

2012

Improving Entry-Level Federal Law Enforcement Training

Jessica Deaton

Southern Illinois University Carbondale, jdeaton@siu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/gs_rp

Recommended Citation

Deaton, Jessica, "Improving Entry-Level Federal Law Enforcement Training" (2012). *Research Papers*. Paper 202.
http://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/gs_rp/202

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at OpenSIUC. It has been accepted for inclusion in Research Papers by an authorized administrator of OpenSIUC. For more information, please contact opensiuc@lib.siu.edu.

IMPROVING ENTRY-LEVEL FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING

by

Jessica Len Deaton

B.S., Southeast Missouri State University, 2010

A Research Paper

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Master of Arts

Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice

Southern Illinois University Carbondale

May 2012

RESEARCH PAPER APPROVAL

IMPROVING ENTRY-LEVEL FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING

By

Jessica Len Deaton

A Research Paper Submitted in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in the field of Criminology and Criminal Justice

Approved by:

Dr. Joseph Schafer, Chair

Dr. George Burruss

Dr. Matthew Giblin

Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
April 10, 2012

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are many people that have supported me during my time in graduate school. First and for most, I would like to thank God for blessing me with all the amazing opportunities I have received in my life. Without Him, none of my achievements would have been possible.

I would also like to thank all the faculty members who have helped in the success of my career. I would like to give a special thank you to all of the members of my committee. I cannot express how much I appreciate all the help I received from Dr. Schafer, Dr. Giblin, and Dr. Burruss. They were the professors I knew I could go to at any time when I was stressed. They were always willing to help in any way that they could. All the drafts, revisions, and the final paper could not have been done with my committee. Not only have they helped with my research papers, but I have received many other great opportunities through their guidance. I will be forever grateful for everything they have done.

Thank you to my fellow colleagues who have completed the CCJ graduate program with me. You guys have been like a second family. From the countless hours we have spent in the computer lab, helping each other survive statistics, and spending days studying for our exams, we became a very close cohort. I could not have asked for a better group of individuals to make this journey with. Without the support from you all, I know I would have never made it through. Finally, I would like to thank my family. They have given me unconditional love and support throughout my life. I could not have accomplished anything without them. Whenever I was stressed over school, I knew I could count on my family to be there with encouraging words. They have been my support system and the people that I know will always be there for me. There are no words to describe my appreciation. I love you all.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS i

CHAPTERS

 CHAPTER 1 – Introduction..... 1

 CHAPTER 2 – Police Training with the Mentally Ill..... 4

 CHAPTER 3 – Police and Cultural Awareness 15

 CHAPTER 4 – Police Training and Higher Education..... 22

 CHAPTER 5 – Summary and Conclusion..... 29

REFERENCES 31

VITA 35

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) serves as law enforcement training for 90 Federal government agencies (all but FBI and DEA). State and local police agencies also send officers here for specialized training. FLETC uses a combination of classroom learning along with the most state of the art technology to enhance training, so the students are receiving the best training and education possible. FLETC has a wide array of basic and advanced programs that students can participate in. All agencies that have partnerships with FLETC send individuals through a training program.

Before ever going through any type of training, an individual must be employed by a federal agency. Once employed, the person then starts training. One basic program that many officers follow is the Criminal Investigator Training Program (CITP). This program provides these trainees with not only basic and fundamental skills and training, but it also provides knowledge and information on how to conduct a criminal investigation.

Individuals follow a rigorous 12 week training period consisting of classroom lectures, labs, and physical exercises. The trainees must meet the standards in the classroom, along with the physical performance requirements. After graduating from a basic training program, many trainees must continue to advanced programs or programs specific to their agency. Some of the other basic training programs one can pursue are the Customs & Border Protection Training Program, the Immigration & Customs Training Program, the Land Management Police Training, and the Uniformed Police Training Program.

The goal of this project was to see how entry-level federal law enforcement training could be improved. This could include areas of the training curriculum or other areas of qualification concerning the individual. Based on twelve weeks of auditing classes, building

relationships with a couple dozen students and instructors, and my own observations, a few training areas were identified as potentially needing improvement. These suggested areas of improvement could benefit law enforcement by making officers more aware of the people they encounter daily and how to approach certain situations. By not implementing these improvements, officers are receiving limited knowledge of these controversial issues.

After following almost an entire CITP class and auditing classes for many other training programs, there was little time spent on how to manage and handle situations with the mentally ill. The Uniformed Police Training Program only spends two hours of training curriculum on this subject. It includes one class all participants must attend called Managing Abnormal Behaviors. Criminal Investigator Training Program and Law Management Police Training participants receive no training courses dedicated to this subject. Law enforcement officers encounter a wide array of individuals and are first responders for calls of service. Being able to recognize people that may have a mental illness and those that do not will help how the officer approaches the situation.

Another area of training that could be improved would be the curriculum content on police cultural diversity and awareness. This is a very important topic for law enforcement, because you need to understand people who are different from you. Officers come into training from vastly different areas of the country and different backgrounds. Some are coming from large cities full of diversity, while others have never quite experienced it. Regardless of where one comes from, it is important for a law enforcement officer to be able to understand people of different cultures. One of the most important concepts you hear, especially in interviewing classes, is rapport. Not only will it help performance out in the field but can also help the relationships of the officers in an agency. The Uniformed Police Training Program, Criminal

Investigator Training Program, or The Land Management Training Program had no courses dedicated to cultural diversity.

The last area for improvement steers away from the curriculum of the training programs and relates more to the qualifications of the individuals. The value of higher education for law enforcement officers has been debated for some time. Although a lot of students going through training did have some kind of college degree, there were also a lot who did not. A degree might be able to enhance the training environment by bringing in the background of a formal institution like a university. It could enhance the way students in training learn and lead to an improvement of classroom work. Higher education could provide the officer with skills and knowledge that you cannot obtain during training.

