Police Conflict Management, Volume I

Challenges and Opportunities in the 21st Century

Edited by Mario S. Staller
Swen Koerner · Benni Zaiser

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Introduction: Twenty-First-Century Policing—Between Evidence-Based Practice and Reflexivity

Mario S. Staller, Swen Koerner, and Benni Zaiser

From the Los Angeles Zoot Suit Riots (1943), to the race riots in Watts (1965) and Detroit (1967), as well as the Stonewall Riots in New York City (1969), all the way to the 1992 Los Angeles Riots, the police in the USA have had a consistent track record of brutality against marginalised groups (Moore, 2016). The corresponding, broad media coverage across the globe makes the USA a suitable canvas to illustrate the contribution

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we are confident these two volumes will make to conflict management in the police, not only in the USA but beyond.

Intermittent reconciliation efforts have attempted to identify causes and effects and provide the police with recommendations to move towards better relationships with the communities they serve. As a result, trust in the police and corresponding reform efforts have kept progressing and regressing cyclically, keeping the state of policing moving on the spot rather than in a linear fashion towards sustainable improvement. In the 1990s, policing literature started to coin the term "21st-century policing". In the aftermath of the 1992 Los Angeles Riots and the Rampart scandal—in which, throughout the 1990s, a number of officers of the Los Angeles Police Department's (LAPD) Rampart Division had been found to have systematically abused their authority and were implicated in various forms of misconduct—the US Department of Justice (DoJ), and RAND Public Safety and Justice, published a series of research reports.

In 1992, the DoJ published a research brief on *Policing Strategies that Address Community Needs in the 21st Century* (Jordan, 1992). The focus-group-based report included a discussion on various trends that determine the potential for conflict during police–citizen interactions. In 1998, the DoJ published *Police in the Community: Strategies for the 21st Century* (Miller & Hess, 1998), an overview of evidence-based best practices. This report provided guidance for law enforcement agencies on how community policing could be implemented effectively through interpersonal skills, dealing effectively with diversity, and communication. In 2001, the DoJ posted *Policing in the 21st Century: What Works and What Doesn't* (Mazerolle, 2001), an analysis of the implementation of community policing in Australia. Among others, this report identified an unhealthy social distance between the police and the communities they serve; ongoing emphasis on traditional, reactive policing tactics were found to be major shortfalls. In 2003, RAND Public Safety and Justice published *Training the 21st Century Police Officer*, the findings of an independent review assessing police training in the areas of use of force, search and seizure, arrest procedures, community policing, and diversity awareness (Glenn et al., 2003).

The crisis–opportunity cycle started over again when, in 2014, Michael Brown was shot by police in Ferguson, Missouri, and unrest unfolded, sparking another international debate on police–community relations and the use of force (Robinson, 2020). As a result, President Obama commissioned *The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing* (Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2015), which set out to advance police reform with the successful implementation of community policing to advance trust and legitimacy and improve training and education for the safety of both officers and citizens. Six years later, George Floyd was killed by police in Minnesota in the USA, which led to a higher interval rate of global coverage and public discourse on police reform.

We are now almost one-quarter into the new century, but the police officer and his or her institution keep struggling with a set of challenges that have not changed since the last century.

What we believe to be key in overcoming that same crisis–opportunity cycle, or at least keep these cyclical setbacks on a trajectory of continuous improvement, is an observation that also reaches back into the last century. The periodic public discussions that follow each setback typically fail to distinguish between clearly extra-legal police action and unsanctioned use of force that is simply the result of incompetence (Fyfe, 1986). The focus on malicious misconduct and the corresponding dichotomy between a few bad apples and mostly good officers deprives all the police, the public, and those who study the relationship between the two, of the necessary depth to make meaningful changes. Systemic features—including the law (e.g., qualified immunity, Obasogie & Zaret, 2021), policy and procedures (e.g., lack of de-escalation mandates, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2015; or hiring, Hilal et al., 2017), as well as training and education (e.g., lack of interpersonal skills training and education, Police Executive Research Forum, 2015)—have been found to contribute to the negative outcomes of policing. These negative outcomes include excessive use of force (e.g., White, 2001), bad community relations (e.g., Giles, 2002), and ultimately a lack of trust and legitimacy in the police by those that they serve (Kochel & Skogan, 2021; Kyprianides et al., 2021; Tyler, 2002). What all these systemic features have in common is that they are closely associated with the level

of competency of both the individual officers and the institution of the police. As Fyfe (1986) said more than a third of a century ago:

> We should take care too to distinguish between legitimate provoked force and incompetence-related violence. The former is that *required* to put down threats against officers or other challenges to official authority. The latter is unnecessary, and occurs only because officers lack the expertise to employ readily available and less frantic means of putting down such threats and challenges. (p. 221, emphasis in original)

This is Volume I of the Palgrave Macmillan book series on "Police Conflict Management" and will provide readers with an overview of the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century. As teased out above in this Introduction and worked out through many of the chapters of this volume, many of the challenges of twenty-first-century policing are substantially the same as those of the twentieth century, although they might present themselves in an updated version that reflects the twenty-first-century society that they are now rooted in. This realisation lends much importance to the opportunities of twenty-first-century policing, and we hope to identify those that might help us more adequately address these long-standing challenges.

Already in the 1970s, the USA had seen a demand for building a policing policy and strategy based on independent research and scientific evidence. The Police Foundation (now the National Policing Institute) and the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) were, to our knowledge, among the first national level research and education organisations to advance policing through innovation and scientific research (National Policing Institute, 2022). Since then, research projects, programmes, and institutions have sprawled across several countries, culminating in the establishment of professional societies of evidence-based policing in the UK in 2010 (Society of Evidence-Based Policing, 2022), in Australia and New Zealand in 2013 (Australia and New Zealand Society of Evidence-Based Policing, 2022), and in the USA (American Society of Evidence-Based Policing, 2023) and in Canada in 2015 (Canadian Society of Evidence-Based Policing, 2022).

There is broad agreement on the need to implement policing practices based on scientific evidence as well as on the success that evidence-based policing has produced (Bennell et al., 2021; Todak et al., 2021). However, we have seen recent reiterations of the crisis–opportunity cycle and the corresponding public sentiment, which is now articulated in the "defund and abolish the police" discussions (e.g., McDowell & Fernandez, 2018), as indicators that conventional research on policing is insufficient to address the needs of society in the twenty-first century. The discourse between the police and the public fails to effectively negotiate the needs of two separate social systems (i.e., the police and the public). Each system filters that much called for evidence through its own socio-perceptual lens. The police and the public lack an epistemic consensus, which we argue seems to perpetuate the crisis–opportunity cycle.

As a consequence, in an effort to better coordinate the creation of mutually agreed upon knowledge between science, the police, and the public, we advocate for reflexivity as a prerogative in modern police practice and research (Koerner & Staller, 2022). Reflexivity calls for the analysis of the preconditions and consequences of scientific perspectives themselves. It is a process upstream from the creation of an evidence-base, as it gives primary attention to the point of view of a second-order observation that critically engages social and individual constraints, such as personal experiences, beliefs and knowledge, or scientific and disciplinary theories and methods, which enable and limit not only *what* can be seen, but also *how* it is seen.

A reflexive practice enables practitioners and researchers to learn conscientiously and deliberately from experiences that range from first-hand frontline occurrences in the field to critically evaluating an evidence-based policy implementation or finding the right research question to address a socially relevant issue in policing (Bolton & Delderfield, 2018). The process of reflection allows them to incorporate the second-order observation to become aware of the biases that naturally come with the perspective, which are operating in the first order. In policing, such insight often includes matters of how the police or research relates to society or the role that culture mediates and moderates between the positive variables under investigation. As such, a reflexive practice can

challenge assumptions, ideological illusions, and damaging biases rooted in both society at large and police culture in particular; it can also question inequalities and personal and institutional behaviours that might silence or marginalise the voices of others (Bolton & Delderfield, 2018). It prevents us from perpetuating an evidence-base of what has often been deemed "best practice" in policing, but which has been created "working backwards", from "within the box" of an assumed hypothesis, contaminated by the presence of a heuristic and confirmation bias (Staller et al., 2022). Think of the 21-foot rule, also referred to as the Tueller drill, as an example. The 21-foot rule states 21 feet to be the distance far enough away for a police officer to safely draw their firearm and shoot a knife attacker, who launches at them with the intent to use the knife (Martinelli, 2014). Since the 1980s, this rule has informed police training and practice, as well as corresponding jurisprudence in the USA (Machacynski, 2020; Martinelli, 2014). Sandel et al. (2020) found that, even though the rule had been discussed throughout its existence, peer-reviewed evidence was lacking. Consequently, the authors ran a series of experiments and concluded that 21 feet was not far enough for officers to defend themselves against a knife-armed citizen launching at them. Despite its methodological rigour and conclusive results, we find the study to be constrained and of limited relevance for practitioners. All of the four studies published were designed to test drawing time in relation to threat distance, measuring running speed and drawing speed and the accuracy of participants, along with playing out a knife attack across 21 feet, in a linear fashion, without any obstruction or any other factors that might determine the way such a scenario might play out in the real world. It is this lack of ecological validity that we argue can be filled so as to make officer safety research more meaningful and applicable for police in the field (and jurisprudence on the corresponding uses of force).

Ultimately, reflexivity enables researchers and practitioners to better understand:

- What they know and what they do not know;
- What they do not know they know and do not know;
- The constraints of their own perspective;

- The complexity of the interactive co-experience, within which all the researchers, the police, and the public continuously negotiate and renegotiate their coexistence.

This is the mindset with which we worked to compile a new set of perspectives on an old line-up of problems. We organised this book series on "Police Conflict Management" in two volumes, *Challenges and Opportunities in the 21st Century* and *Training and Education*, with the aspiration to cover the full spectrum of encounters between the public and the police, from the merely communicative all the way to the use of lethal force (both ways).

1   The Project

Even though we anticipated that academics and practitioners would have different needs and wants in what they hope to take away from these two volumes, we deliberately chose to address both audiences with each volume and each chapter. This is our attempt to fill the gap between research and practice. In addition, several contributions stem from practitioner researchers, whose immersion in the subject matter, combined with their academic skillset, allows for rigorous research of socially relevant issues. Ultimately, we hope the volumes will invite those readers that are police practitioners to look beyond the organisational and socio-cultural constraints of the police and those readers that are academics to take research out of the ivory tower and into the sandbox.

In an effort to widen the geographic scope of the volumes and move their insights beyond those gained from the USA, we are very proud to showcase the contributions of authors from countries where policing literature is rather scarce and evidence-based policing has no or only a very young tradition, such as Russia, the countries in Scandinavia, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and Germany. With three methodologically diverse contributions from the Republic of South Africa, the volumes also provide unique insight into police conflict management in a post-conflict society. In contrast with so many others, police systems have been studied by a broader body of literature and is now, too, moving

towards the evidence-based policing paradigm (Newham & Rappert, 2018).

Of course, we would have loved to see more issues addressed, more topics covered, and contributions from authors of a wider cultural and geographical diversity. For that, we rely on the reader and his or her interest in the book series, which will ultimately allow us to make potential future editions as up to date as current events will then require, and even to be more informative and interesting as the two volumes which we are honoured to present to you now.

We can only do justice to the academic standard we set out to live up to with this endeavour by providing the reader with an overview of the process of how the Palgrave Macmillan book series on "Police Conflict Management" came about. Between April and July 2021, we collected abstracts through both calls on researchgate.net and through other academic outlets as well as through the direct invitation of authors we had identified to have a track record of research in any area that was associated with conflict management in policing. Authors were encouraged to propose, from within their area of expertise, the topic they deemed to be the best fit for either volume. Both through open calls for abstracts and open-ended invitations, we set out to let all contributors identify the challenges to and opportunities of—as well as the corresponding training in police conflict management—the twenty-first century, beyond the constraints of potential editorial selection.

After reviewing abstracts and composing the structure of the book series, we notified authors of the acceptance of their abstracts in October 2021. In autumn 2022, Palgrave Macmillan completed two independent reviews of the project (both favourable) and collaboratively worked out its organisation across two volumes as its final form. One reviewer and the publisher requested efforts to be made to acquire more authors from the Global South for a more balanced perspective. Another round of recruitment followed as authors created their manuscripts. The truly global provenance of the authors—who were impacted by the 2019 coronavirus pandemic, the ramifications of the war in the Ukraine, and other challenges both at the national level, such as rotating power outages,

and at the individual level involving personal health and bereavement—warranted several adaptions of the final submission time-line, which we moved from July 31, 2022, to September 30, 2022.

What followed in October was a single-iteration peer review, in which each chapter had a primary reviewer (the author of another chapter) and a secondary reviewer (editor), based on five criteria:

- Does the chapter provide sufficient background of the topic it addresses?
- Does the chapter offer value to both academics and practitioners?
- Does the chapter reflect the current state-of-the-art of the subject matter?
- Is the chapter written coherently and in a way that can be understood by readers not immersed in the subject matter?
- Does the chapter live up to the academic (arguments are based on evidence) as well as the editorial standard (language, APA seventh edition) of a peer-reviewed journal?

The initial review was double-blind. Authors and reviewers were revealed when they were provided with the feedback. In November, revisions were resubmitted to the reviewers for final feedback and votes. In December, authors were informed accordingly. On December 31, 2022, we submitted the manuscripts to the publisher.

The bottom line is that seven submitted abstracts were withdrawn prior to submission of a manuscript, and three chapter manuscripts were rejected by peer-review. This left 17 chapters and an editorial for *Police Conflict Management. Volume I: Challenges and Opportunities in the 21st Century*, and 17 chapters and an editorial for *Police Conflict Management. Volume II: Training and Education.*

2   A Specific Look at This Volume

Police Conflict Management Volume I approaches *Challenges and Opportunities in the 21st Century* from a macro-perspective and narrows down its focus to the micro-level of analysis, chapter by chapter, to take a

more granular look at individual challenges and opportunities. Chapter 2 continues the substantial part of this Introduction and explores *Police Trust and Legitimacy in Modern Societies*. The author provides an interesting vantage point on fairness and procedural justice and incorporates not only the diversity and complexity that shape modern societies but also often overlooked concepts, such as individualism and the decreasing respect of authorities. Chapter 3 introduces readers to *Danger, Fighting, and Badassness: A Social Systems Perspective on Narratives and Codes in Police Conflict Management*. The authors provide a novel perspective on police culture, an understanding of which we hope will equip police officers, police conflict management instructors, and decision-makers with greater insight as to how they can mitigate unintended consequences of a negatively skewed worldview. Chapter 4 will add to our understanding of how authority and order maintenance accounts shape police–citizen interactions: *Policing in the Light of Social Dominance Theory and the Social Distance Theory of Power* will harness new theoretical perspectives that are actionable for the purpose of increasing community relations.

Chapter 5 will zoom in and set the stage for challenges and opportunities associated with the *Psychological Aspects of the Use of Firearms by the Police*. It provides a comprehensive overview on corresponding research and practice in Europe with a specific focus on Germany. Chapter 6 will discuss *Prevalence and Correlates of Violence Against Law Enforcement Officers in the United States: A National Portrait*. It will not only discuss violence against the police that leads to officer-involved shootings but also add nuance to Chapter 3, which discusses danger narratives in police culture, as it offers a timely account of how some of the risks officers face on a daily basis may be precipitated. Chapter 7 will introduce the reader to *Police Conflict Management and the Phenomenon of Suicide-By-Cop in North America* and explore the intricacies associated with this challenge, which is closely associated with policing the mentally unwell.

With de-escalation figuring so prominently in the recommendations that many of the cited reports by the DoJ and the Office of Community Oriented Policing have given, we are proud to introduce a novel, critical, and reflexive perspective on the subject with *A Feminist Ethics of Care Approach to De-escalation in Policing* in Chapter 8. Chapter 9 will demonstrate how common misconceptions in the police act as *Barriers*

to Effective De-escalation, undermining conventional approaches to de-escalating. Chapter 10 is *Applying the Interpersonal Circumplex Model to De-escalative Communication in Police Services* to explore how human behaviour follows certain action–reaction patterns that law enforcement can exploit for training and practice. With a focus on *The Nonverbal Behavior and Appearance of Police Officers in the Police Service*, Chapter 11 provides an exclusive account of non-verbal communication that puts its solid theoretical underpinning into practice for police officers, conflict management trainers, and decision-makers alike. Chapter 12 provides a state-of-the-art overview of *Effective Police Negotiation* by *Synthesising the Strategies and Techniques that Promote Success Within Hostage or Crisis Situations*. Chapter 13 will bring the reader up to speed with the latest contributions of a paramount communication theory in law enforcement that has informed best practice in policing for more than half a century: *Community Relations and Policing: A Communication Accommodation Theory Perspective*.

Current affairs warrant a closer look at *Policing Hate Rallies*, which Chapter 14 will provide with a critical review of lessons learned from previous events in the USA. Chapter 15 offers a unique and reflexive perspective on *Police Conflict Management in South Africa* with *An Autoethnographic Reconnaissance*. Chapter 16 is on *Police Crowd Management in South Africa* and discusses *Efforts and Challenges of De-escalation*, adding insight to the literature from a different and distinctive jurisdiction. Chapter 17 offers yet another perspective as unique and as valuable on *Police Legitimacy in Russia*, as it is *Explaining Millennials' Obligation to Obey and Willingness to Cooperate*.

Individual chapters have a Key Takeaway section at the end, containing derivations, hints, and recommendations for action. Here we asked all authors to summarise the important key points of their own contribution with regard to three different populations:

1. **Police officers**, understood as frontline workers and street level bureaucrats. Of course, the other populations could also be police officers, yet in the Key Takeaway section they refer to the population that resolves conflict and is engaged in conflict management with citizens directly.

2. **Conflict management trainers**, understood as individuals that are assigned to the task of providing learning opportunities for police officers (the frontline workers) as it relates to the management of conflictual situations. As such, this term refers to individuals that are also known as force trainers, de-escalation trainers, communication trainers, firearms instructors, personal protection and self-defence trainers, tactical trainers, and so on.
3. **Police decision-makers**, as a term for the individuals that are in charge of changing policy concerning police conflict management as well as the corresponding training and education.

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Police Trust and Legitimacy in Modern Societies: Fairness in Interactions as a Key

Silvia Staubli

Reviewer: Kobus Schwartz

Trust is a core and indispensable ingredient of interactions in a society. Several times a day we need to decide whether we trust friends, the media, colleagues, politicians, and so on. Not only individuals but also organisations depend on trust; in the private sector trustworthy agencies will gain more clients, while trust facilitates the relationship between state organisations and the population. Institutional trustworthiness can be seen as a predictor of legitimacy. Applied to the police, legitimacy allows them to be perceived as an authority, prompting people to accept their exercise of power and orders (Sunshine & Tyler, 2003).

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Trust in the police can be elaborated and studied through different lenses and perspectives. First, it can be differentiated between the institutional, organisational, and individual levels. Trust in the institution of the police goes along with the police as embedded in (non-) democratic structures and further state institutions. Trust in the organisation concerns general attitudes about it and its functioning, such as how the police should fight crime. In contrast, trust at the individual level inherits attitudes towards and expectations of how the police should work in interactions between them and citizens.[1] Second, trust-building processes can be studied either from the point of view of the public of the police, of the police of the public, or as an interactive process. And third, specific contexts such as policing (football) crowds and policing vulnerable people enable further and different insights into trust-building.

In the following, trust is described through a multifaceted lens, as an individual concept linked to trust in the organisation of the police. Moreover, contexts frame the perception of the police, with trust-building processes becoming fluid especially in situations of crowd policing. To be able to explain police trust, measurements of performance, such as efficiency and procedural justice, are required. To start with, and to frame the question of how trust in the police can positively contribute to the conflict management capacity of police forces, it is necessary to explain how individual trust works against the background of a modern and complex society and how it comes into play in interactions between the police and the public.

1   Trust in Modern, Complex Societies

Trust is considered to be the cement that holds a modern society together (Simmel, 1992). The more so since societies are becoming increasingly complex. In the course of modernisation, traditional structures have

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[1] The notion of the police as an institutional body only applies when talking about the police from a comparative perspective, considering the constitution of a country as (non-)democratic and its effect on policing styles, corruption, etc. For this chapter, the focus lies on the police as one type of formal organisation (cf. Henning, 2007).

dissolved in favour of individual freedom and self-determination. In traditional societies, clear norms and values dictated what was tolerated and what behaviour was considered deviant and thus required sanctions. Interpersonal trust was based on shared knowledge of such norms and values. Thus, certain people were trusted more than others because, for example, they came from the same class and so shared the same values. Such categorisations have not completely disappeared in modern times. However, a pluralisation of lifestyles and the accompanying abundance of norms and values make it difficult to clearly divide people into groups, which calls for other forms of orientation or other sources of trust.

When it comes to trust in organisations, experiences play an important role. Whether and how a contact between the population and the police takes place contributes significantly to trust-building. Such processes can be explained, on the one hand, by individual trust, that is, trust between individuals. In a three-part relationship, it is a matter of how the individual (A) decides to trust, to whom (B) he or she directs their trust, and under what circumstances (C) he or she exercises their trust. In other words, A trusts B in relation to C (Hardin, 2006). Applied to trust in an organisation (B), it can be said that whether we (A) trust it or not depends on our perception of that organisation. Furthermore, our trust also depends on the trustworthiness of the organisation. Several factors can contribute to such a perception. In the case of legal organisations such as courts or the police (C), certain expectations about their roles and duties are ascribed to them based on what we have learned at school, from friends, or through media coverage. Trust in the police can therefore be seen as the public's belief that the police have good intentions towards citizens and are capable of acting in certain ways in certain situations (Jackson, Bradford, et al., 2011). Another source of information is a personal experience with organisational representatives (Giddens, 1990). Police officers as representatives of the police as an organisation can therefore influence the trust-building process.

Trust thus concerns intentions to act: it implies that the other party behaves in a specific, expectable way. The more one knows or thinks one knows about the other person, the better one can assess their action and the greater the trust in the sense of expectations of an action. Consequently, one trusts that the other person will behave in a certain way.

In this context, we speak of particularised trust when familiar persons such as family members, friends, or acquaintances are trusted. Generalised trust, on the other hand, refers to trust in unknown people, for example people one meets on the street (Freitag & Traunmüller, 2009).

In the case of trust in organisations, there is the problem that people usually have only rudimentary—or at least incomplete—knowledge about an organisation and its functioning. Here, too, a certain challenge becomes apparent with the increasing complexity of societies. This also applies to the police, whose areas of responsibility have grown steadily over the years. This, together with centralisation and privatisation in the security industry, leads to a decrease in the population's clear understanding of what the police are as an organisation, what they are and what they are not (or no longer) responsible for. If trust in organisations is also linked to expectations of action based on knowledge about the organisation, it seems more difficult to build trust in the police because of their increasing complexity (cf. Luhmann, 2000).

2   Trust as a Predictor of Legitimacy

Trust in someone goes hand in hand with the trustworthiness of those trusted or relied upon. Consequently, a trustworthy actor is seen as able and willing not to exploit the vulnerability of the trust-giver (Möllering, 2006). Trust thus refers to expectations in future actions. In contrast, legitimacy focuses on aspects of morality and duty to obey. Organisations are ascribed legitimacy if their rules are seen as correct and binding and the associated consequences as just. Another aspect, which comes into play especially in the context of the police, is the willingness to obey: a legitimate authority is accepted, its orders are obeyed (Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Weber, 1980). Thus, while trust refers to positive expectations in future actions, legitimacy is about the recognition of present claims to power (Bottoms & Tankebe, 2012).

In traditional and hierarchical societies, the police derived and still derive their legitimacy from the state's mandate to ensure law and order, by force if necessary. This can still be observed in many countries around the world, where people obey the police based solely on an existing power

differential (and fear of repression). In most modern Western democracies, however, the police have to acquire their legitimacy by meeting certain expectations from the people. Their legitimacy is no longer a foregone conclusion in the eyes of the population, but must be established and constantly demonstrated anew (Beetham, 2013). There are three characteristics that define the police as a legitimate organisation. The first is whether the police exercise power within the law, which is referred to as "legality", or whether they abuse that power (Beetham, 1991). The second concerns the way in which the police act and whether the action is considered appropriate or excessive in the particular situation (Beetham, 1991). In addition, the rules that guide the action of the police must be precise and binding and the outcome of such rules must be fair (Hough et al., 2010; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003). And third, the police are seen as legitimate if they are perceived by the population as morally similar to them, sharing the same values (Bradford, 2014; Bradford et al., 2014; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003).

When these characteristics are present, perceived legitimacy leads the population to obey the police, their decisions, and orders, even when they are not (fully) understood or accepted (Tyler, 1998; Tyler & Huo, 2002). But not only trust-building processes are dynamic and involve both sides—the police and those policed, as mentioned at the beginning—legitimacy, as an outcome of trust, can also be looked at from both sides. Newer research points to the impact of the police's self-perception. Self-legitimacy can be understood as: the police officers' sense that (1) their role and activity is justifiable; (2) that the relation between the police and those policed is founded on a match between the means and objectives of the organisation and those of the wider society; and (3) that they, as police officers, have a special place in society (Bradford & Quinton, 2014). Whether or not the police believe that their work matches the expectations of the public relates to their trust in society. While the level of public trust in the police is high across Western Europe—with some exceptions (Staubli, 2017)—police officers themselves report lower levels of trust in the public (Kääriäinen & Sirén, 2011). Nevertheless, it has been shown that the perception of public support and public cooperation affects police officers' self-legitimacy which in turn contributes to democratic policing styles (Bradford & Quinton, 2014).

What Is Police Trust, and Which Levels Are Affected?

1. Institution/organisation:
- Trust in the police as a democratic institution
- Trust in the performance of the police
- Trust in the morals of the police
2. Level of Action:

    • Confidence in procedural justice: fair, respectful behaviour, fair outcomes

3. Situational Component:
- Form of police contact: location, time, number, and characteristics of those involved
- Fluid trust in interactions with groups such as demonstrators or football fans

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3   How Can Trust (Building) Be Explained?

Trust in the Performance of the Police: Effectiveness and Procedural Fairness

One important indicator of trust in the police is their performance. If the population assesses police work as good, trust in them is high, and vice versa. Such a correlation is confirmed across all European countries (Staubli, 2017). Basically, police performance can be measured according to their efficiency in fighting crime and their success in community policing (cf. Neyroud, 2008). Efficiency in crime control is generally about how well the police do their job in the eyes of the public. Elements of success in community policing include perceived help and support from the police in the community, satisfaction with the time it takes to arrive on the scene after an emergency call, or satisfaction with police presence in the streets. Also at the local level, if the work is perceived as satisfactory, people are more likely to trust the police than if they are dissatisfied with police performance (Staubli, 2014).

Beyond the perceived efficiency of the police, the perception of fairness in encounters is crucial in shaping populations' perception of police legitimacy (Hough et al., 2010; Jackson & Bradford, 2010; Jackson, Pooler, 2011; Mazerolle et al., 2013). Procedural justice in terms of processes and outcomes postulates that fair and appropriate behaviour, as well as adequate outcomes, on the part of the police will have a positive influence on the perception of the controlled parties and thus on the interaction itself. A behaviour will be perceived as appropriate when it is neutral, when the treatment is carried out with dignity and respect, and when the outcome, such as a fine, is perceived as appropriate (Tyler & Huo, 2002).

Procedural justice plays an important role in shaping opinions about the police, trust in them, and their perceived legitimacy.[2] If people assess the behaviour of police officers as appropriate, neutral, and fair, they trust the police more, with positive experiences having a strong impact on trust in procedural fairness (Oliveira et al., 2021). If, on the other hand, the behaviour of the police is rated as disrespectful, unfair, and biased, this has a negative effect on trust in them and on the perception of their efficiency (Kääriäinen, 2007; Mazerolle et al., 2013; Oliveira et al., 2021). Furthermore, it has been confirmed that procedural fairness also affects the sense of identification with authority that the police represent: when people feel that they are treated fairly by the police, their sense of identification with the superior group that the police represent is strengthened, which in turn increases the legitimacy of the police. In contrast, unfair treatment signals to people that they do not belong to the same moral group, which undermines both identification and police legitimacy (Bradford et al., 2014). Encountering a negative policing style can also foster a pre-existing or burgeoning sense of otherness and alienation from the wider social and political community (Bradford, 2014). Such concepts of perceived social identity operate in conflictual situations such as in confrontations with violent football fans, as outlined in the next chapter. The perception of the legitimacy of the way in which action is taken against fans affects not only the perception of the police,

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[2] Procedural justice is either seen as a determinant (Tankebe, 2013) or an antecedent of legitimacy (Jackson et al., 2011). For discussion, see Schaap and Saarikomääki (2022). In this chapter, procedural justice is considered a determinant of legitimacy.

but also the internal dynamics of the fan group and the way in which it acts collectively (Stott et al., 2012). For the police, this means that they can lose much of the public's trust if their behaviour is perceived as inappropriate and gain little if it is perceived positively.

Research has widely confirmed the positive impact of procedural justice on police trust, legitimacy, and compliance (Bottoms & Tankebe, 2012; Mazerolle et al., 2013; Nagin & Telep, 2017; Reisig et al., 2017; Sahin et al., 2017; Tankebe, 2009; Tyler & Huo, 2002). Yet, some important aspects need to be considered when discussing how the procedural justice approach can be transferred to daily police work. First, it was shown that there are some limitations in transferring the concept to non-Western, non-democratic countries. The democratic conditions in a country shape how the police are perceived as an institution. It follows that in many non-democratic and transfer countries the police act for the interests of the political establishment, leading to corruption and disrespect of human rights. Moreover, in politically unstable countries and countries of the Global South, a police force that fights crime effectively is more appreciated than one that acts in a fair and respectable way (Boateng, 2020; Tankebe, 2009). Second, at the level of interaction, it matters under what circumstances an interaction between the police and the population occurs, whether the contact is initiated by the population such as to report a crime or initiated by the police such as in the context of a traffic offence or control of a person. Procedural justice has been shown to be more relevant in police-initiated contacts while performance matters more in those contacts initiated by the population (Murphy, 2009). Third, pre-existing attitudes on the part of the public can influence the perception of the police in an interaction with them (Oliveira et al., 2021). And fourth, the positive impact of a just procedural treatment that people have received on their trust in the police might not be lasting and transferrable to trust in the organisation, but bound to the concrete situation, as an experimental study has shown (Sahin et al., 2017). Theory and research on procedural justice is constantly being developed and refined and includes new elements such as public perceptions of racialised policing (Jackson et al., 2021).

Policing Crowds: Social Identity in Group Contexts

There are many different contexts in which interactions or "encounters" between the police and the public might happen. One that deserves to be mentioned are interactions with larger groups, such as in the context of crowd policing around football matches or demonstrations. It has been shown that shared group identities, based on the same nationality or community, for example, play an important role. They exist prior to the interaction with the police, affecting how interactions are perceived (Lind & Tyler, 1988), and they are shaped by the group to which individuals feel they belong.[3] In groups with a strong sense of belonging and hence social identity, individual members are strongly motivated to contribute to the maintenance and well-being of the group, because their self-concept is linked to that of the group (Blader & Tyler, 2009; Tyler & Blader, 2003). When a group, for instance at a demonstration, feels that the police officers who control them share the same value as they do or they feel a personal relationship with them, they will open up their closed group identity and feelings of us versus them. If this is the case, people will also care more about the quality of their treatment by the police, as they identify more strongly with them (Tyler, 2001). It follows that perceived (negative) fairness by the police alters and shapes how groups feel about the identities the police present in their eyes (Bradford et al., 2014).

Beyond identity and senses of belonging within such groups, contexts should not be neglected, as they determine which social group an individual belongs to in a concrete situation (Reicher, 1996). According to the elaborated social identity model (ESIM), the context primarily refers to the behaviour shown by the groups present and the individuals belonging to them, in contrast to situational approaches, where place and time are also considered (Cohen & Felson, 1979; Hine et al., 2020). Applied to the police, this means that the evaluation of their actions by those present decisively contributes to which social group an individual feels he or she belongs to. If the actions of the police are perceived

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[3] The so-called group value model (GVM) opts for shared group identities existing prior to an interaction with the police, while the group engagement model (GEM) postulates that the group to which they feel they belong to shapes an individual's behaviour.

as illegitimate by those present, a law-abiding individual can suddenly assume a social identity that opposes the police orders or even deliberately acts against them. This can, for example, happen in the context of a demonstration, after the police begin to close off a street, which results in a rejectionist attitude on the part of the demonstrators, or an increased solidarity and identity formation with the other demonstrators (Brechbühl et al., 2020). This changed social context ultimately causes a change in the social identity of the persons present. This may also include delinquent or violent acts, as a confrontation with the police is now suddenly seen as a legitimate means (e.g., as a demand for one's own rights). Such a change in social identity(ies) could also lead to a shift in the balance of power: the strengthened, resisting mass of people suddenly feel capable of successfully asserting their own ideas against the police due to their increased number. Moreover, those who carry out the confrontation are seen as prototypical and are thus more able to influence others in the crowd who share the same identity (e.g., Stott & Drury, 2000). Conversely, if police behaviour is perceived as legitimate, this can lead to self-regulatory tendencies (Stott et al., 2012, 2019).

Policing Marginalised and Vulnerable Groups

Beyond contextual elements, the identity of those who are encountered by the police has an influence on the course and perception of police contacts. An understanding of marginalised and vulnerable groups helps police officers to interact with them with a certain level of prior knowledge and thus be able to better assess them. To start with, it has been shown that trust in organisations such as the police is closely interrelated with social trust. Social trust refers to a general trust in unfamiliar fellow human beings and is considered an important cornerstone of social capital (Putnam, 1995; Rothstein & Stolle, 2002). Research confirms links between social trust and trust in organisations such as the police for various Western countries (Grönlund & Setälä, 2012; Rothstein & Stolle, 2008; Staubli, 2016, 2017). People who have little trust in their fellow human beings transfer this distrust to the police. So far, however, it has not been possible to conclusively determine the characteristics of

people with deep interpersonal trust. Having said that, specific attention must be paid to marginalised and vulnerable groups, such as ethnic minorities, homeless people, but also crime victims or juveniles. Procedural justice theory offers only one of several elements when it comes to defining what positive and hence trust-building interactions between the police and individuals are. Homeless people, for example, do value fair and respectful encounters but do not make the transfer to trusting the police in general. Moreover, other social processes such as a history of exclusion and marginalisation seem to be more important in shaping attitudes towards the police than their actual perception of police behaviour (Kyprianides et al., 2021).

Experiences of victimisation and the personal perception of safety are listed as factors negatively influencing police trust: fear of becoming a victim of a criminal act and having become a victim of crime are associated with lower trust in the police (Bradford, 2011; Guzzi & Hirtenlehner, 2015; Jackson et al., 2009; Kääriäinen, 2007; Kääriäinen & Sirén, 2011). However, it is evident here that police behaviour can have a major impact on police trust. Crime victims who report an offence to the police trust them more if they were satisfied with their work and if they felt that they had been taken seriously and kept adequately informed (Staubli, 2017; Wolfe et al., 2015).

When considering the relationship between the police and marginalised groups or minorities, one should consider structural inequalities and discrimination within societies, leading to over-policing of certain communities (Roux, 2018). Moreover, people of colour might become targets of racial profiling and/or police brutality (Graham et al., 2020). A relationship between racism and policing was found in a range of countries across the globe, including the USA (Mesic et al., 2018), Brazil (Cano, 2010), and Europe (Body-Gendrot, 2010). As far as trust is concerned, in general, people of a migrant background trust the police less, as shown for countries such as France (Roché, 2008; Roché et al., 2018), Switzerland (Staubli, 2014), or the UK (Bradford et al., 2018). Here, experiences with the police can override characteristics of origin when minorities are more often controlled by the police than the majority population (de Maillard et al., 2018; Jackson et al., 2012), especially in disrupted neighbourhoods (Roux, 2018). Moreover,

controls might be more tense due to pre-existing negative stereotyping and historical conflicts. In Europe, this becomes especially evident in the context of controlling (migrant) youth (Saarikkomäki et al., 2021). Moreover, men and younger people are generally more likely to be stopped and checked by the police (Bradford et al., 2009; Jackson et al., 2012).

4   Conclusion

The police have the task of ensuring security and order in society and are allowed to use force, if necessary. Legally speaking, they derive their legitimacy from this task alone. To fulfil this mandate, however, they are dependent on the support of the population—for several reasons. First, in complex modern societies it is almost impossible to monitor every nook and cranny, be it in the "physical" space of villages and cities, or in the "virtual" space of the internet, social media, and social networks. Second, plural norms and values are leading to very different views and guides to action in daily life. Organisations are also becoming more complex and difficult to understand. For the population, this means that they have little well-founded knowledge about the police and evaluate them based on media reports and stories related by friends, but also their own experiences. If they basically trust the police as a state organisation, individual experiences in interactions with the police could be formative, having a negative impact on trust. Expectations are thus not so much linked to organisations as such, but to their representatives. On the one hand, this means that the image and perception of the police can be improved by positive behaviour. On the other hand, behaviour that is perceived as negative might also lead to dissatisfaction and mistrust towards the police as an organisation. The police are faced with the task of dealing with a diverse and thus very varied clientele, which can lead to uncertainties. This is where trust comes into play. Research has shown that the police are perceived as a legitimate power and authority when they have people's trust; trust that the police will do their job appropriately and efficiently, but also that they will behave correctly and fairly. People who fundamentally trust the police are more likely to behave

cooperatively and follow their instructions. This facilitates police work and promotes reporting of crimes (Tyler & Fagan, 2008).

The police are a complex organisation with different units requiring different policing styles and tactics. While preventive styles such as community policing leads to friendly communication and constant exchange targeted towards building a relationship with residents, public order or special units are prepared for confrontational situations. Moreover, police officers must always be prepared for serious situations, being confronted by a criminal, or being attacked by the other party for whatever reason. Despite these facts, many daily interactions between the police and the public happen between representatives of the monopoly of power and ordinary citizens, marginalised and vulnerable people, and groups. Here, being fair and respectful favours positive experiences and helps to de-escalate tense situations.

The behaviour of police officers during checks is not only decisive in gaining the trust of the individuals checked, but also contributes to a lasting imprint of trust in the police. A polite and respectful manner on the part of the police is therefore important. It is important to bear in mind that the persons being checked have a previous history or at least a pre-existing image of the police. This can be positive or negative, shaped by their own experiences, by the experiences of family members or friends, or by media reports. Negative behaviour on the part of the police can reinforce negative images or destroy positive ones. Especially in the case of people seeking help, such as victims of crime, it has been shown that satisfaction with a police contact contributes significantly to a high level of trust. Such trust is essential in today's complex societies, where, despite state-of-the-art technologies, seamless surveillance of all public (and private) spaces is almost impossible. The police are more dependent than ever on the cooperation of the population. People who trust the police and see them as legitimate are more likely to cooperate with the police than people who are suspicious of them.

What follows for the organisational and individual level is that "trusting" the police (Staubli, 2017) is hardly static but highly volatile in concrete situations; it is a process with the police being only one actor amongst others. It is also clear that policing inherits a certain "fallibility", as certain elements of daily police work involve practice that makes

conflict and controversy unavoidable (Newburn, 2022, p. 441). Nevertheless, society as a context in which to operate, and its population as the clients of its action, are changing steadily. And so must the police if they want to address the needs of the population adequately. Even though the monopoly on the use of force on the side of the police will never enable a power balance between them and the public, there are instruments that contribute to more positive and hence trustful interactions.

Key Takeaways
Police Officers

Interactions with the police heavily depend on contexts, with conflictive situations arising more often when marginal and/or vulnerable groups, as well as crowds, are policed. The basis for trust and procedurally fair encounters is, on the one hand, a certain awareness, knowledge, and understanding of such groups. On the other hand, it needs a critical self-reflection on their own behaviour:

- Self-reflection: Police officers should reflect as to whether they have a biased awareness and classification of people, and think about why they have a certain perception of certain groups such as minorities in society.
- Police culture: Inappropriate and rude behaviour should be named and reported, independently of negative reactions on the part of colleagues. In return, officers can act as role models for their colleagues when treating people respectfully and adequately.

Conflict Management Trainers

An awareness must be created that the perception of the police in interactions is crucial for building trust in the population. Procedural justice—neutrality, voice, and respect in interactions—should serve as a basis for this, which could be achieved by:

- Communication training, where the effects of positive and negative communication are demonstrated.
- Regular group reflections amongst police officers and group leaders on police–citizen interactions. This might help to increase awareness of how communication and treatment affect the perception of the public.

- A belief that the work of the police is carried out along the expectations of the public, as one element of self-legitimacy, fosters trust in society, and therefore positive interactions.
- Regular group discussions on how officers believe that the police are perceived and why it is either positive or negative might help in raising self-awareness and mitigating negative feelings.

Police Decision-Makers

Police leaders must foster an inclusive police culture and a zero-tolerance policy in cases of the abuse of power and human rights. This could be achieved by:

- Reflecting on the plurality of the population in the police, e.g., through an appropriate gender distribution and by including police officers with migration backgrounds.
- Developing criteria or reviewing existing criteria that guarantee such a mix in the recruitment of future police officers.
- Clear statements and guides with norms—including fairness—and a culture of intolerance, against an abuse of power.
- Establish neutral contact points where police officers can report inappropriate, inadequate, and unlawful behaviour of their colleagues and take complaints to ombudspersons or human rights organisations to be seriously considered.
- Introducing quality management with the aim of learning permanently from incidents, to implement after-action reviews, to foster self-reflection, and thus to improve the fairness of interactions between the police and civil/modern societies.

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Danger, Fighting, and Badassness: A Social Systems Perspective on Narratives and Codes in Police Conflict Management

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Reviewer: Raoul Jaccard

1   Introduction

Police narratives play a significant role in police culture and police training (Branch, 2021; Fletcher, 1996; Ford, 2003; Hulst, 2013; Kurtz & Colburn, 2019; Schaefer & Tewksbury, 2017; Sierra-Arévalo,

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2021; Staller & Koerner, 2022a; Waddington, 1999). While these narratives are often transmitted orally via the act of storytelling, there are also other forms and media of transmission. For example, the narrative that the police are the last line of defense against societal chaos is transmitted through the "thin blue line" metaphor (Wall, 2020), which appears on (velcro) patches (Staller, Koerner, & Heil, 2022), in movies (McVey, 2022), or is verbally   perpetuated by police trainers (Sierra-Arévalo, 2021). Likewise, the narrative of police officers who engage in non-legalistic practices in service of the greater good can be observed in movies like *Dirty Harry* (Klockars, 1980) and circulates through storytelling within the police system (Hine et al., 2020).

Related to police conflict management, there are certain narratives that implicitly convey what needs to be done in any given situation or how information has to be interpreted: the danger and the fighting narrative. In this chapter, we will describe these two narratives, including their respective forms and different media of occurrence. Based on a social systems perspective on functional differentiation (Luhmann, 2013), we then offer an analysis of their function. Concerning the effects of said narratives, we contend that "badassness" serves as a border for information to be adopted by the system of police training. Through this analysis we hope to enhance the potential of observational reflexivity of the police system, allowing for an informed management of these narratives and a reframing of "badassness".

2 The Danger Narrative

Several studies on the particularities of the social system of policing have found the police profession to be inherently associated with a perception of danger (Branch, 2021; Charman, 2017; Loftus, 2009; Marenin, 2016; Rowe & Rowe, 2021; Sierra-Arévalo, 2021; Simon, 2021;

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Staller & Koerner, 2022a). We refer to the communicative transmission of this idea, in which danger does exist, but in which this danger is also normalized within the police profession and transmitted as ever increasing—as the police danger narrative (Eisenberg (2023), Staller & Koerner, 2022a). As a kind of metanarrative, it comprises the totality of smaller building blocks, such as metaphors, argumentative figures, and stories told within the system, which are used to implicitly and explicitly convey knowledge about the relationship between police work and its inherent dangers. The significance of and the affiliation with the metanarrative in some cases only becomes apparent when viewed as a whole. Various studies from Germany, the USA, and the UK have exposed several elements, which can be interpreted as part of the narrative, including:

- The constant and *ever-present* danger in police operations ("They can pull a knife at any moment"; Behr, 2019, p. 29).
- The narrative of a *continuously increasing* danger for police officers ("The world is getting worse"; "Violence against police officers is on the rise";"Obviously, certain consequences of societal undesirable developments are reflected in the [officially reported crime statistics of the federal criminal police], with which not only police security management, but also every colleague is confronted with in daily service"; Clages, 2021, p. 2).
- Hypothetical "what if" scenarios ("But what do you do when you're standing alone in an alley in front of a 115 kg man?" (Fletcher, 1996, p. 40).
- The dogmatic focus on potential danger at the center of a wide variety of thought and action practices throughout police socialization (Sierra-Arévalo, 2021), e.g., "From a police perspective, [a police officer who, by her behavior, de-escalated a situation as a result] neglects self-protection by sitting down on the edge of the bed. It is a risky behavior, since it cannot be ruled out that the Russian man keeps dangerous objects or weapons under the bed cover or uses the proximity for a physical attack" (Reuter, 2014, p. 69) or "Getting home safe and sound" (Jager et al., 2013, p. 267).

- The construction of police (self-protection) practices as "survival", e.g., "Survival is no accident" (Füllgrabe, 2000), "Don't let them kill you on some dirty roadway" (Lynch, 2017), "My workday looks like watching every shift to make sure my patrol partner(s) get home safe!" (Jager et al., 2013, p. 267).
- Exemplary vivid case descriptions as anecdotal evidence of a present violence problem, e.g., "Through a behavior described as conspicuous in the court hearing that followed later, the Salafist Safia S., a 15-year-old schoolgirl, provoked an ID check on February 26, 2016. In the process, she abruptly stabbed a young federal police officer in the neck with a knife—she was carrying another knife in her backpack" (Goertz, 2021, p. 5).
- Metaphors that focus on the dangerousness of the other party (compared to other aspects worth attending to), such as the "*Gefahrenradar*" (Füllgrabe, 2023).[1]

The danger narrative is omnipresent in the police. As such it has been described as a constitutive part of police culture (Fletcher, 1996; Hulst, 2013; Kurtz & Colburn, 2019; Kurtz & Upton, 2017; Lynch, 2017; Rantatalo & Karp, 2018). Even young police officers at the beginning of their careers are exposed to these narratives and socialized in this way (Hulst & Ybema, 2020). Accordingly, they acquire knowledge that supports that worldview, which, in turn, guides their behavior (Staller & Koerner, 2022b).

In Germany, this narrative can be extended throughout the three years of initial police socialization[2]: during the officers' learning at the police university, where the job is generally framed as dangerous; at the police academy, where "officers' safety" outshines other interactional considerations; and during field training, where anecdotes about dangerous situations circulate amongst staff (Staller et al., 2023).

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[1] The German term "*Gefahrenradar*" was introduced by Füllgrabe in the German police literature in 2000 (Füllgrabe, 2000) and could be best translated by the term "danger radar".

[2] In Germany police recruits go through a three-tiered system over the course of three years. This consists of higher education, classroom style training at the Police University of Applied Sciences, practical skills training at the police academy, and several periods of field training. The police officers graduate with a bachelor's degree.

Besides verbal communication, the danger narrative can be traced in the literature as well, such as in popular bestsellers like *The Psychology of Self-protection* (Füllgrabe, 2023) or in scientific journals (Goertz, 2021), where it is often presented as the basic assumption for specific areas worth researching. Even though we are now critical of such portrayals (Bochenek & Staller, 2014; Körner & Staller, 2018; Körner & Staller, 2020; Koerner & Staller, 2022; Staller & Koerner, 2021b, 2021c; Staller et al., 2022; Zaiser et al., 2022), we have to note that, in the past, we had subscribed to this narrative and disseminated it for years ourselves (see, e.g., Bochenek & Staller, 2014; Körner & Staller, 2018).

Regarding the success of the danger narrative, there are also other media involved. The alleged dangers of the profession also circulate in the news media as well as in popular culture (Aiello, 2014; Kurtz & Upton, 2017). There is also a general societal image of what the police are and what they do (Sausdal, 2021a). Thus, those who choose the police profession may already have clear subjective ideas of what is expected (Staller & Koerner, 2022b). The extent to which the subjective view of a constantly and continuously increasing danger for police officers matches reality seems to be of secondary importance, because our own view creates the reality we eventually perceive (Staller & Koerner, 2022a).

There is evidence from research into the psychology of aggression that the individual assumption of a dangerous world leads to individually more aggressive action tendencies (Dodge et al., 2015; Huesmann, 2018). Ambiguous stimuli in interactions are interpreted in a more hostile way, increasing the likelihood of using one's own more aggressive action scripts. This makes it more difficult to shape interactions with the other party. The subjective perception of how dangerous interactions are in one's own work environment builds the foundation for one's own actions regarding the management of conflicts. In this context, a longitudinal study by Baier (2019) exemplifies this problem: police officers' fear of assault was associated with a higher risk of experiencing verbal and, on a longitudinal basis, physical violence in the study.

In essence, the danger narrative forms a coherent perspective on the reality of policing, which leads to another prevalent narrative, which can be viewed—from this coherent perspective—as a solution: the fighting narrative.

3   The Fighting Narrative

The fighting narrative revolves around the notion that the core oper-ation of the police is "fighting". We owe this lens of analysis to the ethnographic work of Sausdal (2020b, 2021a, 2021b), who describes his observations in the context of transnational European policing as a "fighting fetish" (2021a):

> They "have" to fight. They "need" to wage war, they regularly told me in a language of inevitability, even when admitting that their work involves and, arguably, necessitated many other things. (S. 410)

Underlying this need for fighting is the "ideological assumption" (Bowling et al., 2019) that the police are a functional prerequisite for social order and that, without a police force, chaos would break out. This assumption also underlies the artifact of the thin blue line (Staller, Koerner, & Heil, 2022; Wall, 2020)—the police as the border that ensures that society does not descend into chaos. In this logic, fighting "must" take place, since otherwise chaos would prevail.

However, focusing on current policing practices, much of police work is characterized by activities other than "fighting" (Rowe & Rowe, 2021; Sausdal, 2020a, 2021a). A lot of the work police do on a day-to-day basis has nothing to do with face-to-face interactions in conflict situa-tions. Policing is becoming more and more differentiated. The system out-differentiates itself. For example, with policing in the digital space and the raise of cybercrime, the question of to what extent and who needs to be empowered to "fight" in the first place arises even more. Also, concerning the creation of safety and security within society, the police play only a small part in this process (Frevel, 2022). "Fighting", and especially "physical fighting", thus remains the exception—not the rule. However, from the perspective of the police culture a different observa-tion is made within the system: fighting *is* the constitutive element of policing.

Against the backdrop of this inherent assumption, several prevalent observations employ that logic. For example, only frontline work with conflictual police–civilian interactions is understood as "real" police

work. Argumentative positions of individual police officers are strengthened by their respective "combat experience" (Seidensticker, 2021), which elevates their status in the system. Furthermore, according to this logic, the genuine work of police officers is also regularly understood as clear "friend–foe" or "us versus them" constellations (Behr, 2017).

As a consequence, the fighting narrative contains some implications for perceptions of what police work actually entails. The image of many police officers seems to regularly revolve around action, adventure, excitement, and the use of force (Brown et al., 1993; Fletcher, 1996). This is a notion that is also embedded within popular culture, where police work is regularly portrayed as "law and order" policing (O'Sullivan, 2005). This system-external ascription of policing easily passes the system, is applied to police from the outside, and then affects the inside (Pollock et al., 2021; Sausdal, 2021a).

However, there are also observations that partially paint a different picture: police work motivated by sympathy for the fate of crime suspects, for the circumstances that compelled them to act. This is a picture of police officers with differentiated views and perspectives (Sausdal, 2021b). So, on the one hand, there is a reality of policing that has distinctly prosocial overtones, and on the other hand there is the shared narrative that cops must be "hardcore" or "badass": "It's not fucking social work we do. This is police work" (Sausdal, 2021b, p. 191).

The tension between communication related to fighting and the reality of policing has to be negotiated in some way in order to provide a coherent perspective, as this tension has become existential, as a quote from a police officer shows:

> If we don't ultimately have this tough lingo, this way of speaking about our work and seeing the world we live in, if our work is not set against the evils of this world, then why are we even here? (Sausdal, 2021a, S. 413)

The quote also refers back to the danger narrative. Danger ("the evils of this world") is the argumentative prerequisite for fighting. The existence of danger is the logical consequence if there is a police focused

on fighting. The circularity of the argument provides coherence, mutually reinforcing the above-mentioned narratives. This process points us towards social systems theory (Luhmann, 2013, 2020), which allows for an analysis of the communicative processes with its conditions and consequences.

4   A Social Systems Perspective on Narratives

With the framework of modern social systems theory, we focus our analysis of narratives on two questions. First, how come certain narratives are so successful within the police? Our second question relates to that: which problems do narratives actually solve?

Narratives as Succesful Communcation

The question concerning the success of narratives must be posed in the light of the general problem of communication (Luhmann, 1981). Viewed from a Luhmannian perspective, any form of communication is in essence highly unlikely, unless it has found a way to effectively solve the following three problems.

Firstly, one party must understand what the other party means (*improbability of understanding*). This relates to the problem that "[m]eaning can only be understood in context, and context for each individual consists of what his own memory supplies" (Luhmann, 1981, p. 123). Secondly, recipients must be reached, which is much easier in situations where recipients are present (*improbability of reaching recipients*). This is related to the problem of space and time, or as Luhmann puts it: "It is improbable that a communication should reach more persons than are present in a given situation" (p. 123). And thirdly, communication must be successful in that the receiving party takes over the selective content of the communication (the information) as a premise of its own actions, that is it follows its own selections from it (*improbability of success*). The problem is that it is highly improbable for

individuals to accept understood communication, given the high individuality of humans. Furthermore, these improbabilities mutually reinforce one another. When one problem is solved, the others become more difficult. If a person has understood a communication, more reasons exist to reject it. If a communication extends beyond the people present, the more difficult it gets to understand and thus accept it.

The prevalence of the danger and the fighting narratives within the system indicates that they *are successful* in terms of communication, which means that the above-mentioned obstacles have been overcome.

Concerning *understanding*, the two narratives build on a shared understanding of the police by the police. The "cop culture", with its traditionalistic views (compared to other police cultures) on law and order, heteronormative masculinity, and dominance (Behr, 2020; Burke, 1992; Silvestri, 2017), provides the systemic structure that ensures that the narratives are understood. The cop culture structure boils down possible "contexts" for police officers to a shared context of understanding.

The cop culture also provides a structure that allows for the narratives to be conserved, to trespass space and time, and hence solve the problem of the improbability of *reaching recipients*. The culture ensures that danger stories (Fletcher, 1996), danger emblems and ideas (e.g., the thin blue line; Staller, Koerner, & Heil, 2022; Wall, 2020), and metaphors (e.g., the danger radar; Koerner & Staller, 2021b) keep circulating. The implementation of training structures, which emphasize physical coercion and the use of force over other forms of conflict management (Sloan & Paoline, 2021; Staller et al., 2021), can also be understood as systemic structures (network nodes), which ensure the distribution of the danger—and the fighting—narrative.

Finally, the acceptance of the communication, the *success of communication*, is also reinforced on a structural level, for example by a shared identity (e.g., cop culture), shared beliefs about what training should emphasize (e.g., the handling and use of firearms compared to de-escalation strategies), which equipment (e.g., weaponry) is used/worn, or on a general level a shared understanding of what policing actually entails.

The potential of overcoming these obstacles of communication depends on the systemic structures in play. On the other hand, the narratives themselves reproduce these structures. They are consequence and condition at the same time. Narratives and structure reinforce each other in a circular way, ultimately allowing the communication to be successful. The success of communication also points towards a second systemic question worth pursuing: Which systemic problems do the danger and the fighting narratives actually solve?

Narratives as System Reproducing Elements

Narratives successfully circumvent the obstacles of communication. However, successful communication does not guarantee their existence within the system. It can be assumed, from a functional perspective, that narratives solve a specific problem. Since social systems can be described as autopoietic, self-stabilizing systems, the function in question can be analyzed based on this assumption. Specifically, those narratives that enhance the self-stabilizing capacity of the system appear to be functional.

Before we turn to the specific function of narratives, we will briefly describe the autopoietic processes of systems, which are based on self-reference on three different levels (Luhmann, 2013). First, systems refer to themselves via communication as the fundamental and (according to Luhmann, the only) social operation. On a basic level of self-reference, this entails that a certain basic operation (or unit act) is followed by the next basic operation. Whereas for the economy this unit act is payment (payment follows payment), the unit act for the police has been argued to be policing (Koerner & Staller, 2022), with its mandate to control for violence on a societal level (Luhmann, 1995, 2002). Second, on another level of self-reference, reflection entails the self-description of the social system within the social system. For the social system of police, this includes descriptions of the police within the police, which revolve around the identity of the system, capturing its own past, present, and future, determining tasks, and formulating expectations. Through reflection, the police create internal consistency. Third, according to

Luhmann, highly evolved social systems have developed a further level of self-reference: reflexivity, which refers to the adoption of core processes on the core processes itself. For the police, this would entail policing the police. Related to violence, it would mean to control the control of violence. In general, this allows the system to control complexities. However, since the evaluation of social systems is non-normative, the reflexivity of policing has led to the development of a third, "hidden" control mechanism, which controls the control of violence control. These are processes that ensure "that nothing happens when something happens" (Luhmann, 1995). Such mechanisms immunize the system against destabilization.

The danger and the fighting narrative easily connect to the basic operation (basic self-reference): the control of violence indicates that violence is the source of danger and fighting thus the mechanism to control it. Police officers execute their duties (control for violence) by using force. The unit act oscillates between (the perception of) danger and its physical control via physical use of force. Violence is answered with force. Danger is fought.

On the second level of self-reference, this self-description can be observed within the two narratives: danger (of violence) as the continuous, ever-present problem; and fighting (against violence) as the solution. As such, the narratives maintain the system. On this level of reflection, the police's own violence is assumed to be legitimate.

In addition, reflexive mechanisms (the third level of self-reference) safeguard that tenet of "legitimate violence". While there are governance structures that control for the legitimacy of violence, such as regulations, directives, training, or internal affairs divisions (Cabral & Lazzarini, 2015), others have evolved culturally, such as the wall of silence (Conway & Westmarland, 2021; Schuck & Rabe-Hemp, 2022) and the revisionist writing of reports to justify an unjustified use of force (Apuzzo, 2015).

In this context, controlling for violence within the police lies within some ancestral routines that cannot easily be changed from the outside. Reflexivity immunizes against the loss of control and safeguards the police from it. In that vein, narratives can also be viewed as reflexive mechanisms. From this perspective, the danger narrative and the fighting

narrative implicitly convey the message that, in the light of ever-increasing danger (and imminent societal chaos), fighting is the only option.

While fighting as such is constructed to be the solution, it can also be observed as a problem. For example, the focus on fighting renders other options invisible. Fighting may prime officers to address immediate problems, which can create more immediate problems like "officer-induced jeopardy". Fighting de-optionalizes communication. The faster physical force is employed, the less options for conflict resolution are available. If fighting primes for "running towards the danger", the option of "disengagement" as a non-fighting tactic does not easily come to mind.[3] Since fights are fast and chaotic, slowing down appears to be a counter-intuitive strategy. And while chaos prevails during the fight, the lines between legal and illegal actions blur, leading to another problem: the need for the construction of legality (even if it could be observed as illegal from a different perspective) and the need for observed illegality to vanish into latency. From a systems perspective, this refers to "useful illegalities". These can regularly be observed in complex organizational systems and allow the system to operate and to cope with the demands of complex and highly dynamic problems, *despite* the rigid frameworks that control for deviations (Kühl, 2021). Another aspect that could be observed as a problem is how the focus on danger and fighting disregards what led to the conflict in the first place. The danger is already there, and reactive measures to fight it must be taken. However, acknowledging the interactional dynamics of any police–citizen encounter allows for a variety of options to manage conflict beyond fighting or using force respectively (Zaiser et al., 2022).

In a circular manner, the semantics of the narratives can be observed in structural equivalents in the police system: an emphasis on training structures, which emphasizes fighting options (e.g., firearms training, the use of force training), and the increase in the police's fighting potential (e.g., a tendency towards militarization, at least in Germany). These are

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3 We thank the San Francisco Police Department's Crisis/Hostage Negotiation Team, which, during a conference talk, reported on the successful, repeated use of disengagement in dealing with crisis situations. Disengagement or temporary non-engagement elegantly replaces the conventional control of violence through use of force with a response focused on support.

consequences and conditions at the same time, reproducing semantics and structures based on the system's self-reference. As such, the narratives are functional for the system. They are reflexive control strategies that immunize the system against other alternatives for coping with the unit act of the system—controlling for violence.

Over the last decades, the internal organizational structures that focus on providing the potential to deal with the perceived danger have primarily been training departments. As sub-systems, they have to differentiate themselves from their environment (other sub-systems within the police), based on a binary code (Luhmann, 2013). This binary code "regulates the oscillation between positive and negative values, thus the contingency of the evaluations on which the system orients its own operations" (p. 90). Since the system's operations have to be carried out as selections, "[b]inary codes are, in a strict sense, forms, which is to say two-sided forms, that facilitate switching from one side to the other, from value to opposing value and back by distinguishing themselves as forms from other forms" (p. 91). Whereas the binary code for policing in general has been postulated to be legal/illegal (Koerner & Staller, 2022), the sub-system of police training with a strong interconnection to the danger and the fighting narrative has its own code that ensures its autopoiesis. We propose this code to be *badass/not-badass*.

5   The Code of Badassness

In his seminal analysis of *Ways of the Badass*, Katz (1988) describes badassness as a project of constructing one's own identity along several levels of intimidating aggression in an attempt to assert control, status, and recognition from one's peers. On a lower level of aggression, badassness involves the display of behavior and use of symbols and devices that suggest an impenetrable self. In contrast, higher levels of aggression involve the transcendence of moral injunctions and, being mean, based on a logic of domination. While the concept has been used in Katz's analysis in order to explain deviant behavior, a creep of concept (Haslam, 2016) has been observable over the last decades. Initially, the

concept centers around the use of violence and aggression as key intimidating factors, especially by transgressing moral injunctions (Kopak & Sefiha, 2014). However, newer versions of the use of "badass" as a term extend beyond physical forms of aggression and violence in order to be perceived as tough, and to reach a social status that is intimidating to others (Douwen et al., 2022; Johnson, 2014; Maddox, 2019).

Intimidation—along with coercion and power—can be viewed as a key strategy to exert dominance in social interactions (Maner, 2017). As such, badassness relates to the fighting narrative, which in essence advocates for the domination over danger, when danger must be fought. In the sub-system of police training (in Germany), the code of badassness possibly allows information to be processed based on its value for dominance. As a code, badass/not-badass allows us to assign a value— *badass*—as the preference value of acceptance and *not-badass* as the value of rejection. The code acts as a filter for relevance, allowing the system to reduce complexity in decision making (e.g., which information to accept, which information to reject). Simultaneously, it allows the system to control the increasing complexities. Decisions about personnel, training content, equipment, knowledge or told stories, and so on are a frequent feature of the sub-system of police training.

Observations within the German sub-system of police training indicate that organizational decisions can be attributed to this code. For example, we observed that police trainers are selected based on their fighting abilities (Körner et al., 2019) and that knowledge is more easily accepted among police trainers when it comes from Special Operations Units (Staller, Koerner, Abraham, et al., 2022). In turn knowledge is prevented from entering the system (especially the sub-systems of special forces), when it does not fit the logic of a dominance-oriented training paradigm (Koerner & Staller, 2021a; Körner & Staller, 2019; Staller & Koerner, 2021, 2021b).

Concerning the borders of the police training sub-system, the binary code badass/not-badass reduces the complexity of decisions related to the "fit" to the system. Being perceived as "badass" increases the probability of acceptance and, as such, successful communication. As a filter code, it reduces the possibility of other forms of violence control to evolve by ensuring that the danger and the fighting narrative are stabilized as the

reflexive control mechanism for the control of violence. In light of the danger and fighting narratives as reflexive control mechanisms by themselves, badassness may be the result of the reproduction of the narratives in their effort to control for potential threats: events that threaten the danger and the fighting narratives.

6   Concluding Alternative Observations

The analysis of the danger and the fighting narrative through the lens of social systems theory reveals that they serve a functional role: as mechanisms of reflection and reflexivity, they control the complexities of the system by determining its basic logic of controlling violence through reactive violence. The filter code of badassness supports the corresponding decision making. As such, the narratives as well as the filter codes can be observed to be functional solutions from within the system. However, from outside the system, these solutions may appear to be part of the problem, as they stabilize and reproduce semantics and structures that prevent the system from changing the form of its basic operations.

These oppositional observations allow for a third insight: By heightening the potential of observational reflexivity, it becomes clear that the police could be different, and that police conflict management could broaden its perspective on violence control. This would allow the police as a system to manage the danger and the fighting narratives by acknowledging their genesis and their function, and by maybe replacing them with narratives more coherent with different forms of violence control within society. Concerning the code of badassness, reframing and redefining what badassness looks like would allow for assigning different values to information gathered within the system: structures that are reflexive of their observations, officers that have a broad understanding and competence on managing violence and conflict, police trainers that transmit a prosocial worldview, and a police that is oriented towards the communities they serve: that's badass.

Key Takeaways

Understanding the genesis and the function of the danger and the fighting narratives, as well as understanding the code of badassness, allows for the management of these. At the heart of this management is the insightful conduct regarding narratives and filter codes within the system. In line with our key idea to heighten reflexivity within the system of police, we provide some options for reflection on the following populations, without pointing too much towards specific solutions.

