



One Week in the Hidden Epidemic of Police Violence Against Women

Women's Justice Center

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Extreme levels of violence against women and children are a well recognized hallmark of patriarchal strongholds. From the Catholic Church to the Taliban, the boy scouts, football franchises, the military, and more, these sexist organizations over the last decades have been hauled into headlines and courtrooms for their waves of misogynist crimes. Though rarely adequately punished, at the very least they've been called out and chronicled.

Police, however, with their own frightening levels of misogynist violence, have by some silent covenant of their communities been spared the same scrutiny. This evasion is doubly dangerous given the critical role police are needed to play if this violence is ever to be stopped. Police are the sole gatekeepers to protection and justice for women. Instead of properly performing this role, police themselves are some of the worst perpetrators, and their sympathetic departments are all too often prone to hire, harbor, and promote them until their violence reaches extremes.

Why communities, and especially the movement to end violence against women, have avoided calling out police for their misogynist culture and crimes is only one of the questions we want to pose here. But first, take a look for yourself!

Browse through the list at the end of this piece of 24 incidents of police violence against women and children that were reported in news media IN JUST ONE WEEK leading up to Valentine's Day of 2013. See if you don't have some of the same observations and questions as we have.

1. Look at how many of these reported crimes of police violence against women are at the extreme level of violence; murder, attempted murder, kidnap at gunpoint, multiple sexual assaults, shootings, etc.. It's highly unlikely that these criminal officers all of a sudden one day out of the blue escalated to these extremes. What's much more likely is that multiple previous incidents by these officers were tolerated and protected by their departments.

2. Look how many of these crimes are committed by high ranking and older officers. Again, it's highly unlikely that these veteran officers all of a sudden at middle age became perpetrators over night. The advanced ages and ranks of so many of these perpetrators is again more evidence that police departments are harboring and protecting these criminal officers through multiple previous crimes.
3. Every one of these incidents of police violence against women and children reported in this time period was perpetrated by a male police officer, though females make up 13% of our police officers. The disproportionate rate of all police misconduct by male police officers is not a surprise given that in society at large 90 % of all felonies are perpetrated by males. What is staggering is that communities have not insisted on breaking up this toxic male domination of police forces, if for no other reason than the huge savings in lawsuits that would result.
4. Imagine the dangers and injustices suffered by the thousands of women victims who over the course of these officers' careers have called these officers for help, especially in cases of gender based violence!
5. Why has the movement to end violence against women failed to target the dismantling of the toxic hyper-masculine culture and control of police? Why has the movement failed to even point a finger at this monumental obstacle to ending the violence?

The List

The following is a list of the 23 incidents of police violence against women and children that were reported by the National Police Misconduct Reporting Project* newsfeed in the week leading up to and including this Valentine's Day, Feb. 14, 2013.

* The National Police Misconduct Reporting Project (www.policemisconduct.net) aggregates media news reports of police misconduct and lists them in their newsfeed. We've pulled the reports of police violence against women and children from that data. Only incidents resulting in arrest, firing, suspension, charging, or conviction of the officer are included. All incidents occurred while the officer was employed as a police officer, though the officer may have subsequently been fired and therefore may be referred to as a 'former officer' in news reports. None of these incidents was perpetrated by a female officer, though females make up 13% of U.S. police forces.

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Feb. 7, 2013 thru Feb. 14, 2013

Police Misconduct Newsfeed Feb 7, 2013

* Male Officer: **Lafayette, Louisiana:** A police corporal, Jackie Hagan Jr, 34, has been indicted by a grand jury on charges of sexual battery and malfeasance for allegedly battering a woman while he was on duty.

www.wbrz.com/news/former-police-officer-indicted-on-sex-charge



* Male Officer: **South Salt Lake, Utah:** A veteran officer, 41 has been charged with multiple felonies of stalking a former girlfriend and hacking her computer accounts. He is on extended administrative leave. <http://ow.ly/hvDZq>



* Male Officer: **Madison County, Tennessee:** A now fired law-enforcement officer, Ricky Lunsford, 52, has been charged with attempted first-degree murder of his ex-wife, employing a weapon during the commission of a dangerous felony, aggravated kidnapping, and aggravated assault. <http://local.nixle.com/alert/4893966/>



Police Misconduct Newsfeed Feb 8, 2013

* Male Officer: **Hillsboro, Oregon:** An officer surrendered after a gun fight with ten county officers. He allegedly got into a domestic dispute with his wife, when she called the police. When they arrived he armed himself, and fired at officers attempting to enter the house numerous times. His wife finally convinced him to leave the house with her, and their 6-year-old daughter. <http://ow.ly/hynCg>



* Male Officer: **Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania:** A state police trooper, Paul C. Mauser, 38, has been placed on unpaid leave after he was charged with assaulting his wife. According to documents, he got into an argument with her, and pushed her, causing her to fall down a flight of stairs and break her ankle. <http://ow.ly/hyxDI>

* Male Officer: **Pueblo County, Colorado:** An officer, Randall Scott Aire, 42, will face multiple counts of sexual assault and kidnapping, along with menacing and another count of tampering with evidence. He is accused of kidnapping his estranged girlfriend at gunpoint, taking her to his home and sexually assaulting her, before taking her back to her home. <http://ow.ly/hxYoa>



* Male Officer: **Meigs County, Tennessee:** An officer, Bradley Collins, 35, was arrested after being indicted by a grand jury on charges stemming from a shooting incident. He allegedly shot at his stepfather twice, although he did not hit him. <http://ow.ly/hxX9a>



* Male Officer: **Minneapolis, Minnesota:** A police officer is in jail after his arrest for allegedly having off-duty sexual encounters with several girls between the ages of 12 and 14, according to the Sheriff's office. He was arrested on suspicion of first-degree criminal sexual conduct with a person under 13 that caused personal injury.

