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THE MARINE CORPS SUBCULTURE

A Thesis
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Criminal Justice

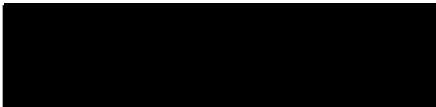
by
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December 1995

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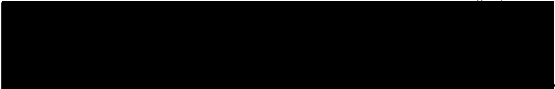
by
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December 1995

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ABSTRACT

Early sociological literature on subcultures was formed and directed by the work of Albert K. Cohen. Cohen (1955) proposed that gang subcultures were the result of ineffective family supervision, the breakdown of parental authority, and the hostility of the child toward the parents.

In The Subculture of Violence (1967), Wolfgang and Ferracutti proposed that violent activity among humans is responsive to specific sets of circumstances, in which violence becomes the expected reaction to certain environmental stimuli. Wolfgang and Ferracutti's work focused primarily on deviant subcultures, with criminal members.

More recent literature has focused on "occupational subcultures" created by the jobs people perform. These subcultures are not necessarily criminal or deviant, however, they still have many of the characteristics of the criminal subcultures such as shared sentiments, beliefs, and customs.

The purpose of this thesis is to provide another type of assessment of the subculture, specifically; an in-depth

analysis of the subculture within the United States Marine Corps. This analysis attempts to bring the traditional literature of criminal subculture and the subculture of violence together with more recent literature of occupational subculture to explain many of the behaviors exhibited by Marines. This study questions whether domestic violence rates within the Marine Corps are an example of some of the deviant activities identified by the more traditional subculture literature.

This thesis concludes that the United States Marine Corps is a subculture of violence according to the traditional research on subcultures presented by many early scholars. Further, the Marine Corps has many of the characteristics discussed in more recent findings on occupational subcultures. The prevalence of violence is demonstrated by the high rates of domestic assaults. This thesis suggests that the Marine Corps must take steps to foster an environment which does not condone violence in family settings and introduces broader training situations which are not limited to wartime scenarios.

Importation explanation and selection process.....46

CHAPTER FOUR Conclusions

 Comparison to national problem.....50

 Preventing domestic violence in the Marine Corps...51

 Determine origins of subculture.....53

REFERENCES.....56

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 - Victims' Fears of Consequences
by Military Service.....43

Table 2 - Abuser Paygrade by Military Service.....47

Table 3 - Victim Age by Military Service.....47

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 - Total Number of Installations.....12

Figure 2 - Active Duty Military.....13

Figure 3 - Percentage of Women in the Services.....15

Figure 4 - DOD Abuse Cases.....35

Figure 5 - Rate/100 of Spouse Abuse.....36

Figure 6 - Rate/100 of Child Abuse.....37

CHAPTER ONE

Marine Corps and Subculture Theory

INTRODUCTION TO SUBCULTURE THEORY

People who form a unique group within a given culture are called a subculture (Kappler, Blumberg, & Potter, 1993). The sociological definition of subculture is a group of peers who share many characteristics of society, but have separate, distinct values that make them unique as compared to the larger culture (Kappler, Blumberg, & Potter, 1993; p. 141).

Early sociological literature on subcultures was formed and directed by the work of Albert K. Cohen. His book, Delinquent Boys (1955), focused on how a delinquent subculture could begin (Williams & McShane, 1994). Cohen's work studied juvenile gangs, describing them as "malicious," and "negativistic." Cohen (1955) proposed a definition of gang subculture where its members are the result of ineffective family supervision, the breakdown of parental authority, and the hostility of the child towards the parents.

Cohen proposed that juveniles join gangs to achieve a status that they can not achieve in the larger, more

dominant culture. Cohen believed that when juveniles become frustrated because they can not achieve a respectable status in the middle class world, the gang becomes a solution. The gang can quickly provide them a status. This status is easily achieved in comparison to the effort it would take to assimilate into the dominant culture.

Subculture implies that there are value judgements or a social value system which is apart from and a part of a larger or central value system (Wolfgang & Ferracutti, 1967). In a subculture, certain types of conduct are expected. The way a person is to act under certain circumstances becomes the rule, or the norm. These rules are called conduct norms. Conduct of an individual is, then, an external exhibition of sharing in values (Wolfgang & Ferracutti, 1967).

The purpose of this thesis is to provide another type of assessment of the subculture, specifically, an in-depth analysis of the subculture within the United States Marine Corps. This analysis attempts to bring the traditional literature of criminal subculture together with the more recent literature of occupational subculture discussed in chapter two to explain many of the behaviors exhibited by Marines.

Some studies have concluded that basic training in the

military can result in the transfer of violent responses to family interactions (Eisenhart, 1975). The Marine Corps domestic violence rate, when compared to the other services, is an example of this. Chapter three uses the Marine Corps' domestic violence rate as an example of how the Marine Corps fosters an environment for its Marines that creates a subculture of violence.

MILITARY SUBCULTURE

An example that seems to accurately exhibit characteristics of a subculture is the United States Armed Forces. The conduct norms of the military are very distinct and different than the rest of society. Also, with the conversion to an all volunteer force, the U. S. military has lost many of the characteristics that had previously made the military installation a community and it began to take on features characteristic of modern industrial occupations (Segal, Lynch, & Blair, 1979). The military is no longer a calling, but an occupation.

Recruits undergo a personal transformation during basic training. There, they receive more than just training, they are ingrained with a sense of service, honor, and discipline. It is at boot camp that the conduct norms of the military begin to take form. All hair is shaven from each recruit's head, all personal effects are taken away, and the values of the subculture begin to be

instilled. The self-interest of the individual becomes second to that of the institution they come to know as the military. Service members become convinced they are selective, better, and above all, different.

The military is the nations' force in readiness. This belief is perpetuated through training as well as fostered by the media and the entertainment industry. Many motion pictures as well as newspaper and magazine articles reinforce what the military is supposed to be and how its members are supposed to act. Almost all of them send the same message: service members are supposed to be tough and aggressive.

The effect of the media and entertainment industries on the image of service members was explored by James William Gibson in Warrior Dreams: Paramilitary Culture in Post-Vietnam America (1994). Gibson evaluated and critiqued several films made during the late 1970s and 1980s, mostly action-adventure films, and described how they created and communicated an American war culture. In these films service members are nearly always portrayed as virtuous defenders of a just cause, and war seems safe, even attractive (Gibson, 1994). Gibson refers to such films as Rambo, Dirty Harry, Patriot Games, and Lethal Weapon to show how the violence of war is glamorized and paints a picture that is not representative of the actual

destructive nature of military combat.

In the military, great emphasis is put on its members to conform to the conduct norms of the subculture. A military unit, regardless of size, is a disciplined family structure, with similar relationships based on mutual respect among members. It is believed that issues and problems which tend to lessen a units' effectiveness must be addressed and resolved. If a service member is having troubles, and those troubles affect the performance of the unit, he or she will receive pressure from the unit to resolve the issue. This pressure may lead to increased frustration, aggression, and ultimately, violence.

The subculture of the military is not isolated to just the service member. Each and every member of a service person's family is also within the military subculture. Military families are subjected to many of the same experiences as their civilian counterparts, however, military families experience stressors unique to their particular situation.

Low pay, having dependents to support, and the high cost of housing today create a great deal of pressure in many military families lives. For example, a service person just out of basic training in 1994 earned \$854.40 per month, which is \$213.35 per week, and \$10,994.20 annually (Marines, 1994). Military spouses may feel the

need to contribute financially to offset the low pay. However, spouses often face a difficult challenge when they try to seek employment. Because of the frequency of relocating, spouses are often unable to establish careers. This may create a significant amount of friction and resentment in a relationship. Not being able to contribute financially may develop low self-esteem in some spouses, they may feel even more trapped, and dependent on their spouse.

Sixty-one percent of all military members have a family (U.S.D.O.D., 1993). Both during basic training and tours of duty, military men and women are separated from family members for extended periods of time. This separation may make a parent less involved in the lives of the children, as well as less involved in the relationship with their spouse. Additionally, reunification can be as stressful as it is joyful.

