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## TODAY'S "SHORT TOPIC" "IT IS THE MOST SURPRISING RESULT OF MY CAREER"



By Stephen L. Bakke  July 14, 2016

### *Here's what provoked me:*

*As usual I find that our leaders often become part of the problem when they judge too quickly and conclude prematurely. This was particularly evident in the events surrounding two horrific recent killings of black men by cops. Coincident with those events and politicians' comments, a new Harvard study was released which hits this subject "right between the eyes." It's titled: "Empirical Analysis of Racial Differences in Police Use of Force."*

### *Here's my response:*

#### **"It Is the Most Surprising Result of My Career"**

Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton immediately declared that the killing of a black man after a traffic stop would not have happened if it had involved a white person. In reaction to that and another incident, President Obama proclaimed: ".....these fatal shootings are not isolated incidents. They are symptomatic of the racial disparities that appear across the [criminal justice] system....."

Obama and Dayton were referring to a much proclaimed epidemic of primarily white cops killing black men. While we have a huge violence problem in the U.S., do we really know this conclusion about cops killing blacks is correct? Can we agree that any successful cure requires an accurate diagnosis of a problem?

"It is the most surprising result of my career." So exclaimed Harvard professor and lead researcher Roland Fryer Jr., a black man. He also noted: "On the most extreme use of force – officer-involved shootings – we find no racial differences in either the raw data or when contextual factors are taken into account." This is an extensive new study titled "Empirical Analysis of Racial Differences in Police Use of Force."

As to the assumption of "white" cops in particular being the racial perpetrator, according to a review of the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the rate of black officers who kill black offenders is more than twice that of white officers.

If these facts are ignored, how can we ever advance the cause of "cops vs. black" relationships?