CHAPTER 2

POLICE TRAINING WITH THE MENTALLY ILL

Federal law enforcement officers often encounter citizens experiencing a mental illness. Consider three examples from the past decade. On July 24, 1998, Russell Eugene Weston Jr. stormed the United States Capitol resulting in the fatalities of two United States Capitol Police officers. Weston was believed to have a strong distrust against the federal government and that the government was out to get him. He had been a mental patient who was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia. He believed that time was running out and that the Capitol held the ruby satellite that could manipulate time. He believed that this was the key to stopping cannibalism, and the two officers were cannibals who were keeping him from the satellite (Miller, 1999).

On March 4, 2010, a mentally ill man became involved in a shootout with Pentagon police officers. John Patrick Bedell opened fire on three Pentagon police officers as he arrived upon a security checkpoint. Two of the officers were wounded and Bedell was fatally shot. Bedell had been diagnosed as being bipolar or manic depressive. He had been in and out of psychiatric treatment programs over the course of several years. His symptoms had become more pronounced as he tried to self-medicate by using marijuana. It was unknown why Bedell opened fire but his psychiatrist, J. Michael Nelson, quoted, “without stabilizing medication, the symptoms of his disinhibition, agitation and fearfulness complicated the lack of treatment” (“Pentagon Gunman had History of Mental Illness,” 2010).

On November 11, 2001, Oscar Ortega-Hernandez fired shots at the White House in attempts to assassinate the President. Ortega-Hernandez believed that President Obama needed to be killed. The FBI, U.S. Park Police, and U.S. Secret Service teamed up to locate Ortega-Hernandez and interview witness who knew him (Ryan, 2011). Ortega-Hernandez was said to have struggled with mental illness, and Dr. E. Fuller Torrey suggested he was a schizophrenic.

Ortega-Hernandez was a religious extremist who believed that he was the present day Jesus Christ and that President Obama was the anti-Christ (Yardley, 2011).

As these examples illustrate, federal law enforcement officers are the first responders to the scene and are the first people to deal with calls for service involving the mentally ill (Tucker, Van Hasselt, & Russell, 2008). At this time, there are two options: they recognize that this person has a mental illness and they take the actions for the appropriate treatment or they decide that this person's activity is illegal and an immediate action, like arrest, needs to take place. By default, police have become the gatekeepers in determining the fate of the individual and taken on the role of a mental health professional. It seems to be, however, that law enforcement officers have inadequate training when dealing with a person who has a mental illness (Lamb, Weinberger, & DeCuir Jr., 2002). Those with a mental illness often distrust the federal government so training would help in more routine situations that are less violent.

Other than mental health professionals, law enforcement officers interact with mentally ill individuals more often than any other occupational group. They also make up one third of all mental health referrals. A survey that was conducted in California determined that the average amount of mental health training time for law enforcement officers was only 6.3 hours. The interaction between police officers and the mentally ill has greatly increased along with the demand for intervention but at the same time training has become widely limited. It is suggested that officers need to be educated on how to handle people with a mental illness to ensure that the best interest of all people involved is covered, because there is such potential for high risks (Vermette, Pinals, & Applebaum, 2005).

Police have the discretion in how they exercise their duties. Several cases have found that police officers try to use informal tactics, like verbal communication, when dealing with

mentally ill people. Trying to calm the individual down and taking them home are the most common ways the police handle these situations. In certain areas, public policy seems to have the most discretion in the fact that the police officers must take the appropriate action for the offense; if a mentally ill person commits a crime then they must be taken to jail (Lamb et al., 2002). Treatment is then not always guaranteed but hoped for while the person is in custody. So when the officer has more discretion, why does it always seem that they choose to arrest a mentally ill person who has committed a minor offense? Despite the fact that officers deal with these people often, it is not always as easy for an officer to determine that someone has a mental illness as it is for a mental health professional. The lack of training in dealing with these kinds of people can certainly impact that recognition. There are many factors that can play a role in why this happens (Husted, Charter & Perrou, 1995).

A lot of times mentally ill people come across as being intoxicated, especially when it has been proven that drugs or alcohol have been used. Signs of mental illness can vanish while confusion may overcome the situation between the police, suspect, and community members. Violence might start to flair which leads to the individual being forcibly subdued and ultimately arrested (Lamb & Grant, 1982). Another factor that can lead to a mentally ill person being arrested is what is referred to as mercy booking. This happens when the officer arrests the mentally ill person and takes them to jail, because they believe there are no alternative solutions. This often occurs in areas where there are limited psychiatric facilities and treatment services, so the individual is thought to receive better treatment and care in jail. An alternative viewing of this could be that the individual chooses not to undergo treatment, so officers may be influenced by the services offered in jail. Mercy booking are often seen as unconstitutional, but most states do not have laws against it (Ogloff, Finkelman, Otto, & Bulling, 1990).

In 1987, Memphis officers responded to a situation where a paranoid schizophrenic man was cutting himself with a knife and threatening other people around him. One of the police officers responded by fatally shooting the individual. This incident led to the implementation of programs to limit jail time for the mentally ill and provide better police responses in these situations (Vickers, 2000). The Memphis crisis intervention team was developed and provides a partnership with the University of Memphis and various mental health services. The team was made up of police officers who have specialized training and understanding of handling situations with mentally ill individuals and their families (Compton, Esterberg, McGee, Kotwicki, & Oliva, 2006). The officers go through forty hours of this specialized training that covers mental illness, substance abuse, medication, etc. They receive the training from various mental health providers and consumer groups. There are currently one hundred eighty patrol officers that provide day to night patrol and coverage in all precincts (Cochran, Deane, & Borum, 2000).

The crisis intervention team also works closely with local medical facilities' mental health department to ensure that transporting these individuals is done in a safe manner. This is done not only to protect the individual but themselves and also the community. When a disturbance call is reported and a mentally ill person may be involved, a member of the crisis intervention team reports immediately to the scene. Here the officer will initially access the scene to determine what exactly the complaint is about and the level of severity. The officer will intervene to ensure the safety of the community and then provide the appropriate disposition (Cochran et al., 2000).

Some of the many options the officer has are: contacting the case manager that is in charge of the particular person, they may make a referral to have this person put in some type of

treatment modality, or they may directly take that person to the psychiatric emergency services provided at the university. It has only been until recent that empirical research has become available on the program's effectiveness. However, the research that has been conducted has shown that this program is rather effective in lowering arrest rates and the officers' response time to these situations (Cochran et al., 2000).

