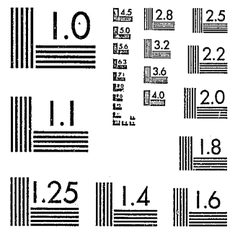

SMALL TOWN POLICE: AN OCCUPATIONAL ETHNOGRAPHY

by

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and
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Problem

With few exceptions academic studies of police behavior in the last decade have been dominated by two trends. The first is an emphasis on the study of large urban police departments at the expense of rural or small town ones; and the second, the nearly ubiquitous assumption that the police in America are beset by a multitude of problems which require remedial action if police are to be able to function at a reasonable level of fairness and efficiency. Without questioning that studies of big city police officers and their problems are necessary and worthwhile, I believe they have introduced an unfortunately biased view of who and what the American policeman really is. This is because so many authors tend to overgeneralize from a limited data base, either claiming or tacitly implying that their findings are characteristic of police officers in general. For example, Skolnick does this in his book, Justice Without Trial, a classic and otherwise excellent study of detectives and vice officers and the social and moral implications of their actions. Although his research experience was with one agency in one city, he insists on overstepping his data by suggesting that his "sketch of the working personality," a personality in which suspicion and authoritarianism are the main ingredients, is applicable to police officers in general (1966:42-70).

From the research I conducted it became obvious that the behavior typical of the police department I studied (and very probably of other departments like it) did not fit into any of the available molds --such as Skolnick's personality scheme-- and that, therefore, a need exists to broaden the view of police behavior prevalent in today's literature. My research focused on the intensive study of a police department in a small American city (pop. 7,000) where both the requirements for policing the community and the working behavior of the officers differed notably from the usual representations I had encountered in my reading. For example, crime is of a different nature entirely than that found in large urban centers. Violent crimes (i.e., murder, non-negligent manslaughter, aggravated assault, forcible rape and robbery) which pose a serious threat to an officer's life are virtually unheard of and professional criminals such as career burglars and robbers (to say nothing of "hit men") are exceedingly rare or altogether nonexistent. Also absent is organized crime, a regular and practically inextricable part of the large urban scene where it especially permeates the poorer sectors through promotion of drugs, gambling and prostitution. Although violence does occur in the community I studied, it is generally in the form of simple assaults which average less than one incident per week. Most often these are between persons who know each other, and frequently involve mutual combat. Burglary and theft occur frequently but in around 75% of the cases these crimes are committed by juveniles who selectively steal items for personal use, sometimes taking them from friends and acquaintances. The scene of a

family returning home to find their house completely cleaned out of all valuables never occurred during my two year association with the small department. In the small city, proportionate property loss through theft is appreciably lower than in areas where professional criminals operate. Let me stress here that I do not believe this lack of large-scale crime is due to anything but the factors which identify a small city as a small city: its demography; popultaion size and limited socio-economic variability (see Chapter 4 for community survey; also see Chapter 4 in James Q. Wilson's Varieties of Police Behavior for similar discussion of how demography influences and determines the types of crime committed in a community). During my contacts with local suspects and previously convicted offenders I could not overlook in some a pronounced anti-social propensity as well as remarkable ambition and even talent in some cases for burglary, larceny and criminal mischief. It is likely that in a conducive environment where they might apprentice with more experienced criminals, where they might more readily and profitably dispose of stolen goods, and where they might have easy access to an underworld large enough to offer refuge and anonymity from police recognition, some of these small town hoods might indeed carve out impressive careers for themselves. However, because in a small city the resources are not there, serious large-scale crime is simply not a reality of day-to-day life. Thus, the police are left free to devote their time and effort on patrol to maintaining social order, breaking up family disturbances and other civil quarrels, regulating traffic, spotting vandalism, rendering assistance to the public and

checking out suspicious circumstances.

Another major difference between the type of urban police department routinely reported on in the literature and the one in the small community I studied is directly related to variation in agency size. With only twelve patrol officers available to cover three shifts each day, seven days a week, it often happens that only one or two officers are on duty during a given shift. This is quite a contrast to the situation depicted by police researchers in agencies that have at least 20 and sometimes more than 100 officers working per shift. This difference in manpower strength has dramatic effects on such important patrol variables as response time and the availability of backup, effects which have a marked influence on the behavior of the police in a small community. An officer working completely alone will certainly have a different approach to the arrest and handling of a drunk and disorderly person, for instance, than if he were part of a larger force. It is points like these, which will be more fully discussed later, that have convinced me that the present picture of the American policeman is myopic. The pre-eminent big city focus presents an incomplete picture which tends to obscure the diversity there is among this country's law enforcement officers. The degree of this urban slant is perhaps best indicated by the fact that in only one book could I find my concern over this neglect echoed. In a collection of articles under the title Focus on Police, editors Potholm and Morgan make the following telling comment:

> It is instructive that the great morality play we know as the American Western featured, almost exclusively, rural law enforcement. There were few heroes in urban police forces of that era who could command respect and interest from the general public over long periods of time. The towering, mythicized figure of the western marshall, struggling, often alone, to bring rudimentary order and transitory peace to the western town held the public attention for over a century. Surprisingly enough, despite this interest, rural law enforcement as a study area is almost totally neglected as we approach the modern era . . . Considering the tens of thousands of country town and rural law enforcement agencies, this is a neglect of serious import and one which prevents our rounding out the picture of law enforcement in the United States. (1976:26)

As alluded to by Potholm and Morgan, the number of police personnel working outside America's big cities is indeed great; however, it is difficult to quantify because of definitional problems. Since police have evidently been regarded for so long as a homogeneous group, there exists to my knowledge no attempt in the literature to identify objective criteria which would distinguish between large and small agencies. How does one classify types of police agencies at all? The F.B.I., in its annual compendium of Uniform Crime Reports (UCR), recognizes "police reporting areas" by correlating them with the geo-political jurisdictions they serve (F.B.I., 1978). The groupings conform more or less to U. S. Bureau of the Census standards: groups I through IV are labeled "city," with staggered population coverage ranging from those cities with less than 10,000 inhabitants to those with over 250,000; group VIII, labeled "rural county;" and group IX, labeled

"suburban county." (Group VII was deleted in the F.B.I. adaptation of the standards.) Within each of the established population/geographical categories, the size of respective police agencies varies widely (F.B.I., 1978:237-280).

Before being able to give an indication of the number of police personnel who serve in the country's many small agencies, I am pressed here to digress briefly on the subject. I will not try to establish an unequivocal definition which draws an absolute line between large and small agencies. The number of possible variables affecting police behavior is great enough that any demarcation line would have to be a hazy one. For instance, an agency may be small in size but because of a large minority population within the community, or its proximity to a large urban center, might face policing problems more akin to the city than other small agencies. What I will attempt to do then is to identify a department size which will permit a reasonable assumption that any given agency of this size or smaller will in certain important ways resemble the one I studied. I do not wish to suggest that the agency I studied is a type model representative of all small agencies. Rather, that if certain key elements --I've singled out three-- are present in a police department of appropriate size, then it is very probably that the policing attitudes and behavior of the department will differ from its big city counterparts in ways similar to those I encountered in my research. Thus, the category "large agency" in this discussion will be defined by exclusion from the "small agency" category rather than by objective criteria of its own. I realize that this

attempt will provide only a very crude division between types of police agencies, but I have neither the time, the data, nor the need in this study to develop an extensive taxonomy based on corresponding differences in the size and behavior of all police departments. My immediate objective is merely to give an indication of the number of officers throughout the United States who serve communities like the one I studied. Since the numbers involved are quite high (see below), a relatively high degree of potential error can be tolerated.

It is my belief that departments which employ fifty or fewer personnel can be designated as small departments, not because in my subjective estimation fifty appears to be a comparatively small figure, but because the limit of fifty total personnel will necessarily attend a working environement that differs significantly from that of the urban police officer in at least three ways. First, a department of fifty will usually serve a community of low population number and/or density where, according to UCR statistics, crime occurs at a considerably lower rate than in the city. The rate of violent crimes (calculated at the standard rate of crimes per 100,000 population per year) for cities under 25,000 in 1977 was 236.68, while the corresponding rate for cities above 25,000 was 709.11 (see Table 1). The important point for this discussion is that of the nation's 7,018 cities with less than 25,000 inhabitants served by law enforcement agencies, 99% of these have departments which employ fifty or fewer personnel (F.B.I., 1978: 237-78).

TABLE 1

RATE OF VIOLENT CRIME IN CITIES OF OVER AND UNDER 25,000 POPULATION[a]

	No. of Cities	Estimated 1972 pop.	No. of Violent Crimes	Crime Rate (Crimes/100,000/Yr)
Cities over 25,000 pop.	1,175	98,539,000	698,748	709.11
Cities under 25,000 pop.[b]	6,751	43,095,000	101,998	236.68

[a]Adapted from information provided by the F.B.I. (1978:147-8).

[b]Discrepancy between this figure and the previously cited total of cities with less than 25,000 population is due to the fact that totals in the table reflect only those cities whose police departments participate in UCR, the source of national compiled crime statistics.

The second factor which qualifies a department of fifty or less as small is that officers in departments of this size will often find themselves handling calls when backup is either unavailable or delayed. The availability of a partner at the scene influences an officer's style in non-emergency situations as well as in cases where backup may be critical to personal safety. Commonly 56% of a department's police personnel are deployed in actual patrol work, with the remainded involved ir investigation, administration, communications, records and other functions (National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, 1973:200). This means that in a department of fifty, there will be 28 patrol officers or an average of six officers per shift. Serving a citizenry of 20,000 to 25,000 it is inevitable that at times all six officers will be occupied at once, causing delays in initial and backup response times.

A third feature of the small department, as I quickly experienced in the small department I worked with, is that all members know each other on a personal face-to-face basis. This was true across divisional lines. All the administrators, officers, detectives, dispatchers, jailers and secretaries knew one another. The minimum information known about one's co-workers generally included: length of employment with the department, previous police experience, marital status, number of children, residence, spouse's employment, and type of car. A change in the status of any of these quickly became common knowledge. It was also apparent that this informal familiarity among department members influenced the conduct of police business, including such internal matters as promotion and shift assignments, and routine departures from the prescribed chain of command at all levels. Therefore, I feel it is important to qualify that a small department is one in which the small number of personnel invites (if not imposes) an opportunity for interpersonal acquaintance and contact of this kind. In this context, too, fifty seems a manageable figure.

After deciding that one could assuredly, albeit not exclusively, identify agencies with less than fifty personnel as small, I discovered that small agencies, thus defined, employ 97,078, or 27% of all city police personnel in the United States (F.B.I., 1978:237-78). Recent figures for the state of Oregon, where I conducted my research, offer a more precise breakdown. In 1977, 181 of the total 194 police departments in the state employed less than fifty personnel (Table 2). In terms of actual manpower, this accounts for 31% of all law enforce-

ment employees (Table 3). Furthermore, if we examine the figures for only local police departments --those serving municipalities and counties, thereby excluding State Police and Corrections Officers-- we find that nearly half (45%) work in the smaller agencies (Table 4).

TABLE 2

NUMERICAL BREAKDOWN OF OREGON LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES BY SIZE

Agency Size	Number of Departments	Percentage of Total
1-5	84	43
6-10	29	15
11-25	45	26
26-50	23	12
51-100	4	2
over 100	9	5
Total	194	100%

TABLE 3

NUMBER OF SWORN LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS BY AGENCY SIZE

Agency Size	Number of Officers	Percentage of Total
1-50	1519	31
51+	3357	69
Total	4876	100%

TABLE 4

NUMBER OF OREGON POLICE OFFICERS BY AGENCY SIZE SERVING MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY DEPARTMENTS[a]

Agency Size	Number of Officers	Percentage of Total
1-50	1519	45
51+	1838	55
Total	3357	100%

[a]Excludes State Police and Corrections Officers. Municipal and county officers are those generally associated with the term "police," rather than specialists such as highway patrol or corrections.

Tables 2, 3 and 4 are based on information obtained from State of Oregon, Executive Department, Board on Police Standards and Training (BPST).

If the number of police working in small departments and consequently the proportion of the population served by small agencies is so high, then why has so little attention been given to them by scholars interested in police behavior and by government bodies intent on improving police-community relations and the quality of law enforcement in general? I believe the answer lies in the problem-oriented nature of most police research. The police in large urban centers have proportionately greater problems than those encountered in small communities. In addition to facing higher incidences of violent crime, city police must occassionally deal with mass riots and violent or potentially violent demonstrations, events which are virtually unimaginable in a small community. In the past decade and a half, American public opinion has been pressing for solutions to problems like these, concern stimulated by massive media coverage of police response to Civil Rights and Anti-war demonstrations of the 1960's and early 70's. The federal government during this time established a new agency, the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) to help solve the "crisis" in law enforcement. Thus, given a pervasive awareness of urban law enforcement problems and the fact that a new government agency

was readily dispensing research funds, it is understandable that the principal efforts of contemporary researchers would be addressed to urban police and their problems. It is time, however, that this lop-sided approach be stopped, not only because the particular needs of small departments are being ignored, but because the emphasis given to urban problems can even be shown to have a detrimental effect on the training and professionalization of small town and rural police officers. Many of the innovative policies in law enforcement today originate in research projects, but since such research is almost exclusively conducted in urban settings, the only published material available to progressive administrators of small departments and to the police academies which train the officers is derived from and related to the experiences and requirements of urban police personnel. I regard this as a grave mistake.

It is naive and obtuse to suppose that smaller departments should model themselves after their large urban counterparts. The problems and conditions facing the two are quite different. At a basic training session sponsored by Oregon's BPST, student officers viewed many training films, most of which showed the various phases of police work as they were encountered by officers in two-man units on patrol in distinctly urban or large suburban communities. In the questioning which followed each film, it was repeatedly asked by students, "How do you handle the same situation if you're the only one on duty?" Usually the instructors could reply only with the concession that this would certainly make the job "a little more difficult." (In fact, a

later show of hands revealed that not a single one of the more than sixty recruits came from departments that routinely had two-man units).

A recent publication by LEAA is only one of many that further illustrates the urban bias urged upon policymakers. (I have used the following study as an example because it was among several publications --discarded and never used-- that were given to me by the Chief of Police in the small town where I worked.) It concerns the hiring and promotion of police officers, a serious issue that ought to be of special concern to the small agency which, with limited financial resources must do its best to attract and retain suitable and qualified individuals despite comparatively low pay. In the LEAA report, Police Selection and Career Assessment, researchers Dunnette and Motowidlo state their objectives quite clearly:

> Our main objective in this research program has been to develop new methods for evaluating persons who apply for positions in police work and for assessing the potential of present police officers who are being considered for promotion. (1976:xv)

It is also clear that the authors expect their results will be applicable to all of the nation's police departments since, to facilitate the widespread implementation of their program, they call for the establishment of regional testing centers to serve small agencies which cannot afford to run their own facility (1976:76). To attain their objectives, Dunnette and Motowidlo employed a two-phase research design. First, they realized it was essential to learn "exactly what activities or job behaviors are critical to effectiveness or ineffec-

tiveness (success or failure) in police work" (1976:xv). In order to do this, the researchers used a number of techniques, including "first-hand observation by 'their' staff members of officers as they carried out their jobs" (1976:xvi). This information was then used to construct two testing procedures which, if properly administered and scored, would ideally fulfill their objectives.

I do not wish to enter any discussion concerning the validity of the testing technique employed by Dunnette and Motowidlo, or the validity of its results; that kind of evaluation is outside my interests and competence. Rather, since my major concern is that these researchers have not considered the realities of policing a small community, I would prefer to conditionally accept their procedure as useful but critically examine its breadth of application. One need not look far to find evidence which in my view seriously limits the relevance of their research for use by small departments. First, the research --which was to determine what activities and behaviors are actually critical to police job performance-- was conducted exclusively and predictably in high-population and therefore high-crime areas (i.e., exceeding 25,000 population; see Table 1): Cincinnati, Des Moines, Miami (Dade County), Minneapolis, Portland, San Diego, and Washington D.C.. The smallest agency in the sample employs 404 personnel, while the largest has 4,946. If the authors truly expect their program to be useful across the full spectrum of this country's law enforcement agencies, I do not understand how they plan to reconcile their sample data with their stated research plan of basing the testing procedure on real, on-the-job police work. Plainly, like so many other researchers

they make the assumption that either all police officers are alike or that all police officers should be alike in resembling the big city cop. This assumption is unwarranted and any use of the testing procedure by a small department will yield suspect results. For instance, one portion of Dunnette's and Motowidlo's battery of tests is a measurement of the job performance of the "precinct patrolman" (1976:85). Supervisors are to evaluate patrolmen by scoring them on standardized rating scales related to functions of patrol work such as crime prevention, traffic maintenance, etc.. The scales in each case range from 1 through 9 and include nine examples of <u>on-the-job behavior</u> which supposedly typify and justify each rating level and which characterize an increasingly professional working attitude. Figure 1 is an example of such a rating scale which I believe demonstrates the designers' oversight of police in a small community.

It is obvious that the higher a man scores on these scales, the better he supposedly is performing his work. Yet how can the small town supervisor rate his officers on this scale when he realizes that the two examples of highest rated behavior in this case bear no relevance to his officers' working environment? In the town where I worked, there had not been a police shooting incident in over ten years. Surely, danger and violence as described in items 8 and 9 <u>can</u> occur anywhere, even in the smallest of towns. But to expect that it will occur with enough regularity that every one of twenty or even ten officers on a small department will encounter an armed assailant within each evaluation period is unrealistic, to say the least! According to the stated

USING FORCE APPROPRIATELY

Job Category B

Keeping one's "cool" under pressure or personal abuse; being able to judge and to utilize the correct amount of force to resolve an incident promptly and effectively; avoiding acts that might be seen as brutal or sadistic; retaining composure when confronted with hostility and provocation.

9 — A deskman calmly convinced a man who was pointing a rifle at him to hand it over rather than shooting the man when he had the chance.

8 — In a fight with a traffic violator, the violator knocked one officer down, took his revolver, and shot six shots at the officer's partner, hitting him four times. The wounded officer pulled his revolver and drew a bead on the violator, who then threw the empty gun down and raised his hands. The wounded officer did not fire, but instead kept the violator covered until he was in custody.

7 — An officer stopped a car for a traffic violation and the driver assaulted the officer with obscenities and verbal abuse. The officer wrote the tag and calmly explained why the man got the tag and how he could handle it, still amid a barrage of obscenities.

6 — The officer grabbed the arm of a girl attacking her boyfriend with an ice pick, narrowly saving him. The officer was then assaulted by her, and had his shirt ripped by the ice pick before he struck her in the head with his gun to subdue her.

5 — The officer waited for two young men who had been rowdy and noisy in a restaurant to come back to their car to pick them up. He took them to a dark area several blocks from their car, kicked them in the ass, and told them to walk back to their car. He also said that they should stay out of the area, because their kind weren't needed.

4 — While taking a very hostile and belligerent man to jail, the officer purposely threw him against the wall.

3 — The officer slapped a man who was pestering a bartender to sell him a drink after hours.

2 — A man stopped after being chased at high speed. Even though the situation was in hand, an officer from a second squad which pulled up began beating the man.

1

goals of the designers, the evaluation should be based on real, observed job activity, not subjective speculation about what an officer's actions might be in a given situation. The same is true of similar tests in other categories, such as "teamwork." To suit the small agency, the rating scales would have to be truncated, and thereby distorted. The criteria which Dunnette and Motowidlo use in their recommeded assessment procedures are natural in view of their data base: An outstanding officer is one who acts appropriately in the face of pressures and circumstances that are most likely to be encountered in a big city. However, also natural is the corollary that the outstanding officer is an anachorism to the small town, for where there are no such opportunities to "excell," there can be no excellence.

I hope that the preceding explicit example has made clear the point I have been trying to express, that the insensitivity to everyday working conditions of small town police that is faithfully encountered in the relevant literature must cease if these nearly 100,000 officers are to be expected to behave as responsible men and women whose dealings with the public are both fair and consistent. To impose on a small department the standards and training which have been formulated on big city studies is analogous to insisting that people of all sizes should wear clothing that was cut for giants. It is ill-fitting, awkward, ridiculous, and all too readily shed. I certainly do not mean to suggest that smaller police agencies should be exempt from standards and a level of professionalism; simply that their training, direction and evaluation should be tailored to their own dimensions.

Goals and Objectives

This dissertation is based on research which was designed in response to the oversight in police literature that has been discussed above. From the start, I realized that I wanted to collect and report on information which would contribute to a more widespread awareness of and responsiveness to the needs of the many police officers who work in our country's small communities. Because the functioning and behavior of the small town policeman in America has been so thoroughly overlooked, a veritable multitude of possible research topics presented themselves. However, a few pressingly real concerns put some restraints on my imagination. First, as a graduate student I had limited financial resources available, so the study would have to be conducted by myself without the aid of hired assistants (although my wife proved to be an invaluable research partner throughout the study). Second, as an anthropologist, I sympathize with the discipline's traditional approach to doctoral research projects. Neophyte anthropologists are expected to undergo the test of fieldwork, an experience which has the researcher living among his subjects for a period of time, usually at least one year. Without length methodological discussion and expressed in plain, everyday language, the idea behind this approach can be summarized in a brief maxim: If you can live with them, you've earned the right to talk about them. Guided by the dictates of limited resources and my chosen approach, I settled down to conducting an intensive study of the police department of one small Oregon city. With a total of 27 personnel (17 sworn officers and 10 civilian employees) the department

certainly qualified as small. Yet I was glad to see that even within the organization of this size there was plenty of variability and complexity worthy of description. One task remained before I could begin fieldwork, and that was the formulation of some goals which would provide guidelines for the collection of data.

At the beginning of this dissertation I mentioned two biases which pervade contemporary police research: (1) focus on large urban departments and (2) a preponderance of problem-oriented studies. The decision to study a small police agency was in response to the urban focus. To address the second bias, I chose to follow the example of Michael Banton as set forth in his work, The Policeman in the Community (1964). Banton recognized that not only did most social scientists concentrate on "problems," but also that they are apparently expected to do so. He relates that his acquaintances here and abroad universally assumed that he intended to study police because he was primarily interested in corruption, brutality, or other defects in police conduct or organization. According to Banton,

> the tradition of research into social problems is now so firmly established that the public takes it for granted the sociologists study social institutions that are not working satisfactorily. The idea that it can be instructive to analyse institutions that are working well in order to see if anything can be learned from their success has not yet taken hold. (1964:vii)

Banton's main area of interest was police-community relations but, following his own suggestion, he did not focus his research on the specific areas of conflict between the public and the police.

Instead he broadened his view to take in the normal, everyday interaction between public and police. He soon discovered that little attention had been given to this by previous authors and he therefore began his study by collecting a mass of descriptive information. Only later did he begin his analysis. Thus, axiomatic to Banton's methodology was a determination to limit his preconceptions and expectations and, as much as possible, to allow the data to indicate the major areas of interest and concern.

I found Banton's approach very compatible with my own research goals. Since there has been so little research done on the behavior of small town police, it would be presumptive to identify and single out in advance any specific problems in need of exploration. I began my research with a firm resolve to head in the direction of description. Like traditional anthropologists making first contact with the proverbial primitive tribe, I believe I ought to first describe the setting and seek to convey to the reader an appreciation for the behavior and values of my subjects before I embark on any analysis. The description will include not only actual situations and events, but also the attitudes of the officers towards their work. It was not long after beginning the research that I realized I could not adequately discuss the attitudes of patrol officers unless I examined the department in its entirety, including staff (administrators), dispatchers, and other support personnel. As previously stated, interaction between members of different divisions is frequent and clearly affects officers in a very personal way. For the patrolman in a small department, job

satisfaction and performance seem as much governed by intra-departmental conditions and activities as by what happens on the street.

Returning briefly to the matter of "problems," I would like to stress that a descriptive approach does not ignore problems. On the contrary, it recognizes them as part of the system under description. As Banton suggests, the image of a police department without any problems would probably be popularly rejected as an anomaly. To be sure, the small department I studied had its share of problems, both internal and with the public. These will be evident in the description of events where their inclusion is appropriate. Description, then, is a major goal of this study and I believe it will be a useful one if the availability of such descriptive information can aid responsible and concerned leaders in constructing training programs and other guidelines in a proper perspective for the small department. However, while good ethnographic reporting --occupational ethnography, in this case-- is the first step in attempting to understand the behavior of any social group, I believe this study can contribute more to the understanding and professionalization of the small town cop by going beyond mere description. Another objective of this study is comparison. By comparing the situation in the small agency I observed with some of the more prominent models of police behavior offered in the literature, models based on big city experiences, it will be possible to draw attention to important areas where the needs and concerns of the small agency depart from and even conflict with those of larger departments.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

Something to Hide?

If Michael Banton's remarks about research on police were to be expressed as a postulate, "it is generally believed that social research on police deals with police problems," then a corollary could be: "it is generally believed that police are a closed socio-occupational group who wish to remain inaccessible to researchers because they have something to hide." This kind of thinking is probably in operation whenever a social researcher undertakes to study any powerful institution or group within his or her own society.

The study of complex societies, sometimes summarily identified with urban anthropology, is an area of special interest for me and one which led me as a graduate student in anthropology to coursework in other related disciplines devoted to urban concerns. As part of a seminar in criminal justice, one sociology professor had arranged for each member of the class to accompany an officer of the local 150-man Clarence police force on patrol in a marked police vehicle for one shift. The purpose of the assignment was to allow the students to supplement or compare previous readings on police behavior with an actual, if brief, first-hand experience. The officer with whom I rode and others I encountered during that day appeared neither suspicious nor guarded on my account. Rather, their behavior seemed

relaxed and their conversation was candid in my presence. It occurred to me that research such as I was interested in might be possible without a need for political clout and high-level string-pulling or for ground floor "infiltration" and the accompanying dissemblings and ethical dilemmas. The officers assured me that many more people would be sympathetic towards the police if only they had a chance to see what being a cop is really like.

I found it interesting and noteworthy that many of my classmates after their individual ride-along sessions expressed disappointment that there had been so little "real" police work for them to observe (the concept of "real" police work apparently having been defined according to anticipations planted and cultivated throughout earlier reading assignments, as well as popular notions promoted by television programs and other police fiction). Interesting, too, was the fact that the officer with whom I rode had himself communicated to me that his job did not offer as much opportunity for "real action" as he had hoped and would like. For me, the experience illuminated some very obvious and important differences in the character of police and police work between the big cities I had read about and the mid-sized (100,000 pop.) less heterogeneous university town of Clarence where I had now had my first personal or "inside" contact with the police. What was police work really like, I wondered, in the far smaller town of Garden Valley where I lived?

At this stage, as throughout the study, my wife, Renate, was of invaluable assistance and support to me. Since January 1976, she had been working as a clerk at Garden Valley City Hall which was housed in an antiquated and outgrown structure soon to be vacated in favor of a new facility. In the cramped quarters of the old building her work

routine brought her into daily informal contact with the Chief and other police personnel. Since turnover among police personnel was (and still is) high, the Chief often had his eye out for replacements. In March, Renate welcomed a transfer to fill the newly vacated position of Detective Secretary, a job which she thought would be more interesting and challenging than her duties in the Water Department. She knew, of course, of my interest in police and now seriously encouraged me to talk to Police Chief Gene Favor about doing research with the Garden Valley force. On being introduced to Favor, he showed interest in my academic credentials and told me of his belief that higher education should play a greater part in professionalizing law enforcement. His hope was that eventually every officer of his department would have at least an A.A. degree. He himself was close to completing requirements for a B.S. through correspondence courses with an eastern University, and was enthusiastic at the prospect of being involved in a graduate research project. He showed me a recent issue of a police journal which included an article on crime prevention that named him as co-author, and suggested that perhaps my research, too, would yield material that he and I could submit jointly for publication. The initial steps of making contact and obtaining permission to conduct the study were easier than I could have imagined. On approval from the City Manager, the Chief extended to me carte blanche to proceed in whatever manner I chose.

Since I did not want to appear to the rank-and-file members of the department as "the Chief's man," I decided to seek their approval independently. I attended a meeting of the Garden Valley Police Officers Association at which about three-quarters of the department's personnel

were present (the Association did not include the department's supervisory personnel or secretaries as members; these were not represented by the Association in labor contract negotiations or other personnel matters, although they were generally included in social events which might be organized and sponsored by the Association). Amid chips-and-beer informality and following a presentation by another attendant guest, a salesman trying to sell cancer insurance to the officers, I addressed the Association with my own "pitch" concerning my proposed study. I found that many were already aware of the project and all agreed that a tell-it-like-it-is study would be welcome. Some officers even jokingly insisted that after being involved with police work myself I probably would not want to give it up and would end up as one of them. I was able to begin the research on an optimistic note.

Selecting a basic research approach was an easy decision for me. My own methodological predilection and the type of data I wanted to collect dictated that participant observation would be the best choice. Since I hoped to both describe the daily activities of the police department's employees and to acquire an overview of police service within a small community, it seemed that regular and repeated --ideally daily-- contact would afford the best opportunities. However, selecting the actual strategy of day-in/day-out contact with the department's employees was another matter. I couldn't simply tell them something like, "Oh, don't mind me, I'm just a resident participant observer." Rather, as Vidich and Bensman have pointed out, a participant observer must carefully choose the position he hopes to fill in the society or social group he is studying (Vidich and Bensman, 1968). Choosing a position was not a simple task, especially because I wanted to study the whole

department. As in most bureaucratic organizations, in the Garden Valley Police Department there was some alienation between personnel at different levels. Erve Chambers in his article, "Working for the Man," has discussed the problem of having to assume multiple positions within one research setting. Essentially his suggestion is to go with the tide and change when necessary (1978). I recognized that there were three groups within the police department that would each require a different positional stance, or role, of the researcher: the administration, the detective division, and the combined forces of patrol and special services personnel (see Fig. 2a). These groups were so separated by work space and function that each had a separate identity which would require a different response on my part.

Originally I had intended to study the department according to the subdivisions defined by the official organizational structure (Fig. 2b). However, it became quickly apparent that this approach was not practical, since my primary interest was in the working behavior of Garden Valley's police employees, and it seemed their daily work habits did not correspond to the organizational chart. According to the official structure, the Operations Commander (Lieutenant) and Special Services Division Commander (Sergeant) were, first and foremost, members of their respective divisions. In actuality, their work load and schedules more closely resembled those of the Chief and Captain, and they themselves identified principally as staff members or administrators. Thus, the Chief, Captain, Lieutenant and Sergeant constituted a group ("The Staff"), defined by work habits and recognized as a distinct group by subordinate personnel.

Figure 2a

Official Organizational Structure

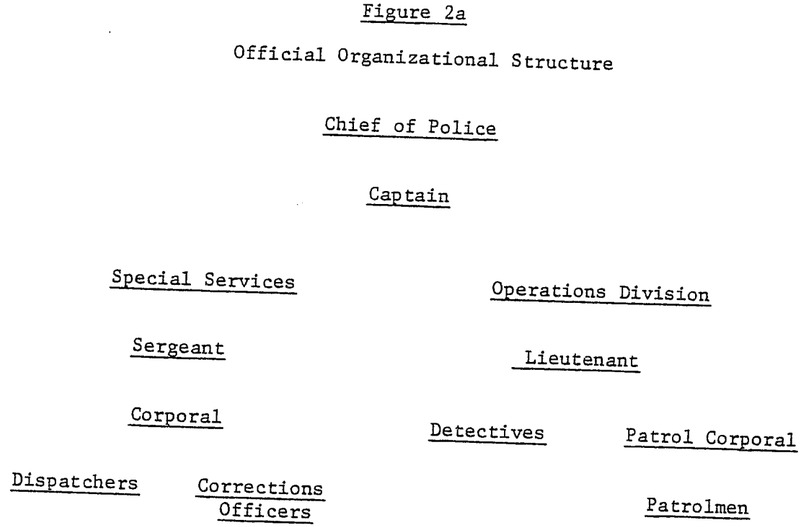
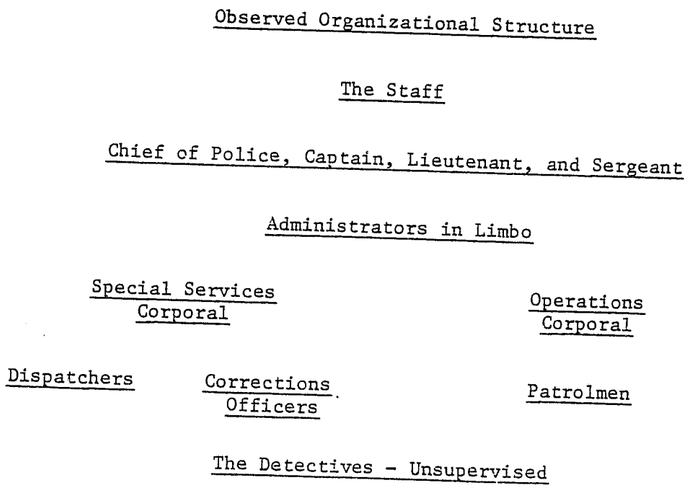


Figure 2b

Observed Organizational Structure



Other departures from expected group identity were even more striking. Although detectives and patrolmen were officially members of the same division, Operations, they rarely interacted in their work. The job of detective was a high-status position in the department and whoever occupied it was usually proud of it and guarded his independence. A detective could usually choose which cases he wanted to work on during a given day, had a very flexible schedule, and wore civilian attire. The patrol officer, on the other hand, was assigned to a specific shift, responded to requests for service and dispatcher's calls whether he wanted to or not, and always wore a uniform. On duty, detectives had little in common with the patrolmen and, during the course of the research, never sought to include patrolmen in their work unless expediency dictated it.

