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A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF 129 POLICE LETHAL FORCE INCIDENTS IN 2016
EXAMINING PARTICIPANT BEHAVIOR RELATING TO MENTAL ILLNESS
THAT CONTRIBUTES TO THE USE OF LETHAL FORCE

By:

Edward H. Byers
B.S., Purdue University, 1979
M.S., University of Arizona, 1987

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty of the
College of Arts and Sciences of the University of Louisville
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for the Degree of

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In Criminal Justice

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Louisville, Kentucky

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife, Treva Hodges
who has allowed me to blur the line between wonder and wander.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To the many people that made me question the nature of things.

ABSTRACT

A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF 129 POLICE LETHAL FORCE INCIDENTS IN 2016 EXAMINING PARTICIPANT BEHAVIOR RELATING TO MENTAL ILLNESS THAT CONTRIBUTES TO THE USE OF LETHAL FORCE

Edward H. Byers

July 13, 20201

This multi-case, exploratory research study examined videos and related news media articles of lethal police shootings and found commonalities and possible contributing factors. Videos and informational articles posted on news media websites in the public domain were used in a qualitative content analysis to identify common elements in police lethal force incidents. The results of this study revealed contributing behaviors by the participants related to mental illness that contribute to lethal force. The decision to use lethal force by a police officer is framed using four analytical themes.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In August of 2014, Michael Brown Jr., a Black man, was fatally shot by Darren Wilson, a White male Ferguson (MO) police officer. Officer Wilson stated that Mr. Brown attacked him while he was seated in his police vehicle and a struggle ensued involving the service handgun of Officer Wilson. Mr. Brown fled, and Officer Wilson chased him on foot before Mr. Brown stopped and advanced towards him. A witness stated that Mr. Brown raised his hands in the air in a gesture of surrender, but Officer Wilson disputed this account. Officer Wilson shot Mr. Brown, striking him six times in the front of his body. The alleged actions of Mr. Brown and Officer Wilson were not compatible with the expected typical behavioral response of persons under similar circumstances.

The Brown protests in Ferguson, some of which resulted in rioting, were the subject of international news media reports. In the wake of these events, Governor Jay Nixon ceded local policing authority to the Missouri State Highway Patrol. Subsequent investigations, including a grand jury presentation, found that there was no evidence that Officer Wilson had violated any state or federal laws. Additionally, a U.S. Department of Justice investigation did not charge Officer Wilson with any violations of Mr. Brown's civil rights. Witnesses and evidence supported Officer Wilson's version of events, and investigators found that testimony contradicting the police officer's account of the event

was not credible. In 2020, a newly elected prosecutor reviewed the case and declined to charge Officer Wilson with any criminal activity. Despite these outcomes, publicity about the event remains a topic in the ongoing national discussion of distrust between marginalized members of society and the police.

Over 1,000 civilians were killed by American law enforcement officers in 2016. Although this number is modest when compared to the 62.9 million law enforcement and civilian contacts in 2011 (retrieved from <https://www.nationalreview.com/2014/12/dojs-policing-statistics-dont-lie-ian-tuttle/> on April 21, 2018), many of the civilian deaths in 2016 were contested and several were associated with major urban riots. All the deaths generated public interest and became the subject of television news segments and newspaper articles as citizens attempted to understand the factors involved in the lethal police/citizen encounters. Current criminal justice research has begun to examine elements of the encounter, but the behaviors of participants have historically received minimal research efforts.

Among the many factors considered, mental health has been overlooked. Dane County District Attorney Ismael Ozanne, discussing a police shooting incident in Wisconsin, stated that “mental health issues have been present in far too many” police shootings. District Attorney Ozanne cautioned that researchers cannot continue to ignore mental health if society hopes to prevent further loss of life (retrieved from https://madison.com/wsj/news/local/crime-and-courts/madison-police-officer-cleared-in-fatal-shooting-of-mentally-ill/article_7ef8f698-054b-5afc-a509-c67d9cbf4238.html on June 1, 2017). This dissertation takes District Attorney Ozanne’s advice toward a practical, evidence based understanding of lethal force encounters by considering the behavioral elements that precipitate such events. The goal of this dissertations is to

understand what impact mental health behaviors have on police behaviors and decision making.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Police use of deadly force has been a significant topic of scholarship for decades. Civil liability and harm to police legitimacy have been associated with many fatal police actions. Beginning in the 1960s, police use of deadly force became a precipitating issue for urban riots after police officers killed citizens (Fyfe, 1988). In or around 2015, public unrest emerged in some American cities when incidents of police officers using lethal force against civilians were publicized via public media and social media platforms. These media representations frequently included videos of the actual shooting of civilians by police officers, but they offered no background information to show situational context or provide knowledge of the behaviors leading to the shooting. As a result of the lack of explanatory factors and possible mistrust of police, some cities such as Ferguson experienced violent unrest due to the actions of police officers as representatives of local government (Chaney, 2015). Some riots have historically been caused by civilian dissatisfaction with police actions when protesters were inclined to immediate and violent civil disobedience (Fyfe, 2015). Even when used with great restraint, police use of lethal force has created polarization, suspicion, and distrust from marginalized members of society (Fyfe, 1988), including those subjects suffering from mental illness or associated behaviors (Goldberg, White, & Weisburd, 2019). A lack of openness and transparency in the investigation of deaths of minorities by police officers has inspired a decline of confidence in local police agencies. The resulting mistrust has negatively characterized the perceptions of local police departments during encounters with some minority

communities (Micucci & Gomme, 2005; Ariel, Farrar, & Sutherland, 2015; Koper, 2016; DeGue, Fowler, & Calkins, 2016).

This study illuminates behavioral factors related to mental illness during law enforcement encounters and contributes to the current knowledge of lethal force incidents. The units of analysis used are those actions by the subject which occur before police officers arrive at the scene, actions by both the police officer and the subject during the encounter, and the notation of mental illness suffered by participants in media outlets.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This multi-case, exploratory, qualitative content analysis examined videos and related news media articles of police shootings that resulted in the death of civilians in 2016 with the purpose to identify behavioral actions related to mental illness that may cause police encounters to develop into lethal confrontations. The results of this study revealed common contributory behaviors exhibited by participants which occur before and during the lethal encounter. Specifically, three aspects of mental illness were present in many of the videos and news media articles. Ultimately, this study shows that identifiable behaviors contribute to many lethal force encounters, and the recognition of such factors can be used by responding police officers to encourage non-lethal closures to such events.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Seven years after Mr. Brown's death in Ferguson, many cities are still experiencing violent and peaceful protests concerning the deaths of civilians by police officers. Social tension between communities and their police departments remains a significant problem and this examination of police lethal force encounters revealed

practical perspectives and policy implications that can decrease the likelihood of mental health issues contributing to lethal situations between officers and subjects. While other studies concentrate of the racial attributes of the police lethal encounter, this study examined the issues of behavior of participants in shooting incidents and recognizes the limitations for marginalized people to obtain mental health treatment before their actions place them into a police encounter.

Weaknesses of Existing Studies

The need for this study stems from three weaknesses in exiting studies; a lack of standard definitions for research efforts, limited transparency by police agencies, and incomplete data collection. First, past studies of police use of deadly force have encountered difficulties as definitions used in lethal force incidents are not standardized within criminal justice agencies and no clear common definitions exist that allow comparisons to use in research efforts. Terminology on death certificates vary between states and the lack of written standardization of causes of death by coroners and medical examiners makes potential studies of deaths by police improbable (Sherman and Langworthy, 1979). Death reports provided to the National Center of Health Statistics (NCHS) revealed that police figures of lethal force were twice as high as those reported by local coroners to the NCHS (Sherman and Langworthy, 1979; Banks, Couzens, Blanton, and Cribb, 2015). Common definitions are also needed to compare use of force rates between different agencies and geographical locations. (Alpert & MacDonald, 2001).

Restrictions to public access of information concerning police use of lethal force incidents place additional limitations on academic studies. Koper (2016) cited a lack of transparency and available data while trying to study the use of deadly force by police

and called for compulsory reporting methods for such incidents, including accessible databases which are available for research efforts. Koper found that not all law enforcement agencies considered police shootings to be public information and details were kept from the public domain. This lack of transparency means that “we know next to nothing about how often American police officers exercise their prerogative to use deadly force” (Klinger, 2012, p.78) and that existing data collection systems cannot provide information that researchers can trust.

Finally, data does not exist for the examination of contributing behavioral factors associated with shooting incidents involving police officers and members of the public. Past scholarly investigations have commonly used the factors of race, agency characteristics, and data about police and citizen contacts to examine police use of force. Data for research is available that reflects the national representation of incidents by examining the types of calls, area demographics, and respective agency size associated with lethal force situations. Past and current databases used by the United States Department of Justice and its bureaus have historically identified but underestimated approximately 40% to 70% of civilians killed by law enforcement officers (Maguire, Nix, & Campbell, 2017). Notably, these datasets did not include contributing behavioral factors in events of police use of lethal force. Fyfe (1988) recognized the severity of the lack of data and argued that the omission of data collecting by the federal government about police use of lethal force “can only be defined as inexcusable” (p. 174).

The federal government has historically not kept statistics or information concerning the number of people killed in police encounters or recorded the interpersonal behaviors which contribute to these situations. In 2017, the FBI launched a pilot program to collect cursory data from police departments during law enforcement encounters where

civilians were killed by officers, but this information was not available for use in this study. As the FBI does not routinely release information concerning shootings which involve special agents within their agency, the legitimacy of this dataset is being questioned (retrieved from <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/justice-department/when-fbi-shoots-someone-including-bystander-or-hostage-it-investigates-n968451> on March 23, 2019). Although criminal justice academics have asked for a national research database on officer-involved shootings, to date the absence of such a public database in the United States remains “an embarrassing situation” (Alpert, 2015, p. 239). The present study provides information that bridges the information gap concerning participant behaviors in police lethal force encounters.

Policy Implications

Police administrators generally agree that quality data collection and research would be beneficial to examine police lethal force incidents since missing or inaccurate data impedes improvements to existing policies. Police professionals recognize the need for further study of lethal force situations to learn how to reduce all levels of force used by police officers. The Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) is an independent research organization that focuses on critical issues in policing by identifying best practices on fundamental issues in policing. PERF encourages officers to reduce use of force incidents, including force that is intended to be lethal. The objectives of PERF are to advance professionalism in policing, to improve the delivery of police services through the exercise of strong national leadership, to increase public debate of police and criminal justice issues, and to encourage research and policy development (retrieved from <http://www.policeforum.org/about-us> on May 20, 2018).

Police lethal force encounters can challenge relationships that officers attempt to build with community members. When incidents are questioned by members of the public and police agencies respond without transparency, the community becomes suspicious about the incident and the factors leading to the use of lethal force. The performance of individual officers is affected as community members no longer trust the law enforcement agency, resulting in less public cooperation during the investigation of crimes and calls for service.

Police use of force relies on legal factors as defined in the United States Supreme Court Decisions *Graham v. Connor* (1989) and *Tennessee v. Garner* (1985). The Supreme Court established that the reasonableness of an officer's use of force is to be determined from the perspective of a reasonable officer under the circumstances that were apparent to him or her at the time of the incident. The Supreme Court made clear that this deferential standard prevents post event legal speculation of an officer's judgment about use of force as hindsight and information known to the officer after the incident would not be considered in the reasonableness standard (Broome, 2011). The Supreme Court also acknowledged that many police incidents involving force occur quickly and judgements are made rapidly. Objective standards, with situational variables that are known to affect most officers, are used to determine reasonableness (Blair et al., 2011).

Perceived danger is legally relevant when an officer evaluates the need for lethal force but the Supreme Court decision acknowledged the difficulty to access the situation accurately from the relative scant information available to most officers when they initially respond to calls for service that may evolve to deadly force (Homant, Kennedy,

& Hupp, 2000). Further, the laws that govern police use of deadly force can be too nebulous to be used as operational guidelines and agency policy (Fyfe, 1988).

Use of Force in Marginalized Communities

Beginning in or around 2015, public unrest became apparent in some American cities when incidents of police officers killing civilians became readily available through videos posted to social and media websites. Chaney (2015) found that many economically and racially marginalized communities had historically experienced social unrest and citizens directed violence towards police officers. Included in the public turmoil were calls for openness and transparency in the investigations of deaths of minorities by police officers. Eventually, this citizen unrest led to political movements such as Black Lives Matter.

Black Lives Matter is an activist movement that originated in the African-American community. The movement campaigns against police killings of Black people and broader issues of racial profiling, police brutality, and racial inequality in the criminal justice system. Black Lives Matter became internationally recognized for its street demonstrations following the 2014 deaths of Michael Brown and Eric Garner, who was selling cigarettes in New York City. Both deaths occurred during police encounters after officers used force against the individuals. Since 2015, participants in the movement have continued to demonstrate against the deaths of numerous other Black Americans by police actions and has generated enough public interest to bring a larger portion of the American population to question police tactics, protest the lack of transparency concerning enforcement encounters that resulted in deaths to civilians, and demand openness in post-event investigations.

Use of Force and the Quality of Work Life for Police Officers

Use of force is an established work-related component for the contemporary American police officer. In 2015, the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated that 606,505 full-time state and local police officers performed law enforcement duties in America (retrieved from U.S. Department of Labor website <https://www.bls.gov/iif/oshwc/foi-/police-officers-2014.htm> on May 30, 2018). On average, each day two or three of these officers were involved in lethal force incidents in which a civilian was killed (Hirschfield, 2015). Additionally, 117,973 law enforcement officers were feloniously assaulted by offenders in the United States in 2003 and 2004 with 318 officers dying from their injuries (retrieved from <http://www.nleomf.-org/facts/officer-fatalities-data/year.html> on May 29, 2018). The Federal Bureau of Investigation, in the Law Enforcement Officers Killed or Assaulted database, cites that 118 officers died in the performance of their duties while 57,180 officers were assaulted in 2016 (retrieved from <https://ucr.fbi.gov/leoka/2016> on June 23, 2020).

Use of force incidents expose police officers to a higher risk of injury or death risk than most other occupations. The Injuries, Illnesses, and Fatalities Program of the U.S. Department of Labor provides annual information on the rate and number of work-related injuries, illnesses, fatalities, and how these statistics vary by incident, industry, geography, occupation, and other characteristics. These data are collected through the Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses and the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries. An examination of this dataset reveals that police officers are exposed to a higher risk of work-related injury or illness than most other occupations. On average, 115 police officers suffered fatal work injuries each year from 2003 to 2014 and an average of 30,990 nonfatal injuries involving days-away-from-work were reported for police officers each year from 2009 to 2014. The rate of fatal work injuries for law

enforcement officers in 2014 was 13.5 per 100,000 full-time-equivalent workers, compared to a rate of 3.4 for all occupations. Similarly, the rate of nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses involving days-away-from-work among police officers was 485.8 cases per 10,000 full-time workers in 2014, whereas the rate was 107.1 cases for all occupations. Nonfatal injuries and illnesses in 2014 that caused police officers to miss work resulted primarily from violence, but other causative factors included injuries by persons or animals, falls, slips, and trips. The primary cause of fatal occupational injuries among police officers in 2014 was violence performed by other persons or animals in 56 % of the reported incidents. Homicides, one type of violence, accounted for 45% of fatal work injuries for police officers in 2014, but only 8% for all occupations. Of the 97 reported fatal work injuries to police officers in 2014, 10 were killed in multiple-fatality incidents where more than one worker was killed. In 2014, 64% of these fatal work injuries to police officers occurred on streets or highways and 56% of the injuries to law enforcement officers involved a person as the source of the fatal injury. Most often this was an assailant such as a robber, suspect, or inmate involved in hitting, kicking, beating, or shooting the officer (retrieved from U.S. Department of Labor website <https://www.bls.gov/iif/oshwc/foi-/police-officers-2014.htm> on May 30, 2018).

The Department of Labor's collection efforts offer only a brief synopsis of information that cannot be relied upon solely for research data but is revealing of the risks that police officers are exposed to while in the line of duty due to violent acts during from law enforcement encounters with the public. Statistics such as these can reinforce an officer's perception of risk and lead to increased efforts of self-protection. Although aware of these risks to police officers during use of force incidents, members of academia and law enforcement administrators cannot monitor at the national level how police use

force or why lethal force is used as no trustworthy data collection system currently exists (Klinger, 2012).

THE INFREQUENCY OF POLICE USE OF LETHAL FORCE

Police use of lethal force is an uncommon event that many officers will not experience in their career. Researchers are unlikely to personally observe a police lethal force incident due to the rarity of such events, and actual field observational studies conducted by researchers make the ability to view police shootings in person improbable (Croft, 1985; Alpert & Dunham, 2004; James et al., 2013; Buehler, 2017). Selected studies have estimated that the rate of all types of force during law enforcement encounters were between 5% and 10% of all contacts (Friedrich, 1980; Croft & Austin 1987; Fyfe, 1988). Garner, Buchanan, Schade, and Hepburn (1996) examined police data and found that only one in five arrests involved some level of use of force and that most police officers used no force or low levels of force in most arrests. Ariel, Farrar, and Sutherland (2015) conducted a randomized controlled study in which nearly 1,000 officer shifts (a measure defined as one officer working one shift) were studied by using officers from the Rialto Police Department in California for 12 months using body-worn cameras. They found only 25 incidents of use of force in these nearly 1,000 officer shifts, or approximately 2.5% of the officer shifts involved any level of use of force. It is not believed that any officer of the Rialto Police Department was involved with a lethal force incident during their study.

The use of videos of actual shootings to identify behavioral actions of civilians and police officers contributes to the academic discussion of police use of lethal force to inform contemporary police practices and policies. Due to the rarity of police lethal force incidents, videos in the public domain that record deaths by police are an important tool

for the investigation of these encounters. Video recordings are often used by police agencies during media briefings as administrators and supervisors include the causative reasons for the decisions to use force by their officers. In many of these briefings, the videos of dash mounted cameras and body worn cameras are made available to the public to allow police administrators to offer their version of the incident, usually to counter the anti-police narrative being offered by detractors. Videos from police dash mounted cameras, body worn cameras, cell phone cameras, and other recording systems are also a method to provide additional information to the public and are brought into public scrutiny to support either side of a discourse concerning police use of force.

Former Chief of Police Steve Conrad of the Louisville (KY) Metro Police Department (LMPD) routinely released the videos from body worn cameras and dash mounted vehicle cameras when LMPD officers used lethal force against a civilian subject in the performance of their duties. On April 24, 2018, former Chief Conrad released videos of four officers engaging a suspected armed robber in the Portland neighborhood of Louisville. The suspect, later identified as Demonjhea Jordan, shot at responding officers as they attempted to contact him about the crime on a city sidewalk near the robbery location. The officers responded by using their firearms and Jordan died from his wounds (retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ygkaz2MksQQ> on June 3, 2018). On April 9, 2018, LMPD officers engaged Russell Bogan, who threatened officers and neighbors with a large screwdriver while using a stabbing motion. After two conducted energy weapon deployments failed to stop Bogan, officers used lethal force as he moved aggressively closer towards the officers and continued to use the screwdriver in a stabbing motion (retrieved from <https://www.courierjournal.com/story/news/-crime-/2018/04/26/louisville-police-shootings-2018/553053002/> on June 3, 2018). In both

incidents, former LMPD Chief Conrad cited the need for public scrutiny to ensure confidence in the police department's actions during these lethal force incidents and provided video representations of each event to assist the public to decide if respective officers had acted within the scope of their duties and in accordance with the reasonableness of each situation.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This dissertation examines the interplay between police culture, police messaging during communications to responding officers, and quick decisions by officer which lead to lethal force during encounters when people exhibit behaviors attributed to mental illness. Four primary concepts served as analytical foundations to examine the interaction between the behavioral themes revealed in this study. Each concept contributes to understanding how police officers can interpret abnormal behaviors under stress during critical incidents.

The study also uses other academic references to strengthen observations and policy implications. Police decisions to use lethal force are made quickly, under duress, are influenced by local police culture, and include public stigma concerning mental illness and associated behaviors. The use of supporting past studies encourages an examination of how these phenomena interact and suggests modifications in policy and training that can encourage less lethal conclusions to some lethal force incidents.

The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge

Written by Peter Berger and Thomas Luckman, *The Social Construction of Reality* (1966) examines how knowledge is formed during interactions between groups of people and objects. The authors examine how meanings are formed during life activities

and how people interact to construct a version of reality. This work contributes to a broad understanding concerning how societies derive meaning from interactions.

Human thought is not immune to the influences of social context, as social phenomena are constructed through human activity, resulting in interpretations that people assign to their experiences. Reality is defined as phenomena that is independent of our volition, and knowledge is the certainty that phenomena are real and possess specific characteristics. Reality and knowledge relate to certain social contexts which allow groups of people to make a collective sense of experiences within the accepted framework of past group experiences.

Distinct groups of people can compose disparate meanings of the same phenomena due to the different perspectives of their viewpoints. People learn accepted responses by interacting with members of their group as they construct meaningful interpretations to different phenomena, then share their interpretations of events with each other. Participation in the sharing of joint meanings allows members to formulate appropriate responses during situations involving other people or situations in the future. Thus, when law enforcement agents participate in the experiences of other officers that have been involved in critical incidents, individual officers benefit by understanding the context of the situation and the solution rendered. The validity of collective knowledge is assumed to be appropriate until an officer encounters a situation that cannot be negotiated using accepted ideas and principles, then the event must be redefined with collective input from other group members. Shared experiences allow for a continuous interchange of expressions and potential redefinitions of events to allow members of the group to reference acceptable resolutions to anticipated future encounters.

Occupational knowledge is socially distributed, allowing members to fashion their behavior using shared definitions to provide a stable environment of conduct within the work group. By sharing core understandings of events during the formation of work actions, members of an occupation gain a higher knowledge of specific situations involving their vocation than people not employed in that vocation. Adherence to the occupational culture can limit choices but provide relief to members from making complex decisions in new situations by providing references that are accepted by the occupational group. Vocational groups can affect the distribution of special knowledge by using specific vocabularies that internalize routine interpretation and standardize common conduct. Burger and Luckmann further state that internal cooperation allows members to interact, and to challenge threats to the accepted reality of their work organization.

Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method

The dynamic role of police culture in officer decision making is examined in reference to *Symbolic Interactionism* (1969), by Hubert Blumer, to examine how individuals establish meaning using three methods: people act towards objects on the context of what those objects mean to them, shared meaning arises from the social interaction with members of a group, and meanings are subjected to continuous interpretative processes that can bring new meanings to the objects. The work by Blumer allows an understanding of how individuals and groups of people derive understanding from interactions to form meaning.

Blumer defines objects as physical items, social interactions between people, and abstract ideas and principles. Explanations and concepts are influenced by social context as individuals assign meanings to objects via their interpretations during the interaction.

The act of living is a shared process as individuals interact with objects, form reactions to their perceptions, and share those perceptions. Human association is a dynamic influence in the interpretation of situations as responses are formed using the collective expectations of a group. As interaction occurs with the object, human life and conduct are influenced by discussion with others to give structure and consistency to a group. Examination of the interaction between humans and objects within the context they occur allows discovery of connected relationships between objects.

Individual meaning is influenced by social interactions with other people and is based on the totality of the known context and factors of the event. Personal sensations, feelings, ideas, memories, motives, and attitudes can affect individual interpretations of objects by using the intrinsic properties of an object to form meanings that are influenced by cultural norms. As an example, police officers may consider firearms possession by a private citizen to be inherently dangerous although they experience less alarm during daily contact with other officers that carry firearms as the other officers are considered members of their collective. Police officers rely on the past experiences of other officers to formulate responses when they encounter a novel or uncertain situation and new concepts allow different interpretations which are communicated to other officers to allow them to function during newly discovered orientations, thus allowing group members to share definitions of acceptable reactions to anticipate unknown experiences in the future.

Self-interaction with objects is influenced by the presence of other people or by a desire to conform to the perspective of the collective by using the group reference as a guide. Individual and group conduct allow shared meaning among members in response

to objects and allow collective responses that contribute to future actions by offering resolutions without the burden of analyzing different objects involved in every situation.

Meanings can change in a group context with the introduction of new circumstances or dissatisfaction with old meanings. If new objects are encountered, the actor responds based on past conceptions and experiences until such reactions fail to produce desired outcomes. Novel situations allow different formations of meaning and can change behavioral responses by allowing objects to be redefined into new references. Using past collective definitions of objects, people can respond to new or altered objects and prevent stalled responses. Group perspectives therefore are not stable as unforeseen experiences can alter the collective expectation and affect future member responses.

Meanings arise from continuing interpretive processes as past experiences influence new definitions and actions. New situations may allow confused interpretations and actions that deviate from the normal behavior of the group. As an example, the sound of gunshots during a riot may cause police officers to initiate mitigation techniques to enhance personal safety but the same sound at a firearms range will not trigger a similar response as the sound of gunshots are part of the shared training experience of the police collective. Individuals use interpretation to define personal meaning via a formative process that allows reactions to proceed in an accepted manner as defined by the group. Human group life is the process in which these interpretations and actions are responsively performed in concert with or towards other people or objects. A shared collective interpretation provides order by determining similar responses to objects, but groups can assign different meanings to an object while living in close association with other groups that have opposing views to the same object.

Split-Second Syndrome

In his observations of individual police officers and their tendency to use firearms quickly, James Fyfe (1988) stated that policing is a human service that requires officers to diagnosis problems and prescribe remedies to social problems. Police officers maintain order in society and their duties include responding to many non-enforcement actions such as medical emergencies and motor vehicle accidents. Officers must make quick decisions to formulate appropriate resolutions for each incident and have a great range of potential dispositions to situations, including deciding which persons formally enter the legal system or are referred to other specialized agencies. Fyfe stated that police officers rely on past experiences and meanings to formulate these quick responses, agreeing with Blumer (1969).

Police officers must make decisions with little time to investigate encounters, resulting in excessive violence towards people. Fyfe identified two types of excessive police use of force: extralegal violence is the willful and wrongful use of force by police officers who deliberately exceed the lawful level of force needed to control a subject, and unnecessary force occurs when police officers prove incapable of maintaining social control with appropriate force or resort to excessive force in a quick manner. Extralegal police violence can be aligned with politically pragmatic issues of police conduct and occurs at a lower rate than unnecessary force.

Police officers have choices when using force during law enforcement encounters. Third party reactions can influence the behavior of police officers and subjects, leading to officers trying to appear humane during their encounter with perceived offenders who may be embarrassed by their irrational behavior. Officers can lessen the potential of violence by slowing the pace of encounters to allow the restoration of reason to encourage nonviolent resolution of the immediate problem, encourage confidence in the

outcomes suggested by the police officer, make resolutions that are collaborative rather than coercive, using techniques that manipulate time to avoid violent outcomes unless lives are endangered, and using privacy when dealing with subjects. Fyfe agreed with Manning (1988) and noted that the characteristics of police work and police organizations are major influences of police misconduct which allow officers to use force to bring perceived offenders into the formal justice system; however, officers can also make mistaken moral choices to situations which can lead to misconduct and inappropriate use of force.

Problems exist as the public may not be aware of the different roles of police officers. Many public contacts that officers initiate are urgent matters that confront problems as they occur, performed in public with the expectation of appearing to do the right thing when interacting with people who may not agree with their actions, and involve stressed or unwilling participants that are victims or offenders. These three constraints of police and citizen encounters influence use of force by police officers and can increase the potential for violence. Police officers are unable to select the time, location, or type of service they will offer, putting limits on their ability to solve problems or refer subjects to specialized agencies for assistance. The input of policy makers and police administrators is needed to change the public perception of unrealistic expectations of police officers during incidents which include use of force. Fyfe stated that altering police organizational expectations and norms by punishing police agencies, rather than individual officers, would be the most effective way to change use of force policies as citizens have little empathy towards perceived criminals who are the victims of police violence and are not regarded as peers of law abiding members of society.

The Split Second Syndrome occurs when police officers treat similar circumstances as alike and quickly utilize past successful techniques in the new encounter, however no two situations are alike and past resolutions may not be appropriate in the current circumstances. Police officers make critical decisions under adverse conditions and cannot consider all factors due to limited time constraints and information which prevent officers to consider alternative law enforcement actions during a confrontation and lead to high levels of inappropriate use of force. Decisions determining the appropriateness of police use of force are accepted using post-event legal evaluations of the actions of the subject that favor the actions of the responding police officers. Consideration of the knowledge the officer possessed during the event is the primary criteria by which officers are judged, making the sole basis of the appropriateness of the use of force judged by the perceptions of the officer during the encounter. The contributory actions of the police officer during the encounter are normally not considered but can result in unnecessary violence that fails to protect human life. The focus on the factors to use lethal force ignores the totality of the circumstances of the encounter and results in officers exposing themselves to situations where deadly force is justified.

Police administrators should afford less attention to the outcomes of lethal force and more inspection to the responses of police officers to determine if the tactics used encourage nonviolent outcomes. To avoid the effects of The Split Second Syndrome, Fyfe suggests that the locations of possible engagements be surveyed to formulate future plans to encourage nonviolent resolutions. He also recommended that officers should attempt to gather more information via police communications systems while traveling to the scene and use the information to plan nonviolent responses. Diagnostic tools to be

used are tactical knowledge which is the prior knowledge of the actors, the setting of the incident, and concealment or remaining hidden until the perceived offender is present with less hazard to the officers and the public.

Symbolic Communication: Signifying Calls and the Police Response

Police communications contribute to police violence when the behaviors of mental illness are present. Peter Manning wrote *Symbolic Communication: Signifying Calls and the Police Response* (1988) after conducting research on two large police departments, one in America and one in England. Manning found similarities between how the calls for service were processed as police communications contained limited information concerning the actual incident when dispatching police officers to respond. Manning agreed with Fyfe (1988) that the lack of information available to responding police officers limits their ability to respond with less violence. Additionally, Manning agreed with Blumer (1969) that meanings arise from police culture as officers analyze information quickly as they respond to calls for assistance.

Initial calls for assistance from citizens are considered poorly organized by dispatchers but contain a high level of information that may not be passed to responding law enforcement officers. After receiving ponderous verbal communications from reporting parties, dispatchers streamline information into short phrases or codes which result in limited information being communicated to responding officers.

Communication messages are perceived as a type of summary of the incident and are made to conform to the known and accepted pragmatic relevance desired by the local police agency, forcing officers to attempt to make sense of the information as related to the actual event as they become involved in the responsive effort.

The primary function of police communication is efficient message interpretation and transmittal to other employees. The goal of efficient police communication is defining an object into a known social form to support rational decisions pertaining to the resolution of the incident. In police organizations, meaning is socially constructed from message content with input by multiple employees using visual, aural, and written channels. By using codes to represent situations, members of law enforcement agencies pattern the flow of information into reduced messages that imply shared interpretations of specific phrases to give meaning to officers using occupational expressions that remain unknown to people outside police culture. Calls are converted into incidents using social reality, tacit knowledge, and references to known types of past experiences that exist in local police cultures. Police culture is defined as a set of vague and tacit ideas which are not firmly entrenched and have frequent and acceptable exceptions to behavior. The culture of a police organization affects the local definition of calls for assistance by the shared reality of the members of that agency using tacit knowledge of police culture as a combination of explicit facts and implicit meanings of key words.

Actual events are not observed by police communication personnel but must be interpreted abstractly to classify calls into categories before assigning officers to respond. Dispatchers encode the information using implicit understandings of past events and key words to establish an event type, making each coded message an abbreviated narrative of the incident. Dispatched messages contain specific contexts or paradigms to attempt to aid officers during decision making while adhering to organizational and occupational perspectives, but some codes are too precise to accurately reflect the event.

Image formation is a convenient method to pass information in police organizations by using past classifications to shape definitions of current incidents to

allow members to determine meaning. Historical contexts influence the meaning of police messages and nebulous information can result in multiple image formations by personnel responding to the same incident. Imprecise coding allows alternative representations of events to occur, and each alteration can limit or expand the perception of subsequent potential resolutions considered by responding officers or dispatchers. Police officers have few restraints on their interpretation of police messages and must evaluate them within the context of the actual situation as they gain knowledge of the incident. Not all members of a police organization will have the same interpretation of problem resolutions as each member senses different aspects of the work environment and has different methods to resolve incidents.

