## **The USFG should create a policy that substantially increases punishment for police brutality**

**Emily Walker. (December 6, 2019 Friday).** Behind Police Brutality. The Delta Statement: Delta State University. <https://advance-lexis-com.swcproxy.swccd.edu/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5XNW-SSJ1-DY7P-T1HH-00000-00&context=1516831>.

What is Police Brutality?

**Police brutality is a rising occurrence in America.**

As defined by uslegal.org, police brutality "is a civil rights violation that occurs when a police officer acts with excessive force by using an amount of force with regards to a civilian that is more than necessary."

According to britannica.com, **Americans of all races, ethnicities, ages, classes and genders can be victims of police brutality.**

However, the majority of victims of police brutality are African American. According to britannica.com, police brutality towards African Americans began to rise after WWII. This had to do with the race riots happening at the time.

According to BBC news, "accurate data on police shootings is difficult to obtain because local police forces are not obliged to provide figures."

BBC News continues, **"According to a database compiled by the Washington Post, 709 people have been killed by law enforcement officials** so far this year and about 20% of victims were black. Texas had the second-highest number of total deaths."

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L3Qsx2QMRlU>

Cases of police brutality

**On October 15, 2019, in Fort Worth, Texas, two police officers responded to a non-emergency call.** The officers were responding to a welfare check call when a neighbor saw Atatiana Jefferson's mother's door ajar.

**Officer Aaron Dean fired shots into the house and killed Atatiana Jefferson in her mother's home.** The officer claimed that the silhouette looked like an intruder. **Dean demanded Jefferson put her hands up and shot her seconds after.**

James Smith, the neighbor who called, says, "If I had never dialed the police department, she'd still be alive."

Smith told local media, "It makes you not want to call the police."

Officer Aaron Dean was charged with murder and resigned from the Fort Worth Police Department. The officer is described as "reckless" in a BBC news article.

**In another case, a young Georgia toddler suffered burns all over his body after officers threw a flash grenade into his playpen during a raid in December of 2015.**

**On April 21st of 2014, another victim named Neykeyia Parker, was violently dragged out of her car and aggressively arrested in front of her young child. The officer claimed that she was "trespassing" at her own apartment complex in Houston.**

A video to show more cases: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NPQimBNWytY>

What are the causes of Police Brutality?

Police brutality is an abuse of power over ordinary people. There are many underlying psychological reasons for the violent behavior. According to Business Insider, the standards on what constitutes brutality vary widely.

William Terril, former police officer and professor of criminal justice at Michigan State, explains, "Excess is in the eyes of the beholder." There is an inconsistency of standards from department to department.

Terril continues, "To one officer 'objectively reasonable' means that if you don't give me your license, I get to use soft hands, and in another town the same resistance means I can pull you through the car window, [or] I can taze you."

**Another reason police brutality occurs is due to the minimal consequences for misconduct.**

**According to Business Insider, in New Jersey, almost 99 percent of police brutality cases go uninvestigated. Only one out of three police officers are convicted nationwide.**

**On a national level, prosecutors decline almost 95 percent of police brutality cases.** USA Today says this is because juries "are conditioned to believe cops, and victims' credibility is often challenged."

According to a statistic on mapping police violence.org, there were only 23 days in 2018 where the police did not kill someone.

Mapping Police Violence also found that police killed 1,147 people in 2017. African American people were 25 percent of those killed despite being only 13 percent of the population.

Psychological reasons for police brutality

A recent report on NPR indicated that officer fear is part of the problem with police brutality.

Gordon B. Moskowitz, chair of the psychology department at Lehigh University, says, "it is naive to call these events racialized decisions in the manner most people think about race."

He continues, "However, it is equally naive to say Americans live in a post-racial society where such actions are not influenced by race."

Moskowitz's research looks at the thought processes that occur unconsciously. His research reveals the part racial bias plays in police brutality. He suggests that what people imagine is often very different from the way bias actually manifests in everyday life.

"The actual impact of racism on our decisions can be very subtle, often not something easily recognized by the people who are being influenced," he continued.

In 2014, Moskowitz examined cases of police brutality. He concludes that there is implicit bias in occurrences of police brutality. He explains, "thoughts and feelings triggered extremely quickly for the purpose of guiding fast reactions."

Moskowitz explains further, "Similar to people pulling their hand from a hot stove, individuals develop fast, reflexive responses to other people and situations that help prepare appropriate behavior. When stereotypes are triggered, the consequences can be inappropriate and undesired responses that might not be endorsed if the people involved were aware they were doing it."

