



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on October 27, 2015

President's Lies Matter: Obama Defends Black Lives Matter Movement

It's a phenomenon that has led to riots and the killing of police officers. But that didn't stop Barack Obama from defending the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement last Thursday at a White House criminal-justice forum. It was an action that, critics say, reinforced divisive misconceptions — ones that have contributed the murder and mayhem.

While Obama paired his defense of BLM with praise for the “overwhelming majority” of police who want “to do the right thing,” he also spoke of “a specific problem that’s happening in the African-American community that’s not happening in other communities.” Yet he wasn’t referring to the black community’s 72 percent out-of-wedlock birthrate or that blacks are approximately 50 percent of the United States’ homicide victims (while only 13 percent of the population) — or that 90 to 93 percent of these victims are killed by other blacks. Rather, referencing the notion that an inordinate number of black suspects are shot by police officers, the president [said](#), “We as a society, particularly given our history, have to take this seriously. And one of the ways of avoiding the politics of this and losing the moment is everybody just stepping back for a second and understanding that the African-American community is not just making this up. It’s not just something being politicized.”

The truth, however, is that *made up* and *politicized* describe BLM’s claims perfectly.

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Let’s start with BLM’s central assertion, that black lives are, as movement co-founder Alicia Garza [put it](#), “uniquely, systematically, and savagely targeted by the state.” While this has become a narrative echoed by politicians and pundits, as black columnist Larry Elder [pointed out](#) last year, “In the last several decades the numbers of blacks killed by cops are down nearly 75 percent.” Of course, this only tells us about blacks killed yesterday vs. today, but what about blacks vs. whites? As Elder also





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informed, “In 2012, according to the CDC, 140 blacks were killed by police. That same year 386 whites were killed by police. Over the 13-year period from 1999 to 2011, the CDC reports that 2,151 whites were killed by cops — and 1,130 blacks were killed by cops.”

Yet given that whites outnumber blacks in the United States approximately 5 to 1, that 2 to 2.5 times as many whites would be killed by police is no surprise. So rates must be examined. And as I [reported](#) in May, “Relative to whites, blacks are shot by police [at a lower rate](#) than their involvement in crime would suggest. As sociologist and ex-cop Professor Peter Moskos [writes](#), ‘adjusted for the homicide rate, whites are 1.7 times more likely than blacks [to] die at the hands of police. Adjusted for the racial disparity at which police are feloniously killed, whites are 1.3 times more likely than blacks to die at the hands of police.’” And, reinforcing the last point, I wrote, “Black suspects are [as likely to shoot at police as to be shot at](#)... According to [FBI statistics](#), 46 percent of those who’ve murdered police officers during the last decade have been black.”

But why would, contrary to the Obama/BLM line, police be more likely to shoot whites? Perhaps it’s because they’re actually more willing to.

This was the determination of a study out of Washington State University (WSU) [published online](#) last year in the *Journal of Experimental Criminology*. It found, [wrote WSU News](#), that while participants “were more likely to feel threatened in scenarios involving black people ... when it came time to shoot, participants were biased in favor of black suspects, taking longer to pull the trigger against them than against armed white or Hispanic suspects.”

Further refuting the narrative of anti-black police bias, the *Washington Times*’ Valerie Richardson quoted WSU study researcher David Klinger, a professor of criminology and criminal science at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, and [wrote](#):

[Klinger said] black SWAT officers make up about one-third of the St. Louis force — and they commit on average about one-third of the shootings each year.

... “Once you start looking at levels of violence, levels of threat, blacks are not shot in manners that are disproportionate to their involvement in illegal activity,” he said. “And it doesn’t matter if the cop is black, white or Hispanic.

Yet this may be untrue. Blacks may be shot disproportionately — *less frequently* than their involvement in illegal activity might indicate. The WSU researchers explained this phenomenon in [their paper](#), writing, “There is some evidence from the field to support the proposition that an officer’s threat bias could cause him or her to tend to take more time to make decisions to shoot people whom they subconsciously perceived as more threatening because of race or ethnicity. This behavioral ‘counter-bias’ might be rooted in people’s concerns about the social and legal consequences of shooting a member of a historically oppressed racial or ethnic group.”

In other words, knowledge that shooting a black suspect may mean becoming a pariah, career destruction, being investigated, receiving death threats, and your whole family having to go into hiding, may make you think twice. Just ask Officer Darren Wilson of Ferguson fame.

And research bears this out. Just consider work done independently by Professor Klinger, who is also a former cop and author of the 2006 book *Into the Kill Zone: A Cop’s Eye View of Deadly Force*. After interviewing hundreds of policemen, Klinger [reported](#), “When it comes to the issue of race, I’ve never had a single officer tell me, ‘I didn’t shoot a guy because he was white.’ I’ve had multiple officers tell me, ‘I didn’t shoot a guy because he was black.’ ... The second thing is, I’ve had multiple officers tell



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me they were worried in the wake of a shooting because they shot a black person, and I've had multiple officers tell me that they were glad that the person they shot was white."

In light of these facts, it's not surprising that Obama's defense of BLM has drawn criticism. Just this weekend, for instance, presidential contender Governor Chris Christie [said](#) on CBS' *Face the Nation* that Obama "justifies Black Lives Matter ... [and] I don't believe that that movement should be justified when they're calling for the murder of police officers." Christie was referring to incidents such as [Manhattan](#) and [Minnesota](#) BLM marches during which rabble-rousers chanted, respectively, that they wanted "dead cops," and "Pigs in a blanket, fry 'em like bacon."

Even more pointed in his criticism of BLM and its enablers, such as Obama, is black Milwaukee County Sheriff David Clarke. After a BLM-inspired murder of a police officer in August, Clarke [said](#) that Obama "started this war on police," and he insisted that BLM members weren't "black activists" but "black slime."

And these critics would say that BLM's own words and actions tell the tale. The aforementioned Garza admitted that BLM was an organized movement — an [astroturf campaign](#), in other words — that bussed 500 protesters into Ferguson and [was designed](#) "to be a platform also to reenergize radical politics in our [the black] community." During a Saturday BLM-affiliated "protest" in Chicago, rabble-rousers took down an American flag and [replaced it](#) with an "Unapologetically Black" flag. And Georgia BLM activist Latausha Nedd currently [faces charges](#) of "criminal solicitation and terroristic threats" for waving a gun and a machete in videos and asking "blacks to take police officer's guns, take over a police station and kill white people."

Of course, Barack Obama would never make such statements. He only defends an organization rife with people who do.

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