Police Officers

- Police officers may reflect on the stories they tell and critically reflect on stories they listen to. It may be worth thinking about what aspects of police work should be granted a center stage within circulating narratives.
- Calling out danger and fighting narratives when confronted with them may heighten the awareness of the narratives as narratives within the police.
- Reflecting on which actions and behaviors are valued and framed as "badass" may valorize prosocial behavior, such as a broad understanding of and competence with managing violence and conflict with human subjects at its center.

Conflict Management Trainers

- A conflict management trainer may want to be critically reflective about anecdotes they provide for training purposes.
- Also, training content (e.g., the curriculum) may be reflected in the light of the described narratives. While there is no doubt that the police profession occasionally engages in physical violence, contextualizing these training settings as "rare, but needed" may help to immunize against the view of an inherently dangerous world. Constructing training settings that account for all problems of front-line officers, e.g., empathetic de-escalation in one case versus physical control in another case, may delimit the inherent danger and fighting narrative within traditional police use of force training.
- A critical reflection of badassness as it relates to the sub-system of conflict management training (e.g., police use of force, defensive tactics, firearms training) may provide the opportunity to valorize

aspects of policing that have not been valued by these sub-systems so far.

Police Decision-Makers

- Police decision-makers may critically reflect on arguments within decision-making processes that are built on the danger or fighting narrative. By acknowledging the drawbacks of giving in to these narratives, more insightful and more informed decisions can be made.
- Thinking about and circulating alternative narratives that transmit a prosocial worldview of policing, and that transmit a different logic to violence control, may be a first step in replacing a latent acting structure.

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Policing in the Light of Social Dominance Theory and the Social Distance Theory of Power

Swen Koerner, Mario S. Staller, and Benni Zaiser

Reviewer: Shawn Hill

1   Policing as Social Interaction

Being a police officer is a social profession. It is defined as social in that a large part of its work involves interacting with people. Police officers ask residents for their documents in traffic stops, search people in the park

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for prohibited substances, record witness and injured party statements, accompany demonstrations, or expel violent family members from their homes. The respective research has a lot to offer, including theories and methods on face-to-face interactions (Hadley et al., 2022) and interaction-specific bodies of knowledge, which for example comprise caregiver interactions in emergency situations (Rogers et al., 2019), de-escalatory communication (Engel et al., 2019; Pontzer, 2021), or the dynamics of crowd policing (Nassauer, 2019; Williams & Stott, 2022).

Encounters between the police and the public are not interactions at eye level. For instance, one cannot simply avoid a police inter-action. Police encounters are often authoritative situations. From a resident's perspective, every action of a police officer, every approach, every stop, every entry, every question and query, every physical inter-vention, every ticket, and so on, can be perceived as an individual restriction and behavioural imposition. However, in order to accomplish their mission, the police have statutory and customary authority to conduct the mentioned actions. In social terms, the police are the state-legitimized organization for controlling violence (Luhmann, 1995). As a result, police interaction is fundamentally underpinned by a certain power imbalance.

In recent years, international police research points to challenges that characterize encounters between the police and the public. For instance, interactions that result in the death or serious injury of resi-dents as a result of (excessive) police use of force (Goff & Rau, 2020; Lee, 2021; Tillyer, 2022), or which reveal racial bias (Goff & Rau, 2020; Peeples, 2019; Ross et al., 2018; Verbruggen, 2022), however statistically insignificant their number, clearly indicate a problematic framing of the fundamental power imbalance between police officers and civilians.

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Even if the police–resident interaction is not an interaction at eye level, it still leaves room for balancing the power differential with a sense of proportionality, for example by providing a good rationale for the particular policing concern and executing it fairly and transparently (McLean et al., 2019; Nix et al., 2015; Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017). In addition, research also indicates concerns associated with the organizational culture of policing. The police are riddled with semantics and practices of a masculinity that sees itself as superior (Gutschmidt & Vera, 2020; Prokos & Padavic, 2002; Rawski & Workman-Stark, 2018), as well as with a lead narrative of a pervasive danger of externally caused violence (Staller & Koerner, 2022; see Chapter 3) and the currently politically relevant topic of racism and racial bias (Behr, 2021; Peeples, 2020; Rohde & Kursawe, 2021).

Police culture and interpersonal behaviour are closely linked. While the conditioning factors for the aforementioned problems are viewed through a wide variety of scientific observational lenses (for racism, see e.g., Polizeiakademie Niedersachsen, 2021), social psychology provides two conceptual frameworks: social dominance theory (SDT) and the social distance theory of power (SDTP). In this chapter, we will argue that they offer a fruitful impetus for reflection efforts within the police, since they relate individual behaviour to its institutional context in a theoretically informed and empirically validated way.

The reference point of both theories is power. SDT states that one's own power is secured through dominance. SDTP, on the other hand, states that dominance is the result of the asymmetrical power relations that are reflected in social interactions in the form of social distance, which in turn can lead to violence. In essence, both theories offer explanations for the police's need to be in control and to strive to maintain (and defend) their individual and institutional position of dominance. This has also been found to be an issue in police science: "Behind racism, right-wing extremism, discrimination, and use of excessive force is the fear of losing dominance" (Behr, 2021, p. 55).

2 An Explanatory Approach to Group-Based Hierarchies: Social Dominance Theory

SDT (Pratto et al., 2006; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Sidanius et al., 2016) is based on the observation that all social systems are structured as group-based social hierarchies, which in turn have a superior group at the top and other groups in lower hierarchical positions. There is a power imbalance between groups, which is expressed and reinforced through a group-based behaviour of dominance. Sidanius and Pratto (1999) see this as a universal grammar of the social realm. While there are differences in the level of repression (e.g., repression is sometimes more visible, direct, and pronounced in anti-democratic societies than in democracies) structural inequality is considered a universally observable phenomenon in the context of SDT:

> Regardless of a society's form of government, the contents of its fundamental belief system, or the complexity of its social and economic arrangements, human societies tend to organise as group-based social hierarchies in which at least one group enjoys greater social status and power than other groups. Members of dominant social groups tend to enjoy a disproportionate share of positive social value, or desirable material and symbolic resources such as political power, wealth, protection by force, plentiful and desirable food, and access to good housing, health care, leisure, and education. (Pratto et al., 2006, pp. 271f.)

The basic assumption of SDT is that social systems (re)organize themselves as group-based hierarchies. Common forms of social oppression, such as sexism, racism, nationalism, hostility towards people with mental illness, physical and mental disabilities, obesity or low social status, all represent specific manifestations of the general social tendency to form group-based inequalities and to reproduce and adapt them through interaction. Social inequality and thus the superiority of one's own group is established along recurring axes of distinction.

The Three Axes of Social Hierarchy

SDT distinguishes between three different, primary types of group-based social hierarchies:

1. Hierarchy of age: Social systems worldwide differentiate their inhabitants according to age. Correspondingly, they generate a vertically coded hierarchy between dominant adults and non-dominant non-adults, which shapes social processes in many social domains (e.g., consumption of goods, education, school, sports, political decisions). In society, adults claim a disproportionate amount of power when compared to adolescents and therefore assume a position of superiority.
2. Hierarchy of gender: Social systems worldwide differentiate their inhabitants according to gender and organize the distribution of social power predominantly along the distinction of men and women. Although matriarchal forms of society exist in specific cultural spaces, the patriarchal system dominates on a global scale: compared to women, men have more social, political, and military power.
3. An arbitrarily set hierarchy: Social systems worldwide form supplementary categories, in addition to the distinctions according to age and gender, based on group-based hierarchies that are built into the structure of the respective society. Among the arbitrarily set and culturally determined categories are distinctions along the lines of race, ethnicity, worldview, or religion, whose universal function is to structure social processes as in-group/out-group procedures and to enable the corresponding assignment of individuals into said groups. Allocating (a set of) people to one side of the distinction generates a grouping of "us" versus "them".

Regardless of the category of separation, according to SDT societies are divided into groups that dominate (in-groups) and other groups that are dominated (out-groups). A socially superiorly perceived in-group, as for instance a group of academics, white-coloured people, or Christians, assigns itself as well as the inferior out-groups their respective positions in society, while also posessing a disproportionately large share

of the relevant social resources (e.g., health, income, security, education, knowledge, housing). On the one hand, empirically, there is often intersectionality between elite in-groups, meaning that members of one group, e.g., people of white skin colour, are also members of the other group, e.g., Christians. On the other hand, in-groups can also be in competition with each other. However, their commonality lies in the fact that in-groups establish their dominance at the expense of out-groups.

Empiricism of Inequality

This structural inequality that is centred on social distinctions is confirmed by numerous research findings, for instance, by studies comparing income. Study data for the USA show an unequal distribution of income between population groups along race and gender-related characteristics (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999): the white European American population earns more than America's black population. However, there is an underlying gender effect worth noting: it is the men in the white European American group who earn significantly more than the men in the black American group (incidentally earning significantly more than the women in the country's in-group as well), while the difference in income between the women in both groups is much smaller. Based on their analysis, Sidanius and Pratto (1999) conclude that the reason for the difference in income between the two population groups is that black American men earn significantly less than white European American men.

   This finding is consistent with research on victimization in the domain of police violence. Again, the data show that male black American members of the out-group are at a significantly higher risk of being shot by white police officers in ambiguous situations than are the white European American representatives of the in-group and their respective female members of the out-group (Plant et al., 2011). While no differences emerge between white European American and black American women when the officers are unarmed, the risk again increases substantially for the latter group when police officers are armed. The explanation for this lies in stereotypical imputation: in race-based attribution, individuals of

the coded out-group are perceived as more aggressive than members of the in-group (Plant et al., 2011).

In the domain of arbitrarily set hierarchies, SDT as a whole assumes a gender effect that has been empirically confirmed many times: male individuals are significantly more likely to use distinctions of race, ethnicity, worldview, or religion to establish group-based dominance than female members of the same group (Pratto et al., 2006). Further, male members of the out-group are more likely to be the target of discrimination than female members of the out-group. Thus, according to SDT, the establishment of social dominance is a primarily male phenomenon in which the use of violence—especially male-to-male—plays a central role (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Sidanius & Veniegas, 2000). But how do group-based social dominance hierarchies explain themselves?

Mechanisms of Group-Based Dominance Hierarchies

Social dominance hierarchies serve to maintain and consolidate asymmetric power relations in favour of a superior group. SDT takes the approach of specifically identifying and understanding those mechanisms that are responsible for the genesis, establishment, and modification of group-based social hierarchies. To do so, it takes a variety of different types of analyses into account, ranging from individual psychological preconditions, relationships of individuals to other individuals within and outside their groups, institutional practices, and cultural ideologies, all of which interact with one another (Pratto & Stewart, 2012; Pratto et al., 2006; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Sidanius et al., 2016).

Group-based social hierarchy arises by virtue of the dominant group's discrimination against the subordinate group at a variety of levels. More specifically, SDT distinguishes the following mechanisms (Pratto et al., 2006) that are intertwined in the creation and affirmation of group-based inequality:

- Individual discrimination: At the individual level, discrimination manifests itself as an orientation towards dominance, as well as in the behaviour of individual representatives of the in-group. For example,

individuals whose appearance makes them part of the out-group are denied information, while other people are discriminated against on the basis of their sexual orientation and are therefore excluded from participating in conversations.

- According to SDT, individual behaviour is woven into legitimizing myths. Legitimizing myths describe an ensemble of shared convictions, beliefs, stereotypes, and worldviews of the dominant in-group. In so-called hierarchy-legitimizing myths, the inequality in question and the accompanying discrimination imperative are justified as fair, normal, moral, and/or as naturally given (Pratto et al., 2006, pp. 275f.). Hierarchy-legitimizing myths "not only organize individual, group, and institutional behavior in ways that sustain dominance, they often lead subordinates to collaborate with dominants in the maintenance of oppression" (ibid., p. 276).

- Individual behaviour is framed by practices and structures of institutional discrimination. Here, SDT points to hierarchy-promoting institutions that ascribe positive social values to the dominant group, while devaluing the orientations of the subordinate group. Prisons, for example, embody structures of institutional discrimination. By "housing" numerous members of the inferior group, they represent the dominance and controlling power of the superior in-group (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). The mechanism of institutional discrimination is highly effective for several reasons. First, when compared to individuals, institutions have more resources. Institutions also form their own internal norms. They exert strong influence in society and can control deviant behaviour of in-group members. Finally, institutions are more robust to external expectations of change (Pratto et al., 2006).

- Group-based discrimination plays a central function in establishing social dominance hierarchies. Among the inter-group processes that generate inequality, asymmetric group behaviours are of specific interest. These include the preference for one's own group over the subordinate out-group and, conversely, the subordinate group's preference for the dominant group, which is based on legitimizing myths (Pratto et al., 2006, p. 279). It also encompasses the self-disempowerment of the inferior group, for example through drug use and crime.

Societies, according to SDT, tend towards inequality, thereby allowing superior power to reproduce itself through dominance. Once a hierarchy between a dominant and a subordinate group is established, social inequality and repression is promoted, protected, and exacerbated by different processes at multiple levels. At the individual level, for example, both members of dominant groups and members of subordinate groups are motivated to justify the system and thus participate in its maintenance (Pratto et al., 2006). According to SDT, members of the dominant group are motivated on a psychological level to maintain their higher social status. At the same time, members of subordinate groups tend to consciously or unconsciously acknowledge the structures of their own oppression in order to satisfy the need for a predictable and controllable world.

A crucial advantage of SDT is that it helps us to understand the manifestations of social dominance hierarchies, not only at the individual level but also at the systemic level: it explains the dominance of in-group members, for example addressing theit use of violence, as it constitutes itself as being built on underlying social structures. Individual behaviour is a result of the interplay between the institutional, social, and group levels. According to SDT, an end to social inequality and dominance hierarchies cannot be expected. Dominance hierarchies are universal. Despite the normatively clear position of contributing to the reduction of social inequality and oppression by analysing their mechanisms, SDT claims that structural inequalities and asymmetrical power relations cannot be eliminated. They are thought of as aspects that have complex psychological and social functions. Although their basic existence is undisputed, the many forms and shapes they take are subject to debate (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). However, social inequalities can be gradually shaped.

While SDT is concerned with securing one's own power through dominance, SDTP also focuses on the maintenance of not only individual, but also institutional, positions of dominance. It focuses primarily on social interactions in which power relations are gradually structured by social proximity and distance.

3   Social Distance Theory of Power

SDTP is based on the core assumption of social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 2004) that individuals tend to fit into groups that are important to them, for example because of their gender, ethnic, or professional identity. This creates a binary structured orientation between oneself and others as well as between one's own and others' group identities (Magee & Smith, 2013, p. 159).

Power and Social Distance

When we encounter individuals from other groups, identification with a particular group can lead to distortions in perception, evaluation, and social behaviour. According to SDTP, this is especially important when the relationship between members from different groups is characterized by a power imbalance: that is when the powers and abilities are unequally distributed in favour of one party and allow them "control over valued resources" (Magee & Smith, 2013, p. 2) that are unequally distributed in favour of one party. When a power differential is involved, social distance is perceived differently. Social distance is not to be confused with physical distance. In SDTP, social distance refers to the degree of subjectively perceived closeness or distance to other individuals and groups (Magee, 2019). In this respect, one may well be physically very close to another person, yet socially very distant at the same time, and vice versa.

SDTP assumes that the possession and attribution of power moderates social distance. Individuals and groups with power perceive a greater social distance between them and individuals and groups with less power (Magee & Smith, 2013). Individuals with attributed power over important social resources expect submission and exert more influence over the course of their interactions with inferiors. Therefore, they are less motivated to join out-group individuals and expect individuals with less power to join them or to comply with their demands.

Empiricism of Interaction Design

Numerous studies point out problematic aspects of how interactions unfold under the condition of a person or group-related power differential. For example, individuals with greater attributed power that perceive the social distance between them, and individuals or groups with lesser power as increasingly large, tend to:

- Make cynical attributions;
- Show less empathy for the needs, feelings, and behaviours of the interaction partner;
- Display negative emotions such as contempt and anger;
- Articulate stereotypes, prejudices, and negative images of society;
- Demonstrate their expectation of submission and compliance;
- Show an increased readiness for aggression (Lammers et al., 2012; Magee, 2019; Magee & Smith, 2013; McCarthy et al., 2020).

The superior party is far more relevant to individuals with less power than the other way around (Magee, 2019). The extent of perceived social distance is measured by how members of the in-group perceive the identity and status of the out-group. For individuals and social groups who are perceived as different based on certain characteristics such as ethnicity, gender, or appearance, in-group identification is low and perceived social distance is correspondingly high. Conflicts are especially likely when individuals with lower power do not live up to the expectations of individuals with higher power, for instance by not following instructions or showing an insufficient amount of respect. In hierarchical relationships, social distance is associated with violence and aggression by the superior group when their expectations are not met (Magee, 2019). Violence and aggression serve the purpose of restoring power and thus the primacy of one's personal and group identity, as well as the corresponding social status.

Mechanisms of Power: Submission and Violence

SDTP thus provides an approach that can explain the emergence of violence as a mechanism for maintaining asymmetrical power relations between individuals and groups. It is interesting to note that the power, identity, status, and primacy of the superior group, along with the accompanying cognitive and normative orientations, are stabilized by specific interactions with the out-groups that lead either to the proactive subjugation of the inferior group or to resistance on their part. Resistance indicates a temporary crisis of power before a violent response demonstrates the superiority of the group in power all the more forcefully, thereby further consolidating the hierarchical dynamic. The need for control seems to be of great importance when seen from the point of view of superior persons and groups. While submission still allows for the fictitious freedom to decide the level of recognition individuals attribute to their inferiority, violence fulfils the control function in a more direct manner and leaves a deep impression in the subjugated persons' minds.

4   SDT and SDTP: Police Perspectives

These introductions to SDT and SDTP already show that both approaches unfold high explanatory power for the contemporary challenges the police are facing, as mentioned at the beginning. When seen through the public's eye, police violence can be understood as a problem of an excessive claim to power that favours social distance and dominance towards persons and groups that are described as being of lesser power (Goff & Rau, 2020; Lee, 2021; Tillyer, 2022). These problems that are associated with police culture are rooted in: the widespread cult of masculinity (Gutschmidt & Vera, 2020; Prokos & Padavic, 2002; Rawski & Workman-Stark, 2018), narratives of omnipresent danger (Staller & Koerner, 2022), as well as the structurally applied, arbitrary hierarchy of ethnic and racial discrimination (Goff & Rau, 2020;

Peeples, 2019; Ross et al., 2018; Verbruggen, 2022). Consequently, the concepts of SDT and SDTP provide a valuable analytical framework and orientation for the further professionalization of police practice (Koerner & Staller, 2022).

SDTP and the Police

In a democratic society, the police hold the monopoly on the legitimate use of force and have been endowed with corresponding authorities by the state. Research on SDTP indicates that an exaggerated focus on power can lead to a more assertive and excessive use of that power, which can in turn result in dysfunctional consequences in police–resident interactions. The likelihood of aggressive behaviour towards the policed civilian or group increases as the perceived social distance on the part of the police officers increases. If the expectation of submission and compliance is unexpectedly not fulfilled, violence negates the threat to police-related identity, power, and status, which is perceived as being inherent in the residents' rejection, and thus restores the presupposed order.

Problem Analysis

SDPT offers an explanation of the police use of force at the individual and at the group level. Violence is directed against individuals and groups who are perceived as having less power and therefore to be socially distant (Lammers et al., 2012). The relationship with them is, correspondingly, socially distant as well. Study data show that police violence is superabundant as well as severe toward individuals and groups perceived as criminals (Alpert & Dunham, 2004), socioeconomically disadvantaged (Lee et al., 2014; McCarthy et al., 2018; Terrill & Reisig, 2003), or ethnically different (Lautenschlager & Omori, 2018; Lee et al., 2014). Perceived social distance from the out-group influences cognitive, emotional, and behavioural responses (Magee & Smith, 2013):

- On a cognitive level, social distance suggests greater use of stereotypes;
- At the emotional level, social distance leads to a more intense experience of socially dismissive emotions such as anger and contempt, with a concomitant lower experience of pro-social emotions such as empathy and guilt;
- Behaviourally, social dominance is associated with increased aggression.

SDTP also makes it clear that distance is not equal. Social distance can be accompanied by physical distance or physical closeness—each expressing a dominance orientation. Social closeness can be accompanied by physical closeness or physical distance—each expressing recognition (Magee, 2019). The social distance or closeness felt in each case is heavily influenced by one's own as well as the police culture's identity and status beliefs. It is concretely reflected in interactional behaviour. This is important to mention when addressing the police's point of view, because it generates important insights into the topic of officer safety.

Officer safety is strongly dependent on how police officers view themselves, others, and the world. For instance, whether physical proximity or distance is seen as the right choice in police interactions with a person in an acute mental health crisis can significantly depend on the police officer's perceived social proximity or distance. SDTP shows how the general and often oversimplified recommendations for officer safety (such as distance) are formulated. Functional officer safety requires first and foremost reflection and (re)calibration of one's own power ambitions.

From a police psychology perspective, social distance moves in a problematic circle: social dominance is a prerequisite as well as a consequence of dysfunctional worldviews and interaction strategies. It is the reason for social rejection of one's own person (Magee, 2019), which, in turn, favours an immersion in or a withdrawal into the appreciative police bubble (Behr, 2021). From there, the position of power receives further reinforcement, which, in turn, increases perceived social distance. This is then reflected using correspondingly aligned worldviews and interaction strategies, forming new prerequisites for dominance-heavy behaviour. Accordingly, SDTP also offers a possible explanatory

approach to structural and institutional racism in the context of the police (Christe-Zeyse, 2022; Rucker & Richeson, 2021). Initial analyses for the German police force indicate that police work is "generally accompanied by circumstances and preconditions that have a favorable effect with regard to various radicalization factors, ensuring that (especially) right-wing extremist tendencies can potentially better develop" (Rohde & Kursawe, 2021, p. 168). The internal interpretation of social distance within the police could be an important anchor point for further research.

Potential Solutions

In addition to the merely descriptive insights into the dysfunctions of excessive power and social distance, SDTP also provides the police with tangible points of departure for efforts in reducing the aforementioned issues. For example, a recent study by McCarthy et al. (2020) highlights the violence-reducing benefits of community policing. It concludes that "higher levels of community engagement by officers are associated with a lower propensity for coercive policing, with officers who report more frequent community engagement displaying lower levels of endorsement of coercive policing responses and higher levels of endorsement of non-coercive policing responses" (S. 14). According to the data, socially relating to the community one is policing, especially in "times of nothing" (Rowe & Rowe, 2021) when there is no actual call for service, reduces the officer's perceived social distance from the community and thus their attitude towards the use of force. Innocuous conversations between the police and residents in which they take a mutual interest in each other and exchange information on current topics and sensitivities, close the social gap between police officers and residents.

Community policing does not mean that the police lose any of their official power. It is only the presentation of the inescapable power differential that makes the difference in this case. Study data by Wit et al. (2017) suggest that it is precisely this shaping of power by those who have power that matters. When, from the point of view of the police, power is interpreted as a *responsibility* rather than an opportunity, it

increases the likelihood of accepting cues from others. This includes empathy and the willingness to accept cues that come from those with less power (Wit et al., 2017). When seen as a responsibility, power also encourages the reflecting individuals to adopt the perspective of less powerful individuals, giving them voice and to be interested in their needs, experiences, and reasons for their respective behaviour (Magee, 2020). When the primary focus is no longer on direct or indirect control over the other, and there is no expectation of submission, conformity, and enforcement anymore, the focus can shift to responsibility. It can then increase the trust and feeling of fairness of police interaction partners. According to SDTP, trust forms the central challenge as well as the key task of modern policing (Magee, 2019). Research shows that procedural transparency, a good rationale for the particular policing concern, and fair treatment are effective tools for balancing the power with a sense of proportionality and generating citizens' acceptance (McLean et al., 2019; Nix et al., 2015; Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017).

SDT and Policing

SDT declares the existence of social inequality, and thus the superiority of one group over other groups, to be the universal grammar of social systems. Inequality is based on a power imbalance between the in-group, which perceives itself as superior, and the out-group, which perceives itself as inferior. Hierarchy and dominance are thereby the preconditions as well as the results of discriminatory practices and structures at the individual, social, and group levels. Empirically, SDT shows that dominance orientation is associated with the use of violence, which is rooted, for example, in stereotypical attributions of the dangerousness of members of the out-group.

Problem Analysis

The relevance for policing is obvious. The relationship between the police and the public can be described as a specific manifestation of social inequality, in which the police develop a dominance orientation due to

their power to control violence that has been handed over to them by the state. The superiority of the police as an in-group is grounded in discrimination against others as an inferior out-group, which sometimes takes the form of violence.

Accordingly, research shows the effect of arbitrarily stabilized hierarchies in the police service. In a recent study, Swencionis et al. (2021) demonstrate that white police officers with a high social dominance orientation that is based on a high-status white group identity are significantly more likely to use violence against inferior-status individuals than fellow officers with a less pronounced dominance orientation. Moreover, numerous studies indicate the phenomena of racial bias and racial profiling on the part of the police (Goff & Rau, 2020; Peeples, 2019; Ross et al., 2018; Verbruggen, 2022).

The discrimination enacted in this context is rooted in the culture and organization of the police. As SDT argues, myths that legitimize dominance and hierarchy, group-based interactions, and institutional structures all play a key role. In an international perspective, this coincides with research that addresses the widespread cult of masculinity and danger within the police. It identifies it in informal and formal intergroup exchanges, for example in police training or organizational units, as well as in service regulations, conceptualizations of officer safety, or police violence statistics (Gutschmidt & Vera, 2020; Peeples, 2020; Prokos & Padavic, 2002; Rawski & Workman-Stark, 2018; Rohde & Kursawe, 2021; Staller & Koerner, 2022). SDT can provide a unifying framework for such research.

Potential for Solutions

From the SDT perspective, the police embody a group that is necessarily based on power claims and is therefore built on inequality in a society based on inequality. Furthermore, SDT addresses group-based oppression and the underlying social dominance, which, in everyday life, can manifest themselves as discrimination in individual police behaviour and as a structural effect at the level of the overall police organization while also entailing repercussions on that very structure. From the perspective

of SDT, individual cases, and general structures, perspectives of personalization and "socialization" do not form exclusive reference points in an analysis. Behaviour and context mutually constitute each other.

SDT has practical implications for both the behavioural and organizational level. In essence, these boil down to introspection and reflection on questions such as to what extent existing attitudes, practices, and structures are based on a categorically overused dominance orientation and through which alternatives the resulting inequality effects can be sensitively dealt with. This includes thinking about the basis of common, group-related narratives within the police bubble, for example narratives about petty criminals, gangs of foreigners or clan criminals, and what practical consequences these narratives entail. SDT-informed reflection becomes very illustrative due to its focus on the individual's as well as the respective in-group's use of language: Are there terms and phrases in the "language of the police" that reduce persons of out-groups to a certain person-related characteristic, or to characteristics of an entire group? Are there terms and phrases that place them on the "against" and inferior side of the police or address them without any actual factual reason? If so, there is a concrete starting point for resetting the police's dominance behaviour in gestures and expressions by changing their perception and use of language. Guidelines for this can be found in communication principles such as active listening, which is well-known as a powerful tool for street policing (Vecchi et al., 2019).

5   Conclusion

SDT and SDTP are two theoretically grounded and empirically validated approaches with great explanatory power for critical issues in contemporary policing. Police violence, racial bias, police masculinity, and narratives of omnipresent danger are closely intertwined and ultimately "suffer" from an individual and structural overuse of power claims on the part of the police. Dominance and distance are associated with discrimination and violence, which are in turn expressed in individual interactional behaviour, shaped by police culture, and (re-)produced in reciprocal reference. Perspectives on SDT and SDTP not only contribute

to the explanation of contemporary police problems, but offer promising solutions as well. Consequently, more research furthering SDT and SDTP-based insights into policing is desirable.

Key Takeaways

SDT and SDTP, which originate in social psychology, offer great explanatory power both for the basic work of the police as well as for particular challenges and problem areas. They help us to better understand the fundamental power relationship of the police and to recognize its form and function. A strong power imbalance leads to social distance and dominance over individuals and groups, which ultimately promotes violence. By pointing to the mutual salience of individual police behaviour and police context, SDT and SDTP also provide points of departure for further research on police violence and extremism in the police, among others.

SDTP and SDT hold significant implications for police practice and organization. At their core, they relate to attitudes, practices, and structures at all levels of the police (individual, group, and social system).

Police Officers

On the individual level of police officers, and strongly related to the concept of officer safety, the following key takeaways can be formulated:

- Recognize social distance (and closeness) and social dominance as central to your own and your group's behaviour;
- Acknowledge power as a task of responsibility and consciously (re)calibrate social distance and dominance to shape interactions accordingly;
- Reduce the power differential, for instance by literally stepping back or stepping toward the resident;
- Ensure procedural transparency and fairness of police-related actions;
- Put yourself in the place of the other, recognizing their needs and interests, enabling their voice;
- Communicate in a sensible and sensitive manner and avoid gestures and expressions of high dominance;
- Examine your own "police bubble" and question dominant narratives and the images of self, others, and the world these narratives convey;

- Recognize your own and the police's cultural biases (e.g., racial bias, gender bias);
- Use "times of nothing" for active relationship building and active engagement within the community, e.g., through small talk (community policing).

In this context, **conflict management trainers** and **police decision-makers** are challenged:

- To examine the key function of social distance (and closeness) and social dominance for the police;
- To organizationally and educationally promote the idea that police power is interpreted as a responsibility rather than an opportunity;
- To provide the necessary structural conditions for police officers and police organizations to critically and constructively address and redesign the role and effect of social dominance;
- To recognize the "police bubble" and question dominant narratives of the police and the world these narratives convey;
- To thematize the police's cultural biases (e.g., racial bias, gender bias).

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Psychological Aspects of the Use of Firearms by the Police

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1   Introduction

Symbols of the police are the uniform, police badge, and handcuffs. In many countries, police officers are authorized to carry firearms, making the firearm an additional symbol of state authority.[1] Using this powerful

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[1] Although the firearm is part of the standard equipment of police officers in many countries, there are also countries, such as the United Kingdom, where only specific police units carry firearms. Nevertheless, the use of a firearm is one of the most drastic acts of a police officer and the most significant interference with the rights of a citizen.

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means of intervention responsibly requires a lot of officers. For instance, the events in the USA after George Floyd's death have shown, once again, it may have serious consequences for individuals and society as a whole (Campbell, 2021; Skoy, 2020). Yet, despite the profound impact of the use of firearms by the police, there is relatively little research available on the subject. Research findings from one country may only be applicable to another country to a limited degree. Findings made in one country can, at best, provide a rough guideline for another country due to the differences in operational concepts (e.g., individual patrols, unarmed units), legal frameworks, and threat levels, which may only be comparable to some extent or not at all. Focusing on the case of Germany in comparison to Europe, this chapter illustrates factors and psychological aspects of the use of firearms by the police. Frequently, the focus of studies in other countries may be on factors that are not considered as important, e.g., in Germany. For instance, ethnicity plays a significant role concerning the use of firearms in the USA (Klahm & Tillyer, 2010), while it has been of relatively low significance in this context in Germany so far. However, influences such as cultural embeddedness, crime situation, and formal and informal characteristics of organizations all play a decisive role when it comes to the use of lethal force (White, 2006). The unreflected and unverified application of findings from the USA, where a large part of research on this subject is conducted (Kesic & Thomas, 2020), to Germany must therefore be viewed very critically. Also, the situation is compounded by the fact that access to relevant data and information is often very limited or not granted at all (Kesic & Thomas, 2020; Lorei & Balaneskovic, 2020b;

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Osse & Cano, 2017; Timmer & Pronk, 2011). Psychological and social science research mainly deals with factors influencing the decision as to whether to fire a shot and primarily focuses on aspects pertaining to the ethnic background of the targeted person (Cojean et al., 2020). This is most likely due to the fact that ethnic background is one of the most discussed aspects of the use of firearms in US society, where a large part of such research is conducted. Other aspects include police policy and culture, environmental factors, and the relationship between police action and the behavior and resistance of the person who is eventually shot at (Cojean et al., 2020).

2   Situation

Official information on the use of firearms by the German police is available to the public only in the form of the annual statistics published by the Conference of Interior Ministers. While these statistics include a rough classification system based on the fields of law concerned (self-defense, crime prevention, prevention of escape, etc.), the type of shot fired (warning shots, shots fired at objects, shots fired at persons), and the consequences of the use of firearms, they are hardly suitable as a basis for more detailed analyses. Other agencies, such as the New York Police Department, also publish their firearm use analyses online (cf. Bratton, 2014; New York City Police Department, 2019).

The Analytical Case of Germany

In Germany, every police officer carries a firearm as well as a pepper spray and a baton (expandable baton in most cases). The use of these weapons is governed by the respective state and federal police acts. Selected operational police forces are also equipped with a conducted energy device (CED), better known as a Taser. Only the firing of service weapons is considered in the official statistics of the Conference of Interior Ministers. The use of other commands, control, and operational means or the threat of making use of a firearm are not covered by German statistics.
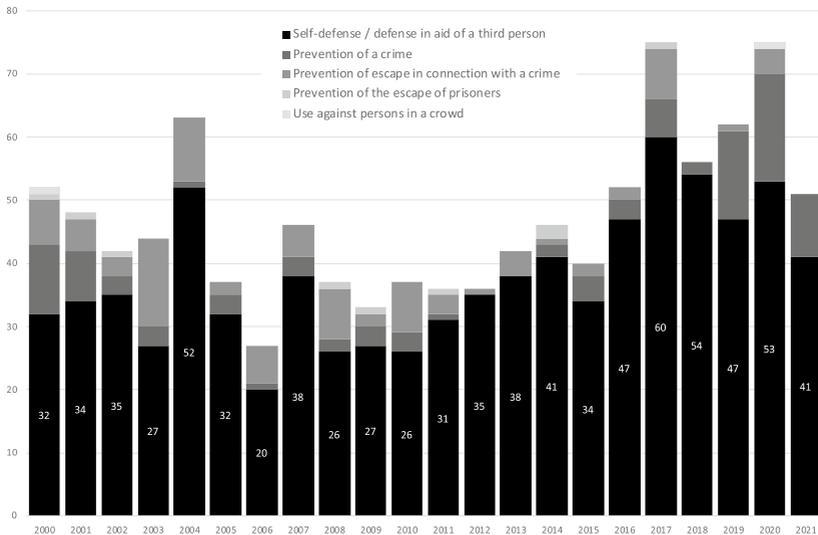
Fig. 1 Number of incidents involving the use of firearms by the police against persons since the year 2000 (*Source* Annual statistics of the Conference of Interior Ministers)

Every year, approximately 10,000–16,000 incidents involving the use of firearms by any of the approximately 250,000 police officers are recorded in Germany (European Union, 2019). In almost 99% of these cases, the service weapon is used to kill dangerous, sick, or injured animals; there were 15,652 such incidents in 2020 (Conference of Interior Ministers). On average, there are between 27 and 75 incidents per year in which police officers shoot at persons (see Fig. 1). In most of these cases, the service weapon is fired to avert danger to the life or limb of the police officer or another person. It is much less common for German police officers to fire at persons in order to prevent their escape or a crime.

Comparison with Europe

While it might be assumed that police practice is homogeneous throughout the European Union, it turns out that many aspects relating to the use of firearms vary significantly between the individual member

states (Lorei & Balaneskovic, 2020b; Timmer & Pronk, 2011), for example, the density of police forces, which ranges between 1.3 police officers per 1000 inhabitants in Finland and 5 officers per 1000 inhabitants in Greece (Lorei & Balaneskovic, 2020b). With 3.04 police officers per 1000 inhabitants, Germany is slightly below the average (3.35 police officers per 1000 inhabitants) of EU countries. Such differences also exist with regard to police weapons (Lorei & Balaneskovic, 2020b). For example, only about a quarter of police officers in Latvia carry firearms. In Sweden, less than half do, whereas in Poland, Slovenia, Hungary, and Cyprus, almost three-quarters of the police force does. In many other EU countries, firearms are part of the police officer's equipment. Officers in most EU countries stated that they carry pepper spray dispensers or similar devices in addition to their firearms. Batons are just as common. One-third of the countries also equip the police with Tasers. Similar differences exist with regard to marksmanship training and the legal framework for the use of firearms by the police (Lorei & Balaneskovic, 2020b).

3   Aspects Prior to the Use of Firearms: Basic and Advanced Training

Adang (2012) calls for the basic and advanced training curriculum to include problem-solving skills to prepare police officers for dangerous situations better. In addition to motor skills, decision-making behavior and perception must be trained in order to be able to assess dangers better. It is important that officers undergoing training realistically feel stress and emotions to familiarize them with the pressure experienced during service and its influence on performance. Helsen and Starkes (1999) evaluated an interactive video training course and found that, while it was suitable for improving tactical skills, the trainees' hit rate remained low. Cox et al. (2014) compared decision-making training using static images with video simulation and discovered significant differences in terms of false decisions. In the case of video-based training, the tendency not to shoot increased, although the shown opponent was armed. Wrong decisions leading to shooting at unarmed persons

remained at the same low level in both cases. Thus, there are marked differences depending on the type of simulation used.

Sim et al. (2013) impressively demonstrated that aspects of the design of marksmanship training that might seem to be of only secondary significance at first may have a major impact indeed. For example, such aspects can give rise to prejudice which may influence the decision whether or not to shoot. Training may mislead participants to focus on supposedly meaningful characteristics such as appearance and ethnicity as cues instead of aspects that are actually relevant to decision-making (e.g., weapons). Such factors will have a priming effect on the corresponding decision-making. Similarly, Biggs et al. (2021) found that shooters based their decision whether or not to shoot more or less unconsciously on the characteristics of their potential targets. In this case, the characteristics leading to an increase in wrong decisions were shot holes in the target or marked target areas. Realistic decision-making training accordingly should be designed in a very sensitive fashion and be adjusted to the police officers' operational reality.

The possibility of being shot at is a particular stressor in training and contributes to the realism of training scenarios. Taverniers et al. (2011) showed that this optional feature increases stress reactions in simulation vs. training scenarios without enemy fire and that it has a negative effect on working memory. There is also a lower hit rate in such simulations (which also is more realistic) (Taverniers & De Boeck, 2014). Furthermore, participants take this type of training much more seriously. At the same time, such training better prepares participants for real-life operations as it improves hit rates in real gunfights (Oudejans, 2008).

4   Aspects During the Use of Firearms

Influences on the Decision to Shoot and Decision-Making

While the firearm is a symbol of state authority and part of a police officer's equipment in Germany, it is not a matter of course that officers make use of their service weapon. Indeed, it is not given for police

officers to use their service weapon, even when it is an option or even necessary, as was proven 40 years ago by Binder and Scharf (1980) and Scharf and Binder (1983) in their analyses of police operations. Pinizzotto et al. (2012) provide even more relevant data. According to their study, police officers used their firearm only in 7% of the 1102 cases in which it would have been legally permissible. Ellrich et al. (2011) mention that German police officers who were attacked and thought they should have used command, control, and operational means to repel the attack, did not do so in the situation in question. It is not known, however, why they did not do so. Additional information on this matter can be found in the Conference of Interior Ministers' annual statistics on the use of firearms by the police, which mentions numerous warning shots fired in "life-and-death" situations. In 2019, there were 39 such cases and 29 in 2020 (Conference of Interior Ministers). Since the same legal requirements must be met for a warning shot and a shot fired at a person, the question arises as to why—in such a situation with a danger to life and limb—police officers did not fire at the attacker immediately, although this would have been legally permissible (e.g., Section 85(2) of the Hessian Act on Public Safety and Order). There are certainly various reasons. It cannot be ruled out, however, that some police officers did not want to shoot at the person.

One myth about the use of firearms by the police is that the decision is always made within a fraction of a second and that officers can hardly prepare for it because no situations are alike (the so-called "split-second syndrome"; Fyfe, 1986). Accordingly, many analyses focus only on the moment when the finger pulls the trigger (Adang, 2012). Criticizing this approach, Fyfe (1986) pointed out that the decision to shoot was often based on other, previous decisions. Research on natural decision-making behavior shows the same results, for decisions follow previous decisions in a consecutive manner, which is why a final decision is also the result of the decision before it (Harman et al., 2019). Consequently, the entire "history" (Adang, 2012; Fyfe, 1986) must be considered when analyzing decisions on whether to shoot. Binder and Scharf (1980) and Scharf and Binder (1983) therefore divide encounters between the police and members of the public into four phases (preparation, initiation of interaction, interaction, and final decision).

Lorei (1999) supports this idea by distinguishing between the use of firearms in the narrow sense (i.e., the actual firing of a gun) and the use of firearms in the broad sense, which begins when a firearm is carried. Every now and then, the history of an incident shows that a situation in which the police officer is eventually "forced" to shoot is significantly shaped by their previous behavior (Adang, 2012). Such previous behavior may include, for example, not making use of available cover or moving into a dangerous area (Adang, 2012). The availability of information (e.g., provided during a briefing) may also influence the later decision to shoot (Johnson et al., 2018).

Fear caused by a threat may impact the decision to shoot in different ways. For example, when comparing simulated knife attacks with a rubber knife vs. a Shocknife, the higher threat level did not influence the perception of the distance to the attacker (which in general was systematically underestimated), but rather the assessment of such distance (Nieuwenhuys, Canal Bruland, et al., 2012). Eventually, it caused officers to decide to shoot earlier. Fear thus seems to influence the assessment of information in decision-making processes but not the perception of information as such. This fear also leads to an increase in wrong decisions. In a training facility, training participants fearing to be hit by plastic bullets would shoot at non-targets more frequently than trainees in a less threatening situation, that is, not under fire by a simulated opponent (Nieuwenhuys, Savelsbergh et al., 2012). At the same time, visual behavior remains unchanged under fear. In the end, one can assume that fear changes the decision-making process of shooters in such a way that decisions are based more on inferences and expectations than on actually relevant visual information (Nieuwenhuys, Savelsbergh, et al., 2012). Fear thus shifts the decision-making criterion, which in the case of error dependence of decisions (Lorei, 1999) leads to a situation in which prioritization with the goal of preventing one error increases the probability of making another. This effect of fear seems to be almost impossible to overcome by practice (Nieuwenhuys et al., 2015).

Experiencing the Use of Firearms

Most police officers involved in a gunfight before report that they experienced a change in perception, thinking, or behavior during the gunfight (Artwohl & Christensen, 1997; Klinger & Brunson, 2009; Miller, 2006; for Germany: Lorei & Balaneskovic, 2020a). This includes, in particular:

- Hearing impairment: hearing absolutely nothing—sounds seem to be unusually far away or muffled;
- Increase in volume: sounds were perceived much more loudly than usual;
- Tunnel vision: only things at the heart of the action were noticed, while things at the periphery were not seen;
- Increased visual clarity: visual details could be seen with particular clarity;
- Slow motion: events appeared to occur in slow motion—everything seemed to take longer than usual;
- Time lapse: events appeared to occur faster than normal;
- Distracting thoughts: thoughts that had little to do with the actual situation;
- A feeling of experiencing everything like a film or as if watching themselves;
- "Autopilot": automatic reactions with little consideration as to how to act;
- Paralysis: a short period during which the officer felt numb/frozen/paralyzed.

With regard to memories of the event, it is possible for people to no longer recall some of their own actions or parts of the event, or to believe remembering certain things as facts before realizing they have happened differently or not at all.

Hitting the Target

Hit rates in operational situations do not necessarily correspond to hit rates in live fire training. More than 20 years ago, it was questioned whether conventional basic and advanced marksmanship training was suitable for preparing trainees adequately for real gunfights and sufficiently enabling police officers to hit their target (Morrison & Vila, 1998). During shooting practice, hit rates are usually measured for static shooters firing at static targets and appear to be relatively high. However, rates in more realistic exercises with a greater operational focus are significantly lower (Lorei & Heimann, 2017; Lorei & Stiegler, 2014a, 2014b; Lorei, Stiegler, et al., 2014; Taverniers & De Boeck, 2014).

According to the Conference of Interior Ministers' statistics covering the period between 2013 and 2018, the use of firearms by police officers targeting persons did not entail any medical consequence in 8–22 cases. This is not to be confused with warning shots or shots fired at objects, which are recorded separately. The hit probability of police officers targeting a person varies. Furthermore, studies show differences in hit rates, which are influenced by several factors, such as the number of individual shots fired or the distance to the person hit. For example, compared to the USA, hit rates in Germany ranged from 66.0 to 80.4% (for an unknown number of shots fired in each case), whereas police officers in the USA had a hit rate maximum of just under 60%, according to a number of analyses (Aveni, 2004; Donner & Popovich, 2019; Police Academy—Firearms and Tactics Section, 2006; White, 2006).

Analyses of the use of firearms in Germany in the period from 2013 through 2018 (Lorei & Balaneskovic, 2020a) showed a 100% hit rate within the very short range of up to 1.5 meters. At a distance of up to three meters, approximately three-quarters of the shots hit the target. Beyond three meters distance, hit rates were significantly lower. Of course, rates depended on how a shot was fired and where it was aimed (Lorei & Balaneskovic, 2020a). In point shooting, shooters mostly aim their firearm only roughly at their opponent or at the area of the legs. Accordingly, every second shot fired in such cases primarily hits the torso or legs. On the other hand, shots aimed roughly and quickly using the gun sights (so-called fast precision shooting) mostly targeted the legs or

torso. In such cases, three-quarters of the shots hit the legs or the body. Precision fire was used less frequently than the two types mentioned before. Directed equally often at the body and the legs, precision fire hits the intended target area in most cases (a hit rate of 83.3%).

One reason for the significantly reduced hit rates in real-life operations compared to live fire training is the dynamic nature of such situations. In a real gunfight, both the police officer and their opponent will be moving more or less quickly (Lorei & Balaneskovic, 2020a) and may be involved in other interactions, such as physical combat. This may lead to a different style of shooting than during relatively or entirely static shooting practice. How a gun is fired can also be completely different compared to the shooting range. Shooters usually firing a gun with both hands during practice may be forced to use one hand only, even their non-dominant hand on operations (Lorei & Balaneskovic, 2020a), for example while parrying a physical attack or holding a flashlight with the other hand. Moreover, firing speed (e.g., no rough sighting on operations, fast pulling of the trigger, faster firing to hit earlier) may change, which can entail a change in hit rate (Lorei et al., 2017).

In addition, the hazard situation has an influence as well. For example, Schade and Bruns (1989) found that the hit rate decreases with increasing hazard levels. The stress caused by the operational situation itself can significantly affect hit rates (Lorei, 2014). Gunfights are always associated with stress. Indeed, a situation in which one's health or life is at stake is perceived as highly stressful, which has been confirmed by numerous studies in the police sector (Lorei, Hallenberger, et al., 2014). As stress regularly impacts on performance behavior (Lorei, 2014), in the context of the use of firearms, the question arises as to what effect stress has on gunfights. Lorei (2014) compiled numerous studies on the influence of different stressors on various performance parameters in connection with both police operations in general and shooting in particular. The effects of stress appear to be very heterogeneous. On the whole, it was not possible to clearly identify the impact of stress experienced in relevant operations on the shooting performance of police officers (Lorei, 2014). Depending on the stressor (time pressure, physical strain, etc.) and performance parameter (decision-making, accuracy, experience, etc.), stress may have a positive or negative impact on certain aspects of

shooting. However, it can be doubted that the identified impact of stress on firing performance in general and hit rates in particular are always direct consequences of stress. At times, the alleged effects of stress more likely result from a change of tasks in connection with the stressor (Klein, 1996, p. 57). This is the case, for instance, when people suddenly fire shots more rapidly in realistic scenarios under enemy fire in order to hit the enemy before being hit themselves. In such cases, firing performance does not change as a result of stress but as a result of the shooting requirements of speed vs. precision (Lorei et al., 2017). Consequently, Nieuwenhuys, Canal Bruland, et al. (2012) found that, under fear, the decision to pull the trigger was made faster, and hit rates thus deteriorated. On the other hand, resilience training (Andersen & Gustafsberg, 2016) and breathing relaxation training in combination with trigger control exercises (Hornsby et al., 2021) were found to have positive effects on firing performance. Operational experience gained in very stressful situations also seems to play an important role (Landman et al., 2016). Very stressful training (i.e., simulations in which the participants are under fire) better prepares trainees for real-life operations because of its positive effect on hit rates in real gunfights (Oudejans, 2008).

5   Consequences of the Use of Firearms

Consequences for Targeted Persons

The consequences of the use of firearms by the police when a target is hit are subject to the potential ballistic effectiveness of the ammunition as well as the area being hit. A distinction must be made between the immediate medical effect and the medium to long-term medical consequences, which makes the use of firearms a difficult case of police conflict management. This distinction is highly relevant, for even if the medium to long-term consequence may be death, a person hit by a shot may still be fully capable of taking action for a while (Rothschild & Kneubuehl, 2012). The operational ammunition commonly used by the police today was introduced for various reasons and has been in use for approximately

20 years (Lorei, 2017). An essential characteristic of this ammunition type is its stopping power, that is, the capacity of the projectile to incapacitate or immobilize a person. This characteristic of the cartridge is of great importance. However, only a few studies have evaluated ammunition with regard to this characteristic so far (Lorei, 2017). Knowledge accordingly is rather limited and partly based on myths (Rothschild & Kneubuehl, 2012).

The direct effects of a hit varied considerably among incidents in which firearms were used in Germany in 2013 and 2018 (Lorei & Balaneskovic, 2020a). In one case, the study detected an effect, although the shot had missed its target. When a shot hit the torso, an effect could be observed in only approximately a quarter of the cases. The effect was mostly the person hit going down. When the legs were hit, this also caused the person hit to go down in two-thirds of the cases. Regardless of where a person was hit, shooters were unable to visually verify the hit in most cases but could only observe its effects. To achieve a hit and a hit effect, shooters usually required a varying number of shots. To that effect, two or three shots were necessary to hit the opponent in a quarter of the cases. In a few cases, it took four shots to hit the target. Most of the time, however, one or two hits were required until an effect could be observed.

The consequences of the use of firearms by the police appear to vary considerably among EU countries. In the period from 2014 through 2018, analyzed by Lorei and Balaneskovic (2020b), EU countries reported between zero (Croatia and Latvia) and a total of up to 53 fatalities (Germany) as a result of the use of firearms by the police. In relation to the total population, Luxembourg had the highest rate in the five-year period at 1.6 fatalities per one million inhabitants. Germany, counting approximately 0.6 fatalities per one million inhabitants over five years, is in the middle of the range, together with Austria and Denmark. Fatality rates in Latvia, Croatia, Hungary, and Poland are low. By comparison, a total of 963 (Kieffer, 2017) or 438 people (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2020) were killed as a result of police action in the USA in 2016. In relation to the US population of approximately 324 million, the fatality rate is 14.85 per one million inhabitants over five

years or 1.35 over one year (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2020). This is many times the rate recorded in any EU country, though conditions in the EU are not at all comparable to the USA.

In some respects, the situation is similar for the number of persons injured by police firearms in EU countries. Absolute values for the five-year period mentioned above range between 0 (Latvia and Luxembourg) and 155 (Germany). In relation to the population size, Germany is in the upper third of the range, counting 1.86 injured persons per one million inhabitants.

Consequences for Shooters

Many studies describe the use of firearms as one of the most drastic events in police service and as causing extreme stress (Lorei, Hallenberger, et al., 2014). When it comes to the use of firearms, police officers also perceive a discrepancy between their expectations and reality—both in terms of experiencing and remembering the incident and processing it emotionally (Miller, 2006). The stress caused by such an incident seems to be the greatest in the subsequent three days and persists for an average of approximately 20 weeks. After this period, officers can return to a kind of normalcy (Loo, 1986). Reactions to the use of firearms are typical of such incidents and include a number of regular symptoms (Miller, 2006). Often, shooters experience sleep disturbances (sometimes including nightmares), brooding about the event, flashbacks, reflection on and reassessment of important personal values, feelings of guilt, a loss of interest in work, and anger relating to the event (Loo, 1986). Such an experience can even be overburdening, thus leading to acute stress disorder or even post-traumatic stress disorder (Hallenberger, 2014). For this reason, systematic psychosocial care structures have been established (Hallenberger & Haller, 2015), though the offer is often ignored (Oßwald-Meßner, 2020).

6   Problems During the Use of Firearms

Selectivity with Regard to Targeted Persons

The use of firearms represents one of the most challenging situations in police conflict management. There are several reasons for this, as will be illustrated below. Not only the training for the use of firearms but also the consequences for the police officer, the victim, and also the public are relevant here. The debate centers on two groups of people that are disproportionately often shot at by the police. In the USA, this applies primarily to people of color. The debate there focuses on racist tendencies within the police (Cesario et al., 2019; Correll et al., 2007; Durna, 2011; Miller et al., 2012; Plant et al., 2011; Pleskac et al., 2018). This aspect plays a minor role in Germany. Both there and other countries, a massive share of the lethal incidents relating to the use of firearms by the police seem to involve people suffering from mental illnesses and people having psychological emergencies. Feltes and Alex (2020) criticize police interaction with this group of people. Diederichs (2016) notes that nine out of ten persons shot dead by the police in 2005 were suffering from mental illnesses or having a psychological emergency. Fuller et al. (2015) discuss the same problem with police interaction with mentally ill individuals with regard to the USA, whereas Kesic and Thomas (2020), as well as Thomas (2020), focus on Australia, which brings the situation right before firearm discharge to a focus for police conflict management.

Unauthorized Use of Firearms

According to the Conference of Interior Ministers, in 5 out of 360 incidents in the period from 2015 through 2020, German police officers made unauthorized use of their firearms against persons. The use of firearms by the police thus seems to comply with the law in almost 99% of cases.

Unintentional Discharge of Firearms

Sometimes, the handling of firearms may lead to accidental firing. This may have dire consequences if such accidentally fired shots injure or even kill a person—whether it is another officer, a person interacting with the officer, or an innocent bystander. The unintentional discharge of firearms and accidental hits happen quite often. In Germany, unintentional discharge has been officially recorded since 2014 and is covered in reports by the Conference of Interior Ministers. The figures range between 1 and 98 cases of unintentional discharge per year. In other EU countries and the New York Police Department, unintentional discharge is also a common problem (Lorei & Balaneskovic, 2020b). The consequences can be dramatic, as shown by the serious injuries and fatalities (Lorei, 2020). It must be made clear, however, that in reality—unless there is a malfunction—firearms do not go off by themselves. In fact, in almost all cases, the person holding the weapon also pulled the trigger, even if this happened unintentionally or was unnoticed. Factors and circumstances leading to the unintentional discharge of firearms include a loss of balance, tripping, falling, being scared, inadequate cognitive explanations, joining in a shooting, an impact on the firing hand, contralateral force transmission (Lorei, 2005), and reactions triggered by perception (Heim, 2009). There are recommendations on how to avoid this problem (Lorei & Heim, 2022).

Disarming of Police Officers

There is a potential for dangerous situations in every police operation because it is not only the officers who can make use of the firearms they carry. Service weapons may also pose a risk to police officers. Indeed, incidents in which officers are disarmed are not as rare as one might expect. Although no official statistics are available, Lorei (2020) mentions at least 21 cases documented in the press in Germany from

1994 through 2014. In the USA, the Federal Bureau of Investigation reports that 997 police officers were killed between 2001 and 2019, 62 of which were shot with their own service weapon (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2020; see also FBI LEOKA Reports: Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted https://www.fbi.gov/services/cjis/ucr/publications# LEOKA).

Friendly Fire and Collateral Damage

Friendly fire and shots fired at innocent bystanders (collateral damage) are an enormous problem in both the military and police contexts. According to a report by the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ) (Rademacher, 2003), 18% of fatalities in the Korean War, 39% in the Vietnam War, and 45% in the 1991 Gulf War were allegedly due to "friendly fire." As the report states, 165 US service members and five from the UK were killed by friendly fire from fellow service members or allies during Operation Desert Storm in 1991. The problem is also known to affect German police officers, though. Lorei (2020) lists several cases that have become public, even though there are no official statistics on this matter. In the USA, on the other hand, police officers killed by friendly fire from other officers were at least statistically recorded in the period from 2012 through 2014. Every year, two to three US police officers were killed by friendly fire (see also FBI LEOKA Reports: Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted https://www.fbi.gov/services/ cjis/ucr/publications#LEOKA). It is rare that German police officers hit an innocent bystander when making use of firearms against persons. According to information provided by the Conference of Interior Ministers, this happened in 4 out of 360 cases in which firearms were used against persons by the police in the period from 2015 through 2020. In comparison, the New York City Police Department (2019) reported that in 2 out of a total of 17 cases of firearms used by the police (11.8%), innocent bystanders were harmed by police projectiles.

7   Conclusion

Even though much more research will be required to fill the gaps on the use of firearms by the police, there are already many findings showing certain patterns that help to prepare for such situations (e.g., interaction with persons suffering from mental illnesses, unintentional discharge of firearms, realistic basic and advanced training to ensure optimal preparation). It can already be said that international studies can bring insight into the comparison of firearm use. In this respect, it can be recognized that dealing with mentally ill people is a challenge. Although, unlike the USA, nationality, race, or skin color does not play a significant role in firearm use in the European jurisdiction, social tensions are also a dynamic phenomenon that must be observed in the context of firearm use. Ultimately, it can be said that the psychological aspects of firearm use are multifaceted. All individuals involved in such a situation experience a different perspective before, during, and after the firearm use. Therefore, in addition to the micro-level of such an incident, the societal level should also be included in police conflict management, emphasizing a transparent approach.

Key Takeways
Police Officers
It is imperative for all police officers to carefully reflect on the responsibility of bearing firearms and mentally and physically prepare for the associated duties. They have to acquire extensive knowledge and prepare for the use of firearms in the best way possible by undergoing realistic training. In situations with potential for escalation, officers must be aware that every step they take may lead to the use of firearms and, eventually, may influence the final decision on whether to shoot.
Conflict Management Trainers

Conflict management trainers are an essential group of persons in the context of the use of firearms by the police. They should contribute their expertise to basic and advanced training, counseling, and particularly research into this important aspect of police work. In addition

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to contributing to professional behavior on operations and ensuring the health of police officers, the impact of their work can be of high value to society as a whole.

Police Decision-Makers

Although firearms are very rarely used in German police practice, their use has severe consequences for any persons involved. Therefore, police officers must be well prepared. This is the responsibility of decision-makers, who must ensure the availability of practice and training facilities and opportunities and provide any means required for developing and maintaining motor and mental skills according to the mission. Such preparation also includes facilitating and promoting research in this field. Furthermore, in the aftermath of such a serious incident, decision-makers' duty of care requires them to ensure that officers undergo individual stress management and to analyze and consider whatever insights might be gained for development in this area.

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Prevalence and Correlates of Violence Against Law Enforcement Officers in the United States: A National Portrait

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Reviewer: Rick Parent

1 Introduction

Front-line policing, in particular patrol work, is a dangerous job and can involve serious injuries and sometimes death for officers, with about 10% of officers assaulted each year in the USA (Bierie, 2017). The National

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Institute for Occupational Safety (NIOSH) has found that law enforcement officers (LEOs) as a group experience one of the highest rates of workplace homicides and have the highest occupational rate of violent victimization in the USA (Harrell et al., 2022; National Institute of Occupational Safety & Health, 1996). Despite these dangers that LEOs face, there is limited national data on violence against LEOs (VAO). Also, much of the research has focused on felonious killings of LEOs (e.g., the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries and the National Law Enforcement Officer Memorial Fund database), with less on the broader set of police officer line-of-duty assaults not resulting in the death of an officer. The existing databases often undercount LEOs who were shot by a firearm but not killed, and completely miss LEOs who were shot at but not injured or not hit. They also contain only a limited number of community, agency, and situational risk factors for investigating patterns that would inform policies, protocols, and prevention. In sum, there is no clear national portrait of VAO.

To address some of these limitations, we collected novel survey data on the aggregate counts of VAO from 2015 to 2019 with a nationally representative sample of 800 US law enforcement agencies (LEAs). This is the first nationally representative survey on the aggregated yearly counts of VAO. The survey examines the number of VAO incidents (including incidents involving firearm shootings, and with other weapons or bodily force, in the past five years) and separately the number of officer-involved shooting (OIS) incidents, where a civilian shoots at an officer. We examine: (1) How many VAO and OIS incidents did the average US LEA experience in the past five years? (2) To what extent are agency characteristics, culture, policing practices, and required training related to the rate of VAO?

The US Context for VAO

Part of the context for considering VAO in the USA is the large size of the population, the large number of officers, and the ready availability

of firearms. Based on US Census data (https://usafacts.org/data/top
ics/people-society/population-and-demographics/our-changing-popula
tion), the population of the USA is roughly 332 million. Also, there are
over 700,000 full-time sworn officers working for general-purpose law
enforcement agencies at the state, county, or local level (Bureau of Justice
Statistics, 2022). Also, the USA is one of the few Western countries
that has a legally protected right to posses a firearm and in some states
carry the firearm with them. This culture that is supportive of firearms
is unique to the USA. No other Western nation is close to the rate of
possession of handguns and handgun violence. With less than 5% of
the world's population, the USA has nearly half (46%) of the world's
civilian-owned guns, based on recent global survey data (Small arms
survey, 2018). This unique context forms an important backdrop to the
discussion of VAO in the USA.

Overall Rates of VAO and Trends Over Time

Felonious assaults on police are rare events from a statistical perspective,
occurring in less than 0.5% of arrests (White et al., 2019). However,
it can be serious when it occurs, and officers who have been attacked
experience stress that can negatively affect their job performance in a
variety of important ways (McMurray, 1990). Most aggression toward
police results in minor injuries, and only a tiny percentage result in
death (Bierie, 2017). The best available data on non-fatal VAO is the
Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted (LEOKA) data covering
LEOs who were killed, feloniously or accidentally, and LEOs who experi-
enced an aggravated assault while performing their duties. However, even
the LEOKA data have some shortcomings. First, LEOKA is a voluntary
database and LEAs are not required to report attacks against officers to
the FBI. While generally about 12,000 LEAs report data to LEOKA, not
all agencies provide such reports. Second, while only a small percentage
of shootings do not result in some injury, incidents that did not result
in injury are not included in the LEOKA database. Third, the LEOKA
database does not include a number of variables that are of interest

to researchers for model testing, as it was not designed as a research database.

The most recent LEOKA data on assaults on LEOs are from 2019 when 56,034 were assaulted while performing their duties and 30.7% were injured. In 2019, about 80% of LEOs who were assaulted in the line of duty were attacked with hands, fists, or feet; 3.8% were assaulted with firearms; and 16.9% with knives or other weapons. The 2019 rate of assaults on LEOs, 11.8% of sworn LEOs, represents a continuing increasing trend of officer assaults since 2015 (9.9% in 2015; 9.8% in 2016; 10.1% in 2017; 10.8% in 2018) (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2019b). In an earlier analysis of LEOKA data from 2010 to 2016, Shjarback and Maguire (2021) assessed whether VAO has increased in the wake of events in Ferguson, Missouri involving police use of deadly force in 2014. Neither injurious nor non-injurious assaults on LEOs increased following Michael Brown's death in August 2014 and the findings were robust across a variety of model specifications and estimation techniques, providing little evidence of a "War on Cops" through 2016 (Shjarback & Maguire, 2021).

Fatalities Against LEOs

There are several federal datasets on fatal shooting of LEOs. First, White and colleagues (2019) examined nearly 50 years of all LEO line-of-duty deaths (1970–2016) using National Law Enforcement Officer Memorial Fund (NLEOMF) data. They found that the number of deaths declined dramatically over the last five decades and concluded that policing is a much safer profession now compared to 50 years ago. They suggest that the reasons for this decline in officer deaths, compared to the 1970s and 1980s, include better trauma care in hospitals to save the lives of officers who in earlier decades might have died, advances in body armor along with mandatory policies to wear it, and better training, supervision, and technologies. While there has been a 75% drop in deaths, there has been remarkable stability in geographic, temporal, and incident-level characteristics (White et al., 2019).

Second, an analysis of 1980–1992 LEOKA data reveals that about 1000 LEOs were killed in the line of duty during this timeframe, with the highest number of deaths occurring in 1980 (104) and the lowest in 1992 (62) (Bailey, 1996). In contrast, over this period the total number of assaults on LEOs increased considerably (57,847 in 1980; 91,252 in 1992), including those involving firearms (3295 in 1980; 4455 in 1992) (Bailey, 1996). The number of LEOs killed per 1000 total assaults and firearm assaults was much higher in 1980 (l.80 and 31.59, respectively) than in 1992 (0.68 and 13.9) (Bailey, 1996). Also, an analysis of the number of LEOs killed feloniously from 1996 to 2008 showed the rate at which they were killed in the line of duty decreased approximately 36% (LEOKA, 1996, 2008) from 55 (0.14 per 1000) to 41 (0.09 per 1000) (Brandl & Stroshine, 2012). In an analysis of 37 years of LEOKA data by Zimring and Arsiniega (2015), from 1976 to 2012, the death rate of police from violent assaults dropped from 27.88 per 100,000 to 7.16 per 100,000, a decline of almost 75%.

