



## **Dispelling the Myths Surrounding Police Use of Lethal Force**

[Richard R. Johnson, Ph.D.](#)

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Over the last three years there has been growing concern in the public discourse about the use of force, especially lethal force, by the police in the United States. This concern spawned the creation of the Black Lives Matter organization and motivated President Obama to organize a commission on policing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Concerns over several highly publicized and politicized deaths of African-American men by police use of force have produced numerous public protests in almost every city, town, and university in the nation. Most of these protests have been peaceful, but many have not, especially the protest in Dallas on July 7 that resulted in eleven officers being shot, five of them fatally. This was followed on July 17 by the ambush of officers in Baton Rouge, with 6 officers shot, 3 of them fatally.

In the public discussion around the topic of police use of force, many disturbing claims have been made by civil rights groups, the news media, and even government leaders. However, as President Obama stated in his October 27, 2015 address to the International Association of Chiefs of Police, “too often law enforcement gets scapegoated for broader failures of our society.”<sup>1</sup> The purpose of this report, therefore, is to fact check these various claims and, with the aid of scientific research and other credible sources, try to determine if these claims are indeed true. The reader is encouraged to access and explore the many references cited in this report so that the reader can assess the facts and make up his or her own mind.

### **Police Use of Lethal Force is an Epidemic**

Many civil rights leaders, politicians, and media figures have suggested that deaths from police use of force in the U.S. are widespread and have reached epidemic levels. To check the evidence for this argument, one must first determine how many police use of force deaths actually occur annually. There is some difficulty involved in determining exactly how many deaths occur annually from police use of force as data sources differ widely.

### ***Determining how many deaths actually occur***

Official government statistics on deaths from police activity come from two distinct sources – the FBI Uniform Crime Reports and the CDC Mortality Reports. The FBI data is gathered from law enforcement agencies that voluntarily report specific types of crime data, including all homicides, each year.<sup>2</sup> These data have been criticized because between 20% and 30% of law enforcement agencies do not report data in a given year, although the majority of these non-reporting agencies are quite small (fewer than 5 officers) and rarely experience violent crime.<sup>3</sup> The CDC data, on the other hand, comes from a federal supplemental form that is completed by coroners and physicians when they complete a death certificate.<sup>4</sup> Because it takes time to gather all of the facts needed to determine the correct cause of death, and it takes time to compile, tabulate, and analyze the data received, the FBI and CDC release their reports lagged by about two years. In other words, information on deaths in 2016 will not be available to the public until 2018. Despite the fact that these data come from different sources (police departments versus hospitals), the numbers generally coincide.

An analysis of the CDC data for the 10-years of 2003 through 2012 revealed that 4,285 deaths were reported by doctors and coroners to have been attributed to “legal interventions” by the police. While the number of deaths fluctuated from year to year, the average annual number of deaths from police use of force reported by the CDC (not police sources) over the last decade was 429 deaths.<sup>5</sup> Please recall, however, that these data are lagged by two years, so 2014 has only just become available.

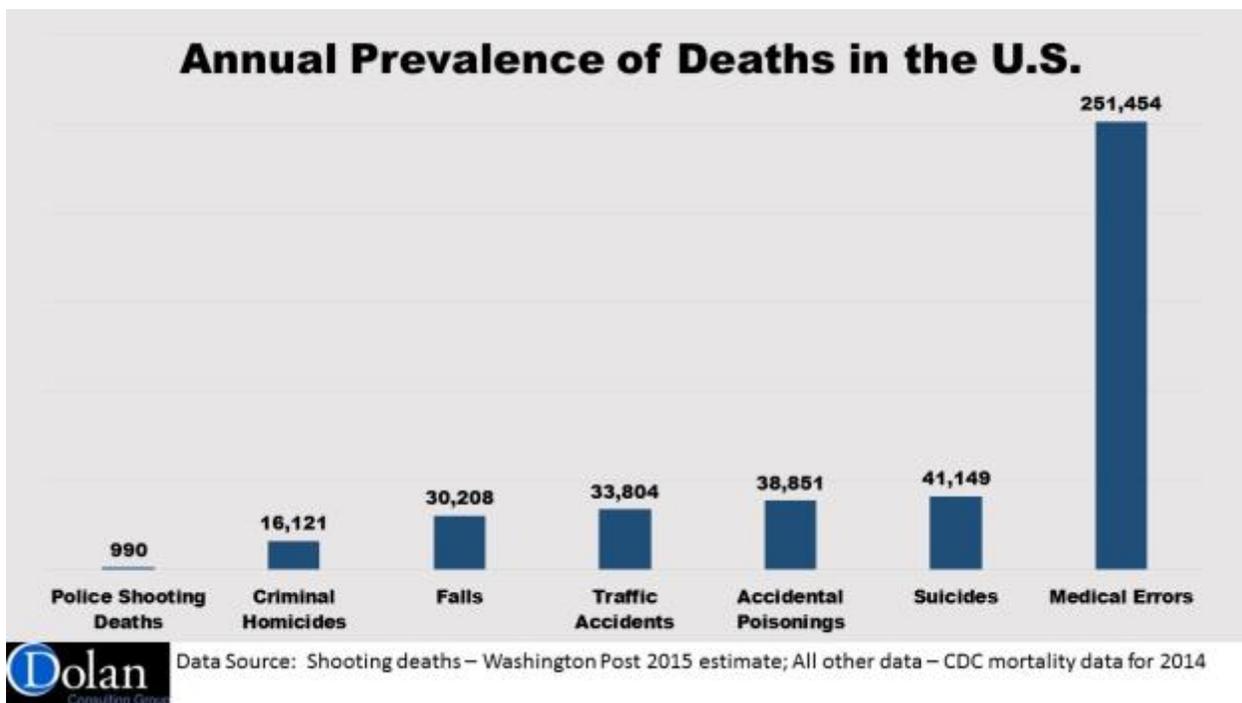
Critical of these official statistics, several media outlets have attempted to create their own data regarding deaths from police use of force. Unfortunately, these media data collection efforts are more likely to contain errors as they rely only on media reports and report information before all the facts have even been determined. Just one typical example of this would be a barricaded gunman situation where the gunman opens fire on the police, the police return fire, and the man is later found dead. Only after a full autopsy is conducted and a coroner’s report is released months later is it learned that the gunman actually committed suicide and was never hit by the bullets of the police. Nevertheless, this death is attributed to the police in the media data. The media data also counts accidental deaths from police use of force, such as when an officer shoots at an armed suspect, but the bullet misses and hits an innocent bystander a block away.

