

Let's Look — *Critically!* — at Fox News Bill O'Reilly's *Talking Points* and His Statistics

O'Reilly, The Truth About Ferguson
(*see, in particular, up to 5:01*)

Police Don't Kill People Often

“In 2012, the last stats available from the FBI there were about 12 million arrests in the U.S.A. That averages out to 34,000 arrests per day. In 99.9 percent of those cases, the perpetrator was not killed by police. In fact, just over 400 fatal police shootings a year are recorded in this country, according to the FBI. So let me restate -- **12 million arrests a year, 400 fatal shootings, many of them justified.** And Al Sharpton has the nerve to insult the American police community, men and women risking their lives to protect us.”

—O'Reilly, *Fox News*

Given the context, O'Reilly is using the FBI statistics to attack the race-based claim that police are disproportionately targeting blacks and that, as Al Sharpton put it, “*we have had enough*”.

Let's Look Closer

According to FBI statistics for 2012, there were 12 million arrests of which 400 involved fatal shooting. (That's 0.0033 percent of 12 million)

O'Reilly is telling us that police officers kill citizens only rarely.

But are these statistics at all relevant?

Are they relevant for the question *whether police officers disproportionately kill blacks?*

An Imaginary Dialogue

O'Reilly: Statistics show that police officers do not usually kill. They are no monsters as the media want them to depict.

Protester: No one in her right mind says that police officers kill people all the time! Protesters are angry at the police because **police officers disproportionately kill blacks.**

O'Reilly: So, what's your point?

Protester: My point is that your statistics do not address the question whether police officers disproportionately kill one racial group, blacks, compared to another, whites. They are useless and misleading statistics...

O'Reilly's Second Set of Statistics

The truth is that
91 % of black
homicide victims
are killed by other
blacks

Let's assume the reported
statistics are correct.

Blacks are Often Killed by Other Blacks

“Black boys being murdered in the context of Ferguson. Are you kidding me?”

The truth is that 91 percent of black homicide victims are killed by other blacks -- 91 percent. Yet, that woman tries to mislead folks by accusing American law enforcement of shooting down young black men in the streets.”

—O'Reilly, Fox News

Given the context, O'Reilly is using the black-on-blacks murder statistics to attack the claim that police officers are disproportionately killing young blacks (“black boys being murdered”)

Look Closer

Another Imaginary Dialogue

Protester: A white police officer killed a black kid, Michael Brown.

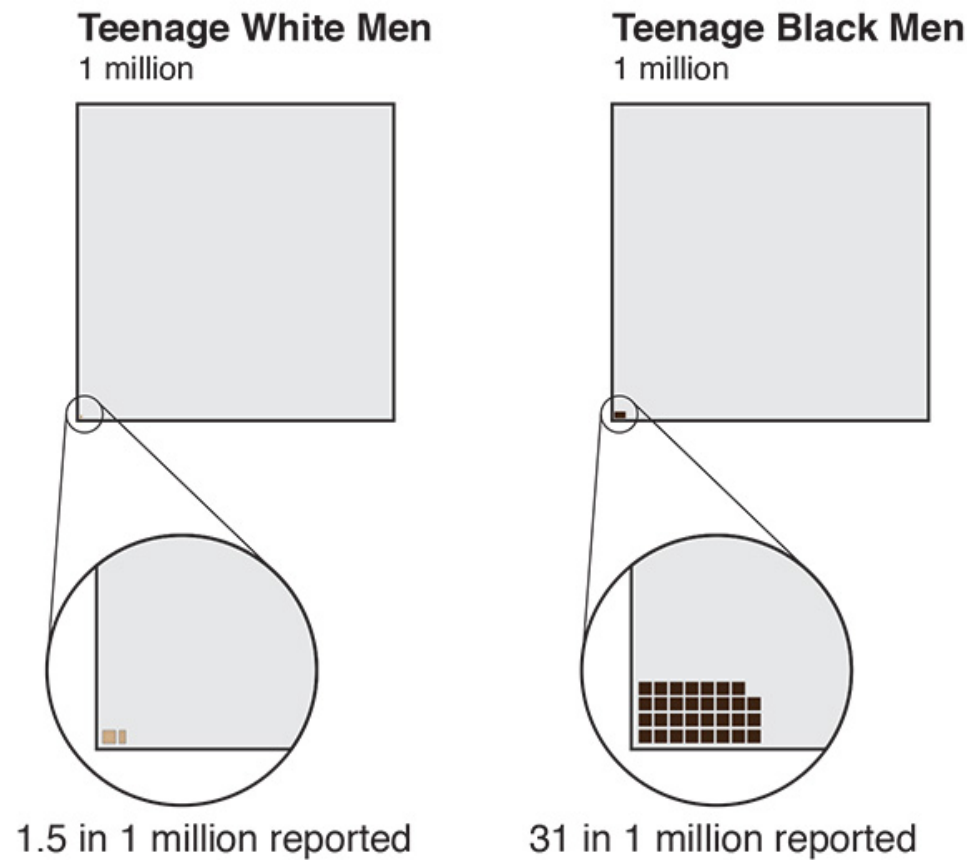
O'Reilly: That's terrible. But, you know, statistics show that most of the time blacks are killed by other blacks.

