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95-IJ-CX-0058

A Cross - Cultural Study of Police Corruption:
Perceptions of Offense Seriousness

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A Paper presented to the American Society of Criminology Annual Meeting
November 1995, Boston, Mass.

By virtue of the fact that policing is a highly discretionary, coercive activity that routinely takes place in private settings, out of the sight of supervisors, and before witnesses who are often regarded as unreliable, it is, as the history of virtually every police agency in the world bears testimony, an occupation that is ripe with opportunities for misconduct of many types.¹ One type of misconduct, corruption - the abuse of police authority *for gain* - has been particularly problematic.² Contributing to the difficulties of controlling corruption is not only the reluctance of police officers to report corrupt activities of their fellow officers - a phenomenon sometimes identified as *The Code* or the *Blue Curtain*³ - and the reluctance of police administrators to admit the existence of corruption, but also the fact that the typical corrupt transaction benefits the parties to it and thus leaves no immediate victim-complainant to call attention to it.

Until relatively recently, at least in the United States, the administrative view of corruption

¹Histories of police that document the abiding prevalence of corruption are too numerous to list here. The most thorough scholarly explorations of the temptations to corruption in contemporary policing include G. Marx, *Surveillance* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991); M. Punch, *Conduct Unbecoming: The Social Construction of Police Deviance and Control* (London: Tavistock, 1986); P.K. Manning and L. Redlinger, "The Invitational Edges of Police Construction," in C. Klockars and S. Mastrofski (eds.) *Thinking about Police* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1993) pp. 398-412; and J. Rubinstein, *City Police* (New York: Ballinger, 1973)

²The *for gain* dimension of corruption typically distinguishes it from other forms of police misconduct such as brutality. There is, however, debate over whether the definition of police corruption should include various forms of the use of police authority for police political, organizational, or strategic gain. See C. Klockars and S. Mastrofski (eds.) *op. cit.*; C. Klockars, *Thinking about Police* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1983); L. Sherman, *Scandal and Reform* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1978); H. Goldstein, *Policing a Free Society* (Cambridge: Ballinger, 1977), and H. Goldstein, *Police Corruption: Perspective on its Nature and Control* (Washington, DC: The Police Foundation, 1975):.

³See W.K. Muir, *Police: Streetcorner Politicians* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press and E. Stoddard in C. Klockars (ed.) *op. cit.*

was to see it as largely reflective of the moral defects of individual police officers⁴ and to fight corruption by carefully screening applicants for police positions, pursuing defective officers aggressively, and removing them from their police positions before their behavior spread throughout the agency. Sometimes referred to as the "bad apple" theory of police corruption, it has been largely discredited in recent years.⁵

Although high quality research on corruption is severely limited,⁶ contemporary approaches to corruption stress the importance of four dimensions of corruption that go beyond the understanding of corruption as a problem of the moral defects of individual "bad-apple" police officers. Unlike the individualistic approach to police corruption, each of these four dimensions is profoundly social and organizational in nature.

Organizational Rules

The first of these dimensions is organizational rules and the manner in which they are made,

⁴The capacity to predict police integrity from psychological testing is extremely limited: J.E. Taller and LD. Hinz, *Performance Prediction of Public Safety and Law Enforcement Personnel* (Springfield, Ill: C. Thomas, 1990); E.J. Delattre, *Character and Cops* (Washington, D.C.: The American Enterprise Institute, 1989); J. Malouff and N.S. Schutte, "Using Biographical Information to Hire the Best New Police Officers," (1980) *Journal of Police Science and Administration* 14: 256-67; R.E. Daley, "The Relationship of Personality Variables to Suitability for Police Work," (1980) *DAI* 44:1551-69.

⁵The analytical assault on the understanding of corruption as a problem of individually defective police officers was begun by Goldstein in *op. cit.* (1975) and continued in Goldstein, *op. cit.* (1977). It has, however, taken more than a decade for most U.S. police agencies to embrace and begin to act upon Goldstein's pioneering analysis..

⁶Spurred at least in part by the national attention given to a corruption scandal in New York City, documented in *The Knapp Commission Report on Police Corruption* (New York: George Brazillier, 1972), the 1970's produced a substantial number of serious studies of police corruption. Since 1980, scholarly attention to police corruption has been minimal, reflecting, at least in part, a shift in both public interest and federal funding priorities. This change in research activity occurred despite the fact that the spread of drug usage during the 1980's created tremendous new opportunities for corruption. See D.L. Carter, "Drug-Related Corruption of Police Officers: A Contemporary Typology" (1990) *Journal of Criminal Justice* 18: 88-98.

communicated, and understood. In nations in which police are highly decentralized (e.g., the United States) police organizations differ markedly in what they officially prohibit as corrupt behavior.⁷ This is particularly true of marginally or *mala prohibita* corrupt behavior such as off-duty employment, receipt of favors, gratuities, small gifts, free meals, and discounts. The problem is further complicated by the fact that in many agencies while the official policy formally prohibits such activities, the *agency's* unofficial policy, supported firmly but in silence by supervisors and administrators is to permit and ignore such behaviors provided that it is limited and conducted discretely

Corruption Control Techniques

The second organizational dimension of corruption is the whole range of activities police agencies employ to prevent and control it. These include, but are not limited to education in ethics, proactive and reactive corruption investigation, integrity testing, and the general deterrence of corruption by the discipline and punishment of offenders. The extent to which these and other organizational anti-corruption techniques are employed varies enormously.

"The Code"

The third organizational dimension of corruption has already been mentioned. It is "The Code" or the "Blue Curtain" - the informal prohibition in the occupational culture of policing against reporting the misconduct of fellow police officers. Two features of The Code bear emphasis here

First, exactly what behavior is covered by The Code varies *enormously* between police agencies. In some agencies it may cover only relatively low-level corruption; in others it may cover corruption of even the most serious degree. Secondly, *The Code* not only differs in what behavior it

⁷R.J. McCormack, *Corruption in the Subculture of Policing: An Empirical Study of Police-Officer Perceptions*. (1986) Unpublished Ph.. D. Dissertation. See also Muir, *op. cit.*

covers but to whom the benefit of its coverage is extended. In some agencies The Code is largely limited to police *partners* who enjoy *vis a vi* one another, a testimonial immunity that police liken to traditionally privileged relationships between husband and wife, physician and patient, or lawyer and client.

While most police administrators probably understand that circumscribing both whom and what The Code covers should be an administrative priority,⁸ the Code develops in virtually every police agency as a response to the punitive orientation of the quasi-military police administrative system. Put too crudely, quasi-military police administration works by creating hundreds and sometimes thousands of rules and punishing deviations from those rules severely. It is a sociological inevitability that under such administrative and organizational conditions some form of The Code will evolve.⁹

The Influence of Public Expectations on Police Integrity

The fourth and final dimension of police corruption to which contemporary police theory gives emphasis is the influence of the social and political environment in which police institutions, systems, and agencies operate.¹⁰ Even within the same country, as United States history illustrates

⁸T. Barker and R.O. Wells, "Police Administrator's Attitudes toward Definition and Control of Police Deviance," *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*. (1982) 51 (4): 8-16.

⁹On this and other unfortunate consequences of the quasi-military organization of police see E. Bittner, *The Functions of Police in Modern Society* (Chevy Chase, MD: NIMH, 1970 and *Aspects of Police Work* (Boston: Boston University Press, 1990); C.B. Klockars, *The Idea of Police* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1985); T. Jefferson, *The Case against Paramilitary Policing* (Milton Keynes, England: Open University Press, 1990); D. Guyot, *Policing as though People Matter* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991)

¹⁰Although this understanding is the tacit assumption of virtually all historical studies of police, it received, to our knowledge, its first systematic exploration by A.J. Reiss, Jr. and D.J. Bordua in "Environment and Organization: A Perspective on the Police" in D. Bordua, *The Police: Six Sociological Essays* (ed.) (New York: John Wiley, 1967) and in A.J. Reiss, Jr., *The Police*

there are areas with long and virtually uninterrupted traditions of police corruption (e.g. Chicago, New Orleans, Key West), equally long traditions of minimal corruption (e.g.. Milwaukee, Kansas City, Seattle), and still others that have undergone repeated cycles of scandal and reform (e.g.. New York, Philadelphia, Oakland). From such histories we may conclude not only that public expectations about police integrity exert vastly different pressures on police agencies in different areas but also that public pressures toward corruption may be successfully resisted,

Corruption Research: Theory, Method, and Police Administration

It is, of course, possible to bring many types of theory to the study of police corruption. The theoretical approach outlined above employs an organizational/occupational-culture approach with at least two fortuitous consequences. The first is that many of the theoretical questions and issues that emerge from such an approach are of direct relevance to practical police administration. For example, the corruption theory advanced above maintains that there is a direct relationship between the punitive orientation of the quasi-military police administrative system and the abiding presence of The Code in the occupational culture of policing. Sociologically, one might predict that the more punitive the administrative orientation is perceived by line police officers to be, the stronger The Code will be as well.

Police administrators are, however, sharply divided over the perception of administrative punitiveness they wish to encourage. Some seek to cultivate a reputation for administrative fairness in discipline and empathy for the line police officer's lot. They believe that such a reputation will

and the Public (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971). The specific application of these principles to police corruption was first advanced by Goldstein in his *Police Corruption* (1975) and later in his *Policing a Free Society* (1977). Both points inform the recent Croatian publication by J.Sintic (ed.) *Uloga Policije u Demokratskom Drustvu* (The Role of the Police in Democratic Society) (ZagebL Ministry of the Interior: 1995).

encourage loyalty to the agency, enhance respect for the administration. And diminish the perceived need for The Code as a mechanism of defense. In contrast, other police administrators believe in the virtue of developing a fearsome disciplinary reputation. They argue that the way to circumscribe The Code is to make the cost of adhering to it extremely high. It is possible that both strategies are effective, that neither is, or that one is superior to the other. These are empirical questions about which, at present, we have no systematic empirical evidence.

Questions and problems of this sort lead to the second virtue of contemporary organizational/occupational-culture theories of corruption: their amenability to empirical study. Corruption is extremely difficult to study in a direct, quantitative, empirical manner. Because most corruption incidents are never reported or recorded official data on corruption is best regarded as a measure of police agency anti-corruption activity than the actual level of corruption. Police officers are unlikely to be willing to candidly report their own or other's corrupt activities, even in the face of assurances of confidentiality by researchers.

In contrast to these limitations on direct study, the major propositions of the contemporary corruption theory are questions of *fact and opinion* that can be explored directly and without anything like the resistance that direct inquiries about corrupt *behavior* are likely to provoke. It is, for example, possible to ask factual questions about officers' *knowledge* of agency rules and questions of officers' *opinions* about the seriousness of their violation, the punishment they deserve or are likely to receive, and their estimates of willingness of officers to report such behavior without asking them directly about their own or others' corrupt *behavior*.

The Research Design

In April of 1995 we designed and pretested a questionnaire that sought to accomplish two

ends. First, it sought measure in a systematic, empirical, quantitative manner five questions that are crucial to both an organizational/occupational-culture theory of police corruption and to practical police administration:

1. What is the level of knowledge of organizational rules governing corruption?
2. How strongly does the occupational culture support these rules?
3. To what extent does The Code protect officers who violate agency rules prohibiting corrupt behavior?
4. To what extent do the ethics of individual police officers depart from the norms of The Code?
5. What is the relationship between the perceived severity of punishment of corruption and the strength of The Code?