Packing up your possessions and moving to another town may be stressful for anyone. It often means leaving friends behind and no longer having the support of family members. Mobility may also involve additional expenses which can exacerbate an already stressful financial situation.

Military personnel often feel isolated from their family because of long hours and temporary separations.

Service members and their families are also physically isolated from the surrounding communities, living on installations, behind fences, and inside of gates usually maintained by armed guards. Further, communication barriers add to an already frustrating lack of contact with family members. During basic training and tours of duty, the isolation and communication barriers are at their greatest.

Many military men who have served overseas have married women from other countries, which introduces culture and life-style differences and creates additional barriers to communication. This usually includes lack of support from friends and family for the spouse, which in turn creates more dependence on the relationship. The military family is isolated and removed from their hometown where other family members and friends can provide emotional support. When the military family travels or is transferred overseas, many problems similar to those discussed above can create stress within the family: isolation, lack of support from friends and family, difficulties in acculturation, and increased physical and emotional dependency on the relationship.

The activities of a military member are closely monitored by his or her superiors. During basic training, field maneuvers, and combat situations, service members

live and work together. Their activities are continually supervised. If there are problems at home or at work, the commanding officer usually knows about them.

Many in the military describe a double message they receive from command or the military system in general. The first message, "Your family is recognized in that we will offer services for family members to help you keep everyone healthy and happy at home." On the other hand, the second message is, "When it comes right down to it, your work is more important than your family. We really do not want you to bother us about them." Of course, the degree to which these messages are expressed varies from commander to commander; however, the consensus is that these dual messages do exist in one form or another.

In recent years, there is increased stress due to the uncertainty associated with force drawdown. As of December 31, 1994, the services had a combined strength of 1,584,232 people on active duty, which was 8,132 fewer than November and about 91,000 fewer than in 1993 (Navy Times, 1995; p. 28). The Presidio Base Closure Evaluation (1992) found that over the last four years many civilian jobs have been cut and military members have been called in as replacements, often in understaffed offices and in jobs for which they had no previous training. Increased pressures and future uncertainty place stresses on families. The

Presidio report found that these stresses often take their toll in incidents of family violence, child abuse, and alcohol and drug abuse. Additionally, when civilian jobs are cut, military members become even more isolated and less integrated with the civilian communities.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MARINE CORPS SUBCULTURE

With deployment rates far above those of the other services and an increase in small, urban conflict throughout the world, the Marine Corps, in particular, is even more vulnerable to these unique stressors. In 1993, seventy-eight percent of all officers and sixty-eight percent of all enlisted Marines were away from their families for over thirty days. Marine Corps spouses are especially young, with one-third between the ages of seventeen and twenty-four. Sixty-eight percent of all Marine Corps families have children under the age of eleven, and Marine Corps families move more frequently than the other services, about every 2.4 years (Marines, 1994).

The Marine Corps presents a unique opportunity to analyze both the traditional and more recent research on subculture. Being a Marine is an occupation, and the Marine Corps subculture is truly an occupational subculture with common attitudes and beliefs created by the job. Being a Marine is a distinct identity because of the character of the Corps.

Subculture theory in general, and more specifically the subculture of violence theory, help explain how violent activity among humans is responsive to specific sets of circumstances. The behavior is learned and shared in a cultural setting, and violence becomes the expected reaction to certain environmental stimuli (Shoemaker & Sherman, 1987). Marvin E. Wolfgang and Franco Ferracutti developed a theoretical framework for the theory in their book, The Subculture of Violence (1967). Violent subcultures place positive value on the use of violence to resolve personal problems.

The subculture of violence theory is an attempt to explain violence among specific categories of people who are thought to exhibit particularly high rates of violence. Wolfgang and Ferracutti suggest that a subculture of violence is likely to exist among societies that are characterized by "machoism," or the equation of maleness with aggression, and societies that are characterized by "frontier mores," where the rule of "gun and fist" are idealized.

DISPERSION AND HOMOGENEITY

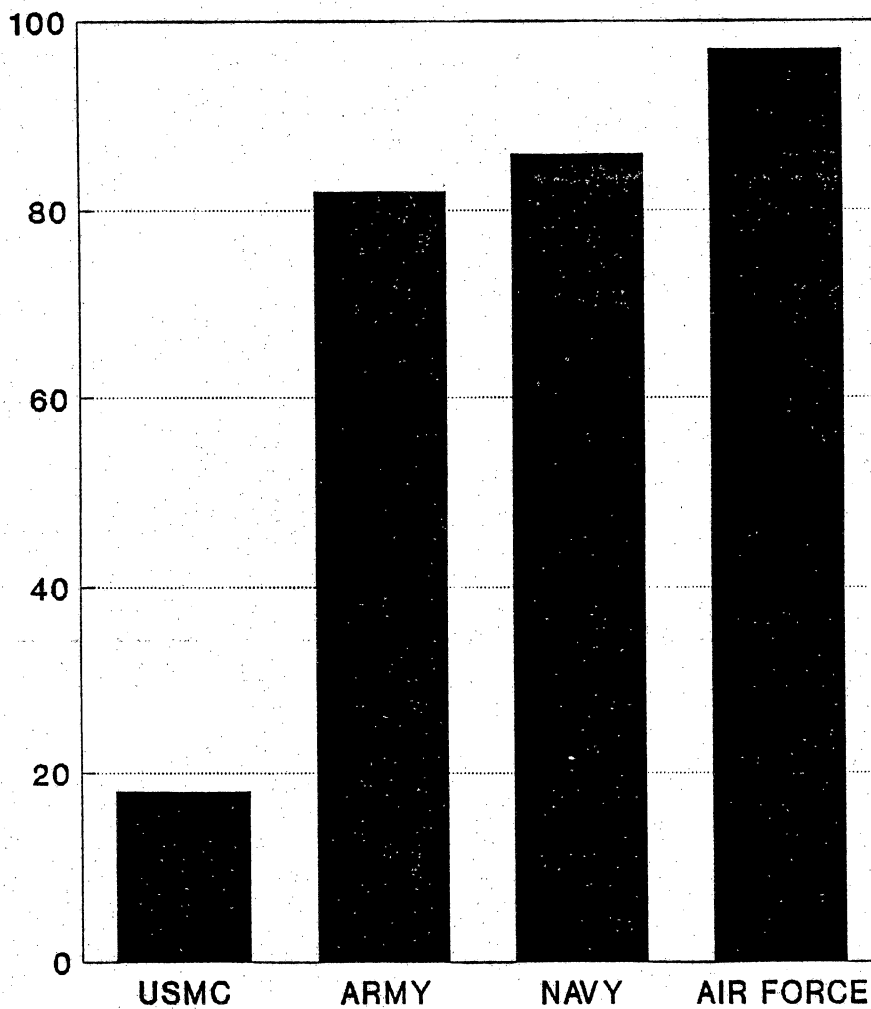
Subcultures are characterized by lack of dispersion. Subcultures are often isolated in certain geographic areas, with definite boundaries. When one lives and works upon a military installation, they are removed from the dominant

culture, they are geographically separated from the general public. Although Marines and their families are stationed around the world, as figure one demonstrates, when compared to the other services, the Marine Corps is unquestionably much less dispersed. Figure one shows that the Marine Corps has only 18 installations, as compared to 82 for the Army, 86 for the Navy, and 97 for the Air Force.

The Marine Corps is much smaller than any of the other services, with 174,507 personnel, which is less than half of any of the other services (Figure 2). The small population demonstrated in figure two suggests that the Marine Corps may be less socially active than the other services, particularly when one considers that this small number of Marines is only dispersed throughout eighteen installations world-wide.

