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# Perceptions of performance and behavior of college educated police officers

Paul Edmund Nagosky

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PERCEPTIONS OF PERFORMANCE OF COLLEGE EDUCATED POLICE OFFICERS  
ABSTRACT

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Master's Degree of Human Resource Management  
University of Richmond  
2007

Russell Lomax Leonard, Jr, Ph.D.

Good police applicants are becoming scarcer and many agencies have lowered their hiring standard to fill academy classes. In this labor pool environment is it worth having a college education requirement? Is the performance of college educated officers superior to that of non-college educated officers?

An opinion survey was issued to officers and sergeants of the Chesterfield County Police Department regarding how they felt toward college education and its effect, if any on several aspects of police performance.

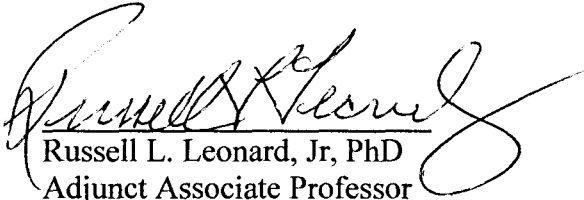
In some aspects of performance or behavior, such as sensitivity to minorities, authoritarianism, and use of force, there were slight tendencies for respondents to answer favorably toward college education. In other aspects, such as communications skills, citizen complaints, and innovation the respondents had small tendencies to be negative toward college education.

If the human resource deficit continues and the agency encounters increased difficulty hiring and retaining officers, lowering or eliminating the college credit requirement and instituting a college education incentive program may become necessary in order to be competitive with other law enforcement agencies.

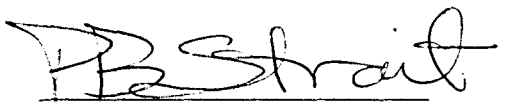
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### Perceptions of Performance and Behavior of College Educated Police Officers

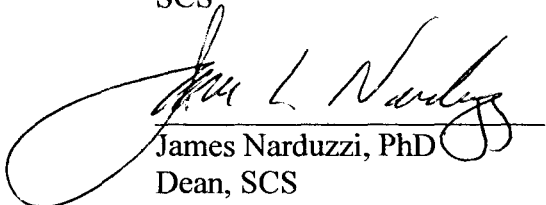
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PERCEPTIONS OF PERFORMANCE AND BEHAVIOR OF COLLEGE EDUCATED  
POLICE OFFICERS

By

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B. A., Mercyhurst College, 1996

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

of the University of Richmond

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## **Special Thanks.**

**Without you this project would have been impossible**

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- Sergeant Randy Dalton (For putting up with me on the job during this)
- Sergeant Curtis Tanner
- Sergeant Michael Heinzelman (Your sense of humor helped to put things in perspective)
- Sergeant Edward Wessel
- Sergeant Steven Grohowski
- My wife (The person who I saw on occasion walking around my house. Also for putting up with my many, many hours hunched in front of the computer)

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## CHAPTER I (Introduction)

### Rational for Selection

Earlier this century most American law enforcement agencies seemed to be more interested in an applicant's physical traits rather than in his education. "Traditional emphasis, with few exceptions, has been placed on the potential officer's physical attributes, such as height and weight" (Polk & Armstrong, 2001, 77). For instance, in 1934, an applicant for the Virginia State Police had to be taller than 5 ft. 8 inches and weigh no more than 154 pounds (Virginia State Police, 2006). There were similar requirements for the Pennsylvania State Police. Early educational requirements were simply the ability to read and write. A trend in many departments, including the author's department, is to institute an educational requirement. This requirement ranges from a set number of college credits up to a full Bachelor's Degree at the time of a potential recruit's application. Charleston, South Carolina, for instance, has this requirement: "Applicants must possess a Bachelor's Degree or above from an accredited college" (City of Charleston, 2006). Another agency that requires college is Arlington, Texas, which according to Alex (2005) has required a four year degree since the 1980s.

Is this a wise approach? Do college-educated police officers perform differently than those without higher education? Is it acceptable for an agency to include educational status as an entry requirement or to compensate college-educated officers more than officers who have not attended college? Is there a possibility that a department with a college entry requirement could face an adverse impact law suit or other civil action? The writer feels that this question should be further explored.

Reasons for Selecting the Specific Topic. In 1937, when Edmund Nagosky, the



paternal grandfather of the writer, was hired by the Pennsylvania State Police, he did not have a high school diploma although he had served some time in the U.S. Army. Despite his lack of education, he was an intelligent man advancing from trooper to corporal and later to sergeant. He served 28 years with the State Police before retiring.

In contrast to this scenario, Edmund's son Richard applied in 1965 to the Millcreek Township Police Department, which at this time required a high school diploma or GED. He was a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army and the first officer hired by this department with a Bachelor's Degree. He, like his father before him, served for 28 years and advanced in rank as well.

In 1998 this writer applied to the Chesterfield County Police Department which at the time of his application required a high school diploma or GED and either two years military experience, two years law enforcement experience or 60 college credits. This was a relatively new requirement that was instituted in 1996 by Chief Carl Baker shortly after his appointment to office. The neighboring Richmond City Police Department had a similar requirement; they have, however, recently reduced the educational requirement to a high school diploma or G.E.D (Richmond Police Department, 2006).

This writer has been in law enforcement for eight years and has worked with officers both with and without college education. He has seen officers in both categories perform excellently and poorly. Is a college education a determinant for good performance as a police officer? Moreover, what are the benefits, if any, of hiring college-educated police officers?

Reasons for Selecting Organization. The Chesterfield County Police Department is the agency in which the writer is employed. The college requirement has been, and

continues to be, a point of contention within the agency. In the past, this writer has been part of conversations with veteran officers, who usually have military backgrounds; they claim that college-educated officers have little common sense, no real world experience or are just plain dumb. In the writer's experience, what determines a police officer's performance is more a factor of the individual's personality than his educational background. He has seen individuals with college backgrounds perform both well and poorly. He has likewise seen personnel with military backgrounds have the same variation in their performances. Polk & Armstrong (2001, 79) supports this and write "Perhaps O'Rourke (1971:36) said it the best when he observed 'many good officers do not have degrees and many poor officers do have degrees'".

It appears that as time progresses, some departments are increasing their educational requirements and currently "Well over half of the officers in the United States now have some college-level education" (Polk & Armstrong, 2001, 79). In the Metro Richmond area, however, most departments still only require a high school diploma or GED. These departments include the cities of Hopewell, Richmond, and Petersburg, Virginia Commonwealth University Police and Virginia Capital Police. The Henrico County Police Department, the Virginia State Police and the City of Colonial Heights have the same requirement, although they indicate that college or some college background is preferred.

The Vision Statement of the Chesterfield County Police Department states the Department's plan to continue to be a nationally recognized leader in law enforcement by attracting and retaining professional employees (Chesterfield County Police Department Strategic Plan FY 2006-2010, 2006, 3). It is the opinion of this writer that educational

requirements should be explored so that it can be determined if this requirement is valid and worth having as an entry requirement. Should a person, who otherwise may be a good candidate, be denied employment with a police agency because he lacks the required number of college credits?

### **Significance of the Topic**

Nationwide, there is an increasing trend for police departments to require a number of college credits to a full Bachelor's Degree for entry requirement. From 1990 to 2000 the "percentage of departments requiring new officers to have at least some college rose from 19% to 37%, and the percent requiring a two year or four year degree grew from 6% to 14%" (Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police Departments in large cities 1990-2000, 2000). "The percentage of police departments in large cities that required a four year degree of new officers rose from 1.6% in 1990 to 4.8% in 2000" (Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police Departments in Large Cities 1990-2000, 2000).

According to these statistics, the number of departments nationwide requiring college education is on the rise. However, in the Chesterfield County Police Department the requirement has been altered somewhat. In 2003 an individual with four years of "progressive and successful experience in a professional trade or business position" could apply (Chesterfield County Police Department, 2004). This person would not need the two years of college, police, or military experience that other applicants would need. More recently the educational requirements have been further modified. Persons without any military, law-enforcement, or college experience may now apply for entry-level positions as long as they have "at least three years full-time verifiable employment" (Chesterfield County Police Department, 2006). Also in 1999 Chesterfield began a

lateral entry program in which a police officer from another jurisdiction with three years law enforcement experience could apply (bid). These lateral entry applicants attend an academy class which is abbreviated compared to the basic academy and the only educational requirement that they must have is a high school diploma or G.E.D. (ibid).

It is debatable whether police officers really need college degrees to perform their jobs. Only recently has this requirement been instituted and only a minority of agencies have it. This requirement reduces the number of applicants that a department receives and can make filling positions more difficult for human resource managers. Moreover, a disadvantaged individual who could not afford or otherwise gain access to an institute of higher learning could conceivably take an adverse impact civil action against an agency with this requirement, alleging possible discrimination (Bennett-Alexander & Hartman, 2004).

Mahan (1991) agrees and indicates that a police department should document in policy the reasons why increased educational requirements have been added to the list of entry requirements. He also adds that it is a possibility that some departments may be put at risk for a discrimination suit by implementing this requirement. He does feel that college education increases a person's sense of responsibility, enhances decision making ability, helps to increase communications skills, and generally allows the officer to be more responsive to a community's needs.

In a similar article, A.T. Vodicka (1994), also from *Law and Order*, concurs with Mahan. Vodicka claims that police with college experience have enhanced personal and analytical skills as well as stronger moral character. According to Vodicka, research indicates that college graduates perform police related tasks in a superior manner and are

more flexible to changes within an organization. He adds that demanding college from entry-level recruits may affect minority recruitment in a negative manner. College-educated police officers may possess unrealistic promotional expectations. So it seems all is not perfect with college requirements for entry level police work or with the college-educated police officer. Still these writers indicate strong positive benefits from college education and police careers.

According to Salazar (2006), the President of a state chapter of the NAACP by the name of James Harris questions college requirements, claiming that they eliminate applicants who would be good police officers and that minorities, who historically have less opportunity to attend higher education, will not meet these college requirements (ibid). Salazar, however, also indicates that having a four year degree will make a person a better officer (ibid).

Another issue is age discrimination. "In Mahwah, a police officer with several years' experience sued his department, alleging age discrimination after he was passed over for a promotion to a less experienced officer with a Master's Degree" (Salazar, 2006, 2). This situation was a promotional examination and does not directly pertain to entry requirements. The department successfully defended itself however. Unfortunately the article does not go into details of the civil action, like scores, methods of promotional testing and validity.

Police officers with college educations are not a new idea. August Vollmer, Chief of the Berkeley Police Department from 1905 to 1932, encouraged police officers to take courses in Police Administration at the University of California. He would even recruit college students from this university. He is described by some as the father of modern

police administration. "Vollmer was ahead of his time. It would take other police departments years to reach the level of professionalism he attained within the police department of Berkeley" (Wallace, Roberson, & Stechler, 1995). Shernock (1992, 74) writes:

Vollmer was opposed to colleges providing a trade school orientation for police (Sherman 1978:36). He believed that police officers needed a broad based social science background so that they might understand and deal with the human aspects of their work more effectively (Eskridge, 1989:17)

The subject of this work is the impact that college education has in relation to the performance of police officers. How do college-educated police perform compared to those who do not have this education? Do they generate more or fewer citizen complaints? Do they have better or worse attitudes? Are they more or less likely to use force? Do they solve more or fewer crimes? Do they stay on the job longer?

### **Delimitations**

It is the purpose of this study to determine whether college-educated police officers perform in a manner which is superior or inferior to non college-educated officers. This goal may be achieved through the use of empirical data obtained from the Planning and Research and the Police Personnel Sections of the Department, personal interviews, and research obtained from literary sources. Another goal is to determine whether the police officers employed by the Chesterfield County Police Department believe that college education determines whether or not a person will be a good police officer.

This study does not include whether or not college-educated police supervisors perform in a superior manor to their non college-educated counterparts or whether or not

college credits should be used as a requirement for any promotional process within a police agency itself. It also does not explore other entry requirements, such as military experience, and their validity. Finally this work does not explore differences in performance and behavior between college-educated officers who pursued different courses of study, e.g. sociology, criminal justice, psychology, during their college careers. The study will not include civilian personnel within the agency.

### **Client**

The Chesterfield County Police Department was established in 1918 for the purpose of enforcing traffic laws on the Jefferson-Davis Highway. At this time it was still the duty of the sheriff of Chesterfield County and his deputies to arrest citizens for criminal offenses. In 1924 the agency received state certification, and as time progressed its duties increased in number and scope. In the 1930s the Department began using its trademark green uniform. This was done so that officers would be better camouflaged in wooded areas as they looked for bootleggers and moon shiners that were so common during the era of prohibition.

The Department's organizational structure is paramilitary and hierarchical in nature and includes the Office of the Chief of Police. An example of the Department's organizational chart can be seen in Appendix A. The rank structure is as follows for sworn personnel: Officer/Detective, Sergeant, Lieutenant, Captain, Major, Lt Colonel, and Colonel. There are two Deputy Chiefs under the Chief. One Deputy Chief governs the Support Services Division which includes the Operations Support Bureau, the Administrative Support Bureau, and the Office of Professional Standards. The other Deputy Chief of Police is in charge of the Operations Division. This includes the

Uniform Operations Bureau, which encompasses the Patrol and Community Action Policing Divisions as well as the Street Drug Enforcement Unit, and the Investigations Bureau to which the Criminal Investigation and Special Investigation Divisions belong. There are also two Captains who act as Watch Commanders. It is their job to give leadership to the Department when the Chief or the Deputy Chief is not available. The agency also has a Department of Media Relations, which releases information about Department activities, criminal incidents, traffic events, etc. to the media (<http://www.co.chesterfield.va.us/orgchart.asp>).

The Police Department's core values include integrity, community safety, service and quality. The Department's mission statement is as follows: "The mission of the Chesterfield County Police Department is to provide a professional and unbiased response to the needs of the community. It is the Department's goal to establish a partnership with the citizens in achieving a 'First Choice Community through excellence in public service'" (Chesterfield County Police Department Strategic Plan FY 2006-2010, 2006, 3).

The Agency's Vision Statement states: "It is the vision of the Chesterfield County Police Department to continue to provide quality service to the community as a nationally recognized leader among law enforcement agencies, utilizing state of the art information and policing technologies, attracting and maintaining professional employees, consistently improving our quality of training, and demonstrating innovation and operational flexibility" (ibid).

Other police agencies that commonly work with the county Police Department can be found within Chesterfield. These include the Virginia State Police who have their



headquarters located here at 7700 Midlothian Turnpike. This agency has primary jurisdiction on the interstates highways, such as I-95, Rt 76, and Rt 288 as well as the Chippenham Pocahontas Parkways that run through the county. Pocahontas Park Police are also present and are charged with patrolling the state park located in the county. Finally Virginia State University, which is located in the southern part of Chesterfield, has its own campus police department as well.

The Department's jurisdiction and scope of responsibility is the entire geographical area encompassed within the political borders of Chesterfield County. The operational budget for 2005 was \$38,298,200 and the authorized sworn strength of the department is 500 officers; at this point in time, however, it is below chartered strength (ibid, 12). Chesterfield County itself is 426 square miles in size and has a population of 284,000 (ibid).

One of the goals of the department is to maintain a ratio of 1.65 officers per 1,000 citizens (ibid). Other goals of the Department include "Establish, maintain, enhance, community partnerships, which help ensure a safe community", "Maximize operational efficiency and deliver excellence in customer service", "Increase citizen safety and perception of safety", and "Increase proportion of crimes cleared by arrest" (ibid, 6).

