



Stop Demonizing the Police

By Dave Smith



It has become something of a political tactic used daily among our elites to not debate an idea, but to simply demonize, lumping all individuals so identified into a condemned collective.

Once this ad hominem attack is employed, debate is no longer necessary as the “demons” are not worthy of dialogue or idea exchange. The problem with this approach is it doesn’t actually take the issue off the table or resolve anything. Worse, it promotes actions and punishments far outside the bounds of proportionality.

To “demonize” is to attribute total evil to whomever or whatever is so stigmatized. Once identified as such, it’s totally acceptable to do what you will to these demons among us. Burn the witches,

incarcerate people of Japanese ancestry, defund the police, and on and on. A major problem with reviling something so extremely is the negative impact it has, not just on the stigmatized group, but on those who engage in the castigation, often without fact or logic.

During the trial of the Nazi Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem, the world was stunned by the attending psychiatrist’s statement that Eichmann was “more normal than I am.” It turned out the architect of the murder of millions was thoughtlessly killing, with no conscience, no sense of guilt, no hostility, just cold hard reason as he exterminated millions of Jews, Gypsies, Poles, and the disabled; people who had been demonized during the post-World War I era of crisis for the German nation.

The brilliant holocaust survivor Hannah Arendt and the philosopher Jean Paul Sartre argued that, not only was Eichmann guilty of choosing to be evil, but those who informed on their Jewish neighbors were guilty as well, an idea that rankled the intellectual class that was so exposed. Apologists for the Germans and for the French who collaborated with the Nazis believed that Hitler’s henchmen were so powerful they could not be resisted. So, individual collaborators could not be judged. Arendt and Sartre disputed this, asserting that evil was an individual choice and, whether an individual was a Nazi or a collaborator, each person needed to be judged as part of the collective evil.

America’s Founders sought to avoid witch hunts by creating a Constitution denying government the ability to judge groups. The powerful focus on the rights of individuals forces the government to deal with individual guilt or innocence rather than collective guilt. Past demonizing of groups in America, such as the treatment of Japanese-Americans in World War II, required a Supreme Court ruling and nationwide fear; a lesson we have managed to unlearn.

We have now, once again, begun to stigmatize large groups of our own people in ways long unseen. Calling people Fascists, Nazis, racists, homophobes, sexists, and so on, has replaced debate in our nation. Under such extreme rhetoric, the ideas of the “othered” people no longer need to be listened to and their rights no longer need to be protected, and the Constitution becomes an impediment to be circumvented instead of a mandate to be honored.

For instance, rather than looking at the death of George Floyd or Michael Brown as individual incidents that needed to be examined as singular events, the media, the political class, and the intellectual elite all cried that American law enforcement was somehow innately evil. No evidence, no facts, just terrible emotion. Now we are reaping the fruits of such hysteria. The finding

that Michael Brown's death was justified was given scarcely a footnote in the media, and every subsequent critical incident has become a potential tripwire for civil violence, prosecutorial abuse, and extended suffering for the officers involved.

It is time for America to wake up, remember, and follow the Constitution, and revere those who protect and serve. It took our nation a long time to repent over the incarceration of our Japanese citizens. I hope it won't take nearly as long to repent of the hysteria of demonizing the police through name calling, defamation, and destructive policy making.

A free society is tolerant of ideas and debate, reveres those who preserve and protect those freedoms, and remembers that guilt and innocence are not collective traits but individual ones. Evil isn't an abstract concept, it is a concrete choice. As Hannah Arendt warned, evil is "banal"—in other words a common thing among us all—and needs to be resisted at an individual level by each and every one of us.

And when evil does appear, there are those who rush to stop it. We call those men and women, not "demons," but "heroes." They are the police.

Behind the Badge: Sheriff Kevin Turner



MEET SHERIFF
KEVIN TURNER

Jo Daviess
COUNTY



[Click the above image to view the video](#)

What a Difference a Year Makes

by Jim Kaitschuk, ISA Executive Director

The good news is that there are only 4 scheduled weeks left in the legislative session. The better news is that there are very few bills left that are still moving that we OPPOSE. The best news is that there is a significant willingness by the General Assembly to address some of the challenges facing law enforcement today.

