THE ABUSE OF POLICE AUTHORITY

A National Study of Police Officers' Attitudes

POLICE FOUNDATION

This edition of *The Abuse of Police Authority: A National Study of Police Officers Attitudes* has been formatted for the Web in PDF format; the pagination differs from the printed version.

Copyright restrictions apply.

THE ABUSE OF POLICE AUTHORITY

A National Study of Police Officers' Attitudes

David Weisburd

Rosann Greenspan

Edwin E. Hamilton

Kellie A. Bryant

Hubert Williams

The Police Foundation is a private, independent, nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting innovation and improvement in policing. Established in 1970, the foundation has conducted seminal research in police behavior, policy, and procedure, and works to transfer to local agencies the best new information about practices for dealing effectively with a range of important police operational and administrative concerns. Motivating all of the foundation's efforts is the goal of efficient, humane policing that operates within the framework of democratic principles and the highest ideals of the nation. The Police Foundation's research findings are published as an information service.

The research findings in this publication were supported by Grant Number 97–CK–WX–0047, awarded on behalf of Community Oriented Policing Services, US Department of Justice. Findings, recommendations, and conclusions of the research reported here are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position or policies of the US Department of Justice.

©2001 by the Police Foundation. All rights, including translation into other languages, reserved under the Universal Copyright Convention, the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, and the International and Pan American Copyright Conventions. Permission to quote is readily granted.

ISBN 1–884614–17–5

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 2001–130311

Police Foundation
1201 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20036-2636
(202) 833–1460
E-Mail: pfinfo@policefoundation.org
www.policefoundation.org

Contents

Illustrations

Tables

By Race

By Rank: Supervisors and Nonsupervisors

We expect our police "…to have the wisdom of Solomon, the courage of David, the patience of Job and the leadership of Moses, the kindness of the Good Samaritan, the strategy of Alexander, the faith of Daniel, the diplomacy of Lincoln, the tolerance of the Carpenter of Nazareth, and, finally, an intimate knowledge of every branch of the natural, biological, and social sciences. If he had all these, he might be a good policeman."

—August Vollmer, 1936

Foreword

When the police fail to meet our expectations, we react with dismay, anger, and additional demands. Police corruption and abuse of authority have persisted since the beginning of policing, and were exacerbated late in the twentieth century by America's drug epidemic. Every year, incidents of police abuse of authority cost local communities tens of millions of dollars in legal damages. Tax dollars are wasted. Careers are destroyed. The public trust is compromised.

Virtually every police department has policies prescribing officer conduct and regulating use of force. No police department or police chief should knowingly condone conduct that runs counter to either department policy or constitutional standards. While there is accountability for acts of corruption and other forms of wrongdoing in most police departments, there is little or no accountability for those who tolerate such an environment. How, for example, were a few officers able to brutalize Abner Louima within sound if not sight of first-line supervisors and other department officials in New York's 70th Precinct?

Even good people, placed in the wrong situation, will do the wrong thing. Bad supervision, intense peer pressure, and an organizational culture that sends unclear signals can cause honorable men and women to behave in dishonorable ways. The key moral problem for police departments is the same as it is for corporations, universities, labor unions, and government agencies: how can you create a culture that will induce members to strike the right balance between achieving an organizational goal and observing fundamental principles of decency and fairness?

Values in police agencies come not just from documents that describe them but also from traditional police culture. Too often, there is a disconnect between policies and practices, a failure of police management to monitor behavior and to respond appropriately. If police leadership does not assume an aggressive role in ensuring that the police culture is one of integrity and accountability, officers will continue to cultivate their own culture in their own way.

As this study reaffirms, commitment by the chief and command staff to uphold democratic values and eradicate discriminatory practices is key. Police administrators should proactively institute and enforce strong policies governing conduct, as well as systems to collect and analyze data relative to police-citizen contacts such as complaints, use of force incidents, and traffic stops. Such efforts would inform policy, guide recruitment and training, and build accountability necessary to restore and maintain public trust in the police. It is the lack of internal, systemic controls, and not "a few rotten apples," that perpetuates problems of misconduct and abuse by police. Most of America's police officers are honest, dedicated, hard-working public servants, and it is they, as well as the public they serve, who are victims of the "bad" cop.

Because of the nature of their responsibilities, the police have the power to intervene and become involved at very basic levels within the lives of American citizens. The nature of the police response—the manner in which officers interact with citizens and the methods by which they enforce the law—have critical implications for our democracy and the quality of life of our citizens. As Jerome Skolnick writes in his thoughtful essay, *On Democratic Policing*, "Order achieved through democratic policing is concerned not only with the ends of crime control, but also with the means used to achieve those ends."

Are police abuses inevitable in our efforts to control crime? What are police officers' views on the code of silence, whistle blowing, and the ways in which race or class influence police behavior? What are effective means of preventing abuse of authority by police? This report provides a nationwide portrait of what America's police officers think about these and other important questions of abuse of police authority.

Hubert Williams
President
Police Foundation

Acknowledgments

As in any large-scale project, we owe a debt of gratitude to many people who helped in developing our work. At the outset, we received much advice, encouragement, and support, which continued throughout the project, from Dr. David Hayeslip (now at Abt Associates) and Joseph Kuhns from the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

We would like to thank Mathematica Policy Research Inc. for setting and meeting the highest standards in survey research, especially project director Rhoda Cohen, senior statistician John Hall, telephone supervisor Deborah Reese, survey associate Phyllis Schulman, and all the telephone interviewers. We also thank Edward Maguire of George Mason University for sharing his police agency database and for assisting in developing the sampling frame, and we thank Colleen Cosgrove and Bill Matthews for assisting in selecting police departments for our focus groups.

A number of policing scholars contributed greatly at various stages of the project, from initial design of the sample frame, through development of the survey instrument, and by participation in our focus group of police scholars and executives. Our gratitude goes to Carl Klockars, Peter Manning, Ramiro Martinez, Stephen Mastrofski, Albert Reiss, Jerome Skolnick, Alfred Slocum, and Robert Worden.

We appreciate as well the contributions of Commissioner Thomas Frazier, Chief Jerry Oliver, Chief Jerry Sanders, and Director Robert Pugh in our focus group of scholars and executives.

We learned a tremendous amount from the generous participation of the unnamed officers who took part in our focus groups of rank-and-file officers and supervisors. We thank the officers who participated in the pretest, and especially the 925 officers from across the country who volunteered their cooperation in completing the survey interview. Finally, our thanks go to Fred Wilson, Chris Tutko, Rachel Dadusc, and Michael Clifton, formerly of the Police Foundation, and Kenneth Brunk of the Police Foundation, and especially to Mary Malina, Communications Director of the Police Foundation, who supervised the production of this report.

I

INTRODUCTION

…[P]otential abuse and actual abuse of [police] authority remain both a central problem for police agencies and a central public policy concern.

American society has long entrusted to its police the authority to use force in the pursuit of justice, law, and order. This authority is often glorified in books, television, and movies, where the police are seen as constantly responding to violent felons with equally violent reactions. But the reality of police use of force is much less dramatic and the boundaries of legitimate police use of force are much more constrained than defined in popular culture. The police indeed have discretion to use violence when it is required. However, the potential abuse and actual abuse of such authority remain both a central problem for police agencies and a central public policy concern.

Extreme examples of police abuse often spark major public debate. Videotapes of Rodney King being beaten by Los Angeles police officers, as well as reports of the torture of Abner Louima by New York City police, capture public attention and raise troubling questions about police abuse of force in a democratic society. Are such events isolated aberrations in American policing, or are they extreme examples of a more general problem that plagues American police departments? Does the fact that such events often involve minorities suggest important inequities of law enforcement against particular racial, class, or ethnic groups? What measures can be taken to constrain police abuse, and which are likely to

be most effective? Such questions have been raised and debated in the media, by our politicians, and by police scholars and administrators. However, the voices of rank-and-file police officers and supervisors have not been heard.

This silence is particularly important, given the vast changes in organization, tactics, and philosophy that have occurred in American policing over the past three decades. At the forefront of those changes has been the transition from the use of traditional military and professional models of policing to the creation of innovative models of community policing. While the police had earlier defined professionalization as limiting the role of the community in American policing, today police seek to work closely with the public in defining and responding to problems of crime and disorder. In turn, the military model of police supervision that gave little autonomy or authority to street-level officers has begun to be replaced by more flexible modes of supervision that allow rank-and-file officers the freedom to develop contacts with the public and to define innovative problem-solving strategies. The police and the community are seen as partners in emerging models of community policing. Rank-and-file police—as those closest to the public—have, in turn, become central actors in the movement toward community-oriented policing. The views of rank-and-file police have special significance in this age of community policing, which has sought to tighten the bonds between police and community and to empower both groups to act effectively against community problems.

With the support of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services of the U.S. Department of Justice, the Police Foundation undertook to conduct a representative national survey that would uncover the attitudes of American police about sensitive questions of police abuse of authority. How do contemporary police view abuses of police authority? Do police see them as an inevitable by-product of increased efforts to control crime and disorder? What forms do they take? How common do police believe them to be? What strategies and tactics do police view as most effective in preventing police abuses of authority? Given the importance of the movement toward community-oriented policing, we sought to define whether community-oriented policing is seen to encourage or constrain the boundaries of acceptable use of police authority. Has community policing enhanced the movement toward police respect for the rights of citizens, or has it fostered new police skepticism about the rule of law in a democratic society?

The following is our report on a telephone survey of a representative sample of more than 900 police officers who were drawn from an estimated population of 350,000 American municipal and county police.[1] Ours is the first national study of this type and,

...[V]iews of rank-and-file police have special significance in this age of community policing, which has sought to tighten the bonds between police and community and to empower both groups to act effectively against community problems.

...[T]he first national study of this type ...has particular significance for understanding the attitudes of American police toward abuse of authority in the age of community policing.

therefore, has particular significance for understanding the attitudes of American police toward abuse of authority in the age of community policing. The report examines the questions raised above using the survey responses of police officers, as well as the insights gained from focus groups conducted earlier in the study (see Appendices B, C, and D). The major findings of the study are as follows:

- American police believe that extreme cases of police abuse of authority occur infrequently. However, a substantial minority of officers believe that it is sometimes necessary to use more force than is legally allowable.

- Despite strong support for norms recognizing the boundaries of police authority, officers revealed that it is not unusual for police to ignore improper conduct by their fellow officers.

- American police believe that training and education programs are effective means of preventing police from abusing authority. They also argue that their own department takes a "tough stand" on the issue of police abuse. Finally, they argue that a department's chief and first-line supervisors can play an important role in preventing abuse of authority.

- Police officers believe that the public and the media are too concerned with police abuses of authority.

- American police officers support core principles of community policing; they generally believe that community policing reduces or has no impact on the potential for police abuse.

- A majority of African-American police officers believe that police treat whites better than African Americans and other minorities, and that police officers are more likely to use physical force against minorities or the poor. Few white police officers, however, share these views.

II

METHODOLOGY

Our findings are based on a telephone survey that was conducted by Mathematica Policy Research Inc. of Princeton, New Jersey, under the direction of the Police Foundation. The survey instrument was developed by the Police Foundation's staff after consulting a wide range of earlier studies and after conducting a series of focus groups composed of police scholars, police managers, and rank-and-file police.[2] The survey itself took an average of 25 minutes to complete and was carried out with careful concern for protecting the anonymity, privacy, and confidentiality of participants.[3]

As the sample design was developed, background research revealed that although a number of studies have randomly sampled police departments, only one previous national survey—a 1985 study of police officers' attitudes toward issues related to rape—used a randomly selected sample of police officers (LeDoux and Hazelwood, 1985). In selecting our sample, we had a basic requirement to obtain a representative sample of police officers nationwide.[4] We designed a two-step process. First, we sought the most accurate listing of police agencies throughout the country. Second, after selecting a sample of participating agencies, we began our task of procuring lists of officers from those agencies.

A recent study by Maguire, Snipes, Uchida, and Townsend (1998) concluded that the sources generally relied upon for national-level information about police agencies are inadequate. Maguire

...[W]e had a basic requirement to obtain a representative sample of police officers nationwide.