How does police brutality impact society?

According to citylab.com, in the U.S., African Americans are 2.5 times more likely to be killed by police than white people. For black women, the rate is 1.4 times more likely.

For many African American youth, the disproportionate and often traumatic experience of police arrest and use of violence is often lethal. Racial prejudice and the unchecked authority of police officers are to blame.

According to USAtoday.com, Boston University and the University of Pennsylvania researchers found their findings support, "recent calls to treat police killings as a public health issue."

The research found that the mental health spillover effects of police brutality against unarmed African Americans could be the result of "heightened perceptions of threat and vulnerability, lack of fairness, lower social status, lower beliefs about one's own worth, activation of prior traumas, and identification with the deceased."

This is affecting the communities and making them less safe for citizens and police officers.

**Police brutality is causing a distrust between citizens and the police force. People don't want to call the police because they are afraid the police will treat them unjustly.**

## **The USFG should create a policy that substantially increases punishment for police brutality**

By **GARRY PIERRE-PIERRE , By GARRY PIERRE-PIERRE . (February 22, 1995, Wednesday**, Late Edition - Final). Examining a Jump in Police Brutality Complaints. The New York Times. <https://advance-lexis-com.swcproxy.swccd.edu/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:3S89-W580-008G-F3T5-00000-00&context=1516831>.

**Last year, 557 people came forward to lodge complaints against police officers in four Bronx precincts.** The cases filed with the Civilian Complaint Review Board ranged from accusations of police brutality to claims that officers used foul language.

**The complaints involving the four precincts,** which cover a largely poor swath of the central Bronx, **represented a 50 percent increase in the number of cases from the year before. While the number of complaints citywide rose 37.4 percent last year,** the even greater increase in the four Bronx precincts is particularly troubling to the review board.

Today, to try to find the reason for the jump in complaints, the board's members are to meet with community and police leaders to look at the four precincts -- the 44th, 46th, 47th and 48th, which have a largely black and Hispanic population -- as well as the rest of the borough.

"We want to find out if we are in a situation where good, honest policing is being attacked by drug dealers, or do we have some cops who are out of control," said William F. Kuntz, a board member.

Many of the complaints detail serious allegations, like beatings by police officers using flashlights and walkie-talkies, or officers frisking people without cause.

While the board has yet to determine how many of those allegations have merit, a review of hundreds of the complaints showed that most of the alleged incidents happened at night, between 10 P.M. and 5 A.M. And in most of the cases, the officers involved were white, while the incidents tended to take place in poorer areas where the residents are predominantly black and Hispanic.

Typically in the past, C.C.R.B. complaints have centered on an officer's actions during an arrest, but in many of the Bronx cases, that was not necessarily the case; board members say that could indicate that the officers might be using excessive force against innocent people.

Police officials said that while they have yet to fully analyze the civilian complaints to determine the reasons for the rise in 1994, they have taken steps to combat abuses by police officers. But they said one reason for the increase in complaints could be the jump in the number of arrests last year.

"Any time your enforcement efforts are enhanced, there are some people who are going to perceive it as being abusive," said Deputy Chief Lawrence Loesch, the Police Department's acting deputy commissioner for public information. "If the abuses are real rather than perceived, then we'd like to identify that and deal with them accordingly."

To defuse potentially violent confrontations, department officials have instituted so-called verbal judo classes in which officers are trained to use polite language when dealing with a tense situation.

In the Bronx cases, the complaints run the gamut from the violent to the verbally abusive. One man said he was kicked in the groin after he threw a snowball at no one in particular. Another man complained that he was struck with a nightstick, punched and told, "Nigger, does not belong in this country." And a pregnant woman said she was slammed against a car after asking an officer why he was ticketing her car.

One review board official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the cases could reflect a disturbing pattern. The incidents, the official said, are simply a result of "random and senseless acts of viciousness," adding: "It's about force and control or the use of physical force to control people."

Hector W. Soto, executive director of the Civilian Complaint Review Board, said he has observed a pattern; he finds that most complaints are filed against officers with less than seven years on the job and involve those with no military background. Whereas many officers in past decades had military experience before joining the department, few do today, and that lack of training could account for some officers overreacting in volatile situations.

While complete figures of police brutality cases nationwide are not available, the number of reported cases across the country are on the rise, criminologists said, perhaps reflecting better reporting. Since 1990, 36 of the 50 largest cities have put in place some sort of civilian complaint review board.

