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The Impact of Community Policing in New York City's  
Puerto Rican Communities

by

Carmen Leonor Solis

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Social Welfare  
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Social Welfare, The City University of New York

2004

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Social Welfare in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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## Abstract

The Impact of Community Policing in New York City's  
Puerto Rican Communities

by

*Carmen Leonor Solis*

Adviser: Dr. Robert Salmon

This exploratory study, sought to assess whether community policing initiatives implemented by the NYPD fostered a better relationship with the Puerto Rican Community of New York City. The study examined whether collaborative relationships were formed with the Puerto Rican community and what role the community had in the policing process. Some members of the Puerto Rican community were given an opportunity to voice their opinions on what would facilitate change in police practice in their neighborhoods.

The Puerto Rican community was selected as the group to study because Puerto Ricans are not accurately or adequately represented in literature pertaining to police/community relationships. Furthermore, little is known and or published about their relationship with law enforcement.

The Study's grounded theory approach and semi-structured interviews enabled the Puerto Rican community members as well as police officers to be an important part of the discovery process. There were a total of seventy participants in the study: twenty Puerto Rican New York City Police Officers and fifty New York City Puerto Ricans.

The findings indicate that the Puerto Rican Community of New York City and Puerto Rican Police Officers, perceive problems with the Police Department in the areas of discrimination, brutality, communication, and participation in community policing initiatives. While individual police officers are open to discussing problems and concerns, the NYPD seems resistant to hear the voices of the Puerto Rican Community and Officers who desire to identify and help solve problems. Lack of communication and respect continues to be the most prevalent issue between the NYPD and the Puerto Rican Community. The NYPD acknowledges communication problems with many ethnic and racial communities in their writings and publications. However, this research indicates that in actual practice, the NYPD falls short of their efforts to open the lines of communication to the Puerto Rican Community. Most community participants interviewed indicate no knowledge of Community Policing initiatives.

The findings denote that community policing initiatives are inextricably dependent on commitment, recruitment, cultural diversity, human dignity training, and the inclusion of Puerto Rican and other minority communities at all stages of program development and implementation.

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The Impact of Community Policing in New York City's  
Puerto Rican Communities

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## Chapter I

### I. Introduction

#### Problem Statement

The growing ethnic diversity of our society is having an impact in the work place, in public schools and colleges, politics, government policies and in society in general. It is certainly affecting the relationship of people with Law Enforcement agencies. Today, more than ever, on the electronic and printed media there are constant reports of the strain in the relationship between the police and the communities they serve. Yet when discussing police/community relations with average citizens, most seem to think that problems between police and citizens started in the early 1960's. There is however significant evidence in the literature that indicates that the problematic relationship between the police and the public started much earlier than the 1960's. Individual researchers and commissions evaluating police service and conduct have concluded that there is a need to strengthen police/community relationships since about the 1930's.

Rothlein (1999, p.15) notes:

Perhaps the first major commission ever established to review police misconduct in the United States was the Wickersham Commission in 1931. President Hoover established this Commission which published a 14-volume report on criminal justice in America. One volume was specifically dedicated to a review of police practices and emphasized the need for training and upgrading police service. A second volume was devoted to examining police brutality....

The Kerner Commission Report in 1968 continued to affirm that there was a need to improve relationships between the police and minority communities and that police

officers needed "specialized training on ghetto problems and conditions" (Barlow and Barlow 1993, p.4). Researchers, such as Cromwell and Keefer (1973, p.1), asserted that Law enforcement agencies "had an obligation to attempt to achieve and maintain good police-community relations." This, according to Cromwell and Keefer (1973, p.1), was simply because poor police-community relations decreased opportunities to effectively deal with crime and preserve law and order. In other words, a discontented, disrespected and victimized community will not be supportive of police and any efforts to help prevent crime (Cromwell and Keefer 1973, p.3). Further, poor police-community relations or merely attempting to convince the public that the law enforcement community is "doing something" without actually creating change, only serves to keep the police isolated from the public and the community distrustful of the police (Barlow and Barlow, 1993, p. 8).

Historically, the police have undertaken many initiatives to become more professional, to change, and to meet political and public demands for a greater police presence. According to Greene and Mastrofski (1991, p.1), these initiatives have shifted through political, reform and community stages "characterized by the 'organizational strategies' espoused by the ascendant reformers of the time." Shifts between these stages have been caused by inefficient methodologies and the inability of "old ways to meet the demands of a changing environment" (Greene and Mastrofski, 1991, p.1). The strategies that were specifically intended to improve law enforcement relationships and practice with the dominant groups as well as socioeconomically and culturally diverse communities have been provided only in the past fifteen years. Most of these efforts have

primarily come through several separate, yet interrelated strategies, that basically fall under the Community Policing umbrella (Green and Mastrofski 1991, p.1, Peak and Glensor, 1996, p. 3). This strategy will be discussed in detail as it is infused with social work theories, practice, problem solving, and prevention approaches. However, prior to addressing community policing strategies it is vital that the NYPD's newest strategy be discussed, and that the impact of this strategy on the police/community relationship be addressed.

### The Compstat Strategy

NYPD's Compstat strategy (short for computer statistics), has attracted international attention due to its rapid crime reduction impact. Compstat was designed by NYPD Police Commissioner William Bratton, in an effort to reduce crime by holding precinct commanders and police officers accountable for the crime rate (Pooley, 1996, p.54). Silverman (1999, p. 19) describes this model as "driven by intelligence gathering and fueled by innovative managerial processes...." According to Silverman (1999, p. 181-197), this model gives more authority, responsibility and accountability to the precinct commanders, enabling them to make faster decisions on problems in their area with collected crime data. Silverman posits that the Compstat Strategy can help police/community relations if the community is alerted to the fact that precinct commanders are questioned in-depth at regular, high-level meetings about their methods of dealing with "problem officers" (those who are the subject of multiple abuse complaints). In fact, Silverman (1999) notes that the department recognizes that crime

reduction efforts are minimized if the community's trust in police is lost. To this end, the NYPD introduced, in 1997, the strategy known as Courtesy Professionalism and Respect (CPR). This strategy was to increase police professionalism and encourage courteous behavior, and to establish high regard for all people through enhanced "recruitment processes, executive development, officer training, monitoring of street behavior, Compstat review, and strengthened citizen involvement" (p.196). These intentions are not any different from those proposed in earlier NYPD community policing strategies. Perhaps the only difference is that Compstat review was implemented more thoroughly than community policing and CPR strategies were then connected to the Compstat effort (Silverman, 1999, p.196). As per the earlier community policing strategies, issues of crime and quality of life were to be carefully discussed and evaluated collaboratively by the Police Department, the NYC Mayor's office and the community. Careful consideration was to be given to issues seen as undesirable by all affected by the problem. All NYPD personnel were to receive improved training. However, community policing strategies encountered resistance within police departments to change police training practices and to form collaborative relationships (Jones, 1995, p. 23). Community policing reforms were viewed by police officers as social work strategies, which had no connection to crime fighting (Silverman, 1999, p. 54). Compstat was seen more as an anti-crime strategy, which demands accountability from both commanders and police officers (Silverman, 1999, p. 202-203).

Since its development in 1994, Compstat has received all the credit for the drop in crime. While there is no doubt that crime has dropped significantly, in part as a result of

the Compstat Model, community policing strategies should be credited for some of the decline in crime as well (Pooley, 1996, p.54). Compstat with its very focused crime reduction methods has also been criticized by some African-American and Latino leaders because they believe this approach has increased police discourtesy and abuse of force (Pooley, 1996, p.56). However, compstat's continual evaluation methods have identified the need to include ways of monitoring civilian complaints of police abuse and discourteous behavior. Compstat reviews "citywide, borough, and precinct data by hour and time of day for FADO (force, abuse, discourtesy, and obscene language) citizen complaints" (Silverman, 1999, p. 187).

The problem that was emerging with the new Compstat strategy, and other methods of police reform before it, involved getting the message to the community and actually working collaboratively with the community.

### Community Policing Initiatives

Community Policing strategies, such as The Community Patrol Officer Program (CPOP), Problem-Oriented Policing, Innovative Neighborhood Oriented Policing programs (INOP) and Compstat, all address the question of how police services should be provided and how the community can play an active part in the policing process (Green and Mastrofski, 1991, p. xiii, Silverman, 1999, p. 187). Yet, as will be demonstrated from the interviews in this study, there seems to be minimal effort focused on actually involving the community in the policing process.

The CPOP concept was adopted in the New York City Police Department in the 1980's under Police Commissioner Benjamin Ward, as a demonstration project (McElroy, Cosgrove, Sadd, 1993, p.7). The CPOP and INOP concepts are based on developing collaborative relationships with communities in each precinct area in efforts to effectively reduce or eliminate crime and improve quality of life (Brown,1991 ,p.1-2). There were several attempts to institutionalize CPOP, department wide, in the NYPD, primarily due to public demands to develop better relationships with law enforcement officers, and to establish a greater police presence on the streets. However, in the New York City Police Department (NYPD) these efforts have been determined to be failures (McElroy, Cosgrove, Sadd, 1993). According to Peak and Glensor (1996, p. 3), many initiatives to implement CPOP or COPPS fail because of unrealistic or simplistic expectations. These authors maintain that successful implementation of COPPS calls for changing management's approaches to problem identification, policy and procedure development, planning, program evaluation and the ways in which resources and finances are allocated. Implementation must involve more than a political announcement that CPOP or COPPS will be the new tactic, without clearly stated values, objectives and plans. Roberg and Kuykendall (1997, p. 416) note that a substantial amount of research already exist (NIJ, 1995, Sadd and Grinc, 1994, 1996), which indicates that successful implementation of Community policing requires "the need for pre-implementation training of personnel, the importance of taking a long view at the change process, the need for support from elected officials and other city agencies, and the importance of listening to and involving the

community (p. 416)." However, community policing and problem oriented policing initiatives have encountered many controversies related to methods of implementation, the challenge of change in police practice, and the role of the community in policing initiatives (Jones, 1995, p.4). In fact, in New York City, community policing initiatives looked great on paper. For the most part these initiatives were written clearly and comprehensively with purposeful guidelines. Yet the implementation and consequently the practice of community policing initiatives seemed to fall short of the written objectives. The collaborative efforts needed to implement these initiatives did not seem to be taken seriously by the New York City Police Department, especially in poor ethnic communities who were left out of the planning process. According to Roberg and Kuykendall (1997), a study of Innovative Neighborhood Oriented Policing (INOP) conducted in California, Texas, Kentucky, New York, Virginia, Maryland and Arizona, found that these sites shared the same following implementation problems:

1. There was minimal involvement of police officers, city agencies, and community residents in the program design; consequently, knowledge of the structure and goals of the program and of community policing in general was lacking in all of these groups....
2. Similarly, community residents (even those in INOP areas) were generally were unaware of the goals of INOP projects...INOP projects did not get the community truly involved in community policing. Furthermore, it was not clear that the police knew what the community wanted from the community policing program.
3. Often, community policing is defined and implemented solely as a police initiative to the virtual exclusion of other city agencies and to the communities it hopes to serve. One of the most important findings of the INOP research is that the education and training of community residents regarding their roles in community poling is almost nonexistent....
4. The INOP research suggests that among the most difficult tasks of implementation are (a) educating and training police officers and administrators about the goals and

techniques of community policing; (b) obtaining cooperation of other city agencies in the community policing effort; (c) building trust between the police and residents of communities...(p.417-418).

Therefore, the study tell us that sites, which include New York, lacked the collaborative efforts needed for the successful implementation of problem solving strategies. According to Silverman (1999) implementation of community policing strategies in the NYPD was basically an "afterthought." This author illustrates this point clearly when he describes the 1990 NYPD Community Policing Plan's section on policing responsibilities as "merely a listing of tasks and the offices with primary and secondary responsibility. Missing were a chronology and timetables with stated deadlines for completed tasks. Many of the tasks were bewildering and vague" (p. 58).

The central themes underlying the community policing, problem- oriented policing, and innovative neighborhood-oriented policing models call for fostering better communication with the community in order to define problems and their solutions (Trojanowicz, Steel and Trojanowicz, 1985, p.1). In addition, these models are supposed to provide neighborhood residents with a role in the policing process; namely, that of deciding, in their point of view, "how their communities will be policed" (Trojanowicz, Steele and Trojanowicz, 1985, p.2).

The community policing initiatives themselves advocate having police officers in neighborhoods working collaboratively with community residents, merchants and agencies to address and develop strategies that can help and prevent crime (robbery, burglary, etc.), illicit drug traffic, disorder in neighborhoods (violence, vandalism, etc.), fear, and other issues that upset the quality of life in the City (Brown, 1989, p.4, 1991,

p.1). Community policing initiatives are not solely about prevention. These initiatives also incorporate community organizing strategies and social service delivery and problem solving. Community Policing, Problem Oriented Policing and Innovative Neighborhood-Oriented Policing require that police officers enforce the laws while providing what may be considered social work practice functions (prevention, community organization, problem solving, referral service to improve the quality of life). However the police role in providing these kinds of social services will be different from that of social work.

McElroy, Cosgrove, and Sadd, (1993, p.9) posit that the purpose of the community police officer's role is to:

foster officer accountability for correcting problems at the neighborhood level, increase the officer's knowledge of and identification with the community to which he or she is assigned and assist the people of the community to identify and correct the quality-of-life problems that they find most disturbing (p. 9).

The idea here is not to function as a social worker but to include the "social service aspects of the police role" (Roberg and Kuykendall, 1997, p.154).

Community police officers can have a distinct advantage in resolving community problems when they can understand and relate to the people, and to the needs and problems in the communities to which they have been assigned. In general, much of what all police officers do is deal with problems. While there are problems that are universal or common among different communities, most are characteristic to a particular beat or area and necessitate officers who are knowledgeable of that community as well as officers who can relate to the people who live there (Goldstein, 1990, p. 160). If police work collaboratively with the community and other professionals such as social workers on

these efforts, then the goals of "protection and service to the community" can be provided (Michaels and Treger, 1983, p.113).

Evaluation studies of community policing initiatives in Cities such as New York and Houston indicate that usually in low-income or poor areas the police have had "poor relationships" with such communities (Sadd and Grinc, 1994, p.45). Sadd and Grinc (1994, p.46-47), point out that community policing practitioners need to become more serious about narrowing the gap between the police and poor communities. In addition, these researchers posit that residents and elected officials in poor communities actually have an expectation that services by police or other agencies will be reduced or removed before they can have any meaningful impact on the community. This, in turn, creates skepticism for new policing initiatives or even anger at police for not following through. In such cases, the police department loses public trust in the project's value to the community (Sadd and Grinc, 1994, p.45).

Goldstein (1990, p.159), notes that "relationships between police and minority communities had always been stressful." In practice, police behavior has often induced conflict. Others, such as Green, Bergman, McLaughlin (1994, p.101) and Weisel and Eck (1994, p.59, 63), posit that police departments' struggle with issues of cultural sensitivity, equal access to effective services for all populations and the perceptions of minority communities that they are treated more negatively and less fairly by police. This is particularly true in African-American and Hispanic communities. Sykes (1994, p.13) notes that "from the vantage point of the underclass, dispossessed or minority groups, the

police look more like a repressive institution or an occupying force than a community service institution."

While several evaluation studies on community policing make reference to police/community problems in African-American and some Hispanic communities, few have identified the specific problems encountered by the Puerto Rican and other Hispanic groups. Carter (1983, p. 213), recognized that most of the cultural research done on minorities is basically "limited to the experiences of African-Americans with the criminal justice system and has left a near void in the literature with respect to Hispanic Americans." In addition, community policing problems, as identified by the Puerto Rican Community of New York City, have not been addressed in the literature or in any of the evaluation studies on community policing.

Historically, Puerto Ricans are not accurately or adequately represented in literature pertaining to the police/community relationships. Thus, little is known and/or published about their relationship with the law enforcement (Carter, 1985, p.488). Torres (1988, p.9) points out that "most discussions of the Puerto Rican situation take place within the national discourse relating to economic inequality, deteriorating social conditions for the poor, and the need for a new 'family policy'." Morin (1989, p.98), contends that Puerto Ricans and other Hispanics are "relative newcomers" to the New York and northeast areas (the majority of Puerto Ricans migrated to New York during the 1950s) where problems with police and racial tensions have severely increased only in recent years. Furthermore, language barriers and critical "socio-economic conditions,"

which Puerto Rican and other Hispanics often face, impede opportunities to organize politically and combat problems with police organizations (Morin, 1989, p.98). In Santa Barbara, California, for example, a predominately Caucasian police force struggled with ethnic tensions due to language barriers when attempting to resolve conflicts with their city's Mexican population. Santa Barbara's community policing efforts focused on making their police force more reflective of the community served and ensuring that officers were more culturally sensitive to the crisis at hand, when language was the primary problem. Language barriers have been identified as problems throughout history in police-community relations. According to Kuykendall (1973, p.220), language is one of the most important factors in the culture of the Hispanic community. He contends that "breakdowns in communication had led to complaints of police non-responsiveness in protection and services" for Puerto Ricans and other Hispanics (Kuykendall, 1973, p.220). Carter (1983, p. 214) suggests that conflict and non-responsiveness exist because there is no clear understanding of the cultural norms of the Hispanic community on the part of police and the larger criminal justice system. He contends that "without an understanding of cultural dynamics, conflicting responses to a situation cannot be approached in a rational manner" (Carter, 1983, p.214). According to Carter (1983, p. 221), knowledge of the different Hispanic cultures can contribute significantly to understanding different Latino groups. If cultural factors are observed in cases pertaining to crime or justice, we could develop a better understanding of how to best service them. Since the interaction between the police, Puerto Ricans, and other ethnic communities, has historically been biased and distrustful (Trojanowicz and Buquireoux, 1990, p.243),

the New York City Police Department could then benefit from gaining a better understanding of any ethnic community's perceptions of police. The literature seems to indicate that services to Puerto Rican and other minority communities will not improve unless law enforcement agencies learn more about these communities and the problems they feel are important. Goldstein (1990), maintains that a police officer's traditional role of crime fighting and enforcing laws is inextricably intertwined with his/her knowledge of the area to which he/she has been assigned, that is, "its streets and buildings; its people, their life styles and their culture. It is absurd to assume that a police officer without such familiarity can be other than minimally effective in identifying suspicious or criminal conduct in an area" (p. 159).

This is supported by the findings in Carter's (1983, p.198) exploratory empirical research project on Hispanic attitudes toward the criminal justice system in Texas. These findings demonstrated that attitudinal and behavioral differences exist between Hispanics and other minorities, as well between minorities and the general public. The findings also revealed that the underpinning variable for these differences is culture. Thus, many of the problems between police, the larger criminal justice system and the Hispanic community could be alleviated through cultural understanding (Carter, 1985, p. 226).

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative exploratory study is to assess how community policing strategies, such as the community police officer program, innovative neighborhood-oriented and problem-oriented policing, are effecting the relationship

between the Police Officers and the Puerto Rican Community in the New York City. The following five factors were assessed in this effort:

- (a) The Puerto Rican Community's awareness of the police role and community policing/problem-oriented strategies,
- (b) The input, if any, this community had in the implementation (including identification of training needs) of community policing strategies,
- (c) What police officers serving the Puerto Rican community think about their ability and preparedness to work with the community and to effectively implement these new community policing strategies,
- (d) What areas of training do the Puerto Rican police officers, as well as the Puerto Rican residents of New York City, think are essential for effective policing,
- (e) Do community policing/problem-oriented strategies have social service components, which require greater collaboration between police, community based organizations, and other professions as well as more training in order to facilitate successful practice.

The study examined whether collaborative relationships were formed by police with the Puerto Rican community and if there has been any development of creative solutions to local problems. The use of the problem solving framework for community policing and its relation to social work was addressed. This was done because when the NYPD introduced its community policing strategies it appeared to be based on a social work framework of the problem solving model. In fact, much of the police resistance to

community policing and problem solving stemmed from officer critiques of CPOP appearing to be social work and not real police work (Roberg and Kuykendall, 1997, p.417).

Perceived roles, problems, and needs for improvement and training were explored through face to face and focus group interviews with Puerto Rican residents and police officers in New York city. Whyte (1984, p.109), maintains that it is important to gather information from individuals of different social, racial and economic status who are part of the community or organization. Therefore, this study is comprised of interviews with Puerto Rican police officers, administrators, community leaders, other adult citizens and young adults who are from different social, racial and economic status. These include merchants, professionals and residents who are representative of the Puerto Rican community (Whyte, 1984, p.109).

In addition, a review of the historical antecedents of policing will help explain some of the role conflicts and organizational strife in operationalizing the community policing philosophy.

Reflecting the paucity of literature and empirical work on the Puerto Rican Community/Police relationship, this study is exploratory in the method used and the content it addressed. The study considered a sample of seventy (70) interviews which include interviews with members of the New York City Police Department and the Puerto Rican population of New York City. For this initial effort, "need" was operationally defined as a "normative," and espoused need which, according to Bradshaw (1977) is "what an expert defines as need" (Bradshaw, 1977). The term "expert" refers to all

participants interviewed who in their own words offered their own perspectives, experiences, constructions of reality and expertise (Hartman, 1992, p. 484). Hartman (1992, p.484) asserts that those who tell their stories and enable us to build on their local knowledge are indeed the experts. In validating and making the clients' or the participants' expertise significant, we not only empower them, but also develop greater opportunities for the understanding and resolution of problems in their communities (Hartman, 1992, p.484).

The Puerto Rican community was selected as the specific ethnic group to study regarding the impact of community policing, and police/community relations initiatives, because they are a significant part of New York City's Hispanic population. As noted earlier, they are generally overlooked in the literature on community policing as well as other police/community relations initiatives. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, there are a total of 789,172 Puerto Ricans in New York City, who account for 9.9% of the overall population. These figures are somewhat lower than those of 1990 (897,000 and 12% respectively) and indicate a decrease in the Puerto Rican population of New York City (New York City Department of City Planning, 1994, p.3). However, they are still the largest Hispanic group in New York City ( U.S. Census, 2000).

On a national level, Puerto Ricans are the second largest Hispanic group following Mexican-Americans (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1993, p.4, Romero and Stelzner, 1985, p. 225). A 1976 report of the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights substantiated that Puerto Ricans constitute a unique racial group "with concerns and priorities that frequently differ from those of other minorities, even other Spanish heritage groups"

(Romero and Stelzner, 1985, p.225). At the same time, Puerto Ricans face similar racism against their language, culture, and skin color as all other ethnic groups (Romero and Stelzner, 1985, p. 225). While they endure some of the same prejudice as other groups, they often categorized as having a greater percentage of poverty and unemployment (Romero and Stelzner, 1985, p.225). Statistical data on the mainland presented Puerto Ricans as socioeconomically subordinate to the U.S. average population and other Hispanic groups, in the areas of poverty, income and education. According to the 1990 U.S. census however 33% of Dominicans are below the poverty and Puerto Ricans are the second group with the highest poverty levels at 30% level (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1993, p. 9). The percentage of Mexicans who fell below the poverty level was 23%, the rate for Cubans was at 11% (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1993, p. 9). Romero and Stelzner reported in 1985 (p.217) that there were Meaningful socioeconomic differences revealed statistically for different Hispanic groups and this remains true based on the above data. Yet, literature on Puerto Ricans and the criminal Justice system continues to perceive their situation as identical to that of African-Americans and other Hispanics (Romero and Stelzner, 1985, p.217).

Insufficient research has been conducted on the Puerto Rican relationship with law enforcement and other areas of the criminal justice system (Romero and Stelzner, 1985, p.226). In the literature on corrections, for example, the interests of Puerto Ricans and other Latinos have not been fully addressed. According to Diaz-Cotto (1996, p. 6), the experiences and concerns of Puerto Rican and Latino(a) Prisoners have been practically disregarded by criminal justice institutions and researchers.

Puerto Ricans and other Hispanics continue to be the fastest growing ethnic population in the United States. According to the U.S. Department of commerce (1993, p.2) the overall Hispanic population increased approximately 53% between 1980 and 1990. The Puerto Rican population growth rates "were four times faster than the rest of the nation." Demographers predict that by the year 2010 our society will be young (the largest age group will range between 15 and 25 years of age) and primarily Hispanic. Thus, the composition of the American population has obviously changed over the past decade (Barringer, 1991). In 1990 nine out of every ten Hispanics lived in just 10 states. New York is among the 4 states with the largest Hispanic population (Department of Commerce, 1993, p.3). Moreover, a 1990 report from the Puerto Rican Council on Higher Education, continues to identify New York as a major port of entry for Puerto Ricans and other Hispanics. The fact that the Puerto Rican Community has a significant presence in New York should be the catalyst for improving government relationships, and services to this under-serviced community.

The findings of this study were based on a limited sample of 70 interviews and are not representative of the entire Puerto Rican population of New York City. However, the interviews do provide some insight into problems, which can arise in implementing any police/community strategy or program in Puerto Rican communities. The qualitative analysis, specifically the ethnographic focus of this study, should be useful to the New York City Police Department in establishing better working relationships with the Puerto Rican community.

To maintain the reliability of qualitative analysis, this researcher will follow Tuchman's (1979, p.37) recommendations that a researcher must "submit himself to the materials instead of trying to impose himself on his material, then the material will ultimately speak to him and supply the answers." This researcher attempted to achieve this by not imposing her own thoughts on the process. The analysis of the in-depth interviews enabled the members of the Puerto Rican Community and the Police Officers who work in the Puerto Rican community to tell their own stories in their own words. This approach also allowed this researcher to categorize themes for discussion in an effort to understand what the Puerto Rican community residents and police officers in New York City identified as the policing problems.

### Community Demographics

#### Defining Community

Prior to any discussion on policing and specifically the Community Policing process, it is important to elaborate on how the term "community" is being defined. Seagrave (1996, p. 2), notes that while the term "community has mushroomed in use, there is a lack of clarity about the meaning of the word and there are a myriad of definitions for the term community which have been examined, amended and reassessed by numerous researchers." According to Seagrave (1996, p.2), social scientists such as Stein, Nisbet and Hillery, have all discussed different applications of the concept of community. For example, Seagrave (1996, p.2) notes that Stein (1980) discussed the "historical, political and sociological context" of the concept of community in terms of

the decline that was experienced with "the growth of metropolitan areas." Nisbet (1953) addressed the moral, social and political influences that aided the expansion of power and led what he termed "the quest for community." Hillery (1982), "identified 94 different meanings of the concept...." in one of the largest studies on the concept of community. Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux (1990, p.76) also point out that the word community is defined differently by different people. These authors maintain that "unless we define what we mean by community it can be difficult to understand clearly the goals of community policing." This could be because different meanings can have diverse political implications, which can impact the goals of community policing. The concept of community can have political weight for both, conservative and liberal camps, each utilizing it toward his or her own means and ends. According to Seagrave (1996, p.3) the "pragmatic and utilitarian" perspectives on the concept of community are that it is not working. From a humanitarian civil liberties viewpoint community input is necessary for institutions to act in humane ways. Social scientist perceives the concept of community as a method of social control and conservatives are concerned with the cost of community involvement. For example, conservatives view the concept of a community as a responsibility. In this vein, responsible people can assist the law enforcement community by being the eyes and ears of the police, at no cost to the government. The liberals view the involvement of community as a means of empowering people to have a voice and create change in institutions such as the police department. Either way there is no precise definition, but there is certainly a history of its use to justify new policies and lend political credibility (Seagrave, 1996, p.3-4).

The term "community," for the purpose of this discussion, will be defined by merging two historical definitions. First, community will refer to individuals, families, area businesses, traditional and nontraditional agencies and special interest groups who live in the same area (U. S. Department of Justice, 1989:184). Secondly, it will also be used to refer to 'any area in which people with a common culture share common interest' (Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux, 1990:81). The first definition makes community synonymous with neighborhood. The second makes it synonymous with culture. In merging these definitions into one, the concept of community here refers to people who share distinct ethnic, cultural, social or economic characteristics and live within specific areas (Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux, 1990, p.81). The intent is not to romanticize the concept of community, has often been done (Seagrave, 1996, p.5), but to refer to the people who make up the specific community system that is being discussed (Toch and Grant, 1991, p.250, Pincus and Minahan, 1973, p. 63).