During their daily work activities, the patrol officers routinely interacted with members of the Special Services Division, the dispatchers and jailers. No one would dispute that, in order to function effectively and confidently, the officers are dependent upon information and services provided by the dispatchers. Much study has been devoted to the degree to which radio communications have influenced the style of modern police work.[1] A no less far-reaching effect could be claimed by the introduction of "the computer" into law enforcement.[2]

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[1]See, for example, Rubinstein, pp. 20-21

[2]Standard 24.4 formulated by the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals states that "...every agency operating a full-time communications 'dispatch' center and employing 15 or more persons should install, by 1975, a basic telecommunications terminal capable of transmitting to and receiving from established national, State and local criminal justice information systems...compatible with computer-based information systems." From Police (1973), p. 581.

Even small agencies like Garden Valley are nowadays apt to have relatively sophisticated video terminal equipment for access to automated records systems and vast telecommunications networks. The extent to which routine patrol function can be impeded or incapacitated when the computer is "down" (temporarily inoperative), was humorously communicated to me in a dispatcher's remark: "You know that book, Officer Down, Code 3? Well, you should write one called 'Computer Down, Code 10'!" (Code 10 is the plain-talk radio code for a meal or coffee break.)[3] The radio and computer represent only two of many points at which the jobs of patrolman and dispatcher interact every day. Contact between the officers and jailers was also frequent. When an officer arrested a person and lodged him/her in jail, he would deal personally with a jailer, if one was on duty. However, more important, because the jail population was suaully low (less than five prisoners), much of the jailers' time was spent assisting the dispatcher or accompanying an officer in a patrol vehicle. Additional points which helped to forge a common group identity between patrol and services personnel was that they, too --unlike most of the staff and the detectives-- wore the same police uniforms and were subject to variable shift schedules.

In the outline of the official organizational structure shown in Fig. 2b there are two positions which I have yet to mention, the Special Services and Patrol Corporals. I have saved consideration of

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[1]"Officer down, code 3" means an officer has been violently disabled (shot, stabbed, etc.) and emergency response is ordered. It is the title of a popular book by Pierce Brooks (Motorola, 1975), as well as the basis for and title of a widely distributed police training film on police officer survival. I know that many officers, on hearing that the computer was down, would prepare themselves for a break, during which they would act only in a reactive, not proactive, manner.

their work role until last because they present the most striking example of how actual working behavior could and did vary from the officially defined structure. The workload of either Corporal could range from a heavy administrative output (paperwork) to almost exclusive patrol work and first-line patrol supervision. Quite simply, depending on the ambition and inclination of the individual who held the position, a Corporal could identify himself either as an administrator or as a patrolman. Certainly, he would be required to do some of each type of work regardless of his personal choice, but the amount could and did vary greatly among the different persons who successively occupied both Corporal positions,[1] and a Corporal's choice of identity was very important to his acceptance by co-workers. A Corporal who chose to identify with the administration was commonly regarded as an "ass kisser." On the other hand, if a Corporal identified himself primarily as a patrol supervisor (analogous to a working foreman in civilian occupations), staff members were liable to question his allegiance and would not readily take him into their confidence.[2] Furthermore, the administrative work done by the two Corporals did not necessarily relate to their respective divisions. For example, at various

[1]During the study, four Corporals filled the two positions in six combinations.

[2]Further evidence of the flexibility of the Corporals' role was seen in the mutability of their status as members of the Officers Association. On some occasions there has been agitation among members to have Corporals excluded from the Association, arguing that their supervisory duties make them ineligible for membership. Sometimes a Corporal has sought to voluntarily disassociate himself from the organization. Yet, at another time, one of the most active --almost activist-- members of the Association who was instrumental in leading it to affiliation with the Teamsters was a Corporal.

times, both the Special Services and Patrol Corporals were responsible for the same task, reviewing and approving reports and citations written by the patrolmen.

In summary, I found that the best way to study the police department personnel was to follow them in their work patterns and habits, and in doing so I discovered that the working groups who shared a sense of common purpose and identity did not necessarily reflect the official organization of the department. In this respect, Garden Valley's police department showed a feature that is almost axiomatic to bureaucracies, a disparity between structure and function.

The Researcher as Participant: The Patrolman

Having dissected my subject population, I moved to the next step. My primary strategy was to participate in departmental activities as much as possible, believing that in this way I would, through my actions, gain the trust of the department's members so they would be most likely to behave in my presence in a natural and relaxed manner. But how was I to accomplish this goal for each separate group without alienating the others? The answer was supplied to me by the method of career advancement traditionally practiced in law enforcement. Police employees are initially divided into two segments, civilian and sworn personnel. With a few exceptions (such as department psychologists or crime lab technicians in larger agencies) the civilians always occupy support positions (such as clerical, often times dispatch, etc.), receive the lowest salaries, and are restricted to low-status positions in the bureaucratic structure with little or no prospect for advancement.

All the other positions, from patrolman to chief, are filled by sworn personnel, and sworn personnel generally begin their careers as patrolmen. Thus, I began as a patrolman, since it is a role from which change and diversification seemed most possible and traditionally acceptable. Indeed, it proved to be a useful starting point that allowed access to all segments of the department, beginning, of course, with the uniformed officers on the street; the patrol division, which is the backbone and essence of any police department.

I was sworn in by the Chief, given a badge, uniform, photo I.D. card, revolver, mace canister, and an assigned radio call number. My call number, name, address and telephone were entered in the department's roster and phone lists. Nowhere was there an asterisk by my name with the notation "resident researcher" or "participant observer." By all the trappings, I was a cop; surely a participant, but where was the observer? There is a dilemma in the participant-observer role that is succinctly expressed by Wolcott: "The role of participant and the role of observer are essentially complementary and mutually exclusive; the more perfectly you activate one, the less perfectly you activate its reciprocal" (1973, p. 7). Inherent in any anthropological fieldwork within one's own culture is the invitation to identify too closely with the participant side of participant observation, to "go native" (Gold, 1958). I had taken a warning from the example of another researcher, George Kirkham, who was a harsh critic of police behavior until he himself took the plunge and donned a uniform. He now routinely spends a portion of his time as a police officer and makes no apology for his attraction to the role. His book, Signal Zero, focuses almost exclusively on the exciting and dangerous aspects of patrol.

Written in an anecdotal style, it is bereft of all attempts at objective analysis; if a police officer does something, legal or illegal, Kirkham somehow finds a way to justify it.

I believed that the best way to gain the trust, cooperation and insight into the work of the subjects I wished to observe was to share in their experience, their rewards and frustrations. It was not the aim of my research to discover how I would feel or act as a police officer. No, I did not intend simply to go in policeman's costume, for to ignore the possible consequences and hazards of such a masquerade to the public and the rest of the department (to say nothing of my own person) would be supremely irresponsible.[1] I was happy to find that the Garden Valley Police Department possessed a ready-made status position which would suit my needs: the Reserve Officer. It would mean that, while on duty, I was expected to behave and function as a police officer of the city of Garden Valley, yet I would not be on the city payroll or scheduled to fill a regular shift.[2] To the public,

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[1]While commitment or intent may be critical to one's effectiveness as a police officer, there are certainly other qualifications. I was wholly untrained when I was sworn in and given the accompanying rights and responsibilities. While at first I felt uncomfortable with the possibility that the Chief might be granting me special treatment in this regard, I immediately discovered that in Garden Valley, as in other small towns, a rookie's initial training normally takes place on the job. In the State of Oregon, the law requires only that an officer receive his basic training and certification from a police academy within one year of employment, so it is not unusual for a fledgling officer to have been working on the force for many months before receiving standardized formal training.

[2]By virtue of being a Reserve, I was able to earn money privately both within and outside Garden Valley at special events where extra security or crowd control was needed. However, my employment as a "rent-a-cop" was strictly moonlighting and unrelated to the research project.

there would be no distinguishable difference between myself and any other officer. To the officers, it would identify me as someone very much interested in participation. Yet, it would relieve me of many responsibilities of a regular officer and thereby allow me adequate opportunity, while in uniform, for observation.

The volunteer Reserve program in Garden Valley is similar to other such programs throughout the country. Interested citizens are invited to apply to the program and are accepted on the basis of a satisfactory background check and interview by a board of three or four department members. The Reserves are empowered and equipped as regular officers and differ only in that while on duty they may be subject to a bit closer supervision by their superiors or the Watch Commander.[1] With the exception of a few veteran members, Reserves are usually required to double up with another officer, either a regular officer or a more experienced Reserve, rather than operate a patrol vehicle alone. Aside from semi-formal weekly meetings, all Reserve training takes place on the job. There is no official assignment of a coach to each Reserve, so it is generally possible to ride whenever and with whomever one chooses.[2] There is no written evaluation

[1] At first, Reserves had a separate chain of command, including a Lieutenant and Sergeants. However, shortly after fieldwork began, a reorganization initiated by the Chief levelled all Reserves to the rank of officer. Reserve funds and social activities were administered by a corporate-style organization with an elected president, vice-president and secretary-treasurer (in fact, I served as vice-president during the term of my research).

[2] At the conclusion of fieldwork there was yet another reorganization with the establishment of a departmental Reserve Academy, headed by a staff member acting as Reserve Coordinator, and an assistant. This increased the regimentation and supervision of Reserves.

of Reserves. Although Reserves are often called upon at special events for traffic or crowd control, this is not the main objective of the organization. Garden Valley's Reserve strength is maintained at around 15 officers, and these are used to beef up the police presence in the community. Each Reserve is expected to spend a minimum number of hours each month on routine patrol. Many Reserves view the organization as a springboard into full-time police employment. In fact, many regular officers on the force had been Reserves either in Garden Valley or elsewhere. Thus, it is not uncommon to see Reserves, eager to both learn and impress, putting in twenty to forty hours of unpaid volunteer service on patrol each week. The regular officers recognize the aspirations of many of the Reserves and make a conscious effort to share their knowledge and skills with them, and in most cases regard them as participating patrol officers upon whom they can rely for back-up and assistance. However, since one measure of job success is a statistical record of an officer's activity, the regular almost always takes charge in police-citizen contacts while the Reserve assumes the role of assistant.

I had made it clear that I was a researcher and did not seek "solo" status, yet since I rode on patrol so often and with apparent interest the officers treated me as an "active Reserve," a role already well established in their minds. In line with a comment by Vidich, I was able to execute the strategy of having my cake and eating it, too (Vidich 1960, p. 356). Among my subjects I was a participant, a police officer; but because the demands of the Reserve role were less than those of a regular officer, I had ample opportunity to concentrate on

observation.

The Researcher as "Go-For": The Detectives

I was tracing a normal pattern of career advancement when I switched from patrol to studying the department's two detectives. It had been good to begin with patrol. The detectives were already acquainted with me, knew that I was familiar with the department's procedures and problems, and readily accepted me. To my further advantage, one of the detectives was a recently promoted patrol officer with whom I had previously ridden frequently. Rather than finding myself in the position of an intruder, there seemed to be an attitude of the-more-the-merrier towards me. However, while working with the detectives, I could not participate in their affairs in the same manner I had while working with the patrol division. Since I constantly accompanied one or the other or both of the detectives, it was inevitable that we should discuss the events and ideas related to their work, but it was never expected that I should contribute to the investigation or solving of cases --nor did I want to, else how would I know how they solved cases? During this phase of research my status was more that of a passive participant.

There were many ways I could make myself useful to the detectives, such as relieving them of the tedious task of cataloging evidence at a crime scene or simply serving as a "go-for." There were plenty requests of "Chris, do you have the camera?" or "Chris, could you get the crime kit from the car?" By making myself useful in small ways I made my presence not only acceptable but even welcome. This strategy of

being helpful in small ways seems to be an effective aid to research in our own society. For example, Howell, in his study of hard-living people, regularly accompanied his informants to the food stamps and welfare offices because of his relative ease in filling out forms and ability to deal effectively with bureaucrats (1973). Needless to say, Howell's actions helped to ingratiate him with his informants. Other authors who have followed this course are Spradley in his study of urban nomads (Spradley 1970) and Skolnick in his study of police detectives (Skolnick 1966).

The Researcher as Observer: The Administration

After spending two months with the detectives, I concluded my research term with a study of the administration. I left this till last for an obvious reason. If I had been openly chummy with the administrators on the job throughout the study it is doubtful that the lower echelon members of the department would have been candid around me. It is widely recognized that patrolmen and detectives regularly break departmental rules and regulations (Rubinstein, Radano, Wilson, Stoddard), and the employees of the Garden Valley Police Department were no exception. To avoid the suspicion that I was an administrative spy, I refrained from regular and repeated on-the-job contact with the administration in the earlier stages of the research.

Studying the administration proved to be more trying than my involvement with the rest of the department. With the administration, my position on the participant-to-observer continuum was almost exclusively that of an observer, although not in the sense of an "outside"

observer. I participated only through my presence. As a result, those whom I was observing had greater opportunity to observe me as a person and researcher, someone separate from their usual work environment. Any incompatibilities, whether of a social, political or personal nature, between myself and each administrator would be more readily discerned. Ideally, in a situation like this the researcher should, when possible, seek out subjects who understand the role of an observer and who are somewhat personally compatible with the researcher. In his study, The Man in the Principal's Office, Wolcott alludes to this strategy when he refers to himself in the earlier stages of his research as "a principal investigator in search of a principal" (1973, p. 1). The option of carrying out such a search was not open to me and, since the administration comprised a number of different (and potentially changing) individuals, I doubt it would have been profitable anyway. My actual situation was similar to that encountered by Erve Chambers in his work in an applied setting (1978). He dealt with individuals who either imperfectly understood the role of an objective observer or who did not care to make the effort at understanding. Rather, these people --like most of the administrators I studied-- seemed to regard as a prerequisite for cooperative contact a show of close friendship and at least tacit agreement with their Weltanschauung.

Something which required further diplomatic effort on my part was due to the fact that, like administrators everywhere, those at Garden Valley P.D. often took their work home. It was common to find any of three staff members together after hours, discussing job-related concerns. Therefore, if I truly wanted to observe the total administrative decision making process, besides attending staff meetings and shadowing the administrators on their jobs, I had to socialize with them in their homes. Of course, in most cases these ostensibly social visits really were social visits; however, there was no need to pretend that I was not also collecting information. The difficulty was that in order to operate as an observer in these circumstances I first had to be sure to behave in a manner that was socially acceptable to the individuals concerned. While in their homes or some other primarily social environment I followed common sense and Chambers' suggestions. When, for instance, controversial social or political topics arose in conversation and I was inclined to disagree with my host, I would forego contradiction in favor of a neutral response (such as "I've never heard that argument before"). Some might find this practice objectionable but, realistically, it was that or risk the opportunity to gather essential data. In any event, since conversation not directly related to the job usually focused on sports, food, entertainment, etc., it was not often that such compromises were necessary.

Before leaving this topic, I should point out that my relations with one staff member did not fit the above situation. There was one administrator who, if not exactly anti-social, was certainly reticent about joining in either on- or off-duty socializing with anyone else from the department. The fact that he was generally unpopular with his subordinates may have been explained in part by his role as the department "hatchet man," but his personality seems to also have been a factor. I did not press for social intimacy with him, although I doubt I could have gotten close to him if I had tried. I did, of course, spend

whatever time I could observing him on the job.

Allocation of Time

Between September 1976 and April 1978 I spent a total of twelve months when my time was devoted almost exclusively to the research. During the first eight months I rode regularly as a patrolman, spending an average of 25 hours each week working in uniform. This time was distributed among all three shifts (day, swing and graveyard), although I did concentrate more on swing shift and the first three hours of graveyard since these were the most active times. In addition, I spent about an equal amount of time just hanging around the station in civilian clothes. Hanging out is a regular practice among the Garden Valley police. The officers regularly arrive three-quarters to a half-hour early for their shift and almost always remain at the station for at least an hour after their shift is over. I found these times excellent for collecting all sorts of data including information on the workings of the ubiquitous grapevine, and personal items such as officers' values and feelings of job satisfaction. In the more relaxed atmosphere of the station, freed from the interruptions of the street and the radio it was possible to conduct more complete conversations than one often could on patrol.

It was during this time that I also became well acquainted with the functioning and personnel of the Special Services division. It is usual to find a spirit of commraderie between officers and dispatchers on each shift (Rubinstein). Like the other officers, I too chatted with the on-duty dispatcher at the station and occasionally relieved

him or her for a break. Here again my wife's cooperation was a great asset. After nine months as a secretary with the department, she decided she was ready for a change and was glad to switch positions with a dispatcher who preferred a steady day shift assignment. There were times when we both worked the same shift and could later compare the actions and reactions of officers and dispatchers related to an incident. This was always an enlightening experience! From Renate I was able to obtain a thorough knowledge of the dispatcher's job, including more instruction in emergency procedures and the operation of the formidable "computer" than most officers had the fortune to receive. I at least knew the job well enough that on a few occasions when a dispatcher was absent and no cover was available, I was called in to work a full shift without direct supervision as a dispatcher. Among those who were employed as officers and dispatchers during the research, some became and remain close personal friends of ours.

In May and June of 1977 my research focus was turned on the detectives. Both detectives were scheduled to work day shift. Instead of finding this a desireable change from the varied hours I had previously worked, I viewed it as a minor burden. Getting up early each morning is not my style, so sometimes I arrived at the office at 10:00 instead of 8:00. I felt that this was time I could afford to miss, since I discovered that, first of all, the detectives were themselves often late because they regularly worked after 5:00 P.M. on the day before. Also, the early morning hours were usually spent drinking coffee and plowing through the profusion of paperwork that seemed to always face them. Watching the detectives shuffle paper was perhaps the

most boring part of the entire study. The detectives usually conducted their investigations during late morning or afternoon, a sensible procedure which considered the schedules of their subjects. The detectives were also subject to late-night call-outs and, as I had requested, I was occasionally included.

Two months, July and August of 1977, were devoted to studying the staff. However, there were other intermittent periods of close observation, such as budget time. Besides showing up at the station during the day and the frequent socializing I have already mentioned, I attended several of the bi-weekly City Council meetings and monthly Police-Citizen Advisory Committee meetings. These were some of the many meetings attended by the Chief. The only aspect of the Administrators' job I never saw was what they did at the various regional and national meetings they attended. I had no funds which would allow me to accompany them, so on this subject I had to rely upon second-hand information.

A Note on Note-taking

For a number of reasons, taking notes during the research was both an unobtrusive and simple task. On duty all policemen routinely carry a small notebook which they use repeatedly throughout their workday. They regularly write down information when they talk with citizens. The notebooks may contain drafts for reports or simple references; a license plate, auto description, information from a teletype bulletin, etc. Whether at the station, in the patrol car, or on a call, the small notebooks gradually fill up. While on patrol, I too took to carrying the same type of pocket-sized notebook. In it I recorded both the

information required by my role as a Reserve (I too had to write police reports) and my research notes. My note-taking consequently was an accepted part of the police role and one which drew little or no attention to my alternate role as researcher. I made no attempt to hide the fact that I was also taking notes on the officers' behavior. To the contrary, I might remark after a particularly interesting comment by an officer, "I've got to write that down so I don't forget it." The important point is that taking notes is a part of every police officer's job and, therefore, my note-taking in itself did not make the officers self-conscious.

A similar situation was in effect when I shadowed the detectives and administrators. The amount of paperwork churned out by the department was staggering. Within the station there was evidence of it visible everywhere in the form of incident reports, follow-up reports, disposition reports, time allocation reports, policies, procedures, general orders, rules, regulations, logs, lists, computer print-outs, and memos, memos, memos. There was always someone writing something. Inside the station, the yellow ruled pad is as ubiquitous as the small notebooks seen on patrol. I followed suit and outfitted myself with the appropriate writing material.

The task of note-taking was further simplified because I was able to forego the continual and systematic collection of statistics. I did not need to concentrate on quantification in my notes; the department did it for me. If the police are thorough in anything it is in the relentless collection of numbers. This trait is said to be characteristic of police in general and is supposedly related to a need

felt by police adninistrators to justify their budgets by means of demonstrating their department's efficiency and effectiveness through statistical proof (Goldstein). I found this rationale for the practice was not completely appropriate for the case in Garden Valley, but a discussion of the reasons for this can wait until later. The important thing here is that I was able to obtain abundant and generally reliable statistics on far-ranging items. In addition to uniform statistics (i.e., crime, arrest/disposition, and property loss/recovery statistics such as those compiled in UCR) I had access to logs and print-outs devoted to quantification of virtually every patrol-related activity by type, time of day, day of week, frequency, duration, or whatever other variable(s) might be appropriate. It was a simple matter to find out, for example, what age group received the most traffic citations, or what the police response time was for each call. I was satisfied with the reliability of selected data on the basis of spot check comparisons of my own, or "second hand" comparisons (I discovered considerable duplication in the department's record-keeping, with more than one individual or division independently keeping track of the same items). The benefit of all this to me was that I could concentrate on observing and recording the behavioral aspects of the actions of the police employees and did not have to be preoccupied with quantification.

Interviews, Questionaires, or None of the Above

Methodological comments on interviews and questionnaires in research like that which I conducted can be kept to a minimum here, since I never interviewed or formally questioned anyone associated with the

police department. In the course of time, I became an accepted part of the police department and it would have been an awkward and clumsy posture for me to assume the role of interviewer. A set-up which resembles interrogation, especially among the police, is one that is best left to "outsiders." It is widely recognized that formal interview and questioning procedures will elicit an overdose of ideal, rather than real, responses, and I believe that is true when the interviewer is a stranger among his subject population. When he is one of them, as a true participant-observer is, then there is an even greater likelihood that attempted formal interviews will degenerate into sarcasm and flippant humor. After all, I felt, if I hadn't been able to pick up enough about my informants' personal histories and feelings about what they did for a living just in the course of casual conversation, then I would have come across as pretty dense. I became acquainted with many intimate details of their lives, more so than I would have wished in some cases. Hearing stories of family problems and work-related intrigues were often burdens that I shared for the sake of friendship if not research. Thus, I saw no reason to establish interactions where the obvious purpose was for me to ask the questions and the people to give the answers. I strongly believe that the more informal one can keep the relationship with one's subjects, the better the chance for collecting accurate information.

Pitfalls of Research, or "Blowing My Cover"

I must acknowledge that my fieldwork experience was beset by far fewer obstacles and problems than are normally faced by social researchers.

Some of my colleagues have suggested that this was because I was so determined that it should not be problematical. Certainly, I do not hesitate to describe it as one of the most rewarding and worthwhile experiences I shall have had, but it is not my wish to mislead anyone to the impression that I found the field wholly without its burrs and thorns. Ironically, the snags were not such as one might expect are inevitable and inherent in police research. They were nothing I would have foreseen. One could refer to the "Uncertainty Principle;" I call them accidents. On two occasions in particular I was centrally involved in incidents which caused a mild sensation within the department. Each time I feared all would be hopelessly lost as far as the research was concerned, and that whatever trust and confidence had been invested in me was irretrievably lost. To me, the impact of the sudden crises in which I found myself involved was like a meteor invading earth. However, in each case my dejection was temporary and actually quite unwarranted. Surely, of all people, the police are not unaccustomed to dealing with crises, and while each one, like headline items in the daily news, may cause a brief, sometimes frenetic stir, it is soon eclipsed and succeeded by the next.

Friends and co-workers have urged that the following episodes be included herein for the sake of story-telling. I think it is not a bad idea to include them in this, the methodology chapter, to offer a "view from the pits."

The first incident occurred during my fourth month as a patrolman. The officer with whom I was riding and the Sergeant responded to what all agreed was a "hinky" call at the low-income housing projects.

I was to remain the patrol vehicle, keeping an eye on possible evidence in the parking lot while they went upstairs to contact the caller. The dispatcher had maintained telephone contact with him, trying to obtain more specific information which she would then relay over the radio. The dispatcher announced that the man had suddenly become hysterical and was shouting, "they're going to shoot me!" A moment later, there was a loud report, the blast of a shotgun. It is easy to imagine what feelings must have gripped everyone involved: the man, it turned out, had overheard the officers outside his door but misunderstood them to say they were going to shoot him, and now, hearing the shot, he thought they really were shooting at him; the officers heard the shot and, as they later told me, were certain the "hinky" call had been a set-up for an ambush and that I had been shot. But if anyone had reason to feel shaken, it was me. I had fired the shot, right through the roof of the patrol car. Sitting there, listening to the dispatcher's message, I figured the officers would soon ask me to bring them the shotgun from the car. I had never handled one before. I had received some training with a pistol, but none with a shotgun. I wondered how much trigger pressure it would take. I knew that, according to a department general order, the shotguns were to be mounted in the vehicles in a prescribed manner, the chamber empty and the safety latch on. Had I been familiar with the weapon, I would have known one can't activate the trigger when it is on safety. I learned an unforgettable lesson: NEVER trust a gun to be unloaded! I was tremendously grateful that no one had been hurt, but otherwise felt absolutely awful. It was an unauthorized discharge of a firearm and I would have to go before a board of inquiry.

The news spread instantly within the department. One officer gleefully nicknamed me "Trigger." Many others tried to cheer me up, saying it was the kind of thing that happens all the time. One confided, "I did it myself once down in B------." Another reminded me about the police officer "in T-------- who shot himself in the butt going to the bathroom." And another told me he had worked with "a guy in S------ who blew out the whole windshield." Mine had at least been a lucky shot, right through the dome light, and the gap was easily repaired. But I was disconsolate. I was a real jerk, I told myself, and deserved whatever I had coming to me. However, the review board members were more interested in why the weapon had been loaded in the first place, and why I had received no training with it. It was discovered that I was not the only one who was unfamiliar with the shotguns in the units. Shortly thereafter, a new requirement was introduced and everyone went to the rifle range to qualify with the shotgun as well as with their side arms. Nevertheless, I found that accidental shootings still happen despite training. Just a few weeks after my faux pas, another officer at Garden Valley accidently shot the stairs on his way up from the jail.

The second incident occurred the following March but did not become an issue until several months afterwards. It involved the loss and ransoming of one of my pocket notebooks. As I have mentioned, I used a small pocket notebook for both my police and research notes. In the latter case, my style of notetaking was to jot down telegraphic fragments, just enough to recall an incident or idea to mind. I would transcribe them in greater detail at home and then remove the original

pages, so that any notebook I carried with me on the job rarely contained more than one or two pages of writing, only the current material. I figured my esoteric abbreviations and nearly illegible handwriting would probably confound all but a cryptologist, but I was always careful anyway never to leave my notebook lying around where someone might pick it up, either by accident or design, and look through it. It was another accident which demonstrated that one can't be careful enough.

One evening, following an arrest which had involved considerable wrestling and scuffling, I discovered I had lost my notebook. It must have fallen from my pocket in the parking lot of the tavern where we had trouble getting the suspect into the patrol car. I returned to the scene with the other arresting officer, where we searched without success. We went inside the tavern and asked the owner, who was tending bar, whether it might have been found and turned over to him. He replied it had not. Well, I thought to myself, it was no great loss to me. There were only two sketchy pages which I could still recall without difficulty. However, I was concerned about the possibly sensitive nature of the contents. I crossed my fingers and hoped that whoever found it would simply tear out and discard the scribbed pages and be happy as the lucky new owner of an otherwise perfectly good, blank notebook. That did not happen.

The location where the notebook had been lost was a tavern that increasingly drew the attention of the police due to repeated liquor violations involving minors, and a chronic problem of false alarms with the electronic robbery/burglary alarm system. When the owner later expanded the business and applied for a hard liquor license, there was a

possibility the application would be denied due to an unfavorable recommendation from the police.[1] It was at this time that my lost notebook suddenly surfaced again. Chief Favor received a phone call from a man who claimed to have something that Favor would probably be very interested in getting back. It was Warren, the tavern owner, and he had my notebook. In fact, he had had it all along. I had been right when I supposed no one would be able to un-erstand my notes. What I hadn't reckoned with was that someone might well misunderstand them. Now in a situation where he legitimately felt his interests were about to be threatened by the police, Warren produced the papers as a trump card which he evidently expected would give him some leaverage.

The notes in question related to an incident where a young man with a history of traffic and alcohol related violations was arrested for a minor offense. It was discovered during book-in that he had a capsule of amphetamine in his possession. This was a felony and meant he would be transported to the county jail for disposition. However, the detective who identified the drug also gratuitously notified the Chief at home about the arrest. The young man was the son of an elected public figure and, although he was not a minor and did not wish his parents to be contacted, the Chief called the father anyway and ordered the prisoner to be released on his own recognizance, over the protest of the arresting officer. I knew that the official was known among the

[1] In Oregon, licenses for the sale of wine and beer are much more easily available than those for the sale of hard liquor. The latter are distributed in strictly limited numbers based on population ratios and relatively stringent requirements. Award is subject to approval and endorsement from the local government. Competition for these licenses is usually vigorous.

department as not being very pro-police and that as a member of the budget committee he could be expected to oppose police expenditures. The Chief had the authority to order the man's son released as he did, and I viewed it as a concilliatory gesture. My notations on the matter were brief and editorial: City official's son released by Chief against advice of arresting officer; probable reason political --the man must be asked for funds. Warren, after deciphering what he could, invented a sinister interpretation of this remark, suggesting that the police would seek to blackmail the city official. Nothing could have been further from the truth and, had I not been involved in the misunderstanding, I would have found the notion laughable. I recontacted Warren myself and asked him to return the book, which I told him was my personal property and contained only my personal views which he had misread. He refused. At the urging of the staff, I filed a theft report, naming myself as the victim and Warren as the suspect. After that, the whole matter faded from attention. Warren obtained a liquor license after all, although there remained a lingering enmity between himself and Favor.

In December 1977, at year's end when all outstanding crime reports are reviewed and disposed of, I found the theft report I had filed was designated as "cleared." The disposition page stated the "victim does not desire prosecution." The notes had been returned some time ago by Warren. They were never returned to me.

Ethics

The ethics of any research project inevitably present a dilemma for the investigator. It seems there are always at least two sides to

any issue. In this specific project my concern was to resolve to my own satisfaction the ethical questions which faced me. Since I was conducting research within my own society, I decided to act according to the ethical standards which I as an individual have acquired as an actively participating member of that society. I will not present an abstract discussion of my own ethical standards as this would probably be of little interest to anyone but a polemicist. I believe the material in the text will adequately communicate my perspective. However, it does seem appropriate, before leaving this topic, to briefly review my choices with regard to two of the most prominent ethical questions in police research. One was to consider what effect the written portion of the research could have on the police employees. For a number of reasons I have kept the identities of both the community as well as the department's personnel anonymous. In my first meeting with the Officers Association I proposed the use of pseudnyms and the majority of those present seemed most comfortable with that approach. Although the Chief repeatedly told me that he had no objection to having at least himself and the community identified by name, I was eager to gain acceptance of the project from the officers as well. Also, the use of pseudonyms is common in police research. But there was an additional factor which drew me in this direction.

By its very nature police work often brings local notoriety to police employees. The public is interested in police actions and the media is a ready purveyor of such information. During the research, I did observe --even participate in-- some events which were controversial at the local or regional level. I have no desire to be involved

in or to fuel factional fights and/or political controversies in the city of Garden Valley. So, whenever possible, I have attempted to omit or obscure identifying details that would allow wide recognition of persons and events by local people who may read this work who were themselves not involved. Of course, at times this procedure was not possible. During my research there was only one Chief, one Captain, and one Lieutenant, and their titles identify them easily enough to those who wish to reconstruct the organizational chart of that time (there have been subsequent re-organizations and none of those three individuals any longer occupies those positions). However, as high-ranking public officials whose very jobs thrust them into the public eye, they can expect their actions to bear up under public scrutiny (Vidich and Bensman).

The other issue which deserves some comment is one which confronts any researcher who studies a power-holding segment of contemporary society. It involves the abuse of power. With regard to the police, the catchwords are corruption and brutality. Before beginning the research I decided to follow the traditional approach to this classic research quandary. If corruption and brutality existed, I wanted to see them. I wanted a full exposure to police behavior; I had no desire to avoid the unpleasant. I expressed this to the department's employees and also made them aware that I would not threaten them with legal or disciplinary action if I observed them doing illegal things. The list of authors who have taken this approach is endless. In my view it is the only way to do effective and complete research with any power-holding group (Skolnick, Rubinstein, Kirkham, Spradley, etc., ad

infinitum). I believe I would have followed this path anyway, but it was easier knowing that I was in line with a well established precedent.

During the actual research I was pleased to discover that neither corruption nor brutality was a regular part of police work in Garden Valley. I would like to stress, for the benefit of the police employees as a whole, the impression of honesty and fairness they made on me. Corruption was virtually non-existant and brutality was a minor problem. Both activities were limited to a very small number of individuals who received no support from the department. The desire of the police administrators to avoid the image of "pigs" for their department was so extreme that many officers, and a good many citizens, felt the Garden Valley police could not use any physical force without severe repercussions. One example cited by those who criticize the administration's "over-reactive" handling of brutality involves a prisoner who resisted so violently that four officers were having difficulty restraining him without injury. A new Reserve officer knocked the wind out of the man and brought him down by striking him in the solar plexus, as he claimed he was taught to do at another police department. It happened that there were three supervisors among the struggling officers on the scene, two Corporals and a Sergeant. The Reserve was summarily dismissed, and a communication directed to the Board on Police Standards and Training recommended that he be barred from ever entering the police profession. He was charged (by the City) with assaulting the prisoner. A local jury, however, acquitted him and he spoke confidently of a countersuit.

