is needed to elucidate cause and effect,

it is important to note that a lack of recognition of the condition in the context of law enforcement activities does not negate the significance of the behavioral and physical signs referred to as EXD. For instance, one important study found that only 18 of 214 individuals identified as having EXD died while being restrained or taken into custody.⁶ If anything, the possible association with other life-threatening syndromes only gives impetus to the need for critical emergency medical intervention when encountering a person thought to be in a state of excited delirium.”

From The National Association of Medical Examiners: “The National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) has instructed its members to stop listing “excited delirium” on death certificates. The term has been used for too long to justify police force, the group said.” But also: “Some experts warn that regardless of what words are used, police will still encounter subjects exhibiting the behaviors associated with the phrase.”

In 2009 the American College of Emergency Physicians “formally recognized excited delirium as a unique syndrome. patients who experience this condition are at a higher risk of injury and death. Tragically, ExD patients have a fatality rate of approximately 10%, with 75% of those deaths occurring on scene or during transport” as quoted by Andrew Pachon, MD; and Tiffany M. Abramson, MD in an article on EMS1.com. “First responders must recognize ExD patients are experiencing medical emergencies and are not simply non-cooperative suspects. A review of the use of force with excited delirium patients has shown that standard de-escalation tactics are likely to be ineffective. ExD

patients are often described as “impervious to pain” and therefore pain compliance techniques, including distraction strikes and/or the use of a TASER device, are ineffective. As outlined above, these patients are predisposed to hyperthermia and muscle breakdown and therefore, physical restraint alone is likely to be ineffective and further exacerbate these conditions as the patient continues to fight against restraints.”

So are we crystal clear now? Various science groups are dancing around the phrase and characteristics under the general umbrella of suspicion that law enforcement is leveraging the phrase to cover up good old fashioned brutality. But whatever you call it, the behavior cluster is real and presents an imminent threat to the person experiencing it.

When officers and EMS arrive on a chaotic scene where someone is taking off their clothes, agitated, yelling, incoherent, unresponsive to de-escalation efforts, often damaging property, and impervious to pain, usually under the influence of drugs and underlying medical conditions what are they to do? With all due regard to the researchers and commentators, the reality is that when this behavior happens in the street away from the resources and expertise of the hospital, clinical quandaries disappear, and the survival of the patient and first responders. They can't just walk away from the crisis.

As Force Science Institute writer, attorney Von Kliem has stated: “Discussions that should be aimed at identifying the best emergency response protocols for suspected ExDS cases have instead become racialized

and hyper-politicized. Conversations around ExDS have become volatile, divisive, and no longer reflect purely physiological or psychological considerations.”

Call it what you want, but don't say the phenomenon doesn't exist just because it happens on the streets where commentators fear to tread.

Police Antagonists a Root Ingredient of Murder

Violent crime has skyrocketed in recent months and criminologists are asking why. The increase in the murder rate means that more than 2000 Americans, the majority of whom were black, died in 2020 than in the previous year.

Researchers and commentators are quick to go to the usual suspects when it comes to reasons that crime goes up or down. Was the economy good or bad? Was there unusual weather activity? Was the nation at war? The year 2020 guesses included COVID and political strife. Crime statistics, mostly reflected in the annual FBI crime report, are reported as national in scope but the reality is that there are distinct differences in crime patterns that suspiciously reflect urban areas where police are under political attack.

The increase numbers are stunning: 95% in Milwaukee, 78% in Louisville, Ky., 74% in Seattle, 72% in Minneapolis, 62% in New Orleans, and 58% in Atlanta according to highly regarded crime analyst Jeff Asher. Disturbingly these deaths included 55 children killed in Chicago in 2020, 17 in St. Louis, and 11 in Philadelphia. In South Los Angeles, over 40 children were shot before the year was over.

