

Cops Commit Crimes, Too. This One Is Just 'Invisible'

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Police officers are trained to dominate, interrogate, and show strength. These are the skills that, in theory, make them good police officers—but those same skills can also make for a dangerous abuser, write Melissa Jeltsen and Dana Liebelson at the *Huffington Post*. "If domestic abuse is one of the most underreported crimes, domestic abuse by police officers is virtually an invisible one," they add. Victims may be reluctant to report the abuse to their abuser's colleagues and friends or maneuver through a confounding justice system with which their abuser is familiar. A federal law also states anyone convicted of domestic abuse cannot own a gun—which, for the family of a police officer, could mean loss of income. Yet, as the stories of two women told in the *Huffington Post* piece illustrate, domestic abuse by police officers does happen and can be especially terrifying.

Sarah Loiselle and Karen Tingle, both ex-wives of Delaware state trooper Andrel Martinez, accuse him of abusing, stalking, and intimidating them during their relationships and after they ended. Their stories involve unlawful searches in a police database, threatening messages, friends intimidated at work, and other police officers who appeared to work for their husband rather than his victims. That's one reason a retired police officer believes police departments should have a mandatory procedure in place for instances when an officer is accused of domestic violence, which is no rare thing. Surveys have found that up to 40% of police officers have admitted to violent behavior against a family member. As a Cato Institute researcher explains, domestic violence is "the most common violent crime for which police officers are arrested," but many are never convicted and are even able to keep their jobs.