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# What to Believe About Police? : When Hype and Illusion Replace Our Willingness to Self-Analyze

Richard C. Lumb

*The College at Brockport*, [rlumb@gmail.com](mailto:rlumb@gmail.com)

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# **What to Believe About Police? When Hype and Illusion Replace Our Willingness to Self-Analyze**

**By**  
**Richard C. Lumb, Ph.D.**  
**State University of New York at Brockport, Emeritus**

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Political or other self-interest rhetoric frequently is based on rumor, ideology, a selfish intent to persuade, to chill debate, or to accuse.

This approach, when applied toward policing, as some all-knowing truth, is what ticks me off. Worse still is the reluctance, refusal or inability to conduct one's own research to determine the truth and facts that allow more accurate decision making to occur.

Blaming police, public safety, first responders, corrections and other federal, state, county, and municipal agencies is often a deflection of attention from facts. Why, is it to persuade and seek support for a particular position and less about solutions? Police officers are held accountable when facts and evidence emerge. Lawful protocol and procedure come into play, not emotion and unsubstantiated accusation. Is that not exactly what you and I would also demand?

Called the "Rule of Law" - laws are enacted by citizens who are elected to legislatures and who construct and pass them. Police are "required" to enforce them, part of their oath of office and sworn duty. If you do not like a law, then address it with those who sit in legislative bodies and seek change. Stop blaming those who are hired, mandated and expected to enforce them. Blame is far too convenient for some, as it fits their questionable motivation.

Considering the total number of police officers in the country, versus the fraction of those who commit wrongdoing, the official number found complicit, is minuscule. There are tens of thousands of police and citizen encounters every day, and the number of those validated through evidence of transgression is tiny in comparison.

Mantra and rhetoric are often used by those who want to divert attention, create a smoke screen and have you think differently. Facts, they go evidence and not an unsubstantiated or partial explanation, some of which is purposefully untruthful!

Think about it! We must consider all interactions, including those individuals and groups who have committed wrongdoing and are brought to the attention of police. When some choose not to comply with the law, is it the fault of the police officer, as some would have you believe?

## Justice



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## Victims



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Victims are of all types, ages, shapes, intelligence, sad, frightened, and abused. They are often forgotten when the insensibilities of adult myopia exist and a selfish, “What about me!” mentality exists. In this self-absorbed “Woe is me!” lie the seeds of harming a system that is already overburdened and demands often exceed the ability to manage it appropriately.

There is always more to a situation than told. Drop the emotion and look at facts and documented information allowing you to make up your mind. When individuals abdicate their free will and intuition and blindly follow, they do themselves an injustice. With truth comes the fortitude to make it known and to challenge purposeful inaccuracy. Getting away with misbehavior encourages a continuation of the conduct.

Simple statements, a chant, mantra or the favorite among political circles, the press conference, seeks an emotional outburst, which if blindly accepted, prompts us to fall victim to what Dorothy discovered behind the curtain occupied by the Wizard of Oz!

Come on, stop, and think about it before joining in. We are “social media numb” in too many cases, for we react without sufficient information and that, by itself, is wrongheaded. In Maine, referring to someone as “numb” goes to their thinking and emotions, based on observation. Albeit, it too becomes a judgment call!

The vast majority of police do their job following the law, rules, training, policy and public expectation. Could we say the same ratio of right/wrong exists with all forms of positions including employment, political, elected, volunteer, and thousands of other roles in America?

It is often an attempt at deflection and distraction to sidetrack careful examination. We all have agendas; only some are just more self-serving than others.

When emotion engages, reality often becomes what the beholder desires it to be. Truth becomes twisted to fulfill the vision when enough believe the deviation from facts exist as an illusion. The goal is to manipulate, to promote one's beliefs or agenda and in most cases it is extremely self-serving. Hearing an opposing argument is shut off as there is no interest in changing one's mind or promoting one's agenda. However, then, we face the unwillingness to accept other than what we desire the state of affairs to become as an outcome.

No one is served while residing in the shadows. Some fear the truth as it will debunk what has been said. Others will welcome the findings, as truth vindicates. When we are questioning any critical function to citizen well-being, emotion has no place at the table. It is essential that truth and facts dictate judgment. It is easy to create an illusion through off-the-cuff or wordsmithing statements, but that is selfish, it is self-serving, and it is wrong.