Vermette et al. (2005) conducted a study to determine the perceptions of police officers in relation to the importance of mental health topics and how effective they believe their departments' training is. The study used police officers from Massachusetts who attended one of two training seminars. The results showed that over ninety percent of the respondents thought that mental illness was a very important topic in their work and are interested in learning more about working with a mentally ill person.

Studies examining the effects of mental health training

Several studies have been conducted to review public policy and how it relates to law enforcement responses to the mentally ill. Deane, Steadman, Borum, Veysey, and Morrissey (1999) conducted a study to gather information about how police departments deal with mental disturbances. They classified the types of programs the departments had in place to deal with the mentally ill. They had specialized police responses and specialized mental health responses, both of which were police based. The third option was a mental health based response. They also looked at how the police departments perceive the effectiveness of their specialized programs and how readily available the training is to all the officers. The results of this study concluded that over fifty percent of the police departments nationwide have no type of training program geared towards handling the mentally ill. The findings from this study were consistent with the findings from Peck (2003).

Peck (2003) conducted a study to examine the interactions between police departments and the mentally ill. The results showed that this relationship is very strong; that the police and the mentally ill interactions occur often. Most of the agencies handled the mentally ill disturbances by taking the individual to a mental health facility or hospital. Less than half of all the agencies surveyed reported no specialized training in dealing with the mentally ill and also reported no relationships with local health centers. Like the previous two studies, Hails and Borum (2003) examined police departments and their use of training and specialized programs implemented for dealing with these specific situations. The study showed that, when handling a disturbance call from a mentally ill individual, just over thirty percent of the police departments surveyed had a specialized response they used. A little over twenty percent of the police departments actually had some type of specialized team to respond to these disturbances. The final result of the study showed that less than ten percent of the police departments responded as to having some kind of access to a health crisis team.

Teller, Munetz, Gil, and Ritter (2006) conducted a study to look at the effects before and after a crisis intervention team was implemented in a police department. The study looked at a two year time period before the crisis team and then at four years after the team was implemented. The results showed that proportion of calls for service remained stable over the six year period, with only a slight non-significant increase in calls each year. In relation to the mental disturbances, there was a significant increase in the amount of these particular calls identified and the rate of mental disturbance calls.

In the study, there were seven disposition categories (transport to psychiatric emergency services, other treatment location, jail, no transport, other transportation, no police interaction, and unknown). The results showed that over the six year period of the study, cases that resulted

in police interaction but no transportation topped the list at thirty-two percent. Close behind at thirty-one percent was transportation to other treatment locations like the hospital. In regards to the disposition of the officers with CIT training, results showed that after implementing the program there was a decrease in the rate of transportation to jail. When comparing officers who were CIT trained and those not trained, results showed that the trained officers were more likely to send the individual to jail; this result, however, was not significant. When the officers decided to transport the individual to a facility other than jail, trained officers were more likely to send the individual to a psychiatric emergency service (Teller et al., 2006).

Teller et al. (2006) also showed that there was an increase in the actual number of mental disturbance calls and an increasing proportion of these calls also. There are a couple different explanations as to why this happened. Because of the training, officers were more prepared when answering these types of calls and were better aware of how to handle the situation. The second explanation has to do with the awareness of the program in the community. Because the community knows that this program was implemented, they are more comfortable calling in situations dealing with the mentally ill, because they know there are trained officers that can assist.

Several findings from the study have shown to prove that the program is meeting the desired goals. Individuals are more likely to be taken to treatment facilities by trained officers than officers before the program was implemented. As part of the crisis training program, officers became aware of the different kinds of mental illnesses along with their symptoms and the various options for treatment. Trained officers seemed to acknowledge the fact that effective treatment can prevent future incidences and the less time consuming solutions are always more desirable (Teller et al., 2006).

This study demonstrated that the CIT program between police officers, health care professionals, community, and family members of the mentally ill increased that access to the treatment and services that they need. Because these trained officers have more knowledge and skills in how to handle these kinds of situations, the officers may be able to help individuals without further treatment being needed. CIT training offers the information on when transportation of a treatment facility is most needed and when arresting the individual may be a better solution (Teller et al., 2006).

Borum, Deane, Steadman, and Morrissey (1998) provided the basis of support for specialized police responses. Their study looked at the how prepared the officers were, how well they responded to the mentally ill individuals, how often other solutions were used other than jail, time spent handling the call, and community safety. The results of the study showed that out of all three different types of programs implemented, the Memphis Crisis Intervention Team proved to be the most effective. Officers in this program were more prepared in meeting the needs of the mentally ill. At the same time, it reduced the number of mentally ill individuals that were being arrested and also reduced the time being spent on the incident. Another key factor is ensuring safety for the community and this response team does just that. What proved to be the most important factor was training.

Steadman, Deane, Borum, Morrissey (2000) expanded on this previously mentioned study by using the same programs just changing up the dependent variables. This study diverted away from police perceptions and used actual arrest rates and treatment modalities. The results of their study were similar to the original. The Memphis Crisis Intervention Team was the most effective in handling the incidents other than arrest, which is shown by only a seven percent arrest rate overall (only two percent from the CIT) and also the response rate increased.

When a police department first implements a training program, there is most likely going to be no individuals who are prepared to instruct this type of training. Having experts in the field of training come in to teach can be costly along with sending all responders to another jurisdiction to train. An effective strategy to deal with this problem would be to have the trainer from a specific agency participate in a trainer course. This course is a onetime program that is taught by an expert from an outside source. Another available solution is to send the training coordinator from your agency to an agency that has a specialized program. Here the training coordinator can observe, ask questions, and develop the knowledge that is needed to gain expertise on this topic. They then can develop and implement a program that is unique to their agency to fit the needs of their community. The training coordinator for each agency should have a significant amount of expertise and experience in patrol and be a person of a respectable nature (Reuland & Schwarzfeld, 2008).