More recently, LEOKA data from 2009 to 2021 shows considerable fluctuation in the number of felonious officer deaths. Figure 1 reveals that from 2009 to 2011 there was an increase in the number of LEOs killed from 48 to 72 but then a sharp decrease to 27 in 2013 (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2022). However, there was another increase to 66 officer deaths in 2016, and after a decrease again to 46 in 2020, there was a sharp increase to 73 in 2021.
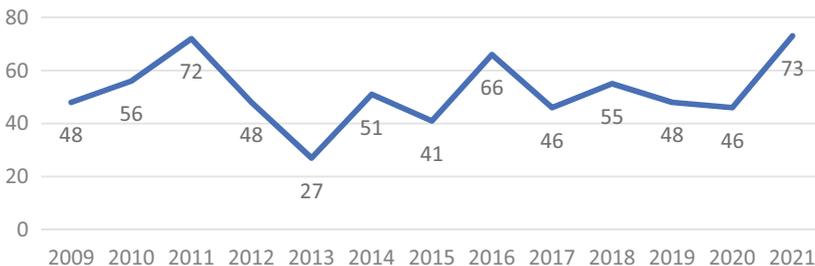
Fig. 1 Leoka data on the number of felonious deaths of officers from 2009 to 2021 (based on BJS data; Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2022)

Next, Tiesman and colleagues (2010) examined workplace injury deaths among LEOs from 1992 to 2002 using the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries and also found that officer deaths were rare events. From 1992 to 2002, 2280 LEOs died from an occupational injury, with a fatality rate of 11.8 per 100,000: 47% were homicides ($n = 1072$; rate = 5.6 per 100,000), 36% were transport related ($n = 815$; rate = 4.2 per 100,000), 11% were due to other causes ($n = 249$; rate = 1.3 per 100,000), and 5% were workplace suicides ($n = 122$; rate 0.6 per 100,000).

Agency and Community Risk Factors for VAO

In studies over a decade old, researchers examined *agency-level* factors related to VAO, including mandatory vest-wear policies, officer density, arrests, two-officer patrols, and the use of improved firearms (Kaminski, 2002, 2004, 2008), with only the level of police officer density (proximity) and the numbers of arrests (exposure) found to be significantly related to VAO risk. However, contrary to these studies, other research has found stricter body armor policies to be related to decreases in VAO (Fridell et al., 2009; LaTourrette, 2010; Liu & Taylor, 2017). Research on *community-level* factors suggests that more dangerous areas, characterized by a disproportionate number of calls for service, are also places where VAO is more likely to occur (Belvedere et al., 2005). Along these lines, research has found that the police were more likely to be murdered in certain regions (Boylen & Little, 1990; Kaminski et al., 2000), economically depressed areas (Chamlin, 1989; Jacobs & Carmichael, 2002; Kaminski, 2008; Kaminski & Marvell, 2002), and locales high in general violence (Fridell & Pate, 1995; Handberg et al., 1988; Jacobs & Carmichael, 2002; Kaminski et al., 2003), though with at least one exception (Kaminski, 2008). Conversely, police homicide risk was lower in urbanized counties and in counties located in the Northeast (Kaminski, 2008). Some studies have found an association between firearm availability in the community and police murders (Lester, 1984, 1987; Swedler et al., 2015); others have not (Kaminski & Marvell, 2002; Mustard, 2001).

Gaps in the Literature

The federal datasets covering VAO and OIS undercount LEOs who were shot but not killed, fail to count LEOs who were shot at but not hit, and LEOs who were shot but not injured. Many of the studies on VAO (Covington et al., 2014; Johnson, 2008; Kaminski et al., 2007; Kent, 2010) have focused on a single or a handful of LEAs (Brandl & Stroshine, 2012; Garner, 1996), limiting across-agency comparisons or the review of statistics applicable to the whole of the USA. A number of these studies are also now outdated, being from ten or more years ago. Many of the VAO studies focus on assaults with firearms and many only cover officer fatalities (Fridell & Pate, 1995; Tiesman et al., 2010; Zimring & Arsiniega, 2015). They also contain only a limited number of community and agency factors to investigate patterns that would inform policies. This study is one of the first comprehensive national surveys to estimate five years of data on VAO and OIS in a nationally representative sample.

2   Methods

Agency Survey Methodology and Sample

We collected our data so that it would be representative of all law enforcement agencies in the USA. A stratified random sample of 4000 LEAs were drawn from the 2017 National Directory of Law Enforcement Administrators (NDLEA) (National Public Safety Information Bureau, 2017), using updated contact information from the 2021 NDLEA to facilitate the locating of agencies to complete the survey (National Public Safety Information Bureau, 2021). The NDLEA is an electronic commercial database listing of over 15,000 municipal, county, and state LEAs in the USA, which is updated yearly and enumerates every LEA and which is considered to be among the most comprehensive lists. Information available from the NDLEA included agency name, type, size (i.e., sworn officer count), email, and phone number of the chief executive officer. LEAs were stratified by type and size. As OIS is a

rare event, we oversampled larger LEAs. All State Police/Highway Patrol agencies and LEAs with 250 or more sworn officers were sampled with certainty, LEAs with 100–249 officers were sampled at 75%, LEAs with 50–99 officers were sampled at 50%, and LEAs with 25–49 officers were sampled at 25%. All other LEAs were sampled proportional to the frame. The survey was restricted to publicly funded civilian LEAs representing municipal, county, state police and highway patrol, or Bureau of Indian Affairs LEAs (no federal LEAs were included in the study) that employ at least one full-time sworn officer with general arrest powers.

Prior to national distribution, the research team conducted a pilot test and cognitive interviews with a small sample of LEAs. The fielding period for the survey was February 2021–February 2022. LEAs were initially invited via email with a unique agency link to take the survey online. Hard copy invitation letters were mailed to LEAs when email addresses were not available. About 25 email and hard copy reminders were sent throughout the survey fielding period to each non-responding LEA. The Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) conducted targeted phone call reminders to smaller LEAs, identified as a subgroup with low participation rates, which had accessed the survey. LEAs were offered several options for completing a survey, including online or via hardcopy (to be returned by mail, email, or fax).

A total of 800 LEAs completed the survey (response rate = 20%). Most surveys were completed online ($n = 778$, 97%), while the remainder were returned via email ($n = 22$, 3%). The sample was weighted to be nationally representative of LEAs in the USA and adjusted for non-response. All results reported from these analyses were weighted (see Table 1 for a sample description).

Measures

Incidents and Rates of Violence Against Officers (VAO)

VAO was defined in the survey for agencies as a "physical confrontation where a subject used bodily force or a weapon (e.g., discharges, uses, or brandishes a firearm, knife, etc.) against one or more officers during the

Table 1 Weighted agency sample descriptions

	VAO model (N = 707) Frequency/mean (SD)	OIS model (N = 707) Frequency/mean (SD)
Type		
Municipal	86.8%	86.7%
County/state police/ highway patrols	13.2%	13.3%
Size (full-time sworn officers)		
Less than 100	87.0%	87.0%
100–249	8.3%	8.3%
250 or more	4.7%	4.7%
Region		
Northeast	17.4%	16.8%
Midwest	32.1%	32.4%
Southeast	19.1%	19.2%
South	10.8%	12.2%
West	20.6%	19.4%
Average calls for service (2017–2019)	4.18 (163,265.7)	4.17 (163,148.7)
Violent crime rate	129.54 (226.31)	132.80 (229.72)
Officer to population ratio	0.27 (0.30)	0.27 (0.30)
In-service training hours	52.00 (64.52)	51.37 (63.05)
Count of non-lethal weapons authorized	7.64 (1.37)	7.64 (1.37)
CALEA accreditation	13.9%	14.7%
Written foot pursuit policy		
No guidelines	12.3%	13.0%
Guidelines but no mandatory policy	22.2%	22.3%
Written mandatory policies	56.4%	55.5%
Written body armor policy	94.2%	93.6%
Simulation training offered	89.9%	89.9%
CIT training offered	94.3%	94.3%
Responding to mental illness training offered	95.3%	95.3%
Body-worn cameras deployed	70.2%	70.0%
Dedicated community policing budget	39.7%	39.1%
Dedicated community policing officers	43.7%	44.0%
Host community policing events once a month or more	47.6%	48.1%

Note N represents the number of non-missing observations, with outliers removed. For the VAO and OIS models, three distinct outliers were removed from each sample

past five years". LEAs were asked to report the total number of incidents where officers were assaulted for each year from 2015 to 2019, and the calls for service (CFS) of each year from 2017 to 2019. The rates of VAO were calculated as measured by the average yearly incidents of VAO incidents per 10,000 CFS.

Incidents and Rates of Officers Shot at by Subjects (OIS)

The rate of OIS was measured by the total number of incidents of a subject discharging a firearm at an officer (regardless of whether the officers were hit and whether the incident resulted in injury or death) across the five-year period 2015–2019, divided by the five-year sum of CFS. CFS was only collected for 2017–2019, and thus CFS for 2015 and 2016 were imputed using the average CFS across 2017–2019 (there is little variation between years).

Covariates

Agency Characteristics

- **Agency region** was measured by reported US census region from the NDLEA (Northeast—the reference category for analysis; Midwest; Southeast; South; and West).
- **Agency size** was measured by the number of full-time sworn officers in the agency, placed in one of three categories by size variable: less than 100 (reference), 100–249, and 250 or more full-time sworn officers.
- **Agency type** included municipal law enforcement (reference) and others, including county law enforcement, state police/highway patrols, and tribal LEAs.
- **CALEA accreditation** was reported by LEAs, coded as "Yes" or "No" (reference).
- **Police population ratio** was calculated as the percentage of the total number of sworn officers over the population of the agency the jurisdiction serves.

Community Characteristics

- **Crime rate** was measured as the average yearly rate of homicides and aggravated assaults between 2017 and 2019 per 100,000 of the population.

Agency Policies, and Trainings

- **In-service training hours** is a continuous measure of the total estimated hours for annual in-service training.
- **Count of weapon types authorized** is measured as the number of weapons and less-lethal tools authorized by an agency, including handguns, patrol rifles, shotguns, batons or other impact weapons, electronic control weapons (e.g., Taser, stun gun), chemical agents (e.g., oleoresin capsicum (OC) spray or Corson-Stoughton gas or CS tear gas), weapon-deployed chemical agents (e.g., pepper ball), other impact munitions (e.g., rubber bullets, bean bags), neck restraints, and takedown techniques (e.g., straight-arm bar).
- **Foot pursuit policy** was measured by asking if an agency had written mandatory policies, guidelines but no mandatory policy, or no guidelines on foot pursuits (reference).
- **Body armor policy** was captured as a dichotomous measure if the agency has a written policy requiring officers to wear body armor, measured as Yes or No (reference).
- **Body-worn camera (BWC) deployment** was measured by asking if the agency currently deploys BWCs, with response options of "Yes" or "No" (reference).
- **Trainings offered to new recruits or in-services** were measured in three distinct covariates for whether the agency offered: (1) decision making/simulation/virtual reality/simunitions training; (2) crisis intervention training (CIT); or (3) training in responding to mental illness, for either in-service officers or new recruits (coded as 1 if training was offered).

Community Policing

- **Community policing budget** was captured by asking LEAs whether the agency has a dedicated portion of the budget for community policing, with response options of "Yes" or "No" (reference).
- **Dedicated community policing officers** was measured by LEAs reporting whether they have one or more dedicated community policing officers, coded as "Yes" or "No" (reference).
- **The frequency of community policing events** was measured by asking LEAs to report how often officers in their agency involved in community meetings or events, such as "coffee with the cop", coded into a two-point scale of a few times a year or fewer (reference) to once a month or more.

Analysis Plan

We conducted the following steps for analysis for both VAO and OIS separately.

Step 1: Fitting Intercept-Only Models to Determine the Best-Fitting Model Types

We performed regression analysis to examine the effects of covariates on VAO and OIS rates separately using count models (Long, 1997). We first modeled VAO yearly average rates with an intercept-only model (no predictor variables included) using Poisson regression. A test of over-dispersion indicated a larger variance than expected, and, thus, we fit a negative binomial regression to compare the model fit with the Poisson model. Using a deviance goodness-of-fit test (Rodríguez, 2007), we found that the negative binomial model fits the data better. We then carried out a Bonferroni outlier test (Fox, 2015; Fox et al., 2007) which suggested the need to remove three outliers to improve the model fit. We further examined the residuals and confirm that the model fits the data well.

We modeled the OIS rates similarly. That is, we fitted both Poisson and negative binomial models, and conducted Bonferroni outlier tests, a dispersion test, and residual analysis to compare the model fit. In addition, as 60% had a zero OIS, we investigated the need for zero-inflated models to account for a large proportion of zeros. The overdispersion test indicated that the negative binomial model fits the data better than a Poisson model. However, using Vuong's non-nested hypothesis test (Vuong, 1989; Zeileis et al., 2008), we found that the zero-inflated models did not improve the model fit significantly. Bonferroni outlier tests indicated the need to remove three outliers for model fit improvement. Therefore, we decided on a negative binomial regression with the three outliers removed.

Step 2: Conducting Multiple Imputation

To address missing data issues, we employed multiple imputation (Rubin, 1987). To avoid outliers biasing regression estimates, for both the models we removed outliers from the dataset prior to imputation. We generated 25 datasets using multiple imputation by chained equations (Van Buuren, 2018; Van Buuren & Groothuis-Oudshoorn, 2011), conducted analyses on all 25 datasets, and reported pooled results using the well-accepted Rubin's Rules (Little & Rubin, 2019; Rubin, 1976).

Step 3: Adding Covariates

To assess the effects of covariates on OIS and VAO, we fit three different stepwise models separately for the two outcomes. Model 1 only included agency and community characteristics, Model 2 included the additional agency policies and training variables, and Model 3 included the additional community policy variables. To ease model convergence, we mean centered and scaled all continuous variables, including crime rate, police–population ratio, in-service training hours, and the number of authorized weapons.

All the analyses were weighted, and we used R software version 4.2.1.

3   Results

Descriptive Statistics

Agencies reported an average of 12.43 VAO incidents per year (SD = 78.62) and 0.11 OIS incidents annually of officers being shot at by a subject (SD = 0.57). Between 2015 and 2019, agencies reported an average total of 0.57 OIS incidents (SD = 2.85) during the five-year period, with 86.8% of agencies not having any OIS shootings of officers in the period of study.

The number of VAO and OIS incidents varies widely by agency size. Agencies with less than 100 sworn officers (87% of agencies in the sample) reported an average of 6.22 VAO incidents annually; LEAs with 100–249 officers (8.3%) reported 21.01 VAO incidents per year; and LEAs with 250 or more officers (4.7%) reported an average of 112.67 VAO incidents per year. Using the NDLEA sampling frame, we extrapolated the total number of VAO incidents per year based on averages by agency size strata. As such, we would expect 147,058 incidents of VAO across all LEAs in the USA per year, with a total of 735,290 VAO incidents across the five-year period of 2015–2019.

Similarly, we estimated the number of OIS incidents nationally. Agencies with less than 100 officers reported an average of 0.030 OIS incidents per year; LEAs with 100–249 officers reported 0.24 OIS incidents per year; and agencies with 250 or more officers reported an average of 1.43 OIS incidents per year. Thus, we estimated an average of 1152 OIS incidents in the nation per year between 2015 and 2019, with a total of 5761 OIS incidents during the five-year period.

Violence Against Officers

As seen in Table 2, controlling for agency and community characteristics, the VAO rate did not significantly differ by region. In contrast, agency size was significantly negatively associated with the VAO rate. In Model 1, agencies with 100–249 officers (IRR = 0.43, $p = 0.04$) and 250 or more officers (IRR = 0.38, $p = 0.04$) had lower VAO rates

compared to agencies with 100 or fewer full-time sworn officers. The officer to population ratio was also significantly associated with the VAO rate. A higher proportion of officers to their respective population was associated with lower VAO rates (Model 3 IRR = 0.71, p = 0.03). This finding remained significant in each of the three stepwise models. Agency training, policies, community policing practices, or violent crime rates were not significantly associated with VAO rates.

Subject Shootings of Officers

As seen in Table 3, whereas no regional differences were found in the VAO model, region was significantly associated with OIS rate. Southeast (Model 3 IRR = 3.05, p = 0.02) and Southern (Model 3 IRR = 2.81, p = 0.04) agencies were associated with nearly three times the OIS rate of one or more officers being shot by a subject, as compared to Northeastern agencies. This finding remained significant in each of the three stepwise models. In Model 2, controlling for agency trainings and policies, agencies with 250 or more full-time officers had higher OIS rates compared to agencies with 100 or fewer officers (IRR = 2.16, p = 0.04), which was marginally significant in Model 1 (p = 0.07). This finding remained significant when controlling for community policing covariates in Model 3 (IRR = 2.11, p = 0.05). The association between the violent crime rate and OIS rate was not significant in Model 1 but was marginally significant in Model 2 (IRR = 1.32, p = 0.10) and Model 3 (IRR = 1.32, p = 0.10). Agency training, policies, or community policing practices were not significantly related to OIS rates.

4   Discussion

Our project data reveal that VAO and OIS are relatively rare events statistically. This is not to diminish the significance of VAO and OIS. Many officers experience mental and physical injuries associated with VAO and OIS or even lose their lives (Papazoglou & Tuttle, 2018). Nevertheless, in dealing with any societal problem we need to be cognizant of its scope.

Table 2 Stepwise Poisson regression models for VAO rate ($N = 707$)

	Model 1 Incident rate ratio (IRR)	Model 2 IRR	Model 3 IRR
Type[a]			
County/state police/ highway patrols	1.05	1.42	1.34
Size (full-time sworn officers)[b]			
100–249	0.43*	0.70	0.74
250 or more	0.38*	0.59	0.62
Region[c]			
Midwest	1.67	1.15	0.98
Southeast	1.01	0.97	0.92
South	0.50	0.65	0.65
West	0.69	0.75	0.68
Violent crime rate	1.17	1.16	1.18
Officer to population ratio	0.71*	0.71*	0.71*
In-service training hours	–	0.89	0.89
Count of non-lethal weapons authorized	–	0.82	0.87
CALEA accreditation	–	0.80	0.85
Written foot pursuit policy	–		
Guidelines but no mandatory policy	–	0.97	0.98
Written mandatory policies	–	1.09	1.13
Written body armor policy	–	1.14	1.18
Body-worn cameras deployed	–	1.81	1.70
Simulation training offered	–	0.59	0.60
CIT training offered	–	1.25	1.27
Responding to mental illness training offered	–	0.22	0.19
Dedicated community policing budget	–	–	0.64
Dedicated community policing officers	–	–	1.10
Frequency of community policing events	–	–	0.89

Notes Reference categories: [a]municipal; [b]less than 100 full-time sworn officers; [c]Northeast;
*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$

Table 3 Stepwise Poisson regression models for OIS against officers' rate ($N = 707$)

	Model 1 Incident rate ratio (IRR)	Model 2 IRR	Model 3 IRR
Type[a]			
County/state police/ highway patrols	1.07	1.01	1.03
Size (full-time sworn officers)[b]			
100–249	1.55	1.61	1.56
250 or more	1.88	2.16*	2.11*
Region[c]			
Midwest	1.94	1.81	1.80
Southeast	2.73*	3.12*	3.05*
South	2.73*	2.85*	2.81*
West	1.64	1.73	1.72
Violent crime rate	1.24	1.32	1.32
Officer to population ratio	0.66	0.64	0.63
In-service training hours	–	1.02	1.02
Count of non-lethal weapons authorized	–	1.07	1.07
CALEA accreditation	–	0.80	0.80
Written foot pursuit policy	–	0.82	0.82
Guidelines but no mandatory policy	–	1.07	0.81
Written mandatory policies	–	0.64	1.04
Written body armor policy	–	0.70	0.63
Body-worn cameras deployed	–	0.34	0.70
Simulation training offered	–	0.97	0.33
CIT training offered	–	0.99	0.94
Responding to mental illness training offered	–	0.82	1.00
Dedicated community policing budget	–	–	1.19
Dedicated community policing officers	–	–	1.05
Frequency of community policing events	–	–	1.06

Notes Reference categories: [a]municipal; [b]less than 100 full-time sworn officers;
[c]Northeast
*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$

We have found that LEAs report an average of about 12 total VAO incidents per year and less than one (0.11) OIS incident annually. That is, the vast majority of officers will not experience VAO nor OIS. Also, the number of VAO and OIS incidents varies widely by agency size. Agencies with less than 100 sworn officers report on average six VAO incidents annually; LEAs with 100–249 officers report 21 VAO incidents per year; and LEAs with 250 or more officers report 113 VAO incidents per year.

Using our sampling frame statistics, we have been able to extrapolate our results to all LEAs across the USA, suggesting that the total number of VAO incidents per year is 147,058. This number suggests that VAO occurs in about 1% of the 13 million or so arrests per year in the USA (Snyder, 2011). Our data suggest that 2.5 times as many assaults against officers occur than Department of Justice (DOJ) data indicate based on LEOKA data (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2010). DOJ estimates that 57,268 officers are assaulted each year (Snyder, 2011). More research will be needed to help explain this difference, but our initial assessment is that the differences could be related to methodology. Given that a number of LEAs do not report data to the DOJ, that might contribute to the difference. While we had a modest response rate for our survey, we did apply statistical weights and non-response bias adjustments to our estimates, something not done by the DOJ. Also, it is possible that our survey methods, with a promise of confidentiality, as opposed to full public release of the data by the DOJ, leads to higher levels of reporting VAO and OIS.

Our extrapolation for OIS suggests that there are 1152 OIS incidents per year across the USA. As noted earlier, the field does not have any data reporting on a broad range of OIS; the extant databases focus on officer deaths. LEOKA data (see earlier literature review) suggest that somewhere between 25 and 70 officers are feloniously killed each year, mostly by firearms, but our data of 1152 OIS incidents per year suggest there are many more officers being shot at than those who are killed.

While front-line law enforcement is one of the more dangerous jobs, officers should be realistic about these dangers. In our study, we found that 87% of agencies did not have a single OIS incident in the five-year period of study. Given the more than 13+ million arrests that are made annually by the police (Snyder, 2011) and hundreds of millions of other

interactions that the police have with the public each year, VAO and OIS rarely occur. While officers should follow appropriate safety protocols when interacting with the public, these data suggest that officers should mostly feel safe in interacting with the public. For example, community policing practices encouraging frequent positive interactions with the public in building partnerships and problem solving will most likely proceed without any VAO or OIS. However, as is human nature when it comes to risk, officers like most people may misinterpret these risks such as people being scared of shark attacks when statistically they are extremely rare. We also note that the risk to officers is often specific to patrol officers providing front-line policing and less for tactical teams with more advanced training, skills, and equipment. Also, these risks do not typically apply to the substantial number of officers working behind a desk, those in other administrative or technical positions such as managing service calls or monitoring cameras.

Next, we then observed only a small number of significant covariates in our VAO rate models, suggesting that VAO is an across-the-nation problem for all LEAs. A consistently significant correlate associated with VAO rates across all three of our models was the ratio of officers-to-citizens in the population. A higher ratio was associated with lower VAO rates. That is, having more officers per citizen is associated with less VAO. This finding is consistent with prior research that has found that lower police-to-citizen ratios increases rates of police injurious assaults (Wilson & Zhao, 2008). Our results suggest that assaulting an officer is perhaps less likely when more police are visible to suspects and that this "boots-on-the-ground" approach might be an effective way to deter VAO (Wilson & Zhao, 2008). This finding is especially relevant to the hiring and retention crisis in law enforcement (Taylor et al., 2005; Wilson et al., 2010) that has continued into the current environment of agencies struggling to hire and retain enough officers to cover all their shifts (International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2020; Police Executive Research Forum, 2021). For many agencies attempting to police their jurisdictions with too few officers, these data suggest that officers might be at greater risk of being a victim of VAO.

In our first VAO model, we found that agencies with 100–249 officers and 250+ officers had lower VAO rates compared to agencies with

100 or fewer officers. While there is more VAO in larger agencies overall, as noted in the descriptive results, here we are examining rates of VAO per 10,000 calls for service. That is, in some smaller agencies with less than 100 officers, they have a very small number of calls for service and their ratio of VAO to calls for service can be high, even though the raw VAO numbers are much smaller than the larger agencies with more than 100 officers. However, once we introduce the agency policy/training and community policing measures in the second and third VAO models the number of officers was no longer significantly associated with VAO rates. Given the non-significant findings in VAO models 2 and 3, we do not believe there is a strong relationship between the number of officers and VAO rates. However, even the non-significant findings in VAO models 2 and 3 are important, which means that even smaller agencies need to be concerned about VAO and that officers are not safer in smaller communities than in larger communities. This is especially concerning given the typical scarcity of resources in many small LEAs where officers might have fewer options to address any trauma they might have experienced from their assault.

In the OIS models, we observed two consistent statistically significant variables, that is, region and agency size. For all three OIS models, Southeast and Southern agencies were associated with nearly three times the rate of OIS incidents as compared to Northeastern agencies. The Northeast having lower OIS rates is consistent with Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) data that the Northeast has the lowest crime rates in the USA. Conversely, the South tends to have among the highest rates (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2019a). This finding is also consistent with research by Kaminski who found police homicide risk was lower in the Northeast (Kaminski, 2008). Also, the South typically has been characterized as being particularly risky for officers compared to other regions (Fridell & Pate, 1997; Geller & Scott, 1992; Kaminski et al., 2000).

While not significant in OIS Model 1 ($p = 0.07$), in both Model 2 (controlling for agency policies/training) and Model 3 (controlling for community policing variables), we found that agencies with 250 or more full-time officers had higher OIS rates compared to agencies with 100 or fewer officers. These data suggest that the larger agencies (more likely to be in urban areas with higher homicide rates) are facing greater dangers

of OIS. These findings are consistent with the results of Kaminski's (2004) research which found that LEAs with more police officers were associated with an increase in the likelihood of an officer homicide.

For the VAO and OIS models we expected that our community policing variables would have been significant since such strategies are designed to improve police–community relationships and tend to improve the dynamic work environment associated with the police profession (Cordner, 1997; Greene, 2000) and increase the perceived legitimacy of the police (Hawdon et al., 2003) and residents' perceptions of the police (Zhao et al., 2002). However, they were not related to these outcomes. Part of this may been due to the broad nature of our community policing measures. Future research should consider more measures that assess each of the three key components of community policing: community partnerships, problem solving, and organizational transformation to implement partnerships and problem solving (Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2021).

We were also surprised that we did not find that the violent crime rate was related to VAO or OIS. Based on prior work, we thought that crime and violence in general, and VAO/OIS, would share common structural causes, and thus where violent crime was high, we thought we would see elevated rates of VAO and OIS. Nevertheless, our finding of the non-significance of violent crime is consistent with prior research (Kaminski, 2008; Kaminski & Marvell, 2002; Peterson & Bailey, 1988).

5   Limitations

With our research relying on LEAs to self-report VAO and OIS, this study is subject to many of the typical limitations of survey research (e.g., inaccurate reporting) that could be compounded by the fact that agencies might be motivated to not report VAO or OIS as it might discourage others from joining their agency as new officers. However, LEAs have been completing these type of organizational surveys for decades (e.g., the BJS LEMAS program) and the field has accepted these surveys as a recognized practice. Another limitation is the depth of our survey. While we attempted to collect at least ten years of data from all the sampled

LEAs, most of the sample could only produce five years of reliable data. In addition, due to the aggregated nature of the data, we were not able to collect more detailed information on VAO and OIS incidents or details on the community being patrolled by the officers. Finally, given the relative rarity of VAO, we note that the law of small numbers suggest that we should use some caution in interpreting our numbers in that small swings could affect our reported proportions.

6   Conclusion

This study confirms in a nationally representative sample of LEAs that VAO and OIS are relatively rare events, with LEAs reporting about 12 total VAO incidents and less than one (0.11) OIS incident annually, with 87% of LEAs reporting no OIS incidents over our entire five-year study period. However, our data reveal some updates to our understanding of VAO and OIS. First, our data suggest that there are 2.5 times as many assaults against officers than the leading DOJ data indicate. Also, there are over 1000 ($n = 1152$) OIS incidents per year involving officers being shot at, a much bigger number than the 25–70 officers feloniously killed each year. So, while rare, a substantial number of officers and their families will likely need help in addressing trauma from violence. Nevertheless, these dangers officers face should not obscure the fact that they should mostly feel safe in interacting with the public.

In research we tend to focus on the statistically significant predictor variables of our study outcomes. However, sometimes the absence of statistically significant variables is important too. We observed only a small number of significant covariates in our VAO and OIS models, suggesting that VAO and OIS are an across-the-nation problem. We cannot focus on a specific set of agencies with clear distinguishing characteristics that are experiencing these problems. We will therefore need VAO and OIS prevention strategies that have wide applicability across LEAs. Nevertheless, a few significant covariates emerged from our analyses. A higher ratio of officers to citizens was associated with lower VAO rates for our first VAO model, but then the relationship becomes non-significant in VAO Models 2 and 3. At a minimum, what this means is

that even smaller LEAs need to be concerned about VAO and that officers are not safer in smaller communities. We also caution LEAs about officer safety issues in the Southeast and Southern agencies that had three times the OIS rate compared to Northeastern agencies. Finally, our data suggest that the larger agencies are facing greater dangers for OIS than smaller agencies.

Key Takeaways

Police Officers

For front line officers, our work highlights the extent of VAO and OIS based on scientific data. That is, moving past the sensationalism of news accounts of a "war on cops" in the USA, our data suggest that their chances of being a victim of an assault or shooting is highly unlikely. For officers on the front line of our communities addressing the dangers of crime, it is no doubt hard to see past the potential for danger. It is easy to see how regularly observing violence can lead an officer to be concerned that they too will be a victim. However, our data and prior research shines a light on the actual extent of VAO and OIS. We recognize that death and injuries to officers do not only occur during arrests. In fact, officers put themselves at risk any time they put on their uniform and may suffer death or assault by ambush even during a "routine" call for service. However, data from this and past studies suggest that the number of actual incidents per capita for front line officers is small and, thus, the overall risk in general is small. Given such data and the importance of police interactions with the public, officers should feel fairly safe during these interactions.

Conflict Management Trainers

For conflict management trainers, our finding that we observed only a small number of significant covariates in our models can help them understand that VAO and OIS are an across-the-board concern that LEAs of all types might need to be able to address. Also, trauma services will need to be varied to address the many types of officers likely to experience trauma associated with VAO and OIS. Conflict management trainers have a number of referral options for psychological interventions that are evidence-based with a history of helping officers effectively handle police-related trauma (Andersen et al., 2015;

Chopko & Schwartz, 2009; Papazoglou & Andersen, 2014). Also, conflict management trainers will need to consider prevention strategies to keep officers safe that have wide applicability across LEAs.

Police Decision-Makers

For police decision-makers, our findings on significant covariates could be used to promote officer safety. These decision-makers can use our data to make a strong case for hiring and maintaining a higher ratio of officers-to-citizens to promote lower VAO rates. The current shortage of officers in many LEAs can be considered an officer safety issue based on our data. Our results can also be used by police decision-makers in the Southeast and Southern agencies to heighten awareness of the three-fold increase in the OIS rate occurring in their agencies. Also, a case can be made that more resources will be needed for the larger LEAs in the USA who are facing the highest levels of OIS.

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Police Conflict Management and the Phenomenon of Suicide-By-Cop in North America

Rick Parent and Catherine Parent

Reviewer: Amy Rose Grubb

1   Decision-Making and the Police Use of Force

In North America, both law and policy govern the police use of force. The use of deadly force by the police must only occur within the parameters of government legislation as well as organizational policies. Within this legal framework, the police are also empowered to utilize discretion. Geller and Scott (1992) define official discretion as an authority

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conferred by law to act in certain situations in accordance with the judgment and conscience of an official or of the official's agency. Government legislation and organizational policies within Canada and the USA serve to guide only the outer limits of police discretion in using force.

Prior to reacting to any situation with the application of force, a police officer is required to evaluate the incident. Through analysis of all the known information, a police officer will attempt to select the most appropriate use of force response. This process requires the officer to first assess the situation, then to act in a reasonable manner to ensure officer safety and public safety. In Canada, the National Use of Force Framework serves as the governing model for all police personnel in the nation, guiding and directing the application of force (Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, 2000).

There is no obligation for the police to use force whenever it is legally justifiable. The use of force, including deadly force, is dependent upon both the unique circumstances of the incident and the unique decision-making of the officer. If two officers are faced with the exact same circumstances, one individual officer may decide to employ deadly force while the other may choose a non-lethal method of dealing with the perceived situation. Thus, both discretion and perception may vary between individual officers (Chappell & Graham, 1985; McLaughlin, 1992).

Levels of violence by the police are also influenced by the characteristics of the specific situation. In each incident, there is a unique set of dynamics that include personality, stress, and danger. Parent (1996) emphasizes that, in some instances, the police officer is forced to react within seconds, and there is little that the involved officers could have done differently to alter the nature of their encounter. Individual officers who have been involved in shootings have detailed how the often split-second incident appeared to unfold in "slow motion" and that their focus was centered on the actions of the assailant. In many cases, police officers responded to the perceived threat in an "automatic" manner, based upon their repeated training in dealing with life-threatening situations. In the vast majority of these cases, a potentially violent encounter will develop into a deadly violent situation in just a matter of seconds. The rapid timing and physiological effects that occur during these specific

encounters tend to suggest that there may have been few alternatives to deadly force (Parent, 2004).

Researchers have noted that an officer's training in violence reduction is a key factor in increasing the amount of time available to influence an outcome (Chidgey et al., 2018; Parent, 2004). One essential factor in controlling fast paced situations includes the obligation of the individual police officer to check for specific indicators as they approach the scene of a potentially violent encounter. In his analysis of 417 fatal police shooting incidents, Parent (2004) noted that information-gathering and tactical decision formation by the police must occur *prior* to the onset of officer arrival with re-evaluation as the incident evolves. Precautions may include developing a habit of checking in-progress crime scenes to identify dangers, options, as well as bystanders. In some instances, it was noted that the mere presence of a police officer may serve to intensify and escalate the situation into which they are entering. This may influence an officer's decision regarding how, and when, to enter a situation (Chidgey et al., 2018; Parent, 2004; Parent & Parent, 2016).

Research has also indicated that, in other instances, an officer may choose to step back and engage in dialog for the purpose of slowing down an event and increase the chances of de-escalation and peaceful resolution (Parent, 2004). Police negotiator strategies suggest that the tactic of "talk, time, and distance" may allow an emotionally charged assaultive individual an opportunity to calm down, or an individual in a drug/alcohol-induced state an opportunity to regain perspective. This may also help police to formulate a plan of action involving a calculated and prolonged response, one that may include the deployment of less-lethal force (Parent, 2011). These issues and options, however, are not always clearly defined. For example, a distressed individual yelling and waving a knife in the air might be "talked down" by an officer applying verbal communication techniques. However, this same distressed individual may cause another officer to believe that his or her life is in danger. The actions may be misconstrued as an aggressive act, indicating the need for the use of coercive force (Parent, 2011; Parent & Parent, 2016).

It is important to recognize that an officer engaged in a potentially lethal encounter will experience a variety of perceptual alterations. For example, tunnel vision may occur which, in effect, nullifies the officer's

peripheral vision. However, the officer may require peripheral vision in order to see other dangers, other alternatives to deadly force, or to become aware of the presence of innocent bystanders. Researchers have cited "time distortions" and "increased auditory and visual acuity" among other physiological effects of high-stress confrontations. These physiological changes, collectively known as the "general adaptive syndrome", are intrinsic within human beings and they act as a survival mechanism (Murray & Zentner, 2001). As part of the general adaptive syndrome, an "alarm stage" may emerge. This is an instantaneous, short-term, life-preserving, and total sympathetic-nervous-system response that occurs when a person consciously or unconsciously perceives a danger-inducing stressor.

In contemporary society, the police are continually occupied with the threat of violence within their day-to-day activities. Skolnick (1966) stated that, in reaction to this, police officers may develop a "perceptual shorthand" to identify certain kinds of people as "symbolic assailants". These assailants are individuals who use specific gestures, language, and attire that the officer has come to recognize as a prelude to violence. This may also apply to symbolic settings, which the officer has come to recognize as having the potential for danger.

Research suggests that an officer's decision to deploy force will be influenced by their training, as well as physiological and psychological responses that occur when under stress (Fridell & Binder, 1992; Parent, 2004). Physical and social settings, including dark or poorly lit places, high crime and violence areas, angry or upset people, and non-supportive social structures, also serve to heighten anxiety (MacDonald et al., 2001; Matulia, 1985). While these factors affect all individuals, police officers are likely to experience even higher levels of anxiety as they often have little choice regarding whether or not to enter a dangerous situation (MacDonald et al., 2001; Matulia, 1985). Indeed, the police occupation is unique in society as it carries the risk of murder or grievous bodily harm during day-to-day duties (Parent & Parent, 2016).

Adding to this complex and precarious situation, individuals who are suicidal, irrational, or mentally ill will have substantial variations in their personal background and will likely have different capacities to hear

and process police commands (Coleman and Cotton, 2014). Police officers are placed in the unenviable position of having to accurately assess and interpret the cues of an individual (often within a few seconds) in order to determine the correct procedure in dealing with him or her. Furthermore, research also suggests that police officers may differ in their individual responses due to factors that include age, cultural background, maturity, experience, attitude, training, and police departmental policies and procedures (Alpert & Fridell, 1992; Fridell & Binder, 1992; Parent, 2004; White, 2001). These potential individual variations may influence how a specific officer will react towards those who are despondent, irrational, or suffering from mental health issues (Parent, 2011; Parent & Parent, 2016).

In Canada, it has been reported that people with mental health issues account for 1 in 5 contacts with the police (Coleman and Cotton, 2014). Furthermore, it is reported that each year police in Canada are responding to increasing numbers of incidents that involve people with mental health issues. Coleman and Cotton (2014) note that in 2012 there were about 1 million contacts between police and individuals with mental health and/or substance use issues in Canada. Roughly 98% of the mental health calls for service required de-escalation, while only 2% required the use of force (Deveau, 2021). Nonetheless, police and conflict managers are concerned that police may not be equipped to be the frontline responder in these types of situations. The increased interactions between police and individuals in crisis are attributed to several factors that include deinstitutionalization practices; increased numbers of people with mental health and substance use issues living on their own; and inadequate/insufficient community resources to address and support people with mental health issues (Chidgey et al., 2018).

As front line responders, police are often summoned to a location when individuals experience mental health episodes, often when resources are limited, closed, or when the individual does not follow the advice of their family or professional. Research conducted by Parent (2004, 2011) and Parent and Parent (2016) suggest that crisis events often occur at night, on weekends, and in public venues. In those instances where the police utilized force, subsequent investigations revealed that in many cases the individual refused assistance but

required intervention, either for their own safety, or for the safety of others (Parent, 2004, 2011; Parent & Parent, 2016).

Researchers have also noted that distressed individuals with mental health issues can exhibit behavior that police officers may perceive as a lethal threat, thus resulting in the police use of deadly force to protect themselves and others (Parent & Parent, 2016). A study of 30 fatal police shootings from 2000 to 2009 noted that in 27% of the cases, the decedent had a documented history of mental illness and/or suicidal behavior. In many instances, the individuals were assailants, in possession of edged weapons, or attacking or threatening to attack the attending officers. In each incident, the officers were assigned to front-line patrol duties. The study also noted that three officers required medical treatment for injuries received as a result of an edged weapon attack (Parent, 2011).

Suicidal individuals who are reticent of taking their own lives have also instigated the police to shoot them, a process known as "suicide-by-cop" (SBC), one form of victim-precipitated homicide (VPH) (Parent, 1996, 2004, Patton and Fremouw, 2016). VPH at the hands of the police is a concern to the community and police agencies. Police personnel require additional training, tactics, and equipment designed to intervene with suicidal individuals whose thinking and behavior may precipitate a lethal response. Enhancing the police training responses to deal with those suffering from suicidal tendencies and mental illness could potentially reduce the frequency of use of deadly force (Chidgey et al., 2018; Parent, 1996, 2004, 2011).

In sum, the police use of force is complex and may have serious consequences for the officer(s) involved, the police agency, conflict managers, and the community at large when death or serious injuries result. Reviews of incidents involving the police use of force explore questions such as:

1. Were there missed opportunities and methods available to prevent the escalation of violence?
2. Did the police response escalate a situation that ultimately resulted in a violent encounter?

Such questions are often asked by police and police oversight agencies as well as by social and mainstream media (Parent & Parent, 2018). The authors Parent and Parent (2018) suggest that media sources may influence the public's view of the police and the actual incident, especially when many of the facts are unknown during early reporting. Public distrust of a police agency can negatively impact the ability of the police to carry out their general day-to-day duties. There are also significant financial consequences, which may result from a controversial police incident involving force, including the costs associated with a public inquiry, a criminal trial, and subsequent civil litigation (Parent & Parent, 2018; Whitelaw & Parent, 2018).

2   Suicide-By-Cop

The phrase "suicide-by-cop" (SBC) originated in the 1980s by police practitioners in the USA as a simplistic means of explaining how individuals will commit the act of suicide by having a police officer kill them during a confrontation (Geberth, 1993; Van Zandt, 1993). Within the field of victimology researchers have attempted to explain extreme violence by focusing upon the character of relationships. Victim-precipitated homicides are those instances in which the victim is a direct, positive precipitator in his or her own death. The victim is the first in the interaction process to threaten or resort to physical violence and not the subsequent slayer (Hepburn, 1973; Luckenbill, 1977; Wolfgang, 1959). Marvin Wolfgang (1959) was one of the first researchers to explore this subject and verified much of this phenomenon through sociological analysis. Wolfgang theorized that an individual may commit an unorthodox form of suicide by provoking another person to slay him or her. In his research, Wolfgang noted that victim-precipitated homicides represented 26% of 588 homicides studied in Philadelphia (Wolfgang, 1959).

Anecdotal research by police practitioners in the early 1990s revealed the phenomenon of SBC (Geberth, 1993; Van Zandt, 1993). During victim-precipitated incidents that are specific to suicide (SBC), an individual will engage in actions designed to lead to his or her own death by threatening the life of a police officer or innocent bystander. The

provoking individual often forces the situation until the police officer has no other option but to use deadly force. In these instances, despite its name, victim-precipitated homicide is in essence a form of suicide.

Suicide has been defined in the sociological context as "death resulting directly or indirectly from a positive or negative act of the victim himself, which he knows will produce this result" (Durkheim, 1897/1951, p. 44). Thus, by virtue of this definition suicide becomes an intentional act. The characteristics associated with an individual predisposed to victim-precipitated homicide are also generally defined within the category of suicidal behavior. These common characteristics include depression, hopelessness, helplessness and desperation. Durkheim suggested that cohesion (the integration of societal forces) reduced suicidal activity within a community, while anomie (social disorganization) promoted it. In today's contemporary society, socio-cultural factors facilitating suicide include a general state of societal demoralization or fragmentation, permissive social attitudes towards suicide, and media attention to celebrity suicides. Additional facilitating factors include social isolation from a supportive network, the suicide of role models or peers (television and films icons), unemployment, and an environment that facilitates suicide such as the availability of firearms.

Schneidman (1981) identifies the main elements of high lethality suicide as being the desire to die; a direct and conscious role in bringing about one's own death; and the fact that death results primarily due to the deceased's actions. In addition, specific psychological characteristics associated with suicide include a general sense of depression, hopelessness, and low self-esteem on the part of the deceased. Often, these characteristics are overtly displayed by actions such as self-inflicted wounds, statements of suicidal intent, or the desire to die.

Foote (1995) adds that victim-precipitated homicide is made up of several dimensions that include risk-taking, aggressiveness, and intentionality. It is within this framework that the concept of SBC emerges. During victim-precipitated incidents, these factors culminate with a risk-taking person aggressively and intentionally engaging in perceived life-threatening behavior, at times resulting in a police officer or another individual taking their life.

> A male subject was emotionally upset owing to marital difficulties and had talked with his family about dying. The subject then went to a convenience store and purchased a quantity of beer and wine, advising the clerk that it would be his last. The subject then became involved in a 25-mile police pursuit where his vehicle was stopped by way of a spike belt. Upon exiting his vehicle, the subject produced a shotgun and placed it under his chin. He then told police personnel that if they did not kill him he would kill an officer. The subject then turned and pointed his shotgun at two police officers and began to approach them. In response, both officers discharged their weapons killing the subject. It was later learned that the shotgun was unloaded. (Parent, 2004, p. 232)

SBC cases may be difficult to categorize with absolute certainty as often there is little or no documentation regarding the level of seriousness associated with the victim's intent to self-harm. Unfortunately, the actions of the victim have led to his or her demise without the benefit of a post-shooting explanation for his or her behavior. Police investigators have often equally confounded this situation by failing to examine, in detail, the root causes of the victim's behavior. All too often, the police shooting has been explained as an "irrational person who came at the officer with a knife or an inoperable gun". It is only within the last three decades that police and conflict-management trainers have begun to examine and refer to the phenomenon of victim-precipitated homicide as a cause of police shootings (Hutson et al., 1998; Lord, 2000, 2004; Mohandie et al., 2009; Parent, 1996, 2004).

This phenomenon has been cited in international studies of police shootings in nations outside of the USA and Canada that include England, Wales, Australia, and most recently Germany (Australian Institute of Criminology, 1998; Behn, 2021; Chidgey et al., 2018; Police Complaints Authority, 2003; Police Scientific Development Branch, 1996). The frequency of SBC instances relative to officer-involved shootings varies depending upon the sample. For example, it was noted that victim-precipitated homicides represented 26% of a total of 588 homicides studied in Philadelphia (Wolfgang, 1959, p. 345). More recent research in the USA has suggested that SBC cases range from 13%

(Hutson et al., 1998) to 36% (Mohandie et al., 2009) of all officer-involved shootings. In the neighboring nation of Canada, an examination of 357 police shooting incidents determined that roughly 15% were instances of SBC (Parent, 2004). In Australia, Kesic et al. (2012) examined 45 fatal police shootings within the state of Victoria, suggesting that a third of the incidents met the criteria for possible suicide by police. In the UK, the Police Complaints Authority for England and Wales (2003) reports that between 10 and 15% of all deaths in police custody between 2000 and 2002 were classified as "self-harm" deaths. Another UK study examined 22 police shooting incidents (9 fatal and 13 non-fatal) that occurred between 1998 and 2001 to assess the likelihood of suicidal motivation. The researchers determined a high rate of probable and possible suicide in 8 (36.4%) of the 22 cases examined (Best et al., 2004).

3   Why Suicide-By-Cop?

Individuals who die by suicide in Western society typically jump from a high structure, crash a speeding vehicle into a stationary object, or by administrating a self-inflicted wound. In an SBC encounter the same results are achieved by forcing another individual to kill them. It is well known in contemporary Western culture, promoted by news reports, television, and movies, that police personnel will respond to a perceived lethal threat by discharging their firearms. Suicide prevention techniques and alternatives to lethal weapons must be made available to police officers, if these situations are to be minimized. However, persons who are strongly predisposed to taking their own lives may resort to extreme methods in an attempt to carry out their goal. As a result, an individual predisposed to suicide may confront the police with a knife or other weapon, advancing upon the officer(s), and forcing them to utilize lethal force. These situations would provide few, if any, options for the attending officers except to respond with the use of a firearm. From the police perspective, most incidents are dynamic and evolving, often requiring split second decision-making. The decisions made by police personnel are often based upon the information that is known at the

time and upon the outward behavior exhibited by the individual. If that behavior suddenly escalates to that of a perceived lethal threat then the police may respond with the use of their firearms (Parent, 2004).

Committing suicide requires a decision and commitment on the part of the victim. In SBC incidents the difficult decision to end one's life is made by someone else. Death is achieved somewhat easier by involving another individual in the suicidal goal. In most instances the police are only a phone call away and may be used to achieve the individual's goal (Van Zandt, 1993). In addition, the stigma and social taboos associated with suicide may be absolved upon being killed by an external mechanism such as the police. Death at the hands of the police often creates controversy and speculation of possible police wrong doing, adding sensation to the suicidal death. Van Zandt (1993) adds that as agents of the state, the police officer truly represents a faceless means of ending one's life in a somewhat dignified manner.

In other instances, the suicidal individual may not have the determination to end his or her own life and, therefore, must seek assistance in fulfilling this goal. Foote (1995) notes that in some instances, the act of suicide is preplanned with the assailant engaging in a calculated intentional act of life threatening behavior, ultimately resulting in an SBC event. However, the act of suicide may also be impulsive with suicidal motivation occurring only after police involvement in a given situation (Foote, 1995). For example, upon police intervention, an individual may suddenly decide that it is better to die at the hands of the police than to face the embarrassment of a public trial with the possibility of a prison term.

Mohandie and Meloy (2000) suggest that suicidal behavior can be considered goal-directed behavior. In some instances, the suicidal behavior appears as an instrumental goal and, in other instances, it is more expressive. Instrumental goals of suicidal behavior may include avoidance of consequences such as reconciliation of a failed love relationship or incarceration. In contrast, expressive goals may include venting hopelessness or rage about an individual's life or proving an emotional point. Any of these motivations may be present in any given incident of SBC (Mohandie & Meloy, 2000, p. 384).

In two documented cases individuals provided statements indicating that they confronted police officers for the purpose of committing suicide. The first case occurred in 1997 when an individual confronted a lone police officer while being armed with a knife in each hand. The suspect refused repeated demands to drop the knives and instead charged at the police officer. In response, the officer discharged his firearm striking the assailant with five bullets. The suspect recovered from his wounds and provided a statement indicating that he had confronted the officer with the hope that he would be killed. The suspect had wanted to die but was unable to take his own life. In response, he intentionally set out upon a course of events that would result in a confrontation with police who in turn would kill him. (Parent, 2004, pp. 232–233)

4   Research and Suicide-By-Cop

Academic research regarding the phenomenon of SBC began to emerge in the mid-1990s in North America. Kennedy et al. (1998) reviewed media reported data in the USA by obtaining a broad sample of documented police shootings and linking potential incidents of SBC cases. The researchers analyzed 240 articles from 1980 to 1995. Police shooting cases were categorized as:

- Probable suicide: the subjects show clear suicidal motivation, either by word or gesture or they confront the police with a dangerous weapon despite having no way to escape, forcing the officers to shoot.
- Possible suicide: subjects appear disturbed or otherwise act as if they do not care whether the officers kill them; they may make a futile or hopeless escape attempt.
- Uncertain: either too little or contradictory information is given.
- Suicide improbable: subject's behavior can be easily accounted for without assuming such motivation.
- No suicidal evidence: subjects clearly attempt to avoid being shot (Kennedy et al., 1998, p. 24).

These researchers found that a probable or possible suicidal motivation was apparent in 16% of the 240 incidents. In addition, they noted that demonstrations of suicidal behavior by the suspect were present in 89% of the cases. These behaviors included pointing or firing a gun at an officer and reaching for a weapon. The majority of the individuals confronted were male (97%).

Lord (1998) examined 67 cases from 32 law enforcement agencies that met SBC criteria. Lord noted that 18 subjects were killed, 5 completed suicide, and 44 individuals were classified as "attempted suicide" since they were not fatally wounded by the police. Three groups of victims emerged in this study: individuals associated with domestic disputes, individuals suffering from mental illness, and individuals with criminal histories facing jail time. Lord noted that the most common stressor that may trigger an SBC incident is the end of a relationship. In addition, 62% of the subjects used alcohol and/or drugs prior to or during the SBC incident.

One of the first academic studies concerning this phenomenon appeared in Canada in 1996 (Parent) and examined the frequency and degree of victim-precipitated acts (a broad form of SBC) that have constituted lethal threats to police officers in British Columbia municipal departments and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police from 1980 through to 1995. This research revealed that characteristics associated with victim-precipitated homicide appear to be a significant factor in 48% of the 58 cases analyzed. These cases involved fatal and non-fatal outcomes including those incidents that were resolved with minimal force.

In these cases, the individual's statements and actions clearly reflected their intent to commit suicide. In several cases, the perpetrator of the lethal threat had a documented history of mental illness and/or suicidal behavior, and several had a high blood-alcohol level at the time of death. In some instances, alcohol, substance abuse, and mental illness were added to a complex picture of suicidal tendencies and irrational behavior (Parent, 1996).

Wilson et al. (1998) analyzed 15 deaths of people with suicidal ideation who, by their behavior, sufficiently provoked law enforcement officers into killing them. Wilson notes that 7 of the 15 individuals had

previous suicide attempts, 40% had medically documented psychiatric diagnoses, and 60% had reasonable historical evidence of psychiatric diagnosis, most commonly depression and substance abuse.

In another study, Hutson et al. (1998) reviewed all of the police shooting cases involving the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department between 1987 and 1997 ($n = 437$). Their analysis determined that 13% of all fatal officer-involved shootings and 11% of all officer-involved shootings, fatal and nonfatal, were SBC situations. The researchers utilized four criteria in defining SBC cases: suicidal intent by the decedent, intent to be killed by law enforcement personnel, possession of a lethal weapon or facsimile, and the intentional escalation of the encounter. Data for 1997 indicated that these cases accounted for 25% of all officers involved in shooting, and 27% of all officer-involved justifiable homicides—a significant increase over previous years.

In addition, the researchers noted that 98% of the suspects were male, 70% had a criminal record, 65% had drug or alcohol problems, 63% had a known psychiatric history, 39% had a history of domestic violence, and 65% had verbally communicated their suicidal intents. Also significant was that 48% of the individuals who were confronted were in possession of firearms and an additional 17% were in possession of replica firearms.

In their 2009 study, Mohandie et al. found that 36% of a sample of 707 officer-involved shootings revealed characteristics of an SBC case. SBC subjects were armed with weapons during 80% ($n = 205$) of the incidents, and 19% feigned or simulated weapon possession. The authors of the study note that SBC cases were more likely to result in the death or injury of the subjects than other officer-involved shooting cases; 51% ($n = 131$) of the SBC subjects were killed during the encounter with police.

Similar to North America, research findings in other Westernized countries that include the United Kingdom, Australia, and Germany have also studied the phenomenon of SBC. For example, Chidgey et al. (2018) examined research related to the police response to individuals displaying suicidal or self-harming behaviors in Australia. The authors observed four themes in the cases examined: characteristics of individuals, the use of violence and weapons, contact with the police prior to suicide, and police officer training. The findings from their study

identified the characteristics of individuals involved in suicidal and self-harm crises with the police. The individuals were mostly males aged 35–40 years with relationship issues, a history of mental health concerns, and were in recent contact with the police prior to the incident of suicidal crisis. These individuals were likely to present violent or aggressive behavior and in many instances were in possession of a weapon that was used to threaten or injure police and/or bystanders or self-harm. The authors note that thinking and perceptions may be distorted by individuals with a major disturbance in mental capacity, be it injury, disability, or while influenced by a substance, thereby affecting responses to police commands (Chidgey et al., 2018).

5   Suicide During Police Confrontations

Related to incidents of SBC is the phenomenon of suicide during police confrontations. In these instances, police officers are pursuing, confronting, or apprehending an individual for a suspected crime when they suddenly produce a firearm and take their own life (Harruff et al., 1993, p. 409). In rare cases, the individual will produce an edged weapon and initiate wounding themselves upon police arrival, thus resulting in grievous bodily harm or death (Parent, 2004, pp. 138–140). In other cases, the individual jumps to their death upon attendance by police personnel. Kais-Prial and Martino (2013) examined 68 cases in which a subject jumped or fell at least two storeys from a balcony, window, or roof because of, or in the presence of, responding police officers, resulting in their death or serious injury. The authors noted that female jumpers were prominently associated with suicidal ideation and mental illness. Harruff et al. (1993) in his analysis of firearm deaths in the USA notes that the involved individual is often emotionally distraught but not necessarily suicidal. However, the sudden presence of the police is believed to be a factor that precipitated the resulting suicide. Why this occurs is not clear. The emotionally disturbed and unpredictable individual may perceive that the option of suicide is less painful than the possibility of incarceration or medical treatment. The individual may also

be contemplating events that will lead to an SBC shooting but, at the last moment, for reasons unknown, decides to take his or her own life.

Haruff, et al. (1993) adds that the suicidal individual is often a white male aged 19–50 years who, in most cases, uses a handgun to fire a fatal wound to the head while being pursued or confronted by police officers. In some instances the suicidal individual is involved in an emotional domestic dispute with a significant other resulting in the police being summoned. In other instances, the individual has committed a crime that has led the police to his or her location with the resulting confrontation. For the police officers intervening in the domestic dispute, or proceeding in the apprehension of the alleged criminal, the circumstances may seem somewhat routine on the surface. However, the situation quickly deteriorates with the individual suddenly killing himself or herself for no apparent reason or motive.

Case 1:

A 34-year-old white male, with a history of drug problems, was arguing with his ex-wife in the parking lot when police were called to the scene. Officers arrived as he was attempting to leave the pickup truck and ordered him to show his hands. The individual refused. He then produced a 380 calibre semiautomatic pistol to the right side of his head and fired it. The individual died as a result of his self-inflicted wound. An autopsy later revealed that, at the time of his death, the individual had a blood-alcohol level of 142 mg (Harruff et al., 1993, p. 408).

Case 2:

Police personnel were dispatched to a residence in relation to a report of a "man with a gun". The individual involved had attended the residence of his former girlfriend and discharged a rifle. The subject then handed one of the residents a suicide note stating that if the police were summoned he would shoot at them. As a result, a SWAT was deployed and the individual was confronted. Upon seeing police personnel, the subject pointed his rifle at the officers who responded by shooting and wounding the subject. Once wounded, the subject crawled with his rifle and positioned himself with the barrel towards his forehead. He then pulled the trigger and killed himself. It was later learned that the subject

had lived a troubled life and had attempted suicide several times in the
past (Parent, 2004, pp. 234–235).

Suicides during police confrontations possess particular challenges for police agencies, as the media, family members, and the public may be skeptical as to how the individual actually died. Did police attendance serve as the catalyst in forcing the individual to commit suicide? What did the attending police officer(s) say or do that may have influenced the individual to take their own life? Was the incident in fact a suicide or were the police somehow responsible for the individual's death? To what extent did extraneous variables such as substance use or a mental health crisis influence the thinking and actions of the individual?

It is unknown how suicides during police confrontations are linked to SBC shootings. Would the incident have evolved into an SBC shooting had the sequence of events occurred differently? How do those factors associated with suicidal phenomena relate and interact with police intervention? These issues remain significant for police personnel who may unknowingly serve as a catalyst in an individual's sudden suicide.

6 The Police Response to Suicide-By-Cop Encounters

Training, tactics, and policy are factors that guide a police officer's behavior in the early stages of potentially violent encounters. As stated, research findings suggest that suicidal ideation and the phenomenon of SBC are significant factors for law enforcement personnel facing a potential lethal threat. Individuals predisposed to suicide have, in many instances, confronted armed police in an attempt to escalate the situation in which they have placed themselves. Alcohol, substance abuse, mental disorder, and suicidal tendencies are some factors which influence the complex picture of irrational behavior. On occasion, individuals acting in a bizarre or irrational manner have confronted armed police with either inferior or imaginary weaponry resulting in their death. During subsequent investigations, findings may conclude that these victims have precipitated their own demise.

The police organization and conflict managers need to further develop training, operational practices, and formalized policies regarding individuals who are vulnerable owing to their emotional, mental, or physical state. The findings of various research studies (Behn, 2021; Chidgey et al., 2018; Lord, 2000, 2004; Mohandie et al., 2009; Parent, 1996, 2004; Police Complaints Authority, 1998, 2003) underscore the need for a greater degree of emphasis to be placed upon the de-escalation training of both police recruits and in-service personnel. Police officers require enhanced verbal and tactical skills associated with the intervention of situations involving individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. Advanced intervention skills are often utilized by police crisis negotiators, focusing on the use of active listening while demonstrating empathy and understanding. Police negotiator techniques tend to build rapport with individuals in crisis and may allow officers to influence the subject's actions by providing nonviolent problem-solving alternatives to their perceived crisis situation (Noesner & Webster, 1997).

More specifically, the police recruit training curriculum requires a detailed approach to the phenomenon of SBC. Police officers require skills and knowledge that will allow them to identify suicidal and psychotic cues when confronting an individual who is violent and dangerous. By identifying these cues, the police officer may be able to assess which use of force option is appropriate for the circumstances at hand, defaulting to de-escalation techniques whenever possible. Police personnel also need to understand and identify the systematic differences in a subject's motivation that result in a police confrontation. In recognizing these differences, personnel will be better equipped in responding to incidents that have the potential for death or grievous bodily harm.

Police education must additionally emphasize the importance of information gathering, prior to police personnel attending a call for service (JIBC, 2016). Call-takers and dispatch personnel within police agencies must be aware of the dynamics associated with an SBC event. It is essential that call-takers and dispatch personnel receive training to solicit pertinent information from members of the public who summon the police. Dispatch personnel must then relay this information to the attending police units prior to their arrival, thus enhancing a planned police response.

Conflict management trainers should also consider the development of a specialized response team for incidents involving individuals that are knowingly suicidal, mentally ill, or acting in an irrational manner. In some jurisdictions, police agencies utilize a crisis intervention team (CIT) composed of police officers, mental health workers, psychiatric nurses, and other professionals that have received specialized training in dealing with individuals with suicidal ideation and mental illness. The CIT concept originated in Memphis, Tennessee in 1988 with a goal to reduce lethality during police encounters with individuals with mental/substance abuse disorders (Rogers et al., 2019). Since then, hundreds of police agencies within the USA have adopted the CIT program and the goal to improve the police response to people in crisis. Other Western nations that include Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom have also implemented CIT programs within police agencies (Deveau, 2021; Rogers et al., 2019).

CITs join the police and the community together for the common goals of safety, understanding, and service to individuals in crisis. These professionals are trained to slow down and de-escalate crisis incidents with the use of negotiation and flexible tactics. As stated, police negotiators have observed that the use of active listening and empathy by attending personnel may assist in building rapport with a subject in crisis thereby allowing for influence and a change of behavior. Known as the "behavioral change stairway model", the techniques emphasized in this model may facilitate the de-escalation of behavior, thereby resolving an incident without the use of force (Vecchi et al., 2005) (Fig. 1).

Research also indicates that a focus upon the individual's problems often serves to diminish their perceived crisis (Patton & Fremouw, 2016). By using these techniques CIT personnel are able to demonstrate that they are not a threat to the suicidal subject and that their goal is to help and not harm. In sum, CIT personnel are specifically assigned to calls for service that involve individuals that are believed to be suicidal and/or have mental health concerns. Variations in CIT deployment exist within police agencies. A CIT may consist of a police officer paired with a psychiatric nurse or mental health worker. In other instances, trained non-uniformed police personnel will respond to calls requiring crisis intervention (Parent & Parent, 2016).
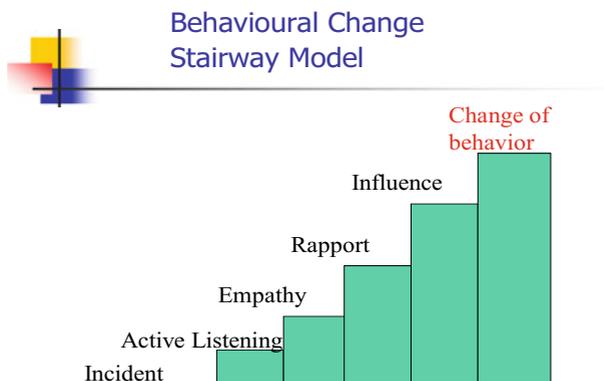
Fig. 1 The behavioral change stairway model (*Data* Vecchi et al., 2005)

In addition to CITs, the option of containment and "tactical withdrawal" must be included as a possible police response. Whenever possible, police officers should physically distance themselves and take cover from individuals who are driven to force an SBC event. A tactical withdrawal and containment by police personnel may serve to neutralize the actions and intentions of the suicidal individual. The tactic of "time, talk, and distance" may also allow an emotionally charged individual the opportunity to calm down, or an individual in a drug/alcohol–induced state an opportunity to regain perspective.

Containment may also allow the police to formulate a plan of de-escalation involving a calculated and prolonged response that may include the deployment of less-lethal force. These less-lethal force options include chemical irritants (e.g., pepper spray), kinetic munitions (e.g., Arwen gun), and conducted energy weapons such as the Taser. In North America, policies involving the deployment of less-lethal options require "reasoned discretion" by the individual officer, depending upon the unique circumstances of the incident that they are facing. For example, if the suicidal individual is in possession of an edged weapon, striking instrument, or a firearm the individual may attempt to injure themselves, innocent members of the public, or the intervening police officer(s). It is, therefore, up to each individual officer to determine if it is appropriate to utilize the less-lethal weaponry at his or her immediate disposal, or

to utilize the standard issue firearm in resolving the perceived assaultive situation. In some instances, less-lethal weaponry may allow the suicidal individual to live while incapacitating the lethal threat.

7   Sentinel Event Reviews

Sentinel event reviews (SERs) occur in healthcare and aviation environments following a death or serious injury. SERs analyze systems, identify weaknesses, and detail possible solutions to prevent future occurrences (Doyle, 2014). A problem-solving approach is utilized to focus upon correcting errors within an agency's operational "systems" while also sharing "lessons learned" with frontline staff and community partners. Researchers have suggested that SERs result in reducing "bad outcomes" by the creation of barriers and safeguards that diminish errors within these systems (Larouzée, 2017). SERs serve to identify the underlying weaknesses within interrelated systems and the existing compounding errors that ultimately result in the serious event. The review and information sharing process serve to strengthen systems and prevent future adverse events or outcomes.

Ritter (2015) suggests sentinel events within the realm of criminal justice occur within police shootings, the wrongful conviction of an innocent person, the release from prison of a dangerous offender, and other serious incidents that are exacerbated by underlying weaknesses within the criminal justice system. For police and conflict managers, SERs provide an opportunity to prevent and manage SBC incidents. Rather than narrowly focusing upon the actions of the officer and police agency, all interrelated government and community agencies need to closely examine and alter the societal systems that result in confrontations with the police (National Institute of Justice, 2017). For example, enhanced training for frontline police officers in mental health practices and the pairing of mental health professionals with police have been shown to de-escalate SBC situations in some cases (Chidgey et al., 2018).

