A Mixed Method Study of Shifts in Patrol Tactics Attributed to Police Involvement in National Events and Movements

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A Mixed Method Study of Shifts in Patrol Tactics Attributed to Police Involvement in National Events and Movements

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education

Seton Hall University
2018
SETON HALL UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

APPROVAL FOR SUCCESSFUL DEFENSE

Christopher Rianldi, has successfully defended and made the required modifications to the text of the doctoral dissertation for the Ed.D. during this Spring Semester 2018.

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Abstract

Over the past few years a series of high profile events involving the use of deadly force by police against individuals of minority descent have sparked national reactions driven in some part by modern media coverage. These reactions have included backlash against law enforcement both within the cities directly involved and those not directly involved. This has led to speculation by some that patrol officers are changing their tactics in a less proactive manner.

The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences, motivation, and practices of an individual department not directly involved with one of the aforementioned nationally scrutinized events. A mixed methods design, focused specifically on patrol officers, was utilized to gain insight into the perceptions and actions of the men and women of an urban patrol division. Patrol officers were surveyed using elements of an instrument utilized in a national poll in order to produce comparable data. Patrol supervisors interviewed and asked open-ended questions selected to gauge their own experiences as well as their perceptions of their subordinates’ experiences.

The study found that a majority of patrol officers report changing their tactics and a majority of patrol supervisors report not having changed their tactics in reaction to recent national events. The study revealed similarities to trends reported in national polls, although in large not to the levels of the national polls.
Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge Dr. Anthony Colella, Mgrs. Christopher Hynes, and Dr. Barbara Strobert for their patience, guidance, and support without which this dissertation would not be what it is today. I must especially thank Dr. Strobert, a lifelong mentor, friend, and confidant who has done more to support my academic career than I could possibly fully articulate. Thank you for everything.

I must acknowledge one particular person anonymously for his assistance in making arrangements to study the site on which this dissertation focuses. Without his help this study would not have been possible. I am very grateful.

I would also like to thank the many mentors I have had throughout my academic and professional careers at Rutgers University, Columbia University, Seton Hall University, and the Bergen County Law & Fire Public Safety Institute, as well as within the Secaucus Police Department. Your contributions are too numerous to mention, but they have not gone unnoticed or unappreciated.
Dedication

This work is dedicated to my parents, Albert and LouAnn Rinaldi, for their support through three universities, four degrees, and a police academy, I could not have done it without them.

And to my wife Rebecca, I could not ask for a better research assistant, proofreader, and partner in life.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The relationship between citizens and police officers has shared a symbiotic nature since the inception of law enforcement itself. As societies expand in size and population, the difficulty in maintaining order and stability increases in scope and complexity. The responsibility for keeping pace with such changes is entrusted to a select few within a community: law enforcement officers. As social demands change, so do expectancies of officers and therefore the perceptions of law enforcement officers. Recent events, including police shootings of individuals of minority descent, the rise of the Black Lives Matters movement, and the shootings of uniformed officers, including 21 officers ambushed and killed in 2016, have changed national attitudes on law enforcement and law enforcement officers (Carrero, Fieldstadt, & Gutierrez, 2016).

Numerous studies on public perceptions of law enforcement officers have been conducted (Bennet, Davis, Sargeant, & Manning, 2013; Brown & Benedict, 2002; Pew, 2017). In light of the recent events cited above, an examination of the effects of these events and of the subsequent public reaction on law enforcement officers and how they perform their duties is necessary. Craig Floyd, president of the National Law Enforcement Fund, stated that the events of 2016 have had a profound impact on law enforcement officers (Pane, 2016).

The focus of this study began in the wake of the 2013 shooting of African American teenager Trayvon Martin by George Zimmerman. Though Zimmerman was not a police officer, he was a member of a “local watch” group administered by the local police department. Subsequently, the social media hashtag of #blacklivesmatter grew into a national movement,
responding to numerous police-involved shootings of minorities. Thereafter, a second movement, Blue Lives Matter, a movement in support of law enforcement officers, arose.

While we know that these events involve law enforcement, we explored what effects, if any, they have had on the profession of law enforcement. I explored whether or not officers believe there has been a change in the way they are viewed by the public, whether or not they have felt repercussions from recent events, and whether or not such views or repercussions have had an effect on how they approach their work. In doing so, we may gain a better understanding of the influence of national events on day-to-day police work. A better understanding of how national events affect everyday patrol departments nationwide can better prepare their officers to cope with the effects of future national events.

**Statement of the Problem**

This study examined what effects, if any, high profile national events such as those previously cited have had on day-to-day police work outside of the geographic areas directly involved. To do so, our examination was limited to one police department and officers with no direct involvement in such events in order to explore whether these outside events have had a measurable effect on patrol tactics elsewhere. This study did not focus on cities such as Ferguson, Missouri, where events have occurred, on officers who were directly involved, and on changes that have been ordered by the United States Justice Department. Rather, this study examined a New Jersey urban police department not directly involved in such events to determine whether or not such events and their outcomes spark changes in patrol tactics elsewhere.

Should these events prove to have had an effect on law enforcement officers outside of their respective jurisdictions, we must then explore what the effect has been. While reports have
argued that departments such as the New York City Police Department have seen a near work stoppage by some patrol officers in the wake of certain events (Celona, Cohen, & Golding, 2014), anecdotal evidence gathered in the preparation of this study has suggested that some officers have taken an opposite approach and increased their efforts in writing tickets and making arrests as a direct response to recent events. As such, it must be determined if these more aggressive efforts are significant; and if so, are they overshadowed by a decrease in patrol efforts.

Conducting such a study was fraught with numerous issues, notably a reluctance on the part of officers to participate in such a study out of fear of how their responses might be used against them (Martin, 1994). While there have been more than 100 scholarly works published on public attitudes towards police (Mazerolle, Bennett, Davis, Sargeant, & Manning, 2013; Pew, 2017), there is a gap in the literature pertaining to how public opinion towards the police and police attitudes towards the general public during times of national scrutiny affect the way police officers approach their work (Tooley, Linkenbach, B.J. Lande, & G.M. Lande, 2009). However, a recent major online quantitative survey sampling the attitudes of nearly 8,000 police officers found that “the majority of police officers say that recent, high profile fatal encounters between Black citizens and police officers have made their jobs riskier, aggravated tensions between police and Blacks, and left many officers reluctant to fully carry out their duties” (Pew, 2017).

While some studies have touched on police perceptions of public image, many predate the modern multifaceted media realities of today and most focus on the idea of “legitimacy” or public acceptance of police authority in low versus high crime areas (Wolfe, Nix, Kaminski, & Rojek, 2016). Past studies have found police officers are concerned that media reports would have a widespread negative influence on the opinion of the general public (Tyler, 2005). As
such there is a need to study whether the increased scrutiny brought onto police officers by the national media during times of high-profile national events affects officer tactics in a significant way.

If an effect on officer tactics has been identified, its root cause or causes were explored. It is not enough to simply state that events have happened or document general public reaction to recent events; this study examined these events and their fallouts from the perspective of law enforcement officers. By examining how law enforcement officers may have altered their efforts in tandem with why they may have altered their efforts, we can better gauge responses to national events in law enforcement and may better foresee future likely reactions to similar events.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to explore what effects, if any, recent high profile events involving police and minorities and related movements have had on law enforcement patrol tactics within a jurisdiction not directly involved in such events. Numerous studies have been conducted on public reactions to police violence and the media has covered public protests and riots in response to such actions. However, there is a void in the qualitative literature examining police reactions to such forementioned events. While some point to a ‘Ferguson effect,’ the idea that officers on patrol have lessened or stopped their efforts to be proactive out of fear of public backlash, the media, or the law, studies of the supposed effect have centered on departments directly involved in the protests or departments nearby. There was a need to study police departments not directly involved to explore whether or not a ‘Ferguson effect’ truly exists and to what extent it may have changed the way officers perform their duty.
Research Questions

The following three questions were used to guide the study:

1. How do officers perceive a difference, if any, in their interactions with the general public that they attribute to a reaction to recent national events?

2. What effects, if any, have movements such as Black Lives Matter had on daily patrol tactics?

3. Have supervisors initiated any changes in response to recent national events and the movements they have spawned?

Conceptual Framework

As this study examines individuals in the workplace, specifically police officers in the patrol field, in relation to motivators and de-motivators and specifically events occurring in the national consciousness, a theory on workplace motivation is best suited to contextualize this study. Frederick Herzberg's (1959) motivation-hygiene theory, also known as the two-factor theory and the dual-factor theory, best suits these needs.

Herzberg’s theory states that vocational satisfaction and vocational dissatisfaction are derived from factors independent of one another. In short, diminishing satisfaction and dissatisfaction do not necessarily increase as the other increases; they are separately motivated.

The two factors referred to are motivators, defined as the causes of positive behavior, and hygiene factors, defined as causes that do not generate satisfaction although their absence or diminishment lead to dissatisfaction.

Law enforcement occupies a unique position in society. It is a government entity and is therefore not driven by standard capitalist goals. It is a vocational field, but its measures of
productivity are different from other vocational fields. In fields such as sales or manufacturing, success can be measured in the reaching of quotas, whereas in law enforcement arrest and summons quotas have been eliminated in the State of New Jersey. As in the service industry, law enforcement bodies do directly assist the general public, but they are further entrusted with protecting the general public and enforcing law and order upon them. As such, many of the motivators and hygiene factors influencing police officers differ from those of professionals in other fields. It is perhaps the only field outside of the military in which internal morale, discipline, and commitment to duty are as directly tied to the success of an organization’s mission as external morale and faith in the field, its cause, and its officers. A mixed methods study with these factors in mind best serves the goals of this study.

**Design and Methodology**

After obtaining permission from the police director in a mid-size urban police department, identified by the pseudonym Maple City, to conduct the study, mixed methods procedures were used. This methodology incorporates both quantitative data through a survey and qualitative data from interviews. Cresswell (2014) suggests that mixed methods may offer a stronger understanding of a problem because of the strength of drawing on both qualitative and quantitative research.

The first phase of data collection included a voluntary and anonymous questionnaire survey distributed to patrolmen within the Maple City Police Department. The questions asked mirrored those asked on a national scale by the Pew Research Center (2017) to simplify comparisons and analysis. Participants in the written survey were required to be active members of the Maple City Patrol Division.
The second phase of data collection consisted of voluntary and anonymous face-to-face interviews of varying lengths of time with frontline supervisors, most often patrol sergeants, who supervise squads of patrolmen on day-to-day patrol. Only six patrol supervisors volunteered to participate in the study and all six were interviewed. These supervisors had at least three years of experience, specifically assigned to patrol.

Supervisory personnel were divided by one key distinction; those who have the ability to change patrol policy and those who do not. In law enforcement, supervisors who do not have the ability to change policy are usually the lowest level of patrol supervision, typically at the rank of sergeant. These are personnel who are typically “on the road” or in the field along with officers. Those with the ability to change, or at least exert a level of influence on policy, usually consist of lieutenants, captains, and chiefs. Different departments will have different roles for their different supervisory titles as well as different titles, usually based on departmental size and history.

All participants were strictly voluntary and were selected from a pool of officers in the Maple City law enforcement department. The department involved had no influence over who was interviewed and who was not in order to avoid bias interference. A list of eligible interview participants was formulated and an invitation to participate was sent to all possible participants.

Interview questions were derived from a review of survey results, current literature, and my own experience within the patrol field to address the research questions. As a member of the law enforcement field, I have direct knowledge and practice within the field and am further able to speak with subjects with the insight of a peer. The questions have further been reviewed by a jury of experts, including current and former members of the law enforcement community, specifically a career patrol officer, multiple career patrol supervisors, law enforcement
supervisors and administrators outside of patrol, and a university professor with law enforcement experience. Members of the jury were not participants in the study.

**Data Collection**

The quantitative data collection, consisting of a written survey, was distributed to all Maple City patrol officers during role call on three days. Participants were advised, via a letter attached to the survey, that the survey was completely voluntary and anonymous. Once completed, the surveys were collected and stored securely throughout the process. No member of the Maple City Police Department was granted access to the raw data materials collected.

Data collection for the qualitative part of this study consisted of one-on-one, face-to-face digitally recorded interviews guided by a set of pre-prepared, open-ended questions. Follow up questions may have differed from person to person based on their responses. While core questions remained the same for each participant, follow up questions were tailored to the specific individuals based on their individual demographics. It is important to recognize that many recent events have centered on race, and as such officers of different backgrounds may bring differing perspectives that offer different opportunities for study.

As the general focus of this study was based on perceptions and relationships, qualitative, in addition to quantitative research, was crucial in illustrating how national events may have affected law enforcement officers and thereafter affected the way they perform their duties. It was not enough to simply quantify how many officers may believe they have changed their attitude, style, and tactics in response to events; rather, we must examine how and why they may have changed in order to gain a true appreciation of the change, if any, that may have occurred.

All interviews were conducted in a professional setting free of distractions. Interviews were conducted within offices to minimize distractions or interruptions. Most important to this
work was its timing within national events. The responses provided were based on reactions to events that cannot be ethically reproduced.

**Data Analysis**

A Likert scale was used to gather responses for each survey question. In Lacosta-Gabari, et al. (2009), it is noted that Likert scales have a high degree of reliability and validity. Data collected from the survey were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as graphs and tables.

The interview questions emerged from the analysis of the survey data. Data analysis of the qualitative information gained from interviews followed procedures suggested by Cresswell (2014) and are detailed in Chapter III. Transcripts were first reviewed and coded individually. Then the interviews were re-read collectively and analyzed using cross-case analysis.

**Significance of the Study**

This study examined whether patrol officers have changed their tactics as a direct result of national events and subsequent social movements they have spawned, including high-profile police-related shootings and the rise of the Black Lives Matter initiative. While a great deal has been written about the triggering events and the subsequent social response, little has been written about their effects on day-to-day patrol tactics. A better understanding of how national events affect everyday patrol departments nationwide can better prepare their police officers to cope with the effects of future national events.

The findings of this study may be utilized by both frontline supervisors, addressing the needs of their assigned bodies, and upper tier supervisors, specifically those with the ability to set or alter policy, to better prepare their departments for the responses of their patrol division to national events. The significance of this study is not limited to the confines of reactions to
specific triggering events, but rather it serves as an analysis of how patrol officers respond to national events in which the field of law enforcement is involved.

**Limitations**

One of the greatest difficulties in conducting a study of this scope is the fact there is not a set definition of responsibilities for law enforcement officers within the United States. In many jurisdictions police officers do not have the same responsibilities as sheriff’s officers, while municipal officers will not have the same responsibilities as state officers. Examining relationships and responses is further complicated by the facts that officers may serve rural, suburban, or urban environments and population demographics may vary greatly from location to location, further complicating reactions and responses. This study was limited to one urban police department.

The study was also dependent on the sampling pool providing honest answers. As this study involves a workplace environment, government relations, public relations, media relations, social constructs, and a host of other factors that may cause officers to fear retribution or other consequences, it is imperative that all subjects involved be assured that confidences be maintained.

There is also the risk of personal bias in such a study. As a patrolman myself I may be unaware that my personal opinions are guiding my work. Being a patrolman grants me access to information others would not be able to acquire, but it also risks an insider bias that may taint or appear to do so in this study.

By focusing on patrol officers and supervisors, this study concentrates on those officers with the most general public exposure and therefore the most relevant experiences. It was not designed to encompass every officer within every role within every department, nationwide. Not
overstating the focus of this study, it sought to provide a window within the police profession in one of its most challenging times.

**Delimitations**

The study was limited by its size. The sampling pool was dictated by one urban police department willing to allow its members to take part in a study, then further cut by those actively within patrol, and finally by those who met the required criteria and were willing to participate voluntarily without compensation. I focused on northern New Jersey, as it is the area with which I have the greatest familiarity and would best be able to utilize professional networks and gather honest responses within a field notoriously sequestered from those outside the field.

**Definition of Terms**

**Ferguson Effect** – an idea that increased scrutiny of police after the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, has led to an increase in crime in major U.S. cities and a less vigorous police enforcement of the law.

**Police Officers and Officers** – sworn officers in a police department.

**Rank and file officers** – sworn personnel assigned to patrol, detectives, and nonsupervisory personnel.

**Sergeants** – first-line supervisors, often the commander of a squad consisting of multiple rank and file officers.

**Squad** – the smallest partition of the patrol division, consisting of officers under the direct command of a superior officer, most often a sergeant.

**Lieutenants** – rank directly above sergeant, often the commander of a platoon consisting of multiple squads.
Platoon – a partition of the patrol division consisting of multiple squads under the supervision of a superior officer, most often a lieutenant.

Division – the personnel subsections of a police department portioned by job function, including, but not limited to, the patrol division, the detective division, and the community policing division.