Many media sources have also pursued their own criteria for what constitutes a death from police use of force. The British newspaper, *The Guardian*, for example, used such sketchy sources as Facebook posts and Twitter tweets, and even counted deaths that were ruled accidents, such as when the police were in a vehicle pursuit and a fatal auto crash resulted. Using the widest definition of “police killings” possible, *The Guardian* found that 1,134 deaths occurred in 2015 due to police activity.<sup>6</sup> Using a slightly more conservative definition of police use of force, and sticking strictly to media sources, the *Washington Post* found that 990 individuals were shot and killed by the police in 2015.<sup>7</sup> This does not necessarily mean that the official CDC and FBI statistics are incorrect as we will have to wait a year or so to find out how closely the federal 2015 numbers match those of the *Washington Post*.

### ***Relative comparisons to other unnatural causes of death***

Numbers of deaths that approach a thousand per year seem staggering and even one needless death is a tragedy, but we must also consider that the U.S. Census Bureau estimated that in 2015 there were 321,418,820 people residing within the United States.<sup>8</sup> Using the *Washington Post* estimate of 990 deaths, this means that only 0.00031% of the U.S. population died from police use of force in 2015. This is hardly an epidemic, especially when compared to the numbers of deaths due to other unnatural causes.

According to the CDC, in 2013 there were 16,121 people murdered in the U.S. by criminals (16.3 times higher than deaths from police use of force).<sup>9</sup> The CDC also reported that 30,208 people died from falls (30.5 times higher than deaths from police), 33,804 died in motor vehicle traffic deaths (34.2 times higher than deaths from police), and 38,851 died from accidental poisonings (39.2 times higher than deaths from police).<sup>10</sup> The CDC also reported that there were 41,149 suicide deaths in 2013 (41.6 times higher than deaths from police use of force).<sup>11</sup> In light of the fact that the general public does not appear to consider traffic crash deaths, accidental poisonings, or suicide deaths to have reached epidemic levels, deaths from police use of force – which happen far less frequently – cannot reasonably be deemed an epidemic.



Part of the fear of police use of force deaths stems from the fact we are supposed to trust the police to protect us, not kill us. The same, however, can be said of doctors and nurses, yet medical errors kill many thousands more Americans annually than do the police. As with deaths from police use of force, determining the exact number of deaths from medical errors is also difficult. First, doctors themselves are the ones reporting such official data to the CDC despite their conflict of interest. Second, many people seeking significant medical care may still have died from their injury or illness even if the error had not occurred, so it is difficult to know which actually caused the death. Third, medical facilities are less forthcoming than law enforcement agencies in disclosing details

about deaths that occur on their premises. Nevertheless, researchers at Johns Hopkins University estimated that in 2015 there were 251,454 deaths from medical errors (roughly equal to the population of Orlando, Florida or Chula Vista, California). Medical errors are the third leading cause of death in the nation.

The risk of death from a doctor or nurse is 254 times greater than the risk of death from police use of force.<sup>12</sup> In spite of this statistical reality, there are public demonstrations nationwide against the police, accusing them of being murderers, but none against doctors and nurses. When a death results from a medical procedure, the public overwhelmingly trusts other doctors to investigate if an error occurred and determine the punishment due the doctor being investigated. At the same time, the public increasingly does not trust police officers to investigate other police officers and demands that citizens unfamiliar with police work should conduct these hearings. This contradiction is difficult to understand or explain.

Regardless of how many deaths occur annually from police use of force, the true measure of concern should be how often the police are *unjustified* in their use of deadly force. If the police are properly using their legal authority to use lethal force, then they cannot control how many deaths occur as that is dependent on the number of people causing or threatening imminent serious bodily injury (i.e., broken bone, punctured flesh, etc.) to an officer or third party.<sup>13</sup> In order to determine if the police are killing “too many” people each year, we need to take into consideration the number of people who are violently assaulting police officers.