There is an anticipated increase in the population of the county and as this population increases so will the demands on the Police Department (ibid, 22). Also in the SWOT analysis that was conducted in conjunction with the FY 2006-2010 Strategic Plan, one of the weaknesses mentioned is "Lack of adequate personnel which creates a delay in first response to demands for service by citizens, department personnel, and county personnel" (ibid, 20).

It is the opinion of the writer that these goals and weaknesses, as well as the possibility of a civil action against the department, are what must be considered when an agency explores the possibility of instituting or keeping an entry level college requirement. Does having a college entry requirement help or hinder these goals? Does it increase the quality of officers or does it hinder the hiring process by turning aside otherwise good candidates who do not meet these minimum requirements? If the goals mentioned in the strategic plan are not met and weaknesses within the police department are not addressed, it could affect the perception of the citizens as they view the efficiency of the Police Department and how safe they feel as residents of the County of Chesterfield.

Do college-educated officers generate fewer citizen complaints, use less force and have superior communication skills in comparison to officers who have not attended college? Are they more innovative and adaptive to change, and are they less likely to be the subject of a civil action than their colleagues who lack higher education? It is an objective of this work to try to answer these questions and to see if college education is a valid entry requirement and if it is right to compensate college-educated officers at a higher rate than their non college-educated colleagues.

## CHAPTER II (Research of the Literature)

The goal of most police agencies that institute a college credit or degree requirement is to help ensure that quality personnel are hired. In theory, the higher education is supposed to help make the occupation appear and perhaps be more professional. Other professions such as school teacher, probation officer and registered nurse all traditionally require a Bachelor's Degree as a minimum educational entry requirement. Worden (1990, 565) writes:

Upgrading police personnel by raising the educational levels of police officers has been-and remains-both an integral element of police professionalization (Fogelson 1977) and part of the conventional wisdom of police administration. Presidential commissions, academicians, and police executives have maintained that higher education is essential for anyone charged with such a complex and important task. Suppositions about the effects of education are embodied in policies that encourage or require officers to obtain a college education.

The article claims that those who hold this view as being correct will believe that "college-educated officers are more likely to appreciate the role of police in a democratic society and to be more tolerant of people different from themselves" (ibid, 566). However Worden adds that "Little if any empirical evidence was--or could have been marshaled in support of those propositions because so few officers at that time had attended college" (ibid).

There are several reasons as to why police organizations explore the value of having college-educated officers. "Higher education *seemed* to be a good idea for police; it *appeared* to be a logical evolutionary step for a profession in its adolescence; many people *believed* that the college experience would make officers perform better" (Carter & Sapp, 1990, 60). In support of this, Spielberg (1979, 117) writes:

In fact, all major studies that have dealt with the question of improving law enforcement have recommended higher education for police officers. Thus the American Bar Association, the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, and the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice support higher education as a requirement for recruits. One reason for such emphasis may be the belief that a liberal education is required if police are to escape the rigid conservatism that seemed to characterize police thinking in the 1960s (Finnigan, 1976).

Other reasons modern police departments consider applicants with college degrees is that higher education allegedly makes a person more culturally sensitive, innovative, and adaptive to change. College may also make a police officer less authoritarian, improve his judgment and communication skills, and make him less likely to use sick leave and unneeded force.

As early as the 1920's, many scholars concluded that the problems with police were caused by personnel issues (Krimmel, 1996). August Vollmer supported many of these ideas. Vollmer was known by many as the "father of American Police Administration" (Wallace, Roberson & Steckler, 1995, 11). In 1908 he was the first to begin formal training for police; later he encouraged his subordinates to take classes in police administration; and in 1919, he began to recruit college students from the University of California (*ibid*). Dunham and Alpert support these facts, as they write "The initial view of professionalism by Vollmer and his followers reflects the classical idea of profession by emphasizing pre-professional classical education in the liberal arts and social sciences, scientific theory, and crime prevention, as well as professional training" (1992, 293). August Vollmer (1971) also advocated the selective hiring process for police officers and stated "When we have reached a point where the best people in society are selected for police service, there will be little confusion regarding their duties". In 1917, he also

proposed a college program in police education with a social science background (Shernock, 1992). “Vollmer envisioned higher education as a vehicle for converting the police occupation into a prestigious profession” (ibid, 71).

The turmoil and youth counter-cultures of the 1960’s were a catalyst for change as to how police conducted themselves. “A chasm was growing between the police and certain segments of the public” (Krimmel, 1996, 86). The President’s Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice was conducted to look into these issues (ibid). One of the Commission’s recommendations was an increase in educational standards among the police with the final goal of having police departments requiring, as a minimum entry standard, a Bachelor’s Degree (ibid). In the 1960’s and 70’s, the majority of police officers did not graduate from high school, received little training, and rated below average on intelligence tests (ibid). “The President’s Commission of the late 1960s mirrored the thinking of scholars and police administrators in that the problems facing police could be blamed on the poor quality of personnel” (ibid).

In the 1970’s, the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, also known as the LEAA, was formed in response to the findings of the President’s Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice (ibid). This program provided a major boost to the idea of college-educated police officers by providing educational grants with the idea of producing better, more professional police (ibid). This aspect of the LEAA was known as the Law Enforcement Education Program or LEEP. In regard to this program, Inciardi (1993, 25) writes:

Furthermore throughout the 1970s LEAA provided more than \$40 million per year for the education of some 100,000 persons employed in or preparing for a career in criminal justice. Known as the Law Enforcement Education Program, the report of the Twentieth Century Fund Task Force,

which examined the operation of LEAA, maintained that the education program was among the agency's most constructive and successful efforts. Nevertheless, and in spite of many billions of dollars spent, LEAA was deemed a failure.

It appears that the reason for LEAA's lack of success lies in several factors: the crime rate continued to increase, many old problems and complaints of the criminal justice system still existed, and the actual cause of crime was still unknown (ibid). LEEP was not, however, specifically listed among the failures of LEAA (ibid).

While Vollmer advocated a liberal arts education for police officers, the LEEP program had some orientation toward training. Shernock (1992, 74) writes:

Vollmer was opposed to colleges providing a trade school orientation for police (Sherman 1978:36). He believed that police officers needed a broad based social science background so that they might understand and deal with the human aspects of their work more effectively (Eskridge, 1989:17). Most of the performance studies, as well as many of the attitudinal studies, did not differentiate the type of education that officers received. Many of the officers who were the subject of performance studies were enrolled in college programs under the LEEP which appeared to be oriented toward training rather than education, and which offered an assortment of courses that has little relation to liberal arts or the social sciences (Brown 1974:120; Goldstein 1977:294; Sherman 1978:38).

Police officers encounter a large variety of conditions, requests for service and people in the course of their employment. While dealing with these situations, officers must maintain a professional demeanor and must remain sensitive to the morays and customs of other peoples and religions. Does college make a person more well-rounded and able to take care of these demands? Are college-educated police more culturally and racially sensitive? Spielberger (1979, 117) writes:

In recent years there have been numerous complaints by the public that police officers are not sensitive to the problems of sensitive groups. On one hand officers are expected to behave in many situations with tact, empathy, and understanding, and on the other hand, they are expected to be able to react effectively with individuals who only respond to physical

force. In short, police suffer from our society's many contradictory role demands. Perhaps the best way to cope with these apparent contradictions is by developing in police officers a broad conceptual base for understanding them. One method of doing this may be by encouraging officers to expand their formal educational experiences.

While these statements do not directly answer the question, they do suggest that college education is a possible solution. In the writer's opinion, college can expose a person to other cultures and races. It may not remove any preconceived beliefs that a student may have concerning other races or ethnicities, but higher education may teach keeping an open mind about others. Bowman Theron (2003) claims that college education sharpens the skills that police need in order to interact with the community and adds that only 50 agencies nationwide require a Bachelor's Degree as an entry requirement.

Comparisons of college and non college-educated officers in their behavioral styles show other differences. Of these differences Spielberger (1979, 118) writes:

Non-college officers prefer to follow schedules and daily routines; move toward them in a belligerent or aggressive manner; consider themselves to be imaginative, ingenious, and having novel ideas; like to work closely with their supervisors rather than by themselves; would rather have their supervisors make decisions for them; and finally value themselves according to how successfully they have conformed to the role requirements of the organization.

In contrast, college graduate officers are willing to experiment and try new things, as opposed to preferring the established and conventional way of doing things; prefer to assume leadership roles and like to direct and supervise the work of others; use a step-by-step method for processing information and reaching decisions; like to engage in work providing a lot of excitement and a great deal of variety, as opposed to work providing a stable and secure future; and finally, value themselves by their achievement of the status symbols established by their culture.

This comparison shows a difference in the behaviors of the officers, but it does not determine which is necessarily better. Several studies have tried to gauge this difference.

Spielberger (1979, 118-119) writes:

In one study the performance of 97 noncollege officers was compared to that of 113 college graduate officers in the Baltimore Police Department (Finnigan, 197). After controlling experimentally for the effects of age, IQ, race, and military service, the college-educated officers were consistently rated significantly higher than the noncollege officers. The type of college degree (e.g., law enforcement, sociology, business) was irrelevant.

In a different study Cascio and Real (1976) examined the relationship between amount of formal education and rated performance, as well as actual on-the-street performance (e.g., number of preventable accidents, injuries by assault and battery) of 940 police officers from the Dade County, Florida, Public Safety Department.

In the second study mentioned by Spielberger, there was an association between higher education and fewer overall injuries, less use of sick time, fewer “use of force” complaints, fewer preventable accidents, and fewer disciplinary actions as a result of traffic accidents (*ibid*). To help explain this, Spielberger (1979, 119) writes:

Common sense may well explain some of these statistical relationships between education and police officer performance. Fewer injuries as a result of assault and battery, for example, could be related to an individual’s superior ability to understand and diagnose situations without having to resort to force. Fewer verbal discourtesy allegations may be the result from the individual’s ability to speak clearly, forcefully, and articulately.

It should be noted that the first study found that the major of the degree was not a relevant factor (*ibid*). Hypothetically, according to the findings of this study, a police officer with an undergraduate degree in physics or English would perform as well as an officer with a degree in criminal justice or sociology. It could be interesting if a future study explored the plausibility of these findings.

A group known as the Police Futurists International has recently been formed to explore the future of law enforcement. The panelists are ten in number and are all either current or past police or federal law enforcement administrators; they recognize that



“Policing has traditionally been a closed, slow-to-change subculture” (Stephens, 2005, 53). In regard to education and police, it is indicated that “Most PFI respondents agreed more education and more and refocused training will be necessary to cope with emerging international and high-tech crime and disorder” (ibid, 54).

Terrorism and the ever increasing complexity of internet crime are also factors that may influence the need for higher educated officers. Law-Enforcement Agencies may need them just to cope with these increasing threats (ibid). Stephens (2005, 53) writes:

Most agreed that success is possible if new personnel come from better-educated applicants who are then better trained and mentored to fit into a reorganized structure designed to meet the new roles and demands of policing. That is a tall order, as today more than 90% of police agencies in the United States require only a high-school diploma or equivalent to qualify for employment; increasingly, however, applicants have done at least some college work.

Along with better technologies and community ties, the respondents of this work also indicate that better educated officers and leaders will inevitably be among the promises of future policing (ibid).

Good judgment is another quality essential for police officers. The increasing demands and types of service that police provide may also be another factor that increases the value of educated police officers. Dunham and Alpert (1993, 240) write:

Deciding upon which activities and tasks require strong control or fundamental guidance requires a comprehensive understanding of the role and function of police in society. One aspect of that insight is the increasing educational level of the police. During the past few years, more educated persons are joining the police force and many officers are raising their level of education. At a time when police are becoming more educated, the requirements of the police are becoming more complicated. No longer do the police simply respond to calls for service. The renewed emphasis on community-oriented policing and problem-solving policing requires officers to think and plan rather than just respond (Alpert and Dunham, 1992). That is, officers are being educated and trained to use

good judgment and discretion in many situations.

There are other issues that may have influenced this trend toward police departments looking into the values of college-educated officers. These issues include critical incidents or police practices that spurned public outcry. “Some say other factors, like the 1992 Los Angeles riots and New Jersey’s racial profiling controversies in the 1990s, have departments looking for more mature and sophisticated officers. ‘We get less complaints, less problems,’ said Paramus Police Chief Fred Corrubia, whose Department requires a Bachelor’s Degree” (Salazar, 2006, 2).

Police discretion is another consideration that may be affected by education. Often in police work officers have a choice whether or not to serve a summons or make a custodial arrest. Shernock (1992, 76) indicates that discretion is an aspect of professionalism and writes:

Because professionalism involves the exercise of discretion, as education increases there should be a greater tendency to take informal action in cases involving maintenance of order, and greater support for independence from supervision or from the authority of nominal superiors.

Dunham and Alpert (1993, 158) support this and write:

Goldstein (1977:286-287) argues that college-educated officers learn things that are independent of what is taught there, in addition to the course work which improves their work performance. Finckenaue (1976) found, when presented with hypothetical scenarios, that college-educated officers say that they would make fewer arrests than officers who do not have a college education. This implies that the former more often think they are able to handle situations without having to invoke the legal sanction of arrest. Sherman (1978, 1980) criticizes prior studies for the failure to control for IQ levels or motivation, as well as insufficient variance and poor measurement of educational quality, when comparing officers without college to those who have been college-educated.

There is, however, also a negative affect that college has on police officers. Educated

officers tend to be more cynical than those who have not received higher education (ibid). Perhaps they become frustrated, since they may feel that they are unrewarded for the time, money and effort put into their education (ibid).

One concern about higher education and law-enforcement is the actual value of the education. Carter and Sapp (1990, 61) wrote of the National Advisory Commission on Higher Education of Police Officers.

The essence of the Commission's inquiry--which came to be known as the "Sherman Report"--was that law enforcement education had serious limitations. It was suggested that even if the arguments in support of police college requirements were valid, the overall benefits of college would not be realized because of qualitative inadequacies in academic course inventories, course content, and faculty credentials (Sherman and National Advisory Commission 1978; National Commission on Higher Education of Police Officers 1979).

There are other concerns when trying to measure the performance of college-educated officers. "That is, college-educated officers might tend to hold different attitudes or perform more effectively not because they went to college but rather because of traits they possessed before attending college" (ibid, 568). Worden also indicates that there is to be "little or no attitudinal or behavioral change in officers who undertake college studies as in-service students. These officers already have developed a set of occupational attitudes (Niederhoffer 1969) as well as a set of 'operational styles' (M. Brown 1981)" (ibid). Niederhoffer observes that "One might expect to observe more marked differences when one examines officers who began their police careers with a college education" (ibid, 569). Worden (1990, 569) states that there are two factors at play in this situation.

First, the effect of a college education on attitudes and behavioral predispositions may be greater for pre-service students than for in-service students because the former are not subject (as students) to administrative

or peer group pressures. Second, pre-college differences in outlooks, intelligence, motivation, and the like might manifest themselves later in occupational attitudes and performance, even if college education per se has little or no observable effect (ibid).

In the 1970s a number of studies were conducted in regard to the benefits provided by higher education for law enforcement. In at least one study a number of positive benefits were found. Carter and Sapp (1990, 62) summed up the benefits of college education:

- Developed a broader base of information for decision making;
- Provided additional years and experiences for increasing maturity;
- Through general education courses and coursework in the major (particularly a criminal justice major) permitted the individual to learn more about the history of the country and the democratic process, and the democratic form of government;
- Engendered the ability to handle difficult or ambiguous situations with greater creativity or innovation;
- Developed a greater empathy for minorities and their discriminatory experiences; this understanding was developed both through coursework and through coursework and through interaction in the academic environment;
- Made officers appear to be less rigid in decision making, to tend to make their decisions in the spirit of the democratic process, and to use discretion in dealing with individual cases rather than applying the same rules to all cases;
- Helped officers to communicate and respond to the crime and service needs of the public in a competent manner, with civility and humanity;
- Made officers more innovative and more flexible when dealing with complex policing programs and strategies, such as problem-oriented policing, community policing, and task force responses;
- Equipped officers better to perform tasks and to make continuous policing decisions with little or no supervision;
- Engendered more “professional” demeanor and performance;
- Enabled officers to cope better with stress and to be more likely to seek assistance with personal or stress related problems, and thereby to be more stable and more reliable employees;
- Enabled officers to adapt their styles of communication and behavior to a wider range of social conditions and classes;
- Tended to make officers less authoritarian and less cynical with

respect to the milieu of policing;  
Enabled officers to accept and adapt to organizational change more readily. (See: Carter, Sapp and Stephens 1988:16-18, 1989).