Administrators – officers with the rank of lieutenant or higher, including, but not limited to, captains, and the Chief of Police.

Chief of Police – the highest ranking officer within a police department and the acting officer in command.

Summary

Chapter I introduced this research study exploring the impact of recent national events involving police and minorities on police patrol tactics. Chapter II offers a review of the existing literature on the interaction of police and minorities, considering the historical background of policing in America, a review of contemporary clashes between police and minorities, and police morale and culture. Chapter III details the research design for this study, considering design selection, data collection, and data analysis. Chapter IV presents the findings resulting from the data collection and analysis. Finally, Chapter V discusses the implications of the findings compared to prior research studies, draws conclusions from this research, and offers recommendations for future research, policy, and practice.
CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter consists of five sections and reviews the existing literature pertaining to the effects the events surrounding recent police-involved shootings have had on day-to-day practices within law enforcement agencies. The chapter begins with a description of the literature search procedures. The next section presents a historical perspective of policing in America, considering the role of police officers in the larger social context. This is followed by a review of the effects of the events of recent clashes between police and citizens. Police culture and morale are discussed next. The final section reviews a recent major research report on how police view their jobs and the impact on police officers of recent fatal encounters between police and African Americans.

Literature Search Procedures

The literary search for this paper included electronic resources such as the online archives of the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Chicago Tribune, the Saint Louis Post-Dispatch, and the Los Angeles Times. Additional digital resources utilized included Academic Search Complete, Educational Resource Information Center (ERIC), (EBSCO), (A&I), Proquest ERIC, Proquest Multiple Databases, Proquest Social Science Journals, Proquest Psychology Journals, Google Scholar, the Seton Hall University Library online system, the websites of individual law enforcement agencies, the websites of individual law enforcement unions, and numerous resources published by the United States government.

Search terms utilized in electronic searches included the following: police-involved shootings, police-involved violence, Charles Oatman, Augusta riots, Rodney King, Los Angeles

Books utilized included those published within the fields of law enforcement, finance, management, and history. Periodicals utilized included *NJ Cop Magazine* and *Police Chief Magazine*. When possible, standing orders, practices, and policies of actual law enforcement agencies were cited. Also utilized were a number of materials published by the two largest police unions in the United States: the Fraternal Order of Police and the Policemen’s Benevolent Association.

**Criteria for Inclusion and Exclusion of Literature**

All studies utilized in this review met most, if not all, of the following criteria:

- English language
- Written and published post 1990 unless theoretical in nature or historical in context primarily pertaining to Charles Oatman and the Augusta riots
- Journal articles were peer reviewed
- Articles were published by respected sources
- Papers and theses reviewed by faculty of accredited colleges and universities within the United States
- Government documents including actual policies
- Government reports including reviews of actual policies and practices
- Legislation pertinent to the subject matter
- Public statements provided by parties involved
Public statements made by legislators, politicians, group leaders, and other individuals within the public sphere with direct connections to the subject matter explored

Digital publications from credible authors, publishers, and accountability practices

Studies rejected from consideration for this review included the following:

- Non-English studies
- Studies pertaining to incidents or other subject matter taking place outside of the United States
- Digital sources that could not be substantiated by a secondary source

**History of Policing**

During the Colonial Period in America (seventeenth and eighteenth centuries), towns were usually small and close knit. There was little need for formal police to enforce the law. Communities exerted strong social controls, often through religion. Walker (1998) states, “Crime and sin were synonymous; an offense against God was an offense against society and vice versa” (p. 16). Policing was done by community volunteers without many rules and designed to meet the needs of each community (Potter, 2013). While there were county sheriffs, their major responsibility was to collect taxes (Monkkonen, 1981).

The modern police force, as we know it today, emerged from a British model developed by Sir Robert Peel in 1829. The nine Peelian principles are the foundation for today’s law enforcement and are as follows:

1. The basic mission for which police exist is to prevent crime and disorder.
2. The ability of police to perform their duties is dependent upon public approval of police actions.

3. Police must secure the willing cooperation of the public in voluntary observance of the law to be able to secure and maintain the respect of the police.

4. The degree of cooperation of the public that can be secured diminishes proportionately to the necessity of the use of physical force.

5. Police seek and preserve public favor not by catering to public opinion but by constantly demonstrating absolute impartial service to the law.

6. Police use physical force to the extent necessary to secure observance of the law or to restore order only when the exercise of persuasion, advice and warning is found to be insufficient.

7. Police, at all times, should maintain a relationship with the public that gives reality to the tradition that the police are the public and the public are the police; the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence.

8. Police should always direct their attention strictly towards their functions and never appear to usurp the powers of the judiciary.

9. The test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder, not the visible evidence of police action in dealing with it (Sir Robert, 2014, par. 10).

These nine Peelian Principles of Modern Policing continue to be the bases of contemporary law enforcement.
Political Era

Rapid urbanization in the United States resulted in a need for organized policing. New York City established the first modern police department in 1845, followed rapidly by Boston, Philadelphia, St. Louis (1846), Chicago (1854), and Los Angeles (1869). These departments addressed rising criminal activity and a need to maintain order (DeLung, 2016).

As police departments expanded, the Peelian Principles were used to guide the development of police policies and police responsibilities. The new departments were bureaucratically organized, publically funded, had full time police as employees, and employees were responsible to a government authority. In the early departments, politics were rampant, with appointments often based on patronage (De Lung, 2016; Balko, 2014). With patronage so prevalent, police were best known for corruption and brutality (Balko, 2014).

Reform Era

The beginning of the twentieth century saw the establishment of several commissions to investigate policing with goals of creating professional police departments and removing politics from policing. The concept of professionalism emerged as the job of police officers became a career with its own standards, entry requirements, and specialized knowledge (Balko, 2014). “The professionalism movement created the modern police organization: a centralized authoritarian bureaucracy focused on crime control” (Walker, 1998, p. 170).

August Vollmer, the police chief in Berkeley, California, from 1905 to 1932 pioneered efforts to reform police departments. He established an organizational structure with clear hierarchical divisions and specialty units. He and other chiefs introduced the use of police radios, squad cars, crime labs, and higher hiring standards. Departments in this era focused on crime control as their major responsibility (Walker, 1998).
The 1960s

During the Civil Rights movement, many protests erupted with confrontations between the public and the police, including violence and rioting. The 1960s saw an increase in overall crime rates and violent crime. Fueled by direct confrontations between the police and the public, Black citizens expressed frustration with perceived discrimination by the police. This led to riots in most major cities, including Watts, Harlem, Detroit, and Newark, New Jersey. These riots and a massacre in Texas were instrumental towards moving police to militaristic actions.

In 1966 the so-called Texas Tower massacre resulted in 13 people killed and more than 30 injured on the University of Texas at Austin campus. A lone gunman shot people from a tower as police below were unable to reach the shooter with their small weapons. Police had to go home to get hunting rifles to return fire (DeLung, 2016).

The rash of urban riots and the Texas massacre raised the issue of the ability of police to respond to such incidents. Police chiefs decided that a unit was needed for an immediate response. This was the beginning of modern SWAT teams. Congress created the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration to provide considerable funding to police departments.

The 1970 Augusta Riots

On May 9, 1970, Charles Oatman, a mentally disabled 16-year-old was found beaten to death within a jail cell in Augusta, Georgia. Early reports claimed that Oatman had fallen out of his bunk bed, but rumors spread across the Black community that Oatman had actually been beaten to death by guards. Riots ensued across the city and by May 13, 1970, twenty buildings had been destroyed, 60 people were injured, and six Black men were shot and killed by police. The riots ended after more than 2,000 National Guard members responded to the city to keep the peace. In the wake of the Augusta Riots, two inmates were convicted in the beating death of
Charles Oatman. All officers involved in the shootings of the six Black males were tried and acquitted. There were no reported riots in Augusta or anywhere else after the acquittal of the officers involved and there was little, if any, measurable change in police policy nationwide in response to the riot. The fallout from the events in Augusta were not unlike so many similar events before it, and some after. Reaction was centralized to the city in which events occurred and had little effect on law enforcement elsewhere (Southern Regional Council, 1970). This would not be the case with the events surrounding the beating of Rodney King.

**Rodney King and the 1992 Los Angeles Riots**

On March 3, 1991, California Highway Patrol officers attempted to pull over Rodney Glen King, III, as he drove on Interstate 210. After a high-speed chase, King was pulled from his vehicle and beaten by police officers on the scene. Much of the beating was recorded on a camcorder by George Holliday, who later sent the video to a local news station. Commercially accessible camcorders were not released until the 1980s and were still a rarity in the 1990s. The video recording of the Rodney King incident was broadcast across the country by local stations; and CNN, a 24-hour news network founded in the 1980s but growing with the spread of cable television in the 1990s, offered many Americans their first look at actual violence between police and African Americans (Troy, 2016).

Unlike Augusta in 1970, there were no riots in Los Angeles immediately after news broke of the incident. Instead, the video cemented the opinion in many minds that the officers involved had committed one, if not multiple crimes, against King. Four officers were tried. The trial was heavily covered by media outlets throughout its proceedings. After seven days of jury deliberations, all four officers were acquitted of assault, while three of the four were acquitted of
using excessive force. The jury could not return a verdict on the fourth officer’s charge of excessive force. Rioting began that day.

More than 1,100 buildings were destroyed, over 2,000 people were injured, and 55 people died during the unrest. Some estimates of material losses have reached $1 bilion. Though both are tragic events centered on somewhat similar events, the statistics of the 1992 Los Angeles riots dwarf those of the 1970 Augusta riots. One of the other key distinctions between these two events is the fact that smaller riots broke out around the country after the Rodney King trial. Las Vegas, Nevada, Tampa, Florida, Seattle, Washington, San Francisco, and San Jose, California, were just some of the cities that saw protests and actual attacks on residential, commercial, government, and often police properties or personnel (Stewart, 2012).

As a result of the riots and the racial unrest that followed, the Los Angeles Police Department instituted new policies and undertook new initiatives to improve both police training and community relations. The Los Angeles Board of Police Commissioners hired former federal judge and director of the FBI and CIA William H. Webster and former Newark Police Department Director Hubert Williams to investigate both the riots and the Los Angeles Police Department in general to further provide recommendations for solutions to the growing problems facing the city. The analysis they produced, now known as the Webster Report (1992), recommended sweeping changes, including mandatory cultural sensitivity training for all officers, the creation of new positions, including community liaisons and other such positions with focus on building community ties, a new emphasis on community policing, the abolishment of racially based profiling, and greater emphasis on minority recruitment within the department (Webster, 1992).
Cities involved in subsequent riots linked to the Rodney King verdict naturally followed suit, but change was not limited to these locations. A wave of reforms were instituted by law enforcement agencies nationwide as a preemptive measure of avoiding another such incident (Stewart, 2012).

**Trayvon Martin and the Founding of the Black Lives Matter Movement**

On February 26, 2012, 17-year-old Trayvon Martin was shot and killed in Sanford, Florida, by George Zimmerman, a volunteer with a local neighborhood watch program sanctioned by the Sanford Police Department. On that evening, Zimmerman contacted the Sanford Police Department, reporting Martin as “a real suspicious guy.” Zimmerman began following Martin, even after being advised not to by Sanford Dispatch. A violent encounter ensued, resulting in Martin’s death. Zimmerman alleged that Martin had attacked him and argued that his actions were legal and justified under Florida’s “stand your ground” laws. As a result, the Sanford Police Department initially refused to charge Zimmerman, citing a lack of evidence (Robles, 2012).

Protests took shape in cities and towns nationwide. The majority of protests remained peaceful with sporadic incidents of violence or criminal mischief being attributed as reactions to the shooting. The protests and growing pressure from government officials eventually forced charges to be filed against Zimmerman. Zimmerman was tried for second degree murder and acquitted in a trial by jury. Fears arose after the verdict was announced that the United States might again see reactionary riots like those seen after the Rodney King incident, but after the shooting, there were only minor incidents of assault and criminal mischief pronounced as the verdict. Protests again remained peaceful, and within the protests the social media tag #blacklivesmatter was born (Herstory, blacklivesmatter.com, 2016).
The term “Black Lives Matter,” or “#blacklivesmatter,” is credited to Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi. According to Garza (2014), the Black Lives Matter movement, “is a call to action for Black people after 17-year-old Trayvon Martin was posthumously placed on trial for his own murder and the killer, George Zimmerman, was not held accountable for the crime he committed. It was a response to the anti-Black racism that permeates our society and also, unfortunately, our movements” (par.1). Racism and responses to racism are not limited to the Rodney King incident or the Black Lives Matter movement, but what separates them from previous incidents and responses is the role of technology (Gorner, Heinzmann, & Sweeney, 2016). Whereas previous riots sparked by interactions between police and African Americans were, for the most part, localized to their respective cities or immediate surrounding geographical locations, the national implications of incidents between police and African Americans has significantly grown, beginning with Rodney King and thereafter expanding and organizing under the Black Lives Matter movement.

**Michael Brown and the 2014 Ferguson Riots**

While the name “Black Lives Matter” was coined in response to the death of Trayvon Martin, it truly rose in national recognition in the aftermath of the death of Michael Brown. On August 9, 2014, Ferguson, Missouri, Police Officer Darren Wilson responded to a report of a robbery at a local convenience store. In doing so, he encountered the accused, 18-year-old Michael Brown. A violent struggle ensued, resulting in the shooting of Brown by Wilson (Unit). Varying accounts of the incident circulated in the media and within the city of Ferguson. Shortly thereafter, protests, both peaceful and violent, broke out (Cuenca, 2014).

Protests in Ferguson occurred in three major waves: immediately after the shooting, after the acquittal of Officer Wilson, and on the one-year anniversary of the shooting. There was
further unrest at other periods, including after the police-involved death of Freddie Grey. The riots were marked by numerous incidents of gunfire, including incidents in which both civilians and police were wounded. The cost of the damage caused was estimated to be in the millions (Cuenca, 2014).

The Ferguson Effect

In the wake of the Ferguson riots, a host of new concepts and theories within the law enforcement field were proposed. In a November 15, 2014, interview with the St. Louis Dispatch, St. Louis Police Chief Sam Dotson claimed that officers under his command were hesitant to enforce the law out of fear of being charged criminally. Chief Dotson coined the phrase ‘the Ferguson Effect’ to describe this supposed phenomenon. Dotson used the term as a means of explaining a spike in specific violent crimes within St. Louis shortly after the events in Ferguson, claiming that criminals were emboldened by the fatigue and negative effects on morale the recent protests and national coverage had spurred within police ranks. Dotson cited recent statistics highlighting a rise in crime, but a decrease in arrests, as proof of his claim (Byers, 2014).

The term ‘Ferguson Effect’ gained national attention and different individuals, mostly within the media or government, used it to different ends (Fabian, 2015). Under Dotson’s original use of the term, the effect is two pronged: (1) that police officers are less vigorously enforcing laws out of fear of possible backlash and (2) as a result, specific crimes in specific locales are on the rise.

The first prong of Dotson’s assertion claims that officers have altered their tactics in light of recent national events, most notably the events in Ferguson and the perceived backlash against Officer Darren Wilson. In a 2015 interview with the New Yorker, Officer Wilson stated that
after shooting Michael Brown he was villainized in the media and soon began receiving death threats towards himself and his then unborn child (Halpern, 2015). The sentiment of feeling villainized by the media has been echoed by other officers with no connection to police-involved shootings (Gorner, Heinzmann, & Sweeney, 2016). Even after Wilson was cleared by the U.S. Justice Department, he was unable to return to a normal life. Wilson was forced to leave the Ferguson Police Department; and after applying for multiple positions as a police officer in other departments, he was told that the shooting had created too great a backlash and, in light of the backlash, he was “unemployable” (Halpern, 2015).

Dotson cited anecdotal evidence, specifically feedback he received from officers under his command, that such a backlash had altered their tactics. Dotson then connected those assertions to a recent drop in arrests and a spike in specific crimes. Dotson assumes that if there has been a widespread change in officer tactics, efforts, and attitudes, it has been entirely, or at least for the most part, defensive. He makes no assertion that some officers may have had an opposite reaction and altered their tactics in a proactive or more aggressive way (Byers, 2014).

The second prong of Dotson’s claim is that the recent spike in crimes and drop in arrests within certain offenses is directly tied to the first prong of his argument. It can be argued that this is and is not true. While there is statistical evidence that Dotson is correct in noting a drop in arrests for certain crimes during the period in question, this is not causation. Within the St. Louis Dispatch interview, Dotson expanded upon his definition of the Ferguson effect by stating that a portion of the decrease in arrests was, in part, due to a large number of officers being reallocated from patrol to protest details or removed from active patrol entirely to attend additional training (Byers, 2014). While such actions were direct responses to the riots in Ferguson, they are not
tied to morale and individual tactics. Such facts are key to assessing whether or not a so-called Ferguson effect has had an effect on other police departments.

The Murders of Police Officers

In the wake of the Ferguson riots, there were additional deaths involving police interaction. Cities such as New York, Baltimore, Baton Rouge, and elsewhere saw protests and incidents of rioting as a result. Civil disobedience was almost expected after each incident. Though many protests ended in violence or the destruction of property, few were as calculated a response as what would occur shortly thereafter. In the months following the riots in Ferguson, officers found themselves targeted by individuals with the specific intent of killing police officers.

A Harris County, Texas, sheriff’s deputy, four Dallas police officers, a Dallas area Rapid Transit officer, two Palm Beach police officers, two Baton Rouge police officers, and one East Baton Rouge Parish sheriff’s officer were among the officers killed in ambush style shootings. All were killed by Black males during or shortly after a time of protest or riot in response to a police-involved shooting. Many attributed the killings of these officers, wholly or in part, to the visceral rhetoric that arose during protests and riots. In numerous protests nationwide protestors were heard chanting anti-police mantras including, “Pigs in a blanket, fry ’em like bacon.” These incidents were recorded and rebroadcast over television and the internet or reported on in print and social media (Comp, 2016).

Police Morale and Tactics

The targeting of police officers, in addition to growing criticism, media negative portrayals, and the day-to-day stresses of the profession have ushered in new lows in police morale. Officers in Chicago described recent events as a “perfect storm” which had turned
morale to “complete garbage” (Gorner, Heinzmann, & Sweeney, 2016, par.1). One was quoted as saying, “A lot of officers are like, ‘This is the last straw. No more proactive anything’” (Gorner, Heinzmann, & Sweeney, 2016, par. 10). This attitude is not unique to Chicago, as newspapers nationwide began running stories about their local police departments citing anecdotal evidence directly from local officers and supervisors, much like those in Chicago, St. Louis, and elsewhere.

The dip in morale has had a documented effect on officer tactics, one that could mean the difference between life and death. In the fall of 2016, a female Chicago police officer, a seventeen-year veteran of law enforcement, was beaten while on the scene of a motor vehicle accident. The officer was armed and feared for her life but refused to pull her gun for protection. According to Chicago Police Superintendent Eddie Johnson, "She didn't want her family or the department to go through the scrutiny the next day on the national news" (Hawkins, 2016, par. 2). This officer could have been beaten to death before backup arrived but still chose not to pull her gun out of fear and a drain on morale that is a staple of the Ferguson effect.

As police morale fell, a countermovement did arise. Supporters of police officers began using the social media tag #bluelivesmatter, a takeoff of the Black Lives Matter tag. The Blue Lives Matter movement received some media attention, and a few sporadic public shows of support did occur, most notably in the forms of public memorials erected in front of the headquarters of agencies which lost officers in the line of duty. In addition to members of the general public showing their support, local governments took it upon themselves to offer symbols of support. In police culture a thin blue line drawn across a black background is seen as a tribute to fallen officers. In recent years, it has come to symbolize all officers, both fallen and active. It is commonly displayed as a flag or on some other emblematic item. In the wakes of
the shootings of police officers, local governments, even those not directly involved, began flying thin-blue-line flags and/or painting a blue line between yellow traffic lines on main streets.

**Behind the Badge**

In January 2017, the Pew Research Center released a report detailing a national survey of almost 8,000 police officers from 54 departments having over 100 officers, conducted by the National Police Research Platform (NPRP). The report found that “majorities of police officers say that recent high-profile encounters between Black citizens and police officers have made their job riskier, aggravated tensions between police and Blacks, and left many officers reluctant to fully carry out some of their duties” (Morin, Parker, Stepler, & Mercer, par. 1).

The Pew survey was one of the largest surveys ever conducted with a national representative sample of police. The Pew study is especially relevant to this dissertation literature review, as it quantitatively explored the effects on police and the public of recent national events of deaths of Black Americans during police encounters. This dissertation also explores the same effects on police, using qualitative methods.

According to the Pew report, these deadly encounters have had a profound impact on police. Some key findings of the Pew report follow:

- A majority of police officers say that their jobs have become more difficult in the wake of the high-profile shootings of Blacks and other minorities.
- 93% of officers are more concerned about their safety.
- 76% of officers have been reluctant to use force when it is appropriate.
- 75% of officers say that interactions between police and Blacks have become more tense.
- 72% of officers are less likely to stop and question people who seem suspicious.
- 86% of officers say that the public does not understand the risks and challenges that they face.

- Less than half of rank and file officers had at least four hours of training in some key areas over the last 12 months (Pew, 2017).

The study for the Pew report was conducted by the NPRP, which is a consortium of researchers and practitioners from across the country. Data were gathered from online interviews administered between May and August, 2016. Participating police departments were randomly selected with all eligible officers from those departments eligible to participate. All responses were anonymous.

Summary

This chapter offered a review of the literature exploring patrol responses to national events involving police and acts of violence. Sources examined included newsprint, historical manuscripts, nonfiction publications, specific studies, laws, and printed public policies. Most important of these pieces to this work is the Pew Research study “Behind the Badge.” As historical texts have concluded that there may be a connection between high-profile events and changes in patrol tactics and “Behind the Badge” concludes that officers state they have changed their tactics on a national level, this dissertation will bridge the gap between historical inferences and national poll results by examining a singular department to determine not only if there has been a change in patrol tactics in a specific department but what that change has entailed and how it came into effect.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter details the data and proposed research methodology. The chapter includes the following: population and sample studied, instrumentation used, data collected, data analysis, and how the research procedures were validated.

The purpose of this study was to explore what effects, if any, recent high profile events involving police and minorities and related movements have had on law enforcement patrol tactics within a jurisdiction not directly involved in such events. The research design selected for this study is a mixed methods strategy that incorporates both quantitative data from a survey and qualitative data from interviews.

The following research questions guided the study:

1. How do officers perceive a difference, if any, in their interactions with the general public that they may attribute to a reaction to national events?
2. What effects, if any, have movements such as Black Lives Matter had on daily patrol tactics?
3. Have supervisors initiated any changes in response to recent national events and the movements they have spawned?

Background

As a member of a patrol division within a police department not directly involved in a high-profile incident of violence between police and a minority group, I have a vested interest in the conclusions of this study. While the department researched in this study is unnamed, it is important to establish that I am not a member of the department studied and have no personal or professional ties to said department. As a member of a patrol division not directly connected to
the department being studied, I possess a practitioner’s knowledge of the field without risking the biases of examining an organization with which I am not affiliated.

Design

The design chosen for this study was a mixed methods sequential, explanatory design in which quantitative data were collected through a survey and analyzed prior to the collection and analysis of qualitative data gathered from interviews. Data from the first phase of this study contributed to questions in the second phase before both data sources were integrated. Cresswell (2014) suggests that mixed methods may offer a more thorough understanding of the problem at hand due to the strength of drawing on both qualitative and quantitative research. Mixed methods can expand the scope of this study to offset the weakness of a single-method study (Blake, 1989; Rossman & Wilson, 1991). One of the benefits of conducting mixed methods research is the ability to use triangulation to examine the same phenomenon by approaching the phenomenon from different vantage points using different methods and techniques. Both words and numbers are used to communicate the findings of a study, making the results more usable to a wider range of readers (Sandelowski et al., 2012). The final results of this study include both observations and statistical analysis, validating the results of the study.

Site

This study was conducted in Maple City, a pseudonym used in place of the actual city, within the state of New Jersey in 2017. The Maple City pseudonym was used to ensure as much confidentiality as possible to the voluntary subjects of this study. Maple City is a densely populated community whose inhabitants identify primarily as minorities. The city attracts large numbers of Hispanic and Muslim immigrants. According to the most recent U.S. Census,
approximately one-third of the city population lives below the poverty line; and only about 10% of the population has a college degree.

Maple City is considered to be one of New Jersey’s most violent places with routinely more violent crime than all the other cities in its county combined. While there have been some improvements in crime reduction, Maple City’s Uniform Crime Report for 2016 indicates that the number of homicides were the same as the previous year, while rapes rose significantly. Gun violence and the drug trade are still going strong in the city (Malinconico, 2017).

The Maple City Police Department employs about 600 people. The number of law enforcement officers is below the state average. The Department is divided into smaller divisions such as Field Operations, Narcotics/Vice, Major Crimes, Patrol, and others. The patrol division is by far the largest, most visible division with the most direct interaction with members of the general public.

Sampling

The sampling of participants in this study was voluntary and anonymous. Participants were identified by rank and, only when necessary in a few specific examples, by background demographics. No participants in this study were promised or provided with any form of compensation for their participation, and no form of retaliation was threatened or enacted against any party not wishing to participate.

Participants were limited to active members of the Maple City Patrol Division. No members of other divisions, retired members of the Department, or members out of service due to disciplinary, medical, or other reasons were sampled.

For the quantitative portion of this study, patrol officers, the most junior rank within the patrol division, were invited to participate in completing a questionnaire. For the qualitative
portion of this study, face-to-face interviews were conducted with the researcher and frontline patrol officers, most often sergeants, the second most junior rank in the patrol division and those with direct supervision of patrol officers. Additional interviews were conducted with supervisors of higher rank to gather information about the Department.

Data Collection

Permission to conduct this study was given by the Maple City Police Director and the Seton Hall Institutional Review Board. Quantitative data were collected via a survey administered to patrol officers who agreed to participate. The survey was an abridged and modified version of a Pew Research Center survey utilized in a study entitled “Behind the Badge: Amid Protests and Calls for Reform, How Police View Their Jobs, Key Issues and Recent Fatal Encounters between Blacks and Police” (Morin, Parker, Stepler, & Mercer). Use of this survey was conducted within the guidelines and limitations required by the Pew Research Center’s “Use Policy.” (Pew Research, 2014).

Authored by Rich Morin, Kim Parker, Renee Stepler, and Andrew Mercer, “Behind the Badge” was published on July 11, 2016. The study outlines its methodology as follows: “Most of the data in this report come from online interviews completed by 7,917 law enforcement officers from 54 police and sheriff’s departments across the United States. Of these, 6,795 interviews came from 43 municipal police departments and 1,122 came from 11 county sheriff’s departments. The surveys were administered between May 19 and August 14, 2016.”

An introductory letter and attached printed survey, approved by the Maple City Police Director, was distributed to all Maple City patrol officers during the daily roll call spanning three days, inviting their participation in this research. A copy of the survey is included in the appendix. Officers who volunteered to participate completed the survey, which was then placed
in a sealed box for collection by the researcher. Officers were assured that participation was anonymous and that individual responses would not be available to anyone in their department. The data collected from the survey provided the basis for the qualitative part of this study.

The survey consisted of ten multiple-choice questions, using a Likert scale for response, selected from the Pew study used in the report “Behind the Badge.” The ten questions were specifically chosen for their focus on police interactions with the general public in light of recent events and police responses to such events. Two additional questions were added for organizational purposes. The first, “Are you currently assigned to the patrol division of your department?” was added to ensure that those completing the survey are currently serving within the patrol division, which is the focus of this study. The results of the second question, “How many years of experience do you have on patrol?” were not used within the confines of this study.

In total, 85 surveys were completed and returned. Of those 85, I removed eight surveys from consideration due to a lack of consistency in answering questions or the complete or the near complete use of the “No answer” option across the entire survey. The remaining 77 surveys reflect a majority (68%) of the 114 officers within the Maple City Patrol Division, a sizeable pool from which to draw conclusions. The survey was summarized using descriptive statistics. Table 1 contains survey questions for related Research Questions 1 and 2.
Table 1

Survey Questions for Related Research Questions 1 and 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Survey Questions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How do officers perceive a difference, if any, in their interactions with the general public that they may attribute to a reaction to national events?</td>
<td>1. How well do you think the public understands the risks and challenges that law enforcement officers face on the job?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. In your department have officers become less willing to stop and question people who seem suspicious?</td>
<td>2. In your department have officers become less willing to stop and question people who seem suspicious?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Has your department taken steps to improve relations between police and Blacks?</td>
<td>3. Has your department taken steps to improve relations between police and Blacks?</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Have officers in your department become more concerned about their safety?</td>
<td>4. Have officers in your department become more concerned about their safety?</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Has your department modified its policies or procedures about the use of force?</td>
<td>5. Has your department modified its policies or procedures about the use of force?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. In your department have interactions between police and Blacks become more tense?</td>
<td>6. In your department have interactions between police and Blacks become more tense?</td>
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| 2. What effects, if any, have movements such as Black Lives Matter had on daily patrol tactics? | 1. How much, if at all, do you think these protests have been motivated by a genuine desire to hold officers accountable for their actions? |
| 2. How much, if at all, do you think these protests have been motivated by longstanding bias against the police? | 2. How much, if at all, do you think these protests have been motivated by longstanding bias against the police? |
| 3. In general, have these high-profile incidents involving police and African Americans affected the difficulty of your job? | 3. In general, have these high-profile incidents involving police and African Americans affected the difficulty of your job? |
| 4. Have officers been more reluctant to use force when it is appropriate? | 4. Have officers been more reluctant to use force when it is appropriate? |

After the collected surveys were analyzed, frontline patrol supervisors with direct supervision of patrol officers were invited, via a consent letter, to participate in an interview which would last about 30 minutes. Six supervisors agreed to participate. No profiles of these officers are provided in order to protect their confidentiality. Before the interviews were
conducted, the interview protocol was discussed with my advisor. Interview questions were reviewed by a patrol lieutenant and sergeant who were not members of the Maple City Police Department to ensure objectivity. The one-on-one interviews were conducted at a mutually agreed upon place and time. The interviews were semi-structured with open-ended questions to explore officers’ perceptions of their subordinates’ views and actions. Semi-structured interviews are best suited to gain descriptive insights of a particular phenomenon (Boydan & Bicklen, 2003). While semi-structured interviews provide a focus for the interviews, the structure also allows the interviewer to ask clarifying questions. Thus, responses may vary significantly in providing data related to the research questions.

The interview questions emerged from the survey results and a review of the literature with questions intended to explore interesting, confusing, or significant survey responses. The table below (Table 2) provides questions that addressed the study’s third research question.

**Table 2**

*Interview Questions that Addressed Research Question 3*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
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<tr>
<td>Have supervisors initiated any changes in response to recent national events and the movements they have spawned?</td>
<td>How would you characterize the interactions between your subordinates and minorities prior to and post recent national events?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Have any of your subordinates reported a difference in dealing with the public in light of recent national events?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Have you noticed any difference in the way your subordinates interact with the public in light of recent events?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Have you noticed any changes in the tactics of those under your command in reaction to recent national events?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Has your department issued any orders, training, or other responses in light of recent events?</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Interviewing participants offers an opportunity to understand the lived experiences of people and the meaning that they make of those experiences (Seidman, 2006). In addition to audio recording the interviews, field notes were taken to record observations of each participant, including body language, voice tone, pauses in the conversation, and reactions. After each interview, member checking was used to allow each participant to review the recorded information and make any changes to the data.

All documents from the research are kept in a locked file cabinet in the researcher’s office. Three years after completion of the dissertation, all records will be destroyed.

**Data Analysis**

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the results of the survey. Tables and graphs were included to summarize the survey responses.

The analysis of the qualitative information gathered from the interviews followed the steps suggested by Cresswell (2014). They are as follows:

1. Organize and prepare the data for analysis.
2. Read through all data.
3. Begin detailed analysis with a coding process.
4. Use the coding process to generate a description of the setting and people as well as categories or themes for analysis.
5. Advance how the description will be represented in the qualitative analysis.
6. Make an interpretation or meaning of the data.
All interviews were transcribed by the researcher, then carefully read for accuracy. Each interview was reviewed on its own and coded. Then all the interviews were re-read collectively and analyzed together, using cross-case analysis. As responses were compared, clear patterns and themes emerged. These included the following: a mistrust of the media, supervisors’ belief in the potential for community policing, significant divergences from national opinions expressed in the Pew poll, and levels of connections and disconnections between subordinates and supervisors on specific survey questions.

**Ethical Considerations**

In conducting this research, I am very much aware of the ethical issues in collecting and analyzing data. First, the study is of value, as it has the potential to improve police officers’ responses to national events. Participants in the study were treated respectfully and their confidentiality preserved. During interviews I was aware of my potential bias and insured that interview participants were aware of the purpose for the study and my role as a researcher. I was careful to ensure that participants in the study were not exposed to any risk.

**Validity and Reliability**

Questions on the survey were taken within the use guidelines from the Pew Research Study “Behind the Badge (2017),” which has established validity and reliability (Pew Research, 2014). Survey questions were further reviewed for this study by a panel of experts to ensure that the questions measured what they were intended to measure. The survey was also first administered to non-participants from other police departments to ensure readability and understanding. Review of the questions by a jury of experts and administration of the survey to non-participants further ensures validity and reliability. The use of a Likert scale on the survey
was selected because such a scale is one of the most reliable ways to measure opinions or perceptions in studies such as this one (McLead, 2008).

Interview questions were analyzed by a jury of experts and were revised based on their input. This helped ensure that questions were clearly stated, leading questions were avoided, and attempts were made to avoid researcher bias. Member checking was utilized after the completion of each interview.

Zohrabi (2013) suggests that using different types of procedures for collecting data through different sources can augment the validity and reliability of the data and their interpretation. Triangulating data in a mixed methods study has been considered useful in improving the reliability of a study (Lillis, 2016).
CHAPTER IV
FINDINGS

Introduction

This mixed methods study was conducted during the winter of 2018 to explore the impact of recent high-profile national events involving police and minorities on patrol tactics. Quantitative data for the study was obtained via a survey of patrol officers and qualitative data was obtained via interviews of patrol supervisors in one police department located within a New Jersey urban city jurisdiction.

Quantitative Data

Ten multiple choice questions were selected for this study from the Pew survey used in “Behind the Badge: Amid Protests and Calls for Reform, How Police View Their Jobs, Key Issues and Recent Fatal Encounters between Blacks and Police,” by R. Morin, K. Parker, and A. Mercer. The Pew survey is the largest, most relevant, and most current survey of American law enforcement officers available. The Pew survey consists of numerous questions, many of which directly address the guiding research questions of this study. The multiple-choice questions and their possible answers were reprinted verbatim from the Pew study, with the exception of being assigned new ordered numbers, in a survey distributed to members of the Maple City Police Department (see Appendix C).

In total, 85 surveys for this research were completed and returned. Of those 85, I removed eight surveys from consideration due to a lack of consistency in answering questions or the complete or the near complete use of the “No answer” option across an entire survey. The remaining 77 surveys reflect a majority of the 114 officers within the Maple City Patrol Division, a sizeable pool from which to draw conclusions.
The research questions that guided this study are as follows:

1. How do officers perceive a difference, if any, in their interactions with the general public that they may attribute to a reaction to national events?
2. What effects, if any, have movements such as Black Lives Matter had on daily patrol tactics?
3. Have supervisors initiated any changes in response to recent national events and the movements they have spawned?

The first two research questions are addressed in the survey and the last research question is addressed through interviews.

Quantitative Findings

For the purposes of symmetry, the responses to the Maple City Survey of patrol officers are presented below in a similar fashion to those printed in the national survey conducted by the Pew Research Center. All numbers are percentages. The percentages less than .5% are replaced by an asterisk (*). Columns/rows may not total 100% due to rounding.

The responses are displayed in table and figure format. Tables 1 through 22 and Figures 1 through 10 are adapted from the Pew Research Center national survey data in “Behind the Badge: Amid Protests and Calls for Reform, How Police View Their Jobs, Key Issues and Recent Fatal Encounters between Blacks and Police,” by R. Morin, K. Parker, and A. Mercer.

**Research Question 1:** How do officers perceive a difference, if any, in their interactions with the general public that they may attribute to a reaction to national events?

The following survey questions and their responses address Research Question 1: Survey Questions 1, 2a, 2b, 2c, 3c, and 3e.
Survey Question 1: How well do you think the public understands the risks and challenges that law enforcement officers face on the job?

The responses of the Maple City patrol officers to Survey Question 1 are displayed in Table 3 below. All numbers are percentages. The percentages less than .5% are replaced by an asterisk (*). Columns/rows may not total 100% due to rounding.

Table 3
Responses of Maple City Patrol Officers to Survey Question 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses (%)</th>
<th>Response Choices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Very well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Somewhat well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Not too well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Not well at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*</td>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Figure 1. Graphic representation of Maple City patrol officers’ responses to Survey Question 1. Adapted from the Pew Research Center national survey data.

Survey Question 2a: As you may know, demonstrations have been held in many parts of the country in recent years to protest the deaths of African Americans who died during encounters
with the police. How much, if at all, do you think these protests have been motivated by a
genuine desire to hold officers accountable for their actions?

The responses of the Maple City patrol officers to Survey Question 2a are displayed in
Table 4 below. All numbers are percentages.

Table 4

*Responses of Maple City Patrol Officers to Survey Question 2a*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses (%)</th>
<th>Response Choices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>A great deal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Not much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*Figure 2.* Graphic representation of Maple City patrol officers’ responses to Survey Question 2a. Adapted from the Pew Research Center national survey data.

**Survey Question 2b:** As you may know, demonstrations have been held in many parts of the
country in recent years to protest the deaths of African Americans who died during encounters
with the police. How much, if at all, do you think these protests have been motivated by longstanding bias against the police?

The responses of the Maple City patrol officers to Survey Question 2b are displayed in Table 5 below. All numbers are percentages.

Table 5

Responses of Maple City Patrol Officers to Survey Question 2b

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses (%)</th>
<th>Response Choices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>A great deal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Not much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Figure 3. Graphic representation of Maple City patrol officers’ responses to Survey Question 2b. Adapted from the Pew Research Center national survey data.

Survey Question 2c: As you may know, demonstrations have been held in many parts of the country in recent years to protest the deaths of African Americans who died during encounters with the police. In general, have these high-profile incidents involving police and African Americans made your job . . . Harder? Easier? Have not made a difference? No answer?
The responses of the Maple City patrol officers to Survey Question 2c are displayed in Table 6 below. All numbers are percentages.

Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses (%)</th>
<th>Response Choices</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>Harder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Easier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Have not made a difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Figure 4. Graphic representation of Maple City patrol officers’ responses to Survey Question 2c. Adapted from the Pew Research Center national survey data.

Survey Question 3c: Here is a list of things that may have happened in some police departments as a result of these high-profile incidents involving African Americans and the police. For each, indicate whether this has happened in your department or not: Officers have become more concerned about their safety.
The responses of the Maple City patrol officers to Survey Question 3c are displayed in Table 7 below. All numbers are percentages.

Table 7

*Responses of Maple City Patrol Officers to Survey Question 3c*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses (%)</th>
<th>Response Choices</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>97</td>
<td>Yes, has happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>No, has not happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*Figure 5.* Graphic representation of Maple City patrol officers’ responses to Survey Question 3c. Adapted from the Pew Research Center national survey data.

**Survey Question 3c:** Here is a list of things that may have happened in some police departments as a result of these high-profile incidents involving African Americans and the police. For each, indicate whether this has happened in your department or not: Interactions between police and Blacks have become more tense.

The responses of the Maple City patrol officers to Survey Question 3e are displayed in Table 8 below. All numbers are percentages.
Table 8

Responses of Maple City Patrol Officers to Survey Question 3e

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses (%)</th>
<th>Response Choices</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Yes, has happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>No, has not happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


A majority of the officers surveyed for this study do not believe that members of the general public understand the risks and challenges officers face in the performance of their duties. A combined 74% answered that the general public understand their risks and challenges as “Not too well” or “Not well at all.” Only 4% of police officers surveyed replied “Very well.” There has not been a police-involved shooting that has gained national attention in Maple City during the timeframe in question, meaning that the officers of Maple City, aside from being law enforcement officers, do not have a direct connection to these events yet still feel that the general
public does not grasp the risks and challenges of their jobs, including the life or death challenges of situations which have triggered recent social responses.

As many members of the general public have formed opinions on recent national events and thereafter expressed their opinions through protests and other acts, police have formed their own opinions about the protests and their motivations. In Maple City only 16% believe that the protests have not been motivated by a genuine desire at all to hold officers accountable. Only 17% actually believe that such protests are motivated “A great deal” by a genuine desire to hold officers accountable, while 36% believe “Some,” although 27 believe “Not much.” Only 4% chose the “No answer” option. It may surprise some that the numbers presented here seem to demonstrate some level of empathy officers of Maple City have with the cause of the protestors, which must then be considered with the results of the next question.

When asked “How much, if at all, do you think these protests have been motivated by longstanding bias against the police?”, 52% answered “A great deal,” 38% answered “Some,” 1% answered “Not much,” and 4% answered “Not at all,” with 4% selecting the “No answer” option. When examined in comparison to the results of the previous question, it is notable that 90% of those surveyed believe that bias against police plays some role in the motivation of these protests, but a smaller majority of 52% still believe that genuine desire to hold officers accountable is “A great deal” or “Some.” These numbers demonstrate that officers believe that a genuine desire to hold officers accountable and bias against police officers are not mutually exclusive. The officers seem to recognize that motivations for social reactions are complex and may lie within the nexus of a desire for justice, which itself may be tainted by bias.

When considering the previous two results, it is not surprising that 61% of those surveyed believe that in general, these high-profile incidents involving police and African Americans have
made their jobs harder. A total of 29% believe that they have not made a difference, while 9% chose “No answer,” and only 1% believe it has made the job easier. The previous responses illustrate that officers recognize the multifaceted nature of recent motivations to protest and that these motivations have added to the complexities of performing their duties. As such, the results of the preceding question offer perhaps the single most important look into police reactions to recent events.

In the most substantial majority response of this survey, 97% of those questioned reported that officers have become more concerned about their safety, with only 1% answering that they have not, and 1% choosing the “No answer” option. It should also be noted that this is only one of two questions that received a 1% or less result of “No answer,” indicating clear and overwhelming opinions on this matter within the patrol division of the Maple City Police Department. With near unanimous response, it is reasonable to hypothesize that officers are changing their patrol tactics because if their previous tactics were up to the challenge presented by recent social backlash there would be no need to fear for safety. Since concern for safety is a primary guiding force in police tactics, we must examine the remaining survey results to determine what changes this concern for safety has ushered in.

A majority 58% of those surveyed answered that interactions with African Americans have become more tense, while 27% answered this has not happened, and 14% selected the “No answer” option. The results of this question illustrate that police do not believe there has been a shift in police and public relations but that they themselves report that interactions with African Americans have changed, becoming more tense in the shadow of recent events and the movements they have spurred. These are first-hand data provided by frontline officers who have the most contact with the general public. Their perceptions of more tense interactions bear
witness there has been a substantial and recognizable change in the interactions of police and the general public.

**Summary of Findings of Survey Questions Under Research Question 1**

**Research Question 1:** How do officers perceive a difference, if any, in their interactions with the general public that they may attribute to a reaction to national events?

As illustrated by the survey results, members of the Maple City Police Department believe there is a difference in their interactions with the general public in light of recent national events and their subsequent social responses. A majority of those surveyed believe the general public does not understand the risks and responsibilities of police work and that interactions between officers and African Americans specifically have become more tense. Officers surveyed nearly unanimously answered that officers have become more concerned for their safety as a result. These responses offer clear motivators for changes in day-to-day patrol tactics.

Officers clearly see a difference in community relations and not one that they believe to be a positive change. The responses to the questions posed under Research Question 1 primarily speak to whether or not there has been a perceived change in public relations. With strong data concluding that officers perceive a difference in interactions with the general public, the survey questions under Research Question 2 examined what effects, if any, have been actualized in the field of patrol tactics, both at the level of department policy and the actions of individual officers.

**Research Question 2:** What effects, if any, have movements such as Black Lives Matter had on daily patrol tactics?

The following survey questions address Research Question 2: Questions 3a, 3b, 3d, 3f.

**Survey Question 3a:** Here is a list of things that may have happened in some police departments as a result of these high-profile incidents involving African Americans and the police. For each,
indicate whether this has happened in your department or not: Officers have become less willing to stop and question people who seem suspicious.

The responses of the Maple City patrol officers to Survey Question 3a are displayed in Table 9 below. All numbers are percentages.

Table 9

*Responses of Maple City Patrol Officers to Survey Question 3a*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses (%)</th>
<th>Response Choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Yes, has happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>No, has not happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
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*Figure 7.* Graphic representation of Maple City patrol officers’ responses to Survey Question 3a. Adapted from the Pew Research Center national survey data.

**Survey Question 3b:** Here is a list of things that may have happened in some police departments as a result of these high-profile incidents involving African Americans and the police. For each, indicate whether this has happened in your department or not: The department has taken steps to improve relations between police and Blacks.
The responses of the Maple City patrol officers to Survey Question 3b are displayed in Table 10 below. All numbers are percentages.

Table 10

Responses of Maple City Patrol Officers to Survey Question 3b

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses (%)</th>
<th>Response Choices</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Yes, has happened</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>No, has not happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>No answer</td>
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Figure 8. Graphic representation of Maple City patrol officers’ responses to Survey Question 3b. Adapted from the Pew Research Center national survey data.

Survey Question 3d: Here is a list of things that may have happened in some police departments as a result of these high-profile incidents involving African Americans and the police. For each, indicate whether this has happened in your department or not: The department has modified its policies or procedures about the use of force.

The responses of the Maple City patrol officers to Survey Question 3d are displayed in Table 11 below. All numbers are percentages.
Table 11

Responses of Maple City Patrol Officers to Survey Question 3d

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses (%)</th>
<th>Response Choices</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Yes, has happened</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>No, has not happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>No answer</td>
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</table>


Figure 9. Graphic representation of Maple City patrol officers’ responses to Survey Question 3d. Adapted from the Pew Research Center national survey data.

**Survey Question 3f:** Here is a list of things that may have happened in some police departments as a result of these high-profile incidents involving African Americans and the police. For each, indicate whether this has happened in your department or not: Officers have been more reluctant to use force when it is appropriate.

The responses of the Maple City patrol officers to Survey Question 3f are displayed in Table 12 below. All numbers are percentages.
Table 12

Responses of Maple City Patrol Officers to Survey Question 3f

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses (%)</th>
<th>Response Choices</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>Yes, has happened</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>No, has not happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Figure 10. Graphic representation of Maple City patrol officers’ responses to Survey Question 3f. Adapted from the Pew Research Center national survey data.

Without question, one of the most risky and challenging aspects of police work is the stopping and questioning of suspicious parties. In such interactions police approach, detain, and question those they feel may be dangerous or have dangerous intents. Many of the incidents that have triggered national reactions, such as Black Lives Matter, began with an officer stopping an individual he or she felt was suspicious. As such interactions have launched reactions from the general public, the general public’s reactions seem to have generated a reaction from the officers of Maple City, as 47% of those surveyed report officers have become less willing to stop and question people who seem suspicious. While 38% answered that this has not happened, 16%
chose not to answer. Though there is no majority answer in these results due to the large percentage of officers who chose the “No answer” option, nearly half of the officers surveyed answered that they believe officers have become less willing to stop and question those they find suspicious. When examined, this still stands as proof that the recent backlash against police officers has had a diminishing effect on the proactive nature of patrol officers. It is not unreasonable, therefore, to conclude that many officers in the field are not stopping individuals they find suspicious, meaning untold numbers of crimes may have gone undeterred or criminals gone on without apprehension.

Though a near majority of officers surveyed believe that patrol personnel are less likely to intervene when they see a suspicious person, the majority also believe that their department is being proactive in improving relations between officers and African Americans. In total, 66% of those surveyed believe the department has been taking steps to improve relations between police and the Black community, while only 12% said this has not happened, and 22% chose not to answer. This illustrates that officers believe that their department in general perceives that the relationship between police and minorities is in need of change and has taken steps to positively direct this endeavor. It is also worth noting that in this study officers were more likely to select “No answer” in response to questions that were directly about their departments. A 66% majority response seems all the more substantial in context.

There is a common colloquialism in law enforcement known as “use of force.” It refers to the scale of effort utilized to compel compliance. In many police interactions, simple verbal guidelines are effective in securing orderly conduct, preservation of peace, or arrest, but when they are not, officers may utilize physical force in the forms of their own physical strength or ability, escalated to the use of defensive devices such as batons, OC sprays, or in some cases,
Tasers, all the way up to deadly force, most commonly the use of firearms. When asked whether or not their department had modified their policies or procedures about the use of force, 35% answered the department had, 30% answered the department had not, and 35% selected “No answer,” providing the least conclusive results of the entire survey.

Perhaps the single most important question in the survey asked whether officers have been more reluctant to use force when it is appropriate. An officer’s decision whether or not to use force and to what degree may mean the difference of actual life and death in many situations. According to the answers provided, 62% of the officers surveyed stated that officers are more reluctant to use force when appropriate. A minority 27% believe this has not happened, while 10% chose the “No answer” option. The key portion of that question to note is the phrase “when appropriate.” A majority of officers surveyed stated they believe officers are less likely to use force when it is appropriate. Use of force is meant as a defense in police work and therefore the results of this question indicate that in light of the reaction to recent events, officers are more reluctant to use force to defend themselves or others. This reluctance may mean the difference in the survival of officers and those they protect.

**Summary of Findings of Survey Questions Under Research Question 2**

Recent events have bred a social and political response which has changed the beliefs of many police officers who have thereafter changed their patrol tactics. While those surveyed indicated that they believe their department is taking steps to improve relations between the police and African Americans, there seems to be less certainty on whether or not the department is adjusting their use of force policies in response to these changes. More troubling facts include that a near majority stated that officers have become less willing to address those they find
suspicious and 62% majority believe officers have become less willing to use appropriate force when appropriate.

The survey concludes that police do perceive a change in public relations, which has made their jobs more difficult and more dangerous. In response, they have altered their patrol tactics, although some numbers presented seem to indicate that they have not been altered in a proactive manner. The officers surveyed have indicated that they believe their department has, in some part, attempted to address these issues. It will take time and further monitoring to conclude whether the changes made by the department are effective and whether the effects recent social demonstrations have had on officers affects patrol tactics in the long term.

**Qualitative Data**

A request was made to interview supervisors within the patrol division of the Maple City Police Department. Six supervisors accepted the offer and were voluntarily interviewed on site over the course of two patrol shifts. Those interviewed did so voluntarily and were not compensated in any way. In light of the nature of this study and the need for honest answers every effort has been made to conceal their identities for this dissertation.

Interviews consisted of seven prewritten questions relevant to the guiding research question: Have supervisors initiated any changes in response to recent national events and the movements they have spawned? Follow up questions and requests for elaboration were made as the interviews progressed. Participants were further asked to review the results of the surveys taken by officers within the Maple City Police Department as well as the results in the national polls provided by Pew Research for further analysis.
1. How would you characterize the interactions between your subordinates and minorities prior to and post recent national events?

Nearly all supervisors interviewed stated that they believed that the patrol division of the Maple City Police Department maintained positive and professional relationships with the general public both prior to and post said events. Most supervisors did differentiate the general public of Maple City into two distinct subsets: those who have not committed an offense and those who have.

In respect to those who have not committed an offense, I received a wide array of answers as to how supervisors believed such residents viewed the Maple City Police Department. Multiple supervisors noted that many officers of Maple City are also residents of Maple City, and that has provided positive ties to the greater community. Many also stated that the high number of minority officers was an asset in connecting with minority members of the public and that perhaps other departments were having issues because they lacked such diversity. Other supervisors stated that they believed that most residents held a negative view of the department, as their opinions had been biased by unfair media coverage that has shrouded law enforcement in general with a negative stigma. Only one supervisor had no strong opinion, stating that he believed he had no way of gauging public opinion and therefore did not know how to answer further.

In respect to relations with those who had committed an offense, nearly all supervisors stated that most arrests occur without incident; but there have been arrests that they felt those arrested used race in some means against officers both prior to and post national events. The supervisors of White, non-Hispanic descent were more likely to state that they had witnessed
such action or had such actions taken against them, although all stated these were not common occurrences. Of those who stated that they had witnessed race raised by a civilian during an arrest prior to and post national events, some stated that the rhetoric used has changed. As one supervisor stated, “Instead of just stupid comments maybe towards the police, they might bring up a specific thing like a ‘hands up, don’t shoot’ or stuff like that or . . . ‘I have a hoodie on, you gonna shoot me now?’”

Multiple supervisors stated that they had witnessed individuals use language in protests such as “Hands up, don’t shoot,” “Black Lives Matter,” and references to the wearing of hooded t-shirts during confrontations but felt these were used more as insults or baiting tactics rather than sincere feelings. As one supervisor put it, “If anything, it’s probably brought up by the civilians . . . more like almost say trash talking . . . like if you’re at a scene . . . it could be anything, it could be a domestic violence incident and then . . . someone involved, someone not involved . . . just yelling “Black Live Matter” or “Hands up, don’t shoot . . . it’s almost brought up like a trash-talking thing.” While most supervisors stated this usually occurred only during high-tension incidents such as arrests, one supervisor reported, “Yes, I’ve been parked in a high-crime area, or a not-so-good neighborhood, and I’ve had a couple of girls, like high school age, come by and shout it out, chant it out.” He too believed this to be an insult to police rather than a sincere expression of feelings, calling it “rhetoric” pushed by the media more than anything. Another continued, “I don’t think it’s a problem with the minority issue; it’s the fact that we’re all blue, and we’re all in uniform, and we signify order in police, I think that’s the problem.”

2. Have any of your subordinates reported a difference in dealing with the public in light of recent national events?
Of those interviewed, only two stated that a subordinate officer had directly reported incidents they felt had been influenced by national events. One told a story of a motor vehicle stop in which the driver “basically told him that he wouldn’t dare to arrest him and he was basically carrying on and on and he made a racial issue out of it.” In the supervisor’s opinion, there was no racial issue; but the accused chose to raise one in an attempt to intimidate the White officer out of arresting him. He further told a story of how he, a White law enforcement official, was arresting a minority member of the public who attempted to claim that race was the basis of his arrest, not the offense allegedly committed.

The second supervisor reported, “Somewhat. They will conversate with me socially or at work about the police job in general, but, yeah, there have been a few that have said, ‘Aw man, I was doing’ . . . whatever they normally do, and for absolutely no reason whatsoever a member of the general public will utilize ‘rhetoric’ against them.” This again echoed the feelings of other supervisors that there is a bigger problem with bias against officers at heart. One supervisor went so far as to say, “Again, anything that would be divulged as racism here would be just ‘cause of this uniform and that’s it.”

3. **Have you noticed any difference in the way your subordinates interact with the public in light of recent events?**

All supervisors interviewed stated that they had not noticed a difference in the way their subordinates interacted with the general public. Most did make mention of concerns about cameras, stating that while they felt their officers were interacting properly with the general public, there is a concern among officers about biased individuals using edited video footage against officers. One supervisor made mention of a member of the general public who consistently recorded officers of the Maple City Police Department and posted the footage online
either edited or out of context with the purpose of harassing, embarrassing, or causing other harm to the department and its officers.

Supervisors also made mention of cameras and aspects of recent protests being used in tandem to bait officers into either inappropriate actions, or actions that may appear in video footage to be inappropriate. As one supervisor bluntly put it, officers are “taking a lot more . . . than they should be taking . . . now everyone is daring you to slap them . . .” Multiple supervisors interviewed alluded to a lack of civility between specific members of the general public and police, which many repeatedly attributed to negative portrayals of officers in the media, often tied to the movements discussed in this study.

4. Have you noticed any changes in the tactics of those under your command in reaction to recent national events?

When asked whether or not they had noticed any changes in the tactics of their subordinate officers, the majority of those interviewed stated that they had not. When asked additional follow-up questions specifically about motor vehicle stops and stops of suspicious parties, some opted to change their answers, although the majority still felt that the tactics of their subordinates had not changed or that motivations for any changes could not be specifically tied to motives connected to recent national events.

No supervisor stated that they had seen officers become more proactive as a result of recent events. One stated that there had been a negative effect on proactive policing while others stated that they believed there may have been a decrease in proactive policing. One stated he believed there to be a drop in proactive policing but attributed it to a generational issue of officers becoming less proactive in general, and another cited safety concerns, stating that he had seen more guns in the last five years than in decades past. Even those who were unsure if there
was a decrease in productivity and if it was tied to national events still hypothesized, “It’s almost because . . . any kind of publicity with officers is usually negative and . . . where an officer might not want to get involved with something . . . where it could end up being taken as bad publicity . . . For the most part cops don’t want to be in newspapers, they don’t want to . . . have that . . . negative. You don’t ever want to be that headline . . . for something. I’d say they’re probably less proactive.”

Of the supervisors who reviewed the quantitative data with me, I did review the answers to Survey Question 3a, which addressed whether officers have become less willing to stop and question people who seem suspicious. In Maple City, 47% answered, “yes, has happened,” 38% answered, “no, has not happened,” and 16% chose the “no answer” option. Upon seeing these numbers, one supervisor stated, “I thought it would be more ‘hasn’t changed at all.” One supervisor reiterated that he believed there had not been a change in tactics despite the numbers.

The near majority of officers answering, “yes, they are less willing to stop and question suspicious parties,” compared to supervisor perceptions that there has been no change may be attributed to a number of possible causes. There is the possibility of disconnect between the ranks, possibly due to a communication issue. There is the chance that what officers believe is not what is being enacted in practice. There is also the outside possibility that those who answered in one way are amassed under a supervisor who answered the same way while officers who answered another way are amassed under a supervisor who answered in the same way as well. The limitations of this study prevent me from presenting a conclusive answer, but this disconnect does offer an opportunity for future study.

5. Has your department issued any orders, training, or other responses in light of recent events?
The consensus among supervisors was that no major, department-wide policy shift had been made in response to these national events, but nearly all did cite the department’s efforts to establish a community policing division as a positive step. When asked if they believed the community policing initiatives had any effect on crime, half who answered stated they believed they may have had, but they did not know how to judge for sure. The majority felt that even if community policing efforts were not having a direct effect on crime rates, it at least helped project police officers in a positive light. One stated that he believed that most community policing efforts focused on children in the community, and the true effects may not be felt for years to come.

This interview question somewhat mirrors Survey Question 3b, in which officers were asked, “Has the department altered its policy on use of force?” Supervisors interviewed stated that there had been no major change in use of force policy, as the Maple City Police Department follows the New Jersey Attorney General’s guidelines on use of force. All supervisors felt that the guidelines were sufficient prior to and post national events.

When asked why officers had answered so inconclusively to Survey Question 3b, with 35% of officers answering “yes,” 30% answering “no,” and 35% selecting “no answer,” supervisors stated that training is ongoing in police work and subordinates may not know why or why not they are being sent to specific training, or the timing of training may have coincided with national events but in reality have had nothing to do with one another. One supervisor did state that he felt recent de-escalation technique training was particularly important in light of recent backlash against police.

6. Have you made any orders, suggestions, or requests of those under your command, formally or informally, in light of recent events?
The majority of supervisors interviewed stated they had not made any specific direct orders in light of recent national events. One stated, “Whenever we go to any assignments that have to do with something that could be racially influenced, I send more than one unit to make sure he has a backup unit to cover his back in case.” Secondary units provide both the added utility and security of a second officer and an onsite witness should one prove necessary.

Some supervisors stressed the importance of informal communication with subordinates. Supervisors interviewed gave the impression that the most honest conversations on dealing with the general public occur when officers are at ease and feel free to speak their minds. Most supervisors stated it is in these types of conversations they have urged their subordinates to do their jobs, but be safe at all times.

**7. Have you altered your command style in any way in light of recent events?**

All supervisors stated they had not altered their command style in light of national events. Of those who elaborated on the subject, they indicated that they felt their command styles were effective and that recent events did not warrant a change in command style over continued guidance of subordinates in their usual styles.

**Reactions to Survey Questions**

The supervisors interviewed are the direct supervisors of those who responded to the survey previously presented, Maple City patrol officers. At the end of each interview, I offered supervisors the chance to review the questions and results of the survey as well as the national numbers provided by Pew Research. Below are the reactions, thoughts, and opinions provided to me by the supervisors on the data presented.

Survey Question 1 asked the following: How well do you think the public understands the risks and challenges that law enforcement officers face on the job?
Table 3, which displays the responses to Survey Question 1, is reprinted below (originally shown on page 41).

Table 3

Responses of Maple City Patrol Officers to Survey Question 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses (%)</th>
<th>Response Choices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Very well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Somewhat well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Not too well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Not well at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*</td>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The supervisors interviewed were not generally surprised by the high percentage of officers who believe that members of the general public do not have a good understanding of police work and all who responded agreed with their subordinates. None of the supervisors stated that they believed the general public understands police work “very well,” and some emphatically stated “not well at all.” Some supervisors interviewed gave examples of the wide variety of calls answered, including everything from complex scenarios involving officers exercising psychological techniques of de-escalation to avoid violence to officers being called to assist senior citizens in fixing toilets.

Some further stated that they believed in a scapegoating effect against police. As one put it, “You’ve got a lot of disgruntled people in this town where we’re an easy target for blame for things so they may not empathize with our situation.” No supervisor attributed this to the so-called Ferguson effect but rather that the Ferguson effect is just another part of the scapegoating
that has been going on for years and has only been amplified by the media’s coverage of recent events.

Survey Question 2a asked the following: As you may know, demonstrations have been held in many parts of the country in recent years to protest the deaths of African Americans who died during encounters with the police. How much, if at all, do you think these protests have been motivated by a genuine desire to hold officers accountable for their actions?

Table 4, which displays the responses to Survey Question 2a, is reprinted below (originally shown on page 42).

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses (%)</th>
<th>Response Choices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>A great deal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Not much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In general, no supervisor was surprised by the responses to this question, and some offered similar sentiments. When asked to elaborate, those who were empathetic for the most part stated that they believed that many of the protests were started in a genuine desire to hold officers accountable but that they had been co-opted by others with less sincere intentions.

One supervisor stated, “I would probably go somewhere closer in the middle between ‘some’ and ‘not much’ because national protests almost have absolutely, not say very little, but I think what’s going on is that they’re not privy to see the entire core process. So they almost feel the same way that we do regarding the lack of justice. But it’s the fact that they want to see a
conviction per se. They basically just want to hang a person, in my opinion; they don’t want justice, they want revenge is what it comes down to. Justice in meted out by the judge, the jury, the prosecution, and defense. But some of these folks are out for blood; they don’t care what happened. They want revenge or they want a punishment for that person, no matter what the circumstances of this event.” He continued, “I would say the legitimate part is probably a very low percentage only because what they are asking for is very much in existence in this state as well as this jurisdiction.”

In echoing the belief that protests begin with sincerity but can be corrupted by those seeking an excuse to commit crimes, another supervisor stated, “A lot of protests . . . I think they start off as a legitimate . . . concern, in the community about, maybe, somebody was killed by law enforcement; but when there’s full blown rioting and stuff like that, that’s when you have kids running around in masks and just looting, I don’t think that has anything to do with the deceased, I think that has to do with an opportunity.”

Survey Question 2b asked the following: How much, if at all, do you think these protests have been motivated by longstanding bias against the police?

Table 5, which displays the responses to Survey Question 2b, is reprinted below (originally shown on page 43).
Table 5

*Responses of Maple City Patrol Officers to Survey Question 2b*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses (%)</th>
<th>Response Choices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>A great deal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Not much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Of the supervisors who responded, there was unanimity in the idea that there was an element of longstanding bias against the police in protest movements. “I think a lot of these protestors want revenge against the police; they’re mad at the police for whatever reason and this gave them a venue,” he stated and continued, “It became a bully pulpit to whip the police.”

Multiple supervisors again echoed the idea that the media was a driving force in this feeling. “I think it’s what they hear on the news . . . they might have their own opinions . . . I don’t think people around here are looking into the facts; they just listen to what they hear on the news . . . and [make] a quick judgment.” In answering a separate question, one supervisor stated, “We’re blue and that’s the minority,” reiterating his belief that there exists a bias against police officers that drives certain responses more than questions of race and racial relations in law enforcement.

Survey Question 2c asked the following: In general, have these high-profile incidents involving police and African Americans made your job harder, easier, [or] not made a difference?
Table 6, which displays the responses to Survey Question 2c, is reprinted below (originally shown on page 44).

Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses (%)</th>
<th>Response Choices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>Harder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Easier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Have not made a difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Reactions to the answers to this question were mixed among supervisors. “I thought it would be even higher than 61%,” stated one supervisor who continued, “I haven’t seen any difference among us, but I think that’s in people’s subconscious now.” Most of the supervisors interviewed stated that they believed that such incidents were at least in the minds of officers on the street.

Of those who felt there was a difference, one stated, “I’ll go for the top one because it absolutely has made this job more difficult because of not only are you trying to do your job which is a difficult job, it’s a heated job.”

Survey Question 3a asked the following: Here is a list of things that may have happened in some police departments as a result of these high-profile incidents involving African Americans and the police. For each, indicate whether this has happened in your department or not: Officers have become less willing to stop and question people who seem suspicious.

Table 9, which displays the responses to Survey Question 3a, is reprinted below (originally shown on page 50).
Table 9

*Responses of Maple City Patrol Officers to Survey Question 3a*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses (%)</th>
<th>Response Choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Yes, has happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>No, has not happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Perhaps one of the most important questions asked in the survey was 3a, which addressed officers being less willing to stop and question suspicious parties. Reactions to these results were again mixed. One supervisor stated, “I thought it would be more ‘hasn’t changed at all,’” reiterating that he had not seen a change in those under his command. Most supervisors stated that they had not seen a change in their officers but also stated they were not surprised by the numbers. Reactions again centered on motivations, as multiple supervisors stated that there is a concern among officers that video may be used by individuals or the media against them in ways officers have no control over.

Survey Question 3b asked the following: Here is a list of things that may have happened in some police departments as a result of these high-profile incidents involving African Americans and the police. For each, indicate whether this has happened in your department or not: The department has taken steps to improve relations between police and Blacks.

Table 10, which displays the responses to Survey Question 3b, is reprinted below (originally shown on page 51).
Table 10

Responses of Maple City Patrol Officers to Survey Question 3b

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses (%)</th>
<th>Response Choices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>Yes, has happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>No, has not happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Most, if not all, supervisors interviewed made direct mention of the department’s recent community policing outreach programs as a means of improving relations with the public in general. No supervisor stated that they were aware of any initiative that specifically target African Americans, but they stated that such initiatives would be spearheaded by other divisions and that the initiatives instituted to reach the public in general were effectively reaching African Americans and other minorities. As one put it, “In this particular jurisdiction we’re not trying to cater to anybody, we’re not trying to cater to one specific group, or Blacks in general. We do have a higher—slightly—Hispanic population however. Though in the last year or two, I will say our community policing division has made tremendous strides. In general, with community relations, not just one demographic but rather with everybody . . . I don’t think we’re trying to specify or hit a target audience; our target audience is everybody.” Supervisors interviewed described community barbeques, senior outreach programs, the Coffee with a Cop program, juvenile recreation events, and other initiatives they felt were not only good ideas but also far more significant and effective than efforts in years past.

When asked if they felt whether or not such efforts had any effect on crime, none said they were sure they had; but all supervisors who responded still felt they were a positive
initiative worth undertaking. Many also expressed that these events had a proactive feeling to them of combating negative images that have been circulated in the media.

Survey Question 3c asked the following: Here is a list of things that may have happened in some police departments as a result of these high-profile incidents involving African Americans and the police. For each, indicate whether this has happened in your department or not: Officers have become more concerned about their safety.

Table 7, which displays the responses to Survey Question 3c, is reprinted below (originally shown on page 45).

Table 7

Responses of Maple City Patrol Officers to Survey Question 3c

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses (%)</th>
<th>Response Choices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>97</td>
<td>Yes, has happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>No, has not happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Of the supervisors interviewed for this study, none stated that they were surprised by the near unanimity of officers stating that subordinates were more concerned about their safety. One supervisor expressed mild surprise that anyone had answered anything but yes. Though they were not surprised that their subordinates had answered this way, at least two stated they were not any more concerned for their own personal safety pre-national events rather than post-national events. This is not to say that they do not have concerns about their safety, but rather that they did not believe that they were in any greater danger than in the past.
Survey Question 3d asked the following: Here is a list of things that may have happened in some police departments as a result of these high-profile incidents involving African Americans and the police. For each, indicate whether this has happened in your department or not: The department has modified its policies or procedures about the use of force.

Table 11, which displays the responses to Survey Question 3d, is reprinted below (originally shown on page 52).

Table 11

*Responses of Maple City Patrol Officers to Survey Question 3d*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses (%)</th>
<th>Response Choices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Yes, has happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>No, has not happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


As stated previously, the supervisors interviewed for this study indicated that they believed their use of force policies were sufficient prior to and post national events. They could cite no portion of their policy they felt was lacking, although at least two expressed concerns about choking, and the public’s perceptions of officer-involved hand-to-hand fights in light of the Eric Garner case. As one put it, “The cops are supposed to have some magical Vulcan nerve pinch. They don’t teach that in the academy; if they did, I would take a Class to find out how to do that,” insinuating that the public does not have a realistic comprehension of what a resisting arrest struggle really is and the realities of an actual fight for arrest.

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1 “The Vulcan nerve pinch,” is a reference to a fictitious compliance hold within the Star Trek media franchise in which one character incapacitates another with a simple one-handed pinch of the neck and/or shoulder area. The hold is portrayed as having no lasting effects on those incapacitated and there is no such parallel in reality.
Survey Question 3e asked the following: Here is a list of things that may have happened in some police departments as a result of these high-profile incidents involving African Americans and the police. For each, indicate whether this has happened in your department or not: Interactions between police and Blacks have become more tense?

Table 8, which displays the responses to Survey Question 3e, is reprinted below (originally shown on page 46).

Table 8

Responses of Maple City Patrol Officers to Survey Question 3e

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses (%)</th>
<th>Response Choices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Yes, has happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>No, has not happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Supervisors were split on these results, although it appeared as though White supervisors of non-Hispanic descent were more likely to agree with the majority. One supervisor who did not agree with the majority argued that the diversity of the Maple City Police Department made it harder for members of the general public to argue racial bias, stating, “It’s kinda hard to throw the race thing at us when we’re all Hispanic and Black here too.”

Others who believed that there had been a slight increase in tension also believed that the Maple City Police Department was better suited to handle such issues to the ethnic breakdown of its force. One stated, “I would say there’s a bit of an increase, but it’s not as prevalent as our national average here in this jurisdiction because, again, the same people who don’t like us will call the police, no matter what. They’re not calling their buddy, some do, but . . . I think this
department overall, in my opinion, has improved in certain areas as far as the professionalism. We have younger officers, we actually have more minority officers, Hispanic officers. now than we do of White males. You have more Hispanic males now in our breakdown. This department, this jurisdiction, we have a very high number of female officers; I mean, it’s not 50/50 obviously, but compared to the other jurisdictions, we have a good amount I think, so we’re doing a lot better, I believe, as a department as a whole than maybe other agencies of our size . . . I mean it is, it’s affecting but it’s not so pronounced.”

Most supervisors stated there was little, if any, change in tensions with African Americans but reiterated that they believed tensions were on the minds of officers who were otherwise rising to the challenge and conducting themselves in a professional manner regardless.

Survey Question 3f asked the following: Here is a list of things that may have happened in some police departments as a result of these high-profile incidents involving African Americans and the police. For each, indicate whether this has happened in your department or not: Officers been more reluctant to use force when it is appropriate?

Table 12, which displays the responses to Survey Question 3f, is reprinted below (originally shown on page 53).

Table 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses (%)</th>
<th>Response Choices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>Yes, has happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>No, has not happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Supervisors were again split on this issue. Some stated that they had not seen anything specific that would lead them to agree with these numbers, although some stated they were not surprised by these results. One stated, “I would probably agree with the 62% saying “yes,” only because in general I think there’s been a larger approach to trying to talk it out; there’s verbal judo, as they say.” None of the supervisors interviewed stated that they themselves would be less likely to use force when appropriate.

When asked directly whether or not his subordinates were less likely to use force when appropriate, he stated, “Yeah, I would say there are times where use of force would have been absolutely justified and officers are either hesitant or delayed in enacting that use of force—or they may use less force—and that’s a problem because then that fight is going to be dragged out longer, the physicality of it.”

When asked directly if they knew of any subordinates who had been injured or suffered other consequences for not using force when appropriate, nearly every supervisor stated that they did not know of anyone who had definitely been injured due to such concerns. Some supervisors rejected the notion completely. One supervisor did mention that he knew of some officers who had been injured and hypothesized, “I don’t know if it’s because they’re using less force or not; they didn’t reveal that to me, but yeah, there may have been where our approach is a little slower than the hands-on immediately. You want to give some commands where in reality maybe three seconds ago you should’ve got on that person or used that night stick or ASP or that chemical agent spray; that could be the case.”

No supervisor reported any statement made by a subordinate indicating they were using less force when appropriate, and none could point to a specific event they witnessed in which they believed their subordinates used less force than appropriate. Multiple supervisors stated that
they believed national events were in the minds of officers and may be a motivator in decision making, but the majority of those interviewed believe force is being used as it should be.

**Summary of Findings from Interviews**

Patrol supervisors occupy a unique position in police work. In general, sergeants not only command their subordinates, they are also in the field and respond along with their officers on more complex or threatening calls. As a result, they are responsible for their subordinates while also being required to perform many of the same tasks their subordinates do. In the field of patrol work this includes direct contact with the general public, often in concert with those of lower rank and occasionally with those of higher rank. They are further entrusted with maintaining the cohesiveness of their squad, partially through direct observations and reactionary steps such as behavioral correction or formal or informal policy change.

The patrol supervisors of the Maple City Police Department were not surprised by the survey answers of their subordinates. These supervisors, for the most part, are in the field dealing with the same scenarios and individuals. Many concurred with the answers of their subordinates and stated that they had not seen a substantial change in tactics. In general, the supervisors of the Maple City Patrol Division appear to maintain realistic views of their subordinates, especially in light of challenges unique to direct policing of the general public. Supervisors further report their belief that the departmental policy sufficiently addresses current challenges in the field and that new initiatives offer possible inroads towards stronger community relations.

**Summary**

In analyzing the data of both the quantitative and qualitative portions of this study, certain patterns emerged, both in regard to the outlined research questions and beyond.
Research Question 1

The first research question asked the following: How do officers perceive a difference, if any, in their interactions with the general public that they may attribute to a reaction to national events? The survey results indicated that nearly 75% of officers surveyed in the Maple City Police Department do not believe that the general public understands the risks and challenges of police work well. A total of 51% believe recent protests have been in some part motivated by a desire to hold police officers accountable for their actions, and 80% believe recent protests have been motivated in some way by a bias against police officers. A total of 58% stated that interactions with African Americans in their community have become more tense. The numbers presented clearly indicate that the officers in the Maple City Police Department believe that recent national events and their subsequent movements have changed their interactions with the general public, making them more difficult; and while a large percentage believe that the protests are motivated by a sincere desire for justice, a much larger percentage believe that the protests are motivated by a bias against law enforcement.

Research Question 2

The second research question asked the following: What effects, if any, have movements such as Black Lives Matter had on daily patrol tactics? A total of 47% of officers surveyed answered that they believe officers have become less willing to stop and question people who seem suspicious, while 62% answered that officers have been more reluctant to use force when appropriate. These results indicate that officers have modified their tactics as a direct result of recent events and the national movements they have spawned. A total of 66% believe the Maple City Police Department has taken steps to improve relations between the police and the Black community, but there was no consensus on whether or not the department has modified its use of
force policies and procedures. The two-thirds majority belief of Maple City patrol officers that the Maple City Police Department has taken steps to improve relations between the police and African Americans indicates a strong perception by officers that their department has taken proactive measures to address the possibility of altering community relations between the department and minority members of the general public. The lack of consensus on whether or not there have been changes to the department’s use of force policy is not necessarily a negative result if the use of force policy was sufficient prior to and post these events, as supervisors indicated in their interviews. However, the nearly exact percentages for each possible answer may indicate confusion over the question, timing of modifications of policies, or confusion over the motivations for the changing of policy.

**Research Question 3**

The third research question asked the following: Have supervisors initiated any changes in response to recent national events and the movements they have spawned? The answers provided by the supervisors interviewed would indicate supervisors have in large not initiated major changes as a response to recent national events and movements. Some supervisors reported some change in the way their subordinates interact with the general public, although most who noticed changes considered them minor. A few of the supervisors interviewed indicated that subordinates had brought to their attention incidents they felt had some context in national movements, but none so severe or constant that they required a more substantive change. Most supervisors indicated they were concerned that such movements were on the minds of their subordinates, but few could point to observed change in officer behaviors. Some supervisors believed there may have been some decline in productivity, specifically in motor vehicle stops and street interventions, although many said they were unsure if they were directly
connected to national movements; and if they were, they were most likely in tandem with a concern over the usage of video footage by biased individuals. Most supervisors stated that they did not believe that the department was making major changes directly in reaction to such events and movements but that the department was making strides in community policing that ultimately accomplished the same goals. Observations such as the diverse racial, ethnic, and gender breakdown of the patrol division and new emphasis on the training of de-escalation techniques may not be direct responses but are also viewed by supervisors as positive factors within the department. Supervisors themselves report that they have not issued any official commands or orders to their subordinates in light of such events but stated that they have stressed safety, situational awareness, and emphasis on patience in light of said events. Many further stated that they had informal discussions with their subordinates on these matters that they felt accomplished what was necessary. Aside from one difference in manpower to respond to racially sensitive calls, supervisors interviewed stated they had not altered their command style, as most of them felt recent events did not necessitate a change.

**Beyond the Research Questions**

While analyzing the statistical data generated by the survey responses of patrol officers and considering them in the context provided by the interviews of supervisors, certain patterns and other observations became noticeable. Even a cursory evaluation of the survey data would indicate that officers were more likely to select the “No answer” on questions pertaining to their department than other questions, illustrating just how difficult it is to conduct a survey of this type. The majority of surveys rejected from consideration were due to officers selecting “No answer” for every question or literally selecting no answer at all.
The results of Survey Questions 2a, in which a majority of officers answered that they believed that the protests examined were in some part motivated by a desire for accountability, and 2b, in which a majority of officers surveyed answered that they believed that protests were in some way based on a longstanding bias against law enforcement, illustrates that the ideas are not mutually exclusive in the minds of Maple City Patrol Officers. The results of Survey Question 2a suggest empathy on the part of officers who believe that many in these protests have sincere motivations. Whether or not these officers agree with such motivations is not examined by this study, but the fact remains that officers believe there is sincerity in some portion of recent movements. That is not to say that they do not believe that there is a larger, and in some cases harmonious, element that is motivated by anti-law enforcement bias, but they recognize there is more complexity than a strictly binary motivation.

Few, if any, supervisors stated that they personally had an issue with police-worn body cameras, but nearly all stated that officers were concerned about being filmed by the general public. Some argued that cameras were used as tools of intimidation, of escalating situations, or of baiting officers into negative reactions. Others stated that officers were concerned about the use of recorded footage and images in social media and the larger professional print, televised and digital media, as even justifiable actions may be biasedly edited or commentated upon. Without provocation, numerous supervisors voiced a mistrust of the media and belief that the media holds some bias against law enforcement. Some supervisors hypothesized further that constant negative coverage of law enforcement has been disheartening to officers and has possibly had a negative effect on proactive policing, as officers are less likely to engage members of the general public or address minor infractions out of fear of unwarranted negative backlash and repercussions.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to ascertain whether or not police-involved shootings which gained national media attention and triggered social responses such as the Black Live Matter movement have had any effects on the day-to-day tactics of patrol officers in a police department that has not been directly involved in such shootings. Though a majority of departments in the United States have not been involved in such an event, recent headlines have indicated that said events may have affected police attitudes and actions nationwide. The idea that officers have changed their tactics in response to such events was dubbed the “Ferguson effect” by St. Louis Police Chief Sam Dotson, and it is said to have affected not only those departments directly involved with such events but also those not directly involved as well (Byers, 2014). As such, a study of an individual department not directly involved with such a recent effect may offer insight into the inner workings of numerous American police departments.

By recreating and utilizing a portion of the same questionnaire used in a national poll conducted by Pew Research Center in 2017, the data produced in this poll can be compared to national statistics, therefore offering greater opportunities for analysis. By including a secondary qualitative segment in which supervisors were interviewed, this study goes beyond what was performed by Pew and offers greater clarification on specific areas of study. In addition, this study was conducted by surveying and interviewing members of the patrol field only, whereas the Pew poll did not differentiate law enforcement roles and therefore may include answers provided by officers who have little or no interaction with the general public. Framing this entire
study with Herzberg’s motivation-hygiene theory better presents the data collected contextually in terms of workplace influencers on satisfaction, motivation, and the altering of approaches by officers in the field.

**Research Questions**

The following three questions were used to guide the study:

1. How do officers perceive a difference, if any, in their interactions with the general public that they attribute to a reaction to recent national events?

2. What effects, if any, have movements such as Black Lives Matter had on daily patrol tactics?

3. Have supervisors initiated any changes in response to recent national events and the movements they have spawned?

**Findings Related to Research Question 1**

**Research Question 1**: How do officers perceive a difference, if any, in their interactions with the general public that they may attribute to a reaction to national events?

**Survey Question 1**: 1. How well do you think the public understands the risks and challenges that law enforcement officers face on the job?

Table 13 displays the responses to Survey Question 1 of both the Maple City Police Department and the national poll conducted by the Pew Research Center. All numbers are percentages. The percentages less than .5% are replaced by an asterisk (*). Columns/rows may not total 100% due to rounding.
Table 13

Responses of Maple City Survey and Pew National Survey to Survey Question 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Choices</th>
<th>Maple City %</th>
<th>Pew National Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very well</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat well</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not too well</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not well at all</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The first survey question examines the opinions officers hold as to whether or not members of the general public understand the more perilous aspects of their profession. Pew notes that 83% of the general public they surveyed believe that they understand the risks and challenges that police officers face. Other polls concur with Pew’s findings that a majority of the general public believe that they understand the risks police officers face (Stepler). The majority of the officers surveyed at Maple City, like the majority of those officers surveyed nationwide, do not agree.