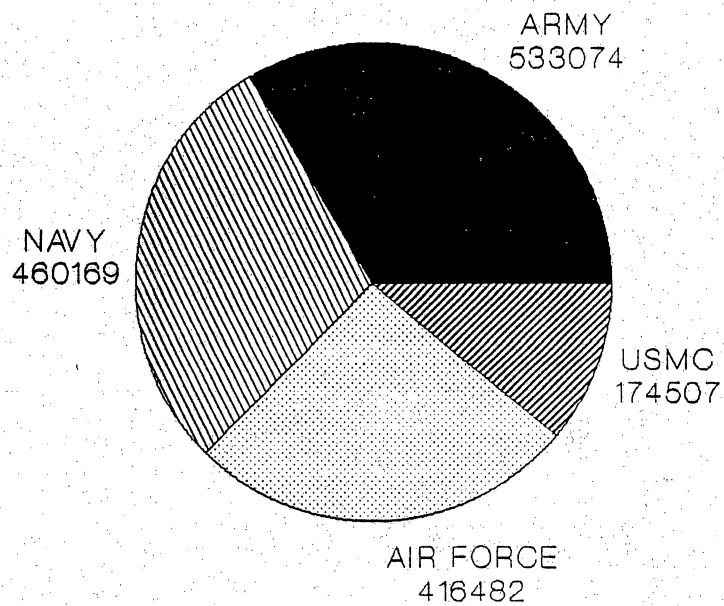
The lack of dispersion and small population demonstrated in figures one and two makes the Marine Corps less socially integrated in the larger surrounding community and perhaps much more socially inactive than any of the other services. Marines will meet fewer people and be stationed at fewer installations than any of the other service members. Marines and their families have a much better chance of being stationed at the same base several times throughout a Marine's career. Marines and their

FIGURE 1
TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTALLATIONS



Note. From Marines (1994, January). Almanac '94 Special Edition. 19

FIGURE 2
ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY



Note. From Marines (1994, January). Almanac '94 Special Edition. 19

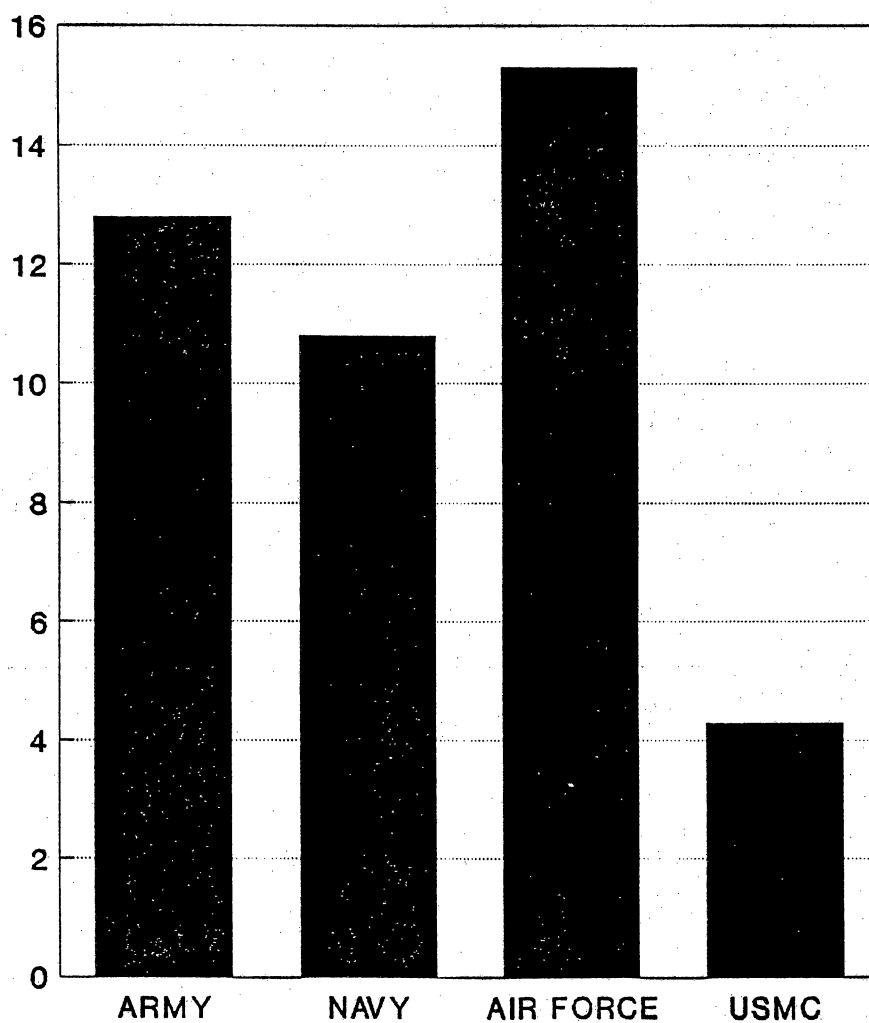
families are much more likely to live near and to meet and work with the same people time and time again.

The Marine Corps is the only service to have twenty-four hour a day military police presence at the entrances to all of their installations. This "closed gate" policy leads to lack of socialization with the surrounding civilian communities, further isolating Marines and their families. This sends a message that the Marine Corps is interested in keeping those not in the subculture away from those who are.

It is in homogeneity that the subculture has strength and durability (Wolfgang & Ferracutti, 1967). Members of a subculture are most often very similar with regard to race, ethnicity, and gender. The most obvious characteristic of homogeneity within the Marine Corps is the fact that it is almost entirely male. In 1994, the representation of women in the Department of Defense Armed Forces was twelve percent. The Marine Corps had by far the lowest percentage of women (4.3%), while the Air Force had the highest (15.3%) (Figure 3). The Marine Corps' low percentage of women demonstrated in figure three makes it much more homogeneic than the other services.

The overwhelming majority of Marines are concentrated in the lower pay grades, with eighty-three percent of enlisted Marines between the paygrades of E1 to E5. The

**FIGURE 3
PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN IN THE SERVICES**



Note. From Marines (1994, January). Almanac '94 Special Edition. 19

evidence linking crime and economic inequality is strong, particularly when analyzing the subculture of violence. Marvin Wolfgang's study of youth crime in Philadelphia found that when the city's youths were divided into two groups of higher versus lower socioeconomic status (SES), the youths with the lower SES committed substantially more criminal activity (Currie, 1985).

The military is clearly a subculture in the most traditional sense. In the Marine Corps, behavior is developed as a result of learning and adjusting to the environment produced by the Marine Corps. From the minute a recruit steps off the bus at recruit training until the day he/she is discharged (and probably even after that), this environment is unavoidable.

The Marine Corps has the characteristics of a subculture of violence (such as its homogeneity with regard to age, sex, income, and lack of dispersion). This chapter suggests that as traditional subculture research indicates, the subculture of the Marine Corps has the potential to cause deviant activities. The problem being investigated is how the violent training of Marines effects the lives of Marines and their families, and in turn, how that effects the mission of the Marine Corps.

CHAPTER TWO

Related Sociological Perspectives

There are several theories and perspectives that are related to the subculture of violence theory that help explain and define violent subcultures and their characteristics. This chapter reviews this literature and attempts to show how the Marine Corps has many of the characteristics commonly found in some of the related violent subculture theories and perspectives.

FRUSTRATION-AGGRESSION HYPOTHESIS

One explanation of why violence occurs in a subculture is based on the theory that frustration often provokes an aggressive response. The occupation of soldiering can be much more frustrating than that of civilians, as noted in chapter one. Steinmetz and Straus (1974) found that the more normal the aggressive behavior is defined within the occupational role, the greater amount of violence there will be. Aggression is the essence of the Marine Corps. The inherent nature of Marine Corps operations and training requires that Marines have the ability to behave aggressively. This is explained perfectly in the mission of the Marine Corps rifle squad: "To locate, close with,

and destroy the enemy by fire and maneuver (FMFM 1-0)."

From boot camp on, at every level of training, Marines are taught aggressiveness. This pro-aggressiveness attitude is reinforced from the very top of the rank structure to the very bottom. For example, in a recent interview, Sergeant Major Lewis G. Lee, the Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps (the highest ranking enlisted Marine) said, "Marines are naturally aggressive, and we have to encourage that (Navy Times, 1994)."

ENVIRONMENTAL THEORIES

According to environmental theories, the environment that the Marine Corps creates for its Marines may be one of the causes of the subculture of violence. Every service is based on discipline, honor, and obedience to orders. However, the Marine Corps, in particular has a world renowned reputation as being the most disciplined and demanding of all the services.

The slogan, "First to fight," has appeared on Marine recruiting posters ever since World War One.