Police communication can be difficult when interpreting the context of the incident as conflict can exist between official procedure, applicable legal statutes, local limits of police action, and the nature of the social events pertinent to the incident. Some police messages received by officers are far removed from the actual situation as the social world of the caller is unknown to the responding police officer. Proximal influences on the meanings of police communication are dynamic and the meaning of initial police messages remains uncertain until the incident is identified and resolved by officers after their arrival at the scene.

Police agencies offer high discretion to members responding to calls for assistance and use locally influenced references for determining meaning during incidents. Police officers share a collective expression of meanings which have been framed within the context of previously known experiences in their locality and profession. The participation in collective experiences allows officers to organize their

actions to conform to stable group perceptions. When received information is mistrusted by responding officers, their subsequent actions are guided by local police culture.

SUMMARY

This chapter briefly reviewed the academic literature concerning police and citizen encounters and revealed that participant behaviors and police responses have few studies which show the interaction between the noted concepts. The study of the manifestations of mental illness and associated behaviors by participants in lethal force situations can offer academic and social benefits by recognizing commonalities to allow police officers to detect impending violence and take measures to mitigate the violent act before it occurs. By interrupting the violence before it happens, participants have less exposure to negative outcomes such as criminal charges, reactionary violence with the associated risk of injury or death, and social sanctions such as loss of relationships and employment (Johnson, 2018).

Laboratory experiments have not been able to replicate all the potential elements or relationships that could affect an officer in a real shooting and, as such, laboratory studies have no resemblance to actual lethal force encounters (Blair et al. 2011; James, Vila, & Daratha, 2013). The academic work on police use of lethal force is small when compared to the studies performed on less critical decision points (Fyfe, 1988). The use of videos that memorialize citizen and police deaths provides an unobtrusive research methodology that minimizes or negates modified behavior by the participants when they are aware of being observed and allows research into a difficult event for academic investigators to observe personally. Using videos and news media articles as a dataset for this dissertation allows for behaviors to be examined that have not previously observed in the academic literature and adds to the academic discussion of police lethal force.

The results section lists the specific behaviors that contribute to lethal force events by civilians and police officers both before and during the lethal force event. The outcomes of the observations will also suggest policy implications and remedies to police tactics to lessen the possibility of a lethal outcome when encountering persons suffering from mental illness during an enforcement contact.

The discussion section summarizes and supports the concepts found in the dataset. Police policy implications suggest that police agencies and their officers can minimize their exposure to civil liability, criminal culpability, and bodily harm via recognition of such incidents and proper preparation to mitigate such incidents.

During an incident, the constant evaluations by each participant result in behaviors that may influence the other participant and the encounter can transform into a lethal event. Within these interactions of observations comes an intersection of vulnerabilities that can lead to a violent action in which the actor usually wins over the reactor (Blair et al., 2011). This study examines a violent form of these intersecting behavioral vulnerabilities; those associated with mental illness which contribute to the application of lethal force in police and citizen encounters.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Use of deadly force has been a significant topic of scholarship for decades. Issues of civil liability and harm to police legitimacy have been associated with fatal police actions and some police agencies have not publicly shared information concerning lethal force incidents, further damaging police credibility. Estimates of the nature and extent of officer-involved lethal incidents have been conflicting, making the circumstances that contribute to police lethal force incidents nebulous. The use of different variables has resulted in different conclusions, making policy recommendations difficult for police administrators to understand or implement. Additionally, use of force issues combine with mental health concerns in a significant number of encounters to further confound attempts to lessen deaths due to police actions. Prior studies provide a background for this dissertation by examining factors present in lethal force situations involving persons with mental illness.

STUDIES OF SITUATIONAL FACTORS OF THE ENCOUNTER

Past research studies have examined the situational factors of lethal force encounters. Many theories have risen from these studies but none of the academic efforts examined the interpersonal behaviors which contributed to these deadly events. This dissertation observed human behaviors to determine what actions were perceived as threats by responding police officers during incidents involving mental illness. The findings will not rely solely on police or journalist reports which may contain bias by the authors. These observations add to the national discussion of police use of lethal force by

increasing awareness of irrational behaviors by participants during encounters involving police officers and the people they serve. The findings of these past studies presented different perspectives which were influenced by the participants and the circumstances of the encounters.

To understand why violent encounters occur in policing and discover methods to mitigate such incidents, Klinger (2005 and 2020) interpreted Perrow's Accident Theory and found that tight coupling and interactive complexity contributed to undesirable outcomes during human interactions in stressful events. Klinger stated that higher amounts of interactions in an encounter increased the potential for an undesirable resolution. As the number of interactions increased, humans could not respond to situational factors with enough time to process information, which led to faulty sensemaking. Klinger suggested policy improvements by creating cultures in policing that promoted officer performance during lethal force incidents to reduce the logical sources of preventable shootings. He recommended the establishment of tactical review boards to examine encounters in which an officer used force.

Klinger (2005) noted that lethal force incidents may be reduced in numbers when police officers created or maintained distance from armed citizens to make situations less complex, but he stated that not all injuries or deaths in police encounters arose from tight coupling and interactive complexity. Klinger said that police officers are only responsible for the aspects of an interaction which they can control and behavior by subjects can force an officer to use lethal force in life threatening situations. Klinger (2001) noted that police officers may use lethal force against citizens to protect themselves against threats they reasonably perceived to be present which are later determined to have not been a danger to the safety of the officers or others. His study

closely examined human behaviors during police encounters, but his policy implications were not implemented by any known police departments.

Rojek, Alpert, and Smith (2012) performed a content analysis of the statements of both police officers and arrestees during 21 incidents in Richland County (SC) which occurred in 2007. The resulting 45 interviews were accomplished using a written instrument which encouraged explanations of responses by the participants with the goal to understand police and citizen encounters from the perspective of each actor in the encounter. They found that police officers and citizens focused on different issues and justified their respective behaviors by the identification and maintenance of specific roles. During encounters, police officers had expectations that citizens would defer to their commands and allow the officers to dominate the encounter, but citizens possessed different individual expectations. Each participant failed to understand and accept the role of the other participant, which led to reduced communication between the parties and unacceptable behavior. Police officers focused on citizens with aggressive behaviors and considered the force responses as acceptable whereas the citizens felt the actions were unjust. Citing a low consistency in qualitative assessments of use of force, the authors stated that official reports and biased statements overlooked contextual and cultural implications during the encounters. As a policy recommendation, the researchers cautioned that such differences would be made known to the public by the arrestees while the perceptions of the officers would only be made known to other officers, potentially increasing conflict between the police and citizens. The researchers used examinations of actual incidents but were limited in that intentional misrepresentation or omissions of important information during arrest situations may have occurred due to the different perceptions or unstated goals of the opposing actors. Additionally, police and citizen

encounters that did not involve arrests were not examined. This dissertation will use video recordings of actual incidents to reduce participant bias and examine the context of lethal force events involving the mentally ill, expanding a limitation of the study by Rojek et. al.

James, Vila, and Daratha (2013) used 60 high definition interactive videos in 1,812 observations of police and military personnel during responses in training simulators to measure use of force responses. The results were subjected to multi-level regression analysis and the researchers found that the observed key response variables were reaction times during lethal force situations and the measurement of observed errors in judgement. The researchers found participants took longer to shoot Black subjects than White or Hispanic subjects. In finding bias, the researchers observed that participating police officers and military members were also less likely to shoot armed Blacks than other races. They found that lethal force encounters were complex, making racial bias difficult to determine in simulator exercises that fail to reflect the reality of actual encounters, a factor that the proposed study seeks to address by including videos of actual incidents rather than simulated exercises to observe how behaviors contributed to lethal force incidents. Additionally, James et. al (2013) noted that a single variable could not be separated from the complex interplay of factors experienced by the officers and the subjects. The researchers noted the term “deadly mix” (p. 199) had been used to refer to the interactive combination of the situation, officer, and offender and how they converged to create a lethal force situation and determined that greater complexity and tighter coupling of factors increased the difficulty of the situation and the potential of a lethal outcome during a critical incident. Limitations included the accuracy and completeness of the information as relayed by participants and the potential distortion of perceptual

memory during stressful events. The dataset used in this dissertation will minimize memory distortion by not relying on post event recollections of lethal force incidents. A further limitation of the study by James et. al may have been bias by participants that were aware they were being evaluated by observers. The authors recommended that policy makers examine if bias is the result of administrative measures during training using scenarios. The findings by James et. al relate to the current study in that short time frames were observed when factors converge quickly as police officers made decisions during lethal force incidents.

In his meta-analysis of use of force studies, Bolger (2015) found that offense seriousness, suspect resistance, arrest, conflict, the number of officers, suspect race, suspect sex, suspect demeanor, suspect intoxication, and officer sex were significantly correlated to levels of force throughout the studies he examined. Bolger's factors can also be distilled into James et. al (2013) observation of lethal force incidents originated from a convergence of factors introduced by the officer, the suspect, and the circumstances of the encounter. Bolger agreed with that conclusion by listing the encounter characteristics, suspect characteristics, and officer characteristics as significant predictors of the aggregate domain effect in police encounters and use of force. He used data collected using systematic social observation methods and may have been influenced by observer or participant bias and, hence, may not be accurate. This dissertation acts upon Bolger's call for future research on making decisions to use force by examining the focus on characteristics of irrational behavior and mental illness during lethal force encounters.

Researchers in Sweden stated that sequences of events during police shootings occurred at a rapid pace, placing the officer at a disadvantage when making lethal force

decisions as disrupted perceptive information confounded rational analysis by the officer. In their content analysis of 112 shooting events involving Swedish police officers from 1984 to 2012, Petersson, Bertilsson, Fredrikson, Magnusson, and Fransson (2017) interviewed 120 officers involved in the lethal force incidents and found that initial responding officers discharged their weapons during 80% of the cases they examined. The officers were not able to predict or prevent the sudden threats they encountered and 92% of the lethal force events were concluded within 60 seconds with 39% of those events concluded within 3 seconds of the threat identification. The researchers found that stress made a rational analysis of the events difficult as existing legal framework and policies were unclear and led officers to initiate control efforts by interpreting the event as it occurred. They stated the human subconscious required time to evaluate an incident and the behaviors associated with the people in the encounter combined with psychological stress to increase the time used to process information for potential resolutions. Although they advocated training to aid officers to respond to factors common in the examined incidents, they noted that the short time frame may negate such training as the quick pace of lethal force events precluded the use of most de-escalation techniques. The researchers also noted the importance to include realistic factors in training sessions to properly prepare officers and called for better police policies for guidance in lethal force encounters. This study was limited to Swedish police officers and may not relate to officers in other countries. The use of interviews of responding officers to gather information may have displayed bias to support the actions of the officer during the encounter as the deceased participant could not provide information. The current study will expand upon the work of Petersson et.al (2017) by discussing methods to make additional information about mental illness available to responding

officers before the officers arrive at the scene and will examine factors related to the convergence of encounters during lethal force encounters.

The Use of Body Worn Cameras

Videos which result from the use of body worn or vehicle mounted cameras have provided challenges when performing academic studies. Distance distortion, a lack of context concerning the encounter before the camera was activated, and potential bias when using official reports or news media articles may present inaccurate information used during academic analysis. Multiple camera viewpoints can alleviate some concerns, but researchers should be cautious of studies that used body worn or vehicle mounted cameras in their studies without examining other informational sources.

White (2014) reviewed 5 studies for a U.S. Department of Justice examination of body worn cameras. He concluded there was a lack of research to support or refute claims of effectiveness or problems with the devices. He noted that police body worn cameras presented the benefits of perceptions of increased transparency, improved evidence gathering capabilities, and the potential to use the recordings to provide realistic training opportunities for police officers. Among the perceived problems were privacy concerns, health effects from wearing the devices, an increased amount of training and policy development, and the substantial cost and logistics of operating the cameras and storing the videos. White called for additional independent research on the equipment and urged law enforcement agencies to implement careful guidelines and policies when deploying body worn cameras. White reviewed five studies which were among the first to look at body worn cameras, making his observations preliminary in the continuing research of the devices. The proposed study will expand White's study by including

representations from additional types of cameras to augment videos from officer worn body cameras.

Ariel, Farrar, and Sutherland (2015) performed a time series study of the use of police body worn cameras in a randomized controlled trial with 1,000 officer shifts using members of the Rialto (CA) Police Department over a 12 month period. They found that complaints against officers were 80% less when body cameras were present and suggested that self-consciousness increased when officers and participants thought they were being observed as the cameras acted as neutral witnesses to record behavior. Policy implications cited were that use of force incidents were reduced when body cameras were used, resulting in improved police relationships with the community. Limitations cited included the inability of computer software to measure police use of force and the factors that contribute to it, the potential of bias in that participants knew they were being observed, the unknown factors of how behaviors of the citizens influenced officer responses, and the presence of alcohol in over half of the cases studied. This dissertation will include observations during incidents when body worn cameras were not present but the encounter was recorded by other types of cameras.

Jennings, Lynch, and Fridell (2015) performed a randomized experiment using 46 Orlando (FL) police officers who used body worn cameras and compared their use of force responses to 43 officers that did not wear the device. They noted a 53.4% decrease in use of force responses by officers during public encounters and a 65.4% reduction in citizen complaints in the interactions when officers wore cameras. The experiment also included surveys of the police officers and associated data supplied by the police department. The researchers stated that body worn cameras may reduce an array of negative outcomes that result from police and citizen encounters by improving behavior

among participants when they realized their actions were recorded and available for review. Cameras, and the videos that result from their use, showed how use of force situations arose during civilian contacts and clarified situational issues without the use of participant narratives which may cloud or attempt to hide factors. Policy implications included the recommendation that body worn cameras improved evidence collection and report writing while promoting better general behavior from both police officers and the public. As only one police department was used, the study cannot be generalized and the observation that improved behavior cannot be attributed to the camera solely as the improved behavior of the officer may have elicited amicable behavior from the citizen. The proposed study will expand this work and examine manifestations of mental illness and acts of aggression during lethal force encounters that were video recorded to determine actions that were considered as dangerous by police officers.

Excessive training in body worn camera analysis led to a distortion of distance perception in trained individuals. Specifically, the research of Boivin, Gendron, Faubert, and Poulin (2017) compared examinations by civilian and police observers and revealed that police officers with more applicable training than civilians misjudged the actual distance between offenders and officers when viewing videotapes, leading to incorrect judgements concerning the appropriateness of force in critical situations. This inaccurate judgment was due to the fisheye lenses used in body worn cameras which offer a wider range of view but distort perceptions of distance to viewers. Boivin et. al used college undergraduate students and police officer cadets to determine how a point of physical view influenced perception by comparing the perspectives of body worn cameras with other cameras mounted at a higher view. The results revealed that the college students did not have camera bias, but the police cadets exhibited significant bias between the two

perspectives and misjudged distances. The researchers recommended caution when evaluating video recordings made by police officers for the appropriateness of their actions due to distorted distance perceptions. The exercise used scenarios, not recordings of actual police and citizen encounters, and did not include many factors related to the physical conditions present during actual police shootings, including poor lighting conditions, and inclement weather; factors which will be present in the videos reviewed in this dissertation.

Zimring (2017) found that surveillance cameras have provided 7% of known videos, police body cameras have accounted for 6%, police dash cams have captured 4.5%, and cameras operated by private citizens compose 2.5% of known recordings. He stated that each new recording of police and citizen encounters make circumstances clearer while discounting or verifying allegations of mistreatment during these interactions. Police cameras merited attention as new cases appeared regularly and gave attention to police and public conduct during encounters by the photographic evidence they yield. The use of police cameras is a changing technology, but further innovations may lower the costs of recording technology and provide a valuable tool to police administrators. Zimring stated video reviews guided the evaluations of police shootings and can suggest changes to training and policies to reduce police use of lethal force. To expand on the observation by Zimring, this dissertation will use 129 incidents that were recorded by dash mounted cameras, body worn cameras, and cameras other than those used by police departments. Some incidents were recorded by multiple types of cameras, which allowed for different perspectives to be examined.

Race

Issues of race during police encounters with the mentally ill have not received academic attention and questions exist concerning the role of race during lethal police encounters. This dissertation will address this academic shortcoming by examining behaviors related to mental health issues as well as the race of citizens involved in deadly encounters with police officers.

James, James, and Vila (2016) examined racial bias in video based scenarios using police officers from the Spokane (WA) Police Department and civilians as a control group. They found that police officers were less likely to shoot or were slower to shoot Blacks as opposed to Whites in similar scenarios, challenging racial bias in policing. The study was not generalizable as only officers from a single department were used in the study, which used specially designed scenarios to test bias but did not include many of the factors found in actual police lethal force incidents, including the effects of mental illness. The current study will research such encounters.

Nix, Campbell, Byers, and Alpert (2016) used journalistic databases and multivariate regression models and found that implicit bias existed during threat perception in police officers as non-White persons were more likely to be subjected to lethal force by police officers than White subjects, Black civilians were more than twice as likely as White subjects to have been unarmed during the confrontations, and that members of racial minorities were less likely to have attacked an officer when compared to White subjects. The study called for a national database to study use of force events but did not use available videos to examine the conclusions of threat perception failures in police officers. Other limitations include the use of data collected by journalists, the use of national level data that can introduce aggregate bias and not be representative of a police jurisdiction, and data based only on the deaths of citizens which is a rare event in

policing. The effort did not study the contributions of mental illness to lethal force incidents, nor did it define the concept of threat perception to measure such reactions by police officers.

Klinger and Slocum (2017), in a policy essay concerning the use of journalistic data, stated that the study by Nix et. al had several issues including the issue of threat perception which did not identify the threats as interpreted by officers and that not all issues fit into a single category during complex social interactions. Klinger and Slocum stated that new measurements of social phenomena should be thoroughly vetted by researchers and lethal force studies should be done with care and diligence due to profound implications to officers and citizens when suggesting policy improvements. The current study will examine video evidence to identify threats which contributed to lethal force by police officers and add to the national discussion of the police use of lethal force during encounters with the mentally ill while noting the race of civilians during these encounters.

Fyfe (1988), in a research article, noted that racial disparities in policing paralleled those found in other social phenomena such as life expectancy, rates of incarceration, unemployment, infant mortality, levels of income, educational level, and socioeconomic status. Fyfe stated his opinion:

In short, as long as some American neighborhoods are perceived realistically as dangerous places that should be avoided whenever possible, we should be neither surprised nor damning if we find that police administrators may take the same considerations into account when judging the actions of officers who are not free to avoid dangerous neighborhoods and who shot occasionally at the people who live in them.... This effect, however, may have less connection with arbitrariness

on the part of the police than with the fact that the police work in a society that itself is so arbitrary regarding issues of race (p. 194).

Prior academic studies have not examined issues of race in individuals who suffer mental illness that are killed during police encounters. This dissertation will examine the race of persons who exhibited erratic behavior during lethal force events.

In summary, studies which examined the situational factors of police and public encounters relate to this dissertation by noting the perceptions of police officers which contribute to inaccurate decisions during encounters with the mentally ill. Additionally, these studies revealed that police officers display bias towards persons with mental illness during stressful encounters which may contribute to encounters becoming lethal.

STUDIES OF THE POLICE ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS OF THE ENCOUNTER

Other studies have examined the relationship between police organizational factors and use of force by officers. Among the issues studied were the effects of police culture, perceived risk, and police legitimacy. None of these studies examined video recordings of incidents but relied on official reports and the opinions of the participants, which may be biased. The proposed study will examine videotaped lethal force incidents to minimize such bias by allowing observational studies of police lethal force events related to mental illness and organizational factors.

Alpert and Macdonald (2001) examined police use of force as a function of organizational characteristics using data from 265 police agencies in 1996. Using a multivariate model, the researchers determined that there was not a strong correlation between reported police use of force and agency related characteristics. Policy recommendations included their finding that police agencies that used force response data for a specific purpose, or had supervisors complete use of force reports, had fewer use of

force incidents when compared to other agencies. The researchers stated that police use of force was related to area characteristics, particularly when the violent crime rate was elevated. While the study found that agencies with higher levels of accountability appear to discourage officers from using force, the authors conceded that requiring supervisory accountability may lead to inaccurate reporting of use of force incidents to police administrators. Alpert and Macdonald used many police agencies to determine that agency characteristics had little effect on reported use of force but failed to examine the behavioral factors present when lethal force was used by officers which can allow for new perspectives relating to this critical issue. Nearly half of the police agencies were in the southeast region of the United States; hence the results may not be generalizable to the rest of the country, but this dissertation included incidents which occurred throughout the United States. Persons with mental illness were known to reside or frequent areas where high crime rates exist, and this dissertation will examine how the behaviors associated with mental illness contribute to lethal force incidents.

Lersch and Mieczkowski (2005) performed an assessment of previous studies of violent police behavior and found a lack of national studies on the subject. Past academic efforts have been accomplished via observational studies, a review of citizen complaints, the use of surveys, and reviews use of force reports submitted by police officers. They stated their effort was limited in that use of force events were rare in policing and police cultures are isolated from, and often in conflict with, the general community. Police cultures promoted reliance as officers provided each other protection in dangerous situations and they viewed society as not holding favorable opinions for their efforts or occupation. Policy considerations included the recognition that police officers lacked direct supervision, which allowed the officers great discretion when making decisions.

Limitations included that policing is a difficult profession with opposing opinions of proper confrontational situation management between different police officers and between officers and the public who constantly questioned the responses of officers. The researchers stated that risk was also elevated when competent or aggressive police officers exposed themselves to more threats than less aggressive officers. Due to this variation of risk exposure, more aggressive officers experienced more negative consequences than meeker officers that perform their duties in a milder manner. The dissertation will expand upon the notation of risk during police encounters by illuminating abnormal behavior which was perceived by officers as threatening and suggest procedures to lessen bias by officers.

One study cited the need for fresh perspectives to improve traditional enforcement practices and change police culture, to which this dissertation will aid by identifying actual behaviors which elicited police officers to respond with lethal force in some encounters. Micucci and Gromme (2005) used data collected from police officers to examine police excessive force and found that it undermined police legitimacy. Minorities perceived police excessive force as supporting political and economic disadvantages without police administrators supervising and disciplining officers. Micucci and Gromme found that novice police officers, highly experienced officers, and supervisors were more likely to view excessive force as a serious matter in policing. Limitations to their study included no method to verify the responses of participating police officers, the use of police officers in one section of the country, the declination of some police departments to participate, and potential understatement due to self-reporting. Policy recommendations included the recognition that police subcultures share socializations and experiences which increase the perception of risk and the authors

called for better recruitment and training to strengthen community relations. This dissertation will examine how police officers share perceptions of risk and the subsequent police actions during encounters with people who exhibit behavior that was interpreted as threatening to the officer(s) or others present.

Zimring (2017) analyzed police use of lethal force using data from federal and state records, crowdsourced research, and media articles. The data sets used by Zimring encompass the years of 1976 to 2015, although not all observations were inclusive of those 39 years of observations. He concluded that police use of lethal force is a serious national problem in the United States as widespread firearms ownership increased the potential for law enforcement officers to be exposed to encounters that threaten their lives or the lives of citizens. Zimring also stated that police use of lethal force can be controlled without major changes to police performance by training officers in specific mitigating techniques to provide alternatives for non-lethal resolutions. Potentially safer procedures and tactics can minimize deaths during future incidents if encouraged by local police managers. Specific policies and procedures that favor non-lethal resolutions may be more effective than general police reform to reduce the number of people killed by police. This dissertation will support the use of available equipment and tactics to subdue suspects which exhibit erratic behavior, making incidents safer for the civilians and police officers, expanding on the policy recommendations made by Zimring.

Fyfe (1988) wrote an academic essay which reviewed lethal force studies that were associated with the apprehension of non-violent felony suspects. Unlike the sister agencies of the criminal justice system, police officers must meet the offenders in the street and during circumstances that are uncontrolled and hiding potential dangers.

Goldstein (1977) stated that, if viewed in a broad context, the police function by making

diagnostic decisions of potential actions that are appropriate in each case as policing is a form of government service which contains several constraints that obstruct positive public relations. Fyfe stated that the “rules and regulations” that govern police use of force are “too vague to be regarded as a comprehensive set of operational guidelines” (p. 171) to influence an officer’s decision to use lethal force. He concluded that race and areas with high crime rates influenced police officers to use excessive force to ensure their safety and stated that police administrators displayed variations in accommodating the use of force by police officers in those areas. He recommended that additional training would improve police officer performance during citizen encounters but recognized qualitative differences existed in different police jurisdictions. His study was limited by only using data associated with incidents in which a person was killed by police. Fyfe did not use those incidents in which lethal force was implied but not actually used or those encounters in which a person was wounded and did not die because of the police action.

Fyfe (2015) expanded upon Goldstein by illustrating that the police-offender interaction is normally urgent, involuntary, and public, making diagnostic decisions difficult with unwilling offenders. This dissertation will expand the observations made by Fyfe and Goldstein by noting the convergence of factors which contribute to the difficulty of making decisions during police encounters involving shared police perspectives. Fyfe recommended the establishment of a national deadly force database to allow critical academic studies on variables which contributed to police lethal force incidents. He observed that until a new breed of police executives and police chiefs can change the unrealistic public perceptions of law enforcement officers, incidents of excessive use of force will continue to plague the profession. The unnecessary episodes

of violence will remain until police officers are taught to analyze confrontations to discover better ways to approach aggressive offenders. The dissertation will expand upon Fyfe's efforts by examining police lethal force encounters, including the presence of mental illness and the influence of police culture.

In summary, studies of the organizational factors present in police and citizen encounters have revealed that high crime areas were prominent in use of force situations, but the studies failed to examine the behaviors related to mental illness that were interpreted as dangerous by police officers. Inappropriate use of force can reduce police legitimacy during these public and urgent interactions. This dissertation will identify those behaviors and examine how police officers share representations among themselves to construct bias towards the mentally ill.

STUDIES OF MENTAL ILLNESS INTERACTIONS INVOLVING POLICE OFFICERS

Some studies have examined the interaction between police officers and the mentally ill or investigated how stigma can affect public service organizations, including police departments. They found a lack of knowledge, training, and resources available to police officers to use when encountering a person with mental illness. Some studies noted a lack of cooperation between police officers and mental health professionals, although officers were often the first contact with an individual during a mental health crisis. This dissertation will expand the discussion of police encounters with people in crisis by identifying behaviors which influenced officers to make lethal force decisions. Policy discussions will be expanded by examining situational contexts of the behaviors exhibited by the mentally ill during encounters; behaviors perceived by police officers as dangerous.

Fry, Riordan, and Geanellos (2002) performed a survey of 131 police officers in Sydney, Australia, to discover issues during interactions between the mentally ill and officers and to explore the relationships between the police and mental health providers. The authors found confusion among officers concerning their expected performance when dealing with the mentally ill. Although the officers acknowledge that they were the first contact for situations involving the mentally ill, they did not feel that such efforts were the responsibility of law enforcement professionals. The officers felt they were not supported or prepared as they possessed inadequate training and resources to properly manage such encounters which included actions interpreted as threatening and dangerous whereas mental health professionals found the same behaviors as requiring attention. The responding police officers stated that interactions with the mentally ill took a minimum of 10% or more of their duty time and noted a lack of communication with mental health providers. Policy concerns included a better relationship between mental health providers and police officers and a need for further training for officers to enhance skills when interacting with the mentally ill. This study was limited by using only officers from Sydney but provided information for that specific area and expressed the opinions of police officers that interacted with people who suffered with mental illness. The proposed study will expand the academic discussion by allowing the examination of behaviors of the mentally ill and police officers during critical incidents.

Cooper, McLearn, and Zapf (2004) surveyed 92 officers from a single department in Canada to examine police decisions when arresting or committing mentally ill subjects. The officers completed questionnaires concerning their attitudes about mental illness and responded to a vignette that required them to formulate a conclusion during an interaction with a mentally ill person. The authors found that the officers

realized that dealing with the mentally ill was their responsibility and desired more training but were frustrated in their performance, citing a lack of cooperation between mental health providers and law enforcement. The study concluded that no racial bias was discovered during the decision making process, but Whites were more apt to be committed which resulted in less mental health resource available for minorities, who were incarcerated at a high rate. Policy implications included that police departments did not provide clear guidelines for officers to follow in interactions with the mentally ill and officers experienced negative results when attempting to seek specialized help for such subjects. This study was limited to a single police department in Canada with a small sample size that was skewed towards White males and was not generalizable. The findings of this study relate to the dissertation by noting that levels of training are not sufficient to decrease lethal force incidents but displayed strength by identifying weaknesses when officers interact with the mentally ill.

In a study for the U.S. Department of Justice, Cordner (2000) performed a survey which examined 22 potential responses for police officers to use during encounters with persons who were mentally ill. The survey revealed that police officers were dissatisfied with law enforcement training techniques which the officers described as inadequate and not successful during encounters with people suffering from mental illness. Most officers believed that persons displaying behaviors related to mental illness presented a high risk to officer safety and made protective considerations a priority when dealing with the mentally ill. The study, which encompassed 3 cities, found that 92% of patrol officers had at least one encounter with a mentally ill person during the previous month with some officers reporting as many as 6 encounters per month. Cordner stated that traditional police responses during encounters with the mentally ill were not effective and

sometimes resulted in tragic consequences. Often officers were not aware that subjects were mentally ill until after the incident, and encounters raised tensions when the individuals did not cooperate, leading officers to believe that the mentally ill were more dangerous than normal cooperating subjects and limited their response to fewer options during such situations. The dissertation will identify specific actions that were interpreted as dangerous by police officers and expand the finding by Cordner. He stated that encounters were dangerous for the persons suffering from mental illness as they were four times more likely to be killed by police officers. Policy concerns included more training for police officers for use in encounters with the mentally ill, having a call classification to notify officers that a person is exhibiting behaviors associated with mental illness, the need for police departments and mental health providers to share information, and deploying mental health providers to respond with police officers during calls involving the mentally ill. Cordner surveyed police officers that had been involved in encounters with the mentally ill but was limited as the sample set was derived using only 3 cities which limited the generalization to other areas. The dissertation will explore methods to alert responding police officers to irrational behavior.

A survey of 126 officers in northern Indiana was done by Wells and Schafer (2006) to determine the perceptions of police officers, state troopers, and sheriff's deputies related to their contacts with the mentally ill. The results indicated that officers felt their training was not sufficient when compared to the many challenges of such interactions. The officers were not satisfied with traditional outcomes and felt too many persons with mental illness were incarcerated in conditions where mental health assistance was not available. Seventy nine percent of the officers indicated that they would prefer taking a person in crisis to a mental health facility rather than a jail although

less than 20% felt that such assistance was easily accomplished. Most of the officers desired additional training as they were not satisfied with existing mitigation techniques when interacting with the mentally ill. Other policy considerations were the encouragement of using community-based treatment programs for the mentally ill with improved communication between the police and mental health providers. The study used the opinions of officers who interacted with the mentally ill but was focused on one county, making the result potentially not generalizable to other communities with differing levels of community support and treatment programs.

Morabito (2007) stated that police officers are the gatekeepers to the criminal justice system, and little is known about how officers interact with the public. He referenced three contexts that informed the decision by officers to arrest an individual, the manipulative context which used considerations of community safety, the temporal context which included the character and mindset of the involved officer, and the scenic context which included features of the community. This dissertation will add to his observations by examining the behaviors of citizens with mental illness that contribute to lethal force encounters. Policy implications included that arrests occurred due to social assistance not being available and stigma of mental illness can lead to less access to social service, employment, and support networks. The limitation of this article was the lack of observable evidence presented to support or refute his claims.