This researcher is clearly aware that some neighborhoods are difficult to change due to their hardships, frustrations and distrust of the system (Toch and Grant, 1991, p.250). However, keeping in mind that social and economic changes in our society have altered the past or the historical meaning of community, there are still many issues that bring people together and offer a feeling of community (Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux, 1990, pp.91-92). According to Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux (1990), "social activist Saul Alinsky proposed viewing community through the prism of issues, since they constitute the most urgent community of interest. The issues of crime, fear of crime, and disorder

within any geographic community offer police their best and most logical opportunity for unifying people in ways that help rebuild that traditional sense of community" (p. 92).

## Chapter II

### I. Literature Review

#### Relationship between the Police and Ethnic Communities

Police agencies have been hard pressed to improve the relationship between ethnic communities and their police personnel. Much of this is due to two factors: a rise in demands for increased police presence and complaints from the communities, especially ethnic communities, citing lack of communication, alleged brutality and racism by police officers. Minority communities have historically mistrusted police, predominantly for their offensive verbal responses, brutal actions and lack of effective service in minority communities (Skolnick, 1973, p.87). For years, minority communities have maintained that they are more prone to physical abuse by police than "members of the dominant society..." (Carter, 1985, p.487). Dramatic illustrations of police/minority conflict include:

- A) the riots that erupted in the African-American Community in Miami during the 1970's after the police beating of African-American insurance executive, Arthur McDuffie
- B) In Los Angeles in 1992 the riots following the beating of Rodney King by police,
- C) The protests in Washington D.C. when the Hispanic community reacted to several incidents of use of excessive force with their youth
- D) In New York City, where cases such as that of Anthony Baez, Vega and Rosario cousins, Abner Louima, Amadu Dialo who lost their lives or were seriously injured as a result of conflicts with police.

Bouza (1990, p.246) notes that while it is likely that these were isolated events, typically they are every day encounters that escalate out of control, yet still reflect an "underlying racism." According to Bouza (1990, p. 246) The "underlying racism" exist because generally the daily encounters with people of color have been negative and predominately based on the fact that some police officers prescribe to stereotypes.

This was certainly true in the case Anthony Baez. Baez had been playing football in the street with family members. The routine encounter occurred when Baez' football hit a parked patrol car. The event soared out of control revealing fundamental racism when Baez was beaten and choked to death by police officer Francis X. Livoti. Officer Livoti already had 14 official complaints filed against him, predominantly for illegal choke holds (Rodriguez, 1996, pp.1-2). The community outcry for justice, which followed magnified the realities of police brutality (Bouza, 1990, p.246).

Needless to say, police brutality and other conflicts are directly related to the interaction between police and their customers, i.e., the community (Bouza, 1990, p.246). If the interaction between police and the communities they serve is poor, there will certainly be problems in attempting to build any relationship. Barlow and Barlow (1993, p.2) note:

In the period between Arthur McDuffie in Miami and Rodney King in Los Angeles, police-minority relations across the nation have been characterized by tensions that typically remain just below the surface until something happens to bring them to the forefront of community and, at times, national concern.

In the Arthur McDuffie and Rodney King cases, the African American communities of Metro-Dade County and Los Angeles County expected convictions of the police

involved. Rothlein (1999, p.18) posits that Arthur Mc Duffie was brutally beaten to death and Rodney King was repeatedly beaten by police officers and caught on videotape. Yet both cases resulted in similar verdicts and in explosions of civil disturbance which left several dead, many injured and extensive damage in both areas not only to property, but also to the relationship between the police, the community and criminal justice system as whole. While the Anthony Baez, Vega and Rosario, Abner Louima and Amadu Dialo cases in New York did not erupt in civil disturbances of the same magnitude, as the Miami and Los Angeles cases, they still led to increased tensions and lack of trust between the New York City's ethnic communities and the police. Police in New York, as in Miami and Los Angeles, continue to wrestle with the need to reclaim support and trust of the communities (Rothlein, 1999, pp.18-20).

Relationships between police and minority community residents must be improved if neighborhoods and the quality of life in these neighborhoods are to be "protected and improved in the City" (Kelling and Stewart, 1989, p.1). This brings a new challenge to policing, one that is much more community-oriented.

The values for new methods of policing call for constructive action between the police and the community as well as a problem solving partnership (Wasserman and Moore, 1988, p.5). Community policing, problem-oriented policing and community-oriented policing all reflect such values as they call for positive interaction, knowledge of neighborhoods, respect and sensitivity for all communities and their problems (Wasserman and Moore, 1988:5). This certainly comes more from a value-laden base, rather than a technical orientation (Wasserman and Moore, 1988, p.5).

Community Policing and its underlying strategies, such as Problem-Oriented Policing and innovative neighborhood-oriented policing, are often presented as emerging theories that seek to change the basic ways in which the Police Department fights crime and responds to the needs and problems of communities (Brown, 1991, p.1). These models appear to be heavily influenced by several social work practice theories and models. These include community organization and problem solving.

In addition, community policing, problem-oriented policing and innovative neighborhood-oriented policing strategies incorporate role and participative management theories. Under such influences, these policing philosophies move police departments towards a model based on social service (including prevention and crisis intervention), community organization, participation, greater professionalism and human relations skills (Tranjanowicz and Bucqueroux, 1990). Community Policing (Problem-oriented policing and innovative neighborhood-oriented policing) seek to change not only the organizational philosophy of the police department, but also the roles of police officers and their relationship with the public they serve.

While these strategies do not preclude Law Enforcement as a major function of the police organization, they appear to incorporate the basic principles of social work practice. For example Briar (1983-84, p.106), points out that:

social workers seek to improve the quality of life for all persons by providing rehabilitative and preventive services and social supports to individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities by working to bring about needed changes in the society.

Social work prevention approaches have incorporated proactive, rather than reactive strategies and have aimed "to identify and to build adaptive strengths and skills in people so as to avoid predictable problems or to attain desired objectives and reduce weakness or limitations..." (P. 106).

Like this depiction of Social Work, Community Policing, Problem-Oriented and Community-Oriented Policing are also described as proactive interactive alternatives to traditional reactive policing. These community oriented approaches are supposed to attend to the needs of special constituencies without depleting resources from the larger community (Brown, 1989, p.4). Furthermore, they are supposed to provide police officers with more freedom to make decisions which facilitate problem identification, as well as problem solving techniques (Greene and Mastrofski, 1991, p. xii). Much of this is supposed to be accomplished by involving police officers in the process of assisting in forming community organizations, providing referrals, designing interventions, and helping to make connections with state, city and private agencies (Trojanowicz, Steele and Trojanowicz, 1985, p.6).

Albeit, as noted by Skolnick (1973:191), police have always performed social service activities "whether they like it or not," police work is not social work and their approach differs from that of social work. In CPOP strategies the social service component includes performing "regular police work" namely, that of enforcing the law (Trojanowicz, Steele and Trojanowicz, 1985, p.6). Thus, while community policing strategies appear to be based on the social work framework of the problem solving model, the approach to meet the stated goals is different. The police department's approach

would be to eliminate difficulties in neighborhoods quickly. In general the standards that apply to police patrol work are geared towards law enforcement and not on providing a service (Roberg and Kuykendall, 1997, p.384). Problem solving methods in social work require rational sometimes long-term procedures involving clear collaborative efforts of problem identification, goal setting, a plan for change, and continual assessment before, during and after every stage of the change effort (Compton and Galaway, 1975 and 1979, p. 236). While community policing, problem-oriented policing and innovative neighborhood policing call for implementing some of these approaches it is not what police officers are normally called upon to do. According to Michaels and Treger (1983, p.112), "the police are action-oriented...", they are not used to doing community outreach and implementing collaborative efforts and may see these as social work roles ( Roberg and Kuykendall, 1997, p.417). However, police do need to realize that in addition to being "concerned with the protection of society" (Weissman, Epstein and Savage, 1983, p.112), they also need to be mindful of how their role can be instrumental in improving, neighborhoods.

One key aspect of John Dewey and Helen Pearlman's work on Problem solving which seems to have been considered is that of putting the primary responsibility on the worker, or in this case, the police officer. Police officers are accountable for changes in their beat areas without being given the skills to engage in goal directed thinking (Compton and Galloway, 1978 and 1979).

Another difference between social work and police orientation with problem solving and provision of social services has to do with education and training. Social

workers get years of training in problem identification and solving techniques, as well as in community organization skills in undergraduate and graduate school. Police officers receive limited or no training in these areas. The McElroy (1993, pp. 41, 42, 54, 57) study of community policing in the New York City revealed that police officers "lack of experience with, and lack of intensive training in the problem solving process," often lead to shallow and insipid identification and assessment of problem situations. Similarly, the study showed that community police officer Sargent's also lacked skills in the problem solving process and "had not been exposed to problem-solving in prior training or in prior assignments within the department" (McElory, 1993, p.104).

However, the root of these new concepts of policing is the realization that the police cannot do their job alone in today's society where the problems that police encounter are much more complex (Brown, 1991:1). Goldstein (1990:21) points out that police need to utilize the people in the communities they serve as resources. The community must be actively involved in the patrol, management, control, and supervision of their community and "the police can, at best, only assist in that task" (Goldstein, 1990:21). While this is an extreme statement it points to need for collaborative efforts, the need for police to work with the community and other professionals. According to former New York City Police Commissioner, Lee Brown (1991), the police need to work in collaboration with the community to identify the problems that cause conflict between them and implement strategies to resolve these problems.

The concept is that by participating, residents will increase their knowledge of the criminal justice system: not only how it operates, but also what its present critical

weakness and flaws are (Brown, 1991). Such knowledge would serve to enlighten residents about what the police can and cannot do, as well as what both they and the police need to do to improve their local neighborhood. Therefore, the greater the community's involvement, the better the relationship should be between community and police. However, this involvement must be clearly defined. Only when participation is clearly outlined can channels of communication and information function within the new Community/ Police philosophies.

The community must also feel that their police department is genuine in its efforts to communicate and improve the community/police relationship. If community residents view police efforts as political ploys to appease them, then police/community relations will be damaged even further. Critics of community policing strategies are skeptical about these police efforts. Many claim that community policing is basically a public relations campaign to take the heat off while the police agency continues in its inability to solve problems and failure to communicate with the citizens that the police are supposed to protect and serve (Ladd, 1993, p.8).

Improving lines of communication is important, specifically in Puerto Rican and other minority communities, which, as noted earlier, historically have had severed and distrustful relationships with the police (Trojanowicz and Buqueroux, 1990, p.243). In fact, a study by Bayley and Mendelson maintains that while residents of minority communities are as likely to call for police assistance as are members of the dominant community, minorities are "less likely than the dominant group to talk over a problem

with police" (Vazquez and Bahn, 1974, p.105). Further, Vasquez and Bahn (1974) report the following about the Bayley and Mendelson study:

The study revealed that among Denver's two minority communities (both in poor contact with the police), the Spanish-speaking related less to the police than the Blacks, despite arrest figures which demonstrate that a larger proportion of the Blacks and Spanish-named population was in trouble with the police more than were members of the dominant community (p.105).

In Carter's (1984, p.225) study of Hispanic interaction with the Criminal Justice System in Texas, the Hispanic community indicated that they received "inadequate protection from the police." In fact, the study revealed that both, Hispanic men and women (98.8% of the Hispanic community surveyed) were more fearful of falling victims to crime because of insufficient police protection. Yet only few assessments have been done on the Puerto Rican or other Latino community's perception of police officers and any problems inherent within their relationship. Kuykendall (1973) in his study on "Police and Minority Groups: Toward a Theory of Negative Contacts," maintained that the Puerto Ricans in El Barrio (East Harlem) were viewed as a "police problem." In addition, Kuykendall (1973), claimed that in the "segregated and disadvantaged" Puerto Rican and Hispanic communities, there was a perception of greater danger for the police. However, the study does not provide a clear quantitative or qualitative assessment of such perceptions by either the community or the police. The study briefly mentions seemingly negative contacts with Puerto Ricans and other Hispanics and offers no particulars about the encounters.

The Vazquez and Bahn (1974) study of "The Police As Viewed By New York City Puerto Ricans" is one of the few studies that offer's some perspective from the Puerto Rican Community. This quantitative study surveyed a total of 323 Puerto Ricans from Brooklyn, the Bronx, Manhattan and Queens, in age groups from 5-14, 15-24, 25-44 and 44-64 (p. 108). The study revealed that there were differences in the ways in which groups within the Puerto Rican community viewed the police (Vazquez and Bahn 1974, pp.111-115). For example, the study affirms that Puerto Rican men have a greater negative perception of police than Puerto Rican women. Also, youth between the ages of 5-14, were found to have a more positive attitude about police than the members of the other age groups. However, the age group between the ages of 15-44 appeared to view police negatively while the members of the 45-64 age group, perceived the police less negatively (Vazquez and Bahn, 1974, p.111-112).

The study also indicated significant differences in the employment status variable. Contrary to what most may believe, the unemployed Puerto Ricans had a more positive perception of the police than did those who were employed. The author's claim that since the unemployed Puerto Ricans were dependent on institutional support, they may have answered favorably for fear of losing their income (Vazquez and Bahn, 1974, p.115). However, the quantitative approach of both the Vasquez and Bahn (1974) and the Kuykendall (1973) study did not enable respondents to tell their story in detail. In fact, the quantitative nature of the Vasquez and Bahn study, in particular, did not allow the respondents to give in-depth information as to why they feel positive or negative about police officers in the New York City. Moreover these studies were not able to ascertain

what the Puerto Rican Community thinks can be done to improve police/community relationships.

More recent community policing studies in New York, such as that of McElroy, Cosgrove and Sadd (1993, p.152), may not be representative of the ethnic or racial communities served by the precincts examined. The McElroy, et al study (1993), which evaluates the community policing program in New York City, contends that the poor as well as ethnic minorities and young families were under-represented in the sample of respondents. The authors maintain that many who were deemed potential respondents and lived in high drug traffic areas feared discussing the neighborhood situation with anyone associated with the police. Language barriers were also noted as a problem in interviewing potential respondents (McElroy, Cosgrove and Sadd, 1993, p.152). Yet again we have another study that, while being of merit and certainly contributing to the knowledge base of community policing literature, does not provide clear information regarding the Puerto Ricans' and other minority groups' perception of their relationship with police and/or their knowledge about community policing strategies. This is not surprising when we learn from police history that Puerto Ricans/Latinos and other minority groups have, for the most part, been left out of every policing process.

#### Historical influences on Community Policing

The history of policing in the United States appears to have its roots in community involvement, politics and the provision of social services. According to Kelling and Moore (1991, p. 6), since the 19th century policing can be categorized into three areas:

political, reform and community. The political stage reflects the links "between police and politics, dated from the introduction of police into municipalities during the 1840's, continued through the progressional periods and ended during the early 1900's." The reform stage was a consequence of the problems identified in the "political era." Kelling and Moore (1991, p.6) note that the reform period came to being during the 1930's and thrived throughout the 1950's and 1960's. This stage started to disintegrate in the late 1970's and "arguably, gave way to the community strategy during the early-mid 1980's."

Thus, historically, the Police have undertaken many initiatives to become more professional, to change, and to meet political and public demands for a greater police presence. According to Greene and Mastrofski (1991, p.1), these initiatives have shifted through the aforementioned stages, "characterized by the 'organizational strategies' espoused by the ascendant reformers of the time." Shifts between these stages have been caused by inefficient methodologies and the inability of "old ways to meet the demands of a changing environment" (Greene and Mastrofski, 1991, p.1). In addition, these metaphors present us with the fact that for years now in our society there has been some change in police roles (Williams and Murphy, 1990, p. 1).

For instance, during the political stage (late 1840-early 1900's), police did more than just enforce laws and/or maintain order; they also rendered a myriad of social services. According to Kelling and More (1991), police operated soup kitchens, provided temporary shelter for immigrant workers in precincts, worked with politicians to find or develop jobs for immigrants, were familiar and related closely to the organizations (social and political) and agencies within the neighborhood, and lived in the community they

patrolled. Thus, the police were initially heavily influenced by social service functions and were, in essence, what is termed today "community police officers" (p.7).

However, Williams and Murphy (1990) argue that such services were readily available, because of the society of that era, namely, white America. These authors point out that the political stage was replete with impositions of "racially biased laws" for African-Americans and other ethnic groups. In other words, African-Americans, Hispanics and other ethnic groups did not reap the benefits of the political stage. Ethnic minorities received no social services or greater protection and police officers did not live in their neighborhoods. First of all, "there were virtually no black police officers until well into the twentieth century." Second, this was an era where slavery and segregation were still very prevalent (Williams and Murphy 1990, pp.5-6). This is not to say that minorities did not have contact with police, for they did, if only to be "kept in place" (Williams and Murphy 1990, p.6).

Also worth mentioning is the fact that women had a significant role in the historical antecedents of policing. Simply put, women brought social services into policing. While minority men were not hired by the police department in large numbers, private women's groups organized and demanded that women be hired in police departments (Schulz, 1995, p. 10). Schulz (1995, p.17) notes "police women were viewed as able to prevent crime through social service intervention. The majority of police women [during the 1900's] were college educated social workers."

Yet, the significant contributions of women, like other minorities, are scant in the literature. This is not surprising, considering that the political era was governed by

politics. Roberg and Kuykendall (1997, p.52) note, that law enforcement was engulfed in politics. Politics determined who was hired, promoted, and even arrested. Certainly political power determined where police worked and what services they provided.

The decades of the 1940's and 50's provide us with examples of cases, which led to significant reforms in law enforcement. Rothlein (1999, p.16) points out that there were several incidents of corruption and political control in the 1940's that attracted national attention. One was a Grand Jury investigation, which accused police in Los Angeles of "protecting prostitutes for \$100.00 per week apiece." Another incident occurred during the Detroit Riots, when the community accused police of not dealing appropriately with incidents of racial violence. The 1950's were so replete with issues involving corruption with police and the government as a whole that hearings of the Kefauver Committee, which exposed extensive corruption in government were televised (Rothlein, 1999, p.16). Well-published incidents of police corruption led many to believe that government was corrupt and that most appointments to civic jobs involved payoffs, nepotism or favoritism (Segrave, 1995, p.11).

The reform stage is noted as the period which "shaped contemporary policing as we knew it through 1970's" (Moore and Kelling, 1986, p.9). Reforming meant changing the organizational strategy of the police. According to Kelling and Moore (1991, p.9), this need for change resulted from the fact that people grew tired of the political control of the police and the corruption that came with it. This shifted the police "to narrowing their function to crime control and criminal apprehension" (Kelling and Moore, 1991, p.9). Actually, it was during this time (the 1950s and 1960s) that police departments became

primarily law enforcement agencies, combating crime (Kelling and Moore, 1991, p.4). As the organizational framework changed to that of strictly enforcing laws, police parted from conducting any action deemed "social work" in order to fight crime (Kelling and Moore, 1986, p.11).

To avoid favoritism and inequity, police officers could no longer reside in their own neighborhoods and were required to take a civil service exam in order to be hired. It was also during this reform stage that we began to see African-Americans and greater numbers women hired by police departments. However, African-American and women police officers were faced with many limitations. For example, African-American "officers all worked in plain clothes...were assigned to black neighborhoods" and were limited from apprehending Whites for any felony and/or misdemeanor (Williams and Murphy, 1990, p.8). Women officers were hired in token numbers and were given limited roles. The role of women in policing was not to arrest, but to talk things out. Segrave (1995) notes that women used "moral persuasion," they were basically seen as 'mother' figures and instrumental in influencing people to do good, "just as social workers attempted to do" (p.2).

The organizational design of the reform age was to "centralize command and control of police activities" (Kelling and Moore, 1986, p.11). The police style of management moved to exert greater supervision of the rank and file and to distribute work in a more standard manner. Kelling and Moore (1991) posit that the organizational strategies of the reform period favored Taylor's Classical/Scientific Management Theory which claims that:

at least two assumptions attended classical theory: workers are inherently uninterested in work and, if left to their own devices, are prone to avoiding it; and, since workers have little or no interest in the substance of their work, the sole common interest between workers and management is found in economic incentives for workers. Thus, both workers and management benefit economically when management arranges work in ways that increase workers' productivity and link productivity to economic rewards (p.12)

The Classical Management Theory then, assisted police administrators in routinizing police work and impeding any decision making by patrol officers. This was done in order to increase productivity and efficiency in enforcing laws and maintaining order.

Consequently, an entire breed of police officers who believed their role was solely to take orders and enforce laws was created (Kelling and Moore, 1991, p.12).

While the reform era sought to develop better control of police functions and greater equity in hiring practices, it had little impact on women and other minorities (Williams and Murphy, 1990, p. 9). The dominant society had plenty to gain in the shift from politics to law enforcement, because they were completely protected by the laws. This was not the case for African-Americans, Hispanics and women. According to Williams and Murphy (1990, p.9) "African-Americans and other minorities lacked both, political power and equal protection under the law, such a transformation [then] could have little significance." In fact, minorities did not necessarily benefit from routine methods or procedures, such as the civil service exams. According to Williams and Murphy (1990) African-Americans and other minorities were failed more often than whites in these exams. These authors report:

In Boston, for example, the examiners failed 75 percent of the blacks as opposed to 35 percent of the whites in 1970. In Atlanta, in the same year, 72 percent of the blacks and only 24 percent of the whites failed. In New York, in 1968, 65 percent of the blacks as opposed to 31 percent of the whites failed. Mexican and Puerto Ricans fared even worse, perhaps because the tests were given in English (pp.9-10).

Therefore, in minority communities the shift to reform indicated that they lacked political clout, protection of the law and power (Williams and Murphy, 1990, p.10). For women, the reforms signified higher educational requirements than for the men, few opportunities for promotion and equal pay, as well as resistance and prejudice to women as police officers. Thus, the more policing changed, the more it remained the same for minorities and women.

The 1960's and 1970's saw the beginning of the community-oriented policing stage. It was a period with a plethora of social changes, which included the civil rights movement, growth in minority populations and higher crime rates (Kelling and Moore, 1990, p.17). Through the 1960's and 70's police practice was closely observed by communities, government agencies and researchers. During these years there were numerous national commissions created to assess police practice, identify problems and recommend improvements (Rothlein, 1999, p.16). Rothlien (1999, p.16-17) presents this best, noting that:

Six blue ribbon national commissions were formulated during this period to examine the practices of law enforcement agencies and make recommendations for reforms (Municipal Management Series, 1991)

- The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice-1967, 1968.

- The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (Kerner Commission) 1967.
- The President's Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence-1968.  
The President's Commission on Campus Unrest-Kent State-1970.
- The National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals-1973
- The Knapp Commission Report on Police Corruption, 1973.

According to Rothlein (1999, p.17), the Knapp Commission Report on Police Corruption was one of the most extensive and valuable documents on corruption practices in the New York Police Department. Community's consciousness to these issues (Rothlein, 1999, p.17) was raised not only through the published report, but specifically through a book and a "blockbuster movie" both entitled "Serpico" and chronicling the efforts of an NYPD detective to explore the pervasive nature of police corruption in New York City.

The racial riots and corruption scandals of the 1960's and 70's gave credence to the need for police reforms and social change (Rothlein, 1999, p.18). With social change came the realization that police had to do more than enforce laws. Although law enforcement is necessary, "it is not sufficient to authorize police actions to maintain order, negotiate conflicts, and solve problems" (Kelling and Moore, 1990, p.19). Thus, in the community-oriented state a need developed to establish a relationship with

community residents in an effort to obtain information when necessary, resolve problems and maintain order. Police departments began to patrol neighborhoods on foot to establish a rapport with residents. Foot patrol programs became very popular with the public during the community-oriented stage of policing. According to Kelling and Moore (1991), the research on foot patrol has demonstrated that "it contributed to city life: it reduced fear, increased citizen satisfaction with police, improved police attitudes toward citizens, and increased the morale and job satisfaction of police" (p. 18). Foot patrol studies also indicated that information obtained by foot patrol officers from community residents assisted in solving crimes. Furthermore, given the uncertainty about police power in controlling or dealing with chaos or turmoil in neighborhoods, police realized that they had to work more the community in order to intervene in a more effective manner (Kelling and Moore, 1991, p.18). Kelling and Moore (1991, p.19) note that the community stage restored emphasis once again on the community with a certain level of political empowerment for many police tasks. It basically set the tone that community support and involvement were imperative if the police were going to meet their goals. Additionally, within the community stage we begin to see police providing an array of social services again.

The community period shifted policing from centralized control to an incremental process of organizational decentralization. This stage offers a progressive style of management (Williams and Murphy, 1990. p.10). In this stage policing shifts from a strict paramilitary organization to one that incorporates a participatory style of management. It is an era where police officers are given the power to make decisions in an effort to

effectively respond to neighborhood needs (Williams and Murphy, 1990, p10). It is a stage where community residents are encouraged to participate in helping to design the delivery of police services. However, for community residents to do this, they must be active, well organized, and politically empowered.

While there is no doubt that there were and probably still are communities with "strong community norms" and political clout this does not apply to all communities (Williams and Murphy, 1990, p.10). Williams and Murphy (1990, p.10), point out that most foot patrol programs, such as the "Safe and Clean Neighborhood Program" in New Jersey, were implemented in neighborhoods which had significant support from the residential and business communities as well as political leaders. However, the communities without such support and with limited resources, who often are in greater need of police services, were basically forced to wait on a very long line. Once again, ethnic minorities lacking resources and power within the political arena remained underserved by police agencies.

In the inner cities, African-Americans, Puerto Ricans and other Latinos face the hardships of unemployment, poor housing conditions, lack of affordable housing and poor education. At the same time, school dropout rates increased for this population. The percentage of single women heads of households escalated dramatically, substance abuse became unmanageable, crime and fear of crime skyrocketed excessively (Williams and Murphy, 1986, p.11). Still, these communities were the ones forced to wait their turn for appropriate and efficient police services.

This only served to create conflict and disharmony within minority communities, which predominately were the ones kept waiting, as well as skepticism of police officers. Williams and Murphy (1990, p. 11) contend that African-Americans became increasingly frustrated and perceived the police as representing the system as a whole. The police were viewed as part of the system that had failed to meet the needs of the community (Cooper, 1980, p.57). Shifting their animosity to the police served to ease some of their frustrations (Cooper, 1980, p.57). These feelings of frustration could only escalate in oppressed communities, as the members were not permitted to voice their distress. In many cases, as discussed earlier, the community responded with civil disobedience.

Cooper (1980, p.57), notes:

such venting can be interpreted as a questioning of [police] authority as rule enforcers and such challenges are not expected to go unheeded. Rule enforcers are not supposed to take any crap from the minions. Not taking any crap, and the need to give a little crap, are ingredients that can lead to physical confrontation between police and ghetto residents.

The riots of the 1960's were certainly evidence of minority community frustration at the police stance to "not take any shit from the public" and to enforce laws with or without force (Cooper, 1980, p.57).

Undoubtedly, the 60's riots proved that the interests of ethnic minorities were not regarded with the same degree of importance by the dominant community and their law enforcement agencies (Williams and Murphy, 1986, p. 11). According to Cooper (1980, p. 58), minority communities or ghettos were defined as "crime ridden and therefore in need of the most rules." The issues of African-American and Puerto Rican communities

actually reached the public agenda only when their problems became a crisis. According to Kingdon (1984, p.204), a crisis or disaster may be the reason why some problems get the attention of governmental officials. For example, as noted earlier, the crisis which resulted from the 60's riots prompted the government to appoint The Kerner Commission to inquire into the reasons for the chaos and to suggest recommendations that would help resolve the problems (Williams and Murphy, 1990, p.11). The Kerner Commission found that the riots were a direct result of years of racism by the dominant society. In addition, the commission's report revealed that incidents of police "insensitivity and brutality" were the main motives for most of the turmoil (Williams and Murphy, 1990, p.11). The Kerner Commission, in understanding that police as rule enforcers were the focal cause of the riots, made the following recommendations (Williams and Murphy, 1986, p.11):

1. Change operations in the inner city to guarantee appropriate officer behavior and eliminate abusive practices.
2. Provide appropriate police protection to urban communities to eliminate the excessive degrees of fear and crime.
3. Develop means through which civilians can acquire effective answers to their grievances.
4. Create policy mandates to help police in abstaining from behaviors that would produce problems and distress in urban communities.
5. Develop community support for law enforcement.

