



## THE BLUE FAMILY TREE

Newsletter article February, 2019

What can I say about black history?

I am as white as they come. Been a cop since I turned 21 and grew up in a very white Colorado town. I have traveled the world and met a great deal of minorities. I would tell you I met a lot of black men and women in the Marine Corps, but I would be lying. We had two kinds of Marines: light green and dark green. Never met a marine that was any other color. On the same token, I have never met a cop who wasn't light blue or dark blue. I was raised to judge people by the content of their character, and not by the color of their skin; I believe a concept we all learned from one Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. I can say unequivocally that I do this, and like so many others, I assume everyone else's values are similar to my own. It is always both disturbing and eye opening to be reminded that they are not. I used to work with a Hispanic officer that our local community called "Coconut" because he was brown on the outside and white on the inside. It is easy for me to forget the racist and hate filled vein that runs through our nation, because I am not exposed to it every day like so many of my dark blue cohorts are. On the other side, I am always deeply offended and saddened when a black subject I am in contact with for violating the law tells me I am being racist simply for contacting him. I wish this just wouldn't be an issue, but wish as I may, here we are. The white population is certainly not free from racially motivated hate either.

Our first black police officer on record was hired by Washington, DC in 1861. More and more blacks began getting hired by urban agencies thereafter until it became common to see a black patrol officer. By the 1930s, the ratio of black to white officers peaked, and although black officers continued to get hired, the percentage of black officers began to decline. There are many reported instances of black officers pushing for police reform during the era of Jim Crow, as many would expect. Today, there are still instances of black officers pushing for police reform, much of the time citing their own unpleasant experiences when confronted by police off duty.

We have to acknowledge that there is an issue here. Where we may disagree is in regards to the size of the problem. certainly not every cop is racist as some would have us believe. We can blame the media, and the inner-city far wing black rights movements if we'd like, but even if you're not the problem, we need to concede that some officers may treat the black community in certain circumstances, differently. We often can articulate reasons for our words and our actions with subjects on the street, but sometimes we might be scared because of the political climate. We need to check that, and handle each encounter with the public based on the facts that individual is bringing to the table, not the national media generated spotlight. The evermore aggressive push on this issue from "the other side" makes this increasingly more difficult to do, but we have to. If we do not, the other side will continue to push harder and harder and the actual incidents of bias policing they can point to will become more and more frequent. Citizens will die. Police will die. I believe if there are 1,000 instances of police treating the black community differently, 999 are motivated by fear created from this political movement and 1 is generated from a racist heart. We can fix the 999 by being present in the contact, and we can fire the 1. It is on us to take the lead by our level headed example and weather this storm.

I reached out to the below author several times with no response. I am guessing he was not interested in being made even more of a spectacle than he already lined out in this post he published on facebook. Since he would not respond, and the post was public, I decided to share the post with you without his name, because what he said was far too important not to be shared with all who can see it.

**It sucks. Sometimes it's hard to process. Sometimes you ask yourself why you do the job. How do you keep going? Last night I got berated for 3 straight hours for being a black cop. Yes, 3 hours. I heard every version of the N-word you could possibly think of. Hearing it wasn't the issue. It's who I heard it from. I was a back up unit on a domestic battery in progress. Witnesses called into 911 stating that they observed a black man chocking and hitting a black women. When we got there, they were still in a struggle and had to be separated. The black female had cuts and bruises all over her elbows and shoulder. She was disheveled. Based on witness statements and interviews with both parties, we determined that the**

**male was the aggressor. He was arrested and charged with domestic battery.**

**I was always taught that women should be honored and treated with respect. Call it cliché, but I still believe that. In my heart I felt like we did a good deed,...helping a battered women. However, no good deed goes unpunished.**

**I, the back up unit, became the enemy of the woman I was here to help. She wasn't upset at her husband who had just assaulted her. She was upset at me. She was disgusted at the sight of me. She hated my very presence. She hated what I stood for. She hated,...that I was black.**

**I guess it's something that I'll never get used to. Even after 7 years working as a cop, it stings to hear it just as much as it did on day one.**

**“Black p\*\*sy ass n\*\*\*. Tryna be the white man. You black and you just gonna stand there and not do nothing. You black bitch ass cop. You worse then the white cracker, f\*\*k you.”**

**Hate from your own race. Being made out to be a traitor against your own race. It never sits right, and I'll never understand it.**

**The American culture today hates blue. Try being black & blue.**

It is a shame that the citizens he encountered that day could not see that he is the best representative of equality they could ask for and that he is there to ensure they get a fair shake where the law is concerned.

Brothers and sisters in blue: Those of us who bare that lighter shade can't imagine what our dark blue family members must endure quite regularly. It is not fair. They are as honorable men and women as any of us, fighting for good in the world and dealing with the evil at even a more elevated level than the rest of us. Look after your dark blue friends. Make sure they know they are where they belong and that they have you as family no matter the circumstance. Tell them black lives do matter, and that blue lives and white lives and brown lives matter too. No one can dispute that African Americans have had to fight for equality in this country and that, historically, police have played at least some role in their oppression. Regardless of where that fight stands today, our dark blue brothers and sisters are very much caught in the middle and need to know that we support them, not because of the color of their black skin, but the content of their blue character.