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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
RIVERSIDE

Holistic Policing: The Art of the Performance

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Sociology

by

Roberto A. Rivera

September 2022

Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Alfredo Mirande, Chairperson

Dr. Juanita García

Dr. Randol Contreras

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2022

The Dissertation of Roberto A. Rivera is approved:

Committee Chairperson

University of California, Riverside

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I also thank those that serve in law enforcement across the United States that have respect for the communities they serve. I hope this dissertation can influence lower levels of police violence in communities of color. I also wish to honor the families of the deceased who have lost a family member to unnecessary police violence. Finally, I want to thank my father, Jesse Rivera, for the stories he shared with me of his life in Puerto Rico. He was an amazing man who with my mother Victoria, gave back to their community as a means of improving the social condition for those less fortunate. It is through my father’s stories that I’m able to author this dissertation.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Holistic Policing: The Art of the Performance

by

Roberto A. Rivera

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in Sociology
University of California, Riverside, September 2022
Dr. Alfredo Mirande, Chairperson

Since the May 25th, 2020, murder of George Floyd there has been a worldwide rebellion against anti-Black racism and policing. The movement for Black lives has opened up much-needed space to investigate and broaden the study of racialized policing to other communities. In assessing attitudes of Latinos towards law enforcement, previous studies have found that the racial oppression that exists between Latinos and White officers is exacerbated by Latino fear of deportation and procedural unfairness (McClusky et al., 2008; Messing et al., 2015). Latino perceptions of police performance have been poor since the *Garner v. Tennessee* (1985) decision. Noting that the prevailing rule here in the U.S. has been that the use of lethal force is justified in apprehending felons is outdated. The Supreme Court held that a police officer is authorized to shoot at a

fleeing felon only when the officer believes that the escapee poses a threat to the officer or the safety of others (1985). This precedent-setting case is utilized by police as a means of sanctioning the use of deadly force when an imminent threat occurs and has led to an increase in officer-involved shootings (Katz, 2015).

This dissertation is a nontraditional approach in book style, which is based on participants observations and a historical narrative. It examines racially biased policing in Latino communities, police use of lethal force from 1942 to 2005, and a police initiative aimed at quelling conflict between barrio residents and the police. This is an autoethnography approach, in which newspaper stories, television news, collected emails, and working notes were collected over the years. I aim to extend Erving Goffman's description within dramaturgy using an autoethnographic approach to illustrate police performance and community responses. It is through this performance that I attempt to develop the concept of holistic policing, in which officers' behaviors are embedded within a whole community model. The findings from this examination could lead to mutual contributions from law enforcement and the community to improve on policing methods that develop trust. Pseudonyms are used throughout most of the dissertation for people, cities, and locations.

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Chapter 1: Loss of Innocence

(The sound of an oxygen machine is heard as two people whisper), “he looks so peaceful, and his oxygen level is good. He’s tired and has gone through so much pain over the last three months. He has seen a lot over his 91 years of life, and everyone loves him. I never thought I would see him like this. We now help him with everything.” This was tough on us to see him in pain. Hospitals were limited in the services they provided in the pandemic COVID environment.

If only we could have had taken him earlier for a breathing treatment or done more for him. “He would be proud of you and your mom,” said the nurse. My mom hasn’t slept in months and is quite tired. He has had a good life and is a peaceful man. I love him so much. He’s a friend, a father, and is a good man. I’ll never be the father nor the man that he is. I hope to tell and share his stories one day.

We all have stories that separate us from one another. Some families have witnessed generational events that have caused trauma within their families. This is my story beginning with the eyes of my father in Puerto Rico who witnessed a police shooting. It then transitions to events surrounding the shooting of a family member by a police officer, and then to a friend who mortally wounds a police officer. I then move forward 20 years to examine my life as a police officer to critically examine a trio of unrelated police shootings in a community I had once patrolled as a police officer. I’m called back to this community and write a police initiative whose aim was to restore the trust of the Latino community. I examined these unprecedented three shootings within a period of 5 days. In response to the shootings, I wrote a police initiative directed at

restoring lost trust from the Latino community resulting from the trio of shootings. I finally discuss a proposed method of policing that is less violent in communities of color.

Introduction

The coqui (ko kee) is making its chirping sound in Corozal, Puerto Rico. It's a sound that all Borinquenos hear at night and the early morning. The sound is peaceful and travels through the air as wind moves in space. The coqui has a special place to everyone on the island and serves as a reminder of life. As long as the coqui can be heard, comes the passion to live life to the fullest and that is Puerto Rico. The island has an Indigenous Taino history that changed to an abrupt in 1493 with Christopher Columbus.

He brought the European language of Spanish and the thirst for gold. They say he sired over a hundred children. Today the name Colon resonates throughout the island. What history doesn't tell you is that he took these women by force and murdered the native people, Taino's, that in time led to their genocide. The name Colon runs in our blood and many Puerto Ricans share this common ancestry. My family knows of this quite well and silence about Columbus often seems to be the path taken.

Violence has a strange path and journeys across the globe. Columbus may have gotten lost and thought he was in the West Indies. But he wasn't lost in the death he brought to the island. He found his pith from the orange in his hand to the blood of the Indigenous people.

The coqui is a species of frog that is found in Puerto Rico. The males make a unique sound that attracts females. The sound also establishes territory and repels other males. They can be up to a few inches in size and weigh no more than a few ounces over

their lifetime. They are symbolic on the island and the sound is music to the ear. For Borinqueños as the coquis stand at a guarded position, they represent the past for they see all over time. When Columbus lands on the island in 1493 he would have heard the coquis at night.

It is believed that my family came from Vizcaya (Biscay) Spain to Puerto Rico after 1815. The diaspora was after the passing of the Real Cedula de Gracias (1815 Royal Degree of Graces) where Catholics immigrated to Puerto Rico. Its where the Spanish were encouraging people to populate the island. Even those from other European countries were encouraged to migrate. This included the nearby islands of Cuba and Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic and Haiti).

* * *

Vizcaya is in the northern part of the country and is still farmland today. My family's history has been in farming and the area scattered with caserios (settlements). It's a Basque city with great mineral wealth. Nearby Guernica (1937) is where Pablo Picasso was inspired by a massacre during the Spanish Civil War. Many of my father's ancestors came from this province area in hopes of a better life through God. My Christian faith is stained by violence. The island of Puerto Rico was not ignored by the Spanish through Columbus and my family was not spared for the name Colon runs within my bloodline.

Los Rivera's de Corozal

It's early morning and the sun is rising from the east. In the neighborhood blasts the sounds of "El Canario" Manuel Jimenez on the radio. Plena music consumes the

countryside's of the island. The smell of pineapple is everywhere. You see them in the mountains, along with tobacco, and sugar canes fields that are lush and high. Your choice for traveling is to take a short walk or to take a long walk. It can be a short walk within a few miles or a longer walk that can be over ten miles. Walking is the means for most to visit family. For the Rivera's in Corozal, a longer walk usually meant a walk to the nearby town of Comerio. Once in Comerio it was more mountains, pineapples, and sugar cane fields.

It's 1942 and World War II has taken Puerto Rican men to war. For the island, it meant rationing food and textiles. For individual families it meant cutting corners and finding food for the family. The Rivera family was no different. They are a strong Catholics that live in a wooden house. A house that would not hold up well in a hurricane. The last major one to hit was Hurricane Ciprian in 1932 and the island wasn't spared of damage. The Rivera's are impoverished, but they make up what they do not have with the love they have for one another. Everything gets reused and reinvented, including clothing. What was a dress one day, can later become a shirt for someone else in the family? Carmen is but only 20 years old and Jose is twenty-four. They survive as best as they can with what they have.

Nearby family farms always shared their food with the Rivera's and others from the area. But the living quarters were pretty tight. The girls slept together, and the boys slept together. God forbid a hurricane should come. They live quite modestly. Carmen was born and raised in Comerio. She came from a more affluent family. She fell in love with the much older Jose. Because of the age difference she was barred from seeing my

grandfather. She was rebellious and ran away to be with him. They soon married and lived in Corozal. Their relationship in time was blessed with children.

Their oldest, Jose Manual was rambunctious and full of life. Nothing about him was predictable. He was ornery at times and quite protective of his family. He would eventually serve in the Army during World War II at the age of twenty. Next came Matilda a quite spoken one in the family with an angelic persona. Maria Antonia followed; she was the socialite and carried the attention from the boys in the neighborhood. Then came, Jesse, aka “Chuyito” my father, he was quiet and shy. He was followed by Juan aka “Johnny” who was a gentleman. Who was followed by the three little ones beginning with my Titi Rosa, Titi Norma and Titi Delia who looked like baby dolls? In Puerto Rico we call our aunts Titi, and the island has many. The family was quite close and looked out for one another. Collecting food, water, and supplies fell on the older children. Most of the families in Corozal had between six and nine children. The coqui wasn’t the only one chirping at night.

The Rivera’s were quite supportive of one another. That support came in many different ways. For the boys it was fighting. Jose Manuel knew hypermasculinity quite well. Many times, he would come home bloodied from fighting. He was the “Jack Johnson” of the town and would be challenged by those from out of town who weren’t familiar with his sparring skills or a brave local trying to make a name for himself. My father told me many times about how my uncle Joe could have been a boxing great. He was both talented and insane when he fought. My father never could tell me the number of fights he thought Uncle Joe had in his lifetime. But he knew he was undefeated and

unmatched. Whether bare knuckles or with gloves, many feared him. It was not surprising that he would go to fight in World War II.

The older sisters were interested in what was new in fashion in Puerto Rico and which handsome boys had gone off to war. Of which, both couldn't be discussed with my Grandma Carmen. She didn't want to hear about the boys in town and kept a close eye on all her daughters. That support would be tested in time and over the years. My father, Jesse was, very observant of the stories of his upbringing on the island. These stories would captivate my three brothers and me. He always recanted stories of his youth at family events. For me, they compared him to the story tellers of Don Quixote and Man of La Mancha or Ernest Hemingway running with the bulls in Spain or fighting tyranny in Cuba. My favorite stories were of Uncle Joe and his fighting. Perhaps because of my interest in boxing or seeing dad's face when he shared a noteworthy fight.

It could had been the bout of the century or the main event with my uncle Joe and Jake LaMotta. Or my Uncle Joe getting in trouble for fighting and punished by having to stay in the house. But my all-time favorite story came after a punishment was announced for Uncle Joe with a party that same night. It was near Christmas and the family left him behind with no clothes to wear. My grandparents knew had they left clothes they wouldn't see him that night. He was known for escaping the house when punished and the taking of his clothes would keep him from running away. At least that's what my grandma Carmen thought. When the family returned home that night, he would turn up missing along with a potato sack. He was both genius and imaginative. The potato sack would be used as clothing to make his escape. I would check one for being clever.

These stories filled my soul and in time inspired me to write. These were stories that belonged to my family and as all oral histories go, there are winners and losers.

As an innocent child my parents treated me as a winner. Having a sense of winning brings confidence and my brothers were extremely competitive in all they did. Unless the confidence fades the four of us had dreams. Losing or the sense of loss, can come in various forms, and can carry an association to trauma. For dad, this trauma would come next year, in two unrelated events.

Fall of 1943

Jesse always had a sense of freedom and free will about him. He's one of the most honest men I knew. But in his younger days, he loved to tour the island. Young Jesse went on his adventures roaming the island. Even though the island is not that large, for Jesse it was his kingdom and he loved to roam the island with his friends and brothers.

He sometimes took fruit to the family from a nearby neighbor, Don Jaime Bou. The neighbor was stingy and always grumpy. It rationalized Jesse's actions in what he was about to do. His aunt Juana would serve as a lookout as long as she could. She was just a few years older than him, but quite adventurous as well. They would jump the fence and take the good guavas. They stood put because they were close to ripe and could be eaten right away. You couldn't hear a sound. They were as quiet as could be not to alert the giant Don Jaime.

For these guavas were big, hearty, and could fill a hungry chico. There was also some other fruit nearby that would be caught in this crime spree. Pineapple was plentiful and grew wild on the island. But Don Jaime had the sweetest pineapple around. The

smell of fresh cut pineapple served as the motive for Jesse and Juana. To be as stealth as one could be, was the strategy used. He would get caught a few times, but Don Jaime was too slow to catch the much younger Jesse. But today it meant the family eats and a bag full of pineapples and guavas would go a long way. The honesty I spoke of my father earlier, comes much later in time.

The Cobian Rancho Naranjo was owned by my grandmother Carmen's father. Her family was in nearby Comerio. It was a tobacco and coffee ranch. For extra income, Jesse would the good leaves and helped hang them. The bad leaves they left for the kids. They would be used for chewing tobacco or fed to the dogs. Jesse loved the ranch and being with his cousins from Comerio. It was peaceful and serene. While the island as a whole was suffering, my family had wealth and privilege in Comerio. With the wealth came responsibility.

Some in my family in Comerio took to activism and became political. Poverty would worsen as the war continued. Puerto Ricans were being drafted into the war and leaving their families in hope that they had adequate sources to eat. Even the high number of Puerto Rican soldiers when they returned home when they returned would be impoverished and challenged to feed their families. In twenty years, Luis Muñoz Marín Rivera (my grandmother's first cousin) would be governor of the island and address the suffering of the people of Puerto Rico.

Yet, in 1943 not all were suffering during the war. My grandmother grew up never without food, nor clean clothes. She was able to travel with family when they wanted and was never without the necessities in life. Most members of my grandfather,

Jose Manuel Rivera's family were the "have-nots," with limited incomes. In contrast, most members of my grandmother Carmen Cobian's family were the "haves." They were well off in the neighboring city of Comerio as large landowners with agriculture.

While Corozal was made up of many pineapple farms, nearby Comerio had tobacco and coffee farms. They belong to my grandmother Carmen's family. It was the Cobian side of the family. As my great grandmother also had the last name of Rivera. Although it seems everyone in my story is named Rivera, it was quite common to marry family, including first cousins. You saw them all the time and it saved money when inviting guests to a wedding.

So, there were many other stories that Jesse shared about his youth. Sometimes they were stories that dealt with hunger. There was Pichin who was married to Titi Elena and his business partner of many years, Panchito who was married to Titi Mercedes. They sold fruits and vegetables to the U.S. Army. On the return trip they would always drop off food at the house. It helped Jesse's family during the war. Many of the boys on the island were off to war. Most serving a country that didn't accept them. Almost all not speaking a word of English. Imagine having a love for a country that doesn't love you back.

Some of the family properties were used by the military and bought or taken for the war effort. My father in later years would take me and my brothers to areas in the town of Vega Baja that was once owned by family. They felt an obligation for the U.S. government to have a vast coastal area for military purposes. Extraordinarily little money was exchanged. He would also speak of the fear on the island if the U.S. would lose the

war to the Germans. If it did it would change all on the island. But the U.S. won, and these lands would never be returned to the family.

It's 5:00 AM on a Saturday morning and Jesse and Johnny go out back to find the few cows the family has. In a few hours the girls will be waking up and will be hungry. Once the cows are found it will be a struggle to milk them and these aren't just any compliant cows. They are stubborn and sometimes defiant. There's no fence to keep them in, so sometimes it can take an hour to find them. But once you do, these cows stay together. For today, they will feed the girls with the milk they bring, and Johnny just saw one in a nearby pasture.

Jesse and Johnny run up a hill and make their way towards a fearsome two. They tried to give them names, but they looked so similar, Jesse was only focused on his cow, India. It becomes a game for the boys to see who goes first to milk the cows and how they are going to do it. The cows are lying down which makes it more difficult to milk them upright. Today Jesse makes the first attempt. He slowly crawls up to one as if he is a ninja assassin. He's stealth and snake-like as he approaches the cow. He reaches out and out of nowhere the cow makes the loudest sounds that could be heard around the island. Johnny jumps back and almost wet his pants. Now Jesse is on the ground laughing from what he saw, and Johnny is shaking his head. The boys are only a few years apart and have never been separated. They are as close as brothers should be. Eventually they both will follow Jose's steps in serving in the U.S. Army. But for today they must finish their mission of milking the cows.

The house is a modest home and built well for the rain. It is two bedrooms and rests on a few acres. It is butted against one of the largest pineapple estates in the country and surrounded by serene landscape. The living room and dining room was spacious, so Jesse slept in a small bed in the dining room. Nearby him as always, was Johnny. The girls had their own room. Behind the house was a pineapple farm that belonged to Don Luis and Enrique Landrone. They owned about a thousand acres and a vast pineapple business. La Fabrica de piña is what dad called it and my grandfather Jose was a handyman who fixed all of the machinery. To Jesse it seemed liked half of Corozal, and the Rivera's had an acre. It was surrounded by lush green grass as high as six feet. A lion could have sought refuge as it awaited its prey.

My grandfather, Jose was a plumber, electrician, mechanic, and amateur gunsmith. He would construct his own guns and most of the time they worked. The family owned a cafetin (café) where they sold beer, sodas, food, and had dancing on Friday and Saturday nights. Every night was good for a fight and the family tried to keep it clean of prostitution, (so dad told me). It was usually visited by people from nearby barrios such as Padilla, Mavilla, Palmarejo, Abras, Dos Bocas, and Pueblo where the family lived.

My grandmother, Carmen Cobian Nieves was from the nearby town of Comerio. She was a beautiful young lady and at 14 married my grandfather who was about eighteen. Jose use to drive a bus at 18. He picked up Carmen and her sisters to take them to school. It was surprising to me to learn that my history is tied to a school bus and a schoolgirl crush in the 1920's.

When my grandfather married my grandmother, he primarily took care of the farm machinery owned by Don Paquito Landrone. Don y Doña Landrone loved my father and became his godparents. Don Landrone was a doctor and had a laboratory (medical clinic). Jesse had asthma and visited the lab at about 6 years old. His asthma was so bad that a few times the family wasn't sure if he would make it. Jesse remembers being in a room with lots of toys and many shots to the arm. He would walk away in a few months never again suffering from asthma again.

Johnny was just a year younger but as youngsters sometimes trouble just follow you. Every family at that time had an average of 6 to 8 kids. Every so often a kid in the neighborhood would take a punch at Johnny. Jesse, being the older brother, would come to his aid. For some reason, Johnny would always pick on bigger guys. Sometimes he won, sometimes he lost. It was when he lost that Jesse intervened. Johnny was more than a brother; he was Jesse's best friend. In time he would have four children.

Matilde followed Jose Manuel in the picking order. She was a mother hen to the Rivera children. She was quiet and soft spoken. She would stay home and watch over the children. In time she would have two children, Hector, and Miriam. Matilde and Luis went to New York. Jesse would eventually bring Hector by airplane at just two years old to the mainland. He peed on Jesse early on in the flight which made for a long flight.

Maria Antonia was beautiful and one of the prettiest girls in Corozal. She would socialize with those others would consider higher society. The boys came calling and she could dance. Between her and Jose Manuel they knew half the island. As much as she loved to party and have fun, she was remarkably close to her siblings. In time she would

have six children. Rosa would eventually move to the US. Mainland with Norma and Delia.

Jesse recounts a predicament Jose got into when he was about eighteen. He stole \$200 from his grandfather Narciso Cobian who was quite wealthy in those times. But \$200 in 1941 was a lot of money. He used it to pay for boxing in San Juan. By the time his father Jose found him he had \$100 left. He was rowdy and had the bounty he found. He left with his close friend Luis Rivera (no relation). It was women, sometimes prostitutes, drinking, and boxing. Jose in the past would take young Jose Manuel's clothes away so he wouldn't leave the house. Yet, he managed to cut out potato sack bags to get away. He was always drinking and fighting. All of Corozal knew him. This was 1942 and a good year for Jesse. He remembers the stories that fill the Rivera family. It all was innocent in how people interact and in a few months' things would change.

No one ever tells you that you're an adult. Events occur that force us to grow up really fast. You stop playing games as you once did as a child. No fanfare, just a change in time and how you play a game. It's now 1943, and Jesse's father passes away. He was parked in his car in Bayamon when a car struck him from behind. His chest was crushed against the steering wheel. As he was healing from his wounds, he subsequently caught tuberculosis. It placed on the family a challenging period economically. When he died the family moved out of the house. They moved a few miles closer to another barrio in Corozal, known as Barrio Pueblo. Just as the first traumatic event hit Jesse; he would soon have another in his life.

The Shooting

It's time for the Rivera children to get ready for school. The radio is playing as the children get ready and in the background on a radio is Daniel Santos singing Irresistible (Desde el cielo, he recibido la noticia, de un angel se ha escapados sin querer. Esta andando perdido por la tierra. Lo que tiene es que se viste de una mujer). It's now 1943 and Jesse is thirteen and as always, is walking to school with his siblings. Abraham Lincoln High School is where he must pass. He knows the school well. His father, Jose advocated towards its construction a few years earlier, and Jesse knew he would be attending the school soon. Everyone in town knew one another.

As he walks past the school, he sees Quirico Arvino the taxi driver. He's a humble man and is very friendly with everyone. He's close to his family and often visits his Aunt Juana. It appears to be just an ordinary day and he has a female passenger in the backseat of his taxi. He's stopped by a police officer, Silverio Torres, who knows Jesse and the Rivera family. He walks up to Quirico and shoots him with a gun close range. Jesse freezes in fear thinking he might be next. He has never seen anyone shot before, let alone murdered in front of him. He's scared and all alone. He runs home to his mother crying from fear in what he just witnessed.

Within the year young Jesse testifies in court. He points out Silverio who shot Quirico from close range. He later learns the officer was jealous of the car rides his wife was getting by Quirico. But everyone knew Quirico was friendly and nice. He would never have thought of sleeping with the officer's wife. Plus, he was interested in my aunt

Juana. They were in love, and she adored him. Jesse understood that his life would change once he testified.

He does eventually testify and is scared for his life as a result. The officer is given a prison term. Jesse fears the officer if let out of prison may come looking for him. He keeps the shooting to himself for 34 years. After the court case Carmen moves to Comerio to live with the Cobian family with all her children except Jose who's in the Army and Jesse who decides to stay in Corozal.

Jesse stayed in Corozal with his grandmother, Pilar Rivera, and Titi Mary, Moncha, Pilar, Carmen, Juana, and Uncle Manolo. He would visit his mother at times, but it wasn't the same without his father. He has two traumatizing events in his life that removes the innocence he once had. No more being a young naïve youth, but someone who needs to grow up and finish school. He wanted to study to be a lawyer, but the passion for law left him when his father died.

Dos Gardenias Para Ti

In a few years Jesse leaves for New York. In some areas it's like Puerto Rico to him. He's no longer a child. He's surrounded by music from the island, and he knows about every dance hall. And the boy can dance... To a young man of twenty he has found his utopia. New York has it all and it has a Puerto Rican atmosphere. It's very segregated and Boricuas spend time together with other Boricuas or a new group that was migrating to the area, Dominicans.