Identifying the outside individuals to train an agency can be tough given the nature of finding an individual who will be a good fit. You need individuals who are capable of communicating the symptoms of a mental illness and the appropriate measures to respond to these calls. Connecting with respectable community services to collaborate and identify those members who will be the trainers is a good option. The individuals chosen to be the trainers should come from diverse backgrounds and know how to lead and command the various topics. To have the training be the most effective, you also want to select individuals who are enthusiastic about the topic and really appreciate the goals of the program being implemented (Reuland & Schwarzfeld, 2008).

You want to avoid the individuals who have had negative experiences with law enforcement and bring that baggage to the table. Prospective trainers should be interviewed to

ensure that these individuals are in no way going to interfere with the goals of the program and lower their credibility. Lastly, the individuals selected to train must have sufficient experience in handling people with a mental illness and are prepared to share this information in a professional but constructive manner (Reuland & Schwarzfeld, 2008).

Training will be the most effective when all of the following steps have been taken as recommended by the Bureau of Justice Assistance:

- Relevant organization and agency leaders, as well as other individuals involved in law enforcement encounters with people with mental illnesses, are committed to working together to develop a collaborative response.
- These leaders have formed a multidisciplinary planning committee to discuss all issues related to program planning, including training.
- The planning committee has analyzed their community's problems and available resources to inform the specialized program's policies and practices, which form the basis of the training content.
- The planning committee has determined whether some or all personnel in the law enforcement department should be trained and whether trained officers should respond alone or in combination with mental health providers.
- Agency leaders serving on the planning committee have designated appropriate staff to compose a working group (called a coordination group in this document) responsible for the day-to-day management of personnel training and other program responsibilities.

- The coordination group, which serves as the administrative body for the training initiative, has determined the length and frequency of training, developed the curriculum, and made key recommendations, such as how to finance training.

Encounters with mentally ill people are clearly of importance when it comes to law enforcement officers. For the safety of the mentally ill person, the officer, and community members, proper training must be included in police training along with relationships with mental health professionals. It seems that much more material should be covered than the one class the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center offers. By offering better training, law enforcement officials are not only going to be able to take on their responsibilities they have been given but also the deaths of the mentally ill could ultimately decline (Lamb et al., 2002).

Better mental health training could have possibly helped prevent the shootings in the three examples at the beginning of the chapter. The behavior and body language of the perpetrators could have been more easily identified if the officers had adequate training on recognizing signs of a mental illness. The officers may have approached the situation differently and there could have been different endings for both the officers and perpetrators.

CHAPTER 3

POLICE AND CULTURAL AWARENESS

Many federal law enforcement agencies deal with a diverse group of people. Not only are they in contact with people of different sexes, races, and cultures, but the agency is made up of a diverse group of officers as well. One federal agency that deals with a diverse group of people is Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The mission of ICE is to not only promote security and safety of the US borders but also immigration and customs within the United States. ICE officers not only conduct investigations on illegal movement of goods but also handle the arrests, detaining, and deportation of illegal immigrants. A similar agency, Customs and Border Protection (CBP), handles security and safety at the borders. CBP prevents terrorists and their weapons and illegal goods and people from entering the United States. Although different in their duties, both of these agencies are in contact with people from all over the world on a daily basis. Officers are not only publicly criticized for being racist but racial profiling is an issue as well.

Research has shown that minority groups distrust law enforcement officers. This makes minority individuals reluctant to call the police when even a desperate situation arises. When they do call, officers often lack awareness of cultural differences (Walker & Kratcoski, 1985). Police have been criticized by the public since the 1960's for their part in damaging the relationship between the community and the police and their inability to control social situations (Barlow, Barlow, & Chiricos, 1993). Sensitivity training became the strategy implemented for a decade but ultimately broke up the police-community relationship. It was not until significant events in history, the beatings of Arthur McDuffie and Rodney King, which changed the traditional mode of policing because of strong racial tensions in major U.S. urban areas

(Blakemore, Barlow, & Padgett, 1995).

Because of this seemingly increasing problem, cultural diversity programs have been implemented. These types of programs are pieces of what is called police-community relations. The goal is to improve the relationship between the police and people in the community because of previous incidents or just the commitment of the police department wanting to improve this area (Blakemore, Barlow, & Padgett, 2005). The idea of this style of policing is for police to engage the community more and make them become more responsive. Also, it encourages the community to engage more in policing. A very important aspect of community-oriented policing is teaching police officers cross-cultural communication skills to make it necessary to have positive interactions with individuals from the community. Although names of the information has changed, there have been two basic premises that remain the same: police officers can be more effective social control agents if they are able to secure community support and police officers will be more responsive to all members of the community and less likely to be abusive (Barlow & Barlow, 1993).

During the 90s, the majority of the training diversity programs focused on specific information about certain cultures. The training programs primarily focused on African Americans, but many more cultures have developed into a share of the course like Hispanics (Cheurprakobkit, 2000). The programs are geared towards specific cultures to meet the requests of the officers attending the training. Evaluations have shown from previous training programs that officers request this information so they know how to handle specific cultural groups. The training is also consistent so law enforcement can provide that routine response for a problem. It is much easier to give out factual information at a training seminar than to have the individuals participate in interactive activities. Our society is continuing to increase in being multi-cultural

and understanding the diversity of the people is important. This will ensure that police are addressing the citizens' needs to the best of their ability and providing quality service. It is up to the police departments to determine if they want to be culturally competent.

There are several principles stated by Blakemore et al., (1995) that encourage learning as a process: encourage an atmosphere that helps officers to begin a process of understanding and appreciating diversity; the goal of the training should be to encourage behavioral changes and not attitudinal adjustments-attitudes are not likely to be altered in limited training blocks; the training should promote the development of a set of process oriented skills that the officers can use to assess his/her level of cultural competences and to increase this level through independent action; the training should be designed in such a fashion so as not to encourage the promotion of stereotypes; the training should promote the perspective that different does not directly equate to deficient; the training should focus on the issues of the training participants with a thorough question and answer period as a part of the training; link the training to other relevant issues which law enforcement officials and officers face, these issues might include community policing, safety, legal liability, and law enforcement effectiveness; discuss issues that promote the development of new insight for participants; and the training should encourage the analysis of the agency's capacity for being culturally competent (pp. 75-80).

