

 **TODAY'S "SHORT TOPIC"**  
**THE BEAT GOES ON:  
POLICE BRUTALITY!  
BLACK MEN AND BOYS  
TARGETED! .....**  
**But where are the facts?**

By Stephen L. Bakke  December 29, 2014



*Here's what provoked me:*

*I get tired of reading unsubstantiated accusations about police brutality and racism which causes only bitterness and endless arguing. Civil rights are too important to be subjected to futile arguments and foolish policies and programs. Yet this pointless "beat goes on!"*

*Here's my response:*

**The Beat Goes On: Police brutality! Black men and boys targeted! ... But where are the facts?**

Sandra Schwartz has her heart in the right place but she's working with bad information ("Police brutality," 12-28). Important civil rights progress made in recent decades must be continued, but if activists continue to make unsupportable accusations, their cause will be hampered by deserved "push back." The issue of "civil rights" deserves careful attention and wise programs. But bad information leads to bad decisions, foolish programs, wasted money, and public cynicism.

Research indicates "brutality and racial targeting" claims are at best greatly exaggerated, and at worst groundless! Check out Michael Tremoglie's "Busting the Myth of 'Racist Killer Cops.'" As long as we are mired in the current futile argument over "brutality and targeting," we will ignore areas in which important progress could be made. For example, one valid question to be asked is: "How can we adjust police policies and procedures that keep pressure on where it should be, while training officers to wisely match response to crime?" Questions like that (there are certainly much better ones) will meet some resistance, but are legitimate and would be productive.

Pounding on false or exaggerated "brutality and racial targeting charges" is getting us nowhere, and that won't change unless our focus changes.