In analysis by Heather Mac Donald, JD, an expert in policing and public safety, she notes that the pandemic and its trauma cannot be blamed for the increase. The timeline just doesn't match. She observes that crime fell during the initial phases of the COVID shut down in

America and around the world. By the end of May, the trend reversed, and only in the U.S., not globally. If one cause world-wide were traced to be the root of a phenomena, the effect would be similar everywhere. But there was something different about the last half of 2020 in the United States.

Continuing MacDonald's observations from her book *The War on Cops* (2016), a New York Times bestseller, she warns that raced-based attacks on the criminal-justice system, from the White House on down, are eroding the authority of law which results in lawlessness.

In addition to the political pandering and rhetoric there are plenty of influences, as reported often here at the NPA, that are suppressing the maintenance of law and order. They include risk assessment by police officers on patrol, removal of protections for police officers, weak police leaders, and weak prosecutors.

The police profession is made up of men and women who are highly aware of the risks of their profession. To say that their lives are at risk is not an overly dramatic exaggeration. In addition to lethal injuries, thousands of police officers suffer debilitating injuries every year for which there is no national database to measure. Injuries include some that end up in the loss of their career, chronic pain, and shorter life spans. The more we know about trauma to the brain, the more we understand the extent of physical and mental stresses that can alter their quality of life. Add to that the strains of shift work and lack of quality sleep. None of these things keep our

officers from answering the call of duty. It is a package of risks they are willing to accept.

We now see police officers making a different risk assessment. Is it worth contacting a suspicious person? Is it worth making that traffic enforcement stop? Will I offend someone and end up being fired? Will I be on an edited viral video after being set up for provocation and attack? Does my public want me being active or will I be punished for doing what the law allows and the job demands? If there is a controversial action I must take will I have legal protections or am I risking my personal financial future? Will I have enough back up with force reductions and defunding? This intentional doubt and fear placed on law enforcement by police antagonists suppresses quality law enforcement.

At the same time, offenders are emboldened to resist, taunt, and even attack police officers. Prosecutors fail to punish rioters. Politicians encourage violent dissent. The media accepts the narratives of offenders while the police remain silent. Legislation continues to tie the hands of the enforcers and liberate the offenders. When society gives tacit or express permission to oppose those whom society has also commissioned to suppress crime, there will be no tie game. There will only be victory to the offenders who care little about the effects of their behavior.

If communities are concerned that the wave of violent crime will come to their doorstep there is a strategy that will prevent and reduce crime: support quality law enforcement.

Uniformed Officers Rejected From Public Places

Georgia State Patrol troopers confirmed that 54-year-old Officer Jean-Harold Louis Astree of the Fairbanks, GA police department was pronounced dead at the scene after a four-vehicle crash. Astree was driving an unmarked Fairburn Police Department Dodge Charger. Among his surviving family is his daughter, Laurali, as a student at Alexander High School, and 7-year-old Jonathon who attended his first day at Mason Creek Elementary just days after his father's death.

When seven colleagues of Sgt. Astree arrived to escort Laurali, in the company of Astree's widow, the school's principal rushed out in distress and lectured the officers saying that their presence was panicking the parents and students. Laurali became so upset at the treatment of the officers – and the fact that the principal did not speak to her or her mother – that she had to leave school to be picked up by a relative. The principal was still griping about the officers' presence at that time and is quoted as saying "I didn't see why this was necessary", apparently referring to the escort. Whether the constant anti-police rhetoric of the NEA teacher's union played into his sentiments is not known.

Kelli Lowe of the National Police Wives Association issued a call to her group's membership to ask the school board for an apology from the principal. Lowe has visited with the Astree family and some of the officers involved in the escorts. She explained that, while she can understand that the presence of several police officers can be alarming under some

circumstances, the officers were clearly not postured or moving around in a way to indicate that there was any trouble or emergency at the school.

Lowe also verified that Fairbanks Police had attempted on three occasions to contact the school and give them advance notice of the officers' plans but got no response from the school. Lowe talked about officers being required to understand various cultures and wondered why others fail to attempt to understand the culture of law enforcement families. One of the traditions often carried out by surviving officers of a line of duty death is to escort the deceased officer's children to events normally attended by the parent. Officers escort children of the fallen to their first day of school, to prom, to graduation, and to other significant events where the absence of the parent creates a need for comfort and support.