The sampling frame... consisted of 5,042 police departments that employ between 91.6 percent and 94.1 percent of all full-time sworn officers who serve in local police agencies in the United States.

et al. explained the limitations of and discrepancies between the FBI Uniform Crime Reports and the 1992 Census of Law Enforcement Agencies that had been compiled by the Bureau of Justice Statistics with the Census Bureau, as comprehensive lists of all police agencies in the United States. Their study developed a more reliable list of police agencies by combining the information contained in the Uniform Crime Reports, the 1992 Census of Law Enforcement Agencies, and a third list of police departments provided by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. This newly created list, with further corrections by Maguire, served as the universe of police departments for the Police Foundation study.

The Police Foundation, in consultation with several policing experts and statisticians, identified criteria for inclusion in the sampling frame. The criteria established were as follows:

- The police department has primary responsibility for providing police services to a residential population (thus eliminating special police forces).
- The department has a minimum of 10 full-time sworn officers.
- The department is either a municipal or county police agency (state police and sheriff departments, with their wide range of responsibilities that may or may not include policing residential populations, were excluded from the sampling frame).

The sampling frame, as thus defined, consisted of 5,042 police departments that employ between 91.6 percent and 94.1 percent of all full-time sworn officers who serve in local police agencies in the United States. Applying the regional classification system used in the FBI Uniform Crime Reports (FBI, 1994), we see that the officers represented 1,377 departments from the Northeast, 1,547 from the South, 1,383 from the North Central, and 735 from the West.[5] Maguire (1997) estimates the number of officers in these 5,042 departments at about 350,000.

We followed a method of multistage, or clustered, sampling, whereby the sampling frame was divided into sampling units that were based on department size.[6] Those units were then distributed into three strata, or groups, by size of department and organized by geographic region. One stratum (the "certainty" stratum) consisted of the nine largest departments. The second stratum contained 84 randomly selected departments with 25 or more full-time sworn officers (the "midsize" stratum). The third group included 28 randomly selected departments with at least 10, but no more than 24, full-time sworn officers (the "small" stratum).

To draw the random samples of officers of all ranks from each of the 121 departments, and then to contact the officers selected to be interviewed, the Police Foundation contacted the 121 selected departments and requested the following information:

- A roster with the names and ranks of all full-time sworn personnel,
- A badge or employee identification number for each officer,
- A phone number at the department where each officer could be contacted,
- An address at the department where each officer could be contacted, and,
- If possible, the shift each officer is assigned to.

As each department's list became available in the form necessary, the random samples were drawn, advance letters were sent to the selected officers, and the process of phoning and conducting the surveys was carried out.

Of the 121 departments contacted, 113 ultimately agreed to participate, for an overall departmental participation rate of 93.4 percent. The eight departments that declined were from all three strata. Thus, we lost (a) one department (from the nine) in the certainty stratum, for a participation rate of 89 percent; (b) six from the 84 in the midsize stratum, for a participation rate of 93 percent; and (c) one from the 28 in the small stratum, for a participation rate of 96.5 percent. The participating departments cooperated by submitting rosters of all full-time sworn personnel, with rank, contact address, and telephone numbers.[7] From those lists, 1,112 officers were randomly selected. As initial contacts were made, it was determined that 60 officers were ineligible to participate for a number of reasons (i.e., were not full-time sworn officers, were on suspension, were on long-term disability, etc.). They were, therefore, removed from the sample. Their elimination left a final sample size of 1,060.

Response rates in social science research are often used as the benchmark for evaluating the representativeness of the sample and for determining the degree to which one can generalize from the survey results to the survey population. A generally accepted rule of thumb is that response rates of 70 percent or above are viewed as "very good" (see Babbie, 1990; Babbie, 1992; Maxfield and Babbie, 1995). Of the 1,060 eligible officers in the sample, 925 completed the survey, for a completion rate of 87.3 percent. This rate is one of the highest achieved in surveys of police, whether on the national or state level (see, for example, LeDoux and Hazelwood, 1985; Pate and Fridell, 1993; Martin and Bensinger, 1994; McConkey, Huon, and Frank, 1996; and Amendola, Hockman, and Scharf, 1996). Even when we combine the departmental participation rate of 93.4 percent with the officer completion rate of 87.3 percent, the combined overall response rate of 81.5 percent is still well above the accepted standard.

In survey research, it is traditional to report the level of statistical confidence, sometimes referred to as sampling error, that can be applied to the estimates reported. For our study, that level of confidence was very high for percentages

Of the 1,060 eligible officers,... 925 completed the survey.... This rate [87%] is one of the highest... in surveys of police, whether on the national or state level....

relating to the full sample. The 95 percent confidence intervals for responses in the survey were generally between 2 and 4 percent.[8] This figure suggests that we can be very confident that the population characteristics associated with the survey responses were generally within plus or minus 2 to 4 percent of those reported. If we were hypothetically to observe repeated samples like that drawn in our study and to calculate a confidence interval for each, then only about 5 in 100 would fail to include the true population percentage (see Weisburd, 1998). This statistic is sometimes defined as the margin of error or the sampling error of a study. Confidence intervals for subsamples in the study, such as women or minorities, were larger. In those cases, we generally compare subgroups and report significance levels. It should be noted that the standard errors used for calculations of confidence intervals and significance statistics were adjusted according to the sampling procedures we used.[9]

Because of the stratified and clustered sampling procedures used in the study, it is necessary to include a correction when reporting survey responses. This correction is based on weighting each department and police officer according to the proportion of the actual population of American police that each represents.[10] In practice, weighting in the survey does not greatly alter the majority of estimates that we report. Nonetheless, the weighted estimates provide a more accurate picture of the true population of responses than that provided by the raw estimates. We report only weighted percentages in the discussion and tables below.

III

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

The survey represents a broad population of officers and reflects the diverse composition of American police. For example, 56 percent of the officers surveyed defined themselves as "patrol officers." Another 16 percent were detectives, criminal investigators, and corporals. Sergeants constituted about 15 percent of the sample, and another 13 percent held the rank of lieutenant or above (see Table 3.1).[11] About 3 of 10 officers in the sample noted that they served as "supervisors." While more than 2 of 10 officers were under 30 years old, more than 8 percent were over 50 years old. Officers ranged in age from 22 to 66 years old. Regarding marital status, almost three of four (74 percent) were either married or living with someone as if married.

The length of service of the sworn police officers in the sample ranged from less than 1 year to 35 years, with about 25 percent at 5 years or less. One in five officers had served from 6 to 10 years, almost one in five had served from 11 to 15 years, and more than one-third had served 16 years or more. Most officers had patrol responsibilities (60 percent). Some 30 percent were involved in other field operations such as gang, juvenile, robbery, and homicide, including 7 percent who identified themselves as assigned to community policing. More than 10 percent did not have field assignments, but served in administration, communications, technical support, and other jobs. This proportion is similar to that reported in the 1993 Law Enforcement

The survey represents a broad population of officers and reflects the diverse composition of American police.

Table 3.1

Officers' Current Rank

Rank	Number of Officers	Percentage of Officers
Patrol Officer	514	55.7
Detective/Criminal Investigator	110	12.0
Corporal	36	4.0
Sergeant	142	15.3
Lieutenant	56	6.1
Captain	17	1.7
Inspector	2	0.2
Major	3	0.3
Deputy Chief	6	0.6
Chief	14	1.5
Other	24	2.4

N = 924

This survey reinforces earlier studies that suggest that American policing reflects the racial and ethnic composition of the U.S. population.

Management and Administrative Statistics (LEMAS) survey of agencies with 100 or more officers, where 11 percent of county police and 9 percent of municipal police did not have field assignments (BJS, 1995).

Many scholars and policy makers have emphasized the importance of education in developing a modern police (see National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, 1973; Carter and Sapp, 1990; Worden, 1990; Travis, 1995). Almost one-third of the sample had a bachelor's degree or higher (see Table 3.2). Additionally, 52 percent had a two-year degree or some college education, and almost 15 percent had graduated from high school (or had a GED). Only five of the officers surveyed had only some high school education. Reflecting the growth in professional police education, more than half of those who had attended college reported that they had majored in criminology, criminal justice, or police science. Some 15 percent of the weighted sample were continuing their education in pursuit of a degree.

This survey reinforces earlier studies that suggest that American policing reflects the racial and ethnic composition of the U.S. population (see BJS, 1995). In the weighted sample, 80.8 percent of the officers were white, as compared with 80.3 percent of the population (Bureau of the Census, 1991), and 10.7 percent were African American, as compared with 12 percent in the national population (see Table 3.3).[12] Also, 9.6 percent of the weighted sample, compared with

Table 3.2

Education Level of Officers

Highest Level Attained	Number of Officers	Percentage of Officers
Some High School	5	0.5
High School Graduate/GED	133	14.7
Some College	303	33.1
Associate's Degree (2 year)	174	18.6
Bachelor's Degree (4 year)	258	27.6
Some Graduate School	19	2.0
Master's Degree	29	3.2
Doctoral Degree or Law Degree	3	0.3

N = 924

8.8 percent of the U.S. population, identified themselves as of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin (see Table 3.4).

While the racial composition of American policing may reflect the nation from which it is drawn, American policing remains a predominantly male profession. Only 8.5 percent of the sample were women (see Figure 3.1). Other sources provided similar estimates. According to the National Center for Women and Policing (1998), "Women currently make up less than 10 percent of sworn police officers nationwide." This figure was also consistent with the 1993 LEMAS survey, which reported that 8 percent of officers in municipal police departments and 10 percent of officers in county police departments were women (BJS, 1995).

Despite the controversies that surround American policing, our survey shows that American police officers are generally satisfied with their career choice. Indeed, almost all of the officers we surveyed (94 percent) indicated that they were satisfied and over half of those said that they were "extremely" satisfied with their choice of policing as a profession (see Figure 3.2). Only two officers described themselves as extremely dissatisfied with their career choice. Even when asked about their satisfaction with their current assignment, more than 90 percent of the sample indicated that they were satisfied, of whom 40 percent were "extremely" satisfied. Nevertheless, 46 percent of police officers described their work as extremely stressful (16 percent) or quite stressful (30 percent).

While the racial composition of American policing may reflect the nation..., American policing remains a predominantly male profession.

Table 3.3

Racial Background of Officers

Race	Number of Officers	Percentage of Officers
White	748	80.8
African American	94	10.7
American Indian or Alaskan Native	8	0.8
Asian	8	0.8
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	3	0.3
Other	36	4.3
Mixed Race	24	2.4

N = 921

Table 3.4

Hispanic vs. Non-Hispanic Officers

	White Officers	African-American Officers	Other Officers	TOTAL
Hispanic	44 (6.2%)	2 (1.8%)	38 (51.6%)	84 (9.6%)
Non-Hispanic	703 (93.8%)	92 (98.2%)	41 (48.4%)	836 (90.4%)

N = 920

Figures 3.1 & 3.2

Figure 3.1

Officers' Gender

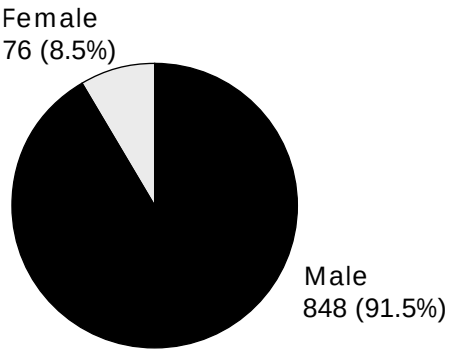
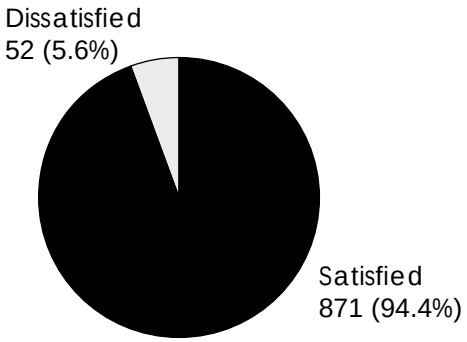


Figure 3.2

Officers' Satisfaction With Career



IV

MAIN SURVEY RESULTS

The survey consisted of more than 80 questions that relate to the problem of abuse of authority (see Appendix A). Below, we summarize the main findings of the study. First, we examine results across the entire sample, focusing on six central concerns: (a) abuse of authority and the use of force, (b) the code of silence, (c) social factors, (d) departmental responses, (e) controlling abuse, and (f) community policing. We then turn to comparisons of subgroup responses according to regional variation, size of department, supervisory status, racial variation, and gender variation. For example, are the perceptions of white officers different from those of African Americans or other minorities? Does it matter if the officer is from the Midwest or the South?