<http://ow.ly/hxNEQ>



* Male Officer: **Rindge, New Hampshire:** A police officer, John Vargas-Cifrino, 35, accused of sexually assaulting a teenager is slated to plead guilty to lesser charges. He allegedly engaged in sex acts with a girl he knew between the age of 13 and 16, according to court documents. <http://www.ledgertranscript.com/home/2673516-95/cifrino-police-vargas-rindge>



* Male Officer: **Weymouth, Massachusetts:** An officer, Scott Ficarra, 37, charged with assaulting his 9-year-old twin daughters has resigned. They told other officers he pushed them and warned them not to tell anyone because no one would believe them, according to a police report on file. <http://ow.ly/hyps7>

* Male Officer: **Rockwood, Michigan:** A now ex-police officer, Christian Zieminski, 34, has pleaded guilty to two misdemeanor charges in connection with an allegation of inappropriate contact involving a female prisoner in his custody. As part of his plea, he has agreed not to challenge his termination. <http://ow.ly/hyuBY>



Police Misconduct Newsfeed Feb 9, 2013 - Feb 11, 2013

* Male Officer: **Auburn, Washington:** A police officer is under investigation for allegedly groping a pregnant, handcuffed woman. Another police department is now conducting a criminal investigation. <http://ow.ly/hC7bq>

* Male Officer: **Orlando, Florida:** A veteran officer, Danny Sidders, who was jailed twice last year on allegations of domestic violence, has been fired. He violated two department policies. <http://ow.ly/hC8YB>



Police Misconduct Newsfeed Feb 12, 2013

* Male Officer: **Jackson, Mississippi:** Bond was denied for Detective Natyyo Gray, 36, a police officer who was charged with capital murder in connection with the death of his one-year-old daughter. An autopsy confirmed that she died of internal hemorrhage after suffering blunt-force trauma to the abdomen. <http://ow.ly/hE5AJ>



* Male Officer: **Rushville, Indiana:** A police officer, Cale Worley, 28, has been arrested after state police say he had an inappropriate relationship with a teenage girl. According to court documents, he sent the 15-year-old girl messages on Facebook and via text. <http://ow.ly/hE8qB>



* Male Officer: Update: **Boulder, Colorado:** A police officer accused of stalking and plotting to kill a fellow officer (ex-girlfriend's boyfriend) pleaded guilty in a county courthouse. He faces one to three years in prison and remains free on a \$500,000 bond. <http://ow.ly/hE983>



* Male Officer: **Douglas County, Colorado:** A sheriff's deputy, Douglas 'Mike' French, has been fired after being tied to a child sex exploitation investigation. Investigators received information about inappropriate text messages involving a juvenile, and determined a deputy



was alleged to be involved. <http://ow.ly/hDWd6>

* Male Officer: **Plattsburgh, New York:** A state trooper, Trevor Donah, charged with raping two women has been charged with attacking a third woman. www.wcax.com/story/21128787/ny-trooper-faces-additional-rape-charges



* Male Officer: **Haines City, Florida:** A police officer who was arrested in an investigation of underage prostitution has pleaded guilty and received 10 years in prison. The report says that the man, Paul Aaron, who ran the prostitution ring, exploited runaway girls younger than 18; one of them was forced to have sex with the officer for free so Aaron could receive favors from him in the future. <http://ow.ly/hDZiX>



Police Misconduct Newsfeed Feb 13, 2013

* Male Officer: **Newton Falls, Ohio:** The village council voted unanimously to terminate the police chief, John Kuivila, amid an investigation into allegations of sexual harassment made by a female employee. The measure was passed as an emergency “to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the community.” <http://ow.ly/hGSSc>



* Male Officer: **Box Elder County, Utah:** A sheriff’s deputy accused of sexually assaulting women during a series of traffic stops has reached a plea agreement that could land him in state prison for up to five years. <http://ow.ly/hGAfL>



* Male Officer: **Selmer, Tennessee:** A police officer, Quinton Garland, has been charged with domestic assault; he is accused of throwing his girlfriend to the floor and then grabbing her by the neck during an argument. According to a Lieutenant, the police are taking the accusations very seriously. He has put on suspension without pay pending the investigation. <http://ow.ly/hG60a>

Police Misconduct Newsfeed Feb 14, 2013:

* Male Officer: **Kingsville, Texas:** A now-former police corporal, David Cerda, 41, was indicted on a charge of continual sexual abuse of a child under 14-years old. <http://ow.ly/hIRjN>



* Male Officer: Update: **Seattle, Washington:** A police lieutenant who was charged with violating a domestic-violence court order reached an agreement that could lead to charges being dropped. The officer has a checkered history with the department. <http://ow.ly/hIATC>



SEE ALSO:

Increasing Women’s Numbers and Influence in Policing

http://justicewomen.com/pw_increasingwomensnumbers.html

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rdjustice@monitor.net**