Carter's and Sapp's research utilized three phases. The first phase reviewed similar research articles. The second phase was a survey of nearly seven hundred law enforcement officers from county, state and municipal departments. In the third site visits were made in order to collect information on educational issues. "In all the comments about the benefits of college education, two factors stand out: communications and social skills" (Carter & Sapp, 1990, 82). Their respondents indicated that these were a factor in college-educated officers generating fewer complaints than their non college-educated counterparts (ibid).

In support of college education of as a valid entry requirement, Carter and Sapp (1990, 79) write:

It has long been argued that higher education requirements are inherently discriminatory toward racial and ethnic minorities, but the findings of this study do not support that argument. Rather, on a national basis, overall educational levels of minorities are virtually comparable to those of white males. Moreover, the proportion of persons who had done graduate work among minorities exceeds that among white males. Similarly, women have higher average levels of education and more graduate work than white males.

Findings pertaining to officers' attitudes vary somewhat from study to study.

Worden (1990, 569) writes:

Miller and Fry (1976) found that education has no positive effect on officers' "public service orientation"; on the contrary, those with a degree displayed less of such an orientation than those without a degree. Hudzik's (1978) findings show that college-educated officers place less value on obedience to supervisors than do officers without a college education; Roberg's (1978) results indicate that college-educated officers are more 'open-minded.' Yet Smith and Ostrom (1974), Miller and Fry (1976), and Smith (1978) report that educational achievement bears no

significant relationship to a preference for autonomy or to resistance to management control.

There are more differences that are commonly believed to exist between college-educated officers and those who did not attend college. For instance, it is believed that college-educated officers are less rigid concerning the actual enforcement of the law.

Worden (1990, 576) supports this:

Because a college education is supposed to provide insights into human behavior and to foster a spirit of experimentation, college-educated officers are (hypothetically) less inclined to invoke the law to resolve problems, and correspondingly are inclined more strongly to develop extralegal solutions.

Another finding in this study was the possibility that higher education may improve the performance of officers involved in police-citizen interactions (Worden, 1990).

In an article entitled “The Effects of College Education on Professional Attitudes Among Police,” a survey was distributed to patrol officers of several northern police departments. Shernock (1992, 71), the author of this work, writes:

The belief in the importance of a college education for police officers derives from two sources or movements: the perceived need to professionalize police and the perceived need to change police attitudes. The movement to professionalize the police by requiring a college education began with August Vollmer, who proposed a 36 month college-level program in police education as early as 1917 (Hudzik 1978:70). Because 75 percent of police officers during this period could not pass an army intelligence test (LeDoux, Tully, Chronister, and Gansneder 1984:22; Sherman 1978:32), Vollmer envisioned higher education as a vehicle for converting the police occupation into a prestigious profession (Goldstein 1977: 283-284; Sherman 1978:32; Sherman and National Advisory Commission 1978: 30-33).

In the article, Shernock (1992) indicates that early studies looked into the differences between college-educated and non college-educated officers as far as their attitudes were concerned; these early studies also examined whether college education was a positive

factor determining whether a police officer was cynical, prejudice, intolerant, or authoritative. Other studies looked into different factors. These studies “examined performance in terms of personnel issues, and found college education to be related to lower absenteeism, fewer disciplinary actions, and faster career advancement (Cascio 1977:90; Daniel 1982:71; Gross 1973:479; LeDoux et al. 1984:24)” (Shernock, 192, 74). Moreover, “Many of these studies found that college-educated officers were less authoritarian (Dalley 1975; Smith, Locke, and Fenster 1970), more attuned to social and ethnic problems (Weiner 1976), less dogmatic (Parker et al. 1976), more open-minded, and less punitively oriented (Guller 1972)” (Shernock, 1992, 73). Other findings show that college-educated police generate fewer complaints, are involved in fewer traffic accidents and are injured less frequently, and are less likely to be assaulted (ibid).

Some of Shernock’s (1992, 84) findings include:

Higher educational level was not related significantly to the measure of commitment to the service ideal or to suspicion of the outside world. Education was related negatively to the comparative value placed on respect for citizens ( $r = -.144$ ,  $p = .033$ ),<sup>13</sup> and positively to support for police strikes ( $\eta = .177$ ,  $p = .020$ ); these results indicated officers’ orientation to serving themselves instead of the public.

Other findings in this same article indicate that college education level did not have a relationship with the use of officer discretion, or intolerance of misconduct of other officers, but it did have a positive relationship with ethical conduct itself. Shernock (ibid) also expressed a possibility that the ethical tendencies of college-educated officers could be further enhanced by increasing their exposure to ethics when adding ethics as a theme in a college’s criminal justice curriculum. “In view of the positive relationship between college education and the importance placed on ethical conduct, it would appear that higher education makes some difference in developing a consciousness of the importance

of ethics” (Shernock, 1992, 85). Further explaining this, Shernock writes “Because professionalism involves adherence to strict ethical codes, as education increases a greater value should be placed on the importance of ethical conduct in both internal (with colleagues) and external (with clients and public) relations” (ibid 76).

In 1996 John Krimmel wrote a journal article entitled “The Performance of College-educated Police: A Study of Self-Rated Police Performance Measures”. In this study a survey was distributed to over two hundred officers in two jurisdictions; these surveys were completed anonymously. The surveys asked the respondents to rate themselves on a variety of topics in regard to their performance. Krimmel (1996, 93) states:

First, this study found differences in performance ratings between police officers possessing a bachelor’s degree or higher and those officers possessing lower level qualifications. This finding may indicate that educated officers are better performing officers, or it may indicate differences in perceptions about their duties. Whichever is the case, the educated officers appear to have advantages over their nondegreed counterparts.

Krimmel (ibid) adds that “It makes sense, for example, that college-educated officers would report better written and oral communication skills”.

In this study Krimmel issued self-reported performance questionnaires. It was found that the officers’ ratings of themselves in certain instances were not very different than the ratings that supervisors would issue (ibid). In support of their validity, Krimmel (1996, 91) writes:

Thus, where self-reported performance appraisals (when used alone) are not necessarily the best method of evaluating police officer performance, they represent a valid performance picture if used as an evaluation tool for organizational purposes. In other words, without any employee performance documentation, self-reported performance instruments at least offer a valid snapshot of the organization’s behavior.



It is also suggested that police administrators who write policy can use these instruments to gather insight from the officers as to where they can make improvements (ibid).

Krimmel also indicates that requiring a Bachelor's Degree for entry into a police department will aide in their problem solving ability. In support of this Krimmel writes:

Collective educational experiences, including the marriage of research and practical applications of successful experimentation, will be one important result of recruiting educated police. In short, improving police performance with college degrees for the members for police departments continues to be a necessity in order to further criminal justice effectiveness.

In both jurisdictions, college-educated officers rated themselves higher than their non college-educated colleagues. These categories include knowledge of departmental rules, use of safety practices, the ability to accept change, quality of written work and oral presentations, interpersonal relationships, and problem-solving abilities (ibid).

In an article written by Carolyn Salazar (2006), it is indicated that in the years between 1990 and 2000, the number of police departments requiring college as an entry requirement has doubled. A Baccalaureate Degree is required in 4.8% of police departments and an Associate's Degree is required in another 9.6%. While college-educated officers may question authority more, they also foster change and come up with new ideas, and receive fewer complaints (ibid).

In 1990 the New Jersey state legislature tried to pass a bill that required all departments which are under the civil service guidelines to include a Baccalaureate Degree as an entry requirement. Several groups, including the NAACP, opposed this bill and the legislation never went through (ibid). In Minnesota, however, all police recruits are currently expected to pass an eight week skill program and possess an Associate's Degree in order to become licensed officers through the Peace Officers Standards and

Training Board (Dale, 1996).

There are other concerns when police departments consider college education requirements. In 2004 a police officer sued his department in Mahwah, New Jersey, for age discrimination when an officer with a graduate degree but less experience than he, was promoted while he was passed over. In December of that year, the courts ruled in favor of the police department (ibid).

Salazar (2006) indicates that several factors influenced the trend toward college-educated, more sophisticated and mature officers. These include New Jersey's racial profiling issues in the 1990s and the Los Angeles riots in 1992 (ibid).

Some advantages of employing college-educated officers include better performance and behavior, less disciplinary actions from use of force allegations, less use of sick leave, fewer officer-involved assaults, fewer complaints and on the job injuries, and increased acceptance of minorities. The writer of this article believes that part of the explanation lies in college exposing a student to other races, cultures, beliefs, goals, and backgrounds (Bowman, 2003).

Truxillo, Bennett & Collins (1998) indicates that there was a relationship between college education and supervisory promotion and job knowledge with an average  $r = .31$  and  $.25$  respectively. They also confirmed that research showed that there is a relationship between college grades and possession of a college degree and interpersonal ability. However, this study also showed that there was no relationship between college education and disciplinary problems (ibid).

The participants were 84 police officers who worked in a southern metropolitan area for a period of over 10 years. Questionnaires concerning the officers' education levels

were distributed, asking questions like GPA, major, type of degree, and number of credit hours earned.

One of the limitations of the study was that the difference between officers who achieved their degrees before being hired by a police department and those who earned their degrees post hire was not explored. The study was unable to compare GPA with actual job performance as well, though it did confirm that other studies have suggested this relationship (Truxillo, Bennett & Collins, 1998).

In the conclusion of this study, the authors suggested that police departments may be justified in giving additional compensation to its college-educated officers or requiring educational qualifications (*ibid*). They also recommend further research exploring the differences between types of college education and job performance as well as “the mechanism through which education is related to job performance (e.g., through achievement motivation, conscientiousness, maturity, job knowledge)” (*ibid*, 281).

In an article entitled “Programs to Improve Police Work” (1974), it was indicated, however, that college-educated police officers generally perform better than others. This conflicts somewhat with what previously mentioned works indicate. The author looked at the Ventura Police Department in California, which instituted a four year college degree requirement. It was found that college-educated officers generated fewer founded complaints and had a lower turnover rate. One of the arguments mentioned in this article for college-educated police was the increase in the education level of the general population. (Programs to Improve Police Work, 1974).

In an article written by T. Alex (2005) it is indicated that in Iowa there is an increase in police officers with college degrees. The percentage is up from 11% in 1983 to 44% in

2005 (ibid). The article also states that according to some police officials, college-educated officers are more adaptive and are more eager to learn (ibid).

Authoritarianism is another characteristic that is studied in police officers. Smith, Locke and Fenster (1970) explored this quality in New York City by issuing a questionnaire to seventy-eight police officers using a Likert type scale. Half of the group had graduated from John Jay College while the other half of the respondents had no college education. The average age and time in service for both groups of respondents were very close, with the college-educated officers averaging 40.6 years of age and 18.2 years of service and the non-college police averaging 40.0 years of age and 18.3 years serving the New York City Police Department (ibid).

In their findings Smith, Locke & Fenster (1970, 314) write:

These findings are consistent with those found earlier (Smith, Locke and Walker, 1967) in which men attending college were found to be less authoritarian than those who had no college experience. The present study demonstrates that the completion of a baccalaureate program which takes typically, six to nine years at John Jay College since our police students are working full schedules while attending school, has a considerable impact on the authoritarian attitudes of the policeman student as contrasted with his brother officer who does not attend college at all.

In this study, the half of the respondents attended college while they were employed by the police department. The differences between the two types of respondents tend to show that police officers who attend college and are actively employed in this capacity may have their attitudes changed by the college experience. This study did not have respondents who already were college graduates before they were employed by a police department.

Technology is yet another factor that may support higher education. Computer

training is common in most if not all colleges. Students, no matter what their major, are exposed to this and other high-technology through the course of their college careers.

Carter and Sapp (1990, 80-81) write:

Our high-tech world is dictating the recruitment of more highly educated officers. College-educated officers appear to be more analytical, hence they are more objective in dealing with the public. The value of college-educated officers will become increasingly evident as our use of technology expands and body of knowledge multiplies. Those with less academic preparation may indeed find their career in law enforcement to be less rewarding than anticipated.

College-educated officers were also believed by respondents to have a wider array of more effective skills than those of officers lacking higher education (ibid).

In a study that questions whether a police officer should be required to have a Bachelor's Degree, Baro and Bruligame (1999) acknowledge that there are advantages to hiring college-educated police officers. Though they argue that most police officers probably do not need a Baccalaureate Degree, they admit that college-educated officers seem to have better communication skills, generate fewer citizen complaints, were less likely to be the focus of a civil or disciplinary action, and had better ethical judgment (ibid). However they write "Enhanced training could produce job performance benefits similar to those attributed to higher education" (ibid, 63).

In this writer's opinion the enhanced training option should be further explored to see if it can generate these desired characteristics more efficiently than can higher education. However it seems uncertain whether it will or not, as Baro and Bruigame (1999, 63) go on to state:

In traditional policing, training may also be preferred to higher education because it can enhance paramilitary discipline and build police solidarity. These effects are not necessarily positive: enhanced discipline and increased solidarity also tend to insulate police bureaucracies so as to

make them more powerful and more autonomous (Kappeler et al. 1994:100-17).

Thus enhanced training could instill characteristics that many consider undesirable, thus defeating its own purpose: “Concerns about inordinate police power and autonomy are at the heart of the current community policing reform movement” (ibid, 63).

Several themes continue to show up in these studies: college-educated officers are more ethical than those who are not college-educated; they are more sensitive to minorities and to other races, more innovative, and better-rounded. College-educated officers are less likely to use force, be involved in fewer vehicle crashes and civil actions, and generate fewer founded citizen complaints; they are even less likely to abuse sick leave, have better communication skills, and are more accepting of change. Though not a true indicator of performance, Polk and Armstrong (2001) indicate that officers with college degrees advance faster than those who don't have higher education. “The data have shown that there is a differential distribution of personnel by education with the more educated respondents holding a higher rank category than those with lower educational level” (ibid, 96).

Do these differences make college requirements valid? This writer feels that the answer to this question is yes. Several departments, like Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Charleston, South Carolina, as well as most federal law enforcement agencies have had Baccalaureate Degree requirements for several years. The courts also seem to appear to recognize the validity of higher education, siding with departments who favor education (Dale, 1996). In support of this Aamodt (2004, 48) writes:

In *Davis v. Dallas* (1985) the U.S. Court of Appeals for the fifth Circuit upheld the Dallas Police Department's requirement that applicants have at least 45 hours of college credit. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth

Circuit upheld a department's requirement of college credits and ultimately a bachelor's degree to be eligible for promotion (*Chicano Police Officers Association v. Stover*, 1976).

To date the Dallas Police Department still maintains its 45 college credit minimum entry qualification but exempts those who have served with the military for a minimum of four years from this requirement (Dallas Police Department, 2006). There are other cases that help to validate college-educated police officers. In *Ice v. Arlington County*, a U.S. District Court sided with the police department's use of a pay incentive program that rewarded officers with college experience (Aamodt, 2004). In this case even the courts acknowledged that the evidence presented showed officers who have attended college were better policemen (ibid).

