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I have been taught to yell “stop resisting” and “drop your weapon” after firing a gun, because bystanders will remember you said it and their memory will automatically reverse the order of the events to make it make sense. Their testimony will support yours, because of this.

I have been told to “loosen up and have fun, it’s fun! Why are you so serious?” When doing a shoot/don’t shoot scenario training.

I have been told that deescalation techniques will get me and other officers killed and as a smaller LEO, I was justified escalating my use of force faster than my colleagues because I was always in danger so I should use it.

I’ve been told my only job is to go home at night.

I’ve been told all of these things in formal, controlled and regulated Police Academies. I have gone through 3. I have heard some of these things more than once.

When I questioned these things in my third academy, and stated that they were inconsistent with the ethics of policing, I was kicked out of the academy on my last day. I had completed and excelled at all the graded tasks, but was told “you aren’t what we want in our force.”

I loved my job. I gave a lot to do it for 5 years. In that time, I never broke leather on my holster. I never fired my taser. I put my hands on an individual twice, both times a simple arm bar hold that immediately caused both individuals to comply. Neither individual was hurt.

I have been in many sticky situations in that time. Faced several armed individuals. I worked in a National Park, yes, but in a high crime area. Being a park ranger, means working alone most of the time. I could not afford to escalate a situation, and I didn’t.

In 4 words, a police academy commander ended my career. “You done belong here.” After 16 years of federal service without a single complaint or write up, I lost any chance of working the final 4 years I needed for retirement.

With student loan debt, living in a new city, with a teenager, I lost my job, my insurance, and the ability to use the education and experience I had worked so hard to achieve.

I don’t regret it.

I still believe in resource protection, it matters, but I no longer believe the system of policing we have is the way to achieve it.

During my campaign for the HoD I got lambasted by my Republican opponent for saying, “I know cops, I’ve worked with them, trained with them, and some of them are my friends, some are not, and some of them are murderers.” I know it’s not politically expedient, but...

Some. Of. Them. Are. Murderers.

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