As a result of these recommendations and the fear of repercussion if no action was taken to remedy the problems, some progress has been made in terms of minimizing friction between police and minority groups (Williams and Murphy, 1990, p.12). Moreover, the hiring of African-Americans, Latinos and women increased and policies against "unnecessary use of weapons, brutality, harassment, verbal abuse and discourtesy have been promulgated and enforced" (Williams and Murphy, 1990, p.12). However, these elements were only part of the problem. The other equally important problem was that the officers who provided services in communities with social ills, lacked "sensitivity and understanding of minority concerns and culture..." (Williams and Murphy, 1990, p.11). According to Carter (1984), lack of sensitivity and understanding of minority concerns and culture "contributes to diminished service delivery, increased hostility and mutual distrust between Hispanic's [other ethnic communities] and the criminal justice system" (p. 214).

While many police officers today have learned to deal with the needs of culturally diverse communities, they have not fully closed the gap. Williams and Murphy (1990, p.11) speak to this when they say "they [police] are far from having totally bridged the chasm that has separated them from minorities--especially blacks--for over 200 years."

Despite new policies and guidelines, racism appears to be prevalent within police departments. Ethnic minorities continue to claim that verbal and physical abuse is more prevalent in their communities than in predominantly white communities and that their communities are less protected by police (Carter, 1985, p. 487). Residents of minority

communities continue to claim that they are being treated differently, that police patrol their neighborhoods poorly and do not respond in a timely Manner to incidents in their communities (Williams and Murphy, 1990, p.12). According to Williams and Murphy (1990, p. 12), a study conducted by the Commission on Cities revealed that although there had been considerable improvements in the relationship between the police and minority communities, the socioeconomic problems (poverty, unemployment, social disorganization, inadequate housing, poor education, and crime) of these communities were only making things worse. As a result of hardships faced by ethnic minorities in urban cities, it is unrealistic to expect this population to have the characteristics (social, economic or political) needed to support the participative process essential for community policing strategies. The community stage "requires an empowered cohesive community" which is ready to compromise, understand and work with a police organization that is trying to be responsive to their needs (Williams and Murphy, 1990, p.11-12). These authors claim that people of color, overwhelmed by their many economic and social problems, lack the skills to effectively participate in this new police initiative.

In other words, lacking resources or social capitol, ethnic groups are powerless. Yet, the Puerto Rican Community, as an interest group, has effectively articulated grievances within many public policy areas and, as a result, several policy initiatives, i.e., bilingual education, have made it to the formal decision making stages of national agendas (Cartagena, 1989, p.65). For example, a window of opportunity opened for Puerto Rican interest groups to become influential in changing language policy in the U.S. during the 1970's. According to Cartagena (1989), lobbying efforts and

contributions unique to Puerto Rican interest groups led to the implementation of "Bilingual assistance provisions in the Voting Rights Act, the court decisions mandating bilingual/bi-cultural education, the constitutional guarantees of bilingual interpreters in criminal proceedings and the plethora of Spanish language notices, letters and materials regarding government entitlements" (p.65). Puerto Rican and other Latino interest groups have attempted to break down the endemic conflict between the police and the Latino community in several States including New York. Puerto Rican and Latino interest groups organized by Parents against Police Brutality, the National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights and the Puerto Rican Legal Defense Fund, have held conferences, taken to the streets in protest and used the growing conflicts between police and Puerto Rican/Latinos to justify the need for improved interactions between the groups. Yet, despite these community efforts, the New York City Police Department, as seen in the findings of this study, has not effectively reached out to the Puerto Rican/Latino community. According to former Police Commissioner Lee Brown (1991, p.35):

from 1970 to 1990, the department has emerged in the vanguard of almost anything having to do with progressive police management. But despite pioneering programs at almost every level, the dominant style of the organization remained traditionally paramilitary with strong control over most activities, even though there was substantial decentralization of some efforts.

For example, some progressive administrators in the New York City Police Department were able to create and implement specialized programs such as hostage negotiating teams and the Community Patrol Officer Program. Yet the more traditionalist administrators, who hold the decision making positions and who come from a mold

which dictates that police officers are "not social workers but tough cops," continue to dominate police policy-making (Brown, 1991, p.37). In identifying the changes that have taken place over time in policing, it is apparent that the various reform phases that were implemented in the past are currently being recycled. In the past the department has initiated reforms, such as those noted earlier in the community stage, but changed in midstream to a different stage of reforms. Instead of continuously recycling those reforms, the New York City Police Department should assess what has worked in the past and improve upon those policies. At the core of this repeated struggle for change is a kind of psychological battle over the use of social work practice values or the strict application of law enforcement (Peak, 1990, p.61). However, lack of this historical knowledge amidst our current police practitioners has made organizational change become what Brown terms a "philosophical battle over what kind of institution law enforcement should be" (Brown, 1991, p.37). Much of this battle is related to the resistance of certain roles. Police officers today continuously resist any functions that involve the provision of social services. A good example of this can be seen in Belknap, Morash and Trojanowicz (1987, p.213) study assessing police officers' roles in attempting to resolve complaints about unmanageable teenagers. Their results revealed that many officers thought that social workers and not police officers should be the ones to work with teenagers. Yet, perhaps these officers could have worked in conjunction with social workers as a "team" to resolve problems with the teens. According to Michaels and Treger (1983, p.113) this type of cooperation between police and social workers can improve the reputation of both

professions because the community witnesses how collaborative efforts can resolve problems.

### Police and Community Roles

The police role recognized by today's generation of police officers basically emphasizes law enforcement, meaning the enforcement of statutes (Broderick, 1987, p.4). Officers are also familiar with tactics of specialized units such as S.N.E.U. (Special Narcotics Enforcement Unit), who patrol areas where there is heavy drug traffic, and T.O.P.A.C. (Total Patrol Concept), who patrol on foot, in cars, scooters and mounted to combat low level everyday criminal activities such as, illegal peddling, prostitution and disorderly groups, without getting to know the people in the neighborhoods. Today's police officers continually resist the link between Community Policing and Social Work. They claim that their job is not to provide social services. This is particularly true for women police officers who for years were viewed as "social workers with police powers" (Segrave, 1995:51). This is not surprising after learning that an entire generation of officers has been trained only to enforce the law and has limited knowledge of the social service history of the police role. In essence they are correct, they are not social workers, yet their job functions have historically had a social service component which employed collaborative efforts with other agencies and people. Clearly, the characteristic roles police officers, and community members, will change as police departments seek to become more professional and more connected to the community.

Trojanowicz, Steele and Trojanowicz (1985), in their study Community Policing A Taxpayer's Perspective, posit that the roles of the community and the police have to merge in order to prevent crime before it happens. These authors note that in line with the community policing concept the role of the police officer is to "act as an organizer, teacher of self-protective actions... and problem-solver." Trojanowicz et al (1985), describe the role of community residents as that of informants in identifying needs, and problem areas. At the center of this preventive approach to crime, disorder and fear is the fact that certain roles must be assumed in order for community policing to work. In light of this, it is necessary to examine the concept of roles.

The personal mannerisms, qualities and expectations of individuals, how they identify with their role and how they interrelate with others, are all factors which influence the character of an organization. Sims and Gioia (1986) maintain that "organizations themselves do not behave independently of the people who construct and manage them. At their essence, organizations are products of the thought and action of their members" (p.1). Thus, organizational behavior in terms of the functions and roles of its members, becomes a significant concept to assess. Although little has been done with role theory and police officers, Belknap, Morash and Trojanowicz (1987, pp.214-215) posit that "police role orientation" is important in explaining police behavior. In a study entitled "Implementing a Community Policing Model for Work with Juveniles: An Exploratory Study," these researchers found identity differences between foot and motor patrol officers and some related differences in police actions. While the limitations of their study called for a reproduction of the study with a larger police sample (they studied

59 police officers), role identity and orientation was a significant variable and will be considered in this section (Belknap, Morash, Trojanowicz, 1987, p.243). In addition, role definition, social position and expectations will also be addressed.

According to Biddle (1979, p.4), role theory is a science concerned with the study of behaviors that are characteristic of persons within contexts and with various processes that presumably produce, explain, or are affected by those behaviors. The most common belief of this ideology is that roles are linked to social positions. "A social position is an identity that designates a commonly recognized set of persons" (Biddle, 1979, p.5). Police are certainly recognized sets of persons whose social positions maintain characteristic roles (Biddle, 1979, p.8). For example, police officers are law enforcers who maintain social order and peace within different communities by exercising power to control the countless rules that govern behavior in our society (Bouza, 1990). As Bouza points out "a police officer's power has its expression in the visible gun; in the public image conveyed in countless dramatizations; in the hesitancy at approaching them; or in the tremor induced when they single any of us out" (p.2). Thus, their social positions set them apart from the public and provide them with authoritative roles. Biddle (1979) notes that these roles are influenced by expectations for role behaviors. Consequently, those who perform the role are aroused to do so based on what they have learned is expected of them.

As we have discovered, most present day police officers have learned to be rule enforcers. Cooper (1980) states that "It is the rules or laws which give the police their justification for their jobs, their profession, [and] their individual behaviors on the beat" (p. 59). Bonifacio (1991, pp. 37-38) maintains that recruits begin to absorb this behavior

in the police academy where they are "socialized through hazing to begin to talk, act and think like a police officer while shedding [their] self-concept as a civilian. This new identity as a police officer has strict rules and regulations concerning his behavior on and off duty." Others are incited by their own expectations to pass on what they see as proper behavior for those who are members of the position (Biddle, 1979). According to Bonifacio (1991, p.40), even amongst themselves police officers have a clear understanding of their roles as law enforcers and have specific expectations of such roles. Within police subculture officers are supposed to be individuals "who act first and think later," any emotional display barring "aggressiveness" will be viewed as a weakness (Bonifacio, 1991, p.40). Non-conformity to this expected authoritarian behavior "risks hostility" and lack of confidence from peers (Bonifacio, 1991, p.41). This could also help explain why the social service aspects of community policing were viewed as not part of the job and resisted by so many police officers. Collaborative efforts and problem solving require that you think through before you act.

Broderick (1987, p.135) offers that police officers are supposed to Aback each other up during times of emergency and to keep their mouths shut in situations where complaints might be made against fellow officers. Solidarity and mutual trust are an essential part of a police officer's role and police subculture will readily judge a "good" cop by whether he/she possess these characteristics (Benner, 1989, p.77). Bonifacio (1991, p.41) notes that the culture of the police organization and the significance placed on reacting to different incidents is responsible for this frame of thought. Police culture has often considered police officers who "think" or contemplate too much on a situation as

"weak" or "soft." According to Bonifacio (1991, p.41) "a thinking police officer is regarded as someone who may not act swiftly and decisively and therefore may lack confidence in himself, his courage and his skills." Police culture therefore encourages officers to shed their sensitive, reflective behavior and "continually act like a tough, decisive, profane man [or woman] who acts rather than thinks (Bonifacio, 1991, p.42). Thus, the roles of police officers carry specific rights, privileges, duties and obligations. Police awareness of their roles as law enforcers to some extent is governed by their expectations (Biddle, 1979, p.8). These authoritative role expectations are apparently endorsed much more than those involved in the thinking aspects of social services.

### Role Expectations

Role expectations imply that a specific behavior is favored for a particular role. These expectations, as noted above, are based on the individual's own expectations or on the opinions of what an individual in a particular role should do (Biddle and Thomas, 1966, p.10). For instance, the community is expected in its role to identify the local concerns in their neighborhood that fall within the purview of the Police Department (Trojanowicz and Bucquerox, 1990, p. 92, U.S. Department of Justice, 1989, p. 184). Community residents are said to be the "eyes and ears of the police" (Greene, 1989, p. 360). As such, their role involves being aware of their neighborhood's characteristics (Brooks, 1989, p. 33). Knowledge of their neighborhood's physical and geographical characteristics allows community members to take an active part in determining the police agenda for their neighborhood (Trojanowicz and Bucquerox, 1990, pp. 95-96). In

an ideal world, community's role is also to be supportive of the police. Residents are encouraged to act individually or in organized groups and inform police of problems in their neighborhood. Once problems have been identified, their role is to continue working in conjunction with police officers to resolve the problems.

The roles of the police or the community are not without effects, rather they are likely to have characteristic effects, or functions, within the social system (Biddle, 1979, p.9). Many of the functions that are performed by community members are understood, e.g., informing the police of problems, helping to patrol the neighborhood. Residents or police officers may be motivated to continue in their roles because they desire and approve the function (Biddle, 1979). However, the motivation to continue in these roles can cease if either group feels lack of trust or if the relationship is strained by one party's response to a particular situation (Goolkasian, Geddes and DeJong, 1989, pp.499-500).

Kahn (1964, p.177) mentions that roles within an organizational framework can be viewed as a group of potential actions or operations to be carried out by any person in a particular position or job. He discusses two kinds of expectations. One he calls the "sent role," which involves the agency informing its members exactly what is expected of them in their job. The other he refers to as the "received role," which instantly persuades the conduct of the role performer and is his/her "immediate source of motivation" (Kahn et al., 1964, pp.177-178). Police administrators can be considered the role senders and the officers the receivers. Differences between how these two groups and the public view the receiver's role are possible reasons for role conflict, role strain and program weaknesses,

especially as police agencies and communities attempt to carry out the objectives of community policing initiatives.

According to Gorden (1974, p.34), role conflict deals with the clashing of two or more roles and or expectations of roles. It has been identified in most research on police behavior as a major problem area for police officers. Basically, police officers fathom a sense of "conflicting expectations from others" in reference to how they should perform their job (Galliher, 1985, p.57). In relation to the community policing concept, role conflict is evident in the officers' dilemma of shifting "from one operational role to another" (Oettmeier and Brown, 1991, p.129). In other words, police officers will have to shift from the traditional "enforcer" role to a role which stresses concern, sensitivity, empathy, inspiration and motivation (Oettmeier and Brown, 1991, p.129).

This continual shift from one role to another is a source of conflict not only within the individual police officer but also between the police and the communities they serve. Wagner and Decker (1989, p.272) note that the conflicting and opposing roles of the police are the cause for many misunderstandings between the police and the public. These authors claim that the diverse expectations about the police role often lead to citizen complaints. This occurs, for the most part, because the public has its own ideas of what the police role should be and these vary from one community to another (Wagner and Decker, 1989, p.272). In citing Wilson's (Galliher, 1985, p.198) observations of different expectations between dominant and minority communities, Galliher contends that "the source of role conflict for the police can be interpreted in class conflict terms."

According to Galliher (1985, p.60), police role conflict is in part a result of distinct and at times opposing demands from diverse social classes in the community.

Galliher (1985, p.60) maintains that a powerful community expects police to protect their interest and to control the behavior of the powerless, namely minority communities. The concern of many minority communities is that those with political power will influence the distribution of police resources. In terms of community policing, the perception of most ethnic minority communities is that it will be at its best in affluent neighborhoods where people and merchants have access to political leadership, leaving their neighborhoods without effective police services (Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux, 1990, p.243). Thus, class conflict becomes one of the many predictors of police behavior. As such, it should be utilized as one of the elements to help us understand the role of police in communities with large racial and ethnic groups (Galliher, 1985, p.62).

Many of the conflicts inherent within the different expectations of the police role can cause stress for police officers, as well as for community residents. Stress is a form of role strain. Role strain occurs as a result of not being able to perform a role. Goode (1960, pp.483-496), defines this as a stressor which makes it difficult to fulfill the demands of one's obligations.

Police officers, faced with conflicting role responsibilities are overwhelmed by the demands from the department, from colleagues and from the members of diversified communities. This is a source of role strain. Whether further strain occurs or persists, according to Argyris (1957, p.47), depends on the particular role, how an individual perceives the role, and on the methods employed to meet challenges that arise in the role.

Brooks (1989, p.141) offers that circumstances which cause strain may cause punitive actions towards anyone that police feel are most likely to commit crime. This, in turn, creates negative attitudes towards the police and a lack of support from the public, which only adds to the strain of a police officer's role (Goolkasian, Geddes, and De Jong, 1989, pp. 499-500).

### Community Organization and other Organizational Theories

Ross (1967, p.40) defines community organization as:

a process by which a community identifies its needs or objectives, orders these needs or objectives, finds the resources (internal and/or external) to deal with these needs or objectives, takes action in respect to them, and in so doing extends and develops cooperative and collaborative attitudes and practices in the community.

The concept of community policing is defined by Brown (1989, p. 7) as "an interactive process between the police and the community to mutually identify and resolve community problems." Both definitions involve a process of identifying needs and resolving problems through collaborative action. Thus, one theory tends to incorporate the other.

Toch and Grant (1991, p.248) offer that the community policing philosophy fosters collective action as a means of controlling disorder and resolving problems. They contend that community police officers are viewed as "mobilizers of citizens" as change agents for communities in neighborhoods in which disorder and apathy are part of every day life. In fact, Toch and Grant (1991, p.250) suggest that if police waived the opportunity to do community organizing, "the term 'community policing' would have very

limited connotations." This implies that community residents would be allowed to assist the police in identifying the services they need, only when this assistance is solicited and accepted. Here we encounter the issues with the community having a voice in the process. If the community subscribes to voicing their concerns only when and if it is solicited, then they are not part of a collective and collaborative process. However, if the NYPD adds them as partners in the problem solving process then they are sharing the responsibility to improve the quality of life in the neighborhood. Therefore, having community organization as a central component of the community policing philosophy, requires that police officers interact with the community and collectively concentrate on problem solving (Ecklein and Lauffer, 1972, p.4). To accomplish this task, police officers must work with residents and share responsibility for creating a community life which is conscious, watchful and active in solving the problems of crime, disorder and fear (Toch and Grant (1991, p.250). According to Ross (1967, pp.22-23), this is considered a "process objective" in community organization. The emphasis is on having people in the community working collaboratively to deal with any problems that ensue in their area. The outcome sought in this process, as noted by Ross (1967, p. 223), is for the most part instilling greater cooperation from the community with respect to mutual problems.

This is most important. If police officers cannot enlist the community to work collaboratively with them, it will be difficult to implement the strategies outlined in the community policing philosophy. Hanasyde (1949) noted that securing citizen participation was of utmost importance in any community organization effort. She states:

Without, at least some degree of participation in their part [community] most schemes can at best be incompletely fulfilled; and even those improvements which can be imposed on a passively consenting neighborhood will eventually meet the fate of the new housing estate to which a slum population is removed without social education in the use of their new equipment (p. 70)

Yet essential participation is not easily secured. Participation, according to Braeger and Specht (1973, p.18), "is an arduous process requiring a depth of commitment." This, unfortunately, is not characteristic of the police organization (Greene and Taylor, 1991, p.196).

The police department has operated within a paramilitary, rigid, status-quo oriented, classical style of management. Its inflexible, insensitive, authority-driven procedures, as noted by Braeger and Specht (1973, p.18) are channeled through a complex and faceless organizational hierarchy which presents serious difficulties for individuals who need assistance with quality-of- life issues in their neighborhoods. These organizational characteristics have been impediments in organizing ethnic minority communities who lack a knowledge base in policing and have limited time to participate in extracurricular activities (Braeger and Specht, 1973, p.18).

Greene and Taylor (1991, p.196) posit that "bureaucratic policing" has created distance between the police and the community, prevented police officers from any policy making decisions and stressed control. Additionally, this bureaucratic style of policing fails to examine police roles in comparison to additionally significant social service and control functions (Greene and Taylor, 1991, p.196). By adopting the Community Policing philosophy, and incorporating some components of community organization theory,

police organizations acknowledge the failures of bureaucratic styles and traditional approaches (Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux, 1990, p.245).

According to Braeger and Spect (1973, p. 35), the main purpose of community organization is to increase the ability of service recipients to utilize and influence institutions and organizations in an effort to meet their needs more efficiently and protect their interest. Frequently this entails reclassifying the roles and participatory efforts of clients. This may involve empowering clients with a shared responsibility and giving them a greater role within the organization (Braeger and Specht, 1973, p.35). Thus, the notion of Community Policing calls for greater participation, not only from the community, but also from police officers. This implies that concepts of participative management play a significant part within the Community policing philosophy.

A participative management style would decentralize present police operations of control and enforcement. This style of management could function well in the police organization. However, for this to occur police officers and community members would need to have more input within the process (Moss Kanter, 1983). Clearly, this is something they are not able to do under the current hierarchal, police management systems. In addition, the terms of participation would have to be clearly defined.

According to Autin (1985), participatory management often falls short on issues of control and cooperation due to ill-defined participatory efforts. He offers the case of the Illinois Police Department to illustrate the problems or confusion created when participation is not clearly defined. Autin (1985) explains that while administrators in the Illinois Police Department felt that they were practicing in a participatory style, the direct

service staff (police officers) indicated that they had no decision making power over program policies and resources as part of the participatory effort. Therefore, the conditions of participation were not clearly understood. Police officers maintained that the decision making process was not decentralized or inclusive of their suggestions (Autin, 1985).

Weatherly (1983, p.41) and Moss Kanter (1983, p.5) also allude to the problems inherent in the idealistic assumptions by administrators and subordinates of what constitutes participation. These authors claim that vague definitions can employ improper operation of participatory efforts. Therefore, to operationalize participative management there must be a clear, continuous and demonstrable commitment from those holding the positions of power within any institution desiring to implement this style of management (Weatherly, 1983, p.43). This is particularly important within the police organization, which has a strict paramilitary organizational structure. Perhaps German (1973) offered an appropriate participative management concept when he affirmed the following:

The police are the community; the community is the police. The community and police must be considered as an organic unity, a mutual supportive partnership...The community must involve itself with the police; the police with the community. Neither the community at large, nor the police, can afford insulation, isolation, indifference or enmity any more than can a healthy functioning family...(p.9).

## Chapter III

### Methodology

#### I. Introduction

The qualitative analysis, specifically the focus of this exploratory research, seeks to assess the participants' perceptions about community policing strategies in New York City's Puerto Rican community. Using a grounded theory approach, the study intensely analyzed what purposeful samples of Puerto Rican adult and young adult residents, and New York City Police Officers think about community policing initiatives, police brutality, and police training. The study also analyzed how these initiatives can be improved and problem areas addressed.

This qualitative study is inductive in its method toward exploration and discovery. According to Patton (1990, p.45), this "means that the results from the findings will be grounded in specific contexts; theories that result from the findings will be grounded in real-world patterns." This way, the data analysis and interpretation help determine the success of the results.

In this study, the significance of the data was decided predominantly by how openly the participants shared their true experiences and stories about their knowledge of community policing strategies and their perceptions of police/community relationships. Since this research is exploratory and the emphasis is on descriptive material, the content of the interviews was used in the final report. The interpretations and explanations of the

participants determined the criteria for success, since the investigator had no preconceived concepts.

The study's grounded theory approach enabled the participants to be an important part of the discovery process. This researcher was able to acquire and report the participants' own perceptions, words and experiences, which provided information that is not readily attained in large-scale quantitative studies. While information acquired from quantitative research is often significant and useful, it does not reflect the local knowledge and specific information that enhances direct practice. The qualitative nature of this study was for the most part in keeping with the history of the community stage of policing in that the discovery was "in tune with the people, understanding the people, belonging to the people, and drawing its strength from the people" (Critchley, 1829 as cited in Williams and Murphy, 1990, p.12). In this way, the qualitative analysis was a creative process, compelling this researcher to engage in cautious and mindful analysis about what was really important and useful in the data. The discovery process provided some quite detailed and familiar information which in turn provided a better understanding as well as some strategies which could lead resolving problems (Opie,1992). In addition, the in-depth descriptions which are usually obtained in qualitative studies can serve as "ends-in-themselves, or they may be useful in generating hypotheses that can be tested at a later date by quantitative methods" (Epstein, 1988, p. 188).

### Grounded Theory

In Glaser and Strauss (1967) book The Discovery of Grounded Theory, they posit that this methodology requires the use of "scientific intelligence." This entails carefully collecting data and putting it through a "systematic analysis" in an effort to draw out its theoretical classifications, effects and degrees of conceptual connection, which combine them in an integrated substantive theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, pp.1-6). This theory development approach, as an inductive operation, is dependent on what the investigator understands or discovers from the experience. Concepts are derived from the information gathered as opposed to using the data to test previously offered theories. As such, the research endeavor becomes a process of discovery and reformulation. By concentrating on the most up-and-coming data developed in the field, the researcher produces new information and builds additional inquiry and analysis (Glaser and Strauss, 1987). Glaser and Strauss (1987), call this theoretical sampling, which allows the researcher to be guided by the theory that emerges during the data collection process. Consequently, the researcher must concurrently gather, code and evaluate the data (Mallon, 1994, 64).

Disparate from deductive approaches, grounded theory and the data collected is not based on biased theoretical frameworks but more generally on existing literature. Part of the strategy includes a framework of "logically-related" ideologies (Mallon, 1994, 64). As new ideas are revealed, an emerging theory unfolds, leading the investigator to another stage in the process. However, until the researcher can identify theoretical gaps and differences between field observations and existing theory, he or she may not know where

the stage leads (Mallon, 1994, 64). The task for the investigator is to be receptive and responsive to the new data despite the struggle which compels the researcher to continue with the intricacy and ambivalence, attempting to make sense of it all, and finally designing a model that is understandable and significant (Mallon, 1994, p.64, Miles and Huberman 1984, p.251).

Bernstein, Goodman and Epstein (1992, p.20) note that in applying grounded theory "the complexity should be from the data, not the methodology." These strategies enabled this researcher to allow themes and patterns to surface from the data collection by means of the semi-structured interviews. The aim is to develop theory that is steadfast and clarifies the field that is studied (Mallon, 1994, p.65)

#### Data Collection and Analysis

To gain a "comprehensive perspective" on community policing strategies for this study, a combination of observational data was utilized (Patton, 1990, p.244). The researcher conducted in-depth interviews, using a sample of Puerto Rican residents and New York City Police Officers from Manhattan, the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island. In assembling the pool of police participants, there was an attempt to interview six administrators. However, only two followed through with the actual interview. The other four consistently cancelled appointments and two stated that "they did not want to do homework." Meaning that they did not want to answer questions and meet with me to discuss this topic.

All interviews were conducted, coded and transcribed by this researcher. The data collected basically determined the presentation and analysis of the findings. The themes and patterns which emerged from the data collection through the open-ended interviews were analyzed by this researcher. Initially, it was intended that the computer software program Ethnograph (Seidel, Kjolseth, and Seymour, 1988), would be utilized. But due to time restrictions and program availability, a decision was made to forego the use of the program. All work was done via WordPerfect 6.0 word-processing program.

This qualitative study employed a combination of "intensity," "opportunistic," and "snowball" purposeful sampling strategies. The opportunistic sampling strategy was used, as this researcher wanted to be "open to follow where ever the data [led]" and "to take advantage of new opportunities during the actual data collection" (Patton, 1990, p.179). The second strategy used is what Patton (1990), terms a "snowball approach" to purposeful sampling. "This is an approach for locating-information-rich key informants or critical cases." The sample snowballs by asking people knowledgeable in the areas being studied who one speak to about the subject matter. As people begin to provide recommendations of who to speak to and what activities to attend, you begin to accumulate more and more useful information and the snowball grows (Patton, 1990, p.176). Intensity sampling, as noted by Patton (1990:179), requires that the researcher have "personal experience with and intense interest in the phenomenon under study." Additionally, it calls for those who are part of the study to "share an intensity of experience with the phenomenon" (Patton, 1990, p.71). In this study it was important to

draw on the experiences of New York City Police Officers who are Puerto Rican and Puerto Rican residents of the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, Manhattan and Staten Island.

#### Statistical Breakdown of Sample Population

In total seventy (70) subjects participated in semi-structured interviews of approximately 1.0 hour in length. Twenty (20) were Puerto Rican police officers, two (2) Puerto Rican Police Administrators, 28 were Puerto Rican adult residents, and 20 Puerto Rican young adult residents of New York City's 5 boroughs.