Do these differences make the non college-educated police officer obsolete? In the writer's opinion the answer is no, as he has worked with what he feels are many fine non college-educated police officers of various backgrounds. Moreover, none of these studies have directly implied that college-educated officers should replace officers who lack higher education or that Baccalaureate Degree entry requirements should be immediately instituted by police departments. It is not the goal of this work, however, to examine this particular question, as interesting as it may seem. It is also not the purpose of this work to demonstrate that college-educated officers write more summonses, solve more crimes, or make more arrests than their non college-educated colleagues.

All police receive or have received some type of training, but not all of them have attended college. This writer has attended two police academies, namely the Pennsylvania Municipal Police Training Program and the Chesterfield County Basic Police Training Academy. Police recruits in both of these commonwealths must attend

training academies before they become officers. It is the opinion of this writer that the purpose of training is to teach the student how to perform, where as the purpose of education is broader, including why something is done a certain way. Brueger (2004) seems to be of similar thought and indicates that training and education have different tasks that should complement each other. Education prepares a person for training programs and teaches the student how to learn as opposed to training which achieves a specified end by building certain skills (ibid). In support of this, Baro and Burlingame write “Berg (1994) maintains that training and education are different in that training is meant to convey skills, attitudes, and general information about the job of policing, while education involves more theoretically based knowledge, values, and attitudes” (1999, 66).

Some colleges will grant credit hours to persons who attend certain police academies. “An emerging debate among criminal justice (CJ) educators concerns awarding academic credit for professional training experiences. The key point of contention within this debate is whether such training is analogous to learning experiences obtained in the college classroom” (Schafer & Castellano, 2005, 300). Mercyhurst College in Erie Pennsylvania, where the writer completed his undergraduate studies, is an example of this and grants a student sixteen credit hours for completing the Municipal Police Training Program located at their North East Township Campus (Municipal Police Training Academy Pennsylvania Act 120, 2002). However the writer feels that just because a police officer has attended a police academy, even one that is sponsored by a college or university, does not mean that he is college-educated. In his experience there is a significant difference in content between the training he has received at the police academies he had attended and the liberal arts & criminal justice college education he has



received. One reason for this, according to Schafer and Thomas (2005, 314), is that “Community colleges may structure terminal degree programs with the belief that participating students will never pursue additional higher education in that field. This could result in a curriculum that emphasizes highly vocational”.

It is the writer’s opinion that the value of having college education requirements must be balanced with the current manpower needs of the individual police department in question. He also stresses that instituting a college credit requirement that denies an otherwise fine applicant could be detrimental to a police agency, particularly one that is having difficulty obtaining police recruits. According to the Chesterfield County Police Department’s Strategic Plan (2006), one of the agency’s weaknesses is a human resource deficit. Other agencies like New York City, Chicago and several departments in California are having problems attracting police officers (McGreevy, 2006). Instituting a college credit or degree entry requirement could compound this recruitment problem by turning aside applicants who under the old entry requirements were considered qualified.

Chapter III of this work will include the results of a survey that was administered to sworn members of the Chesterfield County Police Department. This survey asks the respondents’ opinions in regard to their perception of college education and its effect on the performance and behavior of police officers. These results will be used to aid this writer in the formulation of any recommendations that he will present to the Police Department and will be contained in Chapter IV of this work.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **(Research Chapter)**

This work is based upon several hypotheses in regard to how police officers feel about college education and its effect, positive, negative, or neutral, on the performance and behavior of their colleagues. Because the data here has been subjected to inferential analysis, no definitive tests of the hypotheses can be done. Therefore the results will be discussed in terms of the trends in the data. The hypotheses are as follows:

H 1 predicts that officers who lack college educations will have negative perceptions toward college education in regard to the performance and behavior of police officers. In the writer's experience, this type of sentiment is common among officers with this background.

H 2 predicts that officers who have college educations will tend to have more positive perceptions toward college education in relation to the performance and behavior of police officers than non college-educated officers. In a study performed by Krimmel (1993), it was found that college-educated officers tended to rate themselves higher than officers without college educations.

H 3 predicts that police supervisors will tend to place more value on college education than will a non-supervisor. Shernock (1992) and Polk & Armstrong (2001) indicated that several previous works claimed that college education is related in a positive way to career advancement.

H 4 predicts that police supervisors are more likely to have a college background than do their subordinates. Brecci (1997, 56) found that "front-line supervisors (corporals and sergeants) were the most likely to have taken college classes.

H 5 predicts that college-educated officers will be perceived as less authoritarian than non-college officers. Smith, Locke and Fenster (1970) indicate that college-educated officers show lower authoritarianism than non college-educated police officers.

Based upon the work of Vodicka (1994), H 6 predicts that college-educated officers will be perceived as having better communication skills than non college-educated officers.

Also based upon the work of Vodicka (1994), H 7 predicts that college-educated officers will be perceived to be more adaptive to change.

H 8 predicts that college-educated officers are perceived to be less likely to generate citizen complaints than non college-educated officers. Carter and Sapp (1989, 158), supporting this hypothesis, write “research of particular relevance to police liability consistently indicates that there are fewer citizen complaints and disciplinary actions among higher educated officers.”

H 9 predicts that college-educated officers are less likely to abuse sick leave. Spielberger (1979) supports this and also adds that college-educated officers are less likely to be injured on duty.

H 10 predicts that college-educated officers are more sensitive to minorities than non college-educated officers. In support of this, Carter and Sapp (1989, 63) indicate that college-educated officers have “developed a greater empathy for minorities and their discriminatory experiences.”

H 11 predicts that college-educated officers are less likely to use force. Bowman (2003) indicates that college-educated officers have fewer officer involved assaults and are less likely to be subjected disciplinary actions from use of force situations.

Opinion surveys were distributed to various members of the Police Department; they were analyzed to support or refute the hypotheses. The scope of this survey includes sworn patrol officers, senior patrol officers, master patrol officers, career patrol officers, detectives, senior detectives, master detectives, career detectives, and sergeants of the Chesterfield County Police Department.

Civilian employees were not included in the survey. Also not included were members of the Police Department’s command staff. These include captains, majors, lieutenant colonels, and the chief of police. They are not included as respondents in this survey, since it explores the behavior and performance of field personnel and of not administrative staff.

The performance and behavior of police officers, college and non-college educated, is a dependant variable. Gender, age, law-enforcement experience, race, rank, and

military and/or college experience, if any, are independent variables.

Appendix B shows an example of the cover letter included with the survey.

Appendix C shows the actual survey itself which consists of two sections. Section I contains background questions, such as age, education level, time in service, rank, military experience, and gender. Section II asks questions pertaining to how the respondent feels about college education and its effect on the behavior of police officers. The respondents pick from the following responses: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree or Much More Likely, More Likely, Neutral, Less Likely, or Much Less Likely. It should be noted that several respondents omitted one or more questions throughout the survey. This caused some discrepancies in the total numbers.

The first question of the survey asked the respondent's level of law-enforcement experience. The largest group, 31.3%, or thirty respondents, indicated that they had between 6 and 10 years of law enforcement experience. The second largest group, 24%, or twenty-three respondents, was the group with experience levels of 1 to 5 years of service. Seventeen respondents, 17.7% of the total, claimed they had between 16 to 20 years experience. Fifteen officers, 15.6% of survey takers, indicated that they had 11 to 15 years of experience. Four respondents had 26 years or more service.

The next question asked the respondent's education level. The majority, 42.7 % or forty-one respondents, indicated that they possessed a Bachelor's Degree. The next largest group, 25% or 24 respondents, claimed they had some college credits. These were followed by officers possessing an Associate's Degree, which made up 14.6% or fourteen respondents. Four of the respondents had graduate degrees and seven more had some graduate credits. Only six or 6.2% of respondents lacked any college experience.

Question three asked the respondents when they had obtained their college credits. Most officers, 67 % or sixty-three respondents, indicated that they had obtained their college credits prior to being employed by a police department. The next largest group, 17 % or sixteen respondents, claimed they earned college credits before and after being hired by a police department. The remainder, 9.6%, indicated that they obtained the credits after they were hired by a police department.

Question four inquired how much full-time military experience the respondents possessed. The majority of respondents, 71.1 %, indicated that they had no full-time military experience. These were followed by those officers having 1 to 5 years experience, or 21.6 % of respondents. Of those responding, 6.2 % claimed to have between 6 and 10 years full-time military experience. Only 1 respondent claimed to have 11 to 15 years of experience and no respondent indicated that he exceeded this.

The next question asked the respondents how many years of part-time military experience they possessed. Most, seventy-three or 76 % of respondents, stated that they had no part-time military experience. The next largest group, twelve or 12.5 % of respondents, indicated they had between 1 to 5 years part-time military experience. Nine more or 9.4 % of respondents claimed between 6 to 10 years experience. The next three categories, 11 to 15 years, 16 to 20 years, and 21 or more years, each had one respondent.

The respondent's age was asked in the next question. The largest group, those aged between 31 and 40, accounted for 37.1 % or thirty-six respondents. These were followed by officers between the ages of 21 and 30 years, thirty-four or 35.1 % of respondents. Officers aged between 41 and 50 years accounted for the third largest group. Twenty-four respondents or 24.7% of those who participated in this survey claimed to be in this

category. Only three officers indicated that they were over 51 years of age.

Gender was the next question. The majority of respondents, 91.6%, or eighty-eight officers were male.

Question 8 asked the respondent's racial background. Most respondents, 86.8%, were European. The next largest group, 6.6%, was African, followed by 4.4 % of respondents who claimed to be Latin American. One respondent was Asian, and another indicated that he was Native American.

The final question of Section I asked the respondent's rank. Police officer was the most commonly held rank among respondents at 42.4%. This was followed by the rank of senior officer at 19.6%. Nine respondents, 9.8% of the total, indicated that they were master officers. Next were the ranks of sergeant and career officer with each having seven respondents or 7.6%. Two respondents said they were detectives and two more indicated that they were senior detectives, each making up 2.2% of participants. Master and career detectives each compiled 4.3% of respondents with 4 responses each.

Section two of the survey asks questions in regard to how survey respondents feel about college education and how it effects and influences the performance and behavior of police officers.

In conjunction with the opinion survey, several structured interviews were conducted by this investigator. Several sergeants and a lieutenant, all of varying educational and experience levels, were interviewed. A list of the structured interview questions as well as the consent letter can be seen in Appendix B.

This writer feels that the interview results are very similar to the opinion surveys. It must be remembered that all the officers interviewed had at least some college education.

The lieutenant and two of the sergeants possessed Bachelor's Degrees, another sergeant was eight credits short of a Bachelor's Degree, and the final sergeant had attained an Associate's Degree.

The reader is cautioned that a large percentage of the responses to many of the questions were neutral. A neutral response neither supports or detracts from the validity of the hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1 predicts that officers who lack college educations will have negative perceptions toward college education in regard to the performance and behavior of police officers. The data suggests a tendency for non college-educated officers to respond more negatively towards how they feel college-educated officers will perform or behave as seen in table 1-1. However, only 6 of the survey respondents lacked any college credits.

**Table 1-1**

**H-1 Non college-educated respondents being negative toward college education**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>#/% Non-college +</b>	<b>#/% Non-college -</b>
10	Communication of college-educated better.	0/0%	4/66.6%
11	Sensitivity to minorities.	0/0%	0/0%
12	College-educated less likely to use of force.	1/16.7%	0/0%
13	Sick leave abuse.	0/0%	2/33.3%
14	College-educated having better work ethic.	0/0%	5/83.3%
15	College-educated less likely to generate citizen complaints	1/16.7%	4/66.6%

**Table 1-1(Continued)**

16	College-educated being more innovative than non-college.	0/0%	5/83.3%
17	College-educated being more adaptive than non-college.	1/16.7%	5/83.3%
18	College-educated being more likely to leave a police department than non-college.	0/0%	5/83.3%
19	College-educated being more authoritarian than non-college.	5/83.3%	0/0%

Question Results:

- 7 Support
- 0 Slightly Support
- 0 Equal
- 2 Do Not Support

Conclusion: overall the data tend to support the hypothesis; however, due to the low number of respondents, this writer feels that the hypothesis is only partly supported.

Hypothesis 2 predicts that officers who have college educations will tend to have more positive perceptions toward college education in relation to the performance and behavior of police officers than non college-educated officers. Appendix G contains the survey results from officers with Bachelor’s Degrees.

**Table 1-2**

**H-2 College-educated respondents being more positive than non-college respondents.**

Question	Subject	#/% College Positive	#/% Non-college Positive
10	Communication of college-educated better.	10/24.4%	0/0%



**Table 1-2 (Continued)**

11	Sensitivity to minorities.	13/31.7%	0/0%
12	College-educated less likely to use of force.	10/24.4%	1/16.7%
13	Sick leave abuse.	3/7.3%	0/0%
14	College-educated having better work ethic.	3/7.3%	0/0%
15	College-educated less likely to generate citizen complaints	7/17.5%	1/16.7%
16	College-educated being more innovative than non-college.	10/24.4%	0/0%
17	College-educated being more adaptive than non-college.	15/36.6%	1/16.7%
18	College-educated being more likely to leave a police department than non-college.	2/4.9%	0/0%
19	College-educated being more authoritarian than non-college.	23/56.1%	5/83.3%

## Question Results:

7 Support  
 1 Slightly Support  
 0 Equal  
 1 Do Not Support

Conclusion: overall the data tend to support hypothesis two

The third hypothesis predicts that police supervisors will tend to place more value on college education than do lower ranking officers. Although a total of ninety-seven

surveys were returned, unfortunately only seven surveys were completed by sergeants (Appendix G). In the areas of sensitivity to minorities, communications skills, use of force, adaptively to change and authoritarianism, they tended to answer in a positive way toward college-educated police officers. In the areas of sick leave abuse and work ethic, the sergeants tended not to favor the college-educated officers. Table 1-3 contains data that compares the survey results of sergeants with those of subordinates.

**Table 1-3**

**H-3 Police Sergeant will tend to place more value on college education than lower ranking officers.**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>#/% Sergeant Positive</b>	<b>#/% Subordinate Positive</b>
10	Communication of college-educated better.	3/42.9%	19/21%
11	Sensitivity to minorities.	2/28.6%	15/16.6%
12	College-educated less likely to use of force.	2/28.6%	19/21.1%
13	Sick leave abuse.	0/0%	6/6.6%
14	College-educated having better work ethic.	0/0%	9/10%
15	College-educated less likely to generate citizen complaints	3/42.9%	12/13.3%
16	College-educated being more innovative than non-college.	3/42.9%	18/20%
17	College-educated being more adaptive than non-college.	3/42.9%	18/20%

**Table 1-3 (Continued)**

18	College-educated being more likely to leave a police department than non-college.	2/28.6%	2/2.1%
19	College-educated being more authoritarian than non-college.	6/85.7%	64/71.1%

## Question Results:

7 Support

0 Slightly Support

0 Equal

2 Do Not Support

In the structured interviews, none of the five sergeants interviewed indicated a strong preference for college. One sergeant who has over 15 years supervisory experience and who served in the Vice and Narcotics Unit as a supervisor and currently works in the Patrol Division indicated that he has no preference for college or non college-educated police officers (Personal Communication, October 22, 2006). This sergeant indicated that a college education would effect his hiring decision, “with hopes that they are stronger communicators than those who have not received a college education” (ibid). He added “I would prefer someone who attained their college education while working, as it shows a strong motivation” (ibid).

Another supervisor, a patrol sergeant with 16 years police experience and a commission with the United States Army, stated “I have no preference. It all depends upon the person and the environment they are brought up in. I have run into college-educated people out here who are dumb as a box of rocks” (Personal Communication, October 25, 2006). He places more faith in work experience but feels that college-

educated officers tend to be somewhat more innovative; however, he prefaced this by saying that most officers hired by the Department are college-educated (ibid).