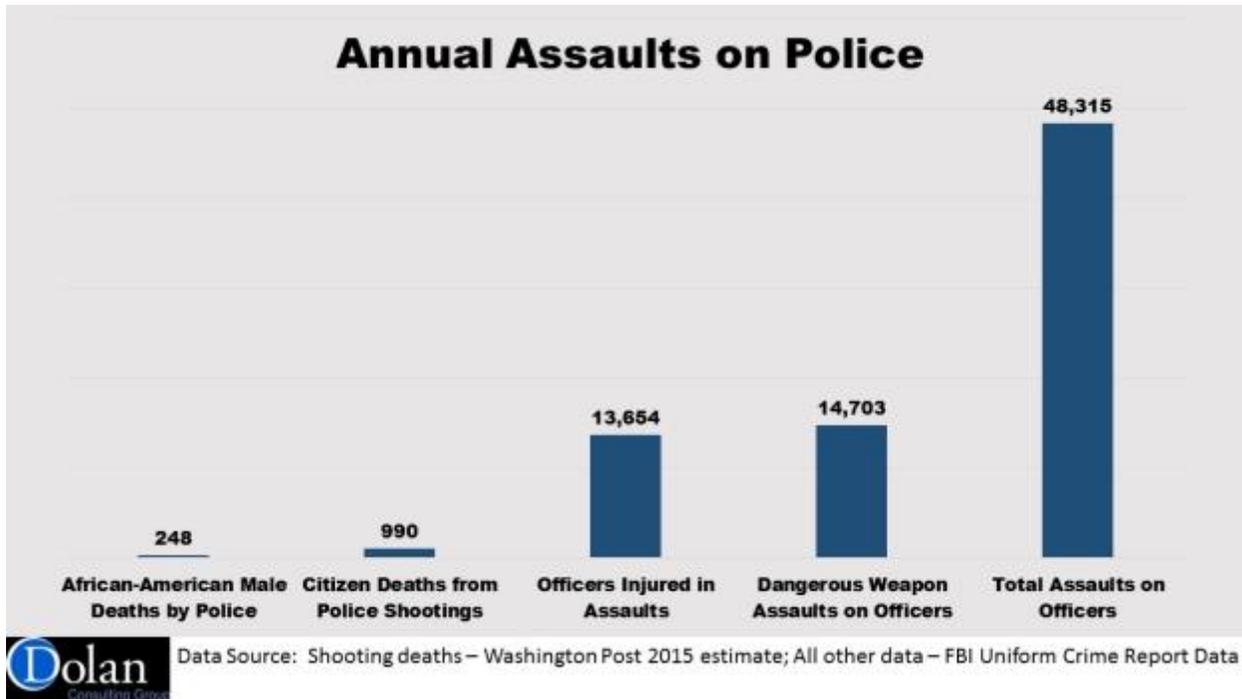
#### ***Comparisons with assaults on police officers***

Again, data of this sort are difficult to find. A conservative estimate, however, can be found within the FBI Uniform Crime Report data. In 2014, the FBI collected data on officer assaults from about 66% of the nation’s 17,000 law enforcement agencies. Even though data from a third of law enforcement agencies was absent, the data that *was* collected revealed that 48,315 assaults occurred against law enforcement officers in 2014, resulting in 13,654 officers receiving an injury requiring medical treatment.<sup>14</sup>

Of the assaults on officers, 1,950 involved a firearm and 951 involved a “cutting instrument” such as a knife, sword, axe, etc. Another 6,803 assaults on officers involved “other dangerous weapons” such as motor vehicles, clubs, metal pipes, shovels, etc. This means that in 2014, police officers were assaulted 9,704 times with deadly weapons (an average of 27 per day).<sup>15</sup> Remember, this is an extremely conservative estimate with only 66% of police departments reporting data. (If the same rate of assaults applies to the 34% of agencies that did not provide data, then the real national total would be 14,703 deadly weapon assaults on officers in 2014, or 40 per day.) This number also fails to count any incidents where an assailant used his hands and feet to beat an officer to the point of serious permanent injury or death.

When compared to the *Washington Post* estimate of 990 deaths from police use of force in 2015, this number pales in comparison to 9,704 to 14,703 deadly weapon assaults against officers. These numbers reveal that hundreds of times each year police officers show restraint in the face of dangerous assaults and do not kill their assailants even when they may be legally justified in doing so. Based on the 9,704 known deadly weapon assaults and the estimate of 990 deaths from police use of force, **only one citizen death occurred for every 10 deadly weapon attacks on officers.**

If we use the estimate of 14,703 deadly weapon assaults, only one citizen death occurred for every 15 deadly weapon attacks. Clearly, law enforcement officers across the nation are using restraint and de-escalation techniques so that deaths only result in about 7-10% of the situations where lethal force may have been legally justified.



### Police Use of Lethal Force is on the Rise

The media, politicians, and civil rights groups are concerned about why police use of deadly force is so high today. Suggestions that police use of deadly force today is higher than in past decades tend to demonstrate a failure to have a grasp of history. Prior to 1985, few judicial decisions limited police use of force, and it was the law of the land that police officers could shoot someone simply for fleeing the commission of a felony, such as a burglary, drug dealing, or auto theft. Most police departments back then lacked a written use of force policy. As a result, officer-involved shootings were far more prevalent three or four decades ago. In 1971, the New York City Police Department alone had 1,562 officer-involved shootings (4.2 per day), and the Philadelphia Police Department had 78 shootings (1.5 per week), even though the U.S. population was 36% smaller than it is today.<sup>16</sup> Comparing these numbers to the *Washington Post* estimate of just 990 deaths from police use of force nationwide in 2015, with a third larger U.S. population, reveals that police use of lethal force is only a fraction of what it was in previous decades.