The police alone cannot resolve complex problems surrounding individuals rendered vulnerable by factors that include suicidal ideation, mental illness, emotional stress, and the influence of a substance. Nor

are the police exclusively responsible for the outcome of an SBC event. All too often, police involvement occurs at the end of a long journey that an individual has taken through a variety of "systems". The community and stakeholders within other systems (i.e., health care, harm reduction, and CISs) must equally share in the responsibility for community safety and well-being.

Holistic examinations of SBC encounters (fatal and non-fatal) are more likely to produce a better understanding of the causes and effects that lead to the event. SERs enable a system-wide analysis of safety weaknesses within a non-blaming process, allowing government and community agencies to collaborate with conflict managers in their area. The review process ultimately reassesses who is responsible for public safety and redefines the roles and relationships between the police, the community, and other stakeholders within "systems and creates mechanisms such as systemic training to equip all stakeholders. Shared ownership, decision-making, and accountability within these three groups enable the collective goal of reducing conflict during police–civilian encounters.

Given the complexity and dynamic nature of SBC incidents it is necessary for police and conflict managers to incorporate a multidimensional approach towards de-escalation. SERs provide law enforcement agencies with another means of enhancing service delivery to their community. They also serve as a doorway for collaborative problem-solving with community partners and stakeholders. Police involved incidents that result in death or serious injury require public review and public input if such tragedies are to be prevented in the future. It is important to seek answers to questions such as what led these individuals to this situation. Why did the police respond in the manner that they did? What can reasonably be done to reduce or eliminate the same outcome in the future? To promote a community culture of safety and security, each one of these questions needs to be addressed.

Key Takeaways

Police and community partners that include law enforcement oversight agencies, mental health practitioners, families, and advocates for families

whose loved ones were involved in an SBC incident share the common goal of promoting health and saving lives. Frontline police officers, conflict management trainers, and police decision-makers can facilitate these goals by working in a concerted manner.

Police Officers

Frontline professionals that include police, conflict management trainers, and other first responders in the community must work together and be open to collaborative interventions. Police/mental health practitioners responding jointly to individuals in crisis and building upon crisis intervention techniques is an example with promising results. Police recruits and frontline officers can also benefit from further education regarding mental health, suicide ideation, perspective taking, and of the difficulties in processing information by those with mental health needs. Collaborative training between police and community partners (such as psychiatric nurses and mental health workers) will assist in understanding and learning from each discipline.

Conflict Management Trainers

The findings suggest that, despite differing policing systems, SBC is an international phenomenon that has been documented in several Western societies. Various global studies have focused upon individual characteristics, situational variables, and legal interventions that include the use of negotiation strategies, CITs, and less-lethal force. The verbal strategies utilized by police negotiators with a focus upon the individual's problems may be effective in reducing the perceived crisis.

Police Decision-Makers

Police leaders must ensure holistic reviews of serious use of force incidents and commit to enhancing existing policies and procedures. Police decision-makers must also enhance frontline training and incorporate effective programs that promote de-escalation, thereby saving lives and reducing injuries. SERs are one example of how this can be done, emphasizing the need to examine and validate suicidal intervention in averted SBC cases. Finally, future research and policies pertaining to SBC encounters and the role of individuals rendered vulnerable due to their emotional, mental, and physical state will hopefully provide additional insight and solutions to a complex community social problem.

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A Feminist Ethics of Care Approach to De-escalation in Policing

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1 Introduction

In response to the national crisis in policing, policymakers and community advocates have put forth trust and legitimacy as the foundational principles for police–community relations (President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015). Police legitimacy, defined both subjectively

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(i.e., the extent to which residents believe that the power the police have to govern is valid and justified; Tyler, 2006) and normatively (i.e., the philosophical standards that define an institution as lawful; Buchanan, 2003), is crucial for the police to function effectively as a system of social governance and control. When there are high levels of distrust between the police and the public, interactions between officers and community members are more likely to be characterized by disrespect, hostility, and conflict, and in turn these attributes increase the likelihood of violence and serious injuries occurring. These negative encounters contribute to a cycle of mistrust and illegitimacy, which further erodes police–community relations and disrupts the coproduction of safe and healthy neighborhoods.

De-escalation policies and training have been proposed as strategies for breaking the cycle of negative police–resident interactions, because these tactics communicate to the public that the police respect and value every human life equally, and they reduce the frequency and magnitude of force that officers use during encounters with residents. Police use of force is described as the "amount of effort required by the police to compel compliance from an unwilling subject" (International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2001, p. 1). Most law enforcement agencies have policies that define police use of force on a continuum from less to more force (e.g., officer presence, verbalization, empty hand controls, less-than-lethal methods, and lethal force) and provide guidance to officers on how to use the necessary level of force to achieve the goals of maintaining control and protecting the public (National Institute of Justice, 2020). While there is no accepted definition for de-escalation, the National Consensus Policy on Use of Force describes it as:

> Taking action or communicating verbally or non-verbally during a potential force encounter in an attempt to stabilize the situation and reduce the immediacy of the threat so that more time, options, and resources can be called upon to resolve the situation without the use of force or with the reduction of force necessary. De-escalation may include the use of techniques as command presence, advisements, warnings, verbal persuasion, and tactical repositioning. (International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2020, p. 2)

Many agencies support the adoption of de-escalation, with a significant number of departments serving large cities requiring some form of de-escalation training (CBS News, 2019). While there are few rigorous evaluations of the effects of de-escalation, two notable analyses include a study of the Integrated Communications, Assessment, and Tactics de-escalation training (ICAT; Police Executive Research Forum, 2016) with officers in Louisville, Kentucky, and an evaluation of a de-escalation curriculum developed by the Tempe Police Department for implementation in Tempe, Arizona. Using a stepped-wedge cluster randomized control crossover design, Engel et al. (2022) found that ICAT de-escalation training was associated with a 28.1% reduction in police use of force, a 36.0% reduction in officer injuries, and a 26.3% reduction in injuries to community members. Much of the reduction in use of force resulted from officers being less likely to use empty hand controls, including take downs, kicks, and hand strikes. The training did not have an effect on officer-involved shootings. The evaluation of the Tempe program was less supportive of de-escalation training, with researchers finding that the training did not have an effect on recorded incidences of police use of force (White, Orosco, et al., 2021). However, using body camera footage from a random sample of officers, researchers concluded that officers who were trained in de-escalation were more likely to attempt to build rapport, transfer control when necessary, and resolve the encounter informally, and less likely to use a condescending tone or imposing body language than officers who did not receive the training (Bennell et al., 2021).

However, critics argue that de-escalation policies and training are ineffective at best and dangerous at worst, because they require officers to engage in a decision-making process that is complex and time consuming. They further argue that time spent in decision-making before action and a hesitancy to use more aggressive methods when they are necessary will result in more injuries for officers and residents (Landers, 2017). Many frontline officers, police leaders, and union representatives have resisted the implementation of de-escalation strategies (Jackman, 2016). The lack of a consistent definition of the term, as well as limited research on the intended and unintended consequences of de-escalation, also make it difficult to determine its efficacy.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine de-escalation from the perspective of a feminist ethics of care. Requests for more women in law enforcement are strongly tied to community demands for police reform, operating under the assumptions that female officers approach police work differently than male officers and that an increased number of women in positions of power is a catalyst for organizational change (Ba et al., 2021; Brown & Silvestri, 2020; Choi et al., 2018; Schuck & Rabe-Hemp, 2019, 2021, 2022). However, reviews of the effects of gender on conflict resolution are limited, and the binary operationalization used in most research contributes to essentialist thinking, which can negatively affect female officers and hinder innovation. Drawing from the literature on women in policing, our goal in this chapter is to outline how a feminist ethics of care approach to de-escalation may reduce conflict between the police and the public. To this end, we present an overview of the history of women in policing and discuss potential reasons for gender-related differences between officers. This is followed by an introduction to the feminist ethics of care and the ways it can be used to reframe de-escalation in policing. The chapter closes with recommendations for officers, trainers, and police executives.

2   Women in Policing

A Brief History

Women have played an important role in American policing since the turn of the century (for an international perspective see Rabe-Hemp & Garcia, 2020). Early (or first-generation) female pioneers in the field served as prison matrons, police matrons, and later as policewomen who protected and reformed "wayward" women and juveniles (Horne, 1980, p. 29). The roles of these women, framed as caretakers and social workers, provided regulation for the changing norms surrounding sexuality, motherhood, femininity, and propriety during World War I, and again during World War II. Their duties, titles, uniforms, and powers were different from those of police officers, and, in most cases, women were organized into separate, "women's bureaus" (Horne, 1980, p. 31).

By 1930, there were about 600 policewomen in the United States, but, following the increase in employment opportunities for women during World War II, the number of women in police ranks climbed to 2610 by 1950 (Rabe-Hemp, 2018). These second-generation policewomen, many of whom had worked during wartime, began to fight for integration, wanting to be police officers rather than policewomen (Schuck, 2020). It was not until the revolutionary changes during the 1960s and 1970s that it became illegal to deny a woman a career as a police officer. In 1972, Congress amended Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, prohibiting public employers from employment discrimination based on gender. This change, which applied to police agencies nationwide, opened the door to patrol work for women.

Despite the legal changes, women interested in a career in policing continued to face challenges, including newly established physical fitness standards that privileged the male form, resistance from male police officers, and a public that was unsure about the expanding role of women in policing and society (Rabe-Hemp, 2018). In 1972, the Police Foundation and the Urban Institute began a year-long study to measure the effectiveness of female police officers, as well as the public's perception of them. The results suggested that female police officers performed their duties as effectively as male officers. Further, the residents of Washington, D.C. were generally supportive of having women patrolling their communities (Bloch & Anderson, 1974). By the end of the 1970s, women were patrolling many of the major cities in the United States (Martin, 1990).

From 1971 to 1990, the number of women working as sworn police officers in local and state agencies increased from 1.4 to 8.6% (Rabe-Hemp, 2018). By the 1980s–1990s, policing was undergoing a revolution, as fear of crime was high, high-profile cases of police brutality (such as the cases of Rodney King and Abner Louima) had the public calling for police reform, and both community policing and zero-tolerance policing hinted at seemingly similar but distinct solutions. Community policing provided opportunities for the expansion of women's roles within policing (Miller, 1999; Schuck, 2017), because community policing called for skills that were stereotypically associated with femininity, such as communication, relationship building, and

problem solving (Miller, 1999). In fact, the required shift in the role of the police officer from crime fighter to problem solver was one of the major explanations as to why community policing faced considerable resistance from officers (Lurigio & Skogan, 1994).

Although most police agencies reported having written gender discrimination policies in the 1990s, experiences with sexism and discrimination were commonly reported by women police during this era. In a 1993 poll of male police officers cited in *Law and Order* magazine, only about 9% approved of having women in their ranks (Sharp, 1993). Despite this continued resistance, the first female police chiefs were appointed in the 1980s–1990s—Penny Harrington in 1985 in Portland, Oregon, and Elizabeth Watson in Houston, Texas in 1990. Scholarship during this era shifted from analyzing whether women were capable of doing the job to assessing whether women were better suited than men to certain aspects of policing, such as de-escalation, community building, and responding to the needs of victims (Martin & Jurik, 2007; Schuck, 2020).

The 2000s brought another dynamic shift in the role of police, as terrorism, coupled with militarization, came to shape public safety. The growth in the representation of women in policing slowed considerably and prompted scholars to explore its etiology. For example, the percentage of women in policing grew from 5% in 1980 to 11% in 2000, but it has only grown to 12.8% in the almost 20 years to 2019. Several explanations for the underrepresentation of women in policing are worth mentioning. First, while overt sexism and discrimination are less common today than they were when women first entered the occupation, women still report experiences with harassment, tokenism, and discrimination and recognize that the male-dominated occupation of policing is not very friendly to women (Cordner & Cordner, 2011; Helfgott et al., 2018; Matusiak & Matusiak, 2018; Shelley et al., 2011). Second, the emphasis on upper body strength in police hiring negatively impacts the recruitment of women (Lonsway, 2003). Last, the perception of the job of policing as crime fighting may discourage women from seeing policing as a profession in which they can help people (Cambareri & Kuhns, 2018; Clinkinbeard et al., 2021; Gibbs, 2019; Rossler et al., 2020; Todak, 2017; Yu, 2019).

The past 20 years has also brought a significant expansion in the collective understanding of the contributions that women have made in American police agencies and their experiences in the "all-boys club". Since 2014, policing has faced a national crisis as the public has called for police reform and accountability. One avenue for reform is the call for greater gender diversity in the police force (President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015). This demand is a result of research that has empirically shown that increasing the representation of women in police agencies reduces the use of force and misconduct and is also associated with better service to victims of crime and greater police legitimacy (Ba et al., 2021; Barnes et al., 2018; Gaub, 2020; Porter & Prenzler, 2017; Schuck, 2018; Schuck et al., 2021).

Explanations for Gender Differences

There are several reasons why women may approach policing differently than men. First, gender is a primary categorization in social relations (Jaffe & Hyde, 2000; Ridgeway, 2009; Wood & Eagly, 2010) and is associated with expected behaviors. For example, women perform more childcare duties than men, resulting in stereotypically gendered expectations of women to be caretakers and nurturers (Bakan, 1996). By comparison, men are more likely to work outside the home and are perceived as agentic and dominant. These generalizations are powerful, learned patterns of socialization that dictate gender-normative behavior for men and women in social interaction; they are also embedded within power structures, ideologies, and institutions in the workplace (Connell, 2009). Ackers (2006) refers to these embedded gendered structures as inequality regimes. In policing, this inequality manifests through the privileging of a "masculinist vision" (Davies, 1996, p. 669), which legitimizes hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 2005). This privilege is apparent in recruitment practices that disadvantage the female form, in the prioritization of crime fighting and the physical aspects of the police role over the service and caretaking aspects (Chan, 1996; Martin & Jurik, 2007), and in the social exclusion of women from decision-making processes

as they are relegated to "women's work" (Garcia, 2003; Lonsway & Achambault, 2012; Spohn & Tellis, 2012).

Interestingly, medical research suggests that women's evolutionary experiences as caretakers and mothers may impact how they react to stress (Verma et al., 2011), such that they are more likely to "tend and befriend" and men are more likely to "fight or flight" (Taylor et al., 2000). Specifically, women's responses to stress may be impacted by different hypothalamic–pituitary–adrenal axis responses (Kajantie & Phillips, 2006), as well as differences in neural responses (i.e., asymmetric prefrontal activity) and limbic activation when confronting stressors (Wang et al., 2007). These types of evolutionary differences, like gender differences in the ability to ascribe a person's mental state (i.e., theory of mind), may help explain why research suggests that women are more proficient at predicting others' behavior and responding with more appropriate emotions than men (Adenzato et al., 2017). Coupled together, these explanations suggest that gender may impact how an officer interacts with members of the community and handles conflict. While empirical research on the topic is mixed, a meta-analysis on conflict management strategies suggests that women are more likely to use compromise as a strategy for resolving conflict, and men are more likely to use forcing (Holt & DeVore, 2005). The mixed results may be attributed to the use of self-report data, small sample sizes, the use of biological sex rather than gender identity, and the strength of workplace roles or statuses (Davis et al., 2010). For instance, Brewer et al. (2002) argues that the reliance on biological sex rather than gender identity when exploring gendered differences in conflict management is problematic. When gender identities are considered (i.e., one's internal sense of self), those who identify as masculine are seen to handle conflict with a competing or dominating style, and those who identify as feminine are more likely to use an avoiding style. Furthermore, Davis et al. (2010) found consistent gender differences in environments of conflict when observing the behaviors of men and women in a natural work setting, rather than in role-playing settings or when asking about their beliefs. Women were more likely to exhibit behaviors that embody the recognition of perspectives, talking, creation of solutions, expression of

emotions, and outreach to others, whereas men were more likely to handle conflict through agentic and task-oriented strategies.

Officers' expectations of interactions with community members are based on their interpretation of their own gender and workplace statuses. These statuses are introduced into the interaction by the way in which individuals perform their roles, and by the acceptance of others, as they assess salience and appropriateness of the behavior based on that status. When female officers interact with community members, a gendered hierarchy is present that intersects with their occupational (and potentially their racial and ethnic) statuses—this interplay of statuses results in unclear power hierarchies within the interaction, due to the subordinate status of women in society. It is clear from the research on men and women in communication (Fişek et al., 1991; Skvoretz & Fararo, 2016) that women are disadvantaged and likely to be interrupted in conversations, resulting in an overall disadvantage in interpersonal interactions (Cannon et al., 2019). Women's subordinate role in society and in conversation may obfuscate the "rules of conduct" in police–resident interactions and may result in women being less likely to adopt a hypermasculine identity or to follow what Harris (2000) describes as the culture of honor posture, where noncompliance by a community member threatens an officer's identity.

Prior empirical research suggests that female officers do not expect deference from community members and are not likely to escalate to force when faced with a disrespectful resident (Rabe-Hemp, 2008). This pattern, of course, does not mean that women police officers do not utilize control and authority in their roles; they may instead display a unique style of policing that involves less physical control. Considerable research has explored how women "do policing" in a way that is unique from male officers, due to their prior experiences with socialization and gender norms (Morash & Haarr, 2012; Murray, 2021; Rabe-Hemp, 2009). Self-reports show that women police officers "do policing" differently, being more compassionate (Morash & Haarr, 2012; Schuck, 2014), more empathetic (McCarthy, 2013), and better at communicating (McCarthy, 2013; Rabe-Hemp, 2009) than their male counterparts, for instance. There is no evidence that female officers who do not expect deference from community members place residents and

fellow officers at greater risk. Rather, research suggests that increased injury for officers and residents is associated with greater force utilized by police, rather than lesser force (Schuck & Rabe-Hemp, 2005).

Research on gender differences regarding de-escalation specifically suggests that, when encountering someone engaged in criminal activity, female officers may be more open to implementing de-escalation strategies (Giacomantonio et al., 2020), more likely to remain calm (White, Mora et al., 2021), more likely to report relying on emotional intelligence skills (Schuck, 2014; White, Mora et al., 2021), and less likely to use controlling strategies (Rabe-Hemp, 2008) than male officers. In their study on the effect of a de-escalation curriculum on officers in the Tempe Police Department, White, Mora et al. (2021) found that the female officers were more likely than male officers to report staying calm, allowing appropriate personal space, using empathy, and employing nonthreatening body language. In an observational study of 131 police–resident interactions, Todak and James (2018) found that female officers were more likely than male officers to use empowerment tactics.

The expectations of community members also play a role in the outcomes of police–resident interactions for officers of different genders. There is considerable evidence to suggest that men and women may be evaluated differently by residents despite displaying the same conflict resolution strategies (Eagly et al., 1992). Specifically, women are more likely to be perceived negatively in conflict, even while exhibiting the same conflict management behavior as men (Korabik et al., 1993). Research suggests that women officers are perceived as "outsiders" in police culture (Barnes et al., 2018; Choi et al., 2018). Interestingly, these perceived differences may explain why women are associated with organizational change. For example, there is a long history of women being associated with police reform (Brown, 1997; Schuck, 2020). Researchers argue that increasing women in policing is associated with organizational change among the public through the process of linking symbolic representation to normative legitimacy (Rabe-Hemp et al. 2023; Schuck et al., 2021). That is, increasing the representation of women in the department, especially in leadership positions, signals to the community that the agency is transforming and becoming an organization which is more consistent with the normative criteria for a legitimate institution of social control.

3   A Feminist Approach

Ethics of Care

The ethics of care perspective appeared in the 1980s as feminists explored the possibility of a moral theory grounded in women's experiences. Gilligan (1982) argued that the dominant theories of morality were inadequate, and Ruddick (1980, p. 348) introduced the concept of "maternal thinking". Over time these ideas evolved into a perspective referred to as the ethics of care. The five general tenets of the approach were best described by Virginia Held (2006) in her work *The Ethics of Care*. First, she argued that the approach is based on the "moral salience of attending to and meeting the needs of the particular others for whom we take responsibility" (Held, 2006, p. 10). Based on the assumption that well-being and success for individuals and communities is a direct result of the quality of care they receive, the approach emphasizes the moral responsibility to respond effectively to their needs. Second, the approach values those emotions that are needed to cultivate and implement the actions that are necessary to attend to and meet the needs of others; these emotions include "sympathy, empathy, sensitivity, and responsiveness" (Held, 2006, p. 10). Third, the approach rejects the view that abstract reasoning should be the highest goal of a moral system. The approach rejects the view that such reasoning avoids bias and is more impartial than other types of reasoning. In contrast, the ethics of care approach encourages a person to respect the claims of others with whom they share relationships. Fourth, the approach applies to both private life and public policy. Finally, the approach assumes that people are both embedded in and encumbered by relationships that shape their social identity. In other words, rather than assuming that individuals are self-sufficient, independent, and autonomous beings who only cooperate to meet their own needs, the ethics of care approach acknowledges that each person begins as a child, who is dependent on others, and remains both willingly and unwillingly interdependent throughout their life. In sum, an ethics of care approach assumes that the interests of the caregiver and care-receiver are interwoven, and it elevates the importance of attentiveness and responsiveness to needs, narrative nuance, and cultivation

of caring relationships. The approach also aspires to foster cooperation and collective responsibility and action (Held, 2006; Noddings, 2013; Tronto, 2005, 2013).

The ethics of care perspective is feminist because it is grounded in how women's experiences shape their moral development and ethical mindset. In theory, women are associated with an ethics of care approach because of societal expectations, socialization patterns, and experiences in gendered power structures. However, women in policing exemplify the complexity of women's experiences. On the one hand, female police officers are associated with positive changes to the way that agencies police, and they are celebrated for bringing unique perspectives and skillsets to the profession. On the other hand, female officers are excluded, oppressed, and abused by a system grounded in hegemonic masculinity, which devalues women and the skills associated with nurturing and caretaking. We propose that the best path forward for both the institution of policing and the well-being of officers is to embrace the ethics of care framework, elevating caring to a primary principle of policing and professionalizing officer practices that directly demonstrate caring, regardless of the gender of the officer.

The Feminist Ethics of Care Approach to De-escalation

An ethics of care approach in the policing institution can reduce the use of force by altering the criteria for its legitimate use. Adopting caring as a primary or higher order principle—and adopting the associated care-focused, second-order principles of attentiveness, responsiveness, flexibility, cooperation, and a sense of ownership—will both directly and indirectly reduce the number of incidents in which officers use force, as well as reduce the level of force utilized during acrimonious encounters. We propose that embracing an ethics of care approach will directly reduce the police use of force in three ways: (1) by valuing, developing, and rewarding skills associated with peaceful conflict resolution; (2) by helping officers recognize when noncompliance is not hazardous and respond appropriately; and (3) by reducing the prevalence of types of

police-initiated encounters that are associated with public perceptions of illegitimate use of force. We also argue that embracing an ethics of care approach will indirectly reduce the police use of force by building a mindset that protects officers from internalizing the thought processes that often arise from negative experiences in the occupation. In other words, embracing caring as a primary principle will protect officers against disengagement, dehumanization of community members, internalization of an "us vs. them" mentality, and endorsement of the belief that fear and physical punishment are effective mechanisms of social control.

The goals of de-escalation strategies in a police–resident encounter are to keep the community member in a physiological and psychological state of calm, to have the community member assume a nonthreatening stance, and to get the community member to comply with officer requests. While an ethics of care approach values skills associated with emotional intelligence (Bar-On, 2006), including empathy, self-awareness, emotional regulation, and verbal and nonverbal communication skills, it also involves additional skills such as knowledge of the community, care for criminals and fulfillment of their needs, expression of emotion-based reasoning (e.g., rather than saying "because it is the law", saying "because I care about you"), flexibility (i.e., being open to change and compromise, and adapting one's response to the needs of the community member), and ownership (i.e., taking responsibility for encounters, including the outcome and the community member's feelings; Held, 2006; Noddings, 2013; Tronto, 2005, 2013). It follows that residents who experience more caring and social emotional support from officers during encounters will feel safer, more relaxed, and more amenable than residents who interact with officers who do not practice caring and emotional intelligence. Agencies that adopt an ethics of care approach will put more resources into hiring officers with caring orientations and developing caring attributes than agencies that do not adopt such an approach because the approach compels agencies to focus on positive police–resident interactions and improving police–community relations rather than just reducing the number of incidents in which officers use physical or deadly force.

The adoption of the feminist ethics of care approach to de-escalation can also lead to a more nuanced approach to noncompliance. In 2018, the Commerce City Police Department in Colorado settled a lawsuit with Carl Leadholm in which officers were accused of beating, tasing, and pepper spraying Leadholm while he was experiencing symptoms of diabetic shock. This incident is not isolated; similar incidents have been reported across the United States (Balko, 2014). These types of incidents happen not only when residents are having medical emergencies, but also when they are exercising their rights, such as refusing to answer questions or consent to searches. These types of incidents illustrate two interconnected problems: the difficulty in recognizing when noncompliance is not threatening, and the primacy of one's ability to compel others to show deference as an indicator of officer skill. The adoption of feminist ethics of care principles can address these issues by reducing biases in officers' task–role schemas (i.e., the processes associated with the ability to perceive and interpret information in a context-specific situation), and these changes will have a particularly strong effect on decreasing officers' use of physical tactics and less-than-lethal force methods.

Finally, because the feminist ethics of care approach puts more weight on maintaining effective police–community relations than punishing residents for misdemeanor offenses, we propose that agencies that adopt this approach may reduce the prevalence of police-initiated encounters that are associated with public perceptions of the illegitimate use of force. These reductions include formal and informal changes to the frequency with which agencies authorize certain types of police practices, such as no-knock warrants, proactive stop and frisk initiatives, vehicle and foot chases, and programs associated with arresting residents for misdemeanor offenses as a method to address serious violent crime. For example, in 2022, Philadelphia passed a law banning the police from pulling over drivers for minor traffic violations. In response to the new law, Council Member Isaiah Thomas was quoted saying, "many traffic stops are traumatic … by removing stops that promote discrimination rather than public safety, we can rebuild police–community relations" (PHL Council, 2022).

4   Conclusion

De-escalation policies and training have been proposed as strategies for increasing police legitimacy, as they reduce the frequency and intensity of force used during police–resident encounters. Embracing a feminist ethics of care approach to de-escalation may lessen conflict between the officers and community members by increasing officers' utilization of care-related interpersonal skills, helping them recognize when noncompliance is not hazardous, and reducing the prevalence of police-initiated encounters that are associated with public perceptions of illegitimate use of force. For de-escalation to be effective, agencies must move beyond simply training officers on soft skills and embrace cultural changes that place caring as the central police value. Embracing an ethics of care approach to de-escalation may reduce police use of force both directly by altering the criteria for legitimate use of force and indirectly by serving to protect officers against the internalization of negative experiences in the occupation.

Moving forward, police leaders, in collaboration with members of the community, need to codify the caring principles into every aspect of the organization. Many de-escalation training programs are grounded in the belief that changing officers' attitudes will change their behavior. However, we propose that a more effective strategy is to change officers' behaviors through the formalization of caring policies and procedures, which will, in turn, cause changes in officers' attitudes that will further reinforce caring activities. The influence of behaviors on attitudes is well-established and is attributable to the idea that modifications to one's self-concept result from changes in the gathering and processing of information, as well as the need for cognitive consistency (Harmon-Jones et al., 2018). This change will require police agencies to carefully consider recruitment and training practices that emphasize caring principles, including increased efforts to hire officers who will embody ethics of care practices.

While critics identify safety as a primary concern when discussing de-escalation, officer burnout is an additional and perhaps greater barrier to sustaining an ethics of care approach. Burnout is defined as a syndrome, resulting from chronic stress in the workplace, that is associated with

emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced professional efficacy (World Health Organization, 2022). We propose that a significant amount of illegitimate police use of force is a result of officers' maladaptive responses to occupational stressors. For the ethics of care approach to be successful, agencies must provide officers with additional occupational health promotion training on how to process the negative aspects of their occupation as well as to deal with negative emotions. To this end, we suggest that departments focus on officer well-being programs that offer strategies for reducing social isolation, insular thinking, and cynicism, as well as programs that help officers enhance their self-regulation and develop a passion for policing that is grounded in the desire to care for people (i.e., harmonious passion; Vallerand et al., 2003).

Key Takeaways
Police Officers

For an ethics of care approach to be successful, officers must internalize the caring principles and put them into action. Officers must embrace the "I" and the "care for", rather than the "we" and the "care about", This shift means that each officer must take actions to improve community members' experiences with the police. Officers also must adopt the perspective that caring actions are themselves an end, not simply a means to achieve other goals. While there can be caring without justice, there can be no justice without caring (Held, 2006).

Conflict Management Trainers

Trainers must be paragons of care-based policing. They should develop training programs that help officers learn to effectively implement care-based activities into their interactions with the public, including identifying when noncompliance is not hazardous. Trainers also need to be aware of the power of the hidden curriculum and ensure that it is consistent with an ethics of care approach. Much of the hidden curriculum is taught through war stories (Prokos & Padavic, 2002), and, as such, trainers must be aware of how these informal messages are received, particularly by young inexperienced officers.

Police Decision-Makers

For the ethics of care approach to be successful, decision-makers must be catalysts for organizational change. They need to work with

representatives of the community on embedding care-based principles into policies and procedures. They must reject the criticism that an ethics of care approach is soft on crime and argue that valuing all lives and preserving human dignity are critical for maintaining police legitimacy and working with the community to coproduce safe and healthy neighborhoods. How the police enact justice is just as important as the end result of justice. Furthermore, decision-makers need to develop the organizational capacity to care by implementing support and well-being programs to help officers remain positive and professional despite negative occupational experiences. This groundwork includes integrating support programs, which protect officers against social isolation and cynicism, into the agency, as well as encouraging the internalization of caring and holding reasonable expectations for the outcomes of organizational change.

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Barriers to Effective De-escalation

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1   Introduction: Why De-escalate?

The police are required to justify their use of force in a specific situation and context with legal authorities that are articulated in abstract terms. As a result, these authorities are applied in a way that can result

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in a discrepancy between the legal use of force and the (ethically) legitimate use of force (Jackson et al., 2013; Jones, 2022; Tyler, 2002). This discrepancy is often visible in the recurrent media coverage and corresponding public attention on what often can be referred to as "lawful but awful use of force" (Jones, 2022). It poses challenges to the police in their efforts to develop and maintain public trust and, ultimately, to justify their legitimacy (for the United States of America, see Kochel & Skogan, 2021; for Latin America, see Malone & Dammert, 2021; for Europe, see Nägel & Vera, 2021; for South Africa, see Lamb, 2021). Negative impacts of decreased trust by the public and legitimacy are well documented for practical police work, including reduced cooperation (e.g., Ang et al., 2021; Tyler & Fagan, 2008) and officer well-being (e.g., Donner et al., 2015). In addition, perceptions of absent legitimacy and (procedurally) just conduct have been shown to increase non-compliance and risk of violence towards police (e.g., Gerber et al., 2018).

In a free and democratic society, police are bound by the principles of legality, necessity, and proportionality. Of all the available courses of action, officers must choose the one that (a) they achieve their goal with (necessity), (b) is legally justified (legality), and (c) is least intrusive in regard to citizens' constitutionally guaranteed rights (proportionality; Staubli, 2017; Terrill & Paoline, 2013; Tyler & Huo, 2002). De-escalation is an essential course of action to ensure legality, necessity, and proportionality in law enforcement (Dunham et al., 2020; Zaiser et al., 2022), which is why we argue there is an ethical imperative for the police to de-escalate.

In addition, de-escalation does not only protect citizens but the physical safety of everyone who is involved in an encounter. Because de-escalation attempts to reduce the use of force, it reduces the risk of physical, psychological, and moral injury. Accordingly, de-escalation has

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been shown to be a potent predictor of officer safety (Engel et al., 2022; Oliva et al., 2010; Zaiser & Staller, 2015).

On a larger scale, de-escalation has been shown to facilitate public trust in the police: the more citizens perceive the police to operate fairly and with respect, the more they reciprocate, trust, and comply with them, and the more legitimacy they grant (Giles, 2002; Kyprianides et al, 2021; Reisig & Lloyd, 2009; Tyler, 2002). This has been demonstrated across national borders and cultural boundaries (Barker et al., 2008). As such, de-escalation is at the core of policing at the individual, the institutional, and the societal level.

In this chapter, we primarily refer to de-escalation in behavioral terms rather than using it to describe a situational state, like the result of behaviors that de-escalate a conflict. Correspondingly, we understand de-escalation to be any conduct practiced by police with the goal of preventing escalation.

As social beings, we exchange information and navigate our world through communication with each other, with and without words. From this point of view, we are not able to not communicate (Watzlawick et al., 2011). There is no social interaction without communication (Luhmann, 1981). Accordingly, the course of an encounter between a citizen and the police is primarily determined by verbal and non-verbal communication. It starts with the mere presence of an officer. It keeps shaping the interaction, even during the potential use of force. And it ends with the conclusion of the encounter or even thereafter, as words and actions of the police officer can have lasting effects on a citizen and predetermine the course of subsequent encounters down the road. Even during the use of force, which, in a broader sense, can be understood as communication, verbal communication does not cease. It accompanies police action either in the form of authoritative or de-escalatory communication.

Consequently, de-escalation does not end when the use of force starts. No matter which tool on their belt officers use to achieve their goals, de-escalation should always accompany all action they take to maintain legality, necessity, and proportionality. Its continued use demonstrates

the police's commitment to these principles. It gives them their best shot at earning and maintaining the trust of those who they serve. As a result, de-escalation is not a conventional tool in the box of the officer. It is a key competency that is the foundation of any subsequent action the police will take to protect life and prevent and prosecute crime.

While factors associated with the target of de-escalation effort remain outside a police officer's direct sphere of influence, approaches addressing the situation and environment of an escalated encounter have been proven to effectively de-escalate conflict situations and the persons causing them (e.g., creating time and distance, and/or containing dangerous conflict parties; Goodman et al., 2020; Police Executive Research Forum [PERF], 2016). Research on de-escalation, especially in the context of policing, is scarce (Engel et al., 2020, 2022). In addition, little has been studied about the effectiveness of any single de-escalation method (for law enforcement, see Engel et al., 2020; for mental health settings, see Roberton et al., 2012). Correspondingly, conceptual and substantial clarity on what constitutes effective de-escalation appears to vary not only among practitioners and training across police agencies (Sloan & Paoline, 2021) but also in research (Staller et al., 2019). For substantial discussions on what skills and abilities make up de-escalation and establish it as the core competency we argue it is, see Chapters 9 and 11 in this volume, and Chapters 27 and 29 in Volume II.

Recurring instances of high-profile uses of force, especially of citizens of color and/or going through psychological crisis (e.g., see Fryer, 2019; Fryer and Roland, 2016; Laniyonu & Goff, 2021), continue to show that the police do not always live up to this insight yet. In the remainder of this chapter, we will investigate factors that we found inhibit the adoption of de-escalation as a key competency in police conflict management and the corresponding organizational and individual commitment to live up to this realization, learn about its potential, and train to develop and maintain the corresponding craft and practice.

2   Why De-escalation Is Neither Trained Nor Practiced Sufficiently

There are several commonly held beliefs about de-escalation and its potential in police conflict resolution. In this section, we will discuss two and then show them—based on the empirical evidence reviewed here—to be misconceived. They contribute to a misguided understanding of de-escalation, which keeps officers from using it to its full potential. As a result, they fail to manage conflict during citizen encounters in ways that reduce the risk of escalation and put officer safety and the safety of the public at jeopardy.

Misconception 1: De-escalation Increases the Risk to Officer Safety

According to Engel et al. (2020), several tactics typically taught in de-escalation trainings are in stark contrast to more traditional approaches taught to officers to manage conflict during citizen encounters. As an example, they discuss how the need for officers to slow down during potentially violent situations is seen by many critics as a risk to officer safety. Creating time allows officers to wait for backup and assess the situation and to weigh different courses of action (De Dreu, 2003; PERF, 2016).

In an unpublished master capstone project, Landers (2017) analyzed five large police agencies. He used a pre-test, post-test design to measure the effect of the implementation of their mandatory de-escalation policies on officer safety risk. The former police officer controlled his results with similar sized police agencies and found increases in both officer injuries and officer deaths. However, the study neither reported statistical significance nor any effect sizes. In addition, Landers's (2017) research is on departmental policies instructing the use of de-escalation in the years that immediately followed their implementation. The study did not capture whether any de-escalation tactics were ultimately used or not in the field. Also, the former police officer did not control for potential changing numbers of encounters between time points. Yet, he published

the results of his study without peer review in *Police Magazine* and without any critical discussion of these shortfalls or any other limitations being identified.

Meanwhile, continued notions of the benefits of effective de-escalation and corresponding commitments in law enforcement (Office of Community Oriented Policing Services [COPS], 2015; Rahr & Rice, 2015; Zaiser & Staller, 2015), along with initial, self-report based, and observational data (Todak & James, 2018; Todak & White, 2019), have been confirmed by Engel et al.'s (2022) first robust randomized controlled trial with a mid-size US police agency. The results indicate significant reductions in use-of-force incidents and, with it, citizen and officer injuries, among others. Accordingly, the evidence does not allow for the conclusion that de-escalation increases the risk to officer safety.

As a result, the evidence available to date, both in terms of quality and in terms of quantity, disqualifies the argument that de-escalation increases risk to officer safety. De-escalation much more reduces risk and predicts safety.

Misconception 2: De-escalation Requires Collaboration

Several private for-profit law enforcement training providers have stated that de-escalation is collaborative in nature and requires the willingness of an emotionally escalated citizen to be de-escalated by the police (Bostain, 2020; Savage, 2019; von Kliem, 2020). Savage (2019) stated that "[t]hinking of de-escalation as a verb, an action the police can do to a suspect, fails to account for the two things required of the suspect for de-escalation to be successful". He elaborated: "the suspect must first agree and then participate in the process." Similarly, Bostain (2020) wrote that "[a]ll officers can do is utilize de-escalation strategies to help individuals choose the best possible outcome by choosing to de-escalate".

While we believe this logic connects with the lived experience of all officers (for reasons discussed below in the next section), we find it does not account for the complexity of a potential use-of-force encounter. We agree with Bostain (2020), when he argues one fundamental truth about

de-escalation to be that it cannot be guaranteed. However, choosing an authoritative approach, or going hands-on and using physical force, cannot guarantee a suspect or an individual going through psychological crisis to end up in handcuffs—just as a conducted energy weapon (CEW) or duty pistol cannot guarantee incapacitation. A CEW might be deployed without a large enough spread, while a suspect shot at might be wearing body armor or just be missed be an officer's shots. This means that any successful action police officers use to enforce the law, regardless of whether it is de-escalation or the use of force, cannot be guaranteed and is subject to several determinants. These include the situation and the environment in which the enforcement action is taken (e.g., potential threats to third parties present vs. a contained situation), the legal and regulatory framework, within which the officer acts (e.g., judicial authorizations or exigent circumstances vs. civil rights), and the circumstances within and associated with the associated parties, including the officer (e.g., warrior vs. guardian mindset, experience, training) and the citizen (e.g., actively vs. passively resisting, mental state, or potential weapons; Zaiser et al., 2022).

We are not aware of any empirical research on the conscious willingness of an emotionally escalated person to de-escalate, when offered or asked to. In contrast, creating time and distance is an established officer safety tactic (PERF, 2016). It does not only afford police officers an increase in relative safety and time to assess and come up with additional options, potential containment of the situation, and arrival for backup. Time and distance also de-escalate. Contrary to this misconception, absent of a potentially de-escalating person's conscious willingness, experimental psychological research has shown repeatedly that time pressure impedes information processing and is often followed by poor decision-making (De Dreu, 2003). At the same time, creating time (Hallett & Dickens, 2015, or Goodman et al., 2020, for emergency and psychiatric nursing; Bansal et al., 2020, as well as Dadds & Tully, 2019, for children with conduct problems, for instance) and safe spaces through containment (e.g., Hallett & Dickens, 2015, or Goodman et al., 2020, for psychiatry) have been successfully used as evidence-based de-escalation methods in primary and secondary care settings. Likewise, recognizing the early warning signs of escalation and avoiding triggers has been well

studied and is generally understood to be a viable de-escalation approach in psychiatric nursing (Goodman et al., 2020; Jamieson et al., 2000; for an overview of identified warning signs preceding escalation of mental health patients, see Brewer et al., 2017): if a person is not exposed to a trigger, it will not escalate them, no matter what their inner disposition about conflict is.

At the bottom line, both escalation and de-escalation of a situation are determined by the mutually constitutive interplay of the situational context and the plethora of layers of determinants, all of which lie within all actors that are involved in the encounter. Accordingly, the success of any action taken by police to maintain public safety and enforce the law is only partially within their realm of control. Just as police officers owe to the public to shoot well enough to minimize the risk of stray bullets, they have to be able to de-escalate well enough to minimize the risk of shooting in the first place.

3   Barriers to De-escalation

These misconceptions might inhibit officers from either practicing de-escalation in the field or practicing it in training in ways that allow law enforcement to unfold its full potential. We argue that they are rooted in (i) several cognitive biases and heuristics that determine officers' information processing and decision making, (ii) the organizational environment that they operate in, and (iii) in the ways in which they all interact with each other.

What follows is not an exhaustive list of either cognitive biases and heuristics or environmental factors that impact de-escalation. The throughline we follow in our argument is to be understood as a description of a logically likely way of several cognitive operations. Its purpose is to identify leverage points where education and training interventions can be implemented effectively. It is not an explanation of a proven causation.

Input: How Officers Perceive, Process, and Make Sense of Information

Action Bias

As mentioned in the previous section, quick and decisive action to deal with dangerous and volatile situations is still seen by many to be the safest approach (Engel et al., 2020). After all, a plethora of factors have been found to support the preference of officers to gain situational control and resolve incidents quickly rather than slowly. These include (but are not limited to) the automation of routine activities (McDaniel et al., 1988), which allows police officers to read situations and citizens through their "perceptual shorthand" (Skolnick, 1966) and resolve incidents quicker and more efficiently. However, this comes at the cost of paying attention to relevant cues and behaviors outside the scope of the officers' perceptions, as well as of mindful engagement with situation and citizen (DeAngelo & Owens, 2017).

All these factors appear to contribute to an *action bias* that has police officers often taking immediate action to neutralize a threat and/or resolve a situation, even if taking more time to assess, deliberate, and communicate were to lead to equal or better outcomes. This phenomenon has also been studied in emergency medical settings, where time is of the essence just as much, if not more (Kiderman et al., 2013). Instances, in which taking immediate action backfire and make things worse, can be seen in repeatedly documented cases of officer-created or officer-induced jeopardy (Lee, 2021; Smith, 2022): despite an absent risk to the public or any third parties, officers immediately confront citizens, often armed with edged objects and/or going through psychological crisis. As a result, they escalate the situation to the point where they have often to use lethal force to defend themselves. Contrary to the ill-conceived notion that de-escalation increases risk to officer safety, slowing things down will increase not only their safety but also protect life and limb of anybody involved in the encounter.

When it comes to selecting between available courses of action in a dynamic situation, the distinction between rash action and "slowing things down" is not dichotomous. These are also not mutually exclusive

or opposite ends of a linear continuum. The above-mentioned complex and mutually constituting interplay of factors stemming from the police officer, the citizen, and the situational context of their encounter allows for an almost infinite number of possible scenarios that may play out. This allows officers to actually slow the situation down and contain a potentially dangerous citizen, yet still be driven by *action bias* in their attempts to de-escalate the individual. If officers do not afford sufficient time to diffuse the crisis but still attempt to rush to resolution, they might only delay escalation (Vecchi et al., 2019). Such crisis intervention attempts do not exhaust the potential for de-escalation. As a result, they do not lower the emotional intensity of the citizen to the point where the situation can be resolved peacefully. What is then left to officers is to take action and move to the next step on the use-of-force continuum, which will escalate the situation and increase the risk for all parties involved. A corresponding example constitutes the confrontation of a contained citizen going through psychological crisis in their apartment by a SWAT team (SIU, 2021). Police officers need to understand that de-escalation will take more time than any other way to maintain public safety and enforce the law.

Inattentional Bias, Cognitive Tunneling, and Task Fixation

Such rash action also constrains the time available to officers to process relevant observations and perceptions, as well as to make and execute decisions with regards to their next course of action (Buckley et al., 2022; Garrison et al., 2012; Kleider-Offutt et al., 2016). One result of exhausted cognitive capacity with significant influence on how a citizen encounter can unfold is the corresponding inattentional bias or blindness (Dirkin, 1983). This is also known as cognitive tunneling (especially in aviation) and, in policing, is often associated with tunnel vision and auditory exclusion (e.g., Klinger & Brunson, 2009). Especially under high cognitive load, police officers are at risk of narrowing their attentional focus on the most salient cues and stimuli: typically, the most prominent and outstanding visual, auditory, olfactory, and tactile stimuli. As a result, they often miss the more subtle but possibly more important

cues that allow them to assess the situation and the safety of everyone involved more effectively. For instance, they might focus on the person that challenges their directions loudest instead of the person that is subtly preparing to attack.

Correspondingly, ongoing research by Zaiser (2022) has shown that, in a hostage-taking scenario, crisis negotiators display the tendency to fixate their communication on achieving a task at hand. This happens often at the expense of the rapport they were trying to build with the subject, a *sine qua non* in crisis negotiations (Vecchi et al., 2019). In the scenario, crisis negotiators typically attempt to persuade the hostage-taker to allow them to directly speak to a hostage. Obtaining proof of life, especially by actively speaking to a hostage, is one of the major tasks to be accomplished by crisis negotiations (McMains et al., 2020). However, repeated attempts to change the hostage-taker's mind results for many crisis negotiators in an argument, which ends up increasing their emotional intensity rather than decreasing it. This ultimately undermines the stabilization of the situation, one of the paramount goals in crisis negotiation (McMains et al., 2020).

Crisis negotiators might be at risk of fixating on obtaining proof of life. Police officers on patrol might be at risk of undermining their de-escalation attempts by getting stuck in the endless repetition of issuing authoritative commands, such as "drop the knife", which can be seen on countless video clips of use-of-force encounters across the globe.

Attentional Bias, Confirmation Bias, and Availability Bias

In addition, inattentional bias, cognitive tunneling, and task fixation can set off a perceptual cascade that will determine (a) where a police officer will allocate and direct their conscious attention, and (b) the subsequent information processing (Dibbets et al., 2021). Humans typically forage information selectively (Prat-Ortega & de la Rocha, 2018; Wimmer et al., 2015): the propensity to forage information and interpret it in ways that best supports already established beliefs and worldviews is commonly referred to as confirmation bias (Hart et al., 2009; Nickerson, 1998). Conversely, humans are quick to discount and find flaws

in information and interpretations that contradict what they believe to be true and question their worldviews.

The tendency to selectively search, perceive, learn, and interpret information often works hand in hand with the availability heuristic. Tversky and Kahneman (1973) showed in a series of studies how humans tend to infer relevance, importance, and frequency of perceptions and observations from how easily they can retrieve them from their memory. This heuristic allows for a more efficient navigation of the physical and social environment they live in. The researchers referred to this finding as the availability heuristic: the assumption that those memories that come easiest to mind are always those that contain more important and more relevant information for the task at hand. Similarly, memories of events that are associated with more serious or more severe consequences are easier to retrieve and therefore evaluated to be more relevant. Ultimately, the more relevant or important the information retrieved from memory is evaluated, the more it is deemed representative of whatever environment or situation it is associated with. It is important to keep in mind how attentional and confirmation bias feed information to that same memory.

While this shortcut might recall relevant information most of the time, it does not guarantee accuracy. Police officers find themselves regularly in complex and/or dynamic situations, usually with incomplete information and a high degree of uncertainty, in which they tend to rely on availability as a heuristic (Gore et al., 2015; Hine et al., 2018). In order to effectively manage such situations, they will draw from training and past experiences to make predictions about how interactions with others will precipitate. In other words, the availability heuristic helps officers fill the gaps, based on what their training and their experiences taught them about similar situations. As a result, both training content and perceptually selective input to the associative memory that feeds the availability heuristic can bias police officers' behavioral response and prevent the consideration of alternative approaches to conflict resolution.

For instance, Pinizzotto's methodologically deficient (King & Sanders, 1997; Zaiser et al., 2022) research on police officers killed in the line of duty (Federal Bureau of Investigation [FBI], 1993) and on police officers who survived potentially lethal assaults (Pinizzotto et al., 1997), has been

widely circulated within law enforcement, for example through the *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin* (Pinizzotto & Davis, 1995, 1999; Pinizzotto et al., 1997, 1998, 2000, 2002a, 2002b, 2006). Police officers who have been trained to see a potentially lethal threat in every citizen encounter, thus might respond to it as such. The subsequent potential escalation will confirm what was learned in training and make the officers' behavioral response a path-dependent consequence, which will reinforce and perpetuate itself down the road. Chapter 2 of this volume provides a more in-depth overview of how danger narratives shape training and practice in policing.

Summary: Input

Police officers' rash attempts to resolve potentially violent situations counteracts proven de-escalation strategies, such as creating time and distance and containing threats. It also takes its toll on their information processing and decision-making capacity. Instead of slowing things down, officers engage before they have evaluated possible alternative courses of action, received backup, and allowed an encountered citizen's emotional intensity to wear off (action bias). As relevant information exceeds officers' capacity to process it, their perception and attention often narrow down to the most salient (cognitive tunneling), yet not necessarily most important (inattentional bias), environmental cues, and/or a task they set out to accomplish before they immersed themselves in the situation (task fixation). As officers then start to make sense of the situation, they direct their attention towards the cues and information (attentional bias) that confirms their beliefs about the citizen they encounter and the nature of the situation (confirmation bias). This will, ultimately, shape the experiences they submit to memory, from which, in turn, they will shape their expectations of how the situation might unfold (availability bias).

This sequence of cognitively biased information processing leads to a potentially skewed situational awareness.

Output: How Officers Make Decisions and Act in Naturalistic Environments

The input sequence introduced above does not only lead to a skew in situational awareness, it also biases the future decisions of officers. Because potentially escalating citizen encounters are already dynamic and complex at baseline, rushed engagement by the police only increases their volatility. Performing cognitively demanding functions, including making decisions in such situations where stakes and uncertainty are high, and information, time, and resources are limited, is studied under the guise of naturalistic decision-making (NDM; Klein, 1989, 2008). In this context, Klein (1989, 2008) established his recognition-primed decision-making model (RPD) on an empirical foundation of interviews and observational studies in urban and rural firefighting, the military, in intensive medical care, as well as in speed chess (Klein, 1989, 2008). RPD assumes that decision makers in an NDM environment will generate possible courses of action based on the memory retrieval of previous experiences. They then match it with the situational outlook and choose the first best option to implement. This is in contrast with more traditional approaches to decision-making, which are characterized by a more linear and analytical approach of comparing a limited set of options by a rational actor (Pachur & Marinello, 2013).

Accordingly, aside from previous experience, which police officers draw from during RPD, their level of situational awareness plays a crucial role in the process: officers perceive, consciously and subconsciously, situational cues from their environment, which they then use to match the most suitable past experience to inform their decision on a viable course of action. This, in turn, allows for a quicker decision, without tying up cognitive resources to analytically compare all available options and choose the one they find most appropriate. Instead of an optimal solution, officers take the first best option and reassess as the situation further unfolds (cf. Klein, 2008).

At the bottom line, it is the memory of the officer, where associations are made and actions are taken, that is primed by the recognition of situational cues. That means that associations are formed out of the memories of the subjective experiences of the officer.

Organizational Context

De-escalation Training: Lack of Conceptual and Didactical Clarity

Recently, research on organizational commitment to de-escalation training, the development of corresponding training, the implementation of such training, and on how to evaluate and assess it has been emerging (Bennell et al., 2022). However, little has been studied about the effectiveness of any single de-escalation method (Daffern et al., 2012; Engel et al., 2020). Correspondingly, conceptual and substantial clarity on what constitutes effective de-escalation appears to vary not only among practitioners and training across police agencies (Sloan & Paoline, 2021) but also in research (Staller et al., 2019; Todak & March, 2021). It is easy for an organization to subscribe to allocating more time and resources to de-escalation training. It is easy for an individual officer undergoing scenario training to subsume the use of a CEW as de-escalation. It is considered a less-lethal force option, after all. However, the escalatory potential of CEW is well-documented (e.g., Ariel et al., 2019) and might not be considered a means of de-escalation by other officers. Disagreement on what constitutes de-escalation and lacking knowledge of how to teach and apply it undermines effective de-escalation training. For instance, Integrated Communication, Assessment, and Tactics trainings (Engel et al., 2020) have produced initial evidence on their efficacy in the reduction of the use of force, and they have still been evaluated as packages. On their cover, they provide little clarity on their content.

In addition, the role that factors underlying the successful transfer of de-escalation skills, methods, and tactics from training and education in the real world that citizens encounter play are often unclear (Staller et al., 2019; Zaiser et al., 2022). These include, among others, personality, attitude, and motivation. While motivation and attitude, often formed through socialization in the organization and under its culture, can be influenced by training and education, personality and other dispositional factors are subject to recruiting and candidate selection, which are beyond the scope of this chapter.

De-escalation Training: Insufficient Time and Resources Allocated

Surveys in several countries across the globe have found a disparity in law enforcement training and education between the amount of time and resources allocated to the use of force (including physical fitness, especially during basic training) and to de-escalation. Law enforcement recruits and officers spend significantly more time training and maintaining skills associated with the use of force than with communication and de-escalation (COPS, 2015; PERF, 2015; Staller et al., 2020; Zaiser et al., 2022). This is in stark contrast to the reality of citizen encounters, which typically does not require the use of force (COPS, 2015; PERF, 2015). Furthermore, this disparity reflects a focus on building and maintaining a repertoire of reactive skills, since the use of force is typically a reaction to an escalation perceived by the police (COPS, 2015; PERF, 2015; Rubin et al., 1994). As a result, the training of de-escalation and communication skills falls short, which withdraws their potential to prevent escalation, de-escalate volatile situations, and reduce risk of bodily and psychological harm to everyone involved in the encounter (Barker et al., 2008; Gau et al., 2012; Giles, 2002; Kochel et al., 2013; Reisig & Lloyd, 2009; Tyler, 2002).

We argue that the countless instances of publicly documented officer-created jeopardy testify to the potentially fatal consequences of this training disparity. Officers yelling repeated commands, such as "drop the knife" or "don't move", especially during encounters with citizens going through psychological crisis or under the influence of drugs or alcohol (cf. cognitive tunneling, inattentional bias, and task fixation), appear to lack (i) a broader repertoire of available courses of action and approaches to problem-solving, (ii) the experience to choose the most viable one at the time, (iii) the flexibility to adapt if it doesn't work, and (iv) the agility to implement another one, when appropriate. The literature on expertise and competence is conclusive: Drawing from a broad knowledge base and using skills and abilities, especially in stressful situations, requires corresponding education and training through deliberate practice (Campitelli & Gobet, 2011; Ericsson et al., 1993).

Summary: Catch-22

As we roll the argumentative steps taken in this section back, the predicament of a cognitive-behavioral catch-22 becomes apparent. A disproportionate amount of training and education time and resources is allocated to practice and maintain use-of-force skills do deal with violent citizens. This over-exposes officers in their training to bad, worse, and worst-case scenarios, which that are not representative of their daily duty (insufficient time and resources). The time and resources left for de-escalation often lack evidence on their efficacy and clarity as to what actually constitutes de-escalation, as well as how it is taught (lack of conceptual and didactical clarity). This leaves officers with a reduced certainty in the efficacy of their skills and ability and a correspondingly low comfort in using de-escalation. At the same time, use-of-force skills are taught much more consistently and frequently, which allows for officers to experience a comparatively higher level of comfort in their use in potentially violent situations, as they experience a higher degree of efficacy during training.

This makes it likely that officers' associative memory to store experiential knowledge represents use-of-force encounters and corresponding situational cues. As they take their training into the real world, this prompts/justifies the use of force, since it is more easily accessible than memories associated with de-escalation and corresponding cues (RPD, availability bias). In addition, it shapes the way officers perceive and interpret their environment (attentional bias), as it makes them then more likely to perceive environmental cues and stimuli that support their worldview of a constantly threatening environment (confirmation bias). The lack of alternative training exposure supports the situational cognitive tunneling, task fixation, and inattentional bias at the expense of less-trained, harder-to-retrieve, de-escalatory courses of action. The result is often an escalation of the situation, which, in turn, drives the action bias that starts a new, self-contained input–output cycle.

The interplay between these internal and external interferences manifests this self-perpetuating cycle on two levels, within a situation, as demonstrated above, as well as between situations, across a career lifespan. This cognitive-behavioral cycle keeps officers caught with a both

individually and group owned perspective on the potential and limits of de-escalation, which manifests itself in the commonly found opinions that lack scientific evidence or profound logic.

4   Conclusion

In this chapter, we have reiterated the ethical imperative of de-escalation and drawn the corresponding conclusion that de-escalation knowledge, skills, and abilities are a key competency for every law enforcement officer. We then identified two empirically unsupported but rather prominent notions on the limited efficacy of de-escalation in police conflict management. We have offered an explanation of how these misconceptions are rooted in a self-contained, cognitive-behavioral loop that is perpetuated by the organizational features of de-escalation training in law enforcement at large.

This leaves the question of how we can bust these myths. We need to break this feedback loop of a self-fulfilling prophecy to increase individual and organizational openness to de-escalation training and practice, so police officers can actually exhaust the full potential of de-escalation, when they manage conflict.

While, as noted in the previous section, substantial research on the efficacy of specific de-escalation methods is scarce, initial evidence on the efficacy of certain training packages is emerging: The PERF's ICAT training has been the first training module focused on de-escalation that has been rigorously evaluated and found to significantly reduce the use of force and associated injuries of both police officers and citizens (Engel et al., 2020). ICAT's (PERF, 2016) focus on concepts such as the "tactical pause" or using distance and cover to create time directly addresses the action bias discussed in the previous section.

As the evidence-base on de-escalation's efficacy begins to form, the police service will have to commit more time and resources to adopt these findings, so officers can be exposed to more and more different approaches to conflict management, which will add to their behavioral repertoire and, ultimately, increase the level of comfort, confidence, and

competence as they start to understand how to maximize the impact of de-escalation.

Avenues of further research include the evaluation of the efficacy of single methods and combinations of methods, as well as empirical tests of the barriers we have theorized impede effective de-escalation.

Key Takeaways

Police Officers

We encourage police officers, who are regularly managing conflict with the public, to:

- Familiarize themselves with the cognitive-behavioral factors that shape the way they experience and interpret their worlds, including their level of comfort, confidence, and competency in de-escalation;
- Be open to de-escalation training and seek opportunities on and off the clock to educate and train accordingly;
- Step outside their comfort zone in training and in the field to increase their proficiency and advance their practice of de-escalation both in training and in the field—as long as officer safety allows them to.

Conflict Management Trainers

We encourage practical skills instructors and conflict management trainers to:

- Familiarize themselves with the cognitive-behavioral factors that shape the way they and the people they teach experience and interpret their worlds, including everyone's level of comfort, confidence, and competency in de-escalation;
- Familiarize themselves with the organizational factors that keep individual police officers and the police as a whole from practicing de-escalation as proficiently as the use of force;
- Acknowledgements that de-escalation requires not only training but also education and seek opportunities to design corresponding modules and sessions based on current research and in ways that address conceptual and didactical shortfalls.

Police Decision-Makers

We encourage police decision-makers to:

- Commit education and training under their area of command or responsibility to evidence-based best practices;
- Increase the amount of time and resources allocated to not just de-escalation training but also de-escalation education to reduce the disparity between the amount of time and resources allocated to de-escalation and the use of force topics;
- Reflect on de-escalation as a key competency in their service's policies and procedures.

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Applying the Interpersonal Circumplex Model to De-escalative Communication in Police Services

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Reviewer: Cara Rabe-Hemp

1 Introduction

Police operations can be characterised by their inherent and unavoidable complexity (Newburn, 2022, pp. 434–435). Newburn (2022, p. 441) has described the nature of police–public interaction as: "Much policing

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is necessarily improvisational, creative and open-ended […]. Indeed, it is inherently unpredictable, and this means that controversy and conflict are never far away. Police–public interactions can be thought of, à la Goffman (1961), as 'encounters'. They are, in Manning's terms, 'a coming together of strangers that is relatively ephemeral and unrehearsed'." (see also Belur, 2010; Bonner, 2015; Cojean et al., 2020; Kesic et al., 2012; Manning, 2003; Mugford et al., 2013; Preddy et al., 2019; Todak & James, 2018).

Due to the complex and conflictual nature of human interactions within police operations, aggression and violence may occur at the end of the escalation continuum. With normative asymmetry, police officers are legally permitted to use force as a last resort (Alpert & Dunham, 2004; Belur, 2010; Kane, 2014). However, from the police officers' perspective, the priority of such encounters is to maintain physical and mental integrity. Subsequently, according to one of the most important German police service regulations "Polizeidienstvorschrift 100 (PDV 100)" and the prominent police guideline "Leitfaden 371—Eigensicherung im Polizeidienst", preventing or reducing the threat of other people to police officers are the primary objectives of operational tactics.

Thompson (1983) stated that 97% of police work involves communicating with the public. To prevent and reduce threat, officers need to flexibly adapt to and modify the situational setting using interpersonal communication (e.g., Boulton & Cole, 2016). Due to its ubiquity, interpersonal communication represents the most powerful resource for solving interpersonal conflict (Watzlawick et al., 2011; Womack & Finley, 1986). Indeed, concerning police–citizen encounters, Sykes and Clark (1975, p. 584) pointed out that "police behaviour must be explained in terms of the rules which order their relations with civilians and which are usually mutually acknowledged by both". The model of interpersonal circumplex and its interactional principles, such as interpersonal complementarity, is a conceptual and empirical framework that incorporates two universal dimensions of human interpersonal behaviour and relationships: dominance (also referred to as power, control, status, or agency) and affiliation (also referred to as warmth, love, harmony, or communion) (Abele & Bruckmüller, 2013; Abele-Brehm & Wojciszke, 2018; Bakan, 1966; Gurtman, 2009; Horowitz, 2004; Kiesler, 1996; Leary, 1957; Locke, 2006; Sullivan, 1953; Wiggins, 1996).

In the present chapter, we propose that the interpersonal circumplex model be applied to analyse interaction patterns during police–citizen encounters and to guide future research on police interactions. Following Orford (1994), the application of the interpersonal circumplex model and corresponding measurement procedures to police–citizen interactions in conflictual settings seems to be plausible. Specifically, we focus on the Kiesler circumplex (Kiesler, 1982, 1996) underlying the Cognitive Behavioural Analysis System of Psychotherapy (McCullough, 2000, 2010) to exemplify the basic ideas of interpersonal circumplex. Within clinical psychology and psychotherapy, both the nature of psychotherapist–patient interaction and the treatment of interpersonal problems through social skills training are essential for therapeutic success (Brakemeier et al., 2014; Guhn et al., 2019). To the best of our knowledge, the interpersonal circumplex approach has not yet been applied to the interpersonal context of policing. There are two advantages to doing so. Firstly, the interpersonal circumplex could provide a conceptual framework for the interpersonal police–citizen interaction. Secondly, empirically established measurement procedures based on the interpersonal circumplex are adaptable to a policing context. To summarise, the presented approach allows us to investigate police–citizen interactions theoretically and empirically, and offers a more profound understanding of the interpersonal dynamics within police operations. For instance, it could allow us to identify evidence-based causal factors underlying escalation. Accordingly, training programmes could be developed to prevent or reduce violence and aggression by addressing these specific risk factors.

2   The Interpersonal Circumplex Model

Basic Assumptions of Interpersonal Behaviour

Sullivan (1953) and Leary (1957) authored the contemporary circumplex models of human interpersonal behaviour (cf. Conci, 2012; Wiggins, 1996). Basic ideas were elaborated further by Benjamin (1979), Carson (1969), Foa (1961), Horowitz (1979), Kiesler (1983), and Wiggins (1979). The interpersonal circumplex (Orford, 1986;

Wiggins, 1982) provides a conceptual framework for describing, organising, and assessing expressed interpersonal behaviour, including personality traits, interpersonal problems, and other interpersonal constructs such as values and motives (Locke, 2000; see also Constantino et al., 2008; Kiesler et al., 1997; Russell, 1980). Theoretically, the interpersonal circumplex incorporates the following main propositions (e.g., Horowitz et al., 1997).

Firstly, according to the interpersonal circumplex model, interpersonal behaviour can be described using two fundamental dimensions. A two-dimensional space is built by the orthogonal axes of dominance—also referred to as agency, which ranges from dominant to submissive behaviour—and affiliation—also referred to as communion, which ranges from friendly to hostile behaviour (Horowitz, 2004). Consequently, any social behaviour (schematically drawn as a vector) can be regarded as a particular blend of dominance and affiliation. Within the circumplex, similar behaviours are located next to each other and summarised as segments, whereas opposing behaviours are located far from each other (Kiesler, 1983; Leary, 1957). Contemporary circumplex models usually differentiate eight segments of the circle. Figure 1 graphically represents the interpersonal circumplex model, including behavioural descriptions of the octants. The intensity of the expressed behaviour can also be displayed within the circumplex (Kiesler, 1983; Orford, 1994). The vector length schematically represents the intensity, from low-to-moderate intensity behaviour (short vector) to high-to-extreme intensity behaviour (long vector). For instance, Kiesler (1983) differentiated the intensity levels of dominance as "controlling" and "dictatorial".

