

... and all cops are an active, perpetual threat to human lives. To all human lives.

"Law never made men a whit more just; and by means of their respect for it, even the well-disposed are daily made the agents of injustice." — Henry David Thoreau

Beatings matter; not just killings.

Theft by government matters; not just ~~physical injury~~ ^{physical injury.}

Humiliation and degradation matter; not just the harms that leave tangible evidence.

Being chained up matters; being caged matters... these things should not happen.

Lost livelihoods, lost friendships, lost family, lost reputation, lost social viability —

all of this matters, and cops do all of this, to all people, all the time. Every day.

(And not just cops, but all of the criminal system, from court personnel to prosecutors to probation officials.)

Racial injustice is a problem, and it matters... but it's not the only problem.

When it comes to police and the punishment apparatus, skin tone alone won't protect you.

A lot of my friends are prison abolitionists — they are right.

Some people I know are police abolitionists — and they are right, too.

So far, though, I don't know of anyone really calling for punishment abolition.

We are all, or nearly all, enthralled by ideas of authority and punishment.

It has to stop.

So long as we believe in punishment, caging and control will continue.

We teach that if you have power, then causing suffering to gain compliance is proper.

We teach that might makes right, and in doing so, we create monsters.

We create punishers. We create cops, cop apologists, and cops' docile victims: the punished.

It has to stop.

Human nature is not fundamentally dark and deadly, we need not be so afraid of one another; we should be much more afraid to not look at the whole picture, however big it is.

To punish is to confess imbecility, or at least laziness... can we stop being lazy imbeciles?

Because human lives matter, all of them,

and the humans who earn their livings by doing sanctioned violence to other humans are bastards...

ACAB, yes, but

they are bastards that we're all at least a little bit responsible for creating.

* This post relates to: I Don't Understand the Outrage (Dec. 2014); The Confession of Imbecility (Dec. 2017); Of Cops and Cognitive Distortion (Dec. 2018); American Exceptionalism (May 2019); Due Process (Dec. 2019) and pretty much everything from 2020! "