It's a summer Saturday night in 1950. Jesse has the choice to hear Frank Sinatra at the Latin Quarter or head to a local dance club to dance or see Daniel Santos who makes

an occasional appearance. For the next 18 months or so it was work and dancing. Dad could dance and the ladies were always around. His top dances were the Mambo and Rumba. For Puerto Ricans in New York at the time they owned and flocked to the Spanish nightclubs. As much fun as he was having, he was living Westside Story with the racial divide for Whites and Puerto Ricans. He lived in Jackson Heights where he did many odd and end jobs, such as cooking and handyman work. Yet, he couldn't escape the mockery of his accent, nor the traces of his Taino culture.

It's now 1951 and the Army is looking for Jesse. He was drafted and didn't report to the U.S. Army. It's the Korean War and that was not acceptable for the military, so they went looking for him. He had to enlist early but was turned down because he was too young at 17. So, he had left the island to find work in New York to help support Carmen and his siblings. Carmen told them he was living in New York, and they didn't believe her. They assumed he was a draft dodger and hiding on the island. Never-the-less Jesse leaves his apartment on Prospect Street to go to work at a nearby factory that made women's purses. He would construct the boxes that would house the purses. At 60 cents an hour and \$35.00 a week it was enough to pay all his bills. Plus, he lived with three of his friends from the island.

As Jesse is leaving his apartment one morning, he realizes he's going to be late for his 7:00 am job start. As he runs down the third floor to the first, he is stopped by two burly men that were well dressed in suits. They ask him to verify his name and he does. They identify themselves as federal agents and tell him the U.S. Army has been looking for him. Jesse responds that he was turned down for being underage. They respond by

telling him that's not the case now and you're going with us. Without giving word to his roommates Jesse is taken out of the building and straight to Camp Kilmer in New Jersey. By 4:00 pm he was processed with the Army and in uniform.

Jesse was now owned by the US. Government and he was preparing for his punishment for missing his draft date in Puerto Rico. He was about to do basic training at Fort Dix in December 1951 and January 1952. The coldest time of the year for training. For a Puerto Rican accustomed to being in the sun in 90-degree temperatures it made for a long day for Jesse knowing his life was about to change. Not only was he losing his job, friends, and life in New York, he felt distraught wondering if his friends thought he was running out on the rent. In time he got a letter out to them, but they never responded. To be picked up at your home in New York for military service was not the norm. To train in freezing temperatures was not the place Jesse wanted to be in 1951.

He was now in an infantry company and finished his basic training at Fort Dix in New Jersey. Because he was living in New York he wasn't drafted with the 65th as Jose Manuel was years earlier. Jesse was in a mix company with about 5% that were Puerto Rican. Back in the day Jesse remembers how they stuck together and became like brothers. Yet, they were given all the dirty work, such as kitchen duty, guard duty, cleaning the barracks. Jesse says with reverence, "they treated us like shit in the work they assigned to us, but they were nice."

At times they rebelled. They wouldn't speak English, which made communication a mess. Sometimes supervisors would have to repeat directions numerous times. There was the time that a corporal wanted a table sanded down. He had Jesse and two others

take the table. It was in the mess hall and soon soldiers would be coming in to eat. The corporal demonstrated what was needed and the three mimicked his behavior. When he stopped, they stopped. He did this a few times and must have thought that they couldn't speak English. He became so frustrated and said, "stupid Puerto Ricans" and walked out of the mess hall. Once he was out of sight, they laughed their asses off and finished the table. Even though they looked out for each other, they knew they were in the Army. It was confirmed with the never-ending duty of peeling potatoes.

In time Jesse was reassigned to Fort Hood in Texas. At the same time troops were coming in from Korea to nearby Fort Sam in Houston. Once there the Puerto Ricans would be discharged and transferred out to other bases. In San Antonio, the women would look for the Boricuas and the men didn't like it which resulted in fights. Jesse would smile and say they would steal the girls from the Mexican men. It was a wild town and fighting was the norm at these dance halls. Because they were also visiting places with bands, the band members would play Borinquen as to stop the fighting. The Puerto Ricans would immediately stop. It was unpatriotic not to pause and stop the fighting. As funny as it sounds like a Mel Brookes scene, Jesse spoke of the event with reverence. The song had special meaning on the island and disrespect wouldn't be tolerated. As Jesse points out it was a long time ago.

In time, Jesse leaves the Army and settles in a small-town National City, California. He moves across the street from Sweetwater High School. His brother, Jose Manuel aka Uncle Joe is married in time has seven children and the stories of Jose Manuel continue as an adult. He had on numerous occasions had a little too much to

drink. Many of the police officers knew him in town. Some played pinnacle with him on days off and drove him home on numerous occasions when he had too much to drink. It was a period where residents trusted the police officers. Also moving into the area is my aunt Maria Antonia. In time she would have six children.

Eventually, my father would open a restaurant in Logan Heights called Anita's. They served Mexican and Puerto Rican food. It is 1959 and San Diego had a small but emerging Puerto Rican community. These were primarily Puerto Ricans who had served in the military and were migrating to San Diego. Most of which had served in the U.S. Army and visited San Diego while on tour. There was Lividita Rivera, Ralph Cuevas, Luis Rivera, and many others.... They drank, played card games, and loved to dance. In time they added dominoes to their activities. Ironically of the twenty-five or so they all married Mexican women. It was quite common for these men returning from military service to come to California. Since they were primarily Spanish speakers it may have been the accent or the dancing that captured these hearts, including my mother who is of Mexican decent. Dad would boast of Puerto Ricans servicemembers settling throughout California.

Chapter 2: Shooting Death of Tato Rivera

The sound of Latino music is playing at a house party in National City. It's a family celebrating a birthday. Someone enters the garage area where the family has items on a table and removes a purse. The homeowners call the police and give a brief description of a Latino male. In the area is my cousin Tato.

The sound of footsteps near St Anthony's Church. Its late and Tato is going to be in trouble. A police car stops near, and he recognizes its Officer William James. Officer James comes out of his marked patrol car and points his duty weapon at Tato; who, immediately takes off and is fired at by Officer James. James follows and Tato drops to the ground near a gate. He is bleeding out as Officer James hovers over him. No weapon is found.

* * *

It's 2 o'clock in the morning and I hear the phone ring. It's unusual and I hear my dad pick up the phone. "This is Jesse who's this?" After a few seconds, I hear him crying. I've never heard my father cry before. I'm 12 years old and the eldest of four brothers. I walk up and give him a hug. My mom comes out of her bedroom and asks what's going on? My dad replies, Tato's dead! He was shot in the back by a National City police officer. I was scared for my family. I wondered if the officer was going to come looking for us. We didn't do anything. Why would he kill Tato? Was it because Tato started drinking and was coming home late at night? Nonetheless, my father took it hard. I've never seen him like this before. Then again, it was the first time I knew of death. No one else from my family had died. Tato was my first cousin from my father's sister Maria

Antonia. He had had run ins with the law, including Officer James, and he had told the family how James had it in for him.

The next two years were tough on the family. My father was gone all the time. He was going to protests, town hall meetings, and to see his sister Maria Antonia. They started mobilizing at San Diego State with the M.E.Ch.A. group and eventually merged with other M.E.Ch.A. groups around San Diego. He wouldn't tell me, nor my siblings about the shooting. It was taboo for us to ask because we knew Tato was shot in the back. But there I saw dad on tv and as well as my cousins. I saw them in newspapers and *La Prensa* it seemed had an article every week for the first year of the protests. I always knew my father as being this shy and soft-spoken man. But when it came to Tato his eyes lit up. By being present at the protests was his means of dealing with the event. Thousands of people gathered with signs.

This started a period of hearing the name Officer William James? Why would he shoot Tato in the back for being an alleged purse snatcher? Tato was only nineteen at the time of the fatal shooting. The newspapers were mixed it seemed on the shooting. Some took the side of James, and others questioned the shooting. The television news stations parallel what we saw in the newspapers. This became the most controversial officer shooting for a person of color for the decade and my family had a front row seat.

My father would tell me what was shared with the family. That James had it in for Tato and wanted him out of National City. They had a history and Tato's background wasn't going to help. The family immediately sensed that night it was James that had killed Tato.

Chapter 3: Smith Morici

Kio, Kio (sound of a straight punch). I'm walking into the dojo of Master James Wilson, at the Jackie Robinson YMCA with my best friend Jorge Gonzales. I see about forty people in the class, and all are Black. Master Wilson acknowledges Jorge and stops the class. "Students, we have a special guest training with us this evening," he said. Master Wilson knew Jorge for many years. We all are called up to the front of the class and are acknowledged with a "rei" or a bow. It was Rodrigo Martinez, Chickee Osorio, and me. Rodrigo was the best of us three. He dedicated more time to stretching and training and it showed.

I remember going to a martial arts tournament in Ensenada on a bus. We sat in the back of an old bus at the terminal in Tijuana, Mexico. The bus had cracks on the floor, and we smelled the exhaust fumes the entire drive South. We were all nervous and wanted to make Jorge proud. I won my first three bouts. Chickee didn't compete. Rodrigo opened someone's face with the round kick in his first bout and was disqualified. He was good.

Chickee and I both went to the same high school and were now training with Jorge. Chickee was taller than I and of Colombian descent. Some of the students used to kid and say that his family was from Medellín and part of the cartel. But I knew the truth and knew his family. His family was from Bogota and sold Olaf Wieghehorst western prints at a nearby shop. But even if he were a part of the cartel, it wouldn't help what we were about to go through in Master Wilson's class.

I'm in the middle of Master Wilson's class and the toughest martial arts workout I have ever gone through. This wasn't the same as our training in the park that I trained at. Training at the park was much easier, and Jorge was less structured. We bowed and we trained. We didn't use the Korean language and laughed and smiled as we worked out. We always sparred and I was average when it came to kicks. I couldn't get my foot as high in the air as Rodrigo Martinez could. He had fast feet and got his kicks well over his head without much effort.

Alan Epperson tried kicking high and was pretty focused in his training. My brother Victor watched, he had dislocated his finger the week prior and decided not to train again. For me, it was the worst decision Victor could make, and one he would later regret. There was little Aaron. Shit, the kid was like eight and was good. He was Jorge's little brother and was short and skinny. Then there was my best friend, Tony Crowell. He was also tall and was a nice kid. Everyone liked Tony. He was calm, had long blond hair, and the girls always liked him. It was no different at the park. With us at the park were two gorgeous girls, Monica Carmen, and Elizabeth. The girls were not only beautiful, but they were also good martial artists as Tony would soon find the hard way in Kumati (sparing).

Tony was the nice guy and did not want to spar with Monica. He became frustrated because he didn't want to hurt Monica and told Jorge that he didn't want to spar with her. I agreed. Tony was much taller than Monica and God forbid if she got hurt. But there we were in the middle of a church park and Jorge was giving the stink eye to Tony. It was like a volcano about to erupt. Jorge's face went from brown to red and he

told Tony he was being disrespectful to the class and would be dismissed from the class if he didn't spar with Monica. Shit, this was getting real. We were now in a circle and Tony grudgingly walked towards the inner circle. Monica walked towards him, and Jorge got in the middle with his right hand in the center of the two. This was like Ali and Frazier with the world watching. I was about to see something happen that I never saw before. A girl and a guy fighting.

I knew this was going to be bad for Monica and that this could lead to my parents removing me from Tae Kwon Do. We were all good Catholic boys and were told not to hit girls and Jorge was forcing Tony to possibly hurt Monica. Jorge walked between the two and removed his hand from the middle. Before I could blink an eye, it was over. Tony was on his back, shocked and surprised. Monica's leg went up in the air and came down on Tony. There she stood watching down at Tony. Shit, she hovered over him like a chicken hawk with a smile on her face.

Then out of nowhere, it happened for Tony. It was as if he and Monica were the only two in the world. She was his first crush, and he was in love. For Monica, it was just another day at the park. For the next 20 years it would be the talk for the Gonzales, Tony, and Monica. Suddenly, all the Gonzalez girls were "bad asses" and none of us would ever think of dating any of them. We were all too scared. But deep inside, we all knew that what we were learning would make us better people someday and we were all "Familia." For Tony, his lesson in love came quite hard.

But now we are in Master Wilson's class and there is no smiling. We were doing pushups over and over again. I felt like I was in the military. We were being yelled at and

were exercising over and over again. Master Wilson never smiled, and he was a seventh dan in Tae Kwon Do which made him one of the top-ranking martial artists on the West Coast. Then the time came for Gabriel Marquez and Chickee to spar. Gabriel was fast with his hands and feet. It was over pretty fast. Then came the match that I wanted to see, Rodrigo and Durante. He was a Filipino kid and pretty new. Rodrigo took him down, and out of nowhere, I became the main bout. It was one-on-one and I had only been training for a year. Then I heard Master Wilson say aloud, "Bobby and Smith stand up and come to the middle..."

We both went to the middle of the class. He was further out than me and got to the inner circle first. I knew in my head he was more prepared. He showed no emotion, just a look on his face indicating that this was his house, and he wasn't about to give it up. I could hear Jorge in the background, "Roberto prepare your uniform." My belt was misaligned, and my gee was not tight. Master Wilson got in the middle of us and lowered his hand. I knew since Smith was more assertive and aggressive, he would come in fast. As Master Wilson walked back and away from us, Smith came in like a speed train. I took a step out away and to his left and placed a straight punch towards the right side of his torso. He grabbed my gee and took me down to the ground. It was then that I knew that he was not only faster but smarter than me. I would eventually learn how I had telegraphed that move, but not today.

In that moment, I was in a dogfight and was trying to survive. What seemed at the time as the longest moment in my life, came to end quite fast. The final kick Smith gave me, put me on my back and without air. It felt like a gunshot to the stomach. Master

Wilson intervened and told Smith to move back. He was told to walk away, and he gave me his back as he sat. (Within our traditional means of training when a combatant injures his opponent he walks away and sits with his/her back away). I remember seeing Jorge grab the center of my uniform and push on my stomach. "Roberto are you ok, Smith had a beautiful kick." Beautiful kick my ass! I didn't see it that way and Jorge's accent was the strongest I ever heard from him.

Everyone in the class watched. I was embarrassed and pissed. I wanted to street fight Smith. No one had ever put me on my back. After a few minutes, I stood up and walked towards the inner circle of our class and we shook hands. Then something unexpected occurred. Smith walked up to me, gave me a hug, and told me "Sorry my brother." I felt like shit. Here I was thinking of ways to get back at him, and he was calling me "my brother." I felt guilty. This stranger, who would become like a brother to me, taught me a valuable lesson. If I trained hard, I could be the best. Smith trained day and night. He was a Black Bruce Lee. He read about and learned all the distinctive styles of martial arts. But for me, this life would only be temporary.

Entering High School

The year was 1978, disco was in and so were Angel flight pants. The Bee Gees were everywhere to be heard. Nearby Stratus Night Club was a few miles away and it was always hopping from Thursday night to Sunday night. It was a teenage nightclub without the alcohol. I was fifteen and loved to dance and so did my friend Tony Crowell and he also owned a pair of Angel Flights. Summer was coming to end. The Padres had a good team, and I was starting at St Augustine High School in a few weeks. It was an all-

boys school affiliated with Our Lady of Academy that was an all-girls school. They were a few miles apart, but it seemed an eternity when you didn't drive and you an incoming first-year student.

As the summer ended, I knew my life would be quite different starting high school. Chickee's older brother, Bobby would drive me to school at Saints. It was a small campus, and all the first-year students knew everyone by name and what Catholic School they came from. The clicks came in the form of parishes. You couldn't say Holy Spirit parish without tying it to Paul Castro, Herbie Barrack, Michael Branch. I was part of Saint John's from Lemon Grove. It was me, Tony Cerquirea, and Chickee. I had a new friend name Alan Epperson. I tried out for the wrestling team because of a guy name Joe Craig. He had come out of St Johns and was a county top wrestler in his weight.

I really went to Saints to play baseball for Coach Whittaker. He had seen me play and invited me out to play for the team. For now, it was a new sport of wrestling. It was hard to make the early practices and I highly suspected I wasn't going to make the first meet. The distance was too far for my mom to pick me after school and Bobby couldn't wait for me. Over the weekend, I decided to tell Coach Limandri I wouldn't be able to wrestle for the team. He was also my English teacher, and he was a pretty cool guy. In truth, I don't think I lasted a week. It was Monday September 25th, a day that would change my life forever.

I went to my first class, and it was with Father Barrett. He was a Jesuit priest who rumor had was locked up by Fidel Castro in Cuba. The students were pretty daring. One of the students entered his class and walked over an imaginary line. The other students

soon followed. It must have confused the father because for the duration of the class he avoided that area of the classroom. A few times he glanced over. I imagined looking for a wire that never existed. But it always brought a laugh to the class. It was 8:50 and the bell rings. We had a 20-minute break before Algebra with deacon Harrick. That usually meant one of two choices. Going to pick up a snack at the Turtle Shop or talking to the guys in the quad area in the center of the school.

It was in a courtyard talking to Paul, Michael, and Herbie. We heard a loud noise. Michael said look up and we saw a large plane that was later identified as PSA 182 with its nose down headed towards the ground. The right wing was on fire and all of a sudden it was headed towards our school. We all ran around a building. It was more like most of the school which was a few hundred ran behind the building. We then heard a loud crash and knew instantly it meant death for everyone onboard. Between the long distance of saints to my house and the crash I knew I would the school after my freshman year. I wish I could had stayed.

Growing up in Lemon Grove

It was 1981 and my sophomore guidance counselor Mr. Singer assigned me woodshop and automotive classes. I told him I wasn't interested. I was going to college someday to teach history or be a scientist and study volcanoes. He told me I had to prove myself in public school and coming from a catholic school didn't mean I would do well here. I told him that my grades slipped a little after the plane crash. I told him my mom would definitely come talk to him. He was stoic and didn't care. He said, "have her talk to me and I'll explain how automotive class can get you a job when you graduate." "So,

you don't think I can cut it in college?", I responded. "Son be a mechanic it will be a wonderful job for you," he said.

Coming home that afternoon was one of the worst days of my life. My mom had a master's degree from San Diego State University and didn't take crap from anyone. She was extremely bright and was looking at getting her PhD at the University of Southern California (USC) in gerontology. She worked for the County of San Diego and never put up with disrespect from me or my brothers. She advocated for the Catholic Diocese to offer Spanish masses all over. She was amazing and I loved her for all that she did for us. But this walk was one of the longest walks of my life. I told mom what happened and explained the conversation I had with Mr. Singer. She immediately placed a phone call and within an hour managed to set up a meeting with my counselor and Vice Principal of the school.

The following day we had our meeting. I was to be as quiet as can be. I knew this counselor was about to get lit up by my mom. The conversation started out with Mr. Singer telling my mom he spoke to me and thought I wasn't college material. I whispered in her ear and told her that he was lying, and that he assigned the auto and woodshop class before ever talking to me. Then came mom's turn to speak. She was confident and was quite eloquent. She spoke of my high assessment scores and finished by saying something I would always remember. "Just because Roberto looks Mexican doesn't mean he's not going to college." I later learned that he did this with many students of color and was allowed to get away with it. It was my first experience with racism, and it hit me hard. I'm white, not brown. I hated the word Chicano and I'm half Puerto Rican. I hated

that I was treated this way. My family came here legally. Well, it was my first time attending public school and unlike at St. Augustine, we had girls at this school...

It's a great high school. I had a crush on Laura. But then so did every other guy on campus. But I was the one that walked her home every day. She was the sweetest thing that walked the halls. The only problem was her dad. I heard from other kids if he found out that I was walking her home; he would kick my ass. If he didn't, her brother Joaquin would. It didn't matter it was worth taking the chance. She was the prettiest girl I had ever seen. But I was too shy to talk to her. I had never had a girlfriend, so did that make me like an old maid or old butler. Whatever, at 16, life was so difficult and challenging. Not only did I not have a girlfriend yet, but I couldn't play baseball. I had to sit out a year and I couldn't run track because I was an out of district transfer. What would I do with my life? For the time being, I got to walk home the prettiest girl in school.

After I finished walking Laura home, she tells me that she doesn't want to get her father upset. It might be best if I didn't walk her home. I was hyped up and headed home. I could immediately hear Victor laughing in the room next to me with his friends. I could hear him say, 'Did you see the owner when I ran out, that man couldn't do anything.' It sounded like he had an army of friends over, he was only fifteen. I walked to his room and saw a case of beer and three of his friends. He had a beer in his hand and his friends were drinking away as well. I asked him what was going on.

He was taller than me and much stronger. He could have done well playing high school football but was never interested in sports. I knew one thing about my brother, he never lied to me. He admitted that he did a beer run from a local liquor store. I was

pissed. He brought problems home to our family. I told him to get his stuff together because he was going back to the liquor store with me. I called the liquor store, spoke to the owner, and told him we were walking down. We both had no money, but Victor was going to return the remaining beer and work around the store after school for a week.

We get to the liquor store and a deputy sheriff detective immediately put his handcuffs on me. I told him I was the one that called, and we were bringing the beer back. Why was he trying to arrest me? Victor looked at me as quiet as can be and didn't say a word. He knew his life was about to change. I was only doing what I felt was the right thing to do, but I started to think how it was a big mistake. This idiot of a detective was arresting me without knowing the facts. The liquor store owner confirmed the call and told him he had the wrong person. Victor is still quiet, not moving, and looked like a deer caught in headlights. I tell the detective, "No shit Sherlock," and thought to myself, how this department had no entry exam.

The detective apologized and gave me his name. He shared that in all his years as a police officer, he never saw anything like what I did. He gave me his business card and told me that if I ever wanted to apply as a deputy, to look him up. I took the card and told him thanks, but I wasn't interested. The business owner had Victor clean around his place for one day and felt sorry for him. He didn't have to return and for now was out of trouble. I later learned that the detective was on the television show, COPS, in a biker episode. Once high school was done, I thought that I would see the world or do the unimaginable and be a police officer.

Smith Morici

As I was attending Helix High School, I continued to train in martial arts. I was improving quite a bit and hanging out with Jorge more often and my Tae Kwon Do crew. But I knew to the level I wanted I needed to train some more with Smith. For the next 4 years, I was like a younger brother to Smith.

He lived with his brothers Sahib and Sean. He had a sister Sabrina, and she was beautiful. She was both nice and sweet. Their mother Peggy was also an attractive lady. Smith's brothers were all genuinely nice and close. As a family, they were as tight as all families should be. The entire family looked athletic. The boys looked like they could be wide receivers for an NFL team.

