

CHAPTER 7

FUTURE RESEARCH

An area for future research or study is represented in the actual existence and outcome of fear or prejudice as it may exist between non-educated officers and their college educated counterparts. Although apparently not an issue in the Morehead City Police Department, this may answer some previously researched suppositions regarding the past exodus by college-educated officers from police employment.

The Morehead City Police Department has certainly established their validity as a forward moving and highly competent (COP) department and through this study they have set new parameters for additional and future research. What are the macro-to-micro reasons for their broad success? Who are their leaders and how much does individual, general, geographic or cultural attitude play in the agency's success? A study of these issues could and should take place. There are strong indicators that additional information could support future research that might yet be drawn from this department.

Research should also be conducted on the "Criminal-Justice Magnet School" opportunity. The experimental schools program in this study suggested that there exists an untapped possibility for future study and accomplishment in specialized secondary-school programs or in specifically designed schools that focus on criminal justice or police science. Assuredly police operating within a constitutional democracy have a need for additional or specific education concerning government, citizens' rights, history, specialized equipment

use and many other studies. In a self assessment this would be a “Must Have” issue.

The nature of policing citizens in a democracy with all of the inherent safeguards has its uniqueness. It is in earlier education that we may find the answer to many of the problems facing peace officers in this millennium. Earlier intervention through specialized education that counters traditionalized bias, non-appropriate stereotyping and juvenile custom crimes could make the difference in better prepared high school students to become criminal justice college students and ultimately in line officers.

The indicators suggest this approach may be fruitful, so the researcher would propose a future cohort study that follows several classes from the initial stages of criminal justice education through college and finally ending with sworn police officers who successfully finish their careers with retirement. This research will have great value for the future of police, their education and future development. It will also drive a variety of usable data as it proceeded toward completion.

In concluding this study, the research has provided strong evidence of the importance of college education and the need for continuing review of training where police are concerned. This study has outlined the tendency of college educated officers to be more likely to select service-oriented application subjects (SOA) rather than proceeding directly to the more strong-enforcement subjects (SEA) encountered in training when they were rating the importance they assigned to the subject.

Similar studies of police agencies like the one conducted by Muir should be focused on at

least two police departments of approximately the same size. Both agencies should be community-policing agencies. Each department should have a similar socio-economic population base. The difference should be in the education of the officers and administrators. Both agencies should be studied for about one to two years. In addition to the department study the citizenry should be studied for their responses to policing using a population satisfaction survey. Morehead City would be a sound candidate for one of the departments.

More study of the predominant small agencies should be undertaken, and researchers should attempt to find out more about the reasons officers at Morehead City seem to have risen to their community-policing task, and although they remain a work in progress, they have generated a new attitude toward fulfilling their community's expectations as well as their own. The police department in Morehead City, as an agency, appears to have a unique quality and that may be the very nature of the environment that exists within the department itself.

The proposed study should seek these answers by validating the view Goldstein (1997), suggested in "Policing a Free Society" when he wrote:

Some contend that along with a greater share of intelligent young people, police departments, in requiring a college degree, would also attract a greater cross section of the population. It is assumed that young people who go to college are drawn from socioeconomic groups having a wide range of views regarding both the police function and the problems with which the police

must deal. It is argued that these people would improve police operations by broadening the values to which police personnel subscribe.

Still others argue that making a college education a requirement for the job is perhaps the most dramatic way whereby the police can divest themselves of some of the persistent misconceptions attached to their work, such as the impression that it consists of simple tasks that can be carried out by anybody. Higher education is expected to bring much-needed respectability, dignity, and status to police service. It is argued that the degree-carrying officer whose education equals or exceeds that of most of the people he contacts tends to function with much greater confidence and in a much less defensive manner. The educational requirement is seen as an indication of what the agency-or the police field as a whole-thinks of itself. (Goldstein, H.,1977, p. 287)