Another recent news report cites a decision by Cold Truth Soft Serve ice cream shop in Midtown Detroit to refuse service to police officers wearing body armor. Owner Timothy Mahoney, a veteran and longtime citizen of Detroit, explained that first responders wearing normal body armor were welcome, just not the heavy tactical vests worn by special units. He claims to understand the "us v. them" mentality, but doesn't explain how wearing protective gear as part of the job fosters such a division.

To counter Mahoney's comments, a former police officer with funding from Michigan Insurance and Financial services handed out free cones from an ice cream truck parked near Cold Truth for several hours.

Social media comments seem to be in overwhelming condemnation of the store's refusal policy. The day was punctuated with an unrelated murder of Detroit police officer Loren Michael Courts.

Reports of coffee shops and restaurants refusing to serve officers in uniform are not rare, although it must be said that most businesses appreciate having visits from police officers because they recognize that most citizens appreciated them and feel safer in their presence. A San Antonio steakhouse made a swift apology for refusing to seat a police officer because the officer was carrying a gun. A Tempe, Arizona Starbucks refused service to police officers, resulting in peace talks with the management of both entities.

Sheriff Chad Bianco of the Riverside, CA Sheriff's office said on Twitter that "the anti-police culture repeatedly displayed by Starbucks employees must end" after two deputies were refused service there. Two employees of a Cook Out restaurant in North Carolina were fired after refusing service to two Roxboro Police officers. A sign at Molly Moon's Homemade Ice Cream on Capitol Hill in Seattle states that the shop is a gun-free zone. It says specifically to police, "Please do not come inside if you are wearing a firearm." Owner Molly Moon Neitzel put the sign up after protestors took over the East Precinct. We know how well that worked out.

While survey after survey cites the rebuilding of appreciation for police after the disastrous results of defunding and anti-police foolishness, a few misguided employees or business owners are still trying to make a point. Some claim it is to open a dialog – one they would

not open by refusing racial minority customers to open talks on racism or by refusing to serve Presbyterians to foster theological debate.

One thing we do know about places that refuse basic decency to police officers, they may not be able to get ice cream, but they'll be there when the owners call 911.

Erasing the Thin Blue Line Means More Crime

It didn't take long for the citizens of Los Angeles to suffer the consequences of rash political decisions aimed at satisfying police critics. Hundreds more LA residents suffered murder and violent injury during 2020, a year of knee jerk decisions by politicians. In the most counterintuitive strategy since the use of blood-letting leeches on the sick, policing was discouraged, pulled back, and defunded in a time of chaos and disorder.

In November of 2020 LAPD Chief Michael Moore announced that the \$150 million budget cut to his department would result in cuts to its air support, robbery and homicide and gang and narcotics units. A reduction of 350 sworn officers and a number of civilian staff accompanies a reduction in reduced desk hours at its stations, and special deployments. The department will cut its air support, robbery and homicide and gang and narcotics units and stop staffing teams that cover homelessness issues. Los Angeles schools had already canceled a third of its school resource officers.

Activists were calling for a 90% cut to the LAPD budget.

In an apparent attempt to convince the public that this was a move forward, the Chief stated that the changes were part of a broad reorganization geared to preserving patrol and community engagement functions. Moore was already facing sinking morale amid reports that officers had little confidence that the Chief and political leaders of the city were supporting

the department. He had issued a letter of apology to his officers about comments made during the summer's disturbances and demands for police reform.

Spring hadn't even sprung when Los Angeles began to open their eyes to the bloodshed Angelenos suffered while police operations were being cut. Homicides increased by more than a third and the increase in non-lethal shootings was over 40%. The Metro Transit Authority increased their budget by \$36 million to enhance safety on their systems. The decision was made by the governing board of the area transit system whose chairperson voted in favor of the increase. The chairperson is none other than LA Mayor Eric Garcetti, a major cheerleader of defunding his own city's police.

