

CRES 10
Discussion 3 Notes

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Reflection Testimonial Freewriting

I think that my personal experience with policing is something that feels less sincere than what I would prefer from my writing.

The truth is that Policing is not a large part of my life, and its not something I particularly care about, outside of the ways in which it opposes the freedoms and lives of people I care about.

I came into the class having already thought about policing, its role and the impacts its had for a long time. I already saw racism as a thing which requires no personal malice, and I already thought of it as something people do, rather than something people are.

I think that the policing testimonial I gave is one which I still find myself tending towards. I am in an espeically privledged group, people for whom the police rarely attack, and people for whom the police recruit from. My testimonial is shaped by the ways in which that is true and made visible around me.

I find myself much more affected by the abhorrent actions taken by police, more than anything else. It is enraging when yet another cop kills an innocent person, and it is maddening when there is a seemingly infinite argument about the fact that the murders committed by police are not execptions, but the point of policing. I find myself often burnt out, too many stories of horrific events, all surrounded by seemingly gormless centerists unable to square the reality with their impression of the police as a necessary and important part of society.

I think perhaps my testimonial falls victim to what is so easy for people like me, apathy. The world always feels like its drowning in blood and fire, and injustice and it can be so easy to disconnect when you aren't the one bleeding or burning, or suffocating. I want to care and help but it feels like an insurmountable task. I'm someone who gets nervous talking to cashiers, who can barely make eye contact and is scared of meeting new people. I feel utterly powerless to change things.

I know I'm not powerless, I can organize, volunteer, donate. I can teach the things I learn here at university so even if I can't share the authority of my degree I can share the information. But it is terrifying and it feels like thowing a bucket of water into a forest fire.

Other Responses

- Only one interaction with police. Extremely friendly and positive, strangely privledged.
Muslim means policing of culture. People are made into police for their family and friends.
- No direct interactions. Father had many interactions. Dad tried to give the talk about racism, death of Treyvon Martin gave the impetus for getting the real details of Racism.
Not afforded the ability to be ignorant. No escape.
- Protection of innocence. Only some are allowed to choose whether to learn about race and racism.
- Assimilating into the US despite the US being the cause of fleeing your home.
Giving up parts of yourself to live in a country that hates people like you and inflicted massive amounts of violence.
Speaking a specific way, hiding language, hiding culture.
Choosing to believe the police do their job. Want to be American Want to Assimilate.
Always being critical, can't be Pakistani, will never be seen as American by some.
- Prisoner of war? Policing and prison abolition is an international issue. US police exchange weapons and training with police and militaries around the world.
- Originally thought it was indirect. Most interactions are through others sharing their experiences.
Parents were racially profiled.
Mixed identities are strange, you are categorized both internally and externally. You are expected to fit in with family.
- DC senior year. Culture shock, a lot of white students. So many white conservatives want to be cops and soldiers.

Can you Describe Policing?

I think that fundamentally, policing is the usage of power to produce the invincible sovereign and suppress the subjects.

I think this is a good definition because the core of policing is both the exertion of state violence as well as the goal of separating the desirable from the undesirable.

To be expand some inferences, not all policing is bad. Safety regulations save lives. Things like speed limits, fire safety, are all important.

I don't exclude this from policing even though that is often not what people mean by policing. I think this definition is similar to power in that it is something that defines a state, and is something that is useful if dangerous.

That doesn't mean however that Police are useful, they engage in a specific type of policing which I personally believe is harmful to people.

Responses

- US police punish people to "ensure a good and functioning society"
- Policing is the act of enforcing a widely accepted belief on others in a manner that results in legal, physical, or financial consequences.
- Establishing controls over how one presents themselves or acts. I think it is more about control over presentation and action.
- Broader perspective
System of control and punishment to convince us that a militarized democracy is necessary.
- Instrument of colonial violence to maintain the imperial core.
- Policing is Cyclical, through capitalism.
Policing is the programmatic and cyclical safeguarding of itself from those it otherizes.
- Use of imperial core.
Policing is used to protect profit.
- Extra nuance: Grandma policing children manners, politeness.