

THE POWER OF POLICE

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The Early Start of Policing

- Early forms of policing began in England and took on two forms; “Watch” and “The Big Stick”
- The “Watch” was a more formal group of volunteers, while “The Big Stick” was informal, and more for private or profit
- In the United States, policing came about in Boston in the form of a “Night Watch” in 1636, New York in 1658, and Philadelphia in 1700
- Philadelphia orchestrated a “Day Watch” in 1833, and New York in 1844
- A good number of these participants of the Night & Day Watches were men trying to escape military service, or men who were forced to serve as punishment

The Early Start of Policing (contd.)

- In southern states, the origins of policing were MUCH more different
- Instead of apprehending mere criminals, policing in southern states was meant to be a method of slave “recollection”
- In the south, the first “formal” slave patrol was created in 1704 in the Carolina states.
- The job of the patrol* (read “police”), was to :
 - *Apprehend runaway slaves and return them to their owners*
 - *Provide a form of “organized terror” for slaves to deter revolts*
 - *To provide a form of “justice” & punishment for those who violated rules on the plantation (when not within rules of the official law)*

Modern Policing Today

- Police today live by the well known motto “Protect and Serve”
- Make no mistake, they do protect & serve us, but the perception of police do seem to be painted negatively with the birth of technology
- Today, police act as a response to the disorders and dangers in many communities
- As the cities grew, so did the police force, meaning order needed to be maintained
- Police act as casual (and not so casual) reminders of how we are to behave, and how to make life safe safe for others to enjoy

Biased Policing

- Biased policing has been an issue which many have addressed, and tried to remedy
- However, it will always pervade the police force, and people of an “everyday” caliber (important to note biases are not limited to police only)
- The issue comes along when the biases begin to prevent “fair” policing, and begin to affect one, or a group of people more than the other
- The study, “The Science of Justice: Race, Arrests, and Police Use of Force” made note of their findings in regards to disproportionate use of force upon blacks, compared to whites
 - *“The study found that the overall mean use-of-force rate for all black residents was 273 per 100,000, which is 3.6 times higher than the rate for white residents (76 per 100,000) and 2.5 times higher than the overall rate of 108 per 100,000 for all residents.”*

Police Tactics: Racial Profiling

- What is Racial Profiling: Racial profiling is defined as the use of race or ethnicity as grounds for suspecting someone as having committed an offense
- Why is it bad?: It hurts community relations between police & the disproportionately targeted group
- It provides easier access for false arrests, and raises risks for potentially unnecessary violent encounters
- Side Note: My /personal/ experiences with racial profiling



Police Tactics: Broken Window Policing

- What Is Broken Window Policing?: Broken Window Policing is the idea that “damaged properties/areas” will generate more crime, thus, providing areas for police to patrol to do their job
- Why Is It Bad?: Broken Window Policing is dangerous because in “poorer” areas, properties may not be as beautiful and appear dilapidated
 - With areas looking “broken” it may encourage increased police patrolling, and increased (*PERHAPS* disproportionate arrests)
 - Increased criminal activity *may* occur in these areas, but there will be citizens who fall victim to false arrests which potentially damages public perception of the police

Implicit vs. Explicit Bias Overall

- (Goff, Jackson, Di Leone, Culotta, and DiTomaso (2014) instructed both undergraduate student and police officer participants to evaluate young Black, White and Latino suspects and estimate their age and culpability for their actions.
 - *Black boys perceived older(4.5-5 yrs) and less innocent compared to white boys: this “adult-like” quality made them appear more appropriate for greater use of police force. (Goff et al., 2014)*
- Example: Tamir Rice, a 12-year old Black boy (perceived to be 20) by the police officer who killed him (Lopez, 2014; Phillip, 2014)
- His age factored into the amount of pain he could receive (tolerate) and the amount of damage that he could inflict. (level of violence)