Our second aspiration in designing our questionnaire was to do so in a manner that would permit its administration cross-culturally. This aspiration presented some interesting design problems that we shall discuss below.

To accomplish both ends we designed a questionnaire that presented eleven brief scenarios describing a range of corrupt practices which are common in modern, industrial societies. Included as well were one scenario describing an incident of excessive use of force as well as another that described a behavior - conducting an off-duty, security system business - that may be permitted by policy in some police agencies and prohibited in others. The scenarios are summarized in Figure 1 below.

As mentioned above, because we sought to use this questionnaire in cross-cultural

applications special attention was given to creating case scenarios that were as near as possible culturally-neutral - in the sense that they would describe situations familiar to citizens and represent equivalent acts in any modern industrial society.

The first problem that a study of corruption - police abuse of authority *for gain* - faces in achieving cultural neutrality of this kind is the different meaning of money in different cultures. A bribe of \$50 U.S. has a clearly different meaning to a U.S. police officer who earns \$40,000 per year and an Eastern European police officer who earns the annual equivalent of \$12,000 U.S. . Conversion of U.S. currency to the currency of some other nation at prevailing exchange rates does not solve this problem.

In the scenarios we created that involved monetary gain we attempted to resolve this problem by expressing the gain in terms of some local value equivalent. In Case 3 we describe the value of a bribe for ignoring a speeding violation as worth one half the value of the fine. In Case 4 we describe the value of a watch taken in an opportunistic theft as worth about two days pay would supply an appropriate holiday from their own culture. In addition, we avoided specific mention of occasions that in the U.S. and some other cultures are occasions for gift-giving to police. Instead of "Christmas" we used "holiday" on the assumption that respondents in nations without a dominant Christian tradition (e.g. Israel, Turkey).

Respondents were asked seven questions about each of these scenarios. The responses, summarized in Figure 2 below, were designed to provide answers to the five questions posed in the discussion of the research design above for that officer. Similarly, we describe in Case 6 an auto-repair kickback scene as producing a reward for the officer of 5% of the value of the repair.

Figure 1: Corruption Case-Scenarios

- Case 1.** A police officer runs his own private business in which he sells and installs security devices, such as alarms, special locks, etc. He does this work during his off-duty hours.
- Case 2.** A police officer routinely accepts free meals, cigarettes, and other items of small value from merchants on his beat. He does not solicit these gifts and is careful not to abuse the generosity of those who give gifts to him.
- Case 3.** A police officer stops a motorist for speeding. The officer agrees to accept a personal gift of half of the amount of the fine in exchange for not issuing a citation.
- Case 4.** A police officer is widely liked in the community, and on holidays local merchants and restaurant and bar owners show their appreciation for his attention by giving him gifts of food and liquor.
- Case 5.** A police officer discovers a burglary of a jewelry shop. The display cases are smashed and it is obvious that many items have been taken. While searching the shop, he takes a watch, worth about two days pay for that officer. He reports that the watch had been stolen during the burglary.
- Case 6.** A police officer has a private arrangement with a local auto body shop to refer the owners of the cars damaged in the accidents to the shop. In exchange for each referral, he receives a payment of 5% of the repair bill from the shop owner.
- Case 7.** A police officer, who happens to be a very good auto mechanic, is scheduled to work during coming holidays. A supervisor offers to give him these days off, if he agrees to tune-up his supervisor's personal car. Evaluate the SUPERVISOR'S behavior.
- Case 8.** At 2 A.M. a police officer, who is on duty, is driving his patrol car on a deserted road. He sees a vehicle that has been driven off the road and is stuck in a ditch. He approaches the vehicle and observes that the driver is not hurt but is obviously intoxicated. He also finds that the driver is a police officer. Instead of reporting this accident and offense he transports the driver to his home.
- Case 9.** A police officer finds a bar on his beat which is still serving drinks a half hour past its legal closing time. Instead of reporting this violation, the police officer agrees to accept a couple of free drinks from the owner.
- Case 10.** Two police officers on foot patrol surprise a man who is attempting to break into an automobile. The man flees. They chase him for about two blocks before apprehending him by tackling him and wrestling him to the ground. After he is under control both officers punch him a couple of times in the stomach as punishment for fleeing and resisting.
- Case 11.** A police officer finds a wallet in a parking lot. It contains the amount of money equivalent to a full-day's pay for that officer. He reports the wallet as lost property, but keeps the money for himself.

The Survey Samples

At present the survey instrument has been administered to four different groups, three in Croatia and one in the United States. The Croatian respondents consist of 370 students in the Croatian Police High School; 223 Students in the Croatian Police College; and 1649 Croatian Police officers. In the coming year we will survey an equivalent number (≈ 2500) of U.S. police officers and police academy students. In addition to the three completed Croatian samples we have also completed, and included in this paper for preliminary comparative analysis, a sample of 269 undergraduate students enrolled in criminal justice courses at the University of Delaware. Some description of each of these subsamples is necessary.

Students at the Croatian Police High School - The first group of respondents in our study are 370 first-year students in the Police High School. Our sample consists of all first-year students aspiring to police careers at that institution. Seventeen to nineteen year-old Croatian young men who have completed ten years of general education and who aspire to become police officers apply to attend the Croatian Police High School. The program in which they enroll lasts for two years and includes course that include criminalistics, criminal law and procedure, psychology, and martial arts. The students live in dorms on the Police Academy campus and receive stipends while they are enrolled. In their second year of study students are assigned to serve internships at police stations. At the end of their program, the students receive a high school diploma and can be employed as police officers.

The survey of all of these students was conducted on the same day at the same class hour. There was no prior announcement of the survey and all participation was voluntary. No student refused to participate. All respondents are male Croatian citizens between the ages of 17 and 20.

Students at the Croatian Police College - Police officials with at least two years of experience and citizens who are high school graduates can apply to the program in criminalistics at the Croatian Police College. The program lasts for five semesters and upon successful completion of it students receive a diploma that entitles them to serve as police inspectors.

The survey was administered to Police College students with prior announcement from the Dean of the College. Participation was voluntary and approximately 75% of the students participated in the survey. Ninety three (93) of the respondents were first-year students and 130 were second-year students. The majority (56%) of the first year students were citizens with high school diplomas, while the majority of the second-year students (58%) were police officers with two years of experience. Some of the respondents at the Police College were female, but as the questionnaire did not ask respondents to identify their gender we cannot specify the exact percentage.¹¹

Croatian Police Officers - The sample of Croatian police officers is a representative national sample that includes a substantial proportion of police officers in the entire country. Because we are interested in the occupational culture of policing in different locations, instead of sampling a fraction of police officers in all police station we selected 41 police stations nationally and surveyed all police officers assigned to each of them. The stations selected in a manner that reflected as closely as possible the national distribution of police by region, size, type, and district.

¹¹It was a considered decision to exclude a gender question from our survey. Because the vast majority of our Croatian police respondents were male, a question asking respondents to identify their gender would have compromised the anonymity and confidentiality of the few female respondents.

Figure 2 - Case Scenario Assessment Options

1. How serious do YOU consider this behavior to be?

Not at all serious 1 2 3 4 5 Very serious

2. How serious do MOST POLICE OFFICERS IN YOUR AGENCY consider this behavior to be?

Not at all serious 1 2 3 4 5 Very serious

3. Would this behavior be regarded as a violation of official policy in your agency?

Definitely not 1 2 3 4 5 Definitely yes

4. If an officer in your agency engaged in this behavior and was discovered doing so, what if any discipline do YOU think SHOULD follow.

- 1. NONE
- 2. VERBAL REPRIMAND
- 3. WRITTEN REPRIMAND
- 4. PERIOD OF SUSPENSION WITHOUT PAY
- 5. DEMOTION IN RANK
- 6. DISMISSAL

5. If an officer in your agency engaged in this behavior and was discovered doing so, what if any discipline do YOU think WOULD follow.

- 1. NONE
- 2. VERBAL REPRIMAND
- 3. WRITTEN REPRIMAND
- 4. PERIOD OF SUSPENSION WITHOUT PAY
- 5. DEMOTION IN RANK
- 6. DISMISSAL

6. Do you think YOU would report a fellow police officer who engaged in this behavior?

Definitely not 1 2 3 4 5 Definitely yes

7. Do you think MOST POLICE OFFICERS IN YOUR AGENCY would report a fellow police officer who engaged in this behavior?

Definitely not 1 2 3 4 5 Definitely yes

The questionnaire was sent by courier to each of the police stations. Each questionnaire contained a cover letter from the researchers and a letter from the Minister of the Interior inviting the Chief and police officers to participate in the study. The letter from the Minister of the Interior described the appropriate ways of distributing and collecting the questionnaires. Police officers received the questionnaire in a sealed envelope and were instructed to place it in another sealed envelope before returning it to the person in charge of questionnaire distribution.

Most of the police officers in the study (74%) had been police officers for less than five years, and most (85%) had worked at their present police station for less than five years. About 19% of the respondents are employed in supervisory ranks.

Most of the police officers reported performing patrol (41%) or traffic (21%) assignments. Most work in small (25-75 officer) or medium sized (75 - 200 officer) police agencies.

U.S. Respondents

Data collection has not been completed in the United States. As noted above, we plan, over the next year to collect a sample that is at least equivalent in size to the Croatian sample from police agencies and police academies in the United States. At the present time our U.S. sample consists of a group of U.S. college students.

University of Delaware Students - Our U.S. student sample consists of 269 students enrolled in sociology and criminal justice classes at the University of Delaware. The questionnaire was administered during class hours, participation was voluntary, and no students refused to participate. Approximately 59% of the students were freshmen or sophomores. Although most (58%) of the students were criminal justice majors, only 13% indicated that they were considering careers as police officers.

Results

In Table 1 below we have summarized some of the results of that portion of the survey in which respondents are asked to evaluate the seriousness of the behavior described in each of the eleven scenarios. In addition to offering their own assessments of the seriousness of that behavior, they were also asked to estimate how serious, in their opinion, most police officers would regard that behavior to be.

A visual inspection of Table 1 first illustrates that our respondents regarded the scenarios presented to them as covering a rather wide range of seriousness. This range is equally as wide among all three Croatian samples and the sample of U.S. college students. Moreover, there was, as Tables 2 and 3 illustrate, a high correlation between the rank order of seriousness, not only among respondents' own estimates of seriousness but also their estimates of the seriousness with which most police officers would evaluate the behavior described in the scenarios.

Although we did seek to represent a range of misconduct in the scenarios we presented in our questionnaire, we did not, in selecting the scenarios to present in our questionnaire, attempt to design any sort of a scale of seriousness. However, the stability of the rankings of our cases across cultures (U.S. and Croatian), across all levels of police experience (no experience among U.S. students, a small amount among the Croatian high school students, and a substantial amount among active Croatian police officers) suggests that there may in fact be an underlying hierarchy or structure of seriousness that is widely shared by both police and citizens, at least in modern industrial societies similar to those in our study.