Secondly, an individual's interpersonal behaviour tends to provoke a certain behavioural response, thus establishing distinct behavioural patterns (Carson, 1969; Kiesler, 1983; Leary, 1957). Leary (1957) used the term "provoke" to indicate that different actions predict distinct responses. Thus, actions and responses are not related by chance. Kiesler (1983) conceptualised the interpersonal connection as a two-stage sequence, whereby actions of others first evoke a covert and
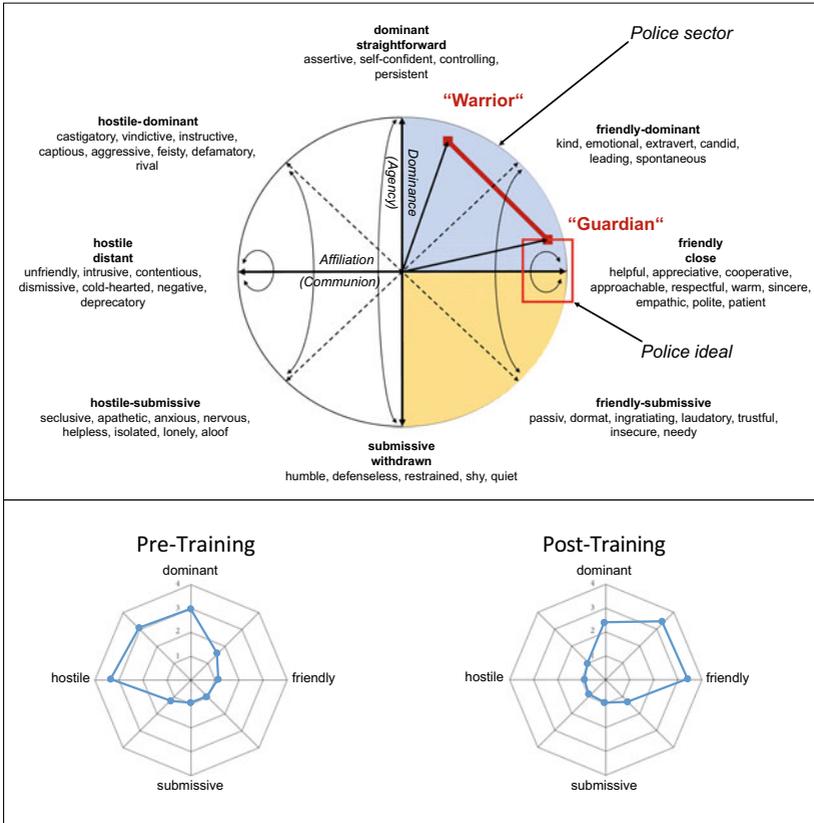
Fig. 1 Panel (A) Kiesler circle (Kiesler, 1983; cf. Kensche, Schweiger & Klein, 2014; pp. 302). Most friendly and slightly dominant police officers will provoke friendly and medium dominant citizens' reactions (blue police sector). If police officers reveal a behavioural pattern that is consistent with high affiliation and medium dominance scores, citizens' behaviour is likely to mirror that (red square). (*Source* Top figure created by the authors). Panel (B) Hypothetical circumplex profiles of individual interaction patterns before training (left) and after training (*Source* Guhn et al., 2019, p. 47, work sheet 16 modified and translated; see also Gurtman, 2009, p. 10). Police training aims to narrow police officers' interaction pattern in the direction of the blue sector)

relatively automatic response, followed by an overt action as a complementary response to the original action. The principle of interpersonal complementarity represents the most important and popular idea of the interpersonal circumplex (Orford, 1994; see Fig. 1). Kiesler (1983, pp. 200–201) depicted the two rules of complementarity as: "A person's interpersonal actions tend (with a probability significantly greater than chance) to initiate, invite, or evoke from an interactant complementary responses that lead to a repetition of the person's original actions [...]. For interpersonal behaviour as operationalized by the two-dimensional interpersonal circle, complementarity occurs on the basis of (a) reciprocity in respect to the Control dimension or axis (dominance pulls submission, submission pulls dominance), and (b) correspondence in respect to the Affiliation dimension (hostility pulls hostility, friendliness pulls friendliness)." That is, interpersonal behaviours are thought to correspond in terms of affiliation, and to be reciprocal in terms of dominance. For example, if Person A acts intrusively to Person B, indicating hostile dominance, Person A is invited to respond complementarily with hostile submissiveness (hostility triggers hostility, dominance provokes submissiveness; see Fig. 1 "vertical" arrows). If Person A appears helpless and overstrained, indicating friendly submissiveness, Person B is likely to offer friendly advice in terms of friendly dominance (friendliness stays the same, submissiveness elicits dominance). Even if Person B does not respond complementarily as predicted, both interactants may note the underlying messages of their communication (cf., Gurtman, 2009, 2020; Pincus & Gurtman, 2006; Sadler et al., 2010).

Measurement of Interpersonal Behaviour

The interpersonal circumplex model constructed by Leary (1957) inspired the development of numerous measures of interpersonal constructs, which provides ample opportunity to empirically assess interpersonal behaviour (Hatcher & Rogers, 2009; Gurtman, 2009, 2020; Locke, 2006, 2010; Thomas & Strauß, 2008 for an overview). The first interpersonal measure grounded in Leary's (1957) work is the Interpersonal Check List. However, this measure has been deemed

methodologically insufficient (Kiesler, 1996). Gurtman (2009, p. 6) listed contemporary measurement procedures that meet the modern methodological criteria, which are:

- Circumplex Scales of Interpersonal Values (CSIV; Locke, 2000);
- Octant Scale Impact Message Inventory (IMI-C; Schmidt et al., 1999);
- Interpersonal Adjective Scales-Revised (IAS-R; Wiggins, 1995; Wiggins et al., 1988);
- Inventory of Interpersonal Problems-Circumplex (IIP-C; Alden et al., 1990; Horowitz et al., 1988, 2000);
- Support Actions Scale-Circumplex (SAS-C; Trobst, 2000).

According to Gurtman (2009, p. 5), the Interpersonal Adjective Scales of Wiggins (1979, 1995) "stands as the prototype of all interpersonal circumplex measures, and remains the measure of choice for the assessment of interpersonal traits from the circumplex perspective". The IAS is a self-reported measure consisting of eight scales for each octant of the circumplex model, each of which includes eight adjectives. Individuals are asked to indicate how accurately the 64 adjectives describe themselves (Wiggins, 1995; see Fig. 1, Panel B).

3   Discussion

Mindset

Whether or not de-escalative communication occurs within police operations can depend on the individual mindset of police officers in terms of their professional role. These job-related attitudes are predominantly referred to typical tasks and action patterns in duty. Recent police research has discussed the influence of both the warrior and guardian mindset of police officers on their behaviour (Carlson, 2020; Koslicki, 2020; McLean et al., 2019, 2021; Rahr & Rice, 2015; Stoughton, 2015, 2016).

Police officers who adopt a warrior mindset perceive humans and the surrounding world to be dangerous and view themselves as crime fighters, whereas police officers who adopt a guardian mindset seek to serve and protect the community whilst cooperating with civilians. On a behavioural level, these mindsets seem to be correlated with specific interpersonal behaviour patterns. Specifically, the warrior mindset has been found to be associated with a tendency to react more aggressively and to neglect de-escalative communication (McLean et al., 2019, 2021; Rahr & Rice, 2015; Stoughton, 2015, 2016). According to Stoughton (2015, p. 231): "[...] the guardian mindset prioritizes service over crime-fighting, and it values the dynamics of short-term encounters as a way to create long-term relationships. [...] The guardian mindset emphasizes communication over commands, cooperation over compliance, and legitimacy over authority. And in the use-of-force context, the Guardian emphasizes patience and restraint over control, stability over action."

Both the interpersonal circumplex model (e.g., Kiesler, 1982, 1996) and the corresponding measurement procedures available (e.g., Locke, 2006) may help to establish diagnostic measures for critical police interaction patterns that give reason to optimize training interventions. Future interaction research in policing could investigate the warrior–guardian duality by identifying behavioural patterns within the interpersonal circumplex (see Fig. 1).

Police Training

Womack and Finley (1986, p. 14) refer to communication as "[...] the central most important commodity that the officer has at his [or her] disposal". Given the significance of communication in the context of the deadly use of force, Wolfe et al. (2020) proposed that "[...] we have an extremely small evidence base concerning what works in police training [...]. There are only a handful of studies that have evaluated training that includes components of de-escalation [...]". Consequently, the authors present "[...] a more fruitful approach to police training: using de-escalation interventions based on theoretical work grounded in general social interactions and the social interactions of police officers

specifically". According to them, police training has to view "police–citizen encounters as social interactions that can either escalate toward, or de-escalate away from, the use of force. That assumption allowed the implementation of skills training that police can use to improve the outcome of such interactions, and to account for variation in citizens' responses to police actions and communications." (see also Renden et al., 2015). Engel et al. (2020) also maintain the call for "[...] evidence-based policing by scientifically testing interventions, and […] rapid research responses for critical issues in policing".

In scenario-based role plays, for example, police officers are confronted with specially trained actors as opponents who show a certain pattern of behaviour along the circumplex model. By video recording the interaction, the verbal and non-verbal reactions of the police officers can be analysed in terms of the circumplex model. Both self-assessments and other-assessments can be combined to adjust the police officers' responses. For example, if the opposing actor exhibiting hostile-submissive behaviour elicits a strong hostile-dominant response from the police officer, social skills training can help the officer to respond in a more friendly and emphatic manner. By repeating the training, it is possible to monitor whether the police officer's response pattern is "moving" toward the police sector (see Fig. 1). Furthermore, the analysed behaviour pattern can be linked to the evaluation of the police officer's mindset and attitude (e.g., the warrior-guardian dichotomy).

In summary, future police training needs to be evidence-based. The primary objective of policing is to reduce or prevent the use of any kind of force. To meet this aim, both a conceptual foundation and empirical investigations are neccessary. Conceptually, any theoretical tenet requires police–citizen encounters to be considered as social interactions that occur in complex and dynamic settings. Indeed, more recently, Koerner and Staller (2021) called for police training that has a more scientific foundation (see Willis & Mastrofski, 2018). Empirical science-based investigations are also needed to demonstrate the effectiveness of police training (Alpert & Dunham, 2010; Bennell et al., 2021; Conti & Nolan III, 2005; Giacomantonio et al., 2019; Jenkins et al., 2021; McLean et al., 2020; Rajakaruna et al., 2017). Moreover, it is essential to verify the effects of any training on police performance. Ideally, police training

needs to avoid both background effects (such training does not have any effect other than that on resource management) and converse effects (training does cause undesirable effects, such as enhancing violence rather than reducing it).

Both the conceptual framework of the interpersonal circumplex and the corresponding measurement procedures may help to satisfy the call for evidence-based interaction research in policing (Engel et al., 2020; Wolfe et al., 2020). Figure 1 exemplifies the hypothethical interaction profiles. To evaluate police training programmes, the individual interaction style of police officer candidates and police officers in duty could be diagnosed before the training starts. To control for the effects of the training programme, these measurements could also be implemented afterwards to subsequently adjust the content of the programme. For instance, Guhn et al. (2019) proposed a Kiesler circle-based training that includes an introduction to the interpersonal circumplex by Kielser (1983), the training of non-verbal and verbal communication, conflict management training, empathy training, and reflection on close relationships. Such training programmes, which are already applied in clinical contexts, could also be adapted to a policing context. Within the interpersonal circumplex, it is meaningful to highlight the affiliation dimension in the direction of friendliness and to attune the dominance dimension to medium level of dominance (see Fig. 1, "police ideal"). To avoid hostile responses from citizens, police officers must avoid interacting in a hostile way. Additionally, the police trainers who teach social skills must have expert social and teaching competencies that in turn inform their personel selection procedures (Schade et al., 2022; Wolfe et al., 2020).

4   Conclusion

Policing requires officers to engage in professional behaviour. The complex operational settings they encounter mean that they must be creative problem solvers (Staller & Zaiser, 2015). To prevent or reduce aggression and violence, officers' communication and social skills play

the most important role. As problem solvers in complex situations, they are foremost *social interaction designers*. For future police interaction research, the interpersonal circumplex can provide both a theoretical foundation of interpersonal behaviour within police–citizen encounters and practical guidance for the design and evaluation of evidence-based police training. Practically, it is important that officers are aware of the complexity and dynamics of police operations and the significance of their own social interaction skills.

Practically, circumplex models such as the Kiesler circle are predominantly applied in personality research and psychotherapy, which mainly focus on the description of personality and emotions by self-assessment (Guhn et al., 2019; Plutchik, 1997). Usually, self-ratings are used to assess interpersonal situations after they have passed. In addition, target behaviour could be rated by external observers. In the case of police operations, it is unclear whether officers can accurately recall their behaviour, especially after critical incidents and high levels of pressure. The use of force within police–public encounters and the related threat could have a massive impact on officers' cognitive functioning. For instance, anxiety impairs efficient top-down attentional control and increases attention to threat-related stimuli (Eysenck et al., 2007). Furthermore, psychological trauma can affect memory (e.g., Brewin, 2011). Concerning observer ratings, it is unclear whether the evaluation of police officers' behaviour from a third-person perspective is valid or consistent with self evaluations, especially when observers are also witnesses of the use of force.

According to Braithewaite et al. (2022, p. 5), one might contextualise circumplex models as "individually-centered theories of interpersonal communication". Such social psychological theories that explain communication behaviour in terms of social skills level, personality traits, or mental states may neglect the impact of intergroup dynamics and relations on individual attitudes and behaviours. Indeed, Gallois et al., (2018, p. 309) refer to communication in the context of intergroup relations as: "Indeed, most of our communication in daily life, as well as in organizations, institutions, and nations, takes place between members of groups that are potentially opposed, where there is a clear sense of 'us' and 'them'. For example, we communicate constantly with members of other

genders, and (at least in complex societies) with people in other ethnic, religious, or cultural groups. Sometimes, such communication is tense or hostile, and it can descend into overt discrimination, war, or genocide. Beyond this, we often wear our group memberships on our sleeves, sometimes literally through uniforms and dress, as well as through language, accent, and communication styles."

Indeed, the group membership of frontline police officers becomes immediately clear by their physical appearance and creates an ingroup–outgroup asymmetry between officers and citizens by legal authority. Furthermore, within policing, researchers have debated the massive impact of occupational culture, in that it may affect or guide the working behaviour of officers on duty. Specifically, cop culture can be defined as a set of attitudes, beliefs, values, norms, working routines, and informal rules shared by members of police organisations. Consequently, police officers may adopt cop culture, including an "us versus them" mentality to justify their work in the community (Boivin et al., 2020; Reiner, 2000, 2002; Reiner & Newburn, 2007; Reuss-Ianni, 1983; Skolnick, 1966; Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986; see Giles et al., 2022 for an overview of intergroup communication in policing). In summary, police work, including communication with citizens, is intergroup in nature (Hill et al., 2021a, 2021b).

Research on intergroup communication (see Braithwaite & Schrodt, 2022; Giles, 2012, 2016 for an intergroup research overview) dates back to social identity theory, proposed by Tajfel and Turner (1979, 1986), and the speech (later communication) accommodation theory, proposed by Giles (1973). Since then, intergroup communication research has aimed to understand how communicative processes between groups work (Palomares et al., 2016; Soliz et al., 2022; Zhang & Giles, 2018). For example, modern communication accommodation theory states that individuals make communicative adjustments (verbally and non-verbally) to accommodate others according to three underlying mechanisms (see Chapter "Community Relations and Policing: A Communication Accommodation Theory Perspective" in this volume). By convergence, individuals adjust their communicative behaviours towards interactants to enhance similarity. By divergence, individuals adjust themselves to enhance dissimilarity. Maintenance comprises no

adjustments (see Dragojevic et al., 2016 for details). Regarding intergroup communication, Gallois et al., (2018, p. 314) have pointed out that both the theoretical and empirical investigations into the "complexity or messiness" of human interactions are challenges for future research (see also Bernhold & Giles, 2022). Analogously, future research on circumplex models that aim to explain police–public interactions needs to adress the "inherently and unavoidable complexity" of police operations (Newburn, 2022, pp. 434–435). Whilst communication accommodation theory highlights the intergroup character of human communication, circumplex models still do not fully incorporate intergroup dynamics. Thus, future research on how to apply circumplex models to police–public interactions needs to address the intergroup impact on communication and specify the psychological mechanisms underlying police communication across situations, sexes, ages, socioeconomic status, nations, and cultures (e.g., Ting-Toomey & Dorjee, 2015).

In general, social psychological theories help to organise knowledge within a field of interest and inspire new research by revealing research gaps. To the best of our knowledge, the Kiesler circumplex model has not yet been applied to a policing context. Thus, there are scarce theoretical and empirical investigations into the use of circumplex models within police–public interactions. In future research, police training interventions need to be developed according to social psychological theories. For instance, theory-driven interventions, such as those conducted by Hill et al. (2021a), have been based on principles derived from intergroup communication. Likewise, circumplex models should inform interventions and evaluations to improve police officers' communication and behaviour (see Chen, 1990, 2012; Vanderplasschen & De Maeyer, 2014 for details on theory-driven interventions and evaluations).

Key Takeaways
Police Officers

Communication is one of the most important core skills of frontline police officers. It is an essential skill in interaction behaviour and can be used to solve interpersonal problems in police operations, that is without

any resulting physical or psychological harm. Furthermore, successful communication of this kind ensures a trustful relationship between police and the public (McCluskey, 2003; Tyler, 1990). The circumplex model of interpersonal behaviour, that is the Kiesler circle, provides a general framework to explain human interaction behaviour and offers the possibility to visualise communication patterns. The Kiesler circle allows us to predict the probable reactions of citizens following police officers' engagement. Thus, we would like to encourage officers to welcome and to commit to any psychological theory that helps us to understand their interaction behaviour and to prevent escalation and use of force by controlling their own behaviour. Therefore, officers need to familiarise themselves with any cognitive-behavioural factor that affects their interaction pattern with citizens (see Chapter "The Nonverbal Behavior and Appearance of Police Officers in the Police Service" in this volume). The circumplex models of interpersonal behaviour provide a general framework for understanding that behavioural pattern. Besides the practical use of operating resources as "hard skill tools", we encourage police officers to focus more intensely on their "soft skill tools", which include communication, empathy, and self-reflection (see Chapter "Barriers to Effective De-escalation" in this volume; e.g. Fyfe, 1986). They need to define themselves as social interaction designers. As such, they should aim to establish an effective police–public relationship to prevent coercion and to gain trust. Consequently, in the sense of increasing professionalism, police officers should regularly engage in social skill training. In addition, officers need to understand how intergroup dynamics and relations affect communication (see Chapter "Community Relations and Policing: A Communication Accommodation Theory Perspective" in this volume).

Conflict Management Trainers

We encourage practical skills instructors and conflict management trainers to familiarise themselves with the nature of human interaction, including social perception and cognition. Concerning intergroup communication, the impact of intergroup processes on communication and, hence, on mission outcomes of police operations should receive special consideration. For this purpose, police trainers need to incorporate current and state-of-the-art social psychological theories to design

the content of their education and training. According to the Kiesler circumplex model, the behavioural patterns of cooperation, respect, and friendliness are key in eliciting a mirrored behavioural pattern of the interaction partner. The guardian mindset may support the behavioural pattern of high friendliness and moderate dominance. Due to their function as role models for police officer candidates in police studies and police officers in vocational training (Bandura, 1977, 1986), we recommend that trainers willingly adopt a guardian mindset, and advocate and adopt the corresponding behavioural pattern. Therefore, social interaction skills, including mindset, attitudes, and values of police trainers themselves, should be included in personnel selection procedures. Furthermore, trainers are encouraged to commit to vocational training ("train the trainer") with an emphasis on theory-driven education and evidence-based training, including conflict management, social skills training, and self-reflection. Therefore, motivation to learn is key. With a growth mindset (Dweck, 2007), learning success is attributed to effective effort and perseverance. Police trainers who adopt a growth mindset will facilitate both learning processes of their trainees and of themselves.

Police Decision-Makers

We advise police decision makers to be open-minded regarding innovation and progress. Concerning police training of any kind, they need to establish an organisational culture that supports scientific research and education. Specifically, before establishing new training programmes, police decision-makers should insist on both theoretical foundations, including a thorough literature review and empirical evidence of training effects. Police decision-makers need to maintain that practical training is combined with theory-driven education. Thus, research and evidence should be part of the mandatory decision criteria within police organisations. The resource allocation to the implementation of training programmes needs to depend on empirical evaluations. Therefore, instead of subjective conviction, objectively measured training effects need to be included as relevant decision criteria. Given the significance of police trainers as role models, personnel selection and education of police trainers should receive specific consideration. More precisely, teaching

is a compentency that differs across individuals, such that job assignment must depend on science-based personnel selection procedures. Police decision-makers should support the personnel selection of police trainers and commit to police education and training that is based on evidence-based research.

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The Nonverbal Behavior and Appearance of Police Officers in the Police Service

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1   Introduction

Police officers' nonverbal behavior and appearance are at the core of communication in the police service. These characteristics may significantly influence interaction processes between police officers and citizens

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and determine the success of police operations. The mere presence of uniformed personnel in a public space can attract the attention of others without their ultimate involvement in interactions with the police. Probably, the most frequent encounter with the police could be based primarily on perception from a distance, such as watching officers passing by in a patrol car or observing a police operation as a bystander. In addition, the increasing importance of social media favors the evaluation of operations by the public. Especially when considering their uniform and equipment, the outer appearance of police officers on duty is salient (Simpson, 2017, 2018; Thielgen et al., 2020). As soon as officers in action are perceived, social information processing starts (e.g. Brunswik, 1944, 1952). Subsequently, civilians derive a judgment about distal ("remote") characteristics of officers (e.g. "competence", "trustworthiness", or "threateningness") from proximal ("perceptible") cues of that person, resulting in the development of an overall impression incorporating all perceptible characteristics of the deployed police forces. In turn, this can influence civilians' behavior in either a direction of cooperation or conflict.

In the present chapter, we address nonverbal behavior and physical appearance in the police service using a social cognition approach. For several reasons, it is necessary for police officers to reflect on these aspects. First, officers are professional and public individuals, which means they are observed and evaluated by citizens. Therefore, colleagues should reflect on the impact of their nonverbal behavior and physical appearance on citizens' impression and behavior (e.g. by deliberate practice; Staller et al., 2022) to uncover potential blind spots (e.g. Luft & Ingham, 1955). Second, although a depth of interaction is lacking due to a relatively ephemeral and/or shallow contact in many encounters, certain police operations are characterized by very close interactions, in which nonverbal behavior and physical appearance may be particularly important, for example communication with individuals suffering mental disorders. Furthermore, it is essential to build up a positive relationship from the beginning by a positive first impression and rapport via nonverbal behavior and physical appearance (e.g. Thielgen et al., 2022b). Together, our objective is to provide a comprehensive overview of the

impact of nonverbal behavior and physical appearance in the police service as a resource for academics, police trainers, and police officers.

2 Nonverbal Behavior and Appearance

Nonverbal signals are manifold. They refer to the exchange of nonlinguistic stimuli in interactions of individuals in the context of a broad, dynamic ecosystem (Patterson, 2019). The system model of dyadic nonverbal interaction describes the effect of nonverbal signals in interactions between individuals in a social system (Patterson, 1984, 1995, 2019; see Fig. 1). During an interaction, individuals send and receive nonverbal signals simultaneously, that is nonverbal information sent by one person is perceived and processed by the other person and vice versa. Patterson (2019) describes the image of an "interaction cell" in which both interaction partners are nested and mutually influence each other. Thereby, the consequences or outcomes of nonverbal interaction depend on both the individuals and the environment in which the interaction takes place (Patterson, 1984, 1995, 2019). In this model, a central determinant factor is the individual "appearance" of the interaction participants, which may also comprise the individual facets of their nonverbal behavior and outer appearance (cf. Patterson, 2019). In the first step, the appearance of a sender acts as a stimulus for a receiver, which triggers an immediate, automatic perception in the sense of categorization and interpretation. In the second step, the automatic processing can in turn automatically trigger a behavior in the counterpart/receiver. This process is assumed to occur unconsciously and without volitional control (see the concept of the perception–behavior expressway of Dijksterhuis & Bargh, 2001). Together, Patterson's (1984, 1995, 2019) approach emphasizes the importance of automatic processing. This approach is particularly important to police services, as it sensitizes toward the multitude of unconscious factors in police communication.

Impression management theory (Snyder, 1981) suggests that a person may consciously display nonverbal signals to achieve a particular effect on another person. Therefore, the sender needs to be aware of the impact
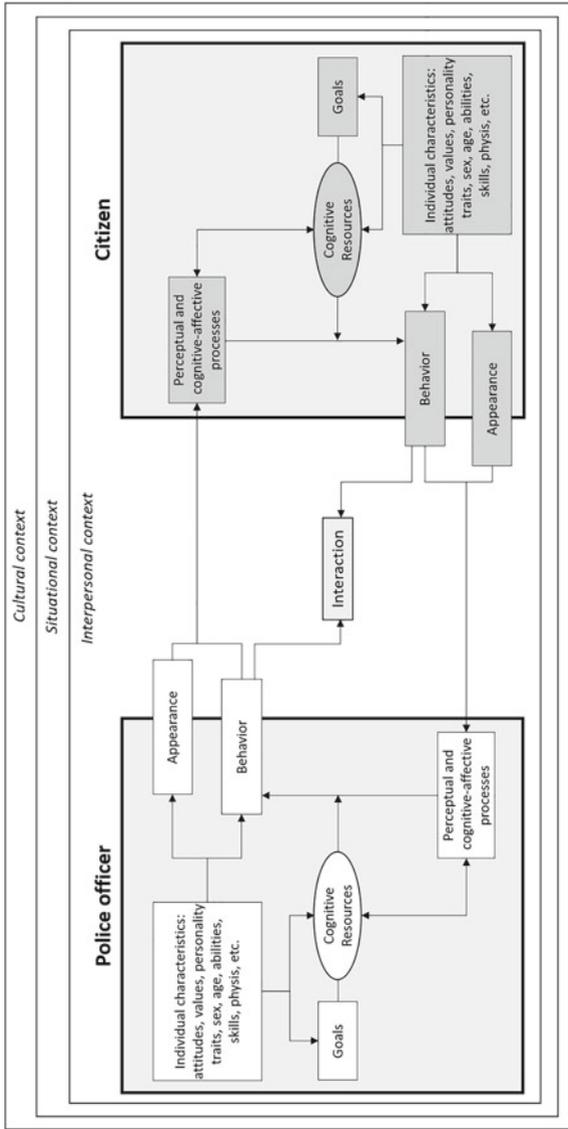
Fig. 1 System model of dyadic nonverbal interaction (*Source* Patterson, 1984, 1995, 2019, adapted to the police context)

of cues of nonverbal behavior and appearance on receivers (Bolino et al., 2016). Together, this approach suggests that nonverbal signals may be consciously displayed to influence others. Indeed, this approach is important to police services, as it highlights that officers may consciously influence civilians by showing nonverbal signals.

Communication accommodation theory is a framework for understanding intergroup communication, that is how people accommodate (or do not accommodate) interaction partners, including the outcomes of accommodative (or nonaccommodative) behavior (see Hill et al., 2022; Giles, 2016). Specifically, individuals may adjust their communication, including signals of nonverbal behavior, in order to influence others. Subsequently, the adjustment of behavior may have consequences, such as attitudes (e.g. perceived legitimacy of the police behavior) and behaviors (e.g. compliance with police instructions), which also includes nonverbal behaviors (Dragojevic et al., 2016). In line with social identity theory (e.g. Tajfel & Turer, 1979), communication accommodation theory distinguishes between interpersonal communication (which is shaped by people's personal identities) and intergroup communication (which is shaped by people's social affiliations, i.e. group affiliations). The interaction between police and civilians can be considered intergroup "par excellence" (Hill et al., 2022, p. 7), due to police officers' appearance (e.g. uniforms) and unique rights. Communication accommodation theory proposes several principal intergroup communication strategies, with high relevance for the police service (Dragojevic et al., 2016; Hill et al., 2022). Accommodation results from people's desire for social approval or respect from others, and subsequently signals of thoughtfulness and respect may be shown. Consequently, in a social interaction, cohesion may be increased, whereas tension may be decreased. Individuals may show a wide range of behaviors to promote accommodation (e.g. perspective-taking, empathy), including nonverbal behaviors (e.g. adopting or complementing others' lexical choices, technical jargon, turns of grammatical phrases and rhetorical structures, or showing nonverbal cues of active listening) (Hill et al., 2022). Nonaccommodation can also result because people do not desire or need the social approval or respect of others, and, thus, signals of insensitivity, disrespect, or group differentiation may be shown. In this context,

in a social interaction, cohesion may be decreased and tension may be increased. Importantly, nonaccommodation may be further distinguished into under-accommodation (i.e. the communication behavior undershoots the level of implementation desired for successful interaction), over-accommodation (i.e. the receiver perceived that a speaker has overshot or gone too far with the level of adjustment necessary for appropriate interaction), and divergence (i.e. individuals accentuate differences with the interlocutor) (Gasiorek, 2016; Hill et al., 2022). Likewise, nonaccommodation may also be signaled by different facets of nonverbal behavior and appearance.

Typically, the following eight facets of nonverbal behavior and appearance can be distinguished (Eaves & Leathers, 2018; Heslin & Patterson, 1982; Knapp et al., 2014; Lorei & Litzke, 2014): (1) environment/context; cues of the face, i.e. (2) eye movements (gaze) and (3) facial expressions (mimic); (4) cues of the voice; (5) body movements, (6) gestures, and postures; (7) proximity and touch; (8) as well as physical appearance. Together, a person's nonverbal signals include expression and appearance, which individuals may either unconsciously show or voluntarily control (Patterson, 2019; Snyder, 1981) or which they may incorporate into communication strategies (Giles, 2016; Hill et al., 2022). Notably, environment/context is an important part of nonverbal behavior since the same behavior may have different meanings depending on the environment/context (cf. Patterson, 2019). For example, a person with a visible tattoo working in a bank may come across as unserious; however, if the person were helping out in a trendy bar, the person may appear particularly attractive to the guests. Moreover, we would consider physical appearance to be an important part of nonverbal signals. In police service, the appearance of officers is characterized by distinctive features, that is the police uniform (color, texture, crest, tie, hat, etc.), command and operational equipment (service weapon, baton, irritant sprayer, "Taser", handcuffs, vest, bodycam, etc.), individual hair and beard styles, body modifications (e.g. tattoos), or body accessories (e.g. piercings) (O'Neill et al., 2018; Simpson, 2017, 2018; Thielgen et al., 2020).

3 Effects of Police Officers' Nonverbal Behavior and Appearance When in Service

The starting point of our discussion is the objectively observable, nonverbal behavior of police officers, including their appearance. In this respect, we will describe psychological processes and their effects on mission outcomes (Eberz et al., 2019; Thielgen et al., 2020).

Perceptions and First Impressions

If the features of nonverbal behavior and appearance are sufficiently salient, they can be perceived and adopted by others to determine their first impression. Studies have shown that an initial assessment of the other person is made after only 100 ms when people meet for the first time (so-called "zero acquaintances") (Back et al., 2010; Nestler & Back, 2013). This process involves a relatively simple evaluation of the counterpart, for example according to characteristics such as attractiveness, sympathy, trust, competence, or aggression (Swider et al., 2016; Willis & Todorov, 2006). Indeed, zero acquaintances are very common in police service, for example in a traffic control situation. Once a first impression has been established, it can significantly bias human information processing. Specifically, information that corresponds to the first impression is processed more easily or even preferentially, whereas contradicting information that could trigger emotional dissonance is neglected (conformation bias; Festinger, 1957; Heider, 1946). Although relationship management becomes increasingly important as the interaction continues (Swider et al., 2016), it would still be beneficial for police officers to make a positive first impression.

In the course of impression formation, cognitive-emotional schemata are activated. Schemata are mental representations that comprise knowledge about persons, objects, or environmental conditions (Fiske & Neuberg, 1990). In the police context, a wide range of schemata exists, including attributes of nonverbal behavior and appearance. For instance, the *uniform effect* is one of the most important schemata.

Specifically, the uniform has an important symbolic function, i.e. it indicates affiliation to the police organization and occupation, the individual status or rank, and the officer's legitimacy (social identity theory; Simpson, 2018; cf. Joseph & Alex, 1972; Timming & Perrett, 2017; Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986). Since officers wear command and control devices, such as weapons, specific schemata such as *weapon focus effects* or *weapon effects* may be activated. Moreover, changeable individual characteristics play a role in impression formation and may trigger cognitive-emotional schemata (*individualization effects*). For example, tattoos may be an expression of personality and individuality ("uniqueness") (Snyder & Fromkin, 1977). Finally, salient nonverbal behaviors may activate different schemata related to approach and avoidance behaviors (*nonverbal behavior effects*; Krieglmeyer & Deutsch, 2013).

Information Processing and Decision-Making

Once cognitive-emotional schemas are activated, they may be further processed in two ways (Chaiken et al., 1989; Evans & Stanovich, 2013; Kahneman, 2011; Pendry, 2014; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986a, 1986b; Pryor et al., 2004). According to Kahneman (2011), one may differentiate "fast thinking" (system 1) and "slow thinking" (system 2). Information processing in system 1 typically occurs rapidly and automatically without mental effort. Usually, this occurs on the basis of spreading activation in a semantic, neuronal network (associative proposition model; Gawronski & Bodenhausen, 2011). The activation of implicit schemata in turn leads to judgments according to "rules of thumb", so-called heuristic judgments. In many cases of daily life, information processing by system 1 leads to correct judgments and thus enables adaptation in a wide range of contexts. However, it is also susceptible to erroneous judgments, for example under time pressure or states of stress. Prejudices and stereotypes can result from low effort in judging. In contrast, information processing in system 2 is performed by conscious elaboration of content, which costs mental resources. Typically, it is accomplished by logical reasoning. The activation of explicit schemata in turn leads

to conscious, rationally based judgments (Gawronski & Bodenhausen, 2011).

Typically, human information processing is based on system 1, that is our actions are primarily grounded in fast and automatic information processing (Kahneman, 2011). People can consciously process information by using system 2; however, this requires an appropriate processing capacity and motivation (Chaiken et al., 1989; Pendry, 2014; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986a; Pryor et al., 2004). In police operations, we would expect that officers' nonverbal behavior and appearance are predominately processed by civilians based on system 1. On the one hand, we assume that citizens typically experience stress during police operations, which means that mental processing could be reduced. On the other hand, we expect that citizens interacting with the police are primarily concerned with the actual case, which is why the motivation to elaborate nonverbal signals should be rather low (Eberz et al., 2019; cf. Thielgen et al., 2020).

Attitudes and Behavior

Attributes of nonverbal behavior and appearance can directly influence judgments about a person's personality (Degelman & Price, 2002; Forbes, 2001; McAleer et al., 2014; Miller et al., 2009). In the police service, specific schemata, that is uniform effect, weapon focus effect, weapon effect, individualization effects, and nonverbal behavior effects, may converge to a general impression. According to Brunswik's (1944, 1952) lens model, individuals are constantly evaluating situations, objects, and people. However, personality traits are typically latent, that is they cannot be observed directly. Thus, when assessing another, a person must rely on observable cues to infer latent personality traits, for example nonverbal signals. Moreover, the stigmatization approach suggests that a person may be negatively evaluated overall, particularly when the other individual displays only one specific negatively evaluated trait, for example showing a strongly discrediting tattoo with content of violence, sexism, or extremism (Goffman, 1963; McElroy et al., 2014).

In summary, the characteristics of police officers' nonverbal behavior and appearance can influence how they are evaluated as personalities by civilians. The overall evaluation of a stimulus object in general or a person in particular is referred to by the term "attitude" (Haddock & Maio, 2014). Considering attitudes toward a person, two basic dimensions of social thought and judgment can be distinguished, that is agency and communion (Hogan & Shelton, 1998; Wojciszke & Abele, 2008). Agency refers to characteristics of competence and assertiveness, that is when people are described as "capable" or "respectable". In contrast, communion refers to features of social connection and social ties, for example "trust" or "sympathy". Another distinction of attitudes could be grounded in motivational psychology—namely, approach and avoidance motives. Approach refers to cues or features that promote motivation to move toward a stimulus object or person, for example if one evaluates a person as "competent", "trustworthy", "likeable", or "respectable". In contrast, avoidance refers to cues or features that promote motivation to move away from a stimulus object or person, for example if one evaluates a person as threatening. From an evolutionary psychology perspective, distinguishing cues of approach and avoidance is crucial in order to detect potential dangers and threats at an early stage of an interaction (McClelland, 1987).

Finally, attitudes can result in behavior. According to the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 2001), people's attitudes are closely linked to their behavioral intentions, which in turn can initiate observable behavior. Indeed, people often behave congruently with their attitudes. For instance, a civilian with an overall positive attitude toward police officers should therefore tend to show behavior aimed toward cooperation. Conversely, a person with a negative attitude toward police officers may be more likely to exhibit behavior aimed at conflict (Eberz et al., 2019). Likewise, communication accommodation theory proposes that a fit between people's (non)accommodative behaviors and others' needs may be crucial, that is a high degree of fit may have beneficial social consequences and vice versa (Giles, 2016; Hill et al., 2022; Thekerar et al., 1982).

Mission Outcomes

Attributes of police officers' nonverbal behavior and appearance may have an impact on mission outcomes, including mission risks (e.g. self-protection) (Eberz et al., 2019; Thielgen et al., 2020). For instance, operational outcomes may include citizens' attitudes toward police officers, the perceived legitimacy of police operations, or the image of the police organization (Simpson, 2019). Finally, such attitudes may result either in cooperation behavior and compliance with police orders or in conflicting behavior, which can significantly affect mission outcomes.

> Situational mission outcomes describe the likelihood that police officers will remain physically or mentally healthy in missions, police missions are completed successfully, mission success is achieved in an efficient manner (less time, less use of command and control devices, less effort, fewer verbal and nonverbal conflicts, etc.) and the overall reputation of the police and trust in the police organization will be enhanced (cf. Eberz et al., 2019).

4   Effects of Attributes of Nonverbal Behavior and Appearance on Attitudes and Behavior

In the last few decades, research has provided a wide range of knowledge regarding the consequences of nonverbal behavior and appearance. Here, we will provide an overview of the effects of specific facets of nonverbal behavior (i.e. cues of the face—gaze and mimic— cues of the voice, body movements, gesture and posture, as well as proximity and touch), including police officers' appearance (i.e. uniform, command and control devices including weapons, accessories, body modifications). Thereby, we will focus on the effects on civilians' attitudes and behavior.

Uniform

The *uniform effect* describes the impact of the police uniform on observers' attitudes and behavior (Johnson, 2001; Simpson, 2019, for a review). It may be grounded on the assumption that wearing a uniform activates a cognitive–emotional schema, which comprises positively valued associations toward police officers, such as "competency", "trust", and "respect". Subsequently, civilians' positive attitudes toward officers should result in their compliant and cooperative behavior while interacting with uniformed personnel. Research has focused on the effects of uniforms—either the uniform as a whole or specific uniform parts—on other people's attitudes and behaviors. Regarding attitudes, research has shown that police officers who wear modern-style uniforms are rated significantly more competent, intelligent, trustable, and cooperative compared to officers in military-style uniforms or civilians (e.g. Singer & Singer, 1985; see Johnson, 2001, for a review). For instance, the recent "police officer perception project" investigated the effects of officers in different situations on duty ("patrol strategies"), for example eating food, being on a bike or in a vehicle (Simpson, 2017, 2018, 2019). It was revealed that officers wearing a uniform were rated more favorably than civilians with respect to (lower) aggressiveness, approachability, friendliness, and reliability. A similar project revealed that uniformed officers were rated more positively than civilians regarding competency, trust, respect, and (reduced) threat level (Schäfer et al., 2019). Moreover, research also investigated the uniform effect on attitudes in specific contexts. For instance, one study focused on the effects of different police officers' appearances in the context of football games, that is officers in the uniform of the protective police, individuals in civilian clothes with high-visibility "Police" vests, individuals in body protection equipment with and without protective helmets, and individuals in civilian clothes (Freundorfer, 2017; Freundorfer et al., in preparation). The results suggest that police officers in the uniform of the protective police were rated most favorably with respect to "competency", "trust", "sympathy", and "respect". Those officers wearing protective equipment were associated with competency and respect; however, they were also

rated less favorably regarding trust, sympathy, and threat level. These effects were even more pronounced when the officers wore helmets. It is noteworthy that the study also determined that pictures of officers wearing high-visibility "Police" vests were rated less favorably than those in uniform. This effect is particularly important since the Rhineland–Palatinate dialogue police appear in civilian clothes and vests (Brunsch, 2013; Freundorfer, 2017; Freundorfer, 2017; Kern, 2017 in preparation). Another study focused on the effects of police officers' appearance on prison inmates' attitudes (Thielgen et al., 2020). Again, the uniform effect could be replicated, that is inmates rated uniformed police officers as more competent and respectable than civilians (cf. Jenkins et al., 2021; cf. Simpson & Sargeant, 2022). Moreover, research has also investigated the specific parts of the uniform on attitudes. For instance, vests are associated with positive attitudes, whereas black gloves, long batons, and sunglasses tend to evoke negative associations (Simpson, 2018). When officers wear vests that are extensively equipped with command and control devices, they appear more competent, organized, and visible but also less approachable, more militaristic, and more intimidating (O'Neill et al., 2018; cf. Blaskovits et al., 2022). Interestingly, ties or neckerchiefs do not seem to have effect on civilians' attitudes (Johnson et al., 2015). Likewise, a study investigated the effects of hats and ties in the USA, summarizing "*no hat or tie required*" (Johnson et al., 2015, S. 158; Simpson, 2018). Regarding behavior, some studies have also linked the uniform effect of police officers with the behavior of civilians. For instance, civilians were more motivated to follow the instructions of officers wearing uniforms (e.g. Bickman, 1971, 1974; see Johnson, 2001, for a review). An important aspect seems to be wearing the police uniform neatly, according to regulations, and "properly" (Bickman, 1971; Wocial et al., 2014). Here, two studies suggest that officers with improperly worn uniforms can trigger intentions of aggressive behavior in their counterpart (Hermanutz, 2013; Hermanutz & Weigle, 2017; Hermanutz et al., 2005; Junk, 2014). Another finding shows that black uniforms in particular are more likely to lead to aggressive behavior among citizens than uniforms of blue colors (see Johnson, 2005, 2013, for a review).

Command and Control Devices

Command and control devices in the police service include the weapon, a baton, an irritant sprayer, a Taser, handcuffs, and bodycams. In this context, one may distinguish two well-established psychological effects. On the one hand, the *weapon focus effect* may attract observers' selective attention toward people who carry weapons (Fawcett et al., 2011; Kocab, 2013; Kocab & Sporer, 2016; Loftus et al., 1987; Steblay, 1992). For instance, one study investigated the gaze behavior of civilians using an eye-tracking technique while viewing pictures of police officers either with their regular gun or with a machine gun. The results suggested that the regular gun hardly had an effect on gaze behavior, whereas the machine gun had a significant impact (Behrens, 2017). On the other hand, the *weapon effect* may activate the cognitive–emotional schemata of aggression and threat among observers (Berkowitz, 1971; Berkowitz & Le Page, 1967) and may subsequently promote aggressive and conflict-related behaviors (Brenner, 2010; Frodi, 1975; Hemenway et al., 2006; Hermanutz, 2013; Hermanutz et al., 2005; Hermanutz & Weigle, 2017; Wormwood et al., 2016; see Benjamin & Bushman, 2016, for a meta-analysis). For instance, one study suggested that police officers strongly equipped with command and control devices might be perceived as less approachable, more militaristic, and more intimidating (O'Neill et al., 2018; cf. Blaskovits et al., 2022). Recently, the Taser has been increasingly adopted by police authorities as a part of their command and control equipment (Landtag Rheinland-Pfalz, Drucksache 17/6054). Since the Taser is not a lethal weapon, researchers have suggested a "*less-than-lethal weapon effect*", that is the aggression-promoting effect should be reduced compared to that of a firearm. Indeed, several studies show that presenting a Taser may reduce violence against officers (Griffith, 2009; Lin & Jones, 2010; Paoline et al., 2012 Taylor & Woods, 2010; cf. DeLone & Thompson, 2009). However, Tasers may also be associated with more violence, particularly when this tool is presented together with other command and control equipment (Paoline et al., 2012; cf. Ariel et al., 2019, for a review). For instance, the recent "City of London TASER Experiment" (Ariel et al., 2019) investigated the effects of Tasers

on (physically and psychologically) aggressive behavior against officers using a randomized controlled study design. The results suggested that assaults against police officers doubled (from approximately 0.21 to 0.44 events out of 1,000 operations), whereas complaints against the police decreased (from nine to five events) (Ariel et al., 2019). Moreover, a recent study by the Rhineland–Palatinate State Police showed that a Taser was used in 139 events during the evaluation period (from December 2018 to November 2019), whereas, in 76% of events, the situation was de-escalated (Ministerium des Inneren & für Sport Rheinland-Pfalz, 2021). Together, the ambiguity in findings might be due to differences in training (Ariel et al., 2019). Recently, bodycams have also been increasingly used. For instance, in one study that queried 118 civilians after police operations where bodycams were used, the results suggested that both the witnesses and accused positively valued their use, since they may promote security, preservation of evidence, and clarification of facts (Hallenberger et al., 2017). Actual studies report conflicting results, that is from less resistance (e.g. Jennings et al., 2017) to more resistance (e.g. Ariel et al., 2015; Ariel & Sutherland, 2016), although there appears to be a great deal of heterogeneity in the findings (see Ariel et al., 2015; Ariel & Sutherland, 2016). Nonetheless, the use of bodycams may be associated with fewer complaints about police work (Ariel & Sutherland, 2017; Hedberg et al., 2015; Jennings et al., 2017).

Hair and Beard Style, Body Modifications, and Body Accessories

We suggest an *individualization effect* based on the assumption that salient alternations of individuals' appearance may activate cognitive-emotional schemata and subsequently affect attitudes and behaviors (Thielgen et al., 2020). Studies on the effect of hair and beard styles have mainly focused on everyday life, but only a few originated from the police service. For instance, Tinsley et al., (2003, S. 45) suggest that civilians apply strict standards to the appearance of police officers: "the results of the present study do not support relaxed grooming standards for police

officers". In other words, the findings revealed that the appearance must match the individual style and appear neat and well groomed. Only a few studies are available on the effect of body modifications (tattoos, etc.) and body accessories (piercings, etc.) in the police service (McMullen & Gibbs, 2019; Tinsley et al., 2003). For instance, two studies revealed that a picture of police officers showing a tattoo are rated less "competent", "trustable", and "respectable" and to be more "threatening" when compared to colleagues showing no tattoo (Schäfer et al., 2019; cf. Hauke-Forman et al., 2021). Moreover, one study also suggested the negative effects of piercings (Schäfer et al., 2019). However, the tattoos of police officers did not seem to have any effect on inmates' attitudes (Thielgen et al., 2020). Research on the relationship between tattoos (or piercings) and behavior is rare (Baumann et al., 2016; Funk & Todorov, 2013; Guéguen, 2013), and studies from the police context are not yet available to our knowledge.

Face

The face plays a significant role in nonverbal behavior since it sends multifaceted and differentiated information. Important information from the face is sent through *eye movements* (*gaze*). Eye movements indicate what individuals are focusing on and to what extent they are following an interaction. Gaze behavior can be a salient nonverbal signal that can even influence the counterpart's sensitivity to fear and aggression (Adams et al., 2003). In the police service, absent or impaired eye contact—for instance, due to wearing sunglasses (Boyanowsky & Griffiths, 1982) or helmets (Freundorfer, 2017)—may be associated with negative attitudes toward police officers. In general, gaze behavior plays a significant role in symmetrical interactions (i.e. interactions at the same hierarchical level) versus complementary interactions (i.e. interactions at different hierarchical levels). On the one hand, gaze behavior can signal that one is listening to an interaction partner and thus promote rapport (Argyle et al., 1974; Tickle-Degnen & Rosenthal, 1990; on the other hand, gaze behavior can be associated with aggression and dominance (e.g. Ellsworth et al., 1972) and thus provoke aggressive behavior

(Ellsworth & Carlsmith, 1973). For instance, sustained eye contact, especially in conjunction with an angry face, can promote aggression in the counterpart (Tang & Schmeichel, 2015). Notably, police officers should be aware that culturally anchored rules about gaze behavior in communication exist (cf. Forgas, 1999).

Important information from the face is sent through *facial expressions* (*mimic*). Facial expressions are the visible movements of the muscles of the facial surface, which are closely connected to the emotional states and moods of the person. From an evolutionary psychology point of view, emotions play a critical role in human life, that is they ensure survival. Basic emotions are considered universal and independent of culture, especially joy, surprise, anger, contempt, fear, sadness, and disgust (Ekman & Friesen, 1982). Notably, there are culturally based rules as to what extent emotions should be shown (cf. Lorei & Litzke, 2014). In communication, facial expressions may serve as feedback by signaling understanding, agreement, or disagreement and may indicate emotional states. However, in some situations, emotions may also be related to provocative behavior in interactions (Ekman, 2010). In particular, true emotions may differ from intentional information, based on muscle movements of the face (Ekman & Friesen, 1982), and thus may be differentiated by the interaction partner (Ekman et al., 1991). Specifically, short-lived facial expressions, such as micro-expressions (Ekman, 1985), are strongly determined by automatic evaluations. In contrast, longer-lasting facial expressions are more controlled by volitional effects (cf. Lorei & Litzke, 2014). However, it is controversial as to what extent spontaneous expressions reliably provide information about intrapsychic processes, for example to identify one's own lies (e.g. Vrij et al., 2019).

A recent study investigated the relationship between facial expressions and the evaluation of police officers by civilians, where a smiling facial expression was more associated with the evaluation of competence, trust, respect, responsiveness, and a low threat level compared to a neutral facial expression (Simpson, 2021). It should be noted that especially angry faces might have a strong effect on others. Depending on the overall situation, both approach and avoidance behavior can be triggered by angry faces (Krieglmeyer & Deutsch, 2013). Facial expressions can be

used to exaggerate or understate emotions, or the expression of emotions can even be neutralized ("poker face") or masked (simulation of another emotion) (Lorei & Litzke, 2014). In the context of communication in the police context, the conscious control of emotions and the associated facial expression is referred to as emotion work (Hochschild, 1983). Important strategies include surface acting and deep acting (cf. Fischbach et al., 2014).

Vocal Cues

Vocal cues comprise audible expressions of the voice, especially pitch, resonance, articulation, volume, tempo, melody, and pauses. The importance of the voice in police work is ubiquitous (see Telser et al., 2021 for a review). Characteristics of voice and the manner of speaking may determine how police officers are perceived by civilians, for example attributes such as competence, strength, assertiveness, and trustworthiness. A clear and sufficiently loud pronunciation is important to being understood; however, being "loud" should not appear to be aggressive. Indeed, a wide range of studies focus on the question of how the personality of speakers is judged by their voice (e.g. Addington, 1968; Aronovitch, 1976; Avery, 2003; Kramer, 1964; Mallory & Miller, 1958; Zare & Flinchbaugh, 2019). Typically, melodious voices are associated with more positive qualities, greater competence, higher attractiveness, and more trustworthiness (cf. Sendlmeier, 2012; Herzog, 1933). The more pleasant the voice seems, the more positive, competent, intelligent, trustworthy, and so on the speaker is assessed to be. Moreover, some studies aimed to link personality traits to vocal cues. For instance, extraverts are more likely to speak louder, faster, more variably, and with shorter pauses compared to introverts (Fay & Middleton, 1942; Funder & Sneed, 1993; Lippa, 1976; Scherer, 1978; Siegman, 1987). Vocal characteristics are also important to assess the cognitive or emotional states of the counterpart, for example anxiety (Harrigan et al., 1994). Like emotions, some vocal expressions of emotion may also be universal (Ekman, 2003; Scherer, 2003). For instance, anger, fear, joy, and sadness have large

vocal commonalities—both within and across cultures (Juslin & Laukka, 2003). When individuals are thinking and their cognitive load is relatively high, this may be reflected in their way of speaking. For instance, it can take longer for the person to answer, they may speak slower and make more pauses (DePaulo et al., 2003; Goldman-Eisler, 1968; Green & Ravizza, 1995), and they seem to speak more monotonously (Kraut & Poe, 1980).

Body Movements, Gesture and Postures, Proxemics and Touch

Body movements refer to physical motions of the person as a whole. This category includes activity, protective and non-protective gestures, arm and hand behavior, body rotation, and foot activity. *Gestures* include individual movements of the hands, feet, and head, that is emblems (fixed signals or symbols with relatively clear meanings), illustrators (hand movements that support verbal messages by underscoring the verbal messages), and adaptors (self-touches, such as "touching the nose" or scratching, which may serve to regulate emotions and are often interpreted as a sign of excitement) (Lorei & Litzke, 2014). *Posture* describes the pose of the body. In general, these signals may express status and dominance (Lorei & Litzke, 2014; cf. Argyle, 2002). On the one hand, they can reflect individuals' attitudes towards the interaction partner; for example, affection can be expressed in an approach of the upper body (Lorei & Litzke, 2014; cf. Argyle, 2002). On the other hand, they can reveal one's emotional state; for example, hunched shoulders can be a sign of fear. In general, body movements, including gestures and postures, can be expressions of both overt and covert hostility (Freedman et al., 1973). A recent study interviewed a sample of $N = 129$ police officers who were survivors of assault, aiming to derive more specific nonverbal signals. Most strongly associated with threatening violence were displaying a "boxer pose", invading another's personal space, putting hands in pockets, clenching hands into fists, and making threatening statements. In contrast, crying, rapid eye blinking, putting hands on hips, and avoiding eye contact were less strongly associated

with violence (Johnson, 2015, 2017). Another recent study investigated cues of police officers ($N = 59$) associated with imminent events linked to fight or flight responses, thereby confirming a six-factor structure, that is gross body movements, tension, sociophysiological cues, physiological cues, tension release, and gestures (Sweet & Burzette, 2018). Notably, the use of gestures is considered to be highly culture-dependent.

Nonverbal behavior also includes the closeness or distance of a person to others (*proximity*) as well as touching people (*touch*). According to Hall's (1966) classical approach, people divide their environment into different zones as a function of their relationship to their interaction partner and culture, that is the intimate zone (<0.6 m), personal zone (0.6–1.2 m), social/consultative or business zone (1.2–3.3 m), and public zone (>3.3 m) (for Western countries; Hall, 1966). In general, the more formal an interaction is, the greater the appropriate distance between the participants. Falling below the appropriate distance can be perceived as a threat, that is a distance reduction can lead to defense or flight responses (Forgas, 1999; Lorei & Litzke, 2014; cf. Baxter & Rozelle, 1975; cf. Rozelle & Baxter, 1978). Touch can be an important nonverbal signal, as it can signal affiliation behavior (cf. McClelland, 1987). It can also help to build a positive conversational relationship ("rapport") (Collins et al., 2002; Tickle-Degnen & Rosenthal, 1990). However, touching is subject to strict cultural conventions; in particular, the extent to which touching is appropriate seems to depend on the relationship between the interaction partners. Touching can also signal dominance, whereby the higher-ranking person may touch the lower-ranking person (Lorei & Litzke, 2014).

Key Takeaways

The nonverbal behavior and appearance of police officers is a central communicative factor in interactions with civilians, which may affect both their attitudes and behaviors. Subsequently, civilians' cooperative or conflicting behavior may have an impact on situational mission outcomes. Therefore, nonverbal behavior and appearance should be an important part of police training, in order to adequately prepare forces for their missions.

Findings on nonverbal behavior and appearance in the police service have important implications for future research. Due to the empirically supported link of nonverbal behavior and appearance to mission outcomes, it seems necessary to continue to systematically research in this field. Here, environment or context might play an important role as a moderator variable. Indeed, the same nonverbal signal may have different meanings depending on the situation (see Patterson, 2019). Thus, the operations of the protective police, criminal police, riot police, special units, and special forces should be differentiated systematically. Moreover, research should also link categories of nonverbal behaviors and appearance with communication strategies as proposed by communication accomodation theory (Giles, 2016; Hill et al., 2022). Finally, it should be noted that training in nonverbal behavior may not only have an effect on the receiver, but also on the senders' psychological and physical processes. This is particularly evident in the discussion about so-called power poses (Carney et al., 2010, 2015; Cuddy et al., 2015, 2018; Körner et al., 2022). Nonetheless, further research, particularly on the significance in the police service, appears to be necessary here (Simmons & Simonsohn, 2017).

Police Officers

Police officers should be aware that their nonverbal behavior and appearance may have a significant effect on citizens' attitudes (e.g. perceived legitimacy) and behavior (e.g. cooperation, compliance):

- According to the system model of dyadic nonverbal interaction, nonverbal behavior and appearance may automatically shape police officers' interactions with civilians. However, in line with impression management theory, cues may be consciously shown to promote interactions in the police service. In this context, communication accommodation theory suggests that securing a fit between communication strategies, including nonverbal behaviors and appearances, and civilians' needs may be crucial to promote mission outcomes.
- The uniform effect suggests that a properly worn uniform has a positive impact on both the attitudes and behavior of civilians, even for different groups (e.g. among prison inmates) and in different contexts (e.g. football games). Body protection equipment could make police

officers appear more threatening under certain conditions, e.g. when eye contact is reduced. Command and operational equipment can bind the attention of the counterpart ("weapon focus effect") and might promote aggression in some circumstances ("weapons effect"), especially if they make police officers appear more militaristic. Other devices, such as the Taser or bodycam, may have graduated effects ("less-than-lethal weapon effect") if its use is made salient. Hairstyle and beard style should appear neat and well-groomed. Body modifications (tattoos, etc.) and body jewelry (piercings, etc.) tend to be associated with more negative attitudes among citizens, whereas they do not seem to make any difference among inmates.

- Signals from the face in particular appear to be significant. Gaze behavior can signal active listening and promote rapport. Conscious use of facial expressions can promote emotion work. Particularly friendly facial expressions are associated with competence, trust, respect, responsiveness, and low threat levels.
- Purposeful use of the voice can promote positive attitudes and cooperative behavior.
- Body movements, gestures, and postures as well as proximity, distance, and touch can be salient in operational situations and influence interactions with citizens. Thereby, de-escalative as well as escalative effects may be possible.

Conflict Management Trainers

Conflict management trainers should consider the effects of nonverbal behavior and appearance on police officers' training and studies:

- Conflict managers should discuss the impact of nonverbal behaviors and appearance in the context of communication strategies, such as accommodation (and nonaccomodation).
- The effects of different facets of nonverbal behavior and appearance on civilians' attitudes and behavior should be systematically addressed, i.e. environment/context, cues of the face—eye movements (gaze) and facial expressions (mimic)— , cues of the voice, body movements, gesture and posture, proximity and touch, as well as physical appearance.

- Due to a close link between nonverbal behavior and appearance on the one hand and mission outcomes on the other hand, conflict managers might also reflect on the impact of attitude, values, and beliefs on trainees and students. In order to be convincing, the congruence of police missions and (non-)verbal communication in particular appears to be an important success factor.
- Environment or context plays an important role, which could moderate the effect of nonverbal behavior and appearance on mission outcomes, e.g. operations of protective police, criminal police, riot police, special units, and special forces. The same nonverbal cue might have different meanings depending on the situation. This issue is particularly relevant in the context of public order policing (Reicher et al., 2004). For instance, the perceptions of the police might change when conflicts arise and specially equipped and protected units of the riot police occur, e.g. in the context of football matches (e.g. Freundorfer, 2017). Here, police dialogue units might play a significant role (e.g. Brunsch, 2013; Kern, 2017) in order to communicate the intentions of police operations, reduce ambiguity, and promote procedural justice.
- The use of video feedback in police training to reflect on nonverbal behavior and physical appearance seems to be particularly effective. In the spirit of reflective practice, it is also recommended that videos of police operations are reviewed and debriefed.

Police Decision-Makers

Decision-makers should give high priority to the nonverbal behavior and appearance of police officers:

- A high-quality police uniform may have a positive impact on interactions with citizens.
- Uniforms and command and control equipment could make an important contribution to the health and safety of police officers.
- Police training and study programs should be supported with sufficient personnel and time for police training, including communication and conflict management training.

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Effective Police Negotiation: Synthesising the Strategies and Techniques that Promote Success Within Hostage or Crisis Situations

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Reviewer: Markus Thielgen

1   Introduction and Contextual Scene Setting

Negotiation is one tactical option that is available to incident commanders when encountering critical incidents (Grubb et al., 2021). Critical incidents requiring intervention by negotiators can vary in contextual and situational characteristics, with negotiators being deployed to a range of incidents, including hostage taking, kidnap and extortion, barricades,

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extortion, and suicide intervention (Grubb et al., 2019a). Whilst negotiation was originally developed in response to several high-profile and poorly managed international hostage-taking incidents (including the hostage-taking event at the 1972 Olympics games referred to as the "Munich Massacre") (Grubb, 2010), the discipline has evolved and is now used to respond to a plethora of diverse critical incidents (Grubb et al., 2019a). Whilst negotiators are trained to respond to a variety of scenarios, by far the majority of the work that they do involves responding to individuals who are experiencing some form of psychological, personal, or emotional crisis, with this often manifesting as threats/attempts to harm the self, as opposed to others. This claim is supported by negotiator deployment data in various countries (Grubb, 2020).

Work by Alexander (2011), for example, reported that 59% of the incidents deployed to by negotiators in Scotland between 2005 and 2008 involved a threat to the perpetrator's life as a result of deliberate self-harm. Similarly, Grubb's (2020) research found that suicide/self-harm intervention was the most frequent deployment category for negotiators and that suicide threats were present in 51% of cases. Qualitative research conducted by Grubb et al. (2019a) equally concluded that most of the work completed by negotiators in England involved responding to individuals in some form of personal crisis with negotiator day-to-day work (i.e., "bread and butter work") consisting of deploying to suicidal individuals. These findings equally resonate with the US data taken from the Hostage Barricade Database System established by the Crisis Negotiation Unit of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (CNU of the FBI) which present a similar Anglo-American picture in relation to the nature and contextual backdrop of negotiation work. Flood (2003, as cited in Vecchi et al., 2005), for example, reported that 90% of critical incidents were non-hostage, crisis situations; Mohandie and Meloy (2010) reported that 77% of cases involved suicidal individuals; and Rogan (2011) reported that suicides, attempted suicides, and barricaded stand-offs accounted for nearly two-thirds of negotiation incidents responded to by law enforcement.

Negotiators respond to a variety of challenging and complex critical incidents whereby individuals are threatening to harm themselves or others (Grubb, 2010, 2020), and therefore often play a role in whether

individuals live or die (Grubb et al., 2019b). As such, negotiators perform an invaluable function within society by resolving critical incidents, with the role helping to prevent numerous fatalities and forming an important part of the modern policing repertoire (Grubb, 2020; Grubb et al., 2019c). Negotiation as a police tool is well-established, with both anecdotal and empirical evidence attesting to its efficacy (Flood, 2003, as cited in Vecchi et al., 2005; Grubb, 2020; McMains et al., 2021; Rogan et al., 1997; Vecchi et al., 2005), and thereby driving the continued implementation of negotiation as an operational police tactic. With negotiation forming such a core function within society, it is important to understand "what works" and "why" in order to develop a strong evidence base for negotiation training and practice and to increase the number of successful negotiation deployments.

2   What Works When Negotiating with Hostage Takers or Individuals-in-Crisis and Why? Dissecting the Negotiation Process: The Journey to Success

When we analyse and dissect the negotiation process and encapsulate the successful journey to negotiated resolution, we can break the process down into key areas of foci. Effective crisis negotiation is essentially characterised by a chronological communicative process adopted by negotiators that focuses on three key components in the form of de-escalation, relationship building, and behavioural influence. Negotiation is one part of a broader interpersonal communication process whereby two interlocutors have to work collaboratively and communicate effectively in order to reach an outcome that meets the demands/needs of both parties, or which results in satisfactory concession by one party to create resolution. When reviewing the growing body of literature relating to negotiation in the context of law enforcement settings, and research that has been completed from non-negotiation disciplinary perspectives to help guide negotiator practice, there are several perennial themes that

occur throughout this body of w2007ork and typically drive under-
standing of negotiation as a police mechanism. These themes include: (1)
the use of de-escalation techniques to reduce subject emotional arousal
levels/distress (see Hammer, ; Rogan & Hammer, 1995; Vecchi et al.,
2005); (2) an emphasis on the development of a relationship between the
negotiator and subject (see Donohue & Roberto, 1993; Donohue et al.,
1991; Grubb, 2016; Grubb et al., 2021; Madrigal et al., 2009; Vecchi
et al., 2005); and (3) facilitation of positive behavioural change in the
subject (see Grubb, 2016; Grubb et al., 2021; Kelln & McMurtry, 2007;
Madrigal et al., 2009; Vecchi, 2009; Vecchi et al., 2005). Each theme
is discussed below with an emphasis on two sub-aspects. The theme is
first discussed and outlined with this initial narrative being followed by
reference to the theoretical underpinnings that inform their application
to a negotiation context, thereby highlighting the evidence base for the
approach.

