

THE PERCEPTION OF DANGER:

THE CASE OF THE POLICE

by

John J. Jones

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

Master of Science

in the

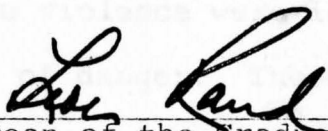
Criminal Justice

Program



Advisor

6/3/77
Date



Dean of the Graduate School

6/10/77
Date

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

June, 1977

ABSTRACT

THE PERCEPTION OF DANGER:
THE CASE OF THE POLICE

John J. Jones

Master of Science

Youngstown State University, 1977

The purpose of this study was to examine the perception of danger by the police. That is to say, what variables affect the perception of danger by a police sample, and if the police perceive danger to any degree differently from the non-police members of society.

From a review of pertinent criminal justice literature, the variables of a police officer's age, race, socio-economic status, police experience, and exposure to violence were identified as affecting the perception of danger. These variables were empirically evaluated.

In order to empirically evaluate this relationship, a questionnaire was administered to police officers in Youngstown, Ohio. A similar questionnaire was administered to a sample of non-police students. The results of the survey suggest that the variables, traditionally defined in the literature, do not to a great degree, affect the

perception of danger. The findings do, however, tentatively support the proposition that the police do perceive higher levels of danger than the non-police. Further study, therefore, is needed in order to explain the observed differences between the police and the non-police sample.

Also, the author would like to thank committee members Dr. Richard E. Bennett, Dr. Calvin E. Sweet, and Dr. Assad S. Cassou for their critical and editorial comments. Special thanks to Richard E. Bennett for his unending help throughout the research.

A word of appreciation is extended to the students who provided encouragement and assistance for the past year has been the main reason for my continuing.

Last but not least, thanks to Myrtle and Robert Jones whose love and guidance in the past has brought this about.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to express his sincerest appreciation to those whose assistance made this study possible. Thanks go to the Youngstown Police Department and Sergeant J.T. McBride for the cooperation given me throughout the data collection period.

Also, the author would like to thank committee members Dr. Richard R. Bennett, Dr. Calvin J. Swank, and Dr. Assad S. Kassees for their guidance and editorial comments. Special thanks to Richard R. Bennett for his unending help throughout the research.

A word of appreciation is extended to Ms. Diane Pallante whose encouragement and assistance for the past year has been the one reason for my continuance.

Last but not least, thanks to Virginia and Robert Jones whose love and guidance in the past has brought this about.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	vi
CHAPTER	
I. Introduction	1
II. Review of the Literature	7
III. Methods	24
IV. Findings	49
V. Summary and Conclusions	61
APPENDIX A. Police Questionnaire	72
APPENDIX B. Non-Police Questionnaire	78
BIBLIOGRAPHY	84

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
1. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficients	52
2. T Test for Pooled Estimate of Standard Error	57

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

It has long been recognized and reinforced through man's various forms of mass communication that today's society is a violent one. Immense amounts of private and public money are spent every year on research concerning violent behavior. Within the last decade, volumes upon volumes of literature have been printed regarding the effects of violence on society. A brief review of any newspaper, whether local or international, will reveal that a majority of the front page topics are connected in some manner with this subject. Daily, radio and television news broadcasts are filled with situations related to violence. Through these channels, we are continuously made aware that violence is a strong element in our society.

The communication of violence is not only limited to the rendition of real life situations containing violence, but is also made apparent through the use of television programs that center their plots around violent situations. Programs rated the highest are often those that display violence of some form or another.

Because of the advances made in the field of communication, every individual in society today is now

made more aware of the high level of existing violence than ever before. In the course of a person's daily activity, it is unavoidable that he will, in some way, be made more cognizant of the presence of society's violence.

The increased awareness of violence has created more of a concern with the problem of violence. In 1971, 55 percent of the American population was more concerned about crime and violence than they had been during the five previous years. In 1973, nearly 60 percent of all Americans felt some level of fear or apprehension about walking within a mile of their home at night.¹

"Collectively, the attention given to violence inevitably produces a generalized reaction which may range from mere concern to profound anxiety, at one time or another, everyone has felt endangered."²

Reflected in this concern is the upsurge of federal funding allocated to crime prevention programs. All levels of government have now become involved in combating the violence of society. In short, within the past decade, there has been an expanded awareness of the existence of violence in society. The general reaction

¹Hazel Erskine, "The Polls: Fear of Violence and Crime," The Public Opinion Quarterly, XXXVIII (Spring, 1974), p. 133.

²James W. Sterling, Changes in Role Concepts of Police Officers (Geithsburg, Maryland: International Association of Chiefs of Police, 1972), p. 245.

to this awareness is an increase in the efforts directed at correcting violent behavior.

Fortunately enough, most members of society view societal violence from the third person perspective. The average person's experience with violent behavior is limited in most part to news stories and various films depicting acts of violence. Violent behavior, being defined as conduct using force so as to injure, damage, or destroy, very rarely is experienced personally by the majority of citizens. However, this is not true for the police of today's society.

The police are among those citizens who experience first hand the phenomena of societal violence. The very nature of the police function requires a police officer to deal personally with violent behavior. It is very rare, in an urban police department that a police officer does not at some time during his daily routine witness, or record, a behavior that could be considered violent. Because of this exposure to the violent person, or to the potentially violent situation, the police tend to become sensitive to the dangers of dealing with violent behavior.³

The element of danger, intrinsic to police work, causes the policeman to become attentive to signs indicating

³Jerome H. Skolnick, Justice Without Trial: Law Enforcement in a Democratic Society (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1966), p. 44.

a potential for violence.⁴ According to Jerome H. Skolnick, these signs or cues are gestures, language and attire. Skolnick says the police use these signs to identify certain kinds of people as potential assaulters, or as he has defined them, "symbolic assailants."⁵ Skolnick suggests that police develop a "perceptual shorthand to identify certain kinds of people as symbolic assailants." In order to minimize the uncertainty of the dangers of police work, they have come to recognize a person's gestures, language, and attire as cues to potential violence.⁶

In identifying these "symbolic assailants," the police learn to evaluate persons and situations in terms of potential danger. The subsequent action taken by the police officer is, therefore, affected by the perceived level of potential danger. A review of pertinent psychological literature indicates that an increase in perceived danger has a negative effect on the rational and discrete thinking processes, thus affecting the reactions of the police in situations perceived as dangerous. Perceived danger also increases the levels of fear and anxiety directed toward a particular person or situation. This

⁴Skolnick, p. 44.

⁵Skolnick, p. 45.

⁶Skolnick, p. 68.

heightened fear and anxiety has been shown to affect the way an individual reacts in a decision making situation.

In the case of the police, reactions to persons and/or situations in which there are high levels of perceived danger become less judicious and less discrete.⁸ Dodd points out that:

When forced with the threat of danger, the cop is inclined to resort to the use of his authority to reduce his perception of the potential hazard. The greater the perceived danger, the less judicious is the exercise of authority.⁹

In Skolnick's study of the police personality, he concludes that when authority is used during times of increased fear and anxiety, it "becomes a resource to reduce perceived threats rather than a series of reflective judgements arrived calmly."¹⁰

It is apparent that the effects of the police use of authority in today's society is a very crucial area. Much has been written about the importance and effectiveness of police use of authority on society. The need for proper, rational and judicious use of authority by the police is of great importance.

⁷Theodore Sarbin, "The Dangerous Individual: An Outcome of Social Identity Transformations." British Journal of Criminology, (1967), p. 293.

⁸David Dodd, "Police Mentality and Behavior," Issues in Criminology, 3 (Summer, 1967), p. 49.

⁹Dodd, p. 50.

¹⁰Skolnick, p. 67.

It has been hypothesized by James W. Sterling and Skolnick in their studies concerning police roles and police personalities that because of their direct dealing with society's violence, the police have a "heightened perception of danger,"¹¹ as compared to other members of society who do not deal directly with societal violence. There is little question concerning the magnitude and importance of the police function. The police are in a unique position by which they can impose "legal violence" directed at law breakers. Because of this effective power, there is a need to continuously examine what variables affect the implementation of this power and to seek ways to correct those that negatively affect the performance of the police function. The purpose of this study is to examine whether or not the police do, in fact, have a "heightened perception of danger" in relation to the "non-police." It is also the purpose of this study to look more closely at the variables that affect the perception of danger and to evaluate whether or not the degree to which a person is exposed to societal violence affects the level of perceived danger.

¹¹Sterling, p. 245.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Upon reviewing the recent Criminal Justice literature concerning the police, two recurrent themes are apparent. They are 1) due to the very nature of the police function, i.e., enforcement of laws and the apprehension of persons violating the law, the police are inherently placed in more dangerous situations and exposed to more potential violence than are any other occupational or social group, and 2) because of danger being intrinsic to the police role, the police develop unique perspectives of the real world and learn to perceive danger in a different manner than the non-police members of society.

In order to simplify the presentation of the literature, the discussion will be broken into two major sections. In the first case, the independent variables will be identified and their affect on the intervening variable will be examined. Secondly, the literature will be reviewed in reference to how the intervening variable affects the dependent variable, the perception of danger.

Independent Variables

It has been shown that police apparently are exposed to violence and danger while performing their jobs and this exposure is of greater magnitude than that

of other social and occupational groups. Marvin Wolfgang expresses this thought in saying:

The exposure to danger and potential violence is one of the most important ingredients separating the policeman from the "civilian." Policemen may be assaulted or insulted just because of their occupation; they are more likely to be assaulted or murdered in executing their duty than are others.¹²

The ways in which a police officer comes in contact with violence are numerous and varied. Because of the police function, the police are required to personally correct behavior, from what is considered mildly violent (i.e., mediating simple disputes between individuals) to correcting much greater levels of violence (i.e., apprehending persons whose activities have caused great injury to another or even death). Finally, in the process of enforcing the laws and exercising their authority, the police are at times exposed to assaults purposely directed at themselves - ranging from verbal assaults to fatal physical attacks. This later exposure is the most widely publicized. It should also be the most impressionable on the individual police officer because of its personalized nature.