Smith's side of his bedroom had about forty trophies. I saw him win a few. The Long Beach tourney he won quite handily, and he was becoming well known on the West Coast for his martial arts skills. He often referred to Master Wilson as a father figure. He spoke of training with Chickee, Gabriel and Kuika. It was evident by his trophies that I was in the presence of someone with the talent to be a top-ranking full contact fighter. But in 1984, this wasn't the case. There wasn't Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) like we see on television today, but we had all the magazines. I knew back then that Smith would be famous and well-known for his martial arts skill someday. I also knew he was one of the kindest people I had ever met. We talked about wearing a San Diego Police Department (SDPD) uniform. I spoke of Paul Ybarrando and his role as a SDPD homicide Lieutenant. Every homicide in San Diego that was on television featured either Police Chief William Kolendar or Lieutenant Paul Ybarrando.

Paul was pretty well recognized on television on all homicides, and I saw him as being famous. He was the first police officer I ever trusted. He was human and was involved with his kids and family. He was this famous police officer and yet lived modestly in his home nearby. Paul's kids played baseball with my younger brother David for years. My dad and he even coached baseball together. I trusted Paul because I knew he was a good man. I asked Paul to talk to Smith and me about becoming police officers, and he agreed. But the moment never came, and I never imagined that a year later Paul would be speaking of Smith, but in a different light.

It was the summer of 1984 and baseball was going strong in San Diego. We had a decent team. The San Diego Padres had some talented players, Gaylord Perry, and Dave Winfield. I was going to a lot of games because we had these coupons that allowed us to get in cheap and sit in the outfield throughout the summer. I lived in two worlds, my baseball world, where I'm playing in leagues around San Diego County, and my martial arts world. But for me, I remember this as being the summer for baseball in San Diego.

But now I'm older, and my friends all moved away. We were growing up and making decisions on our future. I went to a football game at Sweetwater High School and saw Smith there. We spent about 30 minutes catching up. I was there trying to meet up with a Mexican girl that I had a crush on. He was there with a few friends. He was training even more and had a new partner, Chicken Gabriel, and took up boxing as well. I had tried boxing that summer, but after a few months stopped. All the Black males' brothers were faster than me and I soon realized any dream of pro boxing was not in the cards.

By now, Smith had hundreds of trophies. He invited me to his place to have dinner the next day and see his mom. I remember it like it was yesterday. When I walked away, he told me he “found a way to be famous' someday.” He wanted to make his mark in martial arts. For Smith, it was no longer all about Tae Kwon Do. I knew he would be famous. All those close to him knew it as well.

The following week I went to his place. He was hungry and we left on his famous moped nearby to eat. We were both craving fast food. But I knew he hungered to make a name for himself. We all did and of all my friends I knew I would soon be reading about him and his martial arts skill. I saw Peggy and she was still the beautiful mother I remembered. We walked into his bedroom, and it was now empty of trophies. I froze, I thought someone had stolen his trophies. Who would dare do such a thing to Smith? He was the badest martial artist in town. He gave me a look, smiled, and gave me a second lesson in life. He told me that he gave away all of his trophies to the little kids in his neighborhood. He had all the memories from the tournaments and that was all he needed. I knew right then that he was someone who was incredibly special and cared about people.

It is now Sunday, March 31st, and I'm 22 years old. Pretty lost I would say. I never used drugs or got in trouble but didn't quite know what to do with my life. A lot of kids from my Catholic school days either went to work or college. Everyone knew everybody in our neighborhood. Hey, we lived in Lemon Grove.

Our neighborhood was primarily white and most of my friends were white. Dad wanted us to live in nice neighborhoods and always told us about staying out of gangs.

But we still had to cross town and once you cross Lemon Grove Avenue you were in the middle of where the homies lived. I knew many and many knew me. But I never crossed them and manage to get away without getting jumped.

I wish I could say that for my little brother Michael. He began to act like a Cholo and dressing down in a white t-shirt and dark colored pants. He got involved in stealing a car (My dad's) and theft (my baseball card and penny collections) eventually running out of gas somewhere in Arizona. The Thelma and Loise trip last 3 days and he sold my baseball cards for gas for pennies on the dollar. Gone were my Pete Rose and Stan Musial cards. His Cholo period of a year ended with this trip, but he was a wannabe anyway. In our house it was always about sports with baseball at the top.

It was a busy day of playing baseball with Victor. It was 5:00 pm and time for dinner. I turned on the television and Anchorman Phil Stone from Channel 39 was on the air. The news segment was of an officer that was shot and killed, and two others wounded, another officer and a female civilian ride along. I remember thinking to myself, this is getting real. I saw on television hundreds walking around where the officers were shot. The suspect had stolen the officer's car and left the area. I knew this guy would either be shot by the police officers or on death row.

The next day, I again turned on the news. A different station, and the newscaster tells of the suspect turning himself in with his grandfather. Wait a second, that's Smith and his grandfather Yusef. That's Yusef's truck! Oh my god, Smith shot and killed a cop. It couldn't be. We both talked about being police officers a few months earlier. He was straight as can be. He couldn't have done it. Something happened. We both trained

with Master James Wilson in Tae Know Do. It's what kept me out of trouble. What about his brothers Sean, Sahib, and his sister Sabrina?

Smith's grandfather Yusef made the best peach cobbler in town. His restaurant was well known in the area. Peggy looked like the perfect likeness to her father. I could see he was a righteous and good man. I knew that Smith worshiped his grandfather, and I could see why. Not only was Yusef close to Smith and the family, but the man could cook. It was my first taste of soul food, and I was hooked. It came close to Dad's arroz con gandules. With my family, we put pork in everything. You couldn't eat our food if you were Muslim. Smith was leaning that way too in the understanding of the world we live in. We both admired Muhammed Ali as the greatest. I truly felt Smith was destined to be famous, but not for shooting three people.

After a few days, I went to see Peggy. She did not look good. Sean and Sahib were upset and couldn't be controlled. I gave her a big hug and told her to call me if she needed me. Over the next year, I made a few visits to see her. Once when I was visiting them, I saw a Black officer in uniform. I thought he came for either Sean or Sahib, but he was there for Peggy and was supportive of the family. Wait a second, a police officer supporting Smith's family? I was a little confused. I thought all police officers stood behind the badge and never broke ranks. This was new for me, and he was very sympathetic towards the family. He told us of Ritter being a racist and a bad police officer. He also told us the wrong police officer died that day.

Now Smith is in handcuffs and downtown. I only had bits and pieces of what happened. Smith was pulled over for a traffic stop with a bunch of people in his truck.

Some upfront and others in the bed. It was Yusef's truck? He fought with an officer over his driver's license and shot him. Then another officer drew his gun towards Smith as he stood near where he is doing crowd control. Smith shot him and then walked over to a female ride along and shot her with the officer's gun he had taken away. He finished by taking the patrol car and drove off. This is not good. There must be more. He's the nicest kid in town. Nothing now but prison. No one walks from killing a police officer.

More protests and news about the shooting. I was hearing more about Donavon Ritter. He was clean-cut, looked like a good guy. He was shot and injured and was expected to live. Mary Gomez, she looked Hispanic. Why did he shoot her? Gerald Bain passed away. He looked like a great guy. Why did Smith shoot him? Doesn't make sense, how does someone on a ride-along get shot? Maybe she had a weapon and tried to shoot Smith? Check out the attorney for Smith, Gary Brown. He must be good. All he can do was keep Smith off death row. Why did he do this? What really happened? Black folk protesting on the streets on police violence. This was not good.

This looked like Tato's protest. Signs, young people, families chanting on the streets. More people protesting then Tato's murder. Ten years ago, and the time has gone by so fast. Gabriel ended up having a kid with my cousin Myrna. Ralphie (Tato's brother) moved out of National City with his Army of kids. My Titi Toni moved to a home not too far away from the shooting. Officer James was promoted a few times. How did that happen? How do you shoot someone in the back and get promoted? Its cowardly to do that. Didn't Pat Garrett shoot Billy the Kid in the back? Garrett was a Sheriff and maybe James saw Tato as a "Billy the Kid" type.

I hoped that Smith was ok. But it sucks to see someone die for doing their job. Smith was in trouble, and he'll never become exposed outside prison. I hoped that he would be able to stay at Donavon Prison so Peggy could see him. I still didn't have the whole story. I knew that I should see Master Wilson to know what happened.

Trial

All rise for the honorable...The trial was the most watched event in 1985. There were protests on the streets. The city was divided between African Americans and whites. I had never seen this before. Most white folks had Smith guilty before he stood trial. Killing a police officer will do that. Black folk already had Smith innocent before he stood trial. Four hundred years of violent victimization does that to people. What was surprising was how sure people were on his guilt or innocence without listening to any evidence.

San Diego is one of the largest cities in the country. Most that serve in politics here are white. The heads of police departments and highest leadership are white. Most of the corporate structure and the most affluent in the city are white. Black people make up most of the impoverished in the city. It is through high profile ministries that their community gets served in the public's eye. People like Reverend George McKinney and Master Wilson.

I thought Tato's court case was the biggest trial in the 1970's for anyone of color. Smith's trial was much larger. The cases had so many similarities and you couldn't escape from seeing it. There were street protests everywhere. The police officers were on the news talking about the lives of the officers and police background. Many who

publicly responded were White. Within the same news segments were Black people talking about how racist SDPD was and how Smith acted in defense. Over the next 2 years the shooting captured all of San Diego with the media. The racial divide was most evident.

Ten years ago, it was a Brown and White world. The media focus was Tato's background and character. The media minced up the family and wanted to know every tad bit on him. Smith's case was no different. The family was always on the news fighting for their son. As much as I felt sorry for him, it made me wonder who was fighting for the officers' families? You have a dead officer who was performing his duties and a questionable event in the exchange with David Ritter and Smith. Mary Gomez was simply there for the ride as an interested party.

It's the summer of 1985 and the heat index is rising in the city. This case is done before the trial even started. Within 12 months Smith could be on death row. This was no typical opening day for a murder trial. The line was drawn in the sand and people knew where they stood. This was going to be a trial on race like never to be seen in San Diego. The court of public opinion had already come to a verdict, and the sentence had been decided before the trial even started. It was now a Black and White world.

February 19, 1986

Please rise for the Honorable Ben Hamrick. As soon as you blink an eye it was there. Smith was charged with one count of murder and three counts of attempted murder. It took two weeks to select the jury.

March 11, 1986

Michael Carpenter led the prosecution. His opening remarks focused on Smith as a martial arts expert and the violence inflicted on Officers Ritter, Bain, and Gomez. “Ritter will testify that he hit Morici as hard as he could with his baton and it had no effect,” Smith wrestled with Ritter for his revolver and shot him and Bain. He then walked over to Gomez and shot her. Smith fired a total of six rounds from Jacob’s revolver then took his patrol vehicle and ran over his body as he was leaving the scene. Carpenter spoke for less than 30 minutes and was focused on the jury.

Then walks up defense attorney Gary Brown. He looked like a southern attorney, tall and was wearing a gray suit. His suspenders gave him a look of a vaudeville act as he prepared for his performance. With a crowd room of spectators and many more outside the courtroom watching television monitors, he began his scene. He tells a different picture of the events of March 31st. Brown speaks of a traffic stop by Ritter filled with racist remarks. “You think you’re bad, nigger? I’m going to beat your black ass.” He then lays on the ground, as if receiving imaginary baton blows to his body and paints a picture to the jury of a traffic stop gone wrong. He draws from his theatre props and takes out a baton, and aerial photos.

Brown speaks of the initial exchange tween Smith and Ritter:

Ritter (in a harsh, gruff voice): “What’s up, blood?” (a nickname referring to a member of a Black youth gang).

Morici (very courteous): “What’s the problem, officer?”

Ritter: “You claim cuz or blood?”

Morici: "What are you talking about, sir? If I claim anything, I claim myself."

Ritter: "I don't want your wallet! I want your license!"

Morici: "Go ahead, sir. Look at the whole thing. I've got nothing to hide."

Ritter: "Look, boy! I'm going to tell you one more time or you're going to get hurt."

Chapter 4: Drinking the Kool Aid

February 1991

I was 28 years old and am finally hired by the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) and could wear the blue. I had a place I was about to get in Glendale and was about to run my ass off for the next six months. But it was LAPD and I had finally arrived! By mid-March, my goal was to be able to get up to seven miles running. I was up to three miles four times a week and getting stronger running every day. I wasn't fast, but I was not a quitter, and my training officers needed to see that. I couldn't believe the turn my life had taken. I was married and preparing for a new career.

Ralphie was at Rampart Division, and I was going to meet some new friends. All were police officers, or those trying to get in. This department looked a lot Browner and Blacker than San Diego. No one here knew about Tato and Smith. I would get assigned to Rampart or 77th. That's where the action was. I was going to kick ass and take no names. I wanted to be a great police officer. This was where I belonged. I was finally going to be able to make some money and I had a baby on the way. Happy wife happy life as they say. This Catholic boy was ready to work.

"Hon come over here and look at the news." The pursuit looked like a funeral procession. It must have been about 20 PD cars chasing him down. What did he do? They were wailing on this Black man. Why were they beating him down? It didn't look like he was resisting. His name was Rodney King. What did he do that they gave him a beating? It didn't look right. Something must have happened. He just killed someone. George Holliday was now famous, and Rodney got a beat down.

March 1991

My interest in becoming a police officer started with a childhood friend named Ralphie. He was hired by LAPD in the late 1980's and shared his work experience with me. I thought it was cool to hear his work at Rampart Division. I grew up watching all the police officer shows such as Adam 12 and SWAT. Shows that profiled Los Angeles and were close to home here in San Diego.

Ralphie got me excited about his work, and I saw how he had changed. He was more direct now, had some attitude, and was more aggressive. He was pretty quiet as a kid, but I saw the growth he had in becoming a police officer. Plus, the pay was good for a kid with no college behind me. So, I made the decision to apply to LAPD. I started the process and made it all the way to getting hired and given an academy date of April 1991. I found an apartment in Glendale and another recruit for a roommate.

Then it all changes and my life has a plot point due to a guy named Rodney King. I remember happening something like this. (Phone rings) "Candidate Rivera. Its LAPD backgrounds were sorry, but your academy date has been postponed. With the recent Rodney King incident, the department is looking at its use of force policy. Were sorry, but we'll let you know of the next academy date." Sir, yes sir and I appreciate the call and look forward to my start date. How does it look for the next academy sir? I understand, I should start applying elsewhere sir. I really want to be a police officer sir. That's what I remember of this earth-shattering moment for me. After going through the hiring process for 2 years, a car pursuit followed by a police officer beating of a Black man changes the trajectory of my life.

I understand my oral score might be too low for the next academy and even if I got in the next academy new recruits could bump me with a higher score. I was competing with all the military guys who were getting bonus points for service on their oral score and with women. Even with a ninety-nine oral score, I was barely able to get in. I felt that Rodney King incident had ruined it for me, and I can't compete with the in-person interview score of 102. At the time, I never considered that the officers were in the wrong. My identity as a human being was becoming more structural in the sense, I supported the officers on the scene.

That means I wouldn't be working with Ralphie. I needed to start looking at other departments. I figured I would try with the local Sheriff's Department. I can call Levin or Jim. They're both deputies and I figured they'll both look out for me. I knew Levin for a few years, and he use to work for NCPD. He's the only police officer that knew I was Tato's cousin and that I knew Smith. He thought at that time, I had a good chance of getting hired somewhere. On Tato, he only shared with me, "Tato never should had died that night. He was trouble, but never should had been died that way." Thus began a period where I lived a life of selling myself to get hired.

I started to change. I began to keep my hair short and tight, and started to be more polite and professional with all I had contact with on the streets. I used, yes sir or ma'am more often. I was also paying more attention with whom I was spending time together with. I avoided my brother Victor, who by this time was deep into using drugs. I started going to church more and trying to be a better husband. What I noticed was that I was gravitating towards individuals who had similar goals and identity. The color blue meant

more to me, because even the process gave me a sense of family. It was as though I was a marvel superhero on the right side of justice. But I know all the superheroes were White and primarily male. This sense of feeling Blue came with all I knew about being a good police officer and doing what I knew was right.

So began the process of trying to get hired by Riverside Sheriff's Department (RSO), California State University San Marcos Police Department (CSUSM PD) and San Diego County Sheriff's department (SDSO). The process meant running 3 to 4 times a week, lifting weights, and reading as much as I could in the area of criminal justice. My new friends all had the same dream as I did. There was Jeff who was trying to get hired by LAPD and Bennie who had gone to the academy with me and had my back. Can't forget Dennis who had also gone to the academy with me but wasn't focused on a particular department.

We talked policing, had family dinners, and shared where we were at in the police department hiring process. From my group, Bennie was the first to get hired with California State University San Marcos as a university police officer. Mike was hired by El Cajon PD and Gary was hired by National City PD. I just kept going and was waiting for my day to get that call from backgrounds again that I was hired.

Then came a fateful day with a letter I received. It came from the County of San Diego, informing me that I failed the psyche exam. I was told I could challenge the decision but knew very few had it overturned. I immediately called my friends and told them the unwelcome news. I felt I would end up stuck at the dead-end job I had at the time collecting on bad checks for 7-11. Or I could continue working at Kaiser hospital as

a security guard. I'm working two jobs and the Mrs. was happy no blue uniform for me. I wouldn't be a police officer anywhere. This is how it goes, some make it, most don't. I have no education, quit high school at 16, and according to the County of San Diego, not continuing in the hiring process, which meant for me a huge loss of myself.

I knew that all the background investigators talk to each other. When a recruit gets hired somewhere they get more motivated to get that recruit and expedite the process. But once a recruit fails with a department, especially a psyche exam it's all but over with other agencies for that recruit. So, the end had come with the other agencies I was applying to.

After a few months of feeling down, I decided to challenge the decision and sent the county a letter in response to my psyche failing. I based it on the successful psyche exam I had previously taken with LAPD, plus the fact I was successful in graduating from a credited police academy. I had to pay for an outside psyche exam and only remember I was nervous and walked away feeling I also didn't pass with the psychologist I had hired. The exam was forwarded to the county and now I was again part of a waiting game. A determination would be made in a few months, and I would be contacted.

Some time had passed, and I eventually received a letter from the County. I slowly opened it because I felt I had failed again. Somewhere in the letter it said I had passed. I sat down and read it again and saw I would be soon contacted by the background's unit of the department. I was back in the process with the county and could continue the process with the other agencies I was applying to. There was no stopping me

now and shortly after I received a call from a background investigator Terry Wilcox. We met and he was the image of a deputy. Had a mustache and a no-nonsense type of guy.

Deputy Wilcox and I went back and forth with information for a few months. I knew the longer I was in the process the more likely I would get hired by the Sheriff's department. By now a number of academy recruits were getting hired by the department so I knew I had to wait it out. Then again it happened. A call from backgrounds that stopped me from continuing in the hiring process. Deputy Wilcox told me I had an outstanding misdemeanor warrant out for a traffic ticket. Again, the process ended, and I was feeling down. I didn't want to talk to anyone. Nearly 4 years of trying to be a police officer and it was again cut short.

After a few days, I went, paid the outstanding ticket, and cleared the warrant. I came home to dinner and shared my frustration with my wife. I remember just telling her over and over, I didn't know how I missed a court date and failed to pay for the driving ticket. She asked me to show her the ticket and paperwork on the outstanding warrant.

After reading it, she immediately responded "you dummy look at the court date you missed." I looked it and still didn't understand what she meant. She then hit me on the back of the head, look at the date.... I looked at still nothing came to mind. She repeated look at the court date you missed. I looked and soon realized I was out of the country when I was scheduled the ticket court date. Not only was I out of the country, but I was also on the beaches in Mexico on my honeymoon. I immediately thought this could be the loophole I needed to get in.

The following morning, I drove to see Deputy Wilcox and requested to see him at headquarters at Ridgehaven. I had proof of the paid ticket and warrant clearance with me. I finished by showing my marriage certificate and about one hundred honeymoon pictures within three photo albums. I also brought a wedding table item, copy of the airline ticket, and picture of our hotel voucher. The final picture was of the Mrs. on the beach half naked in Mexico. He paused for a few seconds than immediately laughed at me and responded, "Rivera your back in the hiring process." It was music to my ears, and I saw a side of him, I wasn't expecting. It was surreal moment for me, and Deputy Wilcox seemed like a human being. The aftermath for me was being able to talk to him friendly one on one.

Summer of 1991

It was not LAPD, but I was putting myself through a police academy. I couldn't get hired by anyone. I had no degree and dropped out of high school my junior year because school did not challenge me. The only reason I was able to get in at the last minute was because I called the Director the day before it started. I explained how I was accepted into the LAPD, but my academy was placed on hold. There was no test and no application. I just walked into class the next day. I realized how quickly life could change. Without this opportunity I would have no chance to get a job anywhere. I was sure that the director felt sorry for me missing my LAPD academy due to the Rodney King incident.

But I wasn't the only one in class with the same issue. A guy named Gary Kirkpatrick who would eventually get a job with National City Police Department, was in

a comparable situation. He was a bright guy whose smile lit up a room. He scored much higher than me on my Knowledge Domain (KD) exams. I averaged about eighty-five on my exams. In the lower third of the class. I was never the fastest. Again, in the lower third of the class.

I applied to the Grossmont College Open Enrollee Police Academy in 1991. Initially, I was told I had missed the deadline by a month and would have to wait a year. The academy had started, and recruits had already picked up uniforms and paid their tuition. I practically begged to get in and promise to get all my gear the same day. I also showed my acceptance letter from LAPD. After a 24 hour wait period, I was telephoned I was allowed into the program. I was running in the academy the same day.

It was a ten-month academy, and I would have to attend class on nights and Saturdays. It was a 2-part program where the second part would finish at the SDSO academy at Southwestern College. We started with about sixty in our class. At the time, I knew I had no guarantee of getting hired by any department. But could get hired as a volunteer reserve as a backup. I was told half of the class would land jobs somewhere, and others would be able to work as reserves. That meant no pay, but we would get to wear the white shirts with blue pants. I could feel the comradery with the class.

We had those that excelled in the physical portion of academy and those that did well on the academic side. Dave Rainey was the smart one in the class. He had the answer for just about everything. Gary Kirkpatrick was pretty smart too and was always with his sidekick Shanahan who could run the wind. He had the physique of a Greek Warrior. The fact he was humble made him stand out more. We had one woman in our

class, her name was Estes. She was as cool as could be. There was also a guy named Benny who was also pretty cool and we resembled one another in our lives. He was married and had a daughter about the same age as mine. Dennis Sullivan was another cool man but could be a loose cannon when he drank. He took me once to McCabe's in Oceanside. It's a Marine bar and he picked fights with a few. Needless to say, we didn't stay too long. He led us in about everything we did as recruits. At the time we saw each other like brothers.

