

The power of the badge: a controversial issue essay sample

[Law](#), [Crime](#)



Strong, courageous, heroic, all words that we hear and use to describe what comes to mind when we think of “ Police Officers”. In elementary school, the most common phrase students would be asked was “ what do you want to be when you grow up”, and the most common response would be “ a police officer”; and now sadly, most are rethinking this occupational choice. The authority that most cops these days believe they have is over the top; they think that they can take advantage of everything and everybody simply by the power of their badge. Police officers need to have more discipline instead of using their supremacy for brutality; there can be many things done to prevent this prevalent issue of police officers ruthlessness and we need to start taking action now. In our world today, police officers aren’t thought of as “ heroes” anymore and that is a problem. Police officers are the people we rely on to keep us safe, people we can count on whenever there is an issue; but now fear may become a factor next time we are in danger and pick up the phone to call for help.

Various examples of police brutality have been appearing all over social media, becoming a bigger and bigger issue in our society. The serious problem here is that police officers have too much power; this power needs to be limited in order to get things back to the way they should be; fair. Minute crimes should have minute consequences; therefore there is no need for police to force such brutality on individuals that are innocent or just happen to be at the wrong place at the wrong time. For example, an old woman j-walking should not be struck by a Taser gun for such committing such a small crime; or a teen stealing a bag of chips at a convenient store should not be shot at an excessive amount of times or even at all. These

examples may sound unreasonable, because they are; but events like this are true and do occur. In Paul Pompa's poem "Police Dog", the issue of police cruelty is described but in a completely different form. This poem is read as if it is from the dog's perspective, as it reads, "its all just/ play, to wrap your mouth around a man's wrist" (342).

The statement "its all just play" is soon followed by the last line "hold on till the officers arrive, only then do things get serious". This phrase "its all just play" refers to the dogs, it is all just fun and play for them because that is their "role". But when the police officers arrive, things take a turn for the worst and everything becomes serious; no more play time. These canines described in the poem are trained to simply scare, not hurt the individuals they come in contact with; if only the same rules applied for the officers. With the recent unfair treatment of individuals by police officers, the issue of brutality is at all time high. According to statistics, "1 out of every 116 officers is engaged in misconduct" ("Law Enforcement Misconduct Statistics"). Therefore, there is a good chance that these individuals are about to get themselves into trouble whether they deserve it or not. Another way to interpret this poem could be that the phrase "its all just play" refers to the beginning of any arrest, any crime, and any situation that a police officer is about to become involved in.

At first, the officers think it is all play; while they are taking out their cuffs, slamming faces against hoods of their cars, throwing punches and kicks as well as tackling their so called "criminals"; but this "playtime" ends shortly. Reality sets in after as they look at what they have done and the chaos they

have caused: bloody noses, black eyes, & life long scars; as well as leaving families of these individuals in depression, outrage and disgust. An example of this outrage would be from the Milburn family of Galveston, Texas; parents of police brutality victim named Dymond Milburn. In the American Mash-up essay "Texas Manhandle", twelve-year-old, African American, Dymond is on her front lawn in casual short shorts and a t-shirt when four officers, not in uniform, attack her. They strike the back of her head with a flashlight and slap her across the face as her family watches the entire thing not knowing what to do. The poor girl yells to her dad to save her but the cops warned him to stay back.

The end all result to this tragic attack is that these four cops were attacking the wrong girl; their police report states that they were instructed to look for three white prostitutes. They clearly must not have done their proper research on which they were looking for and now, a poor twelve-year-old girl has to suffer from such a traumatic experience. She suffered injuries from so many hits to the head, as well as black eyes, scalp gashes and tenderness of her vertebrae and was diagnosed with posttraumatic stress disorder. This essay can be compared to the poem "Police Dog" because they both depict that once police officers arrive, things can take a completely unexpected turn, usually for the worse. The lawsuit in "Texas Manhandle", accuses Dymond of "resisting arrest" as the four officers that had mistaken her for a prostitution incident half a block from the families home, beat her.

