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## Persuasion, Police, and Public Safety: Message Framing, Compliance, and Perceptions of Law Enforcement

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Persuasion, Police, and Public Safety:  
Message Framing, Compliance, and Perceptions of Law Enforcement

Alexander L. Lancaster

Dissertation submitted  
to the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences  
at West Virginia University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in  
Communication Studies

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Keywords: Police-Citizen Interaction; Persuasion; Compliance-Gaining; Moral  
Foundations

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **Persuasion, Police, and Public Safety: Message Framing, Compliance, and Perceptions of Law Enforcement**

**Alexander L. Lancaster**

In the everyday interactions between law enforcement and the citizens of their communities, officers attempt to gain compliance verbally, before resorting to physical force, if necessary. This dissertation examined the use of persuasive verbal messages by law enforcement officers when encountering citizens. These messages were created to represent a progression of asking, telling, and making, to gain compliance from an individual.

The officers in this study were university police officers, because university police departments are charged with providing a safe learning environment on campus. Due to the visible, community oriented policing in which university police departments tend to engage, it is likely that students would have an interaction with a campus police officer, and that this interaction might call for an officer to make a request or demand of the student. Furthermore, given the ubiquity of communication technology (e.g., social media) on college campuses, it is likely that police and students would communicate not only in-person, but also via computer-mediated channels.

The study in this dissertation utilized a 3 (ask, tell, make) X 2 (emergency, nonemergency) X 2 (face-to-face, computer-mediated communication) experimental design, in which participants ( $N = 190$ ) were assigned randomly to one of 12 conditions. The measured outcomes were propensity to comply with a police officer, perceptions of the police officer, and perceptions of the officer's conversational appropriateness.

Results indicated a significant main effect for message manipulation, such that

participants rated perceptions of officer conversational appropriateness and perceptions of law enforcement more favorably when the hypothetical officer used an ask-framed message, rather than a make-framed message. Furthermore, the results indicated a significant main effect for communication channel, such that participants perceived the police officer to be more conversationally appropriate in the FtF condition than in the CMC condition. Additional post-hoc results, theoretical implications, practical applications, limitations, and future directions for research in this area of communication studies are discussed.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vii
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Persuasion .....	2
Compliance-gaining.....	11
Compliance-gaining and Persuasion.....	18
Compliance-gaining and Police Work .....	19
Citizens and Moral Foundations .....	22
Police Work .....	25
Police-Citizen Interaction .....	28
Computer-Mediated Communication .....	37
Emergency Communication and Social Media.....	37
Adopting Social Media in Emergency Situations.....	39
Law Enforcement and Social Media.....	42
College Students and Social Media .....	44
Rationale .....	45
Police-Citizen Communication in the University Setting.....	45
Computer-Mediated Police-Citizen Communication .....	49
Summary of Chapter I.....	50
CHAPTER II: METHODOLOGY .....	51
Participants.....	51
Design and Procedures.....	52
Stimuli Materials.....	52
Measures .....	53
Pilot Study.....	57
Summary of Chapter II .....	58
CHAPTER III: RESULTS.....	59
Main Study.....	59
Post-Hoc Analyses .....	64
Summary of Chapter III.....	69
CHAPTER IV: DISCUSSION .....	70
Results Revisited and Theoretical Implications.....	70
Practical Applications .....	77

Limitations .....	80
Additional Future Research Directions.....	82
Conclusion .....	85
REFERENCES .....	87
APPENDICES .....	107
Appendix A: Face-to-Face Scenarios .....	107
Appendix B: Social Media Message Post Scenarios .....	109
Appendix C: Conversational Appropriateness Measure.....	111
Appendix D: Perceptions of Law Enforcement Measure .....	112
Appendix E: Attitudes About Compliance with Police .....	113
Appendix F: The Moral Foundations Questionnaire .....	114
Appendix G: Demographic Measures.....	117
Appendix H: Pilot Study Questionnaire .....	118
Appendix I: Main Study Questionnaire .....	120

## LIST OF TABLES

	<u>Page</u>
Table 1: <i>Descriptive Statistics for all Measures</i> .....	57
Table 2: <i>MANOVA with Context, Message Manipulation and Emergency Nature as IVs</i> .....	62
Table 3: <i>Estimated Marginal Means for MANOVA (Message Manipulation)</i> .....	63
Table 4: <i>Estimated Marginal Means for MANOVA (Channel Manipulation)</i> .....	64
Table 5: <i>MANCOVA with Context, Message Manipulation and Emergency Nature as IVs, and Believability and MFT Progressivism entered as Covariates</i> .....	67
Table 6: <i>Estimated Marginal Means for MANCOVA (Message Manipulation)</i> .....	68
Table 7: <i>Estimated Marginal Means for MANCOVA (Channel Manipulation)</i> .....	69



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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Police-citizen interaction is a common, everyday event that occurs for a variety of reasons, from mundane interactions (e.g., traffic stops and wellbeing checks), to emergency situations (e.g., severe traffic accidents and active shooter responses). In fact, in a given year, roughly 17-to-19% of United States citizens will have at least one interaction with a police officer (Durose, Smith, & Langan, 2007; Eith & Durose, 2011). Although Durose et al. noted that the vast majority of these interactions involve nonemergency situations (e.g., traffic stops), police-citizen interactions may nonetheless require an officer to gain an individual's compliance through communicated requests and/or statements. Thus, these police-citizen interactions may be inherently persuasive in nature.

Within the field of communication studies, persuasion occupies an important role in a variety of contexts, including interpersonal communication, mass media communication, and intergroup communication. Another context in which persuasion is likely to be commonplace is public safety, to include police-citizen communication that occurs in-person, as well as through computer-mediated channels. This context of persuasion may be unique, given the power difference that exists between police officers and citizens. Thus, the purpose of this dissertation is to explore the role of persuasion in the official, on-duty communication that takes place between police officers and the citizens they serve, in the face-to-face (FtF) and computer-mediated contexts. Specifically, this dissertation examined the potential for compliance-gaining and perceptions of police based on an officer's use of persuasive attempts phrased as asking, telling, or making.

## **Persuasion**

Persuasion is a process in which an individual attempts to change another's attitudes, beliefs, and/or behavior. Berger, Roloff, and Roskos-Ewoldsen (2010) defined persuasion as, "the use of symbols (sometimes accompanied by images) by one social actor for the purposes of changing or maintaining another social actor's opinion or behavior" (p. 203). This definition is very similar to definitions proposed decades earlier. For example, Simons (1976) previously defined persuasion as, "human communication designed to influence others by modifying their beliefs, values, or attitudes" (p. 21). Although individuals can engage in persuasion across a wide variety of contexts (e.g., health, marketing, and sales), the process and motives for attempting to instill changes in another remain relatively similar. Indeed, Dillard and Marshall (2003) contended that changing the views of others should be considered one of the most fundamental social skills. It is no wonder that persuasion has remained among the most studied topics in social science, with early theories appearing in the mid-1940s (e.g., Heider, 1944; 1946). The past 70 years have seen a variety of theoretical approaches to persuasion, including functional theories (e.g., Katz, 1960), discrepancy models (e.g., Sherif & Hovland, 1961; Sherif, Sherif, & Nebergall, 1965), cognitive models (e.g., Greenwald, 1968), computational theories (e.g., Fishbein & Azjen, 1975), and hot process theories (e.g., Brehm & Brehm, 1981).

Persuasion research remains focused on messages used to change a target's attitude, behavior, or belief toward some concept or object. Persuasion can be enacted off-the-cuff (Dillard, Anderson, & Knobloch, 2002), or be the intent of a carefully constructed message (Zhao, 2002). Individuals tend to engage in persuasion often, be it in

the course of their jobs (e.g., sales associates), volunteer work (e.g., collecting donations for a church), or simply self-serving (e.g., attempting to persuade a group of people to allow line jumping). Whatever the goal of persuasion in a given instance, it is incumbent upon the message sender to prepare a message that will effectively convince another person to change one's attitudes, beliefs, and/or behavior, if only for a moment. Thus, some form of change can be considered the ultimate goal of persuasive attempts. How individuals arrive at that goal has been the subject of study from the beginning of the Communication Studies discipline.

The history of persuasion research involves five distinct theoretical perspectives: functional theories, discrepancy models, cognitive models, computational theories, and hot process theories (Berger et al., 2010). The functional theories perspective was dominated by Katz's (1960) conceptualization of the four functions attitudes can play to help structure an individual's understanding of the environment. These functions include the knowledge function, the utilitarian function, the social identity function, and the value expressive function. According to Katz, persuasion can be achieved by matching the content of a message to one of the four attitude functions. Hullet and Boster (2001) argued that functional theory was flawed because the value expressive function of attitudes was necessarily ambiguous. They proposed a solution to this problem by arguing that audiences must be studied with existing typologies of values, rather than idiosyncratic values. Although parsimonious, the functional theory gave way to a series of discrepancy models that began to take root in the mid-1960s.

Within the discrepancy models era, social judgment theory (SJT; Sherif & Hovland, 1961; Sherif, Sherif, & Nebergall, 1965) is perhaps the best recognized of these

approaches to persuasion. The theory postulates that attitude change occurs when an individual compares a preexisting attitude with the position that is advocated in a persuasive message. Sherif and colleagues proposed that individuals have three regions in which a given persuasive message can fall, which they named the latitudes of acceptance, rejection, and noncommitment. The latitude of acceptance is characterized by an individual's willingness to accept a persuasive message as viable, and therefore engage in attitude change as a result. The latitude of rejection is the region that is associated with being unwilling to engage in attitude change because of one's disagreement with the message. Finally, the latitude of noncommitment is described as the place in which a message will fall if a person has not formed an opinion on the subject of a given message.

According to SJT, the size of an individual's latitudes of acceptance, rejection, and noncommitment are a function of one's involvement with the issue under consideration. When an individual accepts or rejects a message, based on whether it falls into the latitude of acceptance or rejection, SJT posits that one of two effects may occur: the assimilation effect and the contrast effect. In short, the assimilation effect is described as a person believing an argument that falls into the latitude of acceptance is closer to one's original position or opinion than it is in actuality. Conversely, the contrast effect is described as an individual perceiving a message that falls into the latitude of rejection as being more different from one's position than it is in reality. Although SJT was originally developed to examine an individual's response to a single message, Berger et al. (2010) noted that persuasion is most likely to occur when a series of arguments that are close to a person's original attitude are aimed at an individual, rather than a single message. Thus, SJT may examine one or more persuasive messages used in a series to attempt to



influence an individual.

Another discrepancy model is language expectancy theory (LET; Burgoon, Jones, & Stewart, 1975). LET proposes that individuals form expectations regarding others' language-based behaviors from their experiences. As Burgoon et al. (1975) argued, "[a]ttitude change is a function of the level of language intensity in a persuasive message, type of persuasive paradigm employed, and the receiver's expectations of the source's communication behavior" (p. 241). Similar to expectancy violations theory (EVT; Burgoon & Hale, 1988), LET specifies two outcomes based on the violation of a target's expectations. Positive violations lead to enhanced persuasive effects, whereas negative violations tend to hamper persuasion. Combined, SJT and LET represent theories within the discrepancy model paradigm.

Theories contained within the cognitive models paradigm focus on the ability to induce attitude change based on cognitive processing of a persuasive message. Greenwald's (1968) cognitive response model represents one of the earliest, and simplest cognitive models of persuasion. Greenwald argued that persuasion is a function of thinking, because cognitive responses are simply thoughts that persuasive messages bring to the forefront of a target's mind. Thus, persuasive messages can activate (a) positive thoughts that lend toward attitude change or (b) negative thoughts (e.g., counterarguing) that inhibit attitude change. As a result, the goal associated with this theory is to induce positive cognitions to influence attitudes, rather than negative thoughts that will sully the persuasive attempt.

In the wake of Greenwald's theory, two dual-process models of persuasion were presented: The elaboration likelihood model (ELM; Petty & Cacioppo, 1981, 1986) and

the heuristic-systematic model of information processing (HSM; Chaiken, 1980; 1987). The ELM posits that individuals can approach a persuasive message from distinct starting points (i.e., motivation and ability), and engage in distinct message processing as a result. ELM includes two routes to persuasion: the central route, which is characterized by strict message scrutiny, and the peripheral route, which involves processing of cues that accompany the persuasive message (e.g., source characteristics and message medium characteristics). Consistent with the first postulate of ELM, individuals tend to be motivated to process a message to form an accurate attitude. If a person is sufficiently motivated and able to process a message via the central route, one will examine the presented argument, and accept or reject the persuasive attempt. If a person is not sufficiently motivated and/or able to process the message via the central route, one will engage in peripheral-route processing. Peripheral route processing involves examining the cues that accompany a message, rather than the message's core argument. The ELM posits that regardless of which route is taken, there is the potential for a persuasive effect to occur. Central and peripheral route processing differ in that the attitude change garnered by central route processing are posited to be more enduring, resistant to counterarguing, and indicative of behavioral consistency than peripheral route processing. With the ELM, Petty and Cacioppo added a unique contribution to the persuasion literature, in that they conceptualized message elements as variables that could act as core arguments or peripheral cues. Indeed, Petty and Cacioppo (1986) contended that any variable in any given persuasive message can function: (a) as a cue, (b) as an argument, and (c) to affect the degree of elaboration and/or bias message processing. The ELM, however, is not alone in the realm of dual process models. A second dual-process

model, finalized within a year of Petty and Cacioppo's publication of ELM, offers an alternative explanation of persuasive message processing.

Chaiken's (1980, 1987) heuristic-systematic model of information processing (HSM) is a dual-process model of persuasion that explains how individuals process elements of a persuasive message with varying amounts of cognitive effort. Similar to the ELM, the HSM posits that individuals will process a persuasive message in one of two ways: systematically or heuristically. Much like ELM, the HSM also places motivation in a key position, in regards to message processing. Motivation, however, is one area of distinction between ELM and HSM, as the latter indicates different types of motivation above having a correct attitude. Specifically, the HSM recognizes that motivation, which emanates from involvement, can be based on outcome-relevant involvement, impression-relevant involvement, or value-relevant involvement. If an individual is sufficiently motivated to process a message systematically, one will engage the message by scrutinizing the main argument contained there within. If, however, there is insufficient motivation, the target will engage in heuristic processing, which Chaiken conceptualized as decision rules (i.e., simple yes or no decisions). HSM also allows for concurrent, or parallel, processing of messages. Under conditions of parallel processing, individuals engage both the core argument(s) and heuristic cues that accompany the message. As a result, parallel processing may lead to one of three outcomes: an additive effect, in which heuristics complement systematic processing; an attenuation effect, in which the systematic processing overrides the heuristic processing; or a bias effect, in which an ambiguous message can be interpreted in line with a heuristic cue, even when someone is motivated to process the message accurately.

Standing in contrast to the dual process models of persuasion is Kruglanski and Thompson's (1999) unimodel of persuasion. The unimodel posits that individuals do not engage in cognitions across two distinct routes, but rather consider all aspects of a persuasive message when weighing whether to accept or reject it. According to the unimodel, all aspects of a persuasive message, including the argument and any accompanying information or cues, are considered evidence. Receivers are still considered to be high or low in issue involvement, but unlike the dual process models, the unimodel considers all elements of a persuasive message to be evidence that an individual takes into consideration when thinking about a message. Although the unimodel is presented as unique, and distinct from the dual-process theories of persuasion, Berger et al. (2010) argued that a common criticism is that the unimodel and dual-process models do essentially the same thing as one another. Nonetheless, Kruglanski and Thompson presented the theory as a departure from the dual-process models, claiming that persuasion could be examined without differentiating message processing routes.

A final example of a discrepancy models is inoculation theory (McGuire, 1961), which can be understood as a counter-persuasion resistance theory. Inoculation theory states that an individual can be prepared to counterargue against persuasive attempts by presenting him or her with a weak message or series of messages that advocate a position counter to that which a person holds. The theory indicates that doing so provides an inoculation against persuasive attempts, because it provides an individual with the needed mental preparation to defend oneself against an opposing persuasive attack. Recent research (e.g., Pfau, Holbert, Zubric, Pasha, & Lin, 2000; Wigley & Pfau, 2010) has

continued to provide support for inoculation theory, and expanded the scope to include multiple types of inoculating messages. Specifically, Pfau et al. (2000) contended that inoculation theory is viable and has experienced pronounced growth over the past twenty years. This study also distinguished between cognitive (i.e., thought-based) and affective (i.e., relational and emotional) counterarguing. Relatedly, Wigley and Pfau (2010) found that participants exposed to an affective inoculation message recognized more affective counterarguments than participants who were exposed to cognitive inoculation. Furthermore, the authors found that affective counterarguments were rated as stronger than were cognitive arguments.