The police are made aware of the existence of danger and potential violence through training and by what they learn from others in the occupation who have experienced

¹²Marvin Wolfgang and F. Ferracuti, "The Subculture of Violence," Studies in Homicide, edited by Marvin Wolfgang (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), p. 381.

violence first hand.¹³ David Bayley and Harold Mendelsohn point out that the police, through training and association with fellow officers, learn to become alert to danger.¹⁴ Richard Harris, in his study of the police academy, implies that the police recruit "learns" to recognize the dangers of police work and is made aware of the existence of danger during his period at the police academy.¹⁵ According to Harris, police recruits are taught that "the patrolman's occupation is dangerous - dangerous to himself, his family, and the people with whom he comes in contact."¹⁶ He must always be alert and concerned about unexpected situations that may be physically and economically dangerous to himself and his family.¹⁷ The police recruit is taught to perceive the world in a different way than the rest of society: to view it in context with danger.¹⁸

Thus, even before a police officer actually assumes the occupation as a practicing patrolman, he is, through pre-service training, conditioned into an awareness of the

¹³Sterling, pp. 248-251.

¹⁴David Bayley and Harold Mendelsohn, Minorities and the Police: Confrontation in America (New York: Free Press, 1969), p. 89.

¹⁵Richard Harris, The Police Academy: An Inside View (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1973), p. 69.

¹⁶Harris, p. 69.

¹⁷Harris, p. 70.

¹⁸Sterling, p. 245.

possible dangers of police work and is sensitized to dangerous and potentially violent situations.

It has been shown by various studies that this process of being "sensitized to danger and violence" continues throughout a police officer's career. He learns to naturally evaluate situations in terms of danger and potential violence through additional police experience.¹⁹ Sterling states that this perceptual ability is learned largely through experience.²⁰ Therefore, it can be concluded that experience as a police officer affects the exposure to danger and potential violence. Otherwise stated, an increase in experience (number of years as a police officer) should cause an increase in the exposure to danger and potential violence.

In keeping with this thought, it would then be logical to assume that the variable, age (number of years), should also have an exact positive relationship with the exposure to danger and potential violence. That is to say, as a subject's age increases, then his exposure to danger and potential violence should also increase. This assumption is made on the premise of experience being positively related to age. An increase in experience should

¹⁹Ronald K. Tauber, "Danger and the Police: A Theoretical Analysis," Issues in Criminology, 3 (Summer, 1967), p. 70.

²⁰Sterling, p. 250.

inherently mean an increase in age.

Violence in society today appears to be of major proportion. Contrary to thought, violence in today's society is not, however, evenly distributed throughout the social structure. There is much empirical evidence that a person's socio-economic status is an effective indicator for predicting rates of different kinds of deviance and awareness of violence.²¹ Wolfgang and F. Ferracuti, in their work with violence, theorize that in the lower socio-economic class, there is an overt use and exposure to violence; it appears "to be a cultural expression."²² They go on to state:

There is evidence that modes of control of expression of aggression in children vary among the social classes. Lower-class boys, for example, appear more likely to be oriented toward direct expression of aggression than are middle-class boys. The type of punishment meted out by parents to misbehaving children is related to this class orientation toward aggression. Lower-class mothers report that they or their husbands are likely to strike their children or threaten to strike them, whereas middle-class mothers report that their type of punishment is psychological rather than physical.²³

From the literature, it can be gathered that one's socio-economic status will affect the manner and frequency

²¹Wolfgang and Ferracuti, p. 380.

²²Wolfgang and Ferracuti, p. 382.

²³Wolfgang and Ferracuti, p. 382-383.

in which he will be made aware of overt physical violence and danger in society. Wolfgang and Ferracuti suggest that a person of lower socio-economic status is more aware of violence and danger when compared to a person of higher socio-economic status. They conclude that this difference is attributable to their socio-economic status. From this it can be inferred that as socio-economic status decreases, the exposure to danger and potential violence increases. Thus there is an inverse relationship between socio-economic status and the exposure to danger and violence.

Socio-economic status is a multi-dimensional variable. August Hollingshead, in his study of dimensions of socio-economic status, concluded that a person's occupation and income were the elements comprising socio-economic status.²⁴

Because of the nature of this study, the subjects involved in sampling come from two distinct populations: police and non-police (college students). It was felt that because the variables of occupation and income would not significantly vary within both groups, a scale utilizing other elements of socio-economic status had to be developed. It was concluded that in this present study, one could differentiate in terms of socio-economic status by tapping

²⁴August B. Hollingshead, "Two Factor Index of Social Position," unpublished article (New Haven, Connecticut, 1957), p. 10.

a subject's education, his father's education, and his father's occupation. Therefore, the socio-economic index consisted of a scale developed from measuring education, father's education, and father's occupation.

The independent variables identified as experience as a police officer, age, and socio-economic status have all been shown by prior literature to have an effect on the exposure to danger and potential violence. A review of the literature indicates that only the variables of experience and age have a positive relationship with the exposure to danger and potential violence. That is to say, as experience as a police officer and/or age increases, the exposure to danger and potential violence also increases. The relationship between socio-economic status (defined as the combination of education, father's education and father's occupation) and the exposure to danger and potential violence has been purported to be negative. That is to say, as socio-economic status increases, there is a decrease in the exposure to danger and potential violence.

Intervening Variable

At some time, each of us has been personally aware of danger and potential violence.²⁵ The difference

²⁵ Sterling, p. 245.

is that not all people experience the same level of exposure to danger and potential violence.²⁶ As shown previously by Wolfgang and Ferracuti, certain socio-economic classes become aware of danger and violence through the exposure to danger and violence as a cultural expression.²⁷

It has been hypothesized that the police deal with danger and potential violence directly as an element of their job. They become naturally more aware of danger and potential violence than any other social or occupational group.²⁸ The elements of danger and violence as intrinsic properties of the police role are the major differences between the police and the non-police.²⁹ The police occupation is inherently dangerous, whereas other occupations and social groups do not naturally involve danger and violence.³⁰

The exposure to danger and potential violence, or if we may call it, "policeness," is the cognition of danger and violence in society. It is the acknowledgement of the fact that danger and violence do exist.

²⁶Wolfgang and Ferracuti, pp. 382-383.

²⁷Wolfgang and Ferracuti, p. 383.

²⁸Skolnick, p. 44.

²⁹Bayley and Mendelsohn, p. 87.

³⁰Harris, p. 69.

"Policeness" may be divided into two dimensions; the awareness of physical danger and the awareness of psychological danger. Physical danger is concerned with the seeing or experiencing of actual physical injury to one's self or to another; whereas psychological danger is danger that is felt internally, i.e., a feeling of being in a dangerous situation which may not be overtly physically harmful.

Because of the element of "policeness" in the police occupation, it has been hypothesized that the police become sensitized to danger, that is, they have a greater perception of danger than any other social or occupational group.³¹

Policemen are the community's foremost defense against violence, whether committed by individuals or groups. They do stand as a thin line between the citizen and those choosing to flaunt society's norms and values. This being the case, it is easy to see how policemen become sensitized to the possibility of danger, partly as a normal human reaction, partly because duty enjoins them to meet and contain it.³²

In his work with the policeman's "working personality," Skolnick concludes that because of the element of danger being substantial in the police occupation, he becomes especially attentive to signs indicating a potential for violence and lawbreaking."³³ The policeman becomes a

³¹Sterling, p. 245.

³³Bayley and Mendelsohn, pp. 97-98.

³⁴Skolnick, p. 44.

"suspicious" person, sensitive to persons and situations in which violence may occur. In continuously dealing with danger and potential violence, the police develop certain cues to identify particular persons and situations that could be potentially violent.³⁴ The policeman works at identifying cues to violence in order to make more predictable the unpredictable mental and physical effects of the role related violence.

These cues also help to perceive and predict the level of possible danger. It has been shown in the literature concerning non-verbal communication that there are two central areas which generate non-verbal expression: the face and the hands.³⁶

Basic expressions of anger, fear, and happiness are universally recognizable emotions perceived from the face.³⁷ The expression of emotions can be a facet in evaluating individuals.³⁸

³⁴Skolnick, p. 45.

³⁵Skolnick, p. 45.

³⁶Paul Ekman and Wallace Friesen, Emotion in the Human Face: Guidelines for Research and an Intergration of Findings (New York: Pergamon Press, Inc., 1972), pp. 76-80.

³⁷Randall R. Harrison, Beyond Words (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1974), p. 120.

³⁸Jurgen Ruesch and Weldon Kees, Non-Verbal Communication: Notes on the Visual Perception of Human Relations (Los Angeles, California: University of California, 1972), p. 6.

The hands are also considered a central area for the expression of emotions.³⁹ As a method of determining the potential danger of a person, the police take good notice of the position of an individual's hands.⁴⁰ Basic hand positioning used in expressing emotions has been recognized as: crossed on chest, in pockets, pointing, and rested at side.⁴¹

Also, an important non-verbal cue to danger used by the police is body positioning.⁴² These have been labeled as: aggressively forward and passively retracted.⁴³

The police use these non-verbal dimensions of a person's demeanor to perceive and evaluate persons in terms of danger and potential violence.⁴⁴ Because of the social situational variable, exposure to danger and potential violence, it is hypothesized that the police "have a heightened perception of danger,"⁴⁵ in relation to the non-police. "The police learn to cope directly with

³⁹Richard Rozelle and James Baxter, "Impression Formation and Danger Recognition in Experienced Police Officers," Journal of Social Psychology, 96 (1973), p. 5.

⁴⁰Rozelle and Baxter, Impression Formation, p. 5.

⁴¹Julius Fast, Body Language (New York: M. Evans, 1970), pp. 63-65.

⁴²Rozelle and Baxter, Impression Formation, p. 55.

⁴³Fast, pp. 63-65.

⁴⁴Rozelle and Baxter, Impression Formation, p. 57.

⁴⁵Sterling, p. 245.

immediate personal danger whereas the rest of society learns merely to tolerate a generalized awareness of impersonal danger."⁴⁶ It has been implied by Bayley and Mendelsohn, Dodd and Skolnick that because of the increased awareness of danger and potential violence the police have a greater perception of danger than the non-police.

