

Racism, Policing Practices, and Driving While Black

“We’ve Created the Conditions for This Kind of Police Brutality” | Michel Martin & Amanpour

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yc4gHB8HogQ> [April 15, 2021 (19 mins)]

Abandonment and punishment” have been the de facto practices for decades when addressing needs in communities of color—e.g., ignore issues associated with racism and poverty, and invest in prisons—says Patrick Sharkey, Professor of Sociology, Princeton. Police violence has been remarkably high and stable, killing 1000 people a year. By all measures, those killed are still disproportionately Black or Brown—even with years of Black Lives Matter protests. Sharkey posits that social instability and violence in neighborhoods of color can even escalate when there is additional attention on policing practices, and police may step back and stop doing their jobs. There is a second factor, residents become even more reluctant to call on police to respond to threats or problems. Sharkey states that when significant investments are made in communities of color, and residents are supported in identifying ways to address violence and social problems—practices not used under “abandon” and “punish”—alternative, safe and effective solutions will occur.

“The Talk” That Every Black Family Has About Police

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8k-eJOeN5dM> [Apr 15, 2021 (7.5 mins)]

This Trevor Noah and The Daily Show clip focuses on how Black families-- in an effort to respond to police violence that disproportionately targets Black people, and keep their children safe and alive-- are forced to have “The Talk” regarding what to do to survive police stops: “Submit, obey, come home.” While these conversations are fraught with emotion, parents—like their parents and grandparents before them—have no alternative.

Additional Resources:

NPR Fresh Air podcast (April 22, 2021, approx.30 mins) **Yale professor Dr. Phillip Atiba Goff co-founded the Center for Policing Equity**, which collects data on police behavior from 18,000 law enforcement agencies across the country. Atiba Goff says, “Most people think of racism as an issue of character and ignorance. But, focusing on changing racist attitudes is a bad way to stop the behavior. The best way to regulate behavior is to regulate behavior. And that's what we can do in policing. That's what we can do in our communities. That's what we can do with policies.” Atiba Goff describes myriad examples of communities that have reimagined policing based on data and community input. <https://podcasts.google.com>

<https://www.gq.com/story/making-myself-essential> 6-8-20 “I’m an emergency medicine physician in New York City—one of the only black physicians in the entire emergency department at my hospital. While many New Yorkers followed shelter-in-place orders, I’ve been called to work, to help heal the people afflicted by the Coronavirus pandemic... I drive to work, but I’m a black man behind the wheel when law enforcement and the government have ordered us to stay home. Stay-at-home rules have been enforced much more harshly against black people, and I am aware that I am very much a moving target.” –Dr. Darien Sutton-Ramsey