Aside from the cognitive models, there are two computational theories of persuasion that are based on the connection between attitudes and behavior. First, the theory of reasoned action (TRA; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) is based on Fishbein's (1967) theory of attitude. The TRA posits that individuals' attitudes toward a behavior, as well as the subjective norms associated with the behavior (e.g., family and friends' opinions) influence their intentions to perform a given behavior. This behavioral intention then leads to an enacted behavior. As Ajzen (1988) contended, however, the TRA is limited in that it is applicable only to volitional behaviors. Similar criticisms led Ajzen to develop the theory of planned behavior (TPB; Ajzen, 1985). The TPB posits that individuals' attitudes and subjective norms influence their behavioral intentions. Unlike TRA, however, TPB adds perceived behavioral control into the theoretical framework. Thus, if an individual does not perceive that one can control the behavior under consideration (e.g., an addiction), one will not change the behavior, despite having the intention to do so. Together the theories of reasoned action and planned behavior suggest that one's

attitudes and subjective norms, as well as perceived behavioral control in the case of TPB, can influence one's intentions to commit a behavior.

Finally, the hot process theory category is occupied by psychological reactance theory (Brehm & Brehm, 1981). Psychological reactance theory is based on the hypothesized response to a situation in which an individual's freedom is taken away, or in which one perceives having limited agency to behave and/or think as desired. This theory posits that an individual who receives a persuasive message that appears to limit their freedom will respond by attempting to regain the agency that was threatened. Brehm and Brehm also specified the four elements of psychological reactance theory: freedom, threat to freedom, reactance, and restoration of freedom. Freedom refers to an individual having control over actions about which one is aware. A threat to freedom is anything that makes it harder for an individual to exercise one's freedom. Psychological reactance is the response an individual makes to the perceived threat to freedom, potentially imposed by a persuasive appeal. Restoration of freedom refers to the manner by which an individual reestablishes one's freedom, and can be accomplished directly (i.e., doing the prohibited action) or by derogating the source of the threat or exercising some other freedom. Any of these three forms of restoration of freedom can accomplish the goal of

Considering the potential detriment that reactance may have on persuasive attempts, Berger et al. (2010) noted that one way to reduce the potential for reactance to occur is to include a postscript that emphasizes the presence of choice among the message receiver.

Overall, persuasion can be considered in terms of the theories that have guided studies involving influence over the past 70 years. Over time, different theories have been introduced, tested, and in some cases, updated or altogether rejected. These approaches

have explored message features, receiver characteristics, and contextual distinctions that are inherent in persuasive appeals. In general, as O'Keefe (2002) contended, persuasion can be considered a communicated attempt to influence values, attitudes, beliefs, and /or behaviors, aimed at an individual who has some measure of freedom to agree or disagree. In many cases, a persuader likely desires to have the target comply with a communicated persuasive attempt. Thus, one applied form of persuasion commonly studied and employed is compliance-gaining.

### **Compliance-Gaining**

As a research construct, compliance-gaining is distinct from, yet related to persuasion. Compliance-gaining involves a persuasive appeal that seeks to entice an individual to agreement or prescribed behavior. Kellerman (2004) noted that research generally considers compliance-gaining to be a form of goal-oriented social behavior. In keeping with Kellerman's discussion of compliance-gaining, a persuasive appeal might target an individual for the purposes of gaining compliance in the form of short-term behavior change. Indeed, Miller's (2002) definition of "being persuaded" indicates that the term "applies to situations where behavior has been modified by symbolic transactions (messages) that are sometimes, but not always, lined with coercive force (indirectly coercive) and that appeal to the reason and emotions of the person(s) being persuaded" (p. 6). Persuasive messages may lead to behavior-based compliance among targets. Thus, compliance-gaining may be a function of persuasion, such that individuals respond to the messages through behavioral modification. Research on compliance-gaining has spanned a period of over forty years, beginning with Marwell and Schmidt's (1967a, 1967b) tests of the first model of influence. This research was informed by

French and Raven's (1959) power bases, which remain applicable today.

French and Raven (1959) proposed a manner of explaining why one individual might be able to influence another to behave. They identified five power bases: reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, and expert. Reward power refers to an individual's ability to give something desirable to another and/or remove some type of punishment from that person. Conversely, coercive power is rooted in a person's ability to assign punishments and/or remove a reward from another person. Legitimate power deals with an individual's position within society or an organization (e.g., State official or boss) as the basis from which one draws the authority to attempt to influence another person. Referent power involves an individual's desire to emulate another, which gives one power to influence the behavior of the admirer. Finally, expert power refers to the power granted to a person as a function of one's knowledge, in comparison to that of another individual. French and Raven's power bases continue to be incorporated in modern research (e.g., Maxfield & Fisher, 2014). Aside from these power bases, compliance-gaining research has tested other strategies for influencing others.

Soon after French and Raven proposed their typology, Marwell and Schmitt (1967b) listed 16 compliance-gaining strategies that individuals could employ in the interpersonal context. These strategies include promise, threat, positive expertise, negative expertise, liking, pre-giving, aversive stimulation, debt, moral appeal, positive self-feeling, negative self-feeling, positive altercasting, negative altercasting, altruism, positive esteem, and negative esteem. This typology is guided by the power bases, such that the strategies involve using rewards, threats, and differential statuses occupied by message senders and recipients within the compliance-gaining strategies forwarded.



Marwell and Schmitt's strategies, which are inspired by French and Raven's (1959) power bases, are designed to be used between individuals, rather than via mass mediated influence attempts.

Although popular, these strategies have not received unquestioned support from researchers. For example, Wiseman and Shenck-Hamlin (1981) called the deductive approach used by Marwell and Schmitt (i.e., deriving categories from previous literature) to be inferior to inductively derived measures of compliance-gaining (i.e., relying on participant responses to create a list of strategies). Specifically, they claimed that the list was not exhaustive, and that other strategies may exist that would not be found with a review of previous literature that suggested a given compliance-gaining strategy might be effective. Furthermore, upon review of Marwell and Schmitt's (1967b) strategies, Miller, Boster, Roloff, and Seibold (1977) contended that this typology is flawed, citing the situationally bound (i.e., applicable and useful in a limited number of situations) nature of the strategies previously identified. Nonetheless, the Marwell and Schmitt typology remains among the oldest list of compliance-gaining strategies. Aside from these early typologies, research has continued to explore several types of compliance-gaining strategies.

One focus of compliance-gaining research is compliance with authority. Michener and Burt (1975) explored the components of authority as determinants of the likelihood of individuals complying with orders. These authors manipulated normativity, coercive power, collective justification, and success or failure, as well as endorsement, in an experiment using a confederate, to find which of these components led to compliance-gaining. Normativity, which is functionally equivalent to legitimate power (French &

Raven, 1959) and the authority of legitimacy (see Simon, Smithburg, & Thompson, 1970), proposes that legitimacy is a function of an individual's organizational position. Coercive power is taken directly from French and Raven's (1959) power bases, and refers to one person's ability to add punishment and retract reward from another individual. Collective justification is the notion that requests that are claimed to be generated for the good of a group, rather than a single person, are more likely to be well-received and accepted. Finally, endorsement is conceptually similar to normativity, as it refers to person-specific legitimacy. Specifically, endorsement refers to the feelings a lower-status individual holds toward a higher-status other. In other words, endorsement involves how much people in lower positions feel that the people in higher positions should stay in these dominant roles. As Michener and Burt (1975) noted, because endorsement cannot be manipulated directly, success-failure serves as the means by which it is manipulated. Overall, the authors found that compliance-gaining was greater in conditions of high coercive power, collective justification, and normative demands. Furthermore, endorsement did not have an effect on compliance-gaining, contrary to the authors' predictions.

In keeping with the idea of compliance as a function of different source and receiver factors, including power differences, Miller et al. (1977) developed a typology of compliance-gaining message strategies. These authors based their strategies on the contexts in which individuals might seek compliance, which include long- and short-term interpersonal and noninterpersonal situations. Rather than employing a factor analysis from existing typologies, Miller et al. asked participants to report their likelihood of using a given compliance-gaining strategy. The authors reported eight clusters of compliance-

gaining strategies (likely and unlikely strategies to be used in the short term or long term, and in interpersonal or noninterpersonal situations), which they argued are reflective of the situation-specific nature of compliance-gaining attempts. Specifically, Miller et al. reported distinct clusters for interpersonal and noninterpersonal, as well as long-term and short-term contexts. Thus, unlike Marwell and Schmitt's typology, which was developed to be used within interpersonal contexts, Miller et al. highlighted the distinction between compliance-gaining strategies that are useful in different contexts.

Staying with situation-specific instances of compliance-gaining, Cody, McLaughlin, and Jordan (1980) presented a typology of strategies that are geared toward distinct instances in which an individual might seek compliance from another. Cody et al. provided another critique of the Marwell and Schmitt (1967b) typology, claiming that its limitations became clear when comparing it to other classifications of interpersonal compliance-gaining tactics (e.g., Falbo, 1977). Specifically, Cody et al. (1980) claimed that "there is no evidence that the Marwell and Schmitt strategies are directly relevant to the interpersonal domain or that they are exhaustive of strategies relevant to interpersonal behaviors" (p. 35). Furthermore, they reasoned that the Miller et al. (1977) typology might not be exhaustive in terms of the strategies that individuals can employ during instances of interpersonal influence attempts. Using three hypothetical scenarios, the authors found that several new clusters of tactics emerged, depending on the situation presented to participants. Participants reported the strategy they would use to gain compliance from the target in the hypothetical scenarios. Indeed, to highlight the shortcomings of the original Marwell and Schmitt typology, Cody et al. reported that 72% of the strategies that participants included in their responses for one of the three

scenarios were not included in the former list of techniques. A replication of this work by Cody and McLaughlin (1980) added four other dimensions to the results reported by Cody et al. (i.e., personal benefits, consequences, dominance, and rights).

One contentious debate in the history of compliance-gaining research centers on the use of inductively developed strategies (e.g., Wiseman & Scheinck-Hamlin, 1981) versus deductively developed strategies (e.g., Marwell & Schmitt, 1967b). Although Wiseman and Schenck-Hamlin considered the inductive strategy superior, Boster, Stiff, and Reynolds (1985) argued that their claim was unfounded, based on the finding that Marwell and Schmitt's typology was not necessarily subject to social desirability bias, as Wiseman and Schenck-Hamlin had claimed previously. Overall, this history of compliance-gaining research suggests that there have been multiple approaches to finding a more universally applicable typology of strategies that might be used to influence individuals to comply with requests. Applied to the present research, these compliance-gaining studies suggest that there are situational and individual factors that might play into the messages needed to be used to gain compliance from a target.

More recently, Robert Cialdini introduced another widely used typology of compliance-gaining strategies. Specifically, the strategies, which are referred to as Cialdini's weapons of influence, have remained useful in academic and applied contexts. Indeed, some of the strategies that Cialdini (2009) discussed (e.g., foot-in-the-door and door-in-the-face), have been tested in research conducted several decades earlier (Dillard, Hunter, & Burgoon, 1984). Cialdini focused on six persuasive strategies (i.e., reciprocity, commitment, social proof, liking, authority, and scarcity) that might be useful for gaining compliance in several situations. Cialdini was inspired to pursue this typology, based in

part on previous research on offering reasons for requests. Specifically, Cialdini cited Langer, Blank, and Chanowitz's (1978) study, in regards to the distinct levels of successful compliance-gaining with requests that included a reason, versus requests that did not have any reason. Indeed, Langer et al. found that an individual could be 33% more successful in gaining compliance by offering even an irrelevant reason for a simple request to move ahead in a line for a copy machine than by merely asking to move ahead of another person. Cialdini also contended that the norm of reciprocity is useful from a compliance-gaining standpoint, as individuals can make others feel as if they owe them for something. In a prior study, Regan (1971) found that the simple offer of a bottle of Coca Cola made receivers more likely to purchase something from the person who offered the beverage than in conditions in which no such offer was made.

In the case of police-citizen communication, it is likely that the interactants will perceive a power difference, such that the officer holds more power than the citizen. Indeed, this distinction may be heightened by the authority that police officers hold. Among all of Cialdini's weapons, authority may be most germane to the present study. As Milgram (1974) noted, individuals have a very deep sense of duty to comply with authority. Such was the case in his experiments, in which subjects continued to give what they thought to be potentially lethal electrical shocks to another person, at the mere direction of an individual in a lab coat. Cialdini (2009) noted that even a brief consideration of the way in which human society is organized will evidence why people are so strongly inclined to comply with authority. Furthermore, he claimed that individuals rely on relatively menial cues (e.g., titles, clothing, and trappings) to inform them of the presence of authority. Overall, Cialdini's work, as well as prior research,

suggests that individuals can gain compliance via a variety of strategies. To what extent this compliance-gaining may be considered an artifact or cognate of persuasion, is somewhat debated.

### **Compliance-Gaining and Persuasion**

Compliance-gaining may be seen as a subset of persuasion research. As Wiseman and Schenck-Hamlin (1981) noted, persuasion research on compliance-gaining has been guided by the use of various persuasive messages in attempts to create taxonomies of various compliance-gaining strategies. Consistent with Simons' (1976) and Berger et al's (2010) definitions of persuasion, compliance-gaining strategies may be the tool by which individuals achieve persuasive results. Nonetheless, this comparison assumes that some change in beliefs, values, or attitudes would have to occur as the result of compliance-gaining. As O'Keefe (2002) noted, persuasion involves influencing another's mental state, not just their conduct.

Compliance-gaining and persuasion may be seen as very similar constructs. Nonetheless, if compliance-gaining is focused on immediate behavior change through goal-oriented communication (Kellermann, 2004), then in line with O'Keefe's (2002) perspective, it is possible that there will be no lasting persuasive effect. For example, an individual may comply with a request without having any change in one's attitudes or beliefs. Schenck-Hamlin, Georgacarakos, and Wiseman (1982) argued that compliance-gaining can involve at least two types of strategies: enforced control and co-oriented control. The authors suggested that enforced control puts an individual in a position of control over another, whereas co-oriented control involves the use of verbal messages that promote some adjustment on the part of the target. Furthermore, there are some

instances in which compliance may be gained through the use of coercive tactics. For example, Schenck-Hamlin et al.'s (1982) conceptualization of these distinct forms of compliance-gaining offers a potential answer to the question concerning the distinction between pure persuasion (i.e., message-based influence) and compliance-gaining by force (i.e., enforced control). Although both of these tactics might be considered forms of compliance-gaining, the message-based influence would be more closely related to pure persuasion, with compliance-gaining ends. One area in which these two forms of compliance-gaining may be commonplace is law enforcement.

### **Compliance-Gaining and Police Work**

Applied to police work, Miller's definition of compliance-gaining fits well with what officers are seen doing on a daily basis. Police officers are charged with maintaining order, and part of their job includes influencing individuals to change their behavior. This influence can be seen when an officer is warning someone to stop a certain action, or when an officer is communicatively attempting to gain compliance from an individual who is resisting arrest. For example, officers may be called to convince an individual to cease a dangerous or illegal behavior, interview a citizen who is unwilling to cooperate with investigations, or arrest someone who is unwilling to comply with verbal orders. Furthermore, officers possess the legal authority to compel individuals to comply with their requests, and can employ a variety of verbal and physical measures to gain compliance. Anderson et al. (2002) noted that police officers are unique individuals because of their ability to use deadly force, when necessary, in the line of duty. Deadly force is a rare occurrence, but compliance-gaining may be considered commonplace, especially when an individual actively or passively resists arrest. How officers

communicatively gain compliance, then, is an important area of inquiry, because the verbal exchanges may precede physical uses of force, and compliance may be gained from a variety of verbal requests and commands.

Police officers are authorized to use force to overcome resistance. Physical force may be considered a form of compliance-gaining. For example, DeTurck (1987) found that male participants were likely to use physical force against a non-compliant male target with whom they did not have an interpersonal relationship. Whereas Miller and Steinberg (1975) considered communication to be humans' primary means of influencing others, physical force also may be used, albeit as a coercive strategy. In the realm of law enforcement, physical uses of force are governed by written policies that illustrate when an officer can lawfully use force against a noncompliant individual (Thompson & Dowling, 2001). Before turning to physical force, however, police officers also may use verbally communicated strategies to attempt to gain compliance, as evidenced by the growing number of departments that incorporate communication training into law enforcement academies (Erickson, Cheatham, & Haggard, 1976), and the call to continue address interpersonal communication as an aspect of police training (Bizer, 1999).