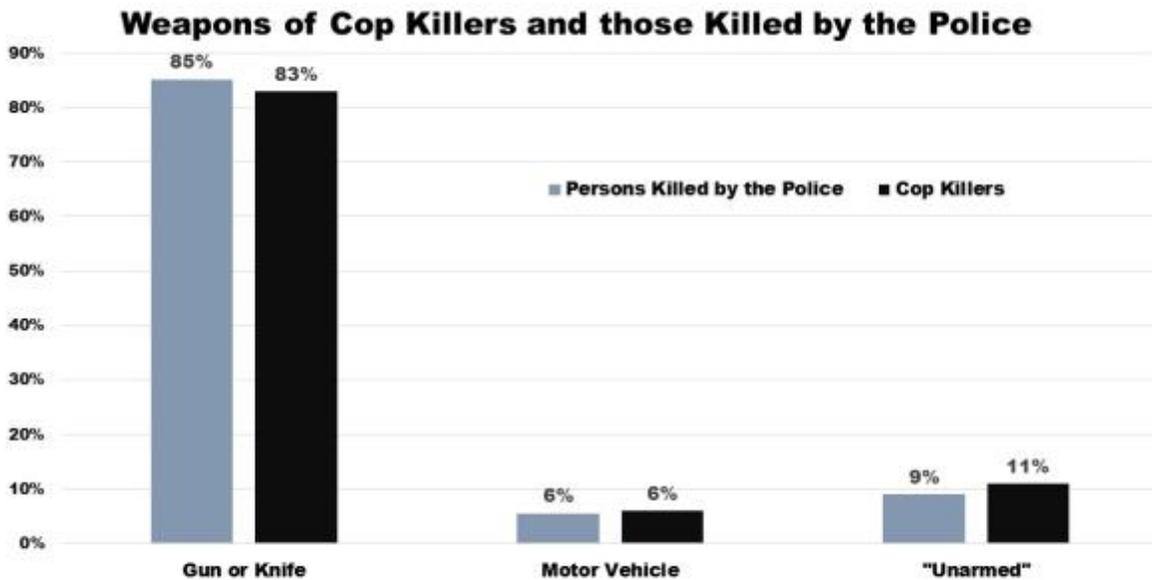
Today there are a number of court decisions that limit the police use of force, especially lethal force.<sup>17</sup> Additionally, it is rare to find a law enforcement agency anywhere in the nation that lacks a written use of force policy that specifically describes when officers can and cannot legally use force.<sup>18</sup> However, since data on the number of deaths each year from police use of force is difficult to locate, analysis of recent trends must rely on official government data (from the CDC or FBI)

that is often criticized. Nevertheless, the CDC data show a steady gradual decline in deaths from police use of force from 2012 through 2014, with an average decrease of 3.3% per year.<sup>19</sup>

From a historical perspective there is no doubt that police use of lethal force occurs only a fraction as often as it did 40 years ago, and official government statistics suggest that it has been declining further since 2012.

### The Police Are Killing Defenseless Unarmed People

Many prominent figures, including President Obama, have expressed great concern over the “killing of unarmed citizens” by the police.<sup>20</sup> A symbol of the Black Lives Matter movement has been one’s hands raised up in surrender, based on the suggestion that Michael Brown was shot to death by a police officer in Ferguson, Missouri while peacefully surrendering.<sup>21</sup> This is in spite of the fact that multiple independent investigations have consistently found that Michael Brown never had his hands up in surrender, but actually physically attacked the officer multiple times.<sup>22</sup> In the minds of some, when the police use lethal force against anyone not armed with a knife or gun, the use of lethal force is illegitimate. This assumes that people armed with a motor vehicle, club, brick, or their bare hands do not pose a serious risk to officers’ lives.



Data Source: Shooting deaths – Washington Post 2015 estimate; Cop Killer – DCG research

Let us first look at the dangerousness of motor vehicles. According to the *Washington Post*, 54 individuals (5.5% of all deaths from police use of force) were shot and killed by the police when armed “only” with a motor vehicle.<sup>23</sup> Some have argued that all an officer had to do when confronted with a motor vehicle is move out of the way. Such an argument ignores the fact that, according to the CDC, 991 pedestrians in America were struck and killed by a motor vehicle in accidents in 2014 alone.<sup>24</sup> Additionally, a detailed review of the circumstances surrounding all law enforcement officer deaths from 2013 through 2015 revealed that 6% of all law enforcement

officers murdered in the line of duty were killed when intentionally run over by a motor vehicle.<sup>25</sup> To compare, 6% of officers murdered in the line of duty were intentionally (not accidentally) killed with a motor vehicle, and 5.5% of those killed by the police were believed to be threatening the officers with a motor vehicle. The percentages are almost a perfect match.