Cross-Cultural Study of Police Corruption: A.S.C. Nov. 1995

Table 1 Perceptions of Offense Seriousness 1 = LEAST SERIOUS - 5 = MOST SERIOUS

| | POLICE HIGH SCHOOL | | POLICE COLLEGE | | POLICE OFFICER | | UDEL | |
|--|--------------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|---------|-------------|
| | OWN | MOST POLICE | OWN | MOST POLICE | OWN | MOST POLICE | OWN | MOST POLICE |
| CASE 4 Holiday Gifts from Merchants | RANK 1 2 1.92 | 1 1.98 | 1 1.78 | 1 1.82 | 1 2.11 | 1 2.09 | 2 1.81 | 1 1.52 |
| CASE 1 Off-Duty Security System Business | 2 2.59 | 3 2.10 | 2 2.41 | 4 2.47 | 2 2.57 | 2 2.50 | 1 1.38 | 2 1.68 |
| CASE 2 Free Meals, Cig- arettes on Beat | 3 2.79 | 2 2.66 | 4 2.79 | 2 2.42 | 4 2.96 | 4 2.66 | 3 2.06 | 3 1.69 |
| CASE 8 Cover-up of P.O. U I Accident | 4 3.14 | 4 3.63 | 3 2.57 | 3 2.43 | 3 2.79 | 3 2.65 | 6 3.49 | 4 2.76 |
| CASE 10 Excessive Force On Car Thief | 5 3.31 | 5 3.16 | 5 2.80 | 5 2.50 | 5 3.01 | 5 2.77 | 8 4.09 | 7.5 2.99 |
| CASE 6 5% Kickback for Auto Repair | 6 3.59 | 6 3.36 | 7 3.53 | 7 3.23 | 7 3.82 | 7 3.45 | 5 3.40 | 6 2.82 |
| CASE 7 Supervisor Offers Holiday Off | 7 3.77 | 8 3.58 | 8 3.95 | 8 3.60 | 6 4.07 | 8 3.72 | 4 3.21 | 5 2.79 |
| CASE 9 Accepts Drinks to ignore Late Bar | 8 3.82 | 7 3.54 | 6 3.51 | 6 3.00 | 6 3.78 | 6 3.31 | 7 3.79 | 7.5 2.99 |
| CASE 11 Theft of \$ from found Wallet | 9 4.19 | 10 3.90 | 9 4.27 | 10 3.82 | 10 4.50 | 10 4.11 | 10 4.11 | 9 3.31 |
| CASE 3 Accepts Bribe of fine for Speed | 10 4.38 | 9 3.80 | 10 4.44 | 8 3.57 | 9 4.42 | 9 3.84 | 9 4.16 | 10 3.59 |
| CASE 5 Theft of Watch from Crime Scene | 11 4.69 | 11 4.46 | 11 4.68 | 11 4.26 | 11 4.67 | 11 4.32 | 11 4.70 | 11 4.10 |

r= 964

r= 809

r= 973

r=898

Table 2 Correlation Coefficients for Own Estimates of Seriousness

| | Police High School | Police College | Police Officers | U Of D Students |
|--------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Police High School | 1.00 | | | |
| Police College | .955* | 1.00 | | |
| Police Officers | .982* | .982* | 1.00 | |
| Univ. Of Delaware | .936* | .964* | .964* | 1.00 |

*significant at .001

Table 3 Correlation Coefficients for MOST POLICE OFFICERS Estimates of Seriousness

| | Police High School | Police College | Police Officers | U Of D Students |
|--------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Police High School | 1.00 | | | |
| Police College | .800** | 1.00 | | |
| Police Officers | .973* | .764** | 1.00 | |
| Univ. Of Delaware | .888* | .934* | .834* | 1.00 |

*Significant at .001 **Significant at .01

A second result suggested by a simple visual inspection of Table 1 is a fairly consistent tendency for respondents to evaluate offenses as more serious than they believe most police officers would find them. This is true across all sub-samples, including the sample of Croatian Police Officers. In 39 of the 44 instances in which we may compare the mean seriousness score of a respondents own opinions with their estimation of the seriousness in which most police would regard it, the respondents rate it as more serious.

Specific Case Findings

An examination of the rank order of the seriousness of cases presented in Table 1 suggests that, in terms of their seriousness, the cases presented appear to fall into three groups. The first group consists of four cases - Cases 4, 1, 2, and 8 - that are judged to be among the least serious by most of the respondents. In Tables 4-7 below we present an ANOVA analysis of these four cases..

Table 4: Opinions about the seriousness of behavior - Case 4: Holiday Gifts of Liquor and Food

| | Own | | | Most Police | | |
|---|------|------|-------|-------------|------|-------|
| | X | s | N | X | s | N |
| Police High School Students Croatia (PHS) | 1.92 | 1.19 | 379 | 1.98 | 1.01 | 379 |
| Police College Students Croatia (PC) | 1.78 | 1.02 | 219 | 1.82 | 0.95 | 216 |
| Police Officers Croatia (OFF) | 2.12 | 1.34 | 1,630 | 2.09 | 1.24 | 1,629 |
| University of Delaware Students (UDEL) | 1.81 | 0.99 | 268 | 1.52 | 0.80 | 268 |

Own Estimates of Seriousness

| | PC | UDEL | HS | OFF |
|------|----|------|----|-----|
| PC | | | | |
| UDEL | | | | |
| HS | | • | | |
| OFF | • | • | | |

P=9.02 df1=3 df2=2488 p<0.001

Most Police Officers' Estimates of Seriousness

| | UDEL | PC | HS | OFF |
|------|------|----|----|-----|
| UDEL | | | | |
| PC | • | | | |
| HS | • | | | |
| OFF | • | • | | |

P=20.64 df1=3 df2=2488 p<0.001

Of the four cases that were ranked as being the least serious of violations, the scenario presented in Case Four, describing receipt of gifts at holidays was ranked as the least serious by all of the Croatian respondents. University of Delaware students regarded it, understandably, as a more serious matter than operating an off-duty security business, an activity that probably would not be prohibited by most U.S. police agencies. We will note, however, that the absolute seriousness

evaluations of the U.S. students were measurably lower than those of Croatian police high school students and Croatian police officers.

As Table 5 illustrates, there was a significant, substantial and expected difference between U.S. students' rating of the seriousness of operating an off-duty security system business and the rating of that activity by all of the sub-groups in the Croatian sample.

Table 5: Opinions about the seriousness of behavior - Case 1: Off duty security system business.

| | Own | | | Most Police | | |
|---|------|------|-------|-------------|------|-------|
| | X | s | N | X | s | N |
| Police High School Students Croatia (PHS) | 2.59 | 1.38 | 378 | 2.70 | 1.13 | 376 |
| Police College Students Croatia (PC) | 2.41 | 1.42 | 220 | 2.47 | 1.15 | 219 |
| Police Officers Croatia (OFF) | 2.56 | 1.53 | 1,636 | 2.50 | 1.31 | 1,619 |
| University of Delaware Students (UDEL) | 1.38 | 0.75 | 268 | 1.68 | .90 | 268 |

Own Estimates of Seriousness

| | UDEL | PC | OFF | PHS |
|------|------|----|-----|-----|
| UDEL | | | | |
| PC | • | | | |
| OFF | • | | | |
| PHS | • | | | |

P=54.23 df1=3 df2=2498 p<0.001

Most Police Officers' Estimates of Seriousness

| | UDEL | PC | OFF | PHS |
|------|------|----|-----|-----|
| UDEL | | | | |
| PC | • | | | |
| OFF | • | | | |
| PHS | • | | • | |

P=40.44 df1=3 df2=2478 p<0.001

With respect to the third case that was ranked among the least serious by all respondents, Case 2, the acceptance of unsolicited gifts of small value (cigarettes, free meals, etc.) was evaluated by the U.S. student respondents as significantly and substantially less serious than it was by any of the Croatian respondents. Because we do not have an equivalent sample of Croatian college students and have not, as yet begun collection of data from U.S. police officers and students in U.S. police academies it is not possible to speculate at this time whether this difference is a reflection of differing cultural standards or a difference in the respective groups' exposure to police culture.

We will note, however, that with respect to the scenario in which police cover up the accident of a police officer who was driving while intoxicated, reported in Table 7, the U.S. college student respondents evaluated this behavior a significantly more serious than did any of the Croatian respondents. However, their estimates of the seriousness with which U.S. police officers would rate this behavior are virtually identical to the ratings given to it by Croatian police officers.

Table 6: Opinions about the seriousness of behavior - Case 2:: Accept unsolicited gifts from merchants

| | Own | | | Most Police | | |
|---|------|------|-------|-------------|------|-------|
| | X | s | N | X | s | N |
| Police High School Students Croatia (PHS) | 2.79 | 1.30 | 378 | 2.66 | 1.08 | 379 |
| Police College Students Croatia (PC) | 2.79 | 1.29 | 219 | 2.42 | 1.06 | 217 |
| Police Officers Croatia (OFF) | 2.96 | 1.51 | 1,619 | 2.66 | 1.33 | 1,611 |
| University of Delaware Students (UDEL) | 2.06 | 0.97 | 269 | 1.69 | .87 | 269 |

Own Estimates of Seriousness

| | UDEL | HS | PC | OFF |
|------|------|----|----|-----|
| UDEL | | | | |
| HS | • | | | |
| PC | • | | | |
| OFF | • | | | |

P=31.44 df1=3 df2=2481 p<0.001

Most Police Officers' Estimates of Seriousness

| | UDEL | PC | HS | OFF |
|------|------|----|----|-----|
| UDEL | | | | |
| PC | • | | | |
| HS | • | • | | |
| OFF | • | • | | |

P=50.04 df1=3 df2=2472 p<0.001

behavior is regarded by most police officers as substantially less serious than do any of the Croatian respondents.

Table 7: Opinions about the seriousness of behavior - Case Cover-up of Police Drunken-Driving Accident

| | Own | | | Most Police | | |
|---|------|------|-------|-------------|------|-------|
| | X | s | N | X | s | N |
| Police High School Students Croatia (PHS) | 3.14 | 1.27 | 378 | 3.03 | 1.15 | 378 |
| Police College Students Croatia (PC) | 3.57 | 1.31 | 217 | 2.43 | 1.18 | 216 |
| Police Officers Croatia (OFF) | 2.79 | 1.48 | 1,626 | 2.65 | 1.34 | 1,618 |
| University of Delaware Students (UDEL) | 3.49 | 1.25 | 268 | 2.76 | 1.18 | 269 |

Own Estimates of Seriousness

| | PC | OFF | PHS | UDEL |
|------|----|-----|-----|------|
| PC | | | | |
| OFF | | | | |
| PHS | * | * | | |
| UDEL | * | * | * | |

F=26.29 df1=3 df2=2485 p<0.001

Most Police Officers' Estimates of Seriousness

| | PC | OFF | UDEL | PHS |
|------|----|-----|------|-----|
| PC | | | | |
| OFF | * | | | |
| UDEL | * | | | |
| PHS | * | * | * | |

F=12.72 df1=3 df2=2477 p<0.001

Offenses of Intermediate Seriousness - Excessive Force, Kickback from Auto Repair Shop, Free Drinks to Overlook Late Closing of Bar, Supervisor Offer of Holidays Off in Exchange for Auto Repair

The scenario describing excessive use of force on an auto thief who fled and resisted arrest was received the least serious evaluation of the four incidents of intermediate seriousness. However, as was the case with the incident of a police cover up of an accident involving an intoxicated police officer, U.S. students regarded this offense as substantially more serious than did all of the respondents in the Croatian sample. There were also significant differences, as Table 8 illustrates between respondents from the Police High School and Respondents from the Police college, but they are relatively small in absolute terms and appear to reflect the power of the large sample size more than any substantial difference of opinion. We may add that both the Police High School and Police College samples contain substantial numbers of respondents who, like the US, students are still civilians.

