SR 950-32 Clinical and Applied Sociology

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Professor

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**Assignment #2 – Developmental Readings**

1. Create Developmental Readings from seminal sources and scholarly peer-reviewed journal articles. Review instructions for Assignment #3, the course essential elements, and course readings to identify selections of books and journals to create 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:** Franklin, J. C., & Hein, J. F. (2021). *Thin Blue Fault line--policing America: a 21st*

*century challenge of compromise*. Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, Ltd.

**Comment 1:** Negative reputation of police in minority neighborhoods

**Comment 2:** Any minority has been belittled, bullied, or taken advantage of.

**Quote/Paraphrase:** The creation and progress of American policing can be traced to

many historically significant attitudes, events, and conditions. Slavery and the control of enslaved people were two of the more menacing features of early American society shaping policing (Franklin & Hein, 2021).

**Essential Element:** In 1704, the colony of Carolina developed the nation’s first slave

patrol. Slave patrols helped to maintain the economic order and assisted the wealthy landowners in recovering and punishing enslaved people who were essentially considered property (Franklin & Hein, 2021).

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is an additive to the discussion. People with black, red,

yellow or brown skin have had greater difficulty assimilating into American society's mainstream. Kappeler continues to state: The additional burden of racism has made that transition for those whose skin is black, brown, red, or yellow more difficult. In no small part because of the tradition of slavery, blacks have long been targets of abuse. The use of patrols to capture runaway slaves was one of the precursors of formal police forces, especially in the South (Franklin & Hein, 2021).

**Contextualization:** Old Man Crow is dead, but his spirit is still with us (Franklin &

Hein, (2021). The seed of policing was planted many years ago, and its roots are buried deep into the fabric of our country. Sadly, many of the policies and practices that were so prevalent during the Jim Crow era are still practiced in some communities in this country. The difference now is that it is not overt racism, but it is profiling. As a police officer, I have witnessed it in Maryland and many cities I have traveled to during my official duties and personal time. I continually see the events of police brutality in

marginalized neighborhoods around the country.

We, the police as an institution, must make sweeping changes that not only effectively keep our communities safe but treat everyone with respect and dignity. When addressing the changes needed to effectively build stronger relationships within marginalized communities through clinical and applied sociology practices, it is important that police reform efforts not only focus on police academy and in-service training but also try to implement restorative justice programs with the focus being on de-escalation and community engagement policing.

**Source Two**: Tartaro, C., Bonnan-White, J., Mastrangelo, M. A., & Mulvihill, R. (2021). Police Officers’ Attitudes Toward Mental Health and Crisis Intervention: Understanding Preparedness to Respond to Community Members in Crisis. *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology*, *36*(3). https://doi.org/10.1007/s11896-021-09459-6

**Comment 3:** Working with people with mental illness as offenders or as individuals needing emergency assistance is a regular part of the job for many in law enforcement.

**Comment 4**: Specialized training is not a regular part of most academy or in-service training.

**Quote/Paraphrase:** With renewed calls for improved police training due to controversial encounters between police and different community constituencies, continued examination of police training is crucial (Tartaro et al., 2021). Two different types of involvement categories define the difference between police and people with mental health issues. One category represents a law enforcement function, where police apply criminal statutes to protect the public (Tartaro et al., 2021). The second category of police involvement is non-criminal statute enforcement to protect physically and/or mentally disabled citizens (Tartaro et al., 2021).

**Essential Element:** The inadequacy of the mental health system left few options or resources for people with mental health illness facing a mental health crisis, and currently, the police are often the last resort (or, as it happens, first contact) for these individuals, with arrest and incarceration among the few avenues for accessing treatment (Tartaro et al., 2021).

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is an additive to the discussion. Studied arrest rates in 81 cities in the USA with populations of at least 50,000 and found an inverse relationship between psychiatric hospital bed capacity and arrests, even after controlling for cities’ homelessness rates and other structural variables (Tartaro et al., 2021).

**Contextualization:** The law enforcement profession has changed drastically regarding responding to calls for service since I entered the police academy in 1987. When I received a call for service with a responding trooper on my shift, the mindset was never a mental health crisis. Upon arrival at a scene, the focus was to address the call transmitted over the radio, meaning that the focus was enforcing the law, which in my mind as a young trooper was black and white. Of course, there was empathy for victims and those involved; however, we did not call-in social workers or any type of mental health professionals to assist in the heat of the moment. People with mental illness commit crimes, just as those without mental illness do. During encounters where enforcement activities are taking place, police officers may be required to “talk down” or subdue suspects who have a mental illness or are in crisis during the arrest process (Tartaro et al., 2021).

As a result of the many instances of police violence involving those with a mental health illness that have been documented over the years, addressing mental health illness by having officers trained to work side by side with mental health professionals when responding to calls is at the forefront of effective policing in 2025.

**Source Three:**  Dempsey, R. P., Eskander, E. E., & Dubljević, V. (2023). Ethical Decision-Making in Law Enforcement: A Scoping Review. *Psych*, *5*(2), 576–601. https://doi.org/10.3390/psych5020037

**Comment 5:** Recent high-profile cases of police violence in the United States have

generated substantial controversy.