Some also argue that an assault with anything other than a knife, gun, or car does not justify a lethal force response from the police. According to the *Washington Post* data, 9.3% of those shot and killed by the police (or 93 individuals) were classified as “unarmed.” The *Washington Post* called individuals “unarmed” not only when the citizen had only his fists as weapons, but also when he had a blunt force weapon such as a club.<sup>26</sup> The opinion that these “unarmed” individuals pose no serious safety risk ignores the fact that 1 out of every 5 people murdered in 2014 was beaten or strangled to death. According to CDC data, of the 15,809 homicides that year, 3,121 of the homicide victims were beaten, strangled, or forcibly drowned. **“Unarmed” assailants kill more than 3,000 people each year.**<sup>27</sup>

A detailed review of the circumstances surrounding all law enforcement officer deaths in 2015 revealed that **11% of all law enforcement officers murdered in the line of duty from 2013 through 2015 were killed by someone the *Washington Post* would label as “unarmed.”** In 5% of officer deaths the officer was beaten to death, and in another 6% the assailant grabbed the officer’s gun and fatally shot the officer.<sup>28</sup> To compare, 11% of officers murdered in the line of duty were *killed* by someone who was “unarmed,” and only 9.3% of those killed by the police were allegedly “unarmed.”

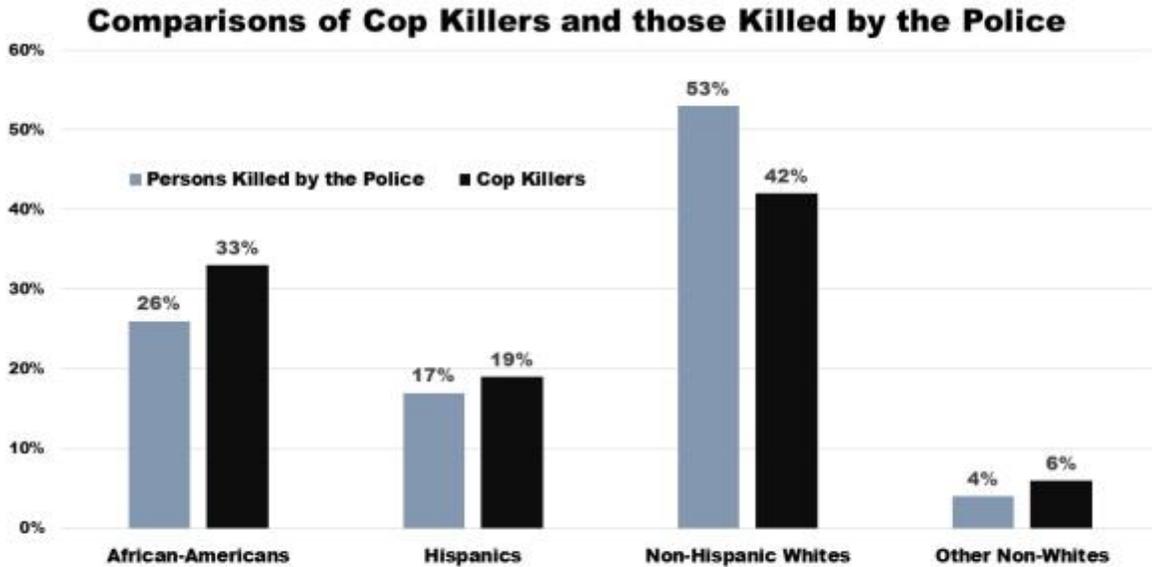
In summary, the data reveal that “unarmed” assailants kill many police officers (and thousands of private citizens) every year. Nevertheless, the data reveal that **law enforcement officers shoot and kill “unarmed” assailants at lower proportions than officers themselves are killed by “unarmed” assailants.**

### **Police Use of Lethal Force Disproportionately Targets African-American Men**

Those that have made this accusation often compare the proportion of police use of force deaths that involved African-Americans, to the proportion of African-Americans in the U.S. population. The *Washington Post* data indicates that 258 of the 990 individuals killed by the police in 2015 were African-Americans, all but 10 of which were male. So that means 25% of those who died from police use of force in 2015 were African-American men and 1% were African-American women. On the other hand, 468 (47.3%) of those killed by the police in 2015 were white (non-Latino) males and 26 (2.6%) were white (non-Latina) females.<sup>29</sup> In other words, almost twice as many non-Latino whites died from police use of force as did African-Americans.

According to U.S. Census estimates, however, African-American men make up only 6.6% of the U.S. population and African-American women make up roughly 6.7%.<sup>30</sup> Therefore, many have made an issue of the 6.6% of the population versus 25% of those killed by the police comparison. The police, however, are not supposed to use deadly force against the general population, only those who are threatening them (or others) with imminent serious violence.

Dolan Consulting Group staff reviewed the details of all of the officers murdered in the line of duty from 2013 through 2015 by locating the officers on the *Officer Down Memorial Page* website.<sup>31</sup> Then, using the same techniques employed by the *Washington Post* for deaths from police use of force, we reviewed online news reports and photos to determine the race of the person who murdered the officer. Of the individuals who murdered police officers from 2013-2015, 33% were African-American, 19% were whites with Spanish surnames, and 5.9% were identified in the news reports as Asian, Pacific Islander, or Native American / Eskimo. All of the non-white killers of the police were male.



