PHI 805-12 Faith-Learning Integration and Interdisciplinary Studies

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Professor

Dr. David Ward, Ph.D., Th.M.

Brian, your sources and Quote/Paraphrases were well chosen. As with your PHI 815 Developmental Readings assignment, this one made me look forward to your assignment #3.

Note my feedback on the Comment #1 Essential Elements.

Your Additive/Variant Analyses demonstrated critical thinking. This is also the part of each Developmental Reading Comment to do faith-learning observations if any occur to you.

Your Contextualizations showed relevant applications and were admirable personal about your field of police work. Thank you for your service, by the way!

I am learning so much about policing from you. I am so glad you are in the OGS program!

Works Cited APA7 format reminders:

Every Works Cited entry is to begin at the left margin and then should be in a .5” hanging indent form.

Journal Titles are to be in Title Case.

Book titles are to be in sentence case: Capitalize first letter of first word in the title and subtitle and any proper nouns.

Article titles are to be in sentence case.

Brian, I am learning so much about policing from you. I am so glad you are in the OGS program!

Keep up the good work! Dr. Ward

**Assignment #2—**Developmental Readings 1. Create Developmental Readings from seminal sources and scholarly peer-reviewed journal articles. Review the instructions for Assignment #3, the course essential elements, and course readings to identify selections of books and journals to use for entries.

a. Refer to the "Student Guide to Developmental Readings" in the General Helps folder for updated information on sample comments, the grading rubric, and key definitions related to developmental readings

**Source One:** Dempsey, J. S., & Forst, L. S. (2016). *An introduction to policing*. Cengage Learning

**Comment 1:** Police personalities are different from most other people

**Comment 1: Comment 2:** Police officers band together into their group.

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Numerous academic studies have indicated that the nature of policing and the experiences that officers go through on the job cause them to band together into a police culture or subculture (Dempsey & Forst, 2016). The police culture or police subculture is a combination of shared norms, values, goals, career patterns, lifestyle, and occupational structure that is somewhat different from the combination held by the rest of society (Dempsey & Forst, 2016).

**Essential Element:** Police officers often socialize primarily with each other because their work schedules are demanding and irregular.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is an additive to police culture or subculture. The police subculture, like many other subcultures, is marked by a sense of exclusivity, secrecy, and a tendency to separate from those outside the group. Police officers primarily interact with their colleagues during work hours and often socialize together even after work and on days off, sometimes at the expense of spending time with old friends and family. During their off-duty hours, officers often discuss work-related matters (Dempsey & Forst, 2016).

**Contextualization: Police** culture encompasses the shared values, beliefs, norms, and behaviors that characterize law enforcement agencies. Every agency has its own distinct culture. As a state trooper in Maryland, we take pride in being known as "Maryland's Finest." This identity is instilled from the application process until retirement. Policing is a job and a calling for those driven by the right reasons. In the Maryland State Police, solidarity and brotherhood are highly valued, creating a solid camaraderie among troopers and fostering a tight-knit community. However, this closeness can also lead to insularity.

An "us vs. them" mentality is typical among police, often viewing the public as potential threats, especially after negative interactions. Additionally, some officers may firmly believe in using force to maintain control and enforce the law, leading to discussions about force's appropriateness and ethical implications.

Subcultures exist within the broader police culture, shaped by various factors such as specialized units, SWAT, narcotics, K9, geographic differences, urban vs. rural policing, and differences in rank and experience, troopers vs. officers. The nature of police work can be stressful, which may lead to a culture that stigmatizes mental health.

Understanding police culture and its subcultures is essential for addressing issues related to accountability, community relations, and the overall effectiveness of law enforcement agencies. Engaging in dialogue and reform efforts can help bridge gaps between police and the communities that we serve.

**Source Two:** Emesowum, B. (2016). *POLICE VIOLENCE : understanding its basic history, causal origins, health consequences, and ... prevention strategies.* Lulu.com.

**Comment 3:** Disproportionate harm African Americans suffer at the hands of the police

**Comment 2: Comment 4**: Prejudices can lead to brutality

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Police violence encompasses any unwarranted or deliberate harassment, verbal abuse, physical or mental harm, property damage, or loss of life that arises from an encounter with law enforcement.