One explanation for the increase in complaints could be increased attention to the issue of brutality and the higher visibility of review boards. The boards tend to give people a chance to file complaints even if they are not well founded, said James J. Fyfe, a professor of criminal justice at Temple University.

"If you feel like you've been victimized and you read in the press that the body politic is such that something will be done about it, you're much more likely to report incidents," said Professor Fyfe, a former New York City police officer and the author of "Above the Law: Police and the Excessive Use of Force" (Free Press, 1993). "My suspicion is that they were happening in the past and people were not reporting them."

In New York, civil libertarians suggest that the increase in complaints partly reflects Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani's aggressiveness in attempting to reduce the city's crime rate. "Fighting crime and respecting people's civil liberties are not mutually exclusive," said Norman Siegel, executive director of the New York Civil Liberties Union. "We can and must have both."

In the Bronx, allegations of police misconduct in the 48th Precinct have helped cast doubt about the motives of some police officers, as have some other recent incidents, like the death of Anthony Baez. Mr. Baez, 29, a Florida man, was asphyxiated when police officers from the 46th Precinct tried to arrest him on Dec. 22 after his football hit a parked police car. A grand jury is expected to rule next week on whether to bring criminal charges in the case.

**Residents of the Central Bronx say problems between the police and their community are nothing new.** Many complain that in neighborhoods plagued with drugs, the police treat working people the same way they treat drug dealers, with searches, name calling and occasional beatings.

**Abraham Pacheco filed a complaint last November on behalf of his brother, Andre, who he said was beaten by officers from the 46th Precinct while walking on the corner of 183d Street and Ryer Avenue about 11 P.M. Records from the civilian board showed that Andre Pacheco suffered a broken nose and facial cuts.**

"They will bother you just for looking at them," said Abraham Pacheco, 23, whose complaint is pending before the review board. "They come out of their cars and ask you if you have drugs, guns and needles like you're a dope addict or something. You tell them no, and they still throw you against the car and start searching you and treat you like you're a criminal. It happens a lot."

**Another woman, Lissette Romero, 22, said she was pushed around by an officer when she questioned a parking ticket. Her complaint is pending before the review board.**

"He got upset, he pushed me around and he kept throwing me against the car," said Mrs. Romero, who was four months pregnant at the time of the incident last October.

Police Commissioner William J. Bratton said yesterday that with a 28 percent increase in arrests last year and an additional 3,000 new officers in the department, it was not surprising that the number of complaints would also increase. However, Mr. Bratton put that rise at closer to 10 percent although he could not explain how he arrived at that number.

"The whole issue of brutality is of concern," he said. "Is there too much of it? Sure. As to is it growing, we're not really sure at this juncture because some of the numbers we're dealing with are soft."

## **The USFG should NOT create a policy that substantially increases punishment for police brutality**

**Peter Baker and Thomas Kaplan. (June 12, 2020 Friday).** Trump Defends Police, but Says He’ll Sign Order Encouraging Better Practices. The New York Times . <https://advance-lexis-com.swcproxy.swccd.edu/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6040-9JG1-JBG3-60R4-00000-00&context=1516831>.

Joseph R. Biden Jr., his Democratic opponent, accused the president of dividing the country.

**President Trump offered** only a vague policy response on Thursday to the [killing of George Floyd](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/31/us/george-floyd-investigation.html), **saying he would sign an executive order encouraging better practices by police departments** while rejecting more far-reaching proposals to tackle racial injustice and police brutality in the United States.

Dismissing police misconduct as the work of only a few “bad apples,” **Mr. Trump strongly defended law enforcement agencies and made clear he had little interest in broader legislation being debated in Congress.** At a round-table discussion he convened in a Dallas church before hosting a campaign fund-raiser, the president derided activists calling for defunding or dismantling police departments.

**“Instead, we have to go the opposite way,” Mr. Trump said. “We must invest more energy and resources in police training and recruiting and community engagement. We have to respect our police — we have to take care of our police. They’re protecting us, and if they’re allowed to do their job, they’ll do a great job. You always have a bad apple no matter where you go. You have bad apples. There are not too many of them, and I can tell you there are not too many of them in the police department.”**

The president’s staunch defense of the police came as city, state and federal lawmakers in both parties were working to develop sweeping proposals to change the way policing works in the United States. Mr. Trump was more explicit in what he would not back than what he would, beyond repeating his support for expanding economic development, investing in medical facilities and encouraging school choice in minority communities.