**Comment 6:** The criticism of the ethics of policing has only grown in volume in recent

years.

**Quote/Paraphrase:** While it has always been clear that moral integrity has a

strong correlation with upholding the law, law enforcement agencies only

started adopting ethics training in the last quarter of the 20th century despite a

long evolution (Dempsey et al., 2023). Although ethics is part of the curriculum

police academy, the level and depth of training varies, and it is easy to conceive of the

adopted ethics training as merely a checklist (Dempsey et al., 2023).

**Essential Element:** **Additive/Variant Analysis:**  This is an additive to the

discussion. Ethical codes of conduct are still relatively new, and by and large, it

is not uncontroversial to assert that there is not enough substance in ethics, either

in police academies or the actual practice of law enforcement (Dempsey et al., 2023).

**Contextualization:** One of the major roadblocks to institute change in law

enforcement is the debate between police reform and what I call old-school policing.

When I graduated from the police academy, our philosophical mindset and outcomes

when responding to calls for service was to assert power, take control of the situation,

and maintain order. In recent years, because of police reform, police departments have

transitioned to a proactive engagement model that is community oriented.

By applying sociology concept to law enforcement reform,

agencies across this country will begin to teach practices to promote fair and effective

law enforcement that does not respond with the mindset of assertive power but of

understanding the dynamics of neighborhoods and individuals.

**Source Four:** Boudreau, C., MacKenzie, S. A., & Simmons, D. J. (2022). Police Violence and Public Opinion After George Floyd: How the Black Lives Matter Movement and Endorsements Affect Support for Reforms. *Political Research Quarterly*, *75*(2), 497–511. https://doi.org/10.1177/10659129221081007

**Comment 8:** What factors shape public opinion about government solutions to address

police violence?

**Comment 9:** A bipartisan majority of the public supports meaningful reforms.

**Quote/Paraphrase:**  In recent years, episodes of police violence involving unarmed

black men’s altercations with a white police officer have captured the attention

of public officials and ordinary citizens (Boudreau et al., 2022). Each of these

episodes followed a disturbingly familiar timeline: immediate condemnation followed by

widespread protests bordering on unrest, internal investigations resulting in none of the

police officers involved being charged and convicted, and diminished hopes for

meaningful changes to police personnel and practices as opponents of reform dug in and

public attention turned elsewhere (Boudreau et al., 2022).

**Essential Element:** Democrats and even Republicans who support Black Lives Matter

(BLM) express high levels of support for the proposals regardless of the information they

receive (Boudreau et al., 2022).

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive to the discussion. Just over one year later,

some things look different. What began as local protests near the scene of Floyd’s death

mushroomed into a mass movement, with tens of millions of Americans taking to the

streets in thousands of cities and towns during a pandemic. Led by the Black Lives

Matter movement, these marches for justice attracted unusual allies (Boudreau et al.,

2022).

**Contextualization:** It is hard for me to understand or explain how or why someone, a

police officer, who has taken an oath to protect and serve could willfully take their life or

brutally beat someone while enforcing the law. As a police officer, there are times when

the use of force is justified and warranted; however, those cases are strictly governed by

the use of force continuum that every law enforcement agency in this country abides by.

As I review the many videos where police brutality was a factor in an individual's injury or death, I understand why police reform must be instituted. Police reform measures must begin with the application process and continue throughout an officer's career. One major area that needs to be addressed is a more in-depth psychological profile of applicants and a bi-annual psychological exam addressing cultural competency for officers in every agency. The daily life of a police officer changes how you look and react to the world. Ensuring that officers are mentally fit to perform the job is just as important as the physical fitness of officers. The mission of policing is to protect and serve and by gaining a better psychological understanding of those tasked with that mission will allow agencies to remove officers who are not fit for duty.

**Source Five:** Iheme, W. C. (2020). Systemic Racism, Police Brutality of Black People, and the Use of Violence in Quelling Peaceful Protests in America. *The Age of Human Rights Journal*, *15*(15), 224–262. https://doi.org/10.17561/tahrj.v15.5851

**Comment 10:** Whenever a black person is murdered, the rebuttal is that it is just the act

of a few bad cops who do not represent the police force.

**Comment 11:** This defense is rooted in insincerity and bad faith and is the byproduct of ‘white supremacy.

**Quote/Paraphrase:** The deeply encrusted culture of hate and oppression against the Black people in America is underscored in police brutality (Iheme, 2020). The American police are the avenue through which the negative machinations and wishes against Black people by white supremacists find expression and enforcement (Iheme, 2020).

**Essential Element:** Although the age-long struggles for civil rights and equal treatments have caused the acquisition of more black-letter rights, the systemic racism that still perverts the American justice system has largely disabled these rights: the result is that Black people continue to exist at the periphery of American economy and politics (Iheme, 2020).

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is an additive to the discussion. Incidents of police brutality against black people has sparked outrage on the internet from around the globe, which pale in insignificance in comparison to what they had suffered in the past without much global attention due to the absence of the internet (Iheme, 2020).