Watson, Morabito, Draine, and Ottah (2008) used a literature review and a multi-layered conceptual model to measure acceptance and effectiveness of crisis intervention training (CIT) in police officers and found no evidence that CIT was effective. They stated officers perceived persons with mental illness as dangerous and individuals with mental illness were subjected to stigma as having a lessor status within society. The

study revealed that police officers were often the first criminal justice contact with the mentally ill and served as evaluators to define appropriate actions to conclude situations. Officers felt that encounters with the mentally ill increased the possibility of injury to themselves and the subjects as other citizens were less likely to intervene with persons displaying symptoms of mental illness and relied on responding police officers to intercede. This dissertation will examine behaviors that contributed to lethal incidents involving responding police officers and citizens. Watson et. al stated that delayed intervention until the situation became a crisis increased the level of force needed by officers to control mentally ill subjects. Disadvantaged neighborhoods had fewer resources to seek assistance for the mentally ill, which resulted in calls for service to police officers rather than mental health treatment. The authors felt that police departments needed officers to adopt positive attitudes when interacting with the mentally ill and an agency champion was needed to promote changes in policies and procedures. Partnerships with local mental health providers and community assistance groups to divert subjects from the criminal justice systems into a mental health system to provide treatment were suggested policy improvements. Limitations included the use of research performed by others which may have reflected bias into their study.

Morabito and Socia (2015) performed a statistical analysis of 6,131 use of force reports submitted by officers of the Portland (OR) Police Bureau from 2008 to 2011 and attempted to find correlations between participant injury and police officer perceptions of danger in behaviors related to mental illness. The study found that subjects experienced injury in 19.0% of the encounters while officers were injured in 7.4% of the cases. Police officers recognized mental illness in 6% of the cases although people with mental illness were no more likely to be injured than those without mental illness, suggesting the mental

illness does not represent a danger to police officers. The perception of danger arose from the officers who were not clinicians and may not have been able to recognize symptoms of mental illness. Policy suggestions included the recognition that the perception of danger contributed to unnecessary stigma which can prevent people who suffer from mental illness to seek treatment. Limitations included the recognition that actions of police officers are based on perceptual cues they recognize during an encounter, all of the officers had completed crisis intervention training and may have been more cognizant of the signs and bias of mental illness, the data used did not supply the context of each encounter, and the study was limited to one city. This dissertation will identify behaviors that were defined as dangerous during police encounters that resulted in a lethal force incident including the mentally ill from many areas by examining the actions of the participants during recorded lethal force events.

Miller (2015), in an essay that reviewed previous studies of police use of force, stated that the use of lethal force is a rare event during police encounters and estimated that 360 deaths of civilians occurred per year. He found that subjects that present a high level of agitation, displayed impaired judgement, and exhibited a lack of self-control resulted in more lethal force incidents than calmer individuals. Miller stated that police officers are expected to react to imminent and credible threats and subjects that demonstrated higher perceived levels of danger were more likely to be met with higher levels of force, including lethal force. He suggested that the level of force used by police officers should be proportional to the danger presented by the subject with the purpose of securing the individual for further processing by the criminal justice system. Miller observed that mental illness was a main contributor to lethal force incidents which may have been avoided if the mental condition of the subject was known before officers

interacted with them. He found that 60 police shootings per year were the result of suicide by cop events in which subjects had a history of suicide attempts and mental illness and were concluded within 10 minutes after the arrival of officers. Miller stated police officers favored priority incidents that contain potential active intervention as a resolution to reduce the time span of the encounter and officers used excessive force when their interpretation of an encounter was viewed as life-threatening. Agitated subjects required more physical restraint than average citizens as aggressive acts motivated by-standers and family members to call the police with the expectation they will control the person to preserve public safety. A lack of specialized training resulted in lethal force being used against the mentally ill when officers interacted with people due to other causes, including homelessness, substance abuse, and joblessness. Suggestions for policy implications included the recognition that officer attitudes, demographics, personalities, and assignments affect the level of force used against citizens. Higher educational levels of officers, an increase in mental health responses coupled with verbal crisis intervention techniques, and stronger efforts at community relationships could lead to a lesser number of lethal force incidents. Miller concluded that there is no evidence that police officers systematically target members of an ethnic group for more forceful confrontations, including lethal force incidents but also stated that some police officers suffered from personality disorders that included dysfunctional traits that led to abusive behavior, particularly when threats to their authority were perceived. Policy implications included the use of transparency to encourage legitimacy via full public disclosure concerning police use of lethal force. Miller stated that conflict management could improve the communication skills used by police officers and become the primary tool for controlling violent and irrational citizens using role-playing training

scenarios to practice mitigating techniques. Miller used studies performed by other researchers which may have contained bias, but his effort was an extensive review of such research although his estimate of annual deaths due to police actions appeared conservative. The proposed study will expand upon the observations made by Miller by identifying behaviors that contribute to lethal force being used during encounters with the mentally ill, including actions by police officers.

A study by DeGue, Fowler, and Calkins (2016) used data from the National Violent Death Reporting System kept by the U.S. Center for Disease Control in 812 cases from 17 states and found that Whites were more likely than Blacks or Hispanics to be killed during encounters with police officers in mental health or substance abuse situations, although minorities were likely to be killed at a higher rate than their representation in the general population. The research revealed that 20% of the deceased subjects had been hospitalized for mental illness or were detained by police officers in the four months prior to their deaths. The researchers estimated between 25% and 50% of fatal encounters in law enforcement incidents involve civilians with mental illness. Observations concerning policy recommendations included improved training for police officers to lower the rate of lethal force using de-escalation techniques, training to recognize implicit bias, the increased use of chemical sprays or conducted energy weapons during encounters, and the recognition of mental health issues during calls for service. Limitations of this study included that 53% of the cases lacked information to be categorized, the data set was not nationally represented, the results may not be generalizable as only successful lethal force events were considered, and events that were concluded with non-lethal means were excluded. The data relied on the input by police officers and medical examiners which made data validation difficult. The dissertation

will examine actions made by police officers during encounters with the mentally ill by observing the incident rather than relying solely on reports for information.

An exploratory descriptive study of police contacts with the mentally ill in Maryland by Goldberg, White, and Weisburd (2019) used longitudinal data to study 449 street segments to examine multistage clustered samples of micro level crime levels using data gathered by the Baltimore County Police Department. Using 3,139 surveys during a census of the area, the authors discovered that persons with mental illness displayed a high level of fear and a low level of trust of police officers. The study also found that persons with mental illness had negative perceptions about police legitimacy, making them apprehensive about cooperating with the police. Additionally, 71.30% of citizens with post-traumatic stress syndrome or depression had annual incomes of under \$25,000.00 which made mental health costs prohibitively high for low wage earners. The citizens with mental illness lived in marginal areas where they were more likely to encounter police officers as their first contact during mental health episodes. Fifty one percent of those suffering from mental illness were not employed, felt less safe in their living conditions, and had a higher fear of becoming victims of a crime. Police officers viewed mentally ill subjects as dangerous, particularly if they did not recognize a mental health event or were not properly trained to interact with people experiencing a personal crisis. Although pertinent to the Baltimore area, it is unknown if the findings of this study are applicable to other jurisdictions. The dissertation will expand upon the findings of the Goldberg, White, and Weisburd by displaying actual behaviors of police officers and subjects which exhibit erratic behavior that were perceived as threats during lethal force encounters.

In summary, studies that examined mental illness during police encounters with citizens add to this dissertation by noting that inadequate agency guidance and training hamper police officers, who recognize limitations when responding to incidents involving persons who have experienced a mental health crisis. The studies also illustrate how officers perceive threats from the mentally ill and use enhanced officer safety considerations during interactions with them. Importantly, the studies reveal that mental illness is a factor in many lethal force events involving police officers.

STUDIES OF VICTIM PRECIPITATED HOMICIDES OR “SUICIDE BY COP”

Studies of victim precipitated homicides, or suicide by cop, will add to the dissertation by examining participant behaviors which contributed to police lethal force incidents. Many of these studies noted that mental illness was present in the deceased after the incident occurred but did not examine behaviors that contributed to the deadly police response. The proposed study will increase the knowledge of suicide by cop incidents to allow new perspectives and policies for officers by examining the interaction between irrational behavior and perceived threats during encounters with the mentally ill.

Homant and Kennedy (2000) performed a content analysis of 23 cases of suicide by cop and the effectiveness of force options that were not intended to be lethal. The study reviewed official reports, court documents, and newspaper accounts of those cases in which the subjects had been exposed to police gunfire after a less lethal force option was attempted. They found that 31% of the events included known prior planning and 57% included examples of irrational behavior by the deceased individuals. The authors found that force options not intended to be lethal were successful if the subject was not armed and recommended additional research on the subject which this dissertation offers using content analysis to add to their study. The study by Homant and Kennedy was

limited by using only cases that resulted in lethal force and the authors admitted that no causal inferences could be made from their study with certainty.

Homant, Kennedy, and Hupp (2000) reviewed 123 incidents of suicide by cop from reports of judicial sources and academic studies. They found that 22% of the reviewed cases had notations of mental illness and 27% had planned their suicide, which led the the researchers to state that emotional inability to kill oneself was a primary factor in these incidents. Factors which contributed to suicide by cop incidents included risk taking, aggressiveness, manipulation, and intentionality. The strongest correlation was the perceived danger of the subjects when they presented themselves to police officers, although the actual danger could not be determined until the incidents ended. The researchers stated that the information was not useful as policy recommendations as suicide by cop events were unpredictably dangerous events that required caution. The study was limited in that the sources used were subjective recollections of surviving police officers as the deceased persons could not be interviewed and no video recordings of these events were used. This dissertation will expand upon this effort by examining video recording of suicide by cop encounters to identify actions that officers perceived as dangerous.

Klinger (2001) stated that many studies were not able to determine intent in suicide by cop cases, making it difficult to measure the number of persons who elicit police officers to kill them. He stated that suicidal intent could be used as a foundation to understand interpersonal violence, but police officers used lethal force when they have a reasonable perception of a threat, even if the threat was subsequently determined to have not been present. Mistaken impressions of imminent peril occurred when officers could not ascertain if the threat is real. The dissertation will examine those actions which

elicited lethal force by officers and expand the observations made by Klinger. The article performed a critical review of suicide by cop research but was limited in that intent is difficult to determine when the subject is deceased and cannot be interviewed. No videos were used to discover the context of the encounter and no policy implications were given in the article.

In a study funded by the U.S. Department of Justice, Pinizzotto, Davis, and Miller (2006) examined 40 incidents in a content analysis of felonious assaults on police officers. The researchers interviewed 50 officers, 43 offenders, and reviewed the official reports associated with each incident. Among their findings were that suicide by cop incidents were misunderstood by law enforcement agencies as no clear or accepted definition existed. The researchers also found a large discrepancy between how police officers and offenders perceived a situation when danger was interpreted by the officer. Policy implications include the use of realistic training scenarios to foster officer awareness during encounters and improved relationships with the media. This examination had strength by using an in-depth analysis of actual police shootings, rather than summaries. The study had a potential dataset of over 800 incidents but the use of only 40 incidents in the study, without the use of videos to validate information, decreased the ability to generalize their work. Their finding that the formation of perceptions of danger by officers differs from the intent of involved citizens in use of force incidents will inform the discussion of how police officers perceive some actions of persons suffering from mental illness. These observations will assist in policy changes that may lead to non-lethal conclusions during police encounters with the mentally ill.

Mohandie, Meloy, and Collins (2009) performed a content analysis by reviewing officer involved shooting files from eight police departments from 1998 to 2006 and

noted that missing mental health history remained common in criminal justice reports. Their study examined incident characteristics, subject data, and situational outcomes. The researchers defined suicide by cop incidents as when a subject engaged in behaviors that caused a lethal force response by police officers. They found the subjects exhibited spontaneous verbal and behavioral indicators that posed a significant threat of violence towards the officers and others before and during the event. The dissertation will examine the spontaneous behaviors of the participants during lethal force encounters, including potential suicide by cop incidents. Mohandie et. al stated that encounters with an armed and suicidal person elevated safety concerns for the safety of officers and civilians present and 62% of suicide by cop subjects had confirmed or probable mental illness with 48% suffering from depression or another mood disorder. Twenty one percent had prior hospitalizations for mental health reasons and 81% of the lethal events were unplanned and spontaneous. Suicidal communication occurred in 87% of the cases, 98% of the cases displayed a behavioral threat with 90% of the threats directed to responding officers. Eighty percent of suicide by cop subjects were armed with actual weapons while an additional 19% possessed simulated weapons. Policy implications included that officer perceptions of danger may not have represented actual danger and there was a moderate chance of injury to officers or others during these encounters. This study examined actual encounters but was limited as the archival data consisted of the memorialized recollections of the officers which could represent bias in their favor. Potential sampling bias could have been present as non-lethal attempts were not included in the study.

Lord and Sloop (2010) reviewed 356 cases of suicide by cop contained in the Hostage Barricade Data System maintained by the U.S. Department of Justice and

developed a decision tree to define suicidal intentions using observable acts. Their model predicted 97.9% of cases that would be classified as suicide by cop using the indicators of communicated intent, acts of nonverbal intent, and deliberate contact with police officers. The researchers also used a content analysis of the comments of the involved police officers. They found that 46.8% of the reviewed suicide by cop cases had a history of mental illness and other aspects included associated criminal activity, an unwillingness to surrender, and possession of a weapon. Collaboration between mental health providers and police departments to preserve life in suicide by cop encounters was the primary policy suggestion. The study was limited by using only police officer comments in their analysis which may have contained bias to favor the actions of the police.

In a later study, Lord (2012) used the decision model to review 12,550 incidents in the National Violent Death Reporting System and found that multiple points of data should be used to classify suicide by cop as it was unlikely that researchers could establish intent with minimal evidence. She included personal characteristics and the situation of a domestic dispute in progress in this later study. Lord found that irrational thought was not a contributing factor in suicide by cop events. Her study was limited in that only 17 states participated in the National Violent Death Reporting System and the database was dependent upon death certificates, medical examiner reports, and police reports of investigation; many of which are the interpretations of individuals as no standard exists among states concerning death records. Lord's study was limited to post event evaluations of converging factors which hasten decision making whereas the dissertation will examine the actual events as they occurred during a lethal force encounter with the mentally ill using videos of the incidents.

Kesic, Thomas, and Ogloff (2012) analyzed factors while reviewing 45 coroner investigations of police shootings from 1980 to 2008 in Victoria, Australia. Using official data, they examined contributory factors during lethal encounters. They found that deaths occurred during arrests made in unplanned police operations that were short in duration and planned by the deceased to encourage police involvement. Citing a lack of prior academic investigations into the behavior of the deceased and the mental health behaviors in lethal force incidents, they stated that 33% of the cases were classified as suicide by cop, 57.8% of the cases involved prior mental illness, and 80% of the involved subjects had a history of violence. Policy suggestions included the need for additional police training to use in encounters with the mentally ill and police partnerships with mental health providers to encourage peaceful resolutions. Actual incidents were examined in this study, but limitations included a wide variation of the quality and depth of the available information and the use of cases only from Australia, limiting the generalization of their findings. The dissertation will add to the work of Kesic et. al by examining video recorded behaviors exhibited during police encounters with the mentally ill.

Patton and Fremouw (2016) performed a critical literature review of academic publications from 1994 to 2014 to examine individual characteristics, situational variables, and legal interventions in suicide by cop incidents. They found that many encounters were unplanned domestic matters or interpersonal disputes where police officers had threatened to arrest one or more of the participants. The events were short in duration, lacked a clear intent, and some participants had significant mental health issues that caused an inability for the subject to process information during an interpersonal crisis. Policy considerations included that the high lethality of these events, coupled with

the rapid development of danger and the lack of known suicidal intent, precluded the use of many interventions not intended to be lethal. They also noted that different codes were used in different reports, making analysis difficult, and called for additional studies of suicide by cop incidents. This study recognized the inability of persons with mental illness to process information and the use of police weapons not intended to be lethal, but the limitations included the use of different definitions throughout the reviewed literature evaluations. This dissertation will make direct observations of lethal force events involving the mentally ill and not rely solely on reports.

Jordan, Panza, and Dempsey (2020) reviewed police reports submitted by the Mental Evaluation Unit of the Los Angeles Police Department to perform a retrospective review of 419 suicide by cop incidents. The researchers examined verbal expressions of a desire to be killed by a police officer or displays of aggressive behaviors that encouraged a police officer to take the life of the subject. They found that 371 incidents (89%) involved subjects that verbally communicated suicidal intentions prior to the encounter and 256 incidents (61%) displayed threatening behavior. One hundred and fifty nine subjects (38%) verbally communicated their suicidal intentions before the incident occurred and 279 (67%) had prior confirmed or suspected mental illness. The study revealed no demographic variables associated with the suicide by cop cases. Their policy recommendations included that suicide by cop encounters had a high number of participants who suffered from mental illness and the Mental Evaluation Unit allowed officers to resolve cases favoring mental health care rather than incarceration. Limitations include the uncertainty that the officers in the specialized unit had received training to accurately identify mental health issues and the use of information recorded by police officers instead of professional mental health providers. The dissertation will add

to these findings by including an examination of the behaviors which contribute to lethal force incidents using video recordings of the encounters.

In summary, studies which examined victim precipitated homicides aid this dissertation by revealing estimates of the presence of mental illness ranging from 22% to 67% during fatal police shootings in suicide by cop incidents. Officers interpreted behavior from these individuals as imminent peril and responded with lethal force. These studies also note that mental health history is missing in many police reports, resulting in inaccurate data and studies. The dissertation will note which behaviors are interpreted by police officers as perilous.

STUDIES OF STIGMA ASSOCIATED WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

This dissertation will support that stigma related to mental illness is present in society and the police agencies that represent it. Previous studies examined stigma and how the mentally ill interact with police officers and this study will examine how the perception of stigma endures in police cultures.

Knifton et al. (2010) interviewed 257 members of minority communities in Scotland using questionnaires completed before and after their participation in a workshop which discussed stigma and discrimination towards people suffering from mental illness. The researchers discovered that significant stigma and shame existed in the public perception of mental illness and inaccurate knowledge led to individuals being subjected to discrimination. They further stated that stigma and discrimination varied between communities and when the stigma of mental illness interacted with police culture, the perceptions of danger were enhanced. The workshops changed the perceptions of 78% of the participants by reducing stigma after completion of the informational meetings. Policy recommendations included the sponsorship of

community approaches and initiatives to improve public understanding of mental illness. The study was limited in that members of minority communities or common interest groups may share similar views of mental health issues and the results may contain bias in a manner that is accepted by that community. This dissertation contributes to the current effort by recognizing the actions that officers define as dangerous in encounters which can lead to stigma.

Smith & Cashwell (2010) surveyed mental health providers and non-mental health providers to examine stigma attached to the mentally ill. The 188 surveys were accomplished via mail and revealed that mental health training, education, and interactions with affected people led to an increase in positive attitudes concerning mental illness. The general population viewed people with mental illness as dangerous, to be avoided, and responsible for their own illnesses. Non-mental health professionals felt that mental illness was associated with secrecy, shame, poor social adaptations, and low self-esteem. The authors suggested that multiple surveys performed before, during, and after training to provide mental health awareness would provide a better assessment of mental health acceptance among professionals. This study was limited in that mental health professionals may have already possessed a low stigma of persons suffering from mental illness and that the mailed surveys may not have provided confidentiality for participants.

Dorner and Mittendorger-Rutz (2017) examined 66,097 individuals with common mental disorders in Sweden using data from three government agencies and found that socioeconomic inequalities resulted in differential care and mental health development among people with common mental disorders. They noted that marginalized people received a different level of mental health treatment than more affluent people. Using

multivariate analysis, the researchers found that different mental health treatments or diagnosis interacted with differing educational levels, which led to stigma. Specifically, mentally ill persons with lower levels of education received higher levels of mental health treatment while people with higher levels of education received diagnosis relating to stress but people with lower levels of education received classifications of depression or anxiety disorders. Persons with lower socioeconomic status received more medication than others and stigma was more pronounced in people receiving medications than others who received psychotherapy alone. Policy implications included noting the associations of stigma with medication and that stress related illness were more socially acceptable than other common mental disorders. This study had a high cohort of study participants with detailed information but used education as a proxy for socioeconomic status and did not include occupations or income as variables. This dissertation will expand the observations of Dorner and Mittendorger-Rutz by noting the interactions between police officers and the mentally ill.

Huggett et. al (2018) performed a thematic analysis to investigate experiences of the stigma of mental illness using 26 participants recruited from a mental health charity in northwest England. Two focus groups were formed from the users of the services provided by the charity. The participants stated that labels of mental illness had profound effects on their daily lives although the mentally ill developed resilience towards the stigma with repeated exposure and peer support. They also stated that stigma related to mental illness was reflected within a society, and the institutions which represent it, as people learned stigma during early socialization. The focus groups also stated that persons suffering from mental crises were perceived as unpredictable, violent, and dangerous throughout the general population and institutional stigma appeared to affect

organizations and their policies, procedures, and culture. Stigma also influenced components of the criminal justice system and the persons working within them, resulting in inappropriate use of police force during contacts with the public. The limitations of the study included the dominance of eight participants during group discussions and the participants volunteered for mental health treatment and were not remanded by a court for compulsory participation and therefore may have been more aware of the effects of stigma related to mental illness.

In summary, studies which examined stigma associated with mental illness will add to this dissertation by showing how stigma is reflected in both society and the police. Stigma is learned during socialization and is dangerous for people who suffer from mental illness, particularly during encounters with police officers. This dissertation will explore how stigma is passed to new officers.

STUDIES CITING PROBLEMS WITH DATABASES

Some studies stated that caution should be used when using assorted databases to examine police lethal force incidents. This dissertation will illuminate the behavioral cues which contributed to the police lethal force incidents by using video recordings released to the public. However, the views are limited due to the released recordings showing the aspect of the camera bearer. This dissertation acknowledges that deficiencies in databases exist and acknowledges those limitations.

Klinger (2012) compared data from the National Vital Statistics Program, the Supplementary Homicide Report System, and the Death in Custody Program. He found that the databases contained inaccurate numbers and invalid data as differences in how police departments reported lethal force incidents to these national databases. These differences led to the inability to track lethal force at the national level as the data

collection systems did not contain accurate information. Klinger stated that researchers use this flawed data when it is favorable to their studies, but it should not be used to explain variations in violent police behavior. Additionally, the existing data omitted all in-custody deaths and did not provide a measure of police intent to use lethal force which did not result in a death. As the data used information reported from police departments, the aggregate use of such data resulted in low estimates of police use of lethal force within the national databases, which made studies that used this information invalid. An additional limitation was that police records may be biased to exonerate officer behavior.

Klinger, Rosenfeld, Isom, and Deckard (2015) focused on the macro level of lethal force events in a study of 230 police shootings in St. Louis (MO) neighborhoods to determine if demographic and socioeconomic characteristics played a role in such incidents. They found that such factors were not a significant predictor of lethal force events but suggested the role of gun violence and perceived threats as a major contributing factor. Multivariate analysis showed that crime is the major factor in police shootings. Klinger et. al further stated that current data is flawed and does not permit a sound assessment of the “social determinants of the use of deadly force by police” (p. 194) and cannot serve as a reliable guide for evaluating or improving police policy. The study relied on police data and did not use videos to confirm the validity of the information contained in the police reports used in the work. Policy recommendations included the establishment of a national database with street-level measures that will allow for more accurate policy proposals and improved training tactics. This dissertation will examine the “social determinants” referenced by Klinger by using observational studies of lethal force encounter with the mentally ill.

Using data from the National Violent Death Reporting System to examine suicide by cop encounters, Lord (2014) discovered that there was not an accepted model or definition of police use of force incidents. Using multinomial logistic regression, she found that the officer's perception of threat led to the force response using the experiences, beliefs, and values of the involved officers. The National Violent Death Reporting System data relied on reports submitted by police departments and did not contain data relating to mental illness. Intent and a history of suicide were not significant in her analysis. The study was also limited in that the actual causative reasons or behaviors which influenced officers to use lethal force were not examined but such observations will be made in this dissertation.

Koper (2016) stated that a lack of transparency and limited public data hindered efforts to study deadly force. He viewed police use of lethal force as controversial and socially disruptive as gun violence polarized relations between police officers and residents of high crime areas. Gun violence accounted for most police officer deaths and resulted in a militarization of police departments with increased hostility between the public and the officers. Koper stated that the ability to study existing databases was impeded by a lack of transparency and missing data which led to undercounting police lethal force incidents by as much as half, hindering the development of evidence-based practices and policies. Police legitimacy was weakened when officers were not held responsible for their use of lethal force in marginalized communities. His policy recommendations included the need for strategies that include community input for improved training and policies with increased openness about use of force incidents. Koper suggested that transparent national databases may build trust with communities and mitigate public outcry when lethal force is used.

Williams, Bowman, and Jung (2016), in an article on policy, examined police lethal force incidents by comparing databases from *The Washington Post*, *The Guardian*, and *The Wall Street Journal* to available federal databases and found that the data kept by the U.S. government was incomplete and unreliable. Individual police agency data was not consistently available and may be removed from public scrutiny due to law, security threats, political concerns, or civil liability. Additionally, some police departments did not submit pertinent information to the federal government as no sanctions existed to compel such reporting. The researchers estimated only 50% of justified homicides by police officers were reported, making statistical correlation questionable. The authors stated open source datasets of the newspapers contained more accurate data. Policy suggestions included having a university to collect data using grants to fund their efforts. Limitations included the study only using lethal force caused by firearms and the use of data that was submitted by police departments or journalists, which could contain bias.

This dissertation acknowledges that inaccurate and missing data can lead to inaccurate studies, but the behaviors associated with mental illness, which are interpreted as dangerous by police officers, has received little attention by prior studies.

In conclusion, this dissertation will add to these past studies by examining the causative behaviors which influenced police officers to use lethal force during encounters involving mental illness. Observations of lethal force incidents will lessen participant bias and define contributory actions that traditional datasets have not recorded, allowing new perspectives into police lethal force incidents and encounters with people who suffer from mental illness.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH DESIGN
INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is an exploratory multiple case study using descriptive content analysis to interpret police officer and citizen behaviors during lethal force events. In 2016, there were approximately 1,000 publicly recorded deaths of civilians by American police officers and the goal of this study is to recognize if lethal police encounters with citizens involve behaviors associated with mental illness. Using videos and news stories in the public domain, I focus on the examination and interpretation of these incidents using post-event observations and content analysis of videos and news media articles to explore behaviors related to mental illness during police lethal force encounters in 2016. Using post-event observational study of videos, with the absence of a researcher in the field during the confrontation, should negate most observational bias which could be exhibited by the participants. By utilizing videos and news media articles, this research will not rely entirely on the recollections of the surviving police officers or civilian witnesses, who may offer different accounts of the same confrontation.

Past research has used several study methods, such as observational studies, citizen complaints, surveys, and official police reports; but the actual number of violent encounters and the causes of these uncommon events remain ambiguous by relying on post-event participant and witness statements (Lersch & Mieczkowski, 2005). Until recently, police have rarely been asked to respond publicly about their use of lethal force, and few academic scholars have persuaded the police to communicate more about this infrequent event. Much is not known about police shootings, making deadly force a

nebulous subject that deserves additional in-depth examination than it has historically received (Fyfe, 1988). This dissertation provides an examination of how the behaviors associated with mental illness can influence police lethal force events.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Qualitative analysis is used to make sense of large amounts of data by identifying significant observations and making a framework for communicating the information revealed from the data. Analysis is accomplished to make the findings relate to the differences and similarities of the cases. Interpreting causes, consequences, and relationships of the cases results in insights about the processes being examined. (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). By using qualitative content analysis, this study presents a more complete construct of how participant behaviors interconnect and contribute to police lethal force incidents involving mental illness.

Content Analysis

The use of recordings and videos enhance the data gathering process in unobtrusive research. Hagan (2014) stated that content analysis allows for the systematic classification and study of mass media whereas secondary analysis of materials allows the reanalysis of data which was previously gathered for other purposes and can be used to address research issues in criminology and criminal justice. Hagan further noted that the “computer revolution and internet” (p. 215) have made new information in the public domain available for research.

Participants may react to stressful events by offering prejudiced recollections in events which are examined by researchers. An advantage to the use of unobtrusive measures is the nonreactivity of the subjects being studied, making them unhampered by

the reactive effects of knowingly being watched. Nonreactive measures also avoid an overreliance on attitudinal data or the verbal descriptions by participants about their behavior (Hagan, 2014). By using content analysis to examine the incidents included in this study, this dissertation will allow an unobtrusive appraisal of lethal force events.

Content analysis offers an excellent technique in comparative and historical studies to discern trends in phenomena. The basic procedure in content analysis allows the selection of categories and subjects to be examined, the establishment of rigorous criteria for inclusion to ensure that the study can be replicated by others, assignment of the material into a preestablished classification scheme, and analyzation of the results (Hagan, 2014).

Content analysis is a qualitative research method described by Neuman and Wiegand (2000) as a technique for examining information or content in written or symbolic material. The technique allows a researcher to discover features in large amounts of material that might otherwise be unnoticed or undiscovered and is used for exploratory, explanatory, and descriptive research. This research method is desirable for examining videotapes and associated news media articles to discover potentially recognizable commonalities during police lethal force encounters with the mentally ill. The use of content analysis allows for a more complete examination of the information available in this study by presenting a more complete construct of how participant behaviors contribute to police lethal force incidents.

Most of the academic literature offers vague and sometimes conflicting reasons for police use of lethal force as past researchers did not use the unobtrusive method of video review and news media content analysis to discover if any causal factors of

behavior existed during fatal encounters involving police officers. In past studies investigators relied on participant based post-incident reports, debriefing interviews, or newspaper accounts that can offer skewed recollections of events. Direct observation of the videos of shooting incidents should minimize, if not negate, bias as reflected by the participants and observers of the events.

Facts can remain hidden from researchers when specific phenomena are measured outside the context in which they have occurred, but unobtrusive measures allow researchers to observe activity that can remain unknown using other research methods. The examination of mental illness and how it influences the perception of dangerousness by police officers has remained hidden from researchers. This study contributes to the academic discussion of police use of lethal force. Berg (2007) stated that unobtrusive research strategies gain information from various traces or records created or left by humans, whether intended or inadvertent, and allow for the study of subjects that otherwise may be difficult or impossible to study without using such measures. This dissertation includes all available news media articles and video recordings of each case posted to the public domain. The goal of this research is to illuminate behaviors related to mental illness during lethal police encounters, which are difficult to examine. Berg stated that “sensemaking” (p. 285) occurs when people make sense of the stimuli they encounter and how they perceive and interpret information and interact with others. The extensive study of many instrumental cases can contribute to a better understanding of theory in a broader context involving police encounters with the mentally ill.

The use of videos in this study has possible limitations. Visibilities can be limited due to environmental conditions such as weather or poor ambient lighting. The hands of

police officers can obstruct the view of the body worn camera when the officer is holding a firearm and the video can be obscured when an officer is running. Incidents in which police officers deliberately deactivated a body camera were not used or found in the data used in this dissertation. In two cases, body worn cameras were torn off the body of the officer, but other body worn cameras recorded the event.

Grounded Theory

Qualitative research design is enlightened through a positivist approach to research by using an inductive reasoning model. Inductive reasoning allows meaning to arise from the data through constant comparative analysis during the data collection process and allows a constructive focus to research that permits an understanding of how facts are created and how the meaning behind reality is constructed and interpreted (Boeri & Lamonica, 2015).

Grounded theory uses inductive reasoning to allow research observations to produce explanations from the information being studied via interpretation of the data to inform the researcher about the phenomenon being studied. Berg (2007) states that grounded theory has three major strengths: it allows creative insights to arise from the examination of contradictory or paradoxical evidence with less research bias than theory built from incremental deduction, as an emergent theory it is likely to be testable with constructs that can be measured, and the resultant theory may be more empirically valid due to the implicit comparison and questioning of the data from the onset of the study. The use of grounded theory in this dissertation will illuminate behaviors associated with mental illness that police officers perceive as dangerous.