There were fourteen (14) individual interviews conducted with police officers while Eight (8) police officers participated in a focus group interview. There were 28 individual interviews conducted with the adult residents and two focus groups conducted with young adults.

The individual interviews were semi-structured in that two open ended interview guides were used. One guide was developed for the police officers and another for the community residents. Open-ended questions were utilized for this study because as Patton (1990, p.297) notes, they "permit persons being interviewed to take whatever direction and use whatever words they want in order to represent what they want to say."

Another reason for having semi-structured interviews was to be able to probe questions further in order to facilitate the acquisition of more information. The semi-structured approach provided flexibility while also allowing the researcher to maintain "control over the direction of the interview" (Epstein and Tripodi, 1977, p.21).

Table 1Community and Police Participants by ethnicity and gender

| <u>Ethnicity</u>  | <u>Males</u> | <u>Females</u> | <u>Percentages</u> |
|---|--------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Puerto Rican<br>Adult Community<br>residents, Over age 21     | 16           | 18             | 48.6%              |
| Puerto Rican<br>Young Adult Community<br>residents, age 18-21 | 7            | 7              | 20%                |
| Puerto Rican<br>Police Officers                               | 15           | 7              | 31.4%              |
| Totals  | 38           | 32             | 100%               |
| Percentages   | 54%          | 46%            | 100%               |
| Grand total   | N'70         |                |                    |

Puerto Rican Community Participants:

The population of community residents in this sample ranged between the ages of 18-70.

Less than half of the participants were male (22.8%) and approximately half was female (25.7%). Less than half of the population were between the ages of 18 and 21 (10%).

In terms of education, more women than men had advanced degrees. In the male population, one had a graduate degree, two had college degree, four had some college education, fourteen had high school education and one participant had only an elementary

school education. In the female population, four had graduate degrees, four had college degrees, thirteen had some college education, and four had a high school education.

The majority of the participants were born in one of four boroughs of New York City. Five females were born in Manhattan, six in Puerto Rico, five in the Bronx, six in Brooklyn, one in New Jersey and one in Queens. Six males were born in Manhattan, six in Puerto Rico, five in the Bronx, five in Brooklyn and three in Queens. All have lived in New York City between 8 and 60 years. Most participants live in the boroughs of Brooklyn, the Bronx, Manhattan and Queens. Eleven live in Queens, twelve live in Manhattan, eleven in Brooklyn, ten in the Bronx and only three live in Staten Island. Most participants were single (25). A quarter of the population were married (11), 5 are divorced and 7 are single heads of households.

The majority of the population (73) write, read and speak Spanish and English fluently. Ten of the community participants knew English fluently, but could only understand Spanish when spoken. Three were fluent in Spanish and could only understand English when spoken. They could not read or write it.

#### Police Participants:

The Puerto Rican Officer participants' ages ranged between 27 and 50. Most of this population (21.4%) were men and 10% were women. There were more men than women with college education in this population. However, this could have been due to the smaller population size of women in this group. There were two females who had college degrees and five females who had some college education. There were three males with

college degrees, and ten had some college education. One male had a graduate degree and one had High School education. Police participants had approximately 25 to 49 years living in New York City. Six officers live in the Bronx, six live in Brooklyn, five in Manhattan, five in Queens and one in Staten Island. Nine of the officers were single, ten were married, two were divorced and one is a single head of household. More than two thirds of the officers (68.1%) can read, write and speak Spanish and English fluently. There were seven officers who could speak and understand Spanish when spoken, but they could not read or write in the Spanish language.

#### Recruitment of participants

##### Community Participants

The community participants were not too difficult to recruit. The main issue with this population was taking up an hour of their time. Oftentimes if I was conducting an interview on the street and friends of the interviewee heard the discussion, they wanted to participate in the conversation and were asked to volunteer as a participant. The majority of the community participants (28) were recruited from the Universal Business School in East Harlem. Other community participants were recruited by this researcher going door to door in local stores, community parks and buildings in several neighborhoods in the boroughs of Brooklyn, the Bronx, Manhattan and Queens. Peers referred the respondents from Staten Island.

With respect to the community pool, six participants were community leaders.

Copies of the proposal were sent to leaders, such as Senator Nydia Vasquez, for comment

and interviews were attempted. However, neither the senator nor her staff responded. While the study incorporates few responses from the police administrators and community leaders, many community residents and the police officers who serve them were interested in participating. There were many residents in some neighborhoods in Brooklyn, the Bronx and Manhattan in particular who asked to participate and answer questions. However, a good majority did not meet the criteria for the study because they were not Puerto Rican. Yet since all were members of the Hispanic Community, they were informed that they would be considered for an expanded part of this study in the future.

#### Police Officer and Administrator Participants

The police officers were the most difficult to recruit. I attempted at first to go through the legal channels of the Police department for support and permission. A copy of my proposal was submitted to the New York City Police Department's Office of Management, Analysis and Planning. After a myriad of phone calls and months of waiting (telephone conversations always indicated a written response was on its way), I heard through a contact in that office that such permission is rarely granted. It appeared that the police department was willing to give me the departmental overview on community policing but was not granting permission to research their personnel on the subject. An official letter or phone call was never received indicating whether or not the Police Department would support this research. I did have an opportunity to meet with Commissioner Lee Brown, who provided the politically correct response to "call my staff

for an appointment," which never materialized and only added months of delay to this process.

Therefore, my request for the Police Department's assistance was limited to those officers who, on their own, demonstrated interest in the topic area and volunteered to participate in the study because they desired to be heard. In other words, I had to resort to an informal source of support that required intensive networking with friends in law enforcement and colleagues at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Some police Officers were recruited by referrals from fellow police officers. Others were recruited through contacts at conferences and meetings of the National Hispanic Law Enforcement Association, New York Chapter and the NYPD Latino Officers Association.

There were many obstacles and delays that resulted from the difficulties encountered in scheduling interviews with Police administrators and officers. Many missed their appointments or arrived late for scheduled appointments. This was not surprising and certainly expected, since police officers often face emergency situations which can change their schedules suddenly. While some interviews were scheduled on an officers' regular days off, in an attempt to deal with the scheduling problems of appointments during working hours, many officers still did not keep appointments.

### Location of Interviews

Prior to commencing the research for this study, a similar study was done for a course on qualitative methods, which will be referred to here as the pretest. The issue of location or interview sites, in many cases, presented some limitations to the pretest study.

Some participants revealed that they "could not speak as openly as they would like" due to the presence of supervisors. Therefore, while initially some participants were interviewed at their precincts, this setting was found to be restrictive in terms of how respondents were able to answer the questions. Thus, interviews were moved to a designated location outside the work environment in an effort to reduce impediments to data collection. In this study similar arrangements were made. Most interviews for the police were conducted at the office of this researcher at John Jay College, or at this researcher's home. Some community interviews were conducted at The Universal Business School or at the participants' homes, or at a store, or restaurant, If participants preferred to be interviewed at their workplace.

### Interview Guides

The interview guides consisted of questions geared for gathering data in several areas; one elicited information regarding the participants' perceptions of the community policing initiatives and the need for improvement. A second sought information on the participants' perceptions of the multi-cultural training offered to police officers. The interview guides were reviewed and modified following a pretest of the instrument with a purposeful sample, which included 13 police officers and two Latino community representatives. The investigator found that some of the questions were ambiguous and repetitious, so they were deleted from the interview guide. The pretest also suggested that the interview guide should not only be administered to front line police officers but

should also be given to officers of higher rank so that different perspectives might be attained, thus providing a greater diversity of opinion.

### Focus Groups

There were a total of three focus group sessions. The first focus group was comprised of seven police officers, although ten were invited. The other two groups were conducted with young adult residents, ages 18 to 21 years old. All of the members of these two focus groups were recruited at the Universal Business School. This age group was the first selected for focus group participation because this method has proved to be the best for eliciting information from this age group population. There was some difficulty in conducting focus groups with adult community residents due to schedules. Therefore, a decision was made to interview adult community residents individually. The purpose of the focus groups was to identify the strengths, weaknesses and needed improvements of the community policing model.

The focus groups assisted in attaining "insights and solutions that may not come about outside of the group situation" (Patton, 1990, pp.17-18). Patton (1990, p.173) contends that focus groups are "a highly efficient data collection technique. They provide some quality control on data collection in that the participants tend to provide checks and balances on each other that weed out false or extreme views." Thus, the group's dynamics usually reinforce a focus on the salient issues or problems of the theme being discussed. In an effort to facilitate discussion, ten major questions were prepared for the focus group interviews. To ensure that all participants shared information, we went around the room

giving everyone an opportunity to give their opinion on a question. Oftentimes this generated more discussion, as participants wanted to voice their concern about an issue raised by someone else in the group.

### Document Analysis

#### New York Police Department's Strategic Plan for Community Policing

One of the documents collected on community policing strategies was the NYPD strategic plan, published in 1991. This document presented the goals, objectives and values of community policing (Brown, 1991):

- a) To align the values of police and their constituents.
- b) To provide a highly visible presence in all the City's neighborhoods.
- c) To treat every citizen with respect, regardless of their ethnic or social background or their cultural, religious or sexual orientation.
- d) To hold human life as the highest priority and use deadly force only when absolutely necessary to save a life.
- e) To maintain the highest level of integrity in all activities, avoiding even the appearance of impropriety.
- f) To recognize the trust the community has in the police by providing them with authority and being accountable for their actions.

The needs identified by this strategic plan were similar to those presented by some of the interviewees. For example, both the plan and several interviewees indicated that a

new style of management needed to be adopted by the department. The plan presented that department training systems needed to be enhanced or redesigned. The plan alluded to the need for new skill development in the areas of problem solving and community organization. Police officers would have to gain more awareness of prevention methods and programs and be able to intervene and refer problems to other city agencies and organizations. The plan also identified the need to develop reward systems to reinforce community policing values and ensure that recognition is given to those officers who excel in carrying out the mission of community policing (Brown, 1991, p.57).

This strategic plan presented all these needs as a positive set of steps that should be taken to implement community policing strategies effectively. The document presented a need to focus more on neighborhoods, to institutionalize problem solving and broaden the base for recruitment without providing a fundamental approach as to how this would be done and without anticipating obstacles. For instance, although the document was clear in stating that there is a need to work with "ethnic and racial" communities, there was a paucity of literature on Puerto Rican/Latino and other minority communities in the context of the plan. Inclusively, the sections on special constituencies in the document failed to include two of the largest minority group's in New York City, namely Puerto Ricans and African-Americans. The documents entire section on "minority issues" only discussed minority recruitment in the police department, as if there were no other issues on minorities needing to be addressed.

### Citizens Police Academy

This section is being placed in the methodology because the recruit training literature was used in the Citizens Police Academy. These materials were used to analyze data in this study.

This researcher had an opportunity to review the NYPD recruit training curriculum as part of a 16-week course from March through June in 1999 entitled The Citizens Police Academy (CPA). Law enforcement agencies and researchers see the Citizens Police Academy as a good tool for improving police/community relations. The main premise of the academy is to educate the public about police functions, policies and procedures. Its second purpose is to facilitate better communication between the police and the community (Cohn, 1996, p. 265). According to Cohn (1996, p. 266), CPA's were first developed in 1977 in England and introduced in the United States in 1985 by the Florida State Police Department. Since 1986, police departments throughout the United States have been initiating similar programs.

The same curriculum that is given to police recruits is given to community recruits minus the physical education piece. In the curriculum there is a component of literature on behavioral sciences. The content of this literature is replete with information indicating that "police work consists mainly of rendering services to the public" and that the New York City Police Department "in partnership with the community" pledges to (NYPD Citizens Police Academy, 1996, p. 20):

- Protect the lives and property of our fellow citizens and impartially enforce the law

- Fight crime both by preventing it and by aggressively pursuing violators of the law
- Maintain a higher standard of integrity than is generally expected of others because so much is expected of us
- Value human life, respect the dignity of each individual and render our services with courtesy and civility (New York City Police Academy, Citizens Police Academy manual 1996, Behavioral Science, week 2, 9-12).

The behavioral sciences component offers the police recruits information on the dynamics of the police department. It provides readings on issues of police authority from the society's perspective and notes that the problem for police in this area is to employ with great wisdom the power they are given once they become police officers (NYPD Citizens Police Academy, 1996, p.26). The enforcement of laws is a clear part of the picture presented, as is the notion that law enforcement cannot be done effectively without public support. Within the framework of this literature, police recruits seem to get adequate information on issues concerning police authority, democratic process and the general obligation of police to be part of the larger community that they serve. In fact, most instructors participating in the civilian police academy were quick to point out that officers did receive training and education on the value of respecting human dignity and on multi-cultural issues. However, the literature had a paucity of reading on race, ethnicity and the police.

The behavioral science section is filled with wording that exemplifies respecting the human dignity of all people. One area, termed "Service Ideal" identifies the need to be sensitive, compassionate, concerned and truthful. Further, it highlights the department's 1997 CPR strategy (courtesy, professionalism and respect) as a departmental responsibility. Yet, CPR as well as the issue of community policing is basically addressed on four pages (NYPD Citizens Police Academy, 1996, p.20 and 32). Community policing is referred to only in a statement that indicates that cooperation with the community is essential to the rendering of quality service and that under the community policing initiative everyone is a problem solver (NYPD Citizens Police Academy 1996, p. 33 and 83).

#### Problem Solving

The only mention of Problem solving in this literature is to list a five step process in the section on dealing with emotionally disturbed persons (NYPD Citizens Police Academy, 1996, p.83) This five step process is a listing presented as follows (NYPD Citizens Police Academy, 1996, p.83):

- identify the Problem
- analyze the problem
- design a response
- implement a response
- evaluate the response

Apart from this listing there is no other information on the problem solving process in this literature. This is not representative of Dewey, Pearlman's, or Compton and Gallaway's problem solving framework in social work. While the work of these authors provides a much more detailed outline of the problem solving framework, it also suggests that there is more to problem solving than following an outline (Compton and Galaway, 1975 and 1979, p. 236). Problem solving involves thorough "thinking and exploring, consciously and knowingly" how to work with your client to achieve their goals. Specifically it entails what "the worker and the client can bring to the process in terms of knowledge, understanding, resources and capacity for joint action" (Compton and Galaway, 1975 and 1979, p. 236). Here again lies the difference between social work and community policing initiatives. In social work the different systems that the client interacts with would have been assessed as part of the problem solving framework. The theoretical assumptions are based on goal attainment, planning, observing, evaluating and sharing responsibilities. Developing trust, viewing limitations, developing contracts, reaching out, working collaboratively and providing encouragement to clients are also factors considered in the problem solving model use by social workers (Compton and Gallaway, 1975 and 1979). All of this takes time because the social worker is attempting to create a holistic approach (assessing all the parts) to problem solving. The problem solving list that appears in the NYPD curriculum demonstrates the quick action orientation of policing to "act first, think later" (Bonifacio, 1991, p.40) as noted in the literature review.

The other quite limited section of the behavioral science component in the NYPD patrol guide is the section on cultural diversity. The nature of culture, issues of values and beliefs, language, racial identity and cross-cultural training is summarized in three pages. A section on personality and attitudes contains several paragraphs on prejudice based on myths and fear of difference (NYPD Citizens Police Academy 1990, p.33 and 83).

Other literature included in the readings concerned police science and law. The police science section discusses drugs, gangs, graffiti and youth programs in detail. While this section also includes quality of life issues, officer training, and information on the Compstat Program, these areas are limited to three paragraphs each. The section on law details a myriad of laws that officers must enforce.

While this researcher is in agreement with Cohn (1996, p. 271), that Citizen police academies are good for educating the public and helping communities to gain a better understanding of police practice, there may be several shortcomings. At the NYPD Citizens Police Academy there was little opportunity for in-depth discussion and sharing of community concerns in the classes. The class I participated in entered the academy in the aftermath of the Diallo shooting. The community participants were interested in bringing this issue and other police brutality issues to the top of the agenda. We were told that such issues could not be discussed.

The approach for dealing with community participant anger on this issue was to invite several CPA class participants to a meeting with some of the members of the Street Crime Unit. This was the unit to which the officers who were involved in the Diallo shooting were assigned. The community members were asked to sit in a lined up format

in front of a stage. The Street Crime Unit Officers sat in the auditorium as the audience. Each community member was asked to make a statement of concern and officers were given an opportunity to respond. Community member after community member expressed legitimate concerns and fears, only to have police officers say that we did not know what we were talking about. For example, one African-American woman shared that she feared for the safety of her sons each time they left her apartment. She indicated that she did not know who would hurt them first, the drug dealers on the block or the police. She feared that any of her sons could fit the description of a person wanted by police and be arrested or shot. The officers responding to her statement did not indicate that they understood her fears, but instead lashed out at her, saying " Lady you don't know what you're talking about, we do our job very well to keep you safe." The one community member who praised the officers for a job well done and then turned to the community members and told us "we must support them 100% no matter what" received a standing ovation from the officers.

Yet the real issues and concerns shared were not even acknowledged by department administrators in the room. Several community members were so enraged that they just walked out of the auditorium without making a statement. All other community members left the room with a sense that NYPD was really not interested in listening to community concerns. One community member commented:

They did not listen to us but they will write that they had joint meetings between street crime officers and community members to discuss problems and they will look good on paper.

Having meetings between police officers and community members might work under very different circumstances. However, NYPD must provide the opportunity for more structured dialogues between the police and community. Perhaps skilled mediators who are knowledgeable in clarifying underlying facts and lay the groundwork for enhanced communication need to be involved (Volpe, 1989, p.232).

Remarkably, the Citizen's Police Academy I attended did actually create more positive attitudes about police methods. There was a sense among community members that they had a better understanding of police work. There was, for example, a great appreciation for what could occur during a shooting. In order to help participants gain a better understanding of incidents involving police shootings there was the simulated weapons training. Community members were given opportunities to role-play, with laser guns, police response to violent situations, in computer controlled scenarios. The Laser guns were replicas of the 9mm Glock guns assigned to police officers. Each community participant responded to a different situation. It was up to the person who was role-playing a police officer to decide if there was a need to fire a gun.

The discussion that ensued after each role-play was amazing. Community members who fired their gun often were not sure how many times the gun actually went off. Several members thought they had only fired one shot but the computer tallies always revealed more than one shot fired. Community members were able to discuss the emotional and psychological stress that police officers can encounter in violent or emergency situations as a result of their experience with the simulated weapons training.

Community members left this session with a different perspective on incidents involving shooting. Certainly, the participants of this Citizens Police Academy learned the need to wait for all information to be assessed in a shooting before making any judgement to blame the officer. Thus, the community developed a greater understanding of the realities of police work and was better equipped to share information with others in their community (Cohn, 1996, p.272).

One of the major concerns with the Citizen's Police Academy (CPA) was the question of follow-up from the participants local precinct. Throughout the program, there was limited involvement from the precinct community affairs officers and practically no involvement from the precinct commanders. This lack of involvement and follow-up does not encourage a closer relationship between the community and the police in the precincts which are supposed to serve them. While there is an alumni association for members of the Citizens Academy, recruitment and precinct participation in this effort is limited. Cohn (1996, p.271) and Greenberg (1991, p.12) offer that the positive effects of a CPA can be lost if there is no planned follow-up effort. This effort should not be the sole responsibility of the CPA alumni association. The precincts who recruit the community members should maintain contact with their CPA graduates and utilize their services to help build closer ties in the precinct community.

### Confidentiality

This issue is being discussed because it was of significant importance to the participants. While community organizations will be identified, administrative titles,

community residents and police officer names and precincts will not be divulged. This is done in response to results from the pretest where guaranteed confidentiality facilitated open discussion and candid responses to questions. During the data collection process for the pretest, some managerial and political obstacles were encountered. Police officers were often resistant to answering questions concerning their opinions and evaluation of the community policing initiatives. This was due to their perceptions of management's reactions to their responses and to their fear of punitive action. During the pretest, in order to win the confidence of police officers and preserve their confidentiality, the names of the precincts, community organizations and administrative titles were not disclosed.

In many of the interviews for this study the respondents immediately presented a "condition" that I "conceal names, locations and other identifying information" in order to prevent any "punitive action." Since it was possible to conceal identities without jeopardizing the "utility of the findings," a decision was made to not reveal any identifying information of any participants (Patton, 1990, p.213). Once confidentiality was established for the interview process, respondents were able to be more honest in their responses to questions and also more comfortable with this researcher.

Therefore, measures were taken to protect the confidentiality and welfare of all the participants. Participation in the study was voluntary and anonymous. Participants arranged appointments for the face to face interviews by calling the researcher. A code number was assigned to each participant and no additional identifying information was solicited. The intent of the research was explained to all participants prior to conducting the interviews. The young adults involved in the focus groups were informed that the

study seeks to elicit their views of, and experiences and interactions with police officers and community policing strategies in their neighborhoods. All participants were told that the study seeks to elicit their ideas about what could help or improve police/community relationships, community policing strategies and the quality of life in their neighborhood. Youth were guaranteed confidentiality and this information was printed on consent forms, which they were asked to read and sign prior to beginning the face to face interview or the focus groups. The protocol for ensuring confidentiality was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board of the Hunter College Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects from Research Risks.

#### Political Ramifications

Police officers and administrators consistently indicated some concern about the political ramifications of their involvement and therefore were somewhat resistant to talk. Grinnell (1981) points out that such resistance usually occurs in program evaluation, as issues of accountability, practicality, proficiency and productiveness tend to incite fears about one's character, integrity, job security and the organization's view or stance. Police Departments are also usually not pleased about individuals who make waves. This researcher anticipates that some of the information will raise questions regarding the practice of community policing. However, since community policing strategies are geared towards promoting problem resolution between the department and the public, all accurate, useful feedback, good or bad, is necessary for effective practice.

Furthermore, this researcher learned that police officers are more likely to trust other police officers. The researcher was not a police officer and therefore the initial perception on the part of the police personnel was that she did not have the same interest, goals, or concerns that the police had. This appeared to add to their resistance (Grinnell, 1981). However, throughout this study, this investigator participated in various Police Department activities, projects and conferences. One of these included the six week training program at the NYPD Citizens Police Academy. This participation along with work and training with some police officers and administrators through organizations such as the Hispanic National Law Enforcement Association, New York Chapter, The Transit Police Hispanic Society, Housing Police Hispanic Society, The Latino Officers Association, Bergen County Police Academy, Jersey City Police Academy, Teaneck Police Department, New York City Police Explorers Program and the New York City Police Department Cadet Corps, eased some of the fears that officers had about the investigator not sharing their interests, goals and concerns. During the actual interviews, however most were pleased to have their concerns heard.

#### Political Issues with the Puerto Rican Community

Political issues did not surface in the target community, as this investigator is Puerto Rican and speaks fluent Spanish. Therefore, she is seen as, and certainly is, a member of the community. This investigator has established ties in the community through work and volunteer efforts with many organizations such as ASPIRA, which is an organization that works to develop leadership skills in Puerto Rican and other Latino

youth. ASPIRA is not an acronym but a Spanish word meaning to aspire, to attain (Pantoja, 2002, p.99). In addition, the investigator is not seen as a member of the police department, which tended to ease fears and concerns about providing information. Further, language barriers, which often impede researchers' ability to obtain information (McElroy, Cosgrove and Sadd, 1993, p.152), were not an obstacle for this investigator.

## Chapter IV

### Findings and Discussion from Community Participants

#### Response from adult and young adult community respondents

All Puerto Rican Community participants in this study appeared to have genuinely shared their opinions and expertise about Police/Community relationships. All of the respondents were clearly able to identify problems in their particular neighborhoods, at times even identifying specific problem areas where drugs were being sold. For example, some respondents were not only able to talk about the specific location where drug sales were occurring but also could identify the different times of the day when drug activity was the most problematic.

The vast majority of problems identified by community participants in this study were generally no different from problems identified by the dominant society in other studies. For example, crime and violence were among the most prevalent problems identified by respondents in this study. According to Jiao (1998, p.151), crime and violence were identified on national surveys as the most pressing problems in our nation. Jiao (1998, p.151) explains that Gallup Reports, in January 1994, August 1994 and January 1995 revealed that issues of crime and violence were viewed by the general public as the most significant problems facing our nation. Jiao (1998, p.151) also notes that the 1994 Gallup surveys demonstrate that approximately 83 percent of citizens believe that crime is a serious threat to American rights, security and freedom.

While the Puerto Rican community identified similar issues in their community, they stressed that police response in their neighborhood was not the same as in predominately white neighborhoods. Most participants felt that there was a lack of concern by the police for their neighborhoods. This supports Carter's (1983, p.225) study of the Hispanic interaction with the criminal justice system in Texas, which was discussed earlier in the literature review. In this study, Hispanics were identified as fearful of falling victims to crime due to insufficient police protection. When the community respondents in this study discussed neighborhood crime problems, their major concern was that the police department was not doing enough in their communities to eradicate the crime problem and to protect them. This supports studies conducted in African-American and other Hispanic communities where residents also indicated that they felt they received less protection from police than predominately white communities and more negative treatment (Greene, Bergman and McLaughlin 1994, p.101).

#### Community Respondents' Views of Specific Neighborhood Crime Problems

All community respondents identified drug sale and use as the number one problem in their neighborhoods. Many believed that drugs were the primary cause of all other social problems in Puerto Rican communities. One respondent stated:

Yes, drugs are a major problem. A root cause of many crimes, family violence, single parent homes and, of course poverty. In my community one of my colleagues was mugged while coming home from a party at 2:00 a.m. by one of our neighborhood drug users, you can't even go out at night anymore and feel safe. A 20-year-old in my building died of a drug overdose, leaving a wife and a child without resources.

Most respondent's (40) indicated that the drug abuse and drug traffic problem is significant because they have to live in buildings next door to drug users and dealers. The majority of this population identified the selling of drugs in front of children as a serious problem. One woman simply stated:

Crack heads live right next door to me. They leave needles around the building and kids pick them up to play with them all the time. They constantly get into fights with us and steal from us. My little brother has been asked to sell drugs for them.

Fear was expressed by more than half of the respondents when they reported that drugs are often sold in their hallways and on their front steps. This is what several respondents said:

Drug dealers selling their drugs to people sometimes in the staircases. You see crack valves or needles, but it's really rare when you see it. I have seen dealers standing in one spot all day. Sometimes they'll walk towards a car and you can see the exchange being made, My family and I are not really affected because we keep away from it. But the drugs are sold right on the street corner.

I've seen teenagers selling drugs, smoking marijuana and drinking alcohol. I'm afraid to let our eleven-year-old son play outside.

Teenage alcohol drinking and smoking of marijuana is going out of control. I feel very uncomfortable with this and am concerned that this can only lead to serious problems. I am concerned for my family's safety.

I've seen groups of kids hanging out passing things. I've passed these groups and smelled the marijuana. There was a shoot out on the corner last summer in the late afternoon. My daughter must stay close to my side when we walk. We stay inside mostly because they make you feel afraid, even just when you are walking down your own block.

Crime and violence, such as robbery, rape, assault, police brutality, domestic violence, violence by teenagers, auto theft and road rage, were all identified by

individuals as well as focus-group members as important problems in Puerto Rican communities in New York City. Other problems identified were drunk driving, car accidents, profiling, disorderly conduct, traffic tickets for no reason, and favoritism towards business owners who are police officers. One respondent put it this way:

Neighborhoods that were proactive and decent converted to abandoned run down buildings because people are afraid to live there. Families being forced to move out from the city due to crime, assault and drugs, even though they would prefer to live there. Mothers live in fear that their kids, because they fit a description, will end up dead, killed by a cop or a gangster for that matter. Today when you go out in this neighborhood, you don't know who will get to your kids first the police or the thugs. This is no way to live but who could afford to move to these nice neighborhoods, not me, not my friends. I don't see mayor Rudy making sure I could afford decent housing or guaranteeing that my kids will be safe. Look see that guy he deals drugs, right in front of my house, that guy steals, and breaks into everybody's car around here, some of these guys if you are not careful will definitely do you harm. But you see them, they walk down the street like they own the whole damn place. I can't do that, the good people around here can't do that. So please mija, tell Mr. Rudy that he has done nothing for the Puerto Rican people around here. Note: Mija is an endearing term used in Spanish, sort of slang for my daughter.