Agreements with LAPDs officer associations have been reached to maintain pension and insurance benefits, along with some promised salary increases.

Meanwhile, to no intelligent person's shock, Minneapolis ponders how to get rid of it's police department while simultaneously spending over \$6 million dollars to recruit officers. While politicians debate, there has been a 250% increase in gunshot victims so far this year in the city.

Myopic observers seem to be afraid to point to the evisceration of law enforcement as a direct cause of the increase in violence. Everything from climate change to COVID-19 to the Trump presidency has been offered up as a theory, with the occasional nod to a reduction in police activity. It is hard to measure both the fear and "fedupness" that police officers feel in deciding to

perform their duties. Optional activities such as contacting suspicious persons, enforcing traffic laws, and high visibility patrol are often curtailed to avoid confrontations that can be the target of criticism and accusations. These preventive activities long been a lawful and expected aspect of basic police work. But the public will never be policed beyond their acceptance of law enforcement. The fewer people who appreciate and encourage effective law enforcement and are willing to make that known to policy makers, the less law enforcement activity they will see.

The grand experiment with defunding LAPD and taking police dollars to fund community groups and non-law enforcement responses is being replicated in cities across the United States. It is not just our police officers being attacked and discouraged, it is the blood of citizens who are being failed by politicians catering to the loudest voices and not to fact and reason.

How To Tell When the Police Critic Doesn't Know What They Are Talking About

The ludicrous commentary by celebrities about recent officer-involved shootings is an extreme example of the lack of knowledge of physics and human capacity as it relates to officer decision-making. The same tired arguments and misunderstandings have been going on for years. Some common topics arise when lay persons talk about police use of force, and most of them are erroneous in fact or interpretation. Here is a sample.

Clue # 1 They include the Trayvon Martin case in examples of police shootings. Martin was shot by a neighborhood watch coordinator in what a jury later accepted as self-defense. The controversy regarding police was their initial conclusion that it was a case of self-defense. The shooter, George Zimmerman, was a mixed-race 28 yr old whom the press managed to call a white male in order to emphasize the potential for a racially charged story.

Trick question to test the amateur activist: How many times did the cops shoot Trayvon Martin? If the answer isn't "zero", the person doesn't know what they are talking about.

Clue # 2 They include Michael Brown as an example of an innocent black teenager shot without justification by a white police officer.

Brown, always referred to as an "unarmed black teenager", was 18 years old, nearly 300 pounds, and was

6'4" tall. Hardly the image of the headphone wearing Facebook photo pushed in the press. Brown, who had just walked away from a strong-arm robbery caught on video in which he shoved an elderly shopkeeper (who was Asian – but Asian victimization had't yet become a newsworthy trend) in order to steal cigars to modify for marijuana use. When confronted in a lawful contact by police officer Darren Wilson, Brown approached Wilson who was still seated in his patrol car when Brown wrestled to take control of Wilson's service weapon. This was confirmed by forensic evidence. Failing that, Brown attempted to flee, ignoring Wilson's attempts to take him into custody, and Wilson shot Brown. All forensics verified this account.

Trick questions to test the activist's knowledge:

1. How many times was Brown shot in the back?
Answer: zero

2. Who was the first person believed to have started the story that Brown was surrendering with his hands up saying "Don't shoot"? Answer: Dorian Johnson, who was arrested on a warrant from another jurisdiction on a what charge? Making a false statement to police during an earlier arrest for theft. He later admitted that his initial statement was untrue.

3. How many autopsies were there on Brown relative to the shooting case? Answer: 3 – all of which confirmed the Wilson's narrative.

4. What was Wilson convicted of after the shooting?
Answer: After a grand jury, federal investigation,

internal investigation, and intense public and media scrutiny, there was zero evidence of wrongdoing of any sort by Officer Wilson. None.