A patrol sergeant with over 20 years experience in law-enforcement states that he feels that there are no differences between college and non college-educated officers in regard to use of force, traffic accidents, innovation, acceptance of change, and authoritarianism (Personal Communication, October 21, 2006). He indicated that, all things being equal, the lack or presence of a college education would not affect his hiring decision. He finds better organizational skills in college-educated officers. Common sense and a better work ethic are traits that he finds favorable in non college-educated officers (ibid).

A Vice and Narcotics sergeant with twelve years with the Chesterfield County Police Department and a Bachelor's Degree indicated "I would prefer some college. I don't think you necessarily need your degree, but it helps to have some college courses" (Personal Communication, October 26, 2006). He adds that "Military is good. However, college gives you the ability or knowledge to study the laws or policies" (ibid).

A lieutenant with over nine years supervisory experience with the Police Department indicated: "I can't say I have a preference. I don't know what difference it makes as far as day to day work is concerned" (Personal Communication, October 23, 2006). He feels that college improves both written skills and oral skills (ibid). "It made a better writer out of me" (ibid). He added, however, "It does not teach commons sense; you cannot go to class to learn to read people" (ibid). He brought up yet another issue with officers who have a college education: "It can develop people to look higher than a police department" (ibid). He also felt that non-college officers tend to be more loyal to the

department (ibid). He indicated that this may be because non college-educated officers may be less marketable or may feel that they are less marketable (ibid).

All of the supervisors interviewed stated that non college-educated applicants should be considered for employment. Two even cited common sense as a trait they found in non college-educated applicants. None of the interviewees indicated that they felt college was a factor in regard to traffic accidents, and only one of them felt that college-educated officers were more innovative; however, one officer prefaced his remarks by indicating that most of the officers hired by the Department had completed some college education. In contrast to this, the lieutenant interviewed indicated that most of the good ideas he has received came from officers without college degrees (Personal Communication, October 23, 2006). Only one interviewee, the vice-sergeant, felt that college-educated officers were less likely to use force and he indicated that the difference was most likely negligible (Personal Communication, October 26, 2006).

Placing college-educated officers in a more positive light, two of the interview subjects indicated that they felt that college-educated applicants showed some degree of motivation by obtaining their degree; the interview subjects felt that college-educated officers should be better writers than non college-educated officers. However, these same two subjects also felt that college-educated officers were less loyal to the Police Department.

Conclusion: because of the responses from the structured interview respondents and that there were only seven survey respondents who held the rank of sergeant, this writer feels that hypothesis three is only somewhat supported.

The fourth hypothesis states that sergeants will tend to have a higher level of

education than lower ranking officers. Table 1-4 contains survey results that compare the education level of sergeants with that of subordinates.

**Table 1-4**

**H-4 Police Sergeant will tend to have a higher level of education than subordinates.**

<b>Education Level</b>	<b>#/% Sergeant</b>	<b>#/% Subordinates</b>
High school Diploma	0/0%	6/6.74%
Some college credits	1/14.3%	23/25.8%
Associate's Degree	1/14.3%	13/14.6%
Bachelor's Degree	4/57.1%	37/41.1%
Some Graduate Credits	1/14.3%	6/6.74%
Advanced Degree	0/0%	4/4.44%

Survey Results:

2 Support

1 Slightly Support

1 Equal

2 Do Not Support

Though the number of supervisor respondents is somewhat low, all of the sergeants who participated in the survey have some college experience. Of the participants of the structured interviews, all but one of them had some college experience. One sergeant had achieved an Associate's Degree, another possessed 96 college credits, but no degree, and the remaining two held Bachelor's Degrees.

Conclusion: hypothesis four is not supported.

The fifth hypothesis predicts that college-educated officers will be perceived to have a lower level of authoritarianism than non college-educated officers. Question 19 asks; "Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are more authoritarian

than non college-educated officers?" The majority of respondents or 61.8% disagreed with this question.

The high school-educated officers tended to disagree or very much disagree with this question. Five of the six respondents in this category disagreed with this question. Most respondents who had achieved four year degrees, twenty-two of forty respondents, disagreed with this question. One agreed and one more very much disagreed.

The structured interview respondents, however, indicated that they felt there was little difference in authoritarianism between college and non-college-educated police officers. One respondent, a Vice and Narcotics Sergeant with twelve years police experience expressed his view on authoritarianism: "I would rather have someone who is authoritarian than someone who cannot control a situation. You can always work on that person who is authoritarian to tone it down a bit. It is easier to do this than to train someone who lacks command presence to take control of a situation. Not only do the supervisors of the police department, but also citizens expect officers to take control of situations" (Personal Communication, October 26, 2006).

Conclusion: despite the somewhat conflicting data gathered from the surveys and the structured interviews, this writer feels that hypothesis five is supported.

The sixth hypothesis predicts that college-educated officers will be perceived to have better communication skills than non college-educated officers. The tenth survey question asked "Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers have better communication skills than non college-educated officers?" Of the officers who submitted surveys, 22.7% agreed with the question. However the largest group, or 48.4% of respondents, disagreed with this question.

Three of the four respondents with advanced degrees agreed or very much agreed with the statement. The fourth was neutral. Of the seven officers with graduate credits, two indicated that they very much agreed with the question, one more agreed, two claimed neutrality, and the remaining two disagreed with the question.

Most officers with four year degrees, seventeen in number or 41.5%, were neutral toward this question. Fourteen respondents, or 35% of those with Bachelor's Degrees, disagreed with the question. Nine more, 22%, indicated that they agreed with the question and only one very much agreed.

Seven of the fourteen respondents with Associate's Degree's, or 50%, indicated that they disagreed with this question. One other very much disagreed with the question. Three were neutral and three more agreed.

The majority of officers with some college credits, seven respondents, disagreed; eleven respondents very much disagreed. Three were neutral toward this question, two more agreed and one very much agreed.

Of the respondents with high school diplomas, there was an even three-way split. Two respondents were neutral, two disagreed and the remaining two very much disagreed with the question.

Most Officers with 5 to 10 years of full-time military experience, eight of twenty-one, indicated that they very much disagreed with this question. Four more disagreed. Five were neutral and four agreed. Three of the six officers with 6 to 10 years of full-time military experience disagreed with this question, with one more very much disagreeing. One officer of this group was neutral.

Of the structured interview respondents, all but one felt that college education had



little impact on a police officer's communication skills. One patrol sergeant with over 20 years experience in law enforcement indicated "If you have no exposure to people and all you have done is sit in a class room environment then you have no people skills"(Personal Communication, October 21, 2006). The lieutenant who was interviewed, however, indicated that he felt that college does improve oral and written skills (Personal Communication, October 23, 2006).

Conclusion: with the majority of survey respondents indicating that they disagree with question 10 in the survey, and most of the structured interview respondents indicating that they feel that college has no effect on an officer's communication skills, this writer feels that hypothesis six is not supported.

The seventh hypothesis predicts that college-educated officers will be perceived to be more adaptive to change. Question 17 asked the respondents "Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are more adaptive to change than non college-educated officers?" Of the respondents, 28.8% agreed with this question and 42.3%, disagreed. All but one of the six officers with high school diplomas either disagreed or very much disagreed with this question. The remaining officer, however, did agree with this question.

Fifteen of forty respondents with Bachelor's Degrees claimed to be neutral in regard to this question. Eleven more respondents agreed and three more very much agreed with question number 17. The remaining eleven respondents with four year degrees disagreed with the question.

With one exception, the structured interview respondents all indicated that they felt there no difference between college and non college-educated officers in regard to

adaptability to change. The dissenting respondent was a sergeant, with no college experience, who has 13.5 years supervisory experience and currently works in the patrol division in the south district. He indicated that he found college-educated officers more adaptable to change (Personal Communication, October 27, 2006).

Despite this, with such a large percentage of survey respondents disagreeing with question, this writer feels that hypothesis seven is not supported.

The eighth hypothesis is that college-educated officers will be perceived to be less likely to generate citizen complaints. The fifteenth question of the survey asks “Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are less likely to generate citizen complaints than non college-educated officers?” 15.6% of respondents agreed with this question and 51.1% disagreed.

Two thirds of the officers with high school diplomas either disagreed or very much disagreed and felt that college-educated officers were more likely to generate citizen complaints. Of the remaining two, one was neutral and the other agreed with the question.

Sixteen of forty-one officers having Bachelor’s Degrees, 39%, were neutral in regard to this question. Another sixteen respondents indicated that they disagreed with the question. Six more agreed, one disagreed, and one skipped this question.

The structured interviews produced somewhat similar results to those of the survey. One sergeant with over 20 years experience with the Police Department, also feels that a pure academic with no work experience will generate more complaints: “I believe that your better police officers come from people who have had a background of practical experiences” (Personal Communication, October 21, 2006).

A sergeant who is a supervisor in the Patrol Divisions in the south district of Chesterfield County and has 13.5 years supervisory experience indicated that, in his experience, when officers deal with law-abiding citizens, both college and non-college officers receive equal numbers of complaints (ibid). He adds “However, when dealing with less than desirable or citizens of foreign descent, it is my opinion that the non-college tend to show more empathy and that the college-educated officers tend to ‘talk down’ to the citizen” (ibid).

A lieutenant with over nine years supervisory experience with the Police Department indicated: “College may help an officer’s verbal communication skills, which in some instances could prevent a complaint due to misunderstanding. But that is going to account for a small percentage” (Personal Communication, October 23, 2006). “I think you learn how to treat people outside a classroom environment” (ibid).

A Vice and Narcotics sergeant with twelve years with the Chesterfield County Police Department and a Bachelor’s Degree felt that education was not a factor when considering citizen complaints and that it depended more on the individual. To demonstrate his view, he pointed out a young police officer who has no college training and had been a marine sergeant for several years. This young officer would not intend to be disrespectful, but from the way he talks and presents himself, using mannerisms and habits gained in the Marine Corps, he could be seen by a citizen as being disrespectful (Personal Communication, October 26, 2006).

Conclusion: overall, this writer feels that due to the data gained from the structured interviews and the opinion survey, hypothesis eight is not supported.

The ninth hypothesis predicts that college-educated officers are perceived to be less

likely to abuse sick leave. Question 13 asks the respondents, “Do you feel that officers who have a college education are more or less likely to abuse sick leave?” According to the opinion survey, 71.1% of the respondents were neutral toward this question; 6.2% of the respondents indicated that they believed college-educated officers were less likely to abuse sick leave; and 22.6% of respondents felt that college-educated officers were more likely to abuse sick leave.

Most officers with Bachelor’s Degrees, thirty-two of forty-one respondents, were neutral towards this question. Five of the remaining respondents felt that college-educated officers were more likely to abuse sick leave. The last three felt that they were less likely. This writer feels that the results of the opinion survey do not support this hypothesis. All respondents in the structured interviews indicated that they did not feel that college, or the lack of college, was a factor in sick leave abuse.

Conclusion: hypothesis nine is not supported.

The tenth hypothesis predicts that college-educated officers are perceived to be more sensitive to minorities. Question 11 asks “In your experience do you feel that college-educated police officers are more sensitive to minorities and other cultures?” Of the respondents only 3.1% felt that college-educated officers were less sensitive to minorities. However, 17.4% of officers felt that college- educated police officers are more sensitive to minorities. The remainder of respondents were neutral.

Four of the six officers who were African-American indicated that they were neutral to this question, with the remaining two agreeing with it. All four Latin-American respondents indicated that they were neutral. The single respondent who claimed to be Asian indicated that college-educated officers were more sensitive to minorities, while

the sole Native-American respondent indicated neutrality.

According to the survey results, three of the four officers with advanced degrees were neutral toward this statement with the fourth agreeing with it. Twenty-eight of the forty-one respondents with Bachelor's Degrees, 70%, indicated that they were neutral, while the remaining twelve agreed. All six officers with high school diplomas were neutral in regard to this question. Based on the survey results, tenth hypothesis is weakly supported.

The eleventh hypothesis predicted that college-educated officers are less likely to use force. Twenty-one or 21.6% of respondents indicated that they felt college-educated officers were less likely to use force. However, most respondents, seventy-one or 73.2%, indicated that they were neutral towards this question. Only 5.1% of the respondent's felt that college-educated officers were more likely to use force than their non college-educated colleagues.

Hard data pertaining to the use of force was obtained from the Chesterfield County Police Department. This data included each use of force incident documented on a PD 147 since 1999. This writer broke down each incident by type of force, year, and level of education of the officer involved. Only incidents involving a single officer using actual force were used; injuries obtained before the incident, which are also documented on the PD 147, were not included. If more than one type of force was used, then the higher level of force, as designated on the use of force continuum, was counted in the data compilation table. For instance, if an officer drew and displayed his firearm and used a physical compliance technique on a suspect during a single incident, then the incident would be tabulated in the "Firearm Displayed" table.

The PD 147 form does not have a provision for officers who have some graduate credits in its education section. For this reason, officers who claimed to have graduate credits on the opinion survey have been merged with officers who indicated that they have Bachelor's Degrees.

There was some difficulty obtaining educational demographics about the Chesterfield County Police Department. The Department was unable to supply accurate input of this nature even though a survey was distributed to sworn members asking, among other things, their level of education. A large number of surveys were never returned by officers. Moreover, the department did not have year-to-year accurate educational demographic information. To compensate, the education breakdown from the opinion survey that was distributed for this project was used. The data compilation can be seen in Appendixes H, I, and J.

The data as compared with the educational demographic obtained from the survey does not strongly support that college-educated officers generate fewer incidents of use of force. In 2006 the collected data showed that officers with Bachelor's Degrees did proportionately become involved with fewer use of force incidents when compared to their peers (Appendix H). However the difference is minimal. The same is true of the use of force data compiled from 2004 and 2003.

In some cases, college-educated officers account for more use of force incidents than their high school-educated peers. In 2006, officers with some college accounted for 25% of all respondents, yet they generated 37.5% of that year's use of force reports (Appendix H). Also of interest, high school-educated officers made up 6.2% of the survey's

respondents; however, the use of force data shows that officers in this education level accounted for only 5% of all use of force reports in 2006.

This writer feels that while this data is interesting, it does not adequately support the hypothesis that college-educated police officers are less likely to use force than are non college-educated officers. Of particular note, this writer has observed that the educational demographics obtained from the PD 147s are somewhat similar to the educational demographics gained from the opinion survey, with the largest deviation from one source to another being 14%.

In a structured interview, a Vice and Narcotics sergeant with twelve years with the Chesterfield County Police Department and a Bachelor's Degree indicated "From my perspective, I think that if you don't have any college then you are more likely to use force quicker" (ibid). The lieutenant with over nine years supervisory experience with the Police Department indicated: "I see all the PD 147s (the Chesterfield County Police Department's Use of Force Report) that come through and I see no correlation as far as education is concerned" (ibid). This seems consistent with the data on the use of force gained from the Office of Professional Standards.

A sergeant who is a supervisor in the Patrol Divisions in the south district of Chesterfield County and has 13.5 years supervisory experience indicated that use of force is an individual choice and "In most cases there are no differences that can be attributed to college vs. non-college" (Personal Communication, October 27, 2006). He added that "In rare situations I have personally observed that college-educated officers tend to overly analyze or hesitate where a non college-educated officer will make a quick assessment and use force to defuse the incident" (ibid). The other three interview

respondents indicated that they felt that there was no difference between college and non-college-educated officers in regard to use of force.

Conclusion: due to the majority of survey and interview respondents being neutral in regard to this question, as well as the use of force data obtained from the Department being somewhat inconclusive, this writer feels that hypothesis eleven is not supported.