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the often-negative interaction between African Americans and law enforcement.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive to the discussion. In a country where police rarely shoot individuals, one would view police violence in America from a different perspective (Emesowum, 2016). Until recently, many people outside the African American communities were unaware of the challenges African Americans face with law enforcement, while others consciously chose to ignore the issue (Emesowum, 2016).

**Contextualization:** Various prejudices can result in police officers engaging in aggressive interactions. These biases extend beyond race and encompass factors such as gender, age, socioeconomic status, accent, and immigration status. The African American community has been experiencing police harassment and brutality since well before the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 60s (Emesowum, 2016).

In my experience responding to calls in urban areas alongside allied agencies, I have had the opportunity to observe how officers respond and interact with the people they are sworn to protect. When I decided to dedicate my life to law enforcement, I understood the inherent dangers. Upon graduating from the academy and starting patrol duty, I aimed to make a positive impact in underprivileged communities. This did not always involve making arrests, getting into physical altercations, or conducting raids. Instead, it was about making the residents of those communities feel safe and secure in their neighborhoods.

There were instances when I found myself responding with officers who approached the situation with the mindset that everyone was a threat and that we were there to enforce the law aggressively. As a young trooper, I needed a different approach. While I recognized the importance of carrying out my duties, I aimed to be a peacemaker when engaging with the public. Through experience and humility, I appreciate the broader significance of wearing a badge and being entrusted with this authority.

**Source Three:**  Frapsauce, A., Gilibert, D., Samatan, A., & Sauvezon, C. (2022). Meaning of Work, Perceived Recognition and Social Support in PTSD Among Police Officers. *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology*, *37*(3). https://doi.org/10.1007/s11896-022-09508-8

**Comment 5:** Police officers are frequently exposed to potentially traumatic events.

**Comment 3: Comment 6:** Development of post-traumatic stress disorders in police officers

**Quote/Paraphrase:** According to the DSM-V, PTSDs are psychological reactions following a traumatic situation where the physical or psychological integrity of the person or those around him or her has been threatened or harmed, for example, during a confrontation with death, the threat of death, serious injury(Frapsauce et al., 2022). These difficulties will likely put the safety of police officers or their colleagues at risk (Frapsauce et al., 2022).

**Essential Element:** This comment indicates that police officers who claim to have been exposed to a traumatic event are more likely to report experiencing post-traumatic stress disorders compared to those who have not been exposed to such events.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is an additive to the discussion. This state of post-traumatic stress is thought to significantly provoke suicidal thoughts, negative perceptions of physical health, the presence of inappropriate reactions, and excessive risk-taking in exposed police officers (Frapsauce et al., 2022).

It is anticipated that a police officer who feels supported in their professional environment will process potentially traumatic events less threatening and damagingly. Put simply, police officers who have encountered a traumatic event during their career are likely to exhibit more symptoms of PTSD compared to their counterparts who have not. However, these symptoms are expected to be less severe if they receive social support from their surroundings (Frapsauce et al., 2022).

**Contextualization:** As a trooper, I underwent training to anticipate and handle traumatic events as part of my duties. These events included responding to high-stress situations such as violence, accidents, natural disasters, and other emergencies. However, there are certain events for which no training can prepare you. The loss of a colleague in the line of duty is a profoundly traumatic experience that deeply affects one's core. I vividly remember experiencing a range of emotions: anger, hurt, grief, and guilt. Despite the turmoil, we were still expected to get up and face each day. In the past, we were expected to rise and be ready for our shifts. There was work to be done, often involving the search for the individuals responsible for our colleague's death. Compartmentalizing these emotions took a heavy toll. I came to understand that trying to conceal my struggles out of fear of being relieved of duty or seen as weak was not a viable option. This approach impacted my professional life and spilled over into every other aspect. I have since realized that by acknowledging the traumatic events and seeking the necessary resources and support, I have not only been able to help myself but also my colleagues in managing the psychological challenges associated with our line of work.

**Source Four:** Hawkins, D. S. (2021). “After Philando, I Had to Take a Sick Day to Recover”: Psychological Distress, Trauma and Police Brutality in the Black Community. *Health Communication*, *37*(9), 1–10. https://doi.org/10.1080/10410236.2021.1913838

**Comment 8:** Police brutality and mental health in black communities.

**Comment 4: Comment 9:** Police departments across the country fail to release official data

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Regrettably, interactions between Black Americans and law enforcement often involve violence, leading to various adverse health effects such as higher rates of race-based mortality, chronic stress, and trauma. Despite increased media attention on police brutality, there is a lack of solid research on violence perpetrated by law enforcement and its impact on the health of the Black community (Hawkins, 2021).