The police, as a result of combined features of social situation, (awareness of danger and potential violence), tend to develop ways of looking at the world distinctive to themselves, cognitive lenses through which to see situations and events, the strength of the lenses may be weaker or stronger depending on certain conditions, but they are ground on a similar axis.⁴⁷

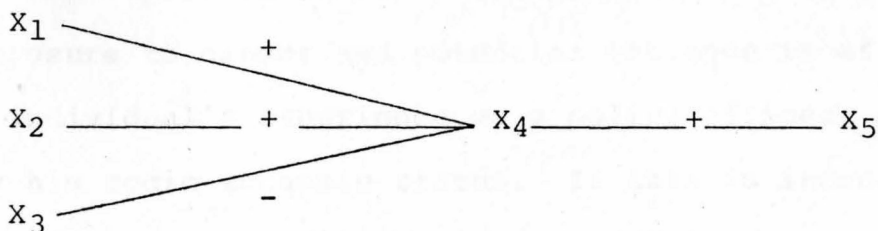
The perception of danger is concerned with the evaluation and conclusion made about an individual or a situation in terms of danger. It has been concluded by prior research that the perception of danger is affected by the situational variable, "policeness" (exposure to danger and potential violence).⁴⁸ The perception of danger, then, may be seen as being positively affected by the variable, "policeness." That is to say, as the exposure to danger and potential violence increases, there is an increase in the level of perceived danger (an increase of evaluating individuals and situations as being dangerous).

⁴⁶ Sterling, p. 246.

⁴⁷ Sterling, p. 245.

⁴⁸ Sterling, p. 245.

From the preceding review of the literature, the following recursive, theoretical model may be graphically represented:



WHERE:

X_1 = experience as police officer

X_2 = age

X_3 = socio-economic status

X_4 = "Policeness"

X_5 = perception of danger

The theoretical model specifies the causal relationship between the demographic variables defined in the literature, on the situational variable "policeness." Also considered in the model is the specification of the causal relationship between the situational variable "policeness" and the perception of danger.

Briefly, the model contends that the two demographic variables, age and experience, have a positive relationship to the situational variable, "policeness" (exposure to danger and potential violence). The third demographic variable, socio-economic status, has a negative affect on "policeness." Also, the situational variable, "policeness"

will have a positive affect on the dependent variable, perception of danger.

Delineation of Hypotheses

As expressed earlier, the literature indicates that the exposure to danger and potential violence is affected by an individual's experience as a police officer, his age, and by his socio-economic status. If this is indeed the case, then as the demographic variables, experience as a police officer and age, increase, the situational variable, "policeness," should also increase. As socio-economic status increases, the situational variable should decrease. In this present study, it is hypothesized that the demographic variables, experience as a police officer and age, are positively related to the situational variable. The variable, socio-economic status, is negatively related to "policeness."

Hypothesis 1: If there is an increase in the values of the demographic variables, experience as a police officer and age, then there will be an increase in the situational variable, "policeness" (exposure to danger and potential violence). The opposite is true for socio-economic status. That is, if socio-economic status increases, then there will be a decrease in the variable, "policeness."

As has been pointed out in the literature, the exposure to violence affects the way in which a person perceives danger. Because of danger and violence in society, it has been hypothesized that people learn to perceive danger differently when confronted with danger and potential violence frequently. In doing so, they become

sensitized to cues to danger and potential violence in order to lessen the unpredictability of violence.⁴⁹ It can be concluded then, that exposure to danger and potential violence is positively related to the level of perceived danger.

Therefore it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 2: If the situational variable ("police-ness") increases, then the level of perceived danger should also increase.

As noted before, much of the literature on the police as a social and occupational group, suggests that they have a heightened perception of danger due to the fact that it is intrinsic to their function as a police officer.⁵⁰ If this is the case, then the level of perceived danger by a group (police) receiving the treatment (being a police officer) should be significantly greater than the level of perceived danger by a group (non-police) not receiving the treatment.

Accordingly, it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 3: The perceived level of danger by the police will be significantly higher than the perceived level of danger by the non-police.

Summary

In summary, the above hypotheses specifically delineate the variable relationship found in the literature

⁴⁹Hans H. Toch and Richard Schulte, "Readiness to Perceive Violence as a Result of Police Training," British Journal of Psychology, 52 (1961), p. 392.

⁵⁰Skolnick, pp. 44-50.

and specified in the theoretical model. These relationships deal with demographics, the situational variable, and the level of perceived danger.

It was concluded from the literature that the demographic variables, experience as a police officer and age, have indicated a positive relationship with a person's exposure to danger and potential violence. That is to say, as a policeman gets older and gains experience as a police officer, then his exposure to danger and potential violence should increase. It has also been theorized that members of lower socio-economic classes are exposed to violence more than those from higher socio-economic classes. Thus, as a person's socio-economic status increases, his exposure to danger and potential violence should decrease.

The situational variable "policeness" (exposure to danger and potential violence) was shown in the literature to have a positive affect on the perception of danger (evaluating individuals and situations in terms of danger). From this it can be inferred that as a person's situational variable, "policeness," increases, his level of perceived danger should also increase.

The literature also indicated that the police function inherently involves danger and potential violence. It was suggested that because the police have a greater exposure to danger and potential violence, they have a

heightened perception of danger. That is to say, that if a person experiences the phenomena of being a police officer, then his perception of danger will be higher than if he did not.

From these propositions, a theoretical model was developed expressing the causal relationship between the variables identified in the literature. Three hypotheses were then derived from the model and in accordance with the literature in order to examine these relationships. The evaluation of the above stated hypotheses is presented in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

The collection and analysis of relevant data must be made in order to evaluate the hypotheses generated in the previous chapter. To be meaningful, the process of analysis and collection of data requires the use of appropriate research methodology. This chapter discusses the manner by which data was collected and analyzed. It includes a discussion and the justification of the research design, sampling, instrumentation and research procedures. Also, methodological problems concerning the implementation of the research are presented and discussed.

Design

A research design is the program that guides the investigator in the process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting observations. It is a model of proof that allows the researcher to draw inferences concerning causal relations among the variables under investigation . . . Furthermore, the research design defines the domain of generalizability; that is, whether the obtained interpretations can be generalized to a larger population or to different situations.⁵¹

⁵¹David Nachmias and Chava Nachmias, Research Methods in Social Sciences (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1976), p. 29.

In order to empirically examine the final hypotheses presented in the previous chapter, the research design must lend itself to a comparison between a police sample and a non-police sample.

A true experimental design consists of four components: "comparison, manipulation, control, and generalization."⁵² Due to the nature of this study, manipulation and control of the treatment is not possible. There is no way to assign subjects to receive the treatment. These subjects have been self-selected prior to the observation. In order to evaluate the differences between the treatment group and the non-treatment group, a design lending itself to comparison must be used.

An ex post facto, pre-experimental, Static-Group Comparison design is implemented as the most appropriate workable design.⁵³ This design was utilized given these requirements and limitations of the present study. The design is graphically represented as follows:

X	0 (Police Group)

	0 (Non-Police Group)

Where: X is the treatment "being a police officer,"
 0 is the observation. The broken line indicates
 no formal means of certifying that the groups would
 have been equivalent had it not been for the X.

⁵²Nachmias and Nachmias, p. 34.

⁵³D. T. Campbell and J.C. Stanley, Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Research (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1963), pp. 6-13.

According to D. T. Campbell and J. C. Stanley, there are certain factors that jeopardize the validity of research findings.⁵⁴ Campbell and Stanley also make a distinction between two kinds of validity. They are: internal validity and external validity:

Internal validity is the basic minimum without which any experiment is uninterpretable: did in fact the experiment treatments make a difference in this specific experimental instance? External validity asks the question of generalizability: to what populations, settings, treatment variables, and measurement variables can this effect be generalized?⁵⁵

Campbell and Stanley discuss twelve variables which jeopardize the validity of experimental findings. Eight of these variables pertain to internal validity, which, if not controlled in the experimental design, might produce effects confounded with the effect of the experimental stimulus. Four of these variables affect the external validity or representativeness of the study.⁵⁶

At this time the author does not wish to deal with each of the twelve possible sources of rival interpretations, but to examine and discuss the particular factors that are relevant and a possible source of bias to the Static-Group Comparison design.

⁵⁴Campbell and Stanley, p. 5

⁵⁵Campbell and Stanley, p. 5.

⁵⁶Campbell and Stanley, p. 5.

Problems Encountered with the Research Design

The Static-Group Comparison research design, as discussed by Campbell and Stanley, is a design in which a group, which has experienced "X", is compared with one which has not. This comparison is made for the purpose of establishing the effect of "X".⁵⁷ Translated to reflect this present study, the design is a comparison between a group of police officers and a group of non-police, in terms of perceived danger. The comparison is made for the purpose of establishing the effects of the treatment on the perception of danger. This treatment is being a police officer.

Because of financial limitations, the subjects studied were purposively selected from the two populations, police and non-police. Systematic differences, which are typically introduced through non-random selection, may contribute to spurious interpretations of the findings.⁵⁸ Campbell and Stanley label this source of invalidity, selection. The differential selection of respondents for the comparison groups may produce results which can be possible sources in biasing the findings. That is to say, there may be something particular to those sampled that would affect the findings. These possible biasing effects

⁵⁷Campbell and Stanley, p. 12.

⁵⁸H.W. Smith, Strategies of Social Research: The Methodological Imagination (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975), p. 64.

can be controlled for through random selection.⁵⁹ By using random selection, we theoretically control for possible biasing factors. However, because of the inability to randomly select and assign subjects into treatment and control groups, this possible source of bias must be recognized.

If the police and the non-police samples differ in regards to their perceived level of danger, it could well have been that they differed prior to, and not because of, the treatment. Because of limitations regarding random assignment, the threat of selection effects must be taken into consideration in making any conclusions from the findings.

Experimental mortality or differential loss of respondents from the comparison groups is also recognized as being a possible confounding variable in regards to the Static-Group Comparison design.⁶⁰ The question relevant to whether or not there is something in common about those people who dropped out of the experiment must be examined. If this threat is operative, then the police might differ not because of the treatment, but because of the selective dropout of persons from one of the groups. It is the author's opinion that the total number of subjects involved in dropout is not large enough (10%) to play a significant role in biasing the findings.

⁵⁹Campbell and Stanley, p. 5-13.

⁶⁰Campbell and Stanley, p. 12.

A final possible confounding variable in relation to the internal validity of the Static-Group Comparison design is the effect of selection-maturation interaction, etc. This possible confounding factor can be operational when differential-sample selection works in conjunction with maturation, history, testing, etc., to produce spurious results. For instance, because of a differential sample, the subjects involved may have had taken a number of surveys concerning this subject. Because of this, perhaps the group had built up an indifference to these types of questionnaires. This could affect their responses or lack thereof. The effect of differential-selection and maturation-interaction could be mistaken for the effect of "X". This variable can be a possible threat to the internal validity of the experiment.⁶¹

The three major confounding variables concerning the internal validity of the experimental design, then, are differential selection and maturation, etc. These threats are possibly operating and are recognized as potentially biasing the findings.

