



“I feel like if you look at things historically, police departments were created to be oppressive organizations to enforce laws for the ruling class. In modern society, you have seen police departments not only develop a militaristic nature, but also use tactics of subjugation and occupation, versus enforcing any sort of law. While there is debate about whether there are good and bad police officers, I personally feel the whole institution is rotten itself.” (Story and photo by Lois Charm)

Jacob Flowers, 36, Midtown, employee for a non-profit



“Well, I actually have a neighbor who is a police officer, so I see both sides of the controversy. It makes me realize that there’s good and bad in everything, and I think it’s just sad but it’s true. He’s a really good guy, and he has two little girls and he’s a sweet man. I just know that there are some bad cops and there are some good, and it’s really sad for the ones that do try to protect us.” (Story and photo by Lois Charm)

Cindy Scott, 50, Cordova, medical science warehouse employee



“I don’t believe that there should be some type of system of checking when people hurt other people. I think that this has become beside the point for most public city cop systems. And it’s mostly just a very racist tool used against people who are working class and don’t live with privilege and it perpetuates a system of capitalism. I’m very ant-capitalist, so I don’t like the cops.” (Story and photo by Lois Charm)

Ariel Clayborn, 26, Midtown, juice bar barista



“A lot of people say all cops aren’t bad, but if I was a cop and I watched a bad cop do something and I didn’t do anything about it, does that make me any good? That makes me bad, too. If you ask me, I feel as though our police are like gangs in the city. If the gangs won’t put their guns down and the police don’t either, does that make things any better?” (Story and photo by Lois Charm)

Antronette Armstrong, 37, Downtown, housekeeper at DoubleTree Hotel



“There’s good and bad. What you hear mostly is bad. You know, there are some bad apples that have ruined the bunch and you don’t hear too much about the good folks. Then you have people out there who want to ruin their communities when something bad happens. They’ll burn down stores and break windows, then all you’re left with are ruined buildings in your community. I say, find another way to voice your opinion. Do something else. Move past it. There aren’t enough activists in the community.”
(Story and photo by Lois Charm)

Terrell Maddox, 55, Downtown, retired chef



“I think they’re not what they’re supposed to be. When you’re in the park they’ll come out and talk to you like you’re a little a** child, and if you talk back to them they’re ready to rake you to jail. Also, they’re so cruel to the homeless people out here.” (Story and photo by Lois Charm)

Shavon Ware, 51, Downtown, housewife



“Sometimes I feel happy and sad because sometimes police are mean and some are nice to you. I feel like they are mean sometimes because they’ll take you to jail and yell at you and push you back to the car. I feel as though they’re also nice because if something happens, like if there’s an accident and someone hits you first, then they’ll let you go.” (Story and photo by Lois Charm)

Teya Lashay Murrell, 8, Downtown, second-grade student



“I think that there’s a lot of good that they do for the community and we can’t appreciate what we don’t thank them for, which is unfortunate. But obviously there are some issues with the police brutality and the racial issues that do need to be addressed, but it’s unfortunate that the actions of a small percentage of the police is overshadowing the good that they do for the community.”
(Story and photo by Lois Charm) Eric Harper, 26, Mumford, TN middle school teacher



“I like them. The other day I was actually pulling into the driveway at my house and down the street there were a bunch of kids playing basketball and a cop had stopped and was playing a game of basketball with the kids and I thought that was very cool. Even with all the negative things going on, they are really trying to get back to the positive, so I don’t feel negative about them at all.”
(Story and photo by Lois Charm)

Britney Kight, 19, Atoka, TN student at University of Memphis, also in Air Force



“We had a riot in the ‘70s between the Hispanics and the cops and it was horrible. We had to put red flags on our property so that no one would destroy it. They burnt down the city (Camden, New Jersey) because they had a conflict with police officers and there was a riot. I was a little kid and it was horrible because you’d see people getting beat up. You’d see cops beating people and people beating the cops and it was something that you wouldn’t want to see, like something that would come out of a horror movie. Even with this, I believe there are good cops because they’re supposed to protect and serve us. Memphis cops are nice.”

Christine Avery, 52, Midtown, laundromat attendant