



# MEMO

**IMPORTANT**

TO: All US law enforcement officers  
(also applicable to any white male that owns a gun)

We figured you would have received the news by now, really. Thanks to those of you that have always known the following points and practiced them daily. However, in light of on-going incidents it is apparent that many did not receive the following instructions.

1. You are a police officer. We expect that you did and continue to receive training that makes you a professional, able to handle stressful situations with calm and a keen sense of decision-making<sup>1</sup>. If you have not received this training, please request it from your supervisors. If you feel like you cannot uphold this commitment, please turn in your gun and badge before you kill someone.
2. Your gun is not the only tool you have. We know that the Department of Defense has made a great deal of surplus military gear available to you<sup>2</sup>. Remember that these powerful tools are for war, not community policing. Please stop killing people who are unarmed. Use your skills in self-defense, your ability to talk someone down, or other forms of non-lethal force to take someone into custody without killing them<sup>3</sup>.
3. Please let judges and juries do their job. Stealing a pack of cigars<sup>4</sup>, holding a toy gun<sup>5</sup>, surprising you in the stairwell<sup>6</sup>, playing rap music, selling single cigarettes<sup>7</sup>, throwing rocks at cars<sup>8</sup> or even running from you<sup>9,10</sup> are NOT, when they are offenses, punishable by death.
4. When one of your fellow officers breaks the law and gets charged for doing so, it is inappropriate for you to stop doing your job<sup>11</sup>; that is policing the community. Surely, there is more subtlety on the spectrum ranging from killing citizens to halting policing (see No. 1 above).
5. Dispatch, please get enough information from a 911 call to know whether the situation is life threatening or not. Pass this along to the officers so they do not mistake a young father buying a BB gun in Walmart<sup>12</sup> or a child playing in the park with a toy gun<sup>5</sup> as active shooters. This way, officers might not shoot on sight innocent adults and children. Know that the 911-caller may hold racial bias and perceive a black male as more dangerous than they are<sup>13</sup>. Use your professional skills to get sufficient information.
6. Also, dispatch, if a person calls in because they think it is illegal for a black teenager wearing a hoodie sweatshirt to be in their neighborhood, keep them on the line until the police arrive so they do not kill the teenager<sup>14</sup>.
7. If you are a white male with a gun reading this because you have mistaken yourself for a police officer...you're not. While we all have the right to defend ourselves, we do not have the training and have repeatedly shown poor judgment in these situations. If you feel you are in danger, call the police and let them do their job. Don't shoot the young black woman on your porch asking for help because she was in a car accident<sup>15</sup>, the black teenager in a hoodie walking home<sup>14</sup>, or the black teens playing their music too loud<sup>16</sup> (see No. 3 above).
8. Many of you did not receive this memo earlier or you chose to ignore it (maybe because you think those killed were death-deserving "thugs"), so the pattern of actions by police has left the black community and others hesitant to trust you<sup>17</sup>. It is your responsibility to rebuild that trust. Start now.

<http://sociologytoolbox.com/>

## NOTES

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