Communication between law enforcement officers and civilians may be key to compliance-gaining without resorting to physical force. One way in which officers can gain compliance through verbal communication is through the use of messages that stress the legitimate power police officers hold. For example, an officer may tell an individual that he or she is giving that person a lawful order, and that their compliance is mandated by law. The legitimacy inherent in the position of law enforcement officer lends to citizens' willingness to comply with police (Jackson, Bradford, Hough, Myhill, Quinton,



& Tyler, 2012; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tyler & Jackson, 2014). As Tyler and Jackson (2014) noted, law enforcement officers' legitimacy plays a large role in gaining citizens' compliance, but recent changes in policing have led to the desire among police agencies to encourage willful cooperation. Thus, modern police officers may seek compliance from individuals with strategies that are not solely based on the legitimate power they hold by virtue of their position. Indeed, officers may draw from other power bases (e.g., reward power in the form of deciding to not ticket an individual for speeding; or coercive power in the form of threatening to place an individual in handcuffs for noncompliance). Still, officers also may engage in other communicative strategies to gain compliance from individuals. For example, Barker et al. (2008) reported that police officers may engage in communication accommodation as a manner of gaining compliance from the citizens they contact. Individuals might consider communication accommodation as a sign of goodwill from an officer, which might make one more willing to work with police. In any case, a law enforcement officer will always carry the authority vested in him or her, by virtue of the position he or she holds. Thus, a police officer's position may still influence individuals to comply, even if the officer does not exercise this authority in a salient manner.

From a law enforcement perspective, compliance-gaining may be limited to short-term interactions, in which an officer has a need for an individual to engage in an immediate behavior change. Thus, similar to the potential distinction between compliance-gaining and persuasion inherent in O'Keefe's (2002) treatment of definitional issues, the nature of law enforcement work may lead to a privileging of compliance in the short-term over persuasion in the long-term. Conversely, some

interactions between law enforcement and citizens (e.g., the DARE program) may focus on providing long-lasting attitude change or shaping. In some cases, especially those involving combative or wholly uncooperative individuals, officers may employ different strategies to gain immediate compliance, with less regard for the long-term implications of the use of such strategies. Still, these strategies are likely largely based on communicated messages, rather than the use of physical force, at least at the outset of most police-citizen contacts. Therefore, this study examines the use of these strategies to induce compliance in a communicative manner. Considering the potential for complaints and civil liabilities resulting from uses of physical force, finding communicative strategies for compliance-gaining may be an invaluable resource for law enforcement agencies.

### **Citizens and Moral Foundations**

The moral foundations perspective was introduced by Haidt and Joseph (2004) as a debate between two paradigms on morality: the empiricist approach and the nativist approach. As these authors noted, the empiricist approach to morality forwards that moral knowledge, beliefs, and actions are learned during childhood, but are not inherent in human beings. Conversely, the nativist approach suggests that knowledge about basic moral issues (e.g., fairness, harm, and respect for authority) are essentially built into the human mind as a result of evolution. Haidt and Joseph (2004) sided with the nativist approach, contending that much of what humans consider moral actions is intuitive, not deliberative. Furthermore, these authors argued that the human mind is equipped with at least four modules for understanding moral decisions (i.e., suffering, hierarchy, reciprocity, and purity), and that these modules provide flashes of affect when certain

patterns emerge in the world.

Haidt and Joseph (2007) continued this line of research, and established a list of five moral foundations, which they presented as a list of concerns. These foundations are harm/care, fairness/reciprocity, ingroup/loyalty, authority/respect, and purity/sanctity. Based on these foundations, Haidt and Graham (2007) created a distinction between social conservatives and liberals. Specifically, they argued that liberals have a set of morals informed by the foundations of harm/care and fairness/reciprocity primarily. Conversely, conservatives root their sense of morality in all five foundations more evenly. Because of this distinction, Haidt and Graham (2007) contended that liberals are unable to understand and/or value conservatives' arguments when they are based on the foundations of ingroup/loyalty, authority/respect, or purity/sanctity. In other words, political liberals tend to base their moral decisions on the foundations of empathy and equity, whereas conservatives tend to base their decisions on all five foundations, including religious considerations (Haidt & Graham, 2007).

Aside from these distinctions between conservatives and liberals, Haidt and Graham (2007) also formalized moral foundations theory, claiming that it has three parts: a nativist claim, a developmental account, and a cultural/historical account. First, the nativist claim indicates that natural selection prepared human beings to learn how to detect and respond to at least five sets of patterns in the world (i.e., the five moral foundations). Second, the developmental account describes how children are able to reach moral maturity through the process of mastering culturally varying virtues that are related to the five moral foundations. Finally, the cultural/historical account explains why different societies vary in they use these five moral foundations when making laws and

naming virtues.

In practice, moral foundations theory is tested with an instrument that measures the five foundations. Once these foundations are measured, the scores for harm and fairness are summed, as are the scores for ingroup, authority, and purity. The composite score for ingroup, authority, and purity is subtracted from the composite score for harm and fairness. The resulting score is a measure of progressivism. Higher scores indicate greater levels of progressivism. Progressivism was first conceptualized by Hunter (1991), and refers to individuals who tend to have more liberal leanings and a general rejection of authority.

Since its inception, moral foundations theory has been used by several researchers exploring morally relevant behaviors. For example, Krakowiak and Tsay (2011) explored the potential for individual characteristics to lead to individuals' acceptance of immoral behaviors. They found that moral disengagement predicted affective dispositions that in turn allowed for affective and cognitive enjoyment. Joeckel, Bowman, and Dogruel (2012) found that moral intuitions can be used to predict whether an individual will commit moral violations within a video game. Furthermore, Cranmer and Martin (in press) found that moral foundations harm/care and fairness/reciprocity were negatively related to verbal aggressiveness, argumentativeness, and Machiavellianism, and positively related to assertiveness, responsiveness, and cognitive flexibility. These results suggest that individuals who draw moral foundations rooted in concern for others tend to be less aggressive and more adaptable. Overall, the extant research suggests that moral foundations may inform the decisions individuals make. These moral foundations, however, may also inform the predispositions individuals have toward authority figures,

as well as their propensity to comply with authority. Indeed, if an individual does not draw from the authority/respect base, he or she might also have disdain for authority figures, including law enforcement officers.

Overall, moral foundations may play an important role in the predispositions individuals hold toward law enforcement officers, as well as their responses to compliance-gaining attempts by police. In any case, the law enforcement officers who attempt these compliance-gaining techniques must be prepared to do so with individuals who are more or less responsive to these attempts.

### **Police Work**

Twenty-first century police officers are similar to, and different from, their predecessors. As Jaschke and Neidhardt (2007) contended, police work has become more professional and citizen-oriented, compared to former policing styles. Although police officers have not changed, in terms of the oath they take as sworn members of law enforcement agencies, technology, media, and changing social norms have had a lasting impact on modern policing. Police officers fall under the category of first responders, which the FCC (2014) defined as firefighters, police, and emergency medical personnel. The work of policing a community has undergone many changes that, on the whole, have required law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve to work cohesively to address issues relevant to policing (Breci, 1994). Furthermore, communication is key to police officers' role within society, as well as to the successful implementation of a community-oriented policing program (i.e., a policing style that is based on proactive work to prevent crime and build bonds between police and community members; Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1994). Thus, part of this transformation is manifested in a

move toward communication between officers and community members. Indeed, Manoj and Baker (2007) identified communication as a critical element of first responder efficacy, considering it to be one of the primary challenges in generating an effective response to an emergency. Modern policing encompasses at least three complementary topics that have received scholarly attention: soft policing strategies, community policing, and citizens' trust in police.

Soft policing strategies involve the use of law enforcement resources for proactive purposes, as opposed to an immediate response to crimes. Innes (2005) described hard policing as inherently involving coercive forms of power (e.g., pursuing criminals actively), and soft policing as being based less on coercive power and more on persuasive social control. In other words, soft policing is designed to rely less on the threat of officers using force and arresting individuals, and more on a communicative connection rooted in trust between police and the community members they serve. Innes rooted this distinction in Nye's (2004a, 2004b) differentiation between hard and soft forms of geopolitical power. Nye conceptualized hard power as involving coercion and inducement. Conversely, soft power involves the use of persuasion. Applied to policing, this power can be expressed in the form of contact that officers have with citizens, as well as the strategies that can be used when communicating with someone while on duty. Soft policing involves a variety of strategies, including fear reduction programs (Wycoff, 1988), foot patrol programs (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1990) and neighborhood problem-solving projects (Cordner, 1988). Together, these soft policing strategies afford law enforcement agencies potentially more positive contact with citizens.

One particular type of soft policing strategy used by law enforcement officers is

community-oriented policing. He, Zhao, and Lovrich (2005) called community-oriented policing a “dominant force impelling organization change in U.S. policing since the early 1980s” (p. 295). Similar to Innes’ (2005) description of soft policing, community-oriented policing involves shifting police officer resources toward engaging members of the public in positive, face-to-face communication with law enforcement. Moore (1994) described community-oriented policing as focusing on maintaining order and providing nonemergency services (e.g., foot patrols in high crime areas, and the DARE program) to community members, as opposed to responding solely to calls for emergency services. Although this task is largely the result of implementation by high ranking members of a police agency, Woods (2000) noted that the work of individual officers who have direct contact with the public is what makes community-oriented policing successful. This proactive form of policing may lead to officers forming ties with community members, thereby developing a rapport that results in greater trust in officers among community members, and perhaps a greater likelihood of compliance with police. By the mid-1990’s, over 60% of U.S. law enforcement agencies were implementing or planning to implement a community-oriented policing program in their jurisdictions (Annan, 1995). The increased positive police-citizen contact brought about as a result of community-oriented policing has led to scholarly inquiry in a third related area: trust in police.

Although soft policing strategies are designed to make police officers more community-oriented, citizens’ perceptions of law enforcement remain divided. For example, research on citizens’ trust in police officers has produced mixed results, suggesting that there are contextual distinctions that may lead individuals to form distinct perceptions of law enforcement as a result of different instances of contact. Hennigan,

Maxson, Sloane, and Ranney (2002) found that individuals who live in low-crime areas have more favorable perceptions of police. On the other hand, Barker et al. (2008) found that individuals may form negative perceptions of police through exposure to media content (e.g., television news). Cheurprakobkit and Bartsch (2001) found that several police officer attributes, including politeness, helpfulness, and honesty, led to greater satisfaction with the police. Furthermore, Tyler (2001a, 2001b, 2005) found that interpersonal experience with police officers influences individuals' levels of trust in law enforcement, as well as propensity to collaborate with police. Trust in police may lead to desirable outcomes for police, including gaining compliance from the individuals they contact. Indeed, Barker et al. (2008) found that trust in police led to greater compliance with officers' requests. One context in which citizens might form distinct perceptions of law enforcement is police-citizen interaction.

### **Police-Citizen Interaction**

Communication between police officers and citizens may lead to distinct perceptions of law enforcement. Interactions between police officers and the citizens they contact may impact the perceptions that individuals have of law enforcement, depending on the valence of the communication that occurs during these interactions. Although citizens tend to hold contradictory perceptions of police (White & Menke, 1982), interpersonal contact between police and community members may result in more positive perceptions of law enforcement, depending on how positive or negative these citizens perceive the interaction. Indeed, extant research (Fagan & Tyler, 2005; Tyler, 2001, 2005) suggests that interpersonal experiences with police officers can influence an individual's willingness to comply with law enforcement. Furthermore, in some cases,



these interactions can lead to officers gaining compliance from citizens, as long as they perceive that they are being treated in a fair manner by an officer with benevolent motives.

In the Communication Studies discipline, Howard Giles and colleagues have arguably made the greatest contribution to police-citizen interaction literature. Giles' research focuses primarily on the use of communication accommodation by police officers and citizens during official contacts. Communication accommodation refers to the amount to which an individual makes vocal speech changes to facilitate communication with another person. This research stems from an intergroup perspective, in which police officers and citizens comprise the two groups that engage one another during official police encounters. The intergroup perspective dates back to Allport's (1954) work on group-based prejudice, rooted primarily in race at that time, and the influence of group membership on communicative encounters between members of distinct groups. For example, Dixon, Schell, Giles, and Drogos (2008) explored the interactions between police officers and Black and White drivers during traffic stops. This study involved examining over 300 randomly sampled videos of actual traffic stops initiated by the Cincinnati Police Department. These authors found that police officers had more positive communication quality with same-race drivers than drivers of different races, even after controlling for several factors. Results also indicated that Black drivers experienced more extensive policing (e.g., contacts that lead to arrests and vehicle searches) than did White drivers, as a result of the initial traffic stop by officers. Although no causal link can be attributed to the communicative experience and propensity for officers to engage in extensive policing with an individual, it is

nonetheless possible that officers were less likely to engage in these extensive tactics under circumstances in which greater communication quality between officers and citizens occurred.

Following this first study into officer and citizen accommodativeness, Giles, Linz, Bonilla, and Gomez (2012) qualitatively examined the interactions that occurred between police officers and white and Hispanic drivers during routine traffic stops. The authors found that Hispanic drivers were, on the whole, treated no differently than were White drivers, although drivers with heavy accents were subject to more extensive police activity and received less communication accommodation from officers than were non-accented drivers. Furthermore, although there was no significant difference in overall treatment, in terms of extensive policing, the results indicated that police officers were more accommodative to White drivers than to Hispanic drivers, but not anymore nonaccommodative toward White drivers than Hispanic drivers. This study also examined the accommodativeness of drivers toward police officers. Giles et al. found that White drivers were more accommodative toward White officers than were Hispanic drivers, and that police officer accommodation was a significant predictor of citizen accommodation. Research conducted by Giles and colleagues has expanded beyond the traffic stop, including general examinations of police-citizen communication in the United States and abroad, as well as citizens' propensity to comply with police officers during official, on-duty contacts. Combined, this research suggests that there are relationships among police-citizen interaction, perceptions of police, and propensity to comply with officers. One aspect of these interactions, trust, has been examined previously in Communication Studies research.

Citizens' trust in police is another common topic for communication research. Barker et al. (2008) examined perceived police officer communication accommodation and trust in police as factors having an influence on attitudes about complying with police. Giles et al. argued that the nature of police work inherently involves officers communicating with individuals who have diverse backgrounds. It is these distinctions that lead to the challenges associated with communication accommodation and nonaccommodation between officers and civilians. The authors presented a model of perceived police accommodation, trust in police, and attitudes about complying with police. Their study included data gathered from Japan, Guam, Korea, and Canada. Results revealed a positive relationship between perceived officer accommodation and reported trust in police, and between reported trust in police and attitudes about compliance with officers. Although there were no significant differences in police trust among participants from Japan, Guam, and Korea, the Canadian participants reported the most trust and perceived compliance with officers, when compared to participants from any of the other sampled countries.

On a related level, Hajek, Giles, Barker, Lin, Zhang, and Hummert (2008) conducted a follow-up study on the expressed trust and compliance by citizens with police officers in the United States and China. Again, communication accommodation was the key element in this study. Hajek et al. found that individuals perceived police accommodation to be higher in the United States and China than in Taiwan. Respondents in the United States also trusted police more than Chinese respondents, who in turn were more trusting of police than were the Taiwanese respondents. Furthermore, Americans reported being more likely to comply with police than did the Chinese or Taiwanese.

Overall, Hajek et al. reported that their results indicate the Western model of law enforcement lends to citizens' perceptions of police officers as being communicatively accommodative, as well as having more trust in police. The authors, however, remained curious as to what would lead citizens to be more compliant with police in the United States, as opposed to the other countries in which data were collected. They reasoned that American participants may have been weary to refuse to comply out of fear that doing so would lead to negative consequences (e.g., arrest). Considering, however, that police in all countries have the power to arrest others, these results suggest that Americans might be more conditioned to complying with police as a social norm.

Much like Hajek et al.'s (2008) study, Hajek, Barker, Giles, Makoni, Pecchioni, Louw-Potgieter, and Myers (2006) tested a similar model of accommodation, trust, and compliance with a sample of American and South African participants. Results of this study indicated that although Caucasian participants from the USA and South Africa experienced more overall contact with the police than Black participants, White participants reported perceiving the police to be more accommodating, had greater trust in police, and reported being more likely to comply with police during an official interaction. Furthermore, American participants reported being more likely to have officer-initiated contacts with police, and being more likely to comply with police, than did South African participants. Hajek et al. (2006) attributed the distinctions between US and South African participants to be due, in part, to the greater accommodativeness that police in the latter country exhibit when interacting with citizens.