De-escalation of Intense Emotions

Negotiators frequently encounter subjects who are experiencing extreme
forms of emotion and are emotionally aroused/activated. Subjects within
critical incidents may present with varying levels of emotional intensity,
often displaying what can be described as emotional distress (Hammer,
2007). Emotions displayed within this context are typically nega-
tively valanced (i.e., anger or sadness) (Hammer, 2007), with research
suggesting that negatively valanced emotion (measured via message
affect) intensifies when negotiators attempt to make initial contact with
a subject (Rogan & Hammer, 1995). When subjects are experiencing
emotional distress, this is considered to compromise the subject's ability
to function cognitively, in a manner that enables them to process infor-
mation and effectively problem solve (Hammer, 2007). This can act as
a barrier to successful negotiation, whereby rational decision marking
is necessitated and inherently central to resolving crisis interactions
(Hammer, 2007). Vecchi et al. (2005) refer to this process as the tran-
sition of a critical incident from a state of high emotionality (crisis) to
rationality (problem solving) which is required to facilitate effective crisis

intervention. The subject's emotional state is therefore considered to be a "crucial ingredient in determining the success or failure of a negotiated outcome" (Miron & Goldstein, 1979, as cited in Hammer, 2007, p. 97).

Emotional communication, in the form of verbal and non-verbal exchanges between two parties, can intensify or reduce emotional distress (Anderson & Guerrero, 1998, as cited in Hammer, 2007); and it is this concept that drives some of the initial processes adopted by negotiators when engaging with subjects in critical incidents. When we consider that emotion is inextricably linked to human behaviour, it is common-sensical to assume that negotiators must consider and work with the emotions being experienced by subjects in order to effectively de-escalate heightened emotions/distress and develop an opportunity to engage in normative bargaining with the individual, with the aim of positively influencing their behaviour and peacefully resolving the critical incident. De-escalation of intense emotions is therefore conceptualised as a form of laying the groundwork for the negotiation process; unless this initial work is performed successfully, the negotiation is unlikely to be successful.

Theoretical Principles and Research Underpinning the Need to De-escalate Emotions in Crisis Negotiation Contexts

Research demonstrates that emotional states can influence reasoning processes and *ergo* a person's logical rationality (Pham, 2007). Most intense emotional states (excluding sadness) are associated with high levels of autonomic arousal, which has been linked to impaired working memory (Darke, 1988a; Humphreys & Revelle, 1984, as cited in Pham, 2007). Such a cognitive impairment is likely to have a negative impact on reasoning abilities, as demonstrated by research conducted with anxious individuals. Research focusing on the impact of anxiety on reasoning abilities, for example, has found that, compared to non-anxious individuals, anxious individuals take longer to verify the validity of logical inferences (Darke, 1988b), scan alternatives in a more haphazard fashion

(Keinan, 1987), select an option without considering each alternative (Keinan, 1987), and process persuasion arguments less thoroughly (Sanbonmatsu & Kardes, 1988), amongst others (see Pham, 2007). Similarly, emotional states of anger and disgust have been shown to reduce levels of cognitive processing and increase reliance on stereotyping and other cognitive cues (Bodenhausen et al., 1994; Tiedens & Linton, 2001); and extreme forms of sadness (i.e., in the form of chronic depression) have also been found to interfere with reasoning and effortful processing (Conway & Giannopoulos, 1993; Hartlage et al., 1993; Silberman et al., 1983).

These findings, therefore, suggest that certain emotions, and particularly those likely to be experienced by subjects encountered by negotiators (i.e., extreme sadness, anger, depression) work to prevent individuals from engaging in rational processing of information and reasoning, components that are key to the successful resolution of crisis incidents. In a similar vein, intense negative emotional states have been linked to a reduction in self-control (in various experimental guises), suggesting that those experiencing extreme negative affect experience a shift in priority whereby distressed individuals prioritise the immediate goal of feeling better over other goals (Tice et al., 2001). When translating this across to a crisis negotiation scenario, this suggests that subjects encountering extreme forms of emotion/negative affect are more likely to pursue a goal of hurting themselves, or others, due to restricted self-control mechanisms that may be over-ridden (i.e., trumped) by the desire to take action in order to relieve their distress and feel better. This means that negotiators trying to prevent such action(s) are essentially working against an underperforming cognitive processing mechanism when trying to negotiate with subjects who are encountering extreme forms of emotional affect. Such research from the cognitive psychology and neuroscientific arenas highlights the link between emotion, cognition, and behaviour, implicating the role of emotional de-escalation as a form of preparatory (ground) work required to facilitate rational communication between the two parties.

Emotional de-escalation techniques that can be applied in a critical incident setting can be translated across from the literature focusing

on the de-escalation of aggression and violence within clinical (i.e., secure mental health) and other settings. General verbal de-escalation principles, for example, have groundings in specific psychotherapies, linguistic science, law enforcement, martial arts, and nursing (Richmond et al., 2012). There is a vast body of literature which focuses on techniques used within such settings to resolve conflict, defuse emotions, and reduce aggression and violent behaviours, with much of this knowledge being applied to de-escalation within law enforcement/critical incident management settings and providing the basis for conflict resolution/crisis intervention training used with police officers. Such techniques include a combination of non-verbal, pre-verbal, and verbal strategies/approaches that can be used to reduce emotional arousal and de-escalate a crisis/conflict situation.

Richmond et al., (2012, p. 20), for example, refer to ten domains of de-escalation that can be used with agitated[1] patients (as originally conceptualised as the ten commandments of de-escalation by Fishkind, 2002), with such techniques having application within the negotiation context whereby subjects may be displaying similar aetiologies. These principles are (1) respect personal space, (2) do not be provocative, (3) establish verbal contact, (4) be concise, (5) identify wants and feelings, (6) listen closely to what the patient is saying, (7) agree or agree to disagree, (8) lay down the law and set clear limits, (9) offer choices and optimism, and (10) debrief the patient and staff.

There are equally a variety of specific verbal/non-verbal techniques/behaviours that have been demonstrated to play a role in de-escalating intense negative emotions. The use of a calm, gentle, and soft tone of voice, for example, is considered to be central to de-escalation (Ryan & Bowers, 2005) with tone of voice equally being identified as a means of displaying calmness on the part of the negotiator and reducing the tension of the situation within hostage or crisis incidents (Thompson, 2013). Non-verbal behaviours have also been identified as playing an

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[1] Agitation has been conceptualised as existing on a continuum ranging from anxiety to high anxiety, to agitation, and then to aggression (Zeller & Rhoades, 2010).

important role within de-escalation; which is unsurprising when considering the fact that communication occurs via both verbal and non-verbal channels (Slatkin, 2009), with research suggesting that approximately 90% of all emotional information and more than 50% of the total information in spoken English is communicated not by what a person says, but by non-verbal behaviour (including body language and tone of voice) (Elgin, 1999, as cited in Richmond et al., 2012). Non-verbal communication happens via a variety of channels, ranging from elements concerning our personhood (i.e., how we look or smell) through to our body language (e.g., posture, gestures, facial expressions, position of body and limbs relative to another person, proximity from the other person, eye contact, grooming behaviours) (Slatkin, 2009, p. 22). Appropriate use of specific non-verbal behaviours has been identified as playing a role in effective de-escalation within clinical settings. The ability to select appropriate non-verbal behaviours is grounded in the clinician having an awareness of their own body language (such as eye contact, posture, proximity, facial cues, intentional movements, and touch) (Lowe, 1992). Avoidance of body language or behaviours that may be construed as confrontational or escalatory is key in these contexts, and awareness of a negotiators' own behaviour is the starting point for attempting to select behaviours that are likely to be helpful in serving a de-escalatory purpose (Slatkin, 2009), such as body language that expresses concern for the patient (Carlsson et al., 2000; Johnson & Hauser, 2001; Virkki, 2008) and is congruent with what the clinician is saying (Richmond et al., 2012). Other helpful behaviours include displaying a calm demeanour and facial expression, and avoidance of closed body language or excessive direct eye contact (Richmond et al., 2012). Understanding the role of body language and non-verbal/pre-verbal behaviour on de-escalatory success is salient when applied to negotiator practice, where the initial contact (and behaviour displayed) by the negotiator can influence the first impression formed by the subject and thereby positively or negatively influence the success of the negotiation within the initial phase of the interaction.

3 Relationship/Rapport/ Quasi-Therapeutic Alliance Building

The second core recurring theme within the negotiation literature relates to the importance of relationship building between the two interlocutors/parties involved (i.e., negotiator and subject). It has long been established that development of a relationship between the negotiator and the subject is an important precursor to success within negotiation contexts (Vecchi et al., 2005), with this forming a key component of several models of negotiation used to elucidate and guide negotiator practice: the Behavioural Change Stairway Model (BCSM) developed by the CNU of FBI (see Vecchi et al., 2005); the Behavioural Influence Stairway Model (BISM) (Vecchi, 2009); the four-phase model of hostage negotiation (Madrigal et al., 2009); and the D.I.A.M.O.N.D. model of negotiation (Grubb et al., 2021), amongst others, all highlight the importance of developing a relationship between the negotiator and subject for promoting success. This relationship has been conceptualised as developing "rapport" (Donohue & Roberto, 1993; Donohue et al., 1991; Vecchi et al., 2005) or a quasi-therapeutic alliance (see Grubb et al., 2021) which promotes an environment that enables the negotiator to influence the behaviour of the subject in a positive manner (due to the development of trust in the negotiator on the part of the subject) (Grubb, 2016; Grubb et al., 2021). Negotiators are trained to utilise various techniques to aid the development of a rapport with the subject, with many of these techniques being derived from the literature focusing on developing rapport within psychotherapeutic contexts.

The core technique used by negotiators to underpin relationship development is the use of active listening skills (ALS). The use of ALS is by far the most well-documented technique within the police negotiation literature (Grubb, 2021). Active listening is described as the "foundation of all negotiation" regardless of the type of negotiation scenario (Vecchi, 2009, p. 12) and is conceptualised as a range of multipurpose tools that can be applied to a variety of communicative contexts, including that of police negotiations (Miller, 2005; Royce, 2005). Exemplars of ALS include the use of *emotional labelling*, *paraphrasing*, *reflecting or mirroring*, *minimal encouragers*, *silences and pauses*, *"I" messages*, and

open-ended questions (Miller, 2005), with these techniques helping the negotiator to facilitate disclosure on the part of the subject and to develop an understanding of their needs/demands and to build a picture of why they are in the position they are in (Grubb, 2016; Grubb et al., 2021). Once collected, this information can then be used to inform the negotiation strategy adopted by the negotiator to help promote a negotiated resolution. Understanding the position of the subject is key within negotiation, and we cannot seek to understand such positioning until we have effectively listened to the subject and heard their point of view.

In addition to ALS, negotiators use various person-centred or humanistic principles to facilitate rapport building/development of the quasi-therapeutic alliance with the subject (Grubb et al., 2021). Such principles include the use of empathy, congruence, and unconditional positive regard (Grubb, 2016; Grubb et al., 2021), with these concepts aligning with conditions described by Rogers (1957) as necessary for therapeutic growth and personality change within the person-centred therapy approach. "Congruence" refers to a state whereby the therapist is congruent or integrated in the relationship with the client (Rogers, 1957); "unconditional positive regard" is when the therapist "experiences a warm acceptance of every aspect of the client's experience" (Rogers, 1959, p. 209), and "empathy" refers to when the therapist experiences an empathic understanding of the client's internal frame of reference (Rogers, 1957). Such therapeutic principles have been translated into a negotiation context, with the terms "therapist" and "client" essentially being replaced by "negotiator" and "subject" (Grubb et al., 2021). The use of empathy, in particular, combined with ALS is highlighted as an important strategy that helps negotiators to achieve rapport with a subject; "the application of active listening skills helps to create an empathic relationship between the negotiators and the subject. Demonstrating this empathy tends to build rapport and, in time, change the subject's behaviour" (Noesner & Webster, 1997, p. 19). Use of empathy is conceptualised as a "golden ticket" that enables the negotiator to break through the metaphorical armour of the subject and connect with them on a human level, with negotiators referring to the use of empathy as a mechanism for "building a stairway of trust" or "opening

an instant can of friendship" (Grubb et al., 2021, p. 968). In line with the BCSM, BISM, and D.I.A.M.O.N.D. models of negotiation, ALS are therefore used to demonstrate empathy, which then helps to develop rapport, which can then be used to influence the behaviour of the subject, resulting in positive behaviour change and successful negotiated resolution (Grubb et al., 2021; Vecchi, 2009; Vecchi et al., 2005).

Theoretical Principles and Research Underpinning the Importance of Relationship Building Within Negotiation Contexts

The importance of relationship/rapport building within negotiation was adopted from the psychotherapeutic and counselling literature, with the concept of the therapeutic alliance (TA) being translated into a negotiation setting, albeit in a condensed and time-pressured format (Grubb et al., 2021). ALS have been effectively used by psychologists, counsellors, and therapists to establish rapport and positive therapeutic relationships with clients in counselling/clinical settings (Evans et al., 1989; Hersen & Van Hasselt, 1998) with the strength of the therapeutic relationship often playing a role in therapeutic success. Research that explores the impact of the therapeutic alliance/relationship consistently demonstrates that the quality of the therapeutic alliance is positively correlated to therapy outcome (Horvath & Luborsky, 1993). In their meta-analysis, Horvath and Symonds (1991) synthesised the quantitative research ($N = 24$ studies) linking the relationship between TA and therapy outcome, finding an average (moderate but reliable) effect size of $r = 0.26$, highlighting the influence of the relationship between client and therapist on therapeutic success. These findings have equally been demonstrated with a variety of therapeutic treatments, including behavioural, cognitive, gestalt, and psychodynamic therapies, with a strong alliance making a positive contribution across all therapy types (Horvath & Simmonds, 1991).

More recent meta-analytic work has replicated these findings, both in adult and youth psychotherapy contexts, with the researchers concluding

that the quality of the alliance was more predictive of therapy outcome than the type of intervention adopted (Karver et al., 2006; Martin et al., 2000; Shirk & Karver, 2003). Work conducted by Ardito and Rabbellino (2011, "abstract") in the form of a historical excursus of studies that investigate the link between alliance and psychotherapy outcome equally concluded that "the quality of the client–therapist alliance is a reliable predictor of positive clinical outcome independent of the variety of psychotherapy approaches and outcome measures". As such, the TA has been clearly highlighted as an important, if not necessary, precursor to successful therapeutic change on the part of the client. When we consider the context of therapy and the broadly conceptualised outcomes of therapeutic growth and behavioural change (in some format), it is logical to assume that successful outcome in a negotiation setting (whereby the outcome is behavioural change in a positive manner) is equally related to the success/quality of the relationship formed between the negotiator ("quasi-therapist") and the subject ("quasi-client"). The empirical, anecdotal, and observational research findings attest to such a claim, with research demonstrating that rapport and development of a quasi-therapeutic alliance is vital to negotiation success (Grubb et al., 2021; McMains et al., 2021; Noesner, 1999; Noesner & Webster, 1997; Vecchi, 2009; Vecchi et al., 2005, 2019).

4   Behavioural Influence and Behavioural Change

Negotiators achieve the successful resolution of critical incidents by encouraging and persuading (i.e., influencing) the subject to change their behaviour in a positive manner. Models of negotiation are often grounded in the concepts of behaviour change, with the majority of extant models being structured around such an end goal (i.e., the BCSM [see Vecchi et al., 2005]; the BISM [Vecchi, 2009]; D.I.A.M.O.N.D. model [Grubb et al., 2021]; the Four-Phase Model of Hostage Negotiation [Madrigal et al., 2009]; the STEPS model [Kelln & McMurtry, 2007]), whereby the subject chooses to surrender peacefully (in the case of hostage taking) or to exit the situation causing concern (in the case

of suicide intervention/barricade situations). When we break crisis negotiation down into its constituent parts, and frame it through a lens of human behaviour, the negotiator has the task of trying to get the subject to do something different, that is, to modulate their behaviour in a manner that poses less risk to themselves or others.

In many senses, negotiators are "professional persuaders" (Grubb, 2016; Grubb et al., 2021), where the success of their persuasion skills can often dictate whether individuals live or die. Such a task is not always easy, particularly when considering the context in which negotiation deployments arise. Convincing someone who is in crisis not to follow through with suicidal behaviour or preventing a hostage taker from following through with a threat to kill a hostage are actions often situated within a backdrop of high emotionality and low rationality on the part of the subject, presenting negotiators with a more time-pressured, riskier task than that of a therapist trying to achieve sustainable and incremental behavioural change with a client. Despite such complexities, negotiators can employ a variety of techniques to influence subject behaviour within such settings, with a variety of strategies having been developed from non-negotiation settings and the theoretical principles applied to negotiation practice.

Theoretical Underpinnings for Behavioural Influence Applied to Negotiation Contexts

Models of Behaviour Change

Behaviour change is a desired outcome within many contexts, with particular emphasis on the work performed within clinical/health/ psychotherapeutic settings. There are a plethora of theories relating to behaviour change within the extant psychological literature base; however, one of the models that has been used to inform understanding within crisis negotiation contexts is the Transtheoretical Stages of Change Model (TSCM; Prochaska & DiClemente, 1986). The TCSM provides a framework to conceptualise and understand how people can make changes in their behaviour and what needs to happen in order for

this task to be successful and applied to multiple problem behaviours including addiction/substance abuse (DiClemente, 2003; Povey et al., 1999), smoking cessation (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983), weight control (Prochaska et al., 1992), and offending behaviour (Casey et al., 2005), amongst others. The TCSM proposes that an individual has to progress through a variety of concrete stages in order to make a change in their behaviour (Kelln & McMurtry, 2007). The model also identifies several fundamental aspects that an individual must accept in order for change to be achieved, including that they must (1) be concerned about their current behaviour, (2) be convinced that they need to make a change, (3) develop an action plan for making a change, and (4) follow through with said action plan and maintain the change (Kelln & McMurtry, 2007).

In a traditional (clinical) application, the TSCM suggests that an individual must transition through five discrete stages (*precontemplation*, *contemplation*, *preparation*, *action*, and *maintenance*) in order to achieve behavioural change, with therapists/clinicians attempting to skilfully move the patient through from *pre-contemplation* (where the patient is not aware of any need to change their behaviour) through to the *contemplation* stage (where they are aware of the need to change), then the *preparation* stage (where they plan how they will change) and then the *action* and *maintenance* stages (where they implement behaviour change(s) and try to maintain such change(s)) (Kelln & McMurtry, 2007). Various experiential or behavioural techniques (or processes of change) can be employed by practitioners to encourage movement from one stage to the next (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983), with the stage of change in which the client presents being used to guide the choice of therapeutic intervention in line with the empirical evidence, demonstrating which processes are most appropriate to the presenting stage of change (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1986).

In line with the successful application of the TSCM in a multitude of behaviour change contexts, the TSCM has equally been applied to negotiation processes, with the model forming a key theoretical underpinning component within the STEPS model of crisis negotiation (Kelln & McMurtry, 2007). The STEPS model applies the TCSM to a negotiation context and provides negotiators with guidance for assessing the

subject's stage of change and selecting the most appropriate negotiation techniques to apply to successfully move the subject sequentially through the various stages of change (i.e., Step 0 = pre-contemplation; Step 1 = contemplation; Step 2 = preparation; Step 4 = action). The authors of the STEPS model recognise that in the same way that a patient who has been smoking 40 cigarettes a day—but does not feel that this is a problem or something that they want to change (i.e., *precontemplation* stage)—is unlikely to respond to intervention by a smoking cessation practitioner, a subject who has just initiated a hostage taking event, is acting aggressively, and making exuberant demands with little awareness of wrongdoing, is equally unlikely to simply give up the stronghold and release the hostages (i.e., move to the action stage) immediately. Sympathetically, an individual who initially presents as in crisis with demonstrable distress and displays of suicidal ideation/threats is unlikely to respond to an initial intervention or request from a negotiator to stop what they are doing and transfer to a place of safety (i.e., move to the action stage) immediately. Instead, the negotiator needs to frame their intervention in accordance with the presenting cognitive framework (stage of change) of the subject to promote success.

The STEPS model adopts principles developed via work in the health behaviour change context by considering the role of stage of change, motivation to change, and treatment readiness to inform management techniques used by negotiators (Kelln & McMurtry, 2007). For example, the model highlights the role of motivational interviewing (MI) (see Miller & Rollnick, 2002) within crisis negotiation to encourage subjects presenting in the early stages of change, or those displaying ambivalence towards their behaviour to move from a non-action phase through to a stage of change where they feel ready and able to start changing their behaviour, *ergo* promoting successful resolution of the incident. Techniques utilised within MI, including expression of empathy, development of discrepancy, rolling with resistance, and supporting self-efficacy (Miller & Rollnick, 2002), can, therefore, equally be applied within negotiation as a mechanism of enhancing the subject's motivation to change and, by association, promoting successful resolution. When considering the crisis negotiation scenario alluded to above, techniques such as validating the subject's lack of readiness to change their

behaviour, reassuring and empathising with the subject, and use of active listening to understand the positioning and reasoning behind the subject's current circumstances and potential distress can be used in the initial pre-contemplative phase to help advance the subject from Step 0 to Step 1, where the subject is able to begin to consider and contemplate behavioural change (see Kelln & McMurtry, 2007 for a more detailed discussion of techniques).

The Psychology of Persuasion

Persuasion can be conceptualised as "a conscious attempt by one individual to change the attitudes, beliefs, or behaviour of another individual or group of individuals through the transmission of some message" (Bettinghaus & Cody, 1987, p. 3). Persuasion is used in various settings to achieve different outcomes and involves an *attempt* to influence human behaviour in one way or another. For example, persuasion communication is used to inform marketing and advertising campaigns, sales interactions, and business negotiations (Perloff, 2010), amongst others. The difference between persuasion approaches applied in these settings versus within a negotiation context, however, is the potential consequences/ramifications if the attempt to influence is not successful. Lack of successful persuasion in advertising campaigns may result in poor sales figures and lower revenue, but when considering potential injury or loss of life as the outcome of non-successful persuasion within a crisis negotiation scenario, the high stakes of successful persuasion become obvious.

Research focusing on the interpersonal persuasion strategies used to gain compliance within non-law enforcement settings has enabled translation of the findings into law enforcement settings, with negotiators being able to adopt some of these tactics to achieve successful behavioural change within crisis negotiation contexts. Exemplar techniques of interpersonal persuasion include the foot-in-the-door (FITD) and the door-in-the face (DITF) techniques which have been consistently demonstrated by researchers to have compliance gaining effects

with meta-analytical support (Dillard et al., 1984; O'Keefe & Hale, 1998). FITD works on the basis that an individual is more likely to comply with a second, larger request if they have already acquiesced in a small, initial, former request (Perloff, 2010). Bem's Self-Perception Theory (1972, as cited in Perloff, 2010) can be used as an explanatory tool to account for the success of the FITD technique, whereby individuals who perform a small favour for someone reflect on their behaviour and form a perception of themselves as a helpful, cooperative person. Once this self-perception has been formed, individuals are more likely to acquiesce in a second request, larger request. The role of cognitive consistency has also been implicated within the FITD technique, whereby a rejection of a second request creates dissonance as this goes against the self-perception created after compliance with the first request (i.e., of being a helpful person). A desire to reduce such dissonance therefore creates commitment to behave in a manner that is consistent with their new self-perception (Perloff, 2010) and results in two sequential compliance behaviours. In the context of crisis negotiation, the FITD technique can be used by dovetailing a small request (e.g., "I would feel much happier if you put both hands on the railings while we are talking") with a larger request (e.g., "Thank you for agreeing to hold onto the railings while we are talking; now that we have been talking for a while, how about you come over onto the safe side of the railings and we can continue to talk so I know you are safe and there is no risk of you falling accidentally?").

The DITF technique works in the opposite sense to the FITD technique with a purposefully inflated larger request (likely to be denied) being followed sequentially by a smaller request (scaled down to a more appropriate request than the initial one). Such a technique has consistently and reliably been demonstrated to have compliance effects, with greater compliance success in experimental conditions involving the DITF technique compared to asking individuals to acquiesce to the larger request in isolation (Cialdini & Ascani, 1976; Mowen & Cialdini, 1980; O'Keefe & Figge, 1999). Psychological explanations for the DITF technique are varied but include the influencing role of guilt induced by refusing the first request, with individuals agreeing to the second request

as a mechanism for removing the unpleasant feeling associated with the guilt experienced (O'Keefe & Figge, 1999). Contrastingly, others have suggested that by scaling down a request, the persuader is then perceived to have made a concession which then leads the persuader to reciprocate with their own concession in line with the social rules of "meeting halfway" (Perloff, 2010). Applying the DITF technique via the lens of hostage negotiation, a negotiator may start with an over-inflated request such as "releasing all of the hostages" which they know is likely to be refused, and then follow such a request with a lesser request such as "releasing a couple of hostages" (perhaps those who are elderly or require medical attention).

Principles of Influence and Social Influence Tactics

The concept of social influence and effective persuasion has been heavily researched within the social psychological domain, with research focusing on factors that define an influential message (Chaiken & Trope, 1999), *ergo* making it more effective from a persuasion perspective. Research has explored influence from a variety of disciplinary contexts, including work that has focused on understanding the psychological mechanisms that drive persuasion (i.e., Cialdini's 2007 principles of influence) and work that has focused on compliance gaining via understanding communication styles and patterns, with Kellermann & Cole's (1991) review, for example, identifying a 64-category scheme based on compliance gaining message behaviours or strategies that can be used to influence the behaviour of others (as cited in Kellermann & Cole, 1994). Such research has typically focused on influence at the dyadic level, attempting to identify the strategies or tactics that can be used to influence the behaviour of the receiver of the message in a certain direction. The work of Robert Cialdini, in particular, has provided a wealth of understanding when considering persuasion and influence using psychologically informed mechanisms or tactics, with these tactics having application to a variety of settings and contexts. Via the use of controlled experimental studies, Cialdini (2007) identified and empirically validated six strategies (or

"weapons" of influence) that can be used to persuade others and ultimately influence their behaviour. These strategies include (1) *reciprocity* (i.e., social exchange or the *quid pro quo* principle), (2) *scarcity* (i.e., people desire things if they believe them to be less available), (3) *authority* (i.e., people are more likely to acquiesce in a person in authority), (4) *commitment and consistency* (i.e., people feel obliged to honour promises/ justify decisions they have made; there is a desire to appear ([and be) consistent with actions we have already taken), (5) *liking* (i.e., people are more likely to do a favour for someone they like), and (6) *social proof* (i.e., people are more likely to behave a certain way if they believe other people are behaving (or would behave) in the same way).

Whilst the research focusing on understanding the psychological principles that underpin social influence was originally performed outside of the context of policing or negotiation, the theory developed has been translated across into such settings and negotiators can adopt relevant "weapons" of influence within their practice in order to try and change the behaviour of the subject and promote incident resolution. Mullins (2002), for example, discusses the application of Cialdini's "weapons" of influence to a US hostage negotiation context as a means of achieving influence and compliance; and research conducted in the UK (anecdotally at least) attests to the utilisation of Cialdini's weapons of influence by English negotiators, with the caveat, however, that some of these "weapons" are more applicable/generalisable to crisis negotiation settings than others (Grubb, 2016; Grubb et al., 2021) (e.g., the use of positive police actions/concessions (cigarettes) can be used to demonstrate *reciprocity*; or the use of a demand made by an authority figure (police officer) can be used to demonstrate *authority*) (Grubb, 2021).

Other researchers have explored the concept of influence within the context of crisis negotiation settings, with Giebels (2002 as cited in Giebels & Noelanders, 2004) developing the framework known as the Table of Ten (ToT) on the basis of interviews with European negotiators (and later empirically validated by analysis of dialogue taken from Dutch and Belgian crisis negotiation incidents). ToT represents ten social influence tactics that can be used by negotiators to positively influence a subject's behaviour (or to dissuade a subject from continuing with their current course of behaviour). ToT differentiates between *relational tactics*

(i.e., those related to the sender and his or her relationship with the other party) and *content tactics* (i.e., those related to the content of the message and the information being conveyed to the other party). Each tactic is underpinned by a principle of social influence that has previously been identified within persuasion, influence, and/or compliance gaining research within various contexts. As such, the ToT presents a set of theoretically informed and psychologically reinforced tactics that have been validated within both negotiation and non-negotiation contexts, further attesting to their credibility.

ToT strategies include (1) being kind (principle = *sympathy*) (i.e., using friendly, helpful behaviours), (2) being equal (principle = *similarity*) (i.e., focusing on something that the parties have in common), (3) being credible (principle = *authority*) (i.e., demonstrating expertise or showing that you are reliable), (4) emotional appeal (principle = *self-image*) (i.e., using the emotions of the subject to your advantage), (5) intimidation (principle = *deterrence/fear*) (i.e., threatening potential consequences if the subject fails to comply), (6) imposing a restriction (principle = *scarcity*) (i.e., making something available in a limited way), (7) direct pressure (principle = *power of repetition*) (i.e., exerting pressure in a neutral manner by being firm), (8) legitimising (principle = *legitimacy*) (i.e., referring to what has been agreed on in society or with others), (9) exchanging (principle = *reciprocity*) (i.e., use of concessions; give and take/*quid pro quo* behaviour), and (10) persuasive arguments (principle = *cognitive consistency*) (i.e., use of rational and logical arguments to persuade the subject) (Giebels et al., 2014). Whilst the ToT provides a framework for negotiators to adopt, the fine art of knowing *which* tactic to adopt *when* plays a key role in successful crisis negotiation outcomes, with factors such as culture also playing a role in whether employment of a particular strategy is likely to have the intended outcome (see Giebels & Taylor, 2009). Giebels and Taylor (2009), for example, found that perpetrators from low-context cultures (i.e., Western societies such as Northern Europe and the United States) were more likely to use persuasive arguments (based on logic and rationality) to reciprocate persuasive arguments and to respond to persuasive arguments in a compromising way than perpetrators from high-context cultures (i.e., from collectivist societies such as China and

Russia). Such findings imply that various factors (including culture) may play a role in the success of persuasive/social influence strategies adopted by negotiators.

More generally speaking, there is likely to be a "horses for courses" element to the success of such strategies, implicating the role of both training, operational experience, and intuition to guide strategy implementation by negotiators *in theatre*. For example, whilst the use of intimidation and direct pressure by negotiators may be advantageous in certain hostage taking situations, to demonstrate authority and power, such strategies may be less beneficial when responding to individuals in crisis who may be persuaded more effectively via the use of the *being kind* and *being equal* principles. It is equally important to recognise that inappropriate matching of strategy to situation/subject can potentially result in unintended consequences, particularly when rapport has not been fully or successfully established between the two parties. Whilst the intended consequence of a social influence tactic may be to change subject behaviour in a positive direction, use of an inappropriately matched or timed tactic could result in negative unintended consequences, highlighting the importance of adopting caution when applying such techniques to hostage/crisis situations and further identifying the role of training to equip negotiators to adopt the *appropriate* "tool" from their "toolbox" at the *appropriate* time.

5   Conclusion

The profession of negotiation has clearly learned from and been informed to a significant degree by practice in (or academic investigation into) different disciplines. It is clear that the practice of negotiation has multidisciplinary origins, and this has served negotiators well by providing a platform for the techniques that they adopt within their practice to resolve critical incidents. There has also been a building of momentum in terms of empirical research that focuses specifically on negotiation as an entity, with researchers internationally starting to build an evidence base for the work that negotiators do *in theatre*. This latter work is particularly welcomed by the author, however, it still has some distance to travel

before a "fully-fledged" evidence base can be established for negotiation practice. To achieve this aim, there needs to not only be a greater quantity of research conducted, but such research also needs to be conducted in the *right* way, that is, by using real deployment data, recordings of actual negotiator–subject dialogue, and statistical modelling that helps to establish the predictors of successful negotiated resolution. Until this full evolution of the discipline has been achieved, we will continue to rely upon anecdotally informed or atheoretical principles/models to inform negotiation practice, which, in the author's eyes at least, presents as an incomplete solution to a complex phenomenon.

Key Takeaways
Police Officers

The techniques discussed above clearly have relevance for officers trained as negotiators and provide a "snapshot" synopsis of the salient areas of foci for achieving the successful resolution of critical incidents (in the form of de-escalation of emotions, development of a relationship between the negotiator and subject, and use of persuasion and influence to achieve behavioural change in the subject); however, these techniques equally have relevance to non-negotiator officers/staff (e.g., frontline police officers, first responders, call handlers) who are likely to encounter members of the public who may be in crisis or presenting with aggressive/ violent behaviour requiring conflict resolution skills. Many of the techniques adopted by negotiators can equally be applied within other law enforcement contexts, providing scope for within-disciplinary learning and training.

Conflict Management Trainers

The negotiation principles and approaches discussed above can equally be applied within other conflict management contexts, providing scope for cross-disciplinary learning and training. The growing negotiation literature base presents a wealth of information that can be used to inform other conflict management practices, with an emphasis on adopting tried and tested negotiation techniques within other conflict management arenas. There is therefore scope for conflict management trainers

to learn from the discipline of negotiation and to develop training based on successful negotiation strategies.

Police Decision-Makers

The discipline of negotiation has developed and evolved significantly since its inception in the 1970s; however, there is still some distance to travel before we can achieve an entirely evidence-based discipline of negotiation. This can be achieved by greater recognition of the beneficial role of academic research and proactive collaboration by police departments/services with academics conducting research that can be used to develop evidence-based negotiation, thereby enhancing negotiator success and saving more lives as a result.

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Community Relations and Policing: A Communication Accommodation Theory Perspective

Shawn L. Hill, Howard Giles, and Edward R. Maguire

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Police worldwide face the ongoing challenge of forging positive and mutually beneficial relationships with the communities they serve. However, these relationships are sometimes strained and even violent,

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particularly in certain impoverished, indigenous, or minority communities with a long history of tension and conflict with the police. Research shows that these strained intergroup relationships have a variety of deleterious consequences for both police and the public. For instance, people who do not trust the police or perceive them as fair are less likely to ask for their help, provide them with information, comply with their requests, serve as witnesses in criminal proceedings, support funding for police, and obey the law (e.g., Gau & Brunson, 2010; Tyler, 2006; Tyler & Huo, 2002). Moreover, people who perceive the police as behaving in an unjust manner are more likely to resist, behave violently toward, or seek to harm, the police (e.g., Gerber et al., 2018; Sherman, 1993; Tyler et al., 2018). Thus, preventing and reducing these intergroup tensions can benefit both the police and communities.

Communication plays a key role in mediating intergroup relations and can play a significant role in improving or diminishing them (see Giles, Maguire et al., 2021). Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT), which is frequently invoked in the sub-discipline of intergroup communication (see Palomares et al., 2016), provides an explanation for how and why individuals adjust their communication across various contexts, as well as the social consequences of such adjustments. CAT provides a potent framework for understanding the dynamics of police–community relations. In particular, CAT's focus on how speakers *converge* to or *diverge* from each other illuminates how intergroup communication between the police and the public can improve or diminish these relationships. Specifically, CAT explains and predicts how groups frequently accommodate and converge communication style towards groups they wish to associate with, and will nonaccommodate and diverge away, and disassociate from, groups for whom they wish to maintain social distance. According to CAT, an individual's strategy of convergence or divergence is largely influenced by social status and group membership. In this way, groups use their communication style to associate with groups with whom they wish to belong, or disassociate with groups with whom they wish to create social distance and distinguish themselves as separate from. In this chapter, we will show how theory and research on intergroup communication accommodation can help the police and

the public establish stronger, safer, more meaningful relationships which benefit the quality of life for both groups.

1 Police–Community Relations

As agents of formal social control, the police are charged with enforcing society's laws as well as perceived norms about what constitutes orderly and appropriate behavior (Thacher, 2004; Wilson, 1968). People's attitudes about the extent to which the police enforce those laws and norms equitably, judiciously, and competently tend to vary widely across segments of the community. For instance, in a 2020 US public opinion poll, 91% of black respondents said black people are treated less fairly than white people when dealing with the police (Pew Research Center, 2020). These results are not surprising. A long line of empirical research in the USA has documented racial inequities in police discretionary decisions such as stops, searches, arrests, and the use of force (e.g., Edwards et al., 2019; Geller, 2021; Kochel et al., 2011; Lett et al., 2020; Pierson et al., 2020). These racial inequities exert a heavy toll on police–community relations.

The USA is not alone in grappling with these issues, and race is not the only factor that produces negative attitudes toward the police. Relationships between the police and the public are global issues. Aside from race, some of the principal factors influencing public attitudes toward the police worldwide are age, ethnicity, gender, political affiliation, religion, sexuality, and socio-economic status (e.g., Brüß, 2008; Hahn, 1971; Hasisi & Weitzer, 2007; Miles-Johnson, 2013; Roché & Oberwittler, 2018; Smith & Hawkins, 1973). When segments of the public view the police as inequitable, injudicious, or incompetent, research (as above) suggests that they may be less willing to support, cooperate, and comply with them. Moreover, they may be less willing to obey the law more generally. On the other hand, positive attitudes toward the police are associated with a variety of beneficial outcomes. Thus, it is vital for the police to take public attitudes toward them seriously.

When police and government officials ignore public sentiment about police–community relations, segments of the public sometimes rise up in

rebellion against the police. This was the case in the United States during the Civil Rights era of the 1960s, when African American populations throughout the country rioted in response to allegations of police misbehavior. One scholar termed these events "police riots" since police actions so often triggered them (Stark, 1972). The United States has experienced collective violence in response to controversial police–citizen encounters on many occasions since then, including the beating of Rodney King in Los Angeles in 1991, the death of Michael Brown in Ferguson in 2014, the death of Freddie Gray in Baltimore in 2015, and the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis in 2020 (for an analysis of the latter incident in terms of intergroup communication theory, see Giles, Hill et al., 2021). Martin Luther King (1966) once said "a riot is the language of the unheard". One way to develop more harmonious relationships between police and the public is to engage in genuine dialogue and to ensure that people feel heard. Fortunately, the field of intergroup communication offers a unique set of theories, concepts, and interventions that can help.

Intergroup communication. Policing scholars have long observed that the core technology of policing is verbal: it is police officers talking to people (Maguire, 2003; Manning, 2000; Sklansky, 2011). How police communicate with the public, especially in times of crisis, can increase or decrease the likelihood of conflict and violence. For instance, research shows that when police officers behave in a procedurally just manner—which includes being polite and respectful to those with whom they are interacting—they increase their perceived legitimacy and improve cooperation and compliance (Mazerolle et al., 2012; Pryce et al., 2017). A separate body of research shows that the police can avert conflict and violence with protesters by engaging in dialogue with them before, during, and after an event (Maguire & Oakley, 2020; Reicher et al., 2004). Recent research has also highlighted the significance of police communication *after* an incident involving significant or questionable use of force, such as officer-involved shootings involving unarmed African Americans (Maguire & Giles, 2022). Therefore, when considering evidence-based approaches for improving policing, it seems prudent to consider theory and research from the study of communication (see Giles, Maguire et al., 2021). One important theory in the study of intergroup communication is known as CAT. The following section

introduces the theory and illustrates its relevance for police–community relations.

2   Communication Accommodation Theory

CAT provides a robust framework for understanding how people accommodate (or not) others with whom they are communicating, and the outcomes associated with those accommodative (or *non*accommodative) behaviors. Initially known as "speech accommodation theory", CAT began as a theory, in the early 1970s, of how people alter their speech styles, including their accents, to accommodate others (see Giles, 2016). It is, arguably, the most elaborated, well-researched, cross-disciplinary theory of communicative adjustments people make with each other (see Gasiorek, 2016a). Over the past half-century, it has evolved into a more general theory of communication that includes both the spoken and written use of language, as well as nonverbal communication dynamics (Dragojevic et al., 2016), and its 50-year longevity will be commemorated in a journal special issue in 2023 (Giles, In press). A compelling feature of the theory is that it has been studied across numerous disciplines, cultures, languages, human groups, and animal species, in multiple applied and institutional settings, and under laboratory as well as naturalistic conditions. Recently, the theory has expanded into new spheres of technology, namely, computer-mediated and human–machine interactions and analyses of social media. In addition, CAT has guided the design (and evaluation) of health care interventions from managing patients' workplace violence to patient care, from pharmacists to handling conditions, from aphasia to Parkinson's disease, among others. Furthermore, it is spawning many satellite theories, furthering our understanding in such domains as bi- and multilingualism, police–civilian encounters, acculturation, intergenerational contact, and interability encounters. On December 5, 2022, CAT had been referred to 261,235 times in separate works according to Academia.edu, and has rendered a weekly average of 1409 references in new papers over the last 14 weeks (September 2 to December 2, 2022).

Hence, and of direct relevance for this chapter, CAT has powerful implications for intergroup relations, including the relationships between police and the public (e.g., Giles et al., 2006; Zaiser & Staller, 2015). As a prelude to unpacking CAT, it is important to highlight an early distinction proposed by Tajfel and Turner (1979) between social interactions that are—at their extremes—interpersonal versus intergroup (for a more detailed and historical overview, see Giles & Walther, 2022). Interpersonal communication is shaped primarily by the individual characteristics of the people involved, whereas intergroup communication is shaped primarily by people's group affiliation. The former is associated with people's *personal identities*, whereas the latter is associated with people's *social identities*. The distinction between these two types of identities is often muddied in the real world, with both having a powerful impact on how we communicate. People can interpersonally accommodate others, such as when spouses respond in a sensitive and caring manner to each other's concerns. People can also respond in an accommodative (or nonaccommodative) manner to others based on their *group-based identity* (Soliz et al., 2009). Refining a number of previous schematic models of CAT, one detailing significant *intergroup* processes of it appears in Fig. 1 (for *non*accommodative processes and prejudice, see Giles et al., In press). For instance, when a police officer stops a vehicle, the driver's behavior toward the officer is shaped heavily by the officer's status as a police officer (a group-based identity), and less so on the officer's personal identity. However, and as Fig. 1 indicates, the actions of an officer and driver in the immediacy of the encounter are influenced not only by their interpersonal history (if they should have one), but also by the *historical* and emotive relations perceived to have been prevailing between local (and oftentimes national) law enforcement and particular marginalized social communities.

Over the decades, CAT has been refined and elaborated many times and has been invoked across many languages and cultures, social groups, and applied social settings (see Zhang & Pitts, 2019). CAT has been studied using an array of different methodologies and with respect to the plethora of adjustments speakers can make with others regarding their communication characteristics and styles, such as *converging* towards each other's languages, accents, vocal and visual nonverbal features, and
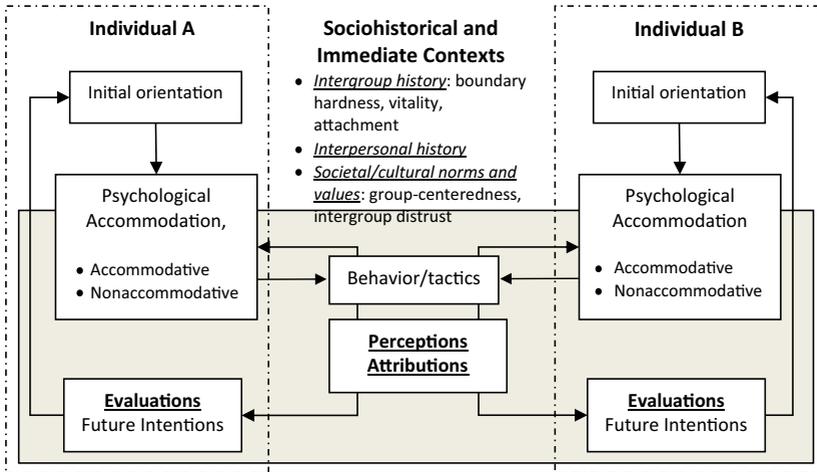
Fig. 1 The intergroup process model of CAT (*Source* After Palomares et al., p. 156)

appearance and dress styles (see Keblusek et al., 2017).[1] Moreover, CAT has had a growing impact on our understanding of the social consequences of communication beyond face-to-face interactions, such as communications involving telephones, computer applications, social media, and other evolving communication technologies (see Dragojevic et al., 2016). CAT has also been applied to an array of institutional settings, including education, health, courts, and law enforcement (for an overview, see Watson & Soliz, 2019). Our primary focus here is on the applications of CAT to policing (see, for example, Giles et al., 2007; Italiano et al., 2021). The interactions between police and the public can be considered intergroup par excellence for several reasons. The group identity of the police is emblazoned on the vehicles driven by patrol officers, and clearly apparent on the uniforms and insignia that officers wear. Even among officers not wearing uniforms, the badge and gun worn on the waist serve as unambiguous markers of group identity. The group

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[1] See, also, the notion of "speech maintenance" (e.g., Bourhis, 1979) where individuals can maintain their valued social identities by not converging to what they believe to be others' communicative practices.

identity of the police is also evident in the unique rights granted to officers—to deprive others of their liberty or even their life.

In what follows, we explore four of CAT's principal intergroup communication strategies. The first of these is accommodation, which we have already discussed briefly and elaborate on in more detail below (for a recent formulation of the so-called Principles of Accommodation, see Dragojevic et al., 2016). The next three are different types of nonaccommodation. They include divergence, under-accommodation, and over-accommodation (for other accommodation strategies, see, for example, Coupland et al., 1988). In general, although there are important contextual caveats, communicative accommodation tends to elicit favorable reactions, while nonaccommodation most often does not (Dragojevic et al., 2016). Accommodation ordinarily results from desiring another's social approval or respect and building relational rapport. Nonaccommodation, therefore, is usually negatively construed by recipients because it signals to them that their approval or respect is not desired or needed (Dragojevic et al., 2016). Accommodation, when properly calibrated—be it reciprocal or asymmetrical[2]—communicates a sense of respect or thoughtfulness. Nonaccommodation communicates a sense of disrespect, insensitivity, or group differentiation. A key feature of CAT is that people accommodate and nonaccommodate based on their own perceptions of other people's needs. Thus, faulty perceptions can lead to the use of accommodative or nonaccommodative forms of communication that do not produce the intended effect. These mismatches can have complex social consequences (e.g., Thakerar et al., 1982). A key component of the theory involves accurately perceiving the need for accommodation or nonaccommodation and then implementing it optimally to achieve the intended effect. Another key component of the theory is the idea of sequential and long-term forms of accommodation and nonaccommodation that accumulate over time (see, e.g., Giles & Smith, 1979; Gasiorek & Dragojevic, 2017; Ferrara, 1991). This idea is especially relevant in certain minority communities where residents

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[2] That is, respectively, when both parties mutually accommodate each other or when only one does so, but the other does not.

perceive a cumulative sense of nonaccommodation from many years of tense interactions and poor relationships with the police (Anderson, 2000; Brunson, 2007).

Accommodation

Harmony between the police and the public provides a host of benefits for both groups. For the police, the benefits include greater levels of support, cooperation, and compliance. For example, in communities where relationships between the police and the public are strained, people are often unwilling to call the police, ask them for help, provide information to them, or serve as witnesses in criminal proceedings (Brunson & Wade, 2019; Desmond et al., 2020). Some research even reports that people who believe the police treat them and their peers unfairly are more likely to view the use of violence against police officers as morally justifiable (Maguire et al., 2018; Tyler et al., 2018). Thus, having harmonious relationships with the public provides the police with several tangible benefits. For the public, harmonious relationships with the police can result in lower rates of violence, greater feelings of safety and security, and other beneficial outcomes (Dawson, 2018; Jackson et al., 2013; Renauer, 2007). Indeed, it has been claimed that even "one positive interaction with an officer can set off a chain reaction of positive perceptions for not only an agency but the entire police profession" (Spotlight, 2021, p. 27).

A long line of research has examined the factors that shape public attitudes toward the police (see Giles et al., 2006; Maguire & Johnson, 2010). However, much of this research has focused on static factors like demographic characteristics that cannot easily be influenced by police practices. However, some research has examined the effect of officers' perceived accommodations with the public on public attitudes toward the police (e.g., Choi et al., 2019). Officers engage in accommodation when they listen closely to what people say to them, try to put themselves in the other person's shoes (a process known as "perspective-taking"; see Gasiorek, 2015), and behave courteously and respectfully in

their interactions with the public. In these ways, accommodation over-laps heavily with procedural justice (Lowrey et al., 2016), but the former concept, we contend, is much more expansive than the latter. Procedural justice refers to how an authority figure behaves during an interaction or encounter with a subordinate. Accommodation occurs in many types of relationships (not just those between authority figures and subordinates), can take place outside of direct encounters between individuals, and involves a wide range of communication genres including spoken language, written language, and nonverbal forms of expression.

For instance, the types of communication accommodative behaviors that can promote cohesion and reduce tension include:

- Adopting or complementing another's lexical choices, technical jargon, turns of grammatical phrase, and rhetorical structures;
- Listening empathically with accompanying nonverbal expressions of this;
- Non-interrupting while legitimating others' argumentative stances, knowledge levels, skills, and goals;
- Reducing power plays and one-upmanship, authoritarian dispositions, and engaging in displays of politeness, responsiveness, and generosity of spirit;
- Expressing concern, care, compassion, and acknowledging deep-seated public fears (and especially with marginalized groups known to have had negative experiences and tense relationships with the police).

Studies have shown that when the public perceives officers as accommodating people in these ways, it leads to improvements in the extent to which they trust the police and report a willingness to comply with them (e.g., Barker et al., 2008; Hajek et al., 2008). Communication training programs for police officers could benefit from incorporating the research evidence on accommodation (and nonaccommodation) strategies. There has been a significant investment in training police officers on how to apply procedural justice theory to their interactions with the public. That training is associated with a variety of beneficial outcomes

(Skogan et al., 2015; Wood et al., 2020). However, accommodation is a more general concept that can be applied to a much wider variety of communicative behaviors (both verbal and non-verbal) and situations, and not just face-to-face encounters, than procedural justice; CAT has recently been the basis for designing interventions in applied spheres, such as education and health (see, e.g., Chevalier et al., 2020; Frey & Lane, 2021; Pines et al., 2021). For example, two recent applications of accommodation to policing in situations which procedural justice judgments were not relevant involved public statements by law enforcement leaders after unarmed Africans were killed by police (Maguire & Giles, 2022) and the police handling of the US Capitol insurrection on January 6, 2021 (Maguire, In press).

Another example of communication training for police that would seem to benefit from CAT, where the police seek cooperation from the public, is during police–suspect interviews. While there is some research in the area of rapport-based approaches to interviews and interrogations (see Brimbal et al., 2021), we are not aware of any research that uses CAT as a framework to inform training programs for the police to accommodate *towards* the suspect in an attempt to gain cooperation during what would likely be described as an intergroup encounter. Police and community relations are less often focused on the relationships between the police and criminal offenders. However, the likelihood of an incarcerated person being reintroduced into society and coming in contact with law enforcement is high. Incorporating accommodative approaches to communication between police and community, even police and criminal offenders (e.g., suspect interviews), would seem to increase the likelihood of future cooperation between both parties.

Interestingly, we speculate that invoking extensive and wide-ranging accommodations like those listed above can, under certain circumstances, result in negative outcomes. In this regard, we introduce the notion here that convergence towards many others can, over time, deplete and drain away one's "accommodative energy". An unfortunate byproduct of this for subsequent encounters with others can be to weaken the adherence to appropriate conversational norms (even toward

intimate others), to cause compassion fatigue (e.g., Turgoose & Maddox, 2017), that would, otherwise, have led to accommodative stances.[3]

Nonaccommodation

Non-accommodative behaviors by the police undermine police–community relations. One of the most common settings in which people encounter the police is during traffic stops. Several studies have examined video footage of such stops featuring actual communications between police officers and drivers. These studies provide insights into how and what social stereotypes may trigger language and nonverbal accommodative behaviors (see Lowrey-Kinberg, 2021). From these investigations, in which police and public behaviors were coded by researchers (methodological limitations notwithstanding), it is common to find less respectful and more nonaccommodative messages being directed at black and Hispanic drivers than their white counterparts. For instance, one award-winning study by Voigt et al. (2017) showed, by means of coders' ratings and computational analyses of transcripts, that officers were more respectful, friendly, formal, and impartial with white than black drivers, irrespective of the severity of the offense or outcome of the stop. In tandem, whites were more reassured (e.g., told "no big deal"), while black drivers were more often told to keep their hands on the wheel (see also Camp et al., 2021).

Another more theoretically intergroup-driven study conducted a content analysis of a stratified random sample of video and audio-recorded traffic stops coded with numerous measures of driver and officer accommodation and nonaccommodation (Dixon et al., 2008; Foster et al., 2022). The study found that black drivers were more likely than

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[3] All this notwithstanding, CAT acknowledges that any decision (conscious or otherwise) to accommodate another can be fraught with risks and uncertainties about just how to behave, thus leading to so-called "accommodative dilemmas" (see, e.g., Gallois & Giles, 1998; Maguire et al., in press). Furthermore, individuals may need to manage multiple (and even competing) goals in some interactions (see Bernhold & Giles, 2022; Wilson, 2019) that can induce them to *simultaneously* converge on certain communicative features, while diverging on others. This balancing act can, in turn, often be somewhat disconcerting and confusing for those involved and, if the circumstances are angstful enough, lead to what has been termed, more emotively, "accommodative turbulence" (Giles, 2008).

whites to experience "extensive policing". For example, black drivers were detained for an average of 2.6 minutes longer than white drivers, were three to five times more likely to be asked to leave the vehicle, and had their vehicles searched for supposedly illegal items more often than white drivers. While each party's accommodativeness predicted the other's level, intergroup encounters (i.e., white officers with black drivers and black officers with white drivers) were coded as more nonaccommodative than those where both driver and officer were of the same racial backgrounds. This intergroup communication climate was characterized by officers listening less, being more indifferent and dismissive, less approachable, and less polite than in intra-ethnic situations. Similar findings have emerged for Hispanic vis-à-vis white drivers (Giles et al., 2012).

Nonaccommodation, as above, can be manifest in a number of ways, and for our purposes here, we introduce only three: overaccommodation, underaccommodation, and divergence. *Overaccommodation* occurs when a receiver perceives that a speaker has overshot or gone too far in the level of adjustment necessary for appropriate interaction (Gasiorek, 2016b) and can be seen as a form of overcompensating. In parent–child relationships, overaccommodation might involve one person perceiving that the other party tries too hard to be their friend, reveals overly intimate personal information, and provides unwanted advice (Speer et al., 2013). An officer may talk to an elderly citizen by using simple words and grammar with a slow speech rate accommodating to what the former believes to be prototypical of members of this social group's cognitive and communicative capacities. Although the officer in this instance may have positive (but misguided) intent in using such language, this type of overaccommodation can harm public perceptions of the police. For instance, in one study where young people rated officers interacting with women more than 70 years old, the officers were perceived as more controlling, of lower status, less caring, and less trustworthy the more overaccommodation they directed towards the elders (Giles et al., 2004).

In contrast, *underaccommodation* is "communication behavior perceived to undershoot the level of implementation desired for successful interaction" (Gasiorek, 2016b, p. 88). This can occur in traffic stops where an officer does not seek, or even seem to listen

to, a driver's account of what happened from their own perspective. Accordingly, the officer's communicative stance is perceived as authoritarian, impolite, and rude (see Lowrey-Kinberg, 2018). Furthermore, there are data suggesting that, for certain socio-demographic groups, *under*accommodation is nine times more prevalent—and hence more ubiquitous and more difficult to communicatively manage—than overaccommodation (Gasiorek & Giles, 2012). It has been argued that underaccommodation may be a common form of miscommunication (see Gallois et al., 2016). While overaccommodation may be unpleasant, in some encounters interactants may still view it as a well-intentioned attempt to be helpful or kind (positive motive), even if executed poorly. In this sense, recipients may be more forgiving in their evaluation of it, and its source, than they would be with underaccommodation. Being seen to communicatively take the perspective of another person is viewed as an accommodative motive that is favorably construed (see Gasiorek, 2015).

Finally, we turn to nonaccommodative messages of which people typically do not enjoy being recipients, and these are forms of communicative *divergence* from others. Divergence can be described as individuals altering their communication to accentuate differences with the interlocutor (Gasiorek, 2016b). In some contexts, the consequences can be telling. For instance, Dixon et al. (2002) found that suspects of color in South Africa who used a Cape Afrikaans accent with a "white"-accented interrogator were judged guiltier of a crime than those who did not diverge so. Yet, it is important to understand (see Giles & Johnson, 1981) that when language forms are a *valued* dimension of, or even a defining characteristic of, a particular social identity (e.g., gang member, homosexual, physically challenged), then there is a strong tendency to accentuate one's communicative identity (i.e., perceived divergence) in search of a positive social identity and ingroup distinctiveness.

One particular construct of communication accommodation which conceptualizes a speaker's objective is *interpersonal control*. This is particularly relevant to the interaction between a police officer and a member of the public because it is a strategy a person uses to establish status

and maintain power in an interaction. When a person engages in nonaccommodative *divergent* communication with an outgroup member (i.e., police–public), the effectiveness of the communication can be compromised (Greenway et al., 2016). For instance, when an officer detains a member of the public for a minor violation (e.g., "jaywalking"), and that interaction results in excessive use of force or an officer-involved shooting, one could envisage the communication between the interlocutors as nonaccommodative and divergent. A classic example is the traffic stop of Sandra Bland in Texas for failing to signal a lane change, which resulted in her arrest and detention, and ultimately her suicide while incarcerated (Lowrey-Kinberg & Sullivan, 2017).

3   Implications

The material we have introduced in this chapter has significant implications for both research and practice. In terms of implications for research, the challenge is to continue building a cumulative body of high-quality research evidence on intergroup communication and accommodation in policing. These approaches to understanding human communication are directly relevant to many of the longstanding issues in policing, including abuse of authority, racial injustice, and police–community relations. At least three types of research are sorely needed. The first is descriptive research on existing accommodation and nonaccommodation practices in policing. Such research would help illuminate the various ways in which police currently engage in accommodative and nonaccommodative forms of communication.

The second, which is more challenging, is to measure the antecedents and effects of these communication behaviors. In terms of antecedents, the contextual features of encounters are likely to have a strong influence on the use accommodation and nonaccommodation. For example, Dixon et al. (2008) found that officers are more accommodating in *intra*-racial stops than in *inter*-racial stops. It is unclear what other factors shape officers' willingness to behave in an accommodative manner with

the public. One possibility is the behavior of the citizen. Accommodation works in both directions, and officers may be less likely to behave in an accommodative manner with people who are being rude or hostile to them. For example, research has consistently found that during police–citizen encounters, the demeanor of the citizen has a powerful effect on officers' attitudes and decisions (e.g., James et al., 2018; Nix et al., 2017; Worden & Shepard, 1996). In terms of outcomes, accommodation could have a variety of different effects on people's attitudes, judgments, and behaviors. For instance, when officers behave in an accommodative manner during encounters, are people more likely to cooperate or comply? If officers are more communicatively accommodative during suspect interviews, are they more likely to gain increased cooperation and disclosure of information? If officers behave in a nonaccommodative manner, are people more likely to resist or rebel? Understanding how accommodation fits into the chain of psychological and behavioral phenomena that occur during a police–citizen encounter is important.

The third is evaluation research testing interventions derived from the study of intergroup communication and accommodation. Research in this genre is just beginning to emerge (see Hill et al., 2021), but a much greater investment in research of this type would help build our collective understanding of how to improve communication between police and the public. For example, Hill et al. (2021) described an intervention called VOICES that was established in a California police department to help improve communication between police and segments of the community with a history of tense relationships with police. VOICES was explicitly based on concepts from the study of intergroup contact and communication. We are unaware of any police training that explicitly includes concepts from the study of communication accommodation. Such training could be promising for addressing the police–community relations crises that unfortunately are highly salient in many communities today.

In terms of implications for practice, the opportunities for developing communication-based innovations are virtually endless. Communicating

with people is a core technology of policing. We need to teach officers how to do it, not based on anecdotes and opinions, but on the science of communication. The most obvious application is to build training courses for police officers based on these ideas. This training could include a course featuring general applications of communicating across intergroup boundaries and incorporating the principles of accommodation into their day-to-day work. This training could also include more specialized applications to specific areas of police work in which accommodation is highly relevant. These courses could include, for example, a focus on communication during traffic stops (Lowrey-Kinberg, 2021; Lowrey-Kinberg & Buker, 2017), during protests (Maguire, In press; Reicher et al., 2004), during interviews, and following controversial events (Maguire & Giles, 2022). Aside from training, it is important to build and test communication-based interventions for improving police–community relations.

4 Conclusion

Communication is the centerpiece of police work. Learning to communicate with people in the community is an essential skill with fundamental implications for the ability of police officers to interact successfully with the people they serve and do their jobs effectively. In this chapter, we have outlined theories, concepts, and research evidence from the study of intergroup communication and accommodation with direct relevance for how police do their work. Police–community relations are currently a highly salient topic with direct implications for the health, safety, and quality of life among both police and community members. Insights from the study of communication can help to improve police–community relations by easing tensions and reducing conflict. Building a strong body of scientific evidence around the application of these communication-based insights to policing could play an important role in improving these relationships.

Key Takeaways
Police Officers

- Poor relationships between the police and the public can challenge police legitimacy, which has deleterious effects on public safety, including less cooperation and compliance;
- Understanding and practicing communication accommodation can help police officers promote cohesion, reduce tension, and create positive outcomes.

Conflict Management Trainers

- Communication mediates relationships and plays a significant role in improving or diminishing them;
- Understanding convergence and divergence processes can improve conflict management.

Police Decision-Makers

- Police departments are more effective when their communities perceive them as legitimate and trustworthy;
- The field of intergroup communication, and more specifically CAT, offers police leaders evidence-based approaches to create more harmonious relationships with the community;
- CAT provides a general framework for training law enforcement on a wide variety of verbal and nonverbal communication strategies.

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Policing Hate Rallies

Edward R. Maguire

Reviewer: Chris Botha

1   Policing Hate Rallies

Hate groups are named entities that have an ideology "centered primarily, or substantially, on hatred or intolerance of specific target populations" (Blazak, 2009, p. 144). After declining for many years, hate crime activity in the United States has become more frequent in recent years (Edwards & Rushin, 2018; Feinberg et al., 2022; Hodwitz & Massingale, 2021). Hate groups have held public rallies in numerous cities to express

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their views, bring attention to their cause, and in some cases to instigate conflict with opposing groups. These rallies are often volatile and
sometimes become violent. They also generate fear and anxiety within
populations who are targeted by expressions of hate (Shodiya-Zeumault
et al., 2021; Stephens, 2018; Williams et al., 2021). Policing these rallies
raises numerous challenges, particularly when rival groups with opposing
perspectives are present (Maguire, 2022a). Based on lessons learned from
several such events in the United States, this chapter explores the challenges that arise for the police during hate rallies. Drawing on these
lessons, as well as theory and research evidence from criminology and
social psychology, the chapter discusses strategies that police can use to
manage conflict, reduce violence, and minimize harm before, during, and
after these events.

This chapter begins by discussing the meaning of hate in both interpersonal and intergroup contexts. It then discusses hate groups and the
kinds of causes they embrace. It then discusses hate rallies, including
their effects on communities and the challenges they pose for the police.
The following section presents case studies of three hate rallies that
occurred in the United States in 2021 and 2022. The case studies
are useful for understanding the challenges that the police face when
handling these types of events. The discussion section then reflects on
the three case studies, together with research evidence from criminology
and social psychology, and offers recommendations for research, policy,
and practice.

2   Literature Review

Hate

What is hate and how does it compare to other negative emotions?
Psychologists distinguish between two types of hate: interpersonal and
intergroup. People feel *interpersonal hate* toward others due primarily to
their perceptions of other people's words or actions. People feel *intergroup hate* toward others on behalf of their own group (the ingroup)

due primarily to other people's status as members of an outgroup.[1] The types of group membership that commonly elicit hate are associated with people's racial, ethnic, religious, tribal, political, or sexual identities. Intergroup hate often results when members of an ingroup feel threatened by an outgroup (Fischer et al., 2018). Intergroup hate is sometimes facilitated by the perception—usually inaccurate—that the outgroup is homogeneous. When people perceive an outgroup as being homogeneous in terms of its negative, adverse, or otherwise objectionable characteristics, they may believe that there "is no merit in trying to correct or improve the outgroup's behavior" (Fischer et al., 2018, p. 314).

Hate differs from other negative emotions such as anger, frustration, jealousy, and contempt (Fischer et al., 2018; Fitness & Fletcher, 1993; Rothenberg, 1971; van Doorn, 2018). For example, anger is premised on the assumption that someone else's behavior can be changed (Fischer et al., 2018). Hate makes no such assumption.[2] Hate implies "a stable perception of a person or group and thus the incapability to change the extremely negative characteristics attributed to the target of hate" (Fischer et al., 2018, p. 310). Hate involves demonizing an adversary, which "intensifies the sense that violence is justified and reduces inhibitions about violence and killing" (Beck & Pretzer, 2005, p. 72). Research shows that people who feel a sense of intergroup hate experience greater levels of emotional arousal than people who feel other negative emotions such as dislike, anger, and contempt. They also "feel more inclined toward attack-oriented behaviors" (Martínez et al., 2022, p. 46). Intergroup hate serves as the psychological foundation of hate groups.

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[1] The terms *ingroup* and *outgroup* are used frequently in social psychology to refer to one's own group (the ingroup) and other people's groups (outgroups). As noted by Brewer (2007, p. 695), "group-based attitudes, perceptions, and behavior arise from basic cognitive categorization processes that partition the social world into ingroups and outgroups".

[2] For example, van Doorn (2018, p. 321) argues that the goal of anger is "to restore or change the (unjust) situation" whereas the goal of hate is "to hurt or eliminate the hated target".

Hate Groups

Determining what constitutes a hate group is sometimes contentious. Most hate groups in the United States are affiliated with right-wing extremist movements. Although there are many left-wing extremist movements, these tend not to fall within the typical definitions of hate groups.[3] As a result, right-leaning critics tend to view hate group designations as biased against conservative causes and values. For example, some critics view the Southern Poverty Law Center as having a leftist bias in assembling its well-known list of hate groups in the United States (O'Neill, 2020; Swain, 2018). Right-wing pundits also argue that left-leaning groups like Antifa and Black Lives Matter should be designated as hate groups (Montgomery, 2018).