Generalizability and Representation

Generalizability is the ability to transfer study findings from the study population group to an entire population and is rarely claimed in qualitative studies. Qualitative research is not normally generalizable in the sense of statistical representativeness, but it enables a researcher to produce generalizable theories via detailed observations with an in-depth familiarity with a group of people in a specific setting (Remler & Van Ryzin, 2011). One strategy is to determine if the data is accurately represented with reflexivity, which refers to the researcher's introspection and reflection of his or her own values, norms, beliefs, position of power, and privilege (Tarr, 2004; Castagno, 2012; Reimer, 2012; Boeri & Lamonica, 2015). A second strategy involves using participant or community consultants to assist in interpretation of the data and involves community members and researchers in all aspects of the research process. The third strategy involves defining representativeness in qualitative studies as a reference to the completeness and appropriateness of the sampling design (Israel, Schulz, Parker, & Becker, 2001). Generalization will be limited in this dissertation. All available incidents were used to ensure completeness in the research design but not all incidents were accessible as they were not posted to the public domain. Due to time restrictions and academic limitations of writing a dissertation, the first two strategies were not used.

Representation is the ability of the study findings to represent data accurately and is evaluated in one of three methods. Replication, one of these methods, can allow other researchers to acknowledge or contest the conclusion of a study (Boeri & Lamonica, 2015). By using content analysis of existing videos of events that have been released into the public domain, a qualitative investigation was possible for a more intensive exploratory research of the phenomena of police use of lethal force during incidents

which display abnormal behavior related to mental illness. The ability to reproduce this study and findings is made easier as the videos and news media stories remain available for public review to allow independent researchers to determine if the designated population sample appears representative and if the conclusions of this study are credible.

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES AND ANALYSIS

Research into the role of mental illness in fatal encounters involving police officers will add to the national discussion concerning the causes of police use of force. Currently, academic research that examines the behaviors of participants during lethal force encounters involving police officers and the mentally ill is limited. This study will expand this research by investigating such interactions in video recorded lethal force encounters which occurred in 2016.

Sample

Study samples can be obtained using two methods. Probability samples use strictly structured, predetermined, and inflexible sampling methods to ensure that every individual in the sample population has an equal chance to be included in the study. Nonprobability samples do not require a list of all possible cases in the population from which to draw a representative sample, nor do such studies claim to produce findings that are normally generalizable to all the population. Nonprobability samples use a variety of flexible sample designs which are informed by the research and lead to sampling designs that are not predetermined and subject to change as the researcher learns more about the targeted population (Boeri & Lamonica, 2015).

Neuman (2006) stated that purposive samples, a type of nonprobability sample, are used to obtain all possible cases that meet prespecified criteria and are used in

exploratory research for extensive investigations. Cases are selected that are informative and can be used to study populations that are difficult to study. The sample used in this study is a purposive sample in which the incidents met the criteria of deaths of civilians by police officers that were videotaped and available in the public domain. No permission or confidentiality is needed for this historical research study as the information is available to the public via the internet.

A review of all the known and available recorded police shooting incidents in 2016 will allow causative factors to be examined to understand the phenomenon of lethal force during encounters with the mentally ill, which is enigmatic to study. As the potential for observing one lethal force encounter while conducting research is minimal, the ability of a researcher to observe personally multiple lethal force encounters is not possible in a practical manner unless video recordings are used. The mention of mental illness in the videos and articles posted by media sources will serve as confirmation that mental illness was a contributing factor in the lethal events.

Many law enforcement agencies located across the United States were included in this study and no specific geographical region or population size was purposely excluded. A small number of police organizations had more than one entry for the dataset which resulted in a civilian death in 2016. With this diverse sample population, the effects of departmental policy, social class, or local police culture should be diluted during any decision-making process used by a police officer when deciding to use lethal force.

Determination of the Type of Sample

To study these lethal force incidents, selection criteria for each case in the study included if the videos of a lethal police encounters in 2016 were subsequently released to

the public and were comprised of three types of recordings. Official recordings are those released by police agencies normally in support of their officer's decisions to use lethal force and includes body worn or carried cameras and dash mounted cameras from inside vehicles. Unofficial recordings are those made by citizens who were present at the scene and includes videos made by cellular telephones and portable computers. Inadvertent recordings are recordings made by cameras that were deployed for other intended purposes such as traffic monitoring or building safety. Staged reenactments of shooting incidents were excluded from this dissertation.

News Media Articles

Police-involved shootings have provoked concerned individuals to demand more information to determine if police officers are targeting minorities with lethal force actions when such force was not necessary. Beginning in 2015, domestic and international newspapers and media companies noted the concern of racial inequity in police shootings and began to monitor incidents when American law enforcement officers used lethal force. *The Washington Post* and *The Guardian* began tallying and publicizing the information based on news reports and public records (Banks, Couzens, Blanton, & Cribb, 2015). Only these two newspapers tallied police lethal force events in 2016.

The Guardian is a British daily newspaper and is part of the Guardian Media Group and is owned by The Scott Trust. *The Guardian's* print edition has an average daily circulation of roughly 162,000 copies in England (Mayhew, 2017). The newspaper has an online United Kingdom edition as well as two international websites; Guardian Australia, founded in 2013, and Guardian US, founded in 2011. The newspaper's online

edition was the fifth most widely read in the world in October 2014, with over 42.6 million readers (Sweeney, 2014). *The Guardian* database on police lethal force in America is titled “The Counted” and it displays 1093 deaths of civilians in 2016 by police officers in the United States. “The Counted” has the years of 2015 and 2016 completed and available (<https://www.-theguardian.com/us-news/nginteractive-/2015/jun/01/the-counted-police-killings-us-database>). No other years are available. The presence of video cameras is not noted in “The Counted” but links to local newspapers in the involved jurisdictions are offered.

The Washington Post is an American newspaper and media corporation owned by The Washington Post Company with principal operations in newspaper and magazine publishing, broadcasting, and cable television systems. The daily circulation of *The Washington Post* has been estimated at 474,767 per day. The company will not disclose digital subscription numbers although it will acknowledge that over one million digital subscriptions exist (retrieved from <https://www.-washingtonpost.-com/wp-rv/postcosites-/postfram.htm?-noredirect=> on June 16, 2018). *The Washington Post* database, “Fatal Force,” displays 963 incidents of police shootings in 2016. The website stated that 142 of these incidents involved body worn cameras by officer(s) present at the respective scenes whereas 821 did not have video available. *The Washington Post* does not note if body worn camera video or video from alternative sources was available in the public domain, nor does it list links to other relevant news media coverage concerning the lethal incidents or the referenced videos.

In 2015, *The Guardian* and *The Washington Post* began efforts to identify and track the number of police lethal force confrontations but limited their studies

geographically to the United States. No other newspapers undertook such studies. Information available on both websites includes the names and demographics of the individuals killed by police, the location of the incident, the mechanism that caused the death (firearms, struck by police vehicle, in-custody death), the law enforcement agencies present, if the deceased person was armed with a weapon, and the status of the investigation. Both websites included situations in which law enforcement officers purposely used lethal force to control or stop civilians in addition to accidental deaths. *The Guardian* website lists more deaths and has internet links to various United States newspapers for additional information.

There are no assurances that either of the news media websites are accurate within their respective data sets. Both websites list two different totals for the total number of civilians killed in 2016 and both websites rely on data sourcing from private individuals by requesting information about police use of force that results in deaths for the civilian involved. These events are then reported to the website. These public-sourced data summaries were not updated as additional information became available through the local news sources and, hence, may contain dated and inaccurate information. Local news organizations appeared to present more timely information. The media articles were printed and indexed for replication, then coded for variables which are listed on the coding instrument (see Appendix A on page 172 for the coding instrument).

Videos

The increase in video making and video viewing capability has risen with the extensive adoption of cameras embedded in cell phones and small portable computers used by individual members of society. Many people post their personal videos on

various types of social media for others to view. The ubiquitous nature of the internet and the ability to view recorded videos via personal computers and smart phones allow police administrators, activists, and other members of the public to interject their interpretations of the incident into the public discourse by targeting a wide audience within their respective communities of interest. With these recordings, unobtrusive observational studies by academic researchers can be easily performed by the release of official videos, traffic monitoring videos, location-specific security videos, and videos made by members of the public.

YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/>) is an American video-sharing website headquartered in San Bruno, California. The service was created in February of 2005 and Google purchased the site in November 2006 for \$1.65 billion and it now operates as one of Google's subsidiaries. It primarily displays a wide variety of user-generated and corporate media videos and available content includes video clips, TV show clips, music videos, short and documentary films, audio recordings, movie trailers and other content such as video blogging, short original videos, and educational videos. Most of the content on YouTube has been uploaded by individuals, but media corporations including CBS, the BBC, Vevo, and Hulu offer some of their material as part of the YouTube partnership program. Videos deemed potentially offensive are available only to registered users affirming themselves to be at least 18 years old. As of February 2017, there were more than 400 hours of varied video content uploaded to YouTube each minute, and one billion hours of content are watched on YouTube every day. As of August 2017, the website was ranked as the second-most popular site in the world by Alexa Internet, a web traffic analysis company (Retrieved from <https://www.->

alexa.com/siteinfo/-youtube.com on March 15, 2018). As a response to uninformed public opinion, some police administrators and civilian activists use YouTube as a public conduit to allow nearly every community member to view police videos and evidence associated with lethal force incidents involving police officers.

The YouTube query function allowed the determination of the existence of videos in the public domain which were available for use in this study. Using data related to 2016 from both *The Washington Post* and *The Guardian*, YouTube was queried to view video footage of each incident that was available. The cases were included in this project if sufficient video and news media information was present via the internet. One hundred and twenty-nine cases that were discovered with video of these incidents in the public domain. This sample is 11.80% of the reported total of 1093 incidents of *The Guardian* and 13.40% of the potential sample population of 963 cases as reported by *The Washington Post*.

Selection Criteria

The criteria for an incident to be included in this study was a lethal force incident had occurred within the United States and resulted in the death of a person due to the actions of an American police officer in 2016 with a visual recording which was available to the public. The video had to contain enough information to code and identify common themes derived from the grounded theory technique of qualitative analysis and allow replication by other researchers to verify or contest the findings.

Each video was viewed from five to twenty times and if a variable was still in doubt after the final viewing, it was not included in the coding instrument. If the confrontation was outside the camera's view but the audio could allow for an answer on

the coding instrument, the notation was included. As an example, if the officer told the offender to keep his or her hands up or in view repeatedly but was out of view, then the coding instrument for that incident reflected that the subject did not comply with verbal commands although the researcher could not actually see the referenced hands. Such observations occurred in three of the examined cases.

Additionally, common behaviors were identified when viewing the incidents. Previously recorded incidents were re-examined for the newly identified theme. The factors were recorded on the instrument and were tabulated. Predominate situational themes related to mental illness were identified and specific examples chosen to illuminate their roles in this study.

The videos used in this study met the following secondary study inclusion criteria:

1. Either the officer(s) and/or the civilian(s) and their respective actions were recorded in video or audio partially or fully. Individual personal opinions in posted videos of the events were omitted from analysis in this study.
2. The spatial position of the participants with respect to each other can be approximately determined. The current generation of body-worn cameras use fisheye lenses that make precise measurements difficult to determine.
3. Weapons or hand implements held by participants can be identified and/or placement of the hands can be noted.
4. Body movements and/or verbal comments of most participants can be observed or heard.

Once a case was determined to be eligible for inclusion into this study, imbedded hyperlinks to local American newspapers were followed from *The Guardian* website,

“The Counted.” Three hundred and seventy-seven news media articles and 586 videos with over 75 hours of observable behavior were found. The information in these articles and videos are included in this study to give a more complete understanding of the incidents and contribute additional information concerning the circumstances of the events. After reviewing half of the sample set, a coding sheet was developed to note commonalities and items that relate to this dissertation. Please see Appendix A for a representation of the coding sheet.

Statistical Test

A chi square crosstabulation test will be used in this study. Chi square crosstabulations are used to compare two or more levels of categorical variables to determine if they are related. The nominal levels of known mental illness will be compared to those actions designated as erratic behavior, which occurs before police officers arrive at the scene of a lethal encounter and include incidents such as smelling stranger’s hair or telling others that they wish to die. Adverse behavioral reactions, which occur after the arrival of officers and may promote the use of deadly force by the officers, included police officers placing themselves into the paths of fleeing cars before using lethal force or subjects that use non-functioning models of firearms or knives to threaten responding officers. By observing if these conditions are present, the discussion of mental illness during police lethal encounters will be expanded to determine if the noted behaviors are associated through the lens of emotion dysregulation.

HYPOTHESIS

A hypothesis is a proposition or tentative statement of causal relationship between two variables and can be expressed as an expected outcome when examining the

variables. Researchers test a hypothesis to answer a research question or provide empirical support for a theory (Neuman & Wiegand, 2000). The hypothesis for this dissertation is “Does behaviors related to mental illness contribute to fatal police encounters?” Research themes of erratic behavior and adverse behavioral reactions will be compared to ascertain if they are associated with mental illness and how police officers may have been influenced by stigma during these encounters. Additionally, I will examine emotion dysregulation in respect to the incidents in which mental illness was not noted.

The use of two variables to measure the influence of a factor will increase the reliability that the noted factor effects the outcome (Neuman & Wiegand, 2000). The first variable to be examined will be erratic behavior which is behavior is commonly considered not appropriate for the social interaction and occurs before the arrival of police officers. This includes behaviors such as urinating on oneself while brandishing a knife or sitting inside a vehicle in a fast food parking lot with a shotgun in your lap. Erratic behavior may have been the primary factor for police officers to respond to the scene. The second variable will be adverse behavioral reactions and is behavior that is not appropriate for the police and citizen encounter and occurs after the arrival of officers. Adverse behavioral reactions can be the behavior that elicits a lethal force response from the officers and may be present in either the civilians or the police officers. Adverse behavioral reactions include answering a known police tactical team at the front door and shooting one of the uniformed officers or shooting a woman who is holding manicure scissors.

Using two variables of mental illness increases the reliability that the observed effects of erratic behavior and adverse behavioral reaction influences the responses of police officers during the encounters. The two variables will support the hypothesis as convergent validity as each variable examines mental illness (Neuman & Wiegand, 2000).

The Instrument

Each case was recorded using an instrument which included five pages of information. A copy of the recording instrument is attached in Appendix A on page 172. Each case was coded, and observations were derived from repeating themes among the data. The recorded data included a summary of the event, the date of occurrence, the law enforcement agency involved, the name of the individual killed, how the incident evolved into a lethal force situation, the number of seconds an officer is at the location until a weapon is discharged, the actions of the officer and the subject, the physical proximity of the participants, if the subject fled from or advanced towards the officer, and information concerning the actual recording of each incident. Video variables in the coding instrument included time of day, lighting, location, scene, type of interaction, initiating incident, number of officers responding, gender of the subject and officer (if known), the behavior of each subject, and evidence of mental illness.

THREATS TO VALIDITY

Replication of findings can show reliability in qualitative research as the sampling design provides techniques to produce the same or similar samples. However, findings will depend on the type of analysis used and may not be replicable (Boeri & Lamonica, 2015). Krathwohl and Smith (2005) noted that qualitative sampling allows a researcher

to choose a sample population that allows the ability to derive the most information for the study. The participants involved in multiple police lethal force incidents involving mental illness comprise a challenging population to examine.

Most of the videos remain in the public domain in YouTube and are available for duplication by other researchers. Due to the ephemeral nature to the internet, a small number of videos had been removed after the initial press release or adjudication of the case, possibly in respect to surviving family members, but the sequence of events remains available in other video segments associated with each incident.

Inaccurate public data may lead citizens to believe that American police officers use lethal force without due consideration as a normal part of a daily duty shift. Past research has revealed that there is a very low probability of lethal force situations occurring, but every police shooting receives extensive media coverage whereas every law enforcement contact does not receive such comprehensive coverage. Police administrators and public special interest groups may not post information or videos on their websites that are contrary to their viewpoints. However, the opposing faction will post such videotapes if it supports their viewpoint. The relative freedom of the internet allows opposing postings and the information included in this study is from opposing websites to provide a more complete contextual understanding of these encounters for this dissertation. These contradicting viewpoints may have been present during videos of specific police lethal encounters that were not posted by any person or group as the incident did not support their special interest claims but were posted by other people when the incident supported their particular interest.

Portions of the information in the websites maintained by *The Guardian* and *The Washington Post* were not current, particularly after a review for case statuses. Many cases are listed as pending but a review of news articles of the local media outlets reflected a closed status, meaning that the case has been administratively and/or judicially adjudicated but not updated on the international media websites. Neither of the large corporate media outlets continued to investigate individual cases or display the current statuses concerning the disposition of criminal, civil, or administrative proceedings related to many of the incidents. Both media outlets appear to have current information if the proceedings were relatively close in time to the date of the referenced actual incident, however those cases were not common. Case disposition for civil, criminal, and administrative proceedings for officer-involved shootings can be lengthy and unpredictable but many of them were resolved within six months of the initial incident. News media internet sites in the areas where the lethal force event occurred contained updated information, allowing their websites to contain accurate data. Those local media websites were used to provide richer and more accurate information concerning the incidents examined in this dissertation.

There are significant differences between *The Washington Post* and *The Guardian* websites. *The Guardian* did not note if video had been released in each incident. *The Washington Post* website states that 144 cases involved body-worn cameras by officers, but no other references were given as to the availability of those videos. *The Guardian* lists 1093 incidents and *The Washington Post* registers 963 incidents in 2016 in which police officers killed civilians. No explanation exists from either media corporation to explain the discrepancy between the two figures.

The Guardian's "The Counted" and The Washington Post's "Fatal Force"

websites lacked information to determine why lethal force was introduced into many of these confrontations, but local media websites contained detailed information. Twenty-four cases listed in "The Counted" and "Fatal Force" internet sites were fact-checked and an error rate of approximately 34% was discovered in that the sites did not mention that mental illness had been diagnosed before the shooting but associated local news coverage mentioned such health conditions in their respective media stories of the events. For this study, the local news media coverage added more depth of situational context, including the presence of mental illness in the subjects/.

As no independent government database exists for comparison, there is no way to ensure that all deaths which recorded eligible lethal force incidents involving police officers in 2016 were captured by these two databases. Multiple internet queries were performed for each known shooting incident involving law enforcement officers from *The Guardian* and *The Washington Post* websites in 2016. Queries were performed using victim's names, agency names, dates of deaths, and combinations thereof in YouTube to ascertain if video was publicly available for use in this study. As an additional search method, the date and law enforcement agency or agencies involved in the incident were queried via internet search engines to determine if the desired videos were available in the public domain.

Trends in the dataset were discovered by multiple views of the available videotapes and review of the associated news media reports. Behaviors of the participants were noted and grouped by using the presence of mental illness before the incident, erratic behaviors before the arrival of responding officers, and adverse

behavioral reactions after the arrival of officers. The three types of information were compared with each other and associations were discovered.

CONCLUSION

An extensive review of videotaped police lethal force events has revealed a dataset that has not been the subject of previous research. Examination of this data will allow academic insights into the role of mental illness in police lethal force incidents and advance the knowledge of the contributory factors of mental illness which influences police officers to apply extreme use of force.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation inquiry revealed that behaviors associated with mental illness contributed to police lethal force incidents during recorded confrontations between civilians and law enforcement officers in 2016. Examinations of the videos and related new media articles showed officer and citizen behaviors related to mental illness influenced how participants react during stressful encounters. The use of grounded research theory resulted in three research themes including the presence of mental illness suffered by the citizens, adverse behavioral reactions exhibited by the civilians and police officers during the encounter, and erratic behavior by the citizen before the arrival of police officers.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE DATASET

One hundred and twenty-nine (129) cases were determined to be eligible for inclusion into this study, allowing 586 videos (over 75 hours) and 377 news media articles to be observed and examined. Multiple police agencies throughout the United States are represented and each case received regional, national, and international news coverage. There were many notable cases in this data set. Robert “LeVoy” Finicum (Case 8) was shot by officers during the illegal occupation of a remote U.S. Fish and Wildlife Visitor Center in Oregon and resulted in the indictment of a special agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation for making false statements during an official investigation. Jakob Wagner (Case 43) was killed during an attempted mass shooting at high school prom in Wisconsin. Alton Sterling (Case 72) was shot after mildly resisting

arrest during a firearms-related call in Louisiana. Philandro Castile (Case 74) was fatally injured during a pretext traffic stop in Minnesota. Paul O'Neal (Case 82) was killed after fleeing from a stolen car that had just collided with a marked police patrol unit in Chicago. Terrence Crutcher's death (Case 96) occurred after he failed to follow the verbal commands of a police officer in Oklahoma. Case 97 involved a domestic terrorist attack when Dahir Adam stabbed multiple victims in a shopping mall in Minnesota during an incident related to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. Case 98 was a causative point for major urban riots and damage in North Carolina, when Keith Scott was shot in an apartment complex parking lot by a plainclothes officer.

The data set consisted of incidents that adversely affected individual officers and their respective law enforcement organizations. The Clinton (North Carolina) Police Department had to request routine patrol assistance from neighboring state and local law enforcement agencies after the shooting of John Coffee (Case 57) depleted the small agency of 7 officers who were placed on administrative leave pending the investigations of the incident. Officers were killed during encounters with Phillip Ferry (Case 15), Joseph Moreno (Case 94), and Dontrell Carter (Case 115).

Officers were shot or physically attacked but survived in multiple encounters. Bruce Kelly, Jr. (Case 11) attacked two officers while he was intoxicated. Ali Yahia (Case 19) assaulted 3 officers who responded to a 911 call at a motel. Calvin Smith (Case 21) shot two police officers in a 48 second gunfight with a total of 54 rounds being fired as the result of a vandalism call. David Mack (Case 35) used a conducted energy weapon against a deputy during a traffic stop. Laronda Sweatt (Case 37) attacked a deputy with an ax after injuring another officer during the service of an eviction notice.

Noel Rodriguez (Case 62) was shot after striking an officer with a “sharp tool.” Miguel Chavez-Angles (Case 66) attacked an officer and attempted to take her service weapon during the hijacking of a city bus. Michael Schumacher (Case 70) attempted to stab an officer with a pitchfork at the front door of a residence. Omer Ismail Ali (Case 86) returned to a shoplifting crime scene and attacked an officer with a large piece of wood. Jeffrey Cave (Case 100) shot a SWAT officer during the entry phase of the execution of a search warrant. Michael Vance, Jr. (Case 109) shot two police officers during a major multi-day crime spree that included the beheading of his uncle and Facebook live streams during the event. James Ritchie (Case 113) was an unidentified serial killer that shot an officer who attempted to question him about an unpaid cab fare. Brent Quinn (Case 123) shot an officer during a traffic stop to investigate a reported suspicious vehicle. James Tylka (Case 128) shot a state trooper and waited to ambush rescuing officers and medical responders before he was killed.

THE ENCOUNTERS

Gender

In 121 of 129 cases (93.80%), the deceased civilian was a male while female subjects were killed in 8 cases (06.20%). While there were cases in which both males and females were present, only the males were killed by police officers in these few incidents. No case represented more than one civilian being killed.

Most of the officers who shot a weapon were male. In 106 of 129 cases (82.17%) the officers were identified as male while female officers were present or discharged their weapons in 10 cases (07.75%). However, in 24 cases (18.60%), the gender of the shooting officers could not be determined.

Age

The ages of the involved police officers were predominately unknown with 103 cases (79.84%) in which no age was given. In the 26 cases where ages were given, 14 cases (53.85%), the officers were between the ages of 21 and 30 years of age while officers between 31 and 40 years of age were present in 11 cases (42.31%). Officers between the ages of 41 to 50 years of age were present in 7 cases (26.92%) and officers between 51 and 60 years of age were in 1 case (03.85%). Officers of different ages appeared to discharge their firearms during the same incident in many of the cases, on and off camera. No officers over 61 years of age were noted in the videos or news media accounts. The amount of missing data does not allow age to be considered a factor in fatal police encounters.

In stark contrast, the ages of all involved citizens were noted. Sixty-seven of the deceased persons (51.94%) were between the ages of 22 and 39 while an additional 39 (30.23%) were between the ages of 40 to 59. Table 1 displays the range of ages of the deceased civilians.

Table 1. Deceased Civilian Age at Time of Incident

Age in Years	Number of Cases	Percentage of Cases
14 to 17	5 cases	03.88%
18 to 21	12 cases	09.30%
22 to 29	33 cases	25.58%
30 to 39	34 cases	26.36%
40 to 49	21 cases	16.28%
50 to 59	18 cases	13.95%
60 to 69	5 cases	03.88%
70 to 79	1 case	00.78%

Cameras Present

Multiple types of cameras were used to record the cases examined in this study. Law enforcement sourced cameras were present in 77 cases (59.69%). The most

common cameras were dash mounted in patrol cars with 59 cases (45.74%). Body worn or carried cameras were present in 53 cases (41.09%). Many of the police officers involved in the study cases used both dash mounted cameras and body worn or carried cameras. A camera mounted in a conducted energy device recorded 1 incident (00.78%). There were no police cameras present in 52 cases (40.31%).

Videos made by civilians, cellphone cameras, and other video recording devices, were present in 20 of the cases (15.50%) and included one dash cam not mounted in a police vehicle. Business and private residence surveillance cameras were used in 35 cases (27.13%). Multiple camera types were present in 39 cases (30.23%). Several cases had multiple cameras present, both government and citizen owned. Helicopters, representing both police and news media, recorded 6 of the cases in the dataset (04.65%).

Table 2 notes the number and type of cameras that recorded the incidents included in this study and were available in the public internet domain.

Table 2. Cameras Present and Recording at the Scene

Type of Camera	Number of Cases	Percentage of Cases
Police Dash Mounted Cameras	59 cases	45.74%
Police Body Worn or Carried Cameras	53 cases	41.09%
Municipal, Business, or Residential Cameras	35 cases	27.13%
Civilian Cameras	20 cases	15.50%
News Media and Police Helicopter Mounted Cameras	6 cases	04.65%
Police Conducted Energy Weapon Mounted Cameras	1 case	00.78%
Unknown Type of Camera	4 cases	03.10%
No Law Enforcement Agency Cameras Present at Scene	52 cases	40.31%

Law enforcement agencies released video in 115 of 129 cases (89.15%) while citizens and witnesses released video in 23 cases (17.83%). In one case (00.78%), it was not determined who released the video. Both law enforcement sources and private individuals released videos of the same incident in various cases.

Locations and Times of Occurrence

Urban areas were the location of 71 of 129 cases (55.04%) of the examined events while rural locations were present in 14 of 129 cases (10.85%). One shooting took place in a city park (00.78%). The remaining 43 cases (33.33%) occurred in locations that could not be determined by observing the videos.

Industrial or non-residential areas were identified in 30 of the cases (23.26%). Residential areas, which include houses, apartments, condominiums, and other places of residence in both urban and rural areas, were the location of 41 of 129 cases (31.78%) during the lethal events.

Streets, sidewalks, highways, and parking areas were the location for 96 of the 129 cases (74.42%). These areas were those in which the public use during the normal course of events for everyday life and included parking areas of residences, stores, and public right of ways.

Sixty-one of the incidents (47.29%) occurred between 4:00 pm and 11:59 pm. The remainder of the fatal events occurred throughout the day, but 6 incidents (04.65%) occurred at unknown times. Table 3 reveals the time of occurrence in 4-hour intervals.

Table 3. Time of Occurrence of the Incidents

Time Occurred	Number of Cases	Percentage of Cases
Midnight to 4:00 am.	19 cases	14.73%
4:01 am to 8:00 am.	9 cases.	06.98%
8:01 am to noon.	19 cases	14.73%
12:01 pm to 4:00 pm	15 cases	11.63%
4:01 pm to 8:00 pm	25 cases	19.38%
8:01 pm to 11:59 pm	36 cases	27.91%
Unknown time.	6 cases	04.65%

Type of Incident

Activities generated by police officers and public calls for service as dispatched to the responding police officers are represented in this category. Incidents such as a “shots

fired” call or any call that mentioned a firearm were represented in 29 of the 129 cases (22.48%). Disturbance calls accounted for 19 of the cases (14.73%) and domestic violence related calls were present in 16 cases (12.40%). These categories accounted for 64 cases (49.61%).

Mental illness was noted as an initial factor requiring police involvement in 11 cases (8.53%), a substantially smaller number as this study found that mental illness was present in 94 cases (72.87%) after the incident had concluded. Each of the remaining call categories accounted for 10% or less of these fatal incidents. Table 4 records the type of initial call or circumstances that initiated the fatal encounter.

Table 4. Type of Incident

Type of Call	Number of Cases	Percentage of Cases
Gun or gunshots fired	29 cases	22.48%
Disturbance	19 cases	14.73%
Domestic Violence	16 cases	12.40%
Fugitive or Warrant Service	13 cases	10.08%
Armed Robbery	12 cases	09.30%
Mental Illness	11 cases.	08.53%
Stolen Motor Vehicle	10 cases	07.75%
Traffic Stops	9 cases	06.98%
Driving While Intoxicated or Drugs Involved	7 cases	05.43%
Hostage Situations	6 cases	04.65%
Off Duty Responses	5 cases	03.88%
Carjacking	4 cases	03.10%
Law Enforcement Pursuit	4 cases	03.10%
Murder	4 cases	03.10%
Request for Assistance	3 cases	02.33%
Home Invasion	2 cases	01.55%
Trespass	2 cases	01.55%
911 Hang Up or 911 Open Line	2 cases	01.55%
Shoplifting	2 cases	01.55%
Burglary	2 cases	01.55%
Serve Eviction Notice	2 cases	01.55%
Suspicious Parked Car or Person	2 cases	01.55%
Littering	1 case	00.78%
Toll Road Enforcement	1 case	00.78%
High School Prom Security Assignment	1 case	00.78%
Welfare Check	1 case	00.78%
Terrorist Attack	1 case	00.78%

Number of Officers Present

Most of the cases, 86 of 129 (66.67%), had no officers present when the involved shooting officer arrived at the scene. In 8 cases (06.20%), there was one officer already present at the scene. In 20 cases (15.50%), there was not enough information available to determine how many officers were present when shooting officer arrived at the scene. Table 5 displays the number of officers that were on-scene when the shooting officer arrived.

Table 5. Number of Officers Present when Shooting Officer Arrives

Number of Officers Present	Number of Cases	Percentage
No Officers Present	86 cases.	66.67%
1 Officer Present	8 cases	06.20%
2 Officers Present	3 cases	02.33%
3 Officers Present	3 cases	02.33%
4 Officers Present	No cases	00.00%
5 Officers Present	1 case	00.78%
6 or More Officers Present	8 cases	06.20%
Unable to Determine Number of Officers Present	20 cases	15.50%

General Information Concerning the Shooting Officers

In 122 cases (94.57%), the officers were dressed in uniforms or wearing clothing that identified them as law enforcement agents. Officers in plainclothes were in 14 cases (10.85%) while 2 cases (01.55%) research was not able to determine what type of clothing the officer was wearing.

Marked police vehicles were observed in 99 of the 129 cases (76.74%) while unmarked vehicles were used in 11 cases (08.53%). Law enforcement vehicles were not observed in 21 of the cases (16.28%) and research was unable to determine if vehicles were present in 3 cases (02.33%).

At the Scene

The number of officers who eventually discharged a weapon at the scene were clustered at 1 or 2 officers shooting with 99 of 129 cases (76.75%). In 5 of the cases

(03.88%), research could not determine how many officers discharged their weapons.

Table 6 presents the number of officers discharging weapons in the events.

Table 6. Number of Officers Firing at the Civilian.

Number of Officers Firing	Number of Cases	Percentage of Cases
1 Officer Firing	67 cases	51.94%
2 Officers Firing	32 cases	24.81%
3 Officers Firing	11 cases	08.53%
4 Officers Firing	6 cases	04.65%
5 Officers Firing	2 cases	01.55%
6 or More Officers Firing	6 cases	04.66%
Unable to Determine Number of Officers Firing	5 cases	03.88%

In 67 cases (51.94%), the officers discharged their weapons within 30 seconds of arriving on the location of the incident. Table 7 displays a summary of the number of seconds that the shooting officer was on-scene before discharging his or her weapon.