In instances of brutality where there was no supervisor present --or where the offending officer was himself a supervisor-- his co-workers

and subordinates, although unwilling to invoke official sanctions against him, would informally seek to express their distaste for the activities. An officer who was predisposed to brutality would be talked about and personally shunned until he learned to "clean up his act." In one incident, a handcuffed prisoner sustained a knee injury when he fell on the stairs which led to the jail. He claimed he was pushed. The person in charge asked a second on-duty officer to write a supplementary report which would state the arrested man was drunk and had slipped and fallen on the stairs, in order to "cover my ass in case the puke tries to raise a stink." The officer flatly refused, even though the request came from a superior. Two other persons on duty that evening also said they had little doubt that the man had, in fact, been pushed, but added they would not voluntarily report the incident to anyone but "wouldn't lie" if they were confronted about it. The social environment within Garden Valley P.D. was not one which bred an attitude of violence towards members of the public. When abuses did occur, I found the employees were fairly effective at policing themselves and curbing both brutality and corruption within the ranks.

CHAPTER III

REVIEWING THE LITERATURE

The presence of uniformed police on the streets has become such a regular and accepted part of daily life in the United States that the average citizen, either when in trouble himself or simply when observing some trouble, will think to call a cop, regardless of the time of day. In most places throughout the country, Americans expect that whenever they call for help, a patrolman will answer their plea. Who would break up a brawl, quell a local disturbance, referee a civil dispute over money or property, or simply maintain crowd and traffic control at an accident if not the patrolman? The general public has come to expect that nearly all kinds of troublesome and sometimes dangerous tasks should be attended to by paid public employees. To meet these demands, the uniformed patrolman has become the backbone of all municipal and county police agencies in this country. The greatest proportion of any department's manpower and budget both are routinely devoted to the staffing and maintenance of the patrol division (Police 1973).

The importance of the patrolman to the organization and goals of a police department is even greater in a small community than in a large one. Many, if not most, small departments rely exclusively on patrolmen and allocate no resources to specialized divisions like detectives. Or, where specialized divisions exist--like the 2-man detective division in Garden Valley--the distinction is more in rank

than in function.[1] Thus, in Garden Valley, as in most small communities, to know the patrolman is to know the police. Yet, ironically, despite the patrolman's ability to intrude into our private lives and his high visibility in everyday affairs, most private citizens know comparatively little of what patrolmen are really like.

Information on the routine behavior of patrolmen, or police in general, is available primarily from two sources. The most prevalent and easily accessible of the two is composed of the numerous fictional accounts of police behavior produced by the entertainment media. The second source of information about patrolmen is represented by those non-fiction accounts which originate primarily in academic research, occasionally supplemented by the writings of journalists and retired policemen. U. S. academicians have been writing about the police for quite some time, but their output has become notably more prodigious since the civil disorders of the 1960's. Although these two sources of information, fiction and non-fication, could be expected to differ, surprisingly they have tended to portray a similar image of what the cop on the street is typically like. It is routinely accepted that the factors most influential in forming a police officer's working personality are those which are associated with the danger inherent in the job. Whether the tone is pro- or anti-police, whether the objective is analytical or reformist, generalized arguments and discussions of police behavior inevitably rest on

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[1] In Garden Valley the detectives had no specialized preparatory training or skills, and the positions rotated among the officers.

the importance, the consequences and circumstances of danger related to the job. To contemporary concerns about attracting and selecting the best applicants for police work, and about the desirability or suitability of problems of women and minorities in police work, the issues of danger and violence are always pivotal.

A few items that are consistently singled out as being most influential in determining police behavior are: (1) the personal exposure to danger which police officers must be ready to face (Sterling, 1972); (2) their own periodic use of coercive force (Muir); and (3) their repeated contact with criminals and other socially undesirable persons (Skolnick, 1966). Balch concludes in his review of numerous police personality studies, that these tend to identify the "average" policeman as an "authoritarian individual," suspicious of everyone except other police officers, and cynical towards the general public (1976). This is very much in line with popular portrayals of police behavior. An officer must always be suspicious, for one can never be sure whether there isn't a dangerous felon hiding out behind the identity of even the most respectable and model citizen; the stuff that whodunit's are made of. Officer cynicism towards the general public stems from a feeling among many policement that the ordinary citizen cares little for the safety of the police. Skolnick quotes an officer:

> . . . a cop can get into a fight with three or four tough kids, and there will be citizens passing by, and maybe they'll look, but they'll never lend a hand . . . they don't care what happens to the cop as long as they don't get a little dirty. (1966, p. 53)

The cumulative effect of these and other traits discussed by Balch--such as bigotry and conventionalism--is that police officers exhibit authoritarian attitudes when dealing with people. They are authoritarian attitudes when dealing with people. They are authoritarian personality types. There are divisions within the literature, with some authors arguing that the authoritarian personality type is created by the job, while others maintain that the job attracts people with such attitudes, and still others suggest that interviews selectively screen out other personality types during the police hiring process. Whatever they may view as the cause, many authors generally agree that much of a policeman's working personality can be best described or explained through reference to authoritarianism (see especially Skolnick, Niederhoffer). Taking an authoritarian posture allows the police officer to more easily seize the upper hand in a police-citizen interaction and this makes him feel better equipped to perform the job which society has assigned to him (Chevigny, 1969). Unfortunately, this leads one to conceive of police-citizen interaction in terms of conflict rather than cooperation.

One more ingredient in the general image of police is the notion that cops stick together, or to phrase it another way, that the police evidence a marked degree of social solidarity as an occupational group.

> Most people seem to accept group solidarity as a characteristic of the police. (Sterling, 1972, p. 277)
>
> All occupational groups share a measure of indivisiveness and identification. People

> are brought together simply by doing the same work and having similar career and salary problems. As several writers have noted, however, police show an unusually high degree of occupational solidarity. (Sknolnick, 1966, p. 52)

Like authoritarianism, solidarity is portrayed as being a response to the dangerous aspects of the job. Egon Bittner believes that policemen develop an "espirit de corps" similar to that among combat soldiers in the military (1974). In all events, solidarity is another feature in the portrait of the policeman as a being who is isolated from the general public. On duty or off, a cop is a cop.

There is undoubtedly some support for this general image of American policemen in the data assembled by numerous authors, but its general applicability even to police in large cities has been challenged. Balch, for one, questions the representation of policemen as authoritarian personalities (1972), though without suggesting any specific alternative perspective. In the Garden Valley research setting I too found the entire popular image of the policeman to be inappropriate and inaccurate. The authoritarian personality was neither a dominant nor characteristic type. And while there was plenty of familiarity between the members of this small department, there was no solidarity to speak of. I realized that, if I had not been made keenly aware of these "categories of police behavior" by reading the literature before I began my field study, I would never have singled them out from the raw data as important areas of investigation. Van Maanen's comments on this very subject are well-taken (although, as it happened, I did not come across his excellent monograph until after completion

of my own fieldwork):

> Often an elaborate soaking up of the literature leads to a very narrow research interest. Far too many studies merely document the "believing-is-seeing" pradigm, for a full set of preconceptions can easily lead to a loss of sensitivity for the discrepant observation which may occur in the field. This is not to say that plowing through others' perspectives on the police is of no benefit, but it is crucial that the would-be researcher not become so steeped in the prevaling logic that his vision is impaired. (1978)

However, since the relevant literature is predisposed towards a certain type of analysis, I will begin by reviewing my Garden Valley experiences in relationship to the favored explanations of police behavior. As the discussion unfolds, it will be apparent that the Garden Valley policeman's behavior does contain some elements of the widely accepted police personality profiles. However, it will also be evident that concentration on these traits and attitudes does not serve well as a means to characterize or understand the small town cop. I believe that to know the police in Garden Valley, one must focus on alternate categories of information. The final section of this chapter will outline an alternative approach, and the remainder of the book will explore it in depth.

Suspicion

The role of suspicion in the postulated working personality of the nation's average policeman has become critical in defining the authoritarian attitude which allegedly typifies police. Skolnick, who deals with the subject at length, remarks: "The element of danger

seems to make the policeman especially attentive to signs indicating a potential for violence and lawbreaking. As a result, the policeman is generally a suspicious person" (Skolnick, p. 31). Robert Balch notes: "Although authors vary in emphasis, there is remarkable agreement on the characteristics believed to make up the police mentality. The cluster of traits that consistently emerges includes suspicion . . . " (p. 105). It is not only social scientists who believe that suspicion is an important element in policing, but police trainers also stress constant suspicion as a positive value and something which police officers should strive to achieve and maintain. In a popular, nationally syndicated training film called "Officer down, code 3," officers are urged to be suspicious of every encounter while they are in uniform. An officer who lets down his guard runs the risk of being a dead officer. The book on which the film is based cites, among other morbid statistics, that the youngest person ever to be charged with killing a police officer was 13 years old, while the oldest was 73 (p. 244)(lest someone argue that there is a difference between reasonable caution and constant suspicion). The FBI also distributes a grim publication to police agencies, an annual "Summary of Law Enforcement Officers Killed." This rather large compilation of facts and figures reports the killings of law enforcement personnel according to the day of the week and time of day they occurred; the age, sex and race of the assailant; the activity in which the victim was engaged at the time of the attack; whether the victim was alone or assisted; as well as geographic and demographic data. No consistent pattern emerges in year after year of summaries. Prime times and

places for police killings seem to change unpredictably. The moral is obvious: it can happen anytime, anywhere, and it could happen to YOU.

While officers at Garden Valley are exposed to sources which propound suspiciousness, what role does it actually play in their daily routines? If questioned on the subject, they will pay lip service to the positive value attributed to suspicion in their formal training, yet their everyday behavior belies their abstract assent. Rather than being like a generalized armour, suspicion is more like a specialized weapon; it is reserved for certain persons under certain circumstances. In Garden Valley, I observed that there was only a limited number of types of people who aroused the immediate and automatic suspicion of the police: members of motorcycle gangs or "bikers;" seedy looking transients; and the occupants of old or beat-up cars with out-of-state license plates. To the officers, these represented "symbolic assailants," people whose mere presence in the community was threatening to the police (Skolnick, 1966). When approaching any of these people, the officers were always extremely cautious and sure to ask for back-up. These "symbolic assailants" have two things in common which lead the Garden Valley police to be suspicious of them. First, it is possible that an officer may himself have had a bad experience with one of these individuals or, more likely, he has heard of the troubles these types have caused in other communities. The second point is that the police know relatively little about the overall behavior of these people, as they come from outside the community. It is primarily the element of the unknown which makes them appear

so threatening. Indeed, there were a few people who ostensibly corresponded to these symbolic assailant types, i.e. bikers and out-of-staters driving old bombs, but who happened to have settled in the area and made regular appearances in town. They were regarded as undesirables by the police and singled out for a traffic stop, field interview or some kind of scrutiny (or "harassment" as they would invariably and sometimes rightly call it) every time they were spotted within the city limits. But since these few individuals were personally recognized and known to the police, even though theoretically they may have been just as committed to anti-social and illegal purposes as the ominous strangers whom they so closely resembled, they did not elicit such an intense response of anxiety and suspense. Because they were familiar faces, they were no longer "symbolic" assailants. The police treated them as they did other locally known troublemakers.

On numerous occasions the officers at Garden Valley behaved in a manner that could hardly be called suspicious, even around persons they had just arrested. I was present at one such incident involving the arrest of two persons at a local tavern. The first was taken into custody for drinking while under age. We had spotted him while walking through the tavern on a routine bar check. We asked him to step outside, where he was told he was under arrest. He had been warned about the matter before. It was departmental policy that any offenders transported in a patrol vehicle should first be handcuffed behind their backs. This procedure is based on widely distributed training material which warns of the dangers of handcuffing a person

in front of his body. Suspects handcuffed in this manner have been known to overcome officers, injure and even kill them, and escape. While attempting to handcuff our prisoner, he began to resist furiously. Eventually it took three of us several minutes to subdue him, handcuff him and literally stuff him into the patrol car. One would think that during an incident like this which involved some violence, the characteristic "suspiciousness" of the participating officers would be heightened and that anyone else who became involved would be treated with extreme caution. Not necessarily.

As evidence against the suspect, a half-full bottle of beer from which he had been drinking was confiscated. While we scuffled with him, the bottle was temporarily set aside on the pavement. During the struggle, a second individual approached and asked us flippantly what was happening. He was told to stand back and keep quiet. Instead, he approached closer, grabbed the beer bottle and disappeared into the tavern. The officer in charge ordered me to go after him and arrest him for interfering with police, an offense defined by local ordinance. I followed, but when I reached him, he had consumed the evidence. I led him outside and began to handcuff him in the prescribed manner, when the officer glanced over and, recognizing this second suspect, instructed me to go ahead and handcuff him in the front. The officer was acquainted with the suspect because of the latter's having been arrested many times before, and he believed he would cause no trouble once he was in custody. In this case the officer in charge was definitely not suspicious of the second suspect despite the fact that he was related to an incident which had just involved a brawl. He

based his decision to handcuff the second individual in front (it's more comfortable) on a personal knowledge of the person's previous behavior. (I ought to emphasize that this particular officer was not one who could be called lax or sloppy in any other aspect of his job; in fact, he was regarded by most of his peers and all of his supervisors as the model of conscientiousness.) Such generalized concepts as the "exposure to danger" inherent in the job or a "working personality" characterized by suspecion seemingly had no influence at all.

Time and again it was clear that personal knowledge about local offenders was the guideline that was most often used by the Garden Valley police in many aspects of their work. Remarks exchanged over the radio during traffic stops or field interviews of certain local offenders sometimes offered telling insights. One officer might broadcast a warning or suggestion to another officer to the effect that "Benjie will run if you don't grab him right away," or "watch out for George Harold, he likes to resist." Such statements suggest that these are the exceptions. They would be wholly superfluous in an enviornment where it is universally assumed that everyone will try to elude or escape, that everyone will resist. Another example of this behavior which I found hard to believe occurred repeatedly in the jail. Over and over again I saw officers leading prisoners without handcuffs to cells or other areas of the jail by walking in front of them. The officers were confident they knew to whom they could safely turn their backs, and who warranted watching. They were able to become acquainted with the local offenders, among whom recid-

ivism was high, and apparently did not feel the need for a blanket, depersonalized suspiciousness.

The officers knew that most of the people on the street were just plain ordinary folks, and did not fear danger from them when none was apparent. Among inexperienced officers, however, there were some who had completed law enforcement programs through a community college, and who seemed determined to do things very much "by the book," and to shun what they clearly regarded as the slovenly bad habits of the old-timers. It was possible to watch these neophytes carefully approach some innocuous looking vehicle which they had stopped for a minor infraction, a hand conspicuously poised over the holster of their revolver. In their dealings with the motorist, their demeanor would be tense and reserved. Inevitably, they would thus unknowingly stop some prominent citizen (and in a small town there seem to be more prominent citizens per capita) who would become outraged at being treated "like a common criminal" over a traffic violation and who would register a complaint with the mayor, the chief of police, or some other prominent citizen, etc. The community and the department's administrators would not tolerate any kind of attitude which antagonized the public, no matter how well founded it may have been in the officer's striving for "professionalism."

Cynicism

There was even less evidence to support the premise that cynicism, as an element of the authoritarian personality, was a common trait among the officers in Garden Valley. The officers were very

definitely cynical towards a certain segment of the population, the troublemakers (see Chapter IV). Someone who had been labeled as a "puke" would receive little trust from the officers, who expected no cooperation from such individuals. But in most cases, the cynicism remained reserved for those individuals who specifically provoked it. A person who flagrantly violated the law and then subsequently fought or otherwise expressed his contempt for police might be regarded as "lower than an ant's asshole." But if such a person were in custody, for example, and the friends or relatives who came to bail him out conducted themselves in a civil manner, they would receive courteous, even friendly treatment in return. I once witnessed a police dispatcher make a personal loan of two dollars to a man whom she did not know who arrived shorthanded to bail out his son in the middle of the night. (He repaid her first thing the next day!) Many of the resident troublemakers' histories were known throughout the department, and some of the stories that circulated about the good kids that had gone bad, or the bad kids that had come from good families, revealed an attitude and view of human nature that was far removed from cynicism towards the general public. As for not being able to rely upon the average citizen for physical assistance, the officers did not expect civilians to expose themselves to personal danger or civil liability on their behalf. While everyone welcomed a spirit of supportiveness from the public, they understood that a risk of personal harm is part of a police officer's job. If anything, their annoyance was greater with some individuals who, equipped with police scanners, C.B. radios, and vigilante-style rhetoric, were always trying to "help."

Solidarity

Next to authoritarianism and its composite traits, suspicion and cynicism, a second theme which surfaces repeatedly in police literature is solidarity. When a group of people within society holds a virtual monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force, it is to be hoped that they share the values of the community they serve, rather than isolate themselves and develop a separate set of values based on their occupational experiences. Many authors believe that such isolation is already the norm, that police officers stick together both on and off the job, and that occupational solidarity among police far exceeds that of other groups (Sterling, Skolnick, Bittner, Banton). Of the many causes cited for this postulated solidarity, two stand out. They are (1) the exposure to danger inherent in the job, and (2) the secrecy which characterizes police work.

Exposure to danger fosters a feeling of camraderie or "espirit de corps" among police because they know they must be able to rely on each other in time of need (Bittner). The feeling of mutual dependence is heightened by the knowledge that they cannot depend on the public for help in danger. In fact, several authors indicate that the police in general perceive the public as hostile, rather than friendly or indifferent towards them. They are, consequently, driven "away from the public and toward one another in their search for friends" (Sterling, 1972, p. 58).

Secrecy contributes to solidarity because "police work is considered a body of knowledge understandable only to the initiated" (Sterling, p. 58). Police are given a mandate to enforce the laws,

but their legislators do not dictate how enforcement should be carried out. The police, therefore, develop methods of their own which they feel are best kept secret for a number of reasons. First and most understandably, they must be secretive about on-going investigations lest the suspects learn of their efforts. But additionally, police routinely use devious--though not necessarily illegal--methods to uncover criminal activity in their everyday work; such as using any minor pretense to stop and get a look inside a car where they suspect illegal activity. These types of police practices often infuriate those who are victimized and are best kept unadvertised. Hence,

> Secrecy, among the police, stands as a shield against the attacks of the outside world . . . secrecy is loyalty, for it represents sticking with the group and its maintainance carries with it a profound sense of participation. Secrecy is solidarity, for it represents a common front against the outside world. (Westley quoted in Sterling, 1971, p. 58)

Those concerned with police behavior see the negative aspect of solidarity as something that propels police into social isolation. If they share both a work and social environment, it is feared they will lose contact with the values of the communities they serve. Solidarity permits them to emphasize their differences with the general public:

> In essence, the outsider perspective chrystallizes the patrolman's occupational identity. It sets him off from others and provides an anchor to which he attaches his interpersonal relationships. Since the private interests and concerns of one are the interests and concerns of most others in the patrol setting they form a common source of appeal and support. This can be summarized neatly by referring to a bond of sympathetic understanding existing among

> police. As one officer remarked succinctly: "To most people we seem to be inhuman, somehow separate and apart. Almost like another species. Maybe they're right, but I'll tell you, I'd trust even my worst enemy in this department before I'd trust the people out there." (Van Mannen, 1978, pp. 120-121)

Good police-community relations are certainly more difficult to achieve under such conditions.

I would like to compare this broadly sketched viewpoint of police solidarity with the actual situation I observed in Garden Valley. I found no evidence that solidarity was an important focus among the police there. To the contrary, divisiveness and backbiting were quite pronounced. This in no way implies that any officers were unwilling to help another on the job; only that they felt no particular affinity for one another merely because they were police officers. However, this observation alone is insufficient to dispute all the literature on solidarity. In fact, Bittner has explicitly stated that such behavior is not incompatible with officers' feelings of solidarity. He depicts a police department as being divided into numerous, ever-branching sub-divisions. Just as the police department as a whole operates under a veil of secrecy concerning the public, so each sub-division has secrets which it keeps from the other sub-divisions. Thus, solidarity extends up to the point at which a perceived threat to the individual officer begins:

> In consequence, solidarity is based mainly on, and limited to the perception of some external risk to a unit, regardless of whether this risk is located outside or inside the institution." (Bittner, p. 238)

Bittner, who observed police officers make disparaging remarks about their fellows, claims that solidarity is nevertheless a pervasive influence on police behavior, but that it is dependent upon "gradations of secretiveness" (Bittner, p. 238):

> Teams of partners do not talk aobut each other in the presence of non-team members, line personnel do not talk about their peers in the presence of ranking officers and, of course, no members of the department talk about anything remotely connected with police work with any outsiders. (p. 238)

My observations were different. I saw officers talking critically about other officers with supervisors, civilian support personnel, and even the public. Furthermore, there was a lack of the superficial signs of solidarity, like a policeman's ball. The department sponsored very few social events and the ones that were held--with the single exception of a potluck Christmas party at an officer's house--were poorly attended. There were occasions when department members cooperated with each other to achieve certain ends. When negotiating a new labor contract, for example, the officers were definitely influenced by a one-for-all-and-all-for-one mentality. Or, when the department's funding was dependent on the passage of a serial tax levy, the entire department cooperated in a concerted public effort to get out the vote in their favor. However, these instances were isolated and exceptional, and the spirit of group identity inevitably faded.

As I have stated before, I am not discrediting the positions taken in the literature. Rather, I object to the degree of generalization inherent in most authors' discussions of solidarity. Among

police in large departments, it may well be that intense feelings of solidarity form an important element of their behavior. However, in the smaller agency I studied, it was simply not the case. One reason was that the officers were not threatened with danger to the degree that a cop in a big city would be. Weeks at a time could go by without any violent incidents being listed on Garden Valley's police log. Second, and probably more important, the police were clearly not isolated from the community. Those officers who had grown up in the area had long-standing friendships and family ties throughout the community. And, of those who had moved to Garden Valley, most had chosen it as a place to raise their families, and showed a desire to be integrated into the surrounding community rather than remain apart. Within Garden Valley's relatively homogeneous population, the lifestyles of most people seemed familiar and acceptable in the officers' personal views. Neighborliness is a value which is still held in high regard by most of the residents in Garden Valley and, I was glad to see, by the police as well. Friendships within the department were generated by common interests or hobbies, like hunting and fishing, or a rapport discovered during a common shift assignment; not by a shared hostility towards the public or a sense of social isolation. The police in Garden Valley had established networks of friendships based on their shared working environment, but their friends, in general, were not exclusively other police.

Danger From Without or Within?

Not all the literature on police behavior endorses the monolithic view introduced above. A recent study by Muir called Street-corner Politicians questions the overall applicability of this generalized view of police work and personality. In the patrol division of a large urban department, Muir identified four different styles of policing, four different responses to what he calls the "four paradoxes of coercive force." The paradoxes relate to the complexities involved with the right of police to resort to violence when it is necessary to carrying out their duty. Muir labels the four styles: professional, reciprocating, enforcement, and avoidance. They are ranked in descending order according to their effectiveness as fair and responsible police behavior. While Muir has departed from the particulars of the mainstream literature on police, he nevertheless remains in agreement with the majority of authors in that he believes violence and the consequent threat of danger to be the most important determinants of a police officer's working personality.

In my research, I found Muir's analysis--like those of others he criticizes--to be inadequate for explaining the behavior I observed. Although Muir's model allows for more variability than most in the literature, it is still overly simplistic for its focus on danger and violence. For example, the officers in Muir's fourth category, the avoiders, are those who would go to extremes to avoid being involved in violence or potential danger. Like Rubinstein before him who also observed this kind of behavior, he attributes it to cowardice or some

failing of character (Rubinstein, 1973). That is, he firmly believes it is exposure to danger that evokes the avoidance response in patrolmen. I too encountered officers who avoided potentially dangerous situations, but their motives were often more complex and diverse than Muir accepts. Granted, I did recognize two officers who fit Muir's avoider category. One could sense they were afraid of getting hurt. However, there were a number of other officers who might avoid violent and dangerous situations for reasons that were unrelated to cowardice. Among first-level supervisors, there were some who viewed their rank as an excuse from patrol work; more and more they evolved their function into a "desk job," with patrol work seen as something extra to do. If they avoided potentially dangerous situations, it was out of laziness. But more important than this was the effect which their avoidance behavior had on the other patrolmen. I rode patrol with an officer on an evening when the only other man on duty was one of these supervisors. Because of the department's size, this was not an uncommon event (the ratio of supervisors to officers was 8:9!). The officer, on this unusually busy evening, handled numerous calls, while the supervisor went to none. Not surprisingly, the patrolman grumbled about having to do all the work, and made an interesting comment on how his own working behavior was affected. He said he hoped no serious or dangerous calls would come up (none did), adding "I'm not going to risk my ass while he sits on his!" The officer made it clear that if any potentially dangerous situations were reported he would respond more slowly tonight than he normally would, to make sure the corporal would have enough time to back him up, or to give

the situation some time to quiet down. It can be said that this particular officer acted as an avoider on some work days but not on others.

At one time during the study, the entire patrol division of the Garden Valley police department acted as avoiders, that is, they were each and all reluctant to enter into a situation which might require physical force of any kind. This group avoidance behavior was the result of officers' fears that their actions would not be backed up by the department's administrators. A week or so before this behavior began, there had been for the area a relatively large and violent confrontation between some partygoers and police. Estimates varied from thirty to one-hundred-and-fifty persons involved. The local newspapers called it a riot, but by big city standards it was only a minor disturbance. Some bottles and other debris were thrown at the police, and nine persons were arrested for disorderly conduct and similar charges. No one among the police or the partygoers was seriously injured. A few people acquired some minor abrasions and bruises. To the later woes of the police, one of the bruised victims turned out to be a pregnant woman. According to police witnesses she had accosted a patrolman from behind and he had blindly struck her with his nightstick. Immediately after the dispersal of the riot, the department was beleaguered by partygoers and their friends protesting the brutality of a police officer who would strike a pregnant woman. Many of the people who had attended the party were "hard living people" (see Chapter IV); or, as the police told it among themselves, "practically every puke in town was there." For the next few days considerable media and community attention was devoted

to "the riot." In general, the ordinary citizenry of Garden Valley seemed to support the police. Letters of commendation and thanks came from the offices of the mayor and the city manager. The officer who was responsible for the incident was called before the administrators and assured there would be no disciplinary action against him. But the very vocal minority who called for him to be punished eventually won. A report from the District Attorney's office favored their testimony and criticized the police. Before another week passed, the wind had changed and the officer was suspended without pay. The officer filed an official grievance against the department and, at an arbitration hearing presided over by a state certified arbitrator, he was exonerated of any wrong-doing. Yet the harm was done. As far as the officers were concerned, they could not trust their administrators to back them up when they were involved in violent situations. Unitl their fear of unwarranted disciplinary action was cured by time, they acted as avoiders. A number of officers who left the department around this time cited the incident as one of the main reasons for quitting.

In Garden Valley I saw how a patrolman might want to avoid dangers not because he feared he would be injured in person, but because he feared he would be injured in his career. Ultimately, his confidence to do the job was either enhanced or impeded by how well he knew and trusted his co-workers and administrators. Not long before he himself resigned from Garden Valley Police Department, a high-ranking supervisor was fond of telling officers, "Don't worry about 'out there.' They'll get you in here long before they get you out on the street." In a

larger agency, policymakers and supervisors are farther removed from the man on the beat, and a disgruntled officer can often transfer to another precinct or division if he has trouble cooperating with his immediate co-workers. In a small agency, this option does not exist. In a small agency, he must either become acclimatized to the internal politics or quit. It was my conclusion that the quality of interpersonal relations within the department was one of the most important factors governing job performance and satisfaction. Internal politics, more than authoritarianism or solidarity, was a direct influence on how a cop in Garden Valley would do his job. The nature of internal politics will be explored in greater depth in Chapter VI. Before weighing the import of interpersonal relations on the everyday behavior of the police officer, I would like to sketch for the reader the scope of the patrolman's job in Garden Valley, and the attitudes which make him successful in that job.

Whatever Happened to "Officer Friendly?"

In the 1950's there began a movement in the United States to "professionalize" the job of the police (Goldstein, 1977, p. 2). The general intent of the movement is to elevate the job of the policeman to the same plane as those of doctor and lawyer. The goals of professionalization include national standards of training, upgrading the technological aspects of the job, and developing a strict code of ethics to govern police behavior (Police, 1973). Because of the high degree of decentralization throughout the country's police agencies, such ambitious plans have had little overall success. For example,

concerning the role of higher education in police training, the 1978 edition of The Police Yearbook, published by the International Association of Chiefs of Police, made the following remarks:

> There is almost no consensus about the purpose of higher education for police officers, let alone the manner in which it should be performed. The idea of college educated police officers began with August Vollmer's dream of making policing an elite profession . . . Today, the initial purpose of higher education for police seems to have been lost in a scramble for credentials and credit hours. (The Police Yearbook, 1978, pp. 285-86)

Although the national movement to professionalize the police has had less than sweeping success, certain types of police behavior have succeeded in becoming identified as the "professional model" and thereby exert considerable influence. Police departments which emulate this model practice what James Q. Wilson calls the "legalistic" style of law enforcement (Wilson, 1968, pp. 172-199). The salient characteristics of the professional or legalistic model are a heavy reliance on technology and a concentrated effort to standardize the nature of police-citizen interactions. It is the second point with which this discussion is chiefly concerned. Under the professional model, officers are constrained to treat all citizens according to the letter of the law. "Thus, for example, police officers were prohibited in some jurisdictions from talking to citizens except in the line of duty" (Goldstein, 1977, p. 135). Though not always so extreme in application, the professional model does advocate that both offenders and non-offenders alike be treated in a highly objective and formal

manner.

The professional model was orignially designed by reform oriented administrators who sought to eradicate corruption and racial and ethnic prejudice among their troops. Imposing objective standards on police-citizen interactions seemed a good way to fight these problems. However, as the model spread around the country, it seems that the original and laudable intentions have gone astray. Instead of projecting to the public a sense of impartiality, police who are trained in the professional model all too often appear to the public as aloof and impersonal, if not actually insensitive to the human crises and problems with which the police must routinely deal. In fact, as Goldstein has pointed out,

> events have made it clear that the highly impersonal form of policing . . . has been among the major factors contributing to the hostility demonstrated towards police in recent years. (1977, p. 136)

Goldstein's comment certainly represents an accurate assessment of the effect that "professional" policing had on the citizenry of Garden Valley. During the tenure of my study, five officers joined the department who had come from various large departments in other states. Their background and training had been very "professional," and, according to personal and employers' letters of recommendation, they were all excellent cops. At first, each of the five was somewhat shocked by the comparative lack of paramilitary rigor in the small department. Four of them adapted readily to their new, more casual role. While they still thought of themselves as good cops--maybe

better than the "homegrown" officers--they did not seem to think their skills and expertise were wasted in a place where there was not much "action." To them Garden Valley was a comfortable place where being a good cop didn't have to be dirty work. However, one of the five seemed either unwilling or unable to adjust, to "let his hair down." His attitude towards the public, rather than friendly, was routinely formal and reserved. In dealing with offenders he always prepared himself for the worst and, by that very attitude, often provoked it. His proclivity for unwittingly antagonizing the public became somewhat of a joke among his peers. And the fact that any arrest in which he was involved was very likely to also include charges of "resisting arrest," was a sharp thorn in the side of the administrators who bore the brunt of impaired police-community relations. Although this officer, whom I shall call Officer Becker, had a lighter side--inside the station he was a great wit and could be socially engaging--he remained alienated from nearly all his co-workers. They did not want fo find themselves in a position where their sympathies were divided between a fellow officer's style and what they thought was right. I use the word "right" here not in the context of justice or legality, but simply in the sense of what is effective and desirable police conduct. Perhaps the following example will help to illustrate.

Officer Mather recounted an incident when he and Officer Becker contacted a woman on the street for information. The woman, in this case, was only a contact and not a suspect. She was an "ordinary person," and Mather said she was trying to be friendly. Becker did

the talking. When the woman remarked that she found Becker's mirrored sunglasses to be distracting--"I feel uncomfortable talking to somebody if I can't look at them"--Becker dispassionately refused to remove them. Any attempt by a member of the public to call attention to an officer's person was to be ignored in his view. "I'm sorry ma'am, but I wear these to protect my eyes from the sun," Becker reportedly said as he continued his questioning in the same uninterrupted business-like tone. Mather admitted that he had felt bad about the encounter, adding, "Can you imagine what that lady's going to think about the police? What would it have taken--just a few words, a smile--to put her at ease? You could see that after that she didn't want to talk anymore." But he had deferred to Becker because of the latter's prior credentials and experience.

The above anecdote points to the essence of what the successful "working personality" is for the police of Garden Valley. I call it an "ethic of friendliness." The best officers were inevitably those with several years police experience who had come to know the community and its people, and who had learned to "read" people and relate to them whenever possible on a personal level. The successful officer would approach any situation willing to talk. If talk was impossible and physical force was clearly the only sensible alternative, then he was ready to do the necessary.

Self-defense tactics and skill in the proper application of physical force are a police officer's immediate tools for survival, anywhere. But in the intimate environment of Garden Valley, an officer's personality and powers of persuasion are equally important.

Even after the arrest of a violent or verbally abusive person, most of the Garden Valley cops I observed would try to strike up a dialogue with the prisoner, and clearly derived a sense of personal and professional satisfaction if they were able to "tame" him or her by the time they had finished processing and lodging the person in the jail. If they were able to win someone over during such a time, it might pay off in the future. Possibly they might be able to exploit such a person's cooperation as an informant. Or, at the very least, if the person was ever to be arrested again, there was a chance the police would have an easier time of it if the prisoner recognized he would receive personalized treatment.