Abuse of Authority and the Use of Force

The use of force may be a relatively rare occurrence in American policing (Worden and Shepard, 1996), but those incidents that do occur escalate too often to the level of excessive force.[13] In trying to understand why, we asked a series of questions that address the attitudes that police officers have toward the use of force and their perceptions of the behavior of their fellow officers.

Our survey shows that most police officers in the United States disapprove of the use of excessive force. Nonetheless, a substantial minority believe that they should be permitted to use more force than the law currently permits, and they consider it acceptable to sometimes

...[M]ost police officers in the United States disapprove of the use of excessive force.

Table 4.1

Officers' Attitudes Toward Limitations on Use of Force

	Police are *not* permitted to use as much force as is often necessary in making arrests. (N=912)	It is sometimes acceptable to use *more* force than is legally allowable to control someone who physically assaults an officer. (N = 912)	Police department rules about the use of force should *not* be any stricter than required by law. (N = 915)	Police officers should be allowed to use physical force in response to verbal abuse. (N = 920)
	Percent			
Strongly Agree	6.2	3.3	6.7	0.4
Agree	24.9	21.2	58.9	6.6
Disagree	60.5	55.2	32.3	67.6
Strongly Disagree	8.4	20.3	2.1	25.4

…[T]he…majority …did not believe that officers …engage in an excessive use of force on a regular basis.

use more force than permitted by the laws that govern them. The officers revealed this attitude in their responses to several questions that were presented to them. More than 30 percent of the sample expressed the opinion that "police officers are not permitted to use as much force as is often necessary in making arrests" (see Table 4.1). Almost 25 percent felt that it is sometimes acceptable to use more force than legally allowable to control a person who physically assaults an officer. A very substantial minority, more than 4 of 10, told us that always following the rules is not compatible with getting the job done (see Appendix A, a19).

Most officers are not interested in holding themselves to higher standards than required by law. More than 65 percent of the sample officers were content that police department rules about the use of force not be stricter than required by law. Still, almost 35 percent did feel that departmental rules should be stricter than required by law. And when asked whether police officers should be allowed to use physical force in response to verbal abuse, a very small number, only 7 percent, thought that this clear violation of current norms should be allowed.

Although a substantial minority expressed the view that the police should be permitted to use more force, the overwhelming majority of the sample did not believe that officers do engage in an excessive use of force on a

Table 4.2

Officers' Perceptions of Use of Force Behavior in Their Department

	Police officers in [city] use more force than necessary to make an arrest. (N = 922)	Police officers in your department respond to verbal abuse with physical force. (N = 922)
Sometimes, Often, or Always	196 (21.7%)	137 (14.7%)
Seldom	581 (62.4%)	497 (53.5%)
Never	145 (16.0%)	288 (31.8%)

regular basis. A mere 4 percent thought that police officers regularly used more physical force than was necessary in making arrests (see Appendix A, a10). And almost everyone (97 percent) agreed that serious cases of misconduct, such as the Rodney King case in Los Angeles and the Abner Louima case in New York, are "extremely rare" in their departments (see Appendix A, a40).

Still, they did not give their fellow officers a completely clean report. When asked about their perceptions of the behavior of officers in their own departments, almost 22 percent of the weighted sample suggested that officers in their department sometimes (or often, or always) use more force than necessary, and only 16 percent reported that they never did so (see Table 4.2). Although the large majority of respondents felt that it is inappropriate to respond to verbal abuse with physical force, almost 15 percent thought that officers in their department engaged in such behavior sometimes (or often, or always).

Code of Silence

Some of the most strongly held and varied responses addressed the troubling area of whether officers should tell when they know that misconduct has occurred. The responses suggest the possibility of a large gap between attitudes and behavior. That is, officers do not believe in protecting wrongdoers; nevertheless, they often do not turn them in.

…[O]fficers do not believe in protecting wrongdoers; nevertheless, they often do not turn them in.

...[M]ore than 80 percent of American police do not accept that the code of silence is an essential part of the mutual trust necessary to achieve good policing.

The survey shows that more than 80 percent of American police do not accept that the code of silence is an essential part of the mutual trust necessary to achieve good policing (see Table 4.3). However, about a quarter of the sample told us that whistle blowing is not worth it, and more than two-thirds reported that police officers were likely to be given a "cold shoulder" by fellow officers if they reported incidents of misconduct. A majority felt that it was not unusual for police officers to turn a "blind eye" to improper conduct by other officers (see Table 4.4). Even when it came to reporting serious criminal violations, a surprising 6 in 10 report that police officers did not always report serious criminal violations involving abuse of authority by fellow officers.

During the focus groups, officers resisted the notion of a code of silence, but agreed in the end that the code stands except in the case of criminal violations. For instance, one supervisor suggested, "I don't think there's a code of silence at all when we are talking about criminal conduct. And if it is, those people are part of a criminal mind." Another said, "I think that the wall of silence, as far as criminal things, is a thing of the past. I hear a lot of cops saying they are not going to lose their house because of you." However, they admitted that in individual cases, it is very difficult to betray fellow officers even when those officers are involved in criminal matters.

In the survey we presented several scenarios involving misconduct, and we asked the officers a series of questions about the seriousness of the conduct, the consequences that should and would follow that conduct, and whether they or others in the department would report such conduct. In one scenario, "An officer has a handcuffed suspect sitting at his desk while he fills out the necessary paperwork. With no provocation from the officer, the suspect suddenly spits in the face of the officer. The officer immediately pushes the suspect in the face causing the suspect to fall from the chair onto the floor." There was wide variation in perception of the offense's seriousness, from 15 percent of the sample considering it not serious at all to 16 percent considering it very serious (see Table 4.5). But would respondents report an officer who engaged in this behavior? Only 3 in 10 stated that they would definitely report. Even fewer, only 11 percent of the sample, thought that most officers in their agency would definitely report the offense.

Table 4.3

Code of Silence: Attitudes

	The code of silence is an essential part of the mutual trust necessary to good policing. (N = 905)	**Whistle blowing is not worth it. (N = 904)**	**An officer who reports another officer's misconduct is likely to be given the "cold shoulder" by fellow officers. (N = 908)**
	Percent		
Strongly Agree	1.2	3.1	11.0
Agree	15.7	21.8	56.4
Disagree	65.6	63.5	30.9
Strongly Disagree	17.5	11.7	1.8

Table 4.4

Code of Silence: Perceptions of Behavior

	It is *not* unusual for a police officer to turn a blind eye to improper conduct by other officers. (N = 908)	**Police officers *always* report serious violations involving abuse of authority by fellow officers (N = 899)**
	Percent	
Strongly Agree	1.8	2.8
Agree	50.6	36.2
Disagree	43.3	58.5
Strongly Disagree	4.4	2.5

Table 4.5

Scenario of an Unruly Suspect: "An officer has a handcuffed suspect at his desk while he fills out the necessary paperwork. With no provocation from the officer, the suspect suddenly spits in the face of the officer. The officer immediately pushes the suspect in the face causing the suspect to fall from the chair onto the floor."

	How serious do you consider the officer's behavior to be? (N = 914)
Very Serious	135 (15.6%)
Quite Serious	188 (20.2%)
Moderately Serious	249 (27.3%)
Not Very Serious	201 (21.7%)
Not Serious at All	141 (15.3%)

	Do you think *you* would report a fellow officer who engaged in this behavior? (N = 914)
Definitely Yes	262 (28.9%)
Possibly Yes	207 (22.6%)
Probably Not	254 (27.7%)
Definitely Not	191 (20.8%)

	Do you think *most* officers in your agency would report a fellow officer who engaged in this behavior? (N = 908)
Definitely Yes	94 (10.8%)
Possibly Yes	270 (29.7%)
Probably Not	378 (41.3%)
Definitely Not	166 (18.3%)

Table 4.6

Perceptions of the Effects of Extra-Legal Factors on Police Behavior

	A police officer is more likely to arrest a person who displays what he or she considers to be a bad attitude. (N=917)	Police officers often treat whites better than they do African Americans and other minorities. (N = 914)	Police officers are more likely to use physical force against African Americans and other minorities than against whites in similar situations. (N = 916)	Police officers are more likely to use physical force against poor people than against middle-class people in similar situations. (N = 918)
	Percent			
Strongly Agree	2.1	1.2	1.7	1.9
Agree	46.7	15.8	9.4	12.2
Disagree	45.1	57.8	55.6	57.9
Strongly Disagree	6.1	25.2	33.3	27.9

Social Factors

The question of the role of extralegal factors in law enforcement has long been a concern among criminologists. Although sociologists since the 1950s (Westley, 1953) have suggested that a citizen's demeanor affects police behavior, recently some authors have called into question the importance of being "in contempt of cop" and have argued for a more precise definition of the term "demeanor," one that limits its meaning to verbal behavior (Klinger, 1994; Lundman, 1994). However, even with a more careful definition of terms, the consensus seems to have returned to the view that a disrespectful or hostile demeanor displayed by a citizen will affect the police-citizen encounter and will increase the likelihood of an arrest (Klinger, 1996; Lundman, 1996; Worden and Shepard, 1996). Our survey shows that police in the U.S. are almost evenly divided in their opinions of whether a police officer is more likely to arrest a person who displays what he or she considers to be a bad attitude. Some 49 percent of the sample thought that a bad attitude could affect the likelihood of arrest, while 51 percent disagreed (see Table 4.6).

Do other extralegal factors, such as whether citizens are African American or white, or poor or middle class, make a difference in the treatment they receive from the police? The criminological literature is split on the extent

...[P]olice...are almost evenly divided in their opinions of whether a police officer is more likely to arrest a person who displays... a bad attitude.

Table 4.7

Police Perceptions of the Public's Attitude Toward the Police

	***Most* people do not respect the police. (N = 924)**	**The relationship between the police and citizens in [city] is very good. (N = 923)**
	Percent	
Strongly Agree	5.6	18.7
Agree	19.1	69.4
Disagree	65.2	9.9
Strongly Disagree	10.1	2.1

...Eighty-eight percent... described the relationship between the police and the citizens in their locality as very good.

to which race affects everyday policing (Mastrofski, Parks, DeJong, and Worden, 1998), the likelihood of being arrested (Tonry, 1995; Black and Reiss, 1970; Lundman, Sykes, and Clark, 1978; Smith and Visher, 1981; Smith, Visher, and Davidson, 1984; Worden, 1996; Lundman, 1996), and the use of excessive force (Adams, 1996; Worden, 1996; Reiss, 1971; Walker, Spohn, and DeLone, 1996; Ogletree, Prosser, Smith, and Talley, 1995). According to our sample, almost 2 in 10 police officers in the U.S. believe that whites are treated better than African Americans and other minorities (see Table 4.6). More than 1 in 10 said that there is more police violence against African Americans than against whites.[14] Moreover, 14 percent of the sample believed that police use physical force against poor people more often than against middle-class people in similar situations.

What were the police officers' views of how the public perceives the police? More than 75 percent did not feel that "most people do not respect the police" (see Table 4.7). Put more positively, more than 75 percent of officers felt that most people respect the police. Indeed, 88 percent of police in our sample described the relationship between the police and the citizens in their locality as very good. However, more than half of our sample thought that the "public is too concerned with police brutality" (see Table 4.8), and more than 80 percent of police officers told us that the newspapers and TV in this country are too concerned with police brutality (see Table 4.8). As one officer in the focus group of police supervisors noted in regard to the media, "They are absolutely ruthless when it comes to police officers."