### **Limitations of the Study**

There were several issues that were not addressed in the survey which may be worthy of mention. Officers were not asked how they felt the behavior and performance of college-educated supervisors compared to those who did not attend college. This was left out because the main focus of this work is the performance of line officers and not their supervisors. Likewise the respondents were not asked how they felt about college credit or degree requirements for those aspiring to be promoted to sergeant or higher.

The survey did not ask the respondents how they felt about officers receiving more compensation in proportion to their level of education. Some police departments, Charleston, South Carolina, for instance, offer more compensation for officers who have achieved Master's Degrees, JDs or PhDs than officers who have a Bachelor's Degree. The courts support agencies compensating those who achieve higher education as seen in *Ice v. Arlington County* (1977) (Aamodt, 2004). Though compensation, education, and performance are commonly associated topics, they were not explored in this work due to time constraints.

Also not included in the survey is the officer's perception as to whether college should be required for entry or advancement in the Police Department's career development program. While this writer finds that using college credit as a qualification



for advancement in career development is interesting, it has been explored in a previous work and is therefore not covered here.

The respondents' perception of military experience and its effect on the behavior and performance of police officers was not investigated. This writer personally feels that military experience is a valid predictor of performance. Police departments in the United States are paramilitary organizations and many policies, procedures, and customs mimic those found in the military. He also feels that this would be an intriguing topic to explore in the future.

Finally the respondents were not asked if they felt that college-educated officers wrote more summonses, made more arrests, and were less likely to be the subject of a civil action than their colleagues who have not attended college. This writer finds these issues interesting and regrets that these topics were not included in the survey due to time and space constraints. These topics, along with those previously mentioned, could be explored in future surveys and papers in order to further determine the value of college education and its effect in law enforcement.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **(The Application Chapter)**

#### **Implementation: Tactics and Strategies**

With consideration given to the data collected from the surveys administered to sworn officers of the Department and the review of the literature, the writer feels that there are few changes that can be implemented in the short term in regard to entry requirements. Depending on future economic, social, and manpower conditions, there may be some changes that can be made involving college credit entry requirements in the long term. These changes require that the agency seriously consider the possible outcomes that can result from the recommendations. Consideration should be given not only to the Department's manpower needs but also to the opinions and feelings of officers who are currently serving with the Chesterfield County Police Department.

#### **Short-Term Recommendations**

In the short term this writer recommends that the agency evaluate current entry requirements and weigh them against the Police Department's current manpower needs. Obviously, if the Department is having a difficult time obtaining police recruits with the current entry requirements, instituting a college credit or degree requirement may not be advisable, regardless of how desirable college-educated officers may be. Currently the Chesterfield County Police Department is suffering from a human resource deficit (Chesterfield County Police Department Strategic Plan FY 2006-2010, 2006). Increasing entry qualifications could further compound the problem.

Alternate Entry Requirements. To date many police departments use alternate requirements so that potential applicants without college can still apply. "Also, many of those departments have established alternatives for the education requirement, such as the

substitution of military experience for higher education, or counting previous law enforcement experience as equivalent to some level of education” (Polk & Armstrong, 2001, 84). The Chesterfield County Police Department has current entry requirements similar to these alternatives (Chesterfield County Police Department, 2006).

The Chesterfield County Police Department has changed its entry requirements several times since this writer has been employed here. In 1998, when the writer applied, the Department required its applicants to have 60 college credits, or two years military or law enforcement experience. Later the department allowed persons with four years of “progressive and successful experience in a professional trade or business position” to apply in lieu of the previously mentioned requirements (Chesterfield County Police Department, 2004). This requirement has since been superseded by a new one: currently, persons who don’t have the military, law enforcement, or college experience previously mentioned can apply if they have “at least three years full-time verifiable employment” (Chesterfield County Police Department, 2006). This alternate entry requirement is obviously an option that has already been explored and implemented by the Department and will not be dwelled upon further in this paper.

Maintaining or Reducing Current Education Requirements. Considering the Police Department’s current staffing issues, this writer feels that instituting a college credit or degree entry requirement is not advisable. The Chesterfield County Police Department should concentrate on obtaining quality police recruits from various sources, including the military, college, and the full-time work force, and set aside any considerations that include increasing education qualification in the short term. For the time being, perhaps, the Chesterfield County Police Department could even set aside any college education

requirements.

There are several agencies that have done just this. For instance the Virginia State Police currently has no college education requirement and currently require only a G.E.D. or high school diploma (Virginia State Police, 2006). Their website, however, indicates that college is preferred (ibid). The Henrico County Division of Police is another respected agency that only requires an applicant to be a “High School graduate or equivalent” (Henrico Division of Police, 2006). Yet another agency that reduced its education requirement was Plano, Texas, which in February of 2006 required police applicants to possess a Bachelor’s Degree (Johnson, 2006). However, by August, the Plano Police Department had to lower its entry requirements to an Associate’s Degree or three years military experience due to a lack of applicants (ibid).

This option would very likely increase the number of initial applicants to a police department with, however, a possible reduction in quality of personnel hired. If the department chose to do so, it could still give preference to those applicants with college in a manner like the Virginia State Police. This writer feels that this option should only be considered if the Department’s personnel deficit becomes worse.

Education Incentive Pay. There may be another alternative to lowering hiring standards. College education entry requirements are recognized as valid by the courts, as seen in *Davis v. Dallas* (Aamodt, 2004). College incentive pay is also recognized by the courts as valid and yet another tool an agency can use to attract potential police officers (ibid). “In *Ice v. Arlington County* (1977), a U.S. District Court ruled that providing pay incentives for officers with a college education was legal and even stated that ‘All of the evidence disclosed that college trained policemen make better policemen’” (ibid, 48-49).

If the department chooses to do so, an education incentive pay system can be instituted in an effort to try to attract more college-educated applicants. Several police departments already do this. Charleston, South Carolina, for instance, offers a 14% increase to the yearly compensation to officers who obtain a Master's Degree and a 21% increase to officers who have achieved a Law Degree or PhD (Charleston Police Department, 2006). The Los Angeles Police Department adjusts salaries in a different way. The higher education a police officer has, the higher his base salary. Officers with a high school diploma start at \$52,638, those with sixty college credits begin at \$54,747, and the starting base salary for officers with Bachelor's Degrees is \$56,898 (Los Angeles Police Department, 2006).

The reasons to implement such a program are threefold. One reason is to make the entry level position into the department appear more lucrative to college level individuals and, in theory, increase the number of college-educated applicants.

The second reason is retention of current, experienced officers. Once this program begins, college-educated officers who are already on the job would receive the appropriate monetary compensation, which would hopefully be an incentive for these officers to continue their employment with this department.

The third reason to implement an education incentive program is to encourage incumbent officers who lack higher education to attend college courses and pursue a degree. It may also encourage officers with college education to further their education and achieve higher degrees. Once the officer receives his diploma, he begins to draw a higher amount of compensation appropriate to the level of the degree obtained.

Currently there is no monetary incentive for an officer who does not have a college

degree to try to obtain one. The current career progression does not even require an officer to possess college credits in order to enter or progress within it (Chesterfield County Police Department, 2005). If the department is serious about attracting and retaining college-educated officers, this writer feels it should consider a program of this type.

To initiate such a program, this writer proposes that a new form be created and distributed to Department members and police recruits upon their graduation from the Academy. It could be called the "Chesterfield County Police Department Education Inventory Form." This form would ask personal information of the member such as rank, name, date of birth, and of course the highest level of education attained. Attached to the form would be college transcripts that would prove the officer's level of education. Those officers and detectives who are interested in participating in the education incentive program would be required to complete the form and provide the necessary documentation.

The Department's Human Resource Division would compile these forms and the information they contain. They would be responsible for keeping these records and for ensuring that the officers receive the proper compensation.

This program would be voluntary; to participate, the Department member would have to be operating in a sworn position. Academy recruits would have to wait upon graduation to submit their paperwork and participate in the program. If the Department chose to do so, they could make this program open only to officers who had completed their initial one year probationary period, though doing this may make the Department appear less desirable to a potential applicant, knowing that he would have to wait a full

year upon completion of the Academy to receive any compensation from the program.

Any program must first be forwarded and considered by the Chesterfield County Police Department's command staff. If the command staff agrees with the program, it can then be submitted to the County Board of Supervisors. The program will not be implemented unless the Board sees value in it and approves funds to support it.

### **Implementation Costs**

To determine the cost of the college incentive program, the number, rank, seniority, and level of college education of those officers who can participate in the program must be known. Currently the Police Department does a yearly audit and has its members complete questionnaires pertaining to their accumulated awards, certifications, and degrees. The information gained in these questionnaires could be compiled to determine the initial cost of this program.

The cost of the program would depend upon the amount of monetary compensation awarded for each level of education attained. This could be a one time lump sum that is given to the officer or it could be a set percentage that would be added to the officer's yearly pay. Logically, the amount of compensation would vary, depending upon the level of degree obtained. For instance, an officer would receive more compensation for a Bachelor's Degree than an Associate's. If the command staff determines that a percentage is added to an officer's yearly pay, this writer recommends that it be non-cumulative and that the percentage be based only on the highest degree obtained.

The type of compensation would, of course, have to be determined before the program is forwarded to the County Board of Supervisors. Once submitted, the percentage could be modified by the Board and then implemented, which would change

the implementation cost.

This writer feels that the Chesterfield County Police Department's implementing a program such as this would give a considerable advantage in recruiting and retention over other agencies in the Richmond area. At this time no police department in the Richmond area offers a college incentive program to its employees at the entry level.

### **Long-Term Recommendations**

This writer feels that the Chesterfield County Police Department could consider using a college credit requirement in the long term, depending upon economic and manpower conditions of the future. If college credits are to be required of all applicants, this writer advises starting with a low number, perhaps thirty credits. That number can always be dropped, kept the same, or later increased, should the department choose to do so. While these requirements may be valid, the writer feels that the Department should retain its military experience qualification for the foreseeable future.

Data Compilation. This writer also feels that the Department's Planning and Research Section should compile statistics pertaining to citizen complaints, founded and unfounded, use of force incidents, traffic accidents, and retention rates of police officers in relation to their education levels. Such a database could be of great use to future research efforts in this area. The data collected could also possibly be used as evidence that supports the Department if it does choose to institute either college education entry requirements or an education incentive program and becomes the subject of a civil action.

Keep Appraised on Current Events. It is this writer's opinion that the Chesterfield County Police Department's Administration continue to be aware of current events, not just in the county but also outside. They should be aware of the hiring and recruiting



practices of other law enforcement agencies, both in and outside of Virginia, and respond appropriately in order to remain competitive. They should also be aware of social and economic conditions that may effect change in this area as well.

The number of police departments that require their applicants to have some degree of college experience has increased considerably in the 1990s (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2001). Public outcry and social change in the past, particularly the incidents of civil disturbances in the 1960s, have been a catalyst of change and one of the reasons why several sources, including *The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice*, made the recommendation that police officers have a liberal arts education (Krimmel, 1996). Civil disturbances and critical incidents could conceivably influence government bodies and police administrations to make changes in the future as they have done so in the past (ibid). This writer feels that these changes could include an increase in the entry level education of police departments.

The department should also consider the possibility that DCJS, or the Department of Criminal Justice Services, may institute college credit entry requirements which all Virginia police departments will be forced to accept. This has happened in other states: police recruits in Minnesota must possess an Associate's Degree before admission into the police training process (Dale, 1996). If this happens, the Department will have no choice but to institute college credit or degree entry requirements. This change may come whether or not the Department wants it.

This writer feels that officers already employed by the Department should not be forced to obtain college credits and that they should be grandfathered in. It is his opinion that, since these officers were hired under conditions that did not require possession of a

college education, it should not be required of them now. He also feels that the requirement would cause a considerable drop in morale.

### **Dissemination**

The release of any information concerning the Chesterfield County Police Department must first be approved by the Chief of Police. Data collected from research and the survey, as well as this writer's recommendation, could first be considered by Carl Baker before this can happen.

Upon approval from the Chief of Police, the data gathered and recommendations will be forwarded to the Personnel Department for consideration. It is this writer's hope that this work will aid them in any considerations and recommendations regarding future modifications to the agency's entry qualifications. It is also this writer's plan to present the findings of this work in power point form to the Department's command staff. A copy of this work will be kept in electronic form so that, on request, this writer can email it to any Department member who wishes to see it.

## CHAPTER V (Conclusion)

### Summary

It appears that this topic will be an ongoing debate for the foreseeable future. The writer feels that college education entry requirements and education incentive programs are valid. He also feels that a college education does, to a certain extent, predict the behavior and performance of an applicant. Police departments who do have this requirement and have education incentive programs appear to be protected to date from civil actions launched against them, as per *Davis v. Dallas* and *Ice v. Arlington County* (Aamodt, 2004). However, he also feels that an officer's possession of a Bachelor's Degree does not automatically guarantee superior performance. The writer has seen several college-educated individuals who were, in his opinion, inadequate police officers.

Likewise, individuals who lack college education should not be automatically considered inferior police officer candidates. Until recent times the majority of police officers did not have a college education. In the writer's experience and opinion, many good police officers are hired from the ranks of the military and other non-college sources. Another consideration to be examined is whether it is right to deny a person a position on a police department just because he lacks a college education. Many individuals enter the military with the hopes that it will aide them in preparation for employment in a civilian law enforcement agency. Military experience has long been considered an acceptable prerequisite entry requirement for a police department. Why turn these applicants aside just because they may not have attended college classes?

The modern police department needs to weigh its need of college-educated police officers. Departments that are having a hard time recruiting candidates may not be wise

to institute a college requirement, since that would possibly reduce the number of applicants. While it could be considered desirable to have educated police officers, it may be better to have police officers, college-educated or not, in sufficient numbers to effectively protect the jurisdiction served by the department. The writer believes and stresses that arbitrarily raising education standards of a police department could be very detrimental to an agency's recruiting efforts. Modern police departments are for several reasons having an increasingly difficult time finding applicants. In support of this McGreevy (2006) writes:

Several factors have combined to leave police departments hard-pressed to fill their ranks. They include mass retirements by the baby boomer generation, a strong economy providing better-paying jobs in the private sector and a military that is bulked up and repeatedly extending the service commitments of soldiers who might otherwise become police officers, according to Jason Abend, executive director of the National Law Enforcement Recruiters Assn.

Everybody's feeling the pinch: New York City is struggling to hire 3,300 officers this year, Abend said. Chicago, which used to have a waiting list of applicants, now must scramble to keep recruits in the pipeline.

And, in California, law enforcement agencies are facing a collective 8,500 vacancies, according to Bob Stesak of the state Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training. Five years ago, the 39 police academies in the state were turning out 4,500 new officers annually; this year they are expected to graduate fewer than 3,000.

With personnel issues to consider, why even consider any college requirements?

Agnes Baro and David Burlingame (1999, 58) write:

In this article, we argue that most officers, given the nature of police organizations, probably do not need four-year degrees. We also question traditional assumptions that higher education is an essential feature of police professionalism, and that the police role or police work is changing in ways that call for higher education.

Despite this argument, the article acknowledged several advantages of college-educated officers, including fewer citizen complaints and use of force incidents and

disciplinary infractions (ibid). Baro and Burlingame claim that in some instances the absence of college education can be detrimental: “A lack of higher education among command staff members and in specialized units is problematic, however; and we argue that a fuller integration of police training with education could help address this problem (ibid).” Despite Baro and Burlingame indicating that they felt that college education was not necessary for police officers to be effective, they admit in the article that it does provide benefits (ibid).

The Chesterfield County Police Department has a requirement that an applicant have two years or sixty credit-hours of college education. This writer feels, however, that any applicant, no matter how well educated, should have some work experience. This requirement ensures that the applicant has experienced the responsibilities of employment and has worked with other employees and performed job-related duties. A recruiter for the Chesterfield County Police Department indicated to this writer that, in at least two cases, individuals with college degrees were denied employment with the Department because they lacked work experience (E. Anderson, Personal Communication, July 16, 2006).

