

# Ochs: highlights from the Police documents

The Bethlehem Gadfly George Floyd killing, Ochs, Holona, Police August 10, 2020

 *Latest in a series of posts responding to the George Floyd killing* 

**Public Safety Committee meeting Tuesday, August 11, 6PM:  
must register**

Prof Holona Ochs:

Highlights from the BPD report (Mickel, Irons, & Strouse)

- People of color make up 60-80% of incidents (compared to 44% of the city) and whites between 30-40% (compared to 60% of the city)
- The single largest age range subject to use of force are 18-25 year-olds (an average of 37% of use of force incidents) . . . this range includes 18 and 19-year-old teenagers.
- There are about 8-9 minors subject to force each year. In our view, subjecting minors to force is absolutely inexcusable.
- BPD is quick to point out that incidents involving force are a small percentage of overall arrests. However, the majority of arrests in Bethlehem are for minor crimes like vandalism, drunkenness, and lesser offenses not even specifically named. Use of force in those incidents needs to be closely examined.
- The Bethlehem Crime report revealed that 81% of Bethlehem cops are white men. (White men make up only about 30% of the Bethlehem population).
- In addition, 70% of complaints to BPD are made by white people, which is again an overrepresentation. I recognize that it is less stark than the makeup of the police force, but it does speak to who feels that they have access to police as a safe service to call . . . and when viewed in combination with who is a police officer, this makes sense.  
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- Bottom line: It's white people calling a white police force, which overwhelmingly uses force on young brown and Black people.

*\*\*\* Gadfly remembers a point made by Councilwoman Negron at last Council meeting, that the low number of Latinx complaints to the police department does not mean that all is good but that they are scared, do not trust the police. Real food for thought there.*