Implicit and Explicit Bias Cont'd

- Whites perceptions of Blacks as “*superhuman*” in relation to the belief that they have a higher pain tolerance...and are more invincible to physical blows than a non-black person (Waytx et al., 2015) (see also Tait & Chibnall, 2014)
 - *If officers see blacks as superhuman, they may justify extreme physical acts against them.*
- Example: Officer Darren Wilson’s 2014 grand jury testimony, he “felt like a five-year-old holding onto Hulk Hogan” (Calamur, 2014) representation of his encounter with victim Michael Brown.
- “Blacks as Criminals” stereotype is also perceived at an implicit level. Participants identified more crime related objects (e.g., guns, knives) after being primed by photos of Black (vs. White faces)
- Blacks are portrayed as “thugs” in the police society and in many American societies even in cases such as Trayvon Martin and Jordan Davis despite their statuses as victims.

Implicit and Explicit Bias Cont'd

- Notably, some shooter bias studies tested civilian and Black police officer participants to examine if shooter bias is specific to non-Blacks.
 - *Results:*
 - *Blacks' racial bias in the Shooter Bias task is equivalent to that of non-Blacks (Correll et al., 2002; Plant, Peruche, & Butz, 2005)*
 - Results imply that shooter bias isn't as much the explicit tendency to discriminate against Blacks, but is perpetuated by familiarity with cultural stereotypes.
 - **This would imply that racial prejudice may not be a police department issue alone, but may supported by larger socialization efforts in our society.**

The Power of the Blue Wall

- The police have often been observed “protecting” accused officers in any situation by remaining silent on the topic.
- In doing so, officers are successful in protecting their fellow officers, but are also successful in further dividing themselves from civilians
- The power of an officer’s silence can be damaging
 - *Officers have been noted to remain silent, or to even go as far as lying to protect a fellow comrade*
- Take for example the case of Ray Tensing
 - *His fellow reporting officer Phillip Kidd lied, saying he saw Tensing get dragged to justify his shooting, which was not true*
 - *Such acts, if not reprimanded instantly, can prove to be powerful in protecting officers, and ruining public perception*

Addressing Police Indiscretions Internally (The Power of Silence & Retaliation)

- Police are meant to protect and serve, but sometimes, they may fall into a life they did not predict
- Due to the “Blue Wall of Silence”, officers are meant to protect their fellow officers as well as the civilians
- However, when officers DO speak out against their comrades, they are forced to endure forms of retaliation
- We can liken this to behaviors of police who do not seem to sympathize may very well do, but cannot vocally express themselves due to retaliation from fellow officers
 - *It is not a secret that after the rise of “Black Lives Matter” organization, the “Blue Lives Matter” organization quickly gained massive support*
 - *If an officer did happen to agree w/ Black Lives Matter, and didn’t agree with the police brutality, would s/he be able to speak out about it free of repercussions?*