In 1996 Chesterfield raised its entry requirements from a high school diploma to two years college, military, or law enforcement experience. Since the writer has been employed by the Department, its entry requirements have changed several times. Recently the Department changed its requirements to allow applicants to have three years of verifiable full time work experience in lieu of college education or military experience (Chesterfield County Police Department, 2006). This action by the Department, the writer feels, is one factor showing that Chesterfield is having a difficult time obtaining

police recruits; otherwise, it might be increasing its entry requirements rather than lowering them.

In the Chesterfield County Police Department's Strategic Plan (2006), one of the weaknesses cited was "Inadequate personnel resources which affects supervision, ability to be innovative in crime suppression, ability to be innovative in program services. Lack of adequate personnel which creates a delay in the first response demands for service by citizens, department personnel, and county personnel." This helps demonstrate the Department's need for qualified personnel and, in the writer's opinion, the greatest deterrent to any agency which aspires to institute a college education entry requirement.

The writer believes that any department that institutes a college education requirement for all of its applicants runs the risk of alienating current employees who lack higher education. In the late 1990s, the Chesterfield County Police Department required that all sergeant applicants have a minimum of thirty college credits. There were several officers who were employed by the department before this requirement was instituted. Despite their tenure, these officers were not grandfathered in and could not apply for the sergeant's position because they lacked sufficient number of college credits. This seemed to create negative morale among many of them. Many police officers have military experience and no college education; they may feel resentment toward a college requirement, whether or not it affects them directly.

Sometimes even college-educated officers disagree with a college credit or degree requirement. In a survey the writer administered in 2005 to several patrol officers of the Chesterfield County Police Department, the topic was the career development program. More than one respondent expressed disdain towards college education. One officer

(anonymous, 2005) wrote “College is overrated in today’s world. I have a four year degree from a major college and it is worth about as much as the paper it is printed on. Life experience matters much more than silly college.” What could be significant about this is the respondent’s claims to have a Bachelor’s Degree.

If a college requirement is instituted by a police department, this writer feels that it could be slowly introduced. For instance, an agency that desires a Bachelor’s Degree as an entry requirement could first start with thirty college credits and work its way up from there. This would give the Department’s current members time to adapt to the change, grandfathering them in, letting their satisfactory experience in the department for a specific and substantial number of years stand in for the new requirement.

This writer feels the educational incentive program could aid the Department’s efforts in hiring and retaining college-educated officers; the program could also encourage officers who aspire to attend college, since the increased monetary compensation may be a good incentive to continue their employment here while attending college. But this program could conceivably create negative feelings in non college-educated officers who have no interest in continuing their education despite the benefits that the incentive program would offer.

### **Personal Learnings**

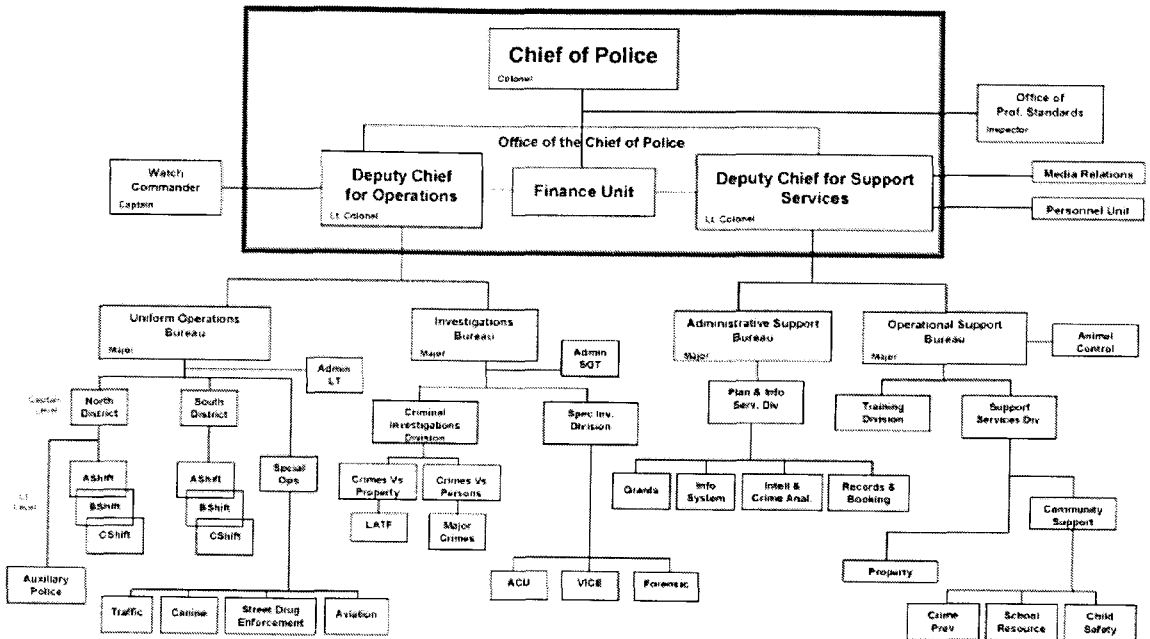
In review of the research of both the literature and the survey which the writer conducted, it appears that hiring college-educated individuals is, at least on the surface, a good idea. The negative perception that many police officers have toward college education along with the negative sentiment that these persons give to the idea of instituting either college credit or college degree requirements is not surprising to the

writer. It is the opinion of the writer that many police administrators would like to employ an entry or even a promotional requirement; they are, however, unable to do so because of the number of much needed applicants it would eliminate.

The writer believes that in time, given a decreasing economy and a continued stable social status of a police officer, it is not inconceivable that an increasing number of the nation's police departments will mandate college education as an entry requirement. However, the writer also feels that it is also possible that college education requirements under certain circumstances will be cast aside in favor of obtaining larger numbers of non college-educated applicants to fill the ranks of police departments. A booming economy with a reduced workforce is one circumstance that would create such a condition. Only time will tell which scenario will prevail.



# Appendix A



January 27, 2015

## Appendix B

Chesterfield County, Virginia

Police Department

Memorandum

Date: June 1, 2006  
To: All Sworn Police Personnel  
Chesterfield County Police Department  
From: Paul Nagosky  
Senior Patrol Officer, Unit # 417  
Subject: Behavior of College-educated in comparison to Non College-Educated  
Police Officers

As a graduate student participating in the University of Richmond's Public Safety University, it is a requirement that I complete a thesis. The topic is the Performance and Attitudes of College-educated Police Officers in comparison to Non College-Educated Police Officers. A copy of this work will be forwarded to the department upon its completion. I request your assistance with this thesis by your participation in this survey. It is designed to determine the respondents' opinion and experiences, both positive and negative, about differences between non college-educated and college-educated officers.

Your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to complete this survey. I would greatly appreciate if you would take a few minutes of your time to complete the survey and return it. The accuracy of the final report will be increased with the larger number of surveys that are collected. Also your confidentiality must be maintained and I ask that you do not sign this survey.

Please complete your survey and return it to my box, in person or via snail mail, at the Midlothian Police Station at your earliest convenience.

Thank you for your cooperation and promptness in returning this survey.

Sincerely

Paul Nagosky  
Senior Patrol Officer  
Unit # 417  
Enc. Survey

## Appendix C

### Section I: Demographics

- 1) How long have you been in law-enforcement? (police-work, not corrections, emergency communications or security)  
A) 1-5 B) 6-10 C) 11-15 D) 16-20 E) 21-25 F) 26+
- 2) What is your current level of education? Pick the one that most applies to you.  
A) High school Diploma B) Some college credits C) Associate's Degree  
D) Bachelor's Degree E) Some graduate credits F) Advanced Degree
- 3) If you have college credits when did you obtain them?  
A) Before being hired on a police department  
B) After being hired on a police department  
C) Both before and after being hired on a police department  
D) N/A
- 4) How many years full time military experience do you have?  
A) None B) 1-5 C) 6-10 D) 11-15 E) 16-20 F) 21+
- 5) How many years reserve military experience do you have?  
A) None B) 1-5 C) 6-10 D) 11-15 E) 16-20 F) 21+
- 6) What is your approximate age?  
A) 21-30 B) 31-40 C) 41-50 D) 51+
- 7) What is your Gender?  
A) Male B) Female
- 8) What best describes your racial background?  
A) European B) African C) Asian D) Latin American E) Arabic

F) East Indian G) Pacific Island

9) What is your current rank? \_\_\_\_\_.

Section II

10) Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers have better communication skills than non college-educated officers?

A) Very much agree B) Agree C) Neutral D) Disagree

E) Very much disagree

11) In your experience do you feel that college-educated police officers are more sensitive to minorities and other cultures?

A) Much more sensitive B) More sensitive C) Neutral D) Less sensitive

E) Much less sensitive

12) Do you feel that officers who have a college education are more or less likely to use force?

A) Much more likely B) More likely C) Neutral D) Less likely

E) Much less likely

13) Do you feel that officers who have a college education are more or less likely to abuse sick leave?

A) Much more likely B) More likely C) Neutral D) Less likely

E) Much less likely

14) Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers have better work-ethic than non college-educated officers?

A) Very much agree B) Agree C) Neutral D) Disagree

E) Very much disagree

15) Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are less likely to generate citizen complaints than non college-educated officers?

A) Very much agree B) Agree C) Neutral D) Disagree

E) Very much disagree

16) Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are more innovative than non college-educated officers?

A) Very much agree B) Agree C) Neutral D) Disagree

E) Very much disagree

17) Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are more adaptive to change than non college-educated officers?

A) Very much agree B) Agree C) Neutral D) Disagree

E) Very much disagree

18) Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are more likely to leave a police department for a non-police-related occupation than non college-educated officers?

A) Very much agree B) Agree C) Neutral D) Disagree

E) Very much disagree

19) Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are more authoritarian than non college-educated officers?

A) Very much agree B) Agree C) Neutral D) Disagree

E) Very much disagree

20) Please take the time to fill in any comments or concerns you have about any of the questions or the topic of this thesis. Give examples of personal experience if you feel the need. Please write legibly and be frank.

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## Appendix D

Table 3-1 Law-Enforcement Experience

1. How long have you been in law-enforcement? (police-work, not corrections, emergency communications or security)

A) 1-5	23	24%
B) 6-10	30	31.3%
C) 11-15	15	15.6%
D) 16-20	17	17.7%
E) 21-25	7	7.3%
F) 26+	4	4.2%

Table 3-2 Education Level

2. What is your current level of education? Pick the one that most applies to you.

A) High school Diploma	6	6.2%
B) Some college credits	24	25%
C) Associate's Degree	14	14.6%
D) Bachelor's Degree	41	42.7%
E) Some graduate credits	7	7.3%
F) Advanced Degree	4	4.2%

Table 3-3 When College Credits Obtained

## 3. If you have college credits when did you obtain them?

A) Before being hired on a police department	63	67%
B) After being hired on a police department	9	9.6%
C) Both before and after being hired on a police department	16	17%
D) N/A	6	6.4%

Table 3-4 Full-Time Military Experience

## 4. How many years full time military experience do you have?

A) None	69	71.1%
B) 1-5	21	21.6%
C) 6-10	6	6.2%
D) 11-15	1	1%
E) 16-20	0	0%
F) 21+	0	0%

Table 3-5 Part-Time Military Experience

## 5. How many years reserve military experience do you have?

A) None	73	76%
B) 1-5	12	12.5%
C) 6-10	9	9.4%
D) 11-15	1	1%
E) 16-20	1	1%
F) 21+	1	1%



Table 3-6 Age

6. What is your approximate age?

A) 21-30	34	35.1%
B) 31-40	36	37.1%
C) 41-50	24	24.7%
D) 51+	3	3.1%

Table 3-7 Gender

7. What is your Gender?

A) Male	88	90.7%
B) Female	9	9.3%

Table 3-8 Racial Background

8. What best describes your racial background?

A) European	79	86.8%
B) African	6	6.6%
C) Asian	1	1.1%
D) Latin American	4	4.4%
E) Arabic	0	0%
F) East Indian	0	0%
G) Native American	1	1.1%

Table 3-9 Rank

## 9. What is your current rank?

Patrol Officer	39	42.4%
Senior Officer	18	19.6%
Master Officer	9	9.8%
Career Officer	7	7.6%
Sergeant	7	7.6%
Detective	2	2.2%
Senior Detective	2	2.2%
Master Detective	4	4.3%
Career Detective	4	4.3%

Table 3-10 Communications Skills

## 10. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers have better communication skills than non college-educated officers?

A) Very much agree	6	6.2%
B) Agree	16	16.5%
C) Neutral	28	28.9%
D) Disagree	33	34%
E) Very much disagree	14	14.4%

Table 3-11 Sensitivity to Minorities

11. In your experience do you feel that college-educated police officers are more sensitive to minorities and other cultures?

A) Much more sensitive	0	0%
B) More sensitive	17	17.5%
C) Neutral	77	79.4%
D) Less sensitive	3	3.1%
E) Much less sensitive	0	0%

Table 3-12 Use of Force

12. Do you feel that officers who have a college education are more or less likely to use force?

A) Much more likely	1	1%
B) More likely	4	4.1%
C) Neutral	71	73.2%
D) Less likely	20	20.6%
E) Much less likely	1	1%

Table 3-13 Sick Leave

13. Do you feel that officers who have a college education are more or less likely to abuse sick leave?

A) Much more likely	1	1%
B) More likely	21	21.6%
C) Neutral	69	71.1%
D) Less likely	6	6.2%
E) Much less likely	0	0%

Table 3-14 Work Ethic

14. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers have better work-ethic than non college-educated officers?

A) Very much agree	0	0%
B) Agree	9	9.3%
C) Neutral	31	32%
D) Disagree	54	55.7%
E) Very much disagree	3	3.1%

Table 3-15 Citizen Complaints

5. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are less likely to generate citizen complaints than non college-educated officers?

A) Very much agree	1	1%
B) Agree	14	14.6%
C) Neutral	32	33.3%
D) Disagree	42	43.8%
E) Very much disagree	7	7.3%

Table 3-16 Innovation

16. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are more innovative than non college-educated officers?

A) Very much agree	0	0%
B) Agree	21	21.6%
C) Neutral	27	27.8%
D) Disagree	42	43.3%
E) Very much disagree	7	7.2%

Table 3-17 Adaptive

17. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are more adaptive to change than non college-educated officers?

A) Very much agree	4	4.1%
B) Agree	24	24.7%
C) Neutral	28	28.9%
D) Disagree	34	35.1%
E) Very much disagree	7	7.2%

Table 3-18 Retention

18. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are more likely to leave a police department for a non-police-related occupation than non college-educated officers?

A) Very much agree	33	34.4%
B) Agree	46	47.9%
C) Neutral	13	13.5%
D) Disagree	4	4.2%
E) Very much disagree	0	0%

Table 3-19 Authoritarian

19. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are more authoritarian than non college-educated officers?

A) Very much agree	3	3.1%
B) Agree	3	3.1%
C) Neutral	32	33%
D) Disagree	52	53.6%
E) Very much disagree	8	8.2%

## Appendix E (Respondents who hold the rank of sergeant)

### Table 3-10 Communications Skills

10. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers have better communication skills than non college-educated officers?

B) Agree	3	42.9%
C) Neutral	2	28.6%
D) Disagree	2	28.6%

### Table 3-11 Sensitivity to Minorities

11. In your experience do you feel that college-educated police officers are more sensitive to minorities and other cultures?