These debates hinge on the definition of "hate groups". The Southern Poverty Law Center (2020) defines a hate group as "an organization or collection of individuals that—based on its official statements or principles, the statements of its leaders, or its activities—has beliefs or practices that attack or malign an entire class of people, typically for their immutable characteristics." Woolf and Hulsizer (2004) define a hate group as an "organized group whose beliefs and actions are rooted in enmity towards an entire class of people based on ethnicity, perceived race, sexual orientation, religion, or other inherent characteristic" (p. 41). Blazak (2009, pp. 157–158), defines a hate group using the following four criteria:

1. A hate group is a collection of people who hold a common disdain for one or more large categorizations of people;
2. A hate group is a named entity;
3. A hate group desires the oppression of one or more large categorizations of people based on historical circumstances;
4. A hate group must act on its collective disdain of other groups.

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[3] Left-wing extremist movements are also significantly less violent. For example, according to Sullaway (2016), "right-wing and left-wing extremist groups are not comparable in the degree of risk created for human life … left-wing extremist attacks tend to be directed toward property. In contrast, right-wing extremist attacks are frequently lethal" (p. 97).

All of these definitions involve a collective sense of intergroup hate for outgroup members based primarily on perceived differences between the hate group and those groups that it targets. The Southern Poverty Law Center (2022a) estimates that there were 733 hate groups in the United States in 2021. Although this is a large number, research by Chermak et al. (2013) finds that most groups are small and do not last very long. They tend to "struggle initially and die young" (p. 211).

The presence of hate groups is associated with a variety of negative outcomes. For instance, people exposed to hate speech can experience psychological and emotional harm (Hawdon et al., 2014; Leets & Giles, 1997; Shodiya-Zeumault et al., 2021; Stephens, 2018; Williams et al., 2021). In addition, research shows that counties with one or more far-right hate groups have more ideologically motivated far-right homicides (Adamczyk et al., 2014). Also, although the far-right claims to "back the blue", several recent events have made it clear that some hate groups are willing to behave violently toward the police so as to achieve their objectives (Maguire, 2022b; Owen, 2021). According to Gruenewald et al. (2016, p. 217), many people on the far right "demonize police by characterizing them as governmental foot soldiers, enforcing policies that threaten Americans' rights and liberties". For that reason, police officers sometimes serve as "practical targets of extreme far-right violence" (p. 217).

Hate Rallies

In this chapter I use the term "hate rallies" to refer to two different types of events. The first is when hate groups decide to hold public events to showcase their viewpoints. The second is when such groups decide to "crash" public events held by other groups whose viewpoints they find objectionable. Both types of hate rallies are common and there is very little social science research on either of them. One study found that white supremacist rallies increase the rate of subsequent cross-burnings in the locales where the rallies are held. Since the suspects in these cross-burnings typically do not have ties to white supremacist groups, the

authors concluded that "white supremacist rallies encourage fellow travelers to engage in this form of racial intimidation" (Green & Rich, 1998, p. 263). The findings from this study suggest that hate rallies may inspire people not affiliated with hate groups to act out on their hateful impulses by behaving in a violent or destructive manner. If this is true, it suggests that limiting hate rallies may prevent subsequent hate crimes so inspired. Further research is needed to test this hypothesis.

Hate rallies tend to promote conflict and violence in other ways as well. For instance, such rallies often include clashes between attendees and counterprotesters. Daniels (1997) notes that "white supremacist rallies are often more heavily attended by [counterprotesters] than supporters, sometimes by ratios of 10 to 1" (p. 4). Violence between attendees and counterprotesters becomes especially worrisome when one or both groups is armed. As noted by Tirschwell and Lefkowitz (2018, p. 174), the presence of heavily armed attendees at the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville "terrorized peaceful protesters and made the job of law enforcement more difficult". Recent hate rallies in the United States have also involved attendees and counterprotesters carrying a variety of weapons other than firearms, including chemical agents, paintball guns, sticks, and knives. These events represent a significant challenge for law enforcement agencies who are seeking to balance multiple objectives: honoring people's First Amendment rights, preventing violence, and preserving officer safety.

3   Three Case Studies

Phoenix, Arizona

On April 17, 2021, the National Socialist Movement (NSM) held a rally in Phoenix, Arizona. The Southern Poverty Law Center (2022b) describes the NSM as a neo-Nazi group that idolizes Adolf Hitler and embraces "violent antisemitic rhetoric" and racist views. It is one of several groups to embrace the well-known 14-word slogan: "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for White children" (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2022b). The NSM has grown smaller and

less active in recent years. For example, data from the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED) Project show that from 2017 to 2021, the NSM held an average of 3.4 events per year. An earlier study of the NSM showed that it held 22 events in 2006 and 30 events in 2007, which suggests a reduction in the frequency of events (Anti-Defamation League, 2008). Although the NSM has a smaller footprint than it once did, its rallies still represent a significant threat to public safety and a challenge for the police. In 2010, the group held a rally in Phoenix that led to violence between attendees, counterprotesters, and police (Sayles, 2010).

The NSM applied to the state of Arizona for a permit to hold a march at the Arizona State Capitol in Phoenix on April 17, 2021. The permit request was denied because the group did not have the required insurance. Nonetheless, the group proceeded with its plans to hold an event. The NSM distributed flyers advertising the rally. The flyers contained a statement that announced: "Teaching Conservatives how to address violent Antifa—one event at a time". Counterprotesters also distributed flyers containing statements like the following:

- Laugh these Nazis out of town.
- Bring your own tomatoes.
- No Nazi's, no KKK, no fascist U.S.A.
- Unite against hate, stop the Nazis!
- Defend Phoenix.

One of these flyers featured a fist breaking a swastika, raising concerns about whether counterprotesters might behave violently during the rally.

The Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) worked closely with police and other partners to develop a carefully crafted set of responses to the rally. It and other religious organizations discouraged their members from counter-protesting at the rally. It also hosted a webinar to encourage local media to cover the event "in a way that wouldn't escalate or amplify extremist messages" (Raz, 2021). Prior to the rally, the Phoenix Police Department assigned detectives from its Community Relations Squad (CRS) to coordinate with the JCRC and the NSM. The rally was expected to be held at the Arizona State Capitol.

The Arizona Department of Public Safety installed two layers of fencing (inner and outer layers) to keep rally attendees and counterprotesters away from the buildings on the Capitol grounds.

On April 17th, the day of the rally, counterprotesters began to mobilize at the State Capitol. However, the NSM changed the venue at the last minute, holding the rally at Eastlake Park instead. Eastlake Park is located about three miles east of the Capitol and is a notable landmark for the city's African American community. The city's website describes Eastlake Park as "the focal point of African American history in Phoenix for much of its existence".[4] The park is located across the street from the Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church, which has been described as "the thriving heartbeat of the African-American Christian community in Phoenix" (Gilger, 2019). The change in venue meant that counterprotesters had mobilized to a different location to where the rally was held.

About 15–20 people attended the NSM rally. Many were wearing black Nazi uniforms with a red armband containing a swastika. They shredded an Israeli flag and spoke loudly about how whites are superior to blacks and Jews. Other than rally attendees and journalists, the park was relatively empty. A small group of African American men were sitting in the park when the rally began. Attendees shouted ethnic slurs and challenged the men to fight. Some of the men yelled back at the attendees, but there was no physical violence. CRS detectives stationed themselves near the park and observed the rally from within their vehicles to avoid drawing attention to themselves. The Phoenix Police Department also staged tactical officers nearby (and out of sight) in case violence erupted, but the event was peaceful and there was no need for them to mobilize. NSM members left the area after only about 40 minutes. Shortly after, counterprotesters began to arrive. Some of them were wearing costumes, with some dressed as superheroes. Many were wearing makeshift body armor and/or carrying shields, suggesting that they were prepared to defend themselves. They remained only briefly because the rally had ended and the attendees had already left. While CRS detectives remained in contact with NSM members before, during, and after the rally, they remained on the periphery during the entire event and did not

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[4] https://www.phoenix.gov/parks/recreation-and-community-centers/centers-e/eastlake.

make any arrests. State Troopers at the Capitol also did not make any arrests because the counterprotesters who mobilized there never came face-to-face with rally attendees and thus there was no conflict.

Portland, Oregon

On August 22, 2021, the Proud Boys held a "Summer of Love" rally in an empty K-Mart parking lot in Portland, Oregon. The Anti-Defamation League (2022b) describes the Proud Boys as a "right-wing extremist group with a violent agenda. They are primarily misogynistic, Islamophobic, transphobic and anti-immigration. Some members espouse white supremacist and antisemitic ideologies". The Proud Boys often hold controversial rallies that attract counterprotesters. These rallies frequently involve violence between participants and counterprotesters, and in some cases between participants and police. The Proud Boys played a key role in the attack on the US Capitol in Washington, DC on January 6, 2001. On June 6, 2022, a federal grand jury in Washington, DC indicted five members of the Proud Boys for seditious conspiracy and other charges associated with their role in breaching the Capitol (USDOJ, 2022).

The Summer of Love rally was scheduled on the one-year anniversary of violent clashes between far-right activists and counterprotesters at a "Back the Blue" rally in downtown Portland the previous year (Shepherd, 2020). Before the Summer of Love rally, Police Chief Chuck Lovell and Mayor Ted Wheeler issued statements encouraging counterprotesters to stay away. Mayor Wheeler, who also serves as police commissioner, noted that police would take a hands-off approach to the rally: "You should not expect to see police officers standing in the middle of the crowd trying to keep people apart. People need to keep themselves apart and avoid physical confrontation." Chief Lovell added that "it's not necessarily the best tactical approach to have officers wading into situations where groups are clashing with each other" and that police would conduct follow-up investigations and make arrests later as needed.[5]

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[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wWBLnFFykDk.

In the absence of police, violence erupted between rally attendees and counterprotesters. According to an affidavit filed later by prosecutors, "several members of the crowd were wearing tactical, armored vests and other equipment and were openly carrying paintball guns and other weapons including baseball bats, explosive devices, bear spray, firearms, and other blunt weapons" (Oregon v. Toese, 2022). Rally participants used these weapons to assault counterprotesters and vandalize vehicles. One participant fired a handgun at counterprotesters in downtown Portland, one of whom returned fire (Haas & Levinson, 2021; Mackey, 2021). Though police did not intervene in the intergroup conflict as it unfolded, they did make some arrests later.

According to one journalist, in adopting a hands-off approach to the event, the Portland Police Department:

> abandoned its duty to secure the streets and officers made no effort to stop assaults on residents by members of the far-right Proud Boys gang, many of whom had traveled from around the country to live out their fantasies of attacking anti-fascist protesters. (Mackey, 2021)

Despite widespread criticism of the Portland Police Bureau's approach to the event, Mayor and Police Commissioner Ted Wheeler initially defended the approach, arguing that with "strategic planning and oversight" he and the police department "mitigated confrontation between the two events and minimized the impact of the weekend's events to Portlanders" (Bernstein, 2021). Following significant backlash from the public and the media, Mayor Wheeler later acknowledged that they had chosen the wrong approach (Koch, 2021).

Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

On June 11, 2022, members of the Patriot Front planned to disrupt the North Idaho "Pride in the Park" event in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center (2022c), the Patriot Front is a "white nationalist hate group that formed in the aftermath of the deadly 'Unite the Right' rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, of August

12, 2017". The group advocates for the creation of a white ethnostate that embraces the identity of its European founders and excludes others "who are not of the founding stock of our people".[6] One group that tracks extremist activity notes that the Patriot Front increased its training in "close-quarter" combat and related activities five-fold in 2021 (ACLED, 2022). The planned attempt to disrupt the event in Coeur D'Alene was part of a more general upsurge in right-wing extremism targeting the LGBTQ community in the United States (ACLED, 2022; Hart et al., 2022; Romano, 2022).

On the day of the Pride in the Park event in Coeur D'Alene, a concerned citizen called 911 to report a group of men engaged in suspicious activity. According to police reports, the caller reported "a large group of similarly dressed masked individuals armed with shields entering the back of a U-Haul van heading toward downtown Coeur D'Alene". Acting on this information, Coeur D'Alene police stopped the truck and discovered 31 Patriot Front members inside. Police also discovered a smoke grenade, shields, metal sticks, helmets, and an operational plan outlining what the group planned to do at the event (Edwards, 2022). Based on their investigation, they arrested all 31 occupants and charged them with conspiracy to riot, a misdemeanor (CPD, 2021).

During a press conference held after the arrests, Coeur D'Alene Police Chief Lee White noted that his agency had received numerous anonymous phone calls from people angry about the arrests and threatening his life and the lives of his officers. Chief White emphasized that, in making these arrests, his agency was not taking sides; instead they were attempting to behave in a neutral manner in an effort to promote public safety:

> It's not our jobs here as law enforcement to take sides or support one viewpoint or the other. We are required to remain completely apolitical and neutral. And that's what we do in our jobs, and that's what we did in this enforcement action. I would tell you that whether the van was loaded full of people who are part of that far right hate group, or if it was

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[6] https://patriotfront.us/manifesto.

loaded with people from Antifa, for instance, who wanted to come here and riot. It would be handled exactly the same.[7]

As this chapter was being finalized, five of the defendants had already been convicted and criminal cases against the remaining defendants were still in process. (Che, 2023).

4   Discussion

Intergroup hate serves as the glue that binds together hate group members and gives them a sense of mission. That hate is typically targeted toward outgroups based on their racial, ethnic, religious, tribal, political, or sexual identity. Intergroup hate often results when an ingroup feels threatened by one or more outgroups (Fischer et al., 2018). For instance, research evidence shows that, in the United States, the number of hate crimes rose substantially during President Donald Trump's administration. Feinberg et al. (2022) found that President Trump's divisive rhetoric "activated attentive whites' sense of threat and prejudice toward racial, ethnic, and religious minorities and encouraged a number of people to act on that threat" (p. 263). Research has also found that white supremacists react to perceived "threats in their environment that challenge traditional white privilege" by mobilizing in the form of rallies, marches, protests, and riots (Boutcher et al., 2017, p. 697; also see Hubbard, 2005; Pardy, 2011; van Dyke & Soule, 2002). The Anti-Defamation League (2022a) estimates that there were 109 "white supremacist events" in the United States in 2021, up from a mean of 75 over the previous four years.

These types of events have a variety of deleterious effects. They promote fear and anxiety among the targets of hate, they bolster hate crimes perpetrated by people unaffiliated with hate groups, they often turn violent, and they represent a significant challenge for law enforcement. This chapter has presented three brief case studies of recent hate rallies held in the United States by different groups. They include an

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[7] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gy9JZ6OTWro.

NSM rally in Phoenix, Arizona; a Proud Boys rally in Portland, Oregon; and a planned Patriot Front mobilization in Coeur D'Alene, Idaho. The nature of these events, and the police response to them, differed widely. But all three events involved hate groups seeking to express their sense of intergroup hate in public settings. Together with theory and research from the study of crowds, these case studies are useful for deriving lessons about policing hate rallies.

Theory and Research from the Study of Crowds

When police respond to crowd events, they often rely on generic civil disorder or riot control *tactics* that tend to inflame tensions rather than de-escalate conflict and prevent violence. In focusing so intently on tactics, police often do not rely on carefully thought-out *strategies* for handling crowd events (Maguire & Oakley, 2020; Maguire, 2022a). Strategy development involves establishing clear goals and planning how to achieve them (Slevin & Pinto, 1987). In other settings, such as business and the military, it is well known that tactics should flow from strategies (Larsdotter, 2019; Nutt, 1989; Slevin & Pinto, 1987). One of the principal shortcomings in the response of US law enforcement agencies to crowd events, including hate rallies, is a tendency to focus on tactics in the absence of clear and coherent crowd management strategies (Maguire & Oakley, 2020; Maguire, 2022a). Thinking strategically about these events involves determining the optimal level of *accommodation* to provide to groups seeking to express their speech and assembly rights. Research shows that too little accommodation can increase the likelihood of conflict because crowds may rebel against what they perceive as an unjust or oppressive exercise of authority by the police. At the same time, too much accommodation can result in an overly permissive environment in which crowd members believe they can violate the law with impunity (for a discussion of the concept of accommodation as applied to crowd events, see Maguire, 2022b).

The most important goal when policing hate rallies and other types of crowd events is the preservation of life. This includes the lives of rally

attendees, counterprotesters, police officers, and bystanders. To accomplish this goal, the police must be thoughtful about how best to prevent violence and the injuries that are likely to result from it. Violence at these events often erupts between different groups, including attendees, counterprotesters, and the police. It is well known that violence is more likely when rival protest groups are present. The presence of multiple groups with different identities, interests, and perspectives—including a hate group, a rival group, and the police—dramatically increases the likelihood of violence between one of more of the dyads involved in the event (Maguire, 2022a). Another fundamental goal when policing crowd events is to preserve and protect people's speech and assembly rights, which in the United States are enshrined in the First Amendment to the Constitution. Put differently, the police must not only be seen as tolerating, but as actively seeking to *facilitate* these rights (Maguire & Oakley, 2020). Depending on the setting, other strategic goals may also be relevant, including preventing crimes against property (vandalism, theft, and arson), ensuring the flow of traffic for emergency vehicles (police, fire, and emergency medical services), and other goals associated with maintaining public safety and public order.

To accomplish these goals, the police can draw on a large body of scientific evidence from the study of crowd psychology and behavior (e.g., Drury & Reicher, 2000, 2009; Stott & Drury, 2000). For instance, they can build thoughtful, multifaceted strategies based on the evidence-based framework developed by Reicher et al. (2004) for policing crowd events. The framework includes four elements: education, facilitation, communication, and differentiation. *Education* refers to the need for the police to educate themselves about the social identities, behaviors, and goals of the groups expected to attend the event, including hate groups and those who are there to protest against them. This often means developing a greater capacity for intelligence gathering to ensure that they are not taken by surprise by crowd events, including hate rallies. *Facilitation* refers to the need for the police to be viewed by groups attending the event as actively seeking to help them observe their right to assemble and speak their mind in a peaceful and lawful manner. Any attempt by the police to stand in the way of people's speech and assembly rights will trigger conflict and potentially violence. *Communication* refers to the

need to communicate with the various segments of the crowd before, during, and after an event. *Differentiation* refers to the need for the police to customize their response to crowd events, treating those who are breaking the law differently from those who are behaving in a peaceful and lawful manner. A common mistake is for the police to take enforcement action against an entire crowd in response to the illegal conduct of only a few crowd members. This is a recipe for escalating tensions and triggering conflict and violence. The four-part approach recommended by Reicher et al. (2004) provides a useful strategic framework for developing thoughtful police strategies for handling crowd events, including hate rallies.

Lessons from the Three Case Studies

The three case studies that I provided earlier in this chapter provide a useful context for thinking about how the police should respond to hate rallies. In Phoenix, the police attempted to communicate with various stakeholders prior to the rally. They worked closely with local faith-based groups, including the Jewish community, to help these groups plan their response to the rally. To help prevent violence, the Phoenix Police Department's CRS actively encouraged these groups not to attend the rally and not to engage in face-to-face counter-protest activity. CRS detectives also sought to reach out to other groups, including anti-fascists, but were unsuccessful in doing so. They contacted members of the NSM prior to the event to make sure they understood the group's plans and could respond accordingly. This outreach very likely helped prevent violence on the day of the rally. For example, when the rally ended and the NSM members had left the area, one of them realized he had lost his telephone. He notified a CRS detective that he was coming back to the park to find his phone. Because counterprotesters had already begun to arrive at the park, the CRS detective encouraged the NSM member not to come back. Instead, the detective told him that the police would find the phone and bring it to him. This decision prevented NSM members and counterprotesters from coming face-to-face with one another and likely prevented conflict.

In Portland, the mayor and police chief chose not to deploy officers at a Proud Boys rally where counterprotesters planned to mobilize. The two groups ended up in a violent conflict with one another that resulted in injuries and property damage. Members of both groups fired handguns at one another in downtown Portland. Fortunately, nobody was hit. The dangerous decision not to deploy police to this event violates one of the most basic principles of policing rival protests, which is ensuring that opposing groups remain physically separated from one another (Maguire, 2022a). This is a lesson that was learned most dramatically during the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville and has been applied to good effect in many cities since then. The decision not to deploy officers to the rally also raises a compelling ethical issue. The decision appears primarily motivated by concerns about officer safety. While officer safety is a vital consideration, choosing not to deploy officers to an event that is likely to turn violent is tantamount to saying that officer safety is *more* important than public safety. The decision not to prioritize public safety is why the mayor and police chief faced such intense backlash after the rally.

In Coeur D'Alene, police did not have intelligence ahead of time to indicate that the Patriot Front was planning to disrupt an LGBTQ pride event. Yet, a concerned citizen noticed the group mobilizing at a nearby hotel and notified the police, who responded quickly, making a vehicle stop that resulted in 31 arrests and which clearly prevented violence. The Patriot Front is known to engage in flash demonstrations "in which group members appear and protest quickly, then leave" (Bombard, 2022). This approach often takes local officials by surprise. It is difficult for the police to prepare properly for events like this when they do not have sufficient intelligence that violence may be imminent. Thus, one question that arises is to what extent federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies could adopt more robust intelligence-gathering and intelligence-sharing practices on hate groups to enable local officials to prepare for such events.

The three case studies are useful for thinking about some of the challenging issues that arise when policing hate rallies. Whenever possible,

police should educate themselves about the groups that plan to mobilize in their communities, including hate groups and those that plan to engage in counter-protests. This is easier when groups announce their planned events publicly (as in Phoenix and Portland) and more difficult when groups engage in flash demonstrations (as in Coeur D'Alene). When the police are aware that hate rallies are being planned, they should work closely with rally organizers and counterprotesters to facilitate their speech and assembly rights, while also clearly articulating what types of behaviors will not be tolerated. The goal is to establish an optimal level of accommodation that seeks to avoid undesirable outcomes. Under-accommodating these groups may generate a defiant reaction that increases the likelihood of conflict. Over-accommodating these groups (as in Portland) may create an overly permissive environment and send an implicit message that anything goes. The goal, as explained well by Chief White in Coeur D'Alene, is for the police to be seen as neutral. Otherwise, rally attendees and/or counterprotesters are likely to turn their wrath toward them. This increases the likelihood of conflict and violence and magnifies officer safety concerns.

Whenever possible, the police should seek to communicate with hate rally and counter-protest groups before, during, and after the event. One of the questions that arises frequently in the police response to crowd events is *who* will be responsible for this communication. Many police departments do not have this function built into their organizational structure. In the Phoenix Police Department, however, the CRS is responsible for communicating with community groups, including protest groups and event organizers. Thus, when the NSM announced its rally in Phoenix, experienced CRS detectives reached out to the NSM and other community groups in an effort to learn about their plans. This enabled the police to develop a more informed response to the event. All police departments should have a structure in place that makes it clear who is responsible for communicating with protest organizers. Communication is one of the most effective means for preventing conflict and violence between police and crowds (Maguire & Oakley, 2020; Reicher et al., 2004).

5   Conclusion

Hate groups hold public rallies to express their views, bring attention to their cause, and, in some cases, to engage in violence against groups holding opposing views. These events have a variety of deleterious effects on communities and the police. For communities, they run the risk of becoming violent and they generate fear and trauma among those who are targeted by expressions of hate. For the police, hate rallies raise numerous challenges, including officer safety issues. These challenges are intensified when crowd members are armed and rival groups are present. This chapter has presented three case studies of hate rallies held recently in the United States. Drawing on these studies, as well as theory and research on the study of crowds, we have discussed how the police can develop more informed, strategic responses to hate rallies. Such responses are crucial for preventing conflict and violence and honoring people's speech and assembly rights.

Key Takeaways
Police Officers

- Adopt a neutral stance toward hate rally attendees and counter-protesters.
- Try to avoid engaging in any behaviors that turn the animus of rally attendees or counterprotesters toward the police.
- Try to establish an optimal level of accommodation for rally attendees and counterprotesters. Under-accommodating them may instigate conflict and violence. Over-accommodating them may establish an overly permissive environment and foster a sense of lawlessness.

Conflict Management Trainers

- Teach officers how to communicate with hate rally attendees and counterprotesters in a neutral manner;
- Teach officers how to avoid instigating unnecessary conflict with hate rally attendees and counterprotesters;

- Teach officers about basic crowd psychology principles to help them make good choices when working at crowd events, including hate rallies.

Police Decision-Makers

- Assign a specific unit with the task of communicating with groups involved in crowd events. Ensure that the people selected for this function are calm, emotionally intelligent, and skilled at interpersonal and intergroup communication. These people will serve as the bridge between the police agency and the crowd.
- Drawing on principles from crowd psychology and lessons learned from previous events, develop comprehensive strategies for responding to crowd events, including hate rallies. Ensure that all tactics used for handling these events are consistent with the underlying strategies.
- Set a clear tone for the agency about the importance of accommodating groups participating in crowd events. Ensure that personnel understand the importance of finding a middle ground between under-accommodating and over-accommodating. Under-accommodation can promote unnecessary conflict and violence between police and groups seeking to express their speech and assembly rights. Over-accommodation can establish an overly permissive environment that promotes a sense of lawlessness.

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Police Conflict Management in South Africa: An Autoethnographic Reconnaissance

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1   Introduction

South Africa has a violent history. This history can be followed through mainly four phases: the pre-colonial, the colonial, and the post-colonial (in two parts) phases of the country's existence (see, for instance, Botha, 2020).

The lived experiences of the baby boomers, those born between 1946 and 1964 (South African Actuarial Association, 2018) may hold the possibility of new perspectives. The boomers were the result of societal developments after World War II. They would enter, and eventually

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spent their lives, in a rapidly changing world. They were not themselves involved in the conflict of the war, but they were to get involved in a war of another kind. Many of these boomers became police officials in South Africa. Those still alive are all now between 58 and 76 years old. The last ones will officially retire from the organised police structures, such as the South African Police Service (SAPS), within the next two years since the obligatory retirement age is 60. The rest have all retired, as I am, and are now trying to make sense of a world that looks drastically different to the one that they were used to.

When I first read Altbeker's (2007) rendition of South Africa's violent crime crisis, I experienced an *ad nauseum* recall of police conflict management in the country. And I wondered: what could I learn from police conflict management in South Africa from my baby boomer peers, police associates who could surely tell me a story that could assist me in my learning process? This chapter is a result of my need to learn.

2   Background

With the four phases of South Africa's history as structure, this part of the chapter describes the country's historical policing context, a motivation for the study and the research question.

South Africa's History: The Four Phases

The Pre-Colonial Phase

According to Botha and Hewitt (2020), the Khoisan can be regarded as South Africa's first people. The Khoisan lived in the time of the oral tradition (Botha & Hewitt, 2020, p. 7) in the great Karoo area of South Africa, about 200,000 to 100,000 years ago (Parkington, 2006, p. 9). The noun "police" was first described in France in the 1530s (Botha & Hewitt, 2020, p. 7). During their research though, the authors could find no evidence that the term was known to the Khoisan (Botha & Hewitt, 2020, p. 7). However, De Jongh (2016, p. 85) describes "law and order"

in our first people communities. That system of law and order would, however, be challenged by the European view of "policing" when the Dutch brought this system to the Cape of Good Hope (today's City of Cape Town) during 1652.

Given De Jongh's (2016, p. 85) remark above, a brief view of the "law and order" system of South Africa's first people warrants some closer attention. The governance style was participative, which explained the participative leadership style (albeit mostly male orientated) with a rather nominal chief's role (Botha & Hewitt, 2020, p. 11). Given the egalitarian mode deduced so far, the latter probably rested on a strong need for concurrence amongst the leaders. Rules were created and enforced, and certain offences led to the death penalty (De Jongh, 2016, p. 85). While conflict certainly would be visible within this human environment, the available evidence creates a picture in which excessive violence is not seen. Since South Africa's gene pool was influenced by East African people more than 1300 years ago (De Jongh, 2016, p. 14), findings from a study in Rwanda may be quite applicable to this discussion. In the Rwanda study, Botha (2020, p. 33) finds evidence of a centralised monarchy (taken to be indicative of the African Feudal system), family prominence, emphasis on gender and religious sensitivity, consultation between the leader (whose authority was visible, and who was the ultimate provider) and the elders, and the availability of a warrior capability.

Whereas the written tradition claims the policing history of South Africa to only have started around the Dutch settlement of 1652, it is clear that some form of societal safety, which was closely linked to governance structures and leadership competence, was present in early South African society.

The Colonial Phase

With the arrival of people from other parts of the world on the shores of current South Africa, information on the local population and the prevailing circumstances were cascaded through the environments of the visitors. Dias seafarer, for instance, traded with the local people

at today's Mossel Bay in 1488 and wrote about the encounter (De Jongh, 2016). Colonialism would come later, preceded by the settlement of the Dutch in 1652, with the (second) British occupation in 1806. South Africa's colonial master, Great Britain, did not develop the ideal of the "British Bobby", the unarmed, caring person to go to when one had trouble (Emsley, 2009) in South Africa. Rather, they gave us a centralised, coercive, military-styled, armed force which protected the interests of the colonial power (not the safety and security of the people in the colony) through brutal repression and a corrupt policing style (Alemika, 1998; Francis, 2012; Rauch & Van der Spuy, 2006). Not much was to be seen in terms of a police–community relationship, and the quest to oppress focussed on public order policing, not crime prevention and investigation (Botha, 2020, p. 35). In fact, during this phase of South Africa's history, the San (also called Bushmen who, with the Khoi, formed the Khoisan) were brutally extinguished. According to Khoisan and Afrikaans expert Dr Willa Boezak, the Dutch Reformed Church (see NGK in my story below) was still engaged in discourse as recent as 1913 on whether the Bushman had a soul (Boezak, 2021).

In general, the evidence suggests that South Africa's colonial experience harboured a much harsher environment as far as human violence is concerned, compared to the pre-colonial environment.

Some findings in the Rwanda study corroborate this theme (see 'The Pre-Colonial Phase' above). In the participants' views, the police supported the "divide and rule" tactics of the colonial ruler by running a system of parallel administration which appeased local leaders while the colonial power remained superior. The police were oppressive, exploitative, and discriminatory (Botha, 2020, p. 34).

In fact, a reading of the literature provides adequate evidence that colonial policing can be described by four dimensions: first, colonial policing agencies were of the nature of a military force, rather than of a civilian service; second, these police forces actively kept the colonial regime in power by (third dimension) oppressing the local opposition to the regime, even in the most brutal manner; and, fourth, these police forces were actively participating in criminality themselves (see, for instance, the rendition in Botha, 2020, p. iv).

The Post-Colonial Phase: *Apartheid*

Once in power, the National Party (NP) government proceeded with a policy of the separate development of South Africa's people (Botha, 2017, p. 12). This policy would eventually become infamous worldwide for the Afrikaans word *apartheid*, which means "separateness". In terms of this policy, the NP government passed a series of laws (later to become known as "the *apartheid* laws") in quick succession. These laws were designed to keep people apart. Some of these laws were: the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act of 1949 (prohibiting "white" and "non-white" people from marrying); the Immorality Act as amended in 1950 (prohibiting "white" and "non-white" people from having sexual relations); the Population Registration Act of 1950 (which provided definitions of "race", distinguishing between "black", "coloured", "Asian" and "white" people); and the Group Areas Act of 1950 (which restricted each "race" group to its own residential and trading areas, often forcibly removing "non-whites" from designated "white" areas; Botha, 2017).

To the NP government, these were "legal" laws since they were passed by Parliament. Equally, it was expected that the South African Police (SAP) would enforce these laws. Obviously, and expectedly, this became another major source of conflict in the country.

The Rwanda study found that the new African leadership was aimed at regime protection and the oppression of the regime's opposition. In fact, the new leadership made use of the colonial regime's methods because it was useful to them (Botha, 2020, p. 34). This was also applicable, and indeed visible, during *apartheid* rule.

The Post-Colonial Phase: Democratic Government

At the time of writing this chapter (November 2022) South Africa is in trouble. According to the Annual Report of the SAPS for 2021–22 (South Africa, 2022b, pp. 211, 317), crime is steadily rising while investigative results are steadily decreasing; detective capacity also is diminishing in favour of a crime prevention capacity (which capacity is not preventing crime).

Botha (2021) has argued that the democratic government, which came to power through South Africa's first all-franchise election (April 1994), represents a historiography of falsitas. Indeed, he asks: *quis custodiet ipsos custodes?* Given the damning information presented to South Africa's "Zondo Commission" (Haffajee, 2022; South Africa, 2022a), it will indeed be difficult to determine who will protect the people of South Africa against the protectors. This view is becoming more evident on a daily basis: a combined study by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) and the Government and Public Policy Thinktank found that elite contestation within the ANC is spilling over into the rest of society (Chipkin et al., 2022). Rather than a revolt of the poor, the rise in conflicts since 2009 is more likely the result of revolts in the ANC. The rise of protests from 2018 shows that President Cyril Ramaphosa does not have the same authority in the ANC as did former President Jacob Zuma, nor is he able or prepared to use violence and patronage to the same extent as his predecessor, and this situation may worsen. The study states that there has been no mass uprising of the poor and of working people in South Africa. Instead, those most prepared for dissent and violence are ruling party members contesting positions and seeking opportunities in the party and in government (Chipkin et al., 2022). The results of work done by academics and investigative journalists in South Africa (Botha, 2021, pp. 55–56) are damning (see, amongst others, Dolley, 2021; Pauw, 2017, 2022). Yet none of the alleged perpetrators have been taken to court, and none of the alleged perpetrators have taken any of the journalists to court.

Notes on the History

From the history, political dominance has clearly played a determining role in the development of South Africa's conflict. Two issues come into play: first, when one looks at the law-making role of the political structure, it is clear that not all laws passed through Parliament were legal, especially if one argues from a viewpoint of democracy. This raised huge possibilities for conflict. Second, the policing of conflict is closely linked

to the usefulness of the police to the wishes of the dominant group in South African society.

It is also clear that the four dimensions of colonial policing had clearly been carried over both to the *apartheid* era as well as to the democratic era according to the four dimensions outlined above.

Motivation for the Study

It will be argued elsewhere in this chapter that autoethnography is not visible in abundance in South African research output. It is non-existent in South African police and policing research. An exception is found with this chapter. This study aims to understand whether an autoethnographic exploration of police conflict management in South Africa can benefit the body of knowledge on this theme. To this end, a research question was formulated:

What can we learn from the baby boomer experience of police conflict management in South Africa?

3   Description of Method

Autoethnography as Method

To me, as I experienced life, *autoethnography* became the link, the nexus, between historiography, autobiography, and ethnography. Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2010, p. 345) describe autoethnography as:

> an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (*graphy*) personal experience (*auto*) in order to understand cultural experience (*ethno*). A researcher uses tenets of *autobiography* and *ethnography* to do and *write* autoethnography. Thus, as a method, autoethnography is both process and product.

Schoeman (2019, p. 52) follows the same line and explains autoethnography (translated from the original Afrikaans) as "a research strategy through which personal experiences (*auto*) are systematically

analysed and described (*graphy*) to understand cultural experiences (*ethno*) better".

Why Autoethnography? Choosing Autoethnography as a Research Method for This Study

The view expressed by Ellis et al. (2010, p. 345) about an autoethnographic researcher using "tenets of *autobiography* and *ethnography* to do and *write* autoethnography" needs some attention when the South African situation is analysed. Some *ethnographic* work has been done (see the bibliography published by Van der Spuy & Banchani, 2013) and the ethnographic work by Faull (2018) contributed to the body of South African policing knowledge. Equally, some *autobiographical* policing work can be found in South Africa. Van der Spuy (2013) published on the personal narratives of police officials in South Africa, and I have 18 autobiographical titles in my personal library.

But it is safe to say that we have a dearth of autoethnographic work on policing in South Africa. Although it is visible in the international research output of four decades (Schoeman, 2019), it is not equally visible in South Africa. I searched for Auto-ethnography OR autoethnography OR ethnography AND police OR policing OR law enforcement AND SA OR general during December 2021 and found 38 sources available in South African university libraries. However, only one of these sources referred to policing in South Africa, and this was a study in the United Kingdom on a policing theme in the city of Durban, South Africa.

A reason for this situation may be found in my experience of half a century of policing in South Africa, where many police officials see research as the domain of university lecturers and full-time researchers and not of "mere" police officials. I have often encountered this phenomenon during the facilitation of learning, during data collection periods for research purposes, and during discussions with prospective post-graduate students. This chapter therefore also aims to provide police officials with a way of looking at the use of autoethnography as a research method (see the discourse in Botha, 2020, pp. 13–14):

police officials are involved in the observation, description, analysis, and explanation of phenomena in society in search of the truth by utilising a systematic process. To this effect one can find an etymological link between the French word *rechercher* ("to investigate") and the Dutch word *rechercheur* ("detective", or "crime investigator"). These two words can also be found in the English language ("researcher"). The etymological relationship between the investigator of crime and the researcher is therefore confirmed. Police officials should therefore not be hesitant to execute the observation, description, analysis, and explanation of phenomena in society (ontology) in search of the truth (episteme) by utilising a systematic process (method).

By utilising autoethnography, I hope to focus some attention on this approach. South Africa's past and present is an emotional, conflict-ridden, and heartsore environment that, in my opinion, could benefit from some honest and tough personal interrogation and reflection.

The Research Narrative of This Chapter

In this chapter I will attempt to understand, and then describe, my own lived experience in the environment of police conflict management in South Africa as analysed systematically through the lens of my ethnic background. The journey may be unpacked as follows.

Two Genres

Two autoethnographic genres, namely analytical autoethnography as well as evocative autoethnography, are combined in this chapter (Schurink, Jordaan et al., 2021, pp. 320–321). Analytically, I cover the understanding, the interpretation, the construction of meaning, and the hermeneutics of being. Evocatively, I deal with the knowledge that the contents of the chapter bring about strong emotional responses. Images, feelings, and memories, even some feelings of loss and nostalgia, appear.

Four Stories, Working Collectively

I perform the above with a pattern of four stories, which do not appear in any specific numerical order in the text, as used by Schoeman (2019) in South Africa. The first story is my personal narrative. The second story covers the individual stories of two research associates, who are also policing associates of mine. The third story covers the theoretical reflection, the literature, throughout the chapter. I took care to link stories 1 and 2 with empirical data relevant to answering the research question. The fourth story is the research story, my research journey.

Data Collection

I worked from three transcribed stories, my own as well as those provided by my two research associates, of whom I now provide more information.

My two fellow travellers on this journey are Johnny Goosen and Glenn Schooling. These are their real names, and they made the decision to this effect themselves. They are involved because I wanted them to add to the lived experience of the policing of conflict in South Africa during our time of service. Both are former colleagues of mine and I have the privilege of having known them for some decades. I met Glen in 1972 when we both landed up in the same platoon during basic training at the Police College in Pretoria. Glenn and I met Johnny in the second half of 1980, when all three of us attended the Commissioned Officer's promotion course at the same Police College. All three of us eventually retired with Senior Management Service rankings: Glenn and I as Assistant Commissioners (the current rank of Major General) on early pension, and Johnny as a Director (the current rank of Brigadier), also on early pension. Johnny and I stayed in the Mossel Bay Local Municipality, while Glenn resides in the City of Cape Town. Both localities are in the Western Cape Province of South Africa. We have regular contact by email and WhatsApp. Johnny and I see each other in person more regularly than we see Glenn, since the two cities are some 380 kilometres apart. Both Johnny and Glenn agreed to take part in the research for this chapter. We had preliminary telephone discussions on the research.

Johnny preferred a face-to-face unstructured interview covering his life history (Geyer, 2021, p. 357), the content of which I transcribed. Johnny then read the transcription and made some changes and corrections, after which we agreed on the version of his story to be used.

Given the distance between us, Glenn and I had telephone discussions. Glenn then wrote his narrative and sent it to me by email. He remembered a specific incident after sending his story off to me, which he then wrote down and sent through. We agreed that the two documents would be regarded as his contribution.

Since our own lives were the primary sources of the information (Cooper & Lilyea, 2022, p. 199) the collection process made extensive use of personal memory data, acculturation (as we grew up in our respective families), and self-reflective data.

I promised to send the chapter to both fellow travellers for their final agreement on their contributions before sending it to the publisher—and this was done. By doing this, the ethical requirements, discussed earlier, were further reinforced.

Data Analysis

Since autoethnography is qualitative research, the researcher may use the same analytical techniques employed in general within the qualitative research domain (Schurink, Schurink et al., 2021, p. 405). In broad terms the analytical elements of qualitative data analysis, particularly through the broad elements of coding, code clustering, and theme development, were particularly useful. This was followed by my use of Braun and Clarke's six-step thematic analysis framework, as described by Maguire and Delahunt (2017). First, to become familiar with the data in the three stories, I read them repeatedly (even though I was the author of one of them). This gave me an overall image of each story. I then generated initial codes by using open coding from whole text, to paragraphs, to line-by-line coding. Third, I organised the initial codes into broad themes, which were then reviewed to ensure useability and authenticity. As a fifth step, the themes were refined even more until I felt comfortable with them. Lastly, I wrote up the emerging themes as

part of the chapter. During the process I felt more comfortable using my usual manual colour-coding method, rather than using computer assisted qualitative data analysis software (as discussed, inter alia, by Schurink, Schurink et al., 2021, p. 395).

4   The Narratives

First Story: My Narrative

My story covers four occupational spheres, all within one vocational area. I served in the South African Police (the SAP) as a police official for 15 years, at the University of South Africa (Unisa) as a lecturer in Police Science for 8 years, in the South African Police Service (the SAPS) as a police official in the Senior Management Service for 11 years (at the rank of Assistant Commissioner which was changed during 2010 to the military designation of Major General, when the South African government remilitarised policing in the country), and as an independent researcher, author, lecturer, and consultant since my official retirement from organised structures at the end of June 2006 (currently, for 16 years). I am therefore, vocationally speaking, very much a policing pracademic ("practitioners who adjunct in academe") or a policing acaprac ("academics who participate in, e.g., governmental think tanks and commissions") depending on the focus on either praxis or academe during my professional life (direct quotations were taken from Raadschelders, 2011, p. 144).

Professionally, from 20 January 1972 (the date on which I joined the SAP) to the current date (I am writing this in November 2022), I have covered a total of 50 years of lived experience in the world of policing in the broadest sense imaginable. Consequently, my story is unpacked in five parts below: the period of growing up in my family household, my working life as a practitioner in organised policing (two parts), my acaprac experience, and my learning journey as an independent policing practitioner.

Growing Up in Conflict: My Afrikaner Heritage

I was born to an Afrikaner family. The Afrikaner as a people has, in itself, been the focus of many studies. Amongst others, the interested reader is referred to the works of South African historian and university professor Hermann Giliomee (2003, 2012, 2019), veteran South African investigative journalist Max du Preez (Du Preez, 2003), and David Harrison, well-known to Southern Africa as a maker of BBC documentaries (Harrison, 1981).

Since I was born in 1954, I am part of the baby boomer generation. In terms of a timeline, I was born six years after the NP won the election and became South Africa's government. The NP can be described as an Afrikaner political party since most people belonging to it were Afrikaners, white skinned people of European descent that migrated to the Cape area of today's South African Western Cape Province (Giliomee, 2012, 2019). They spoke Afrikaans, a language that was born out of amalgamations between European (with Dutch playing an important role), local (First People languages, today typically referred to as languages of the Khoi and the San), and Eastern languages (from slaves imported to the Cape). Modern DNA studies show the traces of European as well as First People genes in Afrikaner families (Botha, 2020), indicating a mix similar to the formation of Afrikaans as a language. Afrikaners and Afrikaans, therefore, are often described as African phenomena by protagonists of such, and as non-African (the term "European settlers" is mostly used) by antagonists—thereby indicative of a main source of conflict.

The NP government proceeded to pass several laws through Parliament, meant to keep people apart, and the SAP was obliged to enforce those laws. The NP was ably assisted by joining forces with the Dutch Reformed Church (Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk in Afrikaans, also referred to as the NGK) and the Afrikaner Broederbond (society of Afrikaner brothers), a secret society purportedly the real power behind the throne (Wilkins & Strydom, 2012). Smith (2009), a former *dominee* (pastor) of the NGK and Broederbonder writes quite extensively about this relationship with the Afrikaner political elite. Similar views are found in Oosthuizen (2018, pp. 20, 38). The NGK did defend *apartheid*

(Oosthuizen, 2018, p. 20). Only much later in my life would I realise the extent of the conflict possibilities enabled through the teachings and decisions of the NGK.

Life in my family portrayed characteristics that would have an influence on my worldview. Some of these are:

- The Second Anglo-Boer War (1899–1902, sometimes also referred to as the South African War, or the Second War of Freedom) destroyed the Afrikaner (Giliomee, 2003, pp. 253–256);
- However, that war also created a determination to survive (Giliomee, 2003, p. 355; 2019, p. 83);
- My Afrikaner family way was one of voluntary obedience to the law, and I never heard my family questioning the legality of those laws;
- In fact, to my family it was the police's work to protect the obedient people against the disobedient ones.

After my last year of school, I decided to become a policeman (the term police "official" did not exist back then).

Working in Conflict: My Life in the SAP

I joined the SAP on 20 January 1972 and was to work at my station (Wolmaransstad in the current North West Province of South Africa, the town in which I grew up) for six months, after which I would be sent to the Police College in Pretoria for basic training. At the station I was placed under the supervision of a constable who would be doing on-the-job training with me. I was also exposed to formal training. My books were delivered within days of my enlistment, together with a schedule of work that I had to be competent in before going to college. My station commander was held personally accountable for my progress, for some teaching, and for supervising the weekly test programme.

However, I also entered a Jekyll and Hyde type of policing world. Inside South Africa, the SAP were the protectors and servants. On our borders, in the then Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and South West Africa (then a South African protectorate, now the independent Namibia) and also by occasion in our frontline states (such as Botswana, Eswatini, and

Mozambique) we were fighting a war in the role of soldiers against an "enemy" of "fighters" who wanted "freedom" for the black inhabitants of South Africa. Freedom fighters for some, terrorists for others, this was still a war. All serving police officials were obliged to obey a call-up for three-month stints in this military role ("border duty" as it was often referred to), although some physical disabilities would release the called-up individual under certain circumstances. Operation K (*Koevoet*, the Afrikaans meaning for the English word "crowbar"), a mechanised SAP unit fighting on the South West Africa border against "insurgents", was, depending on the side the commentator was on, either famous or infamous (Kamongo, 2011). Suffice to say, minimum force is not maximum force, war should not be waged on legal subjects of a state, police officials are not soldiers. The issue of the police as soldiers is embedded in the world of serious conflict (Botha, 2020).

I noticed that some of the constables, upon returning from the "border" (as this soldier role of the SAP was referred to), had a change of heart: in some way they saw all "black" people as "terrorists". To them, "black" and "enemy" were synonyms. This showed in their work: they clearly labelled the "non-white" population inside our borders as being second-class citizens who did not warrant the same protection and service as the "white" people. On the other side of the coin, on my daily duties, it was clear that the "black" community was increasingly seeing us as the oppressor and not the protector and servant that we were supposed to be.

At the end of my basic training I was posted to the Police College to attend an instructor's course. I would eventually spend ten years of my sixteen-year SAP career in the College. My endearing relationship with the education, training, and development area of policing was solidified and I enjoyed it thoroughly. The rest of my SAP career was spent as a functional police official in East London, as curator of the police museums and archives, protocol officer and media relations officer. My last transfer in the SAP was to a desk job that I felt was not making adequate use of my competences. I was also very uncomfortable with the way in which we were policing the "black" townships in the country. It was also clear that the liberation forces, with the ANC as the lead, were entering a new phase of struggle with the minority government

of South Africa. But, true to my unease with policing militarisation, I was extremely worried about the fundamental issues around making war against fellow people of the country. I wanted to contribute to an organisation where I could make a difference. So, I applied for a lecturer position in Police Science at the University of South Africa (Unisa) and was accepted.

Learning about Conflict: Becoming a Policing Acaprac at Unisa

At Unisa I was exposed to Van der Spuy's eye-opening academic criticism of an official SAP history, published for the purposes of the SAPs 75th anniversary (Van der Spuy, 1990) and read the first proper criticism of SAP basic training (Rauch, 1992) in equal eye-opening fashion. Both these authors taught me without them knowing it about another side of the coin, another ontology that I was not exposed to before.

The Unisa years would take my thinking to another level. I met, and worked with, academics who, previous to me accepting the post, were my lecturers as well as the assessors of my work. Professor T. J. van Heerden, a former SAP detective who made a career change in favour of academia, designed the degree BA (Police Science) and launched it through the process at Unisa (Van Vuuren, 1994, pp. 1–17). I lived at the time of the Police Academy in Graaff-Reinet (where the degree was taught to full time members of the SAP), learned about Afrikaner nationalist criminology and police science, was exposed to criticism of police science by Professor Michael Brogden (then from Queen's University, Belfast, Northern Ireland), and studied the report of the International Training Committee on police training in South Africa (Botha, 2018, pp. 96–100).

I was a Unisa lecturer on 2 February 1990 when the then State President F. W. de Klerk (De Klerk, 1999, pp. 159–172) removed the ban on the African National Congress (the ANC) and other organisations and announced the release of Nelson Mandela from prison (27 years after his incarceration). With this, de Klerk had started the dismantling

of *apartheid* and had paved the way for a new dispensation for South Africa (Mandela, 1994, p. 666).

As the transformation process for a "new South Africa" (as the process was quickly named) started and gained momentum, I was invited to be a member of the Change Management Team (CMT) that was to work in conjunction with other teams in the transformation arena of police and policing change in South Africa. These were exciting times, and much was achieved. We could live our dreams of building a policing system that would adequately serve all the people of South Africa. It was also a time of great conflict as the wishes and aspirations of peoples were satisfied, or not. The next phase of my professional life was about to begin as I applied, and was accepted for, one of the three most senior posts in the training environment of the new SAPS.

Working in Conflict Again: My Life in the SAPS

The first five years of my eleven years in the SAPS were very positive, albeit it a new and sometimes very strange game to play as iron shaped iron. George Fivaz, a white man and former member of the SAP's General Staff, was appointed as the first national commissioner of the new SAPS, a policing agency amalgamated from 11 *apartheid*-era police forces. Commissioner Fivaz was seen as not tainted since he was never posted to the SAP Security Branch, and his appointment was seen as a typical Mandela effort to enhance relationships. The new Minister (of Safety and Security, not Law and Order, nor Police) was Sydney Mufamadi. We all served under the world-respected and accepted President Nelson Mandela. It was a time of designing new strategies, developing new structures and regulatory frameworks to execute the strategies, implement newly drafted plans, and assess progress continuously. Of course, there were teething problems. In the main, however, we worked together to the benefit of (Archbishop Desmond Tutu's) the "rainbow nation".

The end of the Mandela administration also heralded the end of Commissioner Fivaz's tenure. With this came a process and a time of downward sliding that is unrivalled and unheralded in South Africa's

policing historiography. Thabo Mbeki became President and the late Jackie Selebi became the new National Police Commissioner.

Selebi, specifically, was a study of conflict in motion. Not a career police official (he was a political appointment) but the first black African person to be appointed as the head of policing in South Africa, he was in a position to break new ground. Unfortunately, it turned out quite the opposite. Selebi was in conflict with everyone: ordinary station police officials, senior police officials on his management team (the meetings of which became commonly known as the "Selebi trials"), organised community structures, and members of the National Assembly (he was very conscious of his seniority within the ANC. The law and Parliament were, because of the junior ANC status of the people involved, subordinate to him). He was brash and had no respect for people. In fact, he was downright abusive and was suspected of undermining the law for personal benefit, which was proven correct with him eventually being found guilty of a serious criminal offence and sentenced to prison. Some of our colleagues around the table became Selebi clones.

Selebi destroyed many people, their lives as well as their careers. I got hurt as well. During early December 2005 I decided, while in the intensive care unit of the Pretoria Heart Hospital, to apply for early retirement.

Being an Independent Policing Pracademic

To say that my time in the SAPS, specifically the last six years, was difficult is an understatement. I needed a complete break. After six months I gradually moved back into the arena of people development, research, and publishing. My work on South Africa's First People (particularly on how societal order was dealt with by the Khoisan) and on the African feudal system while I facilitated learning at the National Police College of Rwanda kindled an interest in politics and policing. This led to an interest in the concept of a Southern Epistemology, and early political/policing relationships. This marriage, between First People and Southern Epistemology, was published (Botha & Hewitt, 2020) and received positive feedback. The influence of politics in policing is an extremely

important issue in South Africa and surfaces throughout this chapter. However, even if only for reflective purposes, the discourse is repeated here. The politics/policing relationship shows some distinct characteristics (Botha, 2020, p. iv): a paramilitary police force; police oppression of the people; police support of a reigning elite, keeping the elite in political power; and a criminally-inclined police agency. These characteristics were visible in South Africa's colonial era, were seamlessly carried over into the immediate post-colonial era (the period of *apartheid*), and are visible in the current post-colonial era (the post-*apartheid* era), which is not a democratic era as South Africa's government often glibly asserts, but rather a dominant-party period (Botha, 2020, 2022).

My colleagues in the industry and I were getting increasingly concerned with the perceived interference in policing by political role players. To this effect, Dr Johan Burger (then at the Institute for Security Studies) and myself teamed up in writing on some operational issues of concern (see, for instance, Burger & Botha, 2011, 2019).

Second Story: The Narratives of My Study Associates

Now, Johnny and Glenn's narratives will be offered. They are not described in the same detail as my story is. Rather, Johnny and Glenn's narratives were subjected to an analysis which should detail the differences and similarities between the three narratives. The results are as follows.

The Personal Dimension Visible in the Stories

Johnny, Glenn, and I are baby boomers, with Johnny born in 1951 and Glenn and I in 1954. All three of us left school and joined the SAP while living in small towns: Johnny in Kirkwood and Glenn in Barkley East (both in today's Eastern Cape Province but to the West and the East of that Province respectively) while I hail from Wolmaransstad in the current North West Province. The schooling systems would have differed somewhat as the former South Africa's provinces had more of a decentralised control system, and it was known that the schooling

system of the Cape of Good Hope Province differed from that of the Transvaal Province where the District of Wolmaransstad was situated (to the West of the Province). The Barkley East District was then in the East, and the Kirkwood District roughly in the middle South of the Cape of Good Hope Province. The fact that we were all three Afrikaans by birth and that schooling was to some extent influenced by Afrikaner culture, wherever the school was situated, meant that cultural values were mostly similar. All three of us were conversant with the conflict in the Afrikaner's past, as described in my story above. Equally, we understood that the police and the Afrikaner were rarely in conflict, but that the relationship was not equally extended to people of colour. We have an array of post-school (therefore, higher education) qualifications between us.

The Interpersonal Dimension of the Stories

Just as in my case, Johnny and Glenn were exposed to principle-based parents and homes. We grew up in relatively poor households and Glenn's household moved around a lot as his father travelled to find work. This meant that Glenn never had the opportunity to build lasting friendships or to find stability. All three of us did not really notice the hurts caused by *apartheid*, we were only exposed to this when we entered our police careers. Johnny and Glenn report that they were able to mix with "black" and "coloured" youngsters as they grew up. In my town this was not the case and "non-white" children were not in the circle of school and friends. Perhaps the separateness was more pronounced in the Transvaal than it was in the Cape.

The Organisational Dimension of the Stories

When we joined the SAP, however, we entered a separate occupational environment, the police culture with its own language, mannerisms, dogma, and view of the world. This environment was dramatically new

to us. We remember off-duty police people attending to emergencies in their civilian clothes and their private vehicles if it was deemed necessary. We worked long hours without overtime or rest days because we deemed it necessary. Most of our commanders were fair and caring people. But we also remember that "non-white" people were "other people", not ours. All three of us remember the 21:00 siren, indicating to people of colour that they had to be out of (the "white") town. Interestingly, even though ideology through the policies of the day played a part in our daily life, an anchor was found in the law—in the police, things were judged by the law. The difference between murder and culpable homicide, we were taught, was a question of law. According to the law, the older police officials told us, the police used minimum force. We were supposed to talk first and use a variety of bare-handed techniques to restrain someone. Our firearms were to be on hold and used only as a last resort. Of course, we later found out that this was not the case under all circumstances. There were bad things, but we could also remember the good of our chosen career. Thinking back, we agree that "professional policing" was extended only to the white population. Glenn and I share the fact that the first women in South African policing were appointed during 1971–1972, the same time as us. We entered, with the women, a new chapter in South African policing that would change the policing landscape in South Africa for the good.

Ending the Stories

As we progressed, we served in a variety of posts. All of us studied and were awarded post-school qualifications. Prescribed police courses for advancement were completed and promotions gained. We left organised policing (the SAPS) within years of each other: Johnny in 2005, I in 2006, Glenn in 2008. We left because we knew that we would have to make our contributions elsewhere. The SAPS under the ANC was not conducive to our efforts.

5   Insights

The Emerging Theme

The influence of politics on policing emerged as the dominant theme through the data analysis process described earlier on in the chapter. The three of us, myself, Johnny, and Glenn, grew up during a time of Afrikaner domination in South Africa. The Afrikaner appropriated the government and the church and was the main influence on society. This meant that the Afrikaner could pass laws through South Arica's Parliament that injured the lives of people who were not born with white skins. The police, an Afrikaner dominant organisation, was obliged to enforce these laws. The police were also obliged to perform a soldier role against enemies of the state—both in situations appearing to protect the integrity of the state (the "border war") as well as in situations of internal stability controls. These two roles entertained a form of identity pluralism between "force" and "service" as opposing ends on the continuum of service delivery. When the ANC ascended to power, this situation at first changed for the better through the transformation efforts during the time of the Mandela Government. From the appointment of the late Selebi during the Mbeki Government, and afterwards to the present day, the situation worsened progressively.

Contextualising the Emerging Theme: Politics and Policing in Other Research Findings

Other research findings speak to the relationship between politics and policing on the continent of Africa as a whole, as well as in South Africa specifically. These findings are indicative of the natural process of moving towards an African policing epistemology, in the tradition of discourse on a Southern epistemology. This is, to me, an important issue to consider since the possibility of African opposition to epistemological value from the Global North can only be dealt with effectively if another epistemology is used to balance the arguments.

Hills (2000, p. 1) argues that the 1960s were characterised by independence from colonial rule for most African states. During the 1990s, however, many African states moved for a redistribution of political power by increasing popular participation. Neo-patrimonial rule (the African "Big Man" concept, see Hills, 2000, p. 19; Rauch & Van der Spuy, 2006, p. 13) was part of this landscape. This phase, moving towards increased popular participation, provided the opportunity to engage with police reforms (Rauch & Van der Spuy, 2006). The latter were necessary because of the excesses visible in policing at the time. Some statistics from the *apartheid* era in South Africa for instance asserts 73 deaths in police detention and 78,000 people detained without trial (Rauch & Van der Spuy, 2006, p. 22). The police reforms therefore were geared to embrace an emphasis on human rights. Botha (2022) reports that efforts were made to support the idea of non-partisan police (not "apolitical police") and good policing governance. However, Baker (2014) warns against a political class that will always seek to manipulate the police as well as non-state actors in the policing environment (such as community–police forums and vigilantes).

Each of the case studies discussed by Rauch and Van der Spuy (2006, p. 15) "provides proof of the intimate connection between police and politics". In political systems where patronage is entrenched, they write, "police are tied to the apron strings of the political elite", in which contexts "the principles of equality before the law and non-partisan service delivery are inconceivable" (Rauch & Van der Spuy, 2006, p. 15). Botha (2020) found

> that policing in South Africa is unduly and adversely influenced by politics through the actions of politicians. It is clear and reported so in the study, that this was also the case under colonial rule, as well as under *apartheid* rule. This means that the current political dispensation in South Africa more than often glibly referred to as the "democratic era" (while it is more likely a "dominant party" era), acts exactly the same as the political dispensations, and therefore the regimes, found during the colonial and *apartheid* eras. (Botha, 2020, p. iv)

A summary word is perhaps found in what I refer to as "The Hills' Quintet", a reflection designed by me on Hills's (2000) rendition of the police and politics in Africa. This reflection can be detailed as:

- The relationship between policing and law in Africa is never self-evident. Because the state is understood as at best a framework for government rather than a system of law, regimes usually appropriate state organisations and the resources they represent. The control of key resources, such as judicial systems, patronage, and the media, are then given to privileged individuals as a political reward. (Hills, 2000, p. 75)
- All government powers and their corresponding economic advantages tend to be treated as private rights. In other words, the concepts of liberalization and democratization do not necessarily progress understanding of African policing or, indeed, of humane standards of policing as such. (Hills, 2000, p. 75)
- Human rights also remain controversial. Certainly, the majority of African writers on the subject in the 1970s considered individual rights to be a Western issue; in Africa rights were seen as communitarian or group based. (Hills, 2000, p. 76)
- Linked to this emphasis on order is the unquantifiable but overwhelming anecdotal evidence that the existing order in most African states effectively permits—or even encourages—the key institutions of state to reward ruthlessness, nepotism and plunder. (Hills, 2000, p. 78)
- The police play a crucial role in the relationship between the central political authority (or regime) and the population at large, and partly because they are agents of both state and society. (Hills, 2000, p. 78)

6   Returning to the Research Question: What Have I Learnt?

The research question was "What can I learn from the baby boomer experience of police conflict management in South Africa?".

I have learnt that the "same old" is not working. The policing system of colonialism, *apartheid*, and the "democratic" (dominant party) state was and still is unduly influenced by politics. This system should surely now be abandoned in favour of a different system.

I do not advance alternatives to the ills visible in police conflict management in South Africa as this was not the purpose of the chapter. However, some suggestions for research are suggested below.

In South Africa, political control of policing is a dangerous animal. It is already clear, and the findings of the Zondo Commission on state capture is evidence of our worst nightmares, that control of the police is of high importance to the South African political elite. Since the elite themselves are the perpetrators of violence, how can we allow them to control policing? The new thinking, so desperately needed, should have as a major research focus a strong drive towards police independence from the political party influence. The police should adhere to the imperatives of constitutional democracy and answer only to the constitution of the country.

The police official cannot be separated from his or her ethnic background. In a diverse country, where a centralised policing agency serves different ethnic groupings, it is a necessity for all police officials to understand the ethnic world of the people that they must serve. That means a thorough understanding of the culture and the language. If this is not possible, one has difficult policy positions to make: utilising police in their ethnic environments only could easily remind people of the separateness of *apartheid*. The point is not to sweep the issue under the mat, or to shoot it down with popular political statements, but to engage it with research.

Policing a constitutional democracy under the rule of law demands a very special police official. Understanding and even creating the higher-level arguments needed for the constitutional state and executing the same effectively to the satisfaction of the courts is the absolute minimum. Research should provide possible ways and means of massaging professionalism (dependent upon a specific qualification, a professional oversight board and acceptance of policing by the broader community as a profession, see Botha, 2021) into the policing system. Interestingly for the purposes of this chapter is that Botha's (2020) research subjects were

all South African university professors working in the environment of policing, in the widest sense of the term. In this chapter, the researcher and his research associates display an interesting mix of theory and practice. The academe/praxis relationship needs to be cherished constantly, as it does also in academic research efforts.

We must understand the history. Once people realise that history helps us not to make the mistakes of the past, providing we interrogate those mistakes and feed the adaptions into the system, the future becomes at least a capable and reachable one. This research-based interrogation of the historiography should be free from populist political manipulative aspirations and weak egos.

7   Closing with the Fourth Story: Balancing Interwovenness with Reflection

While the research journey has been interwoven with the narratives and theory throughout the chapter, I consider it apt to close with a methodological reflection.

Procedurally the structure of the chapter has attended to the typical structure of an academic chapter. It flows from an abstract to a conclusion through key words, orientation, a conceptual analysis, a discussion of the autoethnography (as an approach to research, a strategy to promote research, and a method to do research), remarks on research ethics for autoethnography, descriptions of data collection and analysis, a research question, stories 1 (my own narrative) and 2 (the narratives of my research associates), identification of emerging themes, and a discussion of these themes.

Substantively, the chapter rests upon the contribution that the results may make to the body of knowledge on police conflict management and it looks towards transferability of this knowledge to similar settings. Therefore, it is hoped that the chapter will be of value specifically to other states on the continent of Africa. If so, one would achieve a further aim of supporting the quest for an African policing epistemology. The latter is not meant to be seen as a negation of knowledge available from the

global North, but rather that the global South may add to the collective global body of knowledge on police conflict management.

Lastly, I hope that autoethnography, as an approach to research, a strategy to promote research, and a method to do research, has been useful to the reader.

Key Takeaways
Police Officers

- Use peer-reviewed research to keep constantly current on police conflict management;
- Work from the paradigm that police conflict management competence equals the sum of knowledge, skills, and attitude.

Conflict Management Trainers

- Unpack an understanding of ethnic realities in the learning materials;
- Give adequate attention to intrapersonal, interpersonal, and profession-induced (police culture) conflict.

Police Decision-Makers

- Understand the imperatives of the politics/policing relationship in general, and in political interference in police conflict management, especially from an ethnic perspective;
- Balance the academe/praxis mix in decision-making for police conflict management.

(Table created by author)

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Police Crowd Management in South Africa: Efforts and Challenges of De-escalation

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Reviewer: Stefan Schade

1   Introduction

The de-escalation of police officer violence has received much attention recently in countries like the USA, the UK, and South Africa (SA). Historically, these techniques have been mainly a practice in the mental health field where health practitioners would use "non-provocative verbal and non-verbal clinician communication" to prevent and address potential agitations and violence in patients (Price et al., 2015, p. 447).

