

# Demographic proportionality more useful for raising questions than answering

The Bethlehem Gadfly Environment, Police November 8, 2020

 Latest in a series of posts on the environment 

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ref: **“Trail monitoring again”**

Gadfly:

As with most statistics, demographic proportionality is more useful for raising questions than thinking it is an answer.

WHY are there fewer POC on the trails, Main Street, and in the police department and the rest of the city administration?

- Do they feel less than fully welcome?
- Are marketing and recruiting efforts designed only by white people, and is that part of the problem?
- Considerable effort is expended to market the trails, downtown, and events? Is an equivalent effort made to market to POC?
- How about recruiting efforts for city staff and especially for the PD?

At the same time, it's important to remember that proportionate staffing in PD does not necessarily mean problem solved — it's often the case that POC serving as officers are pushed into conforming with the existing culture. As a result, we see police departments where performance by officers of color is just as problematic as performance of white officers. And just as there are a few white people who go into policing for the wrong reasons — such as liking the authority and power it conveys — the same thing can happen with a minority candidate.

Peter