Table 4.8

Perceptions of Media and Citizens' Concern Toward Police Abuse

	The public is *too* concerned with police brutality. (N = 918)	The newspapers and TV in this country are *too* concerned with police brutality. (N = 920)
	Percent	
Strongly Agree	13.4	36.0
Agree	41.6	44.2
Disagree	42.5	19.0
Strongly Disagree	2.5	0.8

Supervisors and rank-and-file officers alike complained that they are judged on the sensational misdeeds of officers from cities far away from their own. As one said, "We're judged on Rodney King, Fuhrman." Another officer put it this way, "And as far as the Detroit deal, yeah, we caught heat behind that; L.A., we caught heat behind that; and New York, yeah, we caught heat behind that." Still another presented the minority view that the media do treat them fairly, "Our department has a great deal of credibility and respect from the media."

Departmental Response

We polled the officers for their views of how their departments handle cases of abuse of authority. Officers in the sample overwhelmingly (93 percent) reported that their departments take a very tough stance on improper behavior by police (see Table 4.9). And they overwhelmingly (94 percent) disagreed with the suggestion that investigations of police misconduct are usually biased in favor of the police.

When asked about the effectiveness of different institutional procedures for addressing abuses of authority, most people considered internal affairs units effective (79 percent), while a much smaller percentage (38 percent) considered citizen review boards an effective means for preventing police misconduct. This preference for internal review was consistent with views expressed during the focus groups. One rank-and-file officer argued that lawyers and doctors police themselves so why shouldn't police, "Who is on the bar association? Who is on doctors' associations? Doctors judging doctors; doctors policing doctors. We are special[ists]; we've got training; we deal

Supervisors and rank-and file... complained... they are judged on the sensational misdeeds of officers from cities far away from their own.

Table 4.9

Departmental Responses to Abuse of Authority

	Your police department takes a very tough stance on improper behavior by police. (N = 921)	Investigations of police misconduct are usually biased *in favor of* police. (N = 914)	Internal affairs units are *not* effective means for preventing police misconduct. (N = 910)	Citizen review boards are effective means for preventing police misconduct. (N = 872)
	Percent			
Strongly Agree	35.2	0.4	2.4	3.1
Agree	57.4	5.1	19.0	34.7
Disagree	6.6	72.4	66.2	48.4
Strongly Disagree	0.9	22.0	12.4	13.9

Eighty-five percent...said... a police chief's ...strong position against abuses ...can make a big difference in preventing officers from abusing their authority

with other people just like them. Why are we different?" One supervisor suggested, "Internal affairs works. Civilian review authority—as soon as you mention civilian review, the knee-jerk reaction is no way; yadda yadda, they go on and on. If they only knew, civilian review authority is nothing more than a toothless tiger. They're easier on cops than the departments are themselves. Bottom line." Another supervisor agreed, "I think internal affairs is more threatening because we're police officers. We've all been out there. So we know how to play the game."

Controlling Abuse

Can leadership make a difference in preventing police officers' abuse of authority? American police overwhelmingly told us that leadership makes a difference. Eighty-five percent of the officers said that a police chief's taking a strong position against abuses of authority can make a big difference in preventing officers from abusing their authority (see Table 4.10). Policing scholars have long recognized the importance of the chief's role. Skolnick and Fyfe (1993, p. 136) for example argue, "[T]he chief is the main architect of police officers' street behavior. This is so because the strength and direction of street-level police peer pressures ultimately are determined by administrative definitions of good and bad policing and by the general tone that comes down from the top."

Table 4.10

	If a police chief takes a strong position against abuses of authority, he or she can make a big difference in preventing officers from abusing their authority. (N = 920)	Good first-line supervisors can help prevent police officers from abusing their authority. (N = 921)	*Most* police abuse of force could be stopped by developing more effective methods of supervision. (N = 913)
	Percent		
Strongly Agree	24.5	22.9	7.3
Agree	60.3	66.9	48.0
Disagree	13.8	9.3	39.5
Strongly Disagree	1.4	0.9	5.2

Elsewhere, Skolnick and Bayley (1986, p. 220) suggest that executive leadership might be even more important in police departments, with their "traditional paramilitary character," than in other organizations: "Police departments are not democratically run organizations. Everyone within them is either aware or attuned to the chief's preferences, demands, and expectations." Skolnick and Bayley (1986, p. 6) argue, "[A]dministrative leadership, an animating philosophy of values, can indeed effect change."

As important as the role of the chief may be in preventing abuse, an even greater majority—90 percent of police in the sample—told us that good first-line supervisors can help prevent police officers from abusing their authority (see Table 4.10). As an officer who participated in one of the focus groups expressed it, "The supervisor, the first-line supervisor, the sergeant, is so critically important in how he sets the tone, the expectations. How he says things and supports department programs or doesn't support them. If not by what he says, then by body language and tone of voice. How he sells it or doesn't sell it. That sort of thing, I think, is real." It is the supervisor as "role model" who surfaces as the critical aspect in good first-line leadership. Following this, 55 percent of those surveyed thought that developing more effective means of supervision would prevent abuse of force.

It is the supervisor as "role model" who surfaces as the critical aspect in good first-line leadership.

Table 4.11

Officers' Perceptions of the Effects of Training on Abuse of Authority

	Do you think *ethics in law enforcement* training is effective in preventing abuse of authority? (N = 576)	Do you think *interpersonal skills* or *interpersonal relations* training is effective in preventing abuse of authority? (N = 674)	Do you think *human diversity or cultural awareness* training is effective in preventing abuse of authority? (N = 807)
Yes	472 (82.2%)	544 (80.3%)	603 (74.9%)
No	104 (17.8%)	130 (19.7%)	204 (25.1%)

...[O]fficers who have received training in ethics, in interpersonal skills, and in cultural sensitivity report...such... training can play a role in controlling abuses....

In the focus group of chiefs of police and policing scholars, concern was expressed over the changing role of the supervisor in community policing. Chief Jerry Sanders of San Diego suggested that by creating "teams" and reducing "spans of control all of a sudden we find the sergeants are closer to the team members, the officers, than they are to the department. They are so close to the people on the team that it creates problems."

Commissioner Thomas Frazier of Baltimore and Chief Jerry Sanders agreed that the management dynamics of the department had been changed, and a lieutenant with 24-hour responsibility might not see his or her sergeants for a week or two at a time. Professor Carl Klockars suggested that community policing officers operate independently, almost without supervision, and Professor Alfred Slocum suggested that the lack of supervision was "conducive to corruption." The opinions expressed by the officers in our survey—about the difference that good supervisors can make in controlling abuse of authority—suggest that such concern by police executives and academics is well placed. They believed that good supervision matters.

Contrary to the traditional view that most important policing lessons are obtained through experience in the field and not in the academy (Bayley and Bittner, 1984), scholars and police professionals have recently emphasized the importance of changing models of police training. This has led to a renewal of commitment to training efforts and to exploring vastly different training curricula (e.g., see Grant and Grant, 1996; Scrivner, 1994; Goldstein, 1979; Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux, 1994). The good news is that police officers who have received training in ethics, in interpersonal skills, and in

Table 4.12

	Citizens can be a vital source of information about the problems in their neighborhood. (N = 924)	Police should work with citizens to try and solve problems on their beat. (N = 924)	Police should make frequent *informal* contact with people on their beat. (N = 921)
	Percent		
Strongly Agree	79.1	65.1	56.4
Agree	20.7	34.3	42.0
Disagree	0.1	0.4	1.2
Strongly Disagree	0.1	0.2	0.3

cultural sensitivity report that such specialized training can play a role in controlling abuses of police authority.

A substantial majority (82 percent) of those officers in the sample who have received training in law enforcement ethics either in the academy or since becoming a police officer told us that such training prevents abuse of authority (see Table 4.11). A similar majority (80 percent) who have received police training in interpersonal skills or interpersonal relations felt that this training prevents abuse of authority. And 75 percent of officers who reported receiving training in human diversity, cultural differences, cultural awareness, or ethnic sensitivity said that this training prevents abuse of authority.

Community-Oriented Policing

The study provides strong evidence of the penetration of the community policing idea into policing in the U.S. The survey shows that police today overwhelmingly support a philosophy that looks to the public for advice and cooperation. Several statements formed a group designed to measure officers' opinions of the police-community partnership that is generally considered a necessary component of community-oriented policing. Respondents overwhelmingly agreed that working with citizens was an important and effective means of solving neighborhood problems. For example, nearly all agreed that "[c]itizens can be a vital source of information about the problems in their neighborhood," that "[p]olice should work with citizens to try and solve problems on their beat," and that "[p]olice should make frequent informal contact with people on their beat" (see Table 4.12).

...[P]olice today overwhelmingly support a philosophy that looks to the public for advice and cooperation.

But what of the relationship between community policing and abuse of au-

Table 4.13

Perceptions of the Effects of Community Policing on Abuse of Authority

	Do you think that community policing increases, decreases, or has no impact on the risk of corrupt behavior (N=883)	Do you think that community policing increases, decreases, or has no impact on the *number* of excessive force incidents? (N = 885)	Do you think that community policing increases, decreases, or has no impact on the *seriousness* of excessive force incidents? (N = 884)
Increases	63 (7.1%)	17 (2.0%)	32 (3.4%)
Decreases	316 (35.8%)	450 (50.9%)	373 (42.2%)
Has no impact	504 (57.1%)	418 (47.1%)	479 (54.4%)

...[A] close relationship with the community does not increase the risk of police corruption.

thority? Police in our sample generally indicated that a close relationship with the community does not increase the risk of police corruption. We asked this question in two ways. Without referring to community policing, we asked all officers whether they agreed that "[f]requent friendly contact with local residents and merchants increases the likelihood that police officers will accept free lunches, discounts, or gifts of appreciation for effective service" (see Appendix A, a34). Although one in five officers agreed with the statement, almost 80 percent disagreed. Almost all the officers in the survey were familiar with the concept of community-oriented policing (98 percent). We asked those officers whether they thought that community policing increases, decreases, or has no impact on the risk of corrupt behavior. Only 7 percent of the officers told us they thought community policing increases the risk of corruption. Over a third thought it decreases the risk of corruption, and another 57 percent thought it had no effect (see Table 4.13).

Some scholars have suggested that community policing may decrease the likelihood of gross forms of corruption, such as extortion, while increasing the temptations toward softer forms of corruption, such as the free lunch, the "professional" discount, or the gift of appreciation for effective service (Weisburd, McElroy, and Hardyman, 1988). Others suggest that community policing has no discernible impact on corrupt behavior (McElroy, Cosgrove, and Sadd, 1990).

In the focus groups, there was consensus among the officers that community

policing does not lead to corrupt behavior, and there was concern among officers that chiefs are inappropriately concerned about this possibility. One supervisor explained why community policing is not a return to the day of the corrupt beat officer:

> But I think we're in a different day and age, and I'm not so sure we're going to get community-oriented policing to lead us into the corruption that we saw back then, and the reason why I think [so] is we've had things like Rodney King and what's happened in Chicago and what happened there and what's described as happening in many cities. I think there is a different emphasis on morality and ethics in law enforcement than we saw back 40, 50 years ago. I don't think even the public has a tolerance for the corruption that was a fact of daily life in New York 50 years ago.

In the panel of police scholars and executives that we convened at the beginning of the study, concern was expressed about the potential for corruption under community policing. As Baltimore's Commissioner Thomas Frazier said, "One of the things that troubles me about community policing is you talk about establishing relationships. The longer the relationship exists, I think the more opportunity for corruption." Professor Klockars pointed out the irony of some situations, "So if you run a McDonald's and you give a cop a free meal, that's corruption. But if you give a whole booth, that's community policing."

Chief Jerry Sanders of San Diego said,

> I think it's just much more subtle now than it was before. And it's hard to talk in those shades because the officers get invited to dinner at people's houses because they create friendships. The friendships are created, which is what we're trying to do. And when is it not? And when is it a gratuity to go into a friend's business and get a cup of coffee and when is it not? I mean, I just think these are really difficult issues for not only the police officers but for police management. Where do we draw the line? Is it, as O. W. Wilson said, "The first cup of coffee you take for free is the start of corruption," or is it we need to be a little bit more understanding about the motives that we're talking about?

