

Dear Editor:

I have often been amused and better-informed, as a result of reading *Smithology* each month. As a loyal and longtime R&T subscriber, I would ask you to pause briefly and consider the following feedback regarding the November 2017 edition of this featured column.

The author betrays his own white privilege throughout the column: given his ethnicity, background, and developmental niche, he reports having had *friendly and helpful* exchanges with police officers of the South, and I believe him. I also have no reason to dispute that he has had a series of similarly friendly and helpful exchanges with Commander Scholl of the Kent, WA, police department. To some, the essence of white privilege comes from assuming the universality and authority of their own worldview and experience.

With the many achievements that have been made in science and the arts, the author wonders aloud whether or not a deep mistrust in those *who protect us from ourselves* is actually justified. During this brief pause, I would invite you and Mr. Smith to (re)consider the validity of this published observation. I make this request especially because he also implies that he has been *keeping up with the news*. Perhaps you have been keeping up with the news as well?

I would encourage you both to go beyond science, arts, and the news, to more deeply explore the origins of policing in the US. By doing so, perhaps you would begin to understand that police forces have not always been/are not always being deployed to *protect us from ourselves*. Please also note that there have been a number of unjustifiable police murders of unarmed US citizens of color (historically and also in the news!), and there is plenty of audio/video evidence available to demonstrate that most of these recent, brutal, mournful and fatal exchanges were anything but *friendly and helpful* from the very start. Turns out that there are indeed large segments of our population who have valid reasons to mistrust police officers and departments. Despite what you may have been led to believe about your readership, your own experiences and worldview are simply not universal.

Finally, I would kindly ask that you keep an eye out for such spurious terms as *everyone*, *we*, *us*, and *ourselves*, while editing future submissions prior to their publication.

Thanks for taking this brief pause to consider..

R. Wilhite

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