Table 7. Number of Seconds Officer is On-Scene before Shooting

Number of Seconds	Number of Cases	Percentage of Cases
0 to 3 Seconds	8 cases	06.20%
4 to 10 Seconds	26 cases	20.16%
11 to 20 Seconds	23 cases	17.83%
21 to 30 Seconds	10 cases	07.75%
31 to 40 Seconds	6 cases	04.65%
41 to 50 Seconds	5 cases	03.88%
51 to 60 Seconds	5 cases	03.88%
61 to 120 Seconds	8 cases	06.20%
121 to 180 Seconds	6 cases	04.65%
181 to 299 Seconds	7 cases	05.43%
300+ Seconds	7 cases	05.43%
Unknown	18 cases	13.95%

Sixty-three cases (48.84%) displayed 5 or more shots being fired. Table 8 discloses the number of shots fired by involved officers during the incidents.

Table 8. Number of Shots Fired by Officers

Number of Shots Fired by Officers	Number of Cases	Percentage of Cases
1 shot	11 cases	08.53%
2 shots	16 cases	12.40%
3 shots	13 cases	10.08%
4 shots	9 cases	06.98%
5 shots	13 cases	10.08%

6 shots	11 cases	08.53%
7+ shots	39 cases	30.23%
Unknown	16 cases	12.40%
No shots (Conducted energy weapon)	1 case	00.78%

Handguns were the predominate law enforcement firearm used in 113 cases (87.60%) while rifles were used in 20 cases (15.50%). Shotguns were used in 3 cases (02.33%). In 5 cases (03.88%), the type of firearm could not be identified. Multiple weapon types were used in several cases. Conducted energy devices, which can shoot pronged projectiles to complete an electrical circuit, were used in 8 cases (06.20%) including 1 fatality resulting from the device itself.

Firearms and replica firearms were used in 58 cases (44.96%) by civilians while knives, other edged weapons, and sharp tools were used in 43 cases (33.33%). Blunt objects were used by the subjects in 3 cases (02.33%), non-weapons which were disguised to present as weapons were used in 2 cases (01.55%), and a conducted energy weapon was used by one civilian against a police officer in one case (00.78%). Civilians did not possess a weapon in 20 cases (15.50%), and it was not determined if any civilian weapon was present in 2 cases (01.55%).

MENTAL ILLNESS

The research examined if confirmed mental illness was mentioned in the reviewed news media articles and videos as being present during the life of the civilians before the fatal incident. Post-event news conferences, news media reports, comments by family and friends, and official press briefings by criminal justice agencies and private attorneys noted that some deceased persons had been diagnosed with a prior mental condition or stated that a mental illness may have been a contributing behavioral factor during the

lethal force situation. From a review of the associated on-line news media articles and videos, the presence of mental illness attributed to the deceased was noted. No mention of mental illness that was assigned to a law enforcement officer or agent was recorded in any of the cases. Although there is no way to verify these claims of prior mental illness or the contribution of the condition to the participant's state of mind during the incident, this study will assume such media claims are valid.

Prior mental illness was found in 45 cases (34.88%) while 84 cases (65.12%) did not reference such mental health conditions. Appendix B on page 185 is a listing of the cases in which mental illness was referenced in media accounts.

ADVERSE BEHAVIORAL REACTIONS

Adverse behavioral reactions were defined in this study as behaviors exhibited by civilians or officers which are contrary to the expected behavior exhibited by a typical or reasonable person or officer in the same or similar situation or circumstance. These behaviors occurred after the arrival of police offices and contributed to the fatal outcome of the encounter. Many cases included actions by the subject or the officer performing extreme acts such as pointing a non-functioning replica firearm at police, requesting responding law enforcement officers to kill them, or if an officer knowingly placed herself or himself in front of or inside a fleeing vehicle.

Adverse behavioral reactions which contributed to the event becoming fatal were observed in 78 of 129 cases (60.47%) solely by the civilian and in 11 cases (08.53%) only by the responding officers. Both officers and civilians contributed adverse behavioral reactions in 3 cases (02.33%). Combining all three categories yields that 92 cases (71.32%) displayed identifiable adverse behavioral reactions by the participants.

No contributory abnormal behavioral reactions were noted in 35 cases (27.13%) as these participants appeared to function in the normal roles of offender and officer. In 2 cases (01.55%), a review of the videos did not allow for a determination of the presence of adverse behavioral reactions. Appendix C on page 187 is a case listing of the observed adverse behavioral reactions.

ERRATIC BEHAVIOR

Observations revealed citizens acting in a manner that exhibited erratic behavior before police officers were summoned to the eventual lethal encounter. Subsequent exploration of the media articles and videos associated with the incident illuminated how human behavior before the arrival of law enforcement officers could be predictive of the event becoming a lethal force event.

In 77 cases (59.69%), the offender exhibited erratic behavior before the arrival of the law enforcement officers at the scene. In 52 cases (40.31%), such erratic behavior was not noted. No officers exhibited erratic behavior as this query was limited to the time before their arrival at the scene. Appendix D on page 190 notes the erratic behavior that was exhibited by the citizen before police officers arrived as the scene of the fatal event.

INTERACTION BETWEEN THE RESEARCH THEMES

Sixty cases (46.51%) displayed Adverse Behavioral Actions and Erratic Behavior, 41 cases (31.78%) contained actions that were identified as Adverse Behavioral Actions and Mental Illness, and 37 cases (28.69%) showed elements of Erratic Behavior and Mental Illness. All three research themes were present in 35 cases (27.13%) in the dataset. These interactions occurred during the lethal force event and were done by the

citizen. The influence of responding police officers was not examined as no information was available concerning their behavior before the incident or if they had been previously diagnosed with mental illness. Appendix E on page 192 illustrates the interaction of the research themes within each case of this study.

A chi square crosstabulation analysis was performed to compare the interaction of the research themes. A significant relationship was revealed showing $X^2 (1) = 16.38, p = 00.00$. Phi showed a strong relationship between adverse behavioral acts and erratic behaviors in relation to mental illness.

Crosstabulation of Adverse Behavioral Reactions (ABR) and Erratic Behavior (EB) with Mental Illness (MI)

		Mental Illness			
		No	Yes	Total	
ABR & EB	No	Count	34	3	37
		% within Mental Illness	40.5%	6.7%	28.7%
	Yes	Count	50	42	92
		% within Mental Illness	59.5%	93.3%	71.3%
Total	Count	84	45	100.0%	
	% within Mental Illness	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Significance (2-sided)	Exact Significance (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	16.375 ^a	1	.000		
Continuity Correction ^b	14.763	1	.000		
Likelihood Ratio	19.188	1	.000		
Fisher's Exact Test				.000	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	16.248	1	.000		
N of Valid Cases	129				

^a 0 cells (0.00%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 12.91.

^b Computed only for a 2x2 table.

Symmetric Measures

		Approximate Value	Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.356	.000
	Cramer's V	.356	.000
	Contingency Coefficient	.336	.000
Number of Valid Cases		129	

RACE

In examination of the 95 cases that displayed behaviors as noted in the research themes, Blacks were killed in 46 cases (48.42%) and Whites were killed in 34 cases (35.70%), Hispanics were killed in 11 cases (11.58%), Asians were killed in 2 cases (02.11%) and Native Americans were killed in 2 cases (02.11%). Insufficient data was available to determine the race of the involved police officers in this study. Appendix F on page 194 displays the ethnicity or race of the civilians in this dataset that displayed behaviors as defined in the research themes. The high number of male participants is discussed later as a function of emotion dysregulation.

Race demographics displayed in the U. S. Census Bureau's 2016 American Community Survey (p. 32) reveal that Whites composed 66.7% of the population, Hispanics were 17.7%, Blacks were 12.0%, Asians were 6.6%, and Native Americans were 3.1% (retrieved from <https://census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/working-papers/2017/-Harth-01.pdf> on May 20, 2020). This data represents the nation as a whole and does not examine racial distribution within police jurisdictions.

Comparing the data from the 2016 American Community Survey and the findings from this study, Whites were killed by police officers at a reduced rate than represented in the national population. Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans were also represented in the study but with fewer fatalities than their respective population. Blacks were killed at a substantially higher rate than their representation in the U.S. Census Bureau study and this finding may be due to the elevated price of obtaining mental health care as discussed in Chapter 5.

Zimring (2017) found that during criminal justice activities, 41% of Blacks were killed by police and he noted that number represented a larger proportion when compared to Whites and Hispanics killed by police. Zimring cautioned that proportional estimates may be less than aggregate estimates as the Federal Bureau of Investigation oversamples larger cities that have higher populations of Blacks and more deaths may occur in those areas than smaller populated areas.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this dissertation indicated a strong relationship of the research concepts of erratic behavior and abnormal behavioral reactions supporting mental illness related to both police officers and the subjects of the incidents. Responding police officers, combined with the information received by police dispatchers, witnesses, and family members, interpreted the incident to be life threatening and used lethal force to resolve the incident. By recognizing the identified behaviors and changing police mindsets, officers may be trained to use alternative methods to resolve incidents involving persons suffering from mental illness.

Blacks were killed at a higher rate than other races when compared to national census data. The aggregate sampling by the U.S. Census Bureau may not be reflective of the racial composition of individual police jurisdictions and may not be accurate as a comprehensive explanation of the role of race in police lethal force events.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

Many examples of behaviors related to mental illness were observed in the police lethal force incidents examined in this study. These behaviors allowed responding police officers to quickly misinterpret the actions of the subject as dangerous and resulted in lethal force events. The ability for police officers to recognize manifestations of mental illness in the first moments of a critical incident may allow for a comprehensive understanding of the situation and encourage officers to use non-lethal conclusions.

The proportionality of an officer's force response should incorporate reasonableness to the actions of the offender and be necessary for the safety of the public while adhering to applicable laws and agency guidelines. Such appropriate responses can enhance police legitimacy and encourage community support during use of force incidents. In turn, fewer fatalities during police encounters can build trust with community members. By using resolutions that include mental health concerns, police officers can employ techniques that are not intended to be lethal.

The principal variation of this study was not dependent on the fatality of the citizen but upon an examination of the behaviors of the participants before the death occurred. This study does not determine the legal justification of the use of lethal force or the individual merits of each shooting incident, as those decisions are the judgements of local authorities. The unique context of each lethal force event discourages this researcher from assessments. However, the observations of behaviors in each of these

cases allow insights into the process of how common behaviors associated with mental illness contribute to lethal police encounters.

THE ENCOUNTERS

Each encounter examined in this study was unique. Circumstances, locations, and the participants were different in each incident, but commonalities were found. Some brief observations concerning the encounters are offered.

Gender

In 121 cases (93.80%), male subjects were present in police lethal force incidents while male police officers were present in 106 cases (82.17%). In 93 cases (72.10%), male was the gender of both the subjects and the officers in the same incident. Males were clearly the gender of most participants in this study.

Cohn, Jakupack, Seibert, Hilderbrandt, and Zeichner (2010) found that males who believe in traditional gender roles are at a higher risk of using violence in response to actions that threaten masculinity and showed an inability to respond appropriately to emotional distress.

Zimring (2017) found that males represented 49.2% of the general population but were noted to be the victims of police shootings in 95% of cases, which is a higher proportion of gender inequality found in felony arrests or other types of law enforcement contacts.

Two cases in this study illustrate these observations. LaVoy Finicum, Case 8, taunted male law enforcement officers to shoot him during the encounter that led to his death while Case 93 involved the execution of an arrest warrant when the offender, Jesse Beshaw, fled from Franklin County (VT) Sheriff's Deputy Nickolas Palmier, then

verbally challenged the officer to shoot him as he held his hands behind his back and advanced towards the officer at the end of a foot pursuit. Both cases involved male subjects issuing taunting challenges directed towards the responding male officers and appeared to display inappropriate responses to stress, suggesting a nexus to emotion dysregulation which is discussed later in this chapter.

Age

The ages of the involved police officers were predominately unknown with 103 cases (79.84%) in which no age was given, but the ages of all civilians were noted. Sixty-seven of the deceased civilians (51.94%) were between the ages of 22 and 39 while an additional 39 (30.23%) were between the ages of 40 to 59.

Arrests are concentrated in younger age groups but the risk of being killed by a police officer increased in age groups over twenty and remains a higher risk than arrest encounters in comparison to other age groups. Although criminal activity peaks in the late teenage years and arrest rates diminish as a person approaches thirty, the risk of becoming a victim of a police lethal encounter rises sharply with persons in their twenties and does not diminish until a person reaches forty years of age (Zimring, 2017).

Individuals between the ages of 22 to 59 accounted for 106 cases (82.17%) of the cases examined in this study. Although certain individuals may decrease or cease criminal behavior as they age, mental illness did not appear to lessen with age as 30% of the cases in this study were between the ages of 40 to 59.

Cameras Present

Multiple types of cameras were used to record the cases examined in this study with law enforcement sourced cameras present in 77 cases (59.69%). Videos made by

civilians were present in 20 of the cases (15.50%) and business and private residence surveillance cameras were used in 35 cases (27.13%). Zimring (2017) stated that surveillance cameras have provided 7% of known videos, police cameras accounted for 10.50%, cameras operated by private citizens composed 2.5% of known recordings. The data set used in this dissertation revealed considerably higher instances of each type of camera that captured video recordings of police lethal encounters.

Police cameras merit attention as new cases appear regularly, giving attention to police and public conduct during encounters by the photographic evidence they yield. Each new recording of police and citizen encounters can make situations clearer while discounting or verifying allegations of mistreatment during these interactions. Video reviews can guide the reviews of police shootings and suggest changes to training and policies to reduce police use of lethal force (Zimring, 2017).

Locations and Times of Occurrence

Urban areas were the location of 71 of 129 cases (55.04%) of the examined events while rural locations were present in 14 of 129 cases (10.85%). The data in this study suggest that police lethal force events occurred predominately in urban areas. However, the inability to determine a third of the incident sites from the examined videos makes this finding unreliable.

Industrial or non-residential areas were identified in 30 of the cases (23.26%) and residential areas, streets, sidewalks, highways, and parking areas were the stage for 96 of the 129 cases (74.42%). This finding indicates that police lethal encounters largely occurred in those areas where people congregate regularly as represented by this examination.

Sixty-one of the incidents (47.29%) occurred between 4:00 pm and 11:59 pm. The time span of 4:00 pm to 11:59 pm is traditionally considered after work hours, suggesting traditional leisure times are when a large proportion of deaths occurred as compared to the remaining hours in a day.

Type of Call

Disturbance calls were noted as initial responses in 19 cases (14.73%) and domestic violence were noted in 16 cases (12.40%) of the cases in this study while a prior examination by Zimring (2017) revealed that disturbance calls represented 10.8% of calls while domestic violence was the issue in 12.4% of the incidents. Shots fired and firearms calls represented 29 cases (22.48%) of the initial responses in this study but Zimring (2017) noted only 6.8% of calls in his study involved firearms or shots being fired as the initial notification to responding officers.

This disparity between the current study and Zimring's efforts may be reflective of the use of publicly available video versus his observations of all civilians involved in police lethal force incidents, with and without available video.

SUICIDE BY COP

Eighty-one cases (62.80%) in this study exhibited behaviors by the subject that elicited the application of lethal force, which has been previously identified as a component of suicide by cop. Examples include Case 1 when Joshua Sisson held a knife to his boyfriend's neck and advanced towards officers in a threatening manner, Case 24 when Kionte Spencer pointed a replica firearm at officers as they responded to a "man with a gun" call, and Case 30 when Robert Dentmond challenged officers with an assault

rifle. These adverse behavioral reactions by the subjects resulted in officers using lethal force as they interpreted the actions to be threats towards themselves or others.

“Suicide by cop” has been observed in police culture since 1958 and it used as a vocation-specific code phrase to represent a subject precipitated homicide in shooting incidents involving a police officer (Mohandie et. al, 2009). A detailed definition remains elusive among researchers. One study suggested that irrational thought was not a factor (Lord, 2012) while others consider suicidal intent to be a central theme within the phenomena (Klinger, 2001; Arias et.al, 2008; Lord, 2012, 2104; Jordan, Panza, & Dempsey, 2020). A notable lack of consistency remains when defining these cases (Jordan, Panza, & Dempsey, 2020) as many factors have been identified as being present in subject precipitated suicide and include mental illness (Parent & Verdun-Jones, 1998; Lord, 2000), being an older White suicidal male with a criminal history (Lord, 2014), and being a mid-30s male with disrupted relationships and mental health concerns (Jordan, Panza, & Dempsey, 2020).

Most definitions included verbal or behavioral threats by the individual that provoke police officers to apply lethal force to protect themselves or others (Lord, 2012). Other definitions included that the subject had suicidal intent and elicited a police officer to shoot them (Arias et. al, 2008; Jordan, Panza, & Dempsy, 2020). Mohandie et. al (2009) defined “suicide by cop” cases as when the subject engages in conduct that presents actual or apparent risks to others with the intention to cause a lethal force response by police officers present.

Efforts to identify and study the intent of these incidents have been difficult as the intent must be distinguished after the death of the subject using indicators that are rarely

understood. With minimal evidence, proving that a subject's intent was to die by suicide is unlikely (Lord, 2012) as interaction with other factors during and before the incident make these cases difficult to classify as suicide by cop using the assumption that the person intended to die but caused police officers to perform the actual killing (Lord & Sloop, 2010).

Klinger (2001) stated that many studies were not able to determine intent in suicide by cop cases, making the number of persons who elicit police officers to kill them difficult to estimate. Lord (2014) found that intent was not significant in a multivariate analysis of suicide by cop events but Mohandie et. al (2009) stated that 38% of subjects in those cases verbally communicated their suicidal intentions before being killed by police officers.

McKenzie (2006) noted that subjects involved in suicide by cop events may not knowingly plan to die during these encounters but factors such as mental illness or substance abuse can influence actions that are later mistaken for deliberant intent to harm others. Lord and Sloop (2010) identified verbal communication to signify a desire to die as evidence of intent and suggested that suicide by cop studies include both verbal and non-verbal indicators to determine intent. In later studies, Lord (2012, 2014) noted that mental illness may contribute to these police shootings.

Jordan, Panza, and Dempsey (2020) observed that the victims of suicide by cop incidents had experienced mental illness, substance abuse, and stressful life events at the time of their deaths. Homant and Kennedy (2000) stated that 31% of studied incidents presented known planning to be killed by police officers and 57% of their sample

possessed irrational and emotionally disturbed behavior which led to suicide by cop deaths.

THE ANALYTICAL THEMES OF THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF
REALITY, SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM, SYMBOLIC COMMUNICATION, AND
THE SPLIT SECOND SYNDROME

The lethal events in this study were complex incidents that displayed adversarial actions and reactions by the participants. The interpretation of these actions and reactions by police officers influenced their decisions to use lethal force. The Social Construction of Reality (Berger & Luckman, 1966), Symbolic Interactionism (Blumer, 1969), Symbolic Communication (Manning, 1988), and The Split Second Syndrome (Fyfe, 1988) were used as analytical concepts to understand how personal and professional bias can influence the actions of participants during lethal police contacts with subjects who display mental illness.

Context

Human thought and concepts are influenced by social interaction, allowing context to be shared among police officers via a constant interchange of interpretations of events. Small groups of individuals may propose a theory, but everyone participates in defining the concepts by using personal experiences. Unless the interchange is performed in person, it is possible to misinterpret signals during these shared experiences (Berger and Luckman, 1966). This misinterpretation becomes critical when responding police officers are not aware of the presence of mental illness in the subject's past or are not aware of the subject's current behaviors which could suggest mental illness.

In Case 44, Chandler (AZ) Police Officers Daniel Caldwell and Joshua Parks were directed to a local Walmart to investigate Mitchell Oakley for loitering. Both officers may have interpreted the term “loitering” as not dangerous in the context of local police culture, but Mr. Oakley possessed a firearm and shot at both officers before being killed. Mr. Oakley had been committed for mental health treatment and released before the incident. The responding officers were not aware that Mr. Oakley was the subject of the complaint or that he had been a recent patient in a mental health facility, allowing them to misinterpret the “loitering” call as not dangerous as they were unaware that Mr. Oakley possessed a handgun.

Circumstances and behaviors are dependent upon the actors in any given situation, making police encounters dynamic. Knowledge is socially dispersed during social interchange between individuals, giving police officers the ability to respond to people and events in a manner appropriate to their shared context of culture and past experiences. These culturally shared responses create social order when persons display conduct and activities which are defined as appropriate by police culture, which uses continuous input to define context and suggest acceptable police conduct. Repeated social interaction allows behavior to become predictive, suggesting established and expected routines during shared encounters (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Blumer, 1969).

Knowledge arises from the position an individual occupies within a social environment and differs by the degrees of familiarity with each type of incident. As events occur, the objectivity of thought becomes clearer as different perspectives are subjectively experienced by a person. Different actions and objects present themselves as parts of this perceived familiarity by having ritual or shared meanings which are accepted

by members of a social group (Burger & Luckman, 1966). Knowledge allows events to be processed into shared categories and become influences to classify future phenomenon during interactions with other subjects in similar circumstances. When performing an activity related to policing, this familiarity allows the performance of actions while not having specific knowledge about the people in the interaction (Manning, 1988).

Interpretation of an experience is accomplished when a police officer assigns meaning using socially constructed local expressions and contexts to define an incident. As events are made known to police employees, each person adds or subtracts information which can change the context and meaning of an event by the officer. Not all officers may receive identical information of an event and each officer must determine the context of the given situation with the information received from police dispatchers. Additional information can change the meaning or significance of a situation and missing facts must be surmised by responding officers (Manning, 1988). Certain locations can add to the context of the individual officer by being in a known dangerous neighborhood or a safer rural area or the subject's gender or race.

A dynamic encounter with missing information and incomplete knowledge contributed to a lethal force event in Case 128 when Oregon State Police Trooper Nic Cederberg attempted to stop James Tylka arising from an "attempt to locate" request from a police dispatcher center. Trooper Cederberg was unaware that Mr. Tylka was wanted for killing his estranged wife although the dispatchers knew of the homicide. Trooper Cederberg would later sue the county, the responsible party for the dispatch center, after he survived multiple gunshot wounds from Mr. Tylka. Trooper Cederberg stated that had he known of the prior dangerous actions of Mr. Tylka; he would have

responded in a safer manner. The trooper believed that insufficient information given to him led to an incorrect interpretation of the situation and subjected him to violence that could have been avoided.

Vocabulary associated with police work allows officers to fashion responses that are acceptable to the shared contexts of the collective and increases the ability to quickly respond to situations (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Blumer, 1969). The uneven distribution of information can lead to an incident having more than one potential outcome as each officer receives only partial information to plan potential outcomes, including inappropriate resolutions (Manning, 1988).

Case 46 displayed how partial communication can result in lethal force when Darrell Machemehl robbed a store using a sawed-off shotgun and was fleeing from responding police officers. The shotgun fell from his vehicle and was recovered by officers, but the information was not shared with other officers during the pursuit. Subsequently, Mr. Machemehl was shot by officers as he attempted to retrieve the missing shotgun. The officer that fired the shot was unaware that the shotgun was in the custody of other officers and his contextual perception of the actions of Mr. Machemehl was interpreted to be dangerous based on his limited information of the evolving incident.

Meaning

Key words concerning location, gender, and race are the focus of police messages and can give associative meaning to expressions, allowing officers to interpret or misinterpret an event (Manning, 1988). Officers trust each other and give their resolutions credibility by using shared contexts to provide meaning. Shared meanings allow police officers to define their experiences with members of their group and allow

officers to formulate potential responses to mitigate problems while adhering to police cultural norms (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Blumer, 1969; Fyfe, 1988). Contextual planning uses past shared experiences to establish meaning to make anticipatory actions possible once the event is defined by a police officer. The use of shared experiences to reference current situations allows police officers to link potential unknown factors with similar past events to determine acceptable resolutions but problems arise when officers attempt to interpret context within the terms of policing and appropriate legal codes (Manning, 1988; Fyfe, 1988).

Knowledge is defined as the certainty that phenomena are real and possesses special characteristics. Reality pertains to phenomena that are independent of the will of a person but allow different interpretations to arrive at different meanings of an event. Reality and knowledge interact within situational contexts and can be perceived separately according to the perspective of the individual. Legitimation in a police culture occurs when behaviors are explained, justified, and accepted by officers as a vocational group. The behaviors become institutionalized to allow control and acceptance by members of the police society, particularly when people lack all possible knowledge about a situation and rely on shared meanings and stereotypes (Berger & Luckman, 1966).

Officers define meaning by using the total context of a situation and past influences to make interpretations of an event that are influenced by other members of the collective (Blumer, 1969). The use of technology in police communications can lead to fabricated meanings which make true knowledge elusive as police officers misinterpret certain social processes, which they may not have personally experienced, but can be a

false interpretation of the current police call (Manning, 1988; Fyfe, 1988). Meaning is socially constructed within the confines of a police organization by the interpretation of their shared experiences using implicit knowledge of key words and the implied content of messages. Key words, such as “crazy” or “mental patient,” are used by officers to characterize messages and can be the defining aspect of an incident. As an example, in Case 38, Luis Gongora was initially described as “crazy” when he was reported walking down the street with a knife in his hands. Officers arrived at the scene and Mr. Gongora was shot when he did not comply with verbal commands and advanced towards the officers while holding the knife.

Critical information to aid in decision-making may not be available to the officers. As information is transferred between officers, different meanings can occur which can contextually frame how information is interpreted using key words in police communications such as “crazy” (Manning, 1988). The descriptive word “crazy” suggests potential danger and can elicit meanings associated with the stigma of mental illness. The key phrase of “behavioral crisis” instead of “crazy” could have supplied responding law enforcement officers with different references to encourage a less than lethal outcome during the encounter with Mr. Gongora.

Collective definitions are used to fashion acceptable responses by police officers. Social interaction with other officers can affect how individual officers will respond to behaviors interpreted as threatening as the previous actions of other officers allow an individual officer to reference solutions that have been accepted historically and apply them in current situations (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Blumer, 1969; Fyfe, 1988). Individual officers are offered great discretion in resolution choice and shared resolutions

are used in policing as a mode of adaptation to unpredictability to justify swift termination to events. However, police codes and phrases can limit understanding by not including pertinent information concerning the circumstances of the event. (Manning, 1988).

Some tactical responses limit the choice of resolutions available to police officers and discourage the use of force not intended to be lethal. Limited resolution choices were apparent during Case 83 when Cincinnati (OH) Police Officer Anthony Brucato responded to a shoplifting call and shot Jawari Porter after he attacked the officer with a knife while the officer was seated in his police vehicle on a city street and Case 68 when Boone (IA) Police Sergeant Nathan Kester and Officer Joseph Slight shot Michael Disbrowe after he pointed a handgun at the officers which was later determined to be a replica, non-functioning, firearm. In both cases, a review of the totality of the circumstances after the incident revealed that officers responded in lawful manners although officers were unaware of the total factors in each incident. Alternative tactical resolutions using lengthy negotiations may have led to non-lethal conclusions to these encounters.

Image formation is used by police agencies as a method to provide information by referencing past events (Manning, 1988). Police training supports image formation as influences on force responses using the domains of learned values and physical skills (U.S. Department of Homeland Security/Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers, 2011). Image formation may have contributed to lethal outcomes in Case 30 when Robert Dentmond stated his desire to die while contributing to his own death and Case 57 when John Coffey was observed sitting in a fast food restaurant with a shotgun in his lap.

Both cases were dispatched with the abbreviated summaries of “suicidal” and “man with a gun” which contributed to the image formation of a dangerous event and officers could have referenced prior training events which favored lethal force as a resolution to preserve officer and public safety.

Police Culture

Police culture has been defined as a set of vague and tacit ideas, not firmly held or commonly known outside the occupation, that have frequent and acceptable exceptions that used to mediate different situations and provide meaning to individual officers. The concept is resistant to understanding by the public and can be guided by values, choices, and organizational routines that contribute to perceptions by the officer (Manning, 1988).

The use of tacit meanings shared in police culture can offer ambiguity when deciding resolutions. Officers interpret an event using historical or personal contexts of shared police knowledge by referencing key words that hold meaning and influence the outcome of an incident. Such tacit meanings are not traditionally available to the public but inform police interpretations when an officer references the message using occupational knowledge using police metaphors and shared signs of communication to analyze human behavior (Manning, 1988).

Police cultures contribute to the perception of an individual officer by using past shared group experiences as referenced potential actions or reactions, but deviance can occur when those accepted realities become separated from the circumstances and the relevance from which they arose (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Blumer, 1969). Klinger and Brunson (2009) observed that the actions of police officers can be formulated from

definitions that do not correspond with objective reality as officers determine responses using their personal and group interpretations to make sense of situations.

Language allows collective experiences to be shared, validated, and passed within a police culture, allowing new experiences to increase the collective knowledge of the group. As a police culture becomes more specialized, additional knowledge is passed to the officers via language to allow understanding of incidents within the framework of their beliefs. A local police group can become segmented from other groups by using language to support collective or specialized belief systems, making the group inaccessible to challenge by outsiders and allowing a measure of safety and isolation to officers. Common memory allows the acquisition of role-specific vocabularies that provide understanding of police culture between officers to support their subjective reality, and officers reaffirm this understanding of shared experiences to refresh their shared reality (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Blumer, 1969).

Writing about Case 60 in *The Tulsa World*, Samantha Vicent of *The Tulsa World* stated:

(Wagnor Police Officer) Reynolds can be seen toward the end of Cox's video shaking his head multiple times, chugging a Gatorade and asking (Lieutenant) Cox, "Why didn't he just stop?" "Well, who knows? We don't even know why he's running," Cox tells him. "You did exactly what you had to do" (retrieved from https://www.tulsaworld.com/-news/crimewatch/newly-released-video-shows-man-killed-by-officer-in-wagoner/article-_2e78147a-89db-5bc9-8db0-cf54693ed23a.html on May 31, 2017).

The choice of words used by Lieutenant Cox implies his approval of the performance of Officer Reynolds during the incident by using the code phrase of “you did exactly what you had to do” to imply that the resolution supported the subjective and shared reality of their shared police culture.

Police Dispatch

Police communication has richly contextual meanings derived from local police culture with implied common understandings that provide expected resolutions to events. Shared experiences from other officers give context and guidance to individual officers when responding to future calls or situations. In police culture, the construction of responses cannot be separated from the context of the evolving situation and the addition of public information can result in officers continually interpreting a situation as it progresses. The public can provide additional information which can make police responses vary. This addition of information renders decision-making into a constant evaluation of new information rather than a singular set of circumstances (Manning, 1988).

Information is central to the function of a law enforcement organization as police dispatchers convert a caller’s raw experience into a police code. Every addition to a police message results in each call becoming a changing stream of subjective police meanings that offer different implied opinions of the actual incident and facts become subject to definition by using police culture as a frame of reference. Confusion can develop as multiple people offer their versions of the initial call, resulting in police officers attempting to determine the salient facts of the incident as they form a response (Manning, 1988).

Stimuli present at the scene influences responding officers when making decisions but allow little consideration for future implications. These sensory events are analyzed in terms of knowledge already possessed by the officer, but some police communications may not accurately reflect the event or the original circumstances which led to the involvement of officers. Police officers have few restraints on their interpretation of police messages, and they must evaluate the actual situation as they gain knowledge of the incident, however not all officers will resolve problems identically as officers may have contrasting ways to approach incidents (Manning, 1988).

In Case 66, Miguel Chavez-Angles attempted to hijack a city bus when Oklahoma City (OK) Police Officer Heather Lane boarded the vehicle to attempt to determine the circumstances relating to an automated emergency call activated by the bus driver. Mr. Chavez-Angles attacked Officer Lane and attempted to gain control of her handgun before he was shot by Officer Daniel Carli as he assisted in the call. Mr. Chavez-Angles had been released from a mental health facility two hours before the incident. If the recent release from mental health care or the nature of the erratic behavior was known to the responding officers, a single officer entering the scene could have been avoided and negotiations may have been conducted with Mr. Chavez-Angles to seek a non-violent resolution.