**Essential Element:** Police brutality affects black people in many ways.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive to the discussion. Drawing upon Critical Race Theory (CRT), this qualitative study utilized interviews to gain a deeper understanding of how Black Americans interpret narratives of police brutality and the effects of such narratives on their mental well-being (Hawkins, 2021). The analysis reaffirmed previous quantitative research findings, highlighting that the Black community can experience trauma from exposure to graphic images or videos depicting police brutality (Hawkins, 2021).

**Contextualization:** The fear of the police among some African Americans is a multifaceted issue deeply rooted in historical, social, and systemic factors. Unfortunately, I reside in a state where many of these historical events have unfolded. In recent years, Baltimore City has faced the traumatic events surrounding Freddie Gray's death and the subsequent riots. Additionally, the city was rocked by the investigation involving members of the Gun Trace Task Force, which revealed instances of police brutality, robbery, extortion, and overtime fraud. These incidents have further eroded trust and heightened the fear of the police. As the leader of a unit that frequently operates in Baltimore City, I am committed to ensuring that my team consistently treats everyone they encounter with respect. It is possible to carry out our duties without succumbing to the negative behaviors that have tarnished the badge worn by so many of us with pride every day. Understanding the fear of the police among African Americans necessitates recognition of the historical context, systemic issues, and the imperative for meaningful dialogue and reform. Addressing these concerns is crucial for fostering safer, more just communities.

**Source Five:** Lane, R. (2019). “I am a police officer, not a social worker or mental health nurse”: Online discourses of exclusion and resistance regarding mental health‐related police work. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, *29*(5), 429–442. https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.2410

**Comment 10:** The police have faced high‐profile criticisms over their handling of mental health‐related incidents.

**Comment 5: Comment 11:** Mental health work is not considered a valid part of the police role.

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Around 15% of police incidents are estimated to involve individuals with mental health concerns. Despite this, police officers receive minimal mental health training. The police have been publicly criticized for their handling of mental health-related incidents, and concerns have been raised about the lack of funding and fragmented nature of mental health services, which has led to police officers being compelled to take on a primary role in mental health care (Lane, 2019).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with mental health problems are reified and associated with violence, and extreme behavior, justifying the use of force by police.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is a variant of the discussion. Mental health and policing have been debated from various perspectives. Because of the changes to mental health services, the police are increasingly expected to take a role in supporting people with mental illness (Leese & Russell, 2017). Police officers are collaborating more frequently with individuals undergoing mental health crises, prompting a call for the health service to enhance access to suitable mental health support. Furthermore, the Crisis Care Concordat advocates for partnerships between the police, health, and social care systems to enhance the well-being of individuals amid a mental health crisis (Leese & Russell, 2017).

**Contextualization:** It is crucial to provide mental health awareness training for police officers for several reasons. Mental health awareness training enhances our understanding of mental health issues and improves our interactions with individuals experiencing mental health crises. As part of police reform efforts, we must now have de-escalation training. Furthermore, our tactics, equipment, and response procedures have been updated to address the issue of responding to calls involving individuals experiencing mental health crises. Given that a significant number of people with mental health difficulties encounter the police daily, the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) (Home Office, 1984) serves as the foundation for protecting vulnerable children and adults while they are in custody (Leese & Russell, 2017). Implementing comprehensive mental health awareness training has led to better outcomes for both my team and the communities we serve, fostering a safer and more understanding environment.

**Source Six:** Modula, M. J., Mathapo-Thobakgale, E. M., Nyoni, C. N., & Jansen, R. (2024). Strategies for Coping with Occupational Trauma: A Scoping Review of the Police Officer Context. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *21*(7), 921. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph21070921

**Comment 10:** Police officers are often exposed to occupational trauma

**Comment 6: Comment 11:** Continuous exposure to occupational trauma increases police officers’ vulnerability to mental health conditions.

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Occupational trauma is heightened among police officers due to their exposure to physical, biological, chemical, and psychological hazards, sustained occupational trauma results in mental illness among members of the police, which is a public health issue of concern (Modula et al., 2024).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with police officers who often face exposure to traumatic events and situations that can have a significant impact on their mental and emotional well-being. As a result, they may experience occupational trauma to a greater extent than individuals in many other professions (Modula et al., 2024).