The goal of diversity training is to have police officers well equipped with knowledge of other cultures and cultural differences. Not only does the training educate about other cultures, but it always teaches the officers the appropriate ways in policing in minority areas and handling different kinds of situations. Although the popularity of reviewing these programs has become a more consistent part of policing, the amount of evaluation concerning the effectiveness of these types of programs has been limited (Cashmore, 2002).

Studies examining minority perceptions toward police and cultural diversity programs

Gould (1997) conducted a study using a police training facility to see the outcome of a cultural diversity course on new and veteran officers. The course lasted two days covering sixteen hours of coursework. The class contained individuals who were currently in the academy and individuals who were post-academy officers. The program was implemented during the academy agenda where all new officers are required to attend. Veteran officers were required to attend as part of a retraining session in order to improve their relationship with the community.

After the training was completed, all the officers completed a questionnaire that consisted of questions related to their demographics, their service and agency, and their reactions to the diversity class. Interviews were also conducted privately with each officer so they could expand on their answers from the questionnaire. Analysis was used to compare the answers of the new officers against the officers with years of experience and also the reactions towards the course. The results of the study showed that the new officers generally had a more positive attitude than the officers with more experience about the information in the course and how useful it is for police officers. The new officers also showed a much lower level of anger and cynicism compared to the experiences officers (Gould, 1997).

Gould (1997) stated the anger on the part of the experienced officers seemed most often to be related to five things: a feeling expressed by many of the officers that the community did not understand or appreciate what they, the officers, were trying to accomplish; a feeling that most police administrators and many supervisors had lost touch with the reality of policing as the officers face it today; a feeling that many police administrators and community politicians were looking for a quick-and dirty scapegoat, therefore often blaming police officers for things over which they have no control; that the “rules of the street” far too often weighed against the police;

and finally, that there is a divergence between what is being taught in the course and what society actually asks a police officer to do (pg. 351).

A study conducted by Cheurprakobkit (2000) looked at the nature of contacts with police, police experiences, and the language spoken by the officer and how these affected the citizen's attitude toward their performance. The data used was surveys from 1997 about citizens' attitude and police performance from two towns in Texas. For this study, telephone interviews were conducted using the random dialing technique. Of all the useable participants, there were a total of two hundred fifty-one individuals who have been in contact with the police during the past year. There were multiple independent variables: background variables (race, age, income, gender, and educational level), language (English or Spanish), nature of police contact (citizen or police initiated or neutral), police experience, and neighborhood characteristics. There were fifteen dependent variables. Some are as follows: fairness, professional knowledge, helpfulness, quality of service, etc. A measurement scale of one to seven was used with seven being the most satisfied with their experience (Cheurprakobkit, 2000).

The findings of the study showed that the nature of the majority of police encounters were citizen initiated. Whites reported the majority of the crimes over Blacks and Hispanics. Overall, the findings suggested that the respondents had more positive experiences with the police than negative experiences. Community policing seems to be positively influenced because citizens feel that it must be a joint effort in preventing crime, and that they are willing to report crime to the police. Because of the fact that most individuals have positive encounters with the police, this shows that the community policing strategy does have a beneficial outcome. In regards to race, it seems that race does play an important role. As the findings showed, Blacks and Hispanics were less likely to report crime and information, but they were more likely to get

arrested, which resulted in more negative experiences than Whites (Cheurprakobkit, 2000).

Interactions with the police also have shown to influence how individuals perceive police officers. Negative views of police officers can often times be related to negative interactions one has had with police officers. Because of this, it is reasonable to believe that perceptions of police officers may be a function of one's interactions instead of their demographics. Minority groups that address their negative perceptions of police also have a higher rate of police interaction. One study found that individuals' interactions and experiences with police officers were more strongly related to their perceptions and attitude toward the police officer. There are many factors that lead to ones' perceptions of the police. The nature of the altercation and how many times a person comes in contact with the police all influence their perception. This ties into previous stated studies that show whether police-initiated or citizen –initiated interactions were most influential. These studies have consistently shown that interactions that are citizen-initiated have a more positive perception because the citizen was voluntary contacting police (Schafer, Heubner, & Bynum, 2003).

A study conducted by Schafer, Heubner, and Bynum (2003) looked at police perceptions from a Midwest community by examining various factors that could predict the perceptions. There were three research goals to be explored by this study. The first objective was to see the relationship between demographics and police perceptions. Since race has always thought to be a significant factor, the study examined how race affected police perceptions when other demographic variables were controlled. The second objective looked at the perceptions of police officers to determine if the same perceptions also predicted the attitude based from community policing. Because of the increasing implementation of community policing, this study examined demographic and other contextual variables to the influence the aspects of the community

policing style. The third objective was to see how the community context influences one's police perception.

In order for the diversity program to be more successful, the community should be involved also, not just the police officers and police administrators. Some officers have suggested that the training program should be offered to the members of the community. They also noted that a diversity training program would be more beneficial if the course was aimed at explaining the cultural differences instead of putting the blame on the police officers. One thing that was suggested was to remember that when you are teaching cultural diversity, at the same time, you are un-teaching negative attitudes and behaviors about this same topic. A topic like cultural diversity cannot be taught in one course. It is something that has to be programmed to fit the needs of each police department and their officers (Gould, 1997).

We can see that it is much easier to have more positive results when you are teaching new officers compared to officers with more experience. It was shown that the more time an individual is exposed to the policing world, the stronger their feelings of anger and cynicism are toward a cultural diversity training program. The anger and cynicism relates to the attitude of no one caring about the officers therefore they shouldn't be trained to care about others. The new officers weren't exposed to the hostility of the police environment so they were more able to hear the message of what the training is really about and being more receptive to the information given (Gould, 1997).