The majority of police officers in Garden Valley understood that an ethic of friendliness was necessary on the job. Most of the time, projecting a friendly attitude made it easier to gain the cooperation of all types of people, whether they were complainants, victims, suspects, defendants or witnesses. Of course, friendliness too has its hazards. One officer was repeatedly criticized by superiors who feared a breach of the confidentiality to which police are sworn. There was such a thing as being too friendly. And then, too, there were plenty of times when one or another officer would have to begin refusing calls from certain individuals, individuals who had previously drawn police attention because of unruly children, complaining neighbors, or a recidivist family member. These people, unable to handle their problems by themselves, came to see some particular officer as a personal ally, someone they could call on day or night in any time of perceived need. At such times, it was necessary to let these

people know there were other resources at their disposal, clergymen or professional counselors. After having gone to a given location for several days in a row on minor calls, one officer once flatly informed a dispatcher, "I'm not going to 1244 Greentree anymore unless it's a real emergency. Those people think we're in business here just for the 'regular customers!'"

To keep alive the spirit of "Officer Friendly" it is not necessary to look at the world, or even the community, through rose-colored glasses. But surely Officer Becker's mirrored shades are not the answer either. To be a good cop in a town like Garden Valley, one must know the community "face-to-face."

Summary

This chapter has sought to cover a considerable amount of theoretical material. A brief summary, therefore, seems in order. First and foremost, I believe the categories of information under which police behavior is discussed in the available literature are not very useful in analyzing police behavior in small departments like Garden Valley's. Early in the chapter I singled out authoritarianism and solidarity, two of the abstract concepts that are most prevalent in the literature, and reviewed them in light of my field data. I found that a perspective which adhered strictly to these concepts would have produced a misleading picture of the officers in Garden Valley.

Although the literature was inappropriate as a guideline for exploring the behavior I observed, I do not suggest that what is reported

in the literature is inaccurate. Rather, that the popular explanations and analyses of police work do not apply to small departments because of one particular fact. Namely, a policeman's exposure to danger in a small town is not nearly as great as in a large, densely populated and socially heterogeneous urban environment. It is as though police researchers in particular, like the public in general, associate "real" police work with big-city police work. In the very selection of big city departments as research settings there seems to rest a tacit assumption that the most essentially representative police behavior will be observable in the most essentially urban locale. The various features which define an urban environment combine to equal danger, and the heightened exposure to danger experienced by police in big cities underlies all the theoretical concepts with which police behavior is customarily treated. The less essentially urban, and therefore less "dangerous," the locale, the less essentially authoritarian, suspicious, cynical and collectively isolated one may expect the police to be. However, to attribute to the police officers in Garden Valley a merely negative identity, saying they are not like big-city police, would be no more illuminating than to say that they are not "real" police. They are indeed, in that it is their role and responsibility (and motto) to "protect and serve" their community, and it was the intent of my research to discover how they carried out that role and responsibility. Consequently, I found it necessary to identify alternate categories of information for the purpose of concise description and in order to clarify for the purpose of analysis the behavior I observed.

The final pages of the chapter sketched two aspects of police work which I believe must be discussed if one truly wishes to understand the Garden Valley cop. These are: (1) the informal and friendly manner in which most police work is conducted in Garden Valley, and (2) the networks of interpersonal relations within the police department, and how they affect an officer's job satisfaction and performance. The remainder of the dissertation will be devoted to these two topics. Chapters IV and V will offer an ethnographic description of the community of Garden Valley and of numerous actual incidents of police-citizen interaction. It is hoped this material will communicate how important an ethic of friendliness and a strategy of informality are to successful policing in Garden Valley. Chapter VI will deal with the internal politics within the department, and how these can enhance or detract from the quality of an officer's performance, regardless of his aptitude or ability.

CHAPTER IV

THE COMMUNITY

Physical Setting

Garden Valley is a small community (pop. 7,000) located in one of Oregon's many valleys. The town lies in a bucolic setting between verdant, forested slopes. Much of the land immediately outside the city limits and throughout the valley is still devoted to agriculture. As in many small Oregon communities, the lumber and wood products industry is the main employer.[1] There are three major mills within easy commuting distance of town, as well as a number of smaller mills and concerns which manufacture and service the mills' machinery in the area. In addition, there are countless small, independent logging and reforestation businesses (2-20 employees each) whose workers daily disperse over the hundreds of square miles of wooded hills surrounding the town. Other opportunities for employment are provided by the retail trade, utilities, transportation, and public and education services.

Twenty miles from Garden Valley is Clarence, a city of 100,000. Fifty miles in the opposite direction is Parkdale, a city of 40,000. In the seventy-mile stretch between Clarence and Parkdale, Garden Valley is the only town of its size or kind. The rest seem to be

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[1] See appendix for employment distribution by major industry.

mere dots on the map, the kind of tiny towns about which a passing urban motorist might joke, "sneeze and you've missed it!" Garden Valley is unique. It is the only one of the small communities that offers a full range of shopping, entertainment, educational and health care facilities. Although there is no large, modern shopping mall in Garden Valley, the existing retail establishments offer enough of a selection of products that it is possible to locally purchase all of life's ordinary necessities, as well as luxuries. There are two major supermarkets and several smaller markets, and numerous shops which sell clothing, home furnishings, building materials, appliances, hardware, gifts and hobby items. There are four automobile dealerships in town. A white collar segment of the population includes attorneys, accountants, insurance, and real estate agents which serve the community. Several groups of professionals provide medical, dental, and optical services. There are three well-equipped veterniary clinics. There is also a -bed hospital, as well as an independent birthing center attended by midwives and volunteers, and a nursing home. There are two mortuaries. Three major banks and two savings-and-loan institutions have branch offices in Garden Valley, and another is under construction. The churches in Garden Valley represent the Catholic and LDS (Mormon) faiths and numerous protestant and fundamentalist denominations.

Garden Valley is also the center of the local school district. It is the site of the district office, one of several elementary schools and the only junior high and high school in the area. In addition, the State has located branch offices of major social service agencies

in town (e.g., Employment, Adult & Family Services). For entertainment, there are two bowling alleys, a small but adequate public golf course, several tennis courts, a public swimming pool, a nearby recreational lake with campground, a public library, and a drive-in theater. However, the biggest entertainment attraction seems to be the various restaurants, taverns and bars which seem filled to capacity on most Friday and Saturday nights. The effect of Garden Valley's unique character and variety of resources is that the community is "used" by far more than the population of 7,000 residing within the city limits. The size of the total population which Garden Valley serves is more like 14,000. City planners, hoping to prepare for and accommodate the needs of projected population growth, concern themselves with an "area of influence," a 36-mile area surrounding the city of Garden Valley, which itself encompasses only 2.5 square miles.

The presence within the community of so many people from outside dramatically affects the patrol patterns of the police. An intimate hometown atmosphere may dominate most personal and business interactions in town, but it would be incorrect to characterize Garden Valley as a sleepy little rural hamlet. During business hours, the streets of downtown are crowded with autos and pedestrians, and in the evenings many restaurants and taverns do brisk business. Repeatedly patrolling 2.5 square miles for hours on end can be a very boring task. As a result, the overwhelming majority of a police officer's free patrol time is concentrated in those limited geographic areas where there are the most people, the commercial districts.

The residential neighborhoods are most often devoid of interesting on-view behaivor. The police may look for burglars or suspicious persons or circumstances, but they are unlikely to find much. As a rule, the only time the residential areas offer real action for the police is when someone calls for their assistance. The calls which originate from those normally quiet streets do much to make a lasting impression on the officers' working behavior. It is where they learn about their community's people, and how they live and act within their home environments.

The residential areas of Garden Valley cannot be easily tagged with conventional labels such as "working class" or "middle class" neighborhoods. Although researchers in other small communities have found such labels to be useful descriptive devices (Seeley, et al., 1956; Warner, 1963), they are just not adequate to describe the majority of neighborhoods in Garden Valley that represent a hodgepodge of social groups. A doctor, millworker, and welfare family may live on the same street or block. There are occasional tracts of new homes that look generally and similarly well-kept, but it is more common to see spotty neighborhoods, with an attractive home and well-groomed grounds located next to a run-down property and littered yard. Most of the neighborhoods are simply not consistent enough to deserve a generalized label. For relevance to the study, it is perhaps best to say that the appearances of the homes represent residents that are a mix of "respectable" and "less respectable" (or even unrespectable) citizens. The distinction rests not so much on income or class as it does on a disparity in social values and lifestyles.

"Respectable" is a term which the larger group of people are likely to apply to themselves and it is indeed a term which the police use. The superficial markers of respectability are those one would expect: a well-kept home and yard and a late-model family or economy car. The less respectable people are those who care minimally for their yards, let their dwellings fall into disrepair, and seem to favor vehicles which annoy their respectable neighbors; i.e., either old junkers that are eyesores or other vehicles like motorcycles and gleaming, modified "fast" cars, both of which are considered noisy or somehow hazardous. Often, though by no means always, the respectable people are homeowners, while their counterparts are renters. A railroad track divides the town into halves, but there is, figuratively speaking, no right and wrong side of the tracks. Rather, at least in the view of the police and the respectable citizens, there are good and bad sections to a block.

That the differences between the two kinds of people are more than superficial is reflected in the tensions which exist between them. It can often impede their ability to live peaceably side-by-side, and occasionally flares into arguments which involve the police. Most of these disputes involve at least one of three areas where the values or lifestyles of the two groups clase: unsupervised children and pets; loud music and public drinking; and fast or heavy traffic around the residence. The resentments that sometimes simmer between the two kinds of people are rooted in more than the trivial incidents which often provoke their disputes. The complaints may be so trivial as to be almost comic. I recall an incident which occurred in my

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own neighborhood. A woman called the police because a neighbor's large dog was permitted to roam the streets and frequently defecated on her lawn. "After all," she complained, "my dog doesn't go potty on their lawn!" There was a hint that her dissatisfaction went beyond the immediate situation, as she added, "What can you expect from people like that anyway? Look at how they let their children run loose!" The police contacted the owners of the dog, and they promptly reinforced their backyard fence and confined their dog. However, they were angry that the woman had called the police without talking to them first (although it is questionable whether they would have complied with her request alone). They openly resented her self-righteousness and decided to enact their own revenge. They collected a surplus of overripe cherry tomatoes from their garden and later threw them on the woman's lawn. Old vegetables cannot be as easily traced to their owners as large dogs, so the police did not get further involved. It was the kind of petty argument the police typically grumble about, since neighbors really ought to be able to handle things like that between themselves. Nevertheless, the officers also understand that it is possible for respectable people, like the woman in this case, to feel so alienated by the values or apparent lack of values of the less respectable people that they might be too frightened or timid to approach them personally. Certainly, not all the calls which the police receive about neighborhood problems are as minor as this. Calls which involve loud parties or outdoor drinking can easily lead to arrests, and one driving complaint almost culminated in a massive neighborhood brawl. Even the very minor disputes may escalate to

something more serious. A litter of compost on the lawn is still fairly innocuous, but in similar siutations, other people have resorted to breaking windows, slashing tires, or worse, in order to "get back." Because of the mix of people who live side-by-side in Garden Valley, the police are often called to restore and maintain order in situations which do not necessarily involve crime.

The Social Environment

Knowledge of how the Garden Valley police view their physical working environment may offer some insight towards understanding their behavior, but more important is how they perceive the social milieu in which they work. How the local police divide and categorize the population they serve significantly affects their treatment of individuals. Ideally, of course, as sanctioned participants in a criminal justice system which philosophically rests on a presumption of innocence and on equality before the law, police should not employ stereotypes which might lead to prejudice of any kind in their work. According to the expectations of the criminal justice system, all individuals are to be treated in a standard, objectified manner, with variations being related only to the proportionate severity of an offense. A person's social identity is not supposed to be an important or even recognized factor for the policeman, judge or jury. However, the police officer in Garden Valley, as elsewhere, inevitably finds that certain individuals seem to repeatedly and consistently occupy the same role or roles within the system (Skolnick, Wilson, Rubinstein, etc.). Some persons are almost always victims, some suspects, and

some, curiously enough, take turns and may alternate between being a victim and being a suspect. Before long, a police officer's work experience brings him to the discovery that people with similar social habits or lifestyles tend to resemble one another in the types of interactions they have with the police. This quite naturally leads to the development of a taxonomy which the police can apply to most of the people they encounter in their work. Thus, an officer comes to expect a certain type of behavior from individuals, based on appearances and conjectured social values, and is surprised when some people fail to act in the expected manner. This sort of type-casting is something which all police researchers have evidently encountered. Like the social scientist, a cop makes his job easier by defining abstract categories based on empirical data and uses them as a predictive tool; and from his perspective, his predictions are accurate.

Police critics tend to condemn such common typification schemes because they believe them to be aligned with the prejudices of society at large, rather than being based strictly on what the police observe and experience on location. It is my belief, based on my own observation and on those of other researchers, that it is a policeman's experiences on the job which have the greatest effect on his occupational perceptions. The following comment, written by R. Dean Smith for the foreword to James Sterling's Changes in the Role Concepts of Police Officers, expresses an attitude shared by many authors:

> A policeman, profoundly affected by the demands of his occupational role, is not the man that he once was. Nor are his interests, his perceptions of others, or his fears what they once were. (1972, p. ix)

Everyday, the patrolman in Garden Valley interacts with the people of the community he serves. He talks with them on the street, in their homes, at their jobs, when they are in trouble, or when they are out having fun. He sees them in good moods and bad. He sees they are individuals, and recognizes the vast differences in temperament and lifestyle among the population he is hired to police. But he also recognizes similarities amid the differences, and comes to the conclusion that there are, relative to the concerns of his profession, distinct social types. At the first-level order of classification there are two major groups: (1) those who recognize and respect police authority, and (2) those who, to a large degree, do not. The specific labels may vary widely, but one unchanging axiom governs all the variations. Namely, the labels used to identify the first group are complimentary (or at the very least, neutral), while those used to identify the second group are always pejorative. Members of the first group are referred to as good people, solid citizens, respectable people, decent folks, ordinary or average citizens, etc. From their occupational perspective, the police approve and admire these people's lifestyles and social attitudes. In contrast, the members of the second group are referred to in far more colorful terms:

> The asshole--creep, bigmouth, bastard, animal, mope, rough, jerkoff, clown, scumbag, wiseguy, phony, idiot, shithead, bum, fool, or any of a number of anatomical, oral, or incestuous terms . . . (Van Maanen, 1978, p. 221)

Clearly the police do not like the members of this group.

Paul Chevigny, who encountered this kind of dual classification

among the police he studied, claims it is dependent upon the citizen's conduct or bearing in an actual police-citizen interaction (197). The police he studied reportedly demanded a certain amount of deference to their authority from the citizens they contacted. If a person's attitude did not convey proper deference, Chevigny says, the officers would tend to escalate the intensity of the encounter until the person deferred, or violence erupted. In Chevigny's example, the disrespectful person was termed a wiseguy by the police. In Garden Valley, the preferred generic term is "puke." In Chevigny's setting, the for us/against us distinction hinged on individual encounters. In Garden Valley, there is more to the story. As I have stated in the previous chapter, the officers in Garden Valley are commonly not authoritarian types (there have been a few exceptions) and do not insist on making citizens grovel before them. To the contrary, most officers (including myself) routinely ignored heavy verbal abuse and name-calling from members of the public. "Pig" was a very tame invective. In Garden Valley, the names which the pukes openly call the police are far more vulgar than the names which the police privately use for the pukes. Although the Garden Valley officers distinguish between those citizens who respect their authority and those who do not, the distinction is based on more than just the frontal challenge to their authority. Even among the respectable citizens, there are some who make no effort to conceal their disagreement, frustration or annoyance with the police. The officers do not imagine that everyone who respects the law and police authority actually likes the police. There were enough times during my fieldwork when some respectable--even prominent--

citizen (including the mayor!) became very vocal and criticized an officer or the department in general during an encounter. Such behavior, while exasperating, did not, in the officer's view, automatically catapult the citizen into the wiseguy/puke category. The classification of the population into different groups is not governed merely by who likes whom. What the Garden Valley police are aiming at in their classification is to identify lifestyles, or at least certain aspects of a given lifestyle, which are relevant to their ability to enforce the law and maintain order. This becomes clearer when one examines the next level of classification.

The police make more numerous and finer distinctions among the group(s) of people who cause them the greater difficulty. The distinctions, of course, correspond with the problems themselves. Although "ordinary" people are by far the majority of Garden Valley's population, the police recognize only two sub-units within this group, and the distinction between the two is quite minor. On the other hand, the police recognize three different types of disrespectful people and have a greater knowledge about these types of people's habits.

Ordinary Folks

Ordinary people might most easily be described as active participants in mainstream American culture, or at least Garden Valley's interpretation of it. The outer trappings of their identity include a neat home and yard, clean car, regular employment, and a stable family life (at least to the public eye). More important are the

intangibles; the public adherence to certain values, chief among them a respect for the law, but also courtesy and neighborliness. Ordinary or good people commonly lead quiet social lives. They are not the kind of people whom the police expect to find whooping it up in a local tavern. Quite simply, ordinary people, since they compose the majority of the community, behave in a way which the community regards as desirable or acceptable. The police, in their private lives, are themselves ordinary citizens.

The above description of ordinary people as a distinct social group is decidely ephemeral. In terms of behavioral markers, it only brushes the surface. Consequently, it would appear to be of little use to an officer in structuring his response to these individuals in tense or otherwise difficult law enforcement situations. However, since ordinary folks rarely cause great difficulties for the police--they traditionally report, not cause, trouble--there is little need for the police to collect and classify any more extensive information on them. From the above description, the reader should not assume that the members of this social group share a common and homogenized lifestyle. They do not. Individual personal preferences and interests split this group into many separate social networks (e.g., the business community, church congregations, extended family groups, etc.). For the purposes of this study, it may be said that these people constitute a distinct social group only vis-a-vis the police.

To illustrate the degree of tolerance embodied in the "ordinary people" classification, one may refer to a sub-group within it; one which is easily recognized, but on whose distinctions the police do

not focus. The sub-group is a limited but conspicuous number of citizens, residents and participants in Garden Valley's business and civic communities, who identified with the anti-war counterculture youth movement of the late 1960's and early 1970's. Informants have told me that during and shortly after the time of active protests around the country, such people were singled out by local police for extra enforcement. Their mere existance represented a threat to order. However, by the time of my research, the situation had changed dramatically. In the intervening years, the radical views of these people have come to seem less controversial. They were no longer seen as a threat to the community. They are still easily recognized by their style of dress and home decoration, and even rarely appear en masse for peaceful demonstrations (such as against local spraying of herbicides). Also, it is common knowledge among the police that most of these "old hippies" use marijuana, something which is still against the law. But, as long as these persons are orderly in public, express their deviant political views through accepted channels, and remain discreet in their use of marijuana, the police regard and treat them as ordinary people.

The one sub-division which the police do make among ordinary people is to identify the community's senior citizens as a separate group. The police sense that older people in Garden Valley, as elsewhere throughout the nation, are more vulnerable to crime than others. Hence, the department has inaugurated a widely recognized senior citizens crime prevention program. The crime prevention unit is manned by retired volunteers who visit homes and distribute information about

crime prevention throughout the community, with special emphasis on reaching the town's many senior citizens. The volunteers are recognized as part of the department; each has a key to the station, a mail cubicle in the briefing room, a blazer with the GVPD emblem, and a generally good rapport with regular police personnel. This spirit of senior advocacy on the part of the police is reciprocated by the seniors' customary support of the police department. The department's funding depends in part on passage of a biannual tax levy which is technically independent of the rest of the City budget. Seniors (65 years and over) constitute 13 percent of Garden Valley's total population, and 21.5 percent of the voting age population.[1] When it comes time to "pass the budget," as happened during the course of the research, police administrators and personnel look to the seniors for a large and reliable block of "yes" votes.

Pukes

The police officers in Garden Valley collect and classify extensive information about local citizens' lifestyles only when they expect it will be useful on the job. This will become apparent during discussion of the remaining social categories which the police recognize among themselves. As has been mentioned earlier, the police discern three types of people among those who are collectively called "pukes." There are no specific labels for each of the three types; analogous to the proverbial rose, which by any other name would smell as sweet,

[1]U.S. Census, 1970 - General Population.

all of them are just "pukes." But the categories, though not exclusively named, exist nonetheless. During informal conversations with local media people (a broadcaster from Garden Valley, radio station and a reporter from the Garden Valley Herald), I asked each of them to identify the kinds of people who cause trouble for the police. I knew that they regularly reviewed the daily police log and also spent some time hanging out at the station and riding along on partrol. Each of them volunteered the same information: (1) the redneck types who fight and drink alot; (2) kids (teenagers); (3) a handful of real, inveterate crooks. These corresponded very well with what I concluded from my own observations. The labels I have applied to the three categories which shall shortly be discussed are: (1) "Hard living" people, after Joseph T. Howell's excellent ethnography of this segment of American society, Hard Living on Clay Street; (2) a small and well-known group of recidivist criminals; and (3) juveniles. Each of these groups draws the attention of the police for different reasons. Consequently, the information which the officers find useful to collect is somewhat different for each, as is their subsequent working attitude towards the members of each group.

Hard-Living People

A large segment of the adult population in Garden Valley was viewed as troublemakers.[1] These people did not routinely commit serious

[1]Estimating the actual size of this group was beyond the scope of the research, as it would have required a door-to-door canvass and some rather dubious classification procedures. They were unques-

crimes (i.e. felonies); they did not rob, attack, or prey on the other members of the community. Rather, they repeatedly and consistently found themselves in contact and conflict with the police over the violation of lesser laws. Frequently, these people violated traffic laws, misdemeanor statutes, or city ordinances. The latter two are important because when these laws are broken, the police often make an arrest. When the police make an arrest, they come into closer contact with people than in other work-related behavior. They may interview a person under arrest at the station or in the jail. Furthermore, after an arrest, the police may spend considerable time in the home of the arrested person, interviewing members of the family or others involved in the incident. Through such interactions, the police come to learn a great deal about the personal and social values and living conditions of these types of adults.

Since experience demonstrates that the same type of people repeatedly cause similar problems, the police have made note of behavioral clues which could be useful to them in future encounters. They are aware of what sort of offenses these troublemakers are most likely to commit and, more important, how best to handle and diffuse each

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tionably a minority, but their conspicuous lifestyle kept them at high profile. Many "respectable" people with whom I spoke both within and around the community felt that Garden Valley's character was dominated by a "hard-living" style. A business owner who had resettled from another state expressed it discreetly: "I'm very disappointed with the caliber of people here;" but a sheriff's deputy whose patrol area surrounded Garden Valley was more blunt: "This place must have the highest number of pukes per capita anywhere." Whatever the numerical boundaries of the group, informal consensus suggests that there are alot of pukes in Garden Valley.

of these recurrent problems. Handling problems involving this segment of the population is best a difficult task, since the people themselves openly proclaim their contempt for the police and frequently threaten violence even if not always resorting to it. The seasoned or experienced officers have developed an extensive portrait of this troublesome group, and can succeed in their assigned goal of peaceably maintaining order, despite the antagonism of a troublemaker. One simply needs to know the right kind of thing to say at the right time.

In Hard Living on Clay Street Joseph T. Howell renders a description of the lifestyles of some blue-collar families in a Washington, D. C. suburb. He makes no claims that his descriptions or insights apply to blue-collar workers anywhere else. Yet I found it almost uncanny how accurately his account fits the adult troublemaking population in Garden Valley. Howell lists seven characteristics which provide a convenient shorthand for identifying this type of person. The list is worth including here, because the local police recognize these people by many of the same markers which Howell uses:

1. Heavy drinking. Heavy drinking was a way of life on Clay Street. (p. 263)

2. Marital Instability. Most of the hard living families I new on Clay Street had had at least one previous marriage, with their current marriage being somewhat shakey. (p. 263)

3. Toughness. Hard living families used an abundance of profanity, talked alot about violence, and generally acted tough . . . (p. 263)

4. Political alienation. Few hard living families on Clay Street voted or held strong political views. They felt the government was unresponsive, corrupt at all levels, and irrelevant to their needs. (pp. 263-64)

5. Rootlessness. The hard living families rented their homes and tended to move more frequently from one place to another. (p. 264)

6. Present time orientation. The Shakelfords [a hard living family], for instance, were preoccupied with surviving from one day to the next without giving much thought to the future. (p. 264)

7. A strong sense of individualism. The hard living families described themselves as "loners," as their "own men," and liked to work alone. Few were active in community life or belonged to any groups. In contrast, the settled families belonged to groups, participated in community life, and rarely expressed such feelings of independence. (p. 264)

The rootlessness and individualism of hard living people are well recognized by the Garden Valley police, who are aware that these two traits effectively block one avenue of appeal an officer may use to gain the cooperation of other citizens; an appeal to common social values and community spirit. The hard living people in Garden Valley are renters who, by the wider community's standards, are willing to live in dumps or, alternatively, will turn any place they live into a dump. The less respectable citizens mentioned earlier (p.) who live in run-down houses with littered yards are, of course, the hard living people in town. They care little about the opinions and sensibilities of their neighbors. In contacts with the police, the independence of the troublemakers often surfaces as outright contempt for the values of other citizens. Finally, as part of the machinery of city government, the police are not trusted by these people; the police are part of the political system which appears alien to them. The combination of these features predictably makes it difficult for

the police to handle what should be routine calls. Loud parties offer a good example of this problem.

In Garden Valley, the parties of many ordinary people as well as those of hard living people occasionally become so festive that the volume of noise annoys the uninvited neighbors. If the police see that such a party is attended by ordinary people, they simply knock on the door and ask the host to quiet things down. Their visit may produce embarassment, bu there is no hint of tension in the encounter. The police can leave, assured of compliance from the celebrants. An officer responding to a loud party of hard living people knows that this simple approach will not work. Caring nothing for the attitudes of their more conventional neighbors, the hard living people react to a visit from the police by being angry at those who have complained; the latter are usually scolded as "old farts." The police, as emmissaries of the neighbors, bear the brunt of the partygoers' animosity. Whenever I went along to a loud party attended by hard living people, we--the police--were automatically greated with cat calls and derisive language. A simple request to quiet down was always met with comments like "Why? We're not doing anything wrong!" or "Who gives a shit what those people out there think? They don't know nothin' about having a good time!" These people strive to draw the police into arguments. Their toughness (trait 3) is frequently expressed in a rhetoric of violence if not in action. The police are wise to the fact that trying to explain their own position and responsibility only fuels the argument. Instead, they must deliver a message that is soft in tone but tough in content. Either the group quiets

down or the party's over. Without condemning the nature of the gathering, only its volume and visibility, an officer can communicate in a casual and colloquial manner that he does, after all, carry a big stick. "Come on, Bill," one might say, "you don't really want to go to jail again. Tell your buddies to keep it cool." While hard living people may be independent and individualistic in the sense of not belonging to organized groups, it is interesting that they are extremely gregarious within their own circles. They are more than willing to get together on an impromptu basis and party for a day or evening. It is likely to be a hard living household that prompts neighborhood complaints that "there are always cars coming and going there all the time."

Marital instability contributes to the problems which draw the police into the lives of hard living people. Whether the situation involves marriage or common-law cohabitation, domestic disturbances in Garden Valley are frequent, loud and sometimes violent. Additionally, domestic instability often results in a lack of supervision over children in the household, another potential cause of trouble. The present time orientation which Howell associates with hard living people is related primarily to their use of money. When they have it, they spend it, usually quickly and usually on consumables. Consequently, they have little or no savings set aside for emergencies and are usually hard pressed for money. Certainly, financial pressures may lead to all kinds of personal and family crises which could potentially involve the police. However, in a much more direct sense, present time orientation accounts for hard living people getting into

trouble with the law over what might otherwise be only a minor matter. A traffic citation, for example, can snowball into a history of warrants. A high proportion (close to half) of the arrests made in Garden Valley are for warrants. Hard living people often fail to pay traffic tickets or to show up on the date of their scheduled court appearances, either because they do not have the money when the court date arrives, or because they have simply neglected to remember it at all. Failure to appear or failure to comply results in the automatic issuance of a municipal court warrant for the defendant's arrest. The amount of bail on a warrant arrest is higher than on the original offense, a fact which naturally exacerbates the problems between hard living people and the police in any subsequent related encounter.

In agreement with Howell, one can most assuredly say heavy drinking is a way of life for hard living people in Garden Valley. Many men drive to a market each day after work and straight away pick up a six-pack or two of beer. On weekends, drinking often starts on a Friday evening and continues through Sunday night. This is not to imply that everyone is on a continual binge, but that alcohol seems to be a necessary part of all lesiure activities. In any encounter with hard living people, the police are aware they must be ready to deal with intoxicated individuals. The effect of this behavior on the police is that it reinforces their belief one cannot reason with hard living people; one can only manipulate them. Virtually every officer with whom I rode volunteered the same advice: "You can't reason with a drunk. Just tell them anything they want to hear, so long as you get them to cooperate." The general attitude towards hard

living people, due mainly to their abuse of alcohol, was "how can you respect someone who doesn't respect himself?"

In concluding this section on hard living people, I would like to emphasize that the traits which have been itemized here, although they are coincidently those which Howell has defined, are exactly those traits which the Garden Valley police have independently observed, recognized and find useful as behavioral guides in dealing with hard living people.

Habitual Offenders

The second group of pukes in Garden Valley, the habitual offenders, have a lifesytle that is practically identical to hard living, except that they deliberately strive to avoid the police (sometimes, obviously, without success). The present discussionwill examine three salient features of this group: (1) the size of the group; (2) the nature of their criminal activity; (3) the police response to their presence within the community.

In Garden Valley, the habitual offender is, by definition, known to the police. The community is simply not large enough to support an anonymous criminal element operating within its boundaries. Instead, the local criminal population is composed of a core of individuals who have posed a continual problem for the police since the time they were juveniles. During the course of the study, all but one were male. As juveniles, many of them had been to reformatories; by now, some have been in the State Pennitentiary. They all seem to find their way there eventually. Their criminal histories are

common knowledge throughout the police department. Sworn and civilian personnel alike have seen their faces, typed their names, and filed their records again and again. The wife of one police employee made an interesting comment: "Whenever I hear Dave talking about someone with a middle name, like James Leroy Pierce, I know it's one of those people who are always in trouble." (Indeed, using the full name is a common formality accorded to notorious criminals; e.g. Lee Harvey Oswald, John Wilkes Booth.) One officer once said, "I know the middle name of every puke in town, and alot of their birthdates, too . . . better than I now most of my own relatives!"

The size of the group may range from about ten to thirty at any given time, and fluctuates considerably for a number of reasons. New members may suddenly appear who have been recruited in one of two ways. First, of course, there is promotion through the ranks. Juveniles, especially those who quit school and use drugs and alcohol heavily, may graduate from petty thefts and other minor offenses to more "big time" activities like burglary. This is exactly how many of the adult members of today's group got started. Another way in which the group grows is simply by the adults making friends in other communities (or the County jail or State Penn) and inviting them to move to Garden Valley. Habitual offenders also leave Garden Valley for other communities. Like other hard-living people, they are rootless. Also like other hard-living people, they may move away and then return again at a later time. Such news would spread quickly among the police officers. "Did you see?" one would ask, "The Hancocks are back in town. I though we got rid of them. Looks like Beauville

didn't want them either." Habitual offenders will sometimes be absent because they are incarcerated elsewhere, wither for short periods or for several years. The following anecdote should illustrate this last point quite well.

Early one Sunday morning, a man arrived at the station to bail out his two friends (both habitual offenders) who had been arrested during the night. They had harassed an off-duty reserve officer at a pizza parlor. As is not uncommon with habitual offenders--the bail of $610 was promptly produced in cash. As the man waited for his receipt, he strained to catch a glimpse of the three video screens which the dispatcher uses to monitor the jail.

"Say, is that the jail there?" he asked, indicating the screens. "I've never seen it. Hey, it looks pretty nice, compared to the old jail. I saw enough of that place, alright. I haven't even been here since they built the new one."

After the party left, the dispatcher, who didn't recognize the man, turned to me with a confident smile.

"Want to guess where he's been in the past couple of years? I'll bet you anything he wasn't away in the service!"

She was right. The cleaning lady, a long-time employee at the department, stuck her head through the window and interrupted our talk.

"Was that Otis Barnes who was just in here? I thought he was supposed to be in the State Penn," she said.

The dispatcher typed the name on the computer keyboard in front of her. We all three waited for the display on the terminal screen. There was Barnes' name, and next to it, in highlights: "State Parole."

Besides the minor incidents related to their public drinking and traffic violations, the criminal activities pursued by Garden Valley's habitual offenders run virtually the whole gamut of serious crimes: armed and strongarm robbery, larceny, weapons offenses, sex crimes; but it is mostly burglary, assault, and drug offenses for which they are caught and processed through the district rather than municipal court. The truth is, however, that habitual offenders are rarely apprehended for committing a serious crime on the sole basis of a police investigation. There may be plenty of circumstantial evidence available, but most habitual offenders have learned from experience or friends how to escape detection. They usually know exactly what kind of evidence is needed to convict them of a specific charge and are careful to cover their tracks. Thus, to apprehend one of these individuals for a serious crime, the police must usually rely on a lucky break, such as the cooperation of a reliable informant, to supplement their investigation of the scene and analysis of physical evidence. In fact, the only time I witnessed the arrest of any habitual offender for a serious crime, it was thanks to such a lucky break.