Clue # 3 They are still dredging up the Rodney King arrest.

Trick questions:

1. How many officers are still around from the Rodney King era? Answer: It was 1991, a rookie hired that year is likely already retired. Stacey Koon is 70 years old now. Laurence Powell is 60. What other profession is judged by its members from the previous generation?

2. In the Rodney King arrest, there were 56 baton blows alleged. How many of those blows were ultimately found to be excessive? Answer: None, according to the first jury trial, and one or two in the subsequent federal case. Recent research on reaction time might have negated even that finding.

Clue # 4 They never consider the accountability of the alleged victim.

Trick questions:

1. What is the appropriate response when confronted with a weapon capable of killing you or others near you or those in the path of that person's escape? If they say "talk them out of it", "shoot them in the leg", or "use your Taser", they'll need to spend half a year in the police academy and two years on patrol before they understand differently. They could also read the peer-

reviewed research on the rarity of police use of force, and the multiple findings that fail to show race bias in police use of deadly force.

2. What is the law in every state about complying with an order by a police officer and submitting to an arrest?

Answer: You must. It solves all kinds of problems and avoids your getting shot.

I applaud activism, sound journalism, and police accountability. What saddens me is public opinion and activism based on prejudice, ignorance, and cemented conspiracy theories. It is shameful that media analysis, legislation, and policy is so often based on that same ignorance.

Six Methods of Response to Habitual Police Critics

In the tradition of no good deed going unpunished, police critics could not celebrate relief after the capture of fugitive murderer Danelo Cavalcante. In addition to the complaint that it took too long to achieve a successful end to the manhunt, that the use of thermal imaging can be controversial as an invasion of privacy, the latest gripe is that officers took a photo with Cavalcante.

Although critics, professors, and consultants offered opinions that the photo was inappropriate, unprofessional, inhumane, and could be damaging evidence, none of those arguments are valid in this writer's view. But verbal sparring with police critics and journalists in a defensive mode can be an exercise in digging your own public relations burial plot. Here are some script options.

Option 1 – Attack the accuser. “I don't know who started asking this question but my guess it's the same person sitting in their underwear in the mom's basement trying to start another rumor that Starbucks is canceling Christmas. Unless someone can give me a specific reason other than sympathy with a violent killer, I'm going to have to assume this accusation is a failed attempt at satire and should be relegated to an Onion headline.”

Option 2 – Ignore it. “Next question.”

Option 3 – Reject the premise. “The question presumes that there is some kind of prohibition of this kind of photo. There is not. It violates no policy of any of the agencies. There is no grinning or mockery on the faces of the officers. There is no sign of torture or abuse. There was no delay in getting needed medical attention to the suspect. Other than being a photograph there is no comparison to Abu Ghraib or Wild West photos of gunslinger’s corpses. There is nothing to explain, defend, or apologize for.”

Option 4 – Sincere apology. “Our mission was accomplished and there was nothing to be gained by taking a photograph of the officers with the suspect. We assure you that policies will be reviewed and that steps will be taken to protect the dignity of all suspects in the future.”

Option 5 – Snarky apology. “Thank you for pointing out that after days of tireless efforts, thousands of hours of labor shared by multiple law enforcement partners, wise use of technology, and a successful capture of an armed murderous fugitive had a photo taken. First of all, we apologize for the appearance of the officers who looked like they had spent the night in the woods in a thunderstorm. Secondly, we apologize to the suspect’s victim who was brutally murdered, for possibly embarrassing her ex-boyfriend. To all of those who were triggered by the sight of armed officers in tactical uniform, we hope that you can find some hot tea and a warm blanket for comfort.”

Option 6 – Professional, factual response: “They’re proud of their work. I’m not bothered at all by the fact

that they took a photograph with him in custody. “They kept the community safe,” Bivens — the public spokesperson for state police during the manhunt — said. “I say thanks to them and good job.”” This was part of the statement from Pennsylvania State Police Lt. Col. Bivens, which was validated by his boss Col. Christopher Paris who added “The professional restraint that they showed and being able to take him alive and in relatively good health, we’re very proud of that professionalism.”