"Leathernecks," the Marines' long standing nickname was bestowed upon Marines because the original Marine uniform had a leather neck piece which protected the neck from sword slashes. "The Scarlet Trouser Stripe," worn by officers and noncommissioned officers is in honor of Marine officers and noncommissioned officers who were killed or

wounded during the battle of Chapultepec during the Mexican War. "Band of Brothers," this slogan recognizes that a brotherhood concept depends on all members belonging. These slogans and traditions are just a few examples of the environment which is commonplace throughout the Marine Corps and helps to create and encourage aggressive behaviors.

The primary goal of Marine Corps leadership is to instill in all Marines the fact that they are warriors first (FMFM 1-0, 1995). Marines are taught that the only reason the United States of America needs a Marine Corps is to fight and win wars. Everything else is secondary. Feared by enemies, respected by allies, and loved by the American people, Marines are a "special breed" (FMFM 1-0). It is these guiding beliefs and principles that influence Marines attitudes, and regulate their behavior.

This matter of being different than any of the other services is at the very heart of the Marine Corps. A sense of elitism has grown from the fact that every Marine, whether enlisted or officer, goes through the same training experience. Only the Corps requires uniform training for all its members. Both the training of recruits and the basic education of officers have endowed the Corps with a sense of cohesiveness enjoyed by no other American service. The determination to be different has

manifested itself in many ways over the years, but most of all, to an unyielding conviction that Marines exist only to fight.

SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

Symbolic interactionism maintains that it is not possible to understand crime merely by studying criminals, nor can one study violence without considering the environment that develops the aggressive behaviors (Vold, 1979). Therefore, one who is considered deviant in a given society depends very much on the society itself.

In the Marine Corps, violent, aggressive behaviors are not considered as deviant as in society as a whole. Marines are taught to act and behave in violent, aggressive ways and these behaviors are positively reinforced, supported, and rewarded. Furthermore, non-aggressiveness represents a clear and present danger (Eisenhart, 1975).

In symbolic interactionism, meaning is regarded as the central concept in the explanation of behavior, and the influence of the psychology of sociological conditions must be assessed in terms of the meaning those conditions have for the individual (Vold, 1979). To a Marine, violent behavior "means" less than it does to others. Military basic training, in general, creates those meanings. The plausibility of this hypothesis was explored by Ekman, Frieson, and Lutzker (1961) who, while studying

psychological reactions to infantry basic training, administered the MMPI to recruits in the first, fourth, and eighth weeks of basic training. The change in the shape of the profiles suggests that aggressive, impulsive, and energetic features became more prominent, and that recruits became less prone to examine their own responsibility for conflicts, and more ready to react aggressively (Ekman, Frieson, & Lutzker, 1962). This study was administered to only Army recruits; however, the psychological agenda of aggression is more clearly etched and blatant in the Marine Corps (Eisenhart, 1975).

Individual action is a construction and not a release, being built up by the individual through noting and interpreting features of the situation in which he acts (Blumer, 1969). Marines "construct" a definition of aggression that is tolerant of violence, and this definition, over time and continuous reinforcement, becomes real. Certain types of behavior begin to symbolize aggressive behavior. These symbols, or interpretations, define violence and aggression as acceptable acts. This interpretation is not an automatic response, it is formulated through self-interaction. When a Marine is engaging in an act, he interprets the act and develops a meaning for it. With regard to violence, the Marines' meaning is that it is acceptable.

Society's reaction to an individual's behavior is the most important element of symbolic interactionism. If society reacts positively to an individual's behavior, the individual is more likely to continue acting in that manner. The Marine Corps subculture responds favorably to aggressive, violent behaviors. Aggressive behaviors may be further instilled during training scenarios that require aggressive behaviors. Eisenhart (1975) illustrates this with what he was told as a recruit on the bayonet field upon his last lesson, "The next time you are in a bayonet fight, one of you will die and that will be the one who is not aggressive enough".

CORRECTIONAL BOOT CAMPS

Correctional boot camps offer an opportunity to demonstrate how military style boot camps help create the subculture of violence. Correctional boot camps generally involve a short period of incarceration with an intensive regimen very similar to military boot camps. However, the "recruits" are offenders, usually first time offenders and emphasis is on strict discipline, physical training, drill and ceremony, military bearing and courtesy, physical labor, and punishment for minor misconduct. The idea is to turn lawbreakers into disciplined, authority respecting men (Morash & Rucker, 1990).

The important element for the current discussion is

that correctional boot camps offer the opportunity to study whether boot camps alone lay a foundation that sets the stage for a subculture of violence. Although correctional boot camps do not provide training in the use of weapons, and/or physical assault, they promote an aggressive mode of leadership and conflict dominated style of interaction that could exacerbate tendencies toward aggression (Morash & Rucker, 1990).

Studies of correctional boots camps indicate that at the very least, military boot camps do not make offenders any less violent than they were before the boot camp. An evaluation of two-hundred eighty-one graduates of a Florida correctional boot camp found little difference between their performance and a control group: twenty-five percent were rearrested over the next twenty-five months, compared with twenty-eight percent of the control group (Walker, 1994).

Further research will tell us more about the effectiveness of correctional boot camps. However, for purposes of the current discussion, there are differences between correctional boot camps and military boot camps that renders them incomparable. Correctional boot camp graduates often return to the same neighborhoods with the same bleak prospects and delinquent peers that may have led to their initial arrests (Walker, 1994). These

neighborhoods are often characterized by bad economies and high crime rates. Although not by design, a correctional boot camp offers nothing positive at the end, while military boot camps offer entry into a career. Most importantly, military boot camps offer entry into the military subculture, where the aggressive behaviors taught at boot camp are rewarded and supported, while correctional boot camp graduates return to neighborhoods, where the positive aspects of their experiences are negated by peers and family.

The message being sent in correctional boot camps is, "Play the game and you get out early" (Salerno, 1994). Offenders know that all they need to do is get by and they will be free at an earlier date. In military boot camps, however, recruits view their harassment as necessary to accomplish some worthwhile goal (Salerno, 1994).

OCCUPATIONAL SUBCULTURES

"Occupational subcultures" are subcultures created by the jobs people perform. These subcultures are not necessarily criminal or deviant; however, they still have many of the same characteristics as criminal subcultures such as shared sentiments, beliefs, and customs.

Occupational subcultures do not have geographical boundaries as do many delinquent subcultures, they are more often bordered by the job. Police and correctional officer

subcultures are examples of occupational subcultures. A common value that both police and correctional officer subcultures share is bravery. The potential to become the victim of a violent encounter, the need for support by fellow officers during such encounters, and the legitimate use of violence all contribute to a subculture that stresses the virtue of bravery (Kappler, Blumberg, & Potter, 1993). Similar to military personnel, police and correctional officers must insert themselves into dangerous and violent situations and encounters that ordinary citizens are not required to do (Singer, 1993).

All occupational groups undergo a socialization process, through informal gatherings such as "coffee pot stories" or "scuttlebutt." However, few occupational groups rival the intensity with which the Marine Corps develops the subculture of violence. Few occupational groups can compare to the regimented system by which the Marine Corps instills its conduct norms. Military sociology is unique and different.

The occupation of police officer, however, does have very similar characteristics to those of the military subculture. A very important similarity between the military subculture and police subculture is that both occupations require an intense training evolution prior to obtaining the job. The military has its boot camp and the

police have their academy. Both are isolated, intense programs where the conduct norms of the subculture begin to be taught.

Part of the controversy in occupational subculture literature is whether personality traits of the members are similar prior to indoctrination, or developed on the job. As stated earlier, Ekman, Friesen, & Lutzker (1960), found similar aggressive behaviors among military recruits. Similarly, Reiss and Bordua (1967) report many significant differences on personality trait scores between a group of police recruits at the beginning of training, but few significant differences in comparison with a group of experienced police officers. Moreover, the recruits scores were similar across four geographically separated cities. These findings suggest that in both the military and the police, personality traits, attitudes, and beliefs are developed as a result of the occupation.

The police are a generally homogenous group and, as in the military, women are not represented in police work in proportion to their percentage of society. In 1985, women constituted five percent of the police work force while constituting fifty-one percent of the population (Garrison, Grant, & McCormick, 1988, p.34).