Myers, Giles, Reid, and Nabi (2008) explored participant responses to four hypothetical vignettes, in which police officers gave a citation to a driver for committing

a minor traffic infraction. Participants rated officer competence and social attractiveness. Results indicated that police officers who were presented as more accommodating in the hypothetical vignette created more positive cognitive and affective reactions within the participants. Together, the above studies represent much of the work that has been conducted on police-citizen communication, to date. Collectively, this research suggests that citizens of different nations tend to have differential perceptions of police, and may be more or less likely to trust police and/or to comply with an officer's requests or demands. Furthermore, the results suggest that elements of police-citizen communication might influence perceptions of law enforcement as well as propensity to comply with police. Nonetheless, this area of research is somewhat limited, given the predominant focus on communication accommodation, as well as the international comparisons. Thus, the present research seeks to extend this area of scholarly inquiry by examining a domestic university police department and the students they serve.

The police-citizen communication instance is distinct from other contexts in which individuals attempt to use compliance gaining strategies for specific purposes (e.g., to convince someone to comply, to de-escalate a situation, or to effect an arrest). Specifically, police officers must interact with citizens under circumstances that most other professionals will not likely experience. Indeed, part of a police officer's job is to convince citizens that they should comply with requests or demands to avoid negative consequences (e.g., additional charges, injury, or death). Given that police officers are charged with maintaining peace and removing threats from society from the public arena, they are uniquely equipped to engage in compliance-gaining that, as Miller (2002) noted, may have an underlying sense of coercion that is experienced by some receivers. The

position that police officers occupy is one of authority, such that Anderson, Knutson, Giles, and Arroyo (2002) contended that police officers are in a unique position because they are authorized to use deadly force against other individuals if need be, as part of their job. Although the use of deadly force is a rare occurrence, the authority that law enforcement officers carry may lend to the unique context of police-citizen communication.

One way to better understand and contextualize police officers' power, in comparison to the citizens they contact while on duty, is through French and Raven's (1959) power bases. For police officers, their position as a sworn law enforcement officer gives them legitimate power (e.g., referring to the state law that gives them power to effect an arrest), as well as reward (e.g., the ability to let people go with a warning), expert (e.g., knowledge of the law and its application), referent (e.g., being admired by others who wish to become law enforcement officers), and coercive power (the ability to arrest others and use force). Thus, police officers likely remain cognizant of their power, even under circumstances that do not require them to use that power explicitly.

When police officers communicate with citizens, they may face people who have varying perceptions of law enforcement. As Barker et al. (2008) noted, police officers in the United States may be met by a public that lacks trust in law enforcement due to negative perceptions formed by exposure to media that show police involved in uses of force and/or misbehaviors. Furthermore, individuals may recall previous negatively valenced encounters with law enforcement that also might make them skeptical of police in future interactions. Despite this predisposition to be weary of law enforcement, not all encounters necessarily result in negative consequences for the individual contacted by a

police officer. Indeed, some encounters may even leave an individual satisfied with the communication exchange with the officer. For example, Glauser and Tullar (1985) reported that police officers maintain control of conversations with others, and citizens reported being more satisfied with conversations in which the police officer used fewer statements that led to the perception of the police officer attempting to dominate the interaction. Applied to the present research, officers whose communication is geared less toward domination, perhaps through the use of requests over demands, might succeed in gaining compliance while also leaving the individual with whom they interacted with more positive perceptions of police. This research is complemented by recent scholarship that explored the use of compliance gaining messages by American police officers with the citizens they encountered during the course of their shift (Lancaster & Brann, 2015)

Recently, Lancaster and Brann (2015) examined police-citizen interactions by accompanying law enforcement officers working for university and city police departments during their shifts, and engaging in interviews and participant observation with the officers. A primary finding that emerged from this research was police officers' use of a three-tiered approach to compliance-gaining that officers discussed, and that the researchers observed officers use when contacting citizens. Specifically, several police officers commented on being trained to ask, tell, and make citizens comply with requests or orders. Police officers reported that they are trained to begin by asking the people they contact on duty to do something, even if a citizen is legally obliged to do what the officer requests (e.g., saying "May I please see your license, registration, and proof of insurance?" rather than "Give me your license now"). The next level, telling, involves phrasing a statement as a command or an order (e.g., "Show me your identification right

now”). Finally, a make-phrased statement involves the use of a threat or using force to gain compliance (e.g., “Give me your license or you are going to jail”). This three-tiered approach to officer-citizen communication led to the idea that there may be substantive differences in the communication that occurs between police officers and citizens. These differences may lead to distinct outcomes, including perceptions of police and propensity to comply with an officer, when messages are framed in an ask, tell, or make style.

Further research into the ask, tell, make continuum indicated that this type of tactic has been taught to law enforcement officers for some time, but is potentially being phased out and replaced with a new listen explain with equity and dignity system (LEED; Improvingpolice, 2014). This system developed by Sheriff Susan Rahr is based on the idea of gaining compliance from individuals by making them believe that an officer has listened to their position before deciding to take official action (e.g., effect an arrest; Public Affairs, 2011). With this focus on LEED as a new, and potentially improved manner of law enforcement gaining voluntary compliance from citizens, an examination of ask, tell, make is warranted, for the purposes of better understanding how compliance, as well as perceptions of law enforcement, might be impacted by the manner in which a police officer speaks to an individual.

Overall, the communication between police officers and citizens may lead to distinct perceptions of law enforcement and propensity to comply with law enforcement. Law enforcement officers may communicate with citizens in-person, but also may communicate via computer-mediated channels. Whether communication occurs in-person or via mediated channels, it is possible that citizens will still respond to the messages in a similar manner.



## **Computer-Mediated Communication**

Communication via computer-mediated channels continues to be a popular form of human interaction. Today, individuals can connect with one another via computer-mediated communication (CMC) more easily than ever before (Baron, 2010). CMC is distinct from face-to-face (FtF) communication, in that technology mediates the connection between individuals, but interactants can nonetheless accomplish communicative tasks, and even foster relationships via mediated interaction. Indeed, Walther (1992, 1996) contended that individuals are motivated to engage in CMC for the same reasons that they might communicate in the FtF context. Furthermore, aside from the lack of some nonverbal cues that are present in FtF communication, individuals can transmit the same message via mediated channels that would be transmitted in-person. As Walther (1992) argued, the primary distinction between FtF and CMC, in terms of interpersonal communication, is a factor of time. Specifically, Walther argued that interpersonal communication, and relationship development, can take longer when using CMC because of the time lag that might be present in asynchronous forms of communication.

One form of CMC that has continued to grow in popularity is social media. Social media are an element of Web 2.0 (O'Reilly, 2005), and allow individuals to communicate with one another via instant messaging, content posts, and geolocation services. Various social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, SnapChat, and Yik Yak), allow individuals and organizations to post content for others to read. Social media are used in a variety of contexts, including as a channel for emergency communication.

### **Emergency Communication and Social Media**

Social media may be useful tools for government agencies, including law enforcement, during emergency situations. Some research (e.g., Jin, Liu, & Austin, 2014; Lindsay, 2011; Yates & Paquette, 2011) on the use of social media in times of crisis has emerged within the past few years. This research focuses on the use of social media during times of crisis, and has demonstrated some interesting findings (e.g., significant differences in individuals' preferred form and source of communication depending on the type of crisis under consideration; Jin et al., 2014).

In one of the first examinations of the use of social media in times of disaster to date, Lindsay (2011) examined the role of various channels and emergency situations (e.g., television and radio broadcasts during severe weather emergencies), finding that social media are used passively and systematically to disseminate information. Passive use includes posting information on walls, soliciting feedback through messages, and conducting online polls through social media channels. Systematic use of social media includes issuing emergency messages and warnings, soliciting and receiving requests for emergency assistance, and establishing and maintaining situational awareness.

Lindsay also noted that most citizens seek out information posted by other citizens rather than emergency services departments. It follows then, that individuals likely go to the people they trust to learn about emergency situations that are incipient or ongoing. As Palen (2008) noted, people used social media as a primary source of information about the shooting at Virginia Tech, as well as the California wildfires. Overall, this information was found to be by-and-large correct, lending to the utility of seeking information via social media sites. Social media, then, may present a unique affordance in the form of integrating official and lay information sources, such that

individuals have ample choices and perspectives when searching for updates on emergency situations. Along with Lindsay, other researchers (e.g., Jin et al., 2014; Yates & Paquette, 2011) have looked at the use of social media to assist with handling emergency situations, with natural disasters seemingly being the most common event studied. This research suggests that individuals tend to prefer different sources of information, including social media, depending on the situation.

Social media has become one of the most preferred sources of information. Extant research (e.g., Procopio & Procopio, 2007; Sweetser & Metzgar, 2007) suggests that, in many cases, individuals are more likely to perceive social media coverage of an event as more credible than the same coverage by mass media. Furthermore, given that the information provided via social media is often correct (Palen, 2008), citizens may be well served by turning to these channels as a primary or even supplementary source of relevant information during an emergency situation. Whereas historically, the primary channel for disseminating important information such as emergency warnings was broadcast media (Tierney, Lindell, & Perry, 2001), the advent of new media technologies does not limit emergency services agencies to television and radio in their information dissemination ventures.

### **Adopting Social Media in Emergency Situations**

A newer option available to governmental emergency services agencies is to post information on the Internet, in addition to using broadcast media, but many agencies have been slow to move toward these channels. In response to natural or man-made disasters, government emergency services agencies can use social media as a site for posting important information and updates for members of the public. In many cases, however,

governments do not utilize social media to send official information to the public. For example, Mersham (2010) reported the inadequate response on the part of the New Zealand government regarding a tsunami in 2009, noting that because individuals were left to find information on their own, they turned to social media to learn more about the tsunami. Similarly, Sutton, Palen, and Shklovski (2007) found that individuals turned to social media to find updated information about the California wildfires. Clearly, individuals are using social media to glean relevant information about emergency situations. In some cases, government emergency services agencies have used these social media to disseminate this important emergency situation information.

Social media offer a forum that individuals and government organizations can use during times of emergency. As Tanner, Friedman, Barr, and Koskan (2008) contended, the Internet holds an advantage over broadcast media because it is persistent in nature (i.e., once something is posted it does not change unless it is deleted), and it is the site where individuals frequently go to learn about what they should do in times of crisis. Nonetheless, Mergel (2013) noted that at the federal government level, there is little guidance in regards to the incorporation of social media platforms and the personnel in charge of these systems. Schuwerk and Davis (2013) echoed this finding, arguing that the county-level emergency services agencies also are not providing sufficient direction in terms of how to adopt social media as official channels for the distribution of information during emergency situations. Thus, the individuals in charge of these social media outlets are commonly left to fend for themselves, often turning to counterparts at other agencies for guidance (Schuwerk & Davis, 2013).

Historically, communication related to emergency services has been

accomplished through the use of 911. Although 911 was once a service intended for one-way use (i.e., telephone calls from individuals in need of emergency assistance), the modern emergency call system has new properties, such as the ability to serve as a form of communication from call centers to individuals (Moore, 2005). In other words, 911 operators can now call one or several individuals who are in an area affected by irregular police activity (e.g., barricaded suspects) or other emergency situations that warrant information from emergency services providers. Modern technology, however, also allows for the use of new media, such as social network sites, to be incorporated into emergency services communication plans (Merchant, Elmer, & Lurie, 2011). The pervasive nature of new media lends to its utility as a channel through which important messages can be sent to the public during times of crisis. Social media (e.g., Facebook and Twitter) in particular, seem to be ideally situated for this task, because they can reach large numbers of people quickly, and are among the most preferred sources for information-seeking about the events that transpire in times of emergency.

Extant research on this use of social media, however, is limited, due probably to the fact that emergency services are not yet employing this technology on a widespread basis. Although social media is relatively new to the context of disaster response, research has explored its vast use in other contexts, including, notably, campaigns (e.g., Aparaschivei, 2011; Houston, Hawthorne, Spialek, Greenwood, McKinney, & Mitchell, 2013; Morin & Flynn, 2014). The use of social media by emergency response organizations (e.g., law enforcement) does not have to be limited to disaster scenarios. One increasingly popular governmental use of social media is that of law enforcement as a tool to maintain open communication with the public.

## **Law Enforcement and Social Media**

Social media use among law enforcement agencies is a growing trend. According to the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP; 2011), over 88% of a sample of law enforcement agencies reported using social media as part of their operations. This number grew to 95.9% of surveyed agencies two years later (IACP, 2013). Furthermore, the IACP (2011) reported that nearly half of the surveyed agencies had a policy governing the use of social media, and over 20% were in the process of devising such a policy. As Spizman and Miller (2013) noted, one way in which law enforcement agencies are using social media is related to community-oriented policing. Stevens (2010) found that police use of social media allows departments to engage the communities they serve directly, and better understand how citizens perceive law enforcement-related issues. Law enforcement use of social media, however, is not limited to community-oriented policing topics.

Police officers have begun to look at social media as a tool for conducting criminal investigations. The IACP (2011) reported that over 71% of law enforcement agencies included in their study used social media as an investigational tool. Law enforcement investigations using social media include creating false accounts to learn about criminal activity (Masis, 2009), searching for potential admissions of guilt through public posts (USDOJ, 2010), and as a means of gathering information about persons of interest (e.g., gang members; Wilber, 2011). Although the police use social media to conduct certain investigations, not all law enforcement agencies have policies regulating how their officers use these sites (Spizman & Miller, 2013). With police officers now online, other social media users, and the public-at-large may have differently valenced

perceptions of the use of this technology for law enforcement purposes.

In their investigation of the use of social media by law enforcement, Spizman and Miller (2013) reasoned that community members might have distinct perceptions of the presence of law enforcement on social media. Indeed, these authors found that participants were, overall, supportive of police use of social media. The presence of law enforcement of social media sites, however, was less supported when officers engaged in more active forms of policing (e.g., using software to search for crimes). On the whole, Spizman and Miller's results suggest that individuals have more positive perceptions of police use of social media for community-oriented policing purposes. Specifically, their results indicated that participants were more positively disposed toward police use of social media that involved the community, as opposed to the activity that excludes community members.

One type of police agency that has yet to be examined, in terms of its social media use, is the university police agency. These police departments are unique, given the university community they serve. As Thompson, Price, Mrdjenovich, and Khubchandani (2009) noted, campus police are unique because they are wholly responsible for ensuring the safety of students on campus, as well as managing the security protocols for a campus and coordinating with university administration to put safety plans into effect. At the same time, university law enforcement agencies are charged with policing students who perceive them to be "tense, prejudiced, authoritarian, [and] conservative" (Singer & Singer, 1985, p. 732). It is likely that university police departments' use of social media is perceived in a unique manner by students, who are often the subjects of campus law enforcement investigations. Police, however, are not alone in their use of social media;

the college students with whom they interact also use these technologies on a daily basis.

### **College Students and Social Media**

Today's college students as a group, are among the most active social media users. Indeed, the modern college student is a heavy Internet user, spending much more time online than the average person (Chen & Peng, 2008; Quan-Haase, 2007). For example, nearly all college students use Facebook, averaging nearly two hours a day on the site (Junco, 2012; Smith & Caruso, 2010). College students are considered digital natives, individuals who have grown up with digital technology all of their lives, and are practically native speakers of the language of various computer technologies (Prensky, 2001). These digital natives are so in tune with modern digital technology that they may reject the traditional way of learning, desiring instead to be taught with distinct methodology and content with which teachers who are one or two generations removed will have little-to-no experience (Prensky, 2001). Today's college students are technologically savvy, and instructors have been virtually forced to follow suit, using social media for a variety of classroom-related functions.

Aside from personal functions, college students are beginning to use social media in conjunction with their courses. Facebook, in particular, is a social networking site that has seen increased use among college students (Mazer, Murphy, & Simonds, 2007). Bowman and Akcaoglu (2014) noted that Facebook groups used by instructors as a form of out-of-class communication (OCC) with students serve as a space where college students and their teachers can communicate about course-related topics via messages posted to these group pages. These authors found that students not only perceived participation in these Facebook groups positively, but also had significantly higher grades



than their counterparts who did not engage in this online OCC venue. From social and academic perspectives, social media use is a widely popular, useful tool that the vast majority of college students are using today.

Overall, the modern college student is someone who has grown up with digital technology at one's disposal, including social media, and spends a significant portion of time using social network sites. As demonstrated by Spizman and Miller (2013), these college students also may be the ideal group from which to draw samples on social media-related research topics. In the case of the present study, a college student sample will best represent perceptions of university police agencies' use of social media as a form of communicating with students.

## **Rationale**

### **Police-Citizen Communication in the University Setting**

Together, the extant research on police-citizen interaction indicates several outcomes of these communicative events. When police officers and citizens interact, the communication exchange can encompass distinct levels of communication accommodation (Dixon et al., 2008; Giles et al., 2012), and lead to important outcomes, including citizens' trust in police (Barker et al., 2008) and their likelihood of complying with law enforcement officers (Hajek et al., 2006; Hajek et al., 2008). Furthermore, Myers et al. (2008) demonstrated that police officer communication can affect citizens' perceptions of an officer's competence and social attractiveness. These outcomes suggest that individuals are keen to perceive law enforcement officers' communication style during police-citizen interactions, and that their judgments of these communicative phenomena have lasting impacts on their perceptions of police officers.