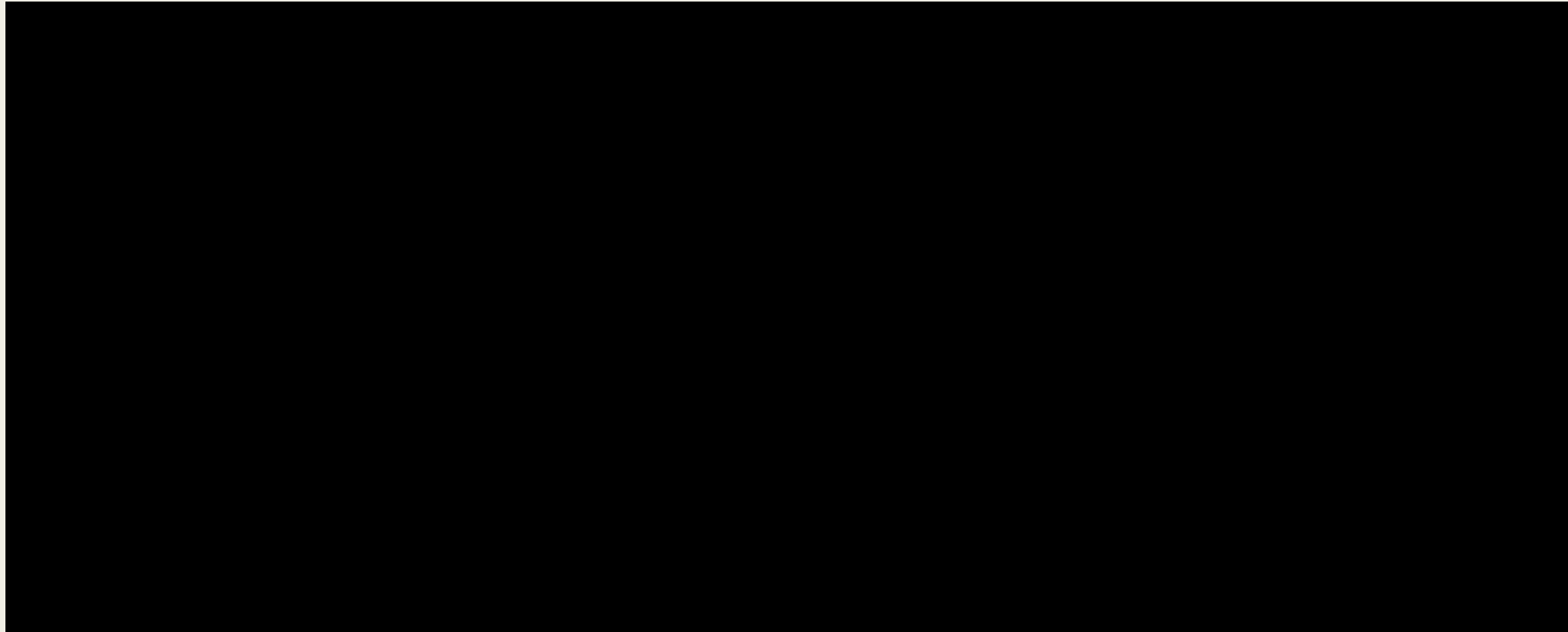
Community & Police Power Dynamics

- The police feed off of the community, and the community feeds off of the police
- With each positive action, the community responds positively to the officers and with each negative interaction, the community responds mostly, negatively
- In a sense, a community holds power over police WHILE the police hold power over a community
- The people and police need an equal exchange in which trust and transparency is developed and celebrated in order to maintain positive outlook for the future of police
- *While the police will hold the majority of power in ALL cases, it is not unheard of for the people to influence the decisions of police, thus, suggesting people have power over the police*

Police and Community Relations

- Due to the outrage of the community, police have tried to appeal to the community by implementing methods to promote transparency
- Methods such as:
 - *Body cameras*
 - *More transparency in information on cases*
 - *Community outreach events*
 - *Increased social media interaction*
- *All in an attempt to better relations with the community, suggesting the community has the power to influence police behaviors*
- *Alternatively, you can take into account the disregard some officers may have due to these changes via turning off body cameras, or “forgetting” to turn them on*
- *In cases like that, relations are pushed to the sour side, transparency is reduced, and the power of the police to ignore the community’s opinions are shown as the dominant power*

Police and Community Relations (continued)



Rotten Apples In a Good Bunch?



The Call of the Law

- One fundamental aspect to grasp is that it takes a certain kind of individual to be drawn to police and law enforcement.
- Recall Officer Darren Wilson, who is responsible for the fatal shooting of unarmed teenager Michael Brown, explained, “The reason I have a clean conscience is that I know I did my job right.” (ABC News, 2014)
 - *A common post-statement after shootings is that police were “just doing their jobs” (Swaine, 2014)*

License to Kill: Black and Blue

- According to ProPublica analysis of federal data on fatal police shootings between 2010-2012, young Black male civilians were 21x more likely to be killed by police than young white civilians (Gabreilson, Jones & Saragara, 2014)