Studies show that in both the military and in police work, the central problem women face comes from their male

counterparts. Janus, Lord, & Power (1988) found sixty-nine percent of women police officers reported the public's attitude toward them was the same or equally supportive as their male contemporaries. However, less than perfect relations with male officers were revealed, with fifty-five percent reporting that they had been assigned a demeaning detail solely because they were women (Janus, Lord, & Power, 1988, p.126).

Similar to the findings of women in police work, Larwood, Glasser, & McDonald (1980) found that women were viewed as less reliable than men in nontraditional military specialties. Further, they found that the longer men are in the military, the more negative they became toward women.

Both the military and police lack females in command positions. In 1994, only two percent of all general officers were female, and the Marine Corps had only one female general officer (Marines, 1994). Warner, Steel, & Lourich (1989) found that among more than two hundred cities studied, representation of women on city councils plays a major independent role in estimating the level of utilization of women as police officers. They found that the higher the percentage of women on city councils, the higher the utilization rate for women officers.

Police officers are isolated because their work

carries into their off duty hours. Some people may not socialize with police because of the jobs they perform. Police show an unusually high degree of solidarity, which stems from the dangers associated with the job. The conclusion reached here is that the personalities of police officers differ from the rest of the population in many of the same ways as the military subculture.

While the military subculture and the police subculture seem to have many like characteristics, one distinct difference is significant. Research on the police subculture is rather extensive, while the military subculture has been practically ignored. Police researchers identified the problems created by the subculture, and many departments have used those research findings to develop programs that deal with the problem. Community-oriented policing has helped create a better relationship between the police and the communities for which they serve. Physical ability tests and entrance standards have been changed to make the requirements equal for all applicants. Affirmative action programs have allowed more minorities and women to fill the ranks.

As more research on the military subculture is established, perhaps the Department of Defense will also be able to establish policies and standards that will help ease the troubles faced by service members and their

families. This is particularly important in the face of studies such as Segal, Lynch, & Blair (1979) which indicates satisfaction among members of the armed forces is significantly lower than that of civilians.

Correctional officers also possess a distinct subculture that is similar to the military subculture. Kauffman (1988) interviewed correctional officers at three different correctional facilities and found characteristics similar to those discussed here describing military subcultures. The officers considered group solidarity essential not only to the accomplishment of shared goals, but also to their very survival as individuals. As a group, they were willing and able to bring considerable pressure on members to conform. The demographic characteristics of correctional officers are also similar to that of the military. Kauffman (1988, p.24) found most of the officers she studied were young, white men who had no formal education beyond high school.

In chapter one, it was noted that military life presents several stressors unique to members of the military and their families. Some of these stressors were low pay, family separation, isolation, and lack of support from the institution of the military. Long, Shoudsmith, Voges, and Roache (1986) studied correctional officers and compared them to a control group of Army personnel. A

conclusion which may be reached from the findings of this study is that correctional officers produce significantly more stress reactions than does a group of Army personnel. This is an interesting finding in light of the fact that there are several similarities between the two professions. Many prisons are located in remote, rural areas, and often times the officers and their families live in the same neighborhoods. There may even be special living arrangements where only prison staff can live in a specific neighborhood. This is very similar to the military installation. Much like the military, prison staff is almost completely closed off from the free society (Fox, 1983).

Long, et al. (1986) concluded that the correctional officer subculture was the reaction of the "person" to the "social environment." This is the same way by which the military subculture has been formed. As the military member enters the "institution" of military, their entire life becomes the result of working and living in the military subculture.

SKINHEAD SUBCULTURE

The American Skinhead subculture offers the most recent opportunity with which to compare the Marine Corps subculture. Mark S. Hamm provides an analysis of the American Skinhead subculture in American Skinheads: The

Criminology and Control of Hate Crimes (1993). Hamm's work suggests that subcultures are constantly being formed and evolving. Subcultures may be a very important element of all societies.

More than anything else, skinheads are depicted as vitriolic racists (Hamm, 1993). Skinheads have earned their title from their shaven heads, and the term has come to symbolize young, white males who behave violently against minorities simply because of their race or ethnicity. Skinheads have been the center of recent media attention, which has depicted them as a neo-Nazi gang responsible for many beatings, and even murders of minorities.

It is not the purpose of the current discussion to explore the causes or beliefs of the skinhead subculture. Instead, Hamm's (1994) work provides a more recent example of a violent subculture, one that is alive and well today, that has many of the same characteristics of the Marine Corps.

Hamm (1994) found the conduct norms of skinhead subcultures to be transmitted most intensely through peers. Violence is the norm among skinheads, non-violence is a form of deviancy. Therefore, violent acts are expected or one will feel as though he is not doing his part, as if he does not belong. Further, Hamm found that skinheads

felt more comfortable behaving violently with other skinheads nearby. Violence became an act of imitation, and group reinforcement for this behavior came to define violence as acceptable in the minds of the skinheads (Hamm, 1994).

This current, modern-day subculture develops its conduct norms the same method by which the Marine Corps develops its conduct norms. During training, Marines are "performing" for other Marines. Acts of non-aggression are considered weak, and dangerous. When Marines witness other Marines behave aggressively, and then are rewarded and praised for their actions, they imitate that violence in hopes of receiving the same rewards and praises. From the moment a recruit enters boot camp, he or she will never be alone. He or she will constantly be in the presence of other members of the subculture, where they will feel more comfortable when behaving aggressively.

CHAPTER THREE

Domestic Violence as a Product of the Subculture

This chapter uses domestic violence rates in the military as a way to demonstrate the military subculture, particularly the Marine Corps subculture of violence. Domestic violence can be used in the theoretical context discussed here to show that the Marine Corps has many of the characteristics of subcultures.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AS A NATIONAL PROBLEM

Child abuse, spouse abuse, and other physical violence occur in more than half of all U.S. households (Kadushin & Martin, 1988). An estimated fifty million people fall victim to physical harm at the hands of another family member each year. In this country, a woman is more likely to be assaulted, injured, raped, or killed by a male partner than by any other type of assailant (Brown & Williams, 1987).

Suzanne Steinmetz and Murray Straus (1974) have noted: "It would be hard to find a group or an institution in American society in which violence is more of an everyday occurrence than it is within the family." Violence not only causes physical harm in families; each incident also

weakens the loyalty, attraction, and trust between members that are basic to positive family functioning (Zastrow, 1993).

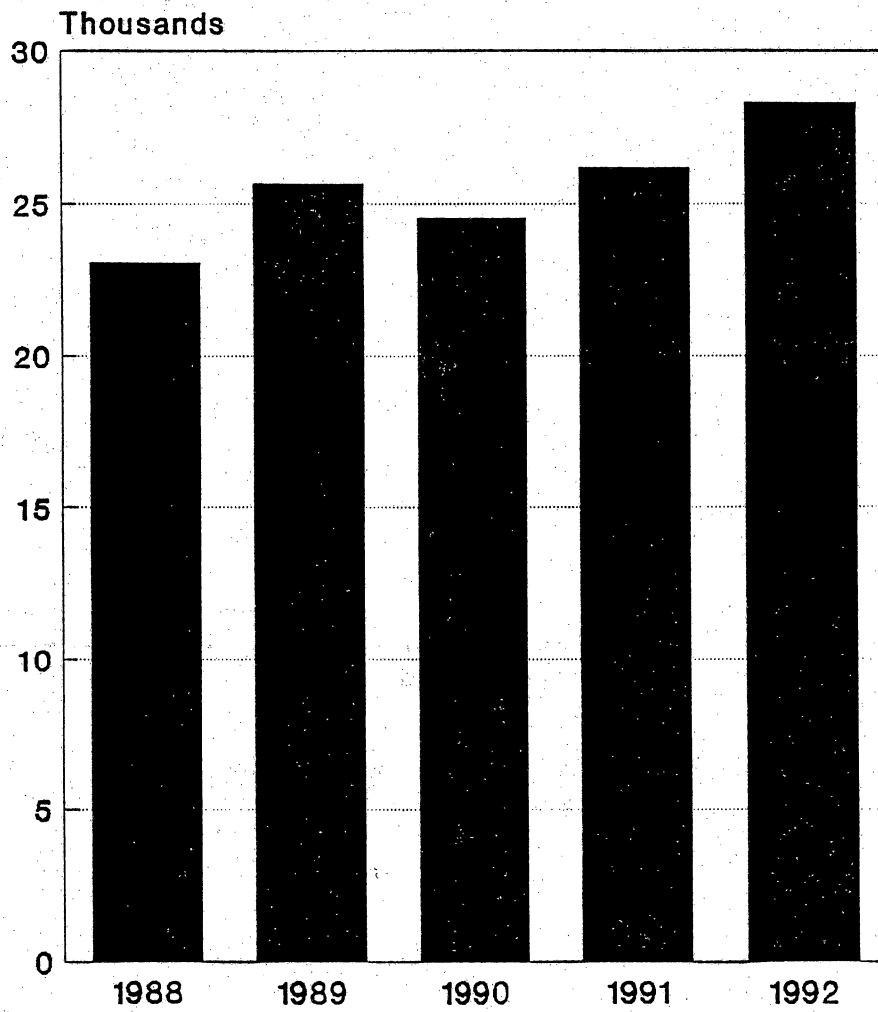
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AS A MILITARY PROBLEM