The training instructors are squared away. But that would change during the academy. Two of the training officers would get in trouble and be terminated with their departments. Surprising, one for stealing with El Cajon PD and the other for drugs with SDPD. We were all shocked at the firing, but knew we were under the microscope until hired. We all had just to stay low keyed and not draw negative attention to ourselves. If we did, it meant you were targeted to get disqualified (dq).

Four months later we transitioned to the Sheriff's Department Academy at Southwestern College. Only about twenty from my Grossmont group came over to Southwestern. My paperwork somehow got delayed and I had to talk to the Southwestern college coordinator of the academy. His name was Harry Hemlock, and he was a pretty serious guy. My paperwork was properly transferred over to the new academy. I was concerned that without the paperwork coming over would I be allowed to continue. I was again allowed in by a hair. I made some good new friends and a few that I would call just colleagues. One was a guy named Jim who in the beginning was pretty cool. He had a Mexican wife and was from the local area.

While in the academy I learned he had married Monica Gonzales. No future sound of wedding bells with Tony. Too bad and at some point, Jim stops talking to me. A fellow recruit tells me Jim thought I had dated and slept with his wife. Wrong call, I was never interested in her. It was Jorge's sister. It got a little weird in the academy. I could tell Jim was stressing around me and other recruits were talking about it. I had two outs, tell him the truth, or let him hang for the rest of the academy. I decided to let him hang for not being strong and talking to me. I just kept focusing on graduating from the academy.

During my time in the academy, I noticed that all of the former Marines were good at shooting, use of force, and running. The instructors love their marines for they followed instruction well and always knew what to do, which usually meant following orders and be at the top of their game. They were tight and did much better than us nonmilitary guys except in Knowledge Domains (KD) exams. If you fail one of these exams you're out. These were blocks of instruction that carried a lot of weight for the academy instructors. They were on criminal law, use of force, and on all areas of policing needed to survive. We lost about a third of our class from Grossmont who failed a KD or just washed out.

While in the tail end of the academy a few of the guys were hired by a department and had jobs waiting. Others went to volunteer as police reserves, while others got washed out and never got a job. Some of them were great people and I wondered why some made it while others didn't. But make a mistake at the academy and it could cost you your career. I learned I had to carry and present myself in a certain way to get a job,

as well as keep it. For me, it seemed staying in the process of getting hired meant I had to always be prepared to perform.

At Southwestern, there were two females Carolina Toothman and Maribel Riley. Toothman spoke Spanish and had family in law enforcement. She seemed like a natural to get hired. Maribel was good at everything she did and worked hard for it. In the academy exists a term, squared away.” It means a recruit who can handle all that is thrown at them and do well in all areas of instruction and job performance. Recruits could guess who would make it to getting hired and who would do well. Maribel was one of the most squared away recruits and was always smiling. She was usually partnered up with me and I didn’t mind because of her demeanor. She made it to Chula Vista Police Department. She was down to earth, and we knew she would be successful.

There were others that went on to be police officers, and others that didn’t. The most accomplished in my academy again at Southwestern was David Rainey. He looked like he was already a captain instead of a recruit. Great guy and down to earth. He never got hired that I knew of with any department. He worked at a casino. I would catch up with him a few years later. He was happy and no longer wanted to become a police officer. Had he been hired, he would have been a great chief somewhere. Some make it, some don’t. Most of the time we never knew why people got disqualified. We just took it as fate. David was the top recruit in our academy. I wasn’t the strongest recruit in about anything. Just average but passed all my KD’s.

I had a near miss a few weeks before graduation. I had caught the flu one week and missed two classes. I was on the fence for being disqualified with the missed classes.

That week the KD was on tear gas. I had to rely on notes from my brothers. It was our last KD for the academy. I scored a sixty-eight on the KD exam and missed passing by one question. I was about to see the parking lot to Southwestern College. Out of fifty-four or so KD's I managed to screw up the very last one before graduation. I went to the Director Hemlock's office, and he told me there wasn't much he could do. He was straight forward and had no emotion. I knew he had done these many times before. He had a commanding presence about him that told me to be straight with him. I'm sure he had seen this before with other recruits. I told him I was out for a few days with the flu and missed the classes on tear gas. I also told him that I had spoken to the instructor, and he would go over what was covered in the class. He reluctantly allowed me to remit the exam.

Others were already planning for their parties and preparing to start work with their agencies. For me, it was getting by this last KD, or I was out. If I didn't pass, I would be known as the guy that missed graduating by one question. A year of running, exams, studying, and working two jobs and it was all possibly ending really fast. My world was crashing, and I only had Bennie and the fellas from Grossmont to rely on. They passed me their notes and I studied my ass off. I was good to go. I passed the exam by one question. My life almost took a different path by one question. The director allowed me back in the academy and I was going to graduate. I knew when I walked how blessed I was to graduate with the challenges I had. I was one question away in my life from being a realtor.

Graduation came and still no job. Everyone looked great on graduation day, and those that were hired by police departments were allowed to wear their uniform. Some had family members walk the stage with them as they received their diploma. Some had family members who were in law enforcement pin them. It was great to see my friend's finish. I saw Monica at graduation. She looked great. She introduced me to her kids. Jim walked over and she walked away. I knew she couldn't be happy with this guy. She really should have been with Tony. They liked each other. But on this night, I had to find my family.

As I spotted my parents, I see Director Hemlock walking up to my mother. He's about a foot taller than my mom and he bends over to hug her in front of a large group garnering his attention. Maybe he told her I almost failed. Not only is he hugging her he's smiling as if they were best friends, or he was family. Is he related to us? I walked up cautiously to them, and he puts his arm on my shoulder. He tells my parents, "Roberto did an outstanding job and will make a great police officer someday."

Mom then tells me how she grew up with Harry and use to babysit him. Not Hemlock but called him by his first name Harry. His parents were close friends of my grandparents, and he was like family to her. She even has a picture of him in his diapers in the house somewhere. I could have used that picture to get me through. Now people would think it was nepotism that got me through the academy.

November of 1992 and I was hired by the University of California San Marcos Police Department (CSUSM). I was finally wearing the "Blue." My shoes had a spit shine and I looked good. My friend Bennie from the police academy helped me get in. He

was the first officer the new university had hired. He put in a good word with the Chief. I was turned down by the San Diego County Sheriff's Department and my oral score was now too low for LAPD. So, walking down the corridor of a university is where I patrolled. I knew that it was not LAPD and that I would never patrol Rampart or 77th. But I looked good, and I was a badass!

After working at the university a few years, I decided to investigate taking courses on campus. I kept walking the halls and being friendly with the faculty and staff. I kept being told I was too nice to be a police officer. I couldn't figure out if that meant they thought that I was weak or that I could never pull the trigger. It meant that I was not the badass I thought I was. But a Professor Mike Acres kept trying to convince me to go to school. He was a cool guy, but I was embarrassed to tell him I quit high school in the 11th grade. I barely graduated with the proficiency examination. I didn't think that I was that bright and what was Sociology? Why does Professor Mike Acres kept telling me, "You're a sociologist and you don't know it?" What is Sociology?

I become friends with Mike, he was hiring several professors of color. Maya Prince was very lady like but seemed a little uncomfortable when around me. A Black professor, Blaine Chappell didn't really talk to me when I walked by his office. It had to be my uniform. Both Prince and Chappell seemed like the only Black professors on campus. Why weren't they cool with me? If they ever needed me, I would be there. Within a year we hired a Black officer, Will McCombs. He was low key and a great guy to work with.

Tom Metzger's son was on campus. Can you believe it? White Aryan Nation at CSUSM. They were going after one professor, Maya Prince. I had to escort her to her vehicle multiple times. She was a tough cookie and she had been through quite a bit. We got word that she was a target. Bennie and I were watchful on campus. We were only 3 officers on campus, but we had the Sheriff's office nearby we could call.

I had a chance to chat with Professor Prince. She was genuinely nice and low key. I don't know why there was a barrier between us when we met. It could have been the uniform. It was like that with the Black folk I see. I understood but disagreed. Most of the police officers I had met were hardworking and family oriented. The press gave us a bad rap. I wasn't out beating people down, shooting anyone. Then again, I was policing on a college campus with just a few thousand college students. At the time, I didn't understand the protests on immigration and Prop 187.

People should come here by a legal means. My family did. My dad from Puerto Rico and mom's family legally came up from Baja California. My great grandfather was a doctor. They left Mexico around 1926 during the Cristero War in Mexico, in which Catholic Churches were ordered by the Mexican government to shut their doors. It was when Catholics clashed with the government. Mom's family had money and privilege. My grandfather was one of the first to drive a vehicle in Baja California. But that was all behind us and I was American Red, White, and Blue. I had a place here in the U.S. If I had to defend a country, I would only fight for the USA.

1994

There were protests all over the state in 1994. Prop 187 was getting all my “gente” up and bothered. They were not going to get deported. My people were needed to pick fruit and work in hotels. But it didn’t matter. I was “Blue” first and if these protests came here what would happen? Was I “Brown” before “Blue”? I was Latino. I was more Boricua. Mom was Mexican, but I wasn’t a “cholo” or “Chicano.” I couldn’t believe these protests and having the white Aryan Nation on campus. Tom Metzger was from nearby Fallbrook and hated Black people which is why I was having to escort Professor Prince to her vehicle. When would this hate end? I didn’t want to arrest my people for protesting something I knew was right. To make things worse, Mike was leaving to go to Akron University. He stopped talking to me about being a sociologist. It was no big deal because I wouldn’t be taking any more classes. I couldn’t go to school and work. I wasn’t college material like Counselor Singer told me and my mother at Helix High School. I need to get out of here and be a police officer where I could do police work. It wouldn’t be at CSUSM.

There were four to six thousand people protesting Prop 187. They were at the doors of Craven Hall, and we had only six or so officers in riot gear. It was going to be hard having to take a baton to people I knew. I was taking classes with these students a few weeks earlier. I was crazy! They could overrun the campus and take it over. We were at the front door in riot gear ready to stomp. Some of these people were like family to me. Did I make a mistake by getting close to some of these professors, staff, and students? It would be much easier to go somewhere else to be a police officer. But where? For the

time being, I couldn't let anyone destroy the building named after Senator Craven. He helped get the campus built, but he spoke out against immigrants. Prop 187 could be the end of my career if the protesters got in the building.

April of 1999

In 1999 I was sworn in with the Sheriff's department by Sheriff William Kolendar in a private ceremony with no fanfare. Just a friend Doralia, and my parents. No more Cal State police. I was the first to break away from the university police department at San Marcos and was finally able to do real police work. Kolendar looked different than on TV. He looked taller and seemed like a great guy. He had a strong accent. He was from New York? He knew everything about policing. But he didn't know about Tato and Smith.

My friend Captain Tony Fuentes pushed for me to get in. He knew of all the community service hours I had put in. I saw myself hopefully like him, hard charger, and Latino. I heard he was promoted having a respected degree where Latinos lacked promotional opportunities. My mom was part of that. Wow, not too many Brown or Black faces in patrol I heard.

Tony connected me with the Latino Peace Officers Association. He gave me advice and looked after me like a little brother. At San Diego Central Jail (SDCJ) a couple of the guys tried to mess with me just because they knew that I knew him. When on the job you always must prove yourself to your colleagues. If there was use of force, I tried to jump in quickly.

We had many suicides and racialized fights at the jail. There were regular deputies like me that would eventually get out to patrol. There were also correctional deputies that would always work the jails. These were deputies that wore the same uniform as the regulars, same union, and had shorter police academies. The regulars would handle all the police reports and were eager beavers to impress command staff. We were led by Ron Cottingham, a no-nonsense guy that was quite outspoken. He also was involved with our union and would eventually work out of Sacramento. He was a good guy and smart.

For the next three and a half years, I was working at the county jails. First Downtown and then South Bay. In downtown I couldn't find good parking. At South Bay it was much easier. Amazing how a decision to work somewhere could be settled on parking and a smaller size. In Downtown you get lost. As a regular you only wanted to get out. If you were offered a chance to get out early, it would be to a patrol station where the action was. In the San Diego County Sheriff's Department, it was Panoramic City in the North and Lemon Grove in the South. I knew the Grove and Spring Valley well. I elected to go to Panoramic City. Tony tried to talk me out of it. He said it would be a big mistake. He didn't tell me why. It was the first time I went against his advice. I would later find out why.

2003

(Radio conversation with three deputies doing surveillance of a drug deal) "Junior are you staged?" (Rivera) "I'm positioned up in a hill and have eyes on the liquor store." (Junior) "Terrell

chill out if the deal is going down and he has to run our way.

Thirty minutes is nothing to watch from here, plus were doing police work brother.” “It was taking forever!” (Terrell) I see him buying the weed.” (Junior). We move towards the suspect and yell for him to get on the ground. Our guns were pointed at a Latino male. “Junior where’s his stash?” He was able to spot it next to some cans. He was a bird dog with great eyes. “I’ll be good like you someday,” I told him. “What are you going to do when I’m gone?” I remember his response, “look Rivera, it’s only a traffic gig in F.S. (Flint Station).” I replied, jokingly, “but it means I won’t have to see you, sons of bitches, for a while.” Panoramic City had seen the last of me.

In reality, I would miss them. We were a team that couldn’t be broken. That year I saw about all you could see as a police officer. Most of my partners were white and if they liked you, they would eat and hang out with you. If they didn’t, you were on your own. Every Friday and Saturday night there was a knifing, murder, or assault somewhere. Panoramic City was considered a hot bed of crime. The city was known for the “Panoramic City Homeboys” and many of the OG’s around. Tony once told me when it came to gangs, San Diego was the sniffles, Panoramic City was a cold, and Los Angeles was like pneumonia.

If Panoramic City was bad, I knew Los Angeles was worse. I tried to do all I could to be a good police officer. Just as every recruit does when they leave the academy.

I spent 10 years trying to land a job and my time at CSUSM. My career was not a blur. I remember the stressful events where I could have deployed lethal force, where unholstering my duty weapon would close out conversation.

The one that I remember most vividly was when I was assigned to a T.O. Early on in training I was one of the first to arrive on the scene where there were two boys each with a leg severed completely off. They were working a Christmas play removing props from a truck outside on a public street. A drunk driver passed out at the wheel and plowed into them.

We had three beats, the East, South and the West. The South Beat bordered Carlsbad and San Marcos. The West Beat bordered Oceanside, and the East Beat was where the action was. If you worked the Sheriff's Department and wanted to keep busy you worked Panoramic City patrol. Our guys always stood out in the department. Everyone who worked Panoramic City was promoted fast and made their way to the Ridgehaven administrative office.

Panoramic City had a history with gangs that crossed over into San Marcos and Oceanside. For some reason a lot of the guys that were military came up here to patrol. More so the Marines in our department. I had seen guys cut out and get reassigned to the jails. They either weren't cut out for it or were not liked by the TO's. The TO's knew their stuff and the early morning hours of a weekend were full of violence. Panoramic City was the most active patrol station in the county. I never understood why. They had the gang members like other stations did. However, if you wanted to be street police officer it was Panoramic City.

I learned about policing from Junior. He had worked the courts and was a true street police officer. He could read people well and I sensed that people were envious of him. Some liked him, some didn't. It's like that as an officer. It doesn't take much to fall from grace.

Some of guys thought of me as a "Beaner lover." If you let someone who was Mexican off without arresting them or towing their car, it showed sympathy to them. Since most of the other guys didn't speak Spanish, many of the Spanish reports came to me. Sometimes I answered up for the call and other times it was pawned on me. If I took their call, then they had to cover my beat till I cleared. It was informal but had to be that way. Otherwise, I would collect all the Spanish speaking paper (police reports). I knew the guys that avoided paper and the guys that answered up on calls. Junior would answer up and because he did, I knew he was a good police officer.

Since he was always involved in an arrest, it was often known as a Junior caper, in which he would arrest someone for something unusual. You couldn't mess with him; he knew the law and penal code. He was a hard charger but did it professionally. Early on some of the guys didn't want to work with him. Some felt that he wanted to make a name for himself. That wasn't the case, and I learned from him how to be a good police officer and be respectful with others. He showed me how to work parolees and work with the State Parole agents. I have many stories from my time patrolling Panoramic City. Many involved Junior, but it was time for me to leave and head to Flint Station (FS). I was taking an investigation position in the traffic unit at FS.

When I got to FS, it was much different then Panoramic City. All the Latino deputies gravitated to FS. There were a few white officers and I only had to respond to one murder during my two years there. It was someone who shot a person through their peephole in the door. Other than that, it was a cakewalk to work at. I was working traffic and it seemed like cool unit. There was Frenchie who was the former D.A.R.E. deputy and everyone knew him in town. He also served as a DJ for every police function in the South Bay. There was Sargent Willie Vasquez who came from Panoramic City. Hard charger and well-liked by the troops. Then there was Tito Colon, who was always good for a laugh. He could had done stand-up comedy somewhere. People gravitated to him. He could make something funny out of anything.

I tried to make a name for myself by making more arrests than anyone else. It didn't matter what you did. If you came along my path, you were going to jail. It seemed like I was arresting about two individuals per day. In 2004, I was one of the top deputies for making arrests. The arrests made me feel like I was part of something much bigger. I was developing a name at the station for making arrests and I wanted to be a detective.

My identity was that of a kick-ass deputy and at the time that's what I understood as being a good police officer. I looked for parolees and anyone on meth walking the streets. I felt in Panoramic City I was an average deputy, but outside of Panoramic City I could be above average. In IB it was different. It wasn't about making arrests; it was about being able to talk to residents and having them respect and trust of the community. My goal was to make my way to the Grove as a detective. Wouldn't it be cool to patrol where you once lived?

Chapter 5: Trio of Shootings

Summer of 2005

Rivera, are you listening to the radio? That's the third shooting within a few days in Panoramic City. Shit, they have more OIS (officer-involved shooting) then all of San Diego. I know they do, and I know why. They have a few cowboys with lots of Native Americans. Too bad they don't have anyone who speaks Spanish.

Early 2006

Listen LT. I know you can't get any Spanish speakers up there. Everyone knows it's a fucking spot to be in. Its cliquish and you have a bunch of cowboys. Panoramic City is known to take down the Indians and everyone knows it. I went there to get out early from jail. I don't want to go back. You would have to promise me the moon and you have no juice. Everyone knows the captain is racist and he doesn't want me there. Shit, I'm the only Spanish speaker you have and I'm busy doing volunteer work. Plus, I want to go to school. I'm thinking about getting a degree in sociology. It's like psychology, but instead, you study groups and collective behavior. Yes, I've been reading. Ok, if I go and be part of this new COPPS Unit in Mar Park you must promise I'll get detective and go to gangs.

August of 2008

Hey Sarge, can you believe we're here in Detroit for this conference. Rivera your Move Forward Project got us this trip, now don't screw your presentation tomorrow with DOJ. They're going to have the top PD administrators in the country. Were just a small pawn in the game. They just want to hear how the violent crime was lowered in Panoramic City by 21% and Weed and Seed. Don't feed them too much. These are police

officers and that's all they want to hear is about crime. I hear you Sarge, but I'm going to include this piece on holistic policing for tomorrow. Communities can't be whole unless they trust us. Rivera just keep it simple; these are police officers.

The following day all went well. Had over a hundred in attendance. Made some friends at DOJ and we toured Detroit. First Greek Town where I won \$90.00 dollars on a slot machine. Leo told me to keep playing with good luck. I knew better and wanted to walk away with some money. Leo took me to a steak restaurant, and we had a great meal. We were headed home and were riding high on the hog. Leo was about to get promoted to Lt. It was about time. He was the longest running sergeant with the department. I didn't understand why he wasn't promoted. He was at the busiest station and oversaw our command mobile field force for North County. Everyone loved Sarge. He looked like this cuddly football player. 6'2 and 275. He played football for the department, and I'm sure hit like a train.

He had an officer involved shooting about which he really didn't talk. When I first came to Panoramic City, I wasn't too sure about him. I don't trust everyone I work with and wasn't sure about him. But he cared about people. He was calm and worked his ass off. He was a good man and advocated for Latinos at Mar Park. He agreed to about all my ideas. Well, he was about to be promoted and all the talk was about him with the other deputies.

We were still at the hotel when a call came in. Leo took it and it went south in seconds. It was someone from the department and Leo was getting pissed. The only thing

Rivera shared was what had been publicized. Something had happened and we didn't know what turn of events was taking place once we returned to Panoramic City.

There would be no promotion for Leo. He would have to transfer to the Encinitas Station. I was not going to make detective. Our unit was changing over to a gang unit and those families that trusted me were now targets for border patrol and local arrests. Even with our unit being credited for lowering crime. I didn't know at the time what wheels were moving with the department. No OIS occurred during my return to Panoramic City. I was even nominated for first William Kolendar Award for the Move Forward Project but knew that change was around the corner. It was over for our unit as we knew it.

Despite increasing concerns nationally about police shootings of African Americans, the victimization of Latinos by police has been ignored. This chapter explores the Move Forward Project, a police initiative that began in 2006 in Southern California. The initiative was aimed at improving trust following three unrelated fatal shootings involving White police officers and Latino residents that occurred within a span of five days in the summer of 2005. These shootings led to public outrage and were followed by two years of community protests.

The data I collected for the study was between 2005 and 2008, is based on participant observation, ethnographic fieldwork, and archival materials. Despite the success of the Move Forward Project, police administrators abruptly ended the program. I felt that the project was disbanded because of its success in reducing crime in the area, which led to a reduction in funding for the police. For reasons related to strategic funding, departments receive increased funding when crime rates are high. My research

highlighted police practices from the Move Forward Project to increase awareness of the current racial disparity in police responses to police violence in Latino communities.

This chapter focuses on a medium-sized city of Panoramic City, nestled in Southern California. According to the 2010 census, had a population of about 98,000 residents, of which about 46% are Latino. More specifically, the area known as Mar Park is centered on a square-mile barrio of the city. Is about 85% Latino with most of its residents being primarily Spanish speakers.

Before settlers came to Panoramic City, Mexicans in the state of California had lands taken away from them after the Mexican American War of 1848. Latino discrimination and victimization by police dates as far back as the 19th century with the end of the Mexican American War. As a result of this police practice, generations of Latinos across the United States have lived in fear of violence at the hands of police. Despite the guarantees contained in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, many Latinos had their lands stolen through illegal business transactions by White settlers overseen by a new White police force and the Texas Rangers (Gonzales 2003). The justification for the tactics of the Texas Rangers was to control the area into the U.S. Latino population (Martinez, 2018).