Police officers should not be allowed to get away with this kind of behavior, causing so much madness in a child's life when she wasn't even the one who

was supposed to be attacked. It is not fair that Dymond is being faced with a lawsuit of resistance; the cops should be the ones faced with a lawsuit. This is a horrid example of how police officers abuse the power that they have “because they can”; incidents like this cannot continue to occur. Another example of the police brutality is in the YouTube video “Indianapolis ‘Officer of the Year’ Attacks Man For Doing Nothing”. A businessman named Brian Hudkins is on a business trip when he becomes faced with a brutal altercation with a police officer. After a business meeting, his co-worker heads back to his hotel room as he realizes his room key is not working and he hears voices coming from inside; thinking a robbery is in place, he contacts Hudkins and they both head to hotel management. Being stressed after a long day, Hudkins talks with hostile tones as he attempts to explain the room issue to the hotel staff and standby police officer. The officer told Hudkins to settle down and lower his voice but Hudkins did not do so, resulting in the start of a pointless brawl.

The officer tackles Hudkins to the ground for no apparent reason other than ignoring his instruction to stop yelling. Within seconds of this attack, Hudkins and his co-worker are being arrested. As he is brought out to the cop car, he is thrown to the ground again, for no reason at all; he was cooperating well with the officers according to his attorney. The officer tries to defend himself by saying that Hudkins raised his finger at him in anger. When reviewing the videotape from the hotel, this was indeed not true; Hudkins hands remained behind his back the entire time. Hudkins took two months to recover from his injuries that were caused by the abusive officer. This man should not have

had to go through this; he was simply complaining about his room issue and the hotel management could have easily taken care of it. There was no place for the cop to tackle Hudkins to the ground; it was uncalled for but of course once again this cop faced no real form of punishment.

Where does it stop? This ongoing issue of brutality truly does not stop at anything. Police officers reach a new level of cruelty as they leave four revelers traumatized, bruised, with cracked teeth, scratches and stitches in the news article "4 Teens Charge Police Brutality." These specific four individuals are accused of assaulting police officers on a Saturday Night on "South Street", a famous street for flash mobs (illegal dance teams). The truth is that during this event, the actual victims here are the four individuals; they are the ones who experience cruelty from police officers that Saturday night. One of the four victims happens to be homosexual; his name is Denzell. While breaking up the flash mob, Denzell is questioned by an officer if he has his I. D. and when he tells him he does not, Denzell is thrown across the car as the officer uses crude language. Denzell questions as to why is he being arrested and the officer had no response; Denzell believes that it is based off his sexuality.

Olivia is another victim who experiences cruelty that night, her and her sister try to flee the scene of the mob so that they wouldn't get stuck in the madness. Olivia asks the cop for help and he rudely ignores her, and in return she insults him. He then attacks her as he punches her in the head and maces her twice, along with her sister. Not only are they both beaten brutally but also tased. David is also a traumatized individual on that night.

He simply tries calling his friends on his cell phone to find out where they went during all the chaos. An officer in spots him and tells him to put the phone down, David refuses, and the cop smashes his phone in pieces. After this he is forced to the ground as the cops joke around with each other whispering “ Let’s Taser this mother-” (4 Teens). David ends up having a broken nose as well as a black eye.

I think we all now know who were really the ones being assaulted. Officers like these are the ones that shouldn’t have the jobs that they have. Police officers are supposed to be the type of people you look up to as a little kid; they are expected to be “ heroic figures”. But, the way police officers are now being described, they are no longer heroes who bring justice; they abuse their authority and cause unnecessary violence, therefore not accomplishing anything. There needs to be some type of solution to solve this police brutality madness. This ongoing phenomenon needs to stop; it is unjust that police officers use such brutal force and unprofessional responses to particular incidents and situations. Officers need to learn to remain professional; they cannot use their power and force on individuals the way they have been doing recently.

Heads of police, sergeants, or whoever tells their officers what to do needs to make sure that their employees are well trained, and very knowledgeable about their duties and what they are supposed to be doing. The main problem in this occupational society is that young, immature cops are being hired and they do not have the proper training or experience to handle certain situations. This lack of training results in the abuse of their badge;

they use the tactic they know they have the ability to use and that is their force. Police officers need to have more discipline instead of using their supremacy for brutality; there can be many things done to prevent this prevalent issue of ruthlessness but the main solution to improve this issue would be enhancing the training of newly experienced officers. If this experience is improved, then maybe police officers will be looked at as “heroic figures” once again.

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