With respect to the second scenario ranked to be of intermediate seriousness - Case 6 - A 5% kickback arrangement between a police officer and an auto repair shop - we find two systematic differences. As evident in Table 9 Croatian police officers personally regard this behavior as more serious than any other group, including U.S. students. By contrast, U.S. students believe that behavior is regarded by most (U.S.) Police officers as substantially less serious than any of the Croatian respondents.

With respect to the seriousness of a supervisor soliciting personal auto repair in exchange for permitting a police officer to have upcoming holidays off, there is no significant difference between any of the groups in the Croatian sample, either in their personal estimations of the seriousness of that offense nor in their estimates of how serious most police officers would regard it. However, U.S. students rank this offense as significantly and substantially less serious both in their own opinion and in their estimation of the opinion of most (U.S.) Police officers as less serious than do all of the Croatian respondents.

Table 8: Opinions about the seriousness of behavior - Case 10: Excessive Force on Fleeing Auto Thief

| | Own | | | Most Police | | |
|---|------|------|-------|-------------|------|-------|
| | X | s | N | X | s | N |
| Police High School Students Croatia (PHS) | 3.31 | 1.30 | 379 | 3.16 | 1.20 | 379 |
| Police College Students Croatia (PC) | 2.80 | 1.37 | 217 | 2.50 | 1.23 | 216 |
| Police Officers Croatia (OFF) | 3.01 | 1.53 | 1,610 | 2.77 | 1.40 | 1,608 |
| University of Delaware Students (UDEL) | 4.09 | 1.08 | 269 | 2.99 | 1.21 | 269 |

Own Estimates of Seriousness

| | PC | OFF | PHS | UDEL |
|------|----|-----|-----|------|
| PC | | | | |
| OFF | | | | |
| PHS | • | • | | |
| UDEL | • | • | • | |

F=49.48 df1=3 df2=2471 p<0.001

Most Police Officers' Estimates of Seriousness

| | PC | OFF | UDEL | PHS |
|------|----|-----|------|-----|
| PC | | | | |
| OFF | • | | | |
| UDEL | • | • | | |
| PHS | • | • | | |

F=14.38 df1=3 df2=2468 p<0.001

Table 9: Opinions about the seriousness of behavior - Case 6: Kickback from Auto Repair Shop

| | Own | | | Most Police | | |
|---|------|------|-------|-------------|------|-------|
| | X | s | N | X | s | N |
| Police High School Students Croatia (PHS) | 3.59 | 1.18 | 379 | 3.36 | 1.07 | 378 |
| Police College Students Croatia (PC) | 3.53 | 1.32 | 219 | 3.23 | 1.14 | 217 |
| Police Officers Croatia (OFF) | 3.82 | 1.38 | 1,621 | 3.45 | 1.32 | 1,616 |
| University of Delaware Students (UDEL) | 3.40 | 1.09 | 269 | 2.82 | 1.19 | 269 |

Own Estimates of Seriousness

| | UDEL | PC | HS | OFF |
|------|------|----|----|-----|
| UDEL | | | | |
| PC | | | | |
| HS | | | | |
| OFF | * | * | * | |

F=11.58 df1=3 df2=2484 p<0.001

Most Police Officers' Estimates of Seriousness

| | UDEL | PC | HS | OFF |
|------|------|----|----|-----|
| UDEL | | | | |
| PC | * | | | |
| HS | * | | | |
| OFF | * | | | |

F=20.06 df1=3 df2=2477 p<0.001

Table 10: Opinions about the seriousness of behavior - Case 7: Supervisor solicits auto work for holiday off

| | Own | | | Most Police | | |
|---|------|------|-------|-------------|------|-------|
| | X | s | N | X | s | N |
| Police High School Students Croatia (PHS) | 3.77 | 1.15 | 379 | 3.58 | 1.09 | 379 |
| Police College Students Croatia (PC) | 3.95 | 1.23 | 218 | 3.60 | 1.15 | 217 |
| Police Officers Croatia (OFF) | 4.07 | 1.29 | 1,628 | 3.72 | 1.28 | 1,625 |
| University of Delaware Students (UDEL) | 3.21 | 1.12 | 268 | 2.79 | 1.17 | 269 |

Own Estimates of Seriousness

| | UDEL | PHS | PC | OFF |
|------|------|-----|----|-----|
| UDEL | | | | |
| PHS | • | | | |
| PC | • | | | |
| OFF | • | | | |

F=38.57 df1=3 df2=2489 p<0.001

Most Police Officers' Estimates of Seriousness

| | UDEL | PC | OFF | PHS |
|------|------|----|-----|-----|
| UDEL | | | | |
| PC | • | | | |
| OFF | • | | | |
| PHS | • | | | |

F=44.63 df1=3 df2=2486 p<0.001

Table 11: Opinions about the seriousness of behavior - Case 9: Free Drinks to Ignore Closing Hour Violation

| | Own | | | Most Police | | |
|---|------|------|-------|-------------|------|-------|
| | X | s | N | X | s | N |
| Police High School Students Croatia (PHS) | 3.82 | 1.13 | 379 | 3.54 | 1.09 | 379 |
| Police College Students Croatia (PC) | 3.51 | 1.27 | 217 | 3.00 | 1.24 | 217 |
| Police Officers Croatia (OFF) | 3.78 | 1.30 | 1,619 | 3.31 | 1.30 | 1,614 |
| University of Delaware Students (UDEL) | 3.79 | 1.06 | 269 | 2.99 | 1.20 | 269 |

Own Estimates of Seriousness

| | PC | OFF | UDEL | PHS |
|------|----|-----|------|-----|
| PC | | | | |
| OFF | • | | | |
| UDEL | | | | |
| PHS | • | | | |

F=3.31 df1=3 df2=2480 p<0.05

Most Police Officers' Estimates of Seriousness

| | UDEL | PC | OFF | PHS |
|------|------|----|-----|-----|
| UDEL | | | | |
| PC | | | | |
| OFF | • | • | | |
| PHS | • | • | • | |

F= 14.30df1=3 df2=2475 p<0.001

With respect to the seriousness of a supervisor soliciting personal auto repair in exchange for permitting a police officer to have upcoming holidays off, there is no significant difference between any of the groups in the Croatian sample, either in their personal estimations of the seriousness of that in the assessment of all respondents in the seriousness with which they personally regarded this behavior and in their estimates of how seriously they believe most police officers would regard it.

In the final case that was ranked of intermediate seriousness - Case 9 - accepting free drinks in exchange for overlooking the late closing of a bar - there was only a relatively small difference in the evaluations of the seriousness by all respondents. There were, however, some rather substantial differences in the estimates of how seriously they personally regarded this behavior and in their estimates of how seriously they believe that most police officers regard it.

Offenses of Great Seriousness - Theft of Money from Found Wallet, Bribe from Motorist Caught Speeding, Theft of Watch from Crime Scene

The three offenses that were evaluated most seriously by both our Croatian and U.S. respondents involve both receipt of a substantial amount of money or a valuable piece of property and abuse of a public trust that police officers' are expected to bear. In the first of these most serious cases, Case 11 presented in Table 12, the officer keeps an amount of money equivalent to a full day's pay from a found wallet. While all respondents rate this behavior as very serious, the Croatian Police Officers rate it as significantly higher, by a distinct margin, than all other groups. It is also the case that those same officers' estimates of the ratings of other police officers' evaluations of the seriousness of this offense is significantly higher than for any other group. While the University of Delaware students' assessment of the seriousness of this behavior does not differ from that of the Croatian Police High School or College students, they estimate that U.S. police officers would judge this behavior to be substantially less serious than all of the Croatian respondents predict of their police.

Table 12: Opinions about the seriousness of behavior - Case 11: Keeps Money from Found Wallet

| | Own | | | Most Police | | |
|---|------|------|-------|-------------|------|-------|
| | X | s | N | X | s | N |
| Police High School Students Croatia (PHS) | 4.19 | 1.10 | 378 | 3.90 | 1.10 | 379 |
| Police College Students Croatia (PC) | 4.27 | 1.04 | 217 | 3.82 | 1.10 | 215 |
| Police Officers Croatia (OFF) | 4.50 | 1.02 | 1,622 | 4.11 | 1.16 | 1,614 |
| University of Delaware Students (UDEL) | 4.17 | 0.91 | 269 | 3.32 | 1.14 | 269 |

Own Estimates of Seriousness

| | UDEL | PHS | PC | OFF |
|------|------|-----|----|-----|
| UDEL | | | | |
| PHS | | | | |
| PC | | | | |
| OFF | * | * | * | |

F=16.50 df1=3 df2=2482 p<0.001

Most Police Officers' Estimates of Seriousness

| | UDEL | PC | PHS | OFF |
|------|------|----|-----|-----|
| UDEL | | | | |
| PC | * | | | |
| PHS | * | | | |
| OFF | * | * | * | |

F=39.09 df1=3 df2=2473 p<0.001

The U.S. students rate the acceptance of a bribe for speeding as slightly less serious than the Croatian respondents, but their estimates of the seriousness with which most police officers would regard doing so does not differ from the Croatian respondents. The Croatian police officers differ with both respondents from the Croatian Police College and U.S. students on their estimates of the

Table 13: Opinions about the seriousness of behavior- Case 3: Bribe to Overlook Speeding Violation

| | Own | | | Most Police | | |
|---|------|------|-------|-------------|------|-------|
| | X | s | N | X | s | N |
| Police High School Students Croatia (PHS) | 4.38 | 1.08 | 379 | 3.80 | 1.01 | 379 |
| Police College Students Croatia (PC) | 4.44 | 1.00 | 219 | 3.57 | 1.09 | 217 |
| Police Officers Croatia (OFF) | 4.42 | 1.10 | 1,635 | 3.84 | 1.20 | 1,628 |
| University of Delaware Students (UDEL) | 4.16 | 0.86 | 269 | 3.59 | 1.03 | 268 |

Own Estimates of Seriousness

| | UDEL | PHS | OFF | PC |
|------|------|-----|-----|----|
| UDEL | | | | |
| PHS | * | | | |
| OFF | * | | | |
| PC | * | | | |

P=4.76 df1=3 df2=2498 p<0.05

Most Police Officers' Estimates of Seriousness

| | PC | UDEL | PHS | OFF |
|------|----|------|-----|-----|
| PC | | | | |
| UDEL | | | | |
| PHS | | * | | |
| OFF | * | * | | |

P=6.61 df1=3 df2=2488 p<0.001

seriousness with which they believe most police officers would assess the seriousness of that offense.

It is their belief that most police officers would regard acceptance of a bribe from a speeder as more serious than U.S. college students or Croatian Police College Students would predict.