He said, without elaborating, that the executive order being drafted would encourage police departments “to meet the most current professional standards for the use of force.”

And while he called the killing of Mr. Floyd “a disgrace,” the president referred to it only in passing and instead castigated critics who have said law enforcement is afflicted with systemic racism that needs to be addressed.

“We have to work together to confront bigotry and prejudice wherever they appear, but we’ll make no progress and heal no wounds by falsely labeling tens of millions of decent Americans as racists or bigots,” Mr. Trump said. “We have to get everybody together. We have to be in the same path.”

Campaigning on Thursday in Pennsylvania, former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr., the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee, criticized Mr. Trump for sowing division in the country. Mr. Trump, he said, had “decided that he was going to pit us against one another based on race,” recalling the president’s comments after a [white nationalist rally in 2017](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/31/us/george-floyd-investigation.html) in Charlottesville, Va.

“When a president speaks, no matter how good or bad he is, people listen,” Mr. Biden said at a round table of his own. He said that when Mr. Trump “speaks and gives credibility” to racist people, “they come out from under the rocks.”

“And you’re seeing it,” he added. “You’re seeing it all across the country.”

The former vice president said the killing of Mr. Floyd had a larger effect globally than the [assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/31/us/george-floyd-investigation.html) did in 1968. “Even Dr. King’s assassination did not have the worldwide impact that George Floyd’s death did,” Mr. Biden said at his event, where he rolled out a new eight-part plan to reopen the economy after months of lockdown because of the [coronavirus pandemic](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/31/us/george-floyd-investigation.html).

Mr. Biden, speaking in West Philadelphia in a room that was the original home of “American Bandstand,” noted that the prevalence today of cellphones that can record episodes of police misconduct had “changed the way everybody’s looking at this.”

“Look at the millions of people marching around the world,” Mr. Biden said, a face mask dangling from his left ear. “So my point is that I think people are really realizing that this is a battle for the soul of America. Who are we? What do we want to be? How do we see ourselves? What do we think we should be? Character is on the ballot here.”

Mr. Biden met with Mr. Floyd’s family in Houston this week and recorded a video message for his funeral. He has called for “real police reform” and has emphasized the need to address systemic racism in society.

Mr. Trump’s trip to Dallas came as he resumed campaigning after a monthslong suspension forced by the virus. The president trails Mr. Biden both nationally and in key swing states. Even in Texas, a Republican bulwark for decades, a half-dozen surveys since April show the Democrat in striking distance with the incumbent. [A Quinnipiac University poll](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/31/us/george-floyd-investigation.html) released last week showed Mr. Trump with 44 percent and Mr. Biden with 43 percent, and a Public Policy Polling survey showed a tie at 48 percent.

In addition to a possible battleground, Texas is seeing its coronavirus infections on the rise after the reopening of businesses and public life. Three of the 10 counties in the United States with [the highest number of new cases per resident](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/31/us/george-floyd-investigation.html) in the past two weeks are in Texas: Jones, Moore and Walker. Even as Mr. Trump visited, Dallas County reported 312 new cases on Thursday, [its highest number yet](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/31/us/george-floyd-investigation.html) and the third straight day of a record.

Mr. Trump brought with him not only Attorney General William P. Barr but also two of the only prominent black members of his administration — Ben Carson, the secretary of housing and urban development, and Dr. Jerome M. Adams, the surgeon general.

Meeting with police union leaders and religious leaders at Gateway Church, Mr. Trump did not invite any of the top three law enforcement officials in Dallas, all of them African-American, according to [The Dallas Morning News](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/31/us/george-floyd-investigation.html). Not included in the event were Chief U. Reneé Hall of the Dallas Police Department, Sheriff Marian Brown or District Attorney [John Creuzot](https://advance-lexis-com.swcproxy.swccd.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=dde6f95d-6b91-404c-a861-e9105eb947a7&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A6040-9JG1-JBG3-60R4-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=6742&pdteaserkey=sr1&pditab=allpods&ecomp=Lbq2k&earg=sr1&prid=59c28067-52ce-41e4-acfa-468032ffab18#).

Mr. Trump did invite Vernell E. Dooley — the police chief of Glenn Heights, a town of about 11,000 south of Dallas — who is African-American — and he praised the president’s efforts on Thursday.