Protester: But —*in this case*— it was a white officer who killed a black kid. So, what are your statistics good for in our discussion?

O'Reilly: They show that officers do not kill black kids often. Other blacks do.

Protester: If your concern is how often officers kill black kids, you should tell us *how often officers kill black kids compared to white kids*.

The Statistics O'Reilly Ignored



Reported killings by police during 2010-2012
21 times as likely for black vs. white teenage men

(Jonathan Stray/ProPublica)

–Deadly Force, in Black and White, PRO PUBLICA

http://www.propublica.org/article/deadly-force-in-black-and-white#disqus_thread

“The 1,217 deadly police shootings from 2010 to 2012 captured in the federal data show that blacks, age 15 to 19, were killed at a rate of 31.17 per million, while just 1.47 per million white males in that age range died at the hands of police.”

By dividing 31.17 by 1.47, one gets 21. This value can be interpreted as saying that **young black kids are 21 times more at risk of being killed by the police than white kids.**

Two Things to Keep in Mind About Statistics

1. Are they relevant?

Statistics can be intimidating because we feel they are like facts we cannot dispute. What we can dispute, however, is whether they are relevant for the issues on the table. O'Reilly's statistics do not seem to be relevant.

2. Are they “absolute” or “comparative”?

There is a difference between (a) the crime rate in the US is low (*absolute*) and (b) the crime rate has increased since last year (*comparative*).

There is a difference between (a) officers do not usually kill people (*absolute*) and (b) officers kill more blacks than whites (*comparative*).

Comparative statistics are often more relevant than absolute statistics.

Some More Statistics About Policing in the United States

Data are from

“Special Report — Contacts Between Police and the Public, 2008”

The Bureau of Justice Statistics, US Department of Justice

TABLE 13

Enforcement actions taken by police during traffic stops, by demographic characteristics of drivers, 2008

Demographic characteristic	Number (in thousands)	Percent of drivers who were—					
		Total	Arrested	Ticketed	Issued a written warning	Given a verbal warning	Allowed to proceed with no enforcement action
Total	17,596	100%	2.6%	55.4%	17.0%	9.7%	15.3%
Sex							
Male	10,287	100%	3.5%	55.9%	16.4%	9.0%	15.3%
Female	7,309	100%	1.4	54.9	17.8	10.6	15.3
Race/Hispanic origin							
White ^a	12,873	100%	2.4%	53.1%	17.7%	11.2%	15.6%
Black/African American ^a	1,841	100%	4.7	58.3	14.8	6.0	16.2
Hispanic/Latino	2,034	100%	2.6	62.9	15.0	4.5	15.0
Other ^{a,b}	710	100%	0.9!	65.0	15.7	7.5!	10.8
Two or more races ^a	137	100%	4.2!	74.4	12.7!	2.4!	6.2!
Age							
16–19	1,294	100%	2.1%!	56.7%	21.2%	9.2%	10.7%
20–29	4,840	100%	4.4	57.1	15.5	9.3	13.5
30–39	3,665	100%	2.9	60.9	15.4	7.7	13.1
40–49	3,452	100%	1.5	54.8	18.2	9.3	16.3
50–59	2,587	100%	1.3!	50.9	17.6	12.3	18.0
60 or older	1,758	100%	1.5!	46.4	17.7	12.1	22.4

Note: Data on the types of enforcement actions taken by police were reported for 99.6% of traffic stop cases. Detail may not sum to total due to rounding. Separate statistics on the racial categories that make up the other race category are not shown due to too few sample cases to obtain reliable estimates. See appendix table 13 for standard errors.

! Interpret data with caution; estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases, or coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

^aExcludes persons of Hispanic origin.

^bIncludes American Indians, Alaska Natives, Asians, Native Hawaiians, and other Pacific Islanders.