**Contextualization:** The culture of hate against Black people in America was not recently developed; instead, the heightened use of smartphones in the 21st century has helped to create more awareness, consciousness, and exposure of the cruelty and brutality by the American police for centuries (Iheme, 2020). This claim is embellished by the video records showing the level of mastery with which the brutality is usually carried out, the perfect use of deadly tactics in tackling down, handcuffing, and skillfully choking Black people to death, even in broad daylight, amidst a global spectacle (Iheme, 2020). I agree that the smartphone has provided a way to document and provide evidence of police brutality; however, these same cases have been reported countless times by citizens in black and brown communities for years. In some law enforcement agencies, this is a common practice. The prevalence of police brutality has not increased; it is now being documented via video. Despite video documentation, many of these officers are not held accountable. When addressing this from a clinical sociology focus, the mindset of those police officers who engage in this type of enforcement is us versus them. I believe that a needed aspect of police reform when it pertains to police brutality would be to have a database that documents not only these cases but every officer involed. Accountability equates with effective reform.

**Source Six:** Alang, S., Haile, R., Hardeman, R., & Judson, J. (2023). Mechanisms Connecting Police Brutality, Intersectionality, and Women’s Health Over the Life Course. *American Journal of Public Health*, *113*(S1), S29–S36. https://doi.org/10.2105/ajph.2022.307064

**Comment 10:** Structural racism and structural sexism expose women of color to

police brutality.

**Comment 11:** Police brutality is a social determinant of health, causing mortality,

morbidity, and disability.

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Exposure to and health consequences of police brutality are not equally distributed. Racially minoritized communities are disproportionately exposed to police brutality, significantly increasing mortality rates and elevating the odds of physical and psychological problems (Alang et al., 2023). Even though most of the research focuses on male victims of police brutality, Black and other women and gender-nonconforming people of color are significantly harmed, and their experiences are rendered invisible. Intersectionality behooves us to analyze beyond the racism of police brutality (Alang et al., 2023).

**Essential Element:**  We also discuss the relevance of applying an intersectionality framework in research that examines the health impacts of police brutality and in developing policies to eliminate this form of structural violence that harms women of color (Alang et al., 2023). We use "women of color" to refer to Black women and other racially minoritized women who are not racialized as White (Alang et al., 2023).

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is an additive to the discussion. We understand that anti-blackness is at the center of structural racism and police brutality and that, even within the heterogeneous category of "women of color," Black women experience anti-Black racism perpetrated and sustained by other women of color (Alang et al., 2023). However, our analysis focuses on the experiences of women of color to acknowledge the complex reality that we are all victims of the White supremacy that makes structural racism possible, and we can be complicit in each other's oppression (Alang et al., 2023). We simultaneously center the experiences of Black women and incorporate how other women of color, especially Indigenous women and Latinas, are racialized and gendered in ways that disproportionately expose them to police brutality (Alang et al., 2023).

**Contextualization:** As a police officer, we are sworn to protect all communities equally and justly; however, addressing the topic of police brutality and women of color, women of color are at a disadvantage due to multiple stereotypes; their race, neighborhood, and oftentimes their socio-economic status. The intersection of racism and sexism by police has a far-reaching effect. Womanhood is typically perceived as White. Black women are often dehumanized and perceived as outside of the category of "woman."(Alang et al., 2023). From personal experience, when responding to calls for service with a white officer to a residence where a woman of color is present, they are not given the same respect or acknowledged in the same manner as their white counterparts. The lack of cultural competency regarding women of color causes further victimization, which needs to be addressed in law enforcement training.

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

**Comment 12:** Biased-based policing has emerged as an important issue in communities.

**Comment 13:** Use of force is a necessary part of police work>

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Biased-based policing is generally defined as any police-initiated

activity that relies on a person’s race or ethnic background rather than on behavior

as a basis for identifying an individual as being involved in criminal activity (Dempsey

& Forst, 2016). Officers are allowed to use the level of force necessary to counter a

subject’s resistance to getting the subject to comply with a lawful order (Dempsey

& Forst, 2016).

**Essential Element:** The perception of racial profiling correlates with the animosity

toward police in the community (Dempsey & Forst, 2016). When an officer uses physical

violence against a citizen is significant (Dempsey & Forst, 2016).

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is an additive to the discussion. African American

males have a lower opinion of police than their white counterparts. African American

males between 18 and 34 said that they had been treated unfairly by the police

(Dempsey & Forst, 2016).

**Contextualization:** Profiling and police brutality go hand in hand, particularly in

marginalized, black, and brown communities. One of the first aspects of a police officer's

field training is showing him/her the neighborhoods on their patrol that are deemed

high-crime areas. Often, those are marginalized communities with systematic

biases, which several agencies patrol, which will result in negative contact with law

enforcement. Negative contact ends in a use of force that escalates to a police brutality

incident. From a clinical perspective, these actions create fear, intimidation, and a lack of

trust, which can only be overcome with police reform in the manner of community

policing with citizen engagement that involves empathetic policing strategies while

continuing the mission of protecting these communities.

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