While all the women addressed the issue of fear specifically at night in their neighborhood, 20 out of 23 of the men indicated that they were fearful not only for themselves but most of all for their families. Newhart and Seibel (1995, p.1-7), in their study of "Victimization Experience and Fear of Crime Among Hispanics," maintain that Hispanic women and Hispanic elderly tend to have a greater fear of crime than whites because they feel more victimized. Also, fear levels for men grew out of their concern for other family members in the home. In a survey assessing New York City residents' attitudes towards crime, the Napolitan Associates (1990, p.11) found that New Yorkers in general are quite fearful and seem to think the worst about crime in their city. This study

reported that 84% of residents in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens and the Bronx were very concerned about falling victim to crime in their neighborhoods. Hispanics were identified as the group that was the most concerned about this issue. These authors note that "most worried of all were Hispanics:78 per cent in this group described themselves as very worried a crime would be committed against them or someone in their family" (Napolitan Associates/PAA, Inc., 1990:11). Clearly the statements by the Puerto Rican respondents in this study validate the findings in the 1990 study by Napolitan Associates/PAA, Inc.

#### Community Methods to Problem Resolution

The community members seemed to believe, for the most part, that there was not much they could do to help resolve these problems. One respondent stated the following when probed further about what he might do to help resolve these problems:

Minding my own business is what I usually do. You have no idea what these people can do around here. So I stay clear of the problem. I make sure my kids don't get involved in the drugs and crime and that's it.

Half of the participants interviewed individually said they are doing nothing to help resolve the problem because they feel the system or the police will not work with or protect them.

### Young Adult Focus Groups

In the young adult focus groups, most participants indicated that they made it a point to stay clear of the crime situation. One respondent expressed concern over how police officers handle situations involving someone who grew up with people who later became drug dealers. The major concern here was that the police would not be able to protect him or his family from the dealers should they retaliate against him. The respondent felt that the dealers not only knew him individually but they also knew his family, which made him an easy target. All of the participants in the young adult focus groups specifically stated that they did not speak to the police about these issues because they were afraid of retaliation. One of the group members stated:

I honestly do nothing. The reason for this is because those who are using and selling drugs are people who I grew up with. I advise them to stop, but I never go as far as getting law enforcement involved because I fear what can happen to me or my family. You know the dealers are in the neighborhood all the time, the police are not.

Worth noting is the fact that if NYPD actually implemented community policing initiatives as outlined, and really did outreach with respondents such as the one above, perhaps this perception would be different.

More than half of the respondents in the individual as well as the young adult focus groups identified specific streets as problematic areas where most drugs are sold. Several participants were very specific in their responses and identified buildings, locations where drugs were sold in the hallways, front stairs and on the roof. One quarter of the population stated that drug sales were taking place in front of the public school in

their neighborhood. Yet the majority of these participants did not feel comfortable going to the police with this information. One could practically sense the discomfort and fear they had about telling their story to police officers. This issue of fear or of lack of safety and protection that community respondents expressed is one of the factors that Jiao (1998, p.138) points out as possibly explaining lack of community involvement in community policing efforts. According to Jiao (1998, p.138), community members are fearful of retaliation from drug dealers and gangs. Basically, the community has lost faith in the capacity of the government and in particular the police to protect them.

Some participants did say that they were aware that they needed to participate more in community events and meetings with government agencies. Several stated that they had actually tried meeting with community boards at their local precincts. However, these respondents said that they were turned off and did not attend any more meetings because they felt the police were not responding to the issues appropriately. One respondent stated:

I attended a community meeting at my precinct, there were lots of police and supervisors there. They were saying tell us about your problems and we promise to help. I told them that the drug dealers were selling drugs in front of my building. I told them if you send a cop between 2 and 6 p.m. you'd see them running their business like the building was their office. You know what happened? Nothing that's what happened. I bet if that I lived in a luxury apartment building in midtown they would have had police there before even the meeting ended.

The respondents in this study have reasons for their concerns. According to a special report from The Bureau of Justice Statistics (Bastian, 1990, pp.1&8), between the years of 1979 and 1986 there were higher rates of victimization from violent crime among

Hispanics than in the dominant society. Hispanics also fell victim to robbery more than non-Hispanics and reported the crime less frequently than blacks or whites to the police. The data indicates that Hispanics and African-Americans reported theft, robbery and household crime less often because they believed police would not respond or view their incident as important. Weitzer (1996, p.310) reports that in a study observing 5,688 police-citizen contacts, police were more likely to view complaints or reports by African-Americans or Hispanics as less credible and less worthy of protection than those reported by Whites. Therefore, even on a national level, the Hispanic community voices similar concerns to that of the Puerto Rican community in this study, namely, that they do not trust that the police department will respond and provide them with appropriate services.

#### What the Police are Doing:

The overall perception was that the Police do not seem to be doing anything in Puerto Rican communities. Some respondents stated that perhaps police were involved in corruption and taking bribes from gangs like the mob. In the young adult focus groups, more than half of the respondents seemed to think that the police were not looking into problems identified by the community. They also appeared to think that greater police presence would deter crime. One focus group member stated:

We need more police on the streets making it safe for everyone. Every time you need a police officer they are never around. I bet if they placed cops on this street every day these drug dealers and thieves would not get away with all they do throughout the day.

Community respondents who were interviewed individually also indicated that there is a need for greater police presence in their communities. Again, the general feeling was that having more police in the neighborhood would lessens criminal activities.

Less than half of all respondents have seen some undercover police activity helping with drug problems in their community (includes focus group). Seven respondents indicated that they thought police officers were doing their best to make arrests. Three participants stated that police seemed to be patrolling more on foot. Only one individual thought that the police were trying to build a good relationship with the public. Three respondents stated the following:

From what I see they really don't do anything. The mob must be really paying them off.

Some police officers are trying to build a good relationship, but most of the Puerto Rican people around here just don't trust them. I can't say I really blame them because even if several cops are trying really hard I think the bosses in the department don't give them the support that they really need.

You can't solve crime if you are not out there on street seeing what is going on. We want them out there on foot. But when the department does this, then they should want the community in favor of them not against them. So they shouldn't try to cover things up when they happen, they should be honest with us.

Two issues seem to be highlighted by the respondents in terms of affecting what the police are doing. One involves having a greater police presence on the streets, the other involves trust. The notion that respondents had of having more police on foot on the street did not appear to be any different from that of the overall New York City population. According to Napolitan and Associates (1990, p.6), most New Yorkers feel that greater police presence on the streets will help solve crime problems. Perhaps

flooding the streets with police officers would help deter crime and catch drug dealers, but most of all it might reduce fear among community residents and instill a sense of community participation. McGarrell, Giacomazzi and Thurman (1997. p.493) posit that community residents who perceive that social and government systems, such as police and neighbors, churches etc., are responsive to their concerns are less fearful. These authors state:

Whereas the breakdown of community indeed may lead to a sense of 'urban unease' and to a greater fear, the perception of informal social control, social support and integration relates to lower levels of fear...meaningful intervention may have an effect in the high disorder neighborhoods, at least in regard to fear. The sub-sample analysis suggested that responsiveness by city hall, the police and neighborhood associations had the greatest influence on fear in these neighborhoods...further, when coupled with the evaluations of programs designed to develop police-citizen-city government partnerships in high-disorder neighborhoods, the results suggest that these efforts to increase responsiveness indeed may reduce the fear of crime (McGarrell, Giacomazzi and Thurman, 1997. p. 494-495).

Minority communities have struggled with the issue of trust in police/community relations for years. Peak and Glensor (1996. p.211) point out that there will always be people in our society that view police as part of a system that cannot be trusted. These authors posit that as long as the police have the power to arrest people and in essence control their behavior there will always be issues of trust. Donato (1999. p.89), on the other hand, states that trust is a significant factor in attaining help form the community. He indicates that without the community's trust the daily job of police officers is inherently difficult. This author indicates that a way to achieve community's support is to treat everyone with human dignity. He maintains that Police organizations need to take

the lessons of Human Dignity to heart and treat even their own members with the dignity they deserve.

There is also a more aggressive tone and more negative feedback about police from the young adults in the focus groups. This is in keeping with the findings in the Vasquez and Bahan (1974, p.113) study. As noted in the literature review, Vasquez and Bahan (1974, p.111) found that Puerto Ricans between the ages of 15 and 44 view police more negatively than other age groups. As mentioned earlier, this also supports other research with younger populations, which suggests that youth are less supportive of police particularly because of negative encounters with them (Taylor, Turner, Esbensen and Winfree Jr. 2001. p. 302).

In many instances the young adult population in the focus groups clearly indicated that their negative perceptions come from witnessing police behavior when officers respond to calls in the neighborhoods where these young adults live. Others stated that police were not respectful towards them when they, or their friends, were stopped and frisked without cause or explanation. Weitzer (1996, p.311) maintains that there are studies which show that African-American and other minority youth are more often suspected of crimes, stopped, questioned and treated in a more abusive manner by police than are whites.

When this study's 18 to 21 year old group was probed further about the issue of disrespect when stopped by police, half indicated that they were respectful and followed police directives. Yet, despite their cooperation, the officers were still disrespectful and

abrupt with them. The other half indicated that they were as disrespectful as the police were to them. One respondent stated this:

They stopped my friends and me and without any explanation just threw us against some cars. And when we asked them to tell us what was going on they started saying things like you little punks think you deserve an explanation, I donut have to tell you shit, you just do as you're told, before I send your ass back to Puerto Rico. I told him to go fuck himself, I was born and raised here and probably more American than he was. They think they got it like that and can just push you around. If they had told us what was going on, we would have cooperated, shit, I'm used to being frisked by cops and only once did a cop stop me and explain to me that I fit a description that had come over the radio and that was why I was detained. So I let him ask me questions, I didn't like it but since he treated me with respect then I respected him too. You do unto others like you want others to do unto you.

#### Community's overall opinion of police officers

Despite the fact that most respondents felt that police were not doing much to rid their communities of drugs and crime, most participants did have an overall favorable opinion of police. Here we find that the adult and young adult community respondents are able to clearly separate issues of department performance, police brutality and justice from their opinions about all police officers. Both young adults and adults in the Puerto Rican community acknowledged the fact that there are good police officers. At the same time, they were very cognizant that some police officers abuse their power and that injustice exists in the police department.

This was further reinforced for this researcher at a protest march against police brutality on October 22, 1996 at City Hall. The families of Anthony Baez, who was killed by NYPD officer Lavotti, and Anthony Rosario, who was shot to death by NYPD officers in what was determined a justifiable homicide, stated that they were there protesting

against police brutality because people were killed by officers who clearly had problems with the communities in which they were assigned to serve. Mr. Baez brother explained it best:

Its not that all cops are bad, some are very good at what they do, it's just that there are those who want to beat up on the community. My family had a strong relationship with the police. My parents know police chiefs and good officers at the precinct. Yet it only took one encounter with one bad cop to change our lives.

For other participants in this study, specifically the young adults in the focus groups, lack of trust was again an issue in their opinion of police officers. Some of the respondents interviewed individually stated the following:

The majority of police take their jobs seriously and want to make a difference. We need more officers that actually care about the community.

My opinion is favorable. Most police are terrific. Now if they only would learn to work more with Puerto Rican people they would realize that we are willing to work with them, but they have to be real in their approach. Please don't appease me with political bullshit that insults my intelligence.

Police have the toughest job in the world, you have your good and bad, but I believe more good. They're human like you and I.

I've met many officers that have the best interest of the public as their number one priority.

The young adults in the focus groups had the following to say:

The majority are helpful and serve the public well. But there is a significant minority that abuse their power in various ways: physically and verbally abusive, rude, they violate speeding laws, they respond to a situation involving the public with an attitude or chip on their shoulder. They stop and question most of us as Puerto Ricans without cause.

I think most of the police officers are fair towards the general public but I also know that there are those who abuse their power.

My overall opinion is that they should be trained better in confronting minority groups.

I do not trust most of them, they are unpredictable.

### Problems Faced by the Puerto Rican Community when dealing with Police

While the majority of the Puerto Rican community respondents had good opinions about police, they affirmed that issues of discrimination, racism, and brutality are alive in the NYPD. More than half of the respondents felt that many police officers discriminate and are racist when dealing with Puerto Ricans and other Latinos. All respondents stressed the language barrier as a primary problem between police and the Puerto Rican community. Several respondents had this to say:

Most police don't care, they discriminate by not providing all information. They think they can do this to us. The language barrier is the main problem causing misunderstandings when the police respond to a call.

Language problems are foremost. Cultural differences in communication style also contribute to misunderstandings with the police.

Language is the number one problem, then cultural differences. Here in East Harlem and in the lower east side too there is no community policing going on in these communities.

The language barrier is causing misunderstandings when the police respond to a call. Negative stereotypes, caused by lack of experience with Puerto Rican people and lack of training.

First they put white officers in a Latin community, so there is no understanding of language or anything. Secondly the police officers mistrust our young people.

Language barriers, cultural misunderstandings. Some police officers view teenagers and Puerto Rican men with fear and suspicion. The perception by some police officers is that poor Puerto Ricans are somehow less than them and that they don't have the ability to effectively complain about abusive or rude behavior. Therefore the police officers feel that the poor do not have to be treated the way

the police would treat the more affluent and educated. The police and the community often seem to be on opposite sides of the fence and do not cooperate with each other.

Language is a problem. Frequently police officers are sent out to my community where the language spoken is not understood or spoken by police and minor problems are magnified.

I do not see any problems in my community between the groups. The only problem that might exist is a language barrier.

In addition to language, more than half of the respondents indicated that police needed to learn more about Puerto Rican culture in an effort to dispel stereotypes and preconceived notions about Puerto Ricans. The issue of stereotyping is seen by some researchers as ingrained in police work (Skolnick, 1994, Walker, Spohn and Delone, 2000). Skolnick (1994), Walker, Spohn and Delone (2000) all contend that police are trained to look for particular "cues" which can make an individual appear suspicious to police. For example, a person of color in a predominately white wealthy neighborhood will probably arouse an officer's suspicion simply because he /she may not seem to fit into the overall environment (Walker, Spohn and Delone, 2000, p.103). Some respondents addressed this issue in the following way:

Stereotyping, if you are Latin or Puerto Rican you're guilty. This is an injustice.

Preconceived notions on both sides. The people don't trust the cops because they feel that we are all alike and the cops believe that the stereotypes about the Puerto Rican community are true. We need to learn about each other.

Lack of cultural knowledge, possible racism and problems with the language.

They have this stereotype that the only thing we know how to do is deal drugs.

The issue of profiling was also of major concern to the Puerto Rican community. Most community participants felt that police officers' belief in stereotypes increased racial profiling, specifically of Puerto Rican youth and men. Several respondents had the following to say:

A problem the Puerto Rican community faces is racial profiling by the police. A Dominican or Cuban can do something, a crime, and the Puerto Rican will get the blame by the police and society as a whole.

I believe that regrettably the Puerto Rican community gets singled out with respect to many of the problems in the community. When it comes to profiling it's the Puerto Ricans who get the bum rap.

Our youth and our men get pressured the most by police. They have this stereotype that the only thing we know how to do is deal drugs and they use racial profiling to stop us more.

#### How conflicts or tensions with police influenced feelings and thinking about police

Some respondents seemed to think that conflicts with police not only created negative perceptions of police for them but also for the way in which police view the community. Several adult community respondents put it this way:

I feel that the conflicts I have seen or have been faced with have put a more negative view on police officers for me. I think cops are faced with so many issues that make them cold that when they need to be nice they don't know how or just don't want to.

I think police officers are not at all willing to listen or interested based on my own experience with a robbery I had in my store. If a crime is not significant they don't

seem to be interested. I have a small bodega, it's not Macy's or Lord and Taylor, but it's a store that is important to me, but not to the police.

In the young adult focus groups, respondents indicated that conflicts witnessed between the police and the community influenced the way they feel about police today. More than half of the participants indicated that they had negative experiences as youth with police. This had a direct effect on their perceptions of police. The negative contacts seemed to have convinced them that police lacked sensitivity when approaching Puerto Ricans and other Latinos. They also indicated that this would keep them from calling police for assistance. This is what the members of young adult focus groups had to say on this issue:

I have learned that police are not sensitive to Latinos. Cops like bribery.

I became hesitant to request police assistance because of the way I have seen them handle some situations.

I was stopped without probable cause while I was driving through Harlem on my way to play tennis. The police let me go as soon as I showed them my John Jay College ID. Also, once I was involved in a car accident and the police did not get out of their vehicle to help me.

A negative experience I had with police was all due to a stop and frisk. Since I am Hispanic, the police thought I was up to no good.

The only conflict I ever had with police officers was when there was a neighborhood brawl, and I was there watching. But when the police showed up everybody ran, except me. I was not doing anything, but they grabbed me punched me and threw me on the police car hood and cuffed me.

According to Walker, Spohn and Delone (2000, p.102), the stopping, frisking and questioning of people on the street is a source of police-community tensions. Racial minorities claim that police stop them more frequently than whites. These authors report that a study by the Massachusetts Attorney General revealed that Boston police officers tended to partake in "improper and unconstitutional conduct with respect to stops and searches of minority individuals." In this study and a similar one in San Diego these authors found that African-American and Hispanic men and youth were stopped and treated disrespectfully much more than whites (Walker, Spohn and Delone, 1999, p.102). There was only one person in the young adult focus groups who indicated that she would judge people individually. She stated:

It has not influenced my opinion about the police. Every officer is his/her own person. Whatever this individual or group of individuals do should not reflect on all police officers.

#### How good experiences influenced thinking about police.

Among the participants interviewed individually in this study, some stated that they did not have any direct good experiences with police. Only three identified having had good experiences. From these three, one respondent indicated that his experience was good because the officer was a personal friend. The second stated that the officer assisted someone she knew with the delivery of their child. The third respondent met the officer in an educational setting. Several respondents offered these comments:

There have been times when I've seen cops do good things and I feel sorry for them, but not when they act like jerks.

Yes, there are some cops that are nice but others see a problem and just walk by without doing anything.

I have seen some, very few, cases where the experience with the police department has been very beneficial.

Police Officers, at least my feelings are that they are generally polite and help you if they could.

In the young adult focus groups some respondents indicated that they had experienced some positive interaction with police officers. But the majority of the group members had not. These are some of the positive experiences they mentioned:

While the times that I have called the ambulance for my mother, she was sick and the police came, they actually showed some compassion.

Every now and then, I see a police officer as I'm walking down the street, I live on a block where there is a police station, and that officer will say hello. My male friends say it's because I'm a girl. Maybe that is true because if they are with me the officers don't say anything, usually they just stare mainly at them. But they are usually nice to me and other female friends.

#### Awareness of racial and ethnic discrimination by police officers in your community:

Less than half (15) of the adult community participants who were interviewed individually had little or no direct awareness of any ethnic or racial discrimination by police in their neighborhood. However, more than half said that while they have not experienced discrimination personally, they believed that some officers did discriminate. In most cases this belief was based on incidents that their friends had experienced and related to them.

More than half of the respondents in both individual interviews and the young adult focus groups believed that the police department did not only discriminate against

the Puerto Rican community but also against minority police officers. The community respondents indicated that discrimination, racism and injustice was systematic. More than half claimed that the community could not expect respect and justice from a police department that internally did not respect its members who were African-American, Puerto Rican/Latino or members of other minority groups. Several respondents made the following statements:

I've never really seen it, but I'm sure it exists.

I have not experienced this personally but I have friends who have told me that they have.

You cannot get justice from a police department that does not protect their own if they are people of color.

Many members of the Puerto Rican community around here will tell you there is no justice, not for us and not for Puerto Rican cops either or for Black cops for that matter. Because if a black or Puerto Rican cop does something wrong, they will go to jail. Most white cops don't go to jail.

When probed further, these respondents discussed incidents of friends encounters with police. One related the following story:

My friends son and several of his Puerto Rican friends were walking down the block and a patrol car pulled up by them. The police told them to stop and then started throwing the boys up against the side of a building and going through their pockets and knapsacks. The boys kept asking the police why they were doing this to them, that they had not done anything, and police just told them that you people always say you never do anything. When they were done, they did not tell them why they were searched or stopped. They just told them to keep walking. One of the boys told me that he yelled out to them if we were white boys you would not have done this right and they told him to just shut up.

Another respondent pointed out that discrimination by the NYPD or the Criminal Justice system existed for the Puerto Rican Community and also for Puerto Rican Police Officers. The respondent expressed it in this manner:

If you're a Puerto Rican community member or cop the scales of justice are against you and so is the Police Department. There was a situation in this neighborhood with some cops who were good cops, always out here arresting drug dealers and talking to us, and I think their radios were stolen by some drug dealers, don't ask me how cause I don't know how it happened. But the cops they went to jail. It was on tv and everything and at least the ones I remember who were involved were Puerto Rican cops. The dealers said the cops trashed their place. But nobody was hurt and I'm telling you these were nice cops. I don't think they did that, but still they went to jail. I bet if they had been white cops they would be right out here. Look at the one that killed the Puerto Rican guy, Baez, he didn't go jail for murder and he committed a murder.

Those respondents who experienced discrimination claimed that it occurred because they were Puerto Rican or of Hispanic background. The issue of poor police response time in Puerto Rican/Hispanic communities was also discussed by some participants, as was the sense that police often target Puerto Rican men and youth more. The following comments support this:

Yes! If you're not white then you get discriminated.

They do not respond to calls as quickly, if at all, in my community.

I am not aware of racial or ethnic discrimination in my particular community where I live, but within the Puerto Rican community there is bias. In certain communities, like East Harlem or the Lower East Side, I believe these communities are more vulnerable.

Yes, I am very aware of racial discrimination by police officers in my community. Often I have heard them mock our language and people who speak with accents.

They seem more suspicious of our youth and men. They are always trying to rap to our young ladies. As a matter of fact that's the only time I have seen them be real helpful around here, when it's a real pretty young lady.

#### Young Adult Focus Groups:

Participants in focus groups seemed to think that police officers were more suspicious of Latinos and often demonstrated signs of prejudice towards this community. These participants have observed that police officers in Puerto Rican communities tend to approach everyone, especially adult males and youth, very cautiously as if they were in danger. According to a report by Amnesty International (1988, p.38), this is a common phenomenon in most urban areas. The report states:

Many communities report that the police unjustly target young black and Latino or Asian males, especially in inner cities, and automatically see them as potential suspects. In Chicago and other Cities, youths in particular areas, wearing certain clothes or simply out on the street, are viewed as gang members, regularly stopped by police and often ill-treated....

In addition, focus group members indicated that the officer's verbal responses to community members as well as their body language were often threatening and/or discriminatory. The following statements support these findings:

Cops in Latino communities tend to stare you down and get out of their cars with guns drawn.

Cops in our neighborhood walk around making sarcastic remarks. They say mira, trying to act like they know the language, what are you doing here, we'll say we live here, they will say sure you do, think you could afford to live here, as if they did not believe us. Maybe I'm too young to afford to live here, but my parents are professionals. They pay the rent so we could live here, not in a ghetto but in a good neighborhood.

Cops don't even walk around in my neighborhood. They drive by sometimes real slow to try to scare you with mean faces, they don't get out of the car and talk to you. They just want you to feel threatened by them.

There were only two respondents in the focus group sessions that had never observed or had knowledge of any racial or discriminatory incidents between police and Puerto Ricans.

### Police Brutality

All respondents, including those in the focus groups, indicated that police brutality probably happens much more than admitted by the police or the community. The community seemed to be very aware that police brutality was not a recent phenomenon but behavior that has been around for decades.

Several respondents pointed out that there is no gender difference regarding police brutality. Half of the respondents indicated that police brutality transcends color and gender. This basically means that community respondents believed that there were some African-American, Puerto Rican/Latino, Asians and women police officers who participated in police brutality. Several respondents put it this way:

It sucks! It's a disgrace when police officers take advantage of their authority and brutalize innocent citizens.

Women officers are as nasty and abusive as the men. Sometimes much more verbally abusive and at times it's clear in their body language.

There is a lot going on, it's not only the white cops that are brutal.

It should not be tolerated. I have seen police officers treat some individuals harshly and physically, but I wasn't present when the incident started. Therefore, I

don't know if it was justified. If the treatment was not justified, the police officer should be held responsible for his actions.

I felt, in some instances, that the police acted appropriately and that many of the bystanders jumped to an uninformed opinion that the police were being abusive or brutal. In other instances I agreed with the opinions of the bystanders that the police were being too aggressive.

I did see an officer throw a man down, then keep hitting the side of his knees with his nightstick. People were yelling at the officer to stop. It made me mad, but it was just that officer.

I think it stinks! I find it amazing that this country takes away the rights of a parent in disciplining a child but gives officers batons to beat the heck out of people.

I have never experienced brutality but I am enraged and frightened by recent reports.

Officers should be able to resolve problems without resorting to inhumane physical and brutal acts and this applies to all officers, whether they are white, Puerto Rican, African-American or part of any other group.

We recognize that there are good cops but there are cops who are out to kill. And when something happens to someone in police custody they claim that the person was resisting arrest. Well, issues of resisting arrest are used by police to basically cover their butts. Police are more prone to use physical force in Puerto Rican and other minority communities.

#### How the community can help resolve these problems

Many community respondents seemed to feel that they cannot do much to create change in the police department. Half of the respondents indicated that the only way they could help resolve problems was to become involved in the issues. Several respondents indicated:

The community would call 911 or the police dept. to report these incidents if they were assured there were no negative consequences to their calling.

No one can do anything.

Many people in the community feel that there is no justice, but there are things they can do. They can join forces with groups like Parents Against Police Brutality. This group was formed to stop cops from killing our children.

How police can reduce problems, conflicts and tensions between them and the community:

There were similar responses from individual participants and the focus groups in this category. The majority of the individual respondents discussed a need for better recruitment methods, more hiring of Puerto Rican/Latino police officers, and additional training for the whole police department.

Young Adult Focus Groups

Focus group participants offered several tips on what the department could do:

- a) Internal Affairs Bureau should ride with cops periodically to see how they respond to calls.
- b) Cops should live within the same community where they work so they can really know the people and problems that community faces.
- c) The Department should give better psychiatric tests with a way of testing for racist behavior.
- d) Invite the community to meet with them at training and sensitivity sessions so that they can voice their opinions.

Only one respondent in the focus group was very negative about what the community could do to resolve problems with police. She stated:

These problems will continue to exist no matter who does what. The problems lie in the individual and depending on how the person was brought up will determine how they will conduct themselves.

Still other group members insisted that additional training for the entire police department and better screening techniques in hiring would assist in determining who had the potential to be racist, bad tempered or violent. Focus group members also indicated that the police need greater dialogue with the Puerto Rican community.

### Community Policing Knowledge

The New York City Police Department has spent the past 10 years focusing on community policing strategies and every precinct has community police officers. Yet, less than half of the community participants interviewed were familiar with these strategies. Of the 48 community participants interviewed, only five were familiar with community policing strategies. Of these five, only three knew who their community police officer was in their neighborhood. Two of these respondents reported that they did not know the officer by name, nor had they seen the officer on patrol often. The one respondent who knew the officer by name nicknamed him superman because his appearance was that of a big strong man.

Most individual participants, as well as focus group members, stated that these interviews provided the first information they have received about community policing. When asked to describe what they thought the job of a community police officer should be, some stated the following:

I think the job should be to enforce laws, but get to know the community.

The job should be to build a relationship with the community, create a better environment.

Community policing is a good opportunity for the police to become better acquainted with the people they are protecting.

There are some officers that walk around, but most people don't want to talk to cops because there is no trust. People get nervous when they are around.

Community policing is when the people living in the problem community help the police. Instead of the police being a reactive activity, they become pro-active.

Their job should be to get to know the people and work with them to fix things in the community.

#### Role of the Community Police Officer

Puerto Rican community respondents seemed to think that the role of the community officer was to be involved with the community and to become better informed about the culture and needs of the community he/she is serving. Also, to equally enforce the laws without taking into consideration a person's race or ethnic background. Several participants stated the following:

Their role is to be very active in the community, they should be visible.