External validity deals with a different question than internal validity. External validity asks the question: "How representative of, or generalizable, to particular populations, settings, independent variables, and dependent

⁶¹Campbell and Stanley, p. 48.

variables, is the study?"⁶² There are four rival causal explanations which are relative to external validity. They are: reactive or interactive effect of testing, interaction effects of selection biases and the experimental variable, reactive effects of experimental arrangements and multiple-treatment interference.⁶³ "While internal validity is the sine qua non, the question of external validity . . . is never completely answerable."⁶⁴ The possible biasing variables concerning the external validity of the Static-Group Comparison design as shown by Campbell and Stanley are: interaction of selection and treatment and reactive effects of experimental arrangements.

The interaction of selection and treatment suggests that differentially selected samples may give responses unrepresentative of the group they are being compared to.⁶⁵ This source of possible biasing effects will be discussed more in the section on sampling.

The exposure to the particular data-collection instrument may lead to a change of behavior in contrast to normal behavior. Because of data-collection arrangements,

⁶²Smith, p. 68.

⁶³Smith, p. 70.

⁶⁴Campbell and Stanley, p. 5.

⁶⁵Smith, p. 71.

subjects may react in a particular manner simply because they gear their responses to match their perception of the researcher's expectations.⁶⁶ This possible rival cause is labeled by Campbell and Stanley as "reactive effects of data-collection arrangements."⁶⁷ The possible affects of data-collection arrangements will be examined in the section assigned to research procedure.

In conclusion, because of the hypotheses being examined and the researcher's financial, time, and sampling limitations, a design reflecting 1) the inability to randomly assign subjects to the treatment, 2) the impossibility of administering a pre-test, and 3) the need for comparison groups is needed. A Static-Group comparison design is selected as the most appropriate design given these requirements and limitations.

Due to the nature of the design, five threats to the validity of findings are recognized as being possibly operative. They are problems of differential selection, mortality, interaction of selection and maturation, etc., interaction of selection and treatment, and reactive effects of data-collection arrangements. Each threat must be weighed in terms of its significant affect on the findings of the present study.

⁶⁶Smith, p. 71.

⁶⁷Campbell and Stanley, p. 6.

Sampling

Sampling is a method by which we infer the characteristics of one group (a population) by using a selection of elements of that group (a sample).⁶⁸ The ability to make inferences from a particular sample to a population depends on the representativeness (random selection) of the sample to the population.

This study is dealing with two distinct populations: police and non-police. From these two general universes, two working universes are selected and sampled.

Selection of the Police Sample

The police sample is randomly selected from a purposively selected police department. The sample is derived from a random selection of police officers from the Youngstown Police Department, Youngstown, Ohio. Only those officers who were present for roll call on each of the three tours of duty (6:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.; 2:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.; and 10:00 p.m. - 6:00 a.m.) during one twenty-four hour period were sampled. This sampling excluded those with days off, sick leave, or vacation during the period the survey was conducted. It is assumed that possible biases created by days off, sick leave, or vacations are not systematically distributed and do not significantly affect the findings.

⁶⁸Smith, p. 105.

The Youngstown Police Department is chosen as the treatment group to be sampled from because of 1) accessibility, 2) cooperativeness of Youngstown Police Department officials, 3) financial limitations of researcher, 4) time considerations, and 5) they have received the treatment (being a police officer). It is also chosen because it is believed that the Youngstown Police Department is representative of the police in general. The Youngstown Police Department is a medium-sized department with the same characteristics of both a small and large department. It is felt that because of the nature of the Youngstown Police Department, it is the most viable sample available.

The police sample consists of fifty-nine (59) Youngstown Police Officers. Of these 59 officers, nine (9) were excluded due to failure to complete the survey.

Selection of Non-Police Sample

The non-police sample analyzed is also based on "purposeful sampling." The subjects are selected from Youngstown State University students because of financial limitations and problems associated with accessibility. Students attending Youngstown State University were chosen as a comparison group for three basic reasons. These are: 1) time considerations, 2) financial limitations, and 3) cooperation of University officials. It was also

more importantly felt that the sample population (Youngstown State University students) would be fundamentally alike to the comparison group (Youngstown Police Officers) except for the treatment variable (being a police officer). This assumption is concerned with variables of age, race, and socio-economic status, which should be relatively equal between the groups.

The non-police sample consists of thirty-five (35) Youngstown State University students "purposively sampled" from students enrolled in classes offered in the summer quarter. All of the questionnaires were completed and none refused to participate.

Problems Associated with Sample Selection

The "purposive sampling" method employed in this study generates a distinct threat to its external validity. Because of limitations previously identified, the sampling of both working universes is non-random. The purposive sampling method creates two specific threats to external validity. They are problems associated with differential selection and selection-treatment interaction.

Due to the nature of the study, it was considered impossible to randomly select individuals from the population and then randomly assign them into either the treatment or the control group. Because of these limitations, the problem of differential selection is a possible biasing factor. The question, "Are the members of the sample (Youngstown Police Department officers and

Youngstown State University students) representative of the universes they were drawn from (police and non-police)?" must be evaluated when making any generalizations from the data.

Another potential problem concerns the effect of "selection-treatment interaction" or the interaction effects of selection biases and the experimental variable. It could be possible that there may be something particular about those subjects sampled that interacts with the treatment to create a non-representative response. This possible effect must also be taken into consideration when making any generalizations to any group other than the particular samples involved.

Although these two problems associated with sampling could not be controlled in the design, it is assumed that their possible biasing effects do not warrant the expurgation of the data collection.

Instrumentation

Given the demands of the theory, restrictions in the research setting, financial and time limitations, a survey technique is deemed the most appropriate workable instrument. The survey technique was chosen over other data collection techniques (interviews, participant observations, etc.) because of financial and time limitations.

The survey instrument consists of a professionally printed booklet containing three pages of closed and structured questions.

The Police Questionnaire

The police have received a questionnaire (Appendix A) which includes questions concerning the subject's demographics, exposure to danger and potential violence, and Likert type attitudinal questions. Since both the police and non-police scales were the same, they are discussed in the section concerning the non-police questionnaire.

The Non-Police Questionnaire

The non-police have received a questionnaire containing similar questions to those given to the police. The non-police questionnaire (Appendix B) included questions concerning the subject's demographics, a scale tapping exposure to danger and potential violence, and Likert type attitudinal questions.

Both police and non-police questionnaires contain seven questions regarding the subject's demographics. They are: age, race, subject's education, and father's occupation. The police are asked to state the number of years they have been a police officer and what their present rank is. The non-police, on the other hand, are asked to state their occupation other than being a student, and also, if they had ever been a police officer.

In the police sample the variables of race and rank do not significantly vary and are excluded from further analysis. With the non-police sample, race

and prior experience as a police officer are also dropped from the analysis for this same reason.

In both the police and the non-police questionnaires, three scales were developed. They are: a socio-economic scale, a "policeness" scale (exposure to danger and potential violence), and a scale tapping the level of perceived danger.

The socio-economic scale is developed by tapping a subject's education, his father's education and his father's occupation. The socio-economic status scale is computed by multiplying the subject's father's occupation by seven, adding it to the subject's education which is multiplied by four, and then adding this sum to the subject's father's education which is multiplied by two.⁶⁹ This sum is then divided by three to give one score for a person's socio-economic status.

A "policeness" score is developed for both samples by asking the subjects to respond to questions aimed at measuring a subject's awareness of danger and potential violence. The questions range from:

1) In the course of your daily activities, have you ever been in a situation in which you felt your physical well-being was in danger from some other individual? to

5) Have you ever witnessed an attack that led to fatality? (Appendix A)

⁶⁹August B. Hollingshead, "Two Factor Index of Social Position" unpublished article (New Haven, Connecticut: 1957), pp. 5-8.

In each case, the subjects are also asked to give the number of times this situation has occurred. It is from this response that a "policeness" score is developed. Responses are coded according to the number of times a subject reported that this situation has occurred. They are: 1 = 0 times; 2 = 1-5 times; 3 = 6-10 times; and 4 = 10 or more times; that the situation has occurred. Each response is weighed in terms of its importance to the variable "policeness" with a feeling of danger given a factor of one, to witnessing a deadly assault given a factor of five, and corresponding factors given to the responses for questions 9 - 11. (Appendix A) The five responses are then added together and divided by five to give one score representing the situational variable "policeness."

The final score is concerned with a perceived danger score. In order to measure the level of perceived danger a "Visual Stimulus Instrument" was developed. The subjects are shown 34 color, photographic slides and are asked to respond to them in terms of danger perceived from each individual slide. Responses were made on a five point Likert-type scale, which ranged from a response of 1 for "not dangerous" to 5 for "very dangerous."

The "Visual Stimulus Instrument" is made up of 34 color, photographic slides. The slides depict various individuals in a variety of different poses. All

individuals in the slides were photographed in front of a neutral black background with no other articles within the slide but the individual himself. All individuals depicted in the slides were white, young (18-32), average-sized (5'10", 150 lbs.) males dressed in typical college student apparel (jeans and a flannel shirt). Each individual was also neatly groomed and free from a beard. Some did, however, have a mustache. Hair length was basically the same length (ears slightly covered) and was well groomed.

The different poses were developed from a review of pertinent, non-verbal communication literature, in order to operationalize the expression of emotions that are used by others as cues to danger or violence. The variables isolated in the slides, in accordance with the literature, are as follows:

FACIAL EXPRESSION:

1. enraged or angered
2. gasping fearful
3. smiling or happy
4. neutral, non-expression

HAND POSITION:

1. crossed on chest
2. in front pockets
3. pointing at subject
4. rested at sides

BODY POSITION:

1. aggressively forward
2. passively retracted

An example of a slide would be: a white, college-aged male dressed in jeans and a flannel or work shirt,

standing in front of a neutral black background, in a leaning forward aggressive position with an angered facial expression and with his hands in his front pockets.

Thirty-two slides were picked from a pool of seventy-two as the best representing the above stated variables by a panel of three expert judges. Two of the thirty-two slides were randomly chosen to be repeated and later used for a check on the reliability of the instrument.⁷⁰

Upon viewing each slide, the subjects were asked to respond to a singular question:

"In the course of your daily activity you must approach this man on the screen. In your opinion, to what degree could this man be dangerous and a possible harm to your physical well-being?"