Research conducted on police-citizen interaction has been guided primarily by communication accommodation theory (CAT; Giles, Mulac, Bradac, & Johnson, 1987). Indeed, Giles and colleagues have generally conducted their research using CAT as the explanatory mechanism for outcomes of police-citizen interactions. From this perspective, these researchers have established that police officers tend to have more positive communication with same-race citizens (Dixon et al., 2008), and that officers tend to be less accommodative toward individuals who have a thick accent and Hispanic drivers are less accommodative toward officers than White drivers (Giles et al., 2012). Furthermore, Barker et al. (2008) found a positive relationship between law enforcement officer communication accommodation and citizen trust in police.

Aside from perceptions of police, Giles and colleagues also have examined citizens' propensity to comply with officers based on communication accommodation. For example, Hajek et al. (2006) cited communication accommodation as the driving factor behind citizens' likelihood of complying with police officers, comparing US and South African samples against one another. Similarly, Hajek et al. (2008) found that American participants were more likely to comply with police than Chinese or Taiwanese participants. The authors explained that this result was due to the fact that Americans perceive officers to be more accommodative than do citizens of other countries. Clearly, police communication accommodation has an effect on citizens' perceptions of police and willingness to comply, especially in the United States. Nonetheless, other unexamined factors may contribute to citizens' propensity to comply with police officers.

Citizens' compliance or intention to comply with police officers may be affected by the way in which police officers phrase statements made during police-citizen

interactions. Lancaster and Brann (2015) found that the police agencies on which their study focused rely on a continuum of ask-tell-make when communicating with the citizens they contact while on-duty. Considering that Giles and colleagues have found that police officer communication can affect perceptions of police and likelihood of compliance with law enforcement, it follows that citizens also might make judgments about police based on the manner in which officers communicate a message toward them. Indeed, it is likely that citizens will feel more likely to comply with an officer who asks them to do something, rather than an officer who uses a command or a threat.

One particular type of law enforcement agency, university police departments, may have a greater need to be present on social media, due to the communities they serve. These police agencies are unique because they remain responsible for all aspects of student safety while on campus (Thompson et al., 2009). University students, who are extremely active on social media (Mazer et al., 2007), represent a group of citizens who are likely to have interactions with police and distinct perceptions of law enforcement use of social media. In the present research, police-citizen interactions were limited in scope to university police officers and university students. Considering the demographics of college students and university police departments, it is likely that these groups will have contact in both FtF and CMC environments. Thus, the following hypotheses are forwarded:

H1: College students will be more likely to intend to comply with a police officer who uses an ask-framed message than with a police officer who uses a tell- or make-phrased message.

Beyond mere intention to comply, citizens, including college students, also likely

form distinct perceptions of police officers based on the communicative choices officers make. Much in the way that citizens tend to have more positively valenced perceptions of police who are communicatively accommodative (Hajek et al., 2008), it is likely that college students who interact with an officer who makes ask-phrased statements will also have more positive perceptions of police than students who are told to do something or presented with a threat to gain compliance. Furthermore, students also are likely to hold distinct perceptions of police officer communication appropriateness based on the phrasing of messages used toward them. Specifically, college students may perceive ask-phrased messages to be more appropriate than tell- or make- phrased messages. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H2: College students will report that police officers who use an ask-framed message are more conversationally appropriate than police officers who use a tell- or make-framed message.

H3: College students will report having more positive perceptions of police when presented with an ask-framed message than a tell- or make-framed message.

Although citizens' propensity of intending to comply with police officers and the valence of their perceptions of police are likely affected by the way in which officers phrase the messages used to communicate with them, there is an important potential exception to this relationship: context. Police officers tend to contact citizens in a variety of circumstances, ranging from commonplace interactions (e.g., traffic stops; Eith & Durose, 2011) to emergency situations (e.g., responses to 911 calls). Furthermore, police officers, as first responders (FCC, 2014), are likely to be on-scene during the outset and climax of an emergency. If police and citizens interact during one of these situations, it is

likely that officers will use tell- and make- phrased commands as a means of imparting the urgency of the situation to bystanders. Conversely, citizens likely perceive non-emergency situations, which are devoid of this potentially imminent danger, to not require such a hostile response on the part of police officers. This distinction in context may lead to distinct intentions to comply with police officers, perceptions of police officers, and perceptions of conversational appropriateness. Therefore, the following research question is proposed:

RQ1: Across ask-, tell-, and make-framed messages, what is the effect of the emergency nature (i.e., emergency versus non-emergency situation) of a message on college students' reported likelihood of complying with police officers, perceptions of police, and perceptions of conversational appropriateness?

### **Computer-Mediated Police-Citizen Communication**

Social media has become a new tool for government use in a variety of contexts. Lindsay (2011) found that social media can be used to disseminate information passively or actively, including Facebook posts, delivering emergency messages, or receiving requests for emergency assistance. Furthermore, police officers have started turning to social media to aid in a variety of law enforcement-related issues (IACP, 2011). The online presence of law enforcement, however, is received with distinctly valenced perceptions among citizens, which Spizman and Miller (2013) argued are influenced by the reason for police use of social media. Overall, the research suggests that law enforcement use of social media is a growing trend, and is met with acceptance and resistance from citizens.

Given the unique context of law enforcement that the university campus

represents, university police departments may use social media to disseminate messages that target college students directly, and are similar to messages that would be delivered in-person by municipal, state, and/or federal law enforcement officers to citizens in on-duty contacts. Nonetheless, the mediated nature of social media communication may lead to distinct reports of likelihood of compliance, perceptions of police, and perceptions of message appropriateness. Therefore the following research questions are proposed:

RQ2: How will compliance with police, perceptions of law enforcement, and perceptions of police officer conversational appropriateness differ when the hypothetical interaction between citizens and police occurs in-person or via computer-mediated communication?

### **Summary of Chapter I**

This chapter reviewed persuasion research, compliance-gaining research, police-citizen interaction research, computer-mediated communication research, and moral foundations theory research. Considering that much of the extant research on police-citizen communication operates from an intergroup perspective, this chapter also addressed the potential utility of the persuasive and compliance-gaining perspective in examining communication that occurs between police officers and citizens. Based on previous research findings, this chapter presented hypotheses and research questions about the communication that might occur between university police officers and university students, in cases in which the officer attempts to gain compliance communicatively.

## CHAPTER II: METHODOLOGY

Before conducting the experiment to test the hypotheses and research questions, data were collected to check the experimental manipulations (emergency/non-emergency and ask/tell/make). After confirming the manipulations, students were recruited to participate in the main data collection for the FtF and CMC conditions. This chapter reports the method and results of the manipulation check as well as the methods for the experiment.

### Participants

This study used a college student sample drawn from communication studies courses at a large, public, mid-Atlantic university. A total of 225 individuals engaged in at least partial completion of the online questionnaire. Due to incomplete data, 35 respondents were removed from the dataset before data analysis began. Thus the final number of participants ( $N = 190$ ; 90 men, 99 women, 1 participant did not identify his or her sex) included only those individuals who did not leave large portions of the questionnaire blank. Participants were recruited from classrooms and were offered extra credit by course instructors for this participation. Participants also were recruited via an online posting on the campus website. Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 46 ( $M = 20.91$ ,  $SD = 2.94$ ), and their academic rank included first year ( $n = 40$ , 21.1%), second year ( $n = 46$ , 24.2%), third year ( $n = 36$ , 18.9%), fourth year ( $n = 50$ , 26.3%), and fifth year or beyond ( $n = 17$ , 8.9%) students. One participant did not indicate his or her academic rank. Participants identified themselves as African-American ( $n = 7$ , 3.7%), Asian ( $n = 3$ , 1.6%), Hispanic/Latino ( $n = 4$ , 2.1%), Native American ( $n = 1$ , 0.5%), Pacific Islander ( $n = 1$ , 0.5%), White ( $n = 162$ , 85.3%), or Other ( $n = 11$ , 5.8%). One

participant did not indicate his or her race/ethnicity.

### **Design and Procedure**

This study utilized an in-class and online data collection based on an online questionnaire. This study employed a 3 (ask, tell, or make) x 2 (emergency or non-emergency) x 2 (FtF or CMC) design, with a total of 12 conditions. Based on the ask-tell-make continuum, three hypothetical messages were developed, in which a police officer contacted a citizen while on-duty using an ask, tell, or make phrased message. The two situations used for the development of these scenarios were a non-emergency and an emergency event. Each of these scenarios involved a police officer attempting to gain compliance from the citizen he or she contacted while on-duty. See Appendix A for the FtF scenarios, and Appendix B for the CMC scenarios. Each participant was assigned randomly to one of these six conditions, based on the questionnaire that he or she received. After reading an informational cover letter and providing informed consent to participate in the study, participants read the scenario. After reading the scenario, participants responded to measures of police officer appropriateness, perceptions of law enforcement, propensity to comply with the officer, and demographic items.

### **Stimuli Materials**

*Scenarios:* Six scenarios (one non-emergency ask message, one non-emergency tell message, one non-emergency make message, one emergency ask message, one emergency tell message, and one emergency make message) set in a hypothetical FtF encounter between a university police officer and a student were designed for this study. Six hypothetical social media site posts by a university police department (one non-emergency ask message, one non-emergency tell message, one non-emergency make



message, one emergency ask message, one emergency tell message, and one emergency make message) also were designed for this study. Participants were assigned randomly to one of the 12 conditions. The non-emergency ask message involved a police officer phrasing a statement as a request (i.e., “would you please...”) during a non-emergency situation. The non-emergency tell message involved a police officer phrasing a statement as a command (i.e., “you will...”) during a non-emergency situation. The non-emergency make message involved a police officer phrasing a statement as a threat (i.e., “you will...or I will arrest you”) during a non-emergency situation. The emergency ask message involved a police officer phrasing a statement as a request (i.e., “would you please...”) during an emergency situation. The emergency tell message involved a police officer phrasing a statement as a command (i.e., “you will...”) during an emergency situation. The emergency make message involved a police officer phrasing a statement as a threat (i.e., “you will...or I will arrest you”) during an emergency situation.

### **Measures**

*Moral foundations:* Graham, Haidt, and Nosek’s (2008) Moral Foundations questionnaire was used to measure participants’ moral foundations. The scale contains 30 items that measure the five moral foundations, and is broken into two parts. The scale also includes two foil items, which are based on the topics of math and being “good.” The measures are presented in two parts: For part one, participants responded to fifteen items that asked participants to rate the relevance of each item on a six-point scale (0 = not at all relevant, 5 = extremely relevant). For part two, participants responded to fifteen items on a six-point Likert-type scale (0 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The items were summed for each of the five moral foundations (i.e., harm, fairness, authority,

ingroup, and purity). From these five scores, a score for progressivism was calculated by subtracting the summed scores of authority, ingroup, and purity from the summed scores of harm and fairness. Scores for harm ranged from 1.17 to 5.00 ( $M = 3.41$ ,  $SD = 0.72$ ,  $\alpha = .57$ ). Scores for fairness ranged from 1.17 to 5.00 ( $M = 3.34$ ,  $SD = 0.76$ ,  $\alpha = .65$ ). Scores for ingroup ranged from 0.17 to 5.00 ( $M = 2.99$ ,  $SD = 0.86$ ,  $\alpha = .72$ ). Scores for authority ranged from 0.33 to 4.50 ( $M = 3.02$ ,  $SD = 0.75$ ,  $\alpha = .56$ ). Scores for purity ranged from 0.00 to 4.83 ( $M = 2.72$ ,  $SD = 0.97$ ,  $\alpha = .74$ ). The index of progressivism ranges from -1.28 to 4.44 ( $M = 0.46$ ,  $SD = 0.79$ ,  $\alpha = .77$ ). Scores were also calculated for the FtF and CMC conditions. In the FTF conditions, scores for harm ranged from 1.83 to 4.83 ( $M = 3.40$ ,  $SD = 0.71$ ,  $\alpha = .59$ ). Scores for fairness ranged from 1.50 to 5.00 ( $M = 3.39$ ,  $SD = 0.73$ ,  $\alpha = .62$ ). Scores for ingroup ranged from 0.17 to 5.00 ( $M = 2.94$ ,  $SD = 0.88$ ,  $\alpha = .71$ ). Scores for authority ranged from 0.33 to 4.33 ( $M = 2.97$ ,  $SD = 0.78$ ,  $\alpha = .57$ ). Scores for purity ranged from 0.00 to 4.67 ( $M = 2.77$ ,  $SD = 0.95$ ,  $\alpha = .74$ ). The index of progressivism ranges from -1.17 to 4.44 ( $M = 0.50$ ,  $SD = 0.89$ ,  $\alpha = .76$ ). In the CMC conditions, scores for harm ranged from 1.17 to 5.00 ( $M = 3.42$ ,  $SD = 0.73$ ,  $\alpha = .56$ ). Scores for fairness ranged from 1.17 to 5.00 ( $M = 3.30$ ,  $SD = 0.77$ ,  $\alpha = .68$ ). Scores for ingroup ranged from 0.83 to 4.83 ( $M = 3.04$ ,  $SD = 0.84$ ,  $\alpha = .72$ ). Scores for authority ranged from 1.17 to 4.50 ( $M = 3.07$ ,  $SD = 0.73$ ,  $\alpha = .55$ ). Scores for purity ranged from 0.33 to 4.83 ( $M = 2.67$ ,  $SD = 0.99$ ,  $\alpha = .74$ ). The index of progressivism ranges from -1.28 to 3.00 ( $M = 0.43$ ,  $SD = 0.70$ ,  $\alpha = .78$ ).

*Message believability:* Graziolo and Carrell's (2002) three-item message believability measure was used to assess participants' perceptions of believability of the hypothetical officer's statements. In the current study, the items were phrased as follows:

“if a police officer were to tell me the message I just read, I would think the message is true; based on real facts; correct.” Participants responded on a seven-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, and 7 = *strongly agree*). Scores ranged from 1.00 to 7.00 ( $M = 4.39$ ,  $SD = 1.74$ ,  $\alpha = .94$ ). In the FTF conditions, scores ranged from 1.33 to 7.00 ( $M = 4.74$ ,  $SD = 1.78$ ,  $\alpha = .93$ ). In the CMC conditions, scores ranged from 1.00 to 7.00 ( $M = 4.09$ ,  $SD = 1.66$ ,  $\alpha = .95$ ).

*Police officer conversational appropriateness:* Police officer conversational appropriateness was measured with six modified items taken from Canary and Spitzberg’s (1987) appropriateness and effectiveness measures. Items were modified to make them applicable directly to the hypothetical police-citizen interaction (e.g., “Her or his conversation was very suitable to the situation” was changed to read “the officer’s statements were very suitable to the situation”). Participants responded on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree* and 5 = *strongly agree*). Scores ranged from 1.20 to 5.00 ( $M = 3.31$ ,  $SD = 0.75$ ,  $\alpha = .79$ ). In the FTF conditions, scores for police officer appropriateness ranged from 1.40 to 5.00 ( $M = 3.47$ ,  $SD = 0.71$ ,  $\alpha = .72$ ). In the CMC conditions, scores for police officer appropriateness ranged from 1.20 to 5.00 ( $M = 3.18$ ,  $SD = 0.77$ ,  $\alpha = .82$ ).

*Perceptions of law enforcement:* Perceptions of law enforcement officers was measured using selected items from Maguire and Johnson’s (2010) measure of police service quality. Specifically, 11 items, which address competence, fairness, and manners, were taken from this measure. Participants responded on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree* and 5 = *strongly agree*). Scores for competence ranged from 1.00 to 5.00 ( $M = 2.91$ ,  $SD = 0.80$ ,  $\alpha = .78$ ). Scores for fairness ranged from 1.00 to 5.00 ( $M =$

3.04,  $SD = 0.80$ ,  $\alpha = .89$ ). Scores for manners ranged from 1.00 to 5.00 ( $M = 2.87$ ,  $SD = 0.82$ ,  $\alpha = .79$ ). In the FtF conditions, scores for competence ranged from 1.00 to 5.00 ( $M = 2.87$ ,  $SD = 0.84$ ,  $\alpha = .80$ ). Scores for fairness ranged from 1.00 to 5.00 ( $M = 3.02$ ,  $SD = 0.84$ ,  $\alpha = .90$ ). Scores for manners ranged from 1.00 to 5.00 ( $M = 2.87$ ,  $SD = 0.84$ ,  $\alpha = .77$ ). In the CMC conditions, scores for competence ranged from 1.00 to 5.00 ( $M = 2.95$ ,  $SD = 0.77$ ,  $\alpha = .77$ ). Scores for fairness ranged from 1.00 to 5.00 ( $M = 3.06$ ,  $SD = 0.77$ ,  $\alpha = .88$ ). Scores for manners ranged from 1.00 to 5.00 ( $M = 3.11$ ,  $SD = 0.83$ ,  $\alpha = .80$ ).

