

## Faculti Summary

<https://faculti.net/before-the-badge/>

The speaker discusses their research on civilian gun ownership and policing conducted during graduate school. Working with a professor on ethnographic research in Texas, they became interested in the training of police officers and how it compared to civilian gun training. The motivation for this study was influenced by experiences with gun ownership and the context of police violence, particularly following events in Ferguson.

The speaker spent a year researching at various police training academies, observing and participating in the training processes. They found that training emphasized a culture that accepts and even encourages using violence, with cadets being punished for insufficient aggression but not for excessive force. This video video dynamic aimed to ensure officers prioritize their safety over de-escalating situations with civilians.

The speaker argues against the "bad apple" theory of police violence, suggesting that systemic issues within police training and hiring contribute to patterns of violence and racial inequality. The frameworks through which candidates are evaluated create a culture where aggression is normalized, and there is little discourse on the historical context of policing or racial disparities in police actions.

Despite some departments implementing de-escalation training, the focus remained on officer safety, and topics like racial inequality were neglected. The speaker expresses skepticism about the potential for reform within policing, advocating for alternative approaches, like reducing civilian gun ownership and exploring abolitionist perspectives, as potential pathways forward. They hope the book contextualizes the issues of police violence and emphasizes the need to address organizational structures rather than just individual behaviors within police departments.