As you are probably aware, there is an average law enforcement agency vacancy rate of approximately 20% statewide. There are challenges getting officers enrolled in academies, finding people that want to become officers, a tremendous number of mandates we must meet, including both training and body cameras and more. I have been told repeatedly by members of the General Assembly that is their intention to help us address these issues through some form of recruitment and retention package. We have been offering suggestions and working with others to collaborate on areas such as money for salaries, property tax relief, income tax relief, money for training, money for equipment, and pension enhancements to name a few. At this time I can't tell you exactly what this will look like, but I can tell you that many legislators recognize that the problem exists and have a willingness to work toward strategies to help alleviate it.



There are also ongoing efforts to address the spike in violent crimes. You will likely see legislation to

address organized retail theft, expressway shootings (LPRs), gun crimes, hopefully enhancements against violence towards police officers, additional felony charges to require DNA submission, and more. As you know, not only do we need the funding to support the jobs that we do as outlined above, but we need the legal tools and support to help us protect our communities.

I would encourage you to talk to your legislators so that they understand how important these issues are to you and our profession and that their backing of these items is an important step to demonstrating support for law enforcement.

Click [HERE](#) for bills the ISA is tracking as of 03/11/2022.

Top 10 Police Podcasts To Follow in 2022

Click on photos for links



1. Policing Matters

About Podcast: In the Policing Matters Podcast, PoliceOne Senior Contributor Doug Wyllie and San Francisco Deputy Chief Jim Dudley (ret.) discuss current news, offer advice, thoughts, tips and laughs for officers.

Frequency: 1 episode / week



2. The Squad Room - Podcast

About Podcast: This podcast provides lifestyle and leadership lessons for police officers

Frequency: 1 episode / week



3. Inside The Squad

About Podcast: Inside The Squad is brought to you by the Community Outreach Unit of the Lafayette, Indiana Police Department. From crime statistics to crime prevention and everything in between, this is your inside look into what's happening at the LPD.

Frequency: 5 episodes / year



4. Police Off The Cuff

About Podcast: Two former NYPD Detectives turned comedians sharing war stories, giving you a peak behind the badge, and talking about comedy, current events and everything in between.

Frequency: 3 episodes / week

CODE 4

POLICE PODCAST



5. Code 4 : Police Podcast

About Podcast: A couple of officers with over twenty years of collective experience having conversations hoping to shed light on a side not often shown

Frequency: 1 episode / quarter

6. Bend Don't Break

About Podcast: Bend Don't Break is a podcast that tells the story of police officers who have overcome significant adversity in their personal and professional lives. Through the power of story, the listener will understand the depth of resilience and personal strength that exists in the men and women who protect our communities 24x7.

Frequency: 3 episodes / quarter

7. Police Academy Podcast

About Podcast: Episodes of Police Academy Podcast include police news topics, analysis of officer involved shootings, use of force situations, explanations of media coverage of the police, answers to citizen questions and stories from both civilian and police sources.

Frequency: 7 episodes / quarter

8. The Off Duty Podcast Law Enforcement

About Podcast: The podcast that interviews the men & women of law enforcement and learns about the person behind the badge! #HumanizeTheBadge

Frequency: 4 episodes / month

9. Quality Policing Podcast

About Podcast: A quality discussion about policing and crime prevention with a focus on current events and honest data.