TABLE 14

**Stopped drivers who were searched by police,
by demographic characteristics, 2002, 2005, and 2008**

Demographic characteristic	2002	2005	2008
Total	5.0%	4.7%	5.0%
Sex			
Male	7.1%	6.7%	7.4%
Female	1.8	1.5	1.6
Race/Hispanic origin			
White ^a	3.5%	3.6%	3.9%
Black/African American ^a	10.2	9.5	12.3
Hispanic/Latino	11.4	9.1	5.8
Other ^{a,b}	2.9!	4.5!	2.1!
Two or more races ^a	~	7.9!	8.6!
Age			
16-19	8.9%	9.8%	7.0%
20-29	6.6	7.9	9.0
30-39	6.4	3.3	4.5
40-49	3.4	3.2	2.5
50-59	1.5	2.2	2.5
60 or older	--	0.2!	1.6

Note: Data on whether police searched a stopped driver or vehicle in 2002 were reported for 98.2% of traffic stops, in 2005 for 96.2%, and in 2008 for 99.5%. Persons of Hispanic origin were excluded from all other race categories. See appendix table 14 for standard errors. Separate statistics on the racial categories that make up the other race category are not shown due to too few sample cases to obtain reliable estimates.

! Interpret data with caution; estimate based on 10 or fewer cases, or coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

~Not applicable. The 2002 PPCS did not separately identify persons of other races or those of two or more races.

--Less than 0.05%

^aExcludes persons of Hispanic origin.

^bIncludes American Indians, Alaska Natives, Asians, Native Hawaiians, and other Pacific Islanders.

TABLE 15

**Type of search conducted by police during traffic stop and
the outcome, 2008**

Characteristic of search	Driver only	Vehicle only	Both driver and vehicle
Total	100%	100%	100%
Type of search			
With consent	57.7%	60.0%	50.8%
Without consent	42.3	40.0	49.2
Outcome of search			
Criminal evidence found	2.1%!	1.6%!	14.3%
No criminal evidence found	97.9	98.4	85.7
Driver's perception of legitimacy			
Search perceived as legitimate	36.1%	20.7%!	21.7%
Search perceived as not legitimate	63.9	79.3	78.3
Number (in thousands)	187	226	458

Note: Data on whether the driver consented to the search were reported for 100% of driver-only searches, 100% of vehicle-only searches, and 94.6% of both driver and vehicle searches. Data on whether evidence was found were reported for 100% of driver-only searches, 96.0% of vehicle-only searches, and 98.9% of both driver and vehicle searches. Data on whether the driver felt that police had legitimate reason for search were reported for 84.2% of driver-only searches, 92.0% of vehicle-only searches, and 91.3% of both driver and vehicle searches. In the "both driver and vehicle" column, drivers who consented to one type of search but not the other were classified as a search without consent. Drivers who experienced a search of both driver and vehicle and felt police had a legitimate reason for one search but not the other were classified as search perceived as not legitimate. See appendix table 15 for standard errors.

! Interpret data with caution; estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases, or coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

TABLE 18**Contacts with police in which force was used or threatened, by demographic characteristics, 2002, 2005, and 2008**

Demographic characteristic	Residents experiencing use or threat of force during most recent contact					
	Number (in thousands)			Percent ^a		
	2002	2005	2008	2002	2005	2008
Total	664	716	574	1.5%	1.6%	1.4%
Sex						
Male	520	514	390	2.2%	2.2%	1.8%
Female	144	202	184	0.7	1.0	1.0
Race/Hispanic origin						
White ^b	374	406	347	1.1%	1.2%	1.2%
Black or African American ^b	173	183	130	3.5	4.3	3.4
Hispanic/Latino	103	105	68	2.5	2.6	1.6
Other ^{b,c}	15!	3!	19!	1.1!	0.2!	1.1!
Two or more races ^b	~	19!	11!	~	4.0!	2.4!
Age						
16-19	152	168	78	3.6%	4.0%	2.4%
20-19	230	271	253	2.1	2.5	2.5
30-39	117	135	122	1.2	1.6	1.5
40-49	95	66	61	1.0	0.7	0.8
50-59	50	39	33!	0.8	0.6	0.5!
60 or older	21!	38	27!	0.4!	0.8	0.6!

Note: Table is based on the resident's most recent contact with police that year. Data on use of force by police during most recent contact in 2002 were reported for 99.3% of police contact cases, in 2005 for 99.6%, and in 2008 for 99.8%. Detail may not sum to total due to rounding. See appendix table 18 for standard errors. Separate statistics on the racial categories that make up the other race category are not shown due to too few sample cases to obtain reliable estimates.

! Interpret data with caution; estimate based on 10 or fewer cases, or coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

~Not applicable. The 2002 PPCS did not separately identify persons of two or more races.

^aSee *Methodology* for distribution of U.S. population who had contact with police.

^bExcludes persons of Hispanic origin.

^cIncludes American Indians, Alaska Natives, Asians, Native Hawaiians, and other Pacific Islanders.

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^bExcludes persons of Hispanic origin.

^aSee *Methodology* for distribution of U.S. population who had contact with police.

~Not applicable. The 2002 PPCS did not separately identify persons of two or more races.