Data Source: Shooting deaths – Washington Post 2015 estimate; Cop Killer – DCG research

Considering this, African-American men may make up 6.6% of the U.S. population, but they account for 33% of those who have murdered police officers in the last three years. In other words, African-American men are 5 times more likely to kill a police officer, but only 3.7 times more likely to be killed by the police. As the U. S. Department of Justice did not think it appropriate to collect data on the race of assailants who assault the police, it would seem highly likely that, in keeping with statistical data relating to deadly assaults upon officers, 33% of the 17,703 deadly force assaults police officers experienced in 2014 were perpetrated by African-American men.

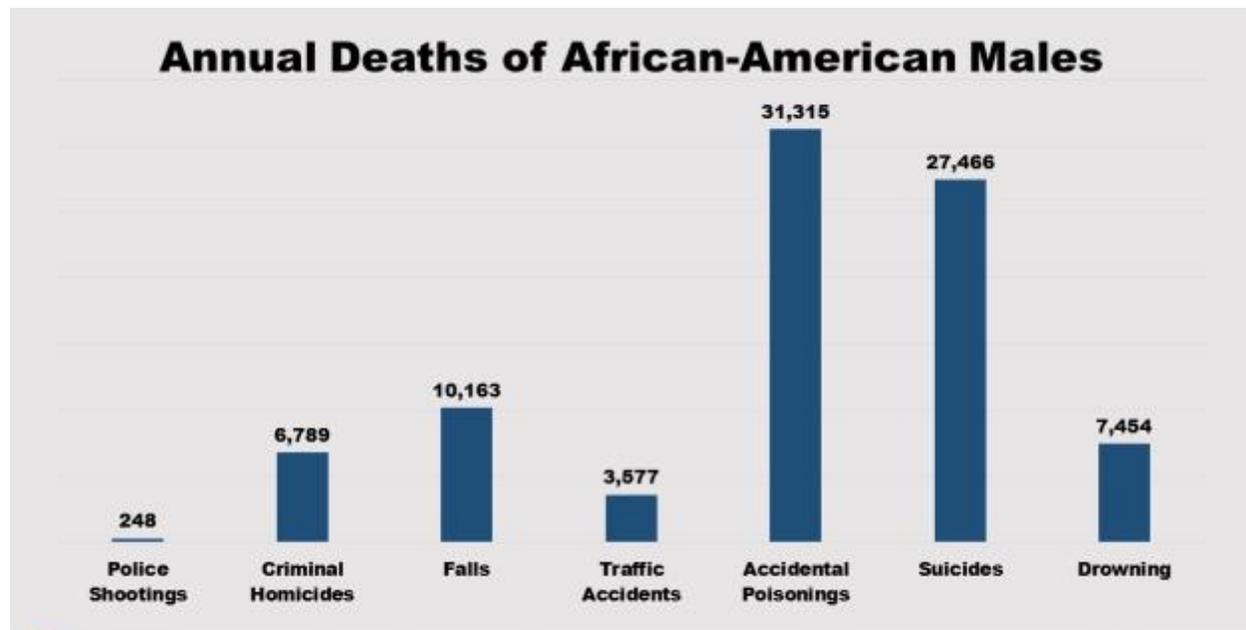
Since the *Washington Post* data suggests only 25% of those killed by police use of force were African-American men, but 33% of law enforcement officers murdered in the line of duty were killed by African-American men, it appears that African-American men are less likely to be killed than their violence towards the police would suggest. The same is true for Hispanic men. According to the *Washington Post*, 17% of the individuals killed by the police were Hispanic men, but 19% of those who killed police officers were Hispanic males.

The evidence suggests that the police do not disproportionately target African-American men for use of lethal force. The evidence suggests that the police are only responding to the rate of deadly force assaults they are experiencing.

### **Police Actions Pose a Substantial Threat to the Lives of African-American Men**

The *Washington Post* reported that there were 248 deaths of African-American males by the police, and the U.S. Census estimated that there were 21,213,642 African-American males in the U.S. in 2015.<sup>32</sup>

In contrast, the CDC data indicate that homicides claimed the lives of 6,789 African-American males in 2014, most of whom were murdered by other African-American males.<sup>33</sup> CDC data also indicate that 3,577 African-American males died from traffic accidents.<sup>34</sup> Using the statistic of 248 deaths from police use of force, **African-American men are 14.4 times more likely to die from a traffic accident than from police use of force. Likewise, they are 27.4 times more likely to be murdered than to be killed by the police officer.** Thus, there is no credible evidence of a systematic genocidal plan by the police to kill African-American men.