Responses were given by circling on the subject's questionnaire the appropriate response. These ranged from 1 = "not dangerous" to 5 = "very dangerous" with 2, 3, and 4 being varying degrees between the two extremes. A pre-test given to a group of college students revealed that a one-second period of viewing the slide was sufficient to view the slide and make certain initial impressions. The pre-test also revealed that upon viewing the slide, fifteen seconds were adequate to make the appropriate response on the questionnaire.

A danger score was then established for each subject by adding the thirty-four responses made and

⁷⁰Smith, p. 59.

dividing by the number of slides (34). Each subject was then assigned a single danger score. Each subject now has a single score for socio-economic status, "policeness," and danger.

Problems Concerned with Instrumentation

There are three major problems encountered in the instrumentation utilized in this research. They are the problems of evaluator apprehension, validity of measurement, and reliability of the instrument.

In the research setting, it is possible that the subjects responded to the instrument in such a manner that would be reflective of perceived experimenter expectations and/or responses in keeping with societal expectations. In other words, in reacting to a question dealing with a person's feeling of fear perhaps the reaction was affected by the pressures imposed by society on the subject rather than a "true" response to the instrument. It could be possible that a survey constructed to tap an individual's perception of danger may be affected by the subject's feelings about admitting a feeling of danger. For example, a police officer may feel that a response indicating that he perceives a situation as highly dangerous is not in keeping with the expectations that are placed on a police officer. If so, then the scores regarding "policeness" and danger

may be affected by these demand characteristics inherent in the research setting.

This problem for the time can only be recognized and speculated upon. We do not know if indeed this rival causal variable is functioning. It is apparent that there is need for further research into the measurement of fear and the effects the stated demand characteristics have on the perception of danger.

Validity of measurement deals with the degree that the measurement being used represents the concept from which generalizations are to be made.⁷¹ Does the instrument used to measure "policeness" or to measure perceived danger represent the concepts of "policeness" and/or perceived danger? Because of the limitations concerning the prior research done in the field, it was required that measures be developed. A panel of expert judges was administered the instrument in a pre-test. It was judged that the instrument did measure the variables being operationalized. It should, however, be pointed out that there is a need for further research into improving these imperfect measures.

Thus, although the problems associated with the instrument are potential invalidators of the findings, it is presumed that their effects are slight.

⁷¹Smith, pp. 87-95.

Procedure

The administration of both the police and the non-police instrument took place during the normal work or school day and was administered in a natural setting (police station, classroom).

In all instances, the researcher was introduced by either the commanding officer (police sample) or the class instructor (non-police sample) as a graduate student from Youngstown State University conducting graduate level research. The commanding officer in the police sample also stated that the study was sanctioned by the department's administration. In both cases the commanding officer or the class instructor requested full subject cooperation.

The questionnaire in all cases was administered by the principal investigator.

Administration Procedure of the Police Sample

Administration of the survey concerning the police sample took place after roll call and prior to field assignment in the roll call room. In doing so, it allowed for all subjects to be surveyed in one place and in an organized manner. It also caused the least amount of inconvenience to the participating agency.

After being formally introduced by the commanding officer, the researcher introduced himself and passed out the questionnaires. The following was the standard

introduction made by the investigator:

"Good morning, (afternoon or evening) gentlemen. My name is John Jones and I am a graduate student at Youngstown State University. I am conducting a study into the perception of potential danger in field situations by the police.

You will be shown 34 photographic slides of various individuals and be asked to evaluate each in terms of your perceived danger from them. Each slide will be flashed for but a second and fifteen seconds will be given to respond to each slide. Each response should be of your first impressions. Circle the number on the questionnaire in front of you which most closely represents your feelings of that particular slide. The responses range from 1 for 'not dangerous' to 5 for 'very dangerous.' The varying degrees between the two extremes are represented by a 2, 3, and 4. Please circle only one number.

In evaluating each slide, the following question should be answered:

'In the course of your daily activity, you must approach this man on the screen. In your opinion, to what degree could this man be dangerous and a possible harm to your physical well-being.'

Your participation in this study is purely voluntary and that if so wished, you may feel free to discontinue participation in this study at any time. All information from this investigation will be held confidential. Findings of this study will be made available for examination to those requesting so.

Thank you for your cooperation."

Upon completion of the slide presentation, the officers were asked to respond to the questions on the final page of the booklet concerning the subject's demographics and the "policeness" scale. It took from seven to ten minutes for the police sample to complete the entire instrument. After the last officer finished,

the questionnaires were gathered and the researcher thanked them for their cooperation. They were then allowed to return to their tour assignments. In all cases, the administration of the questionnaires went smoothly and subject cooperation was very good.

Administration Procedure of the Non-Police Sample

The non-police were administered the instrument prior to the beginning of a scheduled class (for reasons of convenience to the class instructor). The researcher was introduced to the non-police sample by the class instructor. The researcher then distributed the questionnaires and introduced himself in the same manner as done with the police sample. The following introduction was used:

"Good morning, (afternoon). My name is John Jones and I am a graduate student here at Youngstown State University. I am currently doing some research into the perception of danger. This study is designed to examine the perception of danger by people more closely.

You will be shown 34 photographic slides of various individuals and be asked to evaluate each in terms of perceived danger. Each slide will be flashed for but a second and fifteen seconds will be given to respond on the questionnaire to each slide. Each response should be your first impressions. Circle the number which most clearly represents your feelings of that particular slide on the questionnaire in front of you. The responses range from 1 for 'not dangerous' to 5 for 'very dangerous.' The varying degrees between the two extremes are represented by a 2, 3, and 4. Please circle only one number.

In evaluating each slide, the following question should be answered:

'In the course of your daily activity, you must approach this man on the screen. In your opinion, to what degree could this man be dangerous and a possible harm to your physical well-being.'

Your participation in this study is purely voluntary and that if so wished, you may feel free to discontinue participation in this study at any time. All information from this study will be held confidential. Findings of this study will be made available for examination by those requesting so.

Thank you for your cooperation."

Upon completion of the slide presentation, the subjects were asked to respond to the questions on the final page of the booklet concerning their demographics and information relevant to the "policeness" scale. It took the non-police sample from six to eight minutes to complete the entire questionnaire. After the last subject finished, the questionnaires were gathered and the researcher thanked them for their cooperation. The class instructor then proceeded to conduct the scheduled class.

The administration of the instrument went smoothly in the non-police sample, and the cooperation, like that of the police sample, was very good.

Problems Encountered in Instrument Administration

The major problem concerning procedure is the possible presence of demand characteristics. H.W. Smith discusses the problem associated with possible effects

created by the experimenter's personality. He suggests that subject's response may be affected by his perceptions of the experimenter's status, behavior, or attitudes. Campbell and Stanley label this factor "reactive effects of experimental arrangements."⁷² Efforts were made by the experimenter to present himself in the most neutral, professional manner possible. Also, the use of only one experimenter in the administration of the instrument was considered to minimize this effect.

There is also the possibility that some recent event outside of the research design, i.e., recent, widely published outbreak of violence, may have an effect on the validity of the findings. Again, this rival cause is apparently not functioning and this effect is also deemed to be of minimal effect on the findings of this present study.

Summary

This chapter has dealt with the design, sampling, instrumentation, and procedure utilized in evaluating the hypotheses generated in Chapter II. Consideration was given to problems of reliability, validity, and generalizability of the findings.

Because of time considerations and financial limitations, a non-experimental Static-Group Comparison

⁷²Campbell and Stanley, p. 6.

design is implemented as the most workable research design. Inherent in the design are problems concerned with internal and external validity. There were defined as problems relevant to selection of sample, differential mortality, selection-maturation interaction, interaction of selection and treatment, and reactive effects of experimental arrangements.

Each of these threats are recognized as being possibly operative in the present study. The extent to which these problems bias the findings is not self-evident. It can only be said that in evaluating the data collected within the methodology utilized, one must be cognizant of these possible biasing effects. It is believed, however, that although there are certain factors limiting the methodology utilized, their possible biasing affect on the findings are considered minimal.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The present chapter is devoted to the analysis of the data gathered within the framework defined in Chapter II. In doing so, consideration is given to analyzing these data in reference to the theoretical model developed from the literature and presented in Chapter II.

From the model developed, three hypotheses were formulated. These concerned the relationship between (1) demographics and "policeness" and (2) "policeness" and the perception of danger. The three hypotheses are briefly stated thus:

- H₁ A subject's age and experience as a police officer is positively related to "policeness." Whereas a subject's socio-economic status is negatively related to "policeness."
- H₂ A subject's level of "policeness" is positively related to the perception of danger.
- H₃ Because of the element "policeness" in the police occupation the police perceive danger significantly higher than non-police.

The present chapter empirically tests these propositionally derived hypotheses by analysis using data from both a police and a non-police sample. Hypotheses 1 and 2 involve the analysis related to within a police group and Hypothesis 3 involves between

group analysis. As noted in Chapter III the police sample consisted of 50 subjects. Demographically, the police sample consisted of only males who were currently employed as a police officer for the City of Youngstown. Of this group 96% were white and 4% were nonwhite. Levels of education included some high school (6%), equivalency certificate (4%), high school graduate (28%), some college experience (38%), and college graduate (24%). Their ages were divided into four groupings 22-25 years (12%), 26-30 years (32%), 31-40 years (28%), and over 40 years (28%).

The non-police sample (N=35) was 88.6% white and 11.4% nonwhite. Levels of education included some college (85.7%), college graduate (11.4%), and post graduate (2.9%). Their ages were divided into five groupings 18-21 years (28.6%), 22-25 years (34.3%), 26-30 years (17.1%), 31-40 years (11.4%), and over 40 years (8.6%).

Hypotheses and Findings

In order to present the findings more clearly, this portion of the chapter is divided into three sections. Each section includes a statement of the hypothesis, the statistical techniques employed, a presentation of the findings, interpretation, and comment on the findings.

Section 1

Hypothesis 1: If there is an increase in the values of the demographic variables, experience as a police officer and age, there will be an increase in the

situational variable, "policeness" (exposure to danger and potential violence). The opposite is true for socio-economic status. That is, if socio-economic status increases, then there will be a decrease in the variable, "policeness."

An analysis of this hypothesis takes into consideration demographic variables which include experience as a police officer, age, and socio-economic status in the police sample. Their relationship to the situational variable "policeness" was examined to determine the manner in which demographics affect "policeness." As stated in the hypothesis, we would expect that as a subject's years of experience as a police officer and age increased, then his exposure to danger and potential violence would increase. We would expect that as a subject's socio-economic status increased, the exposure to danger and potential violence would decrease. The thought and logic behind this was developed through a review of the pertinent literature (Chapter II).