CHAPTER 4

POLICE TRAINING AND HIGHER EDUCATION

For an individual wanting a career in federal law enforcement, it is often times not necessary for one to have higher education. Some federal agencies, like Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS), require a college degree. To be considered for their special agent position you must have a bachelor's degree. However, many agencies do not require any type of higher education if you have experience. The Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) has many different career paths from a special agent to professional staff. One position an individual can apply for is the FBI police. To enter at the lowest grade level, an applicant can have either specialized work experience or education as a substitution. Those individuals that have a course of study that will lead to a bachelor's degree in police science or a related field can apply.

Along with the FBI police, there are many other agencies that require just experience to meet their qualifications. The United States Secret Service (USSS) requires for their special agent position to have three years of experience in criminal investigations or a law enforcement field. If an individual does not have the specialized experience then they can substitute a bachelor's degree to meet the requirements. The USSS also has a uniformed division that one can apply to. The experience/education requirements for this career are less than the special agent position. For the uniformed division, you only need to have a high school diploma or the equivalent.

To become a Deputy U.S. Marshal for the United States Marshals Service (USMS), a college degree is not required. As long as you have three years of qualifying work experience, then the qualifications for the lowest grade level are met. Like the previous agencies, if an individual does not have any experience then education can be substituted. You must have at

least a bachelor's degree to meet the education requirement. Like the USMS, The Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) does not require higher education. To qualify at the lowest grade level for a correctional officer an individual needs to only have three years of general experience. This general experience can come from a variety of different occupations. A bachelor's degree can be used if the applicant has no general experience.

There has always been controversy over whether college education is necessary for law enforcement. As early as the 1900s, officers were required (under August Vollmer) to attend classes to enhance their education (Carte, 1973). These programs were based off Vollmer's desire to enhance police education. The requirement of just a high school diploma was established at a time when that was the standard. People with a high school diploma were considered highly educated because most people did not finish. The high school diploma, today, has since been replaced with a college degree as the new high level of education (Roberg & Bonn, 2004).

Although the societal education standards have changed, the entry level education requirements for police officers have not. A Bureau of Justice Statistics on local law enforcement agencies reported that in 2000, only one percent of agencies required a four year college degree for new recruits. Approximately fifteen percent of departments required some type of college education, while eight percent of that total was a two-year degree. The majority of local departments, 83%, had a minimum requirement of a high school diploma (Hickman and Reaves, 2003). However, an increasing number of police officers do have degrees. It was reported that in 2000, officers employed by a department that required a degree increased from 3 percent (in 1990) to 9 percent. The increasing amount of college degrees can be attributed to the growing number of criminal justice and criminology programs offered by many universities.

Although the number is increasing, there is always room for improvement (Roberg & Bonn, 2004).

One area of policing that has been credited to improve by higher education is in community oriented policing and accountability. Higher education can develop the skills one would need to make decisions and solve problems when performing community oriented policing. Education was shown to be associated with higher scores in a community-oriented training academy. More educated officers were rewarded in this type of academy. It was suggested that more educated officers were better communicators and problem solvers (Chappell, 2006).

It is noted that the majority of traditional police training focus on law enforcement functions more so than the community-oriented policing approach. Research indicates that traditional training focuses on law enforcement functions that only account for roughly ten percent of the officers' time in the field. Going beyond the traditional training, educational training causes the focus to be built more towards community-oriented policing by using techniques that are geared towards teaching adults. This method provides a deeper learning that excels beyond the classroom. It has also been noted that this system is flexible which allows the police as an organization to change as the community changes (Paterson, 2011).

Another area where higher education can improve accountability is the attitudes and performances of police officers. This can include the area of police complaints. Roberg and Bonn (2004) concluded that higher education had an impact on officers' attitudes and behaviors, which reduces the number of citizen complaints. The officers were better prepared on their use of discretion which ultimately increased the perception of the public on fairness and performance. The behaviors of police officers are the most fundamental issue concerning police

liability. It is clear that the reason there are so many liability issues and verdicts from these cases is because of the fact that the police officers do not fully understand the legal restrictions of their duties and the constitutional rights of the people. Most often times the areas of vulnerability are searches and seizures, interrogations, and use of force. This includes their motivation, their decision making, and their application of procedures and laws (Carter and Sapp, 1989).

Another area that higher education benefits the police field is through professionalism. One aspect of professionalism is organizational reform. Organizational reform was evident not only in the USA but also Australia and Brazil. This aspect is geared towards community oriented policing which holds to the strong values of a democracy. With these values, an improvement in professionalism emerges as learning shifts from a technical approach to a more reflexive approach on the role of a police officer. The importance of lifelong learning emerges similar to fields of medicine, law, and social work (Paterson, 2011).

Studies examining the effects a higher education

A study conducted by Paoline and Terrill (2007) looked to examine the effect of police officers having a college education and their decision to use physical and verbal coercion. The study used in-person interviews and patrol observations of policing in Indianapolis, Indiana and St. Petersburg, Florida. The data used was a part of the Project on Policing Neighborhoods. Observations were taken in twelve different patrol beats in each city. The observations were taken by students who had some training in systematic observation of the police. Personal information like the officer's education, work experience, training, etc. was obtained during the in-person interviews, which were conducted by trained research professionals. The dependent variable, force, was defined by any acts that inflict or threaten physical harm on a person. Verbal force was defined by statements that were in the form of an order and threats. Physical force was

defined as any act of physical restraint including, but not limited to, pat downs, handcuffing, and takedown maneuvers.

The results of Paoline and Terrill's (2007) study showed that police officer education and experience do matter when it comes to use of force. When using high school education as the reference category in the analysis, encounters involving police officers with some higher education or a four year degree resulted in a lower probability of using a high amount of force. Although this type of behavior is necessary in police work, police officers with college education are able to go through the day without relying on this type of coercive behavior. Some college education is not enough though when it comes to physical force. The results indicated that only police officers with a four year degree were significantly less likely to use physical force in their daily endeavors (Paoline & Terrill, 2007).