Shared cultural wisdom influences an officer's interpretation of the police reality to allow responses to ambiguous or novel calls. The public provides poorly organized information that contains eyewitness accounts of incidents as multiple parts of the police communication system relay the information to the officer. Events can be processed or encoded improperly, which can result in the information provided by the caller not being

relayed to officers when a call is dispatched. The police officer must receive, sense, and sort facts in the initial call, often with time constraints that do not allow a reconstruction of the initial notifications as received by the dispatcher. Such constraints force the officer to define the event using the context of shared police culture and guidelines. The less accurate information that an officer possesses, the more interpretation of the event must occur using local police culture and related situational filters to gather information and make responses which value local police objectives over personal preferences (Manning, 1988).

In Case 75, Alvia Braziel was twirling in an intersection when two unidentified Houston (TX) police officers drove into the event. Mr. Braziel pointed a handgun at the officers, and they discharged their handguns immediately. Before leaving their protected area behind the vehicle doors, both officers asked witnesses why Mr. Braziel pointed a handgun at them. Using local police culture and training, the officers responded quickly while not possessing any knowledge of the salient facts about the situation.

Decision Making

Shared language is used by police officers to communicate and distribute specialized knowledge among themselves. Continuous conversation exchanges allow an affirmation of the shared reality among officers to strengthen decision making in accordance with the accepted views of the police collective. These shared views become durable and counter definitions of reality are dismissed within the collective, resulting in competition between the police and different social groups. Definitions can provide interpretative schemes that support identity maintenance and become the basis for the police group to verify their reality. If multiple individual experiences are accepted, it

becomes difficult for single members of a society to make decisions that are considered acceptable to the group (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Blumer, 1969).

The decisions of police officers are influenced by regulations, legal precedents, policies, and directives when forming solutions during incidents. Limited information about an incident can force the officer to make interpretations of the event using his or her observations, interests, and personal perspectives. As the officer identifies an incident, she or he projects thoughts and experiences influenced by his or her police culture to reach a potential resolution consistent with the assumed practices of other officers. The resulting interpretation may not accurately represent the pertinent factors of the event (Manning, 1988; Fyfe, 1988).

In Case 123, Brent Quinn shot Leland (NC) Police Officer Jacob Schwenk after the officer followed his car into a cul-de-sac while investigating a suspicious vehicle call. After Mr. Quinn stopped his car, Officer Schwenk approached the vehicle and Mr. Quinn shot him. Officer Schwenk returned fire and killed Mr. Quinn. The term “suspicious vehicle” did not contain any information that indicated the potential of a dangerous situation and Officer Quinn walked in front of the vehicles and was illuminated by both sets of headlights before he was shot. Past shared encounters involving “suspicious vehicles” may have suggested to Officer Schwenk that the incident was routine and did not require caution.

Officer Discretion

Police officers favor priority incidents that contain potential active intervention to resolve situations and reduce the time span of encounters. Law enforcement organizations emphasize command, control, and supervision, but do not normally

evaluate individual incidents, providing officers with great autonomy to frame acceptable resolutions in uncertain situations. Supervisors may lack the ability to influence daily behavior as they oversee their subordinates from a distance (Miller, 2015).

While performing duties as a police officer without close supervision, discrete institutional processes are interpreted by individual officers using tacit information that allows meanings consistent with police culture. These meanings are combined to give understanding to the event using established situational filters to gather information and choose resolutions. The officer may interpret separate bits of information and arrange them by significance using the shared reality of the police collective (Manning, 1988).

In Case 74, St. Anthony (MN) Police Officer Jeronimo Yanez shot Philandro Castile during a pretext traffic stop while an unidentified officer is standing on the other side of the car and does not draw his handgun during the incident. Officer Yanez apparently interpreted the event differently than the other officer and used lethal force while the other officer appeared confused at the lethal force response. The difference between the behaviors of the two officers illustrates the wide range of behaviors that are subject to interpretation by each individual when supervisors are not physically present.

RESEARCH THEME ONE – MENTAL ILLNESS

Research theme one arose from the review of associated videos and news media articles in which mental illness was noted. The discovery of the mention of mental illness in 45 cases (34.88%) in this dataset concurs with a study by DeGue, Fowler, and Calkins (2016) that stated up to 50% of deaths by police officers involved subjects that suffer from mental illness. Please see Appendix B on page 185 for a listing of the cases in which mental illness was noted.

Mental Illness and Police Contacts

The lack of financial resources to secure treatment may lead mentally ill persons into encounters with the police. Dorner and Mittendorger-Rutz (2017) found that socioeconomic inequalities resulted in differential care and mental health development among people with common mental disorders and noted that marginalized people received a lower level of mental health treatment than more affluent people.

One study of police contacts with the mentally ill in Baltimore (MD) stated 71.30% of those sufferers had annual incomes of under \$25,000.00 and lived in marginal areas where they were more likely to encounter police officers as the first contact during mental health episodes. The study also found that persons with mental illness had negative perceptions about the police and distrusted officers, making them apprehensive about cooperating with the police. Another study found that police officers viewed mentally ill patients as a danger to themselves, particularly if they did not recognize a mental health event or were not properly trained to interact with people experiencing a personal crisis during the performance of their jobs (Goldberg, White, & Weisburd, 2019).

Gilmer, Stefacic, Ettner, Manning, and Tsemberis (2010) found persistent homelessness in people with serious mental illness who spent decades living on the streets or in shelters as they cycled between jails, hospitals, and out-patient programs with little continuing mental health care, increasing the likelihood of being in a police encounter.

A decrease in deaths by police actions during incidents involving mental health crises can begin to strengthen the strained reputation of police officers with disadvantaged populations. Members of marginalized classes in society may have less

access to insurance and health care, leading to untreated mental illnesses and increased exposures to local criminal justice agencies.

Case 78 illustrates the need for affordable and locally available mental health care. Miller Jozwiak and Jason Smathers, writing for *The Sheboygan Press* website, stated that Kevin Higgins, a mentally ill male, received mental health treatment at a hospital and was prescribed new doses of his old medications and was given new medications. Mr. Higgins learned coping techniques that included cognitive behavioral therapy and cognitive processing therapy to enhance his mental health. However, Mr. Higgins could not afford the care. His insurance didn't cover the civilian hospital and he was transferred back to the psychiatrist at the Cleveland Veteran's Administration Clinic. Mr. Higgins later robbed a local bar with an assault rifle and was fatally shot by responding police officers although he knew they were responding and had ample time to flee the bar (retrieved from <https://www.-sheboyganpress.com/story/news/-2016/08/11/widow-shooting-subject-va-let-us-down/88544858/> on May 15, 2017).

Not all mental illnesses suffered by the subjects were known to the respective police agencies at the time of the incident. Police officers were aware of mental illness in 13 cases (10.08%) of the cases in this dissertation. When subjects display signs of mental illness during a law enforcement encounter, police officers may not know an appropriate response to their condition (Blumer, 1969; Manning, 1988).

People experiencing the effects of mental illness may not act rationally or respond to police in an anticipated manner. Police academies teach trainees that civilian subjects will act or react rationally during a law enforcement encounter. However, an unknown portion of these subjects may be experiencing a mental health crisis and may not react

logically towards verbal commands or force options not intended to be lethal. These illogical actions can result in a potential false interpretation of behavior by responding law police officers (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Blumer, 1969). Homant, Kennedy, and Hupp (2000) cited that perceived danger, rather than actual danger, was associated with deadly force used by police officers as authorities are unable to discern the danger present until after the incident had occurred.

Mohandie et. al (2009) observed that 62% of subjects in suicide by cop incidents had a confirmed or probable mental health history and this dataset revealed that 45 cases (34.88%) had mental illness mentioned as a contributing factor in these fatal incidents. Ralph Grenon, in Case 31, suffered from mental illness but was not taking his prescribed medication properly when a mental health worker requested police assistance. Officers breached his apartment door and Mr. Grenon was shot after he threatened the officers with a knife. When officers face subjects who are non-cooperative, there are increased chances for injury or death of one or more of the participants (retrieved the U.S. Department of Labor website [https:// www.bls.gov/iif/-oscwc/foi/police-officers-2014.htm](https://www.bls.gov/iif/-oscwc/foi/police-officers-2014.htm) on May 30, 2018).

The Madison (WI) Police Department has instituted programs to aid officers when they encounter persons suffering from mental illness. Amanda Finn, writing about Case 70 on the Madison.com website, stated:

Sometimes those types of situations can be averted through community-based programs, Lampert (Ronald Lampert, the Chief Executive Officer and President of Journey Mental Health Center) said. One example is the Madison Police Department's Mental Health Liaison program. Capt. Kristen Roman, who

oversees the liaison program, said it was chosen in 2010 by the Council of State Governments Justice Center in conjunction with the Bureau of Justice Assistance as one of six in the country to act as a resource for other agencies who want to enact a similar program. While all Madison police officers are trained in mental health response and de-escalation, about 20 officers act as volunteer liaisons who follow up with individuals in their service areas who have been contacted by police. In 2015, the department added five full-time mental health officers who “take the work the liaisons do part time and do more focused, concentrated follow-up,” Roman said. Part of the role of the mental health officers is to create care guides for the individuals that they encounter so that any future encounters can be handled as smoothly as possible. “The more information we have, the better the outcome will be moving forward,” Roman said. “Mental health officers put together plans to help a responding officer so that, if the situation allows as the officer is responding, they can then bring the information and contact case managers and family members that they wouldn’t otherwise have.” At the beginning of 2016, the department gained one crisis worker who works three days a week through Journey, Roman said... Since the initial liaison program was created in 2004, Roman said she believes it has made positive impacts in the community because she hears good feedback every day (retrieved from https://madison.com/wsj/news-/local/crime-and-courts/man-fatally-shot-by-madison-police-officer-struggled-with-mental/article_0566fd8f-5983-57bb-9c4c-60293aeba81e.html on June 9, 2017).

Peak and Sousa (2018) reported that over 90% of law enforcement officers reported having an encounter with at least one person experiencing a behavioral crisis each month. This figure suggests that police officers maintain an admirable successful contact rate in dealing with persons in mental crises on a national basis. However, in Case 16, Tom Dart wrote for *The Guardian* on February 19, 2016 and reported the death of an unarmed black teenager shot by an Austin (TX) police officer had sparked outrage as the officer failed to follow procedures during an apparent mental health crisis. David Joseph, 17, was naked when officer Geoffrey Freeman encountered the high school senior and fatally shot him within seconds. “Clearly there was something taking place with him mentally that needed to be addressed in a very different way,” said Nelson Linder, president of the Austin branch of the NAACP. The post-mortem results of investigations of Mr. Joseph failed to reveal any history of mental health issues or treatments but did find Xanax (an anti-anxiety medication that requires a medical prescription) and marijuana in his blood system. His death was influenced by a condition known as substance induced excited delirium (retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/usnews/2016/feb/10/-david-joseph-mental-health-austin-police-killing> on May 10, 2017).

Case 29 occurred when Map Kong was shot by three officers of the Burnsville (MN) Police Department after two strikes with a conducted energy weapon failed to persuade Mr. Kong to put down the knife he held in his hands. Mr. Kong had been committed to residential care facilities on two prior occasions for mental health issues and chemical dependency. Although the officers attempted to use force options not intended to be lethal, they were not successful in their efforts to communicate with Mr.

Kong. He did not appear to acknowledge the presence of police officers during the videotaped incident. An investigation by the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* found that “at least 45 percent of those who have died in encounters with law enforcement in the state since 2000 had a history of mental illness, as Kong did, or were in the throes of a mental-health crisis.” An autopsy report on Mr. Kong after his death revealed the presence of amphetamine and methamphetamine in his body (retrieved from <http://www.startribune.com/bca-releases-body-cam-video-from-burnsville-officer-involved-shooting/-383973811/> on May 15, 2017).

Other attempts using verbal communication and family members as intervention efforts were not successful in situations involving mentally ill people. In Case 36, Melinda Boarts was shot and killed by Auburn (AL) Police Officers Gregory Miller and Derrick Johns on a U.S. Forest Service Road after responding to check the welfare of the mentally ill woman. Ms. Boarts ignored the verbal commands of the officers and was shot. According to Amy Yurkanin on the AL.COM News media website, Ms. Borats and was killed by an Auburn police officer after charging officers with a knife. The responding officers may not have known non-lethal techniques to use during the situation. Susan Baty-Pierce of National Alliance on Mental Illness-Birmingham stated it was too expensive for many agencies to pay for community mental health officers solely dedicated to handling mental illness calls. Demopolis (AL) Police Chief Tommie Reese, who was president of the Alabama Association of Chiefs of Police, stated the main issue was a general lack of resources for dealing with people with mental illness (retrieved from https://www.-al.-com/news/birmingham/2016/08/a_deadly_mix_in_police-shootin.html on May 17, 2017).

Multiple resources and close supervision to assist people who suffer from mental illness may not stop a violent conclusion to a police encounter with a person experiencing a behavioral crisis. Case 40 recounts how Melissa Abbot, a resident in a facility designed to help mentally ill people, was shot by Lake Hallie (MN) Police Officer Adam Meyers in a Walmart. As reported by Chris Vetter on the Leader Telegram website, the incident began when Ms. Abbot was identified as a disorderly female who refused to leave the store. Officer Meyers arrived and confronted Ms. Abbott, who possessed a hatchet. Ms. Abbott raised the hatchet above her shoulders charged Officer Meyers and was shot two times. Ms. Abbott was living at a center for developmentally disabled people and had been diagnosed with depressive disorder, borderline personality disorder, and a mild intellectual disability. She had been hospitalized in the past at two other mental health facilities and due to her aggressive behaviors, multiple physical and mechanical restrains had been used to manage her behaviors. Ms. Abbot has threatened to kill others and wrote in her journal a desire that “when the cops get called I will grab their gun and there will be a shootout between me and the cops” (retrieved from https://www.leadertelegram.com/news/daily-updates/da-officer-cleared-in-lake-hallie-walmart-shooting/article_1c9e8faf-83b4-5456-b178-110f3da76818.html on May 17, 2017).

RESEARCH THEME TWO - ADVERSE BEHAVIORAL REACTIONS

Adverse behavioral reactions were defined as those acts that are contrary to how a reasonable officer or subject would act in a similar event or circumstances and occur after the arrival of the police. These reactions are performed without regard to the underlying intent or motivation of other participants during the encounter.

An example of adverse behavioral reactions included civilians advancing towards armed police officers while displaying a knife such as Case 88 when Juan Torres approached officers at the conclusion of a pursuit with a knife in his hand and was shot. Police officers displayed abnormal behavioral reactions by using excessive force which compelled a citizen to act in self-defense and resulted in lethal force by the officer such as Case 8 when Robert “LeVoy” Finicum was fired upon by FBI agents during a forced traffic stop. Each instance is noted in Appendix C on page 187 with a description of the qualifying act.

Police Officer Adverse Behavioral Reactions

Some police officers may suffer from personality disorders that include dysfunctional traits that lead to abusive behavior, particularly when threats to their authority are perceived (Miller, 2015). Fourteen cases (10.85%) in this study revealed that police officers did not regulate their emotions while performing their duty.

Case 54 occurred when Florida State Trooper Misael Diaz stopped Doll Pierre Louis for speeding and a minor auto accident, putting himself in a dangerous situation by leaping on Mr. Louis’ car during the incident. Charles Rabin reported the incident on *The Miami Herald* website and stated that Mr. Louis was driving over the speed limit and being followed by a Florida Highway Patrol trooper before the officer leaped onto the hood of Mr. Louis’ car and, fearing for his life, shot him. The lethal force encounter was captured on the surveillance camera of a nearby gas station (retrieved from <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/crime/article-80135837.html> on May 24, 2017).

In three cases, police officers placed themselves into dangerous situations by lunging into the passenger compartments of targeted vehicles during investigatory stops

of motor vehicles, then used lethal force on the drivers. Case 45 occurred when Willie Tillman attempted to flee from a traffic stop and a police officer lunged into the car and was driven from the scene with his legs hanging outside of the vehicle. During Case 47, Ashtain Barnes was killed after being stopped for not paying a highway toll and the officer entered the driver side window to prevent Mr. Barnes from escaping. Derek Adame was killed after an officer reached into the passenger compartment and was drug by the car during an escape attempt after being stopped as a suspicious vehicle in Case 120. None of the initial circumstances of the traffic stops were sufficient grounds for the application of lethal force and the involved officers placed themselves in danger by their own actions, not the actions of the subjects.

Subject Abnormal Behavioral Reactions

Seventy eight cases (60.47%) involved adverse behavioral reactions by the individual civilian that influenced responding police officers to use lethal force. Case 25 cumulated with Darrell P. Bosell being killed by an unidentified Cheektowaga (NY) police officer who was trained in crisis intervention to interact with people suffering from mental health issues. Cheektowaga Police Chief David Zack stated that Mr. Bosell was suffering from a severe emotional distress and that the responding officer had spoken to Mr. Bosell in a telephone conversation before their fatal encounter. Mr. Bosell later pointed an unloaded gun at the officer during what appeared to be an unrelated call where the officer was unaware that Mr. Bosell was the person who had called the police department earlier. Chief Zack stated that the shooting underscores the need for mandatory training for all police officers in crisis intervention and that mental health issues are of the same importance to the current opioid epidemic (retrieved from

<https://buffalonews.com/cityregion/cheektowaga/cellphone-tracking-led-cheektowaga-police-to-hotel-armed-java-man-20160307> and <http://live.buffalonews.com/2016/03/16/video-police-release-footage-cheektowaga-fatal-shooting/> on May 7, 2017).

RESEARCH THEME THREE – ERRATIC BEHAVIOR

Research theme three explored if the deceased civilians exhibited erratic behavior before the arrival of police officers. Erratic behavior was identified in this study as verbal and physical actions by the civilians that would not be considered a customary activity or practice for the social settings or circumstances present and occurred before officers have responded to the scene. The erratic behavior may be related to the actions that initiated a police response. Seventy-seven cases (59.69%) of the cases in this dissertation exhibited such behavior. Appendix D on page 190 lists each erratic behavior.

The erratic behaviors observed in this study were reported to the police by members of the public or the actual person causing the disturbance. Case 48 occurred when Spokane (WA) Police Officers Ryan Adkins and Brandon Lynch shot Michael Kurtz outside a downtown shelter. Mr. Kurtz reported himself to authorities, then approached the responding officers with a knife and urged them to kill him. One officer deployed his Taser, but it was ineffective and two of them fired, Fuller said. Police believe that Mr. Kurtz called police to the scene, telling a dispatcher that he wanted to hurt himself (retrieved from <http://www.spokesman.com/stories/-2016/apr/28/man-shot-dead-at-the-house-of-charity/> on May 17, 2017).

One subject appeared to encourage a lethal force response even though the officer had called for assistance to control the situation in a less lethal manner. Case 70 involved Madison (WI) Police Officer Hector Rivera, who responded to a break in of a home by a

man, later identified as Michael William Schumacher, who had been reported as acting oddly in a lake by talking to himself and slapping the water. Mr. Schumacher broke a window of a nearby home by throwing a rock and residents called 911 and fled the home after he destroyed items inside the house. Officer Rivera was waiting for backup at the house when Mr. Schumacher approached the officer with a four-pronged pitchfork, ignoring multiple orders from the officer to stop (retrieved from https://madison.com/wsj/news/-local/crime-and-courts/man-killed-in-police-shooting-identified-madison-officials-place-responsibility/-article_41f41564-34c0-5a65-9014-99ced8d99cd9.html on June 1, 2017).

Mr. Schrumacher suffered from a long-term mental illness according to Dean Loumos, who headed the local program that provided shelter and support to him since 2008. “These incidents are rare, and they make the news because they’re tragic,” said Ronald Lampert, chief executive officer and president of Journey Mental Health Center. Mr. Lampert further stated:

The insidious part is when people have a severe mental illness and they hear voices or see things, and the voices tell them to do things, no one knows except them that the voices are telling them to do things, Lampert said. That’s part of the impulsiveness that causes people who have a mental illness to do things out of their normal pattern (retrieved from https://madison.com/wsj/news/local/crime-and-courts/man-fatally-shot-by-madison-police-officer-struggled-with-mental/article_0566fd8f-5983-57bb-9c4c60293aeba81e-.html on June 1, 2017).

Case 76 also represented notable erratic behavior before police officers arrived. Sacramento (CA) Police Officers John Tennis and Randy Lozoya shot Joseph Mann after

responding to a call for service due to a man with a gun acting strangely. Joe Khaulil on the Fox 40 website stated the shooting occurred during a confrontation with Sacramento police after he was acting erratic and advanced towards police officers while holding a knife. The initial call to police dispatchers reported a man acting strangely who was making karate motions in the air, Mr. Mann became agitated after police officers arrived and was described by a witness as furious. Mr. Mann refused to drop his knife and charged an officer who was inside a patrol car. The officers chased him until he stopped and turned towards the officers, raising the knife. Two officers fired their service weapons at the Mr. Mann, and he was killed (retrieved from https://fox40.com/2016/07/11/police-officer-injured-during-shooting-in-north-sacramento/?utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter-_FOX40 on June 2, 2017).

Many subjects in this study appeared to suffer from a condition known as emotional dysfunction and contributed to the lethal force event by their actions.

EMOTION DYSREGULATION

As each affected individual ultimately lost his or her life during the examined incidents in this study, it is difficult to determine if the deceased persons suffered from a condition known as emotional dysregulation. However, many cases exhibited behaviors that have been attributed to emotion dysregulation which may be an important predictive cue of potential violence in a police encounter. Simply stated, emotion dysregulation is a term used by mental health professionals to describe an individual who does not respond to a person or event within a normal range of emotions.

Emotion dysregulation has been described as having a distinct and clinically meaningful connection to psychiatric crises and is a key part of many psychiatric

disorders. The condition includes a tendency for intense emotions to become uncontrollable in a rapid progression as to make control and coping strategies difficult. Emotional dysregulation has been identified as a matter of high public health importance in populations at risk of depression, post-traumatic stress syndrome, and substance abuse. Studies support emotion dysregulation as being a component of multiple psychiatric disorders and it may be present in conditions that include excessive emotionality, excitement-seeking, interpersonal isolation, aggression, alcohol and abuse, self-harm, and suicidality (Bradley et. al, 2015).

Miller (2015) found that irrational actions have contributed to lethal force incidents when police officers or citizens suffered damaging impulses that were inappropriate for the situations. These impulses include anger, intoxication, and delusional mental status and make police encounters unpredictable when innocuous gestures or words by a police officer can transform a compliant citizen into an assailant without prior recognition by the officer.

Mohandei et. al (2009) noted that 81% of subjects in their study of suicide by cop became suicidal in response to the situation and had not intended to die by suicide, suggesting that the incidents resulted in more emotional and reactive impulses that transform quickly into a resolute intention to be killed by police officers, supporting the presence of emotional dysregulation.

Aggressive response behaviors related to emotional dysregulation were observed throughout this dataset. Case 60 provided an example when Wagoner (OK) Police Officer Robert Reynolds shot Andrew Hansen at the conclusion of a vehicle pursuit. Samantha Vicent of *The Tulsa World* wrote on the news website that Andrew Henson

told Officer Reynolds that he needed to kill him and used a racial slur shortly before he was killed. The shooting occurred after Mr. Henson rammed Officer Reynolds' patrol car multiple times when he tried to force the police vehicle off the road. Police body camera footage shows Mr. Henson turning toward the officer with both arms extended in a manner consistent with holding and pointing a handgun and stating "You're gonna have to kill me n-----" at Officer Reynolds, who is white. Wagoner Police Lieutenant Donnie Cox searched Mr. Henson after the shooting but did not find a weapon. The city of Wagoner released the body camera footage and stated that Mr. Henson failed to comply with the commands he was given, and Officer Reynolds reacted to what he perceived as a dangerous situation. Lieutenant Cox perceived the situation as a suicide by cop incident (retrieved from https://www.tulsa-world.com/-news/crimewatch/newly-released-video-shows-man-killed-by-officer-in-wagoner/article-_2e78147a-89db-5bc9-8db0-cf54693ed23a.html on May 31, 2017). Officer Reynolds reacted to Mr. Henson in a manner that supported observations of the local police collective by interpreting his behavior as dangerous (Blumer, 1969; Manning, 1988).

Emotion dysregulation has been defined as a condition involving poor awareness and understanding of emotions, lack of acceptance of emotions, reacting to situations with inappropriate anger or sadness, a reduction in the ability to control impulsive behavior or behave in accordance with desired goals while experiencing negative emotions, and an inability to be flexible in the use of effective emotion regulation strategies to control personal emotional responses appropriately to meet individual goals and situational demands (Gratz and Romer, 2004; Garofalo et. al, 2018).

Bradley et. al (2015) cite a growing body of research on emotion dysregulation that supports the formulation of emotion dysregulation as a distinct and clinically meaningful phenomenon associated with psychiatric distress. They identify emotion dysregulation as a tendency for emotions to spiral out of control, change rapidly, and be expressed in intense and unmodified forms that overwhelm both the coping capacity and reasoning of the individual. Their research supports the conceptualization of the condition as a distinctive component that is found in many forms of psychopathology. Rumination, panic, self-criticism, social inhibition, interpersonal isolation, concentration difficulties, and attention problems can reflect the internalized failures of emotion management while aggression, alcohol and substance abuse, disordered eating, self-harm, and suicidality may be associated with the external behaviors of the condition.

Another possible manifestation of emotional dysregulation, which included suicide, occurred in Case 79 when Tulsa (OK) Police Officers Richard Urban and Jerod Lum responded to a domestic violence call and shot Jerry Brimer as he approached officers with an ax and made statements indicating he wanted to end his life. Katiera Winfrey stated on The News6 website that the officers shot and killed Mr. Brimer after he charged at officers with an ax during a domestic dispute. Mr. Brimer made statements and comments to the officers that he wanted to die after the violent interaction with his wife (retrieved from <https://www.newson6.com-/story/32473774/tulsa-police-investigating-fatal-officer-involved-shooting> on June 3. 2017).

Emotion dysregulation is integral to the disease of borderline personality disorder and includes the inability to respond and manage emotions in an appropriate manner. Maladaptive regulation strategies may manifest as unsuitable behaviors instead of using

appropriate emotion regulation adaptations to respond to adverse situations. Emotion dysregulation includes three aspects: a high sensitivity or vulnerability to emotional stimuli, a high amplitude of emotional response to such stimuli, and a slow return to an emotional baseline after affective arousal (Carpenter and Trull, 2013).

Newhill, Eack, and Mulvey (2012) found that elevated baseline levels of, and less improvement in, emotion dysregulation is a significant predictor of violent behavior. They also found that emotion dysregulation may serve as a catalyst for violent behavior in multiple personality disorders that are characterized by antisocial traits. Mohandie et. al (2009) examined suicide by cop incidents and noted that 98% of their subjects pointed a weapon at someone during the incident and 70% of their subjects verbalized a threat to another person and exhibited more aggression towards police officers. These observations supported the presence of emotion dysregulation.

Thompson (1994) cited that discrete emotions and their consequences can result in individuals displaying highly variable responses in behavior that change the perception of an emotional experience into emotional arousal. The condition also has the capacity to radically change how individuals respond to stimuli. He stated that:

Emotion experience derives from an interaction between biologically based emotive processes and the socialized monitoring, evaluative, and regulatory processes by which emotion experience is interpreted and managed in culture-specific ways. The common theme underlying these studies is how emotional arousal comes to *mean* different things to different individuals (e.g., why anger is empowering to some people, disorganizing for others, and to be denied or avoided

for others), and emotion regulation is a significant component of these individual differences (p.26).

Thompson (1994) defined emotion regulation as the “extrinsic and intrinsic processes responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and modifying emotional reactions, especially their intensive and temporal features, to accomplish one’s goals” (p. 27). Emotion regulation is an acquired strategy of reactive self-management in stressful situations but is susceptible to external influences via the actions of others by a broad base of interconnected processes. The process is eroded when the range of responsive options becomes limited or leads to unacceptable resolutions as emotion management is reliant on acceptable outcomes during the encounter. Thompson (1994) stated:

But it is quite likely that deficiencies in emotion management as well as social information processing contribute to the social dysfunction; under threatening circumstances, the affective salience of social cues, their interpretation, and the thoroughness of one’s search for evaluation of alternative response options are all likely to be affected by skill at self-regulating emotion (p. 44).

Inappropriate emotional response related to emotional dysregulation may have been present in Case 32 when Winslow (AZ) Police Officer Austin Shippley killed Loreal Tsingine as he responded to a shoplifting call. Officer Shippley forced Ms. Tsingine to the ground after she ignored his verbal commands to stop walking away from him. Instead of using a safer control technique, he allowed Ms. Tsingine to stand, and she advanced towards him with a small pair of scissors in an apparent effort to fight him. Officer Shippley then shot her. This use of excessive force by a responding police officer

to the offense of shoplifting with a perceived lethality of manicure scissors may be an example of emotion dysregulation.

Case 99 occurred when El Cajon (CA) Police Officer Richard Gonsalves was called to assist during a mental health call and subsequently shot Alfred Olango. Mr. Olango had been diagnosed as suffering from mental illness and his family had called the police department for assistance as he was displaying odd behavior. Mr. Olango attempted to flee from the officers and was finally stopped in the parking lot of a fast food restaurant which had a camera mounted on an outside wall. Mr. Olango pointed a vaping device in such a manner as to resemble a firearm and was subsequently shot and killed, supporting the concepts of Blumer (1969) that the interaction with Mr. Olango was interpreted by the officers in a manner consistent with their local police culture (also Manning, 1988).

Newhill, Eack, and Mulvey (2012) found that emotion dysregulation is a significant contributor to violence in personality disorders and may be the primary factor that increases the risk of violence in people that suffer from that condition. These researchers defined emotional dysregulation as a “low threshold, or high sensitivity/vulnerability to emotional stimuli coupled with a high amplitude or emotional response and a slow return to a normal emotional baseline” (p. 453) and found that the disorder was predictive of violent behavior.

Cohn, Jukupcak, Seibert, Hildebrandt, and Zeichner (2010) noted that emotion dysregulation is a coping strategy used to control interpersonal encounters that trigger vulnerability and negative affect arousal, making people who associate negative feelings with anger to become susceptible to violence and aggression.

Emotion dysregulation appeared to be the primary cause of many deaths examined in this dissertation. The inability to respond appropriately to the circumstances of a police encounter affected both officers and subjects when events were interpreted as dangerous by the officers.

MENTAL ILLNESS AND POLICE CULTURE

Mental illness and extreme emotional behaviors appeared to be significant factors in 95 cases (73.36%) the police shootings examined in this study. Mohandie et. al (2009) noted that missing mental health history remains common in criminal justice samples (also Lord, 2014).

Persons having a personal crisis may act in manners considered too dangerous by police officers to control by verbal commands only and police officers may interpret intense reactions as dangerous to their physical safety. Lord (2014) found that officers rely on their experiences, beliefs, and values when assessing danger rather than guidance by policies. Officers may use excessive force when their interpretation of an encounter is viewed as life-threatening (Miller, 2015), such as calls involving persons with emotional crisis.

The public stigma of mental illness has been defined as the negative attitude of prejudice and misinformation which is initiated by the exhibition of odd behavior or the mention of past mental health treatment. Stigma can start a cycle leading to decreasing self-esteem, low levels of self-confidence, and discrimination (Sartorius, 2007).

Throughout history, people with mental illness have been treated differently and are often perceived as undesirable, defective, and unacceptable (Stickney, Yanosky, Black, & Stickney, 2012). Such attitudes include the belief that people with mental

illness are dangerous, need to be avoided, and are responsible for their own illnesses (Smith & Cashwell, 2010) and pose a significant threat of homicide or violence towards others (Mohandie et. al, 2009). Inaccurate knowledge leads to individuals being discriminated against and when the stigma of mental illness interacts with police culture, the perceptions of danger are enhanced during incidents (Knifton et. al, 2010). As police officers share knowledge with each other via social interactions (Blumer, 1969), the stigma of mental illness is strengthened within the local police collective.