Many Mexicans that had lived along the Rio Grande River, were lynched by the Rangers who served as military, police, judge, and jury (Mirandé, 1987). Racial divisions were created to separate newly privileged Whites in those areas that were formerly a part of Mexico from Mexican people. A racial and legal history that connects the Texas Rangers to oppression of Mexicans in the United States. It may explain the hostile

narrative between White officers and Latino residents in Panoramic City, who are primarily of Mexican descent. While contemporary police violence against Latinos has these historical roots, the focus of this chapter is on the contemporary situation and specifically, the lessons learned from the Move Forward Project and why was it cancelled.

The profiling of Latinos by police officers was apparent during a five-day period in 2005 in which three unrelated fatal shootings took place in Panoramic City. In each case, all police officers involved in the shootings were White and all victims were Latino. The occurrence of three shootings within such a brief period by officers from the same department suggested that a broader pattern of problems existed.

Prior to the shootings, there was little communication or collaboration between the community and the police. The tension between the community and the police became palpable, as distrust of the police brewed among the Latino residents. In the days following these shootings in 2005, thousands of Latinos came out in protest of these police shootings, worsening an already strained relationship between the police and the community. The lack of communication may have increased the racial divide, promoting an “Us versus Them” mentality among the police and residents.

The Move Forward Project was initiated to promote a more positive engagement between the police department and Latino community, one with mutual trust and respect. In critically evaluating the Move Forward, this chapter draws specifically on Derrick Bell’s Interest Convergence Theory (ICT). An analysis of propositions as markers and angles is used to examine whether the Move Forward Project was successful or not.

Literature Review

In assessing attitudes of Latinos towards law enforcement (McClusky et al., 2008), previous studies have found that the racial division that exists between Latinos and White officers is impacted by Latinos' fear of deportation and procedural unfairness (Messing et al., 2015). Latino perceptions of police performance have been generally poor since the *Garner v. Tennessee* (1975) decision, which, under the Fourth Amendment, allowed police officers to use lethal force when there is a threat to their own lives (Blume, 1984; Carter, 1985).

This precedent-setting case favors police officers and has led to an increase in officer-involved shootings (Katz, 2015). Moreover, social identity cooperation, where Latino residents share similar values and concerns (Bradford, 2014), has influence on the community characteristics of an officer's approaches to patrolling (Reck, 2014). These characteristics include residents avoiding police officers, being fearful, not sharing information when contacted by police, and not reporting crimes to police as they occur (Martinez et al., 2010).

In response to civil and racial unrest in the 1960s, police departments across the United States began developing ways to improve race relations through community-oriented policing. At about the same time that Community-Oriented Policing and Problem Solving (COPPS) philosophies were being implemented, approximately 100,000 police officers were federally funded to support such projects. This federal funding of police departments, which began in the 1960s during a period of racial unrest in urban areas, was continued by President Bill Clinton's 1994 Crime Bill. This bill expanded the

funding with the goal of improving policing in urban areas by adding or redeploying police officers. The initial intent of community policing was to make the streets of America safer, as some studies suggest that police departments that are transparent and work to improve trust are better able to collaborate with community interests (Glaser & Denhardt 2010). Policing efforts were based on a Black/White binary, as was Critical Race Theory (Delgado 2015). This literature contains a gap that does not address those that benefitted due to race over those they marginalized.

Interest-Convergence Theory

Critical Race Theorist Derrick Bell used the *Brown v. The Board of Education* (1954) decision to illustrate his Interest- Convergence Theory (ICT). In critically assessing the impact of this landmark decision, Bell concluded that the decision was issued because it advanced the interests of White Americans, particularly industrialists who saw segregation as detrimental (Bell, 1980). He argued that the interests of those that are White converged with increased divergence of interests for those of color made integration less feasible unless Whites benefitted by the exchange. Racial equality was accommodated only when it converged with the interests of Whites (Bell, 1980). More generally, ICT states that change that benefits communities of color generally occurs when those changes also benefit the interests of White Americans (Alemán & Alemán, 2010).

The Move Forward Project was promoted by the leadership of the Panoramic City Sheriff's station because it served the interests of the police., which sought to project a more positive view of themselves to the community. For example, the captain of the

station was a White male, and his ten superiors were all White. Furthermore, the White power structure was maintained by continuing a divisive “Us versus Them” framework that lacked Latino input on its policing. However, once the Move Forward Project was successful in reducing crime, it was disbanded because it led to a reduction in funding of the police. Consistent with Interest Convergence Theory, the Move Forward Project was discontinued because its success was counter to the advancement of White interests.

Methods

The data were collected between 2005 and 2008, based on participant observation, recollection of personal experience, and ethnographic fieldwork. Additionally, archived newspaper articles, television news reports, district attorney reports and a U.S. Department of Justice report on the three shootings are included among the data. Attempts at contacting the local district attorney’s office to gain permission to review files on the three officer-involved shootings were unsuccessful.

However, I personally knew the officers involved in the three shootings and was consulted to go back to Panoramic City for my experience during my career there as a police officer. My reflection is on how I positioned myself as an officer that shaped people’s behavior around me, as well as my access to settings, resulted from my assignment in Panoramic City.

To implement a Community-Oriented Policing and Problem Solving (COPPS) project in 2006, I authored as an officer at Panoramic City, a grant in cooperation with the local university. The project brought in M.A. graduate students from the local university to examine the relationship between the Panoramic City officers and Latino

residents. Five university students from various disciplines, including sociology, business, and marketing, participated in police ride-along with officers over a 4-month period. The students ranged in age from 22 to 28 and rode with the police officers for a minimum of 8 hours a week.

The students kept monthly progress reports and drafted a final paper in response to what they saw and heard regarding the attitudes of officers towards Latino residents. They shared a research question: Which is more of a barrier to improve police relations in Panoramic City, the Mexican culture or Spanish language?” During the time of the student research, the department had begun a Spanish language immersion program where twelve officers from the Panoramic City station were chosen to learn Spanish over a 10-week period.

In addition, I maintained departmental emails from high-ranking police officials that highly praised the Move Forward Project. Each month, Panoramic City leaders and city government officials evaluated the project. I also gave COPPS monthly reports on the Move Forward Project to Sergeant Carrillo.

The Move Forward Project had ten goals outlined below. Eight of the ten goals were met. Of the two items not met, one—to develop a boxing team—was in process and nearly completed when the project was canceled. The project was canceled due to the Mar Park COPPS unit; being transformed to a gang unit led by a new sergeant. Plans to develop a high school mariachi troupe among two rival high schools never materialized.

As the project was implemented, media reports of improved police/Latino community relations measured trust, as well as by a decrease in the number of protests and an increase in Latino involvement with the Panoramic City Station.

I examined governmental reports that reviewed the trio of shootings in Panoramic City. For instance, in 2008, the County District Attorney's office which oversaw Panoramic City and adjacent cities issued a report that evaluated the use of force from 1998 to 2010. The U.S. Department of Justice issued a report in 2008 justifying the use of lethal force in the trio of shootings that took place in 2005. Additionally, archived newspaper reports on the Panoramic City shootings and their aftermath were collected from the period of 2005 until I transferred out of the Panoramic City station in February of 2008. Finally, the sheriff department reports of the shootings in Panoramic City, which gave detailed accounts of the three residents who were killed as well as the officers' actions who shot them, were examined.

A few methodological limitations must be noted. For one, determination of the nationalities of the three Latino residents killed in the incidents with police was based on media accounts from the internet, archived newspaper sources, and past TV news segments. Additionally, though the researcher can be considered an insider from a former assignment to the sheriff's department, at the time of the three officer-involved shootings, he was assigned to another station rather than the Panoramic City Patrol Station.

Context for the Study: The Panoramic City, CA Police Shootings

This case was chosen as a multi-method, retroactive case study due to its unique quality. Prior to these events, there is no archived history of multiple officer-involved shootings within such brief period. By focusing on such a unique case, this study addresses such research questions as why police initiatives are implemented and why they cease. Media and residents of Panoramic City believed the concentration of shootings to be the first of its kind for its police department. The city has a barrio, Mar Park, where residents primarily speak Spanish and where many are undocumented. Mass protests by predominately Latino residents erupted and continued for two years, as the community decried the shootings and the agency's failure to recruit Spanish-speaking officers who could prevent such future shootings. At the time of the shootings, none of the 49 Panoramic City deputies on the force were fluent in Spanish. A cultural division emerged because of the department's failure to address the Latino community's distrust of the police department.

Shooting #1

On the Thursday that began the streak of shootings, officers responded for the third time in 24 hours to the home of a co-residents' 9-1-1 domestic disturbance call in a primarily Latino neighborhood. The officers reported that they faced a Latino man who had threatened other people and attacked a deputy with dumbbells. The man was unfazed by pepper spray. Two officers fired and the man died at the scene.

The shooting was deemed justified under the state's penal code, which defines shootings as justified if necessary to overcome resistance to the discharge of a lawful

duty or if in defense of others. There were no records of community outreach between the police department and the residents of the area to understand what took place. The department issued no report to the family about the man's death.

Shooting #2

On Friday, a deputy spotted a Jeep suspected to have been used in an armed robbery. The officer stopped the vehicle and chased the unarmed Latino man who ran from it. The officer fired three shots at the man. The final volley of shots penetrated the man's body when he was on his back, lying down.

The District Attorney's audit report stated that the officer shot the man when he reached into his clothing. The family was not given any explanation as to why the suspect had to be killed. This event added to the community's safety concerns about the police-involved shootings. Furthermore, there was a lack of communication between the department and the community and family members of the deceased. Information was received through the media rather than from a mental health liaison from the police department. No one from the police department made themselves available to explain what took place or to help community members process the emotions they experienced because of the incident. Latino leaders were vocal but felt ignored, increasing the level of distrust.

Shooting #3

On Monday, officers tried to stop a Latino man who fit the description of a suspect in a reported car theft. The man ran. Officers chased him, and one deputy shot him as he reportedly reached for a "Leatherman-like tool" in a pouch on his hip. At this

point, the community became even more fearful of their jurisdiction's police officers. Within a short span of time, three fatal shootings had occurred. They were followed by no community outreach or explanation from the department given to the family about the man's death. All three unrelated shootings were ruled justified by the local District Attorney's Office overseeing Panoramic City.

The three Latinos who were shot by deputies were all found to have been unarmed. Also, the language barrier of the three deceased was not examined to assess whether they may have not responded to officer's demands because of their lack of English fluency. All the officers involved in the shootings were White males that spoke no Spanish.

The national political climate during the period of these shootings featured immigration policy at the forefront of discussion. As these conversations were taking place, a new vigilante group was gaining momentum in the U.S. Southwest and at the border of Mexico. These vigilantes were called the Minutemen and their members were primarily White males. While the protests by local Latinos over the three shootings were taking place, the Minutemen were aligning themselves with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Border Patrol in the round-up of illegal Latino immigrants.

For the Minutemen, they had their own protests that were centered on illegal immigration, yet the issue of local day laborers looking for work was gaining momentum. For the Latino protestors, the key issues were about the trio of shootings and the defense of Latino immigrant day labor, which came into question after the shootings.

Unfortunately, the Latino protestors were overshadowed by the Minutemen's activities, which minimized the community's outcry in the media and other potential social supports from other areas. I was recruited back to the Panoramic City Station in early 2006 as tensions mounted between the Minutemen and those in protest of the trio of shootings and Latino immigrant day labor. At his first assigned protest, I witnessed hundreds of those supporting the Minutemen and their beliefs, as well as thousands of protestors on the opposing side, who were supporting Latino immigrant day laborers.

While the protests were taking place, leaders of the Minutemen were meeting with the captain of the police department. The same Minutemen leaders would within a few years be indicted and criminally sentenced for assaults on day workers camped in the area. As Latinos were protesting the series of officer-involved shootings, the Minutemen were promoting anti-immigrant propaganda that was distracting for the city yet supportive by its police command. This diminished the trustworthiness of the mixed message that was being sent to Latino residents and the officers involved in the Move Forward Project.

The relationship between law enforcement and White residents paralleled what was also seen along the southwestern part of the U. S. in states such as Texas and Arizona. Furthermore, this relationship often included use of the U.S. Border Patrol. Historically, it is common for Border Patrol officers to have military or police backgrounds. The similarity between the Border Patrol and Texas Rangers in its early years was not coincidental. They were aligned in their policing of those of Mexican descent in the name of protection of property (Mirandé, 1987). This is similar to how the

Minutemen were claiming that “illegal aliens” were negatively affecting their property values and committing crime.

The Minutemen had a voice in the local police practices involving undocumented immigrants. Doing so allowed an ICE agent to be made available for officers from Panoramic City. For officers with Latino ethnicity, it was troubling to hear the term “non-citizen” used interchangeably with Hispanic between federal agents and police officers. It was even more startling to hear “NHI” (no human involved) as a descriptor for those suspected of being undocumented. This fueled the flames of mistrust by the Latino community towards police officers. It was later determined by the Poverty Law Center that the Minutemen were a White supremacist movement (Sandoval, 2010).

The Move Forward Project: A Pilot Program in the Community-Police Engagement

The three shootings by the five White police officers and what appear by the community as a lack of a department response added to the mistrust of police by many Latinos in the community. Therefore, the sheriff’s department implemented the Move Forward Project to promote positive community-police relations. The loss of trust was highlighted by residents’ comments at community forums, Spanish speaking PTA meetings, local school English immersion classes, media interviews, and the author’s conversations with residents. The shootings illustrated a discrepancy between good intentions and justice.

Many residents feared the police officers that patrolled the area, resulting in a small number of calls for assistance and emergency services from the Latino community. Additionally, the Latino community wanted police accountability for the trio of

shootings. Given the community's loss of trust, the sheriff department's higher command sought a middle ground between the desires of protestors for restorative justice of the shootings and Panoramic City officials. They searched for a solution that would mitigate the social and racial disparities they encountered.

In 2006, Sergeant Leo Carrillo and I were recruited to lead police efforts to formally address community-police conflicts. A Community Oriented Policing and Problem-Solving Unit (COPPS) storefront office was set up at Mar Park to increase police officer contact with residents. While assigned to the COPPS unit, I created the Move Forward Project. The opening of the office led to an initiative that addressed the cultural division between the Latino community and the police department. I was assigned to the storefront station due to my Hispanic heritage, proficiency in Spanish, prior experience with civic engagement, and first-hand knowledge of the Latino community acquired by having patrolled in the area from 2002 to 2004.

The Move Forward Project aimed to develop community trust through collaboration and team building. The 10-point program involved leadership recognition, a local newspaper, and collaboration where local Latino residents were the focus. The leadership recognition focused on the Latino community. Through town hall meetings and face-to-face interactions, the lack of trust in police officers was consistently expressed, becoming especially intense when it involved conflicts between police and youth in the barrio.

One solution was to address the language barrier with the Spanish-speaking residents. I opted to walk door-to-door to listen to the community's concerns. Bilingual

staff and community leaders also reached out to barrio residents to encourage further discussion with the author. As trust among Latinos in the community grew, residents in the local neighborhood gave Panoramic City deputies information on criminal activities.

For example, a canine handler was involved in a foot pursuit in an alley. A teenage resident of Mar Park pointed to the officer where the person had fled. The officer later shared with fellow officers how he had “never witnessed” that before. I was later able to share the information he learned with city officials, detectives, and street level officers. By including all community partners, the author found a holistic means of policing that made it more inviting for residents to come forward with ideas for solutions. Residents would come to the Panoramic City station to offer suggestions on police-community relations. This allowed some residents to be a part of a new collective policing structure. Furthermore, it may have set the parameters for what some authorities would categorize as a new culture that emerged with this new partnership.

Implementation of the Move Forward Project

A holistic method of policing began with the Move Forward Project. The project started with the recognition of good citizenship and leadership achievements with The Champion in the Community program. Each month a member of the Latino community would have lunch with the captain of the sheriff’s station and receive a certificate from the police department. They were also profiled in the local newspaper with a picture of the captain from the Panoramic City station. Additionally, the Move Forward Project identified Latino leaders to participate in the Latino Round Table to collaborate with police officials. This group worked together to address the community’s mistrust of and

excessive use of police force. It organized a simulator shooting training and facilitated agreements to continue future collaborations between the community and the police department. The Latino Roundtable members were pioneers in displaying unity between the community and the police officers by working as a team.

The efforts of Sergeant Carrillo and myself with the Move Forward Project proved successful in building rapport between residents and police officials. For example, I coordinated and staffed a team building event in 2006 called Soccer Fest, which was attended by 2,000 people. The event included a soccer match between local officers and rival high schools. The self-esteem of the student players was bolstered, as evidenced by their jubilant celebration on the field in reaction to their 11 to 1 triumph.

Additionally, twenty-five community social service agencies attended along with residents who would enjoy the games. The residents learned about the services offered by the agencies and sought both volunteer positions and employment opportunities within the community. The Move Forward Project also reached out to a local elementary school, where officers and detectives read to primarily Spanish-speaking first graders to enhance their reading skills and to promote literacy. The outreach was well received by school administrators, teachers, individual family members, and the community at large.

In December of 2007, a Christmas dinner was organized to serve about eight hundred people from the barrio, with two hundred turkeys given out as well. The donated dinners were served by officers and command staffs from the Panoramic City patrol station. I dressed as Santa Claus and gave out candy and gifts, donated from partnered local merchants, to children. In addition, the visual arts department from a local

university produced an anti-gang video. The video targeted single Latina mothers and provided information on community resources. Specifically, the video educated the young moms on behaviors in children that could be indicative of potential gang activity. Additionally, a former member of the Mara Salva Rucha (MS 13) gang was invited to the event. He spoke to Latino children at a few middle schools and appeared in the anti-gang video.

A second video targeted children between the ages of 8 and 12 and was distributed within the community. A preventative anti-gang game was also developed to target children between the ages of 6 and 8. In the game, children had opportunities to make good life choices that demonstrated good citizenship. Every month, a good citizen was recognized for his/her leadership skills as a “Champion in the Community” within the barrio area. The awarded recipient received an exemplary citizenship certificate, lunch at a local eatery, and recognition as a leader in the local newspaper.

After opening the storefront office in the spring of 2006, the community had a significant reduction in violent crimes. The national FBI violent crime index in 2007 showed a decrease of violent crime in Panoramic City by 20.9% from 2006. The following are the summary of activities within the Move Forward Project as outlined in the narrative:

Barriers to the Move Forward Project

The funding police departments receive from the Department of Homeland Security is based on increased or high percentage crime rates. When a city has a large drop in crime, it becomes difficult to receive additional funding for officers, equipment,

or training. This approach becomes counterproductive when trying to reduce disparity by deploying a higher saturation policing method with police officers in the community. It is more advantageous for the department's funding situation to have a high crime rate than a low one.

Yet in the Panoramic City Station, the drop-in crime resulted in a reduction of the department's funding, funding that is needed to continue increasing policing efforts within the community. Thus, the Move Forward Project was eliminated in November of 2008 by the captain of the Panoramic City station, even though he and other high-ranking administrators called it successful. Instead, the Panoramic City Station turned to the current traditional model of community policing, which utilizes the broken window theory (Sampson & Raudenbush, 2004), to promote crime increases to obtain funding.

The Move Forward Project employed an alternative holistic means of addressing the problem of lack of trust in law enforcement by people of color in the United States. Such holistic strategies that were implemented during the author's tenure raised Latino awareness and trust in policing in the barrio section of the city. This resulted in the largest reduction in the crime rate ever for the city.

Results

The Move Forward Project was implemented to promote positive community-police relations in wake of the trio of officer involved shootings. The results of the study to promote positive police and community relations in the Latino community were perceived to be effective for the Panoramic City Station. These included changes observed at events in the interaction of the Panoramic City police officers with its Latino

residents. For example, Soccer Fest measured participation, not trust. Yet the Panoramic City leadership benefits in its description of the event as being successful in increasing trust between police officers and Latino residents. The Latino residents of Panoramic City benefitted in seeing officers in a more engaging, human manner while the city benefitted from fewer complaints from the community against the officers.

There was no formal external evaluation of the project, either by any outside agency or academic institution. The department simply wanted the protests to end, and because the protests did end during the tenure of the project, the department considered the project to be effective. The department saw the initiative as a crime reduction program. In truth, they did not want to reduce crime, as they feared they would lose officers as a result from a drop in federal funding.

During the period of implementation, there were no officer-involved shooting incidents. The initiative resulted in the community going out and participating in the individual tenets of the project. Additionally, Latino residents were walking into the COPPS field office, addressing community concerns, and reporting local crimes. The Spanish immersion program had only one deputy that passed the final exam. The same deputy had some prior Spanish proficiency. Of the five university students, their results all came back to find that “culture” was more of a barrier than language. The most common theme was the racial divide between officers and Latinos in the Mar area.

Recommendations from the students included that the department hire Spanish speaking officers and that they institute culturally sensitive training. Per department administrators and the station captain, I received a recommendation letter, and numerous

departmental emails from high-ranking superiors praised both officers involved in the Move Forward Project. I was also nominated for the inaugural William Kolendar Award.

The Move Forward Project addressed these concerns by giving community members a sense that they had an equal footing with the police officers. From the perspective of the community, trust is not granted automatically to law enforcement, but must be earned through the actions of police officers and public officials. As the program progressed within the Latino community, there were observed changes in the attitude of the command staff at the sheriff's station. Despite the positive efforts that were uniting community residents together and rebuilding trust, there was an obvious increase in border patrol agents at the station and pushback from officers from the Panoramic City station.

Additionally, an ICE agent was assigned to assist officers in the field. Double talk by the station captain that ICE was not working in Panoramic City was given at the Latino Roundtable meetings during this period. Once again, a racial division was becoming more evident in the White race versus those who were primarily Spanish speakers

Despite the efforts of the Move Forward Project personnel, many officers nonetheless continued to demonstrate an adversarial attitude toward Latinos. This phenomenon was witnessed in the interaction of the ICE agents assigned to patrol stations with the police officers in the area. Once again, a color line was emerging where those who did not appear to be U.S. citizens were seen as "them." There was evidence of biased behavior, as White officers were more prone to call for ICE or Border Patrol

agents to determine deportation status of those who may fit the description of undocumented immigrants.

