

Welcome Media Professionals!

We hope you find the following information helpful
To request a full PDF copy of the book, please email:

info@walkingthethinblackline.com

Both print and eBook on sale at Amazon for \$9.99



Melissa McFadden is available for video, audio or print interviews.

Media Contact:

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Melissa is also available as a content expert for the following topics:

- Police brutality
- Racism in policing
- Police reform/defunding
- Protests against police

The Author

Melissa McFadden holds the highest rank of any Black woman in the history of the Columbus Division of Police. She holds a Juris Doctor degree from Capital University Law School, as well as four other college degrees. She served as a Security Specialist in the US Air Force.

As a Lieutenant supervising the largest Zone in Columbus on the busiest shift, she was prevented from taking the Commander's exam due to retaliation for assisting a colleague with an Equal Employment claim.

She has filed numerous grievances, complaints and lawsuits over her twenty-four years spending over \$100,000 of her own money to call out racist tactics by Columbus Police.

She has experienced retaliation over her career for trying to uphold fairness and justice in law enforcement procedures. She has been threatened with discipline, demotion, termination and loss of her pension. None of those efforts have been successful.

She is now able to speak and would like to encourage others to join her in her quest for justice.

The Book

Written as a memoir, this book weaves stories of entrenched racism from throughout Melissa's career into a tale of personal and community trauma.

Everyone can see the effects of racism in policing, but few can explain how it continues to thrive in an environment of 24/7 news coverage, social media and body-worn-cameras. Those who understand are under gag orders that are derived from the same racist policies that perpetuate the overpolicing of our Black communities.

Written for those interested in reforming the institution of policing, this book dives into specifics about why it is difficult to attract and retain Black police officers. It explains the role of the police unions in maintaining the racist status quo while signing contracts that look equitable on paper.

You'll follow Melissa from her humble beginnings in a tiny coal town in West Virginia to her unique position in a large city police department through the battles she has waged. But even with her career long effort to eliminate racism, the war against Black people rages on.

Follow current events at:

Twitter:
[@ThinBlackLine2](https://twitter.com/ThinBlackLine2)

Website:
www.walkingthethinblackline.com

Suggested Interview Questions:

1. Why do you stay on the job with all the difficulties you've experienced?
2. What do you think about all the calls for defunding and reforming the police?
3. What role does the union play in supporting the racist culture at the Columbus Division of Police?
4. How do new minority officers navigate the racism on the street and in the division? Should we and how can we encourage more minority youth to choose policing as a career?
5. How do you see Chief Quinlan's leadership has helped or hurt the culture of racism in the division?
6. Do you think there are "bad apples" in the department? And what should be done to manage them?
7. You point to your military background as a positive in helping you do a good job, but many people are calling for "demilitarizing" the police. What can the police learn from the military?
8. When you hear leaders (mayors, chiefs, union presidents) proclaim that racism doesn't exist in policing, what is your response to that?
9. You point to Facebook posts in the book that expose a side of police behavior that most people never see. Are these posts representative of many of your coworkers or a select few?
10. You've been in law enforcement for a couple of decades, how much has it changed for you? And how much have you changed for it?



Melissa McFadden - Education and Experience

CITY OF COLUMBUS Columbus Ohio

Mar 2014 - Present Police Lieutenant
2014 - Patrol Zone 2

Mar 2010 - Mar 2014 Police Sergeant
2010 - Internal Affairs Bureau

May 1996 - Mar 2009 Police Officer
2000 - Advanced Training Unit
1999 - Police Athletic League
1996 - Patrol Unit

May 1996 - Nov 1996 Columbus Police Training Academy

THE OHIO STATE UNIV MEDICAL CENTER Columbus Ohio
1994 - 1996 Security Officer

OHIO SUPPORT SERVICES, INC. Columbus Ohio
1993 - 1994 Security Officer

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

Nov 1991 - Dec 1992 Security Specialist (Princilik AS)

May 1989 - Nov 1991 Security Specialist (Wurtsmith AFB)

Jan 1989 - Apr 1989 Security Specialist Training (Wurtsmith AFB)

Nov 1988 - Jan 1989 Basic Training (Lackland AFB)

2018 Juris Doctorate, Law

Capital University Law School

2009 Master's Degree, Criminal Justice

Tiffin University

2004 Bachelor of Social Work

Capital University

2004 Bachelor of Arts, Criminology

Capital University

2002 Associate of Arts

Columbus State Community College

Basic Training Instructor Certification

State of Ohio Peace Officer Training

Licensed Social Worker

State of Ohio

For Immediate Release

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Black Female Police Officer Speaks Out on Racism in Law Enforcement in Her New Memoir, “Walking The Thin Black Line: Confronting Racism in the Columbus Division of Police”

Career Police Lieutenant Shares What It’s Really Like to Be Black and Wear a Badge, Based on Her 24 Years Confronting Racism in a Big City Police Department

COLUMBUS, Ohio, Sept. 23, 2020 – One underrepresented voice in the police reform movement that’s swept the country this summer is that of the Black police officer. In her new memoir, “Walking The Thin Black Line: Confronting Racism in the Columbus Division of Police,” Melissa McFadden tells the story of her 24-year career, currently as a Black lieutenant with the Columbus Division of Police.

Black officers walk a thin Black line every time they put on their uniforms. On one side is the Black community they strive to serve and protect from unjust treatment; on the other, a racist institution where they experience ongoing discrimination themselves.

McFadden shares her 24-year quest to defend her overpoliced community while coping with the personal trauma of surviving in a racist police department in this new book available now on Amazon.

Growing up, McFadden dreamed of becoming a police officer – but when she landed a job with the Columbus, Ohio Division of Police, she learned that policing was something very different than what she’d envisioned. As a Black woman from the coal country of West Virginia, she found herself confronting a big city racist police culture that was born in the slave patrols of Reconstruction, emboldened through the Jim Crow era, challenged in the Civil Rights era, and still gaining momentum in the Black Lives Matter era.

McFadden’s memoir “Walking The Thin Black Line” is about her journey through the thicket of systemic racism that hides in union contracts, unfair assignment practices, and discriminatory disciplinary decisions. She shares how racism thrives within police culture because the purpose of policing has never shed its original focus—a war on Black people. McFadden never imagined the day that she would be standing in solidarity with young Black activists and their white allies, holding a sign saying, “Police Reform Now,” while shouting, “BLACK LIVES MATTER!” Her voice had been silenced for over 20 years of her career through threats of retaliation that included taking her entire pension from her.

This historic book documents a perspective not widely known by the politicians, activists, faith leaders and citizens searching for answers to the mistreatment of Black people by our police. The Black officer is often categorized as a turncoat, while at the same time lauded as the hope to solve the problem. Many minority officers remain silent. Many leave the profession. A few who have stayed are beginning to speak out and fight back. McFadden is still in it and inviting you to join her.

About Melissa McFadden

Melissa McFadden is an activist and author who’s spent 24 years as a police officer in the Columbus, Ohio Division of Police. In her years in this profession, she’s witnessed racism throughout the police culture. Silent no more, McFadden shares her journey in, “Walking The Thin Black Line.” Buy the book on Amazon, learn more at <https://www.walkingthethinblackline.com/>, follow @ThinBlackLine2 on Twitter, or email info@walkingthethinblackline.com.

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