TABLE 19**Persons who felt the threat or use of force against them by police was excessive, by demographic characteristics, 2008**

Demographic characteristic	Percent who felt force was excessive
Total	74.3%
Sex	
Male	76.2%
Female	70.6
Race/Hispanic origin	
White*	72.8%
Black/African American*	70.0
Hispanic/Latino	78.9
Age	
16–29	69.6%
30 or older	80.8

Note: Table is based on the residents most recent contact with police in 2008. Data on police use of excessive force in 2008 were reported for 97.5% of use-of-force cases. The total includes estimates for persons identifying with other races or with two or more races, not shown separately. See appendix table 19 for standard errors.

*Excludes persons of Hispanic origin.

TABLE 20**Types of force used or threatened by police, 2008**

Type of force police used or threatened	Percent of contacts with police in which—	
	Force was used or threatened	Excessive force was used or threatened
Pushed or grabbed	53.5%	60.2%
Kicked or hit	12.6	17.2
Sprayed chemical/pepper spray	4.9 !	5.6 !
Electroshock weapon (stun gun)	4.1 !	5.6 !
Pointed gun	25.6	28.4
Threatened force	76.6	84.9
Shouted at resident	75.5	76.6
Cursed at resident	39.1	44.0
Number (in thousands)	574	417

Note: Table is based on the residents most recent contact with police in 2008. Percentages do not sum to total because respondents could have reported that police both threatened and used force or that police used more than one type of force. See appendix table 20 for standard errors.

! Interpret data with caution; estimate based on 10 or fewer cases, or coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

TABLE 21**Persons who felt police threat or use of force against them was excessive, by type of force used or threatened, 2008**

Type of force used or threatened	Contacts with police in which force was used or threatened	
	Number (in thousands)	Percent who felt it was excessive
Total	562	74.3%
Police used force*	344	80.6%
Police only threatened force	141	74.3
Police only shouted/cursed at resident	72	42.9 !

Note: Table is based on the residents most recent contact with police in 2008. Data on use of excessive force by police in 2008 were reported for 97.5% of use-of-force cases. Total includes respondents who did not report the type of force they experienced, not shown separately. See appendix table 21 for standard errors.

! Interpret data with caution; estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases, or coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

*Includes police actions such as grabbing, hitting, using chemical spray, or pointing a gun at the respondent.

TABLE 22**Conduct of residents during police contacts in which force was used or threatened, 2008**

Conduct of resident during contact involving force	Percent
Resident—	
Engaged in at least one type of behavior*	28.4%
Argued with, cursed at, insulted, or verbally threatened the police	21.9
Disobeyed or interfered with officer(s)	11.6
Resisted being handcuffed, arrested, or searched	4.8 !
Tried to get away from police	3.4 !
Pushed, grabbed, or hit officer(s)	0.6 !
Number (in thousands)	574

Note: Table is based on the residents most recent contact with police in 2008. See appendix table 22 for standard errors.

! Interpret data with caution; estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases, or coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

*Detail does not sum to total because some respondents reported more than one type of behavior.

Statistics about Stop-and Frisk in NYC

May 2013



STOP AND FRISK

AND THE URGENT NEED FOR
MEANINGFUL REFORMS

A Report by:



Office of
Bill de Blasio
PUBLIC ADVOCATE FOR THE CITY OF NEW YORK

AN ANALYSIS OF STOP & FRISK DATA

The following data analysis was produced by the Office of the Public Advocate based on raw data provided by the NYPD in their Stop, Question and Frisk Database.³

Summary of Stop and Frisk Encounters, 2011-2012

	2011 ⁴	2012 ⁵
Stops	685,724	532,911
<i>Black</i>	350,743	284,229
<i>Latino</i>	233,740	165,140
<i>White</i>	61,805	50,366
Hit Rate	11.70%	11.21%
Innocence Rate	88.30%	88.79%
Guns Found	768	729

¹ Intro 0881-2012. See: <http://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=1138391&GUID=46EF84F3-F4D4-4B84-BCB2-042A5AC7E674&Options=ID%7CText%7C&Search=police+inspector+general>

Differences in the use in stop and frisk by race

Though differences in the rate of contraband and weapons recovery are small, stops of white New Yorkers are more likely to result in weapons or contraband recovery.

When measured by how many stops it took to recover contraband, African American and Latino New Yorkers are stopped at a rate 40% more frequently than white New Yorkers:

Ratio of contraband recovery compared to stops, by race		Total number of stops, by race	Total stops resulting in contraband recovery
Black	1 : 61	284,229	4,639
Latino	1 : 57	165,140	2,877
White	1 : 43	50,366	1,172

Similarly, it took nearly two times the amount of stops of black New Yorkers to find a weapon when compared to stops of white New Yorkers:

Ratio of weapon recovery compared to stops, by race		Total number of stops, by race	Total stops resulting in weapon recovery
Black	1 : 93	284,229	3,066
Latino	1 : 71	165,140	2,315
White	1 : 49	50,366	1,036