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Recently the need for de-escalation has been emphasized in law enforcement to address violent confrontations and aggressive behaviours during crowd management (McCord, 2018, p. 8). According to Engel et al. (2022), changing the police's policies and training to incorporate de-escalation tactics has become a routinely recommended police reform measure.

De-escalation in the context of crowd management is strongly supported by various theoretical frameworks such as the Elaborated Social Identity Model (ESIM) and theories of procedural fairness and police legitimacy. These frameworks are based on the notion that the approaches that the police use when managing crowds determines whether or not violence will escalate or de-escalate (Kennedy, 2019, p. 14). ESIM in particular encourages the police to view crowd participants as individuals who still hold their individual beliefs and values (ibid.). An intelligence approach is thus central to this theoretical framework, and its importance lies in helping police understand the identities of those participating in the crowd. As a result, officers are able to decide how negotiation and other strategies to minimize violence will be effective when dealing with volatile, disorganized, and violent protesters.

Theories of procedural fairness and police legitimacy also argue that de-escalation of violence and aggression is possible only if the approach to managing crowds is consistent, reasonable, disarmed, and focused (ibid.). The assumption is that crowd behaviour is influenced by the interaction between participants and the police. Crowd participants are in such instances able to voluntarily comply with police directives, especially where they consider the approaches employed by the police as fair.

Gorringe et al. (2012, p. 2) explain that if the police are to avoid resentment and promote the goals of crowds, they should learn and appreciate the values, beliefs, and goals of such crowds. According to the authors, this must be done regardless of any signs of disruption, and attempts should be made to communicate and avoid confrontation. Unfortunately, these practices are sometimes difficult to sustain especially when crowds do not make clear their demands, and theft (lootings) and arson become the main objectives (Gorringe & Rosie, 2011, p. 3).

Because of these challenges and other crowd dynamics that may arise, the literature reveals that repressive practices continue to be used and are to some extent influenced by the view of crowds as irrational and destructive (Borch, 2013, p. 597; Kennedy, 2019, p. 9). It is in such circumstances that crowd participants are managed indiscriminately using escalated force, crowd dispersal tactics, and water cannon and/or tear gas. Both ESIM and the theorist of procedural fairness and police legitimacy would argue that it is such tactics that will then lead to chaos, confrontation, and violence in crowds.

Successful application of de-escalation techniques will therefore require more than just documented ideas. Improved communication skills, experience, and training as well as policy that is empirically grounded and informed by research are all crucial in sustaining the use of de-escalation tactics when policing crowds (Borch, 2013, p. 597; Gorringe et al., 2012, p. 4; McCord, 2018, p. 73; Zaiser & Staller, 2015). PowerDMS (2021) found that training in de-escalation tactics helps law enforcement officers identify critical signs that a situation may escalate into confrontation and violence in a timely manner, and that the situation must be de-escalated. Such signs may include a raised or high-pitched voice, rapid speech, fidgeting and trembling, clenched fists or an aggressive posture, erratic movements, and wild gesturing and pacing. Training can also help officers understand crowd-specific factors such as the intentions and motivations for participation in crowds, which is likely to inform strategy and implementation (Kennedy, 2019, p. 4).

This chapter therefore explores whether or not policy has the potential to de-escalate police officer violence when responding to service delivery protests. Several studies have focused on police brutality when analysing POP units' responses to protests (Cano, 2021; Heiberger, 2022; Lum et al., 2019; Rauch & Storey, 1998; Smith, 2019), but fewer have focused on the efforts made by the South African Police Service (SAPS) to reduce and limit heavy-handed responses to crowd protests or civilians in general (Bruce, 2012, 2020; Dugmore, 2017; Muntingh & Dereymaeker, 2013). This study aims to add to this limited body of knowledge by examining the efforts of SAPS to bring about reform in public order policing from a "de-escalation" perspective and the effect it has on the police and community.

A qualitative methodology was applied and data collected by interviewing a sample of 44 participants consisting of frontline police officers, POP unit members, Community Policing Forum members, civilians, and community activists. The findings suggest more effort on training frontline police officers regarding their respective roles, while educating communities and local government officials is needed if de-escalation of officer violence is to be inculcated into police operations.

2   Background

The Need for De-escalation in SA

SA had a long history of police violence during the apartheid years and has gone through much needed reform to reduce police officer violence, yet the inculcation of practices that reduce heavy-handed responses to crowds has proven to be challenging (Farlam Commission of Inquiry, 2015). SAPS has implemented strategies to reform the Public Order Police (POP) units to reduce the possibility of violent clashes between the police and protesters (SAPS, 2021). The intention was also to de-escalate potential physical and/or lethal confrontation, but, as witnessed during the Marikana massacre in the Northwest Province in 2012, police officers are still eager to respond to protesters in more violent ways than may be appropriate (Farlam Commission of Inquiry, 2015).

The need for de-escalation of violence during protests in SA have also been emphasized by the Panel of Experts (the Panel) established by the Minister of Police in terms of the recommendations of the Marikana Commission of Inquiry in their report in 2018. The Panel (2018) posited that the term "collective protest" refers to "protests carried out by people assembled in groups or crowds, but that protests can also be carried out by individuals and by groups of people who are not assembled together in a crowd" (p. 18).

The Panel reiterated that POP units should "ensure that situations of tension and confrontation are managed without unnecessarily exacerbating the potential for violence and that where violence takes place the response of the police serves to de-escalate rather than exacerbate it"

(The Panel, 2018, p. 38). In addition, police officers are not only to negotiate and de-escalate situations, but are also expected to foreground the principle of differentiation to ensure that where force is used against individuals, they do not antagonize non-violent crowd members and provoke further escalation of violence. The Panel further expressed the need for POP unit members to become more flexible and agile in their response to the specific challenges of each situation (The Panel, 2018). According to the Panel, police actions have to de-escalate conflict with the minimum force because their actions will be measured "in terms of loss of life, injuries to people, damage to property and cost" (The Panel, 2018, p. 266).

Public Order Policing in South Africa

SAPS in particular have been criticized for using excessive force and failing to show interest in managing crowds at demonstrations. SAPS defines a demonstration as a congregation of persons consisting of more than 1 but not more than 15, demonstrating for or against any person, cause, action, or failure to take action (SAPS, 2014). A crowd is formed by more than 15 persons gathered, or an audience consisting of more than 15 at a sporting event or a group of people with a common interest (SAPS, 2014). A crowd, in this chapter, refers to a group of people who gather to either protest or demonstrate, through marches, petitioning, or strikes, to effect changes in their lives, work environments, and/or societies. Narr et al. (2006) define a protest as an organized public demonstration objecting to a policy or course of action. A gathering from SAPS's perspective is an assembly, concourse, or procession of more than 15 persons in or on any public road or any other public place or premises wholly or partly open to the air, as defined in section 1 of the Regulations of Gatherings Act (SAPS, 2014).

Among the cases that subjected SAPS to severe criticism was the assault and killing of a person, Andries Tatane, in Ficksburg in the Free State province in 2011. Tatane died after sustaining injuries during a service delivery protest where the police shot him (Knoetze, 2021). In 2012, the situation worsened when SAPS was held responsible for 34

mortalities of miners who lost their lives as the result of police action (Farlam Commission of Inquiry, 2015). The miners were involved in an unprotected strike at Marikana. During 2015 and 2016, the media, public domain, researchers, academics, and the media further disapproved SAPS's use of unwarranted force when dealing with protests involving students at universities during the #Feesmustfall protests (Brooks, 2017). Protesters and activists were targeted and arrested, and stun grenades and rubber bullets were fired at crowds and even at the Tshwane University of Technology in Pretoria (Right to Protest, 2019). SAPS was criticized for continuing its aggression towards protesters, whether peaceful, disruptive, or violent, and for using various underhand tactics (Right2Protest, 2017, pp. 17–21).

Incidents of police brutality surfaced despite the recommendations made by the Farlam Commission of Inquiry (2015) and the Panel of Experts appointed after the former published its findings (the Panel, 2018). Such heavy-handed policing tactics were not limited to crowd management, as the media reports highlighted unnecessary police brutality when officers enforced national state-of-disaster regulations during the COVID-19 pandemic during 2020 and 2021 (Chabalala, 2020; Lamb, 2020; Wits News, 2020). POP officers were deployed in July 2021 to civil unrest in the KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng Provinces (Ferreira, 2021a). SAPS was again criticized for its late and inadequate response (Singh, 2021), but this time it was ascribed to the absence of intelligence about the scale of the unrest. SAPS was left in a state of unpreparedness to protect citizens' lives and property, as concluded by the country's Human Rights Commission (Ferreira, 2021b; Monama, 2021). These and other recent events in SA exposed the police as: underprepared for public protests, such as the July 2021 citizen unrest (Bruce, 2022); taken by surprise (Felix, 2022); heavy-handed (Bruce, 2020); slow to react and even overwhelmed by crowds (Ferreira, 2021b).

The demand for police de-escalation of violence is clearly warranted. The crime statistics for SA for the last quarter of the 2021/2022 financial year also reflected a violent, brutal, and unsafe situation in the country (Charles, 2022). The crime situation and the SAPS's response to crime and protests raised concerns and several authors recommended a new

type of policing for SA. Bruce and Neild (2005) for instance developed a handbook for oversight of the police to help professionalize them. Dugmore (2017) proposed a policing reform agenda that encapsulates the protection of human rights and the demilitarization of the police, with emphasis on public order policing, the independence and operational autonomy of policing institutions and oversight bodies, and police responsiveness, efficiency, and professionalism. Yet, one has to consider the policing context in SA as a developing country with high levels of unemployment and inequality. Conflict between the community and the SAPS POP units are more closely related to these social dilemmas than frustration with the police, as the findings will point out later. However, the need for de-escalation tactics is critical when reflecting on the unthinkable number of protests in the country. In recent years, POP units saw an increase in the number of protests about inadequate service delivery by local governments and dissatisfaction with crime in communities, protests which are becoming increasingly disruptive and violent, as indicated in Fig. 1.
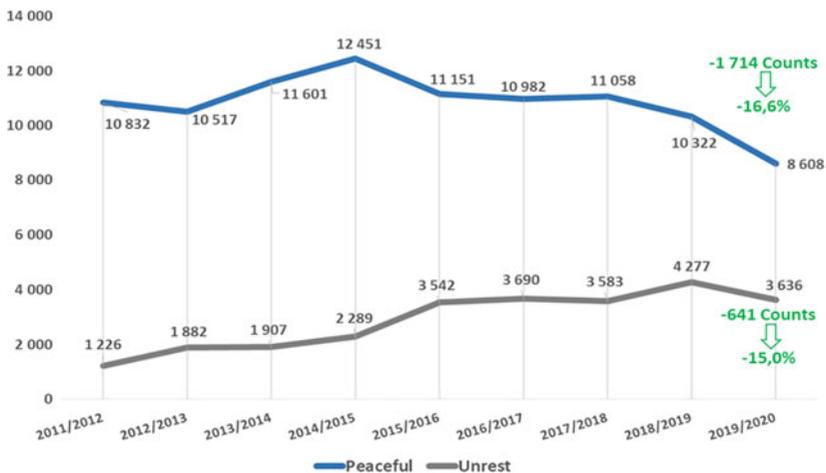
Fig. 1 Number of unrests compared to peaceful protests in South Africa (*Source* SAPS, 2020a)

Regulatory Framework for SAPS

Recognizing that the most important pieces of legislation for police officers are the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and the South African Police Service Act, 1995 (Act No. 68 of 1995), which captures the mandate of the SAPS and the Bill of Rights of people in the country, only the most critical directives for public order policing will be touched on. To this end, the Regulation of Gatherings Act, 1993 (Act No. 205 of 1993) authorizes the police to disperse a crowd where there are reasonable grounds to believe that there is danger to people and property and that such danger cannot be averted through alternative interventions. The policy and guidelines on policing of public protests was rolled out by the office of the Ministry of Police in 2011 to provide direction. Although it pre-dates the Marikana massacre of 2012 and the Panel's report of 2018, it still provided a framework with guidelines for SAPS to police public protests and related major events by minimizing provocation, intimidation, and violence. SAPS had to align itself to improve and develop a dedicated public order policing capacity and improve the training offered to members in the POP environment. An environment with strong lines of command had to be established to ensure that there is a clear/explicit, comprehensible delineation of the roles and responsibilities of different actors. POP unit members were to develop an understanding of protest actions and be able to deal with any type of protest action that may occur, whether planned or spontaneous, and be able to prevent any forms of violence. Policies and strategies involving the use of force needed to be aligned to international standards with the aim of reducing the risk of casualties and fatalities associated with the use of excessive force during public protests. The National Instruction 4 of 2014 on Public Order Police prescribes to SAPS members how to respond to crowds without violating the law. If violence is anticipated or has occurred during any gathering or demonstration, the role of the police is to restore peace and public order. In the course of peaceful assemblies, police officers at station level may act as first responders to observe and report the nature of the gathering or protest. Peaceful protests may be attended and resolved by such first responders, with or without crowd management training, but the POP units must be alerted

and placed on standby, or called to the scene to take on operational command where it has been confirmed that there is a possible threat to safety of people and/or property.

POP units are then required to intervene and restore order, particularly in those situations where there is evidence of violence and serious disruptions. The courts have confirmed the responsibility of police first responders to enforce the law to restore order. This comes after the police refused to assist complainants by removing illegal miners and squatters of a mine's property in a rural town in the Northern Cape even when they were obliged to (Broughton, 2022). This could be the result of fear of retaliation, but whatever reason the officers may have had, it was not deemed to be justifiable because "it is conduct like that results in society losing confidence in the ability of SAPS to protect them from criminal conduct. Hence, society ends up taking the law into its own hands" (Broughton, 2022).

The Panel (2018) states that firearms capable of automatic fire should not be used at all in crowd management. Further, police officers should be provided with clearer standards and greater control should be exercised over the use of less-lethal weapons. The current framework which provides guidance to SAPS members regarding the use of force is inadequate in various ways as it does not clearly articulate what the protection of life, both that of police officers and that of suspects and other civilians, means. The SA President, on 5 August 2021, appointed yet another Expert Panel to investigate and review the country's response to the July 2021 unrest (Expert Panel, 2021). The Expert Panel's report emphasized the content of the National Instruction 4 of 2014 on Public Order Police that "if crowd management or public order situations escalate to the extent that public violence erupts and the necessity to restore public order is required, POP are supposed to take full operational command and stabilize the situation" (Expert Panel, 2021, p. 26).

The emphasis was placed on the "execution of public order restoration operations". There are strict guidelines contained in the same National Instruction on what deterrents can be used to restore order. It clearly states that the use of firearms and sharp ammunition is prohibited; the use of teargas, water cannons, and other measures may only be employed by POP members in situations that allow for its use upon instruction

from operational commanders; rubber bullets may only be used as an offensive measure to disperse crowds in extreme circumstances; and force may only be used upon the command of the Operational Commander, except if the member acts in private defence (Expert Panel, 2021).

3   Methodology

The data of a qualitative study conducted during 2019 regarding "the impact of the SAPS's implementation of the Farlam Commission recommendations on crowd management" was analysed for the effect of policy and other official directives on police responses to crowds and groups of people and to determine if de-escalation tactics were used during such operations. The study involved interviews, analysis of documents such as police incident reports, Internal National Instructions on public order policing, and observation in the field. Sampling was done purposively to identify participants from a population consisting of station frontline police officers, POP unit members, Community Policing Forums, other community members, non-government organizations, and community activists. Focus group interviews were conducted in Gauteng, Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal with 68 participants who included 24 community members, 24 first responder police officers, 18 POP operational officers, 1 air wing unit commander, and 1 training and development expert in the police. No new data were collected and existing data was analysed with "de-escalation of violence" lenses to identify themes that respond to the following questions:

- What was done by SAPS in response to police officer violence when responding to the current form of protests?
- Do police directives adequately direct officers as to how possible violence should be de-escalated?
- What is the impact of police directives on reducing officer violence?

4　Findings

SAPS Response to Address Police Officer Violence when Responding to Protests

Sympathy for Protestors

SAPS members understand the significance of demonstrations and sympathize with protesters as they experience challenges severe enough to prompt them to engage in protests to have their concerns heard and acknowledged. While the message being sent is largely intended for the local municipality, the police just happen to be at the receiving end. An analysis of SAPS's Incident Registration Information System (IRIS) reveals that protests generally result from issues such as increases in bus fares, taxi fares, conflicts between communities and gangs, demands for the release of suspects, demands for the resignation of councillors, and fuel prices. The SAPS IRIS also discloses factors such as personal conflicts, dissatisfaction with bail applications, political intolerance, tertiary institution fees, and unsatisfactory SAPS actions.

Grasp for First Responder Responsibility

First responders understood their role to mean responding to, and gathering information regarding, the protest actions taking place. The primary function is thus to gather information (including who is demonstrating and why), mediate, and monitor the situation in order to determine whether a specialized intervention by POP units is necessary. The information collected is instantly communicated to the office of the station commander and the operational control room, which is able to distribute the information and share it with other role players, including POP units. After collecting and sharing the information, first responders must then monitor the situation, negotiate where possible, and wait for POP units to intervene where violence and disruptions develop.

The decision to activate POP units and other stakeholders is reliant on the level of threat identified. Stations can either manage the situation or activate POP units, but this differs from event to event. Some events only involved first responders managing the situation regardless of disruptions or violence, and have in such cases managed to calm down the situation without activating POP units. However, this has only been the case in those areas where first responders have been trained to manage crowds. What first responders do in such cases is to begin negotiations with the protesters and local authorities or whichever entity is targeted, while acting as the mediator. Where an agreement is reached between the two parties, POP units are not activated and usually the protesters disperse peacefully. However, there are instances where this does not happen. Officers pointed out that municipal and other authorities are not always willing to meet with protesters and to listen to their demands, and that such actions limit their chances of successfully negotiating for a peaceful protest. First responders also indicated that, because they do not have the relevant training and equipment to engage with protestors, they usually just monitor the crowd from a distance without getting involved.

Deployment of POP Units

POP units manage crowds as a core function. The units attend to protests subsequent to activation from stations. When arriving at the scene, the main task is to liaise with the police team in charge (i.e., stations) and engage the leaders of the protests. When protesters are reluctant to listen and cooperate, or if the crowd indicates the absence of a leader, POP operational commanders warn the crowd and a limited period is given for them to disperse. If this warning fails as well, a warning shot is fired with rubber bullets. While some crowds disperse immediately, there are instances where protesters fight back and attack the police. POP members emphasized the fact that they always attempt to engage and negotiate with the crowd regardless of whether or not a protest turned violent or chaotic before their arrival at a scene.

However, there were also concerns raised that the POP units resort to a heavy-handed approach very quickly. This involves the use of brutal

tactics and force, arrests, dispersals, and containment to control and manage the crowd. It was argued though that, even when that is the case, the main task for POP members is to find a favourable outcome. Such heavy-handed reaction by the police advances the cause of the protestors as they can focus media attention on their cause, according to community activists. Police officers therefore have to restrict heavy-handed responses to disorderly behaviour in crowds, as the community leaders and activists who incite other protestors to become violent disappear when the police react to the violence (and thus do not experience such heavy-handedness themselves).

SAPS Efforts to Reform Public Order Policing

In its efforts to professionalize POP capability, SAPS developed a POP strategy with key priorities that focus on improving the capacity of units, skills development, resourcing the units, and modernizing the POP environment (SAPS, 2020b). In addition, SAPS developed National Instruction 4 of 2014 on Public Order Police to guide officers on how to manage crowds during public gatherings (SAPS, 2020b). Clear processes on how to manage different types of crowds are stipulated, as well as procedures to be followed prior, during, and after the event. Paragraph 9 of the instruction defines three levels of protests, which the police must respond to and manage, and they include:

- Level one protests: peaceful gatherings (and less significant sport, entertainment, or social events) handled and managed by trained members who normally perform policing in uniform at the station level or by the Metro Police. In these circumstances there is no threat or the need for use of force.
- Level two protests: handled by members who normally perform policing in uniform at the station level and by Metro police officers trained in basic crowd management skills. POP units are then expected to be in reserve at the scene.
- Level three protests: managed by POP units. In this instance, the potential for violence is likely and members who normally perform policing in uniform at the station level and Metro Police officers can only join in to assist the units.

Station commanders are empowered to take command at protests or gatherings that resemble the first two levels, while station commanders will require well-trained personnel who are conversant with relevant legislation with level three protests. However, decision-making authority during operations remains the responsibility of a qualified and trained POP unit member at the level of warrant officer or higher. Depending on the level of threat determined, a multidisciplinary approach must be implemented and a proactive approach applied to deal with the situation. The role players required may include private security, the supervisor of the marshals, traffic police, emergency medical services, disaster management, and other relevant police units. The task of station commanders is to identify indicators of potential violence by gathering information and or tasking crime intelligence members to gather and analyse information and report the findings. The intelligence is thus used during the planning phase to inform policing strategies during the police planning meeting. Briefing sessions must then be held with commanders of all role players and operational members to define roles and share the details of the plans for the operation.

The instruction further guides operational officers and commanders on the use of force. The instruction provides that any use of force and dispersal of crowds must be conducted by trained POP members. First responders, who normally perform policing in uniform at the station level, and Metro Police, can contain the situation and, where not possible, implement defensive measures until POP members can take control of the situation. Significant to note here is that the use of force and dispersals must only be understood as techniques intended to reduce conflicts and not to prompt them. The degree of force must thus be proportional to the seriousness of the situation and the threat posed. Dispersals should afford protesters the opportunity to escape without subjecting anyone to injuries or possible deaths. While POP units must receive specialized training to achieve this, first responders must be provided with training that is appropriate for them for protests and gatherings. The instruction is clear that station lectures must be used to familiarize operational members at the station level, and POP unit commanders must ensure that first responder training interventions

are formally presented to station members as determined by provincial priorities.

In 2017, SAPS developed a POP strategy which was intended to contribute to a demilitarized, professional, and well-resourced POP capacity, proficient enough to deal with the difficulties associated with the policing of demonstrations and gatherings. The strategy was finalized in 2019 and is based on four pillars, including capacitation, skills, resources, and modernization. The SAPS End Term Report for 2014–2020 refers to the strategy, but the pillars were phrased differently. The strategy is aligned to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, internal directives, and the South African Police Service Act. Though there was no mention of the strategy at the unit level by members during the focus group interviews, progress has been made in recent years in terms of implementing the strategy. Yet, SAPS has managed to increase the capacity of units, develop personnel and first responder skills through training, and successfully resource the units (SAPS, 2018a). By 2017, the public order policing strength was increased to 5,343 with further appointments to be made in the 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 financial years. Skills development was improved by providing first responders and POP members and their commanders with training on how to approach and manage demonstrations and gatherings. Several courses were reviewed (SAPS, 2018b).

These included Crowd Management for Platoon Commanders to address Command and Control; GR-12 Nyala Operators Course to increase capacity for specialised driving skills of hard top vehicles; POP Operational Commanders training to align training modules to current and changing public disorder situation; and Crowd Conflict Management to emphasize tactical negotiating skills during Public Disorder situations. SAPS procured more equipment for POP units such as 2nd Generation Nyalas, minibuses, fire extinguishers, helmets, and gas masks. However, by the end of 2017, efforts to modernize the POP units were still underway.

Directives for Reduced Police Officer Violence and Officer Responses

Challenges with Practical Implementation

While officers acknowledged the existence of the instruction, it was clear that there are some challenges encountered in terms of its implementation. Officers held that instructions usually change as a "knee jerk reaction" to what has happened and are not always practical and appropriate to what is happening on the ground. Similarly, another officer mentioned that "legislators put a strain on operational officers as they sometimes develop directives as a response to extraordinary circumstances which have occurred in isolation". As good as they look and/or may sound on paper, officers expressed that directives are sometimes difficult to implement. There were suggestions that SAPS must modify the development process of internal policies. The current process involves drafting policies at the national level and distributing the drafts to all offices, including those at the local level, for inputs and comments. Though this system provides stations and units with the opportunity to advise in that regard, officers indicated that they mostly are not afforded the opportunity to respond to such communication. Frontline officers therefore feel the National Instruction 4 of 2014 on Public Order Police (NI) is not practical as various factors hamper the implementation of organizational directives.

Improved Training Interventions

The crowd management training programme was criticized by POP members for its quality and efficacy as it does not adequately prepare members to work operationally in teams. Members emphasized the significance of group training at station level and unit level to ensure that officers understand each other's tactics and roles, and thus learn how to work together. This would help to develop trust and rhythm amongst members especially during violent confrontation at protests.

Inhibiting the Police Culture of Seniority

POP members pointed out that station commanders refuse to handover the scene to POP units, very often because they are more senior in rank than the arriving POP commander. It was argued that station commanders allow protests to escalate to riotous conditions before they realize that they should hand over the scene to an experienced POP commander to salvage the situation. In their experience, POP members recall operations that resulted in unnecessary shooting incidents and unlawful arrests because of the undue pressure from high-ranking officers.

Ill-Prepared First Responders

Police stations are nevertheless required to assist POP units where smaller groupings of protesters develop from a major protest assembled in one area. When the protesters divide themselves to form such smaller protests, stations must then intervene to assist because POP units do not have adequate capacity. This rarely happens, however, as first responders have indicated that they are not trained for more than being first responders who observe and report the situation. POP members therefore raised concern over the failure to train first responders. Their mental and emotional capability is as important to respond professionally to unfavourable conditions, especially considering the increase in protests characterized by violence and disruptions.

Sidelining Junior Operational Members

Opinions and experiences of operational officers and relief commanders are not considered during planning. POP members indicated that though pre-planning and contingency planning does happen, it mostly involves only senior members. The argument of POP members was that operational officers and relief commanders are the frontline workers who are exposed to the actual circumstances. Yet, they are not included as part of the planning process. Where information about planned protest action is provided, it is likely to be irrelevant and not helpful. Junior

members often choose not to share the information because they are not given the platform to do so. The consequence of not having intelligence in time is that POP units are forced to plan and make decisions based on their experience. This approach often affects the overall crowd management response at the protest which might be perceived as POP members just rushing in to disperse protesters. To this end, community members suspect that the reason for such behaviour is because POP units lack information about the reasons for protesting.

Lack of Equipment

First responders raised concerns regarding the lack of equipment, which affects the level of involvement of officers at protest scenes. As dangerous as it is to work in the POP environment, first responders are expected to work with what they have, that is their normal policing gear and a side arm. Because of the lack of crowd control equipment (including self-protection gear such as helmets and shields), first responders aired their frustration and struggled to intervene where there are high levels of disruption and violence. The concern is that, should a serious incident or situation occur, first responders can only use their side arms that are loaded with lethal ammunition. They do not have other means to remedy violence or danger with something less lethal. To this end first responders protect themselves by keeping a watchful eye over protests at a distance. Even in terms of communication, first responders only have access to a two-way radio to communicate with one another, but in some environments the radios do not function effectively due to network problems. This situation adds to the officers' safety risk as it would be impossible to request back up while having to face a violent crowd. The need for equipment such as shields, shotguns, helmets, stun grenades, tear gas, thunderflashes, and lighting was therefore emphasized, though officers will require training on such equipment.

First responders also caution against being armed too heavily since it could create the appearance that they are confronting protesters or preventing them from exercising their right to protest. If POP units are to be on standby, somewhere nearby and be able to intervene

immediately when required, participants argued, equipping first responders may not be necessary. Equipment issued to POP members for crowd management includes 400 ml teargas canisters which they consider to be ineffective. POP members thus resort to using rubber bullets, resulting in them being charged for misconduct or worse. Members mentioned that the helmet visors block their view, and if they are opened, officers are exposed to the risk of being injured as the chances of them getting hit in the face with stones and other objects are subsequently higher. Some of the objects used by protesters which may put officers at risk include knobkieries, sticks, bottles, pangas, spades, and weapons such as firearms, knives, petrol bombs, steel rods, sticks with steel, sticks/canes, stones or bricks, tear smoke, tree branches, shambucks, or sharpened sticks or rods. It is therefore more tempting to resort to the shotgun and rubber bullets to restore order.

Poor or Lack of Collaboration between Stations and POP Units

Poor collaboration between stations and units was highlighted as a negative result of the new National Instruction. POP units mentioned that stations are sometimes not willing to work together with them, even when more manpower is required. The members mentioned that "there have been instances where stations pack up and leave when POP gets to the scene". POP unit members seemed discouraged when stating that they get to the protest scene and the first thing that first responders do is vacate the scene. To request their assistance, a protocol must be followed—which was described as a long process. POP units disclosed that even when the situation involves criminal activities, first responders do not open cases but do monitor and wait for POP units to arrive when all duties must be performed by the units including arresting offenders. One first responder mentioned that indeed they do not intervene at any point because "when you react and happen to commit a mistake, the first thing that the court will ask, is if you have received training". Some first responders mentioned that POP members are sometimes the ones to blame them, especially when things go wrong. Consequently, they are discouraged from getting involved.

5   Discussion

It is clear that SAPS has worked hard on improving the internal regulatory framework pertaining to the management of crowds. The recommendations made by the Farlam Commission of Inquiry were taken very seriously which resulted in the review of and repeal of a Standing Order and the crafting of the NI. The NI is comprehensive and is aligned to the constitution of the country, the South African Police Service Act, and the Regulations of Gatherings Act. The responsibilities of various role players are stipulated clearly to avoid role conflict when police officers respond to crowds. SAPS has further developed a POP strategy with improving capacity of units, skills development, resourcing the units, and modernizing the POP environment as key priorities.

Whether or not these organizational directives adequately direct officers on how to de-escalate possible conflict and violence requires more scrutiny. Several positive and unintended effects of the application of organizational directives emerged in the study.

Positive Contributions

From a management point of view, it would seem that the directives do assist in de-escalating officer violence when responding to unruly crowds, as the NI for instance categorizes gatherings into different levels of severity, each with its own level of response and command structure. The new directives, as argued by Engel et al. (2022), should be supported by training to incorporate de-escalation tactics if it is to assist POP units to become more responsive, efficient, and professional, which SAPS falls short of, as pointed out by Dugmore (2017).

- Violence de-escalation strategies seem to be effective for station police officers when they respond to protests. This has involved, amongst other efforts, removing shotguns from the first response function. Station police officers are perceived by community members to show more respect for protesters and comply with police directives.

- The impact of police directives on reducing officer violence by first responders to protests is positive in the sense that it prevents them from engaging directly with unruly crowds while they are hugely outnumbered and in provocation-driven protest situations.
- There is improved commitment to a softer response to protesters which has resulted in many peaceful crowd management operations that have involved less use of aggressive policing. Police officers from both stations and POP units are more committed to communicating and negotiating with protesters, despite the fact that protesters are not always cooperative and/or willing to engage with the police. The incorporation of the ESIM framework in first responders' and POP members' training could encourage police officers even further to view crowd participants as individuals who still hold their individual beliefs and values, even though they may have a shared objective during the protest (Kennedy, 2019, p. 14).
- POP units' responses to protesters' provocative actions when they block roads, attack the police, set fire to buildings, and so on, which normally happens when protestors want to draw the media's attention, is deemed appropriate and justified by non-protesting communities, unless a fatality occurred. Kennedy (2019) advocates the use of frameworks such as ESIM which the police can use in their approaches when managing crowds as it determines whether or not violence will escalate or de-escalate.

Unintended Effects

The new national instructions for POP members on how to respond to public protests have resulted in negative and unintended outcomes. This could be the consequence of inadequate consultation of experienced station first responders and POP members on policy-related matters. Several authors have cautioned against not engaging in empirically grounded research to develop strategies and directives that could sustain the use of de-escalation tactics when policing crowds (Gorringe et al., 2012, p. 4; Zaiser & Staller, 2015; McCord, 2018, p. 73; Borch, 2013, p. 597).

- Like POP members, station members feel that they were not consulted during the draft of the strategy or NI. POP officers are thus somewhat sceptical about the NI and perceive it to be removed from the reality they are faced with when they respond to protest action. The NI proves impractical when they cannot operate in formations when managing a crowd (as prescribed in the NI) because POP units remain short staffed and under-resourced.
- Frontline officers at station level who generally become the first responders of protest actions feel exposed and under-protected from harm as they are not properly trained or equipped to respond to protests. Although the instruction provides for different levels of gatherings, first responders feel that the NI is not practical and therefore threatens their safety as they don't have the training to do the job. Frontline station officers are not adequately equipped to respond to larger gatherings because they are not issued with non-lethal or less-lethal weapons to protect themselves or the lives of others. Such negative first responder perceptions could be addressed through training in de-escalation tactics to help them to identify critical signs that a situation can escalate into confrontation and violence (PowerDMS, 2021).
- Some police officers prefer to monitor protests instead of being involved with negotiations with the conveners of the protest, because they would not have to respond to violence using any level of force, and thereby steer clear of being departmentally or criminally prosecuted should anything go wrong. Officer confidence in performing their duties has weakened due to the fear of doing wrong in the eyes of the law and the public. Their actions paint police officers as incompetent and lazy.
- Regardless of SAPS's commitment to approach crowds differently, to de-escalate officer violence the relationship between the police and protesters remains tense due to lack of trust in the police. Protesters isolate themselves from the police and are becoming more violent towards them during gatherings. POP units' subsequent reaction to such violence is considered hostile and exacerbating to the situation. Resulting from the softer approach, there is clear evidence of reduced

involvement of first responders, growing disrespect for officers of the law, and increased threats to police safety.

- The limitation of the use of certain kinds of gas, weapons, or ammunition puts POP units under pressure to respond to multiple incidents in various police station precincts as prescribed, because such weapons can only be used on instruction by the POP commander at the scene (Expert Panel, 2021). This requires them, as dictated by the seriousness of the situation (Expert Panel, 2021), to travel long distances to respond to protests, often arriving so late that they have no alternative to responding forcefully to the crowds. Further, protestors have learnt that first responders do not confront them and the lack of "excitement" does not "promote" their cause. They rather wait for the POP members to arrive, become unruly, and provoke them until they use force to disperse the crowd. Activists have confirmed that this strategy of protestors helps to highlight their cause in the media.

- More has to be done to debrief POP members after operations to prevent the build-up of stress and resentment for protesters due to the latter's continuous insults, spitting at police officers, and excessive verbal abuse. If not, these officers may seize the opportunity to vent their frustration during protests.

6   Conclusion

In response to police officer violence when responding to protests, SAPS has introduced new directives to reduce violence and respect human rights. While the intention is to move towards being an acceptable and effective police service, officers seem to have lost confidence in their ability to perform their duties, and protesters on the other hand have gained the "upper hand". The latter have further led to deteriorated citizen respect for the police, and the use of more aggressive tactics by protesters towards the police. The other pitfall is that POP units are perceived as hostile. Their mandate is not understood by protesters and confused with that of first responders. To this end, police directives have not succeeded in advancing attempts to de-escalate violence during

protests. Training of the community in the role of the different police responders and incorporating de-escalation tactics in police training could improve the situation.

The impact of police directives on reducing officer violence has unintended effects. For SAPS, the effects are generally not favourable as the safety and well-being of officers at station level are threatened, and the tactics used by POP units are continually confused as a militarized approach to policing. The softer approach of SAPS to de-escalate officer violence in response to protests has resulted in negative perceptions that SAPS officers are "idle and incompetent" and fail to manage riotous events in the eyes of the public at large. Its impact on crowd management is that it compromises police safety, reduces first responder involvement, weakens confidence in officers' ability to perform their duties, and results in poor cooperation between police and protesters.

Key Takeaways
Police Officers

When frontline officers grasp the full scope of their responsibilities and the purpose of a softer crowd management approach, they will value their own contribution as part of the strategy, but they have to acquaint themselves with the law and organizational directives first. In this respect, the new directives on crowd management have not succeeded in reducing officer violence during protests, and in instances where they did, it was at the cost of reduced trust in the ability of the police.

Conflict Management Trainers

Trainers should collaborate with operational policing trainers to prepare frontline officers for the effect of a softer approach to policing crowds. The impact on the community is that protesters are now becoming more inclined to using violent tactics towards the police. Although in line with international practice, their compliance with the NI is associated with an unwillingness to respond to community needs when first responders are expected to just monitor the protest. Some officers confessed to opting not to do anything other than monitoring the protest due to fear of prosecution if they err. Their conduct is detrimental to the image of the police because they are perceived to be incapable

of responding to protests. Trainers should thus develop frontline officers to understand and control their emotions and fear of prosecution. First responders must learn to understand that there is a difference between police observation of a protest and abdicating responsibilities, and that active observation of crowd behaviour could ultimately determine the protestors' behaviour and the police's response to either peaceful or violent protests.

Police Decision-Makers

Policymakers should be concerned about the potential of deadly responses by first responders when exposed to violent crowds while only equipped with a lethal sidearm. They should also reconsider initiatives that fall short of clarifying police roles and do not provide for joint operational training of first responders and POP members. SAPS policymakers need to unpack these factors further to encourage de-escalation of violence and get local government officials on board to improve their service delivery to reduce violent service delivery protests. Clearly, directives without support training on de-escalation tactics have unintended and damaging consequences. Policymakers should engage with frontline officers to gain empirical evidence before drafting directives that are not practical in the field or not supported by operational police officers.

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Police Legitimacy in Russia: Explaining Millennials' Obligation to Obey and Willingness to Cooperate

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Reviewer: Bryce Jenkins

1   Introduction

Research on citizens' judgments of trust and legitimacy of service providers has grown enormously in the past few decades. Trust and legitimacy are structural characteristics in a political system (Lipset, 1959) that is backed by public support (Bratton et al., 2002) and reflects the endorsement of the state by citizens through shared values and norms

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(Gilley, 2006). One organization where legitimacy has become an essential facet of conversation in recent decades is the police, who are often seen as a fundamental extension of government, or as agents of force. Citizens' deference and compliance to the police come from the "symbolic power" (Loader, 1997) the officers carry as the state's functionaries in exercising authority and enhancing government legitimacy. Generally, legitimacy in nation states refers to the degree to which the state facilitates citizens' participation in the political process, executing the rule of law and controlling corruption (Gilley, 2006). Scholars have traditionally set apart the role and function of the public police as distinct from other functionaries within the context of their ability to exercise authority and the power to use deadly force.

While policing scholars were preoccupied with issues relating to citizens' satisfaction and police integrity during the decades leading up to 2000, the past few decades have seen a flurry of research on citizens' perceptions of the trust, confidence, and legitimacy of police officers and law enforcement organizations. The general argument is that citizens' evaluations of police procedural justice will influence their decisions to obey the authorities and comply with the law (Tyler, 1990). Tankebe (2013) challenges the traditional definition of police legitimacy as felt obligation to obey (Tyler, 1990), and emphasizes procedural justice along with police effectiveness, distributive fairness, and lawfulness as the critical components of legitimacy. He suggests that legitimacy beliefs influence citizens' obligation to obey (which is an outcome and not a component of police legitimacy) and serve as precursors to the willingness to cooperate. The importance of the subject matter is well recognized, given that the police service in democratic societies is directly dependent on citizens' approval of the organization.

While there is broad consensus among police scholars on the applicability of legitimacy theory in established democracies, others do not accede to such generalizability (Bradford et al., 2014; Tankebe, 2009). They question whether compliance and cooperation with the police are natural outcomes of police legitimacy in post-colonial countries that are characterized as authoritarian and militaristic (Karstedt, 2013). Others suggest that, in some countries, the power-distance is more significant. That is, people are deferring more to authority given the unequal

distribution of power (Hofstede et al., 2005). Most of the world population live in flawed democracies or hybrid and authoritarian regimes (Nalla & Mamayek, 2013), many of which are high power-distance countries, where compliance to the police is driven more by fear than legitimacy. In some post-colonial democracies such as India, citizens fear the police (Nalla & Madan, 2013). The low accountability and coercive tactics employed by the police make citizens' voluntary compliance questionable.

Following Tankebe's (2013) operationalization of police legitimacy, we address the precursors to citizen obligation to obey and willingness to cooperate with police in modern Russia, a country where the policing style and culture have been grounded in a state-centric police and militaristic organizational framework (Galeotti, 1997). Contrary to what is generally referred to as democratic policing (Nalla, 2009), Russian policing is reminiscent of the intrusive, repressive, and abusive Soviet style of law enforcement (Light et al., 2015). Except for a few studies (Gurinskaya, 2020; Meško et al., 2013; Nalla & Gurinskaya, 2022), which explored police legitimacy more broadly, no prior research has examined the issue of the determinants of citizens' willingness to obey and cooperate with the police in Russia. This research fills this gap by assessing whether legitimacy predicts these attitudes in Russia. More specifically, first, we examine the role police legitimacy plays in influencing Russian millennials' obligation to obey the law and, secondly, their willingness to cooperate with the police, both of which we conceptualize as outcomes of legitimacy. In addition, we examine the role of specific dimensions of legitimacy that include procedural justice, distributive fairness, and effectiveness in explaining citizens' obligation to obey and willingness to cooperate.

2   Police Legitimacy, Obligation to Obey, and Willingness to Cooperate

The notion of legitimacy is grounded in the earlier work of political philosophers who expounded on the concepts of justice, fairness, democracy, and authority. According to Buchanan (2002, pp. 689–690), a

government or an institution is legitimate "if and only if it is morally justified in wielding political power, where to wield political power is to attempt to exercise a monopoly, within a jurisdiction, in the making, application, and enforcement of law". Following Weber's (1978) understanding of power, Haugaard (2022) summarizes that compliance with the decisions of those in power can be achieved through coercion or through authority which is based on the subjective perceptions of legitimacy. Rawls (1971) noted that there is a shared consensus among citizens about what constitutes fairness about laws, fairness in their enforcement, and just outcomes which are critical to establishing and strengthening the foundations of political legitimacy of the state. Thus, he brought to the forefront the concept of distributive fairness as a precursor to legitimacy. These discussions have ultimately led to conversations relating to police legitimacy. Looking through the lens of psychology, Tyler (1990) observed that police cannot obtain citizens' compliance by the sheer threat of force or deterrence. When the public perceives the laws to be fair and justly enforced, they are more likely to have greater trust in the police and feel a greater obligation to obey the law (Tyler, 1990).

These propositions have spawned a significant amount of research in the area of police legitimacy, as well as trust and confidence in public law enforcement (Gau, 2014; Hinds & Murphy, 2007; Murphy et al., 2014; Reisig et al., 2007; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tankebe, 2009; Tyler, 2006, 2011). Importantly, these researchers address the question, "Why should citizens find it compelling to obey and cooperate with the police?" Citizens' willingness to comply with police directives is shaped by their assessments of police performance, procedural justice aspects in their interactions, and their integrity (Sunshine & Tyler, 2003). Additionally, their opinions of the police also influence their decision as to whether to cooperate with law enforcement (Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tyler & Fagan, 2008). Findings from other countries confirm that citizens' attitudes related to various aspects of police legitimacy predict their satisfaction with the police (Hinds & Murphy, 2007) and willingness to cooperate with the police (Tankebe, 2009; Woo et al., 2018). Jackson and his colleagues (2012) argue that legitimacy shapes consent to the rule of law, and this rule of law encourages voluntary compliance with the law.

There is a significant debate in the literature about what police legitimacy is and how it should be operationalized. The concept of police legitimacy is multidimensional (Beetham, 1991). What constitutes legitimacy has been widely debated since Tyler (2006) introduced his measure three decades ago (see Gurinskaya, 2020 for a review). Some argue that obligation to obey constitutes one of the dimensions of legitimacy along with trust in the police (Reisig et al., 2007; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003). Later normative alignment with those who hold the power was said to be another component of legitimacy (Jackson et al., 2012). Among the various antecedents of legitimacy, there is a consensus among scholars that procedural fairness, distributive fairness, and effectiveness are among the key predictors. Police procedural fairness, that is, whether the police treat citizens with fairness and equity, is a significant and critical explanatory variable that predicts police legitimacy measured as trust/confidence and obligation to obey. There is considerable support for a strong positive relationship between procedural fairness and police legitimacy (Hinds & Murphy, 2007; Murphy, 2009; Murphy & Cherney, 2011; Tyler, 2004, 2005), despite variations in methods, data, measurement, and analyses (Mazerolle et al., 2013). Others disagree with this conceptualization of legitimacy as the combination of obligation to obey with normative components and believe that the obligation to obey is not a component of legitimacy but is an outcome of it (Bottoms & Tankebe, 2012). Tankebe (2013) argues that legitimacy consists of many dimensions, including police professionalism, procedural fairness, and police effectiveness in interactions with community members.

Police Legitimacy and Cooperation in Developing and Transitional Countries

In the preceding section, we have drawn attention to the generalizability of the well-established relationship between legitimacy (with the obligation to obey) and police cooperation in developing and transitional democracies as well as in authoritarian states.

Conversations on the relevance and applicability of Tyler's (1990) model of police legitimacy (a concept comprising procedural justice,

distributive justice, police effectiveness, and obligation to obey) in authoritarian states has resulted in a competing model where Tankebe (2013) reasoned that legitimacy is distinct from the obligation to obey. More specifically, he argued that specific elements of legitimacy, such as procedural justice, distributive justice, effectiveness, and lawfulness, shape citizens' obligation to obey, motivating their willingness to cooperate. Sun et al. (2018) tested the latter model in China, an authoritarian state, and found that legitimacy and citizen cooperation are partially mediated by an obligation to obey. From these findings, the authors concluded that those with a stronger sense of obligation to obey are more likely to cooperate with the police. A more recent study examined the role of legitimacy in a high power-distance nation, South Korea (Lee et al., 2022). This study showed that procedural justice was a strong predictor of obligation to obey.

Research more specific to the influence of perceived legitimacy on willingness to cooperate was conducted in four central European countries, including the Slovak Republic, Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland (Moravcová, 2016). The study found that while dimensions of legitimacy (procedural fairness and effectiveness) influenced the obligation to obey, this obligation was found to influence willingness to cooperate only in Hungary. Research from Slovenia (Reisig et al., 2012), another Eastern European country, also confirms the similar finding of the direct relationship between police legitimacy and cooperation, as well as the direct relationship between police effectiveness and cooperation.

3   Present Study

Context: Policing in Russia

The focus of the present study is the Russian Federation, one of the 15 republics that became an independent state after the dissolution of the former Soviet Union in 1991. In this research we examine why Russia's millennials (henceforth "citizens"), born after the formation of the independent state, obey the police. Unlike millennials, research on

their parent's generation's interaction with the law and public police characterizes it as "skeptical, distrustful and often hostile towards the law", suggesting a society that portrayed a "culture of anti-legalism" (Zernova, 2012, p. 224). Policing in modern-day Russia is still heavily based on practices and training from the Soviet Union era, with some organizations and policies surviving countless political changes and revolutions (Galeotti, 1997, p. 142; Pustintsev, 2000, pp. 80–81).

Russian police organizations experienced significant challenges post-1991, not unlike in other transitional economies that came on the heels of economic liberalization and open market orientation (Dubova & Kosal, 2012; Galeotti, 2001; Morn & Segevnin, 1994; Pustintsev, 2000; Shelley, 1999, 2005; Solomon, 2005; Taylor, 2014). Despite many efforts to reform, the Russian police remain highly centralized, politicized, and militarized (Mawby, 2001; Shelley, 1999). Citizens' dissatisfaction with the police in the post-Soviet era has been documented in research conducted in the 1990s and early 2000 (Los, 2002). Some have focused on ineffective crime governance leading to police violence and corruption (Gerber & Mendelson, 2008) and eventually the rise of private police (Volkov, 2000). Others have explored citizens' perceptions of the police in general, focusing on Russia or country comparisons (Davis et al., 2004; Reynolds et al., 2008; Semukhina & Reynolds, 2014).

Semukhina (2014), in her review of the literature from English and Russian language articles, revealed that the public are generally dissatisfied with the police and their ineffective delivery of law enforcement services (Reynolds et al., 2008; Semukhina, 2014). Others have noted that the general public perception of the police is that they are "professionally inept and ineffective" (Zernova, 2012, p. 221), engage in misconduct (Semukhina, 2014), lack integrity (Cheloukhine et al., 2015), and are violent and corrupt (Gerber & Mendelson, 2008).

A similar finding of low trust and police legitimacy was found by Meško and his colleagues (2013). Their study of young people's views of the police using data from eight central and eastern European countries, including Russia, revealed that trust and legitimacy in the police in Russia were among the lowest. Additionally, the study found that

police authority, procedural justice, and police effectiveness were significantly related to trust and legitimacy but willingness to cooperate was not. Gurinskaya (2020) also examined Russia's young adults' views on police legitimacy and support for technology deployment by the police through closed-circuit television cameras in public places.

Drawing from the above literature, we hypothesize that:

H1 Police legitimacy is directly related to the obligation to obey and willingness to cooperate.

H2 Obligation to obey is related to willingness to cooperate.

H3 Individual elements of police legitimacy directly relate to the obligation to obey and willingness to cooperate.

Methodology

Data for the present study came from a sample of college students enrolled in 7 of the 43 large state universities in St. Petersburg, the second largest city in Russia with a population of 5.2 million with over 66,000 students enrolled in state and municipal educational institutions in 2015. The universities offer diverse academic disciplines, including economics, engineering, and social studies. About 75% of the sample came from two major universities where one of the researchers worked, and the rest came from other universities located in the city's center. The demographics of the study community did not vary dramatically, given the small variation in geographic contexts in the campus building location. The data was collected during the 2015–2016 academic year.

A survey was developed in English for this study based on prior research exploring citizens' perceptions of the police (e.g., Hinds & Murphy, 2007; Reisig, 2007; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tankebe, 2009; Tyler, 2006, 2011). The survey was translated from English to Russian and administered to a sample of ten students and later back-translated into English to check for validity and reliability. Survey questions sought

students' attitudes and perceptions on various dimensions of police legitimacy, compliance with the law, and willingness to cooperate with the police. The attitudinal questions were designed to measure opinions on a five-point Likert scale where a response of 1 represented "strongly disagree" and 5 represented "strongly agree".

Permission was sought from several professors from selected departments to administer the survey in their respective classes, either at the beginning or end of class. Fourteen professors gave permission, and three allowed the survey administration in multiple classes they taught. Each class had about 13–30 students. An additional 92 students in Wi-Fi and cafeteria zones also agreed to participate. Of the 500 distributed surveys, 416 were returned to us, of which only 364 were usable, representing a response rate of 73%.

The respondents' ages ranged from 17 to 25 years, with a mean age of 20.9. There were 194 females in the sample (53.3%). Of all the respondents, 187 (51.4%) were single, 114 (31.3%) were dating or seeing someone, and the remaining were married or living with a partner. Most of the respondents (183 or 50.3%) were from families with an average monthly salary (the average monthly income in St. Petersburg at the time of the data collection was 49,000 rubles), and 144 (39.5%) were reported as having an above average income.

As with all survey research, we encountered missing data for some responses, but this accounted for less than 5% for each variable. Meyers et al. (2005) note that missing data with less than a 5% margin can be ignored and included in the analyses (Meyers et al., 2005).

Measurement of Variables

We have two *dependent* variables in our study. The first is one of the constructs of the outcomes of legitimacy: *the obligation to obey*. Obligation to obey laws can come on either an instrumental basis where individuals make cost–benefit calculations or on a normative basis, which includes moral obligation and a commitment to belief systems (Bottoms, 2013). Our measure included both instrumental and normative dimensions comprising four items (Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tyler,

1990; Tyler & Fagan, 2008). Questions asked about the police included: "You should do what the officer tells you to do even if you disagree", "You should accept officers' decisions even if you think they are wrong", "People like me have no choice but to obey the directives of the officers", and "You should accept officers' decisions because that is the proper thing to do". All the items had loadings ranging from 0.67 to 0.85, a Cronbach's α of 0.82, and a Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of 0.85. The mean and standard deviation of the four-point scale is 12.43 and 3.67, respectively.

The second dependent variable in our study is the willingness to cooperate. We measured this with three questions based on prior literature (Reisig & Lloyd, 2009; Tankebe, 2009): "If I witness a crime of violence, I will call the police", "If I witness someone breaking into my house or car, I will call the police", and "If I have an opportunity, I will assist a police officer in apprehending a criminal". Factor analysis of the two items for this scale had loadings of 0.88 and 0.88, and one at 0.61. The Cronbach's alpha for the scale was 0.64.

The key *independent* variable in our study is legitimacy. We combined the three following constructs based on prior work (Reisig et al., 2007; Tankebe, 2009). *Procedural fairness* consisted of seven items: "You should accept officers' decision because that is the right thing to do", "Police respect citizens' rights", "Officers treat citizens with respect", "Make decisions based on facts", "Treat everyone with dignity", "Follow through on their decisions and promises they make", and "Explain their decisions to the people they deal with". The loadings of the items ranged from 0.71 to 0.87. The Cronbach's alpha was 0.94.

Effectiveness was measured by three items (Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tankebe, 2009) that capture their views of "Police promptness in response to calls about crime", "Officers do a good job of preventing crime in my neighbourhood", and "Officers do a good job in working with people to solve problems". The Cronbach's alpha was 0.81 and loadings ranged from 0.83 to 0.87.

Distributive fairness was measured by two items (Reisig et al., 2012): "The officers enforce the law consistently when dealing with all people" and "The officers provide the same quality of service to all people". The loadings of the items were 0.95 and the Cronbach's alpha was 0.90. We

did not have questions relating to the fourth dimension of legitimacy, namely lawfulness, suggested by Tankebe (2013). Therefore, we chose to use a three-dimensional construct that included procedural fairness, distributive fairness, and effectiveness. For the legitimacy scale, all 11 items loaded on the scale had scores ranging from 0.68 to 0.85 with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.94.

4   Findings

Ordinary least squares (OLS) analysis was employed to assess the influence of various independent variables on the dependent variables of obligation to obey and willingness to cooperate. Our dependent variables are constructed from Likert scale questions, which raises the question as to whether OLS is an appropriate analytical tool. It has been argued that logistic or ordinal regression would be more suitable for this variable type (Cohen et al., 2014). However, according to Kromrey and Rendina-Gobioff (2002), OLS is appropriate even for discrete–continuous variables (such as individual Likert items) and produces results similar to those obtained using the two other techniques. Further, Likert scale data are often used in research on police legitimacy and assume that an ordinal metric exists in the measurement of citizens' attitudes (Weinfurt & Moghaddam, 2001).

The assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity were all met in the analysis. The mean variance inflation factor (VIF) scores for models that included a composite legitimacy scale did not exceed 1.05. The models that included individual components of legitimacy showed slightly higher VIF scores, but below 3.27, suggesting no multicollinearity issues.

The results from the OLS analyses are presented in Table 1, which displays models with various control and the key predictor variables on the obligation to obey (models 1 and 4) and willingness to cooperate (models 2-3 and 5-6). In model 1 (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.198$), legitimacy was positively related to the obligation to obey ($\beta = 0.45$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that respondents' obligation to obey was strongly shaped by

their trust and confidence in the police. Two statistically significant variables emerged in model 2 (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.046$). Among the control variables, findings suggest that compared to females, males are more likely to cooperate with the police ($\beta = 0.16$, $p < 0.01$). Findings also show that legitimacy is positively related to willingness to obey ($\beta = 0.17$, $p < 0.01$). Following the argument outlined in Tankebe (2009), in model 3 we included the obligation to obey as a precursor to willingness to cooperate. The adjusted R^2 value dropped marginally, but the obligation to obey did not impact the dependent variables. The effects of both gender and legitimacy remained similar to model 2.

We next continued our analysis by substituting the composite legitimacy scale with its individual components, namely procedural justice, distributive fairness, and effectiveness. In model 4 (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.232$), all three components of legitimacy were related to the obligation to obey with statistical significance. Both procedural justice ($\beta = 0.37$, $p < 0.001$) and distributive justice ($\beta = 0.24$, $p < 0.001$) were positively related to obligation to obey.

However, effectiveness ($\beta = -0.14$, $p < 0.05$) related negatively to the obligation to obey, suggesting that millennials who believe the police are effective are less likely to comply. This finding is similar to the finding from the study in the UK (Tankebe, 2009) and is counter-intuitive. We will elaborate on this finding in the discussion. In model 5 (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.055$) only two components of legitimacy, that is, distributive justice ($\beta = 0.17$, $p < 0.01$) along with gender ($\beta = 0.16$, $p < 0.01$), were statistically significant. This suggests that while in model 2 we find that legitimacy as a compositive variable is a predictor of willingness to cooperate, model 5 shows it is not procedural justice or effectiveness that are key variables to predict willingness to cooperate. In model 6 (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.046$), we repeated the format applied in model 3 by including the obligation to obey as a predictor variable for willingness to cooperate. The adjusted R^2 dropped by a considerable margin. However, the obligation to obey failed to show any significant relationship to willingness to cooperate.

Table 1 OLS on dependent variables "obligation to obey" and "willingness to cooperate" (N = 364)

Dependent Variable:	Model 1 Obligation to Obey			Model 2 Willing to Cooperate			Model 3 Willing to Cooperate		
Variable	b	SE	β	b	SE	β	b	SE	β
Gender (1 = Male)[1]	−0.15	0.36	−0.02	0.75	0.25	0.16**	0.75	0.25	0.16***
Marital Status[2]	−0.19	0.27	−0.04	0.12	0.19	0.03	0.12	0.19	0.03
Income Above Av.[3]	−0.27	0.36	−0.04	−0.37	0.25	−0.08	−0.36	0.25	−0.08
Legitimacy Obligation to obey	0.18	0.02	0.45***	0.04	0.01	0.17**	0.04	0.02	0.16**
Adj R^2	.0198			.0046			.0044		
F	222.3***			5.13***			4.47***		
Dependent Variable:	Model 4 Obligation to Obey			Model 5 Willing to Cooperate			Model 6 Willing to Cooperate		
Variable	b	SE	β	b	SE	β	b	SE	β
Gender (1 = Male)[1]	−0.16	0.36	−0.02	0.75	0.25	0.16**	0.75	0.25	0.16**
Marital Status[2]	−0.25	0.26	−0.05	0.09	0.19	0.03	0.09	0.19	0.03
Income Above Av.[3]	−0.33	0.36	−0.05	−0.42	0.26	−0.09	−0.42	0.26	−0.09

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

Dependent Variable:	Model 1 Obligation to Obey			Model 2 Willing to Cooperate			Model 3 Willing to Cooperate		
Variable	b	SE	β	b	SE	β	b	SE	β
Procedural justice	0.25	0.06	0.37***	0.04	0.04	0.10	0.04	0.04	0.10
Distributive fairness	0.34	0.11	0.24***	0.16	0.08	0.17*	0.16	0.08	0.17*
Effectiveness	−0.22	0.11	−0.14*	−0.10	0.08	−0.09	−0.10	0.08	−0.09
Obligation to obey							0.00	0.04	0.00
Adj R^2	0232			0055			0046		
F	1817***			268***			812***		

*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$
[1]Gender: Females = 0
[2]Marital Status: 0 = married or in relationship
[3]Family income: 0 = national average or below average

5 Discussion

The present study conducted in post-Soviet Russia contributes to the growing literature on the role of legitimacy in predicting obligation to obey and cooperation with the police in transitional and emerging democracies as well as non-democratic states. Prior research outlined above asserts that the obligation to obey, which is subsumed under the larger concept of legitimacy (Tyler, 1990), is a predictor of willingness to cooperate, a finding often found in research in higher-ranked democracies in the world. However, others noted that obligation should be treated as a distinct construct, often an antecedent to a willingness to cooperate (Tankebe, 2013). The findings from this study add to the growing conversation about the role of obligation to obey in countries that have inherited state-centric and authoritarian policing structures. We drew from Tankebe's (2013) argument of considering the obligation to obey as a distinct element apart from the holistic conception of legitimacy (Tyler, 1990) as a precursor to cooperation. Our findings from this study established that obligation does not play a significant role in explaining citizen willingness to cooperate.

The first finding from the study shows that legitimacy has a direct relationship with the obligation to obey and cooperate, lending support to Hypothesis 1. This finding is consistent with other studies that established a relationship with China (Sun et al.), South Korea (Lee et al., 2022), and the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and the Slovak Republic in Eastern Europe (Moravcová, 2016). Research from Slovenia (Reisig et al., 2012) did not test the relationship between legitimacy and obligation to obey as its legitimacy measure incorporated obligation to obey the police. However, our study finds that legitimacy is significantly related to cooperation.

Our second hypothesis tested the proposition that obligation to obey has a role in influencing willingness to cooperate. The finding from this study shows that obligation to obey does not have a significant relationship with cooperation, thus establishing a lack of support for Hypothesis 2. This finding is similar to the results from the South Korean study (Lee et al., 2022) and in the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic, and Poland (Moravcová, 2016), but unlike the outcome of a partial mediation effect

found in the study in China (Sun et al., 2018) and a direct relationship in Hungary (Moravcová, 2016).

Our third key finding from the study is that among the individual elements of police legitimacy, all three dimensions of procedural justice, distributive fairness, and effectiveness are all significantly related to the obligation to obey, finding support for Hypothesis 3. Interestingly, however, effectiveness was found to be negatively related to the obligation to obey, a finding similar to Tankebe's work premised in the UK, a developed democracy (2013).

This study also found that among the individual components of legitimacy, only distributive fairness was related to willingness to cooperate. Unlike the Slovenia study, the relationship between effectiveness and willingness to cooperate was insignificant (Reisig et al., 2012). In a study from Ghana, Tankebe (2009) found a positive relationship between effectiveness and cooperation, prompting him to wonder if effectiveness is more important than procedural fairness in some countries to induce cooperative behavior (Tankebe, 2013). However, he also observed that prior victimization might impact the relationship between police cooperation and effectiveness.

While we draw some interesting findings from this first-time study on police legitimacy and citizen cooperation in Russia, it is essential to note that there is an ongoing debate about the operationalization of the concept of legitimacy and its relevance in developed and emerging democracies and authoritarian states. Future research could test the suitability of the existing operationalizations of legitimacy in authoritarian states.

We also draw attention to some limitations. The first is that survey research of any kind from academia in Russia is wrought with logistical and bureaucratic hurdles unless backed by larger foundations with generous funding. Given these conditions, the studies overwhelmingly rely on data from millennials born after the Russian Federation's independence and do not include the broader population groups whose views may be shaped differently given their experiences with police before and after independence. Secondly, the findings are from one city, and its generalizability to the country, one of the world's largest geographic regions of the world, should be done with caution. Future

studies could draw from distinct regions and samples from a broad spectrum of demographics. Additionally, the data for this study were collected in 2015–2016. Since then, police–citizen relations have been impacted due to various political tensions that have emerged from police involvement in suppressing protests. In particular, these tensions have been heightened by the Russia–Ukraine conflict. These developments give rise to a further need to examine police legitimacy and police–citizen relationships.

The findings from this research have several implications for police officers, conflict management trainers, and policy decision-makers in several areas. In this context, how the police treat citizens sends to the people a message of the status of the organization and what it stands for and represents (Jackson & Bradford, 2009). Legitimacy, inclusive of the elements of fairness, equity, neutrality, transparency, and respectful treatment of citizens, sends strong signals to the community that both the police and they are on the same side (Tyler & Blader, 2013).

Several studies have established that the police application of fair process in interacting with citizens develops social bonds between the authorities and citizens (Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tyler & Huo, 2002). Studies from countries with colonial legacies have established that when people believe the police are legitimate, it enhances their willingness to obey the authorities and cooperate with them. Studies from Ghana (Tankebe, 2009) and South Africa (Bradford et al., 2013) show that police fairness enhances citizens' cooperation. Even when people perceive the police are corrupt but believe they are fair in their interactions with citizens, this significantly enhances their satisfaction with police services (Nalla et al., 2018). Additionally, field experiments (Peyton et al., 2019) have shown that a single incident of positive contact with a police officer can not only improve public attitude toward the police but greatly enhance citizens' obligation to obey as well as their willingness to cooperate. This finding suggests that police departments can benefit if they emphasize strategies for the training and promotion of organizational culture geared toward police–public relations.

Evidence from this study lends support for the role of legitimacy in Russian citizens' obligation to obey and cooperate with the police.

These findings behoove policymakers to recognize their place and importance in working on police education and training, which are an integral part of the larger police organizational culture. In particular, police training should focus on building relationships with citizens grounded in mutual trust, recognizing citizens' rights, and embracing diversity to enhance fairness and equal treatment of all citizens. The police should not only aim at effective crime detection and prevention but also focus on bringing police behavior into line with legal provisions that mandate procedural and distributive fairness principles to be upheld and maintained. Training should be aimed at changing the organizational culture to change the police personnel's self-perceptions as law enforcers to police officers as not just agents of the state but facilitators and partners working collectively with citizens to coproducing safety and security.

Key Takeaways
Police Officers

Police Officers, especially in countries with colonial legacies and where law enforcement are often associated with corruption, need to be aware that it is their conduct that shapes first-hand experiences during citizen encounters and, thus, determines the perception of the police as a whole. With a strong understanding and deliberate practice of procedural justice, they can choose to make a positive difference, encounter by encounter.

Conflict Management Trainers

Conflict management trainers need to educate police officers on the factors that are within their realm of control and that determine the trust the public bestows on them and, thus, the legitimacy of both individual officers and the police as an institution. Conflict management trainers need to teach the principles of procedural justice in accessible and actionable ways.

Police Decision-Makers

Police decision-makers need to ensure the regulatory environment promotes the training of the principles of procedural justice, that conflict management trainers have appropriate time and resources available to

teach and educate the corresponding content, and that all police officers attend training. Police decision-makers further have to create a regulatory environment that promotes the application of the principles of procedural justice in the field, for instance by mandatory procedural justice and/or de-escalation policies. Ultimately police decision-makers need to work towards an organizational culture that promotes procedural justice.

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