

Blacks Do Not Suffer Disproportionately From Police Brutality

A recent *New York Times* [article](#) by Jeremy W. Peters claims it is a “fact” “that black people suffer disproportionately from police brutality.” He also asserts that President Trump’s rejection of this accusation is “racially inflammatory” and “racially divisive.” To the contrary, comprehensive facts show that this allegation against police is false. Furthermore, this deception has stoked racial divides and driven people to despise and even murder police officers.

In an [interview](#) with CBS News that is slated to air in full tonight, reporter Catherine Herridge asked Trump, “Why are African-Americans still dying at the hands of law enforcement in this country?” He responded that this is a “terrible question” and that “more white people” are killed by police than black people.

[CBS News](#), the [New York Times](#), and [many other](#) media outlets are criticizing Trump’s response because blacks are a much smaller portion of the U.S. population than whites. Thus, the odds of being killed by police are higher for each black person than each white person. This frequent argument is highly misleading because it omits facts that are vital to this issue. As detailed in a [2018 paper](#) in the journal *Social Psychological and Personality Science*:

- “The most common means of testing for racial disparity in police use of deadly force is to compare the odds of being fatally shot for blacks to the odds of being fatally shot for whites.”
- That logic is flawed because it relies upon the false assumption that white and black people commit life-

threatening crimes at the same rates.

- The rational way to analyze this issue is to compare the odds of being fatally shot to each race's "involvement in those situations where the police may be more likely to use deadly force."
- Based on four different national datasets on "murder/nonnegligent manslaughter, violent crime, and weapons violations," "in nearly every case, whites were either more likely to be fatally shot by police or police showed no significant disparity in either direction."

The facts about murder and police killings underscore this reality. Black people represent about 13 percent of the U.S. population, [at least 53 percent](#) of murder offenders, and [roughly 33 percent](#) of people killed by police.

The Supreme Court's 1985 ruling in [Tennessee v. Garner](#) forbids police from using lethal force except in situations where there is a genuine risk of "death or serious physical injury." In 2015, the *Washington Post* [found](#) that over the prior decade an average of about five police officers per year were indicted for violating this standard, and only one per year was convicted.

Likewise, a study conducted by the left-leaning Center for Policing Equity reveals that police are [42 percent less likely](#) to use lethal force when arresting black people than when arresting whites. Yet, the authors of this study buried that data on the 19th page of a 29-page report and wrote an overview that gives the opposing impression.

Taken together, the facts above disprove the claim that "black people suffer disproportionately from police brutality." Yet, media outlets routinely ignore these facts or report them in isolation so that their implications are obscured. Meanwhile, they widely spread the counterfactual message that has

inspired racial strife, hatred of the police, and slayings of officers. For example:

- Before Ismaaiyl Brinsley [murdered](#) New York City policemen Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu in 2014, he posted on Instagram: “I’m Putting Wings On Pigs Today. They Take 1 Of Ours.... Let’s Take 2 of Theirs #ShootThePolice, #RIPErivGardner and # This may be my final post.”
- During a 2016 Black Lives Matter [protest in Dallas, TX](#) in which the crowd chanted “Hands up, don’t shoot,” Micah Johnson killed five police officers. During standoff negotiations, he said he wanted to kill white people, especially white officers. All of the policemen he murdered were white.
- Ten days later, [Gavin Eugene Long](#) shot six Baton Rouge, Louisiana police officers, killing three of them. His [suicide note](#) stated: “I must bring the same destruction that bad cops continue to inflict upon my people,” meaning people of color.

Beyond this, the *Times* and other media outlets that propagate those racially provocative falsehoods are accusing people who challenge them of stirring racial hostilities.

There are more than [800,000](#) sworn law enforcement officers in the U.S., and they commit roughly [one murder](#) per year. This amounts to an annual murder rate of 0.13 per 100,000 – or about 38 times lower than the general U.S. murder rate of [5.0](#) per 100,000. Police are vetted for criminality, and thus, they should be much less likely to commit murder than the average person. However, police are also faced with [life-threatening situations](#) more often than the general public, and this opens doors for violent tendencies to emerge.

Regardless, it is irrational to accuse police or any other group of people of brutality or systemic racism based on the

actions of an infinitesimal portion of them. Yet, the media and activists repeatedly do this, even though it is a hallmark tactic of racists and demagogues.

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