

# Police Violence Is Not An Accident

Police departments around the country pride themselves in their strategy of “protecting and serving”. This simple and heartwarming slogan stands in direct contradiction to their actual methods. More appropriately it should read “protecting and serving the rich and powerful”. The police are directly responsible in maintaining economic and racial inequality in Tacoma, the Northwest, and the entire U.S. They accomplish their purist goals with tactics such as intimidation, blackmail, assault, and murder.

## Some recent police tactics in the West:

On Saturday November 15, 2008, 3 members of the Olympia Police Department shot in the back and killed 24-year-old Jose Ramirez Jimenez. Many of the details have been withheld by the OPD, however we do know that the 3 officers who fired the shots were Paul Bakala, Mike Hovda, and Chuck Gassett.

On November 29th, 2009 a King County sheriff's deputy Paul Schene assaulted a 15-year-old black girl, Malika Calhoun, slamming her to the floor of a jail cell, striking her and pulling her hair in a violent rage, which was captured on videotape. In June 2006, Schene shot (several times) and killed a schizophrenic man, Pedro Jo in King County. In 2002 Schene shot and wounded a suspected car thief in Burien.

Early on New Year's morning, 2009, BART police in Oakland, California, shot and killed Oscar Grant, a working class black man, calling him a “bitch ass nigger” as he lay unarmed on a subway platform. Oscar's death was no mistake. He is one of hundreds of black men killed by the police in Oakland each year.

On March 22, 2010, Portland police shot



I am  
oscar  
grant



**“When a cop chooses not to kill you or give you a speeding ticket, he still maintains his position of power that allows him to commit either of these actions and everything in between with no repercussions.”**

and killed a homeless man, Jack Dale Collins, just two months after they shot to death Aaron Campbell, an unarmed black man.

These murders and beatings are not isolated incidents. They are a pattern of routine violence by the state against the poor and people of color. Just last year the Tacoma Police shot 11 people, killing 4. Similarly this past February 36 black men from Tacoma were brutally arrested and held under 1 million dollar bail each. They all are suspected to be “gang” affiliated, under a new conspiracy law which makes association illegal. Some of the men may have participated in activity that the State calls crime. Crime is the act of getting by, a natural response to our social conditions. Yet the rich and powerful, those who have had everything handed to them, will tell us that those of the worst ethics resort to theft, robbery, or drug dealing. Their lackeys, the police, follow their words through systematic arrests and violence. Their campaigns of “cleaning the city” or “improving community safety” are sweet euphemisms for pushing the undesirables out of sight and into cells, or even worse into graves.

The 36 black men, the Tacoma 36, did not have to commit crimes to be jailed; nor did Jose, Malika, Pedro, or Jack. Undesirables do not have to be found “guilty”. We are born guilty. Whether we choose illegalism or not, we are always guilty under their system. The police enforce this reality through their position. They are not here to protect us as individuals, but to protect the current class and social structure. The rest of us are left with imprisonment or death. Each day as they occupy our streets and neighborhoods, they exercise this power. Their existence is unnecessary and harmful. They do not only have the capacity for violence, but a commitment to it. We must denounce the police force as what they are, an irreconcilably brutal institution that must be destroyed.

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