Two well-known recidivists committed a burglary out of town.

They had gained forced entry into an unguarded government storage building at a nearby dam operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. By chance, an eyewitness was able to observe them unseen during the entire crime. The witness, an older man, had walked up the road with his flashlight hunting for nightcrawlers, (worms used for fish bait which surface at night). When he heard a vehicle approaching, he extinguished his light and subsequently was able to watch the occupants of the vehicle get out, break in, and haul away power saws, winches, and other construction materials. He then hurried to the phone and gave the local police the whole story. The police in turn immediately notified F.B.I. agents in Clarence, since the theft of federal property meant the latter would have jurisdiction. They located the suspects and kept them under surveillance at a residence in town until F.B.I. agents arrived.

The officers on duty in Garden Valley that night were certainly glad to have apprehended the two, based on any evidence at all. But the fact remains that, without the account of a witness or similar lucky break, this crime would most likely have gone unsolved. The police in the small department are themselves fully aware that, without fortuitous coincidences or accidental slip-ups by offenders, they will usually be ineffective against a careful criminal. Consequently, they seek at all times to put indirect pressure on the habitual offenders to cease or curtail their criminal activities. Put simply, one could say the police harass them whenever possible. The harassment can be exercised in several strategies. First, an officer will "write a ticket" on one of these individuals whenever he can, even if the

violation is a minor one for wihch an average motorist, for example, might only receive a warning. One habitual offender's record showed he had received 17 citations in a 16-month period, including some for such violations as no rear-view mirror. Another technique useful in the discomfiture of the habitual offenders is the pressing of multiple charges. Whenever one of these local characters is arrested on a minor charge (misdemeanor) such as disorderly conduct or a simple assault, it is uaually easy for the police to find additional related charges to apply. This practice, which is widespread throughout the country, achieves two primary goals. First, it raises the bail needed to release the suspect form jail. This either increases the hardship o the suspect by causing a large sum of money to be tied up until the case is resolved or, better yet from the officers' perspective, it may keep the suspect in jail if he cannot raise bail. Second, because of the nature of our court system, the police have amuch better chance of obtaining a conviction against a suspect if there are multiple charges (Skolnick, Goldstein, Packer). The most popular additional charges are disorderly conduct and resisting arrest. Many times they are undoubtedly warranted by the situation; some of the local offenders are notorious for reacting violently when arrested. However, just as often, the additonal charges stem from the officers' reduced tolerance of uncooperative behavior from persons in this category. If one mouths off or flails about, it could constitute disorderliness or resistance. Most officers do, in fact, engage in such practices, and justify their actions by citing the numerous other times when that particular suspect got away with something, and the latter's general lack of respect

for social order. The "real crooks" may be a small group in Garden Valley, but they are one which the police are careful to keep track of.

Juveniles

Teenagers under the age of eighteen are recognized by the Garden Valley police as a distinct social group which requires special law enforcement effort.[1] The difficulties the officers have with these youths involve three major areas: (1) underage drinking and the use of marijuana; (2) the misuse of automobiles; and (e) vandalism (or "criminal mischief" as it is defined by statute). The police are concerned with these problems for a number of reasons. First, the department does receive quite a few calls from citizens complaining about these incidents. Additionally, callers on a local radio talk show make it clear that many people feel the police should devote considerable attention to juvenile problems. It is an opinion that I saw echoed in the actions of the department's three senior Reserve officers. These men have lived in the community for many years and have strong family and business ties here. Whenever I accompanied them on patrol, they each tended to concentrate their activity on

[1] In Garden Valley, as elsewhere, it is not especially rare for juveniles of any age to be apprehended for criminal offenses. While most juvenile crimes are minor, such as shoplifting and petty thefts, it does occasionally occur (as it did during the course of my research) that the suspects in incidents such as burglary, arson, weapons offenses, and even sexual abuse turn out to be mere children, not even teenagers. Certainly, these are the exception, not the rule.

juveniles, particularly on drinking and driving offenses. I believe their attitudes about community policing fairly represent those of a large segment of Garden Valley's residents. Early in my fieldwork, a young driver who was recklessly showing off to a friend accidentally killed a five-year-old child. Local people are naturally concerned with curbing such abuses.

Another reason the officers focus their attention on this group is the high visibility of the offenses. Teenagers routinely experiment with mild forms of social rebellion, to which an element of daring seems essential. On routine patrol in a small town during the evening, there is little else to catch their interest, so the police find it easy to catch the juveniles, who are typically not discreet. On Friday and Saturday nights, there is a consciuos effort to hunt for juvenile offenders, since they are almost certain to be around. It is not uncommon for the evidence locker to contain a few cases of confiscated beer and several baggies of pot by Monday morning, and for the officers' ticket books to shrink dramatically over the weekend as they distribute the contents to young drivers.

The officers' general attitude towards the community's high school aged juveniles is interesting because of its ambiguity. The officers I asked were likely to admit that most of the kids were "good kins," who would become ordinary citizens, both responsible drivers and drinkers. Many of the policemen themselves enjoy talking about their own rowdy days as youths, but their working attitude towards juvenile offenders does not rest on this kind of sympathetic understanding. Rather, a tradition of enmity pervades the character of

most police-juvenile interactions. When dealing with errant juveniles, the officers consistently drop their Officer Friendly approach. In encounters with hard living people and adult offenders, they usually behave in a manner aimed at reducing tensions between themselves and the citizens. In dealing with juveniles, they nromally act very authoritarian and commanding. Like dictatorial parents, they expect the young person to accede to their moralizing, and countenance no arguments or exchange of opinion. A number of factors might have contributed to this. For one thing, none of the officers (or administrators) have teenaged children who live with them. Without having the first-hand experience of trying to control youthful excesses of their own progeny, they may thend to be overcritical of other parents' temporary failures. However, more important is the attitude of the juveniles themselves. In the spirit of social rebelliousness, many are rude and openly contemptous towards the officers whenever they are stopped. In some cases their cockiness is reinforced by the system of juvenile adjudication. When a person under eighteen is taken into custody for a crime, the law requires that he be transported to and processed at Bassford, a juvenile detention facility in Clarence. There, he will often be released immediately to a parent or guardian. It is possible for the offender to be back home (and on the streets) in Garden Valley before the arresting officer has returned after completing the necessary paperwork. To the officer, who would like to believe that a glimpse of jail will help straighten out the kid, this is disheartening. If anything, the trip and easy release from "jail" teaches the youngsters further contempt for the law. From conversations with

the older children of neighbors and acquaintances, I learned that, to some teens, having been to Bassford even implies a kind of prestige. The officers--and many local parents--would like local authorities to be more involved in the disposition of juvenile offenders. If juvenile offenders were sentenced to community work, such as washing city vehicles or cleaning the park, realizing the consequences of their actions might instill in them a greater respect for the law. It is suggested that increased local control could only have a beneficial effect on the relationship between police officers and the community's teenagers.

Peace Officer or Law Officer?

Before concluding this chapter, there remains the task of relating the officers' classification of social types to the overall goal of their job. Does the officers' division of the local population into five social types--ordinary people, senior citizens, hard living people, habitual offenders, and juveniles--actually assist them in their role as professional policemen? The answer depends on one's perspective of what a police officer should be. Certainly the Garden Valley police are frequently successful in apprehending law breakers because of their knowledge of some group behavior. The following chapter should illustrate more clearly that may officers are able to predict, with a fair degree of accuracy, the behavior of individuals based primarily on information derived from their system of classification. Also, aided by their ability to address each group in its own argot, the officers can more easily gain the cooperation

and trust of both complainants and suspects regardless of social type However, the persons they apprehend have usually violated only the lessor laws (i.e., misdemeanors or traffic infractions). And, just as often, the police use their knowledge of people simply to quell various disorders in the community or to assist citizens, rather than make arrests. According to distinctions made by Michael Banton, the police in Garden Valley are better described as peace officers than law officers:

> A division is becoming apparent between specialist departments within police forces (detectives, traffic officers, vice and fraud squads, etc.) and the ordinary patrolman. The former are "law officers" whose contacts with the public tend to be of a punitive or inquisitory character, whereas the patrolmen . . . are principally "peace officers" operating within the moral consensus of the community. Whereas the former have occasion to speak chiefly to offenders or to persons who can supply information about an offense, the patrolmen interact with all sorts of people and more of their contacts center upon assisting citizens than upon offenses. (1964, pp. 6-7)

Furthermore, when a "peace officer" does enforce the law, he is concerned with laws that are defined primarily by the community he serves rather than by the wider society. He is more likely to arrest a disorderly person than to participate in the investigation of a murder or robbery. James Q. Wilson has discussed the partolman's role in these terms:

> The patrolman's role is defined more by his responsibility for maintaining order than by his responsibility for enforcing the law. By "order" is meant the absence of disorder, and by disorder is meant behavior that either disturbs or threatens to disturb the public peace or that involves face-to-face conflict between two or more persons. Disorder, in short, involves a dispute over what is "right" or "seemly" conduct or over who is to blame for conduct that is agreed to be wrong or unseemly. A noisy drunk, a rowdy teenager shouting or racing his car in the middle of the night, a loud radio in the apartment next door, a panhandler soliciting money from passersby, persons wearing eccentric clothes and unusual hair styles loitering in public places--all these are examples of behavior which "the public" (an onlooker, a neighbor, the community at large) may disapprove of and ask the patrolman to "put a stop to." . . . On the other hand, a fight, a tavern brawl, and an assault on an unfaithful lover are kinds of behavior that even the participants are not likely to condone. Thus, they may agree that the police have a right to intervene, but they are likely to disagree over who is to blame and thus against whom the police ought to act. (1968, pp. 16-17)

Without a doubt, the primary function of the Garden Valley police is to maintain social order rather than investigate crimes. They are ready to respond to a serious crime if one should occur, but such incidents are rare. Instead, the community continuously places demands on the department through direct complaints or informal pressures (e.g., talking with city officials) which require the officers to concentrate on breaches of social order as defined by community consensus. Over time the officers have themselves come to conceive of their police mission in terms of order maintenance and focus their

activities accordingly. Therefore, they collect and classify information about people's behavior which is useful in the detection and apprehension of offenders as well as in helping them quell domestic and small scale public disturbances. They now pursue these goals both on the basis of the traditional activity and concerns within the police department, and because it is plain that this is the kind of police response which the majority of the public expects.

CHAPTER V

WORKING THE STREET

Preliminary Remarks

In the introductory chapter, it was stated that this study is an anthropological one. Yet up to this point, the essence of such an approach has been lacking. Certainly, I have made it clear that my method of collecting data, i.e., participant observation, is firmly grounded in anthropology. Indeed, both the descriptive information which formed the basis of the last chapter and the critical review of police literature in Chapter 3 were influenced by my training in anthropology. However, the fact remains that the most important ingredient of the anthropological method is still missing. What is lacking are extensive descriptions of real behavior or, to use a more abstract term, this study so far lacks good ethnography. The best anthropological writings include a generous sample of descriptive information which conveys to the reader a sense of understanding how the people under study order their everyday lives, in this case their workday.

The goal of the present chapter is to fill that gap. As a theoretical guideline for presentation of the descriptive material I will follow Clifford Geertz's lead and strive for what he calls "thick description" (Geertz 1973:3-30). This approach proceeds, first, from the assumption that the reported behavior, although descriptive, is itself the first step of abstract analysis. A good anthropologist lives and works among a group of people and participates as fully as possible in

their everyday affairs. Then, from among the mass of his observations, literally hundreds daily, he selects and reports on only a few which he believes will convey the essence of his subjects' lives. This process of choosing is the first step in interpreting the behavior of the subject society. Thus, from Gerrtz's perspective, it must be understood that description is itself analysis in anthropology.

Anthropologists study specific social groups. The composition of the groups can vary from independent cultures with completely alien customs and language to specific sub-groupings, such as policemen, within the investigator's own society. Whatever the group, the ultimate goal is the same; to better understand the reasons why people behave as they do. Geertz believes that to accomplish this goal, an anthropologist must sort through the complexity of everyday events until he has a grasp of what influences decision making by individual members of society. That is, he must make sense of the everyday jumble of behavior:

> What the ethnographer is in fact faced with . . . is a multiplicity of comlex conceptual structures, many of them superimposed upon or knotted into one another, which are at once strange, irregular, and inexplicit, and which he must continue somehow first to grasp and then to render (Geertz 1973:10).

Simplification of everyday behavior is not, however, the end of Geertz's thick description. An anthropologist's ethnographic description should still include the jumble of everyday behavior. The aim is to structure the jumble so that the reader can perceive the complexity of social interaction within another society and thereby appreciate the many nuances of thought which a member of any society must consider when acting within a social context. If an anthropologist accomplishes this, the result will validate the accuracy of his first-order interpretations. He

will have, first, himself understood and, second, communicated to the reader the essence of being a member of the society under study.

The remainder of this chapter will endeavor to provide a thick description of the everyday working behavior of the Garden Valley police officers. All the events which are reported in the following account are based on actual occurrences and dispositions. The character sketches are based on real persons. However, I have compressed and selected from my fieldnotes what I believed would constitute a representative sample of activity on various shifts with an assortment of different personnel. The events did not necessarily occur in the given order or time frame, and did not necessarily involve those personnel whom I have cast in the active roles. What I have sought to do, in essence, was to mix people and events, thereby distributing among everyone whatever credit or blame may be due.

Swing Shift

It is my first day on patrol and I have decided to start with swing shift. I am at the station and ready fifteen minutes before the start of shift at 3:00 P.M. This fifteen minute period is required by the police contract and the officers receive no pay for it (although missing it may lead to disciplinary action). It is intended for briefing. Glen Mather, with whom I will be riding, arrived even earlier than I did. There is no one to brief us, so he is catching up on his reports. I look through my looseleaf binder of instructional materials once again: pocket sized summaries of the State criminal code and motor vehicle laws, a report writing manual, the radio code, the phonetic alphabet (Adam, Boy, Charles . . .), some literature from the Academy on felony car stop

procedures and sex crimes investigation, a glossary of legal terms, and a list of spelling demons. At 3:00 O'Clock we still aren't able to go out on the road because the day shift officers haven't returned with the patrol cars yet. I decide to kill the time by visiting with Renate in her office, since her boss is gone today, but she shoos me out, saying she has lots to do. "And besides," she adds with exaggerated magnanimity, "I wouldn't want to contaminate your data."

I step through her office into the adjacent one, where the two detectives are sitting at their desks. Both desks are completely covered with papers and file folders, but neither Jerry nor Ryan appears to be working on anything at the moment. They are just sitting, gazing blankly. They both look beat. Judging by the line-up of empty pop bottles on the shelves behind them, it has been a long day at the office. Ryan Emmerick grins at seeing me in uniform for the first time. "Hey, look at you!" he exclaims, and I am unable to hide my self-consciousness with a nervous laugh.

Jerry Fuhrman's face remains expressionless as he asks me, "Where'd you get the gun?" I tell him the Chief gave it to me out of the department armory.

"Hmmm," Jerry frowns, "don't anybody tell me about it." He is the department's firearms training officer and is supposed to be in charge of these matters. He reaches into the Pendaflex files in his bottom drawer and hands me a paper, guidelines for the use of deadly physical force.

"Here, read it, sign it and give it back to me." He asks for my revolver and copies down the serial number.

"When do you think you can take me out to the range again?" I ask

as he hands the gun back to me. When Jerry took me to the shooting range last week, it was the first time I'd ever even held a gun. With his instruction and coaching, I was able to qualify easily with a surprisingly high score. The last new officer whom Jerry trained also did very well. Jerry is a great teacher and one of the top competitive shooters in the State, with lots of trophies to prove it. He is disappointed that there is so little interest in marksmanship here in the department. He flips through his desk calendar and names a time during the week when we can go out to practice again. ~~He will take the afternoon off.~~

"Anything to get away from this place," he grumbles.

Even Ryan, who is usually buoyant and a ntorious prankster, seems really depressed today. He throws a question at me.

"Know who we've been on the phone with all day?"

I make no attempt to guess, so he tells.

"The Teamsters." Ryan is President of the Garden Valley Police Officers Association, and he has had to start thinking about preparations for negotiation of a new police contract, as the present one expires in less than a year. I wonder if he's serious, and half expect a punchline. No punchline.

"You're not really thinking of joining the Teamsters, are you?" I ask. I look to Jerry, who is Association Vice-President. He shrugs.

"We've got to do something about this place," insists Ryan. "It's getting so bad, we can't even work. All everybody ever thinks about is who. . ."

Before the conversation can go any further, the door opens and the Chief enters the room. He greets me and we exchange jokes about my incipient career as a police officer. Then, serious again, he addresses

Ryan.

"Hey, Ryan, what do the guys think of Whitley?"

Brent Whitley is a young Sergeant in charge of Patrol. As an officer, he was an activist and the first President of the Officers Association. Brent is still unmarried and since the Chief's recent divorce the two have been sharing a house.

Ryan replies that Brent is O.K. and is generally liked by the rest of the men. The Chief's response is abrupt.

"Well, I'm beginning to think I should have made him the Corporal and made Kreuzer the Sergeant!" The Chief leaves and no one says a word. I figure I'll make my exit too and see if Glen is ready to go out yet. Ryan breaks the silence.

"I wish he'd asked me what the guys think of Kreuzer."

"How come?" I ask.

"They can't stand him."

When I return to the squad room, Glen and the off-duty day shift guys are paging through a law enforcement supply catalog. Glen is looking for a second badge, one he can keep in his wallet with his I.D. card.

"This one's good," he says as he indicates one he likes. "It just says 'Peace Officer' without the name of the department, so you can use it when you work someplace else." I find this odd, since Glen has only been with the Garden Valley force for about nine months and, as far as I know, has no reason to think of leaving. He checks his watch and we agree we should go hit the road. It's almost 4:00 O'Clock. Between 3:00 P.M. and 6:00 P.M. is the busiest time for "working traffic." Computer print-outs show it is the time when the most vehicle inquiries are made (stolen vehicle and registration information checks) and when

the most traffic citations are written. Glen goes to find out whether the department's only radar gun is back from being repaired. It is, and we take it. The only other officer on duty during this shift is Phil Kreuzer, a Corporal, and Glen predicts "he's sure not going to use it." We quickly check out our patrol car and we're off.

We drive to a location on Highway 77 across from the shopping center, and park the unit so it is concealed from view. From having lived and driven in the town for three years, I already know this is one of the cops' favorite radar spots. I ask Glen if he doesn't think this kind of activity is sneaky and p-edatory.

"No, not really," he replies. "It's not a matter of being sneaky and hiding just so you can write tickets. Obviously, anybody who pays attention to their driving and isn't going really fast is going to see us anyway."

It's true. I knew it was a regular radar spot in town, and I'd never gotten a speeding ticket here. Glen says he's only interested in the absent-minded speeder, because that's the kind who's going to be a hazard in a busy section like this. "Besides," he adds, "I usually don't write anybody unless they're at least ten miles over the posted limit."

I ask whether this is a standard practice throughout the department, and am told that some officers may give as much as fifteen miles per hour grace before issuing a citation for exceeding the speed limit. In a relatively short time, Glen has issued three VBR (Violation of the Basic Rule of speed) citations; all of them "righteous," as he says --twelve to twenty miles over the 25 m.p.h. limit. The dispatcher's voice booms over the radio.

"One to fifty-one!"

"Some of them talk so close into the mike," Glen observes with slight irritation as he turns down the volume and acknowledges, "fifty-one, go ahead." We receive a report of juveniles throwing rocks at a passing train. The complainant was able to give a partial clothing description for the two suspects. We drive directly to the tracks but are too late. There is no sign of the juveniles. We get out and look around the railroad yard on foot. Nothing. We contact the complainant, a railroad employee, inside the yard office and he repeats the description, and remarks that this goes on almost every day, right at 5:03 when the train comes through. Why can't the police stake it out? He is impatient with Glen's questions, which seem irrelevant to the problem: "What is your date of birth? . . . What is the telephone number here?" This is information Glen will need for his report.

"Why can't the police stake it out?" the man wants to know. Glen assures him we will keep an eye on it in the following days whenever we are not tied up with something else.

We leave and, following Glen's hunch, drive to the low-income apartment complex which is not far away. Kids from there are often involved in criminal mischief, but we don't see anyone en route fitting the given descriptions. It was worth a try.[1] Glen won't write the report now, figuring he'll have time later on. He'd like to work some more traffic while the streets are still fairly busy.

We have not yet resumed our position for working radar when the dispatcher contacts us again. A parking complaint. We drive to the

[1]This "case" was later solved by Kirk Martin, another Garden Valley officer, who was acquainted with and recognized the suspects.

location and find an old one-ton flatbed truck. It is legally parked but its presence in a strictly residential neighborhood is incongruous. The woman who lives in the house where the truck is parked tells us the vehicle has been there several days and no one has checked on it. Maybe it's stolen. Glen relays the license number to the dispatcher and asks for a code 7 and 8 (stolen vehicle and registration checks). About two minutes later, dispatch replies the code 7 is negative (not stolen) and the registration record indicates the owner lives in Brighton, about thirty miles south. Glen wants dispatch to try to telephone the owner. While we wait for the results of that contact, the complainant goes on about how unsafe it is for the truck to be here, since it obstructs a good view of the street, "and kids play here and run out between the cars all the time, and with that thing here you might not see one of them . . ." Her first concern had been that the truck might be stolen; when we determined it was not, she directed her concern to the matter of safety. When Glen affirms that the truck is legally parked and should present no traffic hazard, she is still dissatisfied, and what was probably the true reason for her call comes out. The truck blocks her view from her window and is an eyesore. She just doesn't want it in front of her house.

The dispatcher advises us she has been unable to contact the registered owner by phone. Glen tags the vehicle with a notice which states that, unless the truck is moved within 72 hours, it will be towed away as an abandoned vehicle. The complainant, of course, would like to see it gone sooner, but at least now she has something to look forward to. For Glen, it is another report to write. He thinks maybe he shouldn't wait till later to start writing them up, but the dispatcher promptly

intrudes and asks whether we are clear to take another call.

"Go ahead," Glen replies into the radio as he winks an aside to me, "no rest for the wicked!"

We receive a report of a stolen bicycle and contact the reporting party to learn that his son's bike has just been stolen from the lot at the city park. To the young victim, a boy of about twelve, it represents a serious loss. He anxiously describes the bike in detail, its every dent and decal. It is a prized possession. As we get ready to leave, Glen doesn't want to offer too much hope for recovery. Bicycles are easy to steal and hard to trace (I myself saw the last of my new ten-speed within a year after moving to Garden Valley). I know that the department is campaigning for widespread enforcement of a bicycle licensing ordinance. When a bicycle license is sold, the bike's description, serial number and owner information are noted in police records, and the bicycle is engraved with a special identification number. This would help to trace bicycles which are found or appear to be stolen, and it seems a good idea. But, so far the program has had small success. I suspect it is because many people in this traditionally conservative community have the same reaction as my neighbor, who does not weigh the benefits against the fifty-cent cost. He says, "I can't believe the city is so cheap they even want you to pay so you can have a bicycle! They'll do anything to get more money out of you!"

When we are back in the patrol car, Glen decides to return to the low-income apartments which are just a few blocks from where the bike theft occurred. In the past weeks, several missing bikes have turned up there. The "finders" have been the Miller brothers, who at ages 9 and 11 have been arrested for shoplifting, are invariably prime

suspects in neighborhood vandalism, and are almost daily blamed by other tenants for harassing and assaulting their children.

"Can you imagine what those kids are gonna be like when they reach 18?" Glen asks as we drive, then adds grimly, "if they ever make it to 18!" I've heard police are supposed to be notorious for their usually insensitive gallows humor, so an officer might look at a couple of youngsters like the Millers and glibly remark, "that's my job security right there!" But Glen expresses his sentiments differently. He is serious.

"You can see where the problem starts," he says. "It's the parents. It just makes me sick when I find a kid in trouble and his old man says 'he's no damn good, he never was, and he never will be!' And this is a kid of fourteen or fifteen he's talking about! The trouble with kids like that is their home life. Nobody gives a damn about them, so we have to be the garbage collectors."

We park the car in front of the building and walk to the side, which abuts a vacant lot that is used as a playground. There, right at the bicycle rack, is the bike we are looking for. Glen spots the two Miller boys on the lot and calls them over. He asks whether they have any idea where this bike came from, and in unison they earnestly swear that they found it. Where? At the city park.

We put the bike into the trunk of the patrol car and go upstairs to contact Mrs. Miller. In greeting, she says she knows why we're here. She invites us into the apartment, although she is dressed only in her underwear. She is tremendously obese. She immediately begins an accounting of her health, how she is not well and cannot properly supervise the boys by herself. She has another younger child at home too.

"I can't take much more hassle from the cops and all the nosy people in this goddamn building," she warns. "The doctor says if I get too upset I'll start hemorrhaging . . ." Glen doesn't want to hear her catalog of ailments. He tells her simply that it looks as though the boys have stolen another bike, and a report of it will be sent to the Children's Services Division (CSD). Mrs. Miller angrily responds that the boys told her they found the bike, so what the hell is she supposed to do? Glen firmly warns that if her sons keep up such behavior, CSD can take them away from her. If she can't properly supervise and control them, they might be better off with someone who can. We go back downstairs and head for the victim's home to return the bike.

On the way, Glen talks about his own children. They're good kids, thank God. His wife gets most of the credit. He's lucky to have such a good family. "I kid around alot," he continues, "but I wouldn't trade what I've got for anything. I'm convinced, there's just nothing better and, for me, my family will always come first." When we return the bike, the boy is elated. Glen tells the father that the kids who took it are juveniles who cannot be criminally prosecuted. The man admits he hadn't even thought of prosecution. The bike's back, that's the main thing. We're satisfied we're leaving a couple of satisfied "customers."

"I only wish we could give that kind of service more of the time," Glen says as we're out the door. He picks up the radio and notifies the dispatcher that we're clear, and she tells us to return to the station to feed the prisoners. There is no jailor on duty tonight, so the job falls to the officers. It is a simple task. Just remove the T.V. dinners from their foil trays onto styrofoam plates, pop them into the microwave for a

few minutes, and serve them. Inside the station, we see Kreuzer sitting at his desk in the Watch Commander's office adjoining the dispatch room.

"Hello, Corporal," Glen says cooly in passing.

"Oh, hello Mather," Kreuzer replies.

I stop in to chat for a moment. When I met Phil Kreuzer at a recent party, we discovered we both play the same musical instrument, and agreed to try playing together some time. We talk for awhile before I go to join Glen downstairs in the jail. While Glen waits for the dinners to heat, I go to the Day Room, a large cell with a table, some benches, a toilet, and a television set.

"Do you want coffee or Tang?" I ask the two prisoners. I can't suppressa smile when I see how engrossed they are in the police drama on the screen.

"Coffee or Tang?" I have to repeat the question since neither of them heard me over the wail of the sirens coming from the tube. I wonder who they're rooting for.

Having fed the prisoners, we're thinking of food ourselves, so we ask for clearance for a "Code 10" (coffee or meal break) and drive over to J.J.'s Restaurant on Highway 77. J.J.'s is part owned and operated by a former sheriff's deputy who worked in the area, and it's quite popular among the officers. Besides serving tolerably good food, it is a place where the police can get all the coffee they want for a nickel. This has provoked a minor controversy between the officers and the staff. The latter, while not expressly forbidding the officers to take advantage of the bargain, have made it known that they consider such favors to be unethical. The staff, particularly the Chief, believe the store owner is offering the inexpensive coffee to attract a greater police

presence, thereby "buying" cheap and extra protection for his business. I've talked to the owner, Jess Durbin, about it and he dismisses the idea as nonsense. He knows cops don't make alot of money, and when he was a cop he certainly would have appreciated a place where he could enjoy a relaxing break without feeling he had to spend alot of moeny on food and drink. As for buying extra protection for his own business, he says he'd be all for it if every cafe in town offered the police the same discount.

Glen advises me to order something inexpensive because, the way tonight is going, we may be called away in the middle of our meal. However, luck is with us and we are even able to have an after-dinner cup of coffee. We get better acquainted as Glen talks freely about himself. He's pleased with the turn his life has taken during the past year. He left his laborer job to become a police officer, even though the former was much more highly paid. He's going back to college to get his Associate's Degree; and he'll soon be moving with his family to a large, attractive home he's bought in town. He loves his job. He too started out as a Reserve. It's my first on-the-job contact in this fieldwork, so I still try to keep my questions somewhat structured and in line with the literature I've read, although I'm soon to find that this isn't necessary. We are we sitting here in the back corner of the restaurant, is it so Glen can keep the entire premises under observation and guard himself from ambush? (I noticed that the officer with whom I rode as part of the criminal justice seminar at the University simply sat at the lunch counter with his back to the door.) Glen's answer is illuminating.

"No, cops just like to sit where they can see all the women," he grins. "Did you see the knockers on that one by the cash register?"

Before we clear, the dispatcher calls us on the radio and orders us to the station for a civil standby. As we pull up, we notice that Kreuzer's patrol car is still in the same spot where it was when we first left the station hours ago.

"I wonder what he's doing, why couldn't he take the call?" Glen thinks aloud. We contact the complainant, a woman in her early twenties, at the front counter. She is in the process of getting a divorce and needs to go back to her husband's home and retrieve some belongings. He has made threats against her, and she is afraid to go there alone. Glen tells her to drive over in her car and we'll follow. On the way to our destination, Glen lets loose on the Corporal.

"Did you see that lazy so-and-so, sitting there doing paperwork while he has us running around like bandits? This is our fourth call and he hasn't taken one!"

I don't mention to Glen that when I was talking with Kreuzer, I happened to see that the "paperwork" with which he was so busy was a personal letter that he was writing. It's possible Kreuzer was on his dinner break at the time and hadn't left his desk. I didn't ask.

"It's hard to look and act concerned to the public when you have to work with someone like that!" Glen goes on. But he holds himself in check and quickly reasserts that he loves his job and won't let anything spoil that. "Some of the guys bitch and moan, but I long ago decided it wasn't worth it to let things get to you to the point where you don't like what you're doing anymore. I'm just going to keep doing my job," he resolves good-naturedly.

At the woman's former residence, we stand just inside the doorway as she goes about gathering her property. Her estranged husband's language

is abusive towards her, and his attitude towards us is hostile. It must appear to him that we're on her side. We're not. The purpose of a civil standby is to be present at a potentially volatile situation to make sure nothing happens. When we leave the house, I ask Glen how come the police get involved in what ought to be a personal affair. "If she was afraid to go alone," I ask, "why didn't she ask a relative or a friend to go with her?" Glen replies that there is a segment of the population --"pukes" he calls them-- in Garden Valley who are just like those people. He says that any friend of hers would probably be just as hot-tempered as her "ex" and there would likely have been a fight. "So," he says, "we might as well go and keep the peace. And anyway, I didn't mind helping her. She was a fox!"

It has turned out to be a busy night indeed, as we are dispatched from one call to another, almost back-to-back: a motorist who left a service station without paying for his gas; a simple assault that had occurred earlier in the day; a carfull of teenagers that drove over a curb and damaged a lawn; and "suspicious circumstances" in a school parking lot. We get back to the station around eleven o'clock, the end of shift. Kreuzer is already gone. We stop off to see the dispatcher, whose shift doesn't end untill midnight. Glen asks to see the P.A. cards (P.A. is part of a data processing acronym for a patrol activity reporting program; for each call, the cards show the time when the call was received, when an officer is dispatched, when he arrives, and when he clears). He wants to compare the various times on the cards with the times he jotted in his notebook so he can fill out his Daily Activity Report ("lie sheet"). Then, too, there are still eight reports to be completed. Poor Glen, he started his workday catching up on reports. How he's ending his day,

behind on reports.

More Swing

Robin Scott or Scotty, as he's called by everyone, came from a big city. He and his wife wanted to move their young family to the more peaceful and settled environment of Garden Valley even though it would mean a cut in pay and proportionately lower standard of living than they had been accustomed to. They have bought their dream home, located in an idyllic setting just outside town. They are talking of getting some animals; a pony, maybe a goat. He has a commitment to this area. This is where he wants to raise his kids. He also has a commitment to law enforcement. His house is full of police mementos and novelties, and his scrapbook is filled with commendations and news clippings that suggest an active and illustrious police career back in Southern California. When Scotty was hired as an officer with Garden Valley P.D., he was among a multitude of applicants from all over the country, since the Chief likes to advertise job openings as far and wide as possible. Scotty scored higher than anyone on the written test and was selected after an oral interview by local police and city administrators.

One would think that someone like Scotty, with his aptitude, ability and youth (he is in his mid-twenties) would get ahead fairly quickly, especially in what is advertised as a "small and progressive" department like Garden Valley's. However, he is finding that personality and interpersonal relations figure very importantly in one's survival here. Scotty likes to socialize and is generally liked by his co-workers, but his confident manner and ready sarcasm are perceived by some --who unfortunately include certain staff members-- as arrogance. He feels frustrated by being unable to relate successfully to them and that is

what we've been talking about this afternoon as we're riding together.

"What counts around here is not what you know, but who you blow," he concludes with characteristic wit.