To further analyze how higher education affects the police world, Eterno (2008) compared three different groups of police officers (cadets who became police officers, college graduate officers who were never cadets, and high school graduate officers) and examined the performance of their police work. All three groups of officers were examined and information was gathered on, but not limited to, civilian complaints, departmental vehicular accidents, and arrest activity. The groups were matched by the year they entered the police academy, their sex, and their education level. One area of measurement was the Central Personnel Index (CPI). These are points that measure poor performance of an officer and/or have been disciplined in some manner. The higher number of points an officer has, the more he has been written up for poor behavior. The results of the study showed that officers who had graduated from college had the fewest CPI points, while cadets followed close behind. Officers that were just high school

graduates has the highest number of CPI points, which were almost double that of the other two groups of officers (Eterno, 2008).

With regard to the number of arrests, officers that were college graduates had the highest activity of arrests. Again, cadets were closely behind and high school only officers had the fewest. Other indicators of arrest showed that cadets had the most felony arrests, college graduate officers had the highest number of misdemeanor and resisting arrests, and high school graduate officers has the highest number of violation arrests. This statistic showed that high school graduate officers were outperformed. This data proves to be interesting because the results of the civilian complaints showed that college graduate officers had the fewest complaints against them, even though they made the most arrests. This can only show that the performance of college graduate officers is very successful (Eterno, 2008). However, the link between education and police performance is more complicated. There are other factors, like age, that could influence police performance and ultimately explain the outcome.

The rank of an officer is an indicator of advancement and in some situations can even be an indicator of success. Eterno (2008) looked at rank and compared all three groups of police officers. Like the previous variables analyzed, cadets and college graduate officers are among the greater number of detectives and sergeants (detectives are considered a promotions since a police officer is the lowest rank of uniformed officers). Officers that have only a high school education seem to have the fewest promotions. Polk and Armstrong (2001) also determined that those officers with higher education will enhance their likelihood of promotion. Their study examined the career paths of police officers with higher education. They looked at law enforcements officers from Texas. They not only looked at whether or not education increases the chances of a promotion but also how long the position is held.

The results of the study showed that officers who had completed a graduate degree and those who completed a bachelor's degree had an overwhelming higher likelihood of promotion than those who only completed high school. Approximately one third (31.4%) of graduate degree holders held a command position, while 44.4 percent of the bachelor degree holders held a command position. This is compared to only 15 percent of high school only educated officers held a command position. The findings of the study also shown that the time it takes to hold a command positions is greatly reduced with some type of higher education (Polk & Armstrong, 2001).

Critical research findings have come to show that police officers with a college education are not only more open-minded, but they are also able tolerate the differences of individuals whom they come in contact with than officers with no college education. It could be argued that college educated people are able to handle people from different life-styles, races, and ethnicities better, so they are less likely to use force in a situation. They can tolerate the differences and lean towards a more mediated approach to handle the situation. Research also indicates that college educated officers are more able to understand and grasp the idea of police work in a democratic approach. It has been shown that college educated officers have a better sense of the rights of the citizen and are more likely to adhere to these constitutional rights, even in high pressure situations of open guilt by the suspect. All these research findings can relate to the argument that college educated police officers are more likely to accept organization change. New policing approaches and the law causes change to be inherent, and college educated police officers are known to accept these changes at greater latitude and reduce conflict (Carter & Sapp, 1989).

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The Federal Law Enforcement Training Center provides world-class training to individuals from all over. The training center is one of the best with all the state of the art technology and material. Although the training center is top of the line, there are always going to be flaws. From my observations and interviews with students and instructors, I came to the conclusion that training could be improved in three areas: training on how to handle people with a mental illness, training on cultural awareness and diversity, and officers having higher education. After researching these three areas, previous literature has shown there are benefits of each area on improving law enforcement training.

Law enforcement officers encounter people with a mental illness often and it is important that they know how to handle these situations. Research showed that officers clearly think this is an important topic but so little training is given. Many law enforcement agencies showed an improvement after implementing more training and/or some kind of crisis intervention team. Giving more time in the classroom during training on this topic can certainly improve how prepared an officer is in dealing with the mentally ill. Adding around thirty hours of training could make a huge difference in the training program. The hours would need to be tailored to the specific training program because of the job duties of the various kinds of officers. It could be easily argued that Uniformed Training Police Program should acquire the most training in the areas followed by the other two training programs.

Cultural diversity has always been a problem and caused conflict. As communities have become more diverse, it is crucial for law enforcement officers to have a positive relationship with their community members. Cultural diversity/awareness training programs showed that by

building a better relationship between the police and community members, more positive outcomes will happen. With the mentally ill topic, requiring around thirty hours of classroom lecture on cultural diversity could greatly enhance training. Even though different types of officers deal with the public more, cultural diversity is something that is always going to be needed if you are part of a team. Therefore, all basic training programs should have a number of courses dedicated to cultural diversity.

Although a controversial topic, the research in this project has shown that officers having some kind of college degree can greatly influence their attitudes and behavior. The way an officer performs out in the field and the way they can effectively interact with the community can possibly be improved from higher education. Having a college degree can also give officers skills, like critical thinking, oral communication, and written communication that one may not obtain during police training.

Although students coming out of training from the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center seemed to be well prepared for their duties, there are always areas that can be improved. The previously mentioned areas are just a few areas that I believe could be shown improvement based on what I perceive as important areas of training. There are always going to be other people who many not view these areas as important but rather place emphasis on other areas of training. Further research would be needed to be able to say that the above mentioned areas could indeed improve law enforcement training.

References

- Barlow, D. E., & Barlow, M. H. (1993). Cultural diversity training in criminal justice: A progressive or conservative reform? *Social Justice, 20*(3), 69-84.
- Barlow, D. E., & Barlow, M. H. (1994). Cultural sensitivity rediscovered: Developing training strategies for police officers. *The Justice Professional, 9*(2), 97-116.
- Barlow, D. E., Barlow, M. H., & Chiricos, T. G. (1993). Long economic cycles and the criminal justice system in the U.S. *Crime, Law, and Social Change, 19*, 143-169.
- Blakemore, J. L., Barlow, D., & Padgett, D. L. (1995). From the classroom to the community: Introducing process in police diversity training. *Police Studies, 18*(1), 71-83.
- Borum, R., Deane, M. W., Steadman, H. J., & Morrissey, J. (1998). Police perspectives on responding to mentally ill people in crisis: Perceptions of program effectiveness. *Behavioral Sciences and the Law, 16*, 393-405.
- Carte, G. E. (1973). August Vollmer and the origins of police professionalism. *Journal of Police Science and Administration, 1*, 274-281.
- Carter, D. L., & Sapp, A. D. (1989). The effect of higher education on police liability: Implications for police personnel policy. *American Journal of Police, 8*, 153-166.
- Cashmore, E. (2002). Behind the window dressing: Ethnic minority police perspectives on cultural diversity. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 28*(2), 327-341.
- Chappell, A. T. (2008). Police academy training: Comparing across curricula. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management, 31*(1), 36-56.
- Cheurprakobkit, S. (2000). Police-citizen contact and police performance: Attitudinal differences between Hispanics and non-Hispanics. *Journal of Criminal Justice, 28*, 325-336.