Most officers believe that persons with mental illness present a high risk to officer safety and make protective considerations a priority when dealing with the mentally ill (Cordner, 2000). Officers are hesitant to compromise accepted tactics when interacting with subjects experiencing mental health crises and would reject such efforts as counter to their own personal safety (Wells & Schafer, 2006). By using words and phrases that are contextually dependent on the local police culture, image formation occurs as officers define the event (Manning, 1988) and most police training includes graphic depictions of police officers who were seriously injured or killed due to insufficient tactical considerations (Dupont & Cochran, 2000). This type of training negates efforts to teach officers to deescalate a potential harmful encounter with a person with mental illness and avoid lethal force.

Dupont and Cochran (2000) view this type of training as an obstacle to improving officer interactions during encounters with the mentally ill. Imprecise communications coding of calls and the stigma of mental illness combine with training experiences to allow officers to make false or multiple interpretations of an event when a person acts in a manner not consistent with reasonable expectations (also Manning, 1988).

Stigma related to mental illness is also reflected within a society and the institutions which represent it. Persons suffering from mental crises are perceived as dangerous throughout the general population and institutional stigma appears to affect organizations and their policies, procedures, and culture. Stigma can also affect components of the criminal justice system and the persons working within them, resulting in inappropriate use of police force during contacts with the public (Huggett et. al, 2018; Manning, 1988). Due to increased agitation, disturbed perception, impaired judgement, and lack of self-control, mentally ill persons may require more physical restraint than an average citizen and aggressive acts may cause by-standers and family members to call the police with the expectation they will control the person to preserve public safety (Miller, 2015). As an example, in Case 36, Amy Yurkanin wrote in the AL.COM News media website:

Advocates for the mentally ill say police chiefs and sheriffs have been slow to embrace training, leaving officers unequipped to safely handle confrontations with suicidal or unstable suspects... Without proper training, police officers are more likely to use tactics that can escalate aggression in a person suffering from severe mental illness, experts say, increasing the likelihood of injury or death. In Alabama, only four hours of the 13-week police academy curriculum is dedicated to emotional disturbance. Some states require up to 40 hours, but many, like Alabama, require far less (retrieved from https://www.-al.-com/news/birmingham/2016/08/a_deadly_mix_in_police-_shootin.html on May 17, 2017).

Lack of specialized training results in lethal force being used during police contacts with people who suffer from mental illness. Many mentally ill patients have

conditions that increase their exposure to police officers such as homelessness, substance abuse, and joblessness. These conditions result in mentally ill persons being present in many lethal force cases that should not cumulate in lethal force (Miller, 2015).

Police departments do not provide clear guidelines for officers during mental health or emotional crisis, resulting in frustrations by officers who rely on their personal perceptions, biases, and beliefs during encounters with mentally ill persons (Patch & Arrigo, 1999). Officers construct meaning to incidents using the shared contexts of past similar events as they respond to current incidents (Burger & Luckman, 1966; Manning, 1988). Police officers perform as primary responders to persons in mental health crises and are dissatisfied with law enforcement training techniques, which has been described as inadequate and not successful during encounters with people suffering from mental illness (Cordner, 2000; Fry, Riordan, & Geanellos, 2002; Cooper, McLearn, Zapf, 2004; Wells & Schafer, 2006; Miller, 2015; Goldberg, White, & Weisburd, 2019).

Karen Rivedal, writing on the Madison.com website, interviewed Dane County (WI) District Attorney Ismael Ozanne, who stated that the community must do more to assist people suffering from mental illness:

“I mention this because this is the 15th officer-involved shooting which I have had to make a decision in over the past six years,” he said. “In these OIS incidents, mental health issues have been present in far too many of them. This is a fact we cannot ignore if we hope to learn from each incident to hopefully prevent the loss of other lives” (retrieved from <https://madison.com/wsj/news/local/crime-and-courts/madison-police-officer-cleared-in-fatal-shooting-of->

mentally-ill/article_7ef8f698-054b-5afc-a509-c67d9cbf4238.html on June 1, 2017).

RACE

Persons who exhibited behaviors as defined in the research themes were identified in 95 cases in this study. Blacks were killed in 46 cases (48.42%) while Whites were killed in 34 cases (35.79%). Hispanics were killed in 11 cases (11.58%). Asians and Native Americans were killed in 4 cases (04.21% for each race).

Some racial groups may be disproportionately represented in lethal force incidents, but this may be related to the demographics of criminal behavior and officer assignment to in various communities. Miller (2015) concluded that there is no evidence that police officers systematically target members of an ethnic group for more forceful confrontations, including lethal force incidents.

Transparency can lead to legitimacy via full public disclosure concerning police use of lethal force and may produce such evidence. Jordan, Panza, and Dempsey (2020) examined suicide by cop deaths in the jurisdictional areas of the Los Angeles Police Department and concluded that no significant associations were found for any demographic variables. However, Nix, Campbell, Byers, and Alpert (2017) found that implicit bias existed as non-White subjects were more likely to be subjected to lethal force by police officers than White subjects, Black civilians were more than twice as likely as White subjects to have been unarmed during the confrontations, and that members of racial minorities were less likely to have attacked an officer during the lethal force event when compared to White subjects. Police administrators should accurately

report such events to allow for extensive research to determine the role of race as it influences lethal force encounters.

Race was a noted factor in mental health treatment during a study by Cooper, McLearn, and Zapf (2004) concerning police officer interactions with the mentally ill. Their study concluded that no racial bias was discovered during the decision making process, but Whites were more apt to be committed which resulted in less mental health resource available for minorities, who were incarcerated at a high rate while Dorner and Mittendorger-Rutz (2017) noted that marginalized people received a different level of mental health treatment than more affluent people due to a lack of financial resources.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICING

Looking across the findings of this study, erratic behavior by the subjects and adverse behavioral actions by the subjects and the officers combine with implicit meanings of police culture to contribute to a lethal encounter. These actions support Blumer (1969) and Manning (1988) as that officers referenced past solutions to resolve current issues. Observations suggest a call for specific tactics, innovative field procedures, and identification of improved practices that minimize fatal incidents involving people diagnosed with mental illness or suffering from an emotional crisis. The encounter with an armed and suicidal person requires elevated concerns for the safety of officers and civilians present during an incident (Mohandie et. al, 2009) but the adoption of police policies that places value on the lives of each citizen during conflict resolution can decrease deaths to members of the public (Zimring, 2017).

Klinger (2001) noted that police officers may use lethal force against citizens to protect themselves against a threat they reasonably perceive to be present, regardless of

the results of any subsequent consideration of the facts. Defensive lethal actions can be made in circumstances which are later determined to have not been a threat to the safety of the officers or the public and include individuals who threaten others with unloaded firearms or other objects that can be mistaken as dangerous by the officers, also supporting the observations made by Blumer (1969) that past encounters influence current resolutions.

Police jurisdictional coverage is historically based on isolated patrols of geographical areas, making officers responsible for decisions without supervisory oversight. Police contacts with people suffering from mental illness or emotional crisis in the cases in this dataset indicate that further training and policies need to be formulated to guide officers to non-lethal resolutions during confrontations with these members of our society. The shared police collective requires change to frame encounters with people suffering from mental illness from “dangerous” to “needing medical assistance” to allow officers to formulate acceptable resolutions without actual supervisory guidance at the scene of the incident.

Event Progression

Conflict management training can improve the communication skills of police officers to make verbal expertise the primary tool for controlling irrational citizens by extending the time of the encounter and offering acceptable resolutions to the mentally ill subject. The use of role-playing training scenarios to practice mitigating techniques may reduce the potential for violence (Miller, 2015) and reduce the stigma of mental illness in police culture. De-escalation techniques to minimize conflicts should include enough time to allow individuals to attempt to regulate their emotions by using verbal

interactions to allow a longer recovery time and offer safer resolutions to the citizen. By encouraging non-lethal outcomes during critical events, police legitimacy and community acceptance of police efforts may be improved. Local police cultures should reflect non-lethal responses to be the acceptable and desired outcomes using negotiations and should identify subjects with mental illness as patients, not criminals.

Tactics and procedures that increase the time of the encounter are important to allow officers to gain information to determine if mental illness or emotional crisis are present and attempt non-lethal resolutions. American police officers use force that is not intended to be lethal to deescalate or resolve physical confrontations when time and circumstances permit (Miller, 2015). Officers can use other resolutions to change the circumstances and increase the time span of an incident, such as obtaining an arrest warrant after the subject has been identified or using verbal skills to offer acceptable resolutions for compliance to the subject without resorting to lethal force.

In 67 cases (51.94%) of this study, officers discharged their weapons within 30 seconds of arrival at the scene. In those situations when the use of firearms is appropriate, the shooting should stop when the actions that necessitated the use of a firearm cease. The goal of any use of force action by a police officer should be to stop behavior that threatens the safety or lives of officers or civilians, not to inflict death. Fewer shots that are accurately aimed may provide a better chance of survival for a civilian during confrontations. Zimring (2017) notes that police officers continue to shoot subjects after the cause for applying lethal force has stopped as excessive lethal force is not a concern for most police managers.

Initial responding officers discharged their weapons in 86 cases (66.67%) in this study. Researchers in Sweden stated that in police shootings, sequences of events occur at a rapid pace, putting the officer at a disadvantage when making lethal force decisions. In their study of Swedish police officers, Petersson et. al (2017) stated that initial responding officers were involved in shootings in 80% of the cases they examined. The officers were not able to predict or prevent the sudden threats they encountered and 92% of the lethal force events were concluded within 60 seconds. Although they advocated training to aid officers to respond to factors common in incidents, they noted that the short time frame may negate such training.

Officers may not possess sufficient time to gather additional information after their arrival at the scene. In this study and the Swedish study, many cases occurred as officers discharged their firearms in 60 seconds or less after their arrival at the scene, indicating that officers make quick decisions using limited information with minimal interactions with people present at the location of the incident who could provide additional information, supporting observations by Manning (1988).

Fyfe's "Split Second Syndrome" (1988), in which police officers treat current incidents in a similar manner as past incidents, is supported by the quickness in which lethal force was used by responding officers in this study. Without enough knowledge of the circumstances of an event, officers must rely on past events when making decisions due to time constraints (also Blumer, 1969). These constraints may result in deaths that are later determined to be erroneous or possibly avoidable. Fyfe's observations support Berger and Luckman's (1966) concept of the potential for misinterpretation of information due to possessing limited context of the event.

Klinger (2020) interpreted Perrow's Accident Theory using tight coupling and interactive complexity as contributors to undesirable outcomes during human interactions in stressful events. The observed interactions suggest support for Klinger as officers made swift interpretations of events that result in lethal force decisions. Klinger (2005) noted that when police officers create or maintain distance from armed citizens and make situations less complex, lethal force incidents may be reduced in number although not all injuries or deaths in police encounters arise from tight coupling and interactive complexity. He also stated that police officers are only responsible for the aspects during an interaction which they can control and behavior by subjects can force an officer to use lethal force in life threatening situations. The observation by Klinger supports the use of techniques that extend the time span of an encounter to allow regulation of the emotions of the participants.

Handguns were the predominate law enforcement firearm used in 113 cases (87.60%) while rifles were used in 20 cases (15.50%) and shotguns were used in 3 cases (02.33%) in this study. In 5 cases (03.88%), the type of firearm could not be identified. Handguns are the weapon universally carried by police officers, both on-duty and off-duty. Shotguns and rifles are normally stored and locked inside a police vehicle and not carried with officers on a regular basis. Such storage of the firearms requires extra time to obtain one, which may not be afforded to officers during critical situations when deadly force is applied within seconds after their arrival, suggesting that officers did not possess accurate information concerning the event or sufficient time to investigate the circumstances of the incident as noted by Manning (1988).

Incidents mentioning a firearm such as a “shots fired” call were represented in 29 of the examined 129 cases (22.48%). While disturbance calls accounted for 19 of the cases (14.73%) and domestic violence related calls were present in 16 cases (12.40%), mental illness was announced during the dispatch phase of 11 cases (08.53%). These categories accounted for 64 cases (49.61%). Limited information during the dispatch phase can force police officers to make flawed assumptions during critical incidents (Manning, 1988).

In Case 21, Calvin Smith vandalized his girlfriend’s car and fled from Baton Rouge (LA) Police Officers Sean Garic and Theodore Smith III, who responded to the vandalism call. Mr. Smith stopped at his residence and attacked the officers with an assault rifle. The officers came under fire while still arriving at the residence, endured an intense gunfight, and suffered gunshot wounds until Mr. Smith was fatally shot. Neither officer was initially able to call for assistance or attempt non-lethal resolutions. It was subsequently revealed that Mr. Smith had been a patient in a mental health facility in Shreveport, although neither officer was aware of this information. He was identified as the suspect in the vandalism event before the arrival of police officers and the pursuit should have not been initiated, allowing sufficient time to investigate Mr. Smith and obtain an arrest warrant which could have been executed under safer circumstances.

The offender, the officer, and the circumstances of their interaction join in a dynamic interplay in each police encounter with no predetermined resolution to the event. Perception and interpretation of the actions of the participants play a major role for both the officer and the subject during the encounter. Self-awareness can be a critical component for officers to survive lethal force events but when the officer’s perception of

the circumstances of the incident is distorted or altered, his or her safety can be affected (Miller, 2015). Higher educational level of officers, an increase in mental health responses coupled with verbal crisis intervention techniques, and stronger efforts at community relationships can lead to a lesser number of lethal force incidents involving the mentally ill (Miller, 2015).

Police Training

Lethal force situations involve learned values and physical skills obtained during training of police officers. Training influences the responses of an officer during critical incidents using the affective domain, how a law enforcement officer responds emotionally to situations and confrontations through learned values and attitudes, and the psychomotor domain, how officers respond physically using skills practiced during periodical training sessions. Police officers engage in repetitive training to decide when to apply force within the context of both domains. When officers encounter similar conditions as experienced in training, it is expected that they will respond in a manner consistent with that training. However, if slight differences exist, these trained officers may not respond using resolutions they were taught (U. S. Department of Homeland Security/Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, 2011; Manning, 1988).

Existing legal framework and policies are unclear and lead officers to initiate control efforts by interpreting the event as it occurs. The human subconscious requires time to evaluate an incident and the behaviors in the encounter combine with psychological stress to increase the time used by the officer to process information to arrive at potential resolutions. Such stress may make a rational analysis of the events difficult or impossible (Pettersson et. al, 2017). Failure to comply with the officer's

verbal commands can interact with other factors in the encounter and result in the application of force. Training that increases the time span of an incident and maximizes distance from the subject will enhance the ability of all participants to manage stress and encourage rational decisions by law enforcement officers.

Many officers recall that they respond to lethal force threats automatically and without prior thought but with a sense of robotic detachment (Miller, 2015), indicating the importance of skill training in critical situations. Jordan, Panza, and Dempsey (2020) found that officers who were trained in de-escalation techniques used force only during incidents of aggressive and threatening behavior and at a lesser level than officers who were not trained to interact with the mentally ill. Zimring (2017) noted that proper research may lead to a comprehensive understanding of the actual situations when lethal force should be applied and those incidents where it should not be considered, such as those incidents with individuals who are mentally ill.

Training to assist police officers during encounters with the mentally ill should be designed and accomplished at local levels to ensure the maximization of local mental health resources. Larger urban areas may have increased number of resources to deploy during these encounters, but smaller areas can still develop training and protocols to assist officers when encountering persons displaying the characteristics of a behavioral crisis.

Police leadership can use reviews of incidents involving the mentally ill to determine new tactics and training procedures to lessen the use of lethal force. Police administrators can review these encounters to identify potential problems and implement policy improvements to lower the rate of lethal force incidents at the jurisdictional level.

Klinger (2020) suggested that reviews of video and audio recordings of incidents can provide police supervisors and administrators with opportunities to evaluate tactics and training to make encounters safer. Successful new concepts can be introduced in training academies and in-service training to offer more resolution choices during encounters with members of the public suffering from a mental health crisis.

In Case 92, Bell County (TX) Sheriff's Corporal Shane Geers shot Lyle Blancard during a traffic stop. Mr. Blancard had previously been contacted by sheriff's deputies for shooting a rifle at airplanes flying over his house. Not armed at the time, Mr. Blancard led Corporal Geers down a gravel road, then exited his vehicle and started shouting at the corporal. Corporal Geers then shot Mr. Blancard. This encounter could have been made safer if Corporal Geers and the Bell County Sheriff's Department had training for officers to use during encounters with persons that exhibited behaviors associated with mental illness. Corporal Geers could have used his police vehicle to lengthen the time span of the incident for Mr. Blancard to regulate his and Mr. Blancard's emotions.

In the examined cases where abnormal behavioral responses or erratic behavior were observed, the responses perceived by the police officers were interpreted as a threat to their safety or to the public. The officers in these cases may not be trained to deescalate such situations or to seek the assistance of mental health providers during these rapidly changing incidents as the ability to deploy mental health resources can be constrained by situational or jurisdictional realities. Interim intervention techniques can include improved training to lengthen the time of an incident to allow enough time for persons suffering from emotional dysregulation to regulate their behavior or to offer non-

lethal resolutions to the subject to encourage peaceful endings. Potentially safer procedures and tactics can minimize deaths during future incidents if encouraged by local police managers. Zimring (2017) stated that specific policies and procedures that favor non-lethal resolutions may be more effective than general police reform to reduce the number of people killed by police.

Established and vetted protocols can help members of the criminal justice system respond appropriately to persons suffering from emotional crises. By defining techniques and training protocols before the next incident occurs, police officers can rehearse and evaluate techniques that may give them the best chance to end the conflict without lethal force.

Potential tactical and policy suggestions should arise from the local level to maximize resource allocation and encourage rapid responses that include mental health providers. Police administrators need to stress their preference that such incidents result in non-lethal outcomes with the priorities of protecting officers and civilians from life threatening injuries and to minimize the deaths and injuries to subjects. Training new officers and retraining existing officers in specific mitigating techniques may provide alternatives to encourage non-lethal resolutions (Zimring, 2017). Police departments can identify sympathetic individual officers to champion the efforts of crisis intervention techniques during events when persons exhibit emotional crisis or erratic behavior.

Supervisors should ensure that subordinate police officers are aware that mental health providers can assume responsibility for the patient care of the mentally ill while the officers are expected to provide safety during the encounter and to limit use of force. The current officer mindset of quick resolutions to control incidents should be discarded

during mental health calls to allow subjects to gain coping strategies and select reasonable responses, making the goal of mental health care the primary goal.

Tactical Responses to the Mentally III

Police officers function as first responders to incidents when people suffer emotional crisis or mental health issues and may be armed with weapons other than firearms. Proper training and interaction with mental health patients during training sessions may remove the institutional stigma of mental illness within local police cultures and encourage police officers to use alternative force options rather than firearms.

There is no universal model of tactics or techniques available for police contacts with mental illness as individual jurisdictions have varying access to mental health care providers and facilities. However, crisis intervention teams can be established in communities which include police officers and mental health professionals who are available to respond to events or remotely advise officers during incidents which have elements of emotional crisis or mental illness. The objective of these teams would be to treat the subject as a patient rather than an offender and encourage a resolution that favors mental health care instead of incarceration. Verbal interaction can be used by the responding mental health professional while the police officer maintains a minimum role to ensure safety if the individual threatens another person. Supportive care after the person has been released from a mental health facility or jail would allow participants to obtain required medicines, ensure testing to monitor appropriate medicine use, and help them reenter society. The Los Angeles Police Department utilizes a Mental Evaluation Unit to resolve incidents in manners that promote the use of mental health resources, as opposed to using only the criminal justice system, and has achieved notable success for

victims and increased safety for involved police officers (Jordan, Panza, & Dempsey, 2020).

Police tactics to mitigate dangerous situations may not rely on expensive equipment or training (Zimring, 2017). Specific tactics using commercially available oleoresin capsicum spray can allow responding officers to safely control those persons using edged or blunt weapons that can cause injury when they are close to the officers or members of the public. Oleoresin capsicum spray used in correctional settings can allow police officers to maintain a safe distance of up to 35 feet by remaining outside the effective range of edged or blunt weapons until the subject becomes incapacitated. Specific protocols should include increased proximal distancing and verbal negotiations to allow sufficient time for affected citizens to return to a rational state. Police officers and mental health professionals can bring family members to the scene to encourage efforts to support peaceful resolutions or allow the oleoresin capsicum spray to incapacitate the person to make the situation safe.

Police officers and dispatching call centers should be cognizant to erratic behaviors when the initial public report is made. Only eleven cases (08.53%) in this study were dispatched to officers as potential mental illness issues. Zimring (2017) noted that mental illness was not an initial concern noted in any of the cases he studied. By acknowledging the presence of erratic behavior, officers can recognize the potential of mental illness being present and formulate potential outcomes using non-lethal techniques to control subjects.

Contact protocols can be used by police dispatchers to advise responding officers of potential resolutions during their contact with the identified individual. Many people

suffering mental illness or emotional crisis have a history of prior suicide attempts or mental health treatment. As a person is entered into the criminal justice system after an event, local mental health professionals can formulate individual contact protocols for each officer to use to encourage safer responses during future contacts. The participation of each involved person can be mandated by court order or may be a voluntary participation by the affected person or their families. Individualized contact plans would utilize mental health resources available in local jurisdictions and allow responding officers to follow a tactical procedure that was formulated to encourage non-lethal outcomes while preserving public safety during confrontations and increase coping strategies available to the subject. Criminal justice supervisors should review and evaluate each incident to identify future less lethal resolutions in similar circumstances and potential improvements to local policies and guidelines.

Regional mental health facilities should be established in areas where no in-patient care services are present. Jails do not provide adequate mental health care and normally only large metropolitan areas have in-patient care. The use of regional facilities to serve numerous municipalities would allow police officers an alternative to incarceration during a behavioral crisis and allow for citizens to receive needed care and aftercare from mental health providers. Funding should be allocated to allow these centers to operate and meet the needs of mental health in a professional setting rather than a jail.

The policy implication of using words during the dispatch phase that exclude information and requires officers to quickly formulate responses is inadequate and supports Fyfe's Split Second Syndrome (2015) as many officers in this study discharged

their weapons quickly and without adequate time to investigate the circumstances of the incident they were dispatched to oversee. Code words used in dispatching messages such as “emotional crisis” or “erratic behavior” can be substituted for “disturbed person” or “crazy subject” to encourage less aggressive resolutions and imply that more time is needed to investigate the incident and offer non-lethal resolutions that are acceptable to the subject. Dispatching more than one officer to incidents may allow multiple officers to resolve the issue without relying on the perceptions of a single officer. In 86 cases (66.67%) in this study, the initial responding officer used lethal force with no other officer present.

Mental health care should be made available to persons who suffer from mental illness, erratic behavior, and adverse behavioral reactions during police contacts. Private mental health care can be financially unobtainable for many people, particularly long term sufferers that may not have regular employment or health insurance. Post incident care should include access to mental health counseling, needed medications, and general health care. Other social support, such as housing and food supply, can be gained by using established channels found in local communities.

LIMITATIONS

The Guardian and *The Washington Post* only collected data for 2015 and 2016. Neither corporation offers an explanation as why their respective studies were limited, and no other years were examined by either news media corporation. As such, this data may contain dated information and not allow for a precise examination of mental illness during police lethal force events. As the data for the study arose from news media and You Tube sources, this sample should be considered non-representative and exploratory.

Public data can have shortcomings such as journalism bias, inaccurate data, and dated information which may have influenced this dataset by presenting only videos that support a specific narrative of police lethal force events. Law enforcement agencies and special interest groups can have differing reasons to make the videos available to the public. Bias could be present when videos are released which support a favored narrative, but police transparency can interact with advocacy and legitimacy when examining use of force videos to offer an accurate representation of shooting incidents and changing local protocols as needed.

The use of body worn or carried cameras, dash mounted cameras, and cellphone cameras allow for additional information to be examined by police administrators, public officials, and members of the public. Body worn or carried camera systems are relatively new and expensive, resulting in some police departments not using such technology. Current body worn cameras and storage of video remains expensive and will limit the use of these vital tools. A central repository of police videos which records use of force incidents is necessary for increasing public acceptance of police tactics and formulating improved practical techniques which can be used to lessen deaths of citizens by officers (Zimring, 2017). Recordings made by the public will continue to be useful tools to analyze lethal force events that are not recorded by police officers.

Police departments are not currently required to report lethal incidents to a central national source, resulting in an absence of a single source to gather information to study tactics used by police officers when encountering the mentally ill. The United States Department of Justice has instituted a program, but details and the identification of participating agencies have not been made public. Transparency can strengthen the search

for truth and lead to better police practices to encourage public trust in law enforcement agencies.

The representation of race in this study is not conclusive as the racial composition of each police jurisdiction is not represented. The racial composition of the national population is not representative of each police jurisdiction, making racial comparisons nebulous. Further studies should compare police use of lethal force to the composition of race in each area of responsibility or jurisdiction. The rates of deaths as related to race within jurisdictional areas may be higher or lower than the national average and additional studies are needed to provide an accurate understanding of the role of race in police lethal force incidents involving the mentally ill at the jurisdictional level. Additionally, more research is needed to examine the contribution of race to mental health stigma as interpreted by police officers to determine if persons of color are treated differently during police calls involving mental health.

The mention of mental illness by news media, family members, and police officials in this study does not confirm that a diagnosis was made by a trained mental health official, hence this data could be inaccurate. Future official databases should note if the deceased citizen was a patient of a mental health provider and specify the diagnosis.

CONCLUSION

Behavioral factors contributed to lethal force conclusions during police contacts in this study. The observation and identification of the two identified behavioral conditions related to mental illness can contribute to the academic and vocational discussion of the use of police lethal force. By observing behaviors that contribute to or

may predict attacks, alternative tactical influences may be suggested to minimize fatalities and injuries.

This content analysis gives “voice” to those persons who were killed and may lead to a better understanding of how the interaction of participants and the interplay of developing factors can lead to lethal force outcomes in police responses during interactions that involve the mentally ill of a community. This research enriches the national discussion by expanding the knowledge of how the actions of individual participants promote police lethal force incidents. Potential changes to local policies and vocational practices may lead to fewer deaths by allowing police officers to recognize and respond to behaviors during an encounter with persons suffering from mental illness and encouraging safer conclusions during these incidents. These events should conclude with local mental health treatment rather than incarceration when possible.

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Appendix A. Coding Instrument

AGENCY INFORMATION

Name of Law Enforcement Agency

City & State

Dash Cams

Body Worn Camera

INCIDENT INFORMATION

Date

Time

Type of location

Urban

Rural

Residential

Industrial

Number of Officers Involved

Type of Firearms Used

Body Worn Cameras Present and Used

Video Released

Number of Officers Present when Involved Officer Arrives at Scene

Number of officers discharging weapons during the incident

Type of call initially

Call for Service

Type

Execution of Warrant

Type

Special Ops

Type

Traffic Stop

Type

Patrol

Type

Investigation

Type

Off-Duty

Type

Other

Type

OFFICER INFORMATION

Visual Descriptors of Involved Officer

Sex Age Ht/Wt In Uniform BWC Dash Cam

Symbols of Authority Present (badge, raid jacket)

Does officer try to move towards a position of dominance?

What feature used as a POD?

CIVILIAN INFORMATION

Visual Descriptors of Involved Citizen

Sex Age Ht/Wt At Residence Signs of Intoxication

Erratic Behavior Upon Arrival Known or Suggested Mental Health Issues

Weapon Visible?

Was civilian armed?

Type

Did civilian exhibit erratic behavior later?

Describe

Did officer attempt other levels of force before lethal force was applied?

Response from involved citizen

Did citizen advance towards officer(s)?

Mannerism of citizen:

Does civilian flee from officer?

Mannerism:

Does officer participate in a foot pursuit?

How long?

Number of seconds on scene before involved officer discharges weapon

Number of shots fired at civilian by any officer

Activity by civilian after shots are fired

PRE ATTACK CUES BY CIVILIAN

Hands visible?

Weapon visible?

If hidden, where were hands?

Behind back

In Pockets

Under Garments

Inside Waistband

Hidden by part of vehicle

Hidden by part of scene

Other

Civilian Looking at officer?

Targeting Stare

Or

Escape routes

Assistance for Escape

Weapon of Opportunity at scene

If Officer has back-up/assistance

Notes:

Appendix B Comments of Civilian Mental Illness

Case Number	Name	Description
Case 1	Joshua Adam Sisson	Had a history of mental illness and violence. Held a knife to his boyfriend's throat, then attacked a police officer who responded to the domestic violence call.
Case 7	Cedric Norris	Treated for mental illness while in prior custody.
Case 9	Janet Wilson	Described by witnesses as having "some type of mental incapacity" and as a "disorderly mental female." Was also described as having "mental health issues."
Case 11	Bruce Kelly, Jr.	Prior diagnosis of substance abuse and described as "suffered from severe mental health issues." Mental illness diagnosed as a child.
Case 13	Randy Joe Nelson	Was struck by a conducted energy weapon in a local emergency department while there for a mental illness crisis. Several involuntary commitments for bipolar disease.
Case 16	David Joseph	No reported history of mental illness but cited as having a mental or behavioral crisis when shot by the responding officer.
Case 18	Sahlah Ridgeway	Prior treatment at local hospital for suicidal thoughts. Mother suspected bipolar disease.
Case 21	Calvin Smith	History of mental illness and was treated for such living in Shreveport. Family attempted to have him continue treatment. Previously attempted suicide.
Case 22	Paul Gaston	Friends described as "having problems" and "had a few issues here and there." Also described as rude and aggressive. Pointed a bb-gun at responding police officers.
Case 24	Kionte Spencer	History of mental health issues and admission into treatment programs. Was described as having a "troubled life." Pointed a bb-gun at responding police officers.
Case 25	Darrel P. Bosell	Initially reported as an emotional crisis. Clear to responding police he was in severe emotional distress. Cited in news briefing as having "a mental health issue."
Case 29	Map Kong	Was committed via petitions in 2005 and 2006 for mental illness and chemical dependency.
Case 30	Robert Dentmond	Depressed and suicidal. Grand Jury examining case looked at mental health solutions. Challenged responding officers with a realistic-looking but fake assault rifle.
Case 31	Ralph Grenon	Diagnosed mental illness but not taking medication properly.
Case 33	Jesse Juarez	Previous hospitalizations for schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. Not currently taking his prescribed medications.
Case 36	Melissa Boarts	Diagnosed as suicidal and bipolar. Family called out-of-state authorities by tracking her via a hidden GPS device on her car.
Case 37	Laronda Sweatt	Disabled due to bipolar disease.
Case 38	Luis Gongora	Homeless man described as "crazy." Walking down street waving knife at passersby.
Case 40	Melissa Abbott	History of mental illness that includes depressive disorder, borderline personality disorder, and intellectual disability. Swinging a hatchet in Walmart, scaring other shoppers. Charged responding officer with the hatchet raised.
Case 43	Jakob Wagner	Described as "socially awkward" and "troubled." His family questioned his fitness for gun ownership. Had attempted suicide in the past.
Case 44	Mitchell Oakley	Prior commitment after being determined to be criminally incompetent.
Case 48	Michael Kurtz	Suspect called 911 and threatened officers. Was described as in a "rage" and threatened responding officers with a knife so he could join his recently deceased wife in heaven.
Case 49	Arthur DaRosa	Episode began 10 hours after being released from a mental health facility for treatment of depression. Killed two and assaulted 5 more people with a knife before being killed by responding officers.
Case 57	John Coffey	Post mortem toxicology showed an anti-depressant, Sertraline, in his blood. Was sitting in a fast food parking lot with a shotgun in his lap before being shot by responding officers after exiting his vehicle with the shotgun in his hands.
Case 61	Clifford Tucker	Called local hospital and threatened to commit suicide.
Case 63	Michael Rasmussen	Called 911 and stated that he wanted to take his own life. Shot when he approached deputies with a loaded shotgun and ignored orders to stop.
Case 66	Miguel Chavez-Angles	Had been released from the hospital for a mental health episode less than 2 hours before being shot while attempting to hijack a bus and take a police officer's weapon.