...[C]ommunity policing does not lead to corrupt behavior, and... chiefs are inappropriately concerned about this possibility.

While such concerns are expressed by police scholars and executives, they are not seen as significant by the vast majority of American police.

What do officers think is the relationship between community policing and excessive force? Almost no one told us that community policing would increase the amount (2 percent) or seriousness (3 percent) of excessive force incidents (see Table 4.13). A majority said that community policing decreases the incidents of excessive force (51 percent), and 42 percent thought it would decrease the seriousness of excessive force incidents. Many thought it had no impact on either the amount

"...[P]olice officers sometimes have to explain to individuals and groups of citizens that the police are prohibited by law from using some of the tactics that citizens encourage them to use."

of excessive force (47 percent) or the seriousness of excessive force incidents (54 percent).

The community policing partnership can be complicated. Almost all officers (97 percent) told us that "[p]olice officers sometimes have to explain to individuals and groups of citizens that the police are prohibited by law from using some of the tactics that citizens encourage them to use" (see Appendix A, a32). But 21 percent felt that they could use more aggressive tactics than they otherwise would if the community had asked them to do so (see Appendix A, a33). Whether they might sometimes cross the line to tactics prohibited by law remained unanswered.

We presented the officers with one of two versions of a scenario that addressed, among other issues, whether they would feel justified in using more aggressive tactics if asked by the community (see p. 61). In one version, a randomly assigned half (438) of the officers responded to a set of questions based on the following scenario:

> While patrolling his beat, an officer notices several youths standing on a corner smoking cigarettes and talking to one another. The officer tells the youths to break it up and leave the area. The youths say, "We're not doing anything. Why are you hassling us?" The officer gets out of the car and orders the youths to place their hands up against the wall of a building. They refuse. The officer throws them against the wall and searches them. Finding nothing, the officer uses demeaning language, then tells them that this "will teach you to respect the law" and "I'd better not see you here again" and gets in his patrol car and drives off.

In the other version (see p. 63), the other half (482) of the officers responded to a set of questions based on the following scenario:

> In a community meeting, citizens told police that they were very concerned about groups of rowdy youths hanging out on street corners. After the meeting, an officer who participated in the meeting notices several youths standing on a corner smoking cigarettes and talking to one another. The officer tells the youths to break it up and leave the area. The youths say, "We're not doing anything. Why are you hassling us?" The officer gets out of the car and orders the youths to place their hands up against the wall of a building. They refuse. The officer throws them against the wall and searches them. Finding nothing, the officer uses demeaning language, tells them that this "will teach you to respect the law" and "I'd better not see you here again," and gets in his patrol car and drives off.

With these scenarios, we could capture whether officers felt justified in taking certain questionable actions when they had been asked by the community to do so. Interestingly, the

answers of the two randomly assigned groups of officers were virtually identical to the series of questions that followed the scenarios. Most officers told us that a verbal or written reprimand would and should follow such an incident. A substantial minority thought the discipline would and should be suspension without pay. Slightly more than one in three said they definitely would report a fellow officer who engaged in this behavior, whereas only 1 in 10 believed that most officers in their agency would report such an incident. These results suggest that police officers do not feel justified in using more aggressive tactics if asked by the community to do so.

Subgroup Analysis: Race, Rank, Region, Agency Size, Gender

Thus far, we have described what the survey suggests about the attitudes of police generally toward abuse of authority. But the data can also reveal something about how different subgroups within American policing view such issues. An analysis of subgroup differences is presented in cross-tabulations below. In reporting on differences in responses among different subgroups of police officers, we note again that our statistics were adjusted according to the sampling procedures we used.

Race

By far the most striking differences we discovered among subgroups in our survey were among police officers of different racial groups. Although we originally grouped the officers in two categories (white and non-white) so we could have larger numbers in each category, when strong differences according to race emerged, we re-examined the data, peeling back the non-white category into two subcategories: blacks or African Americans, and other minority officers. In so doing, the significance of the results increased, indicating that African-American officers hold the most distinctive positions on these issues. Without meaning to overstate the generalizability of our findings beyond American policing, the survey tends to corroborate the view that there is a racial divide between whites and African Americans in our society that is not transcended even by a culture as apparently strong as the culture of policing. Not that those differences emerged across every item in our survey, but when they did occur, the relationships were strong, and the kinds of questions in which they emerged grouped together in meaningful configurations.

...[T]here is a racial divide between whites and African Americans in our society that is not transcended even by a culture as... strong as the culture of policing.

Earlier we reported that almost 2 in 10 officers in the weighted sample agreed that police officers often treat whites better than they do African Americans and other minorities. When we considered this issue broken down by race, we found that more than half of the African-American officers felt this way (see Table 4.14).[15] By comparison, fewer than one in four among other minorities agreed with the statement, and fewer

Table 4.14

Police officers often treat whites better than they do African Americans and other minorities (by race). (N = 912)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	Percent			
White Officers	0.7	11.2	60.5	27.7
African-American Officers	4.6	46.7	39.8	8.9
Other Minority Officers	2.4	21.0	53.8	22.9

$x^2 = 41.78$ df = 6 $p < .001$

African-American officers did not see unequal treatment by police as determined only by race.

than one in eight white officers agreed.[16]

The divergence in views of African Americans and other officers continues and grows when we examine whether they felt that police officers were more likely to use physical force against African Americans and other minorities than against whites in similar situations. While only 1 in 20 white officers in the sample thought that African Americans and minorities received this unfair treatment from police, well over half of the African-American officers thought unfair treatment was more likely. Other minorities were more in agreement with the white officers (see Table 4.15).[17]

African-American officers did not see unequal treatment by police as determined only by race. While only 2 percent of white officers in the sample thought that police officers were more likely to use physical force against poor people than against middle-class people in similar situations, 54 percent of the African-American officers felt that way (see Table 4.16). Again, other minorities held a position between the white and African-American officers, but closer to the perspective of the white officers.[18]

While the survey suggests that African-American officers may not trust their fellow officers to treat minority and poor citizens fairly, they did tend to respond more positively to the role of community policing in reducing police abuses of authority. For example, we

Table 4.15

Police officers are more likely to use physical force against African Americans and other minorities than against whites in similar situations (by race). (N = 914)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	Percent			
White Officers	0.6	4.5	58.0	37.0
African-American Officers	9.4	47.7	42.1	0.9
Other Minority Officers	2.4	10.0	50.7	36.9

$x^2 = 86.80$ df = 6 $p < .001$

Table 4.16

Police officers are more likely to use physical force against poor people than against middle-class people in similar situations (by race). (N = 916)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	Percent			
White Officers	0.8	8.0	60.1	31.1
African-American Officers	9.1	45.3	43.6	2.0
Other Minority Officers	4.2	13.0	52.9	30.0

$x^2 = 85.42$ df = 6 $p < .001$

Table 4.17

Community-oriented policing increases, decreases, or has no impact on the number of incidents of excessive force (by race). (N = 883)

	Increases	Decreases	Has No Impact
	Percent		
White Officers	1.2	49.2	49.6
African-American Officers	6.6	65.4	28.1
Other Minority Officers	3.9	50.1	46.0

$x^2 = 20.92$ df = 4 $p < .001$

Table 4.18

Community-oriented policing increases, decreases, or has no impact on the seriousness of excessive force incidents (by race). (N = 882)

	Increases	Decreases	Has No Impact
	Percent		
White Officers	3.2	39.0	57.9
African-American Officers	7.2	63.4	29.3
Other Minority Officers	1.0	46.8	52.3

$x^2 = 27.13$ df = 4 $p < .001$

...[W]e found a ...relationship between race and support for the view that community-oriented policing decreases the number of incidents of excessive force

found a statistically significant relationship between race and support for the view that community-oriented policing decreases the number of incidents of excessive force (see Table 4.17).[19] Although fewer than half of white officers believed this to be the case, almost two-thirds of the African-American police officers surveyed agreed with this position. African-American police officers are also more likely to say that community policing decreased the seriousness of incidents of excessive force (see Table 4.18). Among African-American police officers, 63 percent expressed this view, as contrasted with only 39 percent of white police officers. Finally, African-American officers also had more faith in citizen review boards as an effective means for preventing police misconduct. Almost 7 in 10 African-American officers in the sample believed in the effectiveness of citizen review, compared with one-third of white officers (see Table 4.19). For such relationships, other minority officers once again fell somewhere between African-American and white police officers.

As we continue to discuss relationships among other subgroups in the weighted sample, it will become clear that—while other interesting differences occur—no differences were as large as those found among these racial groups.

Rank: Supervisors and Nonsupervisors

While most officers in the sample—those who were supervisors and those who were not—believed in the impor-

Table 4.19

Citizen review boards are effective means for preventing police misconduct (by race). (N = 868)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	Percent			
White Officers	2.5	30.8	52.2	14.6
African-American Officers	8.4	61.4	22.3	7.9
Other Minority Officers	2.4	38.9	43.6	15.1

$x^2 = 32.04$ df = 6 $p \leq .001$

Table 4.20

Good first-line supervisors can help prevent police officers from abusing their authority (by rank). (N = 921)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	Percent			
Nonsupervisors	16.5	70.2	12.4	0.9
Supervisors	38.5	58.8	1.9	0.8

$x^2 = 76.12$ df = 3 $p < .001$

Table 4.21

If a police chief takes a strong position against abuses of authority, he or she can make a big difference in preventing officers from abusing their authority (by rank). (N = 920)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	Percent			
Nonsupervisors	18.3	62.6	17.4	1.6
Supervisors	39.6	54.6	5.0	0.8

$x^2 = 71.15$ df = 3 $p < .001$

Table 4.22

Most police abuse of force could be stopped by developing more effective methods of supervision (by rank). (N = 913)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	Percent			
Nonsupervisors	6.3	43.7	44.7	5.4
Supervisors	9.9	58.5	26.7	4.9

$x^2 = 33.01$ df = 3 $p \leq .001$

...[G]ood first-line supervisors could help prevent police officers from abusing their authority.

tance of supervision to good policing, that belief was particularly strong among the supervisors themselves. Thus, while more than 87 percent of nonsupervisors in the survey (primarily patrol officers) said that good first-line supervisors could help prevent police officers from abusing their authority, 97 percent of supervisors felt that way (see Table 4.20).[20] Similar relationships are found in other questions directly related to supervision. More than 80 percent of nonsupervisors and almost 95 percent of supervisors believed that if a police chief took a strong position against abuses of authority, he or she could make a big difference in preventing officers from abusing their authority (see Table 4.21).[21] And 50 percent of nonsupervisors and 68 percent of supervisors were likely to believe that most police abuse of force could be stopped by developing more effective methods of supervision (see Table 4.22).[22]

Still in keeping with their role as supervisors, but less predictable, was a series of questions that suggested that supervisors were very serious in their attitudes about reporting misbehavior and that they held police officers to a very high standard. Well over 80 percent of supervisors believed in the value of blowing the whistle on misbehavior by fellow officers, compared with just over 70 percent of nonsupervisors (see Table 4.23).[23] Similarly, supervisors were much less likely to believe in the efficacy of the code of silence (see Table 4.24),[24] and supervisors disagreed to a much greater extent than non-supervisors that it is sometimes accept

Table 4.23

Whistle blowing is not worth it (by rank). (N = 904)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	Percent			
Nonsupervisors	3.9	24.4	61.4	10.3
Supervisors	1.1	15.6	68.4	15.0

$x^2 = 24.99$ df = 3 $p < .001$

Table 4.24

The code of silence is an essential part of the mutual trust necessary to good policing (by rank). (N = 905)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	Percent			
Nonsupervisors	1.5	19.2	64.2	15.1
Supervisors	0.3	7.3	68.8	23.5

$x^2 = 28.46$ df = 3 $p < .001$

Table 4.25

It is sometimes acceptable to use more force than is legally allowable to control someone who physically assaults an officer (by rank). (N = 912)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	Percent			
Nonsupervisors	3.9	23.9	54.5	17.7
Supervisors	1.8	14.6	56.8	26.9