The analysis, then, observed the relationship between a police officer's demographics and "policeness." Upon observation of a scattergram, the data was considered (1) linear (throughout the entire spectrum of the phenomena, as one value increased, the corresponding value increased and vice versa), (2) homoscedastic (bi-variate values are normally distributed around the least squares line), and (3) interval (data with no inherent zero point and having equal conceptual spacing). The Pearson product-moment

correlation was considered as the most appropriate measurement of association given these properties. The analysis is accomplished by using zero order correlations between a subject's experience as a police officer, age, and socio-economic status and "policeness."

The findings are presented in Table 1 with consideration given to the police sample.

TABLE 1
Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficients

	<u>EXPERIENCE</u>	<u>AGE</u>	<u>SES</u>	<u>"POLICENESS"</u>	<u>DANGER</u>
<u>EXPERIENCE</u>	1.0000				
<u>AGE</u>	.9616 (.9246)	1.0000			
<u>SES</u>	-.4949 (.2449)	-.5183 (.2686)	1.0000		
<u>"POLICENESS"</u>	.2512 (.0631)	.2535 (.0642)	-.2831 (.0801)	1.0000	
<u>DANGER</u>	.0180 (.0003)	.0037 (.00001)	-.1949 (.0380)	.1388 (.0192)	1.0000

N = 50

Numbers in parenthesis are r^2 values.

In evaluating the findings concerning the police sample, it becomes apparent that the demographic variables are explaining very little of the total variance in the

variable "policeness." Experience as a police officer, with a zero order correlation coefficient of 0.2512, explains little more than 6% ($r^2 = .0642$) of the variance in "policeness."⁷³ A subject's socio-economic status has been shown to be negatively related to the variable "policeness." The zero order correlations for socio-economic status ($r = -0.2813$) indicates that socio-economic status is explaining 8% ($r^2 = .0801$) of the variance in "policeness."

The findings concerning the relationship between demographics and "policeness" indicate an 8% maximum level of variance explained. Although in all cases the relationships are directionally in keeping with the stated hypothesis, the relationships are very weak. That is to say, given a subject's years of experience as a police officer, age, or socio-economic status, we could predict his "policeness" score a maximum 8% of the time.

Previous social research has determined that a 10% level of explained variance is a minimum to justify further investigation of the hypothesis.⁷⁴ It is felt

⁷³ r^2 is the variance explained.

⁷⁴ John Muellar, Karl Schuessler, and Herbert Costner, Statistical Reasoning in Sociology, (2nd edition; Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1970).

Peggy, Giordano, "Sense of Injustice: Reaction to the Justice System," Criminology, 14 (May, 1976).

given prior research, that a maximum 8% explanation of the variance is not adequate enough to support the working hypothesis. It is, therefore, concluded that with the present data, the stated hypothesis has failed to be supported.

Section 2

Hypothesis 2: If there is an increase in the situational variable "policeness," then there will be an increase in the level of perceived danger.

Analysis of this hypothesis requires the examination of the relationship between the variable "policeness" and the independent variable, perception of danger. As developed in Chapter II, we can expect that there is a positive relationship between a subject's "policeness" score and the level of perceived danger. As the situational variable "policeness" increases, we should find a subsequent increase in the level of perceived danger.

Upon inspection of the data through the use of a scattergram, it was deemed that the data were linear, homoscedastic, and interval. Because of these properties, the Pearson product-moment correlation (Pearson r) was considered the most appropriate measurement of association available to evaluate the stated hypothesis.

Table 1 reflects the zero order correlation made between the variables "policeness" and the perception of danger.

With the police sample, the "policeness" correlational coefficient with regards to perceived danger was .1388.

Thus, "policeness" in this case, is explaining little more than 1% ($r^2 = .0192$) of the variance in danger.

Given the criteria level of a 10% variance explained, the variable "policeness," explaining 1% of the variance in danger, is very weak. It can be concluded that given these data the hypothesis is not supported.

Section 3

Hypothesis 3: The perceived level of danger by the police will be significantly higher than the perceived level of danger by the non-police.

Analysis of this hypothesis required the use of between group analysis to see if the perception of danger is significantly affected by the treatment variable. The analysis concerns making comparisons between a police sample and a non-police sample in terms of perceived danger.

The literature concerning perception of danger by the police suggests that the police do have a heightened perception of danger in comparison to the non-police.⁷⁵ Therefore, we would expect the police sample to score significantly higher than the non-police sample in the perception of danger.

Analysis of the data must lend itself to a comparison between a police sample and a non-police sample in terms of level of perceived danger.

⁷⁵Sterling, p. 245.

By reviewing a scattergram of the danger scores, it was revealed that (1) the scores were basically normally distributed, (2) the data was interval and (3) the population variances were equal. Because of these three properties, it was concluded that a parametric test of significance would be the most appropriate means of analyzing the data. The statistical test selected for this analysis was the T test for pooled estimates of the standard error.⁷⁶ This statistic test was selected for three reasons: (1) the pooled estimate of the standard error corrects for unequal sample size, (2) the T test for pooled estimate of standard error is the most appropriate test when dealing with a small sample size, and (3) since analysis consisted of comparisons between two means, the T test was the most powerful parametric test that could be employed. An alpha level of .01 was chosen as the level of significance. Previous social research has shown this to be an acceptable level of significance.⁷⁷ Furthermore, because the direction of the relationship was predicted, a one-tailed test of significance was used.

The T test is employed to make a decision between two hypotheses, null and working, about some element of a

⁷⁶Hubert Blalock, Jr. and Ann B. Blalock, Methodology in Social Research (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1968), pp. 188-192.

⁷⁷Denton Morrison and Ramon Henkel, "Significance Tests Reconsidered," The American Sociologist, 2 (1969), p. 131.

population on the basis of a sample of the population. The null hypothesis is an assertion that the groups do not differ in terms of some characteristic. In this study, the null hypothesis (H_0) is stated:

H_0 There is no difference in the level of perceived danger between the police and the non-police.

The null hypothesis, then, is created for the "express purpose of seeing if there is empirical warrant for its rejection or nullification so that the alternative (working) hypothesis can be accepted."⁷⁸

Table 2 presents the findings of this analysis.

TABLE 2

T Test for Pooled Estimate
of Standard Error

PERCEPTION OF DANGER	\bar{x}	s	t	p
<u>POLICE (N=50)</u>	2.499	0.532	3.840	.00012*
<u>NON-POLICE (N=35)</u>	2.104	0.415		

*Significant at the .01 alpha level.

p=Probability based on a one-tailed test of significance.

⁷⁸Morrison and Henkel, p. 132.

The perception of danger by the police was statistically significant at the .01 alpha level ($t=3.840$; $p=.00012$).

Since the observed t value lies in the "zone of rejection" (using the .01 alpha level), we conclude that the data has cast doubt on the hypothesis that no difference exists between populations means.⁷⁹ The working hypothesis is tentatively supported.

In rejecting the null hypothesis, we conclude that the observed differences would be unlikely to occur by chance alone ($t=.00012$). That is to say, sampling variation alone probably is not responsible for the observed difference.

The T test in its theoretical sense is simply designed for "assessing the sampling error of a statistic designed to describe a particular population on the basis of a probability (random) sample."⁸⁰ Because of certain limitations concerning the sampling methods utilized, this present study's samples are not based on probability. Morrison and Henkel, in their critic of the significance test, warn against the use of statistical significance to judge substantive significance.

The practice of using statistical significance to judge substantive significance is often made as

⁷⁹Muellar, Schuessler, and Costner, pp. 401-404.

⁸⁰Morrison and Henkel, p. 132.

an outright and simple error of misinterpretation, wherein statistical significance is taken as the criterion for considering a finding substantively important.⁸¹

Although there are problems concerning the use of the T test with non-random assignment, it is considered the most appropriate test available. The T value computed concludes that the possibility of the differences observed being by chance alone are very little ($p=.00012$). From this it can be said that the null hypothesis, stating no difference between populations, is rejected and the alternate hypothesis, stating that there is a difference between the police and the non-police in their perception of danger is tentatively supported by the present data.

Summary

The "policeness" theory as operationalized in this study did not adequately explain the process of the perception of danger. Although the relationships were in the predicted direction, the relationships were weak. For example, the correlation coefficient of determination (containing experience as a police officer, age, and socio-economic status) could only explain a small portion of the total variance in "policeness" (experience = 6%; age = 6%; socio-economic status = 8%). Furthermore, the

⁸¹Morrison and Henkel, p. 136.

correlation coefficient concerning the relationship between "policeness" and the perception of danger was also very weak ("policeness" = 1%).

Generally, then, the theory as operationalized did not offer support for the model. Whether the lack of relationship was due to faulty operationalization of the variables, the invalidity of the measures or the invalidity of the perspective itself can only be speculated upon. It is clear that there is a need for further research in the field concerning the variables that effect the perception of danger.

One interesting finding, though, is centered around the principal concept of this study. That is, that the police have a heightened perception of danger in contrast to the non-police. The findings show that the difference between the police and the non-police is statistically significant ($t=3.840$; $p=.00012$) in their perception of danger. It is pointed out, however, that any conclusions drawn from this data must be concerned with the limitations of non-random sampling/assignment.

From reviewing the findings, it is apparent that the causal model as defined by the literature has failed to be supported and that variables as defined by the literature are not, in fact, related to the perception of danger by the police.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study examined the variables affecting the perception of danger. The variables studied were selected on the basis of prior research into the perception of danger. This research indicated a relationship between the exposure to violence and the perception of danger. Furthermore, variables concerning a person's demographics (experience as a police officer, age, and socio-economic status) were theorized as to explain changes in a person's exposure to violence.

From a review of the literature pertinent to the variables affecting the perception of danger three working hypotheses were developed. Hypotheses 1 and 2 evaluated the affect the variables as defined in the literature had on the perception of danger. Hypothesis 3 dealt with evaluating the effects the treatment (being a police officer) has on the perception of danger. These hypotheses are stated as follows:

Hypothesis 1: If there is an increase in the values of the demographic variables, experience as a police officer and age, there will be an increase in the situational variable, "policeness" (exposure to danger and potential violence). The opposite is true for socio-economic status. That is, if socio-economic

status increases, then there will be a decrease in the variable, "policeness."