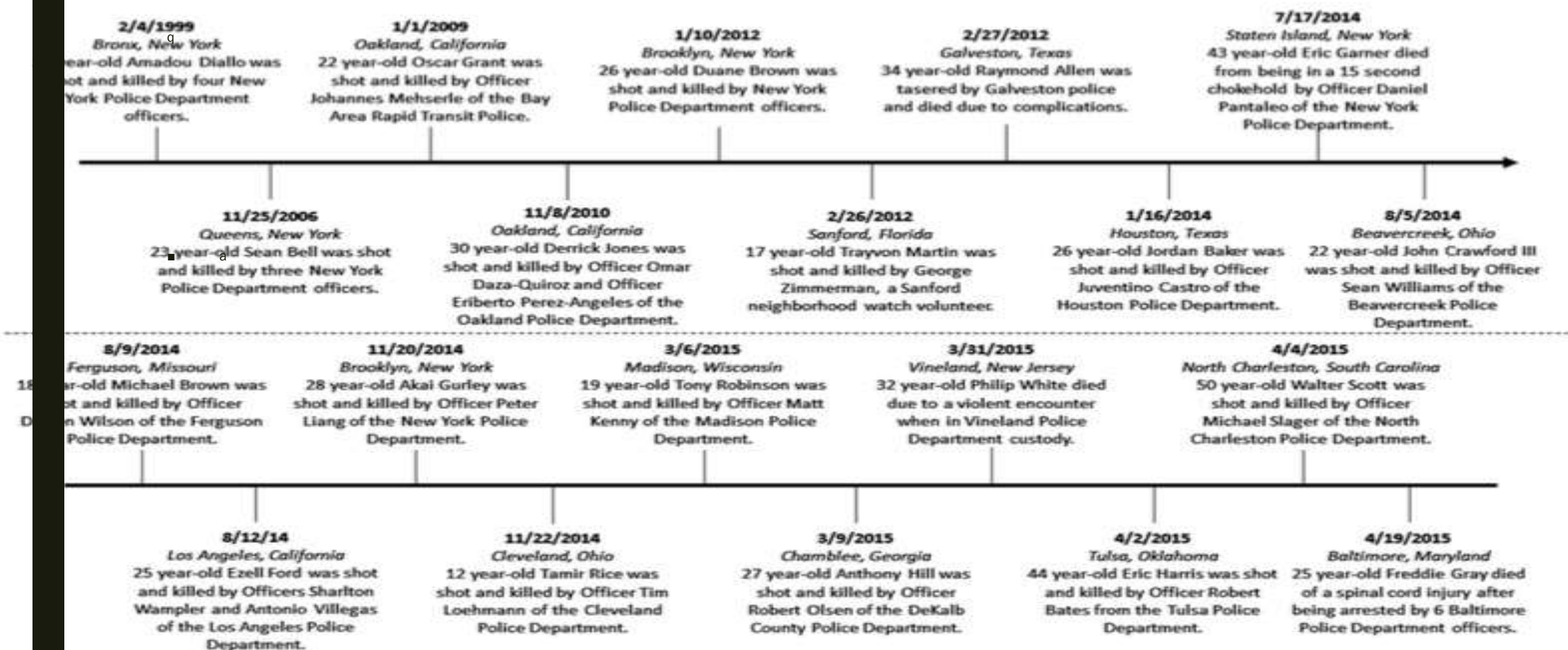


Figure 1. Timeline of the top 20 most publicized police killings of unarmed Black male civilians (January 1999–May 2015). After researching the police killings of unarmed Black male civilians from January 1999 to May 2015, a research assistant documented 78 incidents. The research assistant then conducted a Factiva article search, using each victim's name as the search term, to determine the top 20 incidents with the highest impact factors (i.e., the most publicized incidents according to major national news publications from 1/1/1999 to 5/8/2015). Impact factor was calculated by dividing the number of articles containing each victim's name by the number of days since the incident occurred.