To meet the people in his beat. To learn the needs of the people/business in his beat.

Protecting and communicating with the public despite their cultural background.

To police, not to be told what and how to police a particular group.

They need to become familiar with the community and the people living there. Become knowledgeable of the problems and the culture.

### Young Adult Focus Groups

Focus group members had the following to say:

To help the community arrest drug dealers and not vendors. Don't harass the vendors of fruits and flowers, they sell flowers so that they don't have to sell drugs, harass the drug dealers.

To enforce the laws within the community, but at the same time get to know the community.

To stop worrying about the little things and worry about the big things.

Talk to the people of the community to create a better working environment. Build a relationship with them.

The concept of community involvement in the community policing initiative was not evident in the comments of either the adult respondents or the young adult participants in this study. The lack of community knowledge about community policing efforts would certainly support the charge of critics of community policing that this initiative is basically rhetoric in some communities. The intent being to get some sort of backing from the community (Buerger 1994 p. 270, Skogan 1994 p. 179). Skogan (1994. p. 179-178) maintains that some form of rhetoric is needed because the police department needs to speak out, no matter how insincere, about what they are planning to do to work with the community and create change. The real issue is can police efforts go beyond the rhetoric and actually practice community policing in the same way that they write or speak about it (Skogan 1994 p.179).

Police outreach and other methods to improve relationships in the Puerto Rican community:

Most participants were not aware that the police were doing anything to help improve relationships. Generally, participants indicated that if the police had a real interest in improving relationships with the Puerto Rican community they would have more outreach services. Participants were clear in voicing their concerns that lack of any information about community policing meant that the police were not serious about really working with this community, which again points to the question of whether community policing is just rhetoric. Some respondents expressed their feelings this way:

In my community they are doing nothing, in others they have the community affairs and CPOP units to help communicate with the neighborhoods.

I have no idea what the police are doing because I don't know who my community police officer is, I've never seem him or have gotten any information about community policing. Who knew!

I haven't seen anything being done in my neighborhood. I guess if they wanted to really get to know us and work with us, they would be out here meeting us and giving out information. When they don't want you to park here they put up flyers on all the meters, cars and everywhere. Do you see any signs up about community policing? Who do you see, where do you go, I've learned more from you in this hour than I have from any police officer around here, and you see where the precinct is, right at the corner. Ain't that something?

Young Adult Focus groups:

All but one of the focus group participants expressed similar statements about police involvement in their community. When one focus group member stated "the police

are not doing much, they do not socialize in my neighborhood," other members easily agreed that the same held true in the areas where they lived.

Focus group members stated that the police department was not reaching out to every one. One member stated:

They usually try to talk to the younger people but they need to talk to everyone. They could use the schools to talk to young people and talk to residents in public gatherings. Let me give you an example, we had a so called police community activity, the police were huddled in one group talking to each other, the community was over on the other end talking to each other. But the police and the community were not talking to each other. People from the community were saying, I'm not going over there, if they did this to talk and get to know us why don't they come over, talk say something on the microphones, mingle, no, they are just doing their thing and we are doing ours. But I bet they will report that they had an activity with the community and we came and talked.

#### Information police officers should know in order to do a better job in servicing community

The Puerto Rican community respondents expressed that it was important for police officers to know the people in the communities they served. The community indicated that a method of gaining support and learning the crucial issues of the Puerto Rican community was to become involved in community activities, to take leadership roles in learning about Puerto Rican culture and people. This kind of initiative and involvement would keep police officers abreast of what was going on in the Puerto Rican community. It would also help them assess what resources are available and which ones are needed. The community is interested in meeting with administrators and police officers to discuss their differences and issues of importance. However, once again the community was clear that these discussions had to be real, rather than political i.e.,

making the department look good on paper or in media, just because they met with the community. The Puerto Rican community was indicating that policing advances in new programs such as community policing get bureaucratized and lost in authoritative red tape to instead of collaborative oriented (Roberg and Kuykendall, 1997, pp.26 and 354).

The community also felt that police officers needed to expose themselves to the values, beliefs, traditions and customs of the many culturally different groups in New York City. They thought that it was important for officers to know that preconceived notions based on ignorance only fostered division. Forty out of 48 respondents emphasized that police officers would have to become sensitized to the needs and problems faced specifically by the Puerto Rican community, that, above all, the community wanted to be treated with respect and dignity. Respondents said:

That the people in the community are human beings with issues and problems of their own and should be dealt with like human beings, not animals

That the Puerto Rican community wants to meet more with police to help solve and discuss issues important to them. Not to be appeased by their statements but to really work together and iron out the problems. Let's really put all the cards on the table.

The officers should know about our culture and even our language and that we are not all criminals. Many of us are hard working people.

I think the officers should know about being real professionals. So they will have to go to college and maybe education will open their minds.

Police officers have to learn to work in conjunction with the community. They have to identify problems and help resolve them, they have to assess why certain problems have been reoccurring. Police officers will have to go for training, they have to increase their ability to communicate better with the community, uphold the values of life, they have to be the carriers of democracy. They need to become

sensitive to the needs of our communities. Many of them are not aware of our needs.

### Role of Puerto Rican community in community policing and in helping police

The Puerto Rican community respondents were aware that they had a responsibility in the community policing process to become involved themselves.

However, before they could become involved they had to be invited into the process.

Several respondents offered the following:

Make ourselves available for meetings, volunteer our time to the community affairs unit. But we should know they are interested in our participation. For that you need to reach out.

Communicate daily with local police, set up tenant patrols. They should be able to tell officers their problems and police should be polite and listen.

The community should get along with one another and share their ideas and concerns with one another.

Building positive images for youth. Developing leadership roles in government and education.

Enroll in law enforcement, you become cops, and don't forget your people, inside you can make changes and have the police listen to our concerns. More people need to do that.

Have greater involvement in public affairs, give information when asked. Cooperation is needed. And when good things happen, sometimes thanks should be given to the community.

To participate more for a solution. Make myself available for meetings and community policing conferences, so that I may express my concerns and communicate my needs.

### Police Education and Training

In response to the questions regarding training, the community expressed a need for police to have an understanding of the culture in the community where they work. Community members also identified better communication and listening skills as important.

Most of the participants interviewed individually said that they had never been asked to participate in any kind of police training. Focus group members also stated that no one had ever asked them for their opinions about police training. Focus group members claimed that "the police just don't give anyone information about this."

When participants were asked to discuss what they would suggest if they were given the opportunity to help design training for police officers, they stated the following:

Teach the culture of the public that they are serving.

Provide classes on better communication skills.

Send them to college so that they can open their minds and learn better ways of dealing with people.

### Young Adult Focus Groups:

Focus group members offered these comments:

Provide better communication skills.

Some become cops just to carry a gun. so sometimes training doesn't do anything.

Teach about the racial make-up of the community, about community leaders, what age group is more dominant and needs more attention from police.

Not to be prejudiced, to be more considerate, relate more to the community.

Spend more hours with people in the community.

Be more open, they need to know that everyone is not bad.

Teach the police in college about racial and ethnic communities, teach them about violence, bring them more into the community they service.

### Ways the Puerto Rican community can contribute to police training

Community respondents felt a sense of responsibility to inform police about their concerns. They also believed that they needed to become more involved in police/community activities. Part of the problem, according to some participants, was genuinely knowing which police officers would take the time to listen to them. Another important issue was finding the time for police/community activities given the work and family responsibilities of many community respondents. Three respondents shared these views:

I know we need to enlighten police with community concerns, issues and what we feel must be worked on. That's how we can contribute to training. But it's not that easy. First, they really don't invite you in to help train. Secondly, they don't seem to take us seriously. If I go out of my way to make time to help cops understand my culture and my people then they should at least be appreciative even somewhat excited to participate.

Make members of the community available for interviews. Express their concerns and issues to the person in charge of training. But no one tells you who is in charge. How do you know whom to talk to? Sometimes I feel they brush you off, like they can't be bothered in hearing what you have to say.

Assisting their community officer in whatever they need, provided they know who she/he is. I guess to do this people also have to find the time. Many Puerto Ricans, despite the fact many think we are all on welfare, many are hard working people in low paying jobs. Many have to rush home to cook and clean and try spending some time with their kids. Sometimes the last thing in one's mind is to go to the precinct or a meeting to help cops out. It's not like they make you feel welcome when you do enter a precinct anyway.

Recruitment:

The majority of the respondents seemed to think that the police department needed to be more representative of the communities they served and some specifically stated that more Latinos, African-Americans, Haitians and Asians needed to be hired by the New York City Police Department. The issue of recruitment outside of the City was also raised. Some respondents indicated that the NYPD should focus more on hiring police officers from New York City. These Puerto Rican community respondents felt that officers who were raised in the City would be more knowledgeable about their Puerto Rican culture, language and about the issues of diversity than would officers who never lived in an urban area. In addition, some of these respondents thought that if police officers continued to live in City where they worked they would have a greater commitment to creating a safer environment in an effort to protect their own families.

Several respondents stated the following:

We need more police officers who look like us Latinos or Puerto Rican or Dominican, who can speak our Spanish language and know our customs and traditions.

What would help is more Latinos, Asians, Haitians and African Americans in the police department. Although they also should be more sensitive to their own communities you know cultures. But at least they would know the language if they needed it to help someone who could not speak in English.

I think we not only need more Puerto Ricans and other Latinos as well as some other minority groups, but we need officers who were born and raised in the City and continue to live in the city so that they have a real stake in making sure it's safe for their own families and because they went to school here they may know or have learned something of other cultures.

## Chapter V

### Finding and Discussion from Police Officers

#### Introduction

A thematic analysis of the questions answered by the 22 police officer respondents showed some similarities in community perceptions of problems with the Puerto Rican community in areas of discrimination, communication, brutality and participation in community policing initiatives. Interestingly, the responses of these Puerto Rican Police Officers also indicated that the New York City Police Department does not really care about the Puerto Rican community. Most of the officers have a sense that the department was doing very little to improve police/community relations. Most officers said that the department tends to appease the community with political responses. Such responses tend to make the community think the department is in some way addressing their concerns. This is not uncommon as has been pointed out by police critics. According to Silverman (1999, p.18), "when critics maintain that administrative inflexibility inhibits police from focusing on citizens concerns, the department reacts predictably with adaptive devices that effect superficial fixes...." This often creates ambivalent feelings about the police in the community and can make officers feel that there is no support for real community relationship building from either the public or their own organization. In turn, this creates low morale among police officers, causing them to resist creativity and decrease work effort (Silverman, 1999, p.19). The responding officers in their perceptions of what the department was doing to improve police/community relations addressed these issues. An overwhelming majority of the police officers noted that the Department needs to give

more attention to issues of discrimination and favoritism, not only within the community but also within the police department. Many of the officers discussed departmental problems with discrimination. Walker, Spohn and Delone (1999, p.110) note that discrimination occurs in several specific areas of policing, such as recruitment, promotion to supervisory ranks, assignment shifts and assignments to specialized units.

The issue of trust was discussed in several areas. For example, police officers expressed that there was little to no public trust in police. Many officers were in agreement that police use of force, verbal abuse and prejudice only created further distrust. Walker, Spohn and Delone (1999, p.105) offer that verbal abuse and prejudiced behavior is demeaning to the community, disrespects their right to equal treatment based on their race or ethnicity, and increases conflicts and tensions between the police and the community. All police officer respondents demonstrated a clear understanding of community policing initiatives. The majority of the officers saw the community policing strategy as an asset that could help mend police/community relations. However, they were all equally clear that community policing could only succeed if both officers and administrators were genuinely committed to really working with the community. Issues of resistance were seen as impediments to the implementation process of any community policing initiatives.

The need for skill development in the areas of community organization, problem solving and communication were highlighted by most of the police respondents. Enhanced and longer training in race, ethnicity and the culture of Puerto Ricans were also viewed as necessary to the success of improved police/community relations.

### Response from the Puerto Rican Police Officers

#### Why they became officers:

The majority of the participating officers stated that they became police officers because they wanted to interact with people or realize a childhood dream to help others. Inherent in many of the responses is the desire to provide social services, attain better salary and benefits, and create change in policing. Several officers statements the follow:

I enjoy interacting with people. I wanted adventure and I love to help people.

Because I was recommended to take the exam by my two older brothers who are police officers.

I became a police officer because of the benefits and the money at the time, but I enjoy the service I can provide to help others.

Out of curiosity I took the exam and did very well. A year later I was called. I never expected to stay on but I did because I was doing many things with the community where I worked.

I became a police officer because I wanted to add to the color of NYPD. In my neighborhood of East New York Brooklyn, almost all of the officers in the neighborhood were white and many did not speak the language. I wanted to help my neighbors and be a positive role model to the kids in the neighborhood.

My belief is if you can't beat them join them and, when you do, make a difference for your people.

I didn't think I was going to further my education past a year of college, so it came down to security reasons, you know, a pension and benefits.

Originally I was intrigued by the excitement in chasing criminals. Watching movies had a lot to do with my quest to secure a career in law enforcement. As time went by on the job, I realized it was the thrill of helping people that now keeps me moving to do my job as a NYC police officer.

It was always a childhood dream to be a police officer and really help people in need

Needed a job and wanted a job that I felt I would make this City a better place for all.

I became a police officer because I was married at a very young age and I needed a good paying job with good benefits.

What police officers like about the New York City Police Department:

Again, the vast majority of officers seemed to like working for the Police Department because of the ability to work with people and provide a service. This is what some of them had to say:

I like the positive response that I sometimes get when I help out a person. I also like the adrenaline rush that I experience on certain jobs.

I enjoy working with many different people. The wide variety of assignments you can do. If you're not happy in one place, you can transfer to a different location.

Every day, it's not your 9 to 5 job. You get to meet so many different people in the community.

Helping people. I like the feeling of being my own boss, virtually.

I like the fact of facing new challenges. I like my benefits.

The fact that I meet many different people from all walks of life.

Helping and dealing with good people.

The ability to interact with the community on an everyday basis can be extremely rewarding. You get to meet a lot of good, hard working people. Although the salary is not quite as competitive, the benefits are acceptable.

Being able to help anyone who needs it.

What I like about the Police Department is that I get to work for the community and help those that cannot help themselves.

What Officers don't like about the NYPD:

Police officers, like members of the community, seem to think that the Department does not protect or respect their own members sufficiently. More than half of the officers indicated that racial discrimination was a problem in the police department.

One officer stated:

What I don't like about the police department is the personality hang-ups supervisors have with officers. Disrespect at times due to race or gender.

All of the officers stated that they did not like the bureaucracy and politics in the department. Favoritism appeared to be a real issue for many police officers. The political environment, according to more than half of the officers, enabled some officers to get specific or special assignments depending on who they knew in the police department.

Several officers stated the following:

It's very political, no matter how hard you work.

The political pressures and favoritism that occur within specific communities. Not every community receives the same protection. The salary that the NYPD pays its officers is nowhere near competitive police salaries.

You feel insignificant in the eyes of the administration. I feel like the department does not support its officers. The department goes out of its way to punish you if you mess up, unless you know somebody.

Politics, favoritism, police officers seem to have less rights than regular citizens. When I was in the police academy an instructor told the class, "Welcome to the police department, you have just given up all of your rights." I didn't believe him then, but I do now. Cops have less rights than civilians do. We are held to a much

higher standard than the rest of the population. If a cop does something wrong, they look to crucify him. He is presumed guilty before a trial and if he does lose the trial the punishment is a lot more severe. There are too much politics involved. There is a lot of favoritism when it comes to getting assignments.

I don't like the negative image that the media and the community give police officers. I also don't like the nepotism involved within the Police department when it comes to appointments. I don't like the sexism or the racism when it regards Blacks and Hispanics.

I don't like the politics of the department. The higher ups who care only about numbers and not about the men and women of the department.

Like the community respondents, police officers also raised the issue of trust.

Many felt there was no public trust. They indicated that the community was also guilty of stereotyping police officers by lumping them all into one category as abusers and racist.

Some officers stated the following:

Negative perception some of the public has toward police officers. They tend to think we are all alike.

When a police officer does something wrong and we all get treated like the bad one. That is stereotyping from the public.

The distrust of many members of the public who many times stereotype officers. They say we are all abusive or prejudiced.

#### Police Officers' Understanding of Community Policing:

Most police officers had a very good understanding of community policing strategies. More than half of the responding officers indicated that community policing strategies would be an asset to the department, as police officers would be able to develop closer ties to the people in their work environment. This was something many of them felt

they could not do before. Another finding was that channels of communication and information had a chance for improvement as a result of community policing efforts. Thus, their belief was that community policing would increase the likelihood of both preventing and solving crime as well as creating valuable resources for the community. Several officers did caution that the program could only work if you had officers who were really dedicated and interested in working with the community. Some officers' statements follow:

My understanding of community policing is that it is meant to foster a better relationship between the police department and the community. Not as another tool to generate summonses for the NYPD and penalize the community.

Community policing was developed to bring the community and police together to solve the problems that existed in the neighborhoods. Bring back the beat cop was a favorite term used. It is not a new concept. They figured if they put the same cop in the same neighborhood, he will interact with the people, listen to their problems and try to help solve them. The beat cop will know his area inside out. He will know the details about the area that the passing patrol car will not. He will know who the lawbreakers are and, most important, he will gain the trust and respect of the neighborhood.

These initiatives are great, it's the only way we can work out problems with the community and get to know the people. I worked on foot patrol for five years under some other program and never knew anyone on my beat, but I've made some pretty good collars from the information the people have given me, which by the way they would have never given me a few years ago because I never bothered to interact with them and now I feel that I have made a difference.

Community policing gives you one-on-one conversation with the community. The P.O. walks the beat, walks into business and hears praises and critiques up front, in person.

My understanding is that we are to interact with leaders and people in the community in order to find out the problems that occur in the community and to find some way to combat the problems.

Community policing in theory is effective. The problem is that in practice you need dedicated officers to fill these positions. Many times you have officers working in community policing solely because of the schedule.

This unit was created to give the community direct access to police officers. Community policing is a concept where the police are supposed to work with community members to combat crime and quality of life issues as a team.

My understanding is a bond between the community and the police in case of civil unrest.

Community policing is the interaction with the community by the police in an effort to reduce crime and tension in the community.

Police efforts needed for community policing to work:

In discussing police officer "efforts" that would have to be made in order for community policing to be successful, more than half of the respondents claimed that police officers were going to have to learn skills in community organizing, communication and problem solving. Fifteen out of twenty two officers indicated that police officers would have to become sensitized to the needs and problems faced by the Puerto Rican community. Many officers believed that the New York City Police Department did not have sufficient knowledge about the problems in the Puerto Rican community. For example, how language barriers can impact the response to a call for help in a crisis situation.

All of the officer participants felt that these initiatives would be effective in working with the Puerto Rican community if there was real commitment from the administration. Twenty officers stressed that this could only work if the Puerto Rican community was included in the planning process and if the Department hired more police

officers from the Puerto Rican and other minority communities. Respondents offered the following statements in support of Community Policing:

Officers need to spend more time with the community and get to know the people who live in the area where they patrol. They will have to get better training, increase their ability to communicate better. It is necessary that he or she be a facilitator, organizer and problem solver. They will have to learn to be sensitive to the community's needs.

Officers need to get more involved with the community and their needs.

I feel the major change for community policing to work needs to come from upper management, not from the police officers. Top brass must make a sincere commitment to make this work, by making the community a part of the decision making process.

I don't think the changes should only come from the police officers but from both the officers and the public.

Officers need to be more involved with the community without worrying about the politics of the department. Some officers who want to do community policing say they want to work with community, but they want to be sure that the department really wants to do this. You know, they want to know if this is all a political ploy giving the community lip service to get community leaders off the department's back or if the department is genuinely interested in working with the community.

Join community policing if you want to help the community. Good community policing officers genuinely want to help the community, It comes naturally to them. No amount of training can teach you to care for something you don't care about.

I have had several supervisors who have told me that they did not study to be a police sergeant, lieutenant or captain to sit down with a bunch of cops at a round table to discuss the community's problems. We have to find a way to figure out this mentality and circumvent it. It is real and programmed not to be sensitive to the needs of the people.

Officers need to be kept more in the community they serve instead of moving them from community to community.

Community police officers need to not to be removed from their beats. The police department should use them last. For example don't remove them to go guard a prisoner, DOA or EDP. Let them have a fixed post. All these posts with no exceptions have to be filled, but they should really try to leave community police officers last so that we can be out there meeting people and discussing different issues.

I think the police department needs to instruct its community police officers to be less summons-oriented and more arrest- oriented and community oriented. Mrs. Rivera does not want her auto ticketed she wants the drug dealers on the corner arrested.

This is easy, police officers need to have an open mind. They need to realize that people in general are good. If you work with the people in your neighborhood, they will bend over backwards to help you.

Police resistance to community policing strategies:

The majority of the officer participants indicated that resistance to community policing existed because many officers believed that there was no real support from supervisors and chief administrators for this new initiative. In fact, half of those interviewed said that community policing in the NYPD seemed to be the political "order of the day." If a new police commissioner ordered active involvement in community policing strategies, then orders were followed. Once a new commissioner was appointed, the focus would change and a new political strategy would be developed. Thus, when officers sense that there is no real institutionalized commitment from police administrators, they become resistant to change.

The benefits offered to community policing officers also raised concern. More than half of the officers interviewed indicated that many officers worked in community

policing units simply for the benefits and not because they cared or were really interested in working the community. This created resistance from officers who thought they had a chance to bring about real change in police/community relations. Less than half of the officers claimed that resistance occurred because some officers believed that the strategies detailed on paper could not be appropriately implemented on the streets.

Officers expressed these feelings in the following ways:

Police are resistant because most police officers that go into community policing only do it for the days off and are known as zeros when it comes to police work, like making arrests and correcting crime conditions. This makes police officers that work and care very angry.

I can't say that many police officers are now resisting community policing. I remember when the program first started it was difficult to get anyone to volunteer. No one wanted to trade a car for a foot post. For starters, you get an additional 18 vacation days a year and you really don't answer as many jobs as a radio car. Unfortunately, you have some lazy officers who got into CPOP for the perks, not because they care about the community.

Police resist new strategies because there are times that you don't get the backing from your supervisors.

Police resist because you are asking officers to speak to the community and help solve their problems and at the same time we must summons them and arrest them. The public takes that out on police officers, which strains the relationship.

Police are resistant because the powers that be do not encourage community policing.

They don't care about the community.

If certain officers are resisting some of the strategies, it's probably because they don't believe that certain strategies are going to work.

Most officers just don't care.

The issue of poor contracts, few raises, and lack of public trust seemed to have affected morale and the quality of police work. This, according to some of the participants, could have explained some of the resistance. Officers put it this way:

Many officers within the NYPD are extremely frustrated with recent contracts they have received. The morale of the department is at an all time low and, unfortunately, the ones who suffer are the citizens.

Some officers resist community policing because they don't believe that the people who are poor deserve a chance to better their environment. And since there are officers who think that the public doesn't trust them, then why should they come through for the community.

Community policing strategies that help officers in understanding the Puerto Rican community better

The police officer participants indicated that the community policing strategies that would be most helpful are varied. Some said that an increase in interaction with members of the Puerto Rican community, such as leaders, individuals and organized groups, would be helpful. Others stated that the department should engage in initiatives that invite community members into the precincts to speak with newly-hired police officers. More than half of the officers expressed a need to enhance both formal and informal training on the Puerto Rican culture. Informal methods of training on Puerto Rican culture were identified as meetings with people in the Puerto Rican community to discuss culture and problems. The best strategies centered primarily on the need to

become sensitized and to get to know the community that they are serving much better.

Statements of respondents in support of this included:

Certain strategies that would help are having the officers spend time with Puerto Rican families and see how they really are, not what they heard or have seen on television.

To educate themselves about the Puerto Rican customs and treat everyone like they would like to be treated.

I believe that members of the Puerto Rican community should visit the new officers when they're assigned to their commands to discuss the culture and customs of the Puerto Ricans.

Taking time out to do more interacting with the community.

Better training and understanding in the culture of Puerto Ricans.

Simply taking the time to speak to many different Puerto Ricans will help the officers understand us better.

More non-enforcement contact with the people of Puerto Rican communities as well as others.

We should get more involved with community groups and give them the confidence that everything will be kept confidential. Like you have here.

For starters, the officers need to know the Puerto Rican culture. Once they know this, they need to have an open mind and possess common sense. They need to show that they care. Once the Puerto Ricans see this, they cannot do enough for you.

Constant interaction and exposure to the community, not just one day a week or whenever they need to issue summonses.

One officer indicated that the Puerto Rican Community needed to unite in order to be taken seriously by the Police Department. This officer said:

The Puerto Rican Community is not very unified. Therefore the Police Department does not take them serious. Where there is unity there is strength, which equals power.

Yet another officer indicated that community policing strategies would not help because police officers enter communities believing that the less powerful can be abused. This officer stated the following:

I personally can't answer this because Puerto Rican people were the first Hispanics to arrive in New York and the way the Police dealt with the community back then was entirely different. Now police get out of the academy and do the policing in some neighborhoods like they know how much abuse the community can take. In other neighborhoods where people are politicians and more up to date with the issues, the department holds back.

Is the community well informed about community policing ?

Overall, most police officer participants indicated that better community outreach was needed. The majority of the officer respondents thought that the Puerto Rican community was not well informed about community policing strategies or any NYPD operations. Officers had the following to say:

Not at all, I believe that the Puerto Rican Community doesn't even know how the NYPD operates.

No, because there are people out there that don't know that community policing even exists.

No, I do not think they are well informed at all. The top brass is really not interested in whether they are informed.

No way, usually they are not informed about anything

I don't believe that they are well informed.

Two officers seemed to think that knowledge and outreach on community policing depended a great deal upon the neighborhood and precinct area. Apparently, some commands were more willing than others to share information and work with the community. In areas where the community and the precinct worked together, the Puerto Rican Community was informed about community policing efforts. These officers made the following statements:

I think that would depend on what Puerto Rican neighborhood you visit. I believe that the CPOP program is better in some neighborhoods than others. The neighborhoods where it runs well, the community is usually well informed.

It all depends on the command. Overall, I feel that the Puerto Rican community doesn't take advantage of community policing as might other ethnic communities.

Less than half of the participants believed that the community had some information, but were not willing to take full advantage of the opportunity to participate. One officer offered that, while community residents had information, they were selective in their interactions. This is what some police respondents had to say:

I think they are well informed

Only the people who want to get involved in the community are informed

Puerto Rican communities know what community policing is all about, but they are selective to who they let in. I think Puerto Rican cops are welcome, others are not.

Police perception of how the Puerto Rican community views their role

Most police respondents had a positive perspective on how the Puerto Rican community views their role. More than half expressed that the Puerto Rican community accepts, respects, appreciates and desires to interact with them as Puerto Rican Police Officers.

These officers had this to say:

My role is very important to my community, since I am Puerto Rican. The majority of the community accepts me into their lives because I am Puerto Rican.

It depends on their past experience with the police, but most Puerto Rican communities like our presence and appreciate us.

On a whole, most Puerto Rican citizens respect NYC police officers. It is the younger generation that resists authorities and causes most of the problems with police.

I feel that the people that I've dealt with know that I am Puerto Rican before I am a Police Officer, but I will not tolerate any Puerto Rican breaking the law or harming anyone else in any other way just because they are Puerto Rican.

I think the Puerto Rican community views me as a positive role model. In 1982 there were not that many Hispanics in the police department. I believe it was a total of about 2000. I believe the figure is up to about 6000 now. I remember walking the streets and getting positive feedback from Hispanics in the Neighborhood. They felt they could come over and talk to me because I spoke their language and I was from their cultural background.

They like it when I interact with them and I keep them aware of what's going on in the community.

Approximately half of the officers felt that the community's perception of their role was linked to their positive or negative experience with police. Less than half indicated that the community sees them as oppressors, specifically hired to enforce laws and not build any kind of relationship.

They are ambivalent. When I help them, they love me, when I arrest them they hate me.

They view my role as strictly enforcement. Most of our contact with them is enforcement oriented.