Table 14: Opinions about the seriousness of behavior - Case 5: Theft of Watch from Crime Scene

| | Own | | | Most Police | | |
|---|------|------|-------|-------------|------|-------|
| | X | s | N | X | s | N |
| Police High School Students Croatia (PHS) | 4.69 | 0.80 | 379 | 4.46 | 0.83 | 379 |
| Police College Students Croatia (PC) | 4.68 | 0.73 | 218 | 4.26 | 0.91 | 217 |
| Police Officers Croatia (OFF) | 4.67 | 0.90 | 1,625 | 4.32 | 1.02 | 1,620 |
| University of Delaware Students (UDEL) | 4.70 | 0.60 | 267 | 4.10 | 0.95 | 267 |

Own Estimates of Seriousness

| | UDEL | PC | OFF | PHS |
|------|------|----|-----|-----|
| UDEL | | | | |
| PC | | | | |
| OFF | | | | |
| PHS | | | | |

F=0.134 df1=3 df2=2485 None Significant
 Most Police Officers' Estimates of Seriousness

| | UDEL | PC | OFF | PHS |
|------|------|----|-----|-----|
| UDEL | | | | |
| PC | | | | |
| OFF | • | | | |
| PHS | • | | • | |

F=7.09 df1=3 df2=2479 p<0.001

Finally, all respondent in our sample regarded the theft of an expensive watch from a crime scene to be the most serious situation we presented them. There is no difference between the personal evaluation of the seriousness of this behavior between any of the four sub-samples.. While there are some significant difference in estimates of most police officers sense of the seriousness of this behavior they are very small and, at this far end of our serious scale, are probably not particularly

meaningful. The largest of these differences obtains between the U.S. College Students and the Croatian Police High School Students - a difference of .36 on a four unit 1-5 scale.

Conclusions

At this preliminary stage of our analysis we have to promising preliminary hypotheses. First there appears to be a relatively stable scale of seriousness that police as well as citizens apply to instances of corruption. It may well obtain across both police experience and cultural lines. Irrespective of whether or not such a stable scale exists, it is absolutely true that both police and citizens are quite capable of distinguishing levels of seriousness of corruption.

The second preliminary finding is that there appears to be a systematic tendency to regard most police officers as less impressed by the seriousness of corrupt behavior than the person who is making that assessment. This holds true. In the data examined to date, even when the assessor is a police officer. This second preliminary finding may have substantial administrative implications. Insofar as the institutional/occupational culture approach advises police administrators that a major objective of police administration should be to establish an occupational culture opposed to it, our data, so far, suggest that there is substantial support among individual police officers for such effort.

It is, of course, premature to reach either conclusion. However, other portions of the survey, officer estimations of appropriate punishment and their willingness to report such behavior will permit further explorations of both points. Completion of the U.S. portion of our project will permit us to resolve whether the differences we found between our Croatian respondents and the University of Delaware student are reflections of differences in culture or in exposure to the culture and reality of policing.

POLICE PERCEPTIONS OF DISCIPLINARY FAIRNESS AND THE CODE OF SILENCE

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A Paper presented to the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences

Annual Meeting

March 1996, Las Vegas, Nevada.

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By virtue of the fact that policing is a highly discretionary, coercive activity that routinely takes place in private settings, out of the sight of supervisors, and before witnesses who are often regarded as unreliable, it is, as the history of virtually every police agency in the world bears testimony, an occupation that is ripe with opportunities for misconduct of many types.¹ One type of misconduct, corruption - the abuse of police authority *for gain* - has been particularly problematic.² Contributing to the difficulties of controlling corruption is not only the reluctance of police officers to report corrupt activities of their fellow officers - a phenomenon sometimes identified as *The Code* or the *Blue Curtain*³ - and the reluctance of police administrators to admit the existence of corruption, but also the fact that the typical corrupt transaction benefits the parties to it and thus leaves no immediate victim-complainant to call attention to it.

Until relatively recently, at least in the United States, the administrative view of corruption

¹Histories of police that document the abiding prevalence of corruption are too numerous to list here. The most thorough scholarly explorations of the temptations to corruption in contemporary policing include G. Marx, *Surveillance* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991); M. Punch, *Conduct Unbecoming: The Social Construction of Police Deviance and Control* (London: Tavistock, 1986); P.K. Manning and L. Redlinger, "The Invitational Edges of Police Construction," in C. Klockars and S. Mastrofski (eds.) *Thinking about Police* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1993) pp. 398-412; and J. Rubinstein, *City Police* (New York: Ballinger, 1973)

²The *for gain* dimension of corruption typically distinguishes it from other forms of police misconduct such as brutality. There is, however, debate over whether the definition of police corruption should include various forms of the use of police authority for police political, organizational, or strategic gain. See C. Klockars and S. Mastrofski (eds.) *op. cit.*; C. Klockars, *Thinking about Police* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1983); L. Sherman, *Scandal and Reform* (Berkeley: Univ. Of California Press, 1978); H. Goldstein, *Policing a Free Society* (Cambridge: Ballinger, 1977), and H. Goldstein, *Police Corruption: Perspective on its Nature and Control* (Washington, DC: The Police Foundation, 1975):.

³See W.K. Muir, *Police: Streetcorner Politicians* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press and E. Stoddard in C. Klockars (ed.) *op. cit.*

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was to see it as largely reflective of the moral defects of individual police officers⁴ and to fight corruption by carefully screening applicants for police positions, pursuing defective officers aggressively, and removing them from their police positions before their behavior spread throughout the agency. Sometimes referred to as the "bad apple" theory of police corruption, it has been largely discredited in recent years.⁵

Although high quality research on corruption is severely limited,⁶ contemporary approaches to corruption stress the importance of four dimensions of corruption that go beyond the understanding of corruption as a problem of the moral defects of individual "bad-apple" police officers. Unlike the individualistic approach to police corruption, each of these four dimensions is profoundly social and organizational in nature.

Organizational Rules

The first of these dimensions is organizational rules and the manner in which they are made,

⁴The capacity to predict police integrity from psychological testing is extremely limited: J.E. Taller and LD. Hinz, *Performance Prediction of Public Safety and Law Enforcement Personnel* (Springfield, Ill: C. Thomas, 1990); E.J. Delattre, *Character and Cops* (Washington, D.C.: The American Enterprise Institute, 1989); J. Malouff and N.S. Schutte, "Using Biographical Information to Hire the Best New Police Officers," (1980) *Journal of Police Science and Administration* 14: 256-67; R.E. Daley, "The Relationship of Personality Variables to Suitability for Police Work," (1980) *DAI* 44:1551-69.

⁵The analytical assault on the understanding of corruption as a problem of individually defective police officers was begun by Goldstein in *op. cit.* (1975) and continued in Goldstein, *op. cit.* (1977). It has, however, taken more than a decade for most U.S. police agencies to embrace and begin to act upon Goldstein's pioneering analysis..

⁶Spurred at least in part by the national attention given to a corruption scandal in New York City, documented in *The Knapp Commission Report on Police Corruption* (New York: George Brazillier, 1972), the 1970's produced a substantial number of serious studies of police corruption. Since 1980, scholarly attention to police corruption has been minimal, reflecting, at least in part, a shift in both public interest and federal funding priorities. This change in research activity occurred despite the fact that the spread of drug usage during the 1980's created tremendous new opportunities for corruption. See D.L. Carter, "Drug-Related Corruption of Police Officers: A Contemporary Typology" (1990) *Journal of Criminal Justice* 18: 88-98.

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communicated, and understood. In nations in which police are highly decentralized (e.g., the United States) police organizations differ markedly in what they officially prohibit as corrupt behavior.⁷ This is particularly true of marginally or *mala prohibita* corrupt behavior such as off-duty employment, receipt of favors, gratuities, small gifts, free meals, and discounts. The problem is further complicated by the fact that in many agencies while the official policy formally prohibits such activities, the *agency's* unofficial policy, supported firmly but in silence by supervisors and administrators is to permit and ignore such behaviors provided that it is limited and conducted discretely

Corruption Control Techniques

The second organizational dimension of corruption is the whole range of activities police agencies employ to prevent and control it. These include, but are not limited to education in ethics, proactive and reactive corruption investigation, integrity testing, and the general deterrence of corruption by the discipline and punishment of offenders. The extent to which these and other organizational anti-corruption techniques are employed varies enormously.

"The Code"

The third organizational dimension of corruption has already been mentioned. It is "The Code" or the "Blue Curtain" - the informal prohibition in the occupational culture of policing against reporting the misconduct of fellow police officers. Two features of The Code bear emphasis here

First, exactly what behavior is covered by The Code varies *enormously* between police agencies. In some agencies it may cover only relatively low-level corruption; in others it may cover corruption of even the most serious degree. Secondly, *The Code* not only differs in *what* behavior it

⁷R.J. McCormack, *Corruption in the Subculture of Policing: An Empirical Study of Police-Officer Perceptions*. (1986) Unpublished Ph.. D. Dissertation. See also Muir, *op. cit.*

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covers but *to whom* the benefit of its coverage is extended. In some agencies The Code is largely limited to police *partners* who enjoy *vis a vi* one another, a testimonial immunity that police liken to traditionally privileged relationships between husband and wife, physician and patient, or lawyer and client.

While most police administrators probably understand that circumscribing both whom and what The Code covers should be an administrative priority,⁸ the Code develops in virtually every police agency as a response to the punitive orientation of the quasi-military police administrative system. Put too crudely, quasi-military police administration works by creating hundreds and sometimes thousands of rules and punishing deviations from those rules severely. It is a sociological inevitability that under such administrative and organizational conditions some form of The Code will evolve.⁹

The Influence of Public Expectations on Police Integrity

The fourth and final dimension of police corruption to which contemporary police theory gives emphasis is the influence of the social and political environment in which police institutions, systems, and agencies operate.¹⁰ Even within the same country, as United States history illustrates there are

⁸T. Barker and R.O. Wells, "Police Administrator's Attitudes toward Definition and Control of Police Deviance," *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*. (1982) 51 (4): 8-16.

⁹On this and other unfortunate consequences of the quasi-military organization of police see E. Bittner, *The Functions of Police in Modern Society* (Chevy Chase, MD: NIMH, 1970) and *Aspects of Police Work* (Boston: Boston University Press, 1990); C.B. Klockars, *The Idea of Police* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1985); T. Jefferson, *The Case against Paramilitary Policing* (Milton Keynes, England: Open University Press, 1990); D. Guyot, *Policing as though People Matter* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991)

¹⁰Although this understanding is the tacit assumption of virtually all historical studies of police, it received, to our knowledge, its first systematic exploration by A.J. Reiss, Jr. and D.J. Bordua in "Environment and Organization: A Perspective on the Police" in D. Bordua, *The Police: Six Sociological Essays* (ed.) (New York: John Wiley, 1967) and in A.J. Reiss, Jr., *The Police and the Public* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971). The specific application of these principles to police corruption was first advanced by Goldstein in his *Police Corruption* (1975) and later in his *Policing a Free Society* (1977). Both points inform the recent Croatian publication by

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areas with long and virtually uninterrupted traditions of police corruption (e.g. Chicago, New Orleans, Key West), equally long traditions of minimal corruption (e.g.. Milwaukee, Kansas City, Seattle), and still others that have undergone repeated cycles of scandal and reform (e.g.. New York, Philadelphia, Oakland). From such histories we may conclude not only that public expectations about police integrity exert vastly different pressures on police agencies in different areas but also that public pressures toward corruption may be successfully resisted,

Corruption Research: Theory, Method, and Police Administration

It is, of course, possible to bring many types of theory to the study of police corruption. The theoretical approach outlined above employs an organizational/occupational-culture approach with at least two fortuitous consequences. The first is that many of the theoretical questions and issues that emerge from such an approach are of direct relevance to practical police administration. For example, the corruption theory advanced above maintains that there is a direct relationship between the punitive orientation of the quasi-military police administrative system and the abiding presence of The Code in the occupational culture of policing. Sociologically, one might predict that the more punitive the administrative orientation is perceived by line police officers to be, the stronger The Code will be as well.