Domestic violence is indeed a serious national problem, and recent attention has been given to domestic violence and military personnel. Just as domestic violence remains a problem for all Americans, members of the American Armed Forces also face the dilemma of what to do about domestic violence. Figure four shows how abuse cases within the Department of Defense has increased since 1988. Figure four is particularly alarming considering that the total Department of Defense population has been reduced every year since 1988 (Navy Times, 1995). While the population shrinks, the amount of abuse cases is climbing. The Marine Corps has a particularly difficult challenge, with the highest rates of spouse and child abuse when compared with the other services. Figures five and six show that the Marine Corps' rates of child and spouse abuse are the highest of all the services.

LACK OF PROSECUTION OF MARINE CORPS OFFENDERS

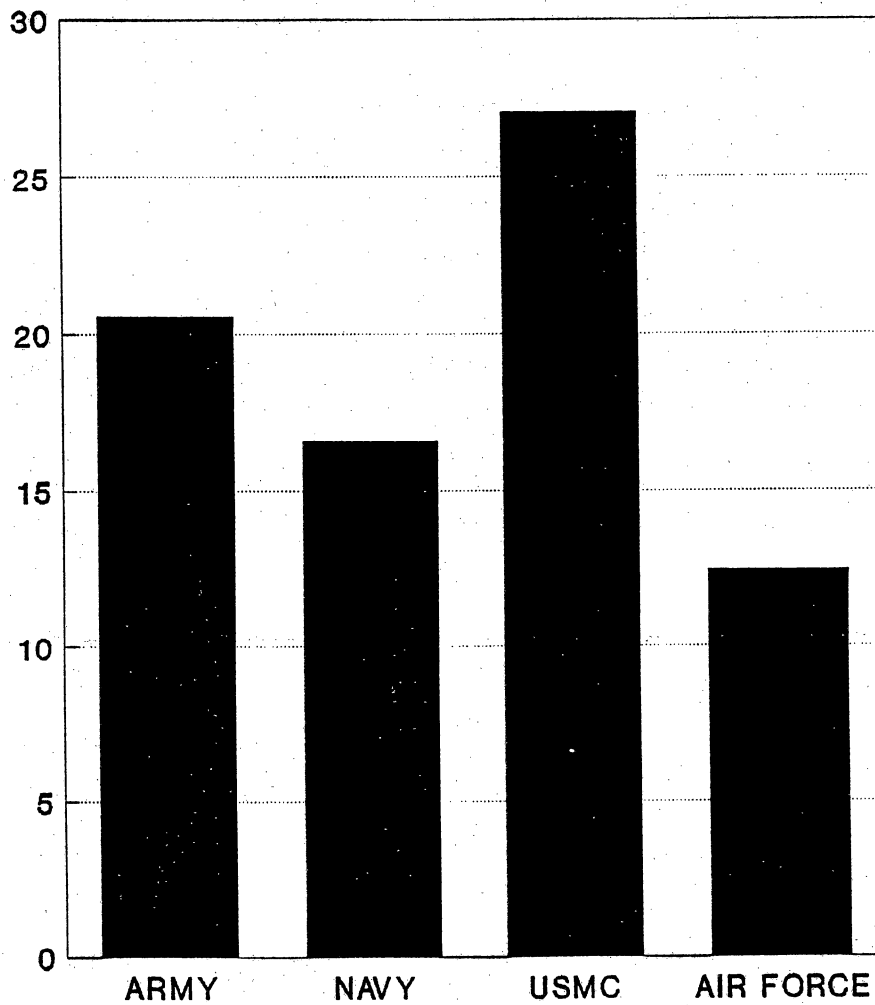
Since Marines are taught that violent behavior is good, they develop a different meaning of violence than most people. Violence may "mean" less than in the other services or as in society in general. It may not be

FIGURE 4
DOD ABUSE CASES



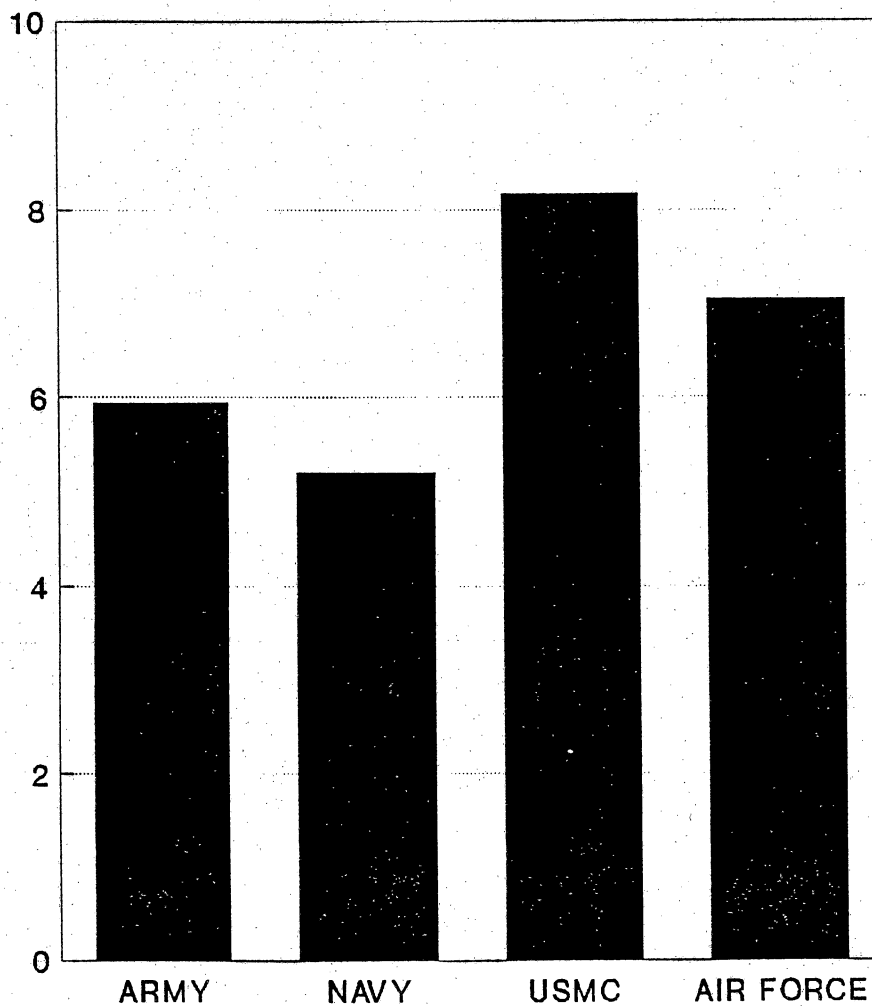
Note. From United States Department of Defense, Family Advocacy Committee's Research Subcommittee (1993).

FIGURE 5
RATE/100 OF SPOUSE ABUSE



Note. From United States Department of Defense, Family Advocacy Committee's Research Subcommittee (1993).