B) More sensitive	2	28.6%
C) Neutral	5	71.4%
D) Less sensitive	0	0%

### Table 3-12 Use of Force

12. Do you feel that officers who have a college education are more or less likely to use force?

B) More likely	1	14.3%
C) Neutral	4	57.1%
D) Less likely	2	28.6%

### Table 3-13 Sick Leave

13. Do you feel that officers who have a college education are more or less likely to abuse sick leave?

B) More likely	4	57.1%
C) Neutral	3	42.9%
D) Less likely	0	0%

Table 3-14 Work Ethic

14. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers have better work-ethic than non college-educated officers?

B) Agree	0	0%
C) Neutral	4	57.1%
D) Disagree	3	42.9%

Table 3-15 Citizen Complaints

15. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are less likely to generate citizen complaints than non college-educated officers?

B) Agree	3	42.9%
C) Neutral	1	14.3%
D) Disagree	3	42.9%

Table 3-16 Innovation

16. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are more innovative than non college-educated officers?

B) Agree	3	42.9%
C) Neutral	2	28.6%
D) Disagree	2	28.6%

Table 3-17 Adaptive

17. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are more adaptive to change than non college-educated officers?

B) Agree	3	42.9%
C) Neutral	2	28.6%
D) Disagree	2	28.6%

Table 3-18 Retention

18. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are more likely to leave a police department for a non-police-related occupation than non college-educated officers?

B) Agree	4	57.2%
C) Neutral	1	14.3%
D) Disagree	2	28.6%

Table 3-19 Authoritarian

19. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are more authoritarian than non college-educated officers?

B) Agree	0	0%
C) Neutral	1	14.3%
D) Disagree	6	85.7%



## Appendix F (High school educated respondents)

### Table 3-10 Communications Skills

10. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers have better communication skills than non college-educated officers?

B) Agree	0	0
C) Neutral	3	33.3%
D) Disagree	6	66.6%

### Table 3-11 Sensitivity to Minorities

11. In your experience do you feel that college-educated police officers are more sensitive to minorities and other cultures?

B) More sensitive	0	0
C) Neutral	6	100%
D) Less sensitive	0	0%

### Table 3-12 Use of Force

12. Do you feel that officers who have a college education are more or less likely to use force?

B) More likely	0	0
C) Neutral	5	83.3%
D) Less likely	1	16.7%

### Table 3-13 Sick Leave

13. Do you feel that officers who have a college education are more or less likely to abuse sick leave?

B) More likely	2	33.3%
C) Neutral	4	66.6%
D) Less likely	0	0

Table 3-14 Work Ethic

14. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers have better work-ethic than non college-educated officers?

B) Agree	0	0%
C) Neutral	1	16.7%
D) Disagree	5	83.3%

Table 3-15 Citizen Complaints

15. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are less likely to generate citizen complaints than non college-educated officers?

B) Agree	1	16.7%
C) Neutral	1	16.7%
D) Disagree	4	66.6%

Table 3-16 Innovation

16. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are more innovative than non college-educated officers?

B) Agree	0	22.2%
C) Neutral	1	16.7%
D) Disagree	5	83.3%

Table 3-17 Adaptive

17. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are more adaptive to change than non college-educated officers?

B) Agree	1	16.7%
C) Neutral	0	0
D) Disagree	5	83.3%

Table 3-18 Retention

18. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are more likely to leave a police department for a non-police-related occupation than non college-educated officers?

B) Agree	5	83.3%
C) Neutral	1	16.7%
D) Disagree	0	0

Table 3-19 Authoritarian

19. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are more authoritarian than non college-educated officers?

B) Agree	0	3.2%
C) Neutral	1	16.7%
D) Disagree	5	83.3%

**Appendix G**  
**(Respondents who have bachelor's degrees)**

Table 3-10 Communications Skills

10. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers have better communication skills than non college-educated officers?

B) Agree	10	24.4 %
C) Neutral	17	41.5%
D) Disagree	14	34.1%

Table 3-11 Sensitivity to Minorities

11. In your experience do you feel that college-educated police officers are more sensitive to minorities and other cultures?

B) More sensitive	13	31.7%
C) Neutral	28	68.3%
D) Less sensitive	0	0%

Table 3-12 Use of Force

12. Do you feel that officers who have a college education are more or less likely to use force?

B) More likely	1	2.4%
C) Neutral	30	73.2%
D) Less likely	10	24.4%

Table 3-13 Sick Leave

13. Do you feel that officers who have a college education are more or less likely to abuse sick leave?

B) More likely	5	12.2%
C) Neutral	33	80.5%
D) Less likely	3	7.3%

Table 3-14 Work Ethic

14. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers have better work-ethic than non college-educated officers?

B) Agree	3	7.3%
C) Neutral	21	51.2%
D) Disagree	17	41.5%

Table 3-15 Citizen Complaints

15. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are less likely to generate citizen complaints than non college-educated officers?

B) Agree	7	17.5%
C) Neutral	16	40%
D) Disagree	17	42.5%

Table 3-16 Innovation

16. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are more innovative than non college-educated officers?

B) Agree	10	24.4%
C) Neutral	17	41.5%
D) Disagree	14	34.1%

Table 3-17 Adaptive

17. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are more adaptive to change than non college-educated officers?

B) Agree	15	36.6%
C) Neutral	15	36.6%
D) Disagree	11	26.8%

Table 3-18 Retention

18. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are more likely to leave a police department for a non-police-related occupation than non college-educated officers?

B) Agree	34	63%
C) Neutral	5	12.2%
D) Disagree	2	4.9%

Table 3-19 Authoritarian

19. Do you agree with the statement that college-educated officers are more authoritarian than non college-educated officers?

B) Agree	1	2.4%
C) Neutral	17	41.5%
D) Disagree	23	56.1%

## Appendix H

### Use of force Data: Documented Uses of Force 2006 (PD 147)

2006	Level of Force	Education	Number of Incidents
	Cap-Stun	BS	5
	Cap-Stun	AS	2
	Cap-Stun	Some College	3
	Cap-Stun	HS	2
	Cap-Stun	MS	1
	Cap-Stun	Total	13
2006	Level of Force	Education	Number of Incidents
	ASP	BS	0
	ASP	AS	0
	ASP	Some College	2
	ASP	HS	0
	ASP	MS	0
	ASP	Total	2
2006	Level of Force	Education	Number of Incidents
	Firearm Displayed	BS	
	Firearm Displayed	AS	2
	Firearm Displayed	Some College	2
	Firearm Displayed	HS	0
	Firearm Displayed	MS	0
	Firearm Displayed	Total	4
2006	Level of Force	Education	Number of Incidents
	Compliance Techniques	BS	9
	Compliance Techniques	AS	3
	Compliance Techniques	Some College	8
	Compliance Techniques	HS	0
	Compliance Techniques	MS	0
	Compliance Techniques	Total	17
2006	Level of Force	Education	Number of Incidents
	Firearm Discharged	BS	1
	Firearm Discharged	AS	0
	Firearm Discharged	Some College	0
	Firearm Discharged	HS	0
	Firearm Discharged	MS	0
	Firearm Discharged	Total	2

Note that in one incident of a firearm being discharged the officer's education level was blank.

<b>Educational Breakdown of Incident Total 2006</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
BS	15	37.5
AS	7	17.5
Some College	15	37.5
HS	2	5
MS	1	2.5
Total	40	100

<b>Educational Breakdown of Opinion Survey</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
BS	48	50
AS	14	14.6
Some College	24	25
HS	6	6.2
MS	4	4.2
Total	96	100

Note: These are based on *reported* incidents of use of force.



## Appendix I

### Use of force Data: Documented Uses of Force 2005 (PD 147)

2005	Level of Force	Education	Number of Incidents
	Cap-Stun	BS	9
	Cap-Stun	AS	10
	Cap-Stun	Some College	7
	Cap-Stun	HS	2
	Cap-Stun	MS	0
	Cap-Stun	Total	28

(Incidents involving Vexor, a non lethal aerosol spray that was used by the Chesterfield County Police Department during 2005 have been included in this table. Vexor was intended to replace Cap-Stun, but was phased out after a brief period of time.)

2005	Level of Force	Education	Number of Incidents
	ASP	BS	0
	ASP	AS	0
	ASP	Some College	0
	ASP	HS	0
	ASP	MS	0
	ASP	Total	0

2005	Level of Force	Education	Number of Incidents
	Firearm Displayed	BS	2
	Firearm Displayed	AS	0
	Firearm Displayed	Some College	0
	Firearm Displayed	HS	1
	Firearm Displayed	MS	0
	Firearm Displayed	Total	3

2005	Level of Force	Education	Number of Incidents
	Compliance Techniques	BS	14
	Compliance Techniques	AS	4
	Compliance Techniques	Some College	6
	Compliance Techniques	HS	2
	Compliance Techniques	MS	1
	Compliance Techniques	Total	27

2005	Level of Force	Education	Number of Incidents
	Firearm Discharged	BS	0
	Firearm Discharged	AS	0
	Firearm Discharged	Some College	0
	Firearm Discharged	HS	0
	Firearm Discharged	MS	0
	Firearm Discharged	Total	0

<b>Educational Breakdown of Incident Total 2005</b>		#	%
	BS	25	43.1
	AS	14	24.13
	Some College	13	22.41
	HS	5	8.62
	MS	1	1.72
	Total	58	100

<b>Educational Breakdown of Opinion Survey</b>		#	%
	BS	48	50
	AS	14	14.6
	Some College	24	25
	HS	6	6.2
	MS	4	4.2
	Total	96	100

Note: These are based on *reported* incidents of use of force.

## Appendix J

### Use of force Data: Documented Uses of Force 2004 (PD 147)

2004	Level of Force	Education	Number of Incidents
	Cap-Stun	BS	6
	Cap-Stun	AS	3
	Cap-Stun	Some College	9
	Cap-Stun	HS	3
	Cap-Stun	MS	0
	Cap-Stun	Total	21 (23)

Note that in two incidents of Cap-Stun being deployed the officers' education level was blank.

2004	Level of Force	Education	Number of Incidents
	ASP	BS	2
	ASP	AS	3
	ASP	Some College	1
	ASP	HS	0
	ASP	MS	0
	ASP	Total	6

2004	Level of Force	Education	Number of Incidents
	Firearm Displayed	BS	5
	Firearm Displayed	AS	1
	Firearm Displayed	Some College	2
	Firearm Displayed	HS	1
	Firearm Displayed	MS	0
	Firearm Displayed	Total	9

2004	Level of Force	Education	Number of Incidents
	Compliance Techniques	BS	12
	Compliance Techniques	AS	2
	Compliance Techniques	Some College	13
	Compliance Techniques	HS	0
	Compliance Techniques	MS	0
	Compliance Techniques	Total	27

2004	Level of Force	Education	Number of Incidents
	Firearm Discharged	BS	0
	Firearm Discharged	AS	1
	Firearm Discharged	Some College	0
	Firearm Discharged	HS	0
	Firearm Discharged	MS	0
	Firearm Discharged	Total	1

<b>Educational Breakdown of Incident Total 2004</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
BS	25	39.06
AS	10	15.46
Some College	25	39.06
HS	4	6.25
MS	0	0
Total	64 (66)	100

<b>Educational Breakdown of Opinion Survey</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
BS	48	50
AS	14	14.6
Some College	24	25
HS	6	6.2
MS	4	4.2
Total	96	100

Note: These are based on *reported* incidents of use of force.

## Appendix K

Chesterfield County, Virginia  
Police Department

### Memorandum

Date: June 1, 2006  
To: All Sworn Police Personnel  
Chesterfield County Police Department  
From: Paul Nagosky  
Senior Patrol Officer, Unit # 417  
For: Dr Russell Leonard Jr.  
Fall 2006  
Subject: Behavior of College-educated in comparison to Non College-Educated  
Police Officers

As a graduate student participating in the University of Richmond's Public Safety University, it is a requirement that I complete a thesis, of which the topic of is the Performance and Attitudes of College-educated Police Officers in comparison to Non College-Educated Police Officers. A copy of this work will be forwarded to the department upon its completion. I request your assistance with this thesis paper by your participation in this structured interview. It is designed to determine the participant's opinion and experiences, both positive and negative, about differences between non college-educated and college-educated officers.

Your participation is voluntary, as if you choose to do so you do not have to participate in the interview. None the less I would greatly appreciate if you took a few minutes of your time to participate in the interview.

This project involves no physical discomfort or risk to any participant.

### Investigator

The principal investigator in this study is Paul Nagosky. I am supervised by Dr Russell Leonard in the School of Continuing Studies of the University of Richmond. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact him at 897-7134 or [Leonard@alongside.com](mailto:Leonard@alongside.com) (email).

### Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this project is voluntary and you are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time. If at any point you are uncomfortable answering that a student poses, you are free to refuse comment. We will not pursue the issue. Information collected will be used for research purposes only.

Participant's Rights Information

As a participant in this study, you have the right to be informed about the results of the research and how the information you have provided will be used. You have the right to respond to make comments, and these responses will be appended to any digital or written form of the results that is made public.

Any questions concerning your rights in this matter may be directed to the Chair of the University of Richmond's Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Research Participants at 289-8417.

Participant's Consent

The study has been described to me and I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my consent and my participation in the study at any time.

I also understand that the results of the study will be made available to me upon written request to the principal investigator via inter-department mail or email request to [penags@yahoo.com](mailto:penags@yahoo.com). I also understand that if I have any questions or concerns pertaining to this study, I may pose them to Paul Nagosky by calling his voice mail at 706-2780 and leave my name and phone number or to Dr Russell Leonard at 897-7134.

I have read and understand the above information and I consent to participate in this study by signing below.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Thank you for promptness and cooperation.  
Sincerely

\_\_\_\_\_  
Paul Nagosky  
Senior Patrol Officer  
Unit # 417

## Appendix L

6-8-06

Structured Interview Questions.

Thesis: Behavior of College-educated Police Officers

Paul Nagosky

- 1) What is your title and job description?
- 2) How long have you served in this capacity?
- 3) What is your role in the hiring process of entry level police officers?
- 4) In your experience do you have any preference for either college or non college-educated applicants?
- 5) What are the differences, if any, between them in regard to use of force. Please give an example of an incident or situation that influenced your opinion in this.
- 6) What are the differences, if any, between them in regard to number of traffic accidents. Please give an example of an incident or situation that influenced your opinion in this.
- 7) What are the differences, if any, between them in regard to citizen complaints. Please give an example of an incident or situation that influenced your opinion in this.
- 8) What are the differences, if any, between them in regard to authoritarianism. Please give an example of an incident or situation that influenced your opinion in this.
- 9) What are the differences, if any, between them in regard to innovation, and acceptance of change or other. Please give an example of an incident or situation that influenced your opinion in this.
- 10) All things being equal, would an applicant's college education have an influence upon your hiring decision? Please give an example of an incident or situation that influenced your opinion in this.
- 11) All things being equal, would an applicant's lack of college education have an influence upon your hiring decision? Please give an example of an incident or situation that influenced your opinion in this.
- 12) What traits do you find favorable and unfavorable in college-educated officers? Please give an example of an incident or situation that influenced your opinion in this.
- 13) What traits do you find favorable and unfavorable in non college-educated officers? Please give an example of an incident or situation that influenced your opinion in this.

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The author of this work serves as a County Police Officer in Chesterfield Virginia, a county that shares a border with the city of Richmond. His twin brother Michael also is a police officer with the same department. He has been with this agency since 1998 and is a third generation police officer. His undergraduate work was in Criminal Justice at Mercyhurst College in his home town of Erie, Pennsylvania.

College education and its effect on the performance of police officers has always been of interest to him. In his home state of Pennsylvania, veteran's preference was commonly awarded to police applicants with military experience. In contrast to this, other police agencies actually require college education. Some, such as Charleston South Carolina, require a full Bachelor's Degree.

To him the differences of educational entry requirements of various police agencies have always been intriguing and as such have been the inspiration of this work.