The primary achievement of the Move Forward Project is the development of a holistic model of policing that included the voice of the citizens of Panoramic City. By doing so, the project improved community-police relations and reduced police violence. The following are recommendations, developed from the Move Forward Project, on how future law enforcement agencies can improve upon this initiative:

Conclusion

Interest Convergence Theory can help explain distrust between disadvantaged Latinos residents of Panoramic City and advantaged White officers who hold a position of power reluctant to non-advantageous change. This relates to police violence in White officers with power and who will not trust their minority charges, while citizens of Latino neighborhoods will not trust the White officers who they believe to have power over them. This causes intense racial conflict, which often manifests as excessive force. This paper contributes to Critical Race Theory literature by moving beyond the White/Black binary and incorporating language, culture, and citizenship status. This was seen as the station saw the advantage of having open dialogues with the Latino community. In doing so, they benefitted from the newly relationship and allowed it to occur.

ICT can be utilized to assess the relationship between the Panoramic City deputies and Latino residents of the city by examining how a primarily White police force benefits by maintaining stratified police practices. Consistent with ICT, an in-group/out-group

racial division existed between the White power structure, including the police, and the Latino residents of Panoramic City.

The theory can be applied to the events in Panoramic City by examining whether the interests of the police and Whites aligned with those of the Latino community. The theory also suggests that the events in Panoramic City resulted in the continuation of the violent historical subjugation of Latinos by non-Latinos rather than the creation of change that Bell spoke of within ICT frameworks. The theory indicates a privileged position for White officers and a lower hierarchical rank for Latino residents of Panoramic City. The theory also has strength within the legal academy (Driver, 2011) and can apply to this paper in the discussion of “Latino interests” and “White interests.” This brings into question the role of non-White police officers and the race of the officers on the police force. ICT can be applied to describe events in Panoramic City in 2005 to understand the police response to the three officer involved shootings.

A police department aiming to end the protests and tensions toward Panoramic City and its police department initiated the Move Forward Project. The history of the high ratio of Latinos shot and killed puts into question attitudes and behaviors that have been institutionalized. Additionally, the relationship between police officers and community residents did not have a resolution of peace and harmony. Furthermore, cities with a high proportion of Latinos are correlated with increased poverty and with different social class status.

Through analytical study, an examination of the Move Forward Project, which revolved around a series of officer involved shootings, was retroactively applied. The

mutual perceptions of mistrust and threat held by law enforcement agents and people of color in barrio neighborhoods created group dynamics that reinforced the in-group solidarity and intergroup conflicts that would not occur in more affluent areas (Holmes & Smith, 2012). This perception took place not only in the city of the three officer-involved shootings, but in the discussions behind closed doors by the officers and community members who aligned themselves in solidarity for a more humane solution.

Examination of the period before the trio of shootings, and the aftermath that followed for Latino residents, reveals that White officers appeared to want to maintain a free reign to the option of force for Latino residents. The officers that were assigned to the Panoramic City station were reluctant to change and many challenged the tenets of the Move Forward Project. Interest Convergence Theory has examined the economic and political power differences and advantages, between those that are White and those that are Latinos in society with a power struggle that is based on control of economic resources.

Institutional inertia is a powerful force preventing change within police agencies, as police departments are resistant to changing discriminatory practices. Much of the powerful changes that I witnessed were undermined by officers who were reluctant to change and department heads who wished to maintain past practices despite the harm these outdated methods caused. These police practices were designed in an era when minorities constituted a small percentage of the population. As demographics change and the Latino population rises, these biased police practices become more evident, as in the case in Panoramic City.

While this paper focused on the success/not successful initiative in the Move Forward Project, the issue of police accountability was constantly in question by the Latino community. It was quite common to hear at Spanish-speaking PTA meetings that there was no reason the police were there for them. Attitudes reflect reality; the Move Forward Project never changed the reality of police brutality. The questionable behavior of the officers involved in these shootings tears down the fabric of trust. It was challenging for social activists from Panoramic City and neighboring areas to have leaders within the community navigate through the deep-rooted structures of policing culture.

Furthermore, the language barriers created divisions between relationships that were crucial in devising a system that met the needs of the community and of the officers to maintain law and order. Even more so, those that see this racialized group as the “other” or an enemy had to learn a more humanistic and integrated approach when working with people of different cultures and languages. The examination of an alternative policing method that studies hiring practices, academy instruction, police attitudes, and behaviors could be better examined through social identity theories of individual perceptions within policing structures.

A humanistic and integrated approach could be designed as a method of policing to solve conflicts with Latinos and other minority groups. An approach that focused on human potential and achievement and not of social disorder. This methodology would embrace face-to-face interactions, develop a community forum of leaders to solve

problems, conduct education outreach, and reward positive behaviors that contribute toward community collaboration and harmony.

This approach would promote trust, peace, unity, and compassion within communities with larger proportions of people of color. It would promote police authorities working with these communities as one team with a common goal—to create trust by incorporating all the components listed above. Additionally, a holistic model of policing could be further examined to improve trust of police by Latinos and lower the use of excessive and lethal force by police.

The Move Forward Project holistically addressed the needs of the Latino community by recognizing that they were part of the solution in their policing and not part of the problem. The holistic model would include residents of good standing being included within the structure of its police departments. The model would be reflective of the demographics of the city and would move away from aggressive police tactics.

I learned through retrospective research that analysis of data from the past can shed light on current events. The advantage of this type of research is the ability to revisit past events and recreate them through analysis by those who had a connection. This type of research cannot be duplicated unless an actor from that period existed to direct and connect the dots per say with access to the information (Cox, 2007). By creating timelines and managing the supporting data, it was easier to reconstruct the events and climate surrounding the trio of shootings in 2005 and the subsequent implementation of the Move Forward Project. The pitfall is that, due to the nature of the events, I had no access to the actual police reports in the trio of shootings, nor was I able to speak directly

to the officers involved. It was also difficult to obtain interviews that could have expedited this study.

It was recognized as a site for federal funding, the Weed and Seed Program, based on Panoramic City having a higher crime rate when compared to neighboring cities. Funding to police agencies could be further examined to look for cities that do not receive federal monies that are tied to crime rates. By maintaining stratified police practices in ethnic communities, funding is constant and maintained. This is a tragic status quo with a cost of racial division. Further evaluation is needed on the criteria that determines how police departments are funded.

In review of the aftermath of the Move Forward Project, the Mar Park COPPS Unit become more of a gang apprehension unit. Sergeant Carrillo and I never returned to the area as assigned officers. No other trio of officer-involved shootings occurred after the project ceased in Panoramic City, nor in any other law enforcement agencies in the area. No future direction of community-police relations was ever discussed for the area examined. The Move Forward Project can thus be concluded to have been a short-term fix bent on improving community-police relations, but not a long-term solution.

In conclusion, more literature and scholarship are needed on the examination of trust-building community-police initiatives within Latino communities. While this chapter has a narrower focus of Latinos, the broader national discussion of police violence has focused on African Americans. An understanding of police initiatives that target trust within Latino communities can contribute to national conversations on police violence in the United States. Interest Convergence Theory can be used to attain a

broader goal of understanding police violence that benefits Whites and changes that continue to marginalize ethnic communities.

As I left Panoramic City in 2008, I sensed things would go back to the station environment prior to the 2005 shootings. Little attention was paid to the Move Forward Project after Leo left the station in 2007. A new sergeant came in and I was advised I was moving towards gangs. I felt that with the improved trust of Latinos to our station that it was a slap in the face to stay arrest those that look like me to benefit the station.

I saw myself brown before blue and had a strong identity for my Latino culture and heritage. I had this duo consciousness that I couldn't explain and understand. I wanted to be the best police officer I could be, but the department was not allowing me to. They saw the benefit in me in being Latino, but as the protests subsided, I was no longer needed. That's how Leo shared with me his feelings when being forced transferred to the Encinitas Station. We knew the police history of Latinos here and for us it was hearing profanity directed towards our people in front of us. It was if some officers ignored our ethnic background. Both Leo and I knew there was a story here to be told but didn't know who to tell it to. It wasn't until 2011 when I officially retired from the department that I wanted to academically learn the science behind the individual relationships of the officers to people who lived in the community. I wanted to understand a performance that appears to take place when officers are in the community and amongst ourselves. How we present ourselves to each other is quite different from how we present ourselves when in uniform.

I had the opportunity in 2011 as I returned to pursue my degree and returned to CSU San Marcos. It was there that I wrote a paper in a criminology class that outlined the trio of shootings and how I felt as an officer on the inside. I was moved by me writing that I knew I wanted to go beyond a B.A. to earn a possible PhD. I was pulled by Professor Maya Prince who at the time was chair of the Sociology Department at CSU San Marcos. She told me she would be reading my books one day. I was taken back by her remarks. It was Professor Alicia Gonzales that took me under her wing and guided me with PhD applications around the country. It was a reuniting with Professor Richard Serpe at a Pacific Sociological Association conference in San Diego that confirmed for me I was a junior sociologist. Collectively these three professors gave me a support path that has guided me to address my duo conscious thoughts and explain police officer behavior as I saw as a performance.

Chapter 6: The Art of the Performance

It is challenging to write about theoretical concepts in an accessible way for the non-scientific reader, even more so when adding discussions of Critical Race Theory (CRT), which is banned in seven states (Feingold, 2021). Currently, many communities of color are challenging the justifications for what appears to be an increase in questionable use of lethal force by U.S. police (Jones, 2021). The 2020 incident involving George Floyd became a global social movement addressing Black lives. Yet, less attention is paid to lethal police events involving Latinos, which have steadily increased over recent years (Durán & Campos, 2021; Mirandé, 1994 and 2020, Mufioz et al., 1998, Munoz, 2000). Utilizing a sociological lens, I use this area of scholarship to understand how these violent events occur.

During my PhD studies, I learned of numerous theories and concepts to understand phenomena, some of which I will outline in this paper. But as I developed my research on identity in policing, one approach stood out to me: Erving Goffman's dramaturgical model, a theatrical metaphor for the understanding of the self (Goffman, 1997). I found it straightforward to associate the dramaturgical model to policing as a micro sociological account in the United States. The model can be applied to police officer identity and the roles they see of themselves in relation to others within police structures (O'Brien, 2016).

Goffman's model was influenced by literary theorist Kenneth Burke's (1968) idea of dramatism, where he saw life as being real within a theatrical performance. For Goffman (1973), he saw a theatrical performance as an extension of the "self," applying

dramaturgy as a metaphor. Some theorists have studied violence within policing by looking at different segments of policing (Ratliff, 2011), such as protests, while others have examined racial domination to explain violence in policing (Rosino, 2017). Others still have examined the use of police cameras in police performance (Campbell & Valera, 2020) and stereotyped language that impacts Black communities to make inferences about policing violence (Williams & Clarke, 2019). Language is codified, and as an officer, I was always watchful on interactions between officer and police contact. This led to my interest in how language is associated with social experience (Tuffin & Puddephatt, 2020).

Yet, there is a gap in literature that addresses police shootings within the Latina/o community in the United States (Durán, 2019). I am interested in finding a broader conceptual framework that can address the Latino community and people in general. In the examination of dramaturgy, I have found that my lived experiences as an officer can potentially offer a unique insight into this concept. To explore my ideas on Goffman, I first utilize symbolic interaction and the three areas of social behavior, the self, and society. It is through a multidisciplinary approach to these areas that I draw a bridge to other theories and concepts. By adding frameworks of sociological practice, legal studies, psychology, history, gender studies, and other scholarly disciplines, I aim to make sense of dramaturgy within the self-performance that occurs as police officers interact with the social world they inhabit.

I begin with the work of sociologists George Mead and Hubert Blumer and their work within symbolic interaction. It is through this theory that I attempt to explain how

police officer interaction within certain racial and ethnic communities can result in violence. I then go into Erving Goffman's Dramaturgy to speak of a performance police officers act out to an audience. Collectively, these theorists take me through a gauntlet of theories to make sense of a social world for those in policing.

George Herbert Mead

George Herbert Mead was a professor whose legacy was carried through his students, who published his lecture notes. Mead understood the world in a naturalistic manner. Basically, trying to argue for what's real. He saw organisms as having real experiences. Every organism has built in its capacity the ability to respond to its environment (Blumer, 1966). As you move up the phenolic system different organisms have different capacities to respond to its environment.

Mead was a behaviorist who was interested in organism response within the natural sciences. For example, as with Pavlov's dogs he would have found interest in its feeding and the stimulus responses for the dogs. The bell ringing to activate a dog's senses that bring it to salivate thinking it was about to eat a meal. Mead would associate this behavior as conditioning (Garrison, 1998).

Human beings have a higher capacity for response to stimuli to manage their own survival. The only thing real for the organism is the ability to respond in its naturalistic environment. Mead, as a social behaviorist, understood his own experience and the meaning human beings have in giving a perspective each has to the perceived perspective of the other to operate with significant symbols and language (Mead, 1922).

Mead saw the Social Act to involve relationships of individuals to other individuals to the self, others, and groups within society as a whole. He saw this as Mind, Self, and Society (Mead, 1934). He looked at gestures such as a dog barking to see if it stimulates the animal to respond to an immediate response biologically. When a dog walks behind another for sex it gives meaning for the dog. But a human male can't walk behind a woman with the same meaning. For human beings they look at the interpretation to the meanings of the shared response (Mead, 1925). If you tell a child "Come home" and he/she doesn't know the meaning it will not respond to the command. A small baby has to learn how to walk and talk as a human being.

Mead used *play* as a stage within child development, *game* to understand the rules children follow, and *rules* to understand the consequences of following the game. Early games that they learn this through are hide and seek and board games. If they don't know the rules they can't play, nor proceed. If they are able to play, they must socially interact with others (Mead, 1999). They learn what is real and, in time, through experience see how others see them. This is important to examine policing in the authenticity to the role for police officers.

What is real within police practice in Dramaturgy is the behavior and social interaction. The meanings and interpretations differ by community. As a police officer, I can communicate police practices using common terms that are shared. For example, a police officer may call a male "Joe Citizen," which equates to someone less likely to be stopped or arrested. Another term I heard as an officer was NHI, which means "no human involved." It's used to describe an illegal immigrant.

Embedded within Mead's pedagogy was a world of knowledge that can aid in the understanding of police behavior. To make sense of theories and concepts that are discussed later, it is necessary to start with Mead's understanding of the social world within *social behaviorism*, a key term in the understanding of Mead's theories (Nickerson, 2021). Humans have attributes that arise from life processes of adaptation and adjustment. Individuals adjust to ongoing patterns that are placed in society through specific behavioral repertoires (Sandrelli, 2019). This adjustment can be either positive or negative, which is reflective of a reinforcement to societal norms. For police officers, this can be how they see themselves within a family structure where there is constant adaptation and adjustment to themselves, society, and other officer interactions. As officers evolve, there is a process through which mistakes are made and they pass through key life stages. For Mead, this would be a trial-error process for which growth is made (Mead, 1932).

Mead used the term *gestures and minds* to describe an interaction of thoughts through communications. He used the term to describe within the social act a stimulus to other forms involved in the same act. It is a triadic process of interaction that takes place between actors and carries three elements that are met through this matrix of response, which also carries significant symbols (Mead, 1934).

- 1) A gesture is made and emitted by someone
- 2) A response is given off from someone else
- 3) An adjustment is made to the response by the person that had made the initial gesture.

Mead saw the mind as being dependent on how the self is constructed through the *genesis of self*. Drawing from the earliest stages of child development, Mead considered how the mind of an infant evolves while placing emphasis on the role of interaction (Mead, 1934). The mind centers around a developmental process by which the self becomes more stable and unified. The self falls as an object in society and implodes outward as verbal and nonverbal language. We interpret and understand others' reactions toward us through what Cooley called the "looking glass self" now generally referred to as "self-reflected appraisals (Cooley, 1922)." Others react to us through a "looking-glass self" (p. 184). Self-reflected appraisals inform how we see our behavior in terms of self-esteem and self-efficacy.

The self can be a "transitory object" in a particular environmental situation or permanent in a mindset of *this is how I am*. It is constantly evolving, and a contractionary social environment will affect the development of the complete self, causing conflict with societal norms when the "me" gets expressed in how others see us. It is the "I" that omits an expressed behavior and the "me" that is witnessed and interpreted by others. Through the "me," repercussions are accessed, and behavior adaptation can occur through the reactions of others, which leads to spontaneous self-control (Mead, 1934). In the case of the murder of George Floyd, the officers involved failed to adjust to the "I" and allowed the "me" to disregard witnesses as they told Chauvin to stop in the events surrounding Floyd's death.

For Mead, symbolic interaction flows through behavioral capacities in the mind and self. This interwovenness occurs within the construction of his *concept of society* in

how the self-integrates in interactions with others in specific situations and roles. The term can be used to understand the “body of institutions” (Frank, 1991). This allows for patterns in society to provide a stable self in our allowance in how others see us. It is a framework that is placed onto them by stabilized relationships and maintained by taking an interactive role with other officers. This leads to influence through social differentiation, where the more heterogeneous a society becomes, the more difficult it is to find a stable self to regulate.

Police officers tend to hang out with those that think, look, and act similar to them. Ingroups are created based on similar ideologies of policing. Officers of color can be seen as the “other,” where interaction is an unbalanced outcome of *us and them*. It could be a Marxist stratification of class barriers that segregates dissimilar attitudes and symbols. This othering alienates the officers of color within the structure and passed to communal members (Mirande, 2013).

Societies are communities with set values, rituals, and customs. White police officers who work in cities of color but who belong to an outside city lack an understanding of these ways to perform. To be successful, officers have to carry an understanding of the various cultures within the communities they serve. They need to be informed by current events and push away with the generalized other in norms, beliefs, and other systems of symbols.

This becomes critical to understanding how an actor's performance unfolds through social behaviorism via adaptation and adjustment. When an officer, fails to listen conflict can arise. This can cause the interaction to be non-authentic for the officer and

mistrust in the interaction. Interpretation of signs, symbols, and gestures can inform the officer to adjust to the interaction. The interaction is not just language, but use of body language. Mead's theory on human motivation is founded on his conceptualization of the interaction between mind, self, and society. His desire was to understand how human action is initiated and given direction, with the basic unit of action being termed an *act*.

The behavior of a police officer can be presented as a series of non-isolated acts. Mead's act was broken down to four key areas:

- (a) *impulse*, a state of disequilibrium between an individual and environment.
- (b) *the stage of perception*, a stimulus arousal to a theory about society that can cause a response.
- (c) *the stage of manipulation*, the emission of behaviors towards the environment that can cause covert acts of *blockage* before it becomes overt.
- (d) *the stage of consummation* is the ending of the equilibrium of an act between an individual and environment.

This stage becomes circular in behavior (I), feedback (me), and readjustment of behavior until an impulse is removed. The process is intended to restore equilibrium to the environment. These stages may not lead to the final consummation stage, but combined, is when thinking occurs and manipulation becomes covert.

The impulse stage for an officer is between the self, others, and society. An example would be traffic stops where the letter and spirit of the law are applied. People

of color have more occurrences of getting a ticket, being arrested, and going to jail by White officers. A perception of maintaining a racialized order could be generationally examined from the start of Jim Crow to today, with the higher rate of African Americans being shot by officers.

In policing, the manipulation stage could be reflected within calls for service where an expected outcome of equilibrium is expected. When officers arrive on the scene, they have been trained to find resolve and leave the area safely. The officer, partner, and citizen, in that order, carry a hierarchical sense of how one gets to a particular outcome. The partner outweighs any outsider who has not been trained or had constant lived experience in this area. Through the use of authority, the officer has power over the relationship between the self and society, and to end the act. By combining these four stages to understand police behavior, emphasis is placed on the performance of the actor/officer.

Herbert Blumer

Studying under Mead at the University of Chicago, Blumer wanted us to understand how we make sense of the world around us. As we go about our day, we see and hear from people, and the information becomes subjectively analyzed. Behavior is determined according to the meaning that is given. Blumer advanced Mead's work in social analysis to distill *symbolic interaction* to three main points: (a) humans act towards things (including other individuals) based on the meanings they have for them (Snow, 2001); (b) meaning arises out of the social interactions one has with one's fellows (Mann, 2008); and (c) meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process a

person uses in dealing with the things they encounter (Borgatta & Edgors, 2000; Larson, 1986; Snow, 2001).

Blumer was interested in the minds of the actors as they interpreted their actions. Meanings are subjective and should never be overshadowed by interpretation. Nor deemphasize the value of human action towards societal rules and norms. For actors, meanings are interpretive and guide future action. The internal consciousness determines the meanings, including of objects.

The importance of Blumer is in his understanding of meanings and the interaction between individuals. He advanced Mead in the use of what was around us that could be interpreted with meaning. With a microfocus towards the exchange between individuals, he saw the individual actor as having the ability to control their behavior-based objects and symbols that were placed in front of them. In doing so, situational meaning could be placed to an object and the consciousness could decide how to respond (Larson, 1986).

My early experiences out on my own on police patrol in a marked patrol car were very eventful. I practiced the various means of interacting with the public to gather information about my beat. When in uniform, it was easier to ask questions because of the authority the uniform represented. When initiating a traffic stop in a marked patrol car, I used language that was simple and authentic. But it did not result in getting the answers or responses that I sought based on my police training. Depending on my word use, I would get a certain response that could be interpreted in many ways due to gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, and other factors. Yet I used simple language to make it easier for the person(s) with whom I had primary contact. I did so to effect an

arrest if needed and maximize cover before and during the use of force. I used the following three areas to guide my performance as an officer: (a) strong moral identity, (b) self-management skills, and (c) respect for human life.

Strong moral identity dealt with resilience and the ability to overcome obstacles as they were presented. Many of my colleagues were from a military background and it was normal to hear *God* and *country* in the same sentence. I found it important to gauge everyone from a moral compass of what was authentic in my performance. Some psychologists have studied spirituality in policing to explore the role of a spiritual framework in buffering toxic experiences that police officers encounter in the course of their duty (Charles et al., 2014). *Self-management skills* are the mechanisms to carry out a performance, as a critique of your performance is constant being done by others. You are judged by your writing skills, time management, and the engagement of your performance to police. *Respect for human life* uses the least restrictive solutions, when possible, to accomplish the police mission. Placing a sociological imagination (Mills, 2000) foothold on seeing myself in the shoes of another. This sociological means of looking at other internal viewpoints makes for understanding on how others have their lived experiences. This gave me an opportunity to go outside the script and apply my lived experiences in the interactions I presented to others.

For me, if I had the probable cause for a stop, I would work my way towards making an arrest. I felt it was the role I was fulfilling as a good officer for the protection of the public. It fulfilled a prototype of officer that I was instructed would keep me alive and serve the public's good. I saw it as part of a social order that identified good people

and bad people. My academy training had more of a focus on dealing with bad people and harmful behavior. Those who would cause harm to good members of society needed to be removed from the streets. In doing so, my early training gave me a hyper awareness of my surroundings when in uniform. Such training gives a sense that the world is always watching you.