Hypothesis 2: If there is an increase in the situational variable, "policeness," then there will be an increase in the level of perceived danger.

Hypothesis 3: The perceived level of danger by the police will be significantly higher than the perceived level of danger by the non-police.

These hypotheses were evaluated using data collected from a police and a non-police sample.

The samples in this study were drawn from two distinct populations: police and non-police. The police sample (N=59) consisted of City of Youngstown Police Officers. The police officers in the Youngstown Police Department were utilized because it was felt that they met the criteria of being representative of the police population.

The non-police sample (N=35) consisted of students enrolled in classes at Youngstown State University. The non-police sample was selected from Youngstown State University students because it was felt that they were fundamentally the same as the treatment group except for the treatment itself. The student group was considered the comparison group.

Both samples were administered a survey geared to measuring the dimensions of the variables defined in the literature and to examine the level of perceived danger. The survey consisted of a number of closed

ended questions regarding the demographics of the subjects and questions regarding the subject's exposure to danger and potential violence. Finally, the survey contained a "Visual Stimulus Instrument" consisting of 34 color photographic slides which depicted individuals in various poses. The subjects were asked to respond to these slides on a five point Likert-type scale in terms of their perceived danger from the slide. These responses were then used to develop a perceived danger score for each subject.

Analysis of the data concerning Hypotheses 1 and 2 required the use of a Pearson product-moment correlation. This measure of association was used with the police data. The Pearson product-moment correlation (Pearson r) was utilized in analyzing both hypotheses because the data was shown to be (1) linear, (2) homoscedastic, and (3) interval. The Pearson " r " was considered the most appropriate measurement of association available given these three properties. The Pearson " r " evaluated the relationships between demographics and "policeness" and the relationship between "policeness" and the perception of danger. On the other hand, Hypothesis 3 was evaluated by using the T test with pooled estimate of the standard error. This statistic test was used because (1) the analysis consisted of comparisons between two means; (2) the pooled estimate of standard error compensates for unequal sample

sizes, (3) the T test is used for comparisons in which there are small sample sizes, and (4) because the analysis consisted of comparisons between two means, the T test was considered the most robust test available.

An evaluation of the findings in the present study indicates that the variables as defined in the literature do not explain a great amount of the variance in the perception of danger. The relationships examined were shown to be very weak. The maximum amount of variance being explained was 8%.

Both Hypotheses 1 and 2 were rejected because of the weak relationship. Hypothesis 3 concerning the treatment variable was evaluated by testing the null hypothesis of no difference between groups. A T test revealed that the observed difference was unlikely to occur by chance alone. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected in favor of the stated hypothesis. Hypothesis 3 was tentatively supported with a word of caution concerning inferences made from a T test used in evaluating differences between non-randomly selected samples.

Upon reviewing the findings of this study, it becomes apparent that the variables traditionally defined in the literature as having a causal relationship to the perception of danger explain very little of the variance in the perception of danger.

The findings illustrate that the demographic variables, experience as a police officer, age, and socio-economic status, explain very little of the variance in the situational variable, "policeness." These findings are in contrast to the present literature concerning the variables affecting the exposure to danger and potential violence. It can be concluded from the findings of the present study that there are variables affecting the exposure to danger and potential violence other than those that have been traditionally defined in the literature.

The findings from the present study point to the need for further research into the variables affecting the exposure to danger and potential violence. Future research must take the initiative to examine the variables, other than those presently defined in the literature, that affect this phenomena.

In addition to this, it was found that a subject's situational variable, "policeness," did not explain a great deal of the variance in the level of perceived danger. Previous research in this area has indicated that the exposure to danger and potential violence has a positive relationship to the perception of danger. The data presented in this study suggests that the exposure to does not affect the perception of danger. Instead, it suggests that some other variable or variables

affect the perception of danger. From this conclusion, it is clear that there is a need for further research into the variables affecting a person's perception of danger. Future research should seek to examine variables other than the ones defined by previous literature, that may affect a person's perception of danger.

Finally, Hypothesis 3 concerning the effects of the treatment, being a police officer, was tentatively supported. It was concluded, with a bit of caution, that the police and the non-police differed in their level of perceived danger. A police sample was found to have a greater level of perceived danger than the non-police sample.

This conclusion at first consideration may be striking, but interpretation of this finding must be done so with caution. According to the findings, the police do significantly perceive a higher level of danger in comparison to a group not experiencing the treatment (being a police officer). However, because of the sampling techniques involved (lack of randomization and random assignment into treatment and control groups), the interpretation of the significance test employed (T test) must be done cautiously. The statistical significance generated in testing the null hypothesis does not necessarily indicate a support for the stated hypothesis. In rejecting the null, one merely accepts the stated hypothesis in favor of the null.

Denton Morrison and Ramon Henkel express a concern for employing a test of significance in studies that do not utilize random sampling/assignment methods. They conclude that, "significance tests can in a technical, legitimate sense be used only on studies that employ probability sampling."⁸²

It was concluded, however, that a T test was the most appropriate test statistic available to determine just how great the difference between the two samples were to be for it to be judged significant. It is therefore concluded that Hypothesis 3, concerning differences in the level of perceived danger, was tentatively supported.

Limitations

In conducting this study, four major limitations became apparent. They are concerned with:

- (1) self-selection into treatment and control groups
- (2) generalizability
- (3) measurement
- (4) validity of findings

The first limitation is concerned with the inability to randomly select and randomly assign subjects into the research. Because of the nature of the study

⁸²Morrison and Henkel, p. 133.

(ex post facto design), the treatment had already taken place. Subjects, because of particular reasons, selected themselves into either the treatment group (became a police officer), or into the comparison group (non-police).

If the police and non-police samples differ in regards to their perceived level of danger, it could well have been that they differed prior to, and not because of, the treatment. Because of self-selection, the possible biasing effects created from samples must be taken into consideration when making conclusions from the findings. The only technique that could alleviate the problems associated with self-selection would be to randomly select the sample from the population and randomly assign subjects into either the treatment and the control groups. This methodology, however, is next to impossible in the criminal justice setting. Governmental restrictions limit the ability to randomly assign subjects to become police officers. Further research into this area should strive to improve the experimental design including the use of a true experimental design (randomization and pre-test).

The second limitation is in regards to the external validity of the study. That is, the generalizability of the findings to another setting, population, or group. Because of the sampling technique and the non-experimental design employed, the generalizability of the study to other

settings is very limited. Future research into this area, in order to make generalizations to a population, needs to utilize a random type sampling method and a true experimental design. Again, often times the use of these research methods are unattainable for reasons of bureaucratic restrictions, time considerations, and financial limitations. Research in the future should seek, however, to compromise between a true experimental design and a non-experimental design in order to improve the generalizability of the findings.

Also a limitation of the present study is concerned with the problem of measurement. Because of the lack of prior research into the measurement of the variables examined in this study, methods of measurement had to be developed. Although a pretest was administered to a panel of expert judges to evaluate the realism of the instrument, the instrument has not been previously empirically validated in the field. It is clear that there is a need for further research into the measurement of the variables affecting the perception of danger. Future research must take into consideration the improvement of the present methods of measurement.

The final limitation of the present study is in regards to the validity of findings; that is, to what degree has the study measured what it set out to measure.⁸³ These possible causes of rival explanation

⁸³Smith, p. 62.

relative to validity of findings were identified as problems associated with differential selection, mortality, interaction of selection-maturation, etc., interaction of selection and treatment, and reactive effects of experimental arrangements. These threats to the validity of the findings were identified and their possible biasing effects were discussed. It was concluded that, although these threats were possibly operative, it was not felt that they seriously biased the findings. A word of warning was voiced, however, concerning any generalization or conclusion made from these findings to other populations or settings.

In summary, the variables as defined in the literature to have a causal relationship to the perception of danger failed to be supported by the present study's findings. The variables which have been traditionally defined in the literature as having an effect on the exposure to danger and potential violence were shown to explain very little of the variance in the exposure to danger and potential violence. Furthermore, the findings indicated that "policeness" explained little more than 1% of the variance in the level of perceived danger. These findings are in contrast to the literature presently in the field and suggest that perhaps there is a need to study other variables and their relationship to the perception of danger. It can be concluded that, given

the methodology, the findings indicate that the theoretical model, as defined by the literature, does not explain the variance in the perception of danger. It is apparent, therefore, that future research in this area must seek to explore new variables associated with exposure to danger and the perception of danger.

The findings did, however, point out an overall difference in the level of perceived danger by a police sample in comparison to a sample of non-police. This concept, tested by the null hypothesis, was shown to be tentatively supported in the present study. We can conclude that the literature indicating that the police differ, in regards to the level of perceived danger from the non-police, was tentatively supported.

In conclusion, it must be considered that there are other variables other than the ones traditionally defined in the literature that effect the perception of danger. Future research should seek to improve the "validity" of these findings by implimenting (1) random selection, (2) random assignment, (3) a true experimental design, and (4) improved measuring devices. Future research must bear the burden of using this means to empirically evaluate the perception of danger.

APPENDIX A

Police Questionnaire

Faint, illegible text at the top of the page, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side.

1954

Very faint, illegible text in the middle section of the page.

AN INVESTIGATION INTO

THE PERCEPTION OF DANGER

Faint, illegible text below the title.

Faint, illegible text in the lower middle section.

1954

Faint, illegible text at the bottom of the page.

This project is an investigation into the perception of potential danger in field situations. You are asked to respond to a series of slides in terms of your perception of their potential danger.

DIRECTIONS

You will be shown 35 photographic slides of various individuals and be asked to evaluate each in terms of danger. Each slide will be flashed for but a second and 15 seconds will be given to respond to each slide. Each response should be of your first impressions. Circle the number which most closely represents your feelings of that particular slide. The responses range from 1 not dangerous to 5 very dangerous. Please circle only one number.

In evaluating each slide the following question should be answered:

* * * * *

"In the course of your daily activity you must approach this man on the screen. In your opinion, to what degree could this man be dangerous and a possible harm to your physical well being?"

* * * * *

CIRCLE ONE

	NOT DANGEROUS				VERY DANGEROUS
1.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	1	2	3	4	5

3.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	1	2	3	4	5
21.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	1	2	3	4	5
23.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	1	2	3	4	5
26.	1	2	3	4	5
27.	1	2	3	4	5
28.	1	2	3	4	5

29.	1	2	3	4	5
30.	1	2	3	4	5
31.	1	2	3	4	5
32.	1	2	3	4	5
33.	1	2	3	4	5
34.	1	2	3	4	5

Please answer the following by either filling in the appropriate space or circling your answer.