*Propensity to comply with law enforcement:* Participants' intent to comply with the law enforcement officer was measured with a modified version of Barker et al.'s (2008) attitudes about compliance items. Specifically, the three items from the original measure were modified to read, "I should obey a police officer," "I would always try to follow what a police officer says I should do," and "I should obey the decisions that a police officer makes." Two additional items were added to this measure: "I would follow the instructions of a police officer," and "I should comply with a police officer's statement." Participants responded on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree* and 5 = *strongly agree*). Scores for intent to comply with a police officer ranged from 1.00 to 5.00 ( $M = 4.00$ ,  $SD = 0.81$ ,  $\alpha = .93$ ). In the FtF conditions, scores for intent to comply with a police officer ranged from 1.00 to 5.00 ( $M = 3.99$ ,  $SD = 0.82$ ,  $\alpha = .92$ ). In the CMC conditions, scores for intent to comply with a police officer ranged from 1.00 to 5.00 ( $M = 4.01$ ,  $SD = 0.81$ ,  $\alpha = .94$ ). See Table 1 for measurement details for all conditions.

*Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for all Measures*

Variable	Range	Mean	Std. deviation	$\alpha$ reliability
MFT-Progressivism	-1.28 – 4.44	0.46	0.79	0.77
Conversational Appropriateness	1.20 – 5.00	3.31	0.75	0.79
Law Enforcement Competence	1.00 – 5.00	2.91	0.80	0.78
Law Enforcement Fairness	1.00 – 5.00	3.04	0.80	0.89
Law Enforcement Manners	1.00 – 5.00	3.12	0.82	0.79
Compliance with Law Enforcement	1.00 – 5.00	4.00	0.81	0.93
Message Believability	1.00 – 7.00	4.39	1.74	0.94

### **Pilot Study**

To test the manipulations of context (emergency/non-emergency situations) and the police officer's message (ask/tell/make), a pilot study was conducted. A total of 45 participants rated the hypothetical scenarios, which yielded 21 ratings for the emergency ask, emergency tell, and nonemergency make conditions, and 24 ratings for the nonemergency ask, nonemergency tell, and emergency make conditions. Participants rated the scenarios on a seven-point semantic differential scale (1 = *nonemergency* to 7 = *emergency*). Results of an analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicated a significant difference between the emergency and nonemergency conditions,  $F(5, 129) = 21.82, p < .001$ . These results suggest that the manipulation of emergency situation was successful.

Pilot test participants also rated the police officer's message using a seven-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*). Results of an ANOVA indicated a significant difference in the ask,  $F(5, 129) = 20.61, p < .001$ , tell,  $F(5, 129) = 9.72, p < .001$ , and make,  $F(5, 129) = 25.79, p < .001$ , ratings. Thus, the manipulation of the police officer communication style were deemed to be successful. Overall, the results of the pilot study indicated that the manipulations were successful, such that participants were able to correctly identify the differences between the hypothetical emergency and non-emergency situations, as well as to correctly identify the ask, tell, and make scenarios. With this knowledge, the results from the main study (i.e., the manipulations of message framing, emergency or nonemergency context, and face-to-face or computer-mediated communication) were next examined.

## **Summary of Chapter II**

This chapter included the participant information, the study design, the stimuli materials, and the measures used in this dissertation. The main study in this dissertation involved an experimental design with manipulations of the emergency nature of the hypothetical situation, police officer communicative phrasing, and face-to-face or computer-mediated context.

## CHAPTER III: RESULTS

### Main Study

Hypothesis one predicted that college students would be more likely to comply with a police officer who used an ask-framed message than with a police officer who used a tell-framed or make-framed message. Hypothesis two predicted that college students would report that police officers who used an ask-framed message were more conversationally appropriate than officers who used a tell-framed message or a make-framed message. Hypothesis three predicted that college students would report having more positive perceptions of police when presented with an ask-framed message than when presented with a tell-framed or make-framed message. Research question one asked what the effect of the emergency or non-emergency nature of the interaction with a police officer would be on compliance, perceptions of law enforcement, and perceptions of officer conversational appropriateness. Finally, research question two asked how compliance, perceptions of law enforcement, and perceptions of officer conversational appropriateness would differ when the hypothetical interaction between citizens and police occurred in-person or via computer-mediated communication.

To assess these hypotheses and research questions, the data were subjected to a 3 X 2 X 2 multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), with the ask, tell, make message manipulation, the emergency context of the message, and the face-to-face or computer-mediated contexts as the independent variables, and propensity to comply, perceptions of law enforcement, and perceptions of conversational appropriateness entered as the dependent variables. Results of the MANOVA indicated no significant interaction effects. Neither the three-way interaction between the ask, tell, make manipulation, the

emergency or nonemergency nature of the message, and the FtF or CMC context, Wilks'  $\lambda = 0.95, p = .19$ , nor the two-way interactions were significant: between the emergency nature of the message and the FtF or CMC context, Wilks'  $\lambda = 0.98, p = .28$ , between the message manipulation and the emergency or nonemergency nature of the message, Wilks'  $\lambda = 0.98, p = .63$ , between the message manipulation and the FtF or CMC context, Wilks'  $\lambda = 0.97, p = .55$ . Furthermore, there was no multivariate main effect for the emergency or nonemergency nature of the message, Wilks'  $\lambda = 0.99, p = .55$ . There were, however, significant multivariate main effects for the ask, tell, make manipulation, Wilks'  $\lambda = 0.86, p < .001$ , as well as for the FtF or CMC context of communication, Wilks'  $\lambda = 0.94, p < .01$ . See Tables 2 – 4 for all information regarding the MANOVA.

An examination of the between groups effects for the ask, tell, make manipulation indicated a significant difference in perceptions of police officer conversational appropriateness,  $F(2, 173) = 7.76, p < .01$ , partial eta squared = .08 as well as for perceptions of law enforcement,  $F(2, 173) = 3.60, p < .05$ , partial eta squared = .04. An examination of the pairwise comparisons of the estimated marginal means indicated a significant difference in ratings of conversational appropriateness between the make ( $M = 3.04, SE = .09$ ) and ask ( $M = 3.48, SE = .10$ ) conditions ( $p < .01$ ), and between the make ( $M = 3.04, SE = .09$ ) and tell ( $M = 3.49, SE = .10$ ) conditions ( $p < .01$ ); ask ( $M = 3.48, SE = .10$ ) and tell ( $M = 3.49, SE = .10$ ) were not significantly different from one another ( $p > .05$ ). Specifically, participants in the ask and tell conditions rated the officer as more conversationally appropriate than they did in the make conditions.

Additionally, there was a significant difference in perceptions of law enforcement among the ask ( $M = 3.21, SE = .10$ ) and make ( $M = 2.84, SE = .09$ ) groups ( $p < .01$ ).



Specifically, participants in the ask conditions reported more favorable perceptions of law enforcement than did participants in the make conditions. There were no significant differences in perceptions of law enforcement between the tell ( $M = 2.99, SE = .10$ ) and make ( $M = 2.84, SE = .09$ ) groups ( $p > .05$ ), nor between the ask ( $M = 3.21, SE = .10$ ) and tell ( $M = 2.99, SE = .10$ ) groups ( $p > .05$ ). Further examination of the between groups effects indicated a significant difference in perceptions of officer conversational appropriateness based on the FtF and CMC conditions,  $F(1, 173) = 4.67, p < .01$ , partial eta squared = .05. An examination of the pairwise comparisons indicated a significant difference in perceptions of officer conversational appropriateness, such that FtF ( $M = 3.50, SE = .08$ ) and CMC ( $M = 3.17, SE = .07$ ) groups ( $p < .01$ ). See Tables 2, 3, and 4 for details of the MANOVA and the estimated marginal means for message manipulation and channel manipulation.

Overall, the results of the MANOVA indicated no support for hypothesis one, as there were no significant differences in compliance based on the message manipulations. The results, however, offered support for hypotheses two and three, as there were significant differences in perceptions of officer conversational appropriateness, and perceptions of law enforcement. Specifically, participants' reports of perceptions of law enforcement were highest for the ask-framed messages, and their ratings were significantly lower for the make-framed messages. There were, however, no significant differences between the ask- and tell-framed messages. In regards to hypothesis three, the results indicated that participants had more favorable perceptions of police when receiving an ask-framed message versus a make-framed message. There were, however, no statistically significant differences between the ask-framed message and the tell-

framed message, nor between the tell-framed message and the make-framed message.

In regards to research question one, the results indicated that there was no main effect for the emergency nature of a message. Thus, there was no effect on compliance, perceptions of law enforcement, or perceptions of conversational appropriateness. For research question two, the results indicated that participants perceived the police officer to be more conversationally appropriate in the FtF condition than in the CMC condition.

*Table 2: MANOVA with Context, Message Manipulation and Emergency Nature as IVs*

Effect	Wilks' $\lambda$ Value	F-value	Hypothesis DF	Error DF	Significance	Partial Eta Squared
Message Manipulation	.859	4.51	6	342	< .001	.073
Channel of Comm.	.935	3.95	3	171	< .01	.065
Emergency Nature	.988	0.72	3	171	.54	.012
Msg. Manip. x Context	.971	0.83	6	342	.55	.014
Msg. Manip. x Emergency Nature	.975	0.73	6	342	.63	.013
Context x Emergency Nature	.978	1.30	3	171	.28	.022
Msg. Manip. x Context x Emerg. Nature	.950	1.47	6	342	.19	.025

*Table 3: Estimated Marginal Means for MANOVA (Message Manipulation)*

Dependent Variable	Group	Estimated Marginal Mean	Standard Error
Conversational Appropriateness	Ask	3.48	.10
	Tell	3.49	.10
	Make	3.04	.09
Perceptions of Law Enforcement	Ask	3.21	.10
	Tell	2.99	.10
	Make	2.84	.09
Compliance with Law Enforcement	Ask	3.94	.12
	Tell	3.97	.11
	Make	4.02	.10

*Table 4: Estimated Marginal Means for MANOVA (Channel Manipulation)*

Dependent Variable	Group	Estimated Marginal Mean	Standard Error
Conversational Appropriateness	FTF	3.50	.08
	CMC	3.17	.07
Perceptions of Law Enforcement	FTF	3.01	.08
	CMC	3.02	.07
Compliance with Law Enforcement	FTF	3.97	.10
	CMC	3.99	.08

### **Post-Hoc Analyses**

Although this dissertation did not factor message believability or MFT progressivism into the hypotheses and research questions as potential covariates, I considered that participants might respond distinctly based on how believable they perceived the police officer's message to be, as well as the participants' trait progressivism. Therefore, three post-hoc multivariate analyses of covariance (MANCOVAs) were performed. To investigate RQ1, a 3 X 2 X 2 multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) was conducted, with message believability and moral foundations progressivism entered as covariates. Results of the MANCOVA indicated that message believability emerged as a significant covariate, Wilks'  $\lambda = 0.60$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial eta squared = .40, but moral foundations progressivism did not emerge as a

significant covariate, Wilks'  $\lambda = 0.99$ ,  $p = .57$ , partial eta squared = .01. Results of the MANCOVA also indicated no significant interaction effects for the interactions between the message manipulation, the emergency or nonemergency nature of the message, and the FtF or CMC context, Wilks'  $\lambda = 0.94$ ,  $p = .12$ , partial eta squared = .03, between the emergency nature of the message and the FtF or CMC context, Wilks'  $\lambda = 0.98$ ,  $p = .31$ , partial eta squared = .02, between the ask, tell, make manipulation and the emergency or nonemergency nature of the message, Wilks'  $\lambda = 0.97$ ,  $p = .53$ , partial eta squared = .02 or between the ask, tell, make manipulation and the FtF or CMC context, Wilks'  $\lambda = 0.98$ ,  $p = .71$ , partial eta squared = .01. Furthermore, there was no multivariate main effect for the emergency or nonemergency nature of the message, Wilks'  $\lambda = 0.99$ ,  $p = .52$ , partial eta squared = .01, nor for the FtF or CMC context of communication, Wilks'  $\lambda = 0.96$ ,  $p = .06$ , partial eta squared = .06. There was, however, a significant main effect for the ask, tell, make manipulation, Wilks'  $\lambda = 0.84$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial eta squared = .08. See Tables 5 – 7 for all information about the MANCOVA.

A further examination of the between subjects effects for the ask, tell, make manipulation revealed a significant difference in perceptions of conversational appropriateness,  $F(2, 169) = 11.10$ ,  $p < .001$ , as well as perceptions of law enforcement,  $F(2, 169) = 2.20$ ,  $p < .05$ . An examination of the estimated marginal means indicated that perceptions of conversational appropriateness were more positive in the ask ( $M = 3.45$ ,  $SE = .09$ ) conditions than in the make ( $M = 3.06$ ,  $SE = .08$ ) conditions ( $p < .01$ ), and in the tell ( $M = 3.51$ ,  $SE = .08$ ) conditions than in the make ( $M = 3.06$ ,  $SE = .08$ ) conditions ( $p < .001$ ). A further examination of the estimated marginal means indicated that perceptions of law enforcement were higher in the ask ( $M = 3.20$ ,  $SE = .10$ ) conditions

than in the make ( $M = 2.83$ ,  $SE = .08$ ) conditions, although not between the tell ( $M = 3.00$ ,  $SE = .09$ ) conditions than in the make ( $M = 2.83$ ,  $SE = .08$ ) conditions ( $p > .05$ ), nor between the ask ( $M = 3.20$ ,  $SE = .10$ ) and the tell ( $M = 3.00$ ,  $SE = .09$ ) conditions ( $p > .05$ ). See Tables 5, 6, and 7 for details of the MANCOVA, and estimated marginal means for message manipulation and channel manipulation.

Overall, the results of the MANCOVA replicated those of the MANOVA, with the exception of main effect for channel falling below the acceptable significance level ( $p = .06$ ). Specifically, even when controlling for message believability and MFT progressivism, the manipulation of the message (i.e., ask, tell, make) still had a significant impact on participants' perceptions of law enforcement and perceptions of police officer conversational appropriateness. Furthermore, the channel through which the message was sent also potentially influenced perceptions of law enforcement. In regards to the effect of channel, because this main effect approached significance, even after controlling for another variable (i.e., believability) that is likely confounded with channel, it was important to further examine whether any significant differences existed between the channels of communication. Specifically, an independent-samples  $t$ -test indicated a significant difference in believability between the FtF and CMC conditions,  $t(186) = 2.57$ ,  $p < .05$ . The message was significantly more believable in the FtF condition ( $M = 4.74$ ,  $SD = 1.78$ ) than in the CMC condition ( $M = 4.10$ ,  $SD = 1.65$ ). These results offer further support for the contention that there are channel effects regardless of message believability.

*Table 5: MANCOVA with Context, Message Manipulation and Emergency Nature as IVs, and Believability and MFT Progressivism entered as Covariates*

Effect	Wilks' $\lambda$ Value	F-value	Hypothesis DF	Error DF	Significance	Partial Eta Squared
MFT Progressivism	.988	0.67	3	167	.57	.012
Message Believability	.602	36.78	3	167	< .001	.398
Message Manipulation	.839	5.10	6	334	< .001	.084
Channel of Comm.	.956	2.58	3	167	.06	.044
Emergency Nature	.986	0.76	3	167	.52	.014
Msg. Manip. x Context	.978	0.62	6	334	.71	.011
Msg. Manip. x Emergency Nature	.970	0.85	6	334	.53	.015
Context x Emergency Nature	.979	1.21	3	167	.31	.021
Msg. Manip. x Context x Emerg. Nature	.942	1.69	6	334	.12	.029

*Table 6: Estimated Marginal Means for MANCOVA (Message Manipulation)*

Dependent Variable	Group	Estimated Marginal Mean	Standard Error
Conversational Appropriateness	Ask	3.45	.09
	Tell	3.51	.08
	Make	3.04	.08
Perceptions of Law Enforcement	Ask	3.20	.10
	Tell	3.01	.09
	Make	2.83	.08
Compliance with Law Enforcement	Ask	3.93	.10
	Tell	3.99	.10
	Make	4.00	.09



*Table 7: Estimated Marginal Means for MANCOVA (Channel Manipulation)*

Dependent Variable	Group	Estimated Marginal Mean	Standard Error
Conversational Appropriateness	FTF	3.42	.07
	CMC	3.24	.06
Perceptions of Law Enforcement	FTF	2.97	.08
	CMC	3.06	.07
Compliance with Law Enforcement	FTF	3.90	.08
	CMC	4.05	.07

### **Summary of Chapter III**

This chapter explored the results of the statistical analyses used to examine the group differences among participants assigned to different experimental conditions. Overall, the results indicated mixed support for the study hypotheses and research questions. These results will be explained further in the discussion section that follows.