A problem which well trained and educated professional officers face in a small town department is generated by the question of what a police officer should and shouldn't be required to do. For starters, Scotty thinks, police officers should be required to stay in top physical condition. Several of Garden Valley's officers are conspicuously overweight, and most would be considered at least somewhat overweight or out of shape. Some of the things Scotty thinks police shouldn't be required to do include running errands, like delivering council agendas, which happens to be our present assignment. To ensure that the mayor, council members, and heads of city departments receive the agendas in time for council meetings --evidently mailing them didn't work too well in the past-- the officers on swing shift are sent out to deliver them personally a few days in advance.

I tell Scotty what some police scholars have written about various styles of policing. James Q. Wilson, for example, recognizes three different styles: the legalistic, watchman, and service styles. Garden Valley seems to favor the service style over the legalistic model. Author William Muir sees the legalistic style as being the dominant trend among California departments, so that is what Scotty is used to.

"Hey, I don't mind doing a service, provided it's for somebody who really needs it," he explains. Just recently he went on a call where he replaced a fuse for an elderly widow. Her son, who normally attended to such household matters for her, was out of town and when her lights suddenly went out, she became frightened and called the police.

"I was glad to help her out, I really was. That's not the kind of stuff I'm talking about . . ." Without interrupting our talk, Scotty has suddenly turned the car around and we're in pursuit of a blue Firebird, our overhead lights flashing. We'd both seen the vehicle, the souped-up kind that is typically driven by juveniles here, peel out and fishtail down a cross-street just a moment ago. The car pulls over without trying to elude us. It is occupied by two females of high school age.

Scotty asks the driver for her license and registration, and we return to the patrol car to use the radio. A quick computer check done by the dispatcher indicates that the young driver has a clean traffic record. She's never received a citation in the two years she's had her license. Like most officers, Scotty is willing to give first-time offenders a chance on the principle of a word to the wise being sufficient. He thinks maybe he'll give her a break. We return to the Firebird and he asks the girl whether she knows why she was stopped.

"Because my tires were spinning?" she responds.

Scotty replies, "yes," then asks why she did it. She answers that the pavement was wet and made her lose control. Scotty and I both glance back to where the incident occurred and, as we suspect, there is no sign of the pavement being wet anywhere.

"You shouldn't lie to me," he says to her with detachment.

We walk back to our unit and he writes a citation. A phrase that I've heard the officers use before has now been dramatized for me. This young lady has "flunked the attitude test," and that, as much as her driving behavior, is why she is being cited. To "pass the attitude test" it is not necessary to grovel before an officer, but while I have

never seen anyone successfully talk their way out of a ticket, it's apparently possible to talk your way into one. A random sample of fifty traffic stops, as recorded on the department's P.A. cards, which contain all pertinent data for each activity including disposition, shows that only twenty-four of the fifty stops resulted in a citation being written. The remainder were concluded with either verbal or written warnings or "correction required" notices. An officer may be influenced by any number of factors in deciding whether a violator is to receive a citation or other type of enforcement, but a motorist who lies or who is openly belligerent "flunks the attitude test" and is therefore more likely to receive a citation.

Back in the car, driving around again on our agenda deliveries, we discuss preparations for our upcoming trip. Scotty, Jerry Fuhrman and I are going on an overnight fishing trip to one of the high lakes later this week. Scotty, however, is disappointed that two other officers have cancelled out after first having agreed to come along. Scotty complains that their behavior is symptomatic of the general lack of solidarity within the department. He tells me that, where he used to work, they had a really active officers association which frequently sponsored family oriented social events. I also know that most of his close friends there were other police officers, many of whom have kept in touch and have come to visit him. In Garden Valley, the officers association sponsors events only sporadically, and many of the officers have close friends from outside their work environment.

Scotty clearly views this comparative lack of solidarity as a problem and feels he has discovered the cause.

"It's the staff," he emphasizes. "If you want a promotion

around here, you've got to brown-nose, and then the other guys don't trust you. I don't feel like I can talk freely to all the guys because I know that what I say will get back to the Chief or the Captain." This is a common sentiment I've heard from many of the officers. He continues, "and they'll nail you for anything around here, just for something to do. It's like they dream up ways for how to do a number on one of the guys!"

"Yeah," I have to admit, "there's almost always somebody on the shit list."

This time we are interrupted by the radio.

"Station one to fifty-nine!"

"Go ahead, one," I reply for our unit.

"Yes, fifty-nine, there's a Mr. Graham at 241 South 1st, it's a red house, he says, on the right side, uh, the north side of the street, and he states there's a vehicle that's been speeding there, a Ford pickup, red, that's speeding . . ."

Sherri, the dispatcher, has been on the job for about a month, but apparently hasn't yet caught on that one of her main functions is to translate what information she receives from a complainant into a brief and concise radio message. She often hogs the air for what seems like minutes before you can figure out what the point of the whole message is. Scotty shakes his head and rolls his eyes as Sherri goes on with her epic about the speeding vehicle. Alright, so it's a speeding vehicle, red Ford pickup, South 1st, unknown direction of travel.

"Does the complainant want contact?" Scotty asks dispatch.

"That's affirmative," Sherri sing-songs in reply.

Unusual. Complainants on these types of calls generally don't

want the police to come to their door, they just want a patrol car to cruise the area looking for the offender vehicle, which is usually gone. But this time we go and make contact. Mr. Graham is complaining about the driving of his neighbors' son and teenaged friends. He fears for the safety of his small child and others who play on the sidewalks and street in this quiet residential neighborhood. He says he has tried talking to the boy's parents about it, but they're as bad as the kid. The old man became hostile and foul-mouthed right away and, ever since, Junior has made it a point to "flip him off" (an obscene gesture) every time he races past the Grahams' house. A glance at the neighbors' house and yard suggests they are hard-living people, in contrast to the Grahams, who appear to be order-loving "solid citizens." It's another one of those calls common in Garden Valley that involve an irreconcilable clash in lifestyles and values between neighbors.

When we go to contact the neighbors, the Calhouns, Mr. Calhoun does not seem surprised to see policemen at his door and his attitude is aggressive. When he hears we're here because of his son, he shows no further interest. He calls Junior to the door and leaves. Junior says the Grahams are crazy, his car is only noisy.

"It's just noisy, so they think I drive fast," he insists. Scotty clearly doesn't believe him, but recognizes that talking to neither him nor his father will be very effective. He does what he must, warns Junior to drive more slowly and responsibly, and repeats what he told Mr. Graham; that a citizen may issue a traffic citation if he can identify the driver, and take him to court. Junior is not impressed and remarks smartly, "yeah, well then they gotta be able to prove it!" We clear from the house and ask dispatch for Junior's

driving status and a read-out of his record. His license is not currently suspended, but his driving record seems interminable, one of those that are --as the cliche goes-- as long as your arm. If we see him around, we'll watch him. Someone is bound to get him for something.[1]

After the call at the Calhouns the evening has become relatively quiet. We must have passed through downtown at least twenty times. Plenty of time for generalized patrol and easy conversation. If an officer doesn't have a rider, either a Reserve like myself or a law enforcement student from the community college or an interested citizen, it can get pretty hard to stay alert on a slow night in Garden Valley. The town only covers 2.5 square miles. If you drive down every one of the streets, it's about forty miles total. There are rules against listening to any commercial radio station in the patrol car. Suddenly we are roused by an urgent dispatch: "Station one to all units, fight in progress at Biff's Market!"

"Hot" calls, or those involving on-going violence or crime, are usually dispatched in this manner rather than being assigned to a specific unit. It ensures that the nearest unit in the area will respond, and also that there will be speedy back-up. Hot calls are rare, so everyone usually wants to get in on the action, everyone on duty plus a couple of the Reserves who regularly listen to their police scanners at home. The responding officers acknowledge such a message by indivi-

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[1]At a later time when I was with the Detectives, I accompanied one on an investigation of an incident which nearly errupted into mob violence against the police. It began with a confrontation between the Grahams and the Calhouns after Junior, speeding again, allegedly almost struck the Grahams' son. Both Calhouns, Junior and Senior, were arrested on several charges while a group of their angry friends sought to get involved.

dually announcing their locations over the radio and stating they are en route to the scene. The last unit to acknowledge customarily asks the dispatcher whether there is any additional information available. Tonight she responds that the report she received was of three men assaulting the store counter clerk.

Scotty and I are the first to arrive and as we approach we see a small crowd of about fifteen people clustered around the store's entrance. We immediately get out of the unit, but, before plunging into the crowd, Scotty hesitates for a moment to scan the area. We don't want to dive in only to discover there is too much for us to handle alone, nor do we want to overlook any possible violence not in the immediate area of the crowd. There is no sign of three people beating up on anyone. The only struggle we see is of a young man in a white apron, apparently the store clerk, who is straining to hold another young man against the fender of a car on the edge of the crowd. Both of them are bleeding profusely from cuts and scrapes on their faces and arms, and the man in the apron is shouting for us to come over. By now, Greg Thatcher, a Reserve officer, has arrived in a second patrol car and the three of us hasten to the two combatants. The store clerk is eager to release his captive into our charge, and I quickly realize how difficult it is to subdue without injuring someone who is determined to resist. Scotty yells for the man to quiet down, but the latter barrages us with profanity and threatens us as he tries to twist and punch his way back to his opponent. He'll have to be wrestled to the ground before he quits, but we all want to avoid the spectacle of three cops piled up on a single person. It will have to be done as swiftly and cleanly as possible. Thatcher grabs the man's

arms, I lift his feet so he can get no purchase for running or kicking, and Scotty presses his flashlight-baton to the man's throat. The pressure against the carotid arteries causes faimting within seconds, and our prisoner is unconscious long enough to get him handcuffed and secured in the back of one of the police cars.

Now we have to find out what the fight was all about. For all we know, the fellow in the car may not have started it at all, although he is certainly going to be charged with resisting arrest and probably with assaulting a police officer, too. Whether innocent of any initial wrongdoing or not, one generally doesn't wrestle with the police in Garden Valley without serving some time for it. The local judge has, at times, made himself unpopular with the officers by stating, for example, that they must expect and endure verbal harrangues and insults of all kinds from members of the public as part of their job; but he is supportive when it comes to physical threats, and does not countenance any physical resistance or violence against a police officer. Scotty, Thatcher and I are all smeared with dirt and blood, happily not our own, but there is no chance to clean up. Thatcher will transport the subject to jail and write a supplementary report. Scotty and I will be responsible for the main report. We turn our attention to the clerk and also search the crowd for any good witnesses to the event. The clerk tells us that three men who were buying beer began to insult his girlfriend, who was standing near him at the counter. He told them to shut up, and the ensuing verbal exchange errupted in violence. According to his girlfriend and a witness from the crowd, the fight was started by the customers. One of the three fled as soon as blows were exchanged and a second fled when he heard the police sirens. It takes nearly an hour just to

gather and put together this information. Of course, all the witnesses and onlookers are excited and curious, and try to detain us for as long as possible so they can find out more from us. But we head for the station to write our report.

My report is only supplementary to Scotty's major effort, so I'm soon finished. I decide to get a couple of Cokes for Scotty and myself. As I head for the vending machine in the employee's lunchroon downstairs, I hear talking and laughter from what sounds like quite a few people. I realize it must be after 11:00 P.M. since, aside from Scotty, everyone else from swing shift is down here: Ryan Emmerick, the Watch Commander; Greg Thatcher; the dispatcher and a new trainee. There is also an officer from graveyard shift, and Frank Sattler, a County Deputy. I'd seen Sattler upstairs just a little earlier when he was bringing in someone he'd arrested for drunk driving. The deputies who police the large rural area surrounding Garden Valley operate out of a small office that is next to the lobby area of the police department, so it is not uncommon to find them at the station. They also use Garden Valley's jail as a holding facility for prisoners who will later be transported to the county jail twenty miles away. And, like the State Police nearby, they use Garden Valley's breathalyzer. The present conversation is, in fact, about the breathalyzer, a device which measures blood alcohol content and to operate requires that the subject blow steadily for at least ten seconds into a tube attached to the machine. Sattler's drunken driver refused to "blow" tonight, even though he was duly informed that submission to the test is required by State law. Now, because of his refusal, his driver's license will be automatically suspended for 90 days. Emmerick recalls a man he once

arrested who was so drunk it was improbable he understood anything that was said or read to him. He obviously mistook the purpose of the breathalyzer and insisted on blowing into it repeatedly in an attempt to obtain a higher reading! In jocund imitation, Emmerick broadly slurs: "Lemme have the sunuvabitch again, I wanna break the record!"

Frank Sattler follows with one of his favorite drunk driver stories. He'd been tailing a car that was weaving badly until it swerved off the road and became mired in a ditch where its tires continued spinning without traction. Frank got out of his patrol car and jogged up alongside the immobilized car, ordering the driver to stop. The bleary-eyed driver, still giving it gas and gripping the steering wheel, was obviously unaware that he had left the road and was no longer moving. He squinted at his speedometer, then gaped at Frank: "Sunuvabitch, how fast you runnin'? An' you ain't even breathin' hard! Damn, I better pull over!"

Day Shift

Today I am riding with Kirk Martin, who has recently been transferred to day shift. There is no regular pattern of shift rotation. One officer may remain on a given shift for many months while another may be constantly reassigned to a new shift. A number of considerations go into determining each month's patrol schedule: who will be sent to the Academy, who will be attending classes at the community college, who will be on vacation or leave, etc. Also, certain assignments are based on the staff's desire to more closely observe specific personnel, either to get better acquainted with someone who appears to be a good prospect for advancement, or to keep an eye on someone whose behavior they feel

needs tighter supervision. In this case, Kirk is in the latter category. He especially dislikes day shift.

"Yeah," he tells me, "I'm on the shit list again, and I didn't even do anything! Well, I'll just keep low profile for awhile. I bet I've got more 'aw shits' 'letters of reprimand' than anybody in my file, but I've got alotta 'attaboys' 'letters of commendation' too. The trouble is, around here, one 'aw shit' cancels out all your 'attaboys!'" So the game plan for today is to keep low profile.

We drive past my residence to look at the wild duck that Renate has raised as a pet. When landscaping was being completed at the new city hall site, earthmoving equipment disturbed and drove a duck from its nest in the shrubbery, and Chief Favor rescued the single duckling that later hatched in the abandoned clutch. Renate can't resist an orphaned animal. Kirk, too, is a great animal lover. He would always rather find a home for a stray than turn it over to the County Animal Control Agency. We talk about animals, various wildlife and their habitats. Inspired by our conversation, he drives to a house on 4th Street, where an elderly couple live with a woolly monkey. Kirk knows the people, and they are glad to have us as visitors. We play with Nitty, who is still playful even though she is getting old and is nearly blind. Her owners take enormous pleasure in recitations of her history, habits and tricks. We leave with an invitation from them to stop by and see her again soon.

Kirk also knows some people in town who raise exotic birds, but they probably won't be home during the day. We can go see them some other time. We drive around. It is amazing how much traffic there is in this town's small downtown section. Garden Valley's rate of motor

vehicle accidents, specifically those involving fatalities and serious injuries, has zoomed within the last year.

"They really oughta put a light here. I don't know how many times I've told them that," Kirk says at a busy intersection. The dispatcher relays a report of a shoplifter in custody at the Shopwell Market, but another officer takes the call. We drive by Shopwell and see that the other officer is Code 4 (needs no assistance). The suspect is a boy of about thirteen. Kirk knows the family.

"Boy, is his old man gonna be happy when he finds out," he says ominously. We drive around some more until the other officer has cleared from his juvenile custody and then, since it is close to lunchtime, we head for the Dairy Queen. On Main Street we pass the Chief's car. Corporal Kreuzer is with him and they are evidently going to lunch together. Kreuzer does not work day shift, but he often visits with the Chief at the station and at home. Some of the officers grudgingly refer to him as "the Chief's fair-haired boy." It is clear to everyone that he is being groomed for the next promotion. Kirk notices and acknowledges them in passing, then expresses the popular sentiment: "That guy's got his nose so far up the Chief's ass, he oughta have turn signals so you can see where he's going!"

At the lunch counter Kirk engages in friendly banter with the waitress and several other patrons. Obviously many citizens enjoy talking to or being seen talking to a uniformed police officer, for it seems they usually try to drag it out for as long as the officer is willing. Kirk certainly knows and is known by alot of people in the community. From what I have been able to determine, he has by far the most extensive informant network of all the officers. At the same time,

he has been criticized for becoming too personally involved with the public.

After lunch we head back towards downtown. In the slow-moving traffic we are hailed by a pedestrian and pull over to the curb so Kirk can talk with the man. Over the sound of the now rather busy police radio, I can only catch drifts of their conversation, which seems to have something to do with a dispute with a neighbor over a boundary fence.

"Let me know how it works out," says to the man as we pull away to resume our routine patrol. "I'll have to take you by his place sometime, Chris. You should see his gun collection, it's fantastic. He's got . . ." As often happens during busy times --and this afternoon has turned out to be a busy one-- our conversation is interrupted by the radio. The dispatcher tells us to respond to a house on Willoughby to handle an animal problem. Kirk acknowledges the call over the radio, saying we are en route, and asks for further details. As the dispatcher does not respond immediately, Kirk graons, "Oh shit, probably another old lady bitchin' about some dog crappin' in her yard!" For the most part, calls on day shift are usually dull, involving what would be called minor complaints. However, to the complainant, a bothersome dog is at that time a major concern and the police officer who responds knows he is going to get an earfull. One of the most frustrating things about animal complaints such as a barking dog or a dog at large is that, for the police officer, it is often a no-win situation. The complainant is usually very emotional, worked up about a situation which has been going on for some time but has finally become so intolerable that the police are called.

"What can happen to me if I shoot that damn dog? Can they sue me?" is often one of the first things the officer hears from the angry citizen. Yet, while the caller may be enraged enough to consider such desperate measures, he or she will most often reject the officer's invitation to come to the station to sign a complaint against the animal's owner. "I don't want trouble with them," is the likely response. "I don't want them to know it was me who called you. Can't the police do anything?" The complainant wants to remain anonymous and refuses to comply with the required procedure, and displaces his/her anger onto the police ("What do I pay my taxes for?")

To our happy surprise, the dispatcher informs us that the residence on Willoughby is occupied by two elderly women who reported not a dog but a rattlesnake in their yard.

"A rattlesnake?" Kirk repeats incredulously. He's lived here most of his life, and he's never heard of a rattelsnake being seen in town. The closest he's heard of them being spotted was in the hills that are quite a distance from the city. As we drive to the location of the call, we talk about the fertile imaginations of elderly people and some of the crazy calls we've gone on in the past. But as we pull into the driveway, Kirk recognizes one of the two women standing out front and changes his mind. "Hey, that's Mrs. Daven. I know her, and I know she's not nuts!"

After exchanging brief greetings, Kirk asks Mrs. Daven if she's sure it's a rattlesnake. She replies without hesitation that she knows nobody ever sees rattlesnakes in town anymore, but she knows what one looks like, and there's one in her yard. When they first saw the snake, the women told their neighbors about it, who urged them to call the police.

Now there are also two men from next-door standing around the driveway. Kirk, still skeptical but now more cautious, asks the women to show us where the snake is. Before we invade the backyard with improvised snake-catching equipment or pistols at the ready, we want to be sure there is really something there. It is quite a procession: Kirk and I go first, taking one step at a time, scanning the yard; the two women behind us, warning us to be careful; and then, further back, the two men, who although they didn't offer any help are willing spectators. Shortly, Mrs. Daven points to the base of a rosebush and indicates it is there, in the same place where she had first discovered it. Without a doubt, there is a snake coiled where she pointed, it's color and markings are distinctly those of a rattler. Kirk tells everyone to stay put and the two of us move a few steps closer. Suddenly he turns to me, grinning broadly, "You know what that is?" Before I can answer, one of the men calls out, "That ain't no snake, that's an ashtray!" It is.

The man explains that a long time ago he had bought the very realistic looking cold ceramic at a garage sale with the idea of frightening his wife with it. She had since banished it to their garage, where he suspects one of the kids had found and decided to use it to scare the old ladies. We all laugh with relief, and Kirk is glad that even the "victims" can find humor in the situation. The man promises to have some words with the kids, and we simply confiscate the ashtray to prevent a recurrence, and leave.

That was a good one. Back to the station to share it. We repeat the story several times as our audience grows, and it gets better with every telling. The Chief, who thinks it is hilarious, takes us to the other side of City Hall to tell it to the ladies in the Water

Department. When we hear Kirk's call number over the portable radio, followed by a message of a minor traffic accident ("fender-bender") obstructing traffic at 6th and Seneca, the two of us take off to get back into the patrol car. As we rush through the P.D. we meet Renate coming out of her office.

"What happened with the rattlesnake?" she asks. She hasn't heard the story yet, but there's no time to tell.

"It was an ashtray!" I call to her as we hurry out the door. Her quizzical echo remains behind. "An ashtray?"

Another Day

In the week or so that we've been riding together, I've gotten to know and like Spencer Collins quite well. William Muir would probably call him the ideal officer, a true "streetcorner politician." Spence used to work in a large police department in California before he and his wife decided they would like to try a different lifestyle in a small rural community. They have invested in the development of Montebello, an ideally self-contained and self-sufficient "utopian" community that is to be constructed not far from town. Spence likes people and likes the people-part of police work. The staff likes to assign him as a coach for new officers and, indeed, he is a natural teacher with excellent skills (although at times I feel like I could do with less didacticism from him).

Today Spence feels he has gathered enough information to begin clearing a theft case he has been working on. Earlier this week, $75 disappeared from the counter of the local stationery store after a customer had put the cash down in payment of a previous bill. The shop-

keeper didn't take the time to put the money away before helping the customer locate something else in another part of the store. It wasn't until some time after the customer left that the shopkeeper remembered the $75 and realized it was gone. During his first interview with the victim, Spence learned that there was only one other person in the store around the time of the incident; a likely suspect, a white male in his early twenties, medium height, slender build, shoulder-length blond hair, clean appearance. Spence tried the description out on some of the other officers and Kirk Martin, who can put names and faces together like nobody I've ever known, suggested Timmy Drew. Timmy had come from a good family background, but got hooked on drugs in Viet Nam. Since his return from the service, he's been involved in some pharmacy burglaries and other thefts. He's recently married and seems to sincerely want to straighten himself out, but it is conceivable that if an opportunity like that in the stationery store presented itself, it might just be too tempting to resist.

Today we'll do a follow-up with the victim. At the start of business hours we go to the stationery store, where Spence informs the owner he has a pretty good idea who took the money. However, there is not enough evidence for prosecution.

"Unless the guy admits he did it, which is unlikely," Spence tells the shopkeeper, "there's not much chance of the case holding up in court. As I see it, if we try to go to court with what we've got, you'll just lose all the way around." The shopkeeper looks dejected at the forecast.

"But," Spence continues, "if you're interested simply in getting your money back, there might be a chance we can do that."

The victim's demeanor brightens, as he affirms that he is primarily interested in recovering his money. "If the guy's willing to give it back," he says, "then I'm willing to give him a break. We can just forget the whole thing." It is a common sentiment among theft victims.

"Alright then," Spence says, "let me handle it, give it a try. If we can get the money back for you, we'll just leave it at that, O.K.?" The victim readily agrees he will not pursue any legal action or seek to learn the suspect's identity.

We leave the store and go to a location where Timmy Drew's father is employed as a supervisor. Even though we already know that Timmy works there too, Spence asks Mr. Drew if he would tell us where his son works so we can talk with him. Mr. Drew is worried.

"Why, he's not in any trouble, is he?" he asks.

"Oh, no," Spence replies convincingly. "We just need to check out some information and thought he might be able to help us."

With undisguised curiosity and concern, Mr. Drew directs us to where we can find Timmy. Timmy is surprised and nervous at our appearance. We find someplace private and Spence addresses the young man in his usual soft-spoken tone. His manner is polite and casual, yet firm and direct. He dispenses with questions and accusations and gets right to the point.

"The other day when you were in the staionery store," he begins, "some money was taken from the counter. No one is saying that you were involved, but if you were there you could, of course, be considered a possible suspect. The store owner called the police because he wants his money back. I imagine if he could somehow get his money back, the

whole thing would probably stop right there. So, if you know anything or can think of anything in the next day or so that might help us, it would sure make things easier on everybody. If it can be helped, there's really no reason to make a big deal out of this."

Timmy's reaction doesn't surprise us.

"Well, I don't know what you're talking about," he says with feigned aloofness. "I couldn't tell you if I was in the store a couple of days ago or not. I just don't remember. Are you saying I did something?"

Spence assures him he is not being accused of anything, and repeats that if the money were recovered, there would be no further mention of the incident to anyone; in fact, there would be no police record relating to Timmy at all with regard to this incident, not even of our visit with him today. Timmy appears a little more relaxed now, and I can't help being struck by the artlessness of his defense. Still protesting complete innocence, he volunteers that he won't get paid for another three days, "so I couldn't do anything even if I was involved."

"Well, three days won't do us any good," replies Spence. "Unless the money's back by tomorrow, we'll have no choice but to go ahead with a formal investigation."

Timmy's attitude is concilliatory.

"What would be the best way for somebody to return the money?" he asks, conspicuously using the third person. Spence mentions some alternatives; maybe slip it under the door after closing time. Spence gets up, repeats his hope for a speedy resolution of the matter, and the two of us leave.

Back in the unit, we inform dispatch that we are clear. When I

ask Spence why he insisted that the money be returned by tomorrow, he says he didn't want Timmy to have three days to reconsider his apparent decision to give it back. There is really no way of legally applying pressure to him, since there is no tangible evidence against him. We'll have to trust that he wants badly enough to keep his family from finding out anything about it.

"The kid stole $75, he can come up with $75," Spence believes. "His father obviously cares about him, let him borrow the money from him."[1]

The dispatcher informs us that Fredericks Funeral Home has requested an escort in about fifteen minutes. Spence instructs her to "have them call back when they're ready to go." It is more like half an hour before dispatch recontacts us and sends us to Fredericks. Driving at a snail's pace, we accompany the procession of cars to the city limits at the south end of town from where the cemetery is just a short trip. When we are through, Spence asks dispatch whether there are any further calls pending --there aren't-- and requests clearance for our Code 10. He invites me to his home where he usually eats, rather than go to a restaurant as many officers do. His wife prepares a vegetarian lunch and eats along with us, sharing in our conversation. She is somewhat of an activist in the community and is intrigued with my research project. She itemizes a whole list of things I should "expose" when I write up the study. The conversation strays from the

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[1]On the next day's follow-up with the victim, we learned that the money had indeed been returned overnight. It was the correct amount. Spence wrote a disposition report stating the property had been recovered and the victim did not wish prosecution. Status: Cleared Exceptional. There is no mention of Timmy Drew anywhere in the report.

topic of police as I find myself complimenting Spence and his wife on their beautiful home. I knew he remodeled the house himself and am really impressed. It turns out he moonlights regularly and has done several remodeling jobs in town. I ask for a few tips about a job I'm doing at home and he is more than glad to give advice. Before long, I find myself on a tour of the house, Spence explaining the various things he's done. We're not through with the tour when he realizes that our half-hour lunch period is over. He takes the portable radio off his belt and informs the dispatcher we are clear. A few minutes later, we leave the house and resume patrol. It is still lunch period at the high school, so we pass by to check out the traffic situation there. The Lieutenant has issued a memo ordering patrol checks of the area during this time due to repeated complaints from school officials and local residents about speed contests and other displays of careless driving. However, it's pretty quiet today. We don't find a single offender.

As we drive around town, Spence has plenty of time to quiz me on patrol procedures. He likes to present me with hypothetical situations and ask how I think I would react in them. Above all, he stresses the importance and efficacy of talk. He is a model of physical fitness and well qualified as an instructor in defensive and baton tactics. Some of the other guys have said he's a good one to avoid fighting with. He himself says that on any call --unless it already involves violence when you arrive-- talk should be enough to handle the problem. He also constantly tests my powers of observation. We drive down a residential block and he'll suddenly ask, "What was that man doing on the roof?" I'm embarassed. What man? What roof? Policemen are famous for their

"sixth sense," an uncanny ability to discover a problem before it happens. Some others who have studied the police have discussed this, and I've also learned that the elusive sixth sense is really just a trained and concentrated power of observation, honed by experience and practice (Goldstein).

Spence is good at being able to define and articulate what he thinks makes a good police officer, and conveys a very professional self-image. My lesson is interrupted by the radio. Our unit is instructed to return to the station and contact the Chief's secretary. Spence wonders what the Chief would want with him. He cannot think of anything he's done that would bring him to the attention of the staff. With a shrug he says "Well, let's see what they want," and heads towards the station. Every officer with whom I've ridden during day shift makes an effort to spend as little time at the station as possible. During the weekend, when the place is deserted except for the dispatcher and maybe a jailor, hanging out at the station can be a regular pastime. But during the week, the atmosphere is one of a busy office, with almost everyone there holding down "desk jobs." There are secretaries and civilians, and the presence of the Chief, Captain, Lieutenant, and detectives --who, by their automatic corporal status, can "pull rank" on the patrolman-- make the officer feel uncomfortably outnumbered by superiors.

When we present ourselves outside the Chief's office at the secretary's desk, she hands over a piece of paper.

"The Chief wants you to take this to Merken's and get a waste-basket for his office."

Spence looks at the purchase order and asks, "isn't there someone

else who could do that?"

"The Chief told me to give it to you," is the reply.

Spence conceals his annoyance. I can appreciate the irony in the situation. It's pretty hard to reconcile a professional self-image with running coolie errands. When ambitious rookie Jason Perry was being trained on day shift, he was appalled at being sent to pick up some overdue library books at the request of the city's head librarian.

"I couldn't believe they actually expect cops to do things like that," he told me with dismay. However, seasoned officers know and resignedly accept that on day shift there's alot of "bullshit."

In the Still of the Night (Graveyard)

Officer Byron Hall, physically unimposing and personally withdrawn, is somewhat of a mystery. He is a good organizer, superb at paperwork, and is constantly recruited by one or another staff member to assist in their projects. (My wife, who likes Byron and knows him on the job, takes exception to this last phrase. "What do you mean 'assist'?" she exclaims. "He ghost-writes for them!") He also reads a great deal and is envied by many of his co-workers for his eloquent verbal skills. One must admire his ability to gain the public's co-operation through his gift of gab but, some wonder, what is an intellectual doing in police work? There is no hint of physical strength or stamina in his image.

"I like the guy, I think he's brilliant," says one plain-spoken officer of him, "but in a fight, he'd be as useless as tits on a snake!" It is true, Byron --short, stout, and impeccably groomed to the tips of his finely manicured fingers-- looks out of place in a police uniform.

I can't agree with those who charge that Byron is only here to look for a promotion to an administrative position, not only because he has told me outright that this is not so, but because he actually seems to strive for anonymity within the department. He does not want to be "pegged" by anyone as anything. When the officers association votes on critical matters, he abstains. When the department's annual group portrait was taken, I could have sworn I saw him purposely duck behind a taller man; at any rate, he is the merest shadow in the photo. And, while he always expresses interest and support for my study, he never wants to make any contribution whatsoever when I ask him, as I do everyone, whether there is any direction he would like to see the research take, any item he thinks should be included. He is glad to help people out at work, but otherwise keeps to himself. He is determined to stay out of the department's internal politics.

Graveyard has just begun and Byron and I are driving through the darkened residential streets of town. He has been assigned to graveyard for what seems like forever. Our conversation is friendly and animated. I am surprised at Byron's revelation that he was once a disc jockey, among other things. The only other man on duty with us tonight is Jason Perry, whom Byron formerly coached and who has not long been on his own as an officer. Jason is one of several rookies whom I've observed throughout the entire course of study, and he has much in common with the others. For one thing, he is very eager to act in his new role (some people call this "hot dogging"), and we are not surprised when, just moments after coming on duty, he radioes that he is out with a suspicious person two blocks from the police station. He asks our unit to come to his location for back-up, although we were on the way as soon

as we heard he was stopped; Byron still feels responsible for him. The suspicious person is a drunk, weaving his way on foot from a nearby tavern. His behavior is obnoxious but he is not deliberately offensive. He keeps repeating that he "can't get over it that this guy" (Jason, who looks quite young) "is really a cop."

"What do you think we should do with this gentleman?" Jason asks with remarkable dignity as we pull up.

"What do you think you should do?" Byron retorts pedantically. The man is not nearly as drunk as most of those who are taken into custody for non-criminal intoxication. The usual "detox," as they are called, is so stupefied he knows neither who nor where he is, and doesn't care where he's going.

"Should we take him in for detox?" Jason asks. Byron silently echos the question mark with raised eyebrows.

"Or do you think we should just send him home?" Jason persists.

Byron wants Jason to make the decision.

"You initiated the contact," he tells him patiently, "use your discretion." Byron lets him think about it for awhile, then asks, "Are you going to transport?"

"Na, we'll just give him a talk and tell him to go home. Maybe keep an eye on him to make sure he gets there O.K." Jason decides. We drive away, leaving Jason to handle it himself.

Instantly our unit is dispatched to an in-progress call. The chance to catch a thief in the act is something that would excite most officers at Garden Valley, but Byron's face remains calm and impassive. Dispatch informs us that the complainant has under current observation a man who is siphoning gasoline from a car parked in front of his house.

He has been watching the operation from the time the thief first arrived in his pickup truck until the present. Byron instructs dispatch to re-contact the complainant by phone so we can plan our approach to the scene with his guidance. This sounds like a good idea to me, and I expect we'll want to split up and approach from two different directions. Byron could let me out ahead, I'll take the portable radio and he can use the car radio so we can coordinate our efforts. This is the strategy I anticipate based on my experiences with other officers responding to similar in-progress crimes. It's very much like stalking game. But I should have known that peering around corners and creeping on all fours is not Byron's style, especially when the crime is so petty. We're not going to play cops and robbers here. That's kid stuff.