1. What is your age? _____
2. What is your race? _____
3. How many years have you been on the force? _____
4. What is your rank? _____
5. Your education (circle one):
 - a. some high school
 - b. equivalency certificate
 - c. high school graduate
 - d. some college
 - e. college graduate
 - f. post graduate
6. How much education does (did) your father have? (circle one):
 - a. some high school
 - b. equivalency certificate
 - c. high school graduate
 - d. some college
 - e. college graduate
 - f. post graduate
7. What is (was) your father's occupation? _____
8. In the line of duty, have you ever been in a situation in which you felt your physical well being was in danger?
 _____ How many times? _____
9. During your career as a police officer, have you ever been physically attacked? _____ How many times? _____

10. Have you or your partner ever been hospitalized because of injuries incurred from an attack? _____ How many times? _____
11. Have you ever been attacked by someone using a deadly weapon (gun, knife, car)? _____ If so, how many times? _____
12. Have you ever witnessed an attack that led to fatality? _____ How many times? _____

APPENDIX B

Non-Police Questionnaire

AN INVESTIGATION INTO
THE REACTION OF POLICE

This project is an investigation into the perception of danger in various situations. The purpose is to determine how people react to different levels of risk and to identify factors that influence their perception of danger.

INTRODUCTION

You will be asked to participate in a series of experiments. Each experiment will be designed to test a specific aspect of your perception of danger. The results of these experiments will be used to develop a model of how people perceive danger in different situations.

AN INVESTIGATION INTO

THE PERCEPTION OF DANGER

In this experiment, you will be asked to estimate the probability of a certain event occurring. The results will be compared to the actual probability of the event occurring.

In the course of your daily activities you may encounter various situations that you perceive to be dangerous. To what degree do you perceive these situations to be dangerous? How do you estimate the probability of a dangerous event occurring?

EXPERIMENT ONE

FOR INSTRUCTIONS

VERY DANGEROUS

- 1. ...
- 2. ...
- 3. ...
- 4. ...
- 5. ...

This project is an investigation into the perception of potential danger in field situations. You are asked to respond to a series of slides in terms of your perception of their potential danger.

DIRECTIONS

You will be shown 35 photographic slides of various individuals and be asked to evaluate each in terms of danger. Each slide will be flashed for but a second and 15 seconds will be given to respond to each slide. Each response should be of your first impressions. Circle the number which most closely represents your feelings of that particular slide. The responses range from 1 not dangerous to 5 very dangerous. Please circle only one number.

In evaluating each slide the following question should be answered:

"In the course of your daily activity you must approach the man on the screen. In your opinion, to what degree could this man be dangerous and a possible harm to your physical well being?"

CIRCLE ONE

	NOT DANGEROUS				VERY DANGEROUS
1.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	1	2	3	4	5

3.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	1	2	3	4	5
21.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	1	2	3	4	5
23.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	1	2	3	4	5
26.	1	2	3	4	5
27.	1	2	3	4	5
28.	1	2	3	4	5

29.	1	2	3	4	5
30.	1	2	3	4	5
31.	1	2	3	4	5
32.	1	2	3	4	5
33.	1	2	3	4	5
34.	1	2	3	4	5

Please answer the following by either filling in the appropriate space or circling your answer.

1. What is your age? _____
2. What is your race? _____
3. Other than being a student, what kind of work are you associated with? _____
4. Have you ever been a police officer? _____
5. Number of years of college? _____
6. How much education does (did) your father have? (circle one):
 - a. some high school
 - b. equivalency certificate
 - c. high school graduate
 - d. some college
 - e. college graduate
 - f. post graduate
7. What is (was) your father's occupation? _____
8. In the course of your daily activities, have you ever been in a situation in which you felt your physical well being was in danger from some other individual? _____
If so, how many times? _____
9. Have you ever been physically attacked? _____
How many times? _____

- 10. Have you ever been the victim of an attack or witnessed an attack which required hospitalization due to injuries incurred? _____ How many times? _____
- 11. Have you ever been attacked by someone using a deadly weapon? (gun, knife, car) _____ If so, how many times? _____
- 12. Have you ever witnessed an attack that led to a fatality. _____ How many times? _____

Block, Robert. *...*

Carpell, Donald. *...*

Caplan, James. *...*

Chase, Paul and Frances. *...*

East, Julius. *Body Language*. New York: ... 1970

Goffman, Erving. *Interaction Ritual*. ...

Slav, Jeffrey. *The Psychology of ...*

Harris, Richard. *The ...*

Harrison, Wendell K. *Social ...*

Holmes, David P. *...*

Murphy, John. *...*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

- Bayley, David and Mendelsohn, Harold. Minorities and the Police: Confrontation in America. New York: Free Press, 1969.
- Blalock, Hubert, Jr. and Blalock, Ann B. Methodology in Social Research. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1968.
- Campbell, Donald T. and Stanley, Julian C. Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Research. Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1963.
- Caporaso, James. Quasi-Experimental Approaches. Edited by James Caporaso and Leslie L. Ross, Jr. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973.
- Ekman, Paul and Friesen, Wallace. Emotion in the Human Face: Guidelines for Research and an Intergration of Findings. New York: Pergamon Press, Inc., 1972.
- Fast, Julius. Body Language. New York: M. Evans, 1970.
- Goffman, Erving. Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face to Face Behavior. New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1967.
- Gray, Jeffery. The Psychology of Fear and Stress. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1971.
- Harris, Richard. The Police Academy: An Inside View. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1973.
- Harrison, Randall R. Beyond Words. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1974.
- Heise, David R. Sociological Methodology. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1976.
- Muellar, John; Schuessler, Karl; and Costner, Herbert. Statistical Reasoning in Sociology. 2nd Edition. Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1970.

- Nachmias, David and Nachmias, Chava. Research Methods in Social Sciences. New York: St. Martins Press, 1976.
- Niederhoffer, Arthur. Behind the Shield: The Police in Urban Society. New York: Anchor Books, 1967.
- Ruesch, Jurgen and Kees, Weldon. Non-Verbal Communication: Notes on the Visual Perception of Human Relations. Los Angeles, California: University of California, 1972.
- Skolnick, Jerome H. Justice Without Trail: Law Enforcement in a Democratic Society. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1966.
- Smith, H.W. Strategies of Social Research: The Methodological Imagination. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975.
- Sterling, James W. Changes in Role Concepts of Police Officers. Geithsburg, Maryland: International Association of Chiefs of Police, 1972.
- Westley, William. Violence and the Police: A Sociological Study of Law, Custom, and Morality. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1970.

Articles

- Bennett, Richard R. "The Necessity of Critical Examination of Criminal Justice Concepts: A Case of the 'Symbolic Assailant.'" Journal of Police Science and Administration, IV (1975), 82-87.
- Black, Donald J. and Reiss, Albert J. Patterns of Behavior in Police and Citizen Transactions, Studies in Crime and Law Enforcement in Major Metropolitan Areas, Volume II, Section I. Report on a Research Study Submitted to the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1967.
- Cruse, Daniel and Rubin, Jesse. Determinants of Police Behavior. United States Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1973.

- Dodd, David. "Police Mentality and Behavior." Issues in Criminology, 3 (Summer, 1967), 47-67.
- Erickson, Kai. "Notes on the Sociology of Deviance." Social Problems, 9, 307-314.
- Erskine, Hazel. "The Polls: Fear of Violence and Crime." The Public Opinion Quarterly, XXXVIII (Spring, 1974), 80-86.
- Ferdinand, Theodore and Luchterhand, Elmer. "Inner-City Youth, the Police, the Juvenile Court, and Justice." Social Problems, (Spring, 1970), 510-527.
- Friedman, Lawrence M. "The Idea of Right as a Social and Legal Concept." Journal of Social Issues, 27, Number 2, 189-198.
- Giordano, Peggy. "Sense of Injustice: Reaction to the Justice System." Criminology, 14, Number 1, (May, 1976), 93-112.
- Hollingshead, August B. "Two Factor Index of Social Position." Unpublished article, New Haven, Connecticut, 1957.
- McNamara, John H. "Uncertainties in Police Work: The Relevance of Police Recruits' Backgrounds and Training." The Police. Edited by David Bordua. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1967.
- Morrison, Denton and Henkel, Ramon. "Significance Tests Reconsidered." The American Sociologist, 2, 131-139.
- Piliavin, Irving and Briar, Scott. "Police Encounters with Juveniles." American Journal of Sociology, 70 (September, 1964), 206-214.
- Reiss, Albert and Bordua, David. "Environment and Organization: A Perspective on the Police." The Police. Edited by David Bordua. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1967.
- Rozelle, Richard and Baxter, James. "Perceptual and Attributional Processes of Impressions Formation and Danger Recognition of Police Officers: An Exploratory Investigation. Proceedings from the 81st Annual Convention, APA.

- 87
- Rozelle, Richard and Baxter, James. "Impression Formation and Danger Recognition in Experienced Police Officers." Journal of Social Psychology, 96, 53-63.
- Sarbin, Theodore. "The Dangerous Individual: An Outcome of Social Identity Transformations." British Journal of Criminology, (1967), 285-295.
- Tauber, Ronald K. "Danger and the Police: A Theoretical Analysis." Issues in Criminology, 3 (Summer, 1967), 69-81.
- Toch, Hans H. and Schulte, Richard. "Readiness to Perceive Violence as a Result of Police Training." British Journal of Psychology, 52 (April, 1961), 389-393.
- Westley, William. "Violence and the Police." American Journal of Sociology, 59 (July, 1953), 34-41.
- Wolfgang, Marvin and Ferracuti, F. "The Subculture of Violence." Studies in Homicide. Edited by Marvin Wolfgang. New York: Harper and Row, 1967.
- Zelditch, Morris, Jr. "Can You Really Study an Army in the Laboratory?" A Sociological Reader on Complex Organizations. Edited by Amilai Etzioni. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1969.

Master's Jones, John J.
Theses
No. 170

376400

Yo. State Univ. Jones, John J.
MASTER'S THESES The perception of
No. 170 danger: the case of
the police.

DATE	ISSUED TO
SEP 30 1987 12:35	Staph, Anthony
MAR 7 1988	163-62-3972 Brennan Edward
8:55	64-6255
Aug 25 92	Kakascik, Albert
2:40	86-4921

376400

W. F. MAAG LIBRARY
YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY
YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO 44555