## **CHAPTER IV: DISCUSSION**

### **Results Revisited and Theoretical Implications**

This dissertation addressed whether a police officer's message and the message channel impacted college students' perceptions and compliance. In this study, college students did not differ in their reports of being willing to comply with police officers based on the manner in which an officer communicated with them (i.e., whether this interaction takes place in-person or via a computer-mediated channel). One possible explanation for this result is that individuals consider complying with police officers to be a normative behavior, and would do so regardless of how an officer approaches them with a request or command to comply. Indeed, the lack of significant differences across the message manipulations, emergency nature manipulations, and channel manipulations, suggest that individuals may be influenced by the presence (even the mediated presence) of a police officer may activate a heuristic that an individual should comply with the officer.

Expanding on this consideration of compliance, previous research may offer a viable reason as to why individuals may be compliant with police officers. For example, McCluskey, Mastrofski, and Parks (1999) contended that compliance with police may depend on considerations of the likely outcomes of interactions with police, and predispositions held by the public and the police. Furthermore, Mastrofski, Snipes, and Supina (1996) found significant effects of extrinsic considerations (e.g., threat of force, and severity of the situation) on citizen compliance with law enforcement. Thus, it is reasonable, considering the hypothetical interaction with police in this dissertation was not based on criminal actions taken by participants, that compliance would not be

significantly different, based on the manipulations of message, emergency nature of the situation, or channel.

Perceptions of officer compliance and perceptions of police did differ significantly by the message manipulation. Specifically, college students rated officer conversational appropriateness and perceptions of law enforcement higher when the hypothetical police officer used an ask-framed message, rather than a make-framed message. These results are somewhat expected, considering that the framing of a message as a request, rather than an order, likely leaves individuals with more favorable perceptions of the individual who delivered the message. Indeed, from a psychological reactance perspective (Brehm & Brehm, 1981), one means of reestablishing freedom in the wake of a perceived threat is to derogate the source. In the case of a law enforcement officer asking, versus telling or threatening, individuals may not feel as much of a lack of freedom if they perceive the message as a request, rather than a command. It follows, then, that these individuals also might consider the officer who asks, rather than threatens, to be more conversationally appropriate. Furthermore, these individuals also might have more favorable perceptions of police, as the hypothetical interaction involved an officer speaking in a manner that might be considered nicer than one might expect an officer to speak otherwise.

Moving to the emergency nature of the hypothetical interaction, there was no effect on compliance, perceptions of law enforcement, or perceptions of conversational appropriateness. The lack of statistical significance may speak to the nature of police-citizen interactions, regardless of whether an emergency situation exists. Although previous research (Mastrofski et al., 1996; McCluskey et al., 1999) contended that the

seriousness of a problem might influence citizens' compliance with law enforcement, the present results indicated that whether or not an emergency exists does not necessarily influence individuals' propensity to comply with law enforcement, nor their perceptions of law enforcement or perceptions of conversational appropriateness.

When controlling for believability in the post-hoc analyses, the main effect for message manipulation remained significant, but the main effect for channel was no longer significant. Although believability was a significant and powerful covariate, it appears that perceptions of message believability may be an artifact of the channel through which the message is sent. Specifically, the average rating for perceptions of message believability was more than half a scale point higher for the FtF conditions than the CMC conditions. That the main effect for channel was no longer significant, while a significant difference in message believability between the two channel conditions also existed, indicates that a natural confound might exist. Specifically, college students might have considered the hypothetical FtF interactions between law enforcement and citizens to be more believable than computer-mediated interactions.

According to the SIPT and hyperpersonal perspectives (Walther, 1992, 1996), the communication between individuals in an online context can be considered functionally equivalent to that which occurs in the FtF context, with the exception that the former will take more time. In the case of police-citizen communication, results indicated that college students differentiated the officer's level of conversational appropriateness between the tell and make conditions. Although it remains unclear why college students identified these differences in the CMC conditions and not the FtF conditions, perhaps the perceived the use of a threat in a police-generated one-to-many message is inappropriate.

Two areas of communication scholarship that might be applicable to future research involving police-citizen interactions are expectancy violations theory (EVT; Burgoon, 1978; Burgoon & Hale, 1988), and research on authority and obedience (Haney, Banks, & Zimbardo, 1973; Milgram, 1974). EVT posits that individuals hold preconceived expectations about the situations in which they might find themselves. If these expectations are violated, individuals tend to respond based on the valence of the violation and the violator's position. In the case of this dissertation, it is possible that students held preconceived notions regarding interactions with police officers, and that these notions led students to believe that they should comply with police officers no matter how the officer phrases a request or demand. From the EVT perspective, the interaction might have even violated some participants' expectations regarding how police officers will interact with citizens. Indeed, some participants may have felt that police officers are supposed to tell them what to do, rather than ask them. In other words, people may view any message from a police officer to be a threat and/or to carry the force of law (e.g., a police officer may not just be asking or offering a choice, but may be masking the requirement for compliance behind a statement phrased as a question). This proposition could be explored in future studies.

The results also presented implications for research on obedience to authority. Foundational research on authority and obedience (e.g., Haney et al., 1973; Milgram, 1974) indicated that individuals are very likely to obey perceived authority figures, even when they believe that what they are doing is causing harm to another person. In the case of law enforcement, police officers have legitimate authority, given their authorization to make arrests, use force to overcome resistance, and even kill citizens in the course of

their duty (Anderson et al., 2002). Furthermore, the presence of police officers may be enough to trigger perceptions of this authority in the individuals they contact while on-duty. Given the natural tendency to obey authority, individuals likely comply naturally, unless some intervening factor exists. In this dissertation, the results suggested that individuals did not differ in compliance with law enforcement, even when the hypothetical officer communicated a message that was threatening. These results support the notion that obedience to authority is a powerful inclination, and is likely to occur in a variety of conditions.

The results present several implications: (a) compliance-gaining through coercive and non-coercive tactics; (b) persuasion and power; and (c) the application of persuasion to police work. First, as addressed in chapter one, compliance-gaining can be considered separate from persuasion. One difference between persuasion and compliance-gaining comes from the inclusion of coercion as a means of gaining compliance. As O'Keefe (2002) noted, persuasion involves a measure of freedom in the target, an element that differentiates it from the potentially coercive nature of compliance-gaining. Police officers may rely on compliance-gaining as a means of successfully executing their duties. Indeed, in the case of police-citizen communication, citizens may feel that they have little-to-no choice but to do what the officer requests or demands. Perhaps this perception of having no choice led participants in this study to generally be willing to comply with police, regardless of the way in which the compliance-gaining message was portrayed. The distinction between police and citizens leads to the next two areas of persuasion-related implications: persuasion and power, and the application of persuasion to law enforcement.

Police officers hold a great amount of power, by virtue of their position in society. This power can be examined from the five bases that French and Raven (1959) introduced, as well as from the perspective of power and persuasion. Specifically, police are authorized to stop, cite, arrest, and even kill others, if the action is justified. As Anderson et al. (2002) noted, the authorization to use deadly force is the key element that distinguishes police officers from other citizens. Clearly, police officers hold a great deal of power, yet the vast majority of their interactions are not based on exercising physical coercion over citizens. Indeed, most contact is based on a simple traffic stop (Durose et al., 2007). In these everyday interactions, it appears that police would rely primarily on communicative means of gaining compliance. Furthermore, the power that police hold may be salient no matter what the situation, especially when interactions between police officers and citizens are considered from an intergroup perspective (e.g., Barker et al., 2008; Dixon et al., 2008; Giles et al., 2012). Thus, this omnipresent, salient power may lead to compliance being the norm among most individuals, no matter how an officer requests compliance communicatively (i.e., asks, tells, or makes).

Additionally, police officers who use these communicative tactics may be persuading citizens not only by the message they send, but the cues that accompany this message (e.g., title, uniform, badge, weapons). Thus, the unique context of police-citizen communication, by virtue of the power distinctions between these groups of people, may lead to a general willingness to comply, based on the elements of a message (e.g., the arguments) as well as the situational factors (e.g., having a law enforcement officer present). In any case, the present study included results that indicate individuals were likely to comply with a police officer, regardless of how his or her message was framed

(i.e., asking, telling, or making).

One theory that could be helpful in explaining the above questions is psychological reactance theory (Brehm & Brehm, 1981). Psychological reactance theory is based on the hypothesized response to a situation in which an individual's freedom is taken away or when one perceives having limited agency to behave and/or think as desired. When an individual perceives as such, one responds by becoming motivated to restore one's freedom. Brehm and Brehm also specified the four elements of psychological reactance theory: freedom, threat to freedom, reactance, and restoration of freedom. Freedom refers to an individual having control over actions about which one is aware. A threat to freedom is anything that makes it harder for an individual to exercise one's freedom. Psychological reactance is the response an individual makes to the threat. Restoration of freedom refers to the manner by which an individual reestablishes one's freedom, and can be accomplished directly (i.e., doing the prohibited action) or by derogating the source of the threat or exercising some other freedom. Any of these three options can accomplish the goal of restoring freedom.

Considering the potential detriment that reactance may have on persuasive attempts, Berger et al. (2010) noted that one way to reduce the potential for reactance to occur is to include a postscript that emphasizes the presence of choice among the message receiver. Based on the results, namely a lack of significant differences in propensity to comply with the officer, it is possible that participants may have engaged in psychological reactance as a means of restoring their freedom and autonomy. This theory also may lend to future considerations of police-citizen communication, in terms of examining individuals' propensity to comply with authority. This will be discussed



further in the future directions section. On a theoretical level, this dissertation addresses issues relevant to persuasion, compliance-gaining, and moral foundations. Law enforcement officers and agencies, however, also might benefit from the results, as they highlight some important, practically applicable pieces of information that might be useful to police.

### **Practical Applications**

University police officers serve a specific population, including students, faculty, staff, administrators, and visitors at academic institutions. This dissertation focused exclusively on this type of law enforcement agency, making the results applicable to this type of police department. Three elements of the results, in particular, are especially important and interesting: (a) respondents' reported propensity to comply with law enforcement; (b) the emergence of message believability as a significant covariate; and (c) the results concerning participants' perceptions of officer conversational appropriateness in the different ask/tell/make conditions.

In terms of the propensity to comply with the law enforcement officer who was hypothetically present in the scenario, the results indicate that, overall, students are likely to do what they are told by a police officer, in emergency and non-emergency situations alike, regardless of how the officer communicates the order to comply. Primarily, this result indicates that college students appear to be willing to comply with law enforcement officers, whether in-person or over the computer. Indeed, participants reported a rather strong likelihood of complying with the police officer.

One interpretation and application of this result is that university police officers might expect similar results, in terms of compliance, when presenting an order as a

request, rather than a statement or a command. Of course, this application should be interpreted with caution, as none of the scenarios in the study portrayed a police officer interacting with a student who was the suspect of a crime. The context surrounding the interactions between police and citizens who they may arrest presents a unique set of intricacies that are outside of the scope of this dissertation, yet which might garner scholarly attention in the future. Given the push toward community-oriented, proactive policing, university police officers likely find themselves in situations in which they are communicating with students who are not suspected of committing a crime, but from whom they nonetheless must gain compliance. Furthermore, combined with the findings from the CMC context, it appears that students perceive police officers to have different levels of conversational appropriateness based on the manner in which they present a statement, at least when the communication is mediated by computer technology.

Turning toward message believability, the post-hoc results indicated that message believability was a significant covariate. These results may have practical implications for university law enforcement agencies, who are increasingly turning toward in-person and CMC resources (e.g., social media platforms) as a means of distributing important information to citizens. Specifically, the average scores for believability in FtF and CMC conditions indicated that participants perceived the police officer's message to be more believable in the in-person context. Nonetheless, the mean scores did not indicate that participants considered the messages to be unbelievable in the CMC conditions. These findings suggest that individuals likely link believability with the credibility that a police officer holds. Whereas it is easy to recognize a police officer in a FtF encounter, the mediated environment of social media may leave some individuals questioning the

believability of a message that supposedly originated from a law enforcement source. Thus, university police departments, especially those who might use social media platforms to spread information, should take care to ensure that the account and message appear professional and believable to student recipients.

Keeping with the style of communication police officers use, one important implication of this dissertation has to do with the use of the ask, tell, make continuum when communicating with citizens. Specifically, although this communication continuum is used by the police department at the university at which the main study was conducted, recent literature in the law enforcement discipline suggests that ask, tell, make may be phased out and replaced by a new form of communication training: listen and explain with equity and dignity (LEED; Improvingpolice, 2014). This system of communication, developed by King County Sheriff Sue Rahr, trains police officers to engage in active listening as a means to gain voluntary compliance (Public Affairs, 2011). This potentially incipient switch to LEED, over ask, tell, make, highlights a possible desire among law enforcement agencies to move toward a system of police-citizen communication that is potentially less likely to lead to escalating conflict. Researchers might consider comparing the ask, tell, make communication continuum to the LEED style of communication.

A final practical implication involves the perceptions of officer conversational appropriateness. This construct is directly related to all three dimensions of perceptions of law enforcement, which suggests that as individuals' perceptions of police officers' conversational appropriateness increases, their perceptions of law enforcement become more positive. Thus, university police officers might consider expanded training

opportunities for interpersonal police-citizen communication as a means of increasing their conversational appropriateness. Furthermore, given the continued focus on community-oriented policing, university police departments might look to this type of training as a means of fostering increased cooperation and trust with students and community partners. Overall, university police departments can develop in-service training and development courses that foster improved police-citizen communication between officers and the students, faculty, and staff members they serve and protect while on-duty.

### **Limitations**

One major limitation in this study stems from a generally weak manipulation of the tell and make scenarios. Specifically, participants may not have seen much of a distinction between the tell and the make scenarios. This limitation may have led, in part, to the null findings, especially in the FtF conditions. If participants did not distinguish the two scenarios, they may not have perceived a difference in the manner in which a police officer was communicating to them. Thus, these participants also may have rated these two types of communication similarly. This limitation can be addressed in future research by making the tell and make scenarios more distinct from one another. It is also possible, however, that some individuals might consider a threat to still be telling, rather than making.

A second limitation involves the believability scores. Some participants considered the hypothetical scenarios to be relatively unbelievable. Indeed, there was a positive relationship between message believability and compliance, which suggests that individuals who did not find the messages believable were not likely to comply with the

police officer. This limitation may have led some individuals, who did not find the messages believable, to report low scores for compliance, regardless of the condition to which they were randomly assigned. Again, although random assignment should have spread this effect evenly, it is nonetheless a systematic error that might have impacted some participants, while not being a problem for others. One way to address this limitation in future research is to use a real police officer in a field setting, rather than a hypothetical scenario.

A third limitation for this study is the strong likelihood that history effects may have influenced respondents' answers on the questionnaires. Specifically, individuals who responded to the questionnaire have likely had previous experiences with law enforcement officers. These experiences may have impacted their general attitudes toward police in general. Thus, if a student had a positive or negative previous interaction with a police officer, it is likely that this experience would create a lasting perception of law enforcement that may have become salient when responding to the questionnaire. Although these individual perceptions should have been represented equally, based on random assignment, it is nonetheless still possible that individuals were affected by these pre-held perceptions. Given this limitation, future research might replicate this study, comparing results regarding perceptions of police at a later time to those obtained presently.

A final potential limitation in this dissertation is the use of a hypothetical scenario in the experimental manipulations. Specifically, participants were provided with a message that was purported to originate from a police officer, but they never interacted with an officer or read any message designed by a police officer. This limitation can be

addressed in future research by receiving permission and cooperation from a law enforcement agency to use an actual police officer in a laboratory environment. This research might shed light on important characteristics of face-to-face contact with law enforcement officers that the hypothetical scenarios could not explore.

### **Additional Future Research Directions**

Based on the results of this dissertation, six additional future avenues for research would logically stem from the present study. First, this study should be replicated with a sample of non-college students, using a field experiment, for the purpose of comparing results across samples. There may exist important distinctions between college students and non-college students that impact propensity to comply with police officers, perceptions of law enforcement, and/or conversational appropriateness. Additionally, future research might replace hypothetical scenarios with actual police-citizen interactions, as a means of increasing ecological validity. Replacing these scenarios with actual communicative events will allow researchers to examine other elements of police-citizen interactions that cannot be observed in an online experiment. For example, individuals might report being more willing to comply with a law enforcement officer with whom they are interacting in-person, in the field, rather than with a police officer via a computer-mediated interaction. Future research might benefit from exploring police-citizen interaction in a field experiment setting, with a group of non-college students as participants.