As Mr. Trump prepared to fly to Dallas on Thursday, Chief Hall’s department [posted a Twitter message](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/31/us/george-floyd-investigation.html) that said, “Let’s work together to end racism,” and included a video showing police officers kneeling with and hugging protesters, with the caption “Because Black lives do matter.”

After his fund-raiser, where donors paid $580,600 each for a meal and a photograph, Mr. Trump will fly to New Jersey for a long weekend at his Bedminster golf club. On June 19, he plans to hold his first campaign rally in months in Tulsa, Okla.

Zach Montague contributed reporting.

PHOTO: **President Trump told a round table in Dallas that police misconduct is a problem of a few “bad apples” and not systemic racism**. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANNA MONEYMAKER/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

## **The USFG should NOT create a policy that substantially increases punishment for police brutality**

By **David Hughes.** **(July 17, 2020 Friday).** Re-Fund The Police, Smarter. The New York Times. <https://advance-lexis-com.swcproxy.swccd.edu/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60CG-DXM1-DXY4-X2RP-00000-00&context=1516831>.

**Having witnessed a racist police system from the inside, I understand why people are desperate for change. Some are calling for the dissolution of policing altogether. As a Black person, I understand. As a cop, I think that's the wrong answer.**

I have seen firsthand how the right kind of policing can serve our communities and make people's lives better. **I have seen police officers use their own money to buy food and diapers for domestic violence victims, clean up a needle-filled vacant lot and build a playground on it, or take young people under their wing to give them a stable adult figure in their life.**

I have also, of course, seen how police can harm people's lives. The answer to racist policing is not in taking away all the good that policing can do, but rather in changing what it means to police, and who is doing it.

**The first part of that change starts with hiring. The majority of police officers do not have four-year college degrees. They don't start their career with a foundational education that will broaden their worldview, make them empathetic to other cultures or understand human psychology.**

**Police academies must change,** too. Police are taught that the enemy is ''out there.'' When they arrive at work with that mind-set, they don't know who wants them in the community, and who wants to kill them. It's no different than troops in Afghanistan or Iraq. We are patrolling the streets of our own cities as an occupying force.

Our **training** also **focuses on worst-case scenarios**: how to arrest someone, how to fight, how to use a weapon. **Instead, it should emphasize preventing escalation.** Once you get to the point where you are having to fight, you've already lost. The question after a shooting by the police should not be ''Was it legal?'' but rather ''Was it necessary?''

The length of police academy varies, but here in Virginia, it's about six months, then around three months with a training officer on the job. Nine months is not sufficient preparation to give you the authority to take someone's life or deprive them of their liberty.

The probationary period for police officers should also be increased to a minimum of three years. Currently, once an officer has completed his probationary period, it is almost impossible to fire him.

Performance evaluations must focus on more than the number of arrests made or traffic tickets written. They should include the officer's conviction rate, a thorough review of the types of arrests made and the number of complaints received.

We must also address the racism of police departments from the inside. I don't mean through ''cultural diversity training.'' When my department did that training, most showed up because they had to and cracked jokes through the whole thing. Instead, we should hire officers who reflect the communities they serve, by race and gender. About 15 percent of the police officers on my force are Black in a city that is about 43 percent Black. This imbalance is reflective of most police departments in America.

Localities should also have the right to enact police residency requirements and give people a say in who polices their community. The officers involved in George Floyd's death did not have a connection to the community they served. Don't confuse being familiar with the people in the community with having a connection. All officers become acquainted with people on their beats -- it's a business relationship. An officer must be able to understand, empathize and feel they are part of the community.

I've worked with hundreds of people as a trainer and patrol officer, investigator, administrator and assessor. **When I hear calls to defund the police, I cringe. Not because I am a cop, but because the adage is true: You get what you pay for.**

**Police salaries are low, making it hard to consistently attract the kind of folks we need on the force.** This

is not said to demean my fellow police officers. But **when you make the job attractive to people who have a college degree and aspire for something more -- to create social change, to understand human psychology, to make a difference in people's lives for the better -- you get the kind of police force any community would welcome.**

**So yes, defund the police. But then re-fund them, better. Hire people with a college degree. Pay them more. Reform police academies to include education on psychology, cultural sensitivity, communication skills and de-escalation of conflict.** Hold people to account.

It's not up to the officers to bring about change. We have to take drastic action to create that change for them. Those who want things to stay the same will have no choice but to go elsewhere, because the world has changed. Policing needs to catch up.

David Hughes is the chief of professional standards at the Newport News Sheriff's Office in Virginia.