Byron approaches slowly and cautiously without activating his overhead lights, but he evidences nothing of the hunters instinct. We drive to the location, spot the victim vehicle and see a young man crouching near the rear of it. Byron gets out of the unit and calls to the suspect, telling him to stand up and raise his hands. Nice try. Instead, the young man runs and the two of us take off after him in pursuit. The chase is soon abandoned. Byron is no athlete and does not go very far or fast before he tires. We have only one portable radio between us, so if we split up on foot, we'll have no way to communicate with each other. Also, it is a dark, overcast night, and the area is criss-crossed by narrow, unpaved alleys that parallel the streets, and an undeveloped wooded area is only two blocks away. The thief has an excellent head start.

Byron is not concerned with mounting an immediate chase. He tells me to take the portable radio and check the immediate area while

he goes to collect evidence from the scene. I carefully poke around the yards and alleys but find nothing and shortly return to the scene. There I find Byron talking with the citizen who reported the incident and who is annoyed we weren't able to catch the suspect. In his view we blew the perfect chance (in fact, he will make a complaint about it to the Chief). Byron briefly interrupts his conversation and tells me to place the five-gallon gas can and hose that the suspect was using in the patrol car as evidence. I'm also to collect the gas cap from the victim vehicle and attempt to contact the owner. I'm talking to the car's owner when Byron rejoins me. The owner is glad we've saved his gas and is happy to let us check the gas cap for fingerprints.

As we walk back to the unit together, Byron explains what's happening. First, the complainant says he can positively identify the gas thief if we can apprehend him. Byron believes we can, because we have his truck; if it is, in fact, his truck. It could be stolen. We radio the dispatcher and ask for a Code 7 and 8 on the license number, and are told that it is not listed as stolen, and is registered to a Danny Clayton. A check of Clayton's operator license record through a computerized inquiry to the Department of Motor Vehicles yields an age and physical description that matches the complainant's description of the suspect. We search the truck and find Clayton's wallet in the glove box. To double check that the truck has not been stolen, Byron asks the dispatcher to telephone Clayton's residence to confirm the whereabouts of the truck. After a brief delay, dispatch replies that Clayton's father said Danny took the truck into town about two hours ago and hasn't returned yet. We are now fairly certain we will have little trouble "solving" this crime.

We walk in the direction that the suspect fled and, after going half a block, Byron stops to make an announcement. His words ring out through the quiet night air:

"Mr. Clayton, we're leaving now and we're going to impound your truck. It would be to your advantage to come with us!"

It is not long before we are approached by the suspect, Danny Clayton. He pretends he was in the neighborhood visiting friends and has no idea what is going on. When I ask him who and where he visited, he claims he doesn't know their last name and can't remember exactly which house it was. We place him under arrest for theft and take him to the station. He insists he's innocent. We learn he is a recently discharged Viet Nam veteran, and Byron is sympathetic. He tells him not to worry; the theft is only a misdemeanor and, since he has no previous record, the judge will probably not sentence him to any jail time as long as he expresses regret for his actions. He'll probably just be fined the amount of bail, $105. In the jail, Danny phones his father and has a rather long conversation with him. His father will be coming to the station to bail him out.

Byron likes to type his reports, and goes back to the squad room to get started. From past experience, I know he will be at this for at least an hour. He writes excellent reports, but I don't feel like sitting and watching him this time. I decide I'll switch over to the other unit and ride with Jason. I go to tell the dispatcher of the change. The dispatchers' shifts overlap with the officers', so Kate --who was on duty when we started our shift-- is no longer here. Todd, the regular graveyard dispatcher, calls Jason back to the station to pick me up, then asks slyly whether we will be passing by the all-night

market soon. He's a confessed "junk food junkie," and I guess his order.

"You want a bag of Frito's?"

"And a package of licorice; black, if they have it."

Two dispatchers recently quit because they were pregnant, and Todd has taken some kidding because of his peculiar appetites for certain foods in the middle of the night.

"You sure you're not pregnant, too?" someone is bound to ask when he sends us out for burritos and pecan pies, and other exotic combinations. The fact is, he is bored.

Jason stops his unit in the car port next to the station and radioes: "72 to station one, tell 516 I'm on the side." I join him and, over and over, we cruise the length of Main Street. Jason is hunting for cars. His is the predatory manner I've recognized in other rookies, too. I've observed various officers "work traffic" in various ways. For the sake of simplicity, I could narrow it down to three different styles: routine, opportunistic, and predatory. Routine traffic is what I'd call the kind of activity most officers identify as "working traffic." That is, they have decided to concentrate on enforcement of traffic laws and place themselves where they are most likely to find violators, such as working radar from a blind, or checking busy intersections downtown where motorists might disobey traffic signals or make illegal turns (to the motorist, this might seem predatory, but to the officer it is routine). Opportunistic enforcement takes place when an officer makes a car stop on account of a violation he happened to observe in the course of some other activity not related to working traffic. The style which I've called predatory consists of using traffic violations as an excuse,

a foot in the door, so to speak; a means to look for some other crime, some "action." Perhaps there will be drugs or alcohol in the car, or maybe the driver or an occupant is wanted on an outstanding warrant.

Jason perks up when we spot a carfull of juveniles. It is driven by Sonny Kane, a good reason, Jason thinks, to pull the car over and get a look inside. Sonny is sixteen years old and has previously been arrested for curfew violation, illegal possession of alcohol and marijuana, and burglary. We begin to follow close behind, and Jason makes a remark I've heard before.

"You know, if you follow any car long enough, you're bound to find something you can pull it over for." It's not hard this time. Sonny's car is in violation of one of the numerous seemingly insignificant laws of the State motor vehicle code that many citizens ignore; no license plate light. We make the car stop, but find no contraband or anything of further interest. Disappointed, Jason issues Sonny a "correction required" notice. He must repair the license plate light within so many days or he will be cited. Sonny was lucky this time. Maybe Jason will be lucky next time.

New officers might hunt for action, like Jason did when he pulled over Sonny Kane, in the hope of getting into something that will look good on their "stats" (activity and arrest statistics). But there is another reason, too. When a rookie in Garden Valley first starts driving solo, he has usually been in uniform for only a couple of months and previously operated as the junior member of a two-man team. He has yet to really learn how to excercise his lawful authority as a police officer. For instance, most new officers, myself included, are nervous the first few times they ask for a motorist's license and registration, and this is

one of the most routine police-citizen interactions. The officer must learn how much authority the uniform and the role actually give him, and must cultivate a comfortable self-image which incorporates that authority. This is best achieved through practice, and an easy way to get practice is to make traffic stops (and traffic stops and traffic stops and traffic stops. . .) Almost like frisky pups, indefatigably zealous rookies are at first benignly tolerated by experienced peers and supervisors; but a new officer is expected to outgrow this behavior. Jason is only twenty-one years old, but is in many ways mature beyond his years. He will be a fine officer in a very short time. For some, it takes much longer. Skip Ford is a young but no longer so inexperienced officer who still acts like a "hot dog." I once overheard a Watch Commander tell him to "cut out the chintzy traffic stops."

"What do you mean?" Skip asked innocently.

"You know what I mean. Don't write a ticket for every diddly-shit offense, like no license plate light!" the Corporal replied bluntly. Skip betrayed his predatory motive with his defense: "Why not? You'd be surprised how many good busts I've gotten out of no license plate lights!"

Well, back to Jason. After a few more uneventful passes through the downtown area, we stop at the store for coffee, and I pick up the snacks that Todd had asked for. We pull into a parking lot which gives us a good view of the major intersection in town. As we drink our coffee, Jason watches the streets, then concludes "it's getting pretty slow already. Let's check the businesses." He starts up the unit and we head for the alleys behind Main Street to start our security checks. Main Street is paralleled on both sides by narrow, dimly lit alleys.

The conditions here make one stare in disbelief at the local merchants' apparent disregard for security. While most of the Main Street business owners have remodeled and improved the store fronts of the rather old buildings, the backdoors which open onto the alleys appear in most cases to still be the originals. Old and worn, many of the doors look as though they would yield to a good kick or a crowbar and, for most locks, an icepick or even a large thumbnail is probably as good as a key. Like anyone on graveyard, Jason always makes a few rounds of security checks. Besides the Main Street area, almost every commercial establishment, church, school, doctor's office, and city property are patrolled nightly.

The security checks usually consist of a slow drive past the building, with the officer using the searchlight that is mounted on the patrol unit to examine doors and other possible points of entry. If an officer wants to make the effort and get out of the unit to rattle doorknobs, there are always unlocked doors and windows to be found. The police patrol patterns must be effective, because on the few occasions when downtown establishments have been burglarized, entry was made through the roof, tunneling under the floor, or through some out-of-the-way window or opening. Jason insists that if a crook were only half as enterprising as the cops in hunting for unsecured premises and vehicles, he could have it made without having to break, pry, crawl or expend effort in anything but stealth. He says countless times he's found new cars at the auto dealerships with the keys in the ignition or readily available in the unlocked office during the night. He brings the keys to the station hoping that business personnel will learn to be more cautious, if for no other reason than to avoid the inconvenience of making the trip to retrieve the keys. Maybe it will work.

Tonight Jason and I can hardly believe what we see when we pass one of the large supermarkets. It is well after midnight and the front door is standing wide open. Jason suspects this is more than a careless employee's oversight; this door was left open by burglars. He radioes for back-up and asks the dispatcher to contact the store manager. While we wait for Byron to arrive, we keep the building under careful surveillance. Neither of us can detect any sign of movement inside, and a quick check of the back door determines it is secured. When Byron shows up, it's agreed he will watch the back door while Jason and I go inside. During the time that we watched the place from outside, we really saw nothing that suggested the supermarket might be occupied. The large parking lot is empty and the surrounding streets are quiet. There is no vehicle nearby that might aid burglars in making a quick escape or in hauling away merchandise. Yet Jason is still very worried that there is more to it than just an open door. Training bulletins and films, as well as pop literature, incessantly warn police officers that their survival is threatened the instant they let down their guard. Never relax. Relaxing can get you killed. You may have gone on a thousand false alarms, but don't assume the next one will be false. Whenever I've gone into unlocked buildings like this with other officers, we have always been cautious, never flippant or careless, and have routinely unsnapped our pistol holsters, just in case. But Jason has actually drawn his gun out and holds it up each time he peers around an aisle. As we creep noiselessly through the darkened supermarket, I think I'm as nervous about being accidentally shot at by him as I ought to be about being attacked by a concealed felon. The feeling is probably mutual. The climax to our search comes when we have covered all the aisles and only

the large walk-in freezer in the storage area at the rear of the store remains to be checked. An ideal place for a burglar to hide. Jason pulls the door open very slowly. The tension has been great. Gripping his revolver in both hands, Jason announces our presence as the door swings open. Is he going to shout "Freeze!"? The hanging carcasses and frozen poultry make no response. There's no one there. Oh well, another dress rehearsal.

Graveyard II

It has been several months now since Jerry Fuhrman was transferred out of detectives back into a uniformed position as patrol supervisor, and the change has worked wonders for his disposition and morale. It is clear that he enjoys being back on patrol again, doing what he believes the police in this town should be doing.

"The best thing for me about being with the dicks," he tells me, "is that I got to work with Ted." Ah yes, Ted; Ted Morgan, the legendary Sergeant Morgan. Morgan is now Chief of Police at another department, but he is remembered as the best supervisor that Garden Valley ever had. In fact, even years after he has left the department, he is still talked about (including by some personnel who scarcely or never even knew him) as the man who could come back and really improve things here if he were appointed Chief. It is a favorite fantasy for some. They say Morgan really knew what police work was about, you could learn alot from him. Most important, as a supervisor, he was considered honest and fair and would always stand behind his men. Since Morgan's resignation, as well as that of another Sergeant, Brent Whitley, the most common complaint among the troops is a lack of leadership and support from the staff.

Morgan and Whitley left the department in the midst of a reorganization which, many feel, had the effect of promoting the wrong people to higher positions. When I ask Jerry how come he has never made it beyond the rank of Corporal, even though he is recognized by others in law enforcement who know him throughout the county and even the state as being an outstanding officer, he just shrugs. He has often wondered that himself. A devoted co-worker speaks up for him with an explanation: "Jerry just doesn't kiss low enough." Staff members call it an attitude problem.

Jerry and I have been on the streets for about an hour tonight, and I can see that my time with him is going to be very instructive. Little things --like the way he holds and carries things, always sure he has a hand free-- give subtle clues that he's an old pro. It is a little after midnight and we've completed security checks at the schools and are headed back to downtown. As we pass the parking lot of the all-night market, we see a souped-up car standing with the hood open. The car is running and the operator is revving the engine for a group of youthful onlookers to see. Jerry drives past, apparently ignoring the scene, and turns the unit behind a store across the street. He extinguishes his lights and slowly drives close to the side of the building and stops. The building has large plate glass windows on the front and on the side, where we are. In the daytime we would be clearly visible from the parking lot across the street. However, in the darkness, the effect is that of a two-way mirror. From our angle we can look through and see the all-night store and its illuminated parking lot without any difficulty, but to anyone looking in our direction from there, the windows offer nothing but a reflection. I ask Jerry what we are watching for and he explains.

"Just watch, that kid's got to show off in front of his friends."

Sure enough, a moment later, the car speeds out of the lot, its tires spinning and burning rubber. The driver then makes an illegal U-turn and accelerates rapidly away from the scene. Jerry is quick to follow but does not immediately activate his overhead lights. First, he wants to pace the speeding car, a necessity if he wants to write a VBR (speeding) citation. We finally match speeds with the car, 65 m.p.h. in a 35 m.p.h. zone, and follow it for the required 1/4 mile. Then we accelerate to catch up with the speeding car but still without activating the emergency lights. The car is still some distance ahead of us and, since we are driving an economy car (a Maverick), Jerry is reluctant to announce our presence until we are right behind it. Other officers, less patient or prudent, often lose speeding cars because they announce their presence too early, and are left behind in a cloud of dust. We're right behind him now, and Jerry activates the overhead lights. No siren is necessary, because the violator pulls over immediately.

The driver turns out to be an extremely rude young man, seventeen years old. Jerry might just have written him a citation and sent him on his way, ignoring the fact that he, as a juvenile, is in violation of the city's curfew ordinance. But because of the boy's attitude, he is determined to get his parents involved. He issues three separate citations (illegal U-turn, VBR, and Careless Driving), instructs him to park and lock his car and come with us to the station. There, he calls the boy's father and asks him to pick up his son. When the man arrives Jerry talks with him and the young man about the latter's driving habits and reminds both of them about the curfew for juveniles before

letting them go home. Maybe after this the kid will be more careful.

Back on the street, Jerry decides to drive through some of the residential areas. After a while, we spot a shabbily dressed young man walking by the roadside. There is really nothing about him that would arouse suspicion, but his presence on the streets this late could be considered unusual. Jerry is going to do an "F.I." or field interview. This simply involves stopping a person and asking him to identify himself and his reason for being where he is, and subsequently recording the information on an F.I. card. While the police have no legal right to stop someone in this manner unless they have reason to believe he or she was involved in some criminal activity, the officers in Garden Valley regard such field interviews as an acceptable and useful procedure. Acceptable because, as some put it, "if it's a law-abiding citizen with nothing to hide, they should be glad to see us patrolling the streets." Useful, because random field interviews have, in fact, led to the later apprehension of burglars and malefactors by confirming their presence in a given location at a certain time. Jerry believes in the value of F.I. stops, but has learned that even law-abiding citizens may become offended and resent such an invasion of privacy. Consequently, he has developed a field interview technique which obscures the actual purpose of his questioning.

We cruise up to the pedestrian and Jerry rolls down his window. He addresses the man from inside the patrol car. This is a passive position for a police officer and usually communicates that nothing serious will be discussed.

"Say, excuse me," he gets the man's attention. "Have you heard any loud noises here in the last few minutes? We got a report of something that sounded like a traffic accident around here."

The man replies he has not, and Jerry asks if he would mind giving us his name and address so we can list it in our report. He would be helping us to document that we were in the area and found nothing. The young man is glad to find us being friendly and seems happy to be in a position where he can do us a favor. He gives us the information, and Jerry draws him into further conversation about what a nice evening it is. Before long, the man volunteers his reason for being out and about at this hour. Soon after we exchange goodbyes with him, Jerry drives a short distance, then stops and removes an F.I. card from his valise and records all the information. My only thought is that his approach is real slick.

Not long after the F.I., Jerry glances at his watch and observes that it's almost 2:00 A.M., the time when the bars close. We're going to look for drunk drivers, or DULI's, as they're known to police throughout the state.[1] Jerry is normally the strong, silent type. I've noticed he's in a good mood tonight, but I'm still quite surprised when he animatedly begins singing. Several times he sings a verse to the tune of Offenbach's "Can Can" (perhaps more familiar to my contemporaries of the television generation as the theme song for the Howdy Doody Show):

It's happy DULI time,
it's happy DULI time;
they're driving everywhere,
and here comes Smokey Bear!

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[1]DULI is a corruption of an anagram once used to denote the statute covering the offense of Driving Under the Influence of Intoxicating Liquor. In recent years, the statute and consequent abbreviation have been changed to include drugs and all intoxicants, not just liquor. But the DULI label remains in common currency.

Jerry's lighthearted attitude is understandable for, while the police certainly recognize that drunk drivers are dangerous, they are also the source of some funny stationhouse anecdotes.

His technique for catching DULI's is not at all subtle. We simply cruise past the bars and, if we see a car leaving one of the lots, we follow it. He sees not reason to be discreet since, as he explains, "a real drunk won't even notice us." Like other experienced officers I have observed, Jerry is not out to catch someone who is just "legally drunk," that is, having a minimum blood alcohol level of .10% as measured by the breathalyzer. He is aware that it is possible to "blow a one-oh" and still drive safely if one is cautious. (On several occasions I rode in moving vehicles with both off-duty police officers and staff members when alcohol was being or had recently been consumed by driver and/or passengers.) Officers like Jerry seek out the drunk driver who is out of control. I've never seen Jerry write a citation for "open container" (having an opened container of beer or other alcohol in a car) unless the driver was also engaged in some violation, like speeding, or appeared to be actually under the influence of the drink. It seems that only the younger officers or "hot dogs" will seize each and every opportunity to write a ticket. While they may enforce the letter of the law, the more seasoned officers enforce the spirit of the law. In a community like Garden Valley, where casual social drinking is an integral part of many adults' lifestyles, such selective enforcement does not seem inappropriate.

Tonight a car pulls out onto the street as we pass Stoney's Bar and Grill. In the few blocks that we follow the car before stopping it it has swerved over the center line of the street three times. The car

is occupied by two persons. The woman in the passenger's seat sits with her back stiff and her arms folded across her chest as she glares at her husband in the driver's seat with silent, undisguised rage. Jerry asks the man to step out of the vehicle to undergo a few field sobriety tests. The man succeeds in getting through a recitation of the alphabet, though a bit slurred, but he cannot keep his balance when Jerry tells him to walk a straight line and then pick up his keys from the ground while standing on one foot. In my view, the tests are a mere formality if Jerry wants to cite the guy. He is, as some officers are fond of saying, clearly "drunk as a skunk."

After putting the man through the tests, Jerry tells him to wait in his car, and we retreat to the patrol unit with his license. A computer check by the dispatcher reveals that our subject has never been cited for driving under the influence. His clean record and the fact that he is accompanied by his wife stir Jerry to give him a break . . . of sorts. Before we return to the stopped car, we sit in the patrol unit with the lights flashing for a few minutes more.

"I'll bet she's really giving it to him," Jerry says. It's an expensive ticket, $305. "Let's give her a little more time." When we do return to the stopped car, Jerry gives the man his license, together with a fairly standard lecture. He concludes with a question directed at the woman.

"How come he's driving instead of you?"

"As him!" she snaps back, nodding towards her husband.

Jerry replies that if they switch places, he will let them go without a ticket, but warns the man sternly that if there is ever a next time, he won't be so lucky. As the couple drives away with the

wife at the wheel, Jerry and I agree that the sentence this drunken driver will get at home will be harsher than what the judge could have meted out.

It is not long after we have cleared from the traffic stop when the dispatcher informs us of a family disturbance in progress at 39 Linden Street. We know the house. It is near the station, one of several to be demolished soon to make room for a new municipal parking lot. The occupants are a hard-living family. We can expect that someone will be drunk. Bud Gentry, the other officer on duty tonight, asks over the radio whether we will want back-up.

"Negative," Jerry replies, "there's two of us already. We'll let you know if we need you to swing by."

As we approach the house, we can hear shouting from inside. The door is opened by a woman who yells at us to "arrest him! He's crazy!" The man to whom she points is plainly intoxicated.

"Get outa my way, pigs, so I can bash her fucking head in like she deserves!"

Jerry's physical presence is imposing. He stands motionless and firm. I notice his muscles are tensed and, as usual, his hands are free. His voice is calm and authoritative.

"You calm down," he says to the man, "I don't want to fight, but if you want to hit her, you'll have to come through me."

He has made it clear the man will have to pass through two armed men to get to his wife. The man is in no mood to fight two policemen, but continues his verbal aggression. He has plenty of steam to blow off, and both we "fucking pigs" and his "goddamn wife" get an ample amount. Jerry tells me to stay inside with the woman while he motions the man

out to the porch. Both can tell their separate stories without having to overshout each other. The woman explains to me that her husband had recently made a promise to her to quit drinking. When he left earlier this evening, ostensibly to visit friends, and didn't return for a long time, she followed up her suspicions and found him at the tavern down the block. They had a mild confrontation there, but when he came home after closing time, he really let loose on her. He hadn't assaulted her, but she feared he would and immediately phoned the police. She says he gets like this every time he starts drinking.

Jerry returns. Standing just inside the doorway where we can keep an eye on both parties, we compare notes in whispered voices. We are sure the fight will only resume as soon as we leave the house. Jerry suggests to the still separated couple that one of them leave the house and stay somewhere else for the night. The woman has cooled down and does not repeat her request that we arrest her husband. It would not help right now. Having him in jail would only increase the family's financial hardship. They would have to come up with bail or do without his earnings during the time he is incarcerated. Our goal is to prevent an assault and maintain peace and order in the neighborhood. Just keep them apart and then, when he's sobered up, they can resolve their difficulties. She says he's the nicest guy in the world, except when he's drinking.

"If you call the station," Jerry tells the woman, "the dispatcher can give you the phone number of somebody in town who works with A.A., if that will help."

The woman is willing to leave the house for tonight, but thinks it's too late to bother relatives or friends. The police department

administers an aid program with funds provided by the Salvation Army and local churches, for persons in need of emergency shelter, food or gasoline. We tell the woman she could probably stay at a nearby motel for free if she wants to go pick up a coupon.

"Aw shit, never mind. I'll go." The man interrupts and leaves on foot.

"I don't know where he's gonna go," the woman remarks to us. She is afraid he will only come back after a short while. She decides to call her sister after all and arranges to stay with her.

While the woman goes about the house getting her two children ready and gathering up some things to take along, we step out on the porch. Jerry radioes Bud Gentry and asks him to cruise the area to keep an eye out for the departed husband. We will wait here until the wife has gone. After awhile, Bud Gentry pulls up and joins us on the porch.

"What was the deal here?" he asks, lighting a cigarette.

"Oh, just pukes," Jerry says wearily.

"Pukes. Typical," Bud replies.

Jerry checks his watch and notices it's time for another jail check. He is conscientious in everything he does and is one of few Watch Commanders who actually do hourly jail checks. It is more usual for personnel to make several periodic checks during a shift and make up the hourly log entries. Of course, the dispatchers have the television screens and intercom which monitor the jail, so it is technically under constant observation. Nevertheless, Jerry faithfully looks in on every prisoner in every cell. He's been in law enforcement too long to take anything for granted. Even in a small facility like Garden Valley's,

there are occasional suicide attempts by inmates.[1] He remembers that, years ago in the old jail, a prisoner hanged himself.

The woman and her kids are ready to leave in her car. I decide to switch cars and ride with Bud for awhile. We cruise through residential neighborhoods and alleyways. Everything's quiet. We talk a little. Bud is one of my favorite people on the force. I find his homespun humor and country manner refreshing. He seems to always be in a good mood, and tends to come across as somewhat naive, the very antithesis of the suspicious and authoritarian cop. Those who know him well know there's more to him than meets the eye. Bud is people-wise. One Bud Gentry story is kind of a classic. He once stopped a motorist for going through a stop sign. During the interminably long time that he was out with this violator, he radioed back such information as "this gentleman don't seem to understand what he done wrong, so I'm gonna take him back to the scene and show him." Other officers who overheard the broadcast rolled their eyes with impatience. When Gentry finally cleared, they pounced on him: "Why didn't you just cite the guy?" They thought he had let the motorist argue and bully him, but Gentry's rationale was in character.

"Aw, he was a big shot, had a big Cadillac with California plates, and two young ladies in the car with him. He was sure in a big hurry. He let me know he had plenty of money, and a little $11 ticket wasn't gonna hurt him none." So Bud made him pay with what he didn't

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[1]There were three attempts during the study. One inmate tried to hang himself with his clothing; another tried to consume the contents of a can of deoderant; and a third, a work release prisoner lodged by the County, actually succeeded in obtaining a blade and cut himself. None were successful, as the police responded immediately in each case.

have . . . time! I'm sure that motorist knew the moral of the story: the fastest way to drive through Garden Valley is slowly!

We cruise through a section near the hospital. There has been a rash of thefts from cars here lately, parts and accessories. Everyone suspects the Bordens, a hard-living family with teenaged sons.

"Yeah, I seen they got an old Dodge in their driveway that they're fixin' up," Bud says. "Probably gettin' the parts from 'Midnight Auto Supply'."

Bud extinguishes his lights on the patrol vehicle as he does for burglar patrol and we slowly drive down an alley. The car's brakes squeal loudly as we stop at the intersecting street. I wince, and Bud grins as he remarks in his typical understated tone:

"Kinda hard to sneak up on 'em when they can hear you comin' from a mile away. City Shops just fixed these brakes about a week ago."

There is a light drizzle of rain now, and it looks like everything is asleep. It'll probably be dead for the rest of the shift until we begin to work traffic again around 5:00 A.M., when the loggers will start driving to work.

CHAPTER VI

INTERNAL POLITICS: A WEB OF CONFLICT

Introductory Comments

If the previous chapter has been successful, it will have conveyed to the reader that to be a good cop in Garden Valley requires a relaxed and friendly demeanor, a personal power of persuasion, and an intimate knowledge of the community, as well as the normal physical skills and mental acumen necessary to the job. Other researchers have recognized these as important in defining the behavioral repertoire of a good policeman. Muir's ideal policeman, the true "streetcorner politician," is one who possesses these traits (pp. 47-58; pp. 144-147). As Muir sees them, these are traits which distinguish the good or the excellent officer from the poor or mediocre one. In Garden Valley, however, they are not merely what makes the difference between good and not-so-good; rather, they are among the traits which are essential for effective community policing. They are, one might say, required courses rather than electives for extra credit. Muir, as has been stated before, conducted his study in a big city, and here again numbers make a difference. Smallness in the size of the police force, as well as in the size of the community, narrows down a multitude of alternatives and possibilities for variability in police behavior. The personnel situation in a small department is not so impersonal and unmanageable as in a large one. A mean or tough cop clearly has no place in Garden Valley, or anywhere.

If such a person should happen to be hired in the small department --as occurred during the fieldwork-- he has no chance to remain undetected. He is soon discovered, by the community and his supervisors and peers, and, if he is not dismissed, inevitably resigns when he finds himself censured and socially isolated from those who might have been his friends. His occupational microcosm offers no cover, and there is no excuse for the department to retain him. So, smallness provides a screen in that regard.

I found it remarkable and encouraging --I might even say inspiring-- that a small agency like Garden Valley was able to attract applicants who were or could become model officers. Nearly all the personnel I met and came to know were people with integrity who liked the community, professed a personal and professional commitment to what they were doing, and were willing to work for relatively low pay.[1] The argument that the nature of police work itself is such that it can turn even good cops into bad cops finds little support in the small town environment, where the common occupational hazards that might produce such a change are reduced or are simply not there. In Chapter I, I have presented evidence that violent or serious crime occurs less frequently in small towns than in areas of high population density. In general, the officer in Garden Valley is not threatened with constant danger to life and safety. He need not and does not regard every member of the public with suspicion and aloofness. The elements which introduce graft and corruption into law enforcement --gambling, prostitution, organized

[1]There were incremental increases in the patrolman's starting wage throughout the research, but a fair figure to quote is around $950 per month.

crime-- are absent in the small community. Moreover, the small town cop is not routinely exposed to the full spectrum of human misery and depravity that exhibits itself among the vast numbers of the big city. Child abuse cases provide a good example. Certainly, there are many harrowing effects of child abuse which are not visible, but nearly all cases of child abuse investigated by the Garden Valley police during the fieldwork involved children who bore minor bruises or welts from what some parents still consider ordinary discipline. Medical and police accounts of child abuse and neglect in a place like New York City, on the other hand, can be heartbreaking and sickening beyond belief. In Garden Valley, there was an occasional encounter with particularly deviant personalities, such as the man who molested his four-year-old daughter, or the burglar who excited himself with his victim's lingerie. Instances like these might make an officer shake his head and say, "it's enough to make you sick." But they were not commone enough to breed a general attitude of fatalism and unfeeling cynicism among the police.

I hope that I have been able to impart to the reader a degree of optimism with regard to small town police. It was apparent, from my observations and experiences at Garden Valley, that having and maintaining an effective, skilled and dedicated police force is a goal within the reach of a small community. However, one cannot avoid recognizing the fact that there are, in Garden Valley, conditions which impede the achievement of this goal, conditions which --short of turning good cops into bad cops-- can and do inhibit or prevent cops from being as good as they could be. As stated in Chapter II, it was never the goal of my research to uncover and focus on the "problems" of law enforcement in

the small town. It was understood, of course, that the Garden Valley Police Department, like any human organization, was bound to have some problems, and these would be treated in the course of overall description and discussion herein. It seems appropriate at this point to report and consider some of the problems. Ultimately, they can be gathered into the portmanteau of one rather serious problem I observed within the department, a problem which undermined and threatened the continued existence of the hometown style of policing that seemed so suited to the community. The problem was one of management, and some of its facets were: divisiveness within the department, particularly a we/they polarization of those at the top of the bureaucratic pyramid (the staff) from those at the lower levels, essentially the officers; periods of low employee morale which became increasingly protracted and pervasive; a high rate of employee turnover, much higher than the average among police agencies throughout the state. The remainder of this dissertation will be devoted to an examination of the problem, its aspects, and its effects.

Management by Default

It has already been stated that, among police scholars and bodies such as Presidential Crime Commissions, there is a call for greater "professionalization" of police officers. Suggested means for achieving this include training programs to teach and improve specialized skills, mandatory higher education for officers, and heavy reliance on technology. There is a similar push for greater professionalism in police administration as well. A management style which has gained

widespread endorsement and popularity, particularly in bureaucracies, is Management by Objective, or MBO. Ostensibly, the Garden Valley Police Department also operated under MBO. This was the style urged on city departments by Garden Valley's chief administrator, the City Manager. As a system, MBO is systems oriented and is seen as being efficient.. It acknowledges the rules of authority, responsibility, chain of command, span of control and accountability, and places these burdens at the supervisory level. Within the police department, however, there was only one administrator who actually adhered faithfully to this system; the second in command, the Captain. Subordinate personnel did not seem to be aware that the Captain's individual management style was actually in line with a carefully structured and prescribed approach. Rather, they believed it was an expression of his personality, "just the way he is." (Certainly, it was compatible with his personality, since he was the only member who consistently practiced MBO.) In the November 1978 issue of Law and Order, which describes itself as "an independent magazine for the police profession," authors Sullivan and O'Brien review and evaluate various styles of administration. It is not surprising that the criticisms which they level at MBO are essentially identical to the criticisms and complaints other police personnel at Garden Valley almost unanimously expressed about the Captain's philosophy and style:

> A plan is objectively (if not coldly) developed and implemented with efficiency and purpose but with indifference to input from knowledgeable subordinates. It tends to be domineering . . . The chain of command is formal and stiff (graduated subordination) with firm policies which direct the activities of all subordinates. . . .Although MBO acknowledges that established policies are not absolute, deviation from them is rarely if ever allowed except with much trepidation on the part of the

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> innovator. . . . generally speaking, such management style maintains the point of view that only those in management or supervisory positions are capable of good judgement and only the upper echelon is capable of making or interpreting policy . . .This system is a stickler for conformity to established policy contained in a procedural manual with no avenue open for exceptions other than review by superiors, ad infinitum. . . . Discipline is maintained and imposed from supervisory levels for operational or performance failures. Such recriminations become well documented in the mountainous quantities of paperwork that this style requires and responds to. (pp. 20-21)

The Captain, indeed, was thought by his subordinates to be too militaristic, autocratic, insensitive and paper-happy. Within the context of a small organization such as Garden Valley P.D., Sullivan and O'Brien would no doubt agree. They conclude:

> Such a style can be utilized . . . in occupations that constantly deal in life and death situations, e.g. major surgical operations, active military service, police response to riots. To maintain such direct pressure under less stringent circumstances would be to use MBO as a euphemism for a dictatorship form of management. When an organization can function at a more reduced level and requires measured responses to varying stimuli on a day to day basis, then MBO leaves something to be desired from a personnel point of view. (p. 21)

Agreed, it may leave something to be desired. But it was not the Captain nor his embrace of MBO, whatever its shortcomings, that constituted the management problem in Garden Valley's police department. Of course, being part of management, he was also unavoidably part of the management problem. At the same time, he, as the only practical proponent of the administration's nominal style, was a victim of the problem as much as he was part of it. Whatever benefits and strengths might have been provided by MBO were largely lost, eclipsed by the effects of the overall administration's general character.