FIGURE 6
RATE/100 OF CHILD ABUSE



Note. From United States Department of Defense, Family Advocacy Committee's Research Subcommittee (1993).

regarded or defined as abnormal. This different definition of violence ultimately leads to the lack of any deterrence of domestic violence in the Marine Corps. In most civilian communities, if an individual is arrested for domestic assault, he is taken to jail, at a minimum for the night, and faces stiff penalties as well as the humiliation of being arrested and going to jail. This provides some form of deterrence. However, in the Marine Corps, if a Marine is apprehended for a domestic assault, he is released that night to his unit representative. The unit representative will recommend to the Marine that he spend the night in the barracks. Usually the Marine will spend the night in the barracks, and the following day the domestic assault will be on the blotter, and the Marine's unit commander will receive a copy of the incident report.

At this point it is left up to the unit commander to punish as he/she sees fit. However, often there is very little, if anything, done. The Marine may receive formal counseling, but most of the time there is no further disciplinary action taken.

Marines can be punished by commanders with non-judicial punishment (NJP). NJP refers to a limited range of punishments which can be imposed for disciplinary offenses by a Commanding Officer or Officer in Charge to members of their command (Military Justice, 1992). Article

128 of the Uniformed Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) is entitled, "Assault (Spouse and child abuse)." Therefore, there is an article that allows the commander the authority to charge and punish Marines for this crime.

A Marine has the right to refuse NJP in lieu of a Trial by Courts Martial. A Trial by Courts Martial is a formal hearing much like a normal civilian trial, but the jury is made up of senior enlisted and Marine officers. Usually, however, Marines accept NJP. At NJP the commander is the judge, jury, and executioner. He/she determines guilt or innocence and punishes as he/she deems appropriate. At NJP the commander's authority to punish is more restricted than if the Marine were to elect to go to a Trial by Courts Martial.

In essence, NJP is the Marine Corps form of plea bargaining, and therefore, is a regular occurrence. Examples of violations for which Marines commonly receive NJP are; drunk and disorderly, dereliction of duty, or unauthorized absence. Rarely, however, is a Marine given NJP for a domestic assault. The Department of Defense Family Advocacy Committee's Research Subcommittee (1993) initiated action to complete a survey of all of the branches of the military. The survey counted the number of cases prosecuted under the UCMJ for domestic violence offenses (article 128 or other appropriate articles of the

Manual for Courts Martial). Also surveyed was the number of cases which had administrative separation as a result of domestic violence assaults. The Family Advocacy Program Managers for each branch of the services worked with their headquarters Staff Judge Advocates (Marine lawyers) to count the number of cases in 1992.

The survey identified 19,281 substantiated domestic violence cases for 1992. The study counted 250 cases as prosecuted under the UCMJ and 482 cases were identified as having been administratively separated. The total number of cases found in this study indicates that a very small number of cases faced legal action for abusive behavior.

The lack of prosecution lends support to the theory of symbolic interactionism. The entire system, including the Military Police, Staff Judge Advocates, and unit commanders seem to define domestic violence as almost non-criminal, allowing it to happen without punishment or any other kind of deterrence. Systematic and thorough investigation and prosecution of domestic violence acts under the UCMJ would appear to be a secondary response to this criminal and violent behavior. It appears, from the low numbers of cases prosecuted or administratively separated, that diversion into treatment remains the primary intervention for domestic violence offenders.

VICTIM MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT PUNISHMENTS

There seems to be a misconception by the victims of abuse in the Marine Corps that if their spouse is identified as abusive, he/she will face stiff penalties. While very few Marines are formally punished for abusive behaviors, one analysis found Marine corps victims to be more afraid of military consequences for their spouse than of any other consequence (Caliber, 1994).

In September, 1994, Caliber Associates prepared an analysis of the Marine Corps spouse abuse responses to a Department of Defense victim intake survey. The abuse victims study was designed to examine both perceptions of the consequences of reporting abuse as well as actual system responses to reported abuse by military sponsors (Caliber, 1994). Analysis of the survey data indicates a number of significant differences between the responses from Marine Corps spouse abuse victims and spouse abuse victims from the other services. The Caliber (1994) analysis found that about two-thirds of all Marine Corps victims were very or somewhat afraid that their spouse's military career would be in trouble, their spouse would be punished by the military, their spouse would be kicked out of the Marine Corps, or that it would be unpleasant for their spouse at work.

The survey respondents were asked, "How afraid are you that any of the following will happen because your problem

is known by the military?" When compared to the other services, the Marine Corps victims are much more afraid of the military consequences. Table one shows that in every single aspect examined, the Marine Corps victims were much more more likely to be affraid of the military consequences. Perhaps the most important aspect examined was that almost half of all Marine Corps victims feared that their spouse would hurt them, while only about a third felt this way in the other services. This may indicate that Marines exhibit aggressive tendencies while in the home much more frequently than members of the other services.

Table one indicates that Marine Corps victims strongly believe their spouse will suffer disciplinary action for abusing them. However, the Department of Defense statistics on prosecution rates clearly show that this is not the case. What is it, then, that makes Marine Corps victims more fearful? It may again be the environment. The same environment that makes Marines more aggressive and violent may make the victims more fearful.

Marine spouses often hear the stories of Marines being punished swiftly and harshly for acts that to them seem ridiculous. These punishments create an environment that leads the spouses to believe a Marine will be punished harshly for a crime as serious as spouse abuse. Force

TABLE 1
VICTIMS' FEARS OF CONSEQUENCES BY MILITARY SERVICE

VICTIMS' FEARS	USMC	ARMY	NAVY	AIR FORCE
Things will get worse at home	52%	40%	34%	31%
Spouse will hurt her	47%	33%	27%	22%
Spouse will be kicked out of the military	63%	54%	45%	54%
Spouse will leave her	44%	29%	25%	25%
Will not be able to support self/kids	52%	41%	35%	36%
Family will think bad of her	33%	12%	9%	13%
Friends will think bad about her	32%	15%	6%	7%
Too many people will hear about it	57%	43%	29%	40%

Note. From Caliber Associates (1994). Analysis of the Marine Corps spouse abuse responses to the department of defense victim intake survey. (Contract No. M00027-94-M-2658). Washington, DC: U. S. Government Printing Offices.

drawdown has made promotion and retention very difficult. Spouses believe a black-mark such as a domestic assault on a Marine's record will surely force them out of the service. This will create an even worse economic situation for the family, and this is the last thing the spouse wants. Also, one of the most common punishments given at NJP is to garnish wages.

Top-ranking officers publicly proclaim to take a tough stance against domestic violence. On May 11, 1993, the Commandant of the Marine corps issued the following order to all General Officers, all Commanding Officers, and all Officers in Charge, "We must maintain a coordinated response in which family violence is reported to proper authorities whenever suspected...commanders should...initiate administrative or disciplinary proceedings to hold offenders accountable for their actions."

It would appear as though the Commandant is publicly proclaiming that the Marine Corps is taking a tough stance against domestic violence. Essentially, he is ordering officers to prosecute cases against Marines who behave violently while in the home. Quite simply, it is not happening. But if the commandant said it should happen, most Marines and their families believe it is happening. This helps create the environment that sponsors fear and

develops these misconceptions regarding punishment.

AGE GROUPS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF MARINE CORPS

ABUSERS AND THEIR VICTIMS

A subculture may be made up of all ages, however, the violence is usually most prominent in a limited, segmental age group (Wolfgang & Ferracutti, 1967). The Caliber study found that in each service, the majority of abusers were in the paygrades E4 to E6, but Marine Corps abusers were consistently more likely to be in the E1 to E3 paygrades (Table 2). Table two shows that Marine Corps abusers fit the description given by Wolfgang & Ferracutti with regards to the violence being most prominent within a certain age group.

Forty-three percent of the Marine Corps is within the E1 to E3 paygrades (Marines, 1994). Almost all Marines are promoted above the E3 paygrade during a normal four year enlistment, and most Marines enlist within a year or two after graduation from high school. Therefore, the overwhelming majority of domestic violence assailants in the Marine Corps are in a younger age group.

Table two also suggests that Marine Corps abusers are of a lower socio-economic status. Social class is an important factor in many studies of violent crime, and the subculture theory is no different. Studies of subculture since 1958 consistently report the same observation:

that the overwhelming majority of assaultive crimes are committed by persons from the lowest stratum of a social organization (Wolfgang & Ferracutti, 1967).