Data Source: Shooting deaths – Washington Post 2015 estimate; All other data – CDC mortality data for 2014

## **Implicit Bias is Driving Police Use of Deadly Force**

As was shown above, the proportions of deaths of African-Americans and Hispanics due to police use of force mirror the same (or even lower) proportions at which members of these racial or ethnic groups kill police officers. This alone suggests there is no national trend of racial bias in the application of deadly force by the police. Yet many political leaders and media sources have suggested that law enforcement officers are being influenced in their behaviors by an unconscious racial bias they hold against African-Americans and Hispanics.<sup>35</sup> This line of reasoning suggests that officers act in a prejudicial manner, but are simply unaware of doing so because the racial biases they hold are unconscious. The claims are made that even African-American and Hispanic law enforcement officers hold implicit biases against people of their own race or ethnicity.<sup>36</sup>

This concept of hidden implicit biases emerged from research that developed a variety of implicit bias tests. These tests purport to expose ingrained biased perceptions of the world.<sup>37</sup> For example, in the implicit bias test regarding sexism, the test taker must rapidly answer questions like, “Who did the laundry, a man or a woman?” If, under a very short time limit, you first answer “woman,” it suggests that you have unconscious sexist views as either men or women could equally have done the laundry. Even if you are a woman, if you initially considered that the woman might have done the laundry, then (it is suggested) you have deeply ingrained sexist stereotypes that must be overcome. However, research as recent as 2015 reveals that women actually still do the overwhelming majority of the household chores in America.<sup>38</sup> Even though the answer “woman” is statistically far more likely to be correct, the test claims that you are sexist for selecting the woman.

The same goes for the implicit bias test regarding racism toward African-Americans. Despite the fact that African-Americans are currently disproportionately more involved in crime than any other race in the U.S., and disproportionately live in poverty, answering questions in a way that suggests African-Americans might be poor or involved in crime produces a test result of implicit bias.<sup>39</sup>

However, there is overwhelming evidence that there is little or no relationship between one’s implicit bias score on racism and any actual prejudicial behavior. A team of research psychologists from Rice University, University of Virginia, University of Connecticut, and the University of Pennsylvania reviewed 46 studies (involving more than 5,600 participants) that tested whether a person’s implicit racial bias score predicted their prejudicial behavior against people of a different race. While they found that one’s overt racism – openly racist beliefs – predicted prejudicial behavior, implicit bias test scores rarely did.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, another study put 80 police officers through rigorous, stress-inducing lethal force scenarios in a simulator and found that the officers’ implicit bias scores had no impact on how quickly they decided to fire on black or white criminal suspects, or whether they accidentally shot a black suspect who did not have a weapon. In fact, in this study, the officers ended up drawing their weapon and firing faster for white suspects than black, and were more likely to shoot white suspects than black suspects on accident.<sup>41</sup>

The evidence suggests that law enforcement officers do not disproportionately kill African-Americans and Hispanics when one considers the rate at which individuals belonging to these racial groups attack and kill officers. Therefore, evidence of bias is lacking. In fact, recent

extensive research has failed to find an association between implicit bias test scores and racially prejudicial behavior.

### **Excessive Force is linked to a Lack of Diversity of Police Forces**

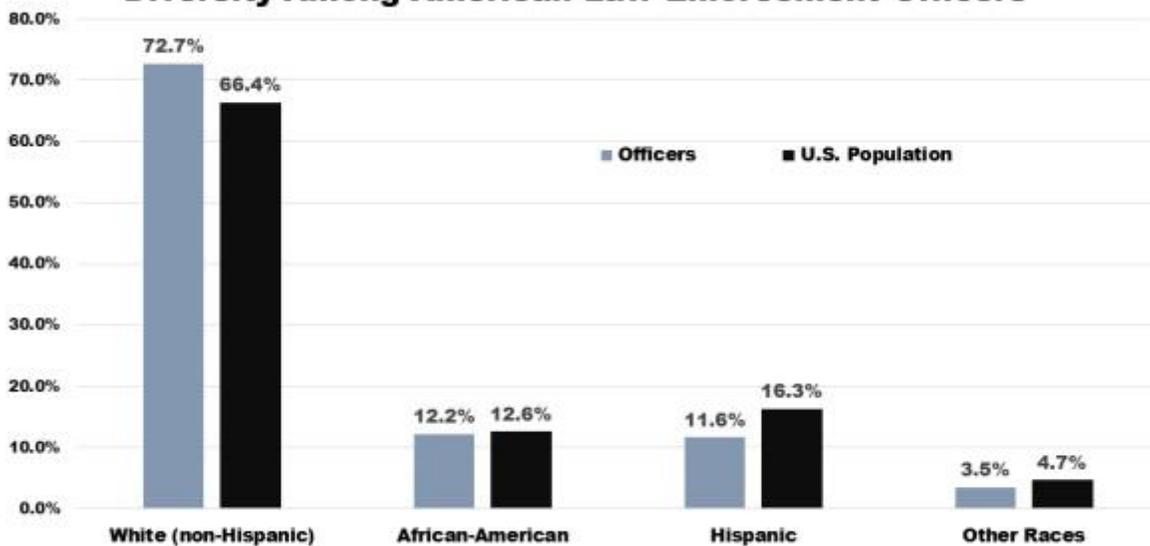
The final claim we will address here regards the belief that if police departments were more racially diverse, then there would be fewer incidences of use of force. This argument goes back to the 1960s and relies on the notion that African-American and Latino officers relate better to African-American and Latino citizens, and vice versa.<sup>42</sup>

First we need to examine the claim that law enforcement agencies are not racially diverse already. The most recent estimates from the U.S. Justice Department from 2010 were that 12.2% of law enforcement officers are African-American, 11.6% are Hispanic, and 3.5% are other non-white races.<sup>43</sup> According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the same year of the Department of Justice data, African-Americans made up 12.6% of the population, or only 0.4 percentage points more than their representation among the ranks of law enforcement officers. The 2010 Census showed that 16.3% of the U.S. population was Hispanic, only 4.7 percentage points more than their representation among law enforcement officers.<sup>44</sup> It would appear that African-Americans are already equally represented among law enforcement agencies, and Hispanic officers are nearing parity with the U.S. population. In fact, a number of major U.S. cities, such as Detroit, Baltimore, Atlanta, and Washington already have majority non-white police forces.