$x^2 = 21.09$ df = 3 $p < .001$

Table 4.26

Police department rules about the use of force should not be any stricter than required by law (by rank). (N = 915)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	Percent			
Nonsupervisors	7.4	62.8	28.6	1.2
Supervisors	4.9	49.6	41.4	4.1

$x^2 = 24.90$ df = 3 $p < .001$

...[W]e did find a consistent difference between the western region of the country and others....

able to use more force than is legally allowable to control someone who physically assaults an officer (see Table 4.25).[25] They were more interested than nonsupervisors in having departmental rules about the use of force that are stricter than required by law (see Table 4.26).[26] Supervisors in our sample were also more likely to note that community-oriented policing could decrease the number and the seriousness of excessive force incidents (see Table 4.27[27] and Table 4.28).[28]

Region

As Professor Carl Klockars stated during the focus group of police scholars and executives at the outset of this study, "There are right answers in different places." During an untranscribed break in our rank-and-file focus group, one officer explained that in her part of the country, it would be considered an affront if a community policing officer refused to accept an offer of a cup of coffee. Those regional cultural differences might explain why officers from the southern region of the country were more likely to offer an opinion that frequent friendly contact with local residents and merchants increased the likelihood that police officers would accept free lunches, discounts, or gifts of appreciation for effective service (see Table 4.29).[29]

While regional differences did not show up as clearly as one might have expected for many questions in the survey, we did find a consistent difference between the western region of the country and others on some specific indicators. Police officers from the

Table 4.27

Community-oriented policing increases, decreases, or has no impact on the number of excessive force incidents (by rank). (N = 885)

	Increases	Decreases	Has No Impact	TOTAL
Nonsupervisors	14 (2.3%)	285 (45.7%)	323 (52.1%)	622
Supervisors	3 (1.4%)	165 (63.5%)	95 (35.1%)	263

$x^2 = 22.91$ df = 2 $p < .001$

Table 4.28

Community-oriented policing increases, decreases, or has no impact on the seriousness of excessive force incidents (by rank). (N = 884)

	Increases	Decreases	Has No Impact	TOTAL
Nonsupervisors	22 (3.3%)	244 (38.6%)	358 (58.1%)	624
Supervisors	10 (3.7%)	129 (50.9%)	121 (45.4%)	260

$x^2 = 10.96$ df = 2 $p < .05$

Table 4.29

Frequent friendly contact with local residents and merchants increases the likelihood that police officers will accept free lunches, discounts, or gifts of appreciation for effective service (by region). (N = 916)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	Percent			
North Central	1.0	18.2	60.4	20.3
Northeast	0.4	14.1	67.8	17.8
South	2.8	25.2	55.4	16.7
West	0.2	15.6	58.1	25.5

$x^2 = 23.08$ df = 9 $p < .001$

Table 4.30

It is sometimes acceptable to use more force than is legally allowable to control someone who physically assaults an officer (by region). (N = 912)

	Agree	Disagree	TOTAL
North Central	40 (20.4%)	149 (79.6%)	189
Northeast	67 (29.4%)	163 (70.7%)	230
South	82 (26.8%)	229 (73.2%)	311
West	32 (17.7%)	150 (82.3%)	182

$x^2 = 8.76$ df = 3 $p < .05$

Officers from small departments believed more strongly in the efficacy of good supervision and in the authority of the chief to influence behavior.

West tended to have a more professional outlook about policing or tended to view policing as constrained by the law. Officers in the West were less likely to agree that it is sometimes acceptable to use more force than is legally allowable to control someone who physically assaults an officer (see Table 4.30).[30] And they are more likely to state that police officers always report serious criminal violations involving abuse of authority by fellow officers (see Table 4.31).[31]

Agency Size

Agency size also appeared relevant to police officers' concerns about police abuse of authority. Officers from small departments believed more strongly in the efficacy of good supervision and in the authority of the chief to influence behavior. Officers in the largest departments more frequently demonstrated what arguably was a more cynical or alienated attitude about leadership in policing, although even in those departments it was distinctly a minority viewpoint. The relationships described were quite strong.

While 94 percent of officers from small departments believed that if a police chief took a strong position against abuses of authority, he or she could make a big difference in preventing officers from abusing their authority, only 68.2 percent of officers from the largest departments agreed (see Table 4.32).[32] Similarly, while 97 percent of officers from small departments agreed that good first-line supervisors could help prevent officers from abusing their authority, only 80 percent of officers

Table 4.31

Police officers always report serious criminal violations involving abuse of authority by fellow officers (by region). (N = 899)

	Agree	Disagree	TOTAL
North Central	63 (33.5%)	124 (66.5%)	187
Northeast	79 (35.1%)	145 (64.9%)	224
South	121 (40.0%)	189 (60.1%)	310
West	83 (48.6%)	95 (51.4%)	178

$x^2 = 9.81$ df = 3 $p < .05$

Table 4.32

If a police chief takes a strong position against abuses of authority, he or she can make a big difference in preventing officers from abusing their authority (by agency size). (N = 920)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	Percent			
Small Departments	37.6	56.2	6.2	0.0
Medium Departments	24.9	62.7	11.3	1.1
Large Departments	14.0	54.2	28.4	3.4

$x^2 = 54.37$ df = 6 $p < .001$

Table 4.33

Good first-line supervisors can help prevent officers from abusing their authority (by agency size). (N = 921)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	Percent			
Small Departments	26.1	70.4	2.7	0.8
Medium Departments	23.8	67.4	8.4	0.5
Large Departments	17.5	62.5	17.5	2.6

$x^2 = 25.93$ df = 6 $p < .001$

Table 4.34

Most police abuse of force could be stopped by developing more effective methods of supervision (by agency size). (N = 913)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	Percent			
Small Departments	9.9	61.1	25.2	3.8
Medium Departments	7.2	48.0	40.5	4.4
Large Departments	6.2	39.2	45.1	9.5

$x^2 = 16.44$ df = 6 $p < .05$

…[O]fficers from the largest departments believed… police administrators concentrate on what police officers do wrong rather than what they do right.

from the largest departments agreed (see Table 4.33).[33] Following this pattern, 71 percent of officers from small departments agreed that most police abuse of force could be stopped by developing more effective methods of supervision, compared with 45 percent of officers from the largest departments (see Table 4.34).[34] Almost 8 in 10 officers from the largest departments believed that police administrators concentrate on what police officers do wrong rather than what they do right, while just over half of the officers from the small departments agreed (see Table 4.35).[35]

Gender

The survey did not reveal meaningful differences in the responses of officers according to gender. While several statistically significant results were found, the sizes of the differences were small, and no consistent theory or idea linked them or suggested that they were meaningful. We could argue that this finding suggested that women adapt to the dominant culture of policing or that women who self-select to enter policing are more like men in policing. However, this conclusion may be premature. As the National Center for Women and Policing (1998) reports, "Women police perform better than their male counterparts at defusing potentially violent situations and become involved in excessive use of force incidents less often." We think it is possible that we did not ask questions in our survey that would reveal specific differences between male and female police officers in regard to the problem of police abuse of authority.

Table 4.35

Police administrators concentrate on what police officers do wrong rather than what police officers do right (by agency size). (N = 920)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	Percent			
Small Departments	14.0	38.6	42.7	4.7
Medium Departments	17.4	48.0	31.9	2.7
Large Departments	29.2	49.6	20.6	0.7

$x^2 = 32.92$ df = 6 $p < .001$

V

CONCLUSION

Police...support a philosophy that looks to the public for advice and cooperation in confronting problems of crime and disorder.

Over the past three decades, American policing has gone through vast changes in its organization, tactics, and philosophy. At the forefront of such changes has been the transition from traditional military and professional models of policing, to innovative models of community policing. Our survey focused on the attitudes of American police toward abuse of authority in this age of community policing. It is the first truly representative study of police attitudes in many years, and thus it provides an important set of findings for understanding American police and for developing public policy.

It is clear from the survey that central components of the community policing idea have filtered down to rank-and-file police officers. Police today overwhelmingly support a philosophy that looks to the public for advice and cooperation in confronting problems of crime and disorder. The survey was unambiguous in this regard. Nearly all who were surveyed believed that citizens are vital to good policing and that police must work with citizens in solving crime problems. In turn, contrary to what some have feared about community policing, officers were more likely to state that community policing reduces the potential for police abuse than increases that potential. This finding, of course, does not mean that community policing has actually reduced the level of abuse in

American policing, but rather that police officers believe this to be the case.

Our portrait of attitudes toward police abuse is much more ambiguous. On the one hand, we have much positive evidence regarding the attitudes of American police officers and their views about their colleagues. Most police we surveyed do not agree that it is acceptable to use more force than is legally necessary, even to control someone who physically assaults an officer. The vast majority identified extreme brands of police abuse such as that reported in the Rodney King and Abner Louima cases as being isolated and very rare occurrences. Most police surveyed told us that their police departments always took a tough stand on the issue of police abuse of citizens.

On the other hand, the survey suggests that police abuse remains a problem that must be addressed by policy makers and police professionals. While the survey suggests that most police officers in the United States disapprove of the use of excessive force, a substantial minority consider it acceptable to sometimes use more force than permitted by the laws that govern them. They also believe that they should be permitted to use more force than the law currently permits. The code of silence also remains a troubling issue for American police. It is still the case that about a quarter of the police we surveyed told us that whistle blowing is not worth it, and two-thirds reported that police officers were likely to be given a "cold shoulder" by fellow officers if they reported incidents of misconduct. Most police officers in the study reported that it is not unusual for police officers to turn a "blind eye" to improper conduct by other officers.

These findings suggest that the culture of silence, which has continually plagued reform in American policing, continues. But it must be recognized that from the perspective of police, the concern of the public with problems of police abuse is not proportional to its incidence. The survey shows that most American police believe that the public is too concerned with police abuse. An even larger number believe that the media have paid too much attention to this question. From the perspective of police, the public and the press have placed too much of their concern on police abuse. At the same time, the police we studied believed that the relationship between police and community is a good one, and is one in which the community overall has respect for the police.

The survey suggests that race continues to be an issue for American police. One in five of those surveyed told us that whites are treated better by police than African Americans and other minorities. We cannot say whether this result represents a change in attitudes either in a more positive or negative direction. However, we can conclude that a substantial number of police in the U.S. see race as an important factor in understanding abuses of police authority.

...[P]olice officers were likely to be given a "cold shoulder" by fellow officers if they reported incidents of misconduct.... [and] it is not unusual for police officers to turn a "blind eye" to improper conduct by other officers.

Comparing African-American officers' views about police abuse with those of white and other minority officers, we found significant and substantial differences.

It is particularly troubling that this perception was far more prevalent among African-American police officers than among others. Comparing African-American officers' views about police abuse with those of white and other minority officers, we found significant and substantial differences. While a small minority of white officers in the sample believed that police treat white citizens better than African-American or other minority citizens in similar situations, a majority of African-American police officers held this view. Similar differences were found between African-American and other police officers in their views on the likelihood of using physical force against minorities and the poor. The magnitude of such race-based differences suggests a large gap between African-American police officers and other officers. Such a deep divide was not predicted at the outset of the study.

The survey also provides some surprising and important lessons regarding how police think abuses of police authority can be controlled. Consistent with the suggestions of certain scholars and police professionals (Grant and Grant, 1996; Scrivner, 1994), most officers believed that training and education are effective methods for reducing police abuse. A substantial majority of those who have experienced training in interpersonal skills, or have taken courses in ethics or diversity, said that such education and training is effective in preventing misbehavior. While those responses did not tell us whether indeed such programs are effective, they did tell us that American police themselves view the programs as important and useful.

Police we surveyed also emphasized the importance of police management in preventing police violence and other forms of abuse. A large majority of police believe that when the chief of police takes a strong stand against police violence, other police officers will follow his or her lead. Similarly, police officers told us that good first-line supervision is an effective method for preventing police abuse. These findings reinforce the long-held view of scholars and police professionals that developing effective methods of supervision and effective supervisors should be a first priority in efforts to control and prevent abuses of police authority.