I vote for option 6.

The War on Cops as a Battle for Democracy

It has been said that even the paranoid have real enemies. In an era where any theory that focuses on the loss of freedoms is labeled as a conspiracy theory, rational considerations in interpreting current events can be lost.

Let's begin with the real views on differing theories of government. Regardless of labels of leftist v. right-wing, Democrats v. Republicans, there are those who believe that individual freedoms and self-improvement are inferior to government control of populations. I am convinced that the revolutionary thinking of our Founders lay in their investment in the individual. The clear statement of the Constitution is that our rights are God-given and not graciously extended by a benevolent government. The debates among the revolutionaries forging our Constitutional democratic republic were primarily about the balance of constraints on a national government and the rights of states that establish smaller divisions of government within it. One of the first of the ten amendments, without which the Constitution would never have been ratified, was number 10: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."

From this essential principle state and local governments created independent law enforcement agencies, regulated by the states and required to abide by the Constitution under the 14th Amendment. The

number of federal agencies, now numbering about 75, also grew. Now, local law enforcement is being painted as the enemy of freedom rather than its actual role as a guarantor of freedom.

In July of 2008, candidate Barack Obama said “We cannot continue to rely on our military in order to achieve the national security objectives we’ve set. We’ve got to have a civilian national security force that’s just as powerful, just as strong, just as well-funded.” Knowing that the vast military force cannot, by law, enforce civilian domestic law according to the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878, the encroachment of federal law enforcement as the most powerful police agency, was envisioned to supplement (eventually to supplant) our locally controlled law enforcement.

At least that’s my theory. It is no surprise to me, that Biden’s Attorney General immediately began orchestrating civil rights investigations of dozens of police departments. No one wants agencies to engage in patterns of unfair police practices, but those alleged practices rarely get litigated. Police agencies under these accusations have little alternative than to submit to consent decrees – court orders without the benefit of a balanced judicial proceeding – that essentially turn local law enforcement into vassals of the federal government. This can last for years and cost millions of local dollars.

Accusations of racism as an epidemic within law enforcement practice are being leveraged against local control of policing. Agencies have been scrambling to evaluate the extent of bias in their enforcement efforts,

making a good faith effort to examine the issue under the bright light of public scrutiny. Enemies of local policing have seized the opportunity to translate every possible event into a narrative that is intended to break down the well-established trust of communities' law enforcement. As a diabolically generated result, advocates of defunding, supplanting, and impeding policing have caused myopic politicians to punish the police for being the police. Removal of sovereign immunity, appointing anti-police activists to police oversight groups, and removing access to tools for the protection of officers and response to violence is slowly eviscerating many police departments. These efforts are being touted as reform and pursuit of justice, while ordinary citizens suffer increasing victimization and fear.

A rational citizen must have anticipated the well-documented increase in violent crime that follows tearing away police from being able to prevent, respond to, and investigate crime. So how can elected leaders ignore the obvious outcome of their campaigns? Missouri state representative Cori Bush is celebrating the defunding of the St. Louis police department, saying the "decision to defund the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department is historic. It marks a new future for our city" is an example of the ludicrous rhetoric celebrated in the media.

Could it be that the politician's fear is not that chaos will reign, but that it might not? Chaos creates fear and demands for action. If the public has already been brainwashed to believe the police are the problem, who will come to their rescue? Maybe the federal

government can! No lesson from history is clearer than the license a weakened population will give to even the worst despot in return for safety.

Supporting the right of the governed to determine how they will be policed in a way that provides local accountability is a key ingredient to liberty. There is a reason that we have 18,000 local law enforcement agencies rather than one big one. We need to keep it that way.

About The Author



This series is authored by [Chief Joel F. Shults, Ed.D.](#) Joel is a retired police chief. He is an award-winning writer, college professor, trainer, and first responder chaplain.