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In Defense of Self and Others... Issues, Facts, and Fallacies: The Realities of Law Enforcement's Use of Deadly Force

Urey W. Patrick, John C. Hall

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In Defense of Self and Others comprehensively addresses the issue of the use of deadly force by law enforcement officers. Beginning with a survey and analysis of the legal standards that define the authority of law enforcement officers to use deadly force, the book provides a detailed discussion of the practical elements that affect an officer's capacity to perceive a threat and to respond in an appropriate and timely fashion. For example, observing that law enforcement officers are always in a reactive mode and responding to the actions of others, the book explains how and why officers are compelled to make quick decisions under severe time constraints where action beats reaction. Moreover, a thorough discussion of wound ballistics illustrates why officers do not possess a reliable means of instantaneously stopping a perceived threat and explains how that affects tactics, training and risk assessments. There are additional chapters that discuss tactics and training, physiological factors of high intensity stress, suicide by cop, the effects of policy and training on the ability of officers to make appropriate decisions regarding the use of force, and much more. Numerous case histories are cited to illustrate the points made. As a result of the addition of new material, including an entirely new chapter that addresses the use of non-deadly force by law enforcement officers, this second edition is 40% larger than the first, and substantially more comprehensive in its coverage of the subject matter. Undoubtedly, the most unique aspect of this book is the expertise of the authors. Acquired during almost 60 years of combined law enforcement experience, Patrick and Hall's expertise reflects a blend of the legal with the practical that is unprecedented. The Supreme Court of the United States has ruled that an officer s decision to use force must be reviewed from the perspective of a reasonable officer on the scene. The object of this book is to provide insight into that perspective by placing the reader in the shoes of an officer on the scene. The book stands alone as a source of information for the law enforcement, legal, and educational communities. It will also be of great interest and benefit to the media, and to the general reader who is interested in this important and frequently controversial topic.

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