Police administrators are, however, sharply divided over the perception of administrative punitiveness they wish to encourage. Some seek to cultivate a reputation for administrative fairness in discipline and empathy for the line police officer's lot. They believe that such a reputation will encourage loyalty to the agency, enhance respect for the administration, and diminish the perceived

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need for The Code as a mechanism of defense. In contrast, other police administrators believe in the virtue of developing a fearsome disciplinary reputation. They argue that the way to circumscribe The Code is to make the cost of adhering to it extremely high. It is possible that both strategies are effective, that neither is, or that one is superior to the other. These are empirical questions about which, at present, we have no systematic empirical evidence.

Questions and problems of this sort lead to the second virtue of contemporary organizational/occupational-culture theories of corruption: their amenability to empirical study. Corruption is extremely difficult to study in a direct, quantitative, empirical manner. Because most corruption incidents are never reported or recorded official data on corruption is best regarded as a measure of police agency anti-corruption activity than the actual level of corruption. Police officers are unlikely to be willing to candidly report their own or other's corrupt activities, even in the face of assurances of confidentiality by researchers.

In contrast to these limitations on direct study, the major propositions of the contemporary corruption theory are questions of *fact and opinion* that can be explored directly and without anything like the resistance that direct inquiries about corrupt *behavior* are likely to provoke. It is, for example, possible to ask factual questions about officers' *knowledge* of agency rules and questions of officers' *opinions* about the seriousness of their violation, the punishment they deserve or are likely to receive, and their estimates of willingness of officers to report such behavior without asking them directly about their own or others' corrupt *behavior*.

The Research Design

In April of 1995 we designed and pretested a questionnaire that sought to measure in a

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systematic, empirical, quantitative manner five questions that are crucial to both an organizational/occupational-culture theory of police corruption and to practical police administration:

1. What is the level of knowledge of organizational rules governing corruption?
2. How strongly does the occupational culture support these rules?
3. To what extent does The Code protect officers who violate agency rules prohibiting corrupt behavior?
4. To what extent do the ethics of individual police officers depart from the norms of The Code?
5. What is the relationship between the perceived fairness of punishment of corruption and the strength of The Code?

To accomplish this end we designed a questionnaire that presented eleven brief scenarios describing a range of corrupt practices which are common in modern, industrial societies. Included as well were one scenario describing an incident of excessive use of force as well as another that described a behavior - conducting an off-duty, security system business - that may be permitted by policy in some police agencies and prohibited in others. The scenarios are summarized in Figure 1 below.

Respondents were asked seven questions about each of these scenarios. The responses, summarized in Figure 2 below, were designed to provide answers to the five questions posed in the discussion of the research design above for that officer. Similarly, we describe in Case 6 an auto-repair kickback scene as producing a reward for the officer of 5% of the value of the repair.

Figure 1: Corruption Case-Scenarios

- Case 1 .** A police officer runs his own private business in which he sells and installs security devices, such as alarms, special locks, etc. He does this work during his off-duty hours.
- Case 2.** A police officer routinely accepts free meals, cigarettes, and other items of small value from merchants on his beat. He does not solicit these gifts and is careful not to abuse the generosity of those who give gifts to him.
- Case 3.** A police officer stops a motorist for speeding. The officer agrees to accept a personal gift of half of the amount of the fine in exchange for not issuing a citation.
- Case 4.** A police officer is widely liked in the community, and on holidays local merchants and restaurant and bar owners show their appreciation for his attention by giving him gifts of food and liquor.
- Case 5.** A police officer discovers a burglary of a jewelry shop. The display cases are smashed and it is obvious that many items have been taken. While searching the shop, he takes a watch, worth about two days pay for that officer. He reports that the watch had been stolen during the burglary.
- Case 6** A police officer has a private arrangement with a local auto body shop to refer the owners of the cars damaged in the accidents to the shop. In exchange for each referral, he receives a payment of 5% of the repair bill from the shop owner.
- Case 7.** A police officer, who happens to be a very good auto mechanic, is scheduled to work during coming holidays. A supervisor offers to give him these days off, if he agrees to tune-up his supervisor's personal car. Evaluate the SUPERVISOR'S behavior.
- Case 8.** At 2 A.M. a police officer, who is on duty, is driving his patrol car on a deserted road. He sees a vehicle that has been driven off the road and is stuck in a ditch. He approaches the vehicle and observes that the driver is not hurt but is obviously intoxicated. He also finds that the driver is a police officer. Instead of reporting this accident and offense he transports the driver to his home.
- Case 9.** A police officer finds a bar on his beat which is still serving drinks a half hour past its legal closing time. Instead of reporting this violation, the police officer agrees to accept a couple of free drinks from the owner.
- Case 10.** Two police officers on foot patrol surprise a man who is attempting to break into an automobile. The man flees. They chase him for about two blocks before apprehending him by tackling him and wrestling him to the ground. After he is under control both officers punch him a couple of times in the stomach as punishment for fleeing and resisting.
- Case 11** A police officer finds a wallet in a parking lot. It contains the amount of money equivalent to a full-day's pay for that officer. He reports the wallet as lost property, but keeps the money for himself.

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The Survey Samples

At present, the survey instrument has been administered to four different groups, three in Croatia and one in the United States. The Croatian respondents consist of 370 students in the Croatian Police High School; 223 Students in the Croatian Police College; and 1649 Croatian Police officers. In the coming year we will survey an equivalent number (≈ 2500) of U.S. police officers and police academy students. In addition to the three completed Croatian samples we have also collected, a sample of _____ undergraduate students enrolled in criminal justice courses at the University of Delaware. A detailed description of all of these samples is available in our previous paper "The Cross-Cultural Study of Police Corruption: Perceptions of Offense Seriousness."¹¹ The analysis in this paper shall be based solely upon the responses of the 1649 Croatian police officers.

Croatian Police Officers - The sample of Croatian police officers is a representative national sample that includes a substantial proportion of police officers in the entire country. Because we are interested in the occupational culture of policing in different locations, instead of sampling a fraction of police officers in all police station we selected 41 police stations nationally and surveyed all police officers assigned to each of them. The stations selected in a manner that reflected as closely as possible the national distribution of police by region, size, type, and district.

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Figure 2 - Case Scenario Assessment Options

1. How serious do YOU consider this behavior to be?

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|-----------------|
| Not at all serious | | | | | Very serious |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

2. How serious do MOST POLICE OFFICERS IN YOUR AGENCY consider this behavior to be?

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|-----------------|
| Not at all serious | | | | | Very serious |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

3. Would this behavior be regarded as a violation of official policy in your agency?

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|-------------------|
| Definitely not | | | | | Definitely yes |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

4. If an officer in your agency engaged in this behavior and was discovered doing so, what if any discipline do YOU think SHOULD follow.

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| 1. NONE | 4. PERIOD OF SUSPENSION WITHOUT PAY |
| 2. VERBAL REPRIMAND | 5. DEMOTION IN RANK |
| 3. WRITTEN REPRIMAND | 6. DISMISSAL |

5. If an officer in your agency engaged in this behavior and was discovered doing so, what if any discipline do YOU think WOULD follow.

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| 1. NONE | 4. PERIOD OF SUSPENSION WITHOUT PAY |
| 2. VERBAL REPRIMAND | 5. DEMOTION IN RANK |
| 3. WRITTEN REPRIMAND | 6. DISMISSAL |

6. Do you think YOU would report a fellow police officer who engaged in this behavior?

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|-------------------|
| Definitely not | | | | | Definitely yes |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

7. Do you think MOST POLICE OFFICERS IN YOUR AGENCY would report a fellow police officer who engaged in this behavior?

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|-------------------|
| Definitely not | | | | | Definitely yes |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

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The questionnaire was sent by courier to each of the police stations. Each questionnaire contained a cover letter from the researchers and a letter from the Minister of the Interior inviting the Chief and police officers to participate in the study. The letter from the Minister of the Interior described the appropriate ways of distributing and collecting the questionnaires. Police officers received the questionnaire in a sealed envelope and were instructed to place it in another sealed envelope before returning it to the person in charge of questionnaire distribution.

Most of the police officers in the study (74%) had been police officers for less than five years, and most (85%) had worked at their present police station for less than five years. About 19% of the respondents are employed in supervisory ranks.

Most of the police officers reported performing patrol (41%) or traffic (21%) assignments. Most work in small (25-75 officer) or medium sized (75 - 200 officer) police agencies.

Offense Seriousness, Appropriate Punishment, and Willingness to Report

In Table 1 below we have summarized the results of six of the questions asked in our survey for each of the eleven case scenarios: officers' perceptions of their own and other officers' estimates of offense seriousness, officers' perceptions of their own and departmental views of appropriate punishment, and officers' perceptions of their own and others' willingness to report offenses. In Table II we report the correlation coefficients between the rank order of responses to all six questions.

The data summarized in both of these tables illustrate that our police officer respondents were highly consistent in their attitudes toward corrupt behavior. In general, the more serious they regarded a behavior, the more severely they believed it should be punished, and the more likely they would be .