While American police recognized the importance of supervision in preventing abuses, they continued to see a tension between getting the police job done and controlling misbehavior. Almost half of the police surveyed told us that "always following the rules" is not compatible with "getting the job done." More than half believed that supervisors focus too much on what they are doing wrong and not enough on what they are doing right.

Abuse of police authority continues to be a major public policy concern. This survey adds the voices of rank-and-file police and supervisors to the debate

over the nature of the problems that American police face and the potential solutions that can be brought. Our study suggests that most police in the United States understand the importance of limits to police authority, and are sensitive to the dangers of corruption and abuse of force. Nonetheless, police abuses of authority are a continuing reality in American policing, as is the "code of silence" that shields those who do abuse their authority. What can be done to prevent such abuses? According to America's police, education and training are effective means of preventing police abuse. They also recognize the continuing importance of effective supervision, and the central role that police executives play in sending the message that police abuses of authority cannot be tolerated.

...[P]olice abuses...are a continuing reality...as is the "code of silence" that shields those who do abuse their authority.

ENDNOTES

1. Details regarding the sample are provided in Chapter II of this report. The sampling frame of the survey as estimated by Maguire (1997) is 351,480 officers.

2. A number of questions were adapted from two previous Police Foundation surveys (Pate and Hamilton, 1992; Wycoff and Oettmeier, 1993). We used several questions from a survey on ethical conduct and discipline from Queensland, Australia (Criminal Justice Commission, 1995). We adopted the question structure (although not the content) for presenting hypothetical scenarios from the survey instrument on police integrity by Carl B. Klockars, Sanja Kutnjak-Ivkovic, and William E. Harver (no date). Scenarios were provided by Chief Jerry Oliver during the expert focus group (see Appendix B) and by Earl Hamilton of the Police Foundation staff. Some of the demographic questions were developed with assistance from members of Mathematica Policy Research Inc., who also assisted with editing the survey questions.

We also consulted a number of survey instruments that addressed police ethics. They did not provide specific questions but assisted us in our thinking. The instruments included the Royal Barbados Police Force survey by Richard R. Bennett (1994), the Illinois Police Behavior Survey (Martin and Bensinger, 1994), an Australian survey on police ethics (McConkey, Huon, and Frank, 1996), and a Police Foundation survey of Oregon State Police officers (Amendola, Hockman, and Scharf, 1996).

We conducted three focus groups, which provided a range of viewpoints from rank-and-file officers to chiefs and academics: The first group combined the knowledge and experience of academic experts and police chiefs (for a full report, see Appendix B). The second group was composed of rank-and-file police officers from departments across the country (see Appendix C for a full report, including selection criteria). The third group consisted of sergeants and lieutenants from departments nationwide (see Appendix D for a full report,

including selection criteria). In addition to the important contributions of the police scholars, chiefs, and officers who participated in our focus groups, as well as the officers who participated in the pretest, we consulted with a number of police researchers as we developed the survey instrument. Professors Carl Klockars, Peter Manning, Stephen Mastrofski, Albert Reiss, Jerome Skolnick, and Robert Worden provided valuable criticism that impelled us to keep a sharp focus.

3. Care was taken to protect the confidentiality and anonymity of all officers participating in the survey, from the design of the selection process through data collection and analysis. Selected departments were requested to provide to the Police Foundation a list of the names of all their full-time, sworn personnel. From this roster, officers were randomly selected for participation. This methodology enabled us to keep the names of the selected officers confidential from their chief and other departmental personnel. (There was some variation in this procedure. In two cases, the department generated the random sample in their own computers in the presence of Police Foundation researchers. In two others, departments provided serial numbers from which we generated the random samples, and only then were we provided names and contact information. Still, every effort was made to protect the privacy of the officers in each situation.)

All information received by the Police Foundation from the departments, as well as interview and survey data, was kept in locked file cabinets. Access to such information was limited to key project personnel.

Under the terms of a subcontract, all information furnished by the departments was made available to Mathematica Policy Research Inc. for the selection of officers and for subsequent interviews. Mathematica Policy Research Inc., in compliance with Police Foundation policy, agreed to maintain strict procedures designed to protect the confidentiality of selected officers. In addition to restricting access to this information to key personnel at Mathematica, the Police Foundation withheld the identity of selected officers from project personnel.

Interviewing staff members at Mathematica signed a confidentiality pledge prior to the surveying period. In signing this pledge, interviewers agreed not to divulge any private, project-related information to any person not authorized to have access to such information.

Serial numbers were assigned to selected officers before creating a machine-processing record and identifiers (i.e., name, address, telephone number, etc.). Those numbers were not included in the machine record nor in the resulting database. Survey data containing identifiers or potential identifiers were kept secured and were destroyed by Mathematica Policy Research Inc. within 10 days of sending the data set to the Police Foundation.

4. We sought at the outset to gain an accurate list of all U.S. police officers. However, attempts to acquire names of current police officers on a state-by-state basis from state licensing boards, although promising at first, were ultimately frustrated and unsuccessful. As a result, we turned to the two-step process defined here.

5. The Northeastern region includes the states of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The South includes Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia. The North Central region includes the states of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. And the Western region includes Alaska, Ari-

zona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

6. This method was developed in consultation with and conducted by John Hall, senior sampling statistician with Mathematica Policy Research Inc.

The sample was selected using a stratified multistage design. The sample initially included 121 police departments that were selected by using probability proportional to size (PPS) methods. To use PPS selection, each department was assigned a measure of size based on an estimate of its number of full-time sworn officers.

Departments that were so large that they were certain to be sampled using PPS methods were selected with probability 1.0 and are called "certainty selections."

Selection was made from a machine-readable file (the sampling frame) that included one record for each of the 5,014 eligible police departments in the study. Each record contained department identification, department type, region, and the estimated number of officers who were employed by the department and were eligible for the survey. The estimated number of officers was used as a measure of size in selecting the sample.

Before selection, the sample frame was stratified by size and region. The size categories were (a) certainty selections, (b) other departments with 25 or more full-time sworn officers, and (c) other departments with 10–24 full-time sworn officers. The sample included nine certainty selections: 84 from the middle-size group and 28 from the smallest group.

The Police Foundation contacted sampled departments and, from each cooperating department, obtained a list of all officers eligible for the survey. Those lists contained identifying information that enabled interviewers to contact sampled officers. The sample selected from those lists was of adequate size to allow completion of 925 to 950 interviews. In *certainty* departments, the number of officers selected was based on the proportion of the total population of officers represented by the department. For *noncertainty* departments with 25 or more officers, we sampled 10 per department. For the departments with 10 to 24 officers, we sampled an average of 4.5 (a random half of the sample was allocated 5 selections, and the other half, 4).

7. As noted in endnote 3, there was some variation in this procedure. In two cases, the departments generated the random sample from their own computers in the presence of Police Foundation researchers. In two others, departments provided serial numbers from which we generated the random samples; only then were we provided names and contact information.

8. When the confidence interval exceeds plus or minus 4 percent, we provide the exact interval in the endnotes.

9. Because of the multistage sampling procedure used in our study, we could not rely on standard estimates of standard errors or statistical significance. Adjusted standard errors and observed significance levels were estimated using the statistical analysis program Sudaan (see Babubhai, Barnwell, and Bieler, 1997), after specifying the specific sampling model used in our study.

10. The weighting procedure was developed by John Hall of Mathematica Policy Research Inc. The weights for the Police Foundation Survey account for differences in (a) probabilities of selection among officers responding to the survey, (b) nonresponse at the department level, and (c) response rates among groups of officers. Without the weighting adjustments, some groups of officers would be overrepresented (and others underrepresented), leading to potentially biased survey estimates.

Weighting took place in seven steps: (a) each sampled department was assigned an initial weight equal to the inverse of its probability of selection; (b) cells were formed for department-level nonresponse adjustment; (c) department-level nonresponse weights were computed; (d) each sampled officer was assigned an initial weight, which was the product of the officer's department's weight and the inverse of the officer's probability of selection within the department; (e) new cells were formed for officer-level nonresponse adjustments; (f) officer-level nonresponse weights were computed; and (g) each officer's final weight was the product of the initial officer weight and the officer-level nonresponse weight.

Initial Department Weights: Initially weighting departments by the inverse of the probability of selection was required because departments were sampled with probability proportional to size. Thus the initial department weight (IDW) is

$$IDW(dept) = 1/P(dept)$$

where P (dept) is the department's probability of selection.

When department-level nonresponse adjustments were made, the initial department weight allowed each department to represent its appropriate share of the population.

Department Nonresponse Adjustment: One large department (selected with certainty for the sample survey) chose not to respond. Because of this, we defined one cell for department-level nonresponse to include all sampled departments within those departments having at least 400 full-time sworn officers (FTSW). Other cells were defined by the intersection of region and major stratum (selected with certainty, noncertainty with more than 24 FTSW and 10–24 FTSW). Departments assigned to the first cell described above were not also assigned to other cells. The departmental nonresponse adjustment, DNRA (dcell), for a cell is the ratio of the sum of IDW for all departments in the cell to the sum of IDW for responding departments in the cell, and the final department weight is

$$FDW(dept) = IDW(dept) \times DNRA(dcell)$$

Each officer was then assigned an initial weight (IWO), where

$$IWO(officer) = FDW(dept) \times 1/P(officer|dept)$$

where P (officer dept) is the probability of an officer being selected for the sample within the department.

Officer Nonresponse Adjustment: Computation of the officer nonresponse adjustment (DNRAO) was similar to that for departments, except the cells were defined differently. For adjustments at the individual level, one cell comprised four departments selected with certainty within a region. One cell included three certainty departments in two neighboring regions. One cell comprised a certainty selection and two other large departments within a region. Eight other cells were defined by the intersection of region and the two major noncertainty strata.

ONRA (ocell) for a cell is the ratio of the sum of IWO (officer) for all sampled officers in the cell to the sum of IWO (officer) for responding officers in the cell, and the final weight is

$$Finalwt(officer) = IWO(officer) \times ONRA(ocell).$$

11. The survey instrument and responses, including raw frequencies and weighted percentages, are provided in Appendix A. Throughout this report, unless otherwise indicated, percentages presented in the text are weighted percentages.

12. Officers could identify themselves as belonging to more than one racial category.

13. For example, in their re-examination of 5,688 cases in the 1977 Police Services Study data, Worden and Shepard

(1996) found that reasonable force was used in 37 cases, and improper force was used in 23 cases. We note that improper force was thus used in 38 percent of encounters that involved force. Similarly, in his re-analysis of 1,565 cases in Albert Reiss's 1967 data, Friedrich (1980) found that reasonable force was used in 52 cases, and excessive force was used in 28 cases. Excessive force was thus used in 35 percent of encounters that involved force.

14. These issues are revisited later, when we take up questions of differences among subgroups of officers and consider whether police officers of different races have differing views of racial bias by police officers.

15. We are beginning to examine whether the influence of race might be explained by other factors, such as the concentration of minority police officers in specific parts of the country. Our findings suggest that the importance of race is maintained even when controlling for other relevant demographic characteristics.

16. In Table 4.14, confidence intervals ranged from ±4.61 percent to ±13.43 percent for African Americans, and from ±5.86 percent to ±13.74 percent for other minorities. We remind the reader that we report confidence intervals only if they are greater than ±4 percent.

17. Confidence intervals ranged from ±5.86 percent to ±10.76 percent for African Americans and from ±9.8 percent to ±11.19 percent for other minorities.

18. Confidence intervals ranged from ±6.02 percent to ±10.94 percent for African Americans and from ±10.49 percent to ±12.23 percent for other minorities.

19. For the number of incidents of excessive force (Table 4.17), confidence intervals for white officers were ±4.12 percent for "decrease" and ±4.19 percent for "no impact." For African-American officers, confidence intervals were ±5.21 percent for "increases," ±9.88 percent for "decreases," and ±8.31 percent for "no impact." For other minority officers, confidence intervals were ±4.29 percent for "increases," ±11.37 percent for "decreases," and ±11.76 percent for "no impact."