Frequency: 1 episode / week

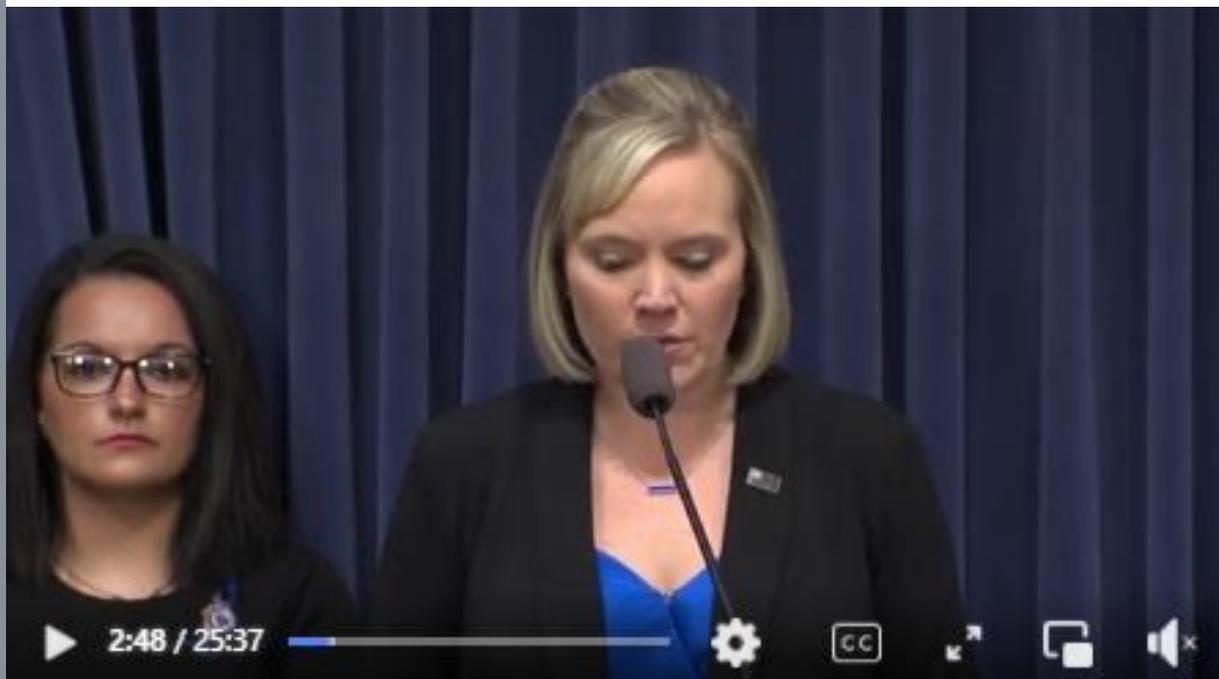


10. Cop Life | | A Police Podcast from Behind the Badge

About Podcast: This is the show that takes an in-depth look at the life of a veteran police officer and the way he balances work, home and plays all while giving insight into the daily dilemmas and situations encountered in any given week.

Frequency: 1 episode / week

Please **CLICK ON THE IMAGE** to listen to this powerful message by family members of fallen Illinois police officers.



5 Myths & Truths About Officers and PTSD

It is encouraging to see how far law enforcement culture has progressed in recognizing the critical role of mental health in officer safety and wellness.

The three models with the most consistent research to support their effectiveness are Prolonged Exposure (PE), Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT), and Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR). In my work, I've seen people recover from PTSD in as few as five or six sessions, but four to six months is often a reasonable timeline. It's also important to mention that treatment is more effective when LEOs work with a clinician they trust who understands and respects the unique challenges of police work.

MYTH 5: I DON'T DESERVE THERAPY. THERE ARE OTHER PEOPLE WHO HAVE IT WORSE THAN I DO.

Fact: Everyone experiencing PTSD, regardless of the severity of the traumatic event or their symptoms, deserves to feel better.

It's always possible to find someone who has it harder. I have had clients tell me that they feel guilty for taking a spot on my schedule, believing that it should go to someone who "needs it more." And while it is understandable that LEOs, who voluntarily risk their lives to protect others, might see it this way, it's vital for LEOs to prioritize their mental health and get the help they need. As the saying goes, put on your own oxygen mask first.

PTSD drastically impacts people's ability to move through life: it can lead to physical health complications, withdrawal from social and interpersonal connections, and even suicide. I meet many officers each year who are unable to function effectively at work or at home because of the debilitating effects of PTSD. No matter the cause or severity of the PTSD, nobody deserves to live with PTSD longer than they must.



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Illinois Officers