As someone who is supposed to be perfect. Never wrong and as an oppressor.

#### Police officers' perception of the Puerto Rican community's role in the helping police solve problems

Approximately half of the officers felt that the Puerto Rican community needed to become more involved in working with the police to prevent crime. The issue of trust also arose. Police officers said that the community should trust them more. This what some officers had to say about this:

The people in the community should allow us to give them our trust so they can open up with the problems.

They need to trust in officers and not stereotype them. The mentality of not being a RAT must change if we are to assist each other.

Every community should try to understand the functioning of the Police Department. Learn that we are here for them. Understand that if they get involved with the Police Department, attend meetings and write letters, their voice will be heard.

It is extremely essential for the Puerto Rican community to assist the NYPD in reducing crime. The police cannot be everywhere at all times. It is imperative that the citizens be the eyes and ears of the department.

Other officers felt that the community's role was to unite and gain a greater power base.

These officers said:

Its role should be in generating a voting block that the mayor is respectful and fearful of as in the Hasidic Jewish groups. Neither police officers nor the police commissioner run the police department, the Mayor does, and he will listen to his powerful constituents.

I feel that the first priority of the Puerto Rican community is to come together as a whole rather than everyone going in their own direction.

The Puerto Rican community should work together as one unit to resolve problems before they arise. Not only react when a problem has occurred with the Puerto Rican community and the police.

One officer believes that the community does the best it can currently. The officer made this comment:

In general, the Puerto Rican community is a loving and caring community. They are conservative in nature and, in my opinion, are pro police. I do believe that they help the police when they can.

Another officer offered that the Puerto Rican Community needs to speak up more and not just accept things. This officer stated:

The community needs to communicate their concerns to the Department. Puerto Ricans don't always do that and just accept things as they come.

Yet, one officer claimed that Puerto Rican community would not participate in anything that did not involve them directly. This officer said:

I have been working with the Puerto Rican community a short time. If the issue/problem does not effect them personally, they will not get involved with the police.

Police perception of the Puerto Rican Community's role in the community policing process

More than 50% of the police respondents believe that the Puerto Rican community's role in the community policing process is to become involved in community council meetings, to voice their specific concerns and to encourage the recruitment of more Puerto Rican/Latinos and other minority police officers. Respondents' statements included:

The Puerto Rican community's role is to assist officers and push for other people in the community to get involved.

The community has to be more vocal continuously, they must make their voice heard.

Their role in the community policing process is to lobby their politicians to increase representation of Hispanic police officers, sergeants, lieutenants, captains, deputy inspectors, chiefs etc. and to mandate ethnic sensitivity courses to its non-Hispanic police officers.

The role of the Puerto Rican community in the community policing process is to identify the problems in their community and communicate with the police where together they can work to solve these problems.

Other officers claimed that the Puerto Rican Community would feel more comfortable voicing their concerns to Puerto Rican Police Officers. One officer offered this insight:

I think that the Puerto Rican community feels a lot more comfortable dealing with a Puerto Rican Police Officer and not afraid of voicing different ideas that may improve public relations with the police department.

Still, one officer perceived that the Puerto Rican Community had no role in the community policing process because they did not participate in anything. This officer said:

In the command I serve in the role is very minimal. The Puerto Rican community doesn't participate in the precinct community council meeting, therefore they have little or no say in the community policing process.

Police Officers' views of what the Department is doing to improve the relationship with the Puerto Rican community

More than half of the Puerto Rican Police Officer respondents felt that the department is doing little to nothing to improve the relationship with the Puerto Rican Community. These officers' statements support this:

At this time, I cannot recall any specific program.

The commitment from the department is very little, due to the fact that they care more about their issues rather than community policing.

I believe they are doing nothing.

The department doesn't care about the community.

Police are doing only what they are told by supervisors to do. Very few police officers ever go out of their way to do anything for the Puerto Rican community.

Again, the issue of gaining political clout through community involvement, voting and lobbying was identified as important for less than half of the responding officers. Three officers mentioned the importance of this as follows:

Whatever the commissioner and mayor wants. The bottom line is that they cater to the community that votes together and stays together.

The commitment I have seen from the top brass has been small, but at times has inspired numerous important community leaders to meetings and studies involving Puerto Rican and police relations.

Very little, only in communities with powerful lobbyists can community policing achieve its goals. In most precincts, especially Hispanic ones, its used as a summons resource.

Several officers felt that the department was doing the best it could to improve police/community relations. They mentioned that the department was holding commanders more accountable and using the media for minority recruitment efforts.

Three officers put it this way:

The establishment of the CPOP program was a step in the right direction. Each precinct has a community affairs officer who is also there to listen to the community. I think Pct. Commanders have also been put on notice and are being held more accountable for the problems in their precincts.

The hierarchy is committed to doing something, but the morale is low with the police officers.

The police are doing many things to improve the relationship with the community. Radio and television spots showing all Hispanic officers and promoting Hispanic officers to important positions in the NYPD.

Yet again, some officers indicated that the Police Department does whatever political interests demands. For example, if the new commissioner is interested in implementing community policing, then police officers will be told to work more with the community. However, if the commissioner's interest is on zero tolerance for crime and on aggressive patrol, then these priorities would be emphasized. One officer said the following:

During the Raymond Kelly administration, community policing was priority. However, when Bratton and his replacement Safir came to office, the focus was only on crime reduction and Compstat became the focus.

What police think can be done to reduce problems, conflicts and tensions between police and Puerto Ricans

One hundred percent of the police respondents indicated that the Police Department needs to reach out and communicate much more with the Puerto Rican community to reduce conflicts and tensions. Responding officers felt that the department needs to do more to educate the community on police work. They also indicated that the Department needed to inform the community about any programs that would help bridge the gap between police and community members. Officers' comments included:

The NYPD should have monthly meetings, go on an advertising blitz to promote more Hispanics to attend these meetings.

Reach out to the community and have events and activities that truly get us talking to each other.

Open the doors, invite people to do ride-a-longs, make them aware of the powers of the police.

Stop feeding people crap and start really communicating with the community.

Training:

Most officer-participants seemed to think that they received limited to no multi-cultural training at the police academy. Many identified a need to have cultural diversity training at the precinct level. All of the officers thought that police officers should have ongoing training in the area. Some officers felt that, while they had received some training, there was room for improvement.

All of the officers interviewed indicated that they had never been asked to participate in designing any training to help sensitize officers to the needs of the Puerto Rican community. Yet they stated that they would cooperate and provide suggestions for such training if asked. Some of them offered the following ideas for this kind of training:

Police views on Multi-cultural training:

On the questions relating to multi-cultural training, Puerto Rican officer responses ranged from acknowledging that the training was adequate or good, to reporting multi-cultural training was not offered at all. Officers' responses included:

It's non-existent. Training to sensitize officers to the Puerto Rican/Hispanic community is non-existent.

While in the Police Academy there was multi-cultural training. At the time I thought it was pretty good. Since then, in light of all the things or events that have happened, I'm sure the training is more intense.

This kind of training currently is a joke. In its present form it does not sensitize officers to work effectively with the Puerto Rican and other Hispanic communities.

It is as good as it can be. But bigots can be weeded out in the hiring process.

All of the respondents agreed that multi-cultural training should be geared towards sensitizing police officers to the culture and values of minority communities. There was also agreement among all respondents that training needed to be expanded beyond a one day workshop if police officers were going to learn appropriately about the needs and problems of the Puerto Rican community. Others indicated that there was need for much improvement in this area. According to some of officers, multi-cultural training sessions

had to do more than just provide information about different cultures and value systems; training had to teach police officers how to respond effectively to special situations with different groups Respondents made these statements:

This kind of training is a good idea because everyone should have a little understanding of other people's culture.

Training is decent but you need the audience to want to learn. The information is there, it's up to the individual police officer to respect the community.

We need better training.

I think that it's a necessity, being the City is as diversified as it is. It doesn't sensitize police officers effectively to work with Puerto Rican and other Hispanic communities because there is not enough training.

Training is good but can be improved. More specialization in the field is necessary for members of the community, not just the academy staff. To some degree the training helps you get to know the Puerto Rican and other Hispanic communities. Each officer recruit is assigned a different culture to research. But if the recruit who was selected to do Puerto Ricans did a poor job in his/her research, the other officers suffer as a result of that officer's lack of work or interest.

The training is good but not extensive. It just teaches about the different ethnic groups and customs, but nothing on sensitivity.

There is not enough multi-cultural training, but the training they do have pushes for treating all persons of any race or religion equally and fairly.

Many police have a different upbringing. Fifty percent live in the suburbs and outer counties, Staten Island, Long Island, they have different views, language, beliefs, music, radio talk shows, they listen to Howard Stern. So in the academy they really should prepare them not just for the streets but in reality they should prepare better for cultural shock.

Just teaching the officers about a culture, just teaching or lecturing about values and okay you have the Dominicans over here and these are some of the things they have in their culture and you have the Puerto Ricans over here and this is what

their culture looks like and some of their habits and here we have the African Americans and this is what they do. You can point this all out to them, give them all that information but information, in and of itself is not going to get the officers to respond in a certain way to the people in the community. If they think these people are parasites, using some of their jargon, then the only type of community policing that parasites deserve is what is called quote unquote an attitude adjustment. From where these officers who think like this come from, these people are uncivilized so sensitivity training must provide officers with ways of approaching and responding to their own behavior.

How police officers would improve training:

An overwhelming majority of the Puerto Rican police officers who participated in this study agreed that one of best ways to improve multi-cultural training was to provide more time for it. The officers thought that training could be improved through both formal and informal methods. Some methods suggested ranged from having town hall type meetings with community members to having community members visiting the precincts. Other, more formal approaches, could involve lectures or official classes in a college for college credit. Some officers made it clear that the approach or method itself was not as important as the need to implement better training which addressed issues of race, culture, ethnicity and the police. Officers' responses included:

Simply by implementing it.

Training needs improvement. Perhaps an extra month strictly dealing with community issues or cultural shock issues.

It needs more time.

Direct contact on a smaller scale, town hall type of concept.

Perhaps have police officers of the particular ethnic group come in and speak to the recruits.

Get members from the Puerto Rican community to address the recruits while they are still in the academy. Have professors from colleges visit the academy and give their expert advice and knowledge, or better yet create courses at the colleges just for the officers and perhaps they could get credit for them.

Speak more about culture and then language

Provide more of it. Both in formal classes and with community meetings

More time in training and on the job training with the community.

The training can be improved by having more direct training at the precinct level. By having all different persons from the community to get together at community council meetings. Not just specific people in the community.

My design would have more precinct level meetings between Hispanic community leaders and the police personnel who patrol their areas. Hispanic community leaders should take more proactive action to prevent negative situations between the Puerto Rican community and the police. They should work closely with the police to have Puerto Rican heritage awareness days, discuss traditions and customs, etc.

One officer addressed the fact that sometimes prejudice and racism is so ingrained that training would not make a difference. This officer stated:

If you grew up racist, nothing is going to change your mind.

#### Officers' perceptions of ethnic and racial discrimination within the police department

All police respondents were in agreement that ethnic and racial discrimination existed at some level within the police department. Like the Puerto Rican community respondents, all Puerto Rican police officers interviewed expressed that most forms of

discrimination in the department are toward minorities (African-Americans, Hispanics, Asians). Several officers made these statements about discrimination:

The recent allegations of racial and ethnic discrimination, like the Louima and Diallo cases, are rare. But there is a lot of stereotyped statements presented by white cops about minorities. In my 15 years, I have seen any and every kind of discrimination at time directed at me by white cops for being Hispanic. But I dealt with it on a one-on-one basis. The majority of the discrimination I have seen is always against minority cops. Once I saw a white cop being discriminated against by a minority supervisor. It was wrong but I felt good that it happened.

Yes it exists; yes I have experienced it. It's there and will always be there. Once the Department discovers that its founded, they give you anything you want. If not, you are considered a problem cop.

In any large organization like the NYPD you are always going to have a few rotten apples. Overall, I feel NYC police officers do a professional job. I have not experienced discrimination in the command I work, but there are a lot of Latino police officers in my command so my experience is not as traumatic as other officers in different commands. Yet I have seen discrimination.

Yes, discrimination exists in the department. You have an anti-crime unit in a predominately Hispanic area and no Hispanic cops represented.

I think some forms of racism do exist within the ranks of the Police Department. I also don't think it is as widespread as some may think. In my experience, officers that I know to be lazy and are transferred are the first ones who cry racism. The reality is a lazy man is never lucky. Is it racism when a white guy is chosen over a black or Hispanic for a special assignment or was the white guy chosen because his father used to work with the chief when they were rookies 25 years earlier. The hook is alive and well. It's not what you know but who you know. I think this holds true in the police department and definitely in private industry.

The officers differed in their opinions as to how discrimination cases were handled by the Department. More than half believed that the department did not take these cases seriously. They claimed that, often, the only action taken was to transfer the

officers who were involved to another precinct. Some officers alleged that any complaints made against superior officers hampered chances for special assignments. Some of these officers put it this way:

The Department handles these cases by just transferring the cops to a different location and hopes it doesn't happen again. These situations could be better handled. Cops who discriminate should not be cops.

There is absolutely, positively racial discrimination against minority officers within the police department. I have been discriminated against by other officers, sergeants and above and I know other officers who have also been discriminated against. There is rarely any action taken by the department against racial discrimination unless it is so blatant that they can't ignore it.

At times the Department's racial and ethnic discrimination policies are a farce, a joke, and even the sexual harassment policies are also a joke. I have seen officers who filed these reports ridiculed to the point that officers have quit the NYPD.

Several officers have been passed by on specialized assignments although they were highly qualified. The department has an EEO office but not too many officers trust the department to investigate allegations of discrimination especially when it involves a superior officer against a cop.

Two officers indicated that these cases are handled appropriately. They stated:

I think the police department handles racial, ethnic and gender discrimination very well. These issues are touched on in unit training. Memos are constantly written on it. Officers are told that they can go to EEO without any type of reprisals. I mean the city just settled with the federal government on monitoring this same issue, including sexual harassment.

There are some officers who do discriminate, they are just ignorant. I think the department handles racial or ethnically biased situations by the book.

What needs to be done with officers who discriminate against or have problems with the Puerto Rican community

All officer participants were in agreement that officers who discriminate against the Puerto Rican community or other minority communities should be either mandated to counseling or removed from the Department. Several officers shared these views:

These officers deserve to be disciplined immediately if it is proven that they have discriminated against any cultural group or citizen of the City of New York. From my experience a good hand-full of officers discriminate.

These officers, in my opinion, should be reprimanded but then at least 3/4 of the officers would be reprimanded. Even one officer who behaves in a discriminating manner is too many. On the surface, biased situations are handled without bias. But the retribution by officers not involved could be humiliating.

Certain officers who have demonstrated problems with dealing with the Puerto Rican community should be moved or given more sensitivity training. On the other hand many officers have never dealt with the Puerto Rican community until they became cops. So a lot of people who aren't Puerto Rican don't know what to expect.

Officers who discriminate against any community suck! I don't think there are many of them and many situations are swept under the rug.

Any officer that has a problem with whatever ethnic community group that he/she works with should be removed from that community.

If you discriminate, you shouldn't be a cop with any community. There are a few cops who discriminate but once a supervisor knows or it's brought to his attention, for the most part it's handled professionally.

I think they should receive counseling and if they persist in their discriminatory views, they should be terminated.

### Police Officers' views on Police Brutality

The majority of the responding officers mentioned that there were three significant problems with police brutality. One was that police brutality destroys the trust and relationship between the police and the community. Secondly, it only creates further stereotypes about police work. Thirdly, it tarnishes the department's reputation and effects morale. The following comments were made by responding officers:

These situations make every cop's job more difficult because everyone reacts like every cop is brutal. This effects morale among the cops and ultimately the job performance suffers. If it is proven beyond reasonable doubt that an officer committed police brutality, the violator should suffer the stiffest penalties.

Whatever bad thing any cop does affects every cop in the city.

Cases of police brutality hurt me personally, but the thing that hurts me the most is that after all the evidence shows that the cops did these things, you still have a lot of cops supporting these losers. These cases should be handled swiftly and with extreme penalties.

It affects every officer who wears a blue uniform because it stereotypes cops as a whole and makes the job much tougher. There is no excuse for brutality and cops who engage in it should be dealt with accordingly.

Police brutality effects the relationships that I have built with my community. I feel like I have to constantly defend the good cops. These cases should be handled with zero tolerance and if the complaint is untrue, then the community should be held accountable.

It lowers morale when these situations arise. People should try to give the benefit of the doubt to the cop. Don't just rush to judgement.

It is very sad. There are much more good officers than bad. But bad news sells papers. When it has been proven that a police officer committed police brutality, that officer should be removed from the job.

This increased the distrust of community towards police officers. If it's founded, then they should be dealt with harshly. But I believe that the people who assault police officers should be dealt with in the same way.

People judge all of us in the same way, they start giving you looks, the cold shoulder, until it begins to die out. Whatever the media writes, people follow. Every case should be handled individually, not as a whole.

When Rodney King was beaten by L.A. cops, I said it had set us back ten years. Nothing could have prepared me for the Abner Louima ordeal. When I first heard it, I thought it was too crazy to be true. Unfortunately, it was. That incident set us back 30 years! What possessed Officer Volpe to do what he did to Louima is incomprehensible. He not only stained the reputation of the NYPD, he has set every police department in the nation back numerous years. While I was in Texas, 2000 miles away on vacation, it was front-page news. Not to mention the criticism and jokes from family, friends, neighbors and strangers. Worst of all, that situation gave new breath to clowns like Sharpton. Subsequently Volpe pleaded guilty. That ordeal damaged the reputation of the department. To make matters worse you have an innocent man shot 41 times by the street crimes unit. Personally I don't believe those cops got up that morning and decided that they were going to kill a black man. It was a horrible tragedy. My heart went out to the Diallo family as well as many other officers that I know. But the news did not mention that the NYPD statistically is the most restrained police department in the U.S. I guess that would not sell papers. Yes, these events have had a great effect on many police officers and in the years to come you will see this with mass exodus from retirements to the likes that the department has never seen. If you think they are having problems now to recruit, just wait another couple of years. They will have to recruit from different states.

Other officers stated that they were sure that police brutality existed simply because racism exists in our society. Yet, they thought the problem was not as huge as politicians or the media make it out to be. One officer offered this statement:

I don't think there are as many cops who use police brutality as Al Sharpton would have us believe. Sure there are racists in the police department. There are also racists in sanitation, fire, parks, etc. departments. There are racists in private industry and in life, that's reality. I think the world is changing and these types of ignorant people are getting less and less. Why is it that Hasidic Jews can triple

park in their neighborhood and we are ordered not to write summonses? Is it because of discrimination or politics? Sure, some neighborhoods get better treatment than others. I think politics plays a major role there. Another thing is why is it when a person gets killed by police they have his graduation picture or communion picture in the paper? They forget to mention his 25 previous arrests.

Another officer explained that police brutality effects minority

recruitment efforts. He stated:

I think these situations discourage minorities from applying to the NYPD. If I am a 22-year-old Hispanic male with a college degree, what incentive would I have to join an organization that is perceived negatively by society and would expose me to racial discrimination among my peers? This in addition to the fact that I may, or will, be risking my valuable life in the process. These cases should be thoroughly investigated. I think that all constitutional safe guards to all parties should be preserved and there should be no penalties until a concrete result has been obtained

Police views on higher education requirements:

A majority of the officer participants (80%) agreed that a degree in higher education was necessary. These officers generally felt that the college experience would expose officers to a diversity of people interested in growing, learning and improving. The officers believed that college education would help some officers become more open minded. For example, officers said:

Higher education is a good thing because then cops can't use the excuse that they didn't know. College education would help diversify some of the garbage thinking of some of these cops who got a GED in order to get into the NYPD.

It's a must, I believe an education gives you an open mind.

A small minority of the officers (4) said that higher education was not necessary for police officers. However, one of these four officers stated that supervisors should have

a college degree. Two others in this group claimed that, while college was not needed, it would offer exposure to different people and an opportunity to take courses in Puerto Rican studies. These officers stated the following:

I don't think it's necessary. No degree could show anyone how to interact with the public.

As a member of the NYPD, who holds a B.A. degree, I feel it's not absolutely necessary for every police officer to possess a degree. There are tons of great detectives and police officers who don't have college. However, I think it's necessary for supervisors.

More education does not necessarily mean a better cop. It would help with the Puerto Rican community only if the officers took up Puerto Rican Studies. This is not necessary. P.O. Justin Volpe had a B.A. An individual has his mind set. It could be that of a bigot, abuser, etc., with or without a degree, before he/she comes on this job. College education can help by being exposed to more different people and perhaps help someone to be more open minded or tolerant of other people.

Half of the cost should be paid by the department or the police officer should get a better salary so he or she can pay for tuition. Officers will be more educated on handling different kind of cultures only if they picked it up in college. If they don't take a course, they try to learn some common sense which is needed in policing and in the real world.

## Chapter VI

### Conclusion and Recommendations

#### Introduction

This exploratory study is an attempt to hear the voices of the Puerto Rican Community and Puerto Rican Police Officers with respect to their relationship and their knowledge of the New York City Police Department and community policing initiatives. The study is exploratory as it considers a limited number of interviews of the Puerto Rican community members and Puerto Rican police officers in New York City. The findings are based on a small sample, they are not representative of the entire New York City Puerto Rican population. However, they do provide some insights as to some of the problems between the New York City Police Department and the Puerto Rican Community. The results of this study can be useful to the New York City Police Department in working to establish a collaborative and better relationship with Puerto Rican communities in New York City.

This chapter will review the problems identified by the participants and offer recommendations that can assist police personnel in developing better communication with and understanding of the Puerto Rican community.

#### Police Department Issues

Data gathered through seventy (70) interviews suggest that the New York City Police Department needs to continually reassess its values, community outreach,

collaborative efforts, training, ability to change, and policies if the Department is going to improve police/community relations.

Both community and police officer participants expressed concern on the management style of the NYPD. Survey participants indicated that the NYPD did not include them in the planning or implementation stages of initiatives such as community poling, problem-oriented policing or innovative neighborhood-oriented policing. The Puerto Rican community participants as well as police officer respondents felt that they had no voice in any decision and were not invited to be active participants in any collaborative efforts. Most participants in this study indicated that there was no real substantial communication between the police and the Puerto Rican community. In fact, most participants expressed that lack of communication and lack of respect were the most prevalent problems in the relationship between the Police Department and the Puerto Rican community.

The Police department does acknowledge communication problems with many ethnic and racial communities in their publications. This research suggests that, in actual practice, the Police Department falls short of their stated effort to open lines of communication to the Puerto Rican Community. While individual police officers and administrators have been open to discussing problems and concerns, the overall Department (NYPD) seems resistant to hear the voices of the Puerto Rican community and of officers who desire to identify and help solve problems.

Both Puerto Rican community respondents and police officer participants claimed that police/community meetings basically served to appease the community, politically,

by placing band-aid remedies on problems and issues discussed. Some of these participants suggested that the Puerto Rican community neighborhoods, with the highest poverty levels, did not communicate problems to the police, mainly because members of the community did not attend, or in many cases, have knowledge of police/community meetings. One community participant stated the following:

First of all, I did not know that the police had meetings, which we could go to. Secondly, I cannot afford to take time from my job to go for a meeting with police. It's not like they were going to actually listen to me anyway. They will probably yes me to death, and in the long run nothing happens. So, why bother saying anything? It's not like they really care about us around here anyway. We are just poor people. We have no rights. At least that is how they make one feel.

This supports the work of Whisenand and Ferguson (1996, p.296) who found that in many cases citizens communicate their problems to police. However, in poverty areas or in communities where most of the residents are poor, this is not the case. Other researchers also mention that in poverty-stricken areas and/or in minority communities, not only do the residents not communicate with police, in many instances they are not aware of policing initiatives such as Community Policing (Skogan, 1994, p.179). This seemed to be the case for many of the adult and young adult Puerto Rican respondents in this study.

### Community Policing Strategies

The study revealed that Community Policing strategies, although commendable in written form, were not implemented effectively in police practice. The majority of the community participants in this study indicated that community policing strategies were

not carried out effectively because the Department failed to reach out to the Puerto Rican community in order to obtain feedback from community residents. Most interviewees were in agreement that community policing objectives should meet the public's demands for a police force that is not reactive, but is instead cognizant of the community's problems and culture. To do otherwise would not be in keeping with the community policing objectives or with the recommendations of prior commissions such as the 1967 President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, the Kerner Commission Report of 1968 and the Mollen Commission Report of 1994 (Cheurprakobkit and Baetsch 1999, p. 89). These commissions basically set the ground work for community policing and re-enforced the need to enhance police/community relations by developing training opportunities, making changes in police procedures and practices, reassessing police attitudes and behaviors, and openly accepting critiques from the communities they served (Cheurppakobkit and Baetsch 1999, p.89).

Community and police participants in this study, like the 1991 CPOP Strategic Plan, called for new skill development in problem solving and for better interactions between police officers and community members. Yet few efforts were implemented by the New York City Police Department to ensure training systems were in place and that the Departments' relationship with the Puerto Rican community was improved. In fact, the strategic plan focuses on minority communities basically in terms of recruitment. The emphasis appears to be solely on recruiting more actively in minority communities. Recruitment of more minorities and, in particular as it relates to this study, recruitment of Puerto Ricans is needed. This need was in fact identified by many of the respondents in

this study. However, recruitment of Puerto Rican officers will not resolve all of the conflicts between the police and Puerto Rican community. Walker, Spohn and Delone (2000, p.115) report that there is little evidence that increasing minority recruitment actually improves how citizens feel about police.

However, according to these authors, minority recruitment and employment does have an effect on police culture. The authors indicate that the different ethnic groups have been able to develop their own associations such as the Hispanic Police Society or the Latino Officers Association, or The Guardians (the African-American police officers association), which have been helpful in identifying issues of discrimination within police departments. These organizations have also assisted in identifying problems between the police and the community and in this way have been useful in breaking the cohesiveness of police culture and the "blue wall of silence" (Walker, Spohn and Delone 2000, p.115).

This study suggests that the Puerto Rican community and Puerto Rican police officers want the Police Department not only to recruit more Puerto Rican police officers, but specifically to be more inclusive of the Puerto Rican community and of Puerto Rican officers in the planning, development and implementation stages of initiatives like community policing. In other words, community policing strategies cannot be carried out effectively if the initiatives are devoid of knowledge, feedback and input from Puerto Rican and other ethnic communities. The respondents also indicated that there must be a real sense of caring for the community, beyond periodic community meetings. This reinforces Buerger's (1994,p. 273), assertion that to truly build and empower a community, there has to be more than weekly or monthly meetings, there has to be "day to day caring"

in significant and meaningful ways. This can only be done by real, continuous and effective outreach, which includes and respects the human dignity of all community residents.

Community policing was supposed to make police departments change from being reactive to being proactive and enlightened in their responses (Zhao, Lovrich, Robinson 2001 p. 366). Yet, the respondents in this study seem to be saying that this organizational change has not occurred in police practice in their neighborhoods. Zhao, Lovrich and Robinson (2001, p.368) posit that organizational change is at times a mere "buffering strategy," in that it gives the impression of both working and developing new programs and approaches and simultaneously the main objectives and goals of the organization remain the same. The perception of the Puerto Rican community and police officer respondents in this study appears to postulate the same notion, that the Police Department is appeasing them with political promises and actually not changing the current practice of policing. Although the current Compstat initiative has demonstrated change in practice with regards to crime reduction and the reporting of problem officers, the community is still not aware of how this new initiative works or that it even exist.

Thus, if the Police Department desires to get the community involved and provide preventive and supportive services to individuals or groups within the various communities in New York City, then, they have to do the following:

1. listen to the voices of those communities and their officers in order to enhance "quality of life" issues.

2. engage in community outreach to secure collaboration
3. develop marketing tools for new strategies such as Compstat and community policing so that the community is informed about their existence
4. develop community education programs to help the community learn how these strategies can assist them and how they can assist in the collaborative efforts.