Just as Marine Corps abusers tend to be younger, so do the victims of domestic assaults (Table 3). More than two-thirds of Marine Corps spouse abuse victims are twenty-five or younger, while about one-half of the victims in the Army, Navy, and Air Force combined were twenty-five or younger. Conversely, eight percent of victims in both the Army and Navy were thirty-six or older, while only one percent of Marine Corps victims were over the age of thirty-six.

Domestic violence within the Marine Corps is an example that fits the subculture model theory. It appears as though the violent, aggressive behaviors taught to Marines carries over into their family life. It also appears that the institution, the environment created by the Marine Corps allows, and almost encourages, violence at home. Finally, family violence is isolated to a very segmented group of young, economically troubled families.

IMPORTATION EXPLANATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

There seem to be two competing theories that may explain the origins of the Marine Corps' subculture. According to social learning theory, the majority of violence exhibited by Marines is a learned behavior. This

TABLE 2

ABUSER PAYGRADE BY MILITARY SERVICE

	MARINE CORPS	ARMY	NAVY	AIR FORCE
E1-E3	41%	23%	14%	13%
E4-E6	52%	68%	79%	82%
E7-E9	5%	7%	6%	4%
OFFICERS	2%	2%	1%	2%

TABLE 3

VICTIM AGE BY MILITARY SERVICE

	MARINE CORPS	ARMY	NAVY	AIR FORCE
16-20	33%	16%	9%	11%
21-25	37%	41%	42%	36%
26-30	17%	24%	22%	33%
31-35	12%	10%	19%	14%
36+	1%	8%	8%	6%

Note. From Caliber Associates (1994). Analysis of the Marine Corps spouse abuse responses to the department of defense victim intake survey. (Contract No. M00027-94-M-2658). Washington, DC: U. S. Government Printing Offices.

is an occupational view that suggests that the institution of the Marine Corps assists in developing and creating violent behavior. The other theory is that the high rate of domestic violence in the Marine Corps is directly correlated with recruiting practices. This "importation" explanation suggests that the Marine Corps tends to recruit and enlist individuals who have a predisposition for violence. This theory is similar to the early literature by Cohen (1955) in which juveniles join gangs as a result of ineffective parental authority, family supervision, and shared experiences of failure in traditional middle-class social systems.

Perhaps the Marine Corps subculture is the result of both schools of thought. If so, the Marine Corps recruits those with a predisposition for violence and then develops the violent traits even further. As Cohen has noted, juveniles join gangs to achieve a status that they can not achieve in the larger, more dominant culture. In one sense the Marine Corps is similar to Cohen's gang, where violent juveniles view the Marine Corps as a means to achieve a status that to them seems unattainable in the civilian world.

Marine Corps recruiting practices support this importation explanation, and the high rate of violence in the Marine Corps may be directly related to recruiting

practices. While the other services have changed recruiting practices to stay competitive with civilian employment opportunities, the Marine Corps recruiting practices have remained the same. The other services advertise enlisting for the purposes of "learning a trade" or "learning a skill." However, the Marine Corps continues to present the image of "warrior" or "knight" in most recruiting media. While the Marine Corps mission requires combat effectiveness, today there is a need for more intelligent and technically proficient recruits. The message the Marine Corps may be sending is, "come join our gang, come join the Marine Corps to vent all of your violent, aggressive tendencies, and we will pay you for it." Individuals with a attitudinal predisposition for abuse may find this appealing. Also, Marine Corps recruiting practices legitimize violence by indicating, "this is the reason why we want you, and you better not let us down."

CHAPTER FOUR

Conclusions

COMPARISON TO NATIONAL PROBLEM

The historical sequence of events concerning the United States Marine Corps' policies and actions to stop domestic violence seems to replicate the problems faced by the nation's criminal justice system over the last twenty years. While the nation's criminal justice system's response has evolved dramatically over the last two decades, the Marine Corps response has remained the same. The Marine Corps has failed to shift to defining domestic violence assaults as a crime. As both a crime and a social problem, offenders must be both prosecuted and treated. One of the problems for the Marine Corps in addressing this critical issue of domestic violence lies in its failure to adopt the same changes many of the leading states and cities in the country have adopted. Domestic violence is a crime under specific state criminal penal codes, and it is a crime under article 128 as defined in the Manual for Courts Martial. To be effective in addressing this problem, the Marine Corps must change its policies and practices. The Marine Corps must adopt a pro-prosecution

policy calling for systematic, universal investigation and prosecution of the perpetrators of such acts.

The Marine Corps faces a unique opportunity to become the leader among the armed forces. Legal, investigative, and command personnel must work together to develop the prosecution policies and practices required to stop family violence in the Marine Corps. Specifically, the Marine Corps must increase the conviction rates of accused batterers; and enhance penalties for convicted batterers. This tough position must be communicated to all Marines, and Marines must be trained to know what the Marine Corps response will be.

PREVENTING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE MARINE CORPS

Outside of combat, reacting quickly and intensely with anger and aggression is usually problematic. The Marine Corps needs to capitalize on the fact that most of its abuse cases are among young couples who have not yet had time to establish patterns of chronic and escalating abuse. The Marine Corps should place substantial emphasis on primary prevention to sensitize young Marine couples to the definitions, symptoms, and dynamics of abuse. Marines and their spouses need to know that the Marine Corps defines family abuse as criminal. This could be done with a violence prevention program at recruit training to educate recruits about domestic violence and provide them

with skills to help them avoid destructive behavior. Also, this program would educate recruits on the possible disciplinary actions that could be taken if they are arrested for a domestic assault.

This training should stress that even though Marines are required to behave violently, this behavior must be contained to training and the battlefield. The training should show that it is inappropriate to respond to every day circumstances as if they were situations encountered in the life-threatening context of combat. Specifically, Marines need to be shown that violence against their defenseless spouse and children is not appropriate. Marines are constantly put in training situations that require quick decisions to be made at a moments notice under the most stressful of situations. This decision-making training should be carried over into the family setting. Marines should be shown that it is feasible to control emotions in a family setting because it is similar to the requirements on the battlefield. The distinction between home and training needs to be clearly defined. This distinction can be established with broader training situations that are not just limited to wartime scenarios.

A generalized uncertainty of the consequences, as well as the concern about negative career impact to the service

member, inhibits many spouse abuse victims in the military from coming forward. The Marine Corps needs to acknowledge that these young women are frequently scared and confused--scared of both their husbands and the Marine Corps institution, which seemingly have total control over their lives. Commanding officer sanctions will only work to the extent that commanding officers, who have authority to impose sanctions, understand and begin to sanction Marines for family violence.

DETERMINE ORIGINS OF SUBCULTURE

Perhaps the Marine Corps should set out to clearly determine whether the subculture is occupational or traditional. That is, does the Marine Corps tend to recruit and enlist individuals who have a predisposition for violence before they enter the Marine Corps? Or, is the high rate of violence a result of the environment created by the Marine Corps? This could be determined by conducting studies of recruit's awareness, understanding, and attitudinal predisposition to violence. The test should be administered to new recruits entering boot camp, and again after the adjustment has taken place. This pre-test/post-test should be designed to capture information of family abuse history, definitions of violence, attitudes towards violence, and some socio-economic information.

The Marine Corps should analyze the entire Marine Corps criminal justice system, and identify how it contributes to the subculture of violence. This includes the Military Police, Staff Judge Advocate, and Unit Commanders. Each of these components continues to allow family violence to happen by unofficially defining it as non-criminal, thus contributing to the subculture of violence.

Marine Corps military police training and practices should be analyzed with regard to handling domestic violence situations. Military police investigators should be trained to conduct more effective evidence collection and to respond sensitively during victim interviews.

The Marine Corps should perhaps capitalize on the established research and literature on subcultures to aid them with overcoming violence. The literature presented here on police subcultures is an example of a similar institution that is taking steps to overcome an identified problem. The Marine Corps should take steps similar to those of police agencies across the country.

The Marine Corps should identify factors that create or contribute to the subculture of violence. The Marine Corps has an opportunity to lead all the other services on this issue, and the Marine Corps' leadership should advocate and fight to develop solutions to handle this

devastating social problem. If the Marine Corps leads, the other services will follow, and ultimately, these recommendations may make the Marine Corps even more effective in combat, by making the individual Marine's family life more pleasant.

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