Case 69	Sherman Evans	Friends stated that he suffered from depression after his wife died. He threatened several responding police officers with a bb gun that appeared to be a functioning handgun.
Case 70	Michael Schumacher	Broke into a house and threatened a responding police officer with a pitchfork. Law enforcement authorities stated they were aware of his mental illness history.
Case 76	Joseph Mann	Suffering from a history of mental illness, he challenged responding officers with a knife after threatening by-standers.
Case 78	Kevin Higgins	Per the Veterans Administration, he suffered from PTSD and depression and was awarded an 80% disability due to these conditions. Attempted to rob a bar but stayed at the location with a rifle after realizing that police had been called.
Case 80	Javier Gaona	Shot by responding officers after he threatened others and the officers with a knife. Police were aware of his mental illness through past encounters with him.
Case 83	Jawari Porter	He attacked a responding police officer after an armed robbery of a grocery store. He had multiple court ordered commitments.
Case 88	Juan Torres	Had a previous diagnosis of schizophrenia, paranoia, and anti-social disorder before he attacked officers with a knife at the conclusion of a vehicle pursuit.
Case 98	Keith Scott	Had suffered a traumatic brain injury and was not taking his prescribed medication. Did not comply with police commands after being observed in possession of a firearm.
Case 99	Alfred Olango	Police responded to his family's call for assistance during a mental health crisis and he pointed a vaping device in a manner that resembled a handgun.
Case 105	Rex Wilson	Had a history of depression and mental illness and was shot after he carjacked a vehicle and pointed a replica handgun at officers.
Case 107	Javier Munoz	Shot after a carjacking and was described as having a severe drug addiction and was "troubled."
Case 110	Michelle Shirley	Diagnosed with manic bi-polar disorder and active in community mental health awareness issues, she was shot after trying to run police officers over with her car.
Case 113	James Ritchie	Suspected as a serial killer, he attacked an officer who wanted to question him about a skipped cab fare. Described by his mother as a "ticking time bomb."
Case 118	Steve Vananda	Had been suicidal for "many years" when he pointed a firearm at responding officers.
Case 125	Earl Eubanks, Jr.	Battled depression and begged officers to shoot him during a domestic violence disturbance.
Case 126	Michael Jacques	Suffered from PTSD arising from a jail term as a sex offender.
Case 128	James Tylka	Before killing his wife, he told her about suicide attempts in 2015.
Case 129	Ricky Whidden	Diagnosed with schizophrenia, he was shot by a deputy as he was running away.

Appendix C Adverse Behavioral Reactions

Case Number	Name	Description	Caused By
Case 1	Joshaua Sisson	Held a knife at boyfriend's throat, then advanced towards responding officers with the knife in a threatening manner.	Civilian
Case 2	Stephen Burwich	Upset about recent gun legislation passed by President Obama. Made incoherent statements to responding police.	Civilian
Case 3	Robert Tenbrink	Attempted armed robbery of a store, then pointed a "realistic" bb gun towards responding officers while ignoring their commands.	Civilian
Case 8	Robert "LeVoy" Finicum	FBI special agents fired upon Finicum after he left his stranded vehicle during an incident in which his vehicle was forced off the road at a police roadblock.	Officers
Case 9	Janet Wilson	Attempted to strike private security officers and responding police officers with her car after creating a disturbance at a shopping mall.	Civilian
Case 11	Bruce Kelly, Jr.	Attacked responding officers after being reported for public intoxication. Attacked many officers with a knife and killed a police dog.	Civilian
Case 12	Edgar Alvarado	Told female friend he was going to kill cops. Years of aggressive behavior and threats towards neighbors. Family attempted to have him arrested for active warrants for his safety.	Civilian
Case 13	Randy Joe Nelson	Attacked hospital staff and responding officers with emergency room equipment before dying from a conducted energy weapon strike.	Civilian
Case 16	David Joseph	Reported for being naked in a subdivision and ran towards the responding officer.	Officer
Case 19	Ali Yahia	Attacked 3 responding officers during questioning in a motel lobby for possible possession of illegal substances. Told the officers to "go ahead and get it over with," then attempted to shot them.	Civilian
Case 21	Calvin Smith	Engaged 2 responding officers in an instant gunfight as they attempted to question him about vandalism to his girlfriend's car.	Civilian
Case 22	Paul Gaston	Friends described as "having problems" and "had a few issues here and there." Also described as rude and aggressive. Pointed a bb-gun at responding police officers.	Civilian
Case 24	Kionte Spencer	Pointed a replica gun at officers responding to a "man with a gun" call.	Civilian
Case 25	Darrel P. Bosell	Held an officer trained in mental health Crisis Intervention Techniques at gunpoint after the officer responded to investigate a stolen gun. Original interaction with the police started as a "mental health issue."	Civilian
Case 27	Gevork Alachadzhyan	Suspect stated he had been injected with a foreign material and displayed erratic behavior upon officers' arrival, then stole a marked police car and led officers in a lengthy high-speed pursuit in the Los Angeles area.	Civilian
Case 28	Daniel Wooters	Police responded when he wandered into a restaurant and threatened to kill patrons. Stole a police car and threatened officers with a knife when stopped.	Civilian
Case 29	Map Kong	Ignored police commands and ran from his car with a knife in a threatening motion towards officers and citizens.	Civilian
Case 30	Robert Dentmond	Challenged responding officers with a replica assault rifle.	Civilian
Case 31	Ralph Grenon	Advanced towards an entry team of officers with 2 knives.	Civilian
Case 32	Loreal Tsingine	Was the subject of a shoplifting call and was subjected to extreme use of force by the responding officer. She responded with scissors to defend herself and was shot by the officer.	Officer
Case 33	Jesse Juarez	Advanced towards a responding deputy with a manual weed cutter during a burglary call.	Civilian
Case 35	David Mack	Attacked a deputy with a conducted energy weapon during a traffic stop for a moving violation.	Civilian
Case 36	Melissa Boarts	Attacked responding officers during a welfare check.	Civilian
Case 37	Laronda Sweatt	Attacked initial responding officer and a back-up officer with an ax during an eviction notice service.	Civilian
Case 38	Luis Gongora	Homeless man described as "crazy." Walking down street waving knife at passersby.	Civilian
Case 39	Lamont Gulley	Killed wife with knife before officers arrive. Has self-inflicted knife wounds to neck. Tells cops to shoot him as he has a gun.	Civilian

Case 40	Melissa Abbott	Threatened shoppers in a Walmart with a hatchet before vandalizing bags of dog food. Attacked the responding officer.	Civilian
Case 42	Mario Mejia-Martinez	Threatened pedestrians with a knife then advanced towards responding officers using the knife in an aggressive manner.	Civilian
Case 43	Jakob Wagner	Shot at former high school classmates during their prom before being shot by an officer assigned as security in the parking lot.	Civilian
Case 44	Mitchell Oakley	After being reported as a trespasser, he shot at 2 officers as they approached him inside a Walmart.	Civilian
Case 45	Willie Tillman	Fled from a traffic stop and an officer lunged partially into the car as it was speeding away.	Officer
Case 46	Darrel Machemehl	After losing his sawed-off shotgun during a pursuit for robbery, he placed his hand inside a bag and simulated pointing the weapon towards responding officers who were also unaware that the weapon had fallen out of the bag.	Civilian
Case 47	Ashtian Barnes	Was stopped for not paying a highway toll when he attempted to flee, the officer lunged partially inside the car as it was speeding away.	Officer
Case 48	Michael Kurtz	Suspect called 911 and threatened officers. Was described as in a "rage" and threatened responding officers with a knife so he could join his recently deceased wife in heaven.	Civilian
Case 49	Arthur DaRosa	Killed 2 people and injured 5 more with his knife before being shot by an off-duty deputy.	Civilian
Case 53	Derek Prophet	Attacked an officer with a knife after being told to pick up his trash.	Civilian
Case 54	Doll Pierre-Louis	A Florida state trooper jumped on Pierre-Doll's hood after a minor traffic accident when Pierre-Doll attempted to flee. The trooper shot him.	Officer
Case 56	Donald Brown III	Charged responding deputies with a knife during a traffic stop for armed robbery.	Civilian
Case 57	John Coffey	Self-reported as a "man needing assistance" then challenged 8 responding officers with a shotgun.	Civilian
Case 60	Andrew Henson	Told responding officers after a pursuit that they would have to kill them, then assumed a combat shooting stance but did not possess a handgun.	Civilian
Case 61	Clifford Tucker	Called local hospital and threatened to commit suicide. Attempted to retrieve a weapon after telling the responding officer to "blow my fucking head off."	Civilian
Case 62	Noel Rodriguez	Asking irrational questions to others present before attempting to use his vehicle to strike several people, including responding police officers.	Civilian
Case 63	Michael Rasmussen	Called 911 and stated that he wanted to take his own life. Shot when he approached deputies with a loaded shotgun and ignored orders to stop.	Civilian
Case 64	Devin Scott	Attacked responding officers with a knife during a domestic violence call.	Civilian
Case 66	Miguel Chavez-Angles	Hijacked a public bus and attacked a responding officer with a fire extinguisher before attempting to take her service weapon.	Civilian
Case 67	Dylan Nobel	Advanced towards responding officers while ignoring commands to stop during a "man with a gun" call.	Civilian
Case 68	Michael Disbrowe	Threatened neighbors and responding officers with an airsoft handgun that was a replica of a firearm.	Civilian
Case 69	Sherman Evans	Threatened several responding police officers with a bb gun that appeared to be a functioning handgun.	Civilian
Case 70	Michael Schumacher	Attacked a responding officer with a pitchfork while breaking into a house.	Civilian
Case 71	Delrawn Small	Shot by an off-duty officer in a road rage incident.	Officer and Civilian
Case 72	Alton Sterling	Shot by an officer while mildly resisting during a "man with a gun" call.	Officer
Case 74	Philandro Castile	Shot by an officer during a pretext traffic stop.	Officer
Case 75	Alva Braziel	Was twirling in an intersection when two police officers drove up and he pointed a handgun at them.	Civilian
Case 76	Joseph Mann	Attacked responding officers with a knife after threatening members of the public.	Civilian
Case 77	Donald Myers	Told responding officers to shoot him at the end of a foot pursuit in a narcotics call. Had lost his handgun during the chase.	Civilian
Case 78	Kevin Higgins	Waited for responding officers in a bar he had just robbed with an assault rifle. Had time to flee but did not.	Civilian
Case 79	Jerry Brimer	During a domestic violence incident, he told responding police officers that he wanted to die before approaching them with an ax.	Civilian
Case 80	Javier Gaona	Threatened responding officers with a knife after telling them to kill him during a disturbance call.	Civilian
Case 83	Jawari Porter	Attacked a responding officer with a knife after threatening a security officer with a knife during a shoplifting incident in a grocery store.	Civilian

Case 84	Darnell Wicker	Attacked responding officers with a pruning saw during a domestic incident.	Civilian
Case 85	Dominic Rollice	Officers responded to a domestic disturbance call and he attacked them with a hammer.	Civilian
Case 86	Omer Ismail Ali	Returned to a store he had just robbed and attacked a responding officer with a wooden pole.	Civilian
Case 87	Todd Browning	Told the responding police officer that he would have to kill him, or he would kill the officer.	Civilian
Case 88	Juan Torres	Attacked responding officers with a knife at the conclusion of a vehicle pursuit.	Civilian
Case 89	Kelley Forte	Was robbing a pharmacy and holding a knife against the pharmacist when he charged responding officer with the knife.	Civilian
Case 90	Jerry Jackson	Police responded to a domestic violence incident and he charged them with a knife.	Civilian
Case 92	Lyle Blanchard	He was shot by a deputy after a brief vehicle pursuit.	Officer
Case 94	Sadiq Idris	Pointed an unloaded stolen gun at a responding police officer.	Civilian
Case 95	Jesse Beshaw	Charged a responding deputy, stating that he had a gun, and told him to shoot him.	Civilian
Case 96	Terrence Crutcher	Shot by a responding officer investigating a car stopped in the road.	Officer
Case 97	Dahir Adam	Stabbed multiple people during a terrorist attack at a shopping mall. Charged an armed off-duty officer and was shot.	Civilian
Case 99	Alfred Olango	Assumed a shooting stance and held a vaping device like a handgun to officers who respond to an assistance call.	Civilian
Case 100	Jeffery Cave	Answered a SWAT announcement with a handgun and shot one of the members.	Civilian
Case 103	Devan Desnoyers	Pointed a replica handgun at officers attempting to arrest him for robbing a drugstore.	Civilian
Case 104	Kheyanev Littledog	Challenges 5 responding police officers with a handgun during a "man with a gun" call.	Civilian
Case 105	Rex Wilson	Pointed a replica handgun at responding officers during a carjacking.	Civilian
Case 108	William Frost, Jr.	After threatening others with a knife, he lunged at a responding officer with a knife.	Civilian
Case 110	Michelle Shirley	Attempted to strike officers with her car during a "dangerous driver" call.	Civilian
Case 112	Christian Redwine	Shot after a two-state pursuit while attempting to elude arrest.	Officer
Case 113	James Ritchie	Suspected as a serial killer, he attacked an officer who wanted to question him about a skipped cab fare.	Civilian
Case 114	Juan Fernandez	Shot after killing one and pointing a weapon towards a hostage.	Civilian
Case 116	Luke Smith	Shot after stabbing his uncle and approaching a team of responding offices with a knife.	Civilian
Case 117	Darius Jones	Observed by patrol officers killing a man, then came towards the officers with the gun.	Civilian
Case 118	Steve Vananda	Had been suicidal for "many years" when he pointed a firearm at responding officers.	Civilian
Case 120	Derek Adame	Became belligerent during a suspicious vehicle investigation and the officer reached into the car during an escape attempt, was drug by the car, and shot the driver.	Officer and Civilian
Case 122	Daniel Riedman	During a traffic stop in which the vehicle's plate was noted as "wanted/armed and dangerous," he was shot as he attempted to retrieve a handgun with three officers pointing handguns at him.	Civilian
Case 123	Brent Quinn	Shot a responding officer during a suspicious vehicle call.	Civilian
Case 125	Earl Eubanks, Jr.	Shot during a domestic violence call when he approaches an officer and tells him to shoot.	Civilian
Case 126	Michael Jacques	Pulled an officer into his car during a traffic stop for reckless driving and assaulted him.	Civilian
Case 127	Gearld Hall	Had stabbed a woman and tried to ignite a natural gas line inside an apartment before lunging at responding officers with a knife.	Civilian
Case 128	James Tylka	After killing his wife, he shot a state trooper and waited to ambush responding officers.	Civilian
Case 129	Ricky Whidden	Although diagnosed with schizophrenia, he was shot by a deputy as he was running away from the scene after threatening his family with a knife.	Officer and Civilian

Appendix D Erratic Behavior before the Police Encounter

Case Number	Name	Description
Case 1	Joshaua Adam Sisson	Had a mask over his face and was holding a knife.
Case 2	Stephen Bukwich	Had barricaded himself and shot at others.
Case 3	Robert Tenbrink	Performed two robberies and remained in the area.
Case 8	Robert "LeVoy" Finicum	Participated in the takeover of a remote nature and visitor center.
Case 9	Janet Wilson	Attempted to strike others with her vehicle.
Case 11	Bruce Kelly, Jr.	Drinking and threatening others.
Case 12	Edgar Alvarado	Had already carjacked 2 cars.
Case 13	Randy Joe Wilson	Attacked hospital staff.
Case 15	Phillip Ferry	Yelling incoherent statements.
Case 16	David Joseph	Running naked through a housing area.
Case 22	Paul Gaston	Involved in a hit and run vehicle accident and waved a firearm at others while walking away.
Case 24	Kionte Spencer	Wore a mask and pointed a replica gun at others.
Case 25	Darrel P. Bosell	Called and spoke to an officer who was trained in Crisis Intervention Techniques (CIT).
Case 27	Gevork Alachadzhyan	Stated he was injected with a foreign material.
Case 28	Daniel Wooters	Was smelling the hair of restaurant patrons.
Case 29	Map Kong	Spent most of the night in a MacDonald's parking lot with a knife in his lap exhibiting what was reported by others as "erratic" behavior.
Case 30	Robert Dentmond	Texted a message to friends stating his intent to die.
Case 31	Ralph "Phil" Grenon	Threatened his apartment manager and a responding crisis worker.
Case 33	Jesse Juarez	Fighting with a security officer after being observed breaking into multiple cars during daylight hours.
Case 36	Melissa Boarts	Left a family function and stated her intent to harm herself.
Case 38	Luis Gongora	Waving a knife while walking down a street.
Case 39	Lamont Gulley	Killed his wife during a domestic violence episode.
Case 40	Melissa Abbott	Attacked bags of dog food and threatened shoppers with an ax at a Walmart.
Case 42	Mario Mejia-Martinez	Harassed others with a knife on a busy city sidewalk.
Case 43	Jakob Wagner	Preoccupied with firearms and was questioned by a family member about his ability to own a firearm.
Case 48	Michael Kurtz	Threatened others with a knife and self-reported to police authorities.
Case 49	Arthur DaRosa	Killed 2 women, wrecked 2 cars, assaulted 3 people in a mall, obtained a knife in a restaurant and killed 1 more person and stabbed another.
Case 56	Donald Brown, III	Fled after performing an armed robbery and threatened others with a knife.
Case 57	John Coffey	Sitting in a Burger King parking lot with a shotgun in his lap. Self-reported to police.
Case 59	Rodney Rogriguez Smith	Shot his friend on a public bus.
Case 60	Andrew Henson	Was the subject of an arrest warrant and fled from a traffic stop for a moving violation.
Case 61	Clifford Tucker	Called a hospital and threatened to commit suicide.
Case 62	Noel Rodriguez	Making incoherent statements and hit a vehicle.
Case 63	Michael Rasmussen	Told 911 he wished to "commit suicide by cops."
Case 66	Miguel Chavez-Angles	Tried to hijack a city bus.
Case 67	Dylan Noble	Led officers on a vehicle pursuit after driving aggressively in front of a marked police unit.
Case 68	Michael Disbrowe	Threatening others with a handgun.
Case 69	Sherman Evans	Reported as man with a gun.

Case 70	Michael Schumacher	Reported as both a home invasion and a man in a lake, "slapping water."
Case 73	Thomas Vandemark	Had assaulted a female and stayed on-scene to wait for the police response.
Case 75	Alvia Braziel	Standing in the middle of an intersection, twirling in a circle.
Case 76	Joseph Mann	Made "karate" motions in the air and urinated on himself.
Case 79	Jerry Brimer	Threatened wife with an ax during a domestic violence incident and threatened suicide.
Case 80	Javier Gaona	Reported as "man with a knife shouting obscenities."
Case 83	Jawari Porter	Threatened a security guard with a knife during a shoplifting incident.
Case 84	Darnell Wicker	Armed with a knife, he kicked in the door of his girlfriend's apartment.
Case 85	Dominic Rollice	Violated a restraining order and entered his wife's garage while intoxicated.
Case 87	Todd Browning	Threatened others at an Auto Zone with a knife.
Case 88	Juan Torres	Stole a truck using a knife, then approached responding officers with the knife.
Case 90	Jerry Jackson	Reported as a domestic violence incident as he entered a residence and threatened his wife with a knife.
Case 91	James Richards	Threatened a hotel room of strangers with a handgun.
Case 92	Lyle Blanchard	Had been previously arrested for shooting at aircraft.
Case 94	Sadiq Idris	Walking down the street with a handgun visible in his rear pocket, threatened others.
Case 96	Terrence Crutcher	Left his vehicle in the street, blocking one lane and partially blocking the other lane.
Case 97	Dahir Adam	Had been sullen and withdrawn for weeks according to family members.
Case 98	Keith Scott	Sitting in a vehicle in an apartment complex parking lot with a handgun.
Case 99	Alfred Olango	Ran into and out of traffic and his family could not control him.
Case 100	Jeffrey Cave	Answered SWAT entrance commands holding a handgun.
Case 104	Kheyanev Littledog	Trespassing and shooting a gun on commercial property.
Case 105	Rex Wilson	Told his wife goodbye before pointing a fake gun at officers.
Case 106	Salvador Reyes	Took a child hostage and held a firearm to the child's head.
Case 107	Javier Munoz	Hijacked 1 vehicle and attempted the second hijacking.
Case 108	William Frost, Jr.	Confronted a couple with a knife.
Case 109	Michael Vance, Jr.	Had beheaded his uncle and shot 2 officers.
Case 110	Michelle Shirley	Was driving her car with both front airbags deployed after crashing into a car.
Case 114	Juan Fernandez	Took a hostage and killed 2 other people with a firearm.
Case 116	Luke Smith	Stabbed his uncle and threatened others with a knife.
Case 117	Darius Jones	Had killed a person in front of police officers in a marked patrol vehicle.
Case 118	Steve Vananda	Fought with a family member and had a gun.
Case 119	Cloetha Mitchell	Shot two people before officers arrived.
Case 121	Richard Grimes	Shot his pregnant girlfriend, killing the fetus.
Case 124	Waltki Williams	Threatened his girlfriend with a handgun during a domestic violence incident.
Case 125	Earl Eubanks, Jr.	Was hitting his wife in a domestic violence call in a public area.
Case 126	Michael Jacques	Was driving into snowbanks and nearly struck a bicyclist.
Case 127	Gerald Hall	Had stabbed a female in a domestic violence incident.
Case 128	James Tylka	Killed his estranged wife with a handgun in a domestic violence call.
Case 129	Ricky Whidden	Threatened his family with a knife.

Appendix E Interaction between the Research Themes

Case 1	Joshua Adam Sisson	ABR	EB	MI
Case 2	Stephen Bukwich	ABR	EB	
Case 3	Robert Tenbrink	ABR	EB	
Case 7	Cedric Norris			MI
Case 8	Robert “LeVoy” Finicum	ABR	EB	
Case 9	Janet Wilson	ABR	EB	MI
Case 11	Bruce Kelly, Jr.	ABR	EB	MI
Case 12	Edgar Alvarado	ABR	EB	
Case 13	Randy Joe Wilson	ABR	EB	MI
Case 15	Phillip Ferry		EB	
Case 16	David Joseph	ABR	EB	MI
Case 18	Sahlah Ridgeway			MI
Case 19	Ali Yahia	ABR		
Case 21	Calvin Smith	ABR		MI
Case 22	Paul Gaston	ABR	EB	MI
Case 24	Kionte Spencer	ABR	EB	
Case 25	Darrel P. Bosell	ABR	EB	MI
Case 27	Gevork Alachadzhyan	ABR	EB	
Case 28	Daniel Wooters	ABR	EB	
Case 29	Map Kong	ABR	EB	MI
Case 30	Robert Dentmond	ABR	EB	MI
Case 31	Ralph “Phil” Grenon	ABR	EB	MI
Case 33	Jesse Juarez	ABR	EB	MI
Case 35	David Mack	ABR		
Case 36	Melissa Boarts	ABR	EB	MI
Case 37	Laronda Sweatt	ABR		MI
Case 38	Luis Gongora	ABR	EB	MI
Case 39	Lamont Gulley	ABR	EB	
Case 40	Melissa Abbott	ABR	EB	MI
Case 42	Mario Mejia-Martinez	ABR	EB	
Case 43	Jakob Wagner	ABR	EB	MI
Case 44	Mitchell Oakley	ABR		MI
Case 46	Darrel S. Machemehl	ABR		
Case 48	Michael Kurtz	ABR	EB	MI
Case 49	Arthur DaRosa	ABR	EB	MI
Case 53	Derek Prophet	ABR		
Case 56	Donald Brown, III	ABR	EB	
Case 57	John Coffey	ABR	EB	MI
Case 59	Rodney Rogriguez Smith		EB	
Case 60	Andrew Henson	ABR	EB	
Case 61	Clifford Tucker	ABR	EB	MI
Case 62	Noel Rodriguez	ABR	EB	
Case 63	Michael Rasmussen	ABR	EB	MI
Case 64	Devin Scott	ABR		
Case 66	Miguel Chavez-Angles	ABR	EB	MI
Case 67	Dylan Noble	ABR	EB	
Case 68	Michael Ervan Disbrowe	ABR	EB	
Case 69	Sherman Evans	ABR	EB	MI
Case 70	Michael Schumacher	ABR	EB	MI
Case 73	Thomas Vandermark		EB	
Case 75	Alva Braziel	ABR	EB	
Case 76	Joseph Mann	ABR	EB	MI
Case 77	Donald Myers	ABR		
Case 78	Kevin Higgins	ABR		MI
Case 79	Jerry Brimer	ABR	EB	
Case 80	Javier Gaona	ABR	EB	MI

Case 83	Jawari Porter	ABR	EB	MI
Case 84	Darnell Wicker	ABR	EB	
Case 85	Dominic Rollice	ABR	EB	
Case 86	Omer Ismail Ali	ABR		
Case 87	Todd Browning	ABR	EB	
Case 88	Juan Torres	ABR	EB	MI
Case 89	Kelly Forte	ABR		
Case 90	Jerry Jackson	ABR	EB	
Case 91	James Richards		EB	
Case 94	Sadiq Idris	ABR	EB	
Case 95	Jesse Beshaw	ABR		
Case 97	Dahir Adam	ABR	EB	
Case 98	Keith Scott		EB	MI
Case 99	Alfred Olango	ABR	EB	MI
Case 100	Jeffrey Cave	ABR	EB	
Case 103	Devan Desnoyers	ABR		
Case 104	Kheyanev Littledog	ABR	EB	
Case 105	Rex Wilson	ABR	EB	MI
Case 106	Salvador Reyes		EB	
Case 107	Javier Munoz		EB	MI
Case 108	William Frost, Jr.	ABR	EB	
Case 109	Michael Vance		EB	
Case 110	Michelle Shirley	ABR	EB	MI
Case 113	James Ritchie	ABR		MI
Case 114	Juan Fernandez	ABR	EB	
Case 116	Luke Smith	ABR	EB	
Case 117	Darius Jones	ABR	EB	
Case 118	Steve Vananda	ABR	EB	MI
Case 119	Cloetha Mitchell		EB	
Case 121	Richard Grimes		EB	
Case 122	Daniel Redman	ABR		
Case 123	Brent Quinn	ABR		
Case 124	Waltki Williams		EB	
Case 125	Earl Eubanks, Jr.	ABR	EB	MI
Case 126	Michael Jacques	ABR	EB	MI
Case 127	Gerald Hall	ABR	EB	
Case 128	James Tylka	ABR	EB	MI
Case 129	Ricky Whidden		EB	MI

Appendix F Civilian Race

Case 1	Joshaua Adam Sisson	White
Case 2	Stephen Bukwich	White
Case 3	Robert Tenbrink	White
Case 7	Cedric Norris	Black
Case 8	Robert "LeVoy" Finicum	White
Case 9	Janet Wilson	Black
Case 11	Bruce Kelly, Jr.	Black
Case 12	Edgar Alvarado	Hispanic
Case 13	Randy Joe Wilson	Black
Case 15	Phillip Ferry	White
Case 16	David Joseph	Black
Case 18	Sahlah Ridgeway	Black
Case 19	Ali Yahia	Black
Case 21	Calvin Smith	Black
Case 22	Paul Gaston	Black
Case 24	Kionte Spencer	Black
Case 25	Darrel P. Bosell	White
Case 27	Gevork Alachadzhyan	White
Case 28	Daniel Wooters	White
Case 29	Map Kong	Asian
Case 30	Robert Dentmond	Black
Case 31	Ralph "Phil" Grenon	White
Case 33	Jesse Juarez	Hispanic
Case 35	David Mack	White
Case 36	Melissa Boarts	White
Case 37	Laronda Sweatt	Black
Case 38	Luis Gongora	Hispanic
Case 39	Lamont Gulley	Black
Case 40	Melissa Abbott	White
Case 42	Mario Mejia-Martinez	Hispanic
Case 43	Jakob Wagner	White
Case 44	Mitchell Oakley	White
Case 46	Darrel S. Machemehl	White
Case 48	Michael Kurtz	White
Case 49	Arthur DaRosa	Black
Case 53	Derek Prophet	White
Case 54	Doll Pierre-Louis	Black
Case 56	Donald Brown, III	White
Case 57	John Coffey	White
Case 59	Rodney Rogriguez Smith	Black
Case 60	Andrew Henson	White
Case 61	Clifford Tucker	White
Case 62	Noel Rodriguez	Hispanic
Case 63	Michael Rasmussen	White
Case 64	Devin Scott	White
Case 66	Miguel Chavez-Angles	Hispanic
Case 67	Dylan Noble	White
Case 68	Michael Ervan Disbrowe	White
Case 69	Sherman Evans	Black
Case 70	Michael Schumacher	White
Case 73	Thomas Vandermark	White
Case 75	Alva Brazier	Black
Case 76	Joseph Mann	Black
Case 77	Donald Myers	White
Case 78	Kevin Higgins	White
Case 79	Jerry Brimer	White

Case 80	Javier Gaona	Hispanic
Case 83	Jawari Porter	Black
Case 84	Darnell Wicker	Black
Case 85	Dominic Rollice	White
Case 86	Omer Ismail Ali	Black
Case 87	Todd Browning	White
Case 88	Juan Torres	Hispanic
Case 89	Kelly Forte	Black
Case 90	Jerry Jackson	White
Case 91	James Richards	Native American
Case 94	Sadiq Idris	Black
Case 95	Jesse Beshaw	White
Case 97	Dahir Adam	Black
Case 98	Keith Scott	Black
Case 99	Alfred Olango	Black
Case 100	Jeffrey Cave	White
Case 103	Devan Desnoyers	White
Case 104	Kheyanev Littledog	Native American
Case 105	Rex Wilson	White
Case 106	Salvador Reyes	Hispanic
Case 107	Javier Munoz	Hispanic
Case 108	William Frost, Jr.	White
Case 109	Michael Vance	White
Case 110	Michelle Shirley	Black
Case 113	James Ritchie	White
Case 114	Juan Fernandez	Hispanic
Case 116	Luke Smith	Asian
Case 117	Darius Jones	Black
Case 118	Steve Vananda	White
Case 119	Cloetha Mitchell	Black
Case 121	Richard Grimes	Black
Case 122	Daniel Redman	White
Case 123	Brent Quinn	White
Case 124	Waltki Williams	Black
Case 125	Earl Eubanks, Jr.	Black
Case 126	Michael Jacques	White
Case 127	Gerald Hall	Black
Case 128	James Tylka	White
Case 129	Ricky Whidden	White

CURRICULUM VITA

Name: Edward H. Byers

Address: 1136 Main Street
Charlestown, IN 47111

EDUCATION & TRAINING

1975 - 1979 Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN. BS in
Natural Resources Management

1985 -1987 University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ. MS in
Renewable Natural Resources
Professional Paper: "Law Enforcement in Land Management
Agencies"

2015 - 2019 University of Louisville, Louisville, KY. PhD student
in Criminal Justice.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

2015 - 2018 Graduate Research and Teaching Assistant at
University of Louisville.

Gathered and coded public domain data on citizens killed
by police in 2015.

Content analysis on newspaper articles on citizens killed by
taser use by police in 2015.

File review and data gathering on homicides investigation
by the Louisville Metro Police Department.

Taught 5 undergraduate classes.

WORK EXPERIENCE

1979 – 1989 Served as a Ranger in the National Park Service at
various National Parks and Monuments.

Performed all functions of Visitor Protection, including law
enforcement, traffic investigations, firefighting, search and
rescue, emergency medical services. Duties were done in
urban, rural, and wilderness locations.

1989 – 2002 Served as a Special Agent with the U.S. Customs Service.

Performed plain-clothes investigations and interdictions in narcotics, white-collar crime and smuggling. Top Secret clearance held.

2001-2010 Served as a Federal Air Marshal.

Performed as an undercover counter-terrorist operative in U.S. flagged commercial aircraft world-wide. Top Secret clearance held.

QUALIFICATIONS

Firearms Instructor Trainer for the National Park Service and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.

Firearms Instructor for the U.S. Customs Service.

Defensive Tactics Instructor for the National Park Service, the U.S. Customs Service, and the Federal Air Marshal Service.

Fourth Degree black belt in Judo.

Sixth Degree black belt in Ju-Jitsu.

NON-ACADEMIC

Member of the Senior Dan (black belt) group for Akayama-Ryu Ju-Jitsu.

Founder of LadySafe, an international association of martial artists who volunteer efforts to teach self-defense to victimized females.