- Cochran, S., Deane, M., & Borum, R. (2000). Improving police response to mentally ill people. *Psychiatric Services, 51*(10), 1315-1316.
- Compton, M. T., Esterberg, M. L., McGee, R., Kotwicki, R. J., & Oliva, J. R. (2006). Crisis intervention team training: Changes in knowledge, attitudes, and stigma related to schizophrenia. *Psychiatric Services, 57*(8), 1199-1202.
- Deane, M. W., Steadman, H. J., Borum, R., Veysey, B. M., & Morrissey, J. P. (1999). Emerging partnerships between mental health and law enforcement. *Psychiatric Services, 50*, 99-101.
- Eterno, J. (2008). Homeland security and the benefits of college education: an exploratory study of the New York City police department's cadet corps. *Professional Issues in Criminal Justice, 3*(2), 1-15.
- Gould, L. A. (1997). Can an old dog be taught new tricks? Teaching cultural diversity to police officers. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management, 20*(2), 339-356.
- Hails, J., & Borum, R. (2003). Police training and specialized approaches to respond to people with mental illnesses. *Crime & Delinquency, 49*(1), 52-61.
- Hickman, M. J., & Reaves, B. A. (2003). Local Police Departments 2000. *Bureau of Justice Statistics*.
- Husted, J. R., Charter, R. A., & Perrou, M. A. (1995). California law enforcement agencies and the mentally ill offender. *The Bulletin of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law, 23*, 315-329.
- Lamb, H. R., & Grant, R. W. (1982). The mentally ill in an urban county jail. *Archives of General Psychiatry, 39*, 17-22.

- Lamb, R., Weinberger, L. E., & DeCuir, Jr, W. J. (2002). The police and mental health. *Psychiatric Services*, 53(10), 1266-1271.
- Miller, B. (1999, April 5). Capitol shooter's mind-set detailed. *Washington Post*, p. A1.
Retrieved from <http://washingtonpost.com/>
- Ogloff, R. P., Finkelman, D., Otto, R. K., & Bulling, D. (1990). Preventing the detention of non-criminal mentally ill people in jails: The need for emergency protective custody units. *Nebraska Law Review*, 69, 434-471.
- Paoline, III, E. A., & Terrill, W. (2007). Police education, experience, and the use of force. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 34(2), 179-196.
- Paterson, C. (2011). Adding value? A review of the international literature on the role of higher education in police training and education. *Police Practice and Research*, 12(4), 286-297.
- Peck, L. W. (2003). Law enforcement interactions with persons with mental illness. *TELEMASP Bulletin*, 10(1), 1-10.
- Pentagon shooter had history of mental illness. (2010, March 5). *MSNBC*. Retrieved from <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/>
- Polk, O. E., & Armstrong, D. A. (2001). Higher education and law enforcement career paths: Is the road to success paved by degree? *Journal of Criminal Justice Education*, 12(1), 77-99.
- Reuland, M., & Schwarzfeld, M. (2008). Improving responses to people with mental illnesses: Strategies for effective law enforcement training. *Bureau of Justice Assistance*, 1-47.
- Roberg, R., & Bonn, S. (2004). Higher education and policing: Where are we now? *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, 27(4), 469-486.

- Ryan, Jason. (2011, November 17). Oscar Ortega-Hernandez charged with trying to kill President Obama. *ABC News*. Retrieved from <http://www.abcnews.com/>
- Schafer, J. A., Huebner, B. M., & Bynum, T. S. (2003). Citizen perceptions of police services: Race, neighborhood context, and community policing. *Police quarterly*, 6(4), 440-468.
- Steadman, H. J., Deane, M. W., Borum, R., & Morrissey, J. P. (2000). Comparing outcomes of major models of police responses to mental health emergencies. *Psychiatric Services*, 51, 645-649.
- Teller, J. S., Munetz, M. R., Gil, K. M., & Ritter, C. (2006). Crisis intervention team training for police officers responding to mental disturbance calls. *Psychiatric Services*, 57(2), 232-237.
- Tucker, A. S., Van Hasselt, V. B., & Russell, S. A. (2008). Law enforcement response to the mentally ill: An evaluative review. *Brief Treatment and Crisis Intervention*, 8(3), 236-250.
- Vermette, H. S., Pinals, D. A., & Appelbaum, P. S. (2005). Mental health training for law enforcement professionals. *The Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law*, 33(1), 42-46.
- Vickers, B. (2000). Memphis, Tennessee police department's crisis intervention team. *U.S. Department of Justice: Bulletin From the Field, Practitioner Perspectives*, 1-4.
- Walker, D. B., & Kratcoski, P. C. (1985). A cross cultural perspective on police values and police-community relations. *Criminal Justice Review*, 10, 17-24.
- Yardley, W. (2011, November 20). White House shooting suspect's path to extremism. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/>

VITA
Graduate School
Southern Illinois University

Jessica Len Deaton

jessicaldeaton@gmail.com

Southeast Missouri State University
Bachelor of Science, Criminal Justice, May 2010

Research Paper Title:

Improving Entry-Level Federal Law Enforcement Training

Major Professor: Dr. Joseph Schafer

Publications:

Burruss, G.W., & Deaton, J.L. (2011). Preventing white-collar crime. In D. Mackey & K. Levan (Eds.), *Crime Prevention* (345-358). Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning.