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SECURING THE SCHOOL AND PROTECTING  
STUDENTS AND STAFF: SCHOOL SECURITY  
GUARDS IN AN INNER-CITY  
SECONDARY SCHOOL

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SECONDARY SCHOOL

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## CHAPTER I

### Introduction

For school administrators, there is little question that the need to control students in schools is critical for student safety and learning. Student control has been and continues to be a persistent focal point in the organizational life of the school. In an early study of the school as a social system, Waller, (1932) found control to be a major issue in the structural and normative aspects of the school culture. Nearly four decades later and, after an extensive study of public schools in America, Silberman (1970, p.122) concluded, "The most important characteristic schools share in common is a preoccupation with order and control."

When the escalating rates of disorder and violence in high schools are considered, the issue of student control becomes even more significant (Bailey, 1970; Westin, 1970; Ritterband & Silberstein, 1973; see also reports by the California State Department of Education, 1975; and by the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency, 1979). Historically, violence and vandalism have not been uncommon in the public school system. However, the incidents before the sixties seemed to have been sporadic and isolated (Westin, 1970). Today, the situation has changed as the level of recorded incidents of crime in schools has risen sharply.

A bill introduced into the House of Representatives of the U.S. Congress (H.R. 4538 "Classroom Safety Act of 1992") summarized the rising tide of violence in American's schools thusly:

Over 3,000,000 crimes occur on or near school campuses every year, 16,000 per school day, or one every six seconds; one-fourth of the major school districts now use metal detectors in an attempt to reduce the number of weapons introduced into the schools by students; twenty percent of teachers in schools have reported being threatened with violence by a student; the despair brought on by poverty and disenfranchisement that affects millions of our youth is rapidly entering the school; and schools are being asked to take on responsibilities that society as a whole has neglected, forcing teachers to referee fights rather than teach (pp. 72-73).

The problem seems to be most acute in large urban schools. Both the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency Report and the California State Department of Education Report note that the incidence of violence, especially vandalism, increases with size of school and urban density.

#### Statement of the Problem

Because violence in the schools has escalated in the last several years, many schools have responded to the safety problem by employing security guards. School security guards have become an integral part of the schools in urban districts.

Some security guards hired in public schools are former or current police officers whose responsibility as police officers is the apprehension of

criminals and prevention of crime. When placed in public schools, police officers must shift from a street scene to an educational context, from dealing with criminals to dealing with students, and from supervision by other law enforcement personnel to supervision by school administrators. Police as security guards must not treat students as criminals or fail to comply with administrative directives. There is little research published about security guards in inner-city schools; many questions related to the transition from police in a street context to security guards in a school context remain unanswered.

The major purpose of this study was to describe and analyze the meaning that student control has for security guards in inner-city, secondary high schools. This purpose was achieved by answering the following research questions:

- (1) What meanings do school security guards give to their experiences in an inner-city, secondary school?
- (2) How do these meanings differ from the meanings they give to their experiences as police officers in a metropolitan setting?

This study has immediate benefits for members of the educational community and the society at large. The results of this study assists educators in better working with security guards to provide safer schools. If schools become safer places for children, society at large will be better.

### Background of the Study

Clarke High School is an urban high school in the southwest part of the United States. To outsiders, Clarke High School would be considered "out of control". Examples of some of the problems described in the local

newspaper within the past four years include a faculty member who was accused of raping a student, alleged sexual harassment of a student by a faculty member, students bringing guns to school, drug deals, pipe bombs, students accusing fellow classmates of sexual battery, and an illegal purchase of an infant by a faculty member.

Clarke has a diverse student population. Of the 1440 students, 24.4% are African American; 11.2%, Hispanic, 11.2%, Native American; 1.1%, Asian; and 58.8%, White. One third of the students are on the free lunch program. The school has been labeled by the State Department of Education as "low performing" because of low students' scores on state mandated achievement tests. The mobility rate is 51%; the dropout rate is 8.8%. The involvement of the parents in this school program is very low.

In January, 1994, the principal of Clarke High School was removed from the school for immoral behavior. The assistant principal was promoted to principal. On January 21, 1994, while attending a reception for the district's new superintendent, I was encouraged by an area superintendent to apply for the now vacant assistant principalship at Clarke. After the reception, I had a phone message at home asking me to contact the principal at Clarke about the position. At my job the next morning, there was a note in my mail box to call the Human Resource Office and schedule an interview at Clarke and at another district high school. I interviewed at both schools but was eventually assigned to Clarke as the assistant principal with major responsibilities for discipline and security.

At Clarke High School, I took field notes on a daily basis from January through December, 1994, as I performed my duties as an assistant principal. As these field notes became more extensive, various areas of concern became apparent. Ironically, one of my most pressing and

consistent problems was with the security personnel hired to provide a safe and orderly environment.

Clarke was allocated 42 hours worth of security each day. Usually, six guards were assigned to work for seven hours each day, but the administration had discretion over the number of guards and the hours assigned to each. Although I would sometimes hire personnel from private security firms, most of the guards I hired were employed by the local police department and worked part-time at Clarke. I gave priority to city police because the local police gave the students and staff a greater sense of security, and because the presence of their cars tended to keep outsiders off of the campus.

In my position as assistant principal, I had two major problems with guards. First, I noticed that sometimes we had too many guards working at one time and, at other times, we had no guards on duty. After observing this problem over an extended period, I decided to place the guards on a schedule and in specific locations. Many of the guards joked about this plan; there were rumors that some would quit and look for other employment. Second, I also had to protect students from these guards. Parents of the students began to voice concerns of illegal searches, harassment and brutality by the guards. This issue became a daily problem for me as an administrator as I tried to understand some of the decisions made by security guards who were hired to control and protect students. Weren't security guards hired to help me rather than hinder me? One way to answer that question was to conduct long interviews with security guards to get a sense of what they meant when they kept Clarke secure.

## Summary

School people, more than ever, are concerned about controlling students and making schools a safer place. In urban areas, especially, violence and disorder have escalated. Many school districts across the nation are adding security personnel to handle this situation. As security guards become a vital part of the school, school people have a limited understanding of this role in the school setting.

## CHAPTER II

### Review of Relevant Literature

The review of the relevant literature will be used to support the purpose of this study. Essentially, three strands of research were investigated and are reported in the following order: School violence, school security guards, and student control.

#### School Violence

Beginning in the 1970's, public concern about violence, vandalism, and other crimes occurring in or near schools has increased. In a Gallup public opinion poll conducted in 1975, a representative national sample of respondents was asked to list the major problems facing public schools. Among the problems most mentioned were crime, violence and stealing (Gallup 1982). Two-thirds of the respondents believed that stealing (of money, clothes, and books) occurred a great deal of the time.

In a 1975 report released by the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency, information collected from 500 schools indicated that crime in the public schools was increasing. Major crimes, such as homicide, rape, robbery, assault, burglary, drugs and alcohol offenses, and weapon offenses, had increased considerably during the 1970 - 1973 period. For example, assaults on teachers and students had increased by about 80 percent, robbery by more than 35 percent, and weapon offenses by more than 50 percent (Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency, 1975).

The Law Enforcement Assistance Administration's (LEAA) National Institute of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention held a conference of various school personnel to study the school crime problem. Of those attending, 90 percent reported incidents of school vandalism, 80 percent reported that weapons were carried into school, and 60 percent reported gang violence at school. (Research for Better Schools Inc., 1976).

At the direction of the U.S. Congress, the National Institute of Education sponsored the first and only comprehensive national study of school crime. The purpose of that study was to determine the frequency and seriousness of crime in elementary and secondary schools in the United States, the number and location of schools affected by crime, and how school crime could be prevented. This landmark study, entitled Violent Schools - Safe Schools, was published in 1978. The three year study was conducted in three phases. In Phase I, a mail survey was sent to a representative sample of principals of more than 4,000 public elementary and secondary schools. They were asked to report over a one-month period any illegal and disruptive activity in their schools. In Phase II, a nationally representative sample of principals in 642 public junior and senior high schools was questioned. This information was collected at sites by field representatives. In addition, students and teachers were asked about illegal and disruptive incidents. Phase III consisted of case studies of ten schools. The focus of these studies was on the ways in which the schools coped or failed to cope with incidents of crime and violence.

The study concluded that teenagers were at greater risk of becoming victims of violence while at school than away from school. Researchers concluded: "Although teenage youth spend at most twenty-five percent of their waking hours in school, forty percent of robberies and thirty-six



percent of assaults on urban teenagers occurs at school." (NIE, 1978, p.9) In secondary schools, 5,200 (five percent of all) secondary teachers were physically attacked each month. These attacks on teachers were almost five times as likely to result in serious injury than attacks on students. The risk of personal violence was more likely in larger than smaller schools, more prevalent in secondary schools than in elementary schools, and greatest at the junior high school level. Theft was clearly the most widespread crime perpetrated against students and teachers.

There have not been any comprehensive nation-wide studies on school violence since the Safe School Study. However, a number of smaller studies have been done. For example, Oliver Miles (1987) studied trends in crime and student misconduct. He concluded that school crime had either leveled off or declined.

California has required all school districts to keep statistics on school crimes. A 1990 report revealed that certain crimes, including theft, substance abuse and felony sex offenses, actually decreased. However, assaults against students and staff increased. During the same four-year period, (1985-1989) incidents of weapons possession increased 28 percent overall, with a 100 percent increase in the number of gun-related incidents (California Department of Education, 1990).

California was not the only state that witnessed an increase in school violence. Florida experienced a forty-two percent increase in gun incidents during the 1987-88 school year, according to reports by the Center to Prevent Handgun Violence (1990). Nationwide, the National School Safety Center estimated that in 1987, 135,000 male students carried guns to school daily and another 270,000 did so at least once during the year (Center to Prevent Handgun Violence, 1990).

Schools have responded to crime and disruption with a wide variety of devices and personnel. Specially designed locks, metal detectors, windows and door alarms are considered generally effective in reducing school crime, though they can be unreliable. The establishment of school security divisions and employment of security officers has increased markedly in the past decade (Quarles, 1989). The most prominent response to school crime among urban schools, particularly at the secondary level, is to employ security guards. Although junior high schools have higher rates of violence than senior high schools, security guards are concentrated more in senior high schools (NIE, 1978). According to the Safe School Report, very few schools (1%) have regular police stationed in them, but the proportion is much higher in big city secondary schools (15%).

#### School Security Guards

Although security guards have become an integral part of the school program as a way of managing school violence, there is not any research reported in the literature upon which this study could build. Barring empirical studies, attention turned to a review of the professional literature concerned with the role of the school security guards. After questioning several police officers, I was told that they were not aware of any such literature. One officer told me to call the local police library. When I talked to the local police librarian, he gave me a list of magazines related to enforcement, but said none of these publications focused on school security. The librarian also stated that since school security was a part-time job, the department had no obligation to provide professional development literature for school security guards.

### Student Control and Pupil Control Ideology

Packard (1988) depicts student control "as the most visible thread woven through the fabric of school life." Waller's (1932) emphasis on pupil control created a theoretical backdrop that led to studies of what came to be known as pupil control ideology. In 1963, Willower and Jones began studying pupil control within a single junior high school. Their observation that public school educators are constantly concerned with pupil control led Willower and Jones to devise and advance the organizing concepts that led to the development of the Pupil Control Ideology Questionnaire (PCI) and the Pupil Control Behavior Rating Form (PCB).

Willower, Jones, Eidell, & Hoy, (1973) maintain that public school educators' obsession with pupil control warranted more methodical investigation. Willower cited the studies of Gilbert, Levinson and Carlson as contributing viable theoretical concepts for extending the junior high school studies. Gilbert and Levinson (1957) reported earlier that staff members in mental hospitals were often absorbed in controlling their patients. Some custodial staff members considered and handled patients "as if they were not fully deserving of respect and humane treatment" (Packard, 1988, p. 185). In contrast, more humanistic staff members believed that patients were human and merited common courtesies and more sensitive forms of therapies.

Carlson had earlier (1964) compared schools to prisons and mental hospitals. In "domesticated" organizations, the institution has no control over client selection and clients have no choice concerning their participation (1964, p. 266). The clients are compelled to avail themselves of the offering of professional and non-professional staff members. Control becomes a vital concern in domesticated institutions.

Both the PCI and PCB instruments provide short and easily scored questionnaires for survey-based hypothesis - testing inquiry. Internal and through-time stability estimates often exceeded 0.90. The instruments have been used to establish a strong (0.70 or higher) relationship between pupil control and personality, organizational, experience and behavioral correlates (Packard, 1988).

The Pupil Control Ideology Questionnaire is the older of the two instruments and played a role in the theory movement of educational administration. The PCI is used to determine teachers' control ideology as a humanistic (low scores) or a custodial (high scores) orientation, while the PCB instrument compels students to relate teachers' pupil control behavior. PCI has been employed in over 200 original studies reported in several hundred publications.

Packard (1988), in a review of literature of all PCI studies, concluded that:

Elementary teachers were more humanistic than secondary school teachers, females more humanistic than males, administrators more humanistic than teachers, counselors more humanistic than administrators, and teachers with less than 5 years teaching experience more humanistic than teachers with 5 or more years teaching experience.

A number of studies have focused on the type of conditions associated with custodial and humanistic scores on the PCI. Theoretically, where organizational clients have no choice in participation, client control is stressed; those most responsible for control (teachers) believe that weak

control is equated with organizational ineffectiveness. Researchers believe threatening conditions contribute to higher, more custodial PCI scores (Willower & Lawrence, 1979). Since high school students are more threatening than elementary students, urban schools are more threatening places than rural schools, and roles in which educators work more directly with students are more threatening than roles with less direct contact, therefore the pupil control orientation of teachers in urban high schools should be more custodial.

The relationship between socioeconomic status and pupil control orientation is not stable. In some studies it has been found to be positive; in others, negative and still others, not existing. Gossen (1969) found that teachers in low socioeconomic status schools were more custodial in their pupil control ideology than teachers in middle or high socioeconomic schools. No significant difference in pupil control orientation was detected between middle and high socioeconomic school sites (Willower, 1973). Kelton (1976) found race and socioeconomic status of students unrelated to educator pupil control orientation. Teachers in low socioeconomic schools were reported as being more humanistic than their counterparts in middle and high socioeconomic schools in a study conducted by Barfield and Burlingame (1974).

The relationship between student race and teacher pupil-control orientation is not stable. Where there is greater community population density, coupled with higher minority staff members, there is a higher custodial orientation (Hoy, 1971). More recently, PCI scores for educators in white middle schools were found to be more custodial than for educators in urban, ethnically diverse schools (Smith, Reinharty, Oshima and Smith, 1982).

The PCI and PCB, in sum, provide insights on educators and pupil control. In this study the term "student control" was used to discuss the perspective of security guards and to avoid any linkage to these earlier studies on educator perspectives.

### Summary

Several studies document the increase of violence, vandalism and other crimes occurring in or near schools. California led the nation in requiring all districts to keep statistics on school crimes. Other states are beginning to follow. The most prominent response to school crimes among urban secondary schools is to employ security guards. These guards are another method the schools use to maintain control. Studies of educators suggest they vary on the humanistic or custodial dimensions in studies of pupil control.

## CHAPTER III

### Methodology

The purpose of this study was to investigate and describe the meaning that student control has for security guards in an inner-city, secondary high school. Two research questions were formulated as a focus for this study. This chapter describes the method used to answer those questions by discussing the selection of informants, collection and analysis of information, and trustworthiness of design.

#### Selection of Informants

The informants were police officers who were also employed as school security guards working in Clarke High School, an inner-city high school located in a southwestern state. Four guards were selected using the following criteria; (1) The race and gender of the guards were representative of the security guard population, (2) and selected informants must have the verbal ability to articulate their work experiences. Each informant was asked to sign an informed consent (see Appendix B).

#### Collection and Analysis of Data

Some "grand tour" information (Spradley, 1979, p. 86) had already been developed through participant observation. More focused information was collected through the long interview. (See Appendix C for IRB approval of data collection by participant observation and long interview.) Although I

had originally planned to collect all information as a participant observer and an interviewer while at Clarke High School, I was transferred to a second school before I had completed all data collection. To fill in the gaps, long interviews were conducted.

To gain a better understanding of the experiences of school security guards in this inner-city high school, I used the nonscheduled standardized interview (also called the Unstructured Schedule Interview (USI) rather than the Scheduled Standardized Interview (SSI), (Denzin 1989). The USI allows the interviewers to structure the questions themselves and the order of the questions to fit the style of the interviewers. Although both types of interviews seek the same type of information, the wording and order in an SSI are the same for everyone (see Appendix A). The advantage of the USI for this study was that the literature review yielded little information upon how questions should be formulated and how they should be sequenced. Because the USI allows for greater latitude for respondent expressions than the SSI, it was better to use this interview type which allowed respondent categories to emerge than an interview type which was more restricting.

The interviews were analyzed by following generally Spradley's Developmental Research Method (1979). This method requires several steps. First, domain analysis was used to examine the information collected with descriptive questions. The resulting domains were used to develop structural questions which will serve as the focus for the second analysis of the interview. Taxonomies analysis were used to investigate the response from the structural interviews. The resulting taxonomies served as a spring board for the formulation of contrast questions during the third analysis of the interview. Componential analysis was employed in the analysis of responses to contrast questions. The final analysis involved extrapolation of



major themes from those dimensions of contrast which repeat themselves in at least two or more cultural domains or from the more explicit and recurrent expressions used by the informants.

The researcher built a conceptual map on how the security guards see their world. First, three major categories of the world were identified: basic routine, situations that could be dangerous, and dealing with others. From the interviews, each sentence was numbered so that sentences could be grouped into stories. Once the stories were developed, concepts were identified. For example; other people, such as teachers, had a sub-category such as tardies. This process was followed closely until a diagram was developed (Figure 1, Schematic Presentation of Categories of Security Guards).

As the study proceeded, these stages often flowed together. At times taxonomies emerged from single descriptive questions. In general, Spradley's method became a guide, not a series of discreet steps followed without reflection.

### Truthworthiness

The researcher attended to trustworthiness throughout the course of the study. Truth value was assured through triangulation using fieldnotes, participant observation, and interviews. To further strengthen truth value, the researcher remained close to the situation. The internal judgments of those who are close to the situation are more often significant than the judgments of outsiders (Walker, 1980). Consistency was maintained through detailed description on how data were collected, how categories were derived, and how decisions were made throughout the inquiry.

Through this process other researchers can replicate the study. By providing a description of the setting, transferability can be used by those interested in applying the findings to their own situations.

## CHAPTER IV

### Security Guards and Their World

#### Introduction

The school security guards see their purpose as securing the school and protecting students and staff. Their world, as school guards, is made up of a basic routine to get through the day. That routine consists of two major elements. The first element is being aware of situations that could be dangerous which they will encounter on a daily basis. The second element is dealing with others such as teachers, administrators, outsiders and students.

To gain a clear understanding of what is to follow see Figure 1, Schematic Presentation of Categories of Security Guards.

#### Basic Routine -- "Making the Rounds"

The guards arrive at school at various times. Some arrive before the students, others come later; the time of arrival depends on their police schedules. When the guards get to the school, they are dressed in their police uniforms and armed. They remain uniformed and armed as security guards.

The day starts for the guards by signing the time sheets in the main office. While in the office they will pick up a radio so they can be at all times in communication with the main office, administrators, and other security guards. The teachers use their classroom emergency buttons to alert the main office to contact the guards. Guards are clear about this

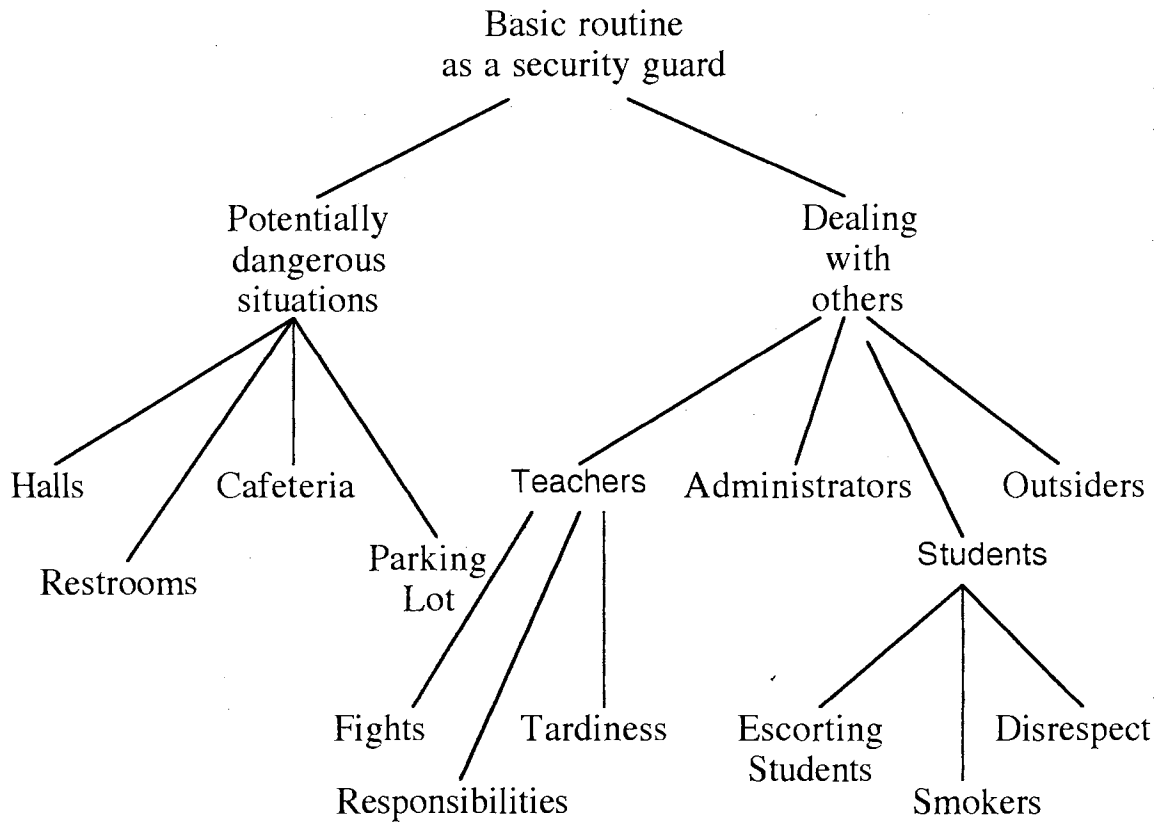


Figure 1. Schematic presentation of categories of security guards

routine.

I arrive at school around 8:30 a.m. My first responsibility, after I sign in and get a radio, is to let the principal and vice principal know that I am present. The main office has a base station which is monitored by the secretaries. The teachers in each room are supplied with a panic button so they can contact the office so the office can contact me if they have a situation arise which they can't handle. Once I check in and pick up my radio, I make the rounds. (Officer C, Sentences 1-8, Feb. 7, 1996)

The guards who arrive when school starts begin their rounds by standing at the main entrances as students begin to arrive. During this time, the guards are looking for trouble while interacting with students and school personnel. They continue to interact as they continue their rounds in other places in the building.

I try to have as much interaction as possible. As I interact with students and personnel, I try to make sure that there are no problems in the halls and during the lunch period. (Officer A, Sentences 1-2, April 6, 1996)

While at the main entry way, the guards will come into contact with parents and sometimes outsiders. As the students move to attend classes, the guards will also move to the halls to make sure there are no problems.

I mostly try to make sure that there are no problems in the halls. My responsibilities, I feel,

are to keep the problems to a minimum level.

(Officer A, Sentences 4-5, Feb. 26, 1996)

As the halls begin to clear with the beginning of classes, guards "push" the remaining students to class. They "push" by verbally encouraging the students to hurry to class.

Throughout the day, I spend a lot of time pushing students to class. I do this by encouraging them to hurry up. (Officer B, Sentences 4-5, March 15, 1996)

When the students are in their classes, the guards then begin to check the restrooms and parking lots.

When not making their rounds, most of the day is spent escorting students from the classrooms for disruptive behavior and interacting with tardy students. As one guard said:

First, I can say that you are on your feet all day. I try to have as much interaction as possible. The days are really slow, not much ever happens. Throughout the day, most of my time is used for escorting students to the office. (Officer A, Sentences 1-4, Feb. 26, 1996)

At noon, the guards return to their rounds by patrolling in and around the cafeteria. This area is a critical location for the guards because of the concentration of students. The guards know from their police training that crowds have the potential for trouble.

I know from situations we deal with on a regular basis on the street that where the crowd is, is

where we should be. (Officer A, Sentences 4-5,  
April 6, 1996)

When the lunch period comes to an end, the guards continue checking possible trouble spots such as halls, restrooms and parking lots. As the school day comes to an end, the guards station themselves on the outside of the buildings, near or in the parking lots. Once the parking lots are clear, the guards end their day and their rounds by returning to the main office to check out, and return their radios.

The school security guards have a basic routine for their day -- making their rounds. The day starts by checking in and making communication with the other guards and administrators. Throughout the day, they check the cafeteria, restrooms, halls, parking lots and anywhere there are crowds. A large amount of their time is used for escorting students to the office. This routine helps them secure and protect students and staff.

### Situations That Could Be Dangerous

While guards make their rounds, they are aware of several situations that could be dangerous: halls, restrooms, cafeteria, and parking lots.

#### Halls

Throughout the course of each day, the guards try to be as visible as possible in the halls. Their major concern is to make sure that the halls are always clear and no problems exist. As they patrol, they watch for students who are tardy, students without passes, and conflicts between or among students.

Students are always in the halls so I often ask for passes and names. A lot of these kids have made

it into a game of being in the halls. Some of these kids we build rapport, but others get offended when asking why they are out. (Officer A, Sentences 13-15, Feb. 26, 1996)

The guards think that the tardy problems can be controlled if educators - teachers and administrators -- imposed stronger consequences.

Tardies! Excessive tardies are a problem everyday. For instance, I usually take the students to the office, but this isn't a deterrent. I think after so many tardies a parent conference, In-House suspension, or a suspension should be a consequence. (Officer B, Sentences 1, 12, 13, March 15, 1996)

Tardies, in short, are a problem that could be solved by educators.

If the guards station themselves in the halls, on a regular basis, they can intervene between students before trouble can start.

If a conflict takes place in the hall between two students and I step in and get the students to reason, and they go opposite ways, then there is no reason to take them to the office. If they keep mouthing each other, and the other students are agitating the problem, it's best to take them to the office. This way counselors can be aware of the problem so it may not escalate. (Officer A, Sentences 5-7, April 6, 1996)

As the guards became more familiar with the school and students as they walk the halls, they tend to keep an eye on the problem students.



At the first of school, I'm able to pick out the students that will be problems. At the semester, the ones that were put out first semester will be back the second. All of these students tend to group together. (Officer C, Sentences 3-5, Feb. 7, 1996)

In the halls, guards have different rapport with different students. For this reason, they tend to be inconsistent in dealing with students in the halls.

Whether I take a students to the office or handle myself depends on the student. If it is an isolated incident, or if the student is basically good, such as one time tardy, I will give them a break, but the repeaters, I will take to the office. I feel like those that try to do the right thing are the ones I try to get to. There is some hope for them. (Officer B, Sentences 6-9, March 15, 1996)

The guards, in sum, spend most of their day patrolling the halls, seeking to spot and stop dangerous situations before they arise. As they walk the halls, they are making sure that the students are in their assigned areas and that there are no problems. During the guards' time in the halls, they work towards identifying problem students and building rapport with good students. This rapport often determines how guards treat students.

### Restrooms

The restrooms are places that are checked several times throughout the day.

There are four boys' restrooms and I check them throughout the day to make sure nobody is smoking, no graffiti, nothing is being torn up, and the stalls have not been kicked in. Every passing period, I usually position myself by the restroom down near the cafeteria. This one is where most of the smoking takes place. (Officer C, Sentences 1-2, 16-17, April 4, 1996)

The guards also make sure that the students have not flooded the restrooms. If this is the case, the guards will notify the custodians. For vandalism, the principal and custodian will be notified. For those students caught smoking in the restrooms, the guards handle these students at their own discretion. If the students have been caught smoking before, they will usually be sent to the office. First time offenders, and those students that listen to the guards, will be given a break.

As the guards check the restrooms, in sum, they are looking for dangers such as vandalism and students smoking. Vandalism is usually reported to the custodian or principal, depending upon the level of destruction. When students are caught smoking, the guards may take them to the office or may handle the incident themselves.

### Cafeteria

During the school day, the guards see crowds as a major source of danger. Incidents may escalate because by-standers may enter the conflict. Hence, the lunch period in the cafeteria is a critical area because of crowds.

While in the cafeteria, the guards move around to prevent problems before they happen. When fights erupt in this area, the guards see this as a major disruption and act accordingly.

Yesterday, in the cafeteria near the end of the lunch period, one female goes to another female and clocks her a couple of times with a combination lock, and the fight was on. At that time, all of the students would not go to class. They wanted to stay and watch. Instead of going to class, they wanted to holler and egg it on. When we got this fight broken up, one of the fighter's friends came from nowhere and started another fight. We had all of these students in the hall as we tried to get them back to class. These types of situations take a while to break up. (Officer B, Sentences 11-17, April 4, 1996)

Most of the time, when fights start in the cafeteria, the officers will yell at the students to get them to stop. When this doesn't work, more forceful procedures are used.

Two girls were involved in a fight and I first yelled to break it up, but the fight continued. When the fight was broken up, one student was taken to the office while the other officer got information from the other student. The girl that was in the office came running back so she gets put in a choke neck lock and is dragged back to the office and cuffed to a chair. (Officer B, Sentences 16-18, April 4, 1996)

The particular procedure used depends on how severe the fight is.

When to cuff a student and when to take a student to the ground depends on the situation. We had a fight today in the cafeteria and I had the student that did not want to fight, and the other officer had the one that started the fight. The one I had kept mouthing, I think to hold his pride. At no time did either student try to fight us back. For this reason, no cuffs were needed. When a student tries to pull away or becomes verbally aggressive towards me, I will cuff. When to put the student on the ground is basically the same thing. Also when the person is larger than you, or when they break free and turn on an officer, I will take to the ground. (Officer A, Sentences 21-28, April 6, 1996)

While in the cafeteria, some of the guards are concerned about the students cleaning up after they eat.

When they eat lunch, they just leave their trays on the table with everything on them. They don't even take time to throw it away. Elementary students are better than these students. These students just don't care. (Officer B, Sentences 19-22, March 15, 1996)

Such lack of caring shows a lack of respect for the school.

The cafeteria, with its crowds and fights, is always a priority for security guards. It is a situation that has great potential for conflict. When

situations arise, the guards tend to use more forceful procedures to control trouble in the cafeteria. Guards also worry about student attitudes toward the school.

### Parking Lot

The parking lots are areas that the guards patrol regularly. While they patrol the lots, they are looking for attacks on teachers' cars, smokers, drugs, weapons, students leaving, and the smooth arrival and exit of the buses. Similar to the cafeteria, the parking lot is a potentially dangerous area. For this reason, the parking lots are checked during the morning, lunch hour, and at the end of the day.

While checking the parking lot, I try to make sure that when the teachers come in the morning, if it is foggy or something, that they don't leave their headlights on. Every once in a while, I do miss a set of headlights because I may have come in late. I make sure bikes and cycles are secure. Being familiar with the teachers' vehicles, I try to watch to make sure no windows are broken or someone has borrowed a stereo or taken it for a joyride. One time a vehicle had been broken into.

At lunch I move around the outside to check the parking lot for smokers and students leaving, but eventually I get back to the cafeteria because this is where the students are.

When school is out, I try to clear the parking lot. Getting the buses out smoothly is often a problem. I have found a couple of guns in cars on the

parking lot. Drugs also have been taken from students' cars. (Officer C, Sentences 11-20, April 4, 1996)

In situations where guns and drugs are found, the students are arrested and an officer is called to book them at the juvenile detention center.

### Summary

The secret of being a security guard is being in the right place at the right time. Danger can be averted in halls, restrooms, cafeteria, and parking lots by making the rounds. When situations become dangerous, security guards respond at levels of action determined by their sense of how dangerous things are. Students are treated differently because of the level of rapport. However, guards often see students as not caring about the school.

### Dealing with Others

The second element of the guards' world is the dealing with people in the school setting. Dealing with teachers, administrators, outsiders and students complicate the world of the guards as they make their rounds.

#### Teachers

Guards often believe teachers fail in helping them maintain security. Three areas are troublesome: fights, responsibilities, and tardies.

#### Fights.

When the guards have to break up a fight, they feel that the teachers don't give them much help in controlling students. The guards think the teachers can and should play a bigger role in dealing with fights.

When a fight starts, I think teachers can disperse the crowd and keep the students back. They can also get in and help the officers break the fight up. They can grab a student from behind and pull them back. They don't have to get in the middle where they are swinging, but there are some things teachers can do. (Officer B, Sentences 11-14, March 15, 1996)

When the guards try to break fights and the teachers stand around and watch, the guards become more forceful in breaking up the fights.

A fight broke out in the cafeteria and an officer tried to break it up and several teachers just stood around. For this reason, the officer sprayed (maced) the students. (Officer B, Sentences 2-3, April 4, 1996)

The guards believe that teachers should be more helpful when fights break out.

#### Teacher responsibilities.

The guards know there is a difference of opinion among the teachers and themselves concerning problems. As one guard put it:

There are teacher problems and security problems. Teacher problems are when kids are acting up in a class, no books, paper or pencil. The teachers call us to escort the students to the office for these infractions. Security problems are fights, guns, drugs and outsiders in or outside of the school

buildings. (Officer A, Sentences 4-7, Feb. 26, 1996)

Teachers would be of more help to the guards if they would fulfill more of their responsibilities in dealing not only with security problems but also teacher problems.

The guards think that the teachers rely too much on the guards for solving all problems.

I think teachers should be more in the hallways between periods. If they see something happening they should call the kids down versus staying in their classrooms waiting for the next bell. When they are on break, and need a substitute, that's not my job. I think the teachers should play a bigger part than what they are doing, instead of placing their responsibilities on someone else. (Officer D, Sentences 10-13, Feb. 9, 1996)

### Tardies.

The guards feel that tardies are teacher problems.

With the tardies, I usually get on the students and tell them to get to class. This is really a teacher problem, not security guard problem. (Officer A, Sentences 1-2, Feb. 26, 1996)

With tardies being a daily problem, the guards are asked by the administration to carry out hall sweeps. According to the guards, these sweeps would be more effective if the teachers would do their part.

There is no deterrent for tardies. I think teachers need to take more responsibility. The kids come in



tardy and the teachers won't write it up, or when we have hall sweeps, we catch most of the students, but they are tardy on an hourly basis. A lot of the students are not reported and some teachers don't lock their doors. Those students we catch, we take to the cafeteria where the counselor will give them a detention slip. (Officer B, Sentences 8-11, March 15, 1996)

If the teachers would fully cooperate and fulfill their responsibilities, tardies would be less of a problem.

#### Administrators

Administrators tend to cause problems for security guards as the guards try to carry out their duties in the school setting. For example, guards and administrators differ on where guards should be.

I feel very limited as a security guard. Many times we find ourselves in disagreement with the administration on whether we should be outside or upstairs. Usually something happens when they decide where we should be located. I can't believe that they think they know where we should be patrolling. I know from situations we deal with on a regular basis, that where the crowd is, is where we should be. (Officer A, Sentences 2-5, April 6, 1996)

When it comes to checking the schools for drugs, there was disagreement on how the search was carried out.

The biggest disagreement I had is that the administrators had a drug dog come out the week before last to do a search. Instead of them doing a surprise search, they went on the intercom and told the teachers that after students pass from their class, and the bell rings, keep the students in because dogs will be doing a search. I feel this defeated the purpose. Now the kids could get rid of contraband if they had any. I told the administrators that they had made a mistake. (Officer D, Sentences 15-19, April 8, 1996)

The guards also know that the streets are different from the schools, and that they should work within the schools' guidelines.

The school is a different environment from the streets. When there is an infraction on the streets, we can ticket or take to jail. I went to a classroom to get a student. When I got to the room, a student was in the corner with a ball of clay wrapped in a towel. The student refused to give the clay to me or the teacher. The student swung the clay at me and refused to go to the office. I had to cuff him. Another situation; a female went into the classroom to attack another student. I grabbed the student by her arm and she began to curse me and get into my face. On the street, I would have taken the student to the

ground. (Officer A, Sentences 5-13, Feb. 26, 1996)

There are occasions when the guards disagree with the administration on how to secure the school. Based on their police training, the guards think that they know better than the administrators on issues of patrolling and checking for drugs. Even though there are disagreements with administrators, the guards say they try to work within the schools' guidelines.

### Outsiders

Outsiders are of major and daily concern to the guards. When the guards describe outsiders they use terms such as "gangsters" and "bad element".

When school is out, I try to make sure everything is OK. Always there are outsiders on campus and many times these outsiders are gangsters. I try to keep the "bad element" out. At this school, you can't wear any gang attire, earrings, clothing with guns, alcohol or sex on it. Also bandannas are illegal. (Officer A, Sentences 6-10, Feb. 26, 1996)

All outsiders are carefully monitored.

Just the other day, as I was patrolling the halls, I noticed two males in the building wearing dark blue clothes, earrings, baseball caps and blue bandannas in their pockets. I approached these guys and asked if they attended school here. They said they came to visit someone. I asked

them to leave, but they continued to go to the cafeteria to visit a friend. I continued to tell them to leave. When they finished talking, they left. This is a good example of a "bad element."  
(Officer A, Sentences 11-17, Feb. 26, 1996)

Guards suggest there is a procedure for dealing with outsiders.

If anybody enters the building, I will stop them and ask what do they need and ask if they are going to the office. I don't want to seem like I'm doing some type of interrogation, but I ask if they are picking up someone. At that point, once I find out who they are, we really don't have much of a problem. Generally, they will go to the office and get a visitor's pass. (Officer D, Sentences 32-35, April 8, 1996)

The guards think of outsiders as possible "gangsters" and "bad elements". Outsiders can usually be identified by the way they dress. The procedure for handling outsiders is to first question, and then ask them to leave.

### Students

Students present guards with several problems including escorting them, smoking, and disrespect.

### Escorting students.

The guards escort students to the office throughout the day. They understand if the students are fighting, they should escort, but many times they escort students for "silly" reasons.

The teachers call us to escort students for minor infractions, such as they won't be quiet or for too many tardies. This seems silly to me. (Officer A, Sentences 16-17, Feb. 26, 1996)

When escorting students, guards have opportunities to interact with the students. For the guards, this is a time to give students advice.

As I escort these students, I talk to the students about the problem and try to give them a better way of handling the situation. Hopefully, they will see a new way of thinking. Some of the students will listen, but most of them don't. (Officer A, Sentences 10-12, Feb. 26, 1996)

The guards think that the students with minor offenses should go to the office on their own.

Seven years ago, I was a student and all the teachers did was give us a referral and we went to the office on our own. (Officer A, Sentence 18, Feb. 26, 1996)

Throughout the day, the guards escort students to the office. They often see this as "silly" but use this opportunity to talk to students.

### Smokers.

Students smoking on campus is a violation of school rules. Although the guards, teachers, and administrators know this, guards believe educators tend to enforce this rule too loosely. One thing the guards agree on is that there must be stronger consequences if they are to end smoking.

Smokers are a problem everyday. I guess they continue to be a problem because nothing really

happens to them. (Officer B, Sentences 12-13, April 4, 1996)

When the guards catch the students smoking, they will either take to the office, talk to them, or ask them to throw the cigarettes away.

I have caught students smoking and had them to throw the cigarettes away and talked to them. But as I think more about it, I believe it's best to take the students to the office. (Officer B, Sentences 12-13, March 15, 1996)

In making a decision on how to handle smokers, the guards base their decisions on whether the students are "good" students or repeaters of the offense. The repeaters are usually sent to the office while the "good" students tend to get a break. Handling smokers in this way has caused a problem between an administrator, a guard and a parent.

The parent of a student called the principal and said there was a guard that did not let the administration know that his child was smoking on school property. (Officer A, Sentence 8, April 6, 1996)

While smoking on campus is a violation of school policy, administrators and guards tend to enforce the smoking rule loosely. The guards are inconsistent on which smokers are sent to the office, and the ones they give a break.

#### Disrespect.

The guards see themselves and other adults in the school as possessing authority and demanding respect. Showing disrespect toward the guards or

administrators or teachers angers the guards. One guard defines disrespect as, follows:

It starts off with elders. I feel like you need to be obedient. I mean, I'm a young person, but I still show obedience, and I'm courteous to my elders, and I don't use profanity. These kids feel like they are grown and can do anything they want to, and talk the way they want to, and that's not so. It just goes back to the old book, you just don't do things in front of adults. (Officer D, Sentences 11-15, April 8, 1996)

When the guards deal with what they consider to be disrespect such as verbal or physical aggression or not obeying promptly whether towards them or a teacher or an administrator, they usually are forceful with the students.

When a student pulls away from me and becomes verbally aggressive to me, I will cuff. I can't say when it's time to justify force. I dealt with kids that felt like they are going to do what they want to. When I say you need to get over here or hurry up, and if I go to grab them by the arm, and say let's go and they snatch away, I may be forceful. (Officer D, Sentences 1-4, April 8, 1996)

The same guard continues and elaborates on how disrespect toward adults is handled.

We had one student that balled his fist up at a teacher. I grabbed him and threw him down and

told him we would not tolerate this. You don't do that at home and even if he does do it at home with his parents, I still won't tolerate it because I'm an authority, not only just as an adult, but I hold a title. We are not going to have it at school. Fighting or disrespect are the only two times I have been forceful. (Officer D, Sentences 5-9, April 8, 1996)

In terms of guards and teachers, one guard suggests just what produces a show of force by the guard.

After we had broken up a fight, there was a couple of kids in the hall screaming and talking loud to some teachers saying "You don't tell me what to do, you don't be disrespecting me." This started more confusion and we had to drop another girl out by her neck because she was disrespecting a teacher which was causing more problems. (Officer B, Sentences 22-23, April 4, 1996)

The guards, in short, demand respect for administrators, teachers and themselves. When the students become disrespectful toward these authority figures, the guards will use forceful procedures in handling the problem.



## Comparing Schools and the Streets

When the guards compare the schools to the street, there are similarities and differences.

### Similarities

The streets and the schools look similar to guards; there are minor differences.

Comparing my guard job to my police job, there is a difference but in a sense there is no difference.

(Officer B, Sentence 1, Feb. 7, 1996)

The guards are in agreement that the streets and schools are dangerous to the public good. Their basic role is to create order.

While patrolling the streets and schools, the guards as officers are confronted with many of the same problems.

The streets and schools are similar in that we deal with common problems such as weapons, drugs, alcohol, and verbal abuse. (Officer C, Sentence 7, Feb. 7, 1996)

As the officers patrol the streets, they deal with many of the same juveniles that they interact with at the school. The officers describe these students as "street smart" and knowing the law.

Lots of these students are "street smart" and they know how far to go with us. (Officer C, Sentence 5, Feb. 3, 1996)

The officers believe that many of the problems they encounter with students on the streets and in the school could be minimized if only there were stronger consequences.

The biggest problem with these juveniles is the laws on the streets and in the schools. These kids know that nothing will happen. (Officer B, Sentences 8-9, March 15, 1996)

What really frustrates the officers is when they detain a juvenile on the street and after extensive paperwork, the juvenile is released to a parent. In the schools, although there is no paperwork to do, guards believe nothing ever seems to happen to the student.

In both places the kids know that nothing will happen. When they break a rule, we do extensive paperwork and these kids are released. This is what frustrates us. (Officer B, Sentences 6-8, April 4, 1996)

### Differences

The main difference for the guards when comparing the streets to the schools is that they are trained for situations on the streets, but not for school situations.

I would not say that I was prepared to be a guard. I think as a police officer, I can do whatever the job is. We get no training for this job from the department. From our field experiences and academy, we apply this training to the school. (Officer C, Sentences 1-4, Feb. 7, 1996)

When on the street, the officers can take action and they don't have to wait as in a school to get direction from a school administrator.

I'm a police officer and I can take action. On the side of the school, I try to handle situations

through an administrator. (Officer C, Sentences  
11-12, April 4, 1996)

When handling situations in the street, the officers can get the attention of the juvenile by throwing them against the car or wall and search if necessary. In the schools, this is not an option for the guards. Once the juveniles are detained on the street, the officer must wait until a parent is present before questioning. In the school, the questioning of the student is part of the guards' routine.

The street and school offer the guard/officer a different set of deterrents for dealing with students.

As a police officer, on the street I have the right to take them to the juvenile hall, physically handle, or write a ticket. In the schools, when there is a rule violation, I usually take the student to an administrator or counselor. (Officer C, Sentences  
16-17, April 4, 1996)

### Summary

The world of school security guards is made up of a basic routine -- making the rounds. During these rounds they are aware of potentially dangerous situations, and deal with others such as teachers, administrators, outsiders, and students.

The guards have a basic routine when making their rounds. This routine begins by checking in and interacting with students. The interaction with students consists of escorting them to the office, encouraging them to get to class on time, and making sure they don't leave the campus. Interacting

with school personnel is usually limited unless there is a problem to be handled.

As guards make their rounds they must also be aware of possibly dangerous situations that arise on a daily basis. These situations require checking the halls, restrooms, cafeteria, and parking lots, and staying close to crowds. All of these areas have the potential for conflict.

The guards also deal with teachers, administrators, outsiders, and students. The guards, when describing these groups, tend to find faults with each that complicate their world.

The guards tend to categorize problems as either security or teacher problems. They feel that the teachers have a difference of opinion about what constitutes a security problem or a teacher problem. They also think that teacher problems could be solved if only the teachers would be more responsible in all of their daily duties.

Administrators and school guards are not always in agreement on how to secure the schools. Disagreements tend to arise between the two on issues such as where to patrol, checking for drugs, and disciplinary measures. Even though the guards feel limited in what they can do in a school environment, they state they always try to work within school guidelines.

Outsiders are problems for the guards. When speaking of outsiders, the guards tend to describe them as "gangsters" and "bad elements". Many times outsiders are easily identified by their clothing. When confronted by outsiders, the guards will usually interrogate. During this interrogation, the guards are hoping that the outsiders will leave the campus.

The guards interact with the students more than anyone else in the school environment. Throughout the day, the guards escort students to the

office for various reasons. As the guards escort students, they frequently try to build rapport, and give the students advice. Some of the students will listen, while others tend to get offended. Most students do not heed their good advice; when students react violently, guards respond in kind.

## CHAPTER V

### Overview, Findings, and Recommendations

This chapter presents an overview of the study, findings, and recommendations.

#### Overview of the Study

This study took place in an inner-city high school in the southwestern part of the United States. The study describes and analyzes the meaning that student control has for security guards in an inner-city, secondary high school.

The participants are police officers who are also employed as security guards in an inner-city high school.

The researcher used the participant observation and long interview methods from January, 1994 through December, 1994. The information from the interviews was analyzed following generally Spradley's Developmental Research Method.

#### Findings

The purpose of this study was to describe and analyze the meaning that student control has for security guards in an inner-city, secondary high school by answering the two research questions.

1) What meanings do school security guards give to their experiences in an inner-city, secondary school?

The security guards' basic routine is clear-cut. When they arrive on the school grounds, the guards establish communication links through their radios with other guards and school administrators. As they begin their rounds, they check the halls, restrooms, and parking lots. Throughout the day, the guards interact with the students and school personnel. Some of the guards' time is used for escorting students to the office. The guards find most of the escorts to be silly because most are for teacher problems, not security problems.

As the guards follow the general routine, specific situations that are potentially dangerous are their concern. These situations include checking the halls, checking restrooms, monitoring the cafeteria, checking parking lots and dealing with students being disrespectful to them and teachers.

Tardy students are a problem everyday for the guards. For this reason, it is a must that the guards have high visibility at all times in the halls. As the guards walk the halls, they check the tardy students for passes and their names. Being in the halls, the guards think that they can intervene before problems occur. Being in the halls also gives the guards a chance to keep an eye on problem students. These students, according to the guards, tend to hang together.

Although the guards see tardies as a teacher problem, they still take on this problem and try to make the best of the situation. While escorting these students, the guards try to build rapport. Some of the students listen as the guards give advice, while others get offended when the guards question them. To gain control of the tardy problem, the guards think there must be stronger consequences. The guards are inconsistent on how they

handle the tardy situation. Students labeled "good", and first time offenders, usually are given a break, while the "bad" students, those repeatedly breaking the school rules, are taken to the office.

The restrooms are trouble spots for the guards. These areas, at times, are vandalized and used by students to smoke. When the guards handle these situations, they tend to be inconsistent. The "good" students are given a break, while the "bad" students are taken to the office.

Monitoring the cafeteria, often the most crowded place in the school, is always a priority for the guards. From their police training, they know that crowds should always be first priority. Crowds can form in the halls, cafeteria and on the parking lots. When a fight erupts in these areas, the problem intensifies for the guards. Under this situation, the guards have a series of procedures to use depending on the seriousness of the fight. When fights occur, the guards will usually yell to try to break them up. When this doesn't work, the guards' procedure becomes more forceful, such as cuffing or taking to the ground. These specific reactions are usually dependent upon the actions of the student. Once the students are broken up and sent separate ways, the guards think the situation has been controlled. When one of the fighters return to continue fighting, the guards become even more forceful. The procedures used include a neck lock and the cuffing of the student to a chair.

Parking lots are dangerous areas for the guards. These areas have a high potential for trouble. Students, automobiles, buses and outsiders complicate this situation. Other problems for the guards on the parking lots are drugs, weapons, and smokers. To minimize the problem on the parking lots, the guards patrol these areas several times throughout the day. When



students are caught with weapons or drugs, an officer is called and the students are arrested and taken to the juvenile detention center.

The guards see themselves as authority figures and demand respect from the students. The guards define disrespect as students not complying and/or verbal abuse from the students. The guards tend to make disrespect a personal matter when it is shown towards them as guards or toward teachers. When the guards deal with disrespect, they are forceful. Students can be cuffed, taken to the ground or even placed in a neck lock for disrespect.

Dealing with teachers, administrators, outsiders, and students is the most complicated part of the guards' duties. The guards' biggest concern about teachers is that the teachers depend on them too much for solving teacher problems. Teacher problems are minor classroom disruptions, tardies and students not having paper or pencils. Security problems, the legitimate problems for guards, consist of fights, drugs, weapons, and outsiders. The guards find most of their day being used to escort students for teacher problems. Although fights are considered security problems, the guards feel that teachers could be more helpful in these situations. Teachers could assist the guards by helping to disperse crowds and they could also grab students from behind to help control the situation.

To control tardies, hall sweeps occur. During the hall sweeps, the teachers once again are not very helpful to the guards. The teachers are instructed to lock their doors and take a roll count at the bell. Many teachers refuse to follow these directions. These actions by the teachers defeat the purpose of the sweeps. The guards say that some of the teachers neglect to stand by their doors during the passing period and some even expect the guards to cover their classes while teachers take a break.

While attempting to carry out their duties, the guards have concerns about administrators. The guards believe that they know more about security than the administrators. When administrators decide where guards should be patrolling, this usually results in a disagreement. Relying on their police training, the guards know where the priority should be placed on crowded locations. Although in disagreement, the guards will silently comply. Another disagreement with administrators is how drug searches are carried out. Administrators want to inform the students before they begin a drug search. Security knows that using this approach only defeats the purpose of the search. The guards believe the administrators need to consult the guards more on these type of situations.

Outsiders are a problem for the guards. When this group is described by the guards, they use terms such as "gangsters" and "bad element". As the guards patrol the halls and parking lots, this group is easily recognized by their attire. When the guards encounter the outsiders, they will use a series of questions to determine if they have any reason to be on the school grounds. If it is determined that the outsiders are trespassing, they are asked to leave or if there is a reason, the outsiders are taken to the office for a visitor's pass.

Most of the guards spend most of their day interacting with the students. This interaction consists of escorting, dealing with smokers and dealing with students that are disrespectful towards the teachers and guards.

The guards understand that, at times, students need to be escorted to the office for violation of school rules. Many of the escorts by the guards are not necessary. For example, fighters need to be escorted, but it seems silly to escort for teacher problems. For these types of escorts, the

teachers should write a referral and hold the student more responsible for going to the office. Since the guards spend a great deal of time escorting, they use this situation as a time to give advice to the students. From this advice the guards hope that the students will have a better way of thinking about situations. Some of the students will take the advice of the guards, but some will ignore.

Smokers are a continuous problem for the guards. Violation of the smoking policy is enforced loosely by both administrators and guards. When the guards catch students smoking, they will use one of three procedures; talk to the students about the health risk, ask the students to throw the cigarettes away, or escort them to the office. When the students are escorted to the office, the guards never know what consequences have been taken. Since students smoking is a daily occurrence, the guards think that the consequences should be stronger. When the guards deal with smokers, there is an inconsistency on how they handle them. Students who the guards consider "good" are usually given a break, while "bad" students are most of the time taken to the office. Even though the guards make exceptions in this situation, some believe that all students in violation of the smoking policy should be escorted to the office.

2) How do these meanings differ from the meanings they give to their experiences as police officers in a metropolitan setting?

The meanings the guards give to their school experiences share more similarities than differences with the meanings police officers give to their experiences in the streets. They see both the streets and schools as dangerous.

The officers feel confident in handling situations on the streets because of the academy training they receive. Because of the fact that the school

offer no such training for the guards, they rely on their police training when working in the schools. Even though the guards receive no training from the schools, and operating under different rules, the guards still try to work within the school guidelines.

On the streets, the officers can take action and don't have to wait. This right to act is not always afforded in the schools. The guards must work through the supervision of school administrators in the schools. This tends to be a handicap for the guards when trying to perform their duties. As the officers patrol the streets, they come into contact with the same students on the streets that they interact with in the schools. The officers see these students/juveniles as "street smart" and very knowledgeable of the laws. The laws, according to the officers, are a joke when dealing with juveniles violating the laws on the street.

While patrolling the streets and schools, the guards and officers experience many of the same problems. Some of the common problems in both settings consist of drugs, weapons, alcohol and verbal abuse. When the juveniles are suspected of any of these offenses in the streets, the officers having the authority to take action, will place the juveniles against the car or wall and search. This procedure is used because the officers' first priority is to ensure their own safety. In the schools, when violations occur in these common areas, guards can not throw students onto the lockers and search.

None of these physically extreme actions, according to officers and guards, would be necessary if only there were stronger consequences when juveniles violate the laws. When these violations happen on the streets, the officers can ticket, take to detention, or physically handle juveniles. When the juveniles are detained by the officers, officers cannot question until a

parent is present. Too often, after the officers detain the juveniles and complete extensive paperwork, the juveniles are released to the parent. This frustrates the officers when dealing with juveniles in the streets. This same situation frustrates the guards in the schools. The only difference is that the schools require no paperwork for the guards in these same situations.

The answers to these questions suggest an important finding not anticipated prior to the study.

When assessing factors in the behavior of the students, the guards and the teacher see factors differently. To run a good school, the guards believe that the students must be "kept in line". To help keep the students in line, the guards believe it is important for guards to be in the right place at the right time. Being in the right place gives the guards a chance to intervene before problems happen.

When situations, such as students being disrespectful and fights breaking out occur, the guards use "police" methods to handle these situations. The guards tend to be more forceful than the teachers. When the teachers encounter a fight, for example, they will usually call for help and try to get the students to stop. Once the fight is broken up, the teachers will write a referral to the school disciplinarian describing what took place. When the guards deal with a fight, their first action is to yell and hope the students stop. As the seriousness of the fight increases, the guards tend to use more forceful methods to take control of the situation. Some of their methods used are choke locks, mace, cuffs and taking the students to the ground (depending on the size of the students). Once the guards get control of the situation and separate the students, they start trying to get information. If one of the students comes back to continue the

fight, the guards will cuff the student to some object. These more forceful actions are more common when there are crowds involved and the teachers refuse to help the guards.

Disrespect is something the teachers may be confronted with on a daily basis. Disrespect could consist of students not complying, using profanity or being verbally abusive. The teachers handle this situation by correcting the student verbally, or writing a referral to the appropriate administrator stating what took place.

The guards operate from the belief that the students must have respect for authority in the schools. With this in mind, when the guards deal with disrespect from the students, whether directed toward them or the teachers, force is their method of control. The guards, although limited in their authority in the schools, believe they can take action and don't have to wait when dealing with disrespectful students. When confronted with disrespect, the guards will either grab the students, take them to the ground or cuff them. Disrespect is something the guards will not tolerate.

There seems to be a major clash in cultures between the guards and administrators and teachers when dealing with disrespect from the students. When the guards are confronted with disrespect the guards will experience a high level of aggression, while administrators and teachers may overlook the situation or counsel the students.

### Recommendations

The findings of this study can be beneficial to school administrators, police departments and researchers. Since security guards have become an integral part of inner-city, secondary high schools, administrators must have

a better understanding of the guards' world. The guards see their role as securing the school and protecting the student and staff. Administrators want the guards to be another helping hand, but they can become a hindrance. Administrators can spend time doing damage control for the guards' behavior on issues dealing with disrespect, for example. Administrators must begin to take the time, if they use school guards, to discuss what actions should be taken in various situations. The guards must know that forceful actions, even involving disrespect, in the school setting are inappropriate. This means closer and continuous supervision of the guards.

Administrators must also require the guards to keep accurate and concise documentation when they have to take action. This documentation would be helpful for police supervisors and parents when questioning administrators.

The findings of this study also could be applied by police departments. The police departments must begin to take a more serious attitude concerning how their officers are responding to situations in the schools when they are guards. This change of attitude will not come into play until the police departments stop looking at these positions as merely part-time jobs. With this new outlook, the schools and the police departments could make training of the guards a top priority as they work toward reducing violence. With training centered on how to be more helpful and effective in the school setting, a path would lead to a body of training literature which is now non-existent.

Through this literature, a manual for the guards could be developed to help guide the guards as they perform their duties. Without training and a manual, school districts are placing themselves in a position for law suits.

There is a void in the student control literature on school security guards; researchers need to expand on this study. This study was limited to one inner-city high school. Further studies should examine other types of schools in other locations. This study is also limited to the guards' perceptions of teachers and administrators. Other studies could focus on the perceptions of teachers and administrators when dealing with the guards. There is also a need for further research investigating whether the guards would deal with disrespect differently if they were not in their police uniforms.



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## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

### Interview Questions

- (1) Describe a typical day as a school security guard.
- (2) Describe some of the typical problems you encounter on a daily basis as you perform your duties as a security guard.
- (3) How do you overcome these problems?
- (4) Describe your responsibilities as a security guard and how do you know this.
- (5) How do you go about fulfilling your responsibilities?
- (6) Compare your school security job to your job as a street cop.
- (7) How were you prepared to do your job as a school security guard?

## APPENDIX B

PLEASE RETURN THE TOP PART OF THIS PAGE WITH YOUR SURVEY

Dear Respondent:

The purpose of this research is to investigate and describe the meaning that pupil control has for security guards in inner-city, secondary high schools. This study has immediate and potential benefits for members of the educational community and the society at large. As a respondent, you will have the opportunities during the interviews to clarify major issues and portray in words your philosophy of being a school security guard. The results of this study will prove helpful to educators because it will assist us in better preparing future administrators and security guards. If schools become safer places for children to be, the society at large will be better for it.

Your participation in this study will require approximately three hours of your time. This time will be spread over three different appointment times and it is completely voluntary. You may decide at any time not to participate. If you do choose to participate, however, your responses will be completely confidential.

Your signature below protects you as a participant in this study by formalizing my promises to maintain your anonymity. Your copy of this form may be detached below the dotted line and kept with your records.

With my signature below, I authorize Ron Caine to conduct interviews with me for the research project. I understand that participation is voluntary, that there is no penalty for refusal to participate, and that I am free to withdraw my consent and participation in this project at any time.

XX \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Respondent

You may contact me, Ron Caine, by phone at 918-641-1541 (work) or 918-428-5080 (home). Dr. Lynn Arney, my dissertation advisor, can be reached by phone at 405-744-7244 (home); or Jennifer Moore at Oklahoma State University at 405-744-5700.

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DETACH THIS PORTION FOR YOUR RECORDS IF YOU WISH  
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Dear Respondent:

The purpose of this research is to investigate and describe the meaning that pupil control has for security guards in inner-city, secondary high schools. This study has immediate and potential benefits for members of the educational community and the society at large. As a respondent, you will have the opportunities during the interviews to clarify major issues and portray in words your philosophy of being a school security guard. The results of this study will prove helpful to educators because it will assist us in better preparing future administrators and security guards. If schools become safer places for children to be, the society at large will be better for it.

Your participation in this study will require approximately three hours of your time. This time will be spread over three different appointment times and it is completely voluntary. You may decide at any time not to participate. If you do choose to participate, however, your responses will be completely confidential.

You may contact me, Ron Caine, by phone at 918-641-1541 (work) or 918-428-5080 (home). Dr. Lynn Arney, my dissertation advisor, can be reached by phone at 405-744-7244 (home); or Jennifer Moore at Oklahoma State University at 405-744-5700.

**APPENDIX C**

**OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD  
HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW**

**Date:** 07-15-94

**IRB#:** ED-95-004

**Proposal Title:** THE CASE OF AN OUT-OF-CONTROL URBAN HIGH SCHOOL

**Principal Investigator(s):** Lynn Arney, Ron D. Caine

**Reviewed and Processed as:** Exempt

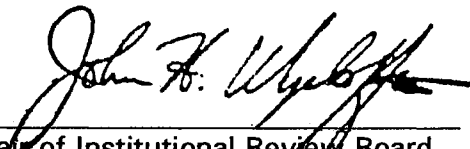
**Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s):** Approved

APPROVAL STATUS SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY FULL INSTITUTIONAL  
REVIEW BOARD AT NEXT MEETING.  
APPROVAL STATUS PERIOD VALID FOR ONE CALENDAR YEAR AFTER  
WHICH A CONTINUATION OR RENEWAL REQUEST IS REQUIRED TO BE  
SUBMITTED FOR BOARD APPROVAL.  
ANY MODIFICATIONS TO APPROVED PROJECT MUST ALSO BE  
SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL.

---

Comments, Modifications/Conditions for Approval or Reasons for Deferral or  
Disapproval are as follows:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Chair of Institutional Review Board

Date: July 18, 1994

**APPENDIX C**

**OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD  
HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW**

**Date:** 02-22-96

**IRB#:** ED-96-079

**Proposal Title:** TO INVESTIGATE AND DESCRIBE THE MEANING THAT PUPIL CONTROL HAS FOR SECURITY GUARDS IN INNER CITY SECONDARY HIGH SCHOOLS

**Principal Investigator(s):** Lynn Arney, Ron D. Caine

**Reviewed and Processed as:** Exempt

**Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s):** Approved

ALL APPROVALS MAY BE SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY FULL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD AT NEXT MEETING.

APPROVAL STATUS PERIOD VALID FOR ONE CALENDAR YEAR AFTER WHICH A CONTINUATION OR RENEWAL REQUEST IS REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED FOR BOARD APPROVAL.

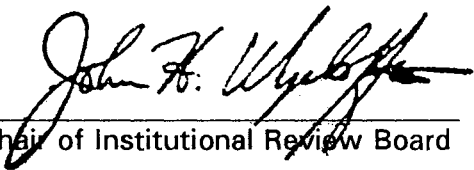
ANY MODIFICATIONS TO APPROVED PROJECT MUST ALSO BE SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL.

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Comments, Modifications/Conditions for Approval or Reasons for Deferral or Disapproval are as follows:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Chair of Institutional Review Board

Date: February 29, 1996





VITA

Ron D. Caine

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

**Thesis: SECURING THE SCHOOL AND PROTECTING STUDENTS AND  
STAFF: SCHOOL SECURITY GUARDS IN AN INNER-CITY  
SECONDARY SCHOOL**

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