Nevertheless, the research is clear that agency racial diversity has no impact on use of force. For example, Criminologist Brad Smith of Wayne State University examined a nationwide sample of hundreds of police departments and found that agency racial diversity has no impact on deaths from police use of force. What did have an impact was the level of violent crime in the city as more violent crime was correlated with more shooting deaths by the police.<sup>45</sup> Sociologists Dale Willits of California State University and Jeffrey Nowacki of the University of New Mexico replicated Smith's findings with another nationwide sample of 325 law enforcement agencies, again revealing that officer racial diversity had no impact on the number of citizens shot and killed by the police, but violent crime levels did.<sup>46</sup> Willits also found that the racial diversity level of the police department had no influence on the rate that police officers were assaulted or murdered, but violent crime did.<sup>47</sup>

Criminologists Matthew Hickman from Seattle University and Alex Piquero from the University of Texas at Dallas studied a national sample of 496 law enforcement agencies and found that the racial diversity of the department had no influence on the number of excessive force complaints that were filed by citizens.<sup>48</sup> This finding was also replicated by another study from a team of sociologists using a nationwide sample of 497 law enforcement agencies.<sup>49</sup> Statistician Gregory Ridgway at the University of Pennsylvania, studying officer-involved shootings within the New York City Police Department, found that black officers were more than 3 times more likely to shoot a citizen than were white officers.<sup>50</sup>

## Diversity Among American Law Enforcement Officers



Data Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics (2010); U.S. Census (2010)

The available evidence is also clear that the diversity levels of police agencies have no influence on how they police. Political scientist Yongbeom Hur examined a nationwide sample of 464 law enforcement agencies and found that their level of racial diversity did not improve the percentage of crimes they solved.<sup>51</sup> Political scientist Elaine Sharp of the University of Kansas examined a nationwide sample of law enforcement agencies and found their level of racial diversity had no impact on proactive arrests by officers for minor misdemeanor offenses.<sup>52</sup> Finally, another study also found that the more racial diversity with police agencies, the greater the job turnover rate for police officers.<sup>53</sup>

**While racial diversity in law enforcement agencies is appropriate because it indicates that hiring policies within these agencies are fair, we cannot expect it to have any impact on how often the police use force.** The empirical evidence remains abundantly clear on this issue.

### Conclusion

In this report several popular claims about police use of lethal force were carefully examined and all were found to be myths. In one last parting analysis, it is helpful to look at deaths from police use of force from a “big picture” perspective. While it is unknown how many police-citizen contacts occur every year, studies that examined three cities and three small towns found that the number of calls for service the police handle averages out to 0.6 calls per year for every person in the community.<sup>54</sup> As there are 321,418,820 people residing in the U.S., this means the police across the nation handle about 192,851,292 calls for service each year. As this does not include proactive stops by officers, and informal citizen contacts unrelated to a call for service, we can double this figure to estimate the average number of official police-citizen contacts across the nation each year.

Out of these 385 million estimated police-citizen contacts, officers made 11,205,833 criminal arrest charges according to the FBI Uniform Crime Reports.<sup>55</sup> Out of these 11,205,833 arrest charges, officers were assaulted roughly 48,315 times, but only 990 deaths of citizens occurred. These deaths occurred in only 0.0003% of all police-citizen contacts, only 0.009% of all arrest situations, and in only 2.1% of assault on officer situations. Deaths from police use of force are very unfortunate, often unavoidable, and extremely rare.



Unfortunately, the myths we addressed here will apparently continue to be reported by major media sources as fact, and are now incorporated into official public policies. It is the hope of the Dolan Consulting Group that readers of this report will check its authenticity by examining its source materials. It is also the hope of the Dolan Consulting Group that readers will share their conclusions as widely as possible in order to dispel these myths that are having grave consequences for the safety of law enforcement officers and grave consequences for the safety and stability of our society.

**Richard R. Johnson** is the Chief Academic Officer at the Dolan Consulting Group. He holds a bachelor's degree in public administration and criminal justice from Indiana University's School of Public and Environmental Affairs (SPEA), a master's degree in criminology from Indiana State University, and a doctorate in criminal justice from the University of Cincinnati. He was formerly a university professor in the area of criminal justice, leaving the University of Toledo at the rank of full professor. Dr. Johnson has published more than 50 articles on policing issues in peer-reviewed research journals, including such top ranked journals as *Justice Quarterly*, *Crime & Delinquency*, *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, and *Journal of Criminal Justice*. Prior to becoming an academic, Dr. Johnson served as a trooper with the Indiana State Police, and as a criminal investigator with the Kane County State's Attorney Office in Illinois.

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**Dolan Consulting Group**  
**Harry P. Dolan, President and CEO**  
**2840 Plaza Place, Suite 325**  
**Raleigh, NC 27612**  
**[info@DolanConsultingGroup.com](mailto:info@DolanConsultingGroup.com)**

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