Causes of Violence

- After relevant events occur that involve officers.
 - *Violence from police increased substantially (mainly to black males) after the fatal shooting of two police officers by a black suspect.*
 - *Increase internal group cohesion within police departments*
 - *Donald Black's influential work on violence as social control for example, describes interpersonal violence in terms of "self-help" (Black, 1983)*
- Describes it as a form of social control.
- Increase the use of force ensures social control, (re) asserts authority, and retaliates against the offending group
- Vargas (2016) Documented police street justice to get back at residents who disrespected or assaulted fellow officers.

Encounters: Black and Blue

- Research suggest that encounters in between police and black civilians are very precarious.
- Reasons:
 - *Realistic and Symbolic intergroup threat, interaction group anxiety* (Riek, Mania & Gaertner, 2006) There is a larger perceived threat when the encounter involves a threatening outgroup of lower status (e.g., Blacks) compared to higher status (e.g., White)
 - Recently it was suggested that due to black males being negative stereotyped by police, they anticipate higher levels of anxiety, self-regulatory efforts during police encounters. (Resulting in “perceived” suspicious behavior, e.g., Avoiding eye contact, shaking)

Proposed Solutions



Solutions

- **Recommendations for Society: Address Racial Prejudice At Early Age**
 - *Research shows that children are more malleable and susceptible to influence. (Undocumented or identified can result in problems later)*
- **Increase Cross-Racial Engagement**
 - *When communication is present within two groups this provides depth of thought, question broad-brush assumptions of entire demographic groups. Cross racial contact may also support more positive intergroup relations in general.*
 - *Ex: White college students with cross-race roommates tend to have more diverse friendships base, experience less interracial anxiety, and more likely to value diversity after only a few months. (Gaither & Sommers, 2013)*

Solutions Cont'd:

Recommendation for Joint Police and Community Efforts

- Support Community Policing
 - *Contact theory suggests that increase of experiences between equal status groups that share common goals facilitate more positive interactions. (Oliver, 2001)*
 - *Community policing requires a large reciprocity between officers and civilians as they are mutually involved in conducting public safety (Greene, 2000; Skolnick & Bayley, 1986)*
 - *Help develop a safe and healthy community with the shared goal or protection from everyone who lives within it.*

Solutions Cont'd

Recommendations for Law Enforcement

■ Diversify Police Forces

- *Departments with more egalitarian climates as well as more greater and racial/ethnic diversity tend to be more effective in executing community policing efforts (Schuck, 2014).*
- *Due to prevailing perceptions of prototypically, less homogeneity should promote more positive intergroup attitudes and weaken “us vs. them” distinctions (Waldzus, Mummendey, Wenzel, & Weber, 2003)*

■ Rotational Assignments to Address Shooter Bias

- *The officers that are most likely to make shoot/no-shoot decisions are the officers that are assigned to “street crime units” (gangs) as opposed to officers “on patrol” servicing civilians who request or need their aid (Plant et al., 2005).*

Solutions Cont'd

Require Diversity Training

■ Require Diversity Training

- *Mandatory diversity training for all law enforcement agents In order to combat implicit and explicit racial biases. (Cox & Blake, 1991)*
- In an analysis training demonstrated a drastic positive, stable impact on cognitive learning outcomes. (cultural diversity issues)

■ Increase Accountability

- *Body cameras and dash cameras during traffic stops. (Currently are being used)*
- *Both of these increase the accountability for not only officers but for civilians as they coproduce public safety.*

Conclusions

- The police are an establishment tasked with the purpose of helping the community, but over time, the lines have been blurred for some officers who may not fully understand their job.
- Police and community relations are improving, with ALL races, but more specifically, the black community
- Only with proper feedback from the community, can the police make the proper decisions on how to deal with the community – somewhat of a “for us by us” stance.
- Public perception is key, and image matters most when dealing with civilians and the police should keep that in mind
- Power is easily blinding, and it is not only up to the officers to maintain a clear head, but also up to us, the public to help them