20. For Table 4.20, confidence intervals range from ±5.53 percent to ±5.84 percent for supervisors.

21. For Table 4.21, confidence intervals range from ±5.88 percent to ±6.03 percent for supervisors.

22. For Table 4.22, confidence intervals range from ±5.25 percent to ±6.50 percent for supervisors

23. For Table 4.23, confidence intervals for supervisors ranged from ±4.98 percent to ±5.57 percent.

24. For Table 4.24, confidence intervals for supervisors ranged from ±5.99 percent to ±6.66 percent.

25. For Table 4.25, confidence intervals for supervisors ranged from ±5.84 percent to ±5.90 percent.

26. For Table 4.26, confidence intervals for supervisors were ±5.55 percent.

27. For Table 4.27, confidence intervals for supervisors were ±6.08 percent for "decreases" and ±6.35 percent for "no impact." For nonsupervisors, confidence intervals were ±4.27 percent for "decreases" and ±4.31 percent for "no impact."

28. For Table 4.28, confidence intervals for supervisors were ±6.25 percent for "decreases" and ±6.35 percent for "no impact." For nonsupervisors, confidence intervals were ±4.29 percent for "no impact."

29. For Table 4.29, confidence intervals for the North Central region ranged from ±4.50 percent to ±6.30 percent. For the

Northeast they ranged from ±4.50 percent to ±5.70 percent. For the South they ranged from ±4.30 percent to ±5.70 percent, and for the West they ranged from ±7.90 percent to ±8.00 percent.

30. For Table 4.30, confidence intervals for the North Central region were ±5.70 percent. For the Northeast they were ±6.02 percent. For the South they were ±6.31 percent, and for the West they were ±6.31 percent.

31. For Table 4.31, confidence intervals for the North Central region were ±8.57 percent. For the Northeast they were ±5.88 percent. For the South they were ±5.57 percent, and for the West they were ±7.02 percent.

32. In Table 4.32, confidence intervals ranged from ±5.00 percent to ±8.00 percent for the largest departments and from ±6.00 percent to ±8.00 percent for the small departments.

33. In Table 4.33, confidence intervals ranged from ±5.50 percent to ±7.50 percent for the largest departments.

35. In Table 4.34, confidence intervals ranged from ±4.82 percent to ±7.93 percent for the largest departments and from ±5.02 percent to ±11.56 percent for the small departments.

35. In Table 4.35, confidence intervals ranged from ±7.29 percent to ±8.02 percent for the largest departments, ±3.39 percent to ±4.25 percent for the medium departments, and ±7.56 percent to ±7.80 percent for the small departments.

REFERENCES

Adams, Kenneth. 1996. "Measuring the Prevalence of Police Abuse of Force," in *Police Violence: Understanding and Controlling Police Abuse of Force*, ed. William A. Geller and Hans Toch. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Amendola, Karen, Cielle Hockman, and Peter Scharf. 1996. *Assessing Law Enforcement Ethics: Technical Report on the Study Conducted with the Oregon Department of State Police*. Washington, DC: Police Foundation.

Babbie, Earl. 1992. *The Practice of Social Research*, 6th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

———. 1990. *Survey Research Methods*, 2nd ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Babubhai, Shai V., Beth G. Barnwell, and Gayle S. Bieler. 1997. *Sudaan Release 7.5: User's Manual*. Research Triangle Park, NC: Research Triangle Institute.

Bayley, David H., and Egon Bittner. 1984. "Learning the Skills of Policing." *Law and Society Review* 30(3): 585–606.

Bennett, Richard R. 1994. *Royal Barbados Police Force Survey*. (Not published.)

Black, Donald, and Albert J. Reiss, Jr. 1970. "Police Control of Juveniles." *American Sociological Review* 35: 63–77.

Bureau of the Census. 1991. *Census of Population and Housing, 1990:* Summary Tape File 3. Washington, DC: Bureau of the Census.

Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). 1995. *Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics, 1993*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Carter, David L., and Allen D. Sapp. 1990. "The Evolution of Higher Education in Law Enforcement: Preliminary Findings From A National Study." *Journal of Criminal Justice Education* 1(1): 59–85.

Criminal Justice Commission. 1995. *Ethical Conduct and Discipline in the Queensland Police Service: The Views of Recruits, First Year Constables, and Experienced Officers*. Brisbane, Australia: Criminal Justice Commission.

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). 1994. *Crime in the United States: Uniform Crime Reports, 1993*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Friedrich, Robert J. 1980. "Police Use of Force: Individuals, Situations, and Organizations." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 452 (November): 82–97.

Grant, J. Douglas, and Joan Grant. 1996. "Officer Selection and the Prevention of Abuse of Force," in *Police Violence: Understanding and Controlling Police Abuse of Force*, ed. William A. Geller and Hans Toch. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Goldstein, Herman. 1979. "Improving Policing: A Problem-Oriented Approach." *Crime and Delinquency* 25(2): 236–58.

Klinger, David A. 1996. "More on Demeanor and Arrest in Dade County." *Criminology* 34(1): 61–82.

———. 1994. "Demeanor or Crime? Why 'Hostile' Citizens Are More Likely to Be Arrested." *Criminology* 32(3): 475–93.

Klockars, Carl B., Sanja Kutnjak-Ivkovic and William E. Harver. (no date). *Police Integrity Survey*.

LeDoux, John C., and Robert R. Hazelwood. 1985. "Police Attitudes and Beliefs Toward Rape." *Journal of Police Science and Administration* 13(3): 211–21.

Lundman, Richard J. 1996. "Demeanor and Arrest: Additional Evidence from Previously Unpublished Data." *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 33(3): 306–53.

———. 1994. "Demeanor or Crime? The Mid-West City Police-Citizen Encounters Study." *Criminology* 32(4): 631–56.

Lundman, Richard, Richard E. Sykes, and John P. Clark. 1978. "Police Control of Juveniles: A Replication." *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 33: 306–353.

Maguire, Edward R. 1997. "The Police Foundation Use of Force Study: Sampling Frame Design Issues." Memorandum prepared for the Police Foundation, 20 October 1997.

Maguire, Edward R., Jeffrey B. Snipes, Craig D. Uchida, and Margaret Townsend. 1998. "Counting Cops: Estimating the Number of Police Depts and Police Officers in the USA" *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management*. 21(1): 97–120.

Martin, Christine, and Peter B. Bensinger. 1994. *Illinois Municipal Officers' Perceptions of Police Ethics*. Chicago: Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.

Mastrofski, Stephen D., Roger B. Parks, Christina DeJong, and Robert E. Worden. "Race and Every-Day Policing: A Research Perspective," paper delivered at the Twelfth International Congress on Criminology, Seoul, Korea, August 24–28, 1998: 14.

Maxfield, Michael G., and Earl Babbie. 1995. *Research Methods for Criminal Justice and Criminology*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

McConkey, Kevin M., Gail F. Huon, and Mark G. Frank. 1996. *Practical Ethics in the Police Service: Ethics and Policing—Study 3*. Payneham, South Australia: National Police Research Unit.

McElroy, Jerome, Colleen A. Cosgrove, and Susan Sadd. 1990. CPOP: *The Research, An Evaluative Study of the New York City Community Patrol Officer Program*. New York: The Vera Institute of Justice.

National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals. 1973. *The Police.* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

National Center for Women and Policing. [electronic bulletin board]; [cited 13 April 1998]; available from (www.feminist.org/police/ncwpAbout.html); INTERNET.

Ogletree, Charles J. Jr., Mary Prosser, Abbe Smith, and William Talley Jr. 1995. *Beyond the Rodney King Story: An Investigation of Police Misconduct in Minority Communities.* Boston: Northeastern University Press.

Pate, Antony M., and Edwin E. Hamilton. 1992. *The New York City Police Cadet Corps Technical Report.* Washington, DC: Police Foundation.

Pate, Antony M., and Lorie A. Fridell. 1993. *Police Use of Force: Official Reports, Citizen Complaints, and Legal Consequences.* Washington, DC: Police Foundation.

Reiss, Albert J. Jr. 1971. *The Police and the Public*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Scrivner, Ellen M. 1994. *The Role of Police Psychology in Controlling Excessive Force.* Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice.

Skolnick, Jerome H., and David H. Bayley. 1986. *The New Blue Line: Police Innovation in Six American Cities.* New York: The Free Press.

Skolnick, Jerome H. 1999. *On Democratic Policing.* Ideas in American Policing series. Washington, DC: Police Foundation.

Skolnick, Jerome H., and James J. Fyfe. 1993. *Above the Law: Police and the Excessive Use of Force.* New York: The Free Press.

Smith, Douglas A., and Christy A. Visher. 1981. "Street-Level Justice: Situational Determinants of Police Arrest Decisions." *Social Problems* 29(2): 167–77.

Smith, Douglas A., Christy A. Visher, and Laura A. Davidson. 1984. "Equity and Discretionary Justice: The Influence of Race on Police Arrest Decisions." *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 75(1): 234–49.

Travis, Jeremy. 1995. "Education in Law Enforcement: Beyond the College Degree." *Criminal Justice of the Americas* 8: 1–6.

Trojanowicz, Robert, and Bonnie Bucqueroux. 1994. *Community Policing: How to Get Started*. Cincinnati: Anderson Publishing.

Tonry, Michael. 1995. *Malign Neglect—Race, Crime, and Punishment in America*. New York: Oxford University Press. p. 71.

Walker, Samuel, Cassia Spohn, and Miriam DeLone. 1996. *The Color of Justice: Race, Ethnicity, and Crime in America*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Weisburd, David. 1998. *Statistics in Criminal Justice*. New York: Wadsworth.

Weisburd, David, Jerome McElroy, and Patricia Hardyman. 1988. "Challenges to Supervision in Community Policing: Observations on a Pilot Project." *American Journal of Police*, 7(2): 29–50.

Westley, William A. 1953. "Violence and the Police." *American Journal of Sociology*, 59: 34–41.

Worden, Robert E. 1990. "A Badge and a Baccalaureate: Policies, Hypotheses, and Further Evidence." *Justice Quarterly* 7(3): 565–92.

Worden, Robert E. 1996. "The 'Causes' of Police Brutality: Theory and Evidence on Police Use of Force" in *Police Violence: Understanding and Controlling Police Abuse of Force*. Ed. William A. Geller and Hans Toch. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Worden, Robert E., and Robin L. Shepard. 1996. "Demeanor, Crime, and Police Behavior: A Reexamination of the Police Services Study Data." *Criminology* 34(1): 83–105.

Wycoff, Mary Ann, and Timothy N. Oettmeier. 1993. *Evaluating Patrol Officer Performance Under Community Policing: The Houston Experience*. Washington, DC: Police Foundation.

AUTHORS

David Weisburd, PhD, is Senior Fellow, and formerly Senior Research Scientist, at the Police Foundation. He also is a professor of criminology at the Hebrew University Law School in Jerusalem, and a Senior Research Fellow in the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of Maryland, College Park.

Rosann Greenspan, PhD, formerly research director at the Police Foundation, is Assistant Director and Visiting Scholar at the Center for the Study of Law and Society at the University of California at Berkeley, where she also teaches in the Legal Studies Program. Dr. Greenspan continues to collaborate on foundation research projects.

Edwin E. Hamilton, MA, is Senior Research Analyst at the Police Foundation. Since coming to the Police Foundation in 1983, Mr. Hamilton has worked on dozens of foundation research projects, and co-authored several foundation research reports.

Kellie A. Bryant, MS, formerly a research associate at the Police Foundation, is a Deputy Marshal with the United States Marshals Service.

Hubert Williams, JD, has been President of the Police Foundation since 1985. In 1962, he joined the Newark, New Jersey, Police Department, was later promoted to sergeant, then lieutenant, and was granted a leave of absence from 1972 to 1974 to direct the Newark High Impact Anti-Crime Initiative. In 1974, Williams was selected to head the Newark Police Department, and served as its director until 1985. During his career with the Newark Police Department, Williams's assignments included undercover narcotics, patrol, field operations, community relations, and the office of the chief.