Table 1 - Offense Seriousness, Punishment, and Willingness to Report

| CASE NUMBER & DESCRIPTION | SERIOUSNESS | | PUNISHMENT | | WILLINGNESS TO REPORT | |
|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | Own View x̄ (rank) | Other Officers x̄ (rank) | Should Receive x̄ (rank) | Would Receive x̄ (rank) | Own View x̄ (rank) | Other Officers x̄ (rank) |
| Case 4 Holiday Gifts from Merchants | 2.11 (1) | 2.09 (1) | 1.62 (1) | 1.79 (1) | 1.67 (1) | 1.86 (1) |
| Case 1 Off-Duty Security System Busin. | 2.57 (2) | 2.50 (2) | 2.05 (2) | 2.35 (2) | 1.89 (2) | 2.37(4) |
| Case 8 Cover-Up of Pol. DUI Accident | 2.79 (3) | 2.65 (3) | 2.17 (4) | 2.39 (4) | 2.07 (3) | 2.09 (3) |
| Case 2 Free Meals, Discounts, on Beat | 2.96 (4) | 2.66 (4) | 2.23 (5) | 2.42 (5) | 2.13 (5) | 2.37 (5) |
| Case 10 Excessive Force on Car Thief | 3.01 (5) | 2.77 (5) | 2.14 (3) | 2.37 (3) | 2.08 (4) | 2.08 (2) |
| Case 9 Drinks to Ignore Late Bar | 3.78 (6) | 3.31 (6) | 2.55 (6) | 2.64 (7) | 2.67 (6) | 2.57(6) |
| Case 6 Auto Repair Shop 5%Kickback | 3.82 (7) | 3.45 (7) | 3.19 (8) | 3.31 (8) | 3.09 (8) | 3.09 (9) |
| Case 7 Supervisor: holiday for tune-up | 4.07 (8) | 3.72 (8) | 2.73 (7) | 2.50 (6) | 2.70 (7) | 2.72 (7) |
| Case 3 Bribe from Speeding Motorist | 4.42 (9) | 3.84 (9) | 3.60 (9) | 3.68 (9) | 3.10 (9) | 3.03 (8) |
| Case 11 Theft from Found Wallet | 4.50 (10) | 4.11 (10) | 3.78 (10) | 3.81 (10) | 3.56 (10) | 3.37 (10) |
| Case 5 Crime Scene Theft of Watch | 4.67 (11) | 4.32(11) | 4.24 (11) | 4.25 (11) | 3.88 (11) | 3.68 (11) |
| | Spearman's r = 1.000 p = .000 | | Spearman's r = .991 p = .000 | | Spearman's r = .955 p = .000 | |

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Table 2 Spearman Correlation Coefficients - Rank Ordering of Own and Others' Views of Seriousness, Punishment Should and Would Receive and Own and Others' Willingness to Report

| | OWN View of Seriousness | OTHERS' View of Seriousness | Punishment SHOULD Receive | Punishment WOULD Receive | OWN Willingness to Report | OTHERS' Willingness to Report |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| OWN View of Seriousness | | | | | | |
| OTHERS' View of Seriousness | 1.000 | | | | | |
| Punishment SHOULD Receive | .964 | .964 | | | | |
| Punishment WOULD Receive | .946 | .982 | .991 | | | |
| OWN Willingness to Report | .982 | .982 | .955 | .982 | | |
| OTHERS' Willingness to Report | .909 | .909 | .964 | .955 | .955 | |

to report it. Moreover, our respondents also believed that, in general, most police officers and, in the case of punishment, the department administration shared these views.

These conclusions are based upon the close intercorrelations between the rank ordering officers reported on all six questions. However, inspection of the mean scores within and between police officer assessments and opinions also suggests some additional occupational culture uniformities.

Offense Seriousness - Although police officer respondents rank their own and other police officers' perceptions of offense serious in an identical manner, in all eleven cases the mean score for the officers' own perception of offense seriousness is higher than the mean score for seriousness that they ascribe to other officers. In some cases this difference is quite small and may not reflect a difference of any consequence. However, some differences in this direction are reasonably large and the consistency in the pattern across all eleven cases may suggest that there is more opposition to corrupt practice among police officers than most police officers believe there to be. This conclusion may also suggest

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to police administrators that there is more support among police officers for creating an occupational culture that is intolerant of corruption than most police officers believe.

Punishment - A pattern that is similar to that found between officers' own and other officers' assessments of seriousness also emerges in officers' opinions of what punishment each of the cases should or would receive. In all cases except one the mean score for the punishment an offense should receive is less than the mean score they predict that the punishment would receive. As was the case with the mean differences between officers' own and estimates of others' perceptions of seriousness some of these differences are very small and may reflect no meaningful distinction.

The single case that went against the overall pattern was Case Seven. It involved a supervisor who gave a police officer a holiday off in exchange for tuning up his car. This difference suggests that officers may believe that the administration is somewhat less likely to be as punitive toward supervisor misconduct than they are toward the misconduct of line officers.

Although this pattern of officer preference for less severe discipline is detectable in the differences in the mean ratings of all of the scenarios except one, the overwhelming finding in this area is not the extent or direction of difference of officer opinion but the similarity between punishments officers believe misconduct should and would receive. This is probably best illustrated by displaying our findings in the form that they appear in Table III.

As Table III illustrates, although there are systematic directional differences in the mean officer ratings of appropriate and expected punishments, in all but two cases is the actual punishment

Table III - Officer Estimates of Appropriate and Expected Punishment

| CASE NUMBER & DESCRIPTION | MODAL APPROPRIATE PUNISHMENT (Description) (%) | PUNISHMENT | | MODAL EXPECTED PUNISHMENT (Description)(%) |
|---|--|---|----------------------------|--|
| | | Should Receive x̄ (rank) % (Should - Would) = 0 | Would Receive x̄ (rank) | |
| Case 4 Holiday Gifts from Merchants | NONE (61%) | 1.62 (1) 78% | 1.79 (1) | NONE (53%) |
| Case 1 Off-Duty Security System Busin. | NONE (44%) | 2.05 (2) 65% | 2.35 (2) | NONE (31%) |
| Case 10 Excessive Force on Car Thief | NONE (37%) | 2.14 (3) 71% | 2.37 (3) | Verbal Reprimand (30%) |
| Case 8 Cover-Up of P.O. DUI Accident | Verbal Reprimand (35%) | 2.17 (4) 74% | 2.39 (4) | Verbal Reprimand (32%) |
| Case 2 Free Meals, Discounts on Beat | Verbal Reprimand (35%) | 2.23 (5) 72% | 2.42 (5) | Verbal Reprimand (33%) |
| Case 9 Drinks to Ignore Late Bar | Written Reprimand (39%) | 2.55 (6) 77% | 2.64 (7) | Written Reprimand (36%) |
| Case 7 Supervisor: Holiday for tune-up | Written Reprimand (30%) | 2.73 (7) 73% | 2.50 (6) | NONE (30%) |
| Case 6 Auto Repair Shop 5% Kickback | Period of Suspension w/o pay (28%) | 3.19 (8) 75% | 3.31 (8) | Period of Suspension w/o Pay (28%) |
| Case 3 Bribe from Speeding Motorist | Period of Suspension w/o Pay (49%) | 3.60 (9) 72% | 3.68 (9) | Period of Suspension w/o Pay (40%) |
| Case 11 Theft from Found Wallet | Period of Suspension w/o Pay (42%) | 3.78 (10) 78% | 3.81 (10) | Period of Suspension w/o Pay (41%) |
| Case 5 Crime Scene Theft of Watch | Demotion in Rank (48%) | 4.24 (11) 81% | 4.25 (11) | Demotion in Rank (48%) |
| | | Spearman's r = .991 p = .000 | | |

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most officers would recommend and the punishment they believe the behavior would receive is identical. That number would drop to one (the case of involving the supervisor) if mean figures for appropriate and expected punishment were used.

A measure of the strength of this agreement, a measure of the extent to which officers perceive punishment as "fair," may be calculated by subtracting the difference between the scores on Questions Three and Four, which ask about what discipline officers believe offenses "should" and "would: receive. On occasions on which that difference is zero, (i.e. there is no discrepancy between what officers believe what punishment should and would receive) it may be said that respondents regard the level of punishment as "fair."

The figures indicating what proportion of police officer respondents believe the punishment they would expect an officer to receive as "fair" are displayed in the center of the third column in Table III. These scores range from a low of 65% in the case of the officer who runs an off-duty security system business to a high of 81% for the case of suspension w/o pay for an officer who steals a fairly expensive watch from a crime scene. On average, it may be said that roughly 75% of Croatian police officers believe the punishment they would expect to receive for the types of misconduct described in our survey would be of appropriate severity.

Willingness to Report: The Code

There are two senses in which the expression "The Code" is used in this paper. In its simplest sense it refers to a rule in the occupational culture of policing that provides that a police officer should not inform on another police officer. In another sense, it refers to a complex set of normative rules that cover not

Table IV -Police Officer Perceptions of Own and Other Officers' Willingness to Report

| CASE NUMBER & DESCRIPTION | "Do you think YOU/MOST POLICE OFFICERS would report a fellow police officer who engaged in this activity?" | | | | | Own View (rank) St.D. Other Officers (rank) St.D. |
|---|--|-----|-----|-----|-------------------|--|
| | Definitely Not | | | | Definitely Yes | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Case 4 Holiday Gifts from Merchants | 1130 | 156 | 175 | 67 | 95 | 1.67 (1) 1.18 |
| | 69% | 10% | 11% | 4% | 6% | |
| | 885 | 298 | 285 | 70 | 81 | 1.86 (1) 1.15 |
| | 55% | 18% | 18% | 4% | 5% | |
| Case 1 Off-Duty Security System Business | 1044 | 148 | 195 | 76 | 174 | 1.89 (2) 1.37 |
| | 63% | 9% | 12% | 5% | 11% | |
| | 630 | 308 | 390 | 105 | 181 | 2.37 (4) 1.34 |
| | 39% | 19% | 24% | 6% | 11% | |
| Case 8 Cover-Up of Police Officer. DUI Accident | 867 | 220 | 261 | 93 | 181 | 2.07 (3) 1.39 |
| | 54% | 14% | 16% | 6% | 11% | |
| | 679 | 323 | 372 | 112 | 133 | 2.09 (3) 1.27 |
| | 42% | 20% | 23% | 7% | 8% | |
| Case 10 Use of Excessive Force on Car Thief | 889 | 185 | 229 | 125 | 182 | 2.08 (4) 1.42 |
| | 55% | 12% | 14% | 8% | 11% | |
| | 765 | 309 | 197 | 107 | 129 | 2.08 (2) 1.28 |
| | 48% | 19% | 18% | 7% | 8% | |
| Case 2 Free Meals, Cigarettes, Discounts, on Beat | 862 | 195 | 246 | 104 | 206 | 2.13 (5) 1.44 |
| | 54% | 12% | 15% | 6% | 13% | |
| | 575 | 336 | 404 | 126 | 175 | 2.37 (5) 1.32 |
| | 35% | 21% | 25% | 8% | 11% | |
| Case 9 Drinks to Ignore Late Bar Closing | 547 | 236 | 375 | 198 | 259 | 2.67 (6) 1.46 |
| | 34% | 15% | 23% | 12% | 16% | |
| | 449 | 329 | 482 | 165 | 187 | 2.57 (6) 1.30 |
| | 28% | 20% | 30% | 10% | 12% | |
| Case 7 Supervisor: gives holiday days off for auto tune-up | 583 | 188 | 333 | 176 | 344 | 2.70 (7) 1.55 |
| | 36% | 12% | 25% | 11% | 21% | |
| | 449 | 263 | 464 | 192 | 254 | 2.72 (7) 1.39 |
| | 28% | 16% | 29% | 12% | 16% | |
| Case 6 Auto Repair Shop 5% Kickback | 460 | 141 | 300 | 215 | 499 | 3.09 (8) 1.61 |
| | 28% | 9% | 19% | 13% | 31% | |
| | 314 | 226 | 484 | 270 | 320 | 3.09 (9) 1.37 |
| | 20% | 14% | 30% | 17% | 20% | |
| Case 3 Bribe from Speeding Motorist | 479 | 112 | 308 | 226 | 500 | 3.10 (9) 1.62 |
| | 29% | 7% | 19% | 14% | 31% | |
| | 307 | 233 | 500 | 278 | 311 | 3.03 (8) 1.35 |
| | 19% | 14% | 31% | 14% | 19% | |
| Case 11 Theft from Found Wallet | 300 | 126 | 245 | 249 | 692 | 3.56 (10) 1.54 |
| | 19% | 8% | 15% | 15% | 43% | |
| | 205 | 203 | 340 | 325 | 450 | 3.37 (10) 1.34 |
| | 13% | 13% | 27% | 20% | 29% | |
| Case 5 Crime Scene Theft of Watch | 236 | 62 | 216 | 245 | 857 | 3.88 (11) 1.46 |
| | 15% | 4% | 13% | 15% | 53% | |
| | 143 | 118 | 416 | 382 | 561 | 3.68 (11) 1.26 |
| | 9% | 17% | 26% | 24% | 35% | |

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only when a police officer should shield the misconduct of a fellow officer but what type of misconduct should be shielded and to whom that shield should be extended. As with any social or organizational norms there will be those who conform to them and those who deviate from them, as well as those who have been effectively socialized to them and those whose socialization to the norms has been inadequate. As with any norms, the norms of The Code can and do change. Norms bear differently on persons of different levels of organizational experience and responsibility. To this we may add as well that individuals, irrespective of their history, experience, or occupational position, engage in variant readings and interpretations of norms, a phenomenon sometimes called "personality," and act on those readings and interpretations in variant ways, a phenomenon sometimes called "style."