The working atmosphere at Garden Valley P.D. resembled what has been described by Sullivan and O'Brien in their discussion of a style called Management by Default:

> This seems to be a fair annotation of this type of system since any success that this style possesses . . . is totally dependent upon the good will, professionalism, the dedication of individual employees rather than thoughtful administrative principles on the part of senior, experienced management. . . . The work and decisions made by subordinates are due more to improvisation by these subordinates, than due to intelligent direction from senior but naive management. (p. 19)

Evidence of this style of management surfaced everywhere. There was a chain of command, for example, but it was, as one employee expressed it, "only a paper chain." It was ignored by everyone but the Captain (who was said to reject intra-departmental communications if they had not arrived on his desk through the proper channels). Subordinates asked whomever they viewed as a reputable ally to clarify a policy issue, whether that person was the Chief, the supervisor of another division, a peer, or a dispatcher. Per Sullivan and O'Brien:

> Where doubt exists as to the desired "policy to follow" reference is sought from peer levels since there is almost no stratified arrangement of a chain of commands. If such does exist, it is non-functioning, since the style is to "jump" such levels . . . (p. 19)

Staff members were as likely to jump the levels of the chain of command as anyone else. The Lieutenant and especially the Chief were notorious for addressing patrolmen and support personnel, without first contacting the subordinate's respective supervisor(s), if they wanted to get certain information or to assign a special task. For a time, there were nearly as many supervisors as there were officers. When an officer found himself on shift with more than one supervisor, the question of who was in charge could be a veritable brain twister: If there are two Corporals on duty at the same time, and one of them has been with the department longer than the other, but the other has been a Corporal longer than the first, then who is the Watch Commander? These things happened, and such

questions were asked.

Because of the organization of the department (see Fig. 2a), the chain of command was sometimes obscured even in theory. The question of who was in charge came under serious scrutiny during an investigation by the District Attorney's office of police conduct during a public disturbance, or "riot" as it was called, that occurred in Garden Valley (see pp). Among the officers who responded were a Sergeant and a Corporal. The Sergeant was the head of the Special Services Division (dispatch/records); the Corporal was the head of the Patrol Division. The latter assumed himself to be in command. He had previously worked for a large police agency in California where he presumably had training and experience in handling similar disturbances. It turned out that the Corporal was the only officer who "knew" who was in charge. The DA's investigators felt the situation was handled poorly by the police. The Sergeant was criticized for not having assumed a stronger leadership role. Back to Management by Default:

> This form of "management" is a system that possesses no substantive policies. It encourages indecision at all levels and poor supervisory direction resulting in the creation of an unpredictable working atmosphere. Concepts of authority, responsibility, and especially accountability are absolutely nonexistent. . . . The pity of such a system is that subordinates never receive any definite policy statements until after trouble has erupted and then the senior disciples of 'this' school of management are more than free with their input after the fact. Such a technique might be more appropriately termed "Management by Ambush." (p. 18)

The work environment at Garden Valley was certainly viewed by the officers as being unpredictable. Even in the most routine police functions one can encounter novel situations almost every day, and I often watched personnel conferring among themselves, trying to ferret out the proper and safest action to take, fearing the inevitable "Monday morning quarterbacking" by

superiors who have the luxury of always being right, after the fact. Written rules and regulations did exist, as well as a voluminous quantity of policies and general orders authored by the Captain. But it was sometimes difficult to navigate one's way around in them. The policies and general orders were indexed, but by title rather than subject. For example, if one needed to look up the proper procedure for responding to an alarm at the radio transmitter site, it wouldn't be found under "A" for alarm, or "R" for radio, or "T" for transmitter, but under "I" for "Illegal Entry to Radio Transmitter Site." The only way to be sure of going "by the book" was to virtually memorize the substance and order of its contents. Even then, the directives might be vague or contradictory when the time came to actually apply them, since there are few situations which conform exactly to what is expected.

Soft Jobs

Before discussing any further the ingredients and effects of Management by Default, I should present a clearer picture of Garden Valley P.D.'s management, who they were and what they did. Of a total of seventeen sworn personnel, eight were men whose job descriptions involved duties other than patrol.

There was the Chief, who did not wear a uniform, although he was sometimes armed. The Captain, sometimes called the Executive Officer, and the Lieutenant, who was the Operations Division Commander, could wear a regular dark blue uniform or a special uniform consisting of black trousers and a white tunic. These three men had no patrol assignments. Theirs were basically desk jobs.

The Sergeant, who was the Special Services Division Commander, was charged with the supervision of dispatch, records and the jail. He wore a regular uniform, was the Watch Commander of his shift, and spent a great deal of his time on patrol. Informally, he was a confidant to the officers and somewhat of a champion of their views and rights.

One uniformed Corporal was the direct supervisor or "Commander" of the Patrol Bureau. He answered to the Lieutenant. A second uniformed Corporal helt the title "Assistant Special Services Division Commander." Both of these men were expected to spend much of their time on patrol.

Two plainclothes Detectives, who answered directly to the Lieutenant, were considered to be of the same rank as Corporal. This meant that they could, if necessary, give orders to patrolmen.[1]

It should be stressed that only the first four --the Chief, Captain, Lieutenant and Sergeant-- were actually responsible for the administration of the department's divisions (concerned with manpower allocation, budget, employee evaluation, etc.). They were the core "staff." Yet, at a given time any one or combination of the remaining four could also loosely be described as staff. They might attend staff meetings, be responsible for the bulk of the administrative paperwork for their respective divisions, or in charge of a special project, and in general be identified by other employees as staff. The conditions determing who besides the top four could be included with the staff will be considered after a look at how the core staff fulfilled its administrative assignments. The previous

[1]There were some intersting contests for dominance among the lower echelon supervisors. Once, the Detectives began using the title "Detective Corporal." The intent was clear in their deductive reasoning. If a Detective outranks an officer, then a Detective Corporal should outrank a Corporal. (The Captain told them to cut it out.)

description of the department's confused chain of command and organizational structure reflects one managerial weakness. There were others which, although they had less of a direct impact on the performance of the officers themselves, contributed to a lack of professional respect which the latter felt for the administration. I refer to the staff's budget management and documentation of departmental activity as two examples.

The budget was prepared yearly. Most organizations which run on a yearly budget probably find discretionary funds tight in the last quarter of the fiscal year. At Garden Valley, not only discretionary funds but budget items which are indispensible to a police department were gone by as early as mid-year. For example, an overtime pay reserve is essential. Officers who work on swing or graveyard shift must regularly appear in court during the day to testify in trials which involved their actions on the street. Also, when additional officers are needed to handle emergencies that cannot be covered by the normal schedule, there should be money to pay them. In Garden Valley, the police overtime budget disappeared like proverbial hotcakes. When the new budget year arrived, the officers had received minimal or no overtime pay for many months, even though they routinely put in plenty of extra hours at work. Sometimes they were compensated with extra time off ("comp time"), but also they were promised that it would be made up to them as soon as the budget passed. Thus, when the funds were finally available, everyone scrambled to get what he believed to be his rightful and fair share of the overtime money before it ran out. Naturally, this rapidly depleted the budget early in the year, and the cycle began anew. Those who had been with the department

for several years confirmed "this happens every year." Money for equipment and supplies was also quickly spent. The detectives received new blazers, and for the secretaries there was a case of rubber finger sheaths that would probably last for twenty years. But before long there would be no money to repair a portable radio; or, most pathetic of all, by year's end officers would use their own money to purchase motor oil to keep their patrol cars running. The staff recommended cutting costs with improbable and unpopular solutions. For example, a few personnel lived ten miles away in Beauville, which has a different telephone exchange. When it was necessary to call these employees at home regarding matters related to work, the calls were to be made collect.[1]

Like other police agencies, Garden Valley P.D. produced monthly and annual summaries of reported crime, arrests, traffic accidents, and miscellaneous departmental activity. Most of the statistics were recorded and compiled by local and state automated data systems, but the analysis of the data was still done manually "in house." In the department's 1977 Annual Report which was submitted to the City Manager and other members of local government, the Chief draws attention to "dramatic increases in some areas," citing them as causes for concern. One is the "dramatic increases of reported rape (75%)." The actual chart which follows the Chief's comments shows a total of 3 rapes reported in 1976, and a total of 4 in 1977. The column which identifies the percent of change shows +75%. Under the heading of "Special Problems" is the statement that

[1]There was a change in management after I completed the fieldwork. When I revisited the department, the officers were euphoric at the prospect of finally having equipment that had long been regarded as necessary but unaffordable. The repeated question, "What did they used to do with the money around here?" had become rhetorical.

"felony assault went up a staggering 43% in 1977." Indeed, the actual figures given --23 in 1976 and 58 in 1977-- indicate an increase that is somewhat more staggering than 43%. The monthly report for January 1978 uniformly reflects inaccurate percentages of change as virtually every item is miscalculated. The total of Part I Offenses for "Last Year To Date" is listed as 49. For the current year to date the total is 59, and the percent of change is -145%! What these statistical reports have in common with the preparation of the budget is another feature of Management by Default identified by Sullivan and O'Brien:

> Since there is little administrative acumen in this style it appears that these "managers" combine illusions of grandeur with managerial weakness and through lack of direction surrender management's role to unheralded, disorganized and less than fully trained subordinates. (p. 18)

Administrative tasks were delegated and delegated until they reached the lowest levels of personnel. I observed a Corporal preparing the budget for the Patrol Division, and an officer who was not even a member of the Special Services Division preparing that budget. The monthly reports were usually prepared by an officer or dispatcher. There was no recognition given to those who had actually done the work (although in some cases they might have preferred to remain anonymous!) and the paperwork was confidently signed and passed on by administrative superiors.

While it was the Chief, Captain, Lieutenant and Sergeant who were technically the core staff, it was usually only the top three who drew the criticism and discontent the officers shared about the "staff." The Sergeant, as I have stated, spent much of his time on patrol and generally participated in the duties and experiences of the officers. There were, in fact, lower level supervisors who spent a great deal less time "working" than the Sergeant did. Of one Corporal, the Captain himself remarked, "he

says he has too much paperwork. I'd like to know what kind of paperwork he could have that he has no time for patrol." And another, a Detective, was a well known "goof off." He declared his career goal to be a job that paid for doing nothing. It was questionable whether he was joking. O. W. Wilson, a respected authority among police administarors, has observed that traditionally detectives, unless carefully supervised, will tend towards lassitude (cited in Skolnick, p. 167). During the time I shadowed the detectives, there was an attempt by the staff to better monitor their activity. I accompanied this particular detective into the office of his bureau commander, where he announced we were going out to work on some cases. When asked "which ones?" he distracted the Lieutenant with inquiries about the latter's real estate ventures. We left without having had to explain our itinerary, and spent the afternoon driving around a nearby lake, enjoying the pleasant weather and scenery.

From the officers' very subjective perspective, "staff" could include anyone who had been advanced without having demonstrated merit and ability for the job, or who failed to fulfill the responsibilities of his promotion. (The above mentioned detective made sure he was "in good with the staff.") It was well known that both the Captain and Lieutenant had been automatically promoted to their respective ranks because of a reorganization in the department's heirarchy. There had been no competition or selection for their positions based on anything but seniority. In the words of Sullivan and O'Brien, promotion based solely on seniority is the systematic advancement of mediocrity and, under Management by Default, "promotions based on merit or other good managerial decision making are only achieved by accident" (p. 20).

In this chapter, I have relied heavily on the observations and critiques of these two authors and, I believe, with justification. The title of their article is "Management's Greatest Dilemma - Part II." It is Part II because, according to the editorial comment which precedes it, it is an elaboration of an article that appeared in Law and Order several months earlier, and which had excited great interest and response from readers. One may believe, then, that the problems of Management by Default --and Management by Objective-- are by no means unique to Garden Valley.

Surely, inconsistency and ineptitude in leadership is a grave detriment to employee morale anywhere and perhaps especially so in a police department. However, as time wore on and more and more personnel left the department, I was made aware that the problem went beyond what has been described in this chapter so far. I began participant observation in the Fall of 1976. Within the few months before the year was out, six sworn personnel and three dispatchers were gone. The reader will recall from the previous narrative chapter that on my first day in uniform I glimpsed some of the discontent that was fomenting among the rank and file. Association leaders were considering Teamster Union representation at that time as a last resort measure to improve their working conditions. I knew that those who left were variously involved in the web of conflict that ultimately enmeshed everyone within the department, but I was not acquainted with the particulars and did not yet feel confident to explore it. It was only after I observed all divisions of the department and became familiar with all the personnel and, finally, recontacted several who had resigned that the nature of the problem in its entirety became clear.

According to data collected and presented by the State Board on Police Standards and Training,[1] municipal police agencies which serve cities of 5,000 to 9,999 population experience a turnover rate among sworn personnel that is about 15%. At Garden Valley, in a little over two years, a total of 32 people left from 23 jobs, a turnover rate approaching 50% per year. 16 of those who left were civilian employees.[2] The remaining 16 were sworn personnel. Only one of these resigned for immediate career advancement; he became Chief of another police department. Nine of the men who resigned went to jobs with other police agencies, many in the same county area, where they would have to work their way up from the bottom. Five of these nine held a rank of Corporal or higher, ranks which they all sacrificed in transfer. Three officers resigned without the prospect of any immediate employment awaiting them. Although they all returned to police work eventually, they quit Garden Valley at the time simply to get out. Their resignations came as something of a surprise to all but their personal allies (or foes). Only one of the 16 was actually fired. For another two, resignation was a mere formality. They had received poor evaluations and strong reprimands and knew they were on the threshold of being dismissed. By superficial appearances, however, all of the other 13 left quite voluntarily. I contacted four officers whom I knew fairly well who resigned in succession. I considered them to be among the best that Garden Valley had. They all stated they wished they could have remained with the force. Three of

[1]Personnel and Budget Study of Oregon Law Enforcement Agencies Under Police Standards Act 1976-77.

[2]I have not included the Corrections Officers whose positions were funded by CETA. Their employment was terminated when their grants expired.

them, in fact, said they might consider coming back, "but first some things would have to change." In each case, the conditions which would have to change involved the administration. Specifically, their complaints centered on an atmosphere of distrust, "headhunting" and "backstabbing" for which they held the administration responsible.

Policing the Police

In many respects, Garden Valley P.D. could have been the type model for Sullivan and O'Brien's summary of Management by Default. They theorize that this style evolves because senior management cannot determine its own overall philosophy or goals. They tell us that another name for this style is "Laissez Faire." It is in this regard that the character of Garden Valley's police administration departed radically from this style. Laissez Faire implies a degree of trust in one's subordinates. While the goals and philosophies of individual staff members may have been uncoordinated and diffuse --though each not necessarily without its own merit-- these supervisors seemed able to cooperate most effectively in one activity, an activity which spread low morale among employees to epidemic proportions.

It is probably superfluous at this point to mention that the staff had no management training or experience outside the context of law enforcement. They had not been executives in civilian organizations. The practical examples which had been offered to them were from police departments, primarily small town police departments. They had risen through the ranks. In their present positions, they continued to do what they had done well in the past, they policed. They policed not the public, but their own troops. The analogy is far reaching. Just as police work

in the small town is chiefly order maintenance, so it is within the politics of the small department. The administration policed not only those who broke the rules, but those who simply rocked the boat. There was a standing "shit list." It seemed someone was always in trouble with the staff, very often because of an "attitude problem." It was clear that morale was low. Those who exhibited the symptoms most acutely were singled out as vectors of the disease, rather than its victims. They were treated as part of the cause, not part of the effect.

I began fieldwork in the midst of an employee exodus. Many of those who remained behind were considering leaving too. The Association meeting where I first presented my research proposal to the officers eventually evolved into a lengthy gripe session. The gripe: "Lousy leadership. Instead of helping us and being on our side, they just think of ways to make it hard for us all the time." Present at the meeting were two new officers who came to Garden Valley from large urban areas. To them, the complaints of their co-workers sounded exaggerated and provincial, and they said so.

"You fellows don't know how good you have it here. There are staff problems and morale problems in every department. But you guys can't imagine what it's like in a big department. It's just too big, too anonymous. You never know what's going on. You don't get proper recognition when you do good work, and you're always looking over your shoulder in case Internal Affairs is on another witch hunt. There's just no way it can be that bad here!"

The others laughed sardonically and chorused, "You ain't seen nothing yet!" Before too long, each of the two new officers took his turn

on the staff's shit list for reasons that appeared unfounded. I couldn't resist reminding each of them later of their optimism at that first meeting. They remembered what they had said. It couldn't be that bad here. One added, "It is different here, though. But it's probably because everything is so scaled down that it's as bad as it is here. I can't believe how petty the things are that the staff will go after you for."

When a new officer joined the department, there was usually a "honeymoon" period with the staff. He would be invited to staff members' homes, be introduced in all the right places, and receive a nice write-up in the Garden Valley Herald. With nearly each new hiring the Chief expressed the hope that "if we can get a few more officers like him and get rid of a few we've got, we'll really have a first-rate department." What this attitude created was a revolving door through which an officer would come in, perhaps go around a few times, and then exit. A citizen's group once sponsored a banquet celebrating their nomination of a "Peace Officer of the Year." Candidates represented municipal, county and state police in the area. Besides outstanding performance and achievement, a necessary qualification was that the candidate had to be employed with his respective agency for a minimum period of time. When Garden Valley was asked to submit the name and resume of its candidate, a top staff member replied, "We have several exemplary officers, but none of them has been here for more than a year." In essence, for anyone who had been there for more than a year, the honeymoon was over.[1]

I attended five staff meetings. At each one, considerable time was

[1]The citizen from the sponsoring organization himself named an officer who was well known in the community. The officer, who had been on the Garden Valley force for about six years, was easily selected as the winner.

spent documenting someone's attitude problem. The solution was simple; the strategy would be more complex. More than once I heard a staff member remark, "We'll get that turkey yet!" Many of the personnel problems involved perceived insubordination. At times, Corporals were included in staff meetings. At other times, when they were excluded, they were likely to be on the shit list themselves. There were two Corporals who at different times were head of the Patrol division. When one Corporal posted a memo regarding maintenance and assignment of patrol vehicles, the Captain removed it because "this sounds too much like a general order. This is the kind of thing either I or the Lieutenant should be writing." The Corporal claimed his memo was based on what had been resolved at a recent staff meeting he attended.

"Everybody agreed this would be the new vehicle policy. I thought I was supposed to be the Patrol Commander, so I wrote the memo. Can't do anything right around here."

The directive was reissued from a higher source, leaving the frustrated Corporal with a not unexpected attitude problem.

The second Corporal made recommendations to the staff regarding the manner in which shotguns were to be mounted in the patrol vehicles. He was also the department's Firearms Training Officer and had considerable expertise with weapons. He held his ground after an exchange of memos with the Captain, who disagreed with the proposed changes, and was stripped of his duties as Firearms Training Officer. A Corporal would either toe the line with the staff, or he would effectively become an Officer with a Corporal's badge. One patrolman arrived at the location of a traffic accident and made suggestions to a superior about mapping the dynamics of

the collision. He was dismissed from the scene and reprimanded for being arrogant. He said he was the only one on the force who had attended a special accident investigation class at the police academy. "What the hell did they send me to school for?" He was a veteran of the shit list.

Divided We Fall

It is not an exaggerated or overly dramatic statement to say that low morale and internal conflict became a daily preoccupation among members of the department. On the surface, the conflict was between staff and subordinates. But both the staff and the collective subordinates were hydra-like entities lacking organization and direction. There were complex personal networks throughout the department. The Chief, Lieutenant and Sergeant, for example, all had personal friendships with different subordinates off the job. While the officers collectively agreed that the department's problem was with the staff, they disagreed as to which staff members were specifically to blame. Some thought you could trust this or that staff member, but not the others. At different times, every one of the staff was approached by employees who sought to finally tell it like it is and call for a reconcilliation, for trust and cooperation between personnel at all levels. Most often, those who thus unburdened themselves regretted it when they did not see the desired effect. The rift was too great. If the officers could have formed a single unified front to demand the changes which they deemed necessary, they would still have disagreed among themselves as to exactly who and what should be the focus of their protest. But the question is academic, since they were never able to organize and consolidate themselves.

They talked about it a great deal, and made repeated efforts as individuals, in groups of twos and threes, and collectively through the Association. When the Association finally voted for Teamster representation, a few members jubilantly thought their troubles were over. Now they would have some clout. But Garden Valley was one of the first police departments in the state to join the Teamsters, and Teamster leaders seemed to still be treading with great caution in this area, knowing the public's sensitivity to unionized police. The Teamster representative stressed that he did not believe police employees should strike or engage in many of the tactics commonly associated with unions. He expected that compromises and concessions could be obtained through cooperation with the Administration.

One Association leader remarked, "But you can't reason with those people. There's the Chief, who doesn't give a damn about anything anymore except getting another job. And the Lieutenant, he's a nice guy but he's in way over his head; put him in a padded cell and he'd be happy. And then there's 'Mister Memo,' who gets his rocks off writing letters of reprimand. . ."

The Teamster Rep was diplomatically skeptical. "I'm sure there are some legitimate complaints," he replied, "but really, I can't believe the Administration has nothing better to do than make life difficult for its officers."

That was enough to disillusion some members already. At the time of my last contact with several officers after I was no longer active with the department, they expressed great dissatisfaction with the Union. It had done nothing for them. They were, in fact, trying to get out of it.

Why were they unable to organize among themselves within the context of their already existing Association? For one thing, there was divisiveness within the ranks of the officers themselves. The causes were both personal and job-related. One frequently heard the quip around the department that there were "too many chiefs and not enough braves." The organization was not topheavy by design, but there was enough latitude and flexibility in job descriptions that anyone with more status than a patrolman --that is, every second man on the force-- could be s supervisor. I am reminded of an old cartoon: The deck of a galleon is crowded with overseers cracking their whips over two lone galley slaves who are chained to the oars. One slave tells the other, "You know, of course, that I intend to fight you tooth and nail for the next promotion!" Promotion offered a chance to make changes and improvements within the system, from above. That is what two Corporals who at different times headed the Patrol division attempted to do. But Corporals were especially vulnerable to pressures from the staff to conform. Thus, concerned with their own job security, the patrolmen's natural leaders were effectively immobilized as activists.

Among the officers, personal differences and incompatibilities obstructed concerted action and cooperation. Other researchers have observed similar inability on the part of workers to organize themselves, even though they share similar complaints and demands regarding working conditions. Bruce Kapferer describes a situation in an African clothing factory where potential leaders were thwarted by differences in their personal backgrounds and allegiances (19). One officer who was considered to be abusive was shunned by his peers. Another, who was considered

lazy, was not trusted. Still another, who made no secret of his complaints, was often on the shit list, so others might want to avoid guilt-by-association, even if they privately agreed with him. An officer might be personally involved with a female dispatcher; another officer might feel this was wrong. Some officers might not be trusted by others because they were personal friends of certain staff. There were endless possibilities to promote distrust and impede solidarity among the officers on a personal level, so they could not rally around an informal leader. The high turnover itself directly reduced the strength of any concerted effort. There were always new people aboard. Someone who is still excited and optimistic about his new job is not likely to spearhead or even join a movement of malcontents. A malcontent who has decided it is time to leave the department and look for greener pasture is likely to have a "short-timer" attitude during the remainder of his stay.

What the officers really hoped for was one of two things. Everyone knew the Chief was looking for another job. Perhaps a new Chief, new blood from outside the organization, could straighten things out. One officer who resigned told me he had originally asked for an indefinite leave of absence. He explained to the City Manager that he would like to return after there had been a change in Administration. The other hope which sustained some of the officers before they quit was that someone from "outside" --a member of the City government, a journalist, or someone like myself-- would call attention to their plight. They knew that if they personally approached anyone with power outside the department, they would suffer disciplinary consequences. A former Association leader recalled, "It got really bad here a couple of years ago, so I went to the

Mayor. I learned don't ever do that. I swear, if the Chief hadn't liked me, I would have been fired. I almost was, anyway." After my fieldwork was over, I learned that some officers had invented a rather ingenious plan to put indirect pressure on the Administration, but I do not know that it was ever implemented. The Chief had wide-ranging personal and professional contacts with other Chiefs throughout the state. It was suggested that, whenever any police department advertised a job opening, every officer at Garden Valley should apply for it. The idea was to get the Chief's own peers to raise the question of why everyone wanted to get out of Garden Valley. The reality of the situation, however, was that the officers never successfully organized themselves. The revolving door never stopped going around.

Nobody Wins

The perspective which is represented in the ethnographic and narrative portions of this case study has been, for the most part, that of the patrolmen. The patrolmen sincerely believed the staff acted as their opponents and impediments rather than as their leaders or allies, and that it was the staff who kept them from doing their job as well as they could have. Obviously, the perspective from the other side of the we/they division was entirely different. The members of the core staff, with whom I was personally acquainted and whom I also observed in their daily work routines, naturally and just as sincerely believed it was the officers who "rocked the boat," who kept them from doing their jobs as well as they could have. I did not have the impression that the staff's philosophy and actions were governed by ill will. As individuals, they could be extra-

ordinarily kind, firendly and generous people. As for their collective action having ill effects, it is sometimes difficult to winnow cause from effect. They were, after all, police. The notion that their actions, their investigation and handling of disciplinary problems actually caused and aggravated disciplinary problems would have been as far-fetched and incomprehensible to them as the suggestion that criminals should not be prosecuted because it is really society that is to blame.

The poor morale which poisoned the rest of the department was no less toxic to the staff. There was also divisiveness among themselves. The Lieutenant, who was usually sympathetic to the complaints of personnel who confided in him, eventually resigned from the department. He later told me that if he hadn't left when he did, it would have driven him to drink. The Sergeant, who was usually sympathetic to complaints of personnel who confided in him, was growing exhausted and disgusted. Whenever he proposed something at staff meetings to improve conditions, it became his responsibility to enact it. He was already putting in countless hours of unpaid overtime and people were still unhappy, always over something else. The Chief openly wanted to avoid internal conflict at any cost. He was looking for career advancement, and knew that employee restiveness and high turnover would not enhance his professional reputation. He really wanted Garden Valley to be a first-rate department; why were so many people quitting? For the Captain, it was business as usual. He was busy writing policies, orders and memos; making training films for the officers to view daily; and attending to the Senior Citizens Crime Prevention volunteer program. If there was a problem within the department, he would be glad to do what he could, provided it came to his attention through the proper channels.

In any given encounter between a staff member and a subordinate --and, of course, in a small department such encounters are frequent and not always within the chain of command-- the we/they distinction could be focused or blurred to varying degrees. A staff member might even admit readily to a dislike or criticism of other staff when talking to one or a few officers "off the cuff," but he would never do so in the company of all the officers. In the overall interaction of officers and staff, their alienation and mutual exclusion were complete. This dualism bears some resemblance to what has been described by Harry Wolcott in a study called Teachers Versus Technocrats. Wolcott compares the teachers and the technocrats --who are, basically, those with managerial authority in the educator subculture-- to moieties. In some respects, the analogy seems tailor-made to fit the case at Garden Valley P.D.

Wolcott concludes:

> In large measure, members of the two moieties identified in the case study engaged in a rivalry that went almost unnoticed by the larger community they purportedly were serving. They created their own hell, pitting their energies and talents against each other to create stress and anguish that detracted from the quality of their professional lives and the lives of their peers. (p. 244)

A problem such as this within an organization is bad enough. But, Wolcott adds, "'i'f there are classroom effects from drawing off so much teacher energy, the the problem is of even greater consequence" (p. 244). Needless to say, concern about the effects of internal conflict can be echoed, indeed amplified, when a similar situation involves the police. While he views the conflict as "a needless waste of human resources," Wolcott volunteers that he has "no compelling evidence that classroom life was really effected" (p. 244). On this latter point, the comparison to Garden Valley P.D. is tengential. It can be argued that anything which detracts

from job satisfaction consequently detracts from the quality of job performance. However, my research was concerned not with what can be argued but with what can be observed. It was difficult to measure or assess the extent to which an officer's performance was affacted by internal department politics. I saw no evidence of chronic absenteeism among the officers, who virtually all donated many extra hours. If they were anything, they were dedicated to their work, and immersing themselves in it was a good way to get their minds off the intradepartmental strife that haunted them. Out on patrol, the subject did not dominate conversation as it did when people gathered informally at the station before or after shift. Many times, their litanies of complaints would be followed by a familiar refrain: "Oh, well, I'm not going to let it bother me. I'm just going to do my job."

Obviously, though, it did bother them. The inevitability and arbitrariness of the shit list threatened to undermine their professional confidence and personal self-esteem. When it got to be too much, they quit. It was that scenario, repeated over and over again, which raises the concern of a cumulative effect. By the conclusion of my fieldwork, there were still some good and experienced officers at Garden Valley, but it was no secret that they too were circulating their resumes. In the small town, an officer's real basic training takes place on the job. In Garden Valley, an important part of that basic training is an intimate knowledge of the community and the tradition of "Officer Friendly." If the veterans are gone, whose example will the new officers follow? Unless the brakes are applied to the department's accelerating turnover, the community is in danger of losing the kind of personal and service-oriented style of policing that is so suited to it.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The introductory chapter outlined three major goals which this dissertation has endeavored to fulfill: (1) To describe police work in Garden Valley; (2) to compare the Garden Valley data with the police role as portrayed in other studies; (3) to identify any significant problems I observed in Garden Valley. Description, the first of these gaols, should require no summary. As I stated earlier, the events reported in this study are already a summary of the behavior I observed. If I have been successful in presenting this material or, to borrow Geertz's phrase, if I have rendered a sufficiently "thick description," the reader will have a fairly good idea of what it is to police a small town like Garden Valley. However, the second and third goals warrant some closing comments. Academic research on police traditionally has an applied orientation. It is generally assumed that if a researcher can make suggestions to improve the lot of our country's police, it is his or her civic duty to do so. I sympathize with this position and would like to sketch a few recommendations based on my research.

The first of these recommendations pertains to officer training. It was pointed out that all police officers in the state where I worked are required to attend and be certified by a State training academy. The academy experience provides a thorough instruction in the law, but, from a small town standpoint, inadequate instruction in how to enforce

it. The training materials, which are based overwhelmingly on big city police work, may misrepresent or overlook the demands and dynamics of policing in the small town. Chapter 3, which compared the Garden Valley police with their big-city counterparts, concluded that the two worlds of police work are considerably different.

The large and socially heterogeneous environment in which the urban cop works is, comparatively speaking, a harsh one. The threat of danger, if not the reality, is everpresent. This threat is lacking in the small town and its absence makes a world of difference. The police in Garden Valley could be more relaxed in their style; they were able to be "Officer Friendly." A lesson of the large urban environment is that a personality trait like suspicion is not only a product of the job but should be consciously cultivated as an essential survival skill. At the training academy in Oregon --and, I suspect, throughout the country-- the big-city lessons rule the pulpit. Based on my observations in Garden Valley, I find that unfortunate. As was mentioned several times in this dissertation, a police officer with a big-city attitude was inappropriate and less than effective in Garden Valley. Also, rookies returning from the academy had to wrestle with the contradictions between the formal training they received and the direction in which their more experienced peers wanted to steer them.

The standardization which characterizes the academy's format and objectives suggests that skillful and "professional" policing is no different in the small town from what it is anywhere else . . . except that it's in a small town. The fact is, some large city departments are attempting to restore a more personal, neighborhood-oriented style with

concepts such as Team Policing. It is a tragic irony when an administrator of a small department can read about such projects and wistfully remark, "It sounds good, but we're just not big enough to do something like that." When some big-city cops are currently being urged to pretend they work in a big "neighborhood," why should so many small town cops be urged to pretend they work in a tiny metropolis? It would not be difficult for training academies to incorporate more of a small town focus in their programs.

The second point I wish to raise is more of a warning than a recommendation. If the governments of small cities and towns want well managed and efficient police, they must pay close attention to their selection of administrators. They must search for people with proven management skills, not just career police officers who have worked their way up through the ranks and present a good public image. The Garden Valley Police Department was a good department. However, it could have been an excellent department if only it had had better leadership. It is possible that I am overreacting and that the situation in Garden Valley was unique. Yet, certain evidence suggests that other small police agencies experience similar difficulties. During the writing of this dissertation, three cases of Officer-Management conflict in other small towns reached such proportions that the squabbling between the two groups received coverage by regional news media. In one case, a majority of the department's officers threatened to resign unless the Chief was removed from his office. He was. In another department, a number of officers also demanded the resignation of the Chief. They were fired instead. In the third case, the city government decided to eliminate the problem by disbanding the police

force and contracted with the County Sheriff for police protection. If three examples can reach the newspapers, there must be many more departments like Garden Valley where the factionalism is kept within the bounds of the agency. The problem is real. It should be recognized and creatively confronted.

In closing, I would like to express the hope that this study, although it has focused on one police department, can benefit the many other police officers who work in our nation's small towns. I do not mean to imply that Garden Valley represents a type model for small departments. But, certainly, the description of the officers' working attitudes, policing styles, and the department's internal problems must be more relevant to the concerns of other small police agencies than the extensive police literature which is devoted almost exclusively to big-city police.

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