Goffman's dramaturgy made me realize that I was a performer on a stage. This performance can go in and out from performer to audience. In order to understand this performance, he uses eight concepts. He went from trying to make sense of the self to include an audience to perform to.

All the World's a Stage

This tenant concerns contemporary staging practices, with the knowledge of composition and storytelling principles. This theme addresses how theatrical strategies are employed to manage the attention of the audience; how these strategies create meaning and experience; and how theatre, dance, and performance relate to the "world at large" (Nibbelink & Merx, 2021, p. 6). The stage is presented as the actor prepares for the performance. Through the use of props, a script, and acting skill, the actor takes the stage.

The Performance

This theme is about the idea of a theatrical performance rooted in tradition. The performance is based on three levels: (a) the actor who is an author of the performance and who represents the director's thought; (b) the director who oversees the actor and controls the narrative script; and (c) the audience who is watching a performance

(Cozma, 2022). By combining the three levels, I describe a police performance utilizing Goffman's dramaturgical model.

Definition of the Situation

The definition of the situation is accomplished by identifying and classifying the topic of the interaction, the context (physical, symbolic, emotional, etc.), the people in the interaction, and the structure of the interaction in terms of how all the people are identified in relation to one another (Grossen, 2010)

Expressions and Impressions

Goffman theorized a form of self-identity that involves a performance intended to produce an impression to an audience (Goffman, 1973). In an incarceration environment this impression is practiced daily. Correctional officers use daily routines in the performance of their job. This role is used to let the inmates know who is in charge. When your outnumbered in some cases 100 to 1 this impression has been strongly presented in order to have the intended outcome of not being injured.

Accounts: Excuses, & Justifications

Accounts are classified as excuses and justifications, each with its own subtype. They are statements that people use to explain a behavior. Excuses are attempts to lesson responsibility. Justifications and excuses are socially accepted language which may create a neutralizing effect for an act yet provides a positive outcome (Scott & Lyman, 1968).

Self-Enhancement and Ingratiation

Authentic self-enhancement aims to present actual positive attributes such as achievements and competencies, whereas exaggerated self-enhancement aims to enhance others' perceptions of oneself on an unjustifiable basis (Kim et al., 2022). It is only within the dramaturgical model of *the performance* and three areas within *impression management* that I wish to further expand how it can be applied to police behavior. To share my understanding of policing, I offer a differential social structural context in the usage of theater companies. These companies demonstrate a means of seeing how officers perform with the community that is presented as the audience. When Goffman spoke about the self, he focused on the everyday life of people (Goffman, 1973). He gave understanding to their behavior, how they are perceived by others, and the context in which the interaction is taking place. It is through this interaction description that I attempt to understand dramaturgy from a symbolic interactionist perspective and how the self is presented. Police departments thus can be examined by performance.

Front Stage

Paraphrasing actress Helen Mirren, "what's one of the most difficult things to do as an actor is to walk up to a scene. Front stage includes interactions in public spaces between an actor and an audience. Backstage interactions are in protected spaces, which allow models to be deconstructed (Mair & Hehenberger, 2014).

As an officer, I responded to various leadership area styles. You always have to be aware of who is watching and is supportive should a use of force occur. You could have a knuckle dragger supervisor who was always willing to advance use of force and will

cover your back if excessive force occurs. This is a style that makes it more challenging to patrol by yourself. A touchy-feely officer that was more involved in the community and not actively trying to make arrests. These are officers that are more freely able to walk in the community.

I always had a sense of self, so when an order was given, I had the choice of either questioning it or responding in what I felt was a holistic manner. Goffman used a dramaturgical approach in understanding the self through roles (Goffman, 1973). Instructions can be given to an officer who may have some hesitancy in following. But an order is an instruction that must be obeyed.

One of my earliest experiences as a trainee recruit involved a Field Training Officer (FTO) while in phase training. I responded to a call for service for a man on the second floor of a hotel. As I was exiting my patrol car, I was instructed by my FTO to take out my less lethal shotgun and take the man down from the upper level. He was hanging near the ledge, and I had a substitute FTO I had never worked with before. I felt that if I had taken him down in the manner, I was being instructed by the FTO, I was risking injury or death to the drunken subject. Instead, I went up to the second floor and grabbed him by the hair and pulled him back where he was immediately handcuffed. I then brought the man up to the patrol car, where I was met by an angry FTO. He asked me why I did not comply with his instructions. I knew it was a test, and the wrong answer would possibly get me disqualified from patrol. I told the FTO that I was looking out for him. Had I used less lethal, and the drunkard man could fallen forward. He could had broken his neck on the landing, and then an internal investigation would put the FTO's

instructions for me in question. Instead, I looked out for the FTO, and the man was in the back of the patrol car without incident.

In understanding the above event, I had an idealized script based on what I knew was the right thing to do. The FTO was on a different script. Knowing the overrepresentation of Latinos in the station made me wonder if his behavior was institutionalized. My identity as a Latino conflicted with the FTO, but the result of the subject not dying at my hands placed him in a safe position with our command staff.

When a recruit goes against a FTO's instructions, it usually means they are not returning to that place for patrol. Not knowing how the director (the station captain) would have responded meant that my performance of going off the FTO's script was never judged. The FTO walked away, and the matter was never brought up again. Going against his initial order placed me as being defiant, and possibly someone who could not be trusted to commit an instruction that I felt was unjust. Panoramic City had the highest rate of officer involved shootings for the county. This is an example of how a moral identity (personal identity) overrode the script. Your backstage self becomes frontstage, even though you knew your behavior would be seen as not being with the team.

In this example, the order was unjust and unnecessary. I saw it as being tested by someone who had little regard for the life of a Latino subject in his late 50's. It is rare for an officer to disobey an order, even when it seems unjust. Starting in the hiring process, we are programmed to follow orders. Such was the case in the recent mass shooting in Uvalde, Texas, where 21 victims were shot (Kellner, 2022). We now know that the chief of police thought he had a barricaded subject, therefore instructing officers not to enter

the school. For at least 30 minutes his orders were obeyed until a group of federal officers decided to enter the building in search of what we know was an active shooter. But if you have your own foundation to create a mission identity that's accountable, you can draw from your conscience and do what you recognize to be right.

In the case of Uvalde, federal officers entered suspecting they had an active shooter. This is an example of different theatre companies operating. The local officers known to the chief stood by outside the school and waited for additional orders. It was outside officers who took charge and entered the school after nearly 1 hour of no action taken by the local police chief and his officers.

I can remember a few times that I had a superior give an order that I felt was unjust. On each occasion, the order came from someone who had created an identity of being a knuckle dragger, or tough. It is not an easy task to strengthen one's self-reflective practices. Call it meditation or prayer, but I found myself a better officer when I tried to act from a spiritual place, which I define as an inner energy that produces a healing sense through understanding of oneself.

As we are now in a period of police reform, questionable use of force practices is under scrutiny. The military is another example of a culture with policies to follow orders that may impede in the understanding of the self (Chemers, 2000). In the military, there are policies about following orders that go against your moral fiber, where following orders is not a defense to heinous acts. An example is the Vietnam War My Lai Massacre of 1968, when U.S. soldiers were instructed to murder over 500 innocent Vietnamese

civilians. Within the instructions to murder the victims, soldiers took it upon themselves to rape women from the group, including young children (Schedler, 1998)

Self-esteem has three dimensions: self-worth, self-efficacy, and authenticity. This is an important part of identity verification, especially in the policing frame. It is the initial police contact that impacts the outcome. Officers are trained to overcome and win. A verification is in order from training to have the advantage. For example, when on a traffic stop, a driver may question the officer, “why was I stopped?” For the officer, it can be that the driver is questioning the context and legality of the traffic stop. This causes a break in the performance to draw attention on the verification of the officer’s character and decision-making process.

When an actor takes center stage, it is imperative that the *impression* of the performance is believable for the audience. The actor’s desire for a possession of attributes is accepted and understood by those watching the performance. Implicit consequences take place for the actor should the performance be deemed not believable. For an officer this could mean that they could be injured or worse. The officer may act and talk on script—this is the front stage (Goffman, 1973).

Theater Companies

I describe theater companies as police departments. They can be federal, state, local, tribal, and school police. As theater companies range in size from small to large so do police departments. Some theater companies have significant backgrounds and are historic. The most visible agency would be the Federal Bureau Investigations (FBI). They handle interstate crimes, bank robberies, and can be seen as the top rung. They can come

with status that can be compared to noteworthy theater companies. As a federal agency, there is a higher price tag to watch the performance—there is more at stake. A performance to see Hamilton could be thousands for a ticket, when compared to a small theater performance which could be a few dollars.

The comparison from federal agencies having a higher price is due to the notoriety they receive on national events such as the Boston Marathon Bombing and Waco Siege of 1993. Other agencies include, the Department of Justice (DOJ), U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). In the United States, we have 65 federal agencies and 27 inspector general's offices. As the FBI is the highest level of policing in the United States, a performance within a dramaturgical framework could be compared to the stage of the Lincoln Center of Performing Arts. The FBI provides instruction and leadership training on police management to every police department in the country using the most contemporary training. Instruction is taught at the highest level by professionals that are experts in their respective fields, similar to theater companies presenting performances using the most experienced or renowned "actors." To be part of the cast, you must be high performing.

At the state and local level of policing would be the compassion to local theater companies. The difference within the performance is a lower budget, less props, and actors with less training. The distinction between federal, state, and local is important, because in this interaction, it is the local that you experience the most. These are police contacts with much more actors compared to those from federal agencies. Local theater

companies develop actors that will be needed to fill roles in their productions. FBI agencies hire from local police departments.

Director

The director oversees the performance. This can be a County Sheriff, Chief of Police, or Police Commissioner. Power and status flow from top to bottom, and actors who wish to become a director must follow the script and do as instructed. If you violate a *director's cue*, you get sanctioned. When director rules are disobeyed, sanctions can occur that involve an internal review process of investigations, such as with the internal affairs unit. Usually, if the officer went off script, it would result in lowered evaluations and unwanted assignments. Officers who appear to be non-compliant with directors are ostracized. This socialization process could be construed as one that becomes an ingroup/outgroup situation for the officer who fails to perform to the script.

In several current events involving an officer-involved shooting, there have been a few Black police chiefs who are horrified to be in their position. Clearly, they were not the director influencing the actor—something else was at work. The script had been altered by police culture. Some performances can be questioned by these police administrators as being non-supportive of the director. Police cultures and racialized practices are in question with many police departments across the U.S. Historically, policing has been a violent path towards people of color (Billies, 2016).

So, what happens when a director breaks from the ranks in support of their community. Such was the case of Captain Levi Gholson with the Chesterfield County Sheriff's Office on June 19, 2020). This was an event that involved BLM and local police

officers from the Chesterfield County Sheriff's office. The captain is of African American decent and was assigned to the protest wearing his uniform. As the protest was taking place, Captain Gholson entered with the protesters with his hands raised in support of BLM.

In press photos you clearly see him walking with protests signs around him in support of BLM. What you don't see are other officers in uniform near him as he's walking. Many reasons could arise but based on my experience I equate it to three possibilities. First, the officers may not be aligned with the captain's identity or racial ideology. Second, they could have racialized viewpoints on BLM and carry an othering of the protestors. Finally, they are uncomfortable in this environment of vulnerably exposing themselves to the public. This practice of officers walking side by side with protestors was unprecedentedly increasingly taking place at the height of the BLM protests around the country. In entering the protest, the captain made it difficult for those lowered rank to use force and sent a clear message that he was aligned with this community.

These directors carry a public performance that is consistently challenged by the audience. For example, with the handling of use of force during the Black Lives Matter protests, some directors aligned themselves with community endorsement of the movement, which determined how use of force was applied or not. Such as Captain Gholson. Yet, unsanctioned internal groups add to the local interpretation of local policing and domestic terrorism.

For example, in April of 2014. Cliven Bundy took on federal law enforcement in Nevada. A cattle rancher with a 21-year dispute with the Bureau of Land Management,

Bundy led an armed standoff against the government (Harris, 2019). As Bundy was grazing his cattle on federal land but not paying for grazing fees, the government levied a million dollar fine against him and confiscated his cattle. Bundy began a siege of the lands while parading an American flag and a heavy display of guns. He was allowed to protest over the years with little to no force by law enforcement. Where a director had the opportunity to stop Bundy from displaying weapons against possible use towards law enforcement, they allowed him to openly carry.

Directors align themselves with other theater companies (police and government agencies) to improve on the performance. Goffman examined institutions such as mental hospitals and the military, discussing the use of laws and codes of justice as legitimate authority (Goffman, 1973). Policing is influenced by military practice and these codes are carried over to how local law enforcement operate. Currently, we see more police officers aligning with the same militias they are surveilling (Dinnen, 2021).

Actor

Actors are people who perform. It can be to an audience or without. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, they describe acting as “performing art in which movement, gesture, and intonation are used to realize a fictional character for the stage, for motion pictures, or for television. Acting is generally agreed to be a matter less of mimicry, exhibitionism, or imitation than of the ability to react to imaginary stimuli” (Chaillet, 2022).

Gives are expressed through verbal symbols that pave way for a communication network for information that gives meaning to such symbols. The impression

management of a performance is controlled through signals one either directly or consciously gives. *Gives off* is an unconscious or indirect action that ties to the performance of the actor to the audience. This can be a non-verbal cue that substantiates what we communicate. Such action can draw a sympathy response in miscommunication that is put out and could involve several emotions, such as mistrust and a sense of deceit. An inference journey occurs that leads a path for controlling the behavior of others. This creates a roadmap for a role sought out in response for the *actor*.

In the context of actor and director, an example of questioning the director's orders might be seen in the recent event involving Alec Baldwin. The actor was on the set handling a gun and ended up shooting and killing someone on the set. One might argue that he was just an actor, that the director or someone else in charge was responsible for making sure the gun was safe. However, no matter what the director told him to do, if he comes from a sense of right and wrong, he might have asked if the gun was loaded and if it is real to make sure he would not harm someone.

With police officers, it may not be the actual director but a perceived director who is telling the officer what to do and what it means to be a police officer, the man in charge, to dominate. This role of masculinity can be awkward for some and accepting for others. Situational events can be challenging when the rules that lie within policy and procedure are not followed. This is mixed with a perceived sense of danger and can confuse the rules, which could change the performance. This perceived director could be from someone in management who collaborates with the director. In the Alec Baldwin example above, the acceptable practice was that the gun had been properly prepared for

the scene, that is, with no live ammunition. It then creates subjective orders by the director that prompts second-guessing of the crew.

This self-reflected appraisal is part of the verification process in how the officer thinks the director evaluates them. It's like a bowl of spaghetti with different strands of influence, all mixed up, directing us to act in a certain way. Some of the strands may be paradoxical. The societal values are mixed with ideas of manhood, of being in charge, thus giving direction to the action. It is important to train officers to have a strong identity and self-management skills. The actions of the officer can each take a different strand with a different outcome. If the officer (actor) chooses the strand that has a strong internal moral compass, he will ensure that the gun's chamber is empty to not cause harm, rather than surrendering to the director. He will try something other than lethal force when lethal force is not necessary.

Script

Using Goffman's dramaturgy, I recognize aspects within police identity that could explain police officer behavior. When an officer is presented a script early on, they prepare an identity for performance. This identity becomes a role and a group identity. As an actor prepares for the stage by rehearsing their lines, the performance is founded by the actors' lived experiences. The actor takes from what was seen in the past to understand the script and tailor the behavior needed to carry out the lines.

Within communication, there are two types in *expressions given* and *expressions given off*. The first, expressions given, is verbal, direct, learned, and authoritarian. In police practice, this can be seen as the letter of the law, where one goes by what the

statute says. The second, expressions given off, is theatrical, non-verbal, and unrehearsed. It can be seen as a non-letter of the law, where the desired action is seen as leaning towards the contacted person of the officer. In some policing spaces, this may be seen as a weakness, going against the grain of the learned script.

A role could be altered with a removal of excessive violence from the script. For example, a script might include the line, “kicking ass and taking no names.” It’s a metaphor and always makes me think of a John Wayne in a western movie. An aggressive performance is defined in the academy as a movement upward in respect from your peers. When in the police academy the prototype of a good officer was one who could defend and fight well when needed. It’s a military with a mindset of I will get through this, end up on top, and survive to fight another day.

Audience

A ticket is needed to watch the play, and the audience in some cases is allowed to judge the performance. This is done with theater companies, where actors are more likely to be judged for their performance. Backstage accompaniment is done primarily with supporting actors. The art of the performance lies in the review by the audience, other cast members, and theatre critics.

In policing when you graduate from the police academy, you’re not able to decide where you’re going. It’s only when you’re off your probation period that you have more freedom in your movement. The police academy compares to actors practicing for a performance, which in time will be in front of an audience that is the general public. If a

training instructor feels that the police recruit cannot perform in front of an audience, they are disqualified and remove from the academy.

Performance

Local law enforcement agencies are influenced by the leadership and administration of both law enforcement and non-law enforcement. For example, the city manager is not law enforcement, but is involved in the gathering of resources and budget for a department. In doing so, the city manager creates an oversight role that can be compared to the producer of a theater production. The chief or sheriff of a law enforcement department is responsible for the overall operations of the department, akin to the director of a theater production. The final administrative decisions rest with their role, and officer performances are in aligned with their point of view. They pride themselves in display of their history performance through use of uniforms with medals and the number of strips one carries on a sleeve. Each stripe carries 5 years, and the uniform expresses an identity that sits at the top of the hierarchy by outlasting others. Police departments are constantly examining performances. When a performance is questionable and unworthy it can go to an internal review process through an internal affairs unit.

Performances can be solo or with a group of other actors. An example is the August 30, 2020, protest in Oregon, where over 700 people were arrested. Protests for and against BLM roam the streets of Lane County. Many police officers were present due to the anticipated high potential for violence with both groups coming together. Some later questioned orders by law enforcement to the anti-BLM group to disperse. Many

were arrested because of the misdemeanor crime of interfering with a peace officer. If an officer judges that a person did not do exactly as the officer said, this can justify a criminal charge of interference. In the case of the protests, public sentiment was that the officers intermittently arrested African American protestors at higher rates than White protestors. In other words, the influence that is played by the chief (director) dictates the culture for a police station or a department. Going off script means going against someone in administration that can cause ostracization of officers from each other. By not staying on script, an outgroup environment is created.

For police officers, the meanings of objects were influenced prior to entering the structure of policing. Yet structural meanings could overtake the individual based on numerous situational events. Since the meaning has been decided by the structure, it could be confusing to an officer's performance. For example, one who places the value of an object according to their own race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation could evoke a different response than someone from a homogenous traditional structure.

Our military is an example. We have never had an African American or Latino lead our military and it was not until recently that the U.S. Marine Corps had the Confederate flag removed from all military bases and banned its use. The removed flag serves as an object with a meaning that references White supremacy and the Jim Crow period with hangings of Black Americans along the U.S. South. For an officer of color these types of objects serve as symbols that can influence the performance.

This could aid in the understanding of how the other is constructed based on how meanings are given for skin tone. Performance responses are given through the meaning

attributed to lived experiences, home environment, or what is taught in school and given off in society. Yet, the meaning is in response to law, Policy, and Procedure (PNP), as well as station and department cultures impacts performance that is expected. For those who come from militarized backgrounds, performance influenced through the meanings of objects may vary by type of military. In policing, use of force is almost exclusively taught by those who have been to combat, those whose experience carries a different threat level from the civilian world. In the Marine Corps, you have two critical skill sets to advance the mission: first, to take orders, and second, to shoot to remove the threat. In the civilian world, the highest threat level is to shoot to stop the threat.

For those from the Marine Corps performance can be altered as they transition into policing. They are no de-escalation methods or training of these soldiers to transition to local policing. The biology of an 18-year-old whose frontal cortex is still 7 years away from full maturation may be trained to be a soldier and influenced to perform in a violent manner. If you're instructed repeatedly to focus on survival and life-or-death skills, it may be worth further examination to see how performance can be structurally manipulated or changed from the military to local police practice.

While many police departments seek out those who have trained from the Marine Corps rank, they most often wait until the police candidate is past the age of 25 with some lived experience. Should that person become a police officer, they maintain a hyperfocus in how training keeps you alive. The higher death threat level of “shoot to remove the threat” is what takes you home at night to your family. The higher death threat carries over to police recruit training, which prepares officers for when they are on

patrol. Trust and a strong relationship to your partners is presented by the training academic as a crucial instruction for performance survival.

In the case of Derek Chauvin, he was trained as a U.S. Army reserve police officer. His training would have provided an understanding of various threat levels, which impacts his performance. His eyes were focused on the individual recording him on a phone as he had a controlled restraint of Floyd on the ground. Chauvin placed a knee to the neck area of Floyd and placed pressure down on the neck area. Witnesses were pleading for him to release his knee off Floyd's neck as they heard him say, "I can't breathe." The perception could be a confident authoritative performance of an officer to an audience. I have seen on too many occasions a hyper masculinized demonstrative behavior where increased aggression occurs.

For an officer to adjust and adapt, they must be in unison with other officers during an event to avoid conflict. The other three officers stood watch as if Floyd was a foreign enemy. Even as Floyd's life was slipping away, Chauvin continued this performance for what appeared to be without regard for human life. The interpretive process is constantly changing as various situational events are placed in front of an officer each day. Identities are woven into how we see ourselves and how others see us. To be successful, officers train in unison and rely on a team mentality to maintain a safety advantage. Some have protective mechanisms that drive us forward. To survive, it may be needed to prepare for a performance (Band, 1991).

Controversial performances appear to be at higher rates in communities of color. Performance is predicted to uphold certain roles. For example, officer comparisons often

take place where the officer is seen as the hero “cowboy” and the bad guy “Indian” is seen in the negative light (Yaquinto, 2019). In the death of George Floyd, former officer Chauvin could be construed as playing the part of a rogue cowboy. His performance may have been influenced by how he wanted to carry out the interaction with Indians. Hence, he was supported by other cowboys and was the architect of a non-scripted role that would be challenged. His role was reinforced with the interaction of the other officers and George Floyd.

This example is part of expected behavior and follows a controversial performance with Chauvin kneeling on Floyd's neck. Floyd died because of the personal actions of the officer who maintained a certain role. The behavior and outcome of death received more attention than if he had shot and killed him while he was trying to get into his truck. The incident goes to review where the shooting is judged to either be justified or not justified, and in the public space Chauvin goes from good guy to villain.