As a second avenue for scholarly inquiry, future research should examine compliance with police officers based on power distinctions between police officers and citizens. Previous research (e.g., Black, 1976) suggests that police officers are more

likely to be coercive toward individuals they consider to be of lower status. Although the present study did not consider power level distinctions between police and citizens as a variable of interest, it is possible that even hypothetical representations of interactions between citizens and law enforcement officers would result in perceptions of power differences. Thus, future research might examine this enmity between citizens and police, perhaps from an intergroup perspective. Furthermore, it should be noted that over 85% of the sample in the current study was White. Consistent with Black's (1976) findings, future research examining power differences should attempt to find a more diverse sample, as racial minority was one of the categories from which Black argued police would behave in accordance with power level distinctions. This future research might shed light on important issues in police-citizen interactions that exist outside of the university environment.

Third, future research could use path analysis to examine the relationships between the variables in the current dissertation. Specifically, the use of path analysis might examine the use of message believability and MFT progressivism as moderators of the relationships between the independent and dependent variables. These moderators would represent a situational element and individual characteristic that might have moderating effects on the relationship between factors of police-citizen interaction and outcomes of these interactions (i.e., compliance, perceptions of law enforcement, and perceptions of officer conversational appropriateness).

A fourth opportunity for future research involves the examination of individuals' expectations regarding interactions with law enforcement officers. This future research direction addresses a potential explanation for some of the statistically nonsignificant

findings in this dissertation. Specifically, as noted above, participants may have approached this study with expectations surrounding the context of police-citizen interactions. Thus, even when manipulations of an officer's communication indicated distinct styles of phrasing, with progressively more direct and threatening features, individuals may nonetheless perceive the officer as "just doing his or her job," therefore not faulting the officer for his or her communication style. This future research might lead to a more complete understanding of the situation of police-citizen communication across a variety of contexts.

A fifth future direction involves the use of psychological reactance theory in examining the differences between individuals' propensity to comply with law enforcement, based on the ask, tell, make continuum. Consistent with this theory, individuals tend to engage in freedom restorative behaviors via psychological reactance when their autonomy is threatened. In the case of police-citizen interactions, individuals who receive a message framed as a tell or make, rather than ask, might engage in psychological reactance as a means of restoring their freedom. Future research should examine this potential in a hypothetical scenario and/or field experiment.

Looking at the intersection of law enforcement and social media, two additional future research directions can be offered. First, scholars should continue to research how law enforcement agencies might use social media as a means of communicating with the public during emergency situations. Specifically, one study that might be considered is an examination of the efficacy of social media and other computer-mediated channels (e.g., mass text messaging, radio and television broadcasts) in establishing one-way (i.e., police-to-citizen) and two-way (police-to-citizen and citizen-to-police) communication



during emergency situations. This research would complement studies on the use of social media by emergency services (e.g., Lindsay, 2011), and would help determine how citizens perceive law enforcement's use of social media as well as their behavior in response to communication initiated by police through these social media accounts.

The second of these future research directions is to directly compare in-person and mediated police-citizen communication for comparative efficacy in influencing behavior (e.g., citizen's compliance). For example, research might examine the hypothetical situation of a police officer coming door-to-door with an emergency message versus a mediated, automated reverse-911 call to a neighborhood affected by an emergency. This research might serve the practical application of establishing what means of communication might be more effective in allowing police agencies to communicate with citizens during emergency situations.

### **Conclusion**

This dissertation explored the subject of police-citizen communication in the specific setting of a university police department and students. The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of police officer message framing (i.e., ask, tell, or make), the nature of the situation (i.e., emergency or nonemergency), and the context of the communication (i.e., face-to-face or computer-mediated). Results indicated that there were no significant differences in the face-to-face conditions, and significant differences only for perceptions of conversational appropriateness in the computer-mediated-communication conditions. Looking forward, this dissertation may spark future research related to police-citizen communication. Researchers might examine this topic in a laboratory setting, as well as issues of power differences between police and citizens,

and/or citizens' expectations about communication with law enforcement. Police-citizen communication is an important topic with meaningful and long-lasting implications.

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## Appendix A

### Face-to-Face Scenarios

Scenario One (Emergency, Ask-framed message):

“I’m Officer Smith with the University police. **This is an emergency situation.** Would you close your dorm door and stay there until instructed otherwise?”

Scenario Two (Non-Emergency, Ask-framed message):

“I’m Officer Smith with the University police. **This is a routine exercise.** Would you close your dorm door and stay there until instructed otherwise?”

Scenario Three (Emergency, Tell-framed message):

“I’m Officer Smith with the University police. **This is an emergency situation.** Close your dorm door and stay there until instructed otherwise.”

Scenario Four (Non-Emergency, Tell-framed message):

“I’m Officer Smith with the University police. **This is a routine exercise.** Close your dorm door and stay there until instructed otherwise.”

Scenario Five (Emergency, Make-framed message):

“I’m Officer Smith with the University police. **This is an emergency situation.** Close your dorm door and stay there until instructed otherwise or you will be arrested for interfering with a police matter.”

Scenario Six (Non-Emergency, Make-framed message):

“I’m Officer Smith with the University police. **This is a routine exercise.** Close your dorm door and stay there until instructed otherwise or you will be arrested for interfering with a police matter.”



## **Appendix B**

### Social Media Message Post Scenarios

Scenario One (Emergency, Ask-framed message):

“There is currently a man with a gun in the area, and we are conducting a search for him. For your own safety, we ask that you please stay away from the downtown campus area for the next hour.”

Scenario Two (Non-Emergency, Ask-framed message):

“There is a car accident on University Avenue blocking the road. We ask that you please stay away from this area for the next hour.”

Scenario Three (Emergency, Tell-framed message):

“There is currently a man with a gun in the area, and we are conducting a search for him. For your own safety, stay away from the downtown campus area for the next hour.”

Scenario Four (Non-Emergency, Tell-framed message):

“There is a car accident on University Avenue blocking the road. Stay away from this area for the next hour.”

Scenario Five (Emergency, Make-framed message):

“There is currently a man with a gun in the area, and we are conducting a search for him. For your own safety, stay away from the downtown campus area for the next hour, or you will be arrested for interfering with a police investigation.”

Scenario Six (Non-Emergency, Make-framed message):

“There is a car accident on University Avenue blocking the road. Stay away from this area for the next hour, or you will be arrested for interfering with a police investigation.”

## **Appendix C**

Conversational Appropriateness Measure (Canary & Spitzberg, 1987)

1. The officer said several things that seemed out of place in this interaction  
(reverse)
2. The officer was a smooth conversationalist
3. Everything the officer said was appropriate
4. The officer's message was very suitable to the situation
5. The officer's communication was very proper

## **Appendix D**

Perceptions of law enforcement (Maguire and Johnson, 2010)

1. University police officers resolve problems effectively
2. University police officers are knowledgeable about resources available in the community
3. University police officers are well trained
4. University police officers remain neutral and fair
5. Bias-based policing is not a problem among university police officers
6. University police officers use fair and impartial decision making when resolving disputes in the community
7. University police officers treat people equally
8. University police officers use fair and impartial decision making when issuing citations
9. University police officers address citizens in a respectful manner and appropriate tone
10. University police officers take into consideration of the feelings of citizens with whom they have contact
11. University police officers pay attention and listen to what citizens say to them

## **Appendix E**

Attitudes about compliance with police (Barker et al., 2008)

1. I should obey the police officer
2. I would always try to follow what the police officer says I should do
3. I should obey the decisions that the police officer makes
4. I would follow the instructions of the police officers
5. I should comply with the police officer's statement

## Appendix F

The Moral Foundations Questionnaire (Graham, Haidt, & Nosek, 2008)

Part 1. When you decide whether something is right or wrong, to what extent are the following considerations relevant to your thinking? Please rate each statement using this scale:

[0] = not at all relevant (This consideration has nothing to do with my judgments of right and wrong)

[1] = not very relevant

[2] = slightly relevant

[3] = somewhat relevant

[4] = very relevant

[5] = extremely relevant (This is one of the most important factors when I judge right and wrong)

\_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone suffered emotionally

\_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not some people were treated differently than others

\_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone's action showed love for his or her country

\_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone showed a lack of respect for authority

\_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone violated standards of purity and decency

\_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone was good at math

\_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone cared for someone weak or vulnerable

\_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone acted unfairly

- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone did something to betray his or her group
- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone conformed to the traditions of society
- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone did something disgusting
- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone was cruel
- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone was denied his or her rights
- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone showed a lack of loyalty
- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not an action caused chaos or disorder
- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone acted in a way that God would approve of

Part 2. Please read the following sentences and indicate your agreement or disagreement:

[0]	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly
disagree	disagree	disagree	agree	agree	agree

- \_\_\_\_\_ Compassion for those who are suffering is the most crucial virtue.
- \_\_\_\_\_ When the government makes laws, the number one principle should be ensuring that everyone is treated fairly.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am proud of my country's history.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Respect for authority is something all children need to learn.
- \_\_\_\_\_ People should not do things that are disgusting, even if no one is harmed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ It is better to do good than to do bad.
- \_\_\_\_\_ One of the worst things a person could do is hurt a defenseless animal.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Justice is the most important requirement for a society.
- \_\_\_\_\_ People should be loyal to their family members, even when they have done something wrong.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Men and women each have different roles to play in society.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I would call some acts wrong on the grounds that they are unnatural.
- \_\_\_\_\_ It can never be right to kill a human being.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I think it's morally wrong that rich children inherit a lot of money while poor children inherit nothing.
- \_\_\_\_\_ It is more important to be a team player than to express oneself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ If I were a soldier and disagreed with my commanding officer's orders, I would obey anyway because that is my duty.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Chastity is an important and valuable virtue.



## Appendix G

### Demographic Measures

1. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_ years
2. What is your sex? \_\_\_\_\_ male      \_\_\_\_\_ female
3. What is your academic rank? \_\_\_\_\_ first-year      \_\_\_\_\_ second-year      \_\_\_\_\_  
third-year      \_\_\_\_\_ fourth-year      \_\_\_\_\_ fifth-year or beyond
4. With which race do you primarily identify (select one)?  
\_\_\_\_\_ African-American      \_\_\_\_\_ Asian-American      \_\_\_\_\_ Caucasian  
(White)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic/Latino(a)      \_\_\_\_\_ Native American      \_\_\_\_\_ Pacific Islander  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other (please identify) \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix H

### Pilot Study Questionnaire

Please read the following scenarios and responds to the items that follow:

[Insert one of the six scenarios]

1. The situation you just read was based on:

A non-emergency situation    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    An emergency situation

2. In the scenario you just read, the police officer spoke as if:

Asking

Strongly Disagree    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    Strongly Agree

Telling

Strongly Disagree    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    Strongly Agree

Threatening/Making

Strongly Disagree    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    Strongly Agree

Thank you for your responses. Before you finish filling out the survey, please tell us a little bit about yourself.

What is your age (in years)? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your sex?

\_\_\_\_\_ Male

\_\_\_\_\_ Female

What is your academic rank?

\_\_\_\_\_ First-year

\_\_\_\_\_ Second-year

\_\_\_\_\_ Third-year

\_\_\_\_\_ Fourth-year

\_\_\_\_\_ Fifth-year or beyond

With which race/ethnicity do you primarily identify (select one)?

- \_\_\_\_\_ African-American
- \_\_\_\_\_ Asian-American
- \_\_\_\_\_ Caucasian (White)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic/Latino(a)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Native American
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pacific Islander
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix I

### Main Study Questionnaire

Thank you for your participation on this study. Please read all instructions that follow, and respond as indicated.

We would like to ask some questions about how you feel toward police officers, in general.

Police officers resolve problems effectively

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

Police officers are knowledgeable about resources available in the community

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

Police officers are well trained

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

Police officers remain neutral and fair

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

Bias-based policing is not a problem among police officers

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

Police officers use fair and impartial decision making when resolving disputes in the community

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

Police officers treat people equally

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

Police officers use fair and impartial decision making when issuing citations

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

Police officers address citizens in a respectful manner and appropriate tone

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

Police officers take into consideration of the feelings of citizens with

whom they have contact

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

Police officers pay attention and listen to what citizens say to them

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

When you decide whether something is right or wrong, to what extent are the following considerations relevant to your thinking? Please rate each statement using this scale:

[0] = not at all relevant (This consideration has nothing to do with my judgments of right and wrong)

[1] = not very relevant

[2] = slightly relevant

[3] = somewhat relevant

[4] = very relevant

[5] = extremely relevant (This is one of the most important factors when I judge right and wrong)

\_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone suffered emotionally

\_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not some people were treated differently than others

\_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone's action showed love for his or her country

- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone showed a lack of respect for authority
- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone violated standards of purity and decency
- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone was good at math
- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone cared for someone weak or vulnerable
- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone acted unfairly
- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone did something to betray his or her group
- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone conformed to the traditions of society
- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone did something disgusting
- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone was cruel
- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone was denied his or her rights
- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone showed a lack of loyalty
- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not an action caused chaos or disorder
- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not someone acted in a way that God would approve of

Please read the following sentences and indicate your agreement or disagreement:

[0]	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly
disagree	disagree	disagree	agree	agree	agree

- \_\_\_\_\_ Compassion for those who are suffering is the most crucial virtue.
- \_\_\_\_\_ When the government makes laws, the number one principle should be ensuring that everyone is treated fairly.

- \_\_\_\_\_ I am proud of my country's history.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Respect for authority is something all children need to learn.
- \_\_\_\_\_ People should not do things that are disgusting, even if no one is harmed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ It is better to do good than to do bad.
- \_\_\_\_\_ One of the worst things a person could do is hurt a defenseless animal.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Justice is the most important requirement for a society.
- \_\_\_\_\_ People should be loyal to their family members, even when they have done something wrong.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Men and women each have different roles to play in society.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I would call some acts wrong on the grounds that they are unnatural.
- \_\_\_\_\_ It can never be right to kill a human being.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I think it's morally wrong that rich children inherit a lot of money while poor children inherit nothing.
- \_\_\_\_\_ It is more important to be a team player than to express oneself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ If I were a soldier and disagreed with my commanding officer's orders, I would obey anyway because that is my duty.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Chastity is an important and valuable virtue.

We would now like to imagine that you are walking somewhere in Downtown Morgantown and are approached by a police officer. Please read the following message, and respond to the items that follow.

*[Insert one of the twelve FTF scenarios]*



If a police officer were to tell me the message I just read, I would think the message is:

True

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

Based on real facts

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

Correct

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

**Keeping the message you read in mind, please respond to the following items.**

He or she said several things that seemed out of place in this conversation

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

He or she was a smooth conversationalist

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

Everything he or she said was appropriate

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

Her or his conversation was very suitable to the situation

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

Her or his communication was very proper

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

City of Morgantown police officers resolve problems effectively

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

City of Morgantown police officers are knowledgeable about resources available in the  
Community

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

City of Morgantown police officers are well trained

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

City of Morgantown police officers remain neutral and fair

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

Bias-based policing is not a problem among City of Morgantown police officers

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

City of Morgantown police officers use fair and impartial decision making when resolving disputes in the community

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

City of Morgantown police officers treat people equally

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

City of Morgantown police officers use fair and impartial decision making when issuing citations

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

City of Morgantown police officers address citizens in a respectful manner and appropriate tone

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

City of Morgantown police officers take into consideration of the feelings of citizens with whom they have contact

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

City of Morgantown police officers pay attention and listen to what citizens say to them

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

I should obey a police officer.

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

I would always try to follow what a police officer says I should do.

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

I should obey the decisions that a police officer makes.

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

I would follow the instructions of police officers.

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

I should comply with a police officer's statement.

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

I would not do as told by a police officer.

Strongly Disagree    1       2       3       4       5    Strongly Agree

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this questionnaire. Before we end, we would like to ask just a few questions about you.

What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_ years

What is your sex? \_\_\_\_\_ male        \_\_\_\_\_ female

What is your academic rank? \_\_\_\_\_ first-year      \_\_\_\_\_ second-year      \_\_\_\_\_ third-year  
\_\_\_\_\_ fourth-year      \_\_\_\_\_ fifth-year or beyond

With which race do you primarily identify (select one)?

\_\_\_\_\_ African-American      \_\_\_\_\_ Asian-American      \_\_\_\_\_ Caucasian  
(White)

\_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic/Latino(a)      \_\_\_\_\_ Native American      \_\_\_\_\_ Pacific Islander

\_\_\_\_\_ Other (please identify) \_\_\_\_\_