Discussion with a Cop Supporter

Below is a discussion I had with a supporter of cops a while back. It may be educational to see the lengths people will go to when they are desperate to excuse the inexcusable and justify that which can't be justified.

"This analogy reflects my perspective: it takes only a little bit of light to dispel a room full of darkness. In this perspective, 'bad' is easily corrupted by 'good,' the catalyst."

It would be nice if that were true, but that doesn't match observation. Good seems more fragile in the real world than bad. If you hang out with "the wrong crowd", which of you is more likely to change their behavior. Yes, sometimes the good might turn some of the bad, but it is much, much more common for it to go the other way. I'm not saying it isn't possible, just that it isn't probable.

"In my experience, people are too complicated to be accurately represented by oversimplified logical proofs."

Again, we aren't taking about people, but behavior.

"I'm not denying that this corruption exists or that these things take place. I'm questioning the virtue of the assertion that 'all cops are bad people.'"

I'm not speaking about corruption, but the fact that the "job", carried out perfectly, demands a person do evil things. You can't speak of "mafia corruption" with any less absurdity than "police corruption". The "job" itself is the problem.

"What I mean by 'policing' is all the good things police do."

None of that requires a person to be a cop. The only advantage cops have is the communication infrastructure which lets them be alerted to a problem. That advantage is going away. The problem is that the bad things cops do, they get away with due to their status as a government enforcer– so the good doesn't require them to be a cop, but to get away with the bad does generally require them to be a cop.

"I'd like to see the results of your thought experiment in which all the police suddenly vanished from the world."

I'd like to see that, too. I know there would be problems. People have been infantized by being trained to outsource their responsibility to "the professionals". This will have consequences. But, just like someone who has been tricked into depending on a wheelchair, you're not going to get better until you take some painful steps.

"In mine, the person has not yet been forced into such a situation. Maybe he's a rookie cop. Or maybe he lives in a peaceful town and hasn't been pressured to go against his principles. He's served his community with a clear conscience for some time. He's not abusing his delegated power, and maybe he never will."

Is he paid by "taxation"? Then he's a thief (receipt of stolen property– if he doesn't help enforce "tax laws") and committing evil. For him to then "arrest" someone for theft is hypocrisy. What kind of things do you expect this unsullied "servant" to do? Can he do those things without violating anyone (besides through his theft)? I've known several cops; even socialized with some. Had a pretty deep conversation with a guy who was training to be a cop. Some were nice, but none were good. It's a logical impossibility for them to be. I don't treat them any different than I treat any other person I know to be a thief or aggressor, but who isn't doing those things at this moment. I would hope they don't act out on what they have been trained to believe it is OK for them to do, as a cop, when out of uniform, but I'm not going to trust one.

"…if you know the person's intentions, you have a better chance of understanding the person's actions."

Which is why I have (in the past) socialized with some cops, under some circumstances. I assume they won't steal of molest while not on the "job", due to their "intentions". But it does happen.

"He may actually be there to help you, but you've already decided that's impossible."

No. I actually haven't. I have written extensively on topics such as this and don't really feel like rehashing it all. Here's one example that pertains to your assumption.

"My point is that intentions are important, because even if they don't change the outcome of the action, they change your perception of both the action and its outcome."

So, if an attacker only intends to rape, and the murder of his victim was an accident, I should excuse the murder? Sorry, but my perception is that if you initiate force/steal as a matter of course, you are a bad guy. If the realization of my perception offends the guy doing it, he could stop.

"I was talking about something closer to 'opinionated conclusions' and 'hypercritical thinking'."

I still believe it is important to be opinionated about certain things (and refuse to excuse or justify them), and the opposite of "hypercritical thinking" is either gullibility or the lack of thought. Maybe a combination. Truth is truth, even if it makes you uncomfortable, or even if you'd rather equivocate.

"I'm not talking about 'looking the other way' in the face of <u>archation</u>. I'm talking about expecting what you don't want."

I don't want a tornado to hit my house. I don't "expect" it, but I would be foolish to ignore the possibility. I don't expect a cop to attack me– unless he initiates contact. Then, whether it's a "traffic stop" or some other "contact", he has already aggressed against me. My expectations are irrelevant at this point. I don't "expect" him to escalate the situation and murder me, but it happens more often than cop supporters want to know. To ignore the reality of the situation: that an armed aggressor has accosted me, and quite probably intends to rob me, might decide to kidnap me, and will murder me if he gets nervous, would be foolish on my part.

"…but what do you do with cops who insist they're doing the right thing, trying to clear the corruption from the system by being a good example?"

I try to educate them as to why they aren't doing the right thing, and that the system isn't corrupt anymore than the mafia is corrupt. It is as it is designed to be.

"How do you decide that point at which you switch from your perspective to theirs?"

When I reject principles and ethics.

"I also see that violence may not be the only effective response to archation. "

Never assumed it was. That's why I write.

"You might define the label by a set of actions, but when you use that label on a person, you are labeling that person."

When a person willingly associates himself with, and gets a large part of his identity from, those behaviors, what would you do? They label themselves. I simply accept their identity.

"If you don't think there should be a next generation of police, I'd like to know how you see the path to this reality."

By getting people to see that cops are unnecessary and harmful to society. A net negative. That they are anti-society. I have no illusions that I will accomplish this myself. But it is enough to see people throw off the veil and see the "job" for what it really is. And I am seeing more and more people grow out of the superstition every day.

"'Copsucker' is a label to which you've attached negative characteristics."

Because blind support of police is a very negative personality flaw. People should be ashamed for exhibiting this trait. Are you going to make nice euphemisms for people who

support other thugs and bullies?

"'Good person' and 'bad person' are labels, too. When we use them to refer to people, they become abstract and simplified…"

Labels aren't bad when they are accurate; only when they are deceptive. Everyone can do both good and bad, but then the scales tip by the majority of a person's actions, the label can be very helpful in discerning who you should trust and who you shouldn't.

"Using the worst definition of 'cop' to justify other labels…"

OK, define cop or "police officer" in a truthful way.

"The kind of peace I meant here was freedom from war and archation."

Probably a pipe dream. There will always be archation (whether it is "war" or not is probably irrelevant), even in a free society. I don't necessarily seek freedom from archation, but I do seek an honest assessment of it, and removal of the veil of legitimacy for those who commit it as a part of their "job". This includes politicians, muggers, and other archators, not just cops.