#### Police discrimination and Brutality

The findings indicate that both the Puerto Rican community respondents and Puerto Rican police officer respondents perceive problems with the New York City Police Department in the areas of discrimination, brutality, lack of communication, and lack of community participation in policing initiatives. Puerto Rican police officer respondents acknowledged that cases of police brutality significantly impact on police/community relations, by creating lack of trust and lack of respect for the police profession. This finding supports the work of Brandl, Strohine and Frank (2001, p.521), who state that "inappropriate use of force has potentially devastating consequences for the police organization, the public and the relationship between the police and the community." These authors maintain that the good intentions of initiatives such as community policing are usually completely wiped out or forgotten when an incident of police brutality is showcased in the media (p.521). According to some of the Puerto Rican respondents in this study, incidents involving police brutality not only generate lack of trust on the part of the community but also effect officer morale. Consequently, officers

don't want to work together and the "good will" efforts to bridge the gaps between the police and the community cease (Brandl, Stroshine and Frank, 2001, p.521).

The adult and young adult community participants in this study noted that police abuse probably occurred more often than actually reported. Their perceptions of abuse seemed to include physical abuse or excessive force, profane and abusive language, humiliating behavior, discriminatory or racist remarks, negative body language and overall disrespect. These respondents also indicated that these negative interactions were more prone to occur with adult and young Puerto Rican males. Several studies on police use of force or misconduct also contend that young minority males appear to have more negative interactions with police (Wagner and Decker 1989, p.273, Taylor, Turner, Esbensen and Winfree Jr. 2001, p. 302).

### Issues with Youth

Several officers noted that many of the problems that police experience with the Puerto Rican community basically stem from their interactions with Puerto Rican youth. Certainly this is significant since, as noted in both the problem statement and literature review, the Puerto Rican community, is a young community, with most of the population ranging between the ages of 15-25 (Barringer, 1991). Therefore, it is important to improve relationships between police and Puerto Rican youth in order to improve the quality of life in Puerto Rican communities.

Alleged police brutality has created much conflict and distrust between police and youth in major cities throughout the United States. In New York City, for example,

several Puerto Rican youth have lost their lives as a result of conflicts with police. These incidents have enraged the Puerto Rican community and added to the general hostility felt towards police by both adults and youth.

The young adults in the focus groups in this study clearly stated that police officers did not treat them with respect and had a tendency to profile them as perpetrators of crime based on the officers' perceived stereotypes. They also indicated that they did not trust police officers. Some researchers have found that negative contacts with police have, indeed, influenced how youth view police. According to Gains, Kappeler, and Voughn (1994, p.343), youth view police less positively than adults after negative interactions with them. These authors posit that the reasons for this include (Gains, Kappeler and Voughn 1994, p.343):

- (1) youth resistance to authority figures and issues of control,
- (2) the fact that youth value their freedom, and feel police infringe upon their freedom when they stop them without explanations or are rude to them, and
- (3) youth have more negative contacts with police

In addition, for some youth such as Puerto Ricans, there is the question of race and ethnicity, as society tends to assume that the typical crime victim is white and the typical offender is African-American or Hispanic/Puerto Rican (Walker S., Spohn C., and DeLone M. 2000, p. 25-27).

One recommendation that should be considered by the New York City Police Department is to work closer with youth and to form collaborative relationships to help repair the damage created by lack of trust, anger, perceived stereotypes and hopelessness realized by many of the Puerto Rican youth of New York City.

Although the youth respondents in this study expressed negative feelings about police officers, they also expressed a willingness to talk things over with police officers. Puerto Rican police officers and Puerto Rican youth appear to be interested in seriously discussing the issues and problems hindering their relationship. The Police Department needs to identify police officers who can be trained to facilitate workshops on conflict and dispute-resolution or on issues of human dignity in order to empower Puerto Rican officers and Puerto Rican youth to improve their understanding of each other through dialogue. The Police Department needs to identify officers who can be good at group facilitation because not all police officers will be able to adapt to the skills of mediation (Volpe 1989, p.234).

Mediators are "neutral and impartial third parties," who do not partake in the decision making process and unlike police they do not exert their authority (Volpe 1989, p.234). Negotiation and dialogue between police and youth can assist in reforming policies and creating better methods of implementing community policing strategies that are aimed at working with youth. Fostering better communication and positive contact with youth will help to relieve animosity, tension and frustration between police and Puerto Rican youth.

Gains, Kappler and Voughn (1994, p.344), also maintain that police departments need to work on their relationship with youth by providing better training and by developing programs that produce positive contacts with youth. While the New York City Police Department has attempted to work with youth through programs such as Law Enforcement Explorers, and the Cops and Kids project, Puerto Rican youth do not attend

these programs in massive numbers. Thus, the Police Department has to reach out to Puerto Rican youth in a broader, more extensive manner. The Police Department needs to have its CPOP personnel visit schools more frequently and develop workshops to work with students and young adults.

Puerto Rican youth need to be included in the decision making process of community policing initiatives and in the activities of police/community relations. The police, as well as Puerto Rican youth, need a more structured forum through which sensitive areas of concern can be addressed and resolved in a peaceful environment.

The police department should also work with existing organizations that work to develop leadership skills in Puerto Rican youth such as ASPIRA. ASPIRA is an organization that assists in organizing Puerto Rican/Latino youth to work in what they call “clubs” which are vehicles to help youth learn about the importance of their Puerto Rican roots, about leadership development, community involvement, and about the importance of acquiring a college education (Pantoja 2002, p.94). ASPIRA and other community based organizations, such as PRACA (Puerto Rican Association for Community Action), hold conferences for youth every year (Pantoja 2002, pg. 94). For example, at the youth conferences held by these organizations police could conduct workshops on improving police/community relations. The New York City Police Department should develop collaborative relationships with ASPIRA, PRACA, Puerto Rican Legal Defense Fund, The National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights, and other community based organizations which have been successful at organizing both youth and adults in the community. The New York City Police Department could work on these

efforts in collaboration with colleges especially institutions that have conflict and dispute resolution experts who can assist with efforts to improve police/youth relations in Puerto Rican communities. The organized collaborative programs suggested above would be more tangible and productive than unstructured meetings.

Buerger (1994, p.272) asserts that gearing community efforts towards work with community based organizations which are committed to empowering the community on a long term basis does more for community policing initiatives than symbolic gestures of a partnership that may never materialize. Buerger (1994 pg.273) states it best when he says:

The real community healing must be done by outreach, by pouring into a seemingly bottomless hole of need those things that are taken for granted in the nostalgic sense of community' we allude to: teaching everyone's children a sense of self-worth, seeing that they do not go hungry, or without medical care or an adequate education; insisting on economic opportunities for all members of community, support services for those who need it, and most important, membership in the community,' which is bestowed, not earned by trial.

#### Education, Training and Development

In the area of education and training, there is some evidence that the NYPD recruit officer training curriculum stresses crime fighting, aggressive pursuit of law offenders, respect for the human dignity of all, courtesy professionalism and respect/integrity. Yet, both the community and police officer respondents in this study indicated that they received little respect for their human dignity and little or no courtesy from the police department.

Training is an essential ingredient in the professional preparation of any profession and is certainly significant in the professional preparation of the police. Lack

of training or poor training will eventually surface in insensitivity when responding to any situation. However, despite the literature's emphasis on the importance of training for police in community policing and cultural diversity, there are few, if any, reports of truly comprehensive and effective approaches to police training.

So, how do we bring police officers closer to meeting the goals of community policing? Through training without a doubt, but exactly what kind of training? Clearly, some training must address ethnic studies/cultural diversity if we want our police to stay abreast of issues in the Puerto Rican community as well as in other of New York City's many diverse communities. If we want police to embrace the initiatives that enhance police/community relations, then training has to incorporate skill-development in problem-identification and problem-solving. These areas have however been identified in training evaluations as areas where there is insufficient coverage. In the McElroy, Cosgrove and Sadd (1993) Study of community policing in New York City, for example, respondents called more frequently for "more training for CPO's [community police officers]" than for any other response or adjustment on the part of Police Department. In this study, Puerto Rican police officer respondents also noted significant deficiencies in actual training programs and suggested that more training is needed. Police respondents asserted that they would have to learn skills in community organizing, communications and problem solving. As was mentioned in the literature review, community policing incorporates social service concepts as well as prevention, problem solving and community organization. Thus, training should perhaps include social work theories of practice, psychology or even sociology. Inclusion of material from these disciplines

brings us to the question of whether police training should be done by a college or University?

Many of the community and police officer respondents spoke about the need of a college education for police officers. Considering that police officers apply much more than physical strength and courage in their work and, that for the most part, officers need to use judgement, reasoning ability, knowledge of the law, cultural diversity, critical thinking and communication skills, it would seem that a college education can best provide these skills and abilities required. Studies also suggest that police participation in accredited educational institutions, builds greater morale, helps with job stress reduction and increases educational opportunities (Macabe and Fajardo 2001, p.128).

According to Lynch (1999, p.112-113), in order to join all other professions, individuals must attain a university-based education. He maintains that local law enforcement continues to rely on "insular non-degree granting [training] in academies" which separate police from the rest of society. This separation not only creates disparities with their colleagues in state and federal law enforcement but also "prevents policing from becoming a true profession." The model of police academies as restricted or isolated training institutions dates back to the history of policing when no need for education was perceived. U.S. Federal Law Enforcement Agencies, on the other hand, have required a college education and encouraged graduate degrees in law and accounting since the appointment of FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, several decades ago (Lynch 1999, p.113).

Most of the police officers in this study indicated that a college degree was necessary. These officers said that a college education would expose officers to a diversity of people interested in learning and personal growth. According to both the police and community respondents, a college education would provide opportunities to learn about historical tensions between communities, diversity in this country, and about governmental theory, management styles, leadership development, and practice including the structure and function of the overall criminal justice system.

Some of the officers mentioned that the government should assist them to obtain a college degree by providing funding for tuition. This would not be a new venture for our government. The Johnson administration during the 1960's actually developed a program titled the Law Enforcement Education Program (LEEP), which provided financial assistance for police officers who wished to obtain college degrees. Approximately 150,000 police officers received baccalaureate degrees as a result of this program (Lynch 1999, p. 114).

In the summer of 2001, the New York City Council funded a 12 credit certificate program in New York City Police Studies at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. The program intended to assist New York City Police Officers to return to college in order to earn credits to meet the Departments promotion requirements and, to encourage these officers to continue on to complete a baccalaureate degree. The New York City Police Department has worked collaboratively with John Jay College to enroll their members in this program. This collaborative effort is good, both for the police and the community, because it demonstrated to both that their suggestions are being implemented.

Some of the courses in this program were designed to prepare officers to recognize the multiple aspects of crime and its impact on families and diverse ethnic communities. The program seeks to prepare officers to make better assessments of the complex problems that plague New York City's diverse communities. The course objectives should help officers learn a myriad of methods on problem solving methods and leadership skills. The program will serve to strengthen the rapport between citizens and police officers because police officers will gain knowledge about the culture of various New York City communities and also learn how best to meet the needs of these communities.

The following two quotes are from students' papers in a "Police Supervision in Multi-cultural City" class demonstrate the value of college courses for police officers:

The reading, class discussions and work groups make one think about the amount of injustices among minorities in the country and that more attention needs to be focused on this issue.

My thoughts on the research and course in general conclude that there was much I needed to learn about diverse communities and their interaction with the criminal justice system. What I learned has in many ways opened my eyes to the reality of our society. What I as an individual can do to avoid being part of the hereditary pull of tension between minority communities and police is apply what I have learned in class by means of teaching others within the police department.

This kind of university-based education and training also offers an opportunity for police officers to gain a wide range of skills and knowledge not received during basic police academy training. In addition, officers become members of a community that has a civilian perspective. As college students, officers are also exposed to different instructional approaches and to people who are knowledgeable in a wide range of disciplines related to policing. In the area of training, the

police department needs to "develop clear training objectives by identifying the role that both in-service training and recruit training will play in facilitating organizational change to the community policing philosophy" (Jones 1995, p.23), that is now incorporated in the NYPD's new Compstat initiative. This may entail redesigning the current curriculum, adding new methodologies, and establishing collaborative partnerships with other government institutions and institutions of higher education (Jones 1995, pp. 20,23). The Police Department also has to develop training that seeks to build bridges of understanding and addresses ways of respecting the dignity not only of the community but also of the members of the Police Department itself. Training should empower police officers to determine whether the policies and existing rules of the Police Department are adequate to meet the needs of the Puerto Rican and other ethnic communities, as well as, the needs of police officers themselves. Knowledge of a community and high police officer morale are essential to the rendering of quality services. Police training should offer greater opportunity to assess the changes that are needed in the ways police do their jobs, the ways they perceive themselves, their role, and the communities they serve (Curran and Rothlein 1999, p.52). In addition, as some of the police officer participants of this study maintained, training cannot be just a forum for distributing information. Quality training does not view participants as just "recipients of information." Instead, it creates a collaborative learning approach, which incorporates their experience, knowledge and analysis (Curran and Rothlein 1999, p. 52).

John Jay college of Criminal Justice in New York City has developed such a training program which fosters a mutuality of understanding between citizens and police in a course called "Human Dignity and the Police" (Curran and Rothlein 1999, p.52). The rationale for

developing the course is based on the "painful reality" that, throughout the world, the relationship between police and the people they serve is full of strife and controversy (Curran and Rothlein 1999, p.50). Police-citizen interaction, as noted by all of the participants in this study, cannot continue to be limited to complaints of rude, insensitive or unprofessional police behavior Curran and Rothlein 1999, p.59). For any new police strategy to continue to succeed police must assess their relationship with the public.

The "Human Dignity and the Police" course makes use of a diversity of experimental learning approaches, which include role play, simulations, case studies and structured exercises, that assist police officers in examining the results of negative interactions and the power of authority figures (Curran and Rothlein 1999, p.59). In this vein, the course seeks to have participants recognize the following according to Curran and Rothlein (1999, p.57):

that violations of human dignity leave permanent scars; that persons in authority can do a great deal of harm [or good] in carrying out their responsibilities; that police are part of a subculture prone to in-group, out group, we-they attitudes that interfere with objective analysis; that there are reasons why social outcasts are estranged from the larger society; and that, given adequate self-reflection, attitudes and behaviors can change.

Human dignity and the police is, therefore, viewed as a course that encourages police officers to treat community residents and each other in more humane and caring ways. Since this is what the Puerto Rican community and Puerto Rican police officers are identifying as a need, then it is recommended that the Police Department assess how such a course can be incorporated into their curriculum through a collaborative partnership with John Jay College.

Overall, the findings of this study reveal that adults as well as young adults in the Puerto Rican community are open and prepared to work and cooperate with the New York City Police

Department on vital issues including: crime prevention, discrimination, youth alienation, abuse of authority and brutality. The Puerto Rican community is also anxious to participate fully in the NYPD's Community Policing Initiatives. The Puerto Rican community is however looking for a real hands on commitment from the police department rather than "lip-service that will not contribute to problem solving" (Cheurprakobkit and Baetsch 1999 p.94).

Based on the findings of this study, the New York City Police Department needs to develop a much more meaningful and trusting relationship with the Puerto Rican community in New York City. In addition, the Department should explore ways of involving, its extraordinary and available resource, its Puerto Rican Police Officers, in the effort to improve the quality of services and the overall police/community relationship in New York City's Puerto Rican communities. This study clearly indicates that Puerto Rican Police Officers have a genuine commitment to working with the Puerto Rican community. This commitment can lead to the identification of problems and subsequently to the resolution of these problems. Moreover, the study further points to the need for the Department to examine programs that are currently in place to determine if they can be enhanced and connected more effectively to community policing initiatives. Two such programs are the NYPD Cadet Program and The NYPD Citizen's Police Academy.

This study indicates that police officers need more education and training. In addition, some study respondents pointed out that community members also need to be educated about police policies, practices and programs. Community education must be included in any outreach program that the police department implements. The NYPD Citizens Police Academy is a vehicle, which is already in place to educate the community. As mentioned previously in this

study, the Citizen's Police Academy shares the Police Academy curriculum with community members in the hope of informing these citizens about the training of new police officers. In this effort, the community participants learn about police practices, policies and procedures and how they can they can assist police (Cohn, 1996, p.265).

The inclusion of more instruction and literature on issues of race and ethnicity in both the Police Academy and the CPA curricula will reassure the community that the Police Department is educating its officers in the cultures of New York City's communities. In addition, more class time, in both academies, needs to be allocated to discussion aimed at resolving police/community conflicts. *This conflict resolution orientation would further encourage citizens and police to examine values and concerns of groups and cultures other than their own.* This process can be facilitated by the development of coalitions and collaborative efforts linking the Police Department, community based organizations and institutions of higher education.

Throughout this study the concept of collaboration has surfaced in the voices of the Puerto Rican community, Puerto Rican police officers and researchers work throughout the literature review. By engaging in an assessment of how collaborative initiatives facilitate better partnerships both within and outside of the institution, the NYPD can improve training, community partnerships and overall police morale. Based on the findings of this study, focused approaches on collaborative efforts can lead to partnerships which can generate greater commitment from administrators, police officers, community members, agencies and organizations throughout the city.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

**Instructions to Participants: Please read Carefully**

Participation in this study is voluntary. There will be no penalty or loss should you decide not to participate. **You may stop or withdraw your participation from this study at any time, even after you begin, your withdrawal will not affect you or the study in any way.**

Your identity as a participant in this research project will remain **confidential** with regards to any publications and oral presentations on the results of this study. Your answers in this study will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. A copy of this consent will be made available to you.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study after you have completed this interview you should contact me at:

Carmen L. Solis (212) 237-8934 or (212) 932-8155

If in the course of the research I find that a follow-up is required, I will be in contact with you.

---

**As a participant I will be asked to do the following:**

To participate in a face to face interview of approximately 1.5 hours in length. The interview will be conducted by the researcher (Carmen L. Solis) only. The researcher will ask me to respond to a series of questions which focus on my perceptions of police officers, community policing initiatives, police brutality and training needs for police officers. I can stop at any time and no longer participate. my withdrawal from the study will not effect me in any way.

**The following Risks may be involved a result of my participation:**

The researcher does not anticipate any risks involved as a result of your participation in this study. If you feel there is a problem or have any concerns Please discuss this with the researcher so that appropriate action can be taken.

**The following benefits are expected as a result of this study:**

- The Puerto Rican community will be empowered by the opportunity to: a) Voice their perceptions of and experiences with New York City Police. b) Discuss ideas and recommend improvements in police/community relationships, community policing strategies and the quality of life in their neighborhoods.
  - The Puerto Rican Community will be educated about Community Policing initiatives.
  - The Police Department will gain knowledge about their interactions with the Puerto Rican Community of New York City.
-

I volunteer to participate in the research study under the supervision of Carmen L. Solis. I understand the information provided about what I will be asked to do as a participant, and I have the opportunity to ask questions with respect to my participation. All of the questions I did ask were answered to my satisfaction.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Instrucciones para Participantes: Favor de leer con mucho cuidado**

Su participacion en este estudio es voluntaria. **Si desea dejar de participar en el estudio, despues de haber comenzado, puede hacerlo con entera libertad.** Su decision de no participar en el estudio no lo afectara a usted o al estudio en ninguna forma.

Su identidad como participante en este estudio sera mantenida en entera confidencialidad con respecto a publicaciones y presentaciones orales que se efectuen sobre los resultados del mismo. Sus contestaciones en el estudio seran mantenidas en forma confidencial hasta donde la ley lo permita. Una copia del consentimiento se le hara llegar a cada uno de ustedes.

Si usted tiene alguna pregunta sobre este estudio depues de haber participado en la entrevista favor de llamar a la Srta. Carmen L. Solis al telefono:(212) 2378173. \_\_\_\_\_

**Para participar en este estudio se le solicitara lo siguiente:**

Participar en una entrevista de aproximadamente 1 1/2 horas. La entrevista sera conducida por la Srta. Carmen Solis. Ella me hara una serie de preguntas dirigidas a escuchar mis opiniones y/o ideas en relacion a la policia, el abuso policial, y los policias de la comunidad. Si deseo dejar de participar en el estudio, despues de haber comenzado, puedo harcerlo con entera libertad.

**Los siguientes riesgos pueden ocurrir como resultado de mi participacion:**

La investigadora no anticipa ningun riesgo como resultado de su participacion en este estudio. Si usted cree que hay, o que puede haber un problema, o si tiene cualquier preocupacion, por favor hable con la investigadora para que ella pueda tomar la accion apropiada.

**Los siguiente beneficios se esperan como resultado de este estudio:**

1. La comunidad Puertorriquena adquirira mayor fuerza al tener la oportunidad de:
  - a. expresar sus percepciones y/o experencias con la policia de Neuva York;
  - b. discutir ideas y recomendar formas de mejorar las relaciones entre la comunidad y la policia, y la calidad de vida en sus vecindarios.
  - c. recibir informacion sobre las iniciativas de la policia de la comunidad.
2. El Departamento de la Policia conozera mejor a la Comunidad Puertorriquena atravez de las interacciones entre ambos.

\_\_\_\_\_ Deseo participar en este estudio bajo la supervision de la Srta. Carmen Solis. Entiendo todos los requisitos para partisipar en este estudio. Tuve la oportunidad de hacer preguntas y todas las preguntas que hice fueron contestadas a mi satisfaccion.

\_signitura

fecha \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix B

## Police Officers: Community Policing Guide

### Personal Data

1. Gender \_\_\_\_\_M \_\_\_\_\_F      2. Age\_\_\_\_\_

3. Ethnic Group\_\_\_\_\_

4. Educational Level

a. High School Diploma  B. Some College

c. College Graduate  d. Other\_\_\_\_\_

5. Where were you born \_\_\_\_\_

6. How long have you lived in New York \_\_\_\_\_

7. Where do you live in New York? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Do You...?(mark all that apply)

a. write  read  Speak  Spanish  English

b. only understand Spanish  English

9. Are you...?

a. single\_\_\_\_\_      b. married\_\_\_\_\_      c. divorced\_\_\_\_\_

d. single head of household\_\_\_\_\_      e. other\_\_\_\_\_

**Police Officers: Community Policing Guide  
Questions**

1. Why did you become a police officer?
2. What do you like about working for the Police Department?
3. What are some of the things you don't like?
4. What is your understanding of Community Policing ?
5. What efforts or changes do you think police officers need to make for community policing to work?
6. In your opinion, why are some police officers resisting the community policing strategies?
7. What community policing strategies would assist Police officers in understanding the Puerto Rican community better?
8. Do you think that the Puerto Rican Community is well informed about community policing?

9. How do you think the Puerto Rican community views your role as a police officer?
  
10. In your opinion, what is the role of the Puerto Rican community in helping the police resolve problems?
  
11. What do think is the role of Puerto Rican community in the Community Policing Process?
  
12. What kind of things are the police doing to improve relationships with the Puerto Rican Community?
  
13. What do you think the police can do to reduce any problems, conflicts and tensions between police and Puerto Ricans?
  
14. What type of commitment is there from the top brass to the success of community policing?
  
15. What is your opinion of the multicultural training, if any, offered to officers?

16. Does this training sensitize police officers effectively to work with Puerto Rican and other Hispanic communities?
17. How do you think the training can be improved?
18. What do think about the recent allegations of racial and ethnic discrimination within the Police Department?
19. Have you experienced kind of discrimination?
20. Do you know of police officers who have been discriminated against?
21. How does the department handle racial or ethnic discrimination among their own?
22. What do you think about officers who discriminate or have problems in dealing with the Puerto Rican Community?

- A. Are there many of these officers?
- B. Can you discuss any particular situations?
- C. What do you think about how racial or ethnically biased situations are handled?
23. Recently the department has had to deal with some cases of alleged police brutality, how do these situations affect you as a police officer?
24. How do you think police brutality situations should be handled?
25. What do you think about higher educational requirement for police officers?
26. How do you think a college education would specifically help Puerto Rican/Latino and non-Latino officers in working with the Puerto Rican Community?



**Young Adult Focus Groups: Community Policing Guide**

1. What is your overall opinion of police officers?
2. In your opinion, what are some of the problems that Puerto Rican Young adults face when dealing with police?

3. How have any conflicts or tensions with police influenced the way you think or feel about police officers?

Probe: Can you discuss any conflicts or negative experiences you may have had with police officers?

4. How have any good experiences influenced the way you think about police?

Probe: Have you had any positive experiences with Police Officers?

5. Are you aware or have any knowledge of any racial or ethnic discrimination by police officers in your community?

6. What do you think about police brutality?

Probe: Have you ever seen or experienced police brutality in your neighborhood? How did that make you feel? What impression did it leave you with about the police?

7. What do you think you can do to help resolve any problems with police officers?
8. What do you think the police can do to reduce the problems, conflicts and tensions between police and Puerto Ricans in your community?
9. What do you know about community policing?
10. How do you think the police are reaching out to help educate your community about community policing efforts?
11. Have you ever been asked to participate in any training for community police officers?
12. What kind of training do you think a community police officer needs?
13. What do you think the role of a community police officer should be in your community?
14. What do you see as your role in the community policing process?

**Young Adult: Focus Group Question Guide****Personal Data**

1. Age \_\_\_\_\_
2. Highest Educational level Completed \_\_\_\_\_
3. Gender \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_ F
4. Were you...?
  - a. Born and raised in the USA. \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no
  - b. If no, where were you born \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. How long have you lived in New York \_\_\_\_\_
5. Do you...? ( mark all that apply)
  - a. write  read  and speak  Spanish and English
  - b. only understand Spanish , English
6. Please indicate the borough you live in
  - a. Manhattan \_\_\_\_\_ b. the Bronx \_\_\_\_\_ c. Brooklyn \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Queens \_\_\_\_\_
7. Do you live with...?
  - a. one parent Mother  Father
  - b. both parents

**Adult: Community Policing Guide****Personal Data**

1. Age \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Gender \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_ F
3. Education
- a. Elementary School \_\_\_\_\_ b. High School \_\_\_\_\_ c. Some College \_\_\_\_\_ d. Education \_\_\_\_\_
- College Graduate \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Graduate school \_\_\_\_\_ f. Other \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
5. Where were You born \_\_\_\_\_
6. How long have you lived in New York \_\_\_\_\_
7. Do You...? (mark all that apply)
- a. write ( ) read ( ) and speak ( ) Spanish ( ) English ( ) fluently
- b. only understand Spanish ( ) English ( )
8. Please indicate the borough where you live
- a. Bronx \_\_\_\_\_ b. Brooklyn \_\_\_\_\_ c. Manhattan \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Queens \_\_\_\_\_ e. Staten Island \_\_\_\_\_
9. Are you...?
- a. Single \_\_\_\_\_ b. Married \_\_\_\_\_ c. Divorced \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Single Head of Household \_\_\_\_\_ e. Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Adult: Community Policing Questions Guide**

1. What crime problems have you observed in your community?
  - A. Do you think drugs are a problem?
  - B. Can you talk about some of things you may have heard or seen?
  - C. How does this problem affect you or your family?
2. What is your overall opinion of police officers?
3. What do you think are some of the problems that the Puerto Rican community faces when dealing with police?
4. How have any conflicts or tensions with police influenced the way you think or feel about police officers?

A. Can you discuss any conflicts or negative experiences you may have had with police officers?

5. How have any good experiences influenced the way you think about police?

A. Have you had any positive experiences with Police Officers?

6. Are you aware or have any knowledge of any racial or ethnic discrimination by police officers in your community?

7. What do you think about police brutality?

Probe: Have you ever seen or experienced police brutality in your neighborhood?

How did that make you feel? What impression did it leave you with about the police?

8. What do you think you can do to help resolve these problems?

9. What do you think the police can do to reduce any problems, conflicts and tensions between police and Puerto Ricans?



17. Have you ever been asked to participate in designing training for community police officers?
18. How do you think the Puerto Rican community can contribute to the training police officers?
19. In your opinion what is the role of Puerto Rican community in community policing and in helping the police reduce criminal activities in your community?
20. What do you think should be the role of the Puerto Rican community?
21. Do you think the police is reaching out enough to help educate your community about community policing efforts?
22. What do you think the role of a community police officer should be in your community?
23. What do you see as your role in the community policing process?

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