Table 13 illustrates that the officers of Maple City are more likely to believe that the general public understands the perils of their work than the national average, as both “Very well” and “Somewhat well” scored higher than the national averages. Both the “Not too well” and “Not well at all” options scored approximately 6% lower each than the national average. Though both survey pools largely do not believe that the general public understands the risks and challenges officers face on the job, the patrol officers of Maple City were more likely to answer “Somewhat well” or “Very well” at a two-to-one ratio over their national counterparts. This may
suggest the patrol officers feel a greater connection with the individuals they serve than other departments surveyed.

**Survey Question 2a:** As you may know, demonstrations have been held in many parts of the country in recent years to protest the deaths of African Americans who died during encounters with the police. How much, if at all, do you think these protests have been motivated by a genuine desire to hold officers accountable for their actions.

Table 14 displays the responses to Survey Question 2a of both the Maple City Police Department and the national poll conducted by the Pew Research Center. All numbers are percentages. The percentages less than .5% are replaced by an asterisk (*). Columns/rows may not total 100% due to rounding.

**Table 14**

*Responses of Maple City Survey and Pew National Survey to Survey Question 2a*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Choices</th>
<th>Maple City %</th>
<th>Pew National %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not much</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The second Peelian principle states “that the power of the police to fulfill their functions and duties is dependent on public approval of their existence, actions and behaviour, and on their ability to secure and maintain public respect,” (Sir Robert, 2014, par. 3). As such, the results of Survey Question 2a hold implications on both public opinion and the extent to which officers can perform their duties in light of public opinion. Question 2a specifically examines whether police
believe that recent protests focusing on incidents in which African Americans died during encounters with police were motivated by genuine desire to hold officers accountable for their actions. Although the Pew poll found that 28% of their sample pool believed these demonstrations had nothing to do with holding officers accountable, the sample at Maple City produced a lower 16% rate. The “Not much” option further drew a 27% conclusion in Maple City, compared to the national conclusion of 36%. The combined percentages of “A great deal” and “Some” were 18% higher in Maple City than the same combined averages in the Pew national poll.

The Pew national poll found that only 35% of those surveyed in their pool believed protests were motivated by genuine desires to hold officers accountable for their actions in measures of “Some” or “A great deal,” whereas officers in Maple City believed the same in a majority of 53%. There is also a 12% difference in belief between the 16% of Maple City patrol officers and the 28% national average of officers who believe these protests were “Not at all” influenced by genuine desires. The numbers suggest that patrol officers of Maple City may be more trusting and more empathetic of the stated reasons for such protests. When considering these numbers, some supervisors interviewed pointed out the diversity represented within the patrol division of the Maple City Police Department, which may speak to greater racial sensitivity among their ranks.

**Survey Question 2b:** As you may know, demonstrations have been held in many parts of the country in recent years to protest the deaths of African Americans who died during encounters with the police. How much, if at all, do you think these protests have been motivated by a genuine desire to hold officers accountable for their actions?
Table 15 displays the responses to Survey Question 2b of both the Maple City Police Department and the national poll conducted by the Pew Research Center. All numbers are percentages. The percentages less than .5% are replaced by an asterisk (*). Columns/rows may not total 100% due to rounding.

Table 15

*Responses of Maple City Survey and Pew National Survey to Survey Question 2b*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Choices</th>
<th>Maple City %</th>
<th>Pew National %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not much</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Like Survey Question 2a, Survey Question 2b examines the opinions of officers as they relate to the motivations behind recent demonstrations in response to the deaths of African Americans during interactions with law enforcement. Similar to the results submitted in Survey Question 2a, the results submitted in Survey Question 2b illustrate that members of the Maple City Police Department are more likely than their national counterparts to believe recent demonstrations are tied to their stated cause than to other reasons; but as with the national average, the officers of the Maple City Police Department believe in majority that these protests are motivated by a bias against police.

While 68% of those who answered in the national poll believe that the demonstrations are motivated by a bias against the police “A great deal,” a lesser 58% believe the same in Maple City. Conversely, the officers of Maple City believe the demonstrations have been motivated in “Some” part due to a bias against police, while the national average was a lower 24%. When
combined, the Maple City and national averages of “A great deal” and “Some” are much closer, while 90% of Maple City selected one of these two options in comparison to the national rate of 92% in total. These numbers speak to the distrust of media and concern about the biased misuse of video footage expressed by supervisors.

**Survey Question 2c:** As you may know, demonstrations have been held in many parts of the country in recent years to protest the deaths of African Americans who died during encounters with the police. In general, have these high-profile incidents involving police and African Americans made your job harder, easier, [or] not made a difference?

Table 16 displays the responses to Survey Question 2c of both the Maple City Police Department and the national poll conducted by the Pew Research Center. All numbers are percentages. The percentages less than .5% are replaced by an asterisk (*). Columns/rows may not total 100% due to rounding.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Choices</th>
<th>Maple City %</th>
<th>Pew National %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harder</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easier</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have not made a difference</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Question 2c directly asks officers whether or not recent incidents have made their jobs harder, easier, or not made a difference. Like the national average, officers of the Maple City Police Department believe in majority that these events have made their jobs harder, but they do not believe it in the same percentage as the national average. A total of 86% of those surveyed in
the national poll believe these events have made their jobs harder, while a lesser 61% believe the same is true in Maple City. The percentage of officers who said it had not made a difference is more than three times as high in the Maple City poll than it is in the national poll.

The significance of these results lies within the fourth Peelian principle, which states officers must “recognize always that the extent to which the co-operation of the public can be secured diminishes proportionately the necessity of the use of physical force and compulsion for achieving police objectives” (Sir Robert, 2014, par. 5). As race-based relations between the police and the general public is one of the most complex aspects of a patrol officer’s functions, as well as a possible tipping point for violent interactions between police and the general public, the fact that a majority of officers surveyed have answered that the incidents previously discussed have made their jobs harder gives context as to why officers have changed tactics in light of recent national events.

**Survey Question 3c:** Here is a list of things that may have happened in some police departments as a result of these high-profile incidents involving African Americans and the police. For each, indicate whether this has happened in your department or not: Officers have become more concerned about their safety.

Table 17 displays the responses to Survey Question 3c of both the Maple City Police Department and the national poll conducted by the Pew Research Center. All numbers are percentages. The percentages less than .5% are replaced by an asterisk (*). Columns/rows may not total 100% due to rounding.
Table 17

Responses of Maple City Survey and Pew National Survey to Survey Question 3c

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Choices</th>
<th>Maple City %</th>
<th>Pew National Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, has happened</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, has not happened</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Survey Question 3c asks whether or not officers are more concerned for their own safety in light of recent events. Despite answers more empathetic to the stated causes of recent social movements than the national average and fewer officers reporting their job becoming harder in light of recent national events, patrol officers in Maple City answered nearly unanimously that they are more concerned for their safety. The 97% who answered there is more concern among Maple City officers is 4% higher than the national average of 93%. Only one officer in the Maple City Patrol Division answered that officers are not more concerned, and only one chose “No answer.”

The numbers presented are particularly definitive when considering them against other results. This was one of only two questions to draw a “No answer” percentage of 1% or less, indicating that there are definitive feelings within the Maple City Patrol Division on this subject. Concern for safety would be one of the factors the Herzberg model considers a hygiene factor, or a factor that leads to dissatisfaction and an effect on productivity or, in police terms, a change in tactics that may include a decrease in proactive policing.

Survey Question 3e: Here is a list of things that may have happened in some police departments as a result of these high-profile incidents involving African Americans and the police. For each,
indicate whether this has happened in your department or not: Interactions between police and Blacks have become more tense.

Table 18 displays the responses to Survey Question 3e of both the Maple City Police Department and the national poll conducted by the Pew Research Center. All numbers are percentages. The percentages less than .5% are replaced by an asterisk (*). Columns/rows may not total 100% due to rounding.

Table 18

*Responses of Maple City Survey and Pew National Survey to Survey Question 3e*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Choices</th>
<th>Maple City %</th>
<th>Pew National %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, has happened</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, has not happened</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Survey Question 3e again shows a significant difference in the experiences of Maple City police officers from those surveyed in the national poll. A total of 17% fewer officers in Maple City said that interactions between the Black community and the police have become more tense in light of national events when compared to the national average. Though a majority 58% still believe interactions have become more tense, this is still substantially lower than the national average of 75%.

The reason for the difference may again come from the racial breakdown of the Maple City Patrol Division. As one supervisor stated, it is harder for a member of the general public to use a claim of racial bias against an officer of the same race. The majority of officers nationwide are White males, which may account for the higher percentage reported in the national statistics.
Like many of the questions asked in this survey, the result may be in part dictated by the experience of the officer in the field as it relates to his or her own racial and ethnic background.

**Findings Related to Research Question 2**

**Research Question 2:** What effects, if any, have movements such as Black Lives Matter had on daily patrol tactics?

**Survey Question 3a:** Here is a list of things that may have happened in some police departments as a result of these high-profile incidents involving African Americans and the police. For each, indicate whether this has happened in your department or not: Officers have become less willing to stop and question people who seem suspicious.

Table 19 displays the responses to Survey Question 3a of both the Maple City Police Department and the national poll conducted by the Pew Research Center. All numbers are percentages. The percentages less than .5% are replaced by an asterisk (*). Columns/rows may not total 100% due to rounding.

Table 19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Choices</th>
<th>Maple City %</th>
<th>Pew National %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, has happened</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, has not happened</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


At the heart of this study is a question of whether or not officers have changed their tactics; and if so, how? The questions of the survey under the second research question speak directly to changes officers themselves have witnessed or they themselves have made. As previously stated, the stopping and questioning of suspicious parties is one of the most dangerous
undertakings possible for a patrol officer. Many officers have been killed in the course of taking such action, and many of the events examined in this study began as such stops.

In Maple City, 47% of its patrol force answered that they believe that officers have become less willing to stop and question suspicious individuals. This represents both a significant percentage of the department but also a significantly lower percentage than the 72% national average. Such a high number of officers reporting that they believe officers have become less willing to stop and question suspicious parties, further supported by the statements of supervisors interviewed in this study, is a near positive indicator that concern for safety has been a motivating factor in officers taking less proactive measures out of fear for their own safety. Such an occurrence is not likely limited to Maple City, as a 2017 LSU (Louisiana State University) poll entitled “Policing in a Post-Ferguson Society” found that two-thirds of officers surveyed stated they felt less safe in performing their duties after the attacks on police officers that followed Ferguson and other such incidents (Wyllie, 2017).

**Survey Question 3b:** Here is a list of things that may have happened in some police departments as a result of these high-profile incidents involving African Americans and the police. For each, indicate whether this has happened in your department or not: The department has taken steps to improve relations between police and Blacks.

Table 20 displays the responses to Survey Question 3b of both the Maple City Police Department and the national poll conducted by the Pew Research Center. All numbers are percentages. The percentages less than .5% are replaced by an asterisk (*). Columns/rows may not total 100% due to rounding.
Table 20

Responses of Maple City Survey and Pew National Survey to Survey Question 3b

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Choices</th>
<th>Maple City %</th>
<th>Pew National %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, has happened</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, has not happened</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Survey Question 3b does not focus on individual officers but rather on the perceptions officers hold of their department in general. By a two-thirds majority, patrol officers of the Maple City Police Department believe that their department has taken steps to improve relations between police and the Black community. This is 7% higher than the national average of 59%. The question does not go into enough depth to determine whether or not patrol officers feel that they themselves are being used to improve relations with the Black community, but the answers provided do indicate that the department is at least attempting a positive outreach effort.

Survey Question 3d: Here is a list of things that may have happened in some police departments as a result of these high-profile incidents involving African Americans and the police. For each, indicate whether this has happened in your department or not: The department has modified its policies or procedures about the use of force.

Table 21 displays the responses to Survey Question 3d of both the Maple City Police Department and the national poll conducted by the Pew Research Center. All numbers are percentages. The percentages less than .5% are replaced by an asterisk (*). Columns/rows may not total 100% due to rounding.
Table 21

*Responses of Maple City Survey and Pew National Survey to Survey Question 3d*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Choices</th>
<th>Maple City %</th>
<th>Pew National %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, has happened</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, has not happened</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Like Survey Question 3b, Survey Question 3d examines patrol officers’ perceptions of their department. Supervisors in large reported that like many, if not all, police departments in New Jersey, Maple City’s use of force policy is based on the New Jersey Attorney General’s Guidelines on Police Use of Force; and therefore changes in department policy are most closely tied to changes made by the Attorney General’s office. As stated before, this question produced the least conclusive data for the Maple City survey and offers little, if any, insight when compared to national numbers without greater amounts of information, which are not currently available.

**Survey Question 3f:** Here is a list of things that may have happened in some police departments as a result of these high-profile incidents involving African Americans and the police. For each, indicate whether this has happened in your department or not: Officers have been more reluctant to use force when it is appropriate.

Table 22 displays the responses to Survey Question 3f of both the Maple City Police Department and the national poll conducted by the Pew Research Center. All numbers are percentages. The percentages less than .5% are replaced by an asterisk (*). Columns/rows may not total 100% due to rounding.
Table 22

Responses of Maple City Survey and Pew National Survey to Survey Question 3f

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Choices</th>
<th>Maple City %</th>
<th>Pew National %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, has happened</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, has not happened</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The final question of the survey, Question 3f, offers perhaps the most troubling numbers of the entire survey. A total of 62% of officers in the Maple City Patrol Division stated that officers have been more reluctant to use force when appropriate. While that is lower than the national average of 76%, it is still a clear majority who responded in this way to a question that clearly states “when appropriate.” Hesitation or failure to use force may be the difference between an arrest in which an officer is not harmed and an arrest in which one is harmed or killed. It may also be the difference between an arrest and a dangerous individual escaping.

Further troubling is the 10% who selected the “No answer” option. The “No answer” option leaves no clarification as to why an officer selected “No answer,” and we are left to speculate why he or she did not come to a conclusion. Are these officers ashamed to contribute to the percentages of one answer or another? Have they never faced a use of force situation? Have they never considered the motivators when choosing to use force or not? The results of this question and 3a offer the clearest indication that patrol officers are changing their tactics, a conclusion that is further explored later in this chapter.
Findings Related to Research Question 3

**Research Question 3:** Have supervisors initiated any changes in response to recent national events and the movements they have spawned?

The question of whether or not supervisors have initiated any changes in response to recent national events is in large point a simple “no.” When asked directly whether or not they had initiated any changes, nearly all answered “no”; and when pressed with follow-up questions, few could point to any formal changes they had made, although many stated that they had stressed safety and situational awareness to their subordinates. They further stated that they had not made any changes to their leadership style. Most supervisors stated that they did not believe change was necessary and, aside from one supervisor who initiated a two-officer response to calls he felt may be racially sensitive, none pointed to any situation where they felt a change may have be beneficial. The general belief of the supervisors in the Maple City Patrol Division is that current supervision is sufficient and capable of handling any challenges these national events may have spurred in Maple City.

In terms of their subordinates, supervisors reported in large that they had not observed any significant change in the way their subordinates interact with the general public, although some reported changes in the way the general public interacts with the police. Multiple supervisors presented anecdotal evidence of members of the general public using the “rhetoric” of social movements as an insult, challenge, or effort to avoid tickets or arrest. Multiple supervisors stated that similar interactions had occurred before the national events studied in this piece but that the language used had become more specifically tied to social movements and that there was an increase in the frequency of these events but that it was not as prevalent as some
might expect. Supervisors further felt that their subordinates had handled racially sensitive issues well before recent events and continued to do so in light of recent events.

Supervisors further felt that their department had not issued any orders specifically in light of recent events but that department initiatives in community policing had contributed to the same goal. Supervisors in large did not believe their department had a specific issue when it came to relations with minorities in the general public and stressed the importance of having a diverse division with personal ties to the community itself.

In answer to one of the guiding questions of this dissertation, it would appear that in Maple City patrol officers are changing tactics and patrol supervisors are not. The idea that patrol officers are changing tactics is not necessarily a positive, as reluctance to engage with suspicious parties would not be considered proactive policing. Patrol supervisors not changing their tactics, specifically leadership style and other focuses of the interview questions is not necessarily a negative, as their self-described styles are in line with the Peelian Principles. Both findings fall within the realities of modern American policing that time-tested theories such as the Peelian Principles have held true and functioned properly through these events, but the rise of access to modern media and social media have added significant complexities to the profession of policing with which no other generation of officers has had to deal. The biases of guilt-by-association agendas by those who feel the possibility of “one bad cop means all cops are bad,” the perceived lack of general public understanding of the profession, the exploitation of social movements by those who would use a genuine belief held by some to rationalize crime as a justified social response, and the ability of media to sensationalize all events found a nexus in recent events, which generated a reaction in patrol officers as expressed in this study. It is
without wonder that officers feel their jobs have become harder and have reacted in the ways previously stated.