There seem to be two primary salient identities: that which is embedded in the performance, and another that is not. You must perform. Gunshots here, an assault there—we control and contain so everyone is safe. Your heart is racing and blood level rising and yet we stay in control. Although calm and collected on the outside, you have accumulated stress. Dead bodies, your heart rate is pounding, and you have a headache, and your bodies physiology is impacted. Over time this takes its toll. That’s a role we take for the performance. You get hired to perform, are continuously expected to pass tests, and are given a badge. The preparation each day becomes routine in how the performance is carried out.

As police accountability increases, officers may be performing to an outdated script. Directors can be removed, and roles can be altered to change the performance. Cities that look at dismantling a department risk the probability of increased crime (Phelps, 2021). A current trend is taking place where cities are making director changes in conformance to the performance that audiences wish to see. This could result in a higher probability of alternative policing methods.

It has influenced for me, a holistic culture of policing (Rivera, 2017). It's the lived experience of the police officer, whether good or bad, that serves as the foundation of their performance. Having the fortunate ability to find the proper cast and skilled director constitutes the art of the performance.

Chapter 7: Holistic Policing

Sir Robert Peeler once said, “The police are the community, and the community is the police” (Albrecht, 2019). Unfortunately, we have gone away from that model and embraced a violent racialized forefront. Imagine a policing method that embraced everyone as a whole person. A method that encouraged police practice to be respectful and understanding of all. Such a method could serve as the alternative to the current traditional model that is selective and prone to increase racialized violence (Bryant-Davis, 2017).

Holistic means “relating to or concerned with wholes or with complete systems rather than with the [analysis](#) of, treatment of, or dissection into parts” Merriam-Webster, 2022). Within the context of policing, I use the term to define a whole person in the understanding of the mind and body. The word was first used in 1926 by Christian Smuts who was a soldier from South Africa (Brush, 1984). He would have witnessed his prime minister in the same year introduce a bill to remove Black South Africans from holding any political office. It was also a colonialized period for India by the United Kingdom. Smuts used the term not in the context of policing but for understanding the organization of nature (Merriam-Webster, 2022).

Holistic policing is a mindset, an ideology based on peace and harmony. Holistic Policing addresses the stress of all its members and carries a multi-disciplinary approach centered on community. The military industrialization of society changed policing in the United States to bring in attitudes and behaviors that are counterproductive towards a holistic method of policing.

Holistic policing is a method of cooperation, respect, and understanding in the lived experience not only of police but of all people. It involves an increased awareness in the historical narrative of those marginalized and the racialized practices of policing. Intersecting history with legal studies, criminology, sociology, anthropology, and other disciplines, holistic policing creates a multidisciplinary approach that addresses the mutual and non-exclusive harms caused in societal matters. Holistic policing is innovative in the methods for police practice, emphasizing the mission in alignment not with the department but in a personal space, aligned with community culture. It's the internal ability to reflect then just act and promotes the application of critical thinking by police before having a knee jerk reaction. It trains an officer's mind in the now.

Police training can help officers to develop the internal ability to reflect rather than just act. Before they pull the trigger, cops could train their minds to be present in the now and not be reactionary in making choices. As police only have a quick moment to decide before acting, if their identity is that of a kick-ass officer, they may be more likely to have increased lethal events in their career. The five officers involved in the trio of Panoramic City shootings all came from military backgrounds. Four of them had Marine training with a skill set of shooting and killing, quite different from the Army and Navy.

In understanding police violence, one must have a broader stakeholder perspective that includes not just the actors, but the audience. It is on the audience that focus has been recently placed on with more so on African Americans with less attention on police violence within Latino communities. It can be confusing for an officer who is of color in how they see themselves within the police structure and of the community

they serve. The identity of the officer is adaptive to the script and the performance can change at any time or any space. In understanding how controversial roles are carried out within the performance, holistic policing is the solution to the actor conforming to the script (Rivera, 2017).

Holistic policing is a circular model that carries the following areas of communal understanding:

- 1) Healthy
- 2) Purposeful
- 3) Value based
- 4) Reflective
- 5) Broad view of stakeholders
- 6) Connection to self & community

Holistic policing takes the whole person approach. With high rates of mental illness in society, the mental health for both officers and members of the community contacted by the officer is a priority (Purba, 2019). The perspective for the officer must come from a healthy place that sees the community as purposeful and of value. When officer events occur that bring about violence, it becomes a reflective process of minimizing harm caused and understanding the self as it connects to the community. To understand holistic policing, we must critically examine the past and current structure we have in place.

People of color are less likely to trust police officers than are those who are White (Saunders, 2021). Historically, people who are White have benefited from policing more

than those of color, a fact that is exemplified in police contact, arrest, and incarceration rates. As people of color have less wealth, this wealth gap affects those who go or stay in jail or prison. This colonial order (Steinmetz, 2017) often determines one's fate within the criminal justice system. Furthermore, a culture arose in our history that came about from racial capitalism via Black and Brown bodies. The military industrial complex was noted on January 17th, 1961, with President Dwight D. Eisenhower in his farewell address. It parallels a movement of incarceration that tied itself early with people of color being drafted into the Vietnam War than those that were white. For people of color those incarceration rates continued to rise and today in the overrepresentation of people of color in prison (Alexander, 2011). This oppressive structure benefits Whiteness and creates a vertical stratified structure that passes through policing.

Holistic policing is a circular method that places community, police departments, and city influences on an equal plane. This level goes against the traditional, often binary structure of marginalization. It resonates with restorative justice practices but is grounded in a critical racialized narrative. Holistic Policing takes you to a space where meetings are conducted in indigenous circles, and mediators are utilized to lead discussions. You have the victim, offender, and members of the community who were impacted by the offense.

Holistic policing uses the following five tenants and two processes.

- *Mirror demographics* includes race/ethnicity and gender, the latter of which is often overlooked. Women exhibit less use of force than their male counterparts, tending to be more verbal when de-escalating a potentially threatening event.

Your police department demographically reflects the community it serves in racial/ethnic, gender, and sexual orientation.

- *Actor composition* is where people are placed in key roles that fit the performance that is sought. This has been more recently done in wake of community policing. Some officers refuse to utilize social worker concepts or theories that create community.
- *Community integration* requires that police officers be seen as part of the community. The community will then help to police itself and allow for change to occur. It is the community that has a key role in its own policing through its hiring practices, police instruction, and external/internal affairs.
- *Whole community approach* occurs when there is mutual respect for everyone, including offenders, victims, and residents, regardless of gender, race, language barrier, or citizenship. This can reduce any harm caused from practitioner practice.
- *Mediation* is conducted in a peaceful, respectful manner as police complaints or community concerns occur. Restorative justice practices, using circles and resolution, are embedded.

Mutual trust is the process for the above five tenants that is anchored in its support for continued maintenance. Holistic policing is driven by a circular direction of performance. The performance is influenced by the authority of the director, which can be a sheriff, police chief, or city manager, but also by community leaders who have exhibited good citizenship. Where the traditional model of policing has a formal director

that is recognized, these community leaders become part of the process and are involved in their community policing. The methods are examined and played out to an audience consisting of residents and citizens of a community. The director oversees the script and has final word on the performance of the police officer. The director can also change the script to alter the performance of the actor to fit the audience. Having community leaders in this role balances out the performance to include mutual respect, local logics, and cultural understanding. Once people are treated with that level of respect, they will hold each other accountable.

Police officers have created an us vs. them mentality. For people of color, it's a them vs. us mentality. Police influence onto a community starts from the bottom of the structure with an officer on street patrol. Dismantling a department and starting new will lose professional knowledge that takes years to create. Changing a department from the top will resonate in change. In other words, if you have a chief/director who comes from a place of peace, they can create a holistic culture in how policing is created, developed, and maintained. This culture would be inclusive of race and gender, where an authentic performance is met by an eager audience.

Removing the actor who negatively influences the structure will enhance and protect the change needed. Police officers' model their behavior from the performances of other officers. They must bring about confidence to the role to be believable. The structure can be influenced by anyone with authority or rank. The person who oversees the budget can influence the department and the culture of the station. This might be a police chief or sheriff and a few administrators within the ranking order. It could also be

the city manager that influences the budget and the potential workforce for a department. In post George Floyd world communities are now seeking abolishing police departments and defunding. It is the culture of the station that is in question. Yet, these budget administrators can influence departments to seek the culture they want. Officers that produce negative and counterproductive behavior are corrected or removed from the structure.

Department & Community & City = Mutual Partnerships

Holistic policing is the removal of paramilitary boot camp academies with more emphasis on academic knowledge. Said one officer, if you're allowed to yell, degrade, and scream at police recruits because you outrank them, don't you think they will mimic what was taught to them? Don't you think it will hinder what it is to be a good officer? And when on patrol they will duplicate the yelling and screaming back. In a holistic model, officers learn the history of policing and there is no bullying of recruits. Police training comes from a place of respect, understating, and accountability.

I interviewed 3 police officers of color and ask questions that related to police training, practice, and alternative policing methods. I use the interviews to give insight into how officers of color see police practice in communities of color. The three officers are of color with each having more than 22 years of policing experience. The next group of questions involved training and hiring practices.

Three retired police officers agreed to be interviewed for this dissertation. They range in experience between 25 to 30 years. They are all male and range from sergeant to commander in rank. Each has been retired for 5 to 15 years.

Officer Interviewee 1 (OI1) was asked a question on hiring practices of recruits and academy instruction:

Bridges must be sought through the community. Most police solutions are short term at best. Address the issues now, you can give them community relations, but they have been there. We have a whole new type of recruit and make policing less paramilitary. You have rank and order, for some that question the use of uniforms and this paramilitary structure. For instance, in a corporation you don't need stripes on the shoulder to know who the boss is...do we really need to have that military look to perform what is necessary?

Federal agents like the FBI and other federal police agencies have no uniforms. Historically blue uniforms for local policing and tan/green uniforms for sheriff deputies. Are these colors damaging to the profession or are they the status quo where they are respected by other officers and select members of a community? Remove the "us vs. them" perceived model and create a nontraditional model that is reflective of what the community looks and acts like.

Officer Interviewee 1 (OI1) was asked about academy instruction:

We can't be successful in policing without policing like Fort Apache the Bronx waiting for the last holdout. Yes, we need report writers. Bring a more psychological approach to policing. You're going to find out not everyone is a crook. Another officer recanted a training instruction in a police academy, "I hate to differ...I was in a class where two instructors with many combined 30 year plus years of police experience. They shared their thoughts on how communities

should be policed. Same class but different lived experiences...Two guys on the same job and diverse attitudes on policing and this was a regional academy shared by numerous police departments.

Officer Interviewee 2 (OI2) was asked how he saw the future of policing:

To be successful, the future of policing is going to have to evolve from where we were at something stretching wider than chasing criminals and putting them in prison. There's a whole psychology within policing that's been talked about but not followed on. As the psyche testes must go through to get employment. Does your response mean you're a bad or good officer in the responses you gave in the initial psyche tests? Officers want to work and feel comfortable and supported in their day-to-day activities. It can be crushing to a cop to not have a station or department as they end their watch each day.

OI2 was asked how he saw officer stress acted out in the community:

Many officers will be sued over their career, whether you applied best practices and you acted according to your department policy and laws of your state. Yet, your department may not pay your legal fees. For example, the Ross Springs police department has abandoned its officers on covering for civil suits. Within the discipline of the structure of the military is Article 133, Conduct Unbecoming an officer (CUVO). Officers are always under the threat of a complaint. Sometimes during the course of an investigation, a complaint could arise and be sustained. and a complaint could be sustained. So how do you reinstall pride into

what many community members see as a broken structure? This is stressing our guys out there in making decisions involving the community.

OI2 explained the different type of leadership styles he saw while working in law enforcement:

In my time working, I saw three Sheriffs with very distinct methods of how the company should be run. The first was very hands-on in communities. Officers loved him due to the support he gave his officers in the field. The second also supported a heavy hand method of policing. The third was not widely supported by the troops. For the higher rank deputies, many supported him. As I was leaving there was an election. The third guy had the endorsement of upper command but was not endorsed by the sheriff's union and the troops (lower rank officers). It seems crazy but this is how it is. We have too many chiefs and not enough Indians to me.

Officer Interviewee 3 (OI3) was asked, how do you see the relationship between Police Academy Instruction and community outcomes from police contacts?

I was a Training Officer for 5 years; I would hear and see all kinds of things that didn't make sense for a large-scale department with how academies are run. For example, in the interaction between a TO and recruit: 'Listen Gonzales, you failed driving and next time you're booted out.' You have people getting in people's faces and the TO can't beat people up. But they had the authority and not the ability. You don't have to degrade them down to prepare for war. But not to adult men and women to police the community.

OI3 was asked, how do you see racism within policing?

You can't stomp out racism and the reality once you lose respect for authority starts to lose respect for authority and policing. This whole tribalism and experiment of democracy. I think it killed the American dream that red blooded Americans and apple pie would drive you to war. I think that's gone for a lot of us. The star-spangled banner with your hand over the heart is gone for me. Looking back at the other recruits and having someone in training yell and scream at you and now you want to give them a badge and a gun. Also, I would change people not staying too long in a position and rework the roles within departments. The foundation of policing is the most important from the trainers to the trainee. Fix it!

Asked how Leadership Impact Police was practiced within communities, OI3 responded:

Look at Comey with Trump and not charging him for the January 6th incident. This is a reward for loyal behavior in law enforcement. Americans are now thinking, I don't have to defend him (Trump) but now defend myself for this support or not supporting the police. The person at the top rarely gets touched. Trump is ripping the thread of Americanism. You're telling good people now it's time to stand in line with everyone else. Now I get stopped and I can get a ticket. Trump keeps my type of life alive, and he projects 'you don't have to like me but I'm trying to protect you.' Look at how he set up the right with Roe vs Wade. We're now seeing the deterioration of America through policing. How does a Texan commit a crime of abortion and go to New

York, and we have in-state in-fighting. If you respect abortion as murder, why don't you support our ideology? It's like you praising the devil because he has nice things. These assholes have something to gain for the average Joe. For those educated, why would you want to back them?

OI3 also addressed who he would improve police hiring practices:

I would start with an effort to hire people from the community. Poor, rich people of all different backgrounds. There are not all bangers, cultivating from the community like we do athletes. You don't have to live in an area to work there. A police department might not know what their officer is doing from another community. Tell parents to look out for them. Give them that sense.

Asked how he saw the future of policing, OI3 responded:

The philosophy of good policing doesn't get instituted. Anarchy on the streets with people policing their neighborhoods. People videotaping cops, instead of telling them to behave better. Instead of trying to fix it now, try to create a cop and record them. Eight-foot rule and when you stop, close the distance within 8 feet. Instead of holding people accountable for behavior and the bad apples. All departments with power get away with their shit. The problem is everywhere, and leadership doesn't care. I can go to any station and ask who will be the idiot that gets in trouble before the end of the year. That asshole is a friend of an officer? he's one of us types of things. Everyone knows the troublemakers in a department, and we can name those people. Leadership: hold people accountable. If a doctor fucks up, he/she can lose their licenses and get sued. In policing if a cop fucks up

other officers run up to protect. Why would you protect someone with a gun and a badge? Policing can get away with that, I don't know another profession that has that.

OI3 was asked how he would improve police practices:

Keeping a department organic. I would focus on resources, thought, and action. Instead of using objects, guns, threats, speed traps to police a community use other avenues. A motorcycle cop on the sidewalk (crime) and is allowed to stop a speeder after they sped, instead of being visible and present. Hiding behind a bush is not holistic. Giving guns that hold more bullets and weaponry. Most of what we do goes against holistic policing. I tried and it just wouldn't work. When a captain I knew put a line of officers and police dogs for high school students during a protest. He violated department policy and U.S. law in how he handled the protesters. This captain is the product of his environment where he was raised. He saw them as brown people trying to run America.

OI3 was asked, how did you see the interaction between Officer Chauvin and George Floyd? How do you see the Minnesota murder of George Floyd?

Chauvin thought at that time and place he was going to get away with it. Maybe you have an officer who wishes to show dominance and is fucked up in the head. Maybe it's the cop that manifested in Chauvin that have his capability. He's the TO that yells and he thinks he can kick your ass. Yet, I believe due to his size that Floyd would have kicked his ass. It was the writer, Malcom Gladwell, in how we play to the group. Dehumanize them and he's like a Nazi from World War II. He

thought he was going to get away with it. Just like those that stormed the capital. I know a lot of arrogant cops but no one that will continue to kill someone on video tape.

When asked how he saw the school shooting in Uvalde, Texas, OI3 responded:

It was the complete opposite in Uvalde, Texas, in that not one wanted to commit violence. The shooter was Latino and not one of the local cops wanted to save the day. Would Chauvin save the day? He leaned on someone handcuffed with others near him. He wouldn't go into a bar to start a fight. It's easy to talk tough when someone is handcuffed and on the ground. Law enforcement must be part of the change. To be holistic you need to grab the minds and hearts of cops. I don't see a buy in at the patrol level.

OI3 was asked how he saw politics interfere with policing.

An ex-cop can bring experience to explain the behavior, but change is political, and you're trying to win over the same cops you're trying to change. We have political division within the ranks. For some it's about the red, white, and blue, fuck him he's a liberal but when needed he's there. Holistically deprogram them all. Think of knuckle draggers from our department. How many would it take to get someone to trust you? Bring them onboard and not throw them overboard. You can investigate people's backgrounds, but it could take years to know them. Bring them over to your side that are the anti-change cops. You don't fart on the first date. But at least I brush my teeth. Policing needs to evolve, not military equipment, but policing with community. Learning ballet for a football player 50

years ago didn't exist. Now players do for balance and coordination. Community and holistic are liberal terms for cops. Specialized units are more interested in a Republican exertive word's usage and not social work emphasis.

Finally, OI3 was asked how he saw a holistic method of policing, after which the interview ended:

Policing wasn't meant to dominate but protect and serve...it's the old guys that will need to change and accept these holistic concepts, to train the new officers coming in. This is not a photo op but plant the seed to improve the community. Good practice...community has had a problem with the police. How they see a homeless, criminal, and sex workers in a negative light? This impacts their performance out on the street and how they interact with someone they don't respect and see as weak. I think police practice may drive up crime and police departments are determinants of policy. The knowledge and evidence of officers are critical towards human rights and evidence police practice. Will law enforcement be there only to police for the one percent?

Holistic Policing Continued

Current challenges need to be met to mend the bridges between community and police. Law enforcement has a sense of unappreciation by their own department and areas where they police. A common penal code, 415 disturbance call, now has them taking verbal abuse. For the officer, they carry the mindset "I have a career and family to protect," and we now see less direct policing. Directed patrol is a method where you identify people, and less community contact reflects less interaction with a community.

Officers do the minimum they have to do though radio calls and see less training due to budget restraints. Is this the result of a history of bad policing?

Moreover, law enforcement will take the reputation of bad cops and protect them across the state. California law enforcement is one of the best in the nation. But the state searching for ways for the public to have confidence in its policing that is functional and professional. Some say to recruit more educated law enforcement and fewer with military backgrounds. In police hiring practices, certain personalities are examined to be more suited for policing. In the past, police recruits internally questioned themselves: “How can I help?” This has now evolved to a crop of potential recruits: “What are you going to do for me.” This a socially intertwined yarn that administrators are seeking the answer to. One officer said, “We scan, analyze, and assess a problem.”

In addressing cultural competence and awareness, I suggest using a demographic mirror in police hiring practices. One must also understand the influence that military practice has on policing. Military backgrounds recognize the performance and adapt to prepare for the role. A process of preparation for those from the military into local policing could lower the number of violent events within communities. Addressing police violence through trustworthy and equitable best practices and a trustful structure could also impact police violence in communities of color, for a separation of performance exists between the patrol officer and administration. For the street patrolling officer, you're working on skills as an actor, yet when patrolling you're on the outside looking in.

Conclusion

It is February 21, 2021. My father's breathing is labored, and he is tired. He is surrounded by my mother, brother, his grandchildren, hospice nurse, and myself. He is resting and appears peaceful. We have told him we love him and have hugged him for the last time. My cousin Raymond had performed a tribal ritual that guides spirits to the next life. It has helped us for today. The house is quiet and solemn for us all.

In the quiet, I think about the families who have lost loved ones that I have spoken about. They didn't have a chance to have loved ones nearby, nor someone close to tell them they loved them before they took their last breath. I can't imagine what it is like to leave this earth and to be either by yourself or with a stranger next to you that has just ended your life. No fanfare, just the pain of a bullet piercing through you and of your heart slowing down with each heartbeat.

What is it like for families recalling the last words shared with their loved one that day? Communities have an expectation of police officers to be law abiding and use good judgement. The overrepresentation of people of color shot and killed by police leads to a breakdown of trust and confidence of those hired to protect and serve. When people of color leave their homes, they never know if it will be the last time, they will see their loved ones and family.

For the deceased person, they have limited control over the actions of the person who took their life. We make unforeseen decisions, and the wrong decision could result with you lying helpless, by yourself, on the ground. You could be laboring as you are

about to take your last breath. It is no longer a performance, but survival mode. Perhaps you wish that you had a loved one with you.

In examining archived newspapers, departmental emails, television news, and speaking to many officers over the years, the areas of dramaturgy can tell us about how officers see themselves within the structure of policing. Goffman's dramaturgy model: the Performance; Expressions and Impressions; Front Stage/Back Stage; and Accounts, Excuses and Justifications; could help us understand the increased rate of officer involved shootings in communities of color.

The curtain is being lowered and the actors are about to take to the stage for the final curtain call. During my father's final moments, I held him and told him how much he was loved. Next to me was a hospice nurse, a stranger I had only met a few hours earlier. I have never cried so much for a human being. It is for me now to pass the stories that he shared with me over the years to my children, and in time possibly grandchildren. How I long to see him again. I am looking forward to that day that I can share another story with him. As with those who I profiled here, they are also waiting the day to be reunited with their families, as with the families in the Panoramic City trio of shootings, SDPD Officer Bain, and my cousin Tato Rivera. They all met their untimely passing, and I'm sure did not know their final moments were approaching. In the case of Officer Bain, he was performing his job duties in service to his department. I'm sure they all wanted to live and not die in the manner they did when they left us. I hear a final breath.

It is 1:10 in the afternoon, and my father has left us. He has written the final chapter to the end of his script. As I write about policing, I think of him all the time. He was someone who couldn't make sense of police violence. It was my father that suggested I research this area. I'm now a professor and teach students issues of race and class. When I survey students to name an African American male that succumbed to police violence almost everyone can name someone. When I ask to name a Latino it's rare that one is named. My father knew that officers involved in shootings of Latinos do not stay in the media as long as shootings of African Americans. We make race binary in the United States and U.S. Law enforcement has a negative past in policing communities of color. Perhaps the reason lies within how the audience perceives the performance of the officer or the perception of how Latinos do not belong here in the United States.

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