

POLICE BRUTALITY: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Communities United Against Police Brutality is a grassroots community organization dedicated to supporting survivors of police brutality and family members of victims, and regaining community control of law enforcement.

Police brutality occurs at a frightening rate. We have seen a drastic rise in violence and use of deadly force by police, disproportionate to any trends in crime. This trend is both local and national in scope. A "blue wall of silence" allows misconduct to go unreported and creates a sense that cops need answer to no one.

All of this has created the need for our group. We are the community's response to police brutality. We see the need to not just fight brutality case-by-case, but to fight the culture that causes it. To address some commonly asked questions:

IS CUAPB AGAINST COPS?

No. Humans being humans, we will always need laws and competent, effective police to enforce those laws. Obviously, therefore, we are not against the police—that would be foolish and harmful to the community. What we ARE against is excessive and indiscriminate use of force, deliberate abuse of authority, racism, and the culture within the police force that condones and encourages these acts and attitudes.

DIDN'T THEY DO SOMETHING TO DESERVE IT?

This is something we've historically liked to tell ourselves about victims of all sorts, in order to imagine that we can keep from becoming a victim ourselves either by doing or not doing certain things. The fact is that a large number of victims of police abuse were never involved in, nor charged with, any criminal activity. Furthermore, no one is more thoroughly trained to restrain a violent individual without causing injury than is the police officer. Injuries and deaths simply do not need to happen.

No one is responsible for an act except the one committing the act. When a man is angered by a woman saying no, he alone decides to force her to have sex. It's called rape. When a parent is angered by their child, the parent alone decides to beat the child. It's called child abuse. When a husband is angered by his wife, he alone decides to hit her. It's called domestic abuse. And when a cop is angered by a suspect, he alone decides to beat the suspect. It's called police brutality. And like the other three, it is a violent crime, for which the perpetrators must be prosecuted.

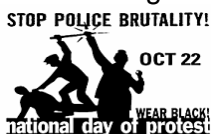
WELL, WHAT WOULD YOU RATHER HAVE, POLICE BRUTALITY OR CRIME?

If there were a difference, perhaps there'd be a choice. It's the modern age in an advanced, civilized, industrialized nation—we are not willing to make that choice, and the suggestion that we should is appalling. Criminals and brutal cops have one critical thing in common: Both are a danger to the community because they force their personal will on the individual of their choice without regard to the law or the consequences. And that is a crime.

ISN'T IT "JUST A FEW BAD APPLES"?

If it is, then the police chief is the fruit merchant knowingly keeping those bad apples in the barrels, you and I are the customers getting sick from that rotting fruit, and CUAPB is the "health department" demanding that the police chief remove those bad apples and clean up his fruit stand.

It is clear to CUAPB and to the rest of the community that police abuse is endemic to law enforcement at present, and only community control of police will solve this dangerous and demoralizing problem. Restoring community control of police is the only way to restore community confidence in police, and has been our goal from the beginning.



***This information brought to you by Communities United Against Police Brutality
Working to end police brutality and bring police under community control.
Need help with a police brutality incident? Call our hotline at 612-874-STOP***