Findings Related to Theoretical Framework

Motivators

When applying Herzberg’s model to the Maple City Patrol Division, it is clear that recent police-related shootings and the subsequent movements created thereafter have strengthened hygiene factors more so than motivators. Still, motivators must be examined and exploited even in light of recent events and backlash to assure that tactics and proactive policing are not corroded to the point of ineffectiveness.

Among the motivators brought up in interviews was the fact that a percentage of the Maple City Patrol Division has ties to the community. These ties include residences within the jurisdiction, past enrollment in local schools, and family currently living within the jurisdiction. Each of these ties represents a motivator, a connection or a network that is tied in a personal sense to the officers themselves. The question that arises is whether or not the department recognizes and makes use of these motivational opportunities. As stated before, the strides made by the department in community policing have been very well received by supervisors, who further report positive responses from officers as well. Offering opportunities for officers to take part in events within the scopes of their social networks may offer a greater sense of connection and a greater motivator. As pointed out by at least one supervisor, utilizing officers for community policing efforts in their former schools, neighborhoods, and other social structures offers an emotional connection to the officer and the opportunity for the officer to better portray the department, especially to younger members of the community and is fully in line with the fifth Peelian Principle.
More so than national averages, the officers of the Maple City Patrol Division appear to empathize with the stated causes of recent social movements and believe at a higher rate that the general public understand their jobs. They also reported that interactions with the Black community had become more tense at a lesser percentage than the national average. Though not necessarily majority beliefs, these findings still offer opportunities for strengthening community relations via mutual understanding in an effort to decrease the “us versus them” contempt held by some. At least one supervisor touted the success of the “Coffee with a Cop” program, which offered direct contact between officers and the general public that did not involve the threat of a ticket or an arrest. Additional positive opportunities for interaction between patrol officers and the general public may offer renewed ties to those they serve and boost their investment in proactive policing. It is important that departments recognize that community policing has benefits to both sides of the initiative and that on the police side the beneficial nature should be spread to the greatest number of officers possible, rather than solely to one specific group of officers designated a community policing division.

**Hygiene Factors**

As noted in the literature review presented in Chapter II, a key aspect of the supposed Ferguson effect states that officers with no connection to such national events have felt villainized by the media, leading thereafter to a change in tactics.

The literature reviewed presented numerous examples of anecdotal evidence illustrating the disconnect in understanding felt by officers. The mentioning of media portrayals of law enforcement made by multiple supervisors interviewed in this study speaks to the very real concern within the law enforcement field that the media has villainized police officers, swaying national opinion against them, and therefore influencing officers into being less proactive
appears to be very real in the Maple City Patrol Division. What may be most distressing to
departments is how little control they feel they have over how the national media and social
media portray police officers in general, especially when their departments had nothing to do
with the triggering incidents in these situations. Though departments may not be able to exercise
a significant level of influence on how some biased outlets disperse information there are steps
departments can take to lessen the effects on their own officers which are explored in upcoming
sections of this study.

**Recommendations for Practice, Policy and Future Research**

**Recommendations for Practice**

When comparing the results of the survey questions under Research Question 1 to the
responses of supervisors interviewed in this study, it is clear that there is some disconnect
between the beliefs of officers and the perceptions of supervisors on motivators and hygiene
factors. It is important for departments to stress the need for strengthened lines of
communication between frontline supervisors and frontline officers. Studies of police have
highlighted informal organizational culture as a determinant of police behavior; thus, informal
relationships may be used to greater effect (Skolnick, 1966; Klinger, 1997; Skolnick & Fyfe,
1995). This must be a two-pronged effort, as officers should be encouraged to voice concerns to
their immediate supervisors before they take it upon themselves to change tactics. A lack of
upward communication may be as much to blame for the disconnect between patrol officers and
their supervisors as any other source.

A similar disconnect is observed in the results of survey questions under Research
Question 2 and the comments of supervisors. Although use of force situations are commonly
documented in police work, they usually address what actions were taken and not necessarily
why certain actions were taken beyond the obvious reason: to effect an arrest or deter an individual from the destruction of property or harming of another. One-on-one debriefings after each use of force would offer supervisors the opportunity to explore why subordinates used the amount of force they did in the way in which they did. If 62% of Maple City Patrol Officers and 76% of officers cited in the national study truly believe that officers have been more reluctant to use force when it is appropriate, such motivations and others may be identified during debriefings.

As stated earlier, the supervisors interviewed believed that community policing events had played some role in improving their image with the general public. Though none stated that they had a means of quantifying whether or not these efforts had any effect on crime, supervisors still felt it was a means for the department to control its own image. In the opinion of supervisors interviewed, the image of law enforcement officers is increasingly painted in a negative light by the media. While recent studies have indicated that community policing has not had a great effect on decreasing crime, I would argue that the value of such endeavors may lie in the morale of the department and therefore may contribute to a positive effect on proactive policing.

Although the police department in this study has established its own community policing division, I would recommend expanding efforts beyond a centralized division, meaning that while a community policing division is a positive, including other police divisions in community policing efforts will directly connect a greater number of officers to efforts supporting improved community relations. Such efforts would fall in line with the fifth Peelian Principle, which states police must “seek and preserve public favour, not by pandering to public opinion . . . by ready offering of individual service and friendship to all members of the public without regard to their
wealth or social standing, by ready exercise of courtesy and friendly good humour, and by ready
offering of individual sacrifice in protecting and preserving life” (Sir Robert, 2014, par. 6).

There is also need to ensure that the motivators and hygiene factors identified by Herzberg are being identified and responded to by a department. One way of doing so is by including a mechanism in officer reviews that allows officers to report not just what they do but why they do it. Most departments require their supervisors to formally review officers on at least an annual basis. Granting officers the opportunity to “state their own case” allows the department to identify factors affecting the greatest number of officers. This may be easily accomplished through an anonymous computerized system. By keeping the input anonymous, officers may feel freer to offer true opinions and avoid fears of backlash. This process further offers departments a nonbinding way of gathering information on morale. Data gathered are not a vote or other means of the bottom attempting to control the top, but rather a way of the top making a conscious effort to overcome supervisor-subordinate disconnect and implement policies that can improve the workplace, improve tactics, and improve proactive policing. It is something akin to a 21st century idea of a suggestion box, but more formalized and with greater potential for specified data when properly executed.

**Recommendations for Policy**

Making recommendations for policy change is particularly difficult when it comes to law enforcement agencies, as most policies are confidential; and therefore I cannot comment directly on where policies may or may not be lacking. The anonymous and unfiltered testimonies of supervisors in this study that current policies are sufficient and functioning properly is testament to the notion that existing policies are not in need of major change.
The split results from Survey Question 3d, in which officers were asked whether or not policy had been altered or updated as a result of recent events, indicate a level of confusion in officers’ perceptions of whether or not policy has been updated. While departments have policies that are in line with federal and state standards, it is important that such policies are periodically reviewed with all members of a department. It is also important to provide the training necessary for officers to appropriately implement policies.

**Limitations of This Study and Recommendations for Future Research**

Though I feel that a strength of this study is its focus on one department, I am aware of the limitations of a study that covers only one jurisdiction among the tens of thousands of police departments in the United States. The most obvious area for future studies is that of other departments nationwide that may concur with this study or find new results based on culture, past practice, and other factors. As demonstrated by the high number of “No answer” selections within the survey completed for this research, the number of individuals who refused participation in the survey, the high number of questions about anonymity from interview subjects, and the number of frontline supervisors who refused an invitation to take part in this study, in addition to the logistical issues of working with shift-scheduled employees who are further subject to orders that limit what they may and may not divulge, it is exceptionally difficult to conduct a study of police in the workplace. This certainly limited the scope of this study and will undoubtedly stand as a limitation for any future work.

One of the greatest limitations of the Pew national poll is that it does not identify anything about officers surveyed other than that they are law enforcement officers. While interviewing supervisors, it became apparent that the ethnic background of those interviewed played some role in their experience and their responses. A party reading this study may also
hypothesize that the diverse nature of the Maple City Patrol Division may have played some role in the difference of their statistics when compared to national numbers. Greater research into the background and experience of officers and supervisors may shed new light on this hypothesis and be its own area of study. One of the limitations of the interview process was the fact that no supervisors interviewed were female. Gender-specific responses may also offer an avenue of study for future works.

As this study has established that there has been a change in officer tactics, most specifically as a decline in proactive tactics, while preparing this study I did speak with at least one patrol officer from a different department who stated that he had increased his number of motor vehicle stops in order to, in his mind, send a message that police would not be intimidated into not performing their duties. Whether this officer is an anomaly or if there are more out there like him in the field offers the possibility of an area of study this dissertation is not suited to address.

As recent national events have led patrol officers in Maple City to alter their tactics, it is important to recognize that with a national media there will always be events involving local law enforcement that reach a national audience. These events will shape American opinions of law enforcement, and law enforcement as a field must therefore adapt with change. While we cannot predict what will be the next event to draw national attention or what public reaction it may produce, by studying recent events and their effects on patrol tactics, we can be better prepared not only to dull any possible negative repercussions but also to maximize the opportunities of positive modification. Some of the recommendations in this study may prove useful in confronting future events, while completely new efforts may be necessary in confronting others. The Ferguson effect has largely been driven by the national media and further study of the effect
the national media has on perceptions of law enforcement and the subsequent responses of law
enforcement officers in opinions and tactics offers an ongoing opportunity for study that may
improve the performance and functionality of American law enforcement in general.
References


Appendix A

Christopher Rinaldi
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

April 3rd, 2017

Captain [Redacted]
[Redacted] Police Department
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Captain [Redacted],

I am writing you today to request the [Redacted] Police Department’s participation in a study I am conducting to complete my doctoral dissertation within the education department at Seton Hall University.

My dissertation looks to examine aspects of the so called “Ferguson Effect,” specifically the theory that the backlash against police officers in the United States post officer related shootings may have led to a shift in the day-to-day tactics of patrol personnel. As recent national surveys of patrol personnel have confirmed the existence of such an effect I would like to conduct a site study of the [Redacted] Police Department to exam what changes, if any, patrol personnel have made and what the greater effects of these changes may be.

Should the [Redacted] Police Department agree to participate in this study I would respectfully request to interview patrol supervisors to ascertain if they have noticed such a change within the department. I would also request a short survey be distributed to patrol personnel and returned for statistical analysis.

Both the interviews and the survey would be kept anonymous and voluntary in order to better achieve truthful answers, untainted by fear of repercussions. I would make every attempt to work within a schedule most convenient to the [Redacted] Police Department and its members as well.

All data collected will thereafter be saved on an electronic memory device which will be stored under lock and key.

Thank you for your consideration in this study and if I may provide further information I can be reached at [Redacted].

Sincerely,

Christopher Rinaldi
Doctoral Candidate
Seton Hall University
Appendix B

January 7th, 2018
To: Patrol Officers of the [Redacted] Police Department

Officer,

You are hereby invited to participate in a 10 multiple-choice question online survey on current events in the field of police work. The results of this survey will be used in an upcoming doctoral dissertation entitled “A Mixed Method Study of Shifts in Patrol Tactics Attributed to Police Involvement in National Events and Movements.”

Permission to conduct this survey was granted by the [Redacted] Chief of Police and participation is strictly voluntary and strictly anonymous. All data will be securely stored and while the possibility of hacking exists in any online form every effort will be made to ensure cyber security. Once started you may also withdraw from participation at any time if you wish. The survey, which is an amended version of a national survey of police officers conducted by the Pew Research Center, is attached and may be completed in less than ten minutes. After the surveys are analyzed, they will be stored on a USB memory drive and kept in a locked safe in my office. The memory drive will be destroyed after 3 years.

If you have questions about this request for participation please contact me at [Redacted] or [Redacted].

Consent to participate is indicated in your completion of the attached survey. Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,
Christopher Rinaldi
Doctoral Candidate
Seton Hall University
Appendix C

Please answer the following questions honestly and to the best of your abilities. If you do not wish to answer a question or have no opinion on the question asked you may select the “No answer” option. Thank you for your participation.

1. How well do you think the public understands the risks and challenges that law enforcement officers face on the job?
   A. Very well
   B. Somewhat well
   C. Not too well
   D. Not well at all
   E. No answer

2. As you may know, demonstrations have been held in many parts of the country in recent years to protest the deaths of African Americans who died during encounters with the police.
   a. How much, if at all, do you think these protests have been motivated by a genuine desire to hold officers accountable for their actions?
      A. A great deal
      B. Some
      C. Not much
      D. Not at all
      E. No answer
   
   b. How much, if at all, do you think these protests have been motivated by longstanding bias against the police?
      A. A great deal
      B. Some
      C. Not much
      D. Not at all
      E. No answer

   c. In general, have these high-profile incidents involving police and African Americans made your job...
      A. Harder
      B. Easier
      C. Have not made a difference
      D. No answer

3. Here is a list of things that may have happened in some police departments as a result of these high profile incidents involving African Americans and the police. For each, indicate whether this has happened in your department or not.

   a. Officers have become less willing to stop and question people who seem suspicious
      A. Yes, has happened
      B. No, has not happened
      C. No answer
b. The department has taken steps to improve relations between police and blacks
A. Yes, has happened
B. No, has not happened
C. No answer

c. Officers have become more concerned about their safety
A. Yes, has happened
B. No, has not happened
C. No answer

d. The department has modified its policies or procedures about the use of force
A. Yes, has happened
B. No, has not happened
C. No answer

e. Interactions between police and blacks have become more tense
A. Yes, has happened
B. No, has not happened
C. No answer

f. Officers have been more reluctant to use force when it is appropriate
A. Yes, has happened
B. No, has not happened
C. No answer

4. Are you currently assigned to the patrol division of your department?
A. Yes
B. No

5. How many years of experience do you have in patrol? _____

***Thank You For Your Participation***
Appendix D

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

1856

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION & HUMAN SERVICES
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION LEADERSHIP MANAGEMENT & POLICY

APPROVAL FOR DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

Candidate, Christopher Pinhaloi, has successfully completed all requisite requirements. This candidate’s proposal has been reviewed and the candidate may proceed to collect data according to the approved proposal for dissertation under the direction of the mentor and the candidate’s dissertation committee.

If there are substantive differences between what has been approved and the actual study, the final dissertation should indicate, on separate pages in the Appendix, the approval of the committee for those changes.

Title of Proposed Dissertation:
A MIXED METHODS STUDY OF SHIFTS IN PATROL TACTICS ATTRIBUTED TO POLICE INVOLVEMENT IN NATIONAL EVENTS AND MOVEMENTS

Dissertation Committee:

Anthony Coletta
Mentor (Last Name)

Barbara Strobert
Committee Member (Print Name)

Christopher Hynes
Committee Member (Print Name)

Committee Member (Print Name)

Committee Member (Print Name)

Committee Member (Print Name)

Signature/Date

Signature/Date

Signature/Date

Signature/Date

Signature/Date
REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH, DEMONSTRATION OR RELATED ACTIVITIES INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

All material must be typed.

PROJECT TITLE: A Mixed Methods Study of Shifts in Police Tactics Attributed to Police Involvement in National Events and Movements

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT:

In making this application, I (we) certify that I (we) have read and understand the University's policies and procedures governing research, development, and related activities involving human subjects. I (we) shall comply with the letter and spirit of those policies. I (we) further acknowledge my (our) obligation to (1) obtain written approval of significant deviations from the originally-approved protocol BEFORE making those deviations, and (2) report immediately all adverse effects of the study on the subjects to the Director of the Institutional Review Board, Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ 07079.

RESEARCHER(S) ____________________________ DATE ____________

**Please print or type out names of all researchers below signature. Use separate sheet of paper, if necessary.**

My signature indicates that I have reviewed the attached materials of my student advisee and consider them to meet IRB standards.

RESEARCHER'S FACULTY ADVISOR [for student researchers only] ____________________________ DATE ____________

**Please print or type out name below signature**

The request for approval submitted by the above researcher(s) was considered by the IRB for Research Involving Human Subjects Research at the _______________ meeting.

The application was approved ___ not approved ___ by the Committee. Special conditions were ______ were not ____ set by the IRB. (Any special conditions are described on the reverse side.)

DIRECTOR ____________________________ DATE ____________

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH

Seton Hall University
3/2016
Mr. Christopher Rinaldi  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]  

April 12, 2017  

Re: Agency Participation in Research Study  

Dear Mr. Rinaldi,

I have received your request for assistance with your doctoral dissertation involving members of the [Redacted] Police Department. After careful consideration, I hereby approve members of our agency to participate in your study and analysis on the tactical approach changes caused by the "Ferguson Effect." Further, it is my understanding that [Redacted] will serve as agency coordinator to the project and is therefore authorized to assist you in that capacity.

I wish you all the best with your research and study.

Very Truly Yours,

[Redacted]