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is an additive to the discussion. Police officers play a crucial role in the criminal justice system and are responsible for upholding community safety. Their duties include mediating conflicts, working under pressure with limited resources, and often facing traumatic situations, such as losing colleagues in the line of duty (Modula et al., 2024). Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administrations also emphasize that police officers are at risk of being exposed to potentially harmful situations, which can impact both themselves and those under their care (Modula et al., 2024).

**Contextualization:** As the team leader, I am acutely aware of the unique stressors and challenges that impact the mental well-being of my team members. I need to prioritize mental wellness and foster a supportive environment to support my team. The nature of our work exposes us to high-stress situations, potentially leading to chronic stress and emotional exhaustion. Furthermore, experiencing traumatic incidents can result in post-traumatic stress disorder, characterized by symptoms such as flashbacks, nightmares, severe anxiety, and intrusive thoughts about the event. It is important to note that seeking help for mental health issues can be stigmatized, especially given the "Type A" personality traits prevalent on the team.

Addressing these concerns necessitates a comprehensive approach, including mental health training, access to counseling services, peer support programs, and efforts to reduce the stigma around mental health in policing.

**Source Seven:** Velazquez, E., & Hernandez, M. (2019). Effects of police officer exposure to traumatic experiences and recognizing the stigma associated with police officer mental health. *Policing: An International Journal*, *42*(4), 711–724. https://doi.org/10.1108/pijpsm-09-2018-0147

**Comment 12:** Why police officers do not seek mental health treatment.

**Comment 7: Comment 13:** How influential stigma is in the police culture

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Law enforcement officers regularly encounter perilous situations and put their lives on the line as part of their professional duties. The heightened stress levels experienced by these officers can have adverse effects on their mental well-being (Velazquez & Hernandez, 2019). This includes an increased susceptibility to developing new mental health issues as well as exacerbating existing conditions. The demanding nature of their work can result in decreased on-the-job productivity, premature retirement, alcohol misuse, higher divorce rates, and, sadly, an elevated risk of suicide among officers (Velazquez & Hernandez, 2019).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with barriers that prevent police officers from seeking treatment.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is an additive to the discussion. The focus of research has advanced in two primary areas. Firstly, it involves the identification and exploration of the mental health challenges experienced by police officers because of trauma (Velazquez & Hernandez, 2019). This includes an in-depth analysis of the specific stressors and triggers that impact their mental well-being. Secondly, the research delves deeply into the stigma surrounding seeking mental health treatment within law enforcement (Velazquez & Hernandez, 2019). It examines the various psychological, organizational, and social barriers that prevent officers from accessing the support they need. Additionally, the research strongly advocates for implementing early intervention strategies to foster resilience and promote overall wellness among law enforcement officers (Velazquez & Hernandez, 2019).

**Contextualization:** The intersection of police interactions and mental health is a critical area of concern because the well-being of law enforcement officers directly affects our interactions with the community. When we are dealing with mental health challenges, it affects our judgment and decision-making. Stress, anxiety, or unresolved trauma can impair their ability to accurately assess situations, potentially leading to misunderstandings or escalations during public interactions. Our capacity to manage these situations successfully hinges on our mental well-being. I often preach the importance of maintaining good mental health because it impacts the individual officers' and the team's performance. This trickles down to our behavior and interactions with the public. When we are mentally healthy, we are more likely to show empathy, patience, and understanding, which leads to more vital community trust and positive relationships.

# References

Dempsey, J. S., & Forst, L. S. (2016). *An introduction to policing*. Cengage Learning.

Emesowum, B. (2016). *POLICE VIOLENCE : understanding its basic history, causal origins, health consequences, and ... prevention strategies.* Lulu.com.

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Leese, M., & Russell, S. (2017). Mental health, vulnerability and risk in police custody. *The Journal of Adult Protection*, *19*(5), 274–283. <https://doi.org/10.1108/jap-03-2017-0006>

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Velazquez, E., & Hernandez, M. (2019). Effects of police officer exposure to traumatic experiences and recognizing the stigma associated with police officer mental health. *Policing: An International Journal*, *42*(4), 711–724. https://doi.org/10.1108/pijpsm-09-2018-0147