Based on the data summarized in Table IV we can offer five general statements about The Code based on our sample of Croatian Police officers:

1. There is a general norm in the occupational culture of policing that enjoins police officers not to report the misconduct of fellow police officers. At least half the police officers in our survey would probably not report a fellow police officer for committing most of the acts we asked about in our survey. At least a quarter of the police officers in our sample would not report a fellow police officer who committed *any* of the corrupt acts we asked about in our survey. In short, The Code, understood in its simplest sense, exists.

2. As the seriousness of the misconduct increases, the injunction against reporting the offense decreases. At least ten percent of police officers report that they would probably report a fellow police officer for every instance of misconduct asked about in our survey. This number

ACJS, 1996: Police Perceptions of Disciplinary Fairness and "The Code" 20 rises to over 50% in the case of misconduct as serious as theft from a crime scene. In short, The Code, as a complex set of norms, exists as well.

3. For offenses that are perceived by police officers to be of little seriousness (accepting holiday gifts, police discounts, free meals, running an off-duty security system business) individual police officers report being less willing to report such offenses than they believe most other officers to be. Support for the Code is strongest for the least serious offenses and is probably highly resistant to constriction for those offenses.

4. For offenses that are perceived by police officers to be of substantial seriousness (e.g., theft) individual officers report being more willing to report such offenses than they believe most other officers to be. Support for the Code is weakest for the most serious offenses.

5. With respect to offenses that police officers would rate as being of moderate or great seriousness, police officers believe that there is more consensus in The Code than there actually is. The Code is probably amenable to some constriction in the case of moderate to serious misconduct.

Perceptions of Fair Discipline and the Code

Our data suggest that there are areas of the Code that may be amenable to change. This suggestion is based largely on the discovery of certain systematic differences between what individual police officers report as their willingness to report misconduct and their perception of the willingness of most police officers to do so. In situations in which individual officers systematically report more willingness to report misconduct than most other officers, a chief who appeals to officers to narrow the Code in such areas would appear likely to receive officer support.

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Change may, of course, be produced through many means, not only moral suasion. Our survey also produces some data on the possible effects of the use of another of those means: punishment.

As we reported above, for most offenses the vast majority of police officers regard the punishment they would expect to receive in their department as "fair". Fairness was operationalized as that condition that existed when the subtraction of the score for what punishment police officers indicated a particular behavior "should" receive from the score they indicated it "would" receive equaled zero.

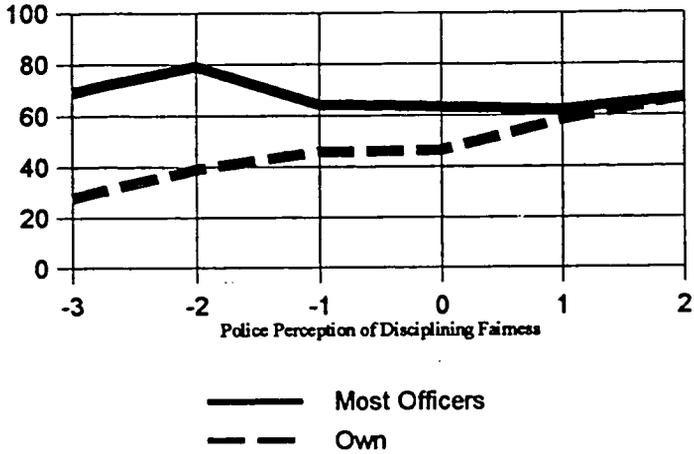
Making this subtraction also yields the possibility of both positive and negative differences. Positive differences, (punishment *should* receive less than punishment *would* receive) indicate that officers perceived the expected punishment as too lenient. Negative differences indicate that the punishment expected was too severe.

Below are eleven graphs that display the relationship between police perceptions of disciplinary fairness and the willingness of officers to report misconduct. In each of the eleven cases a percentage for officer willingness to report is calculated by selecting a score on the willingness to report scale which best divides the respondent sample.

In interpreting the data displayed on these eleven graphs in a way that might prove helpful to police administrators who wished to manipulate the perceived severity of punishment they threatened to circumscribe the code, we have found it helpful to examine the results displayed on the eleven graphs below in terms of three models of the possible relationship and the Code.

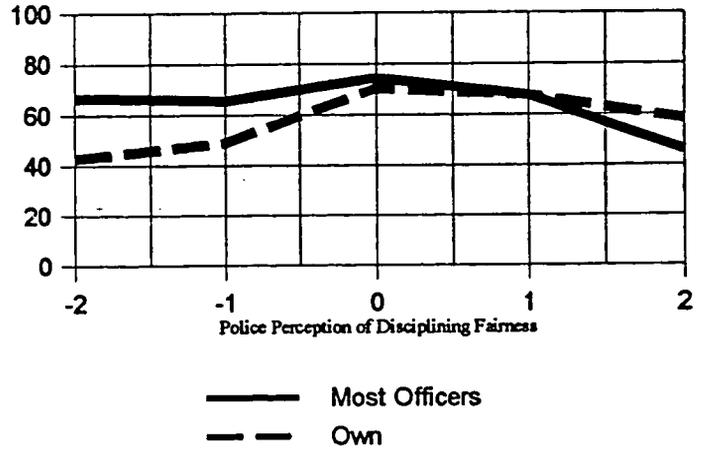
Free Meals, Discounts, on Beat

Case 2



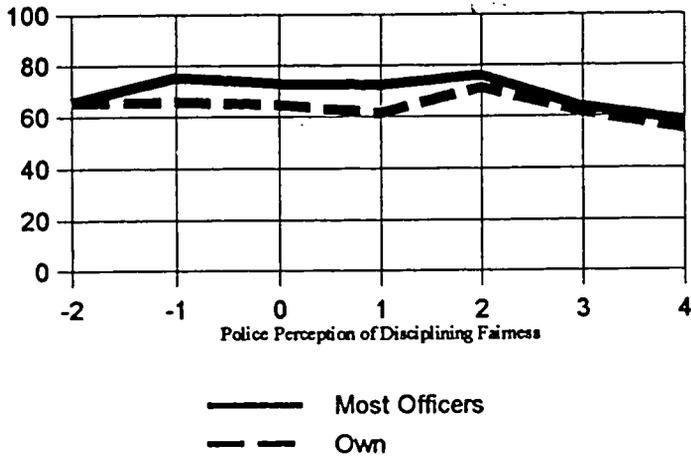
Drinks to Ignore Late Bar

Case 9



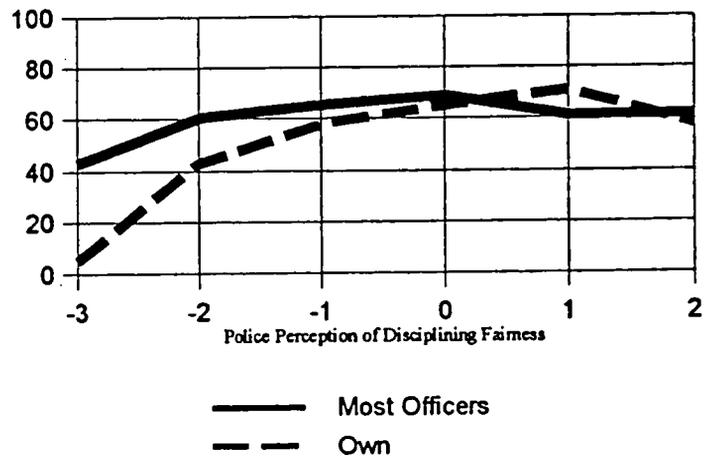
Supervisor: holiday for tune-up

Case 7



Auto Repair Shop 5% Kickback

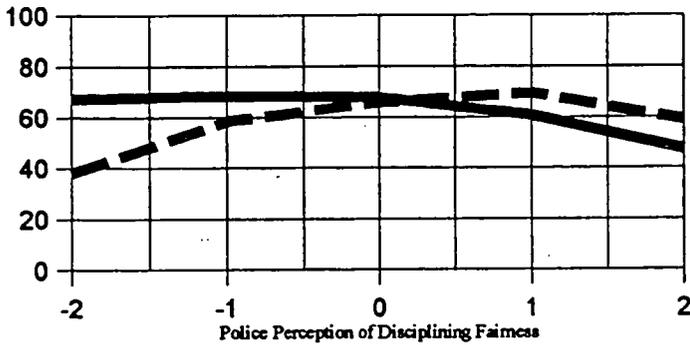
Case 6



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Bribe from Speeding Motorist

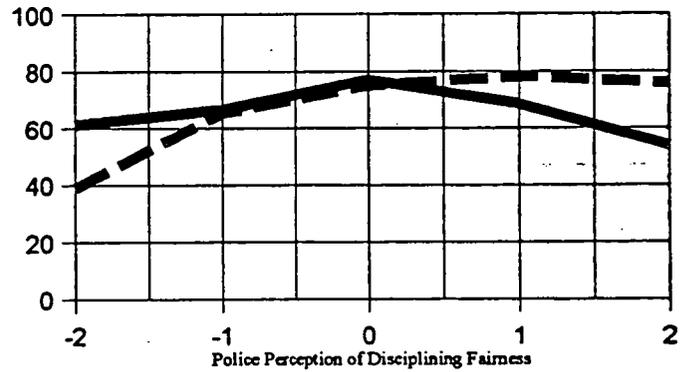
Case 3



— Most Officers
 - - Own

Theft from Found Wallet

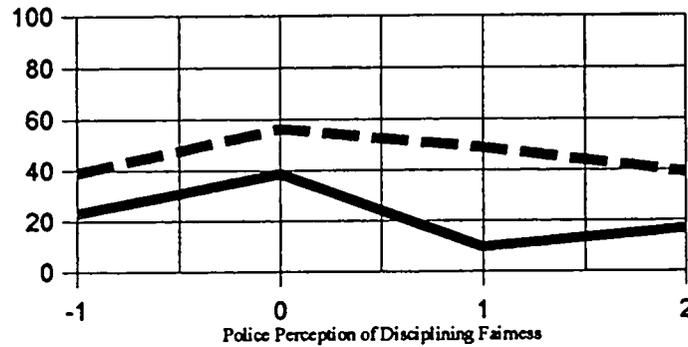
Case 11



— Most Officers - - Own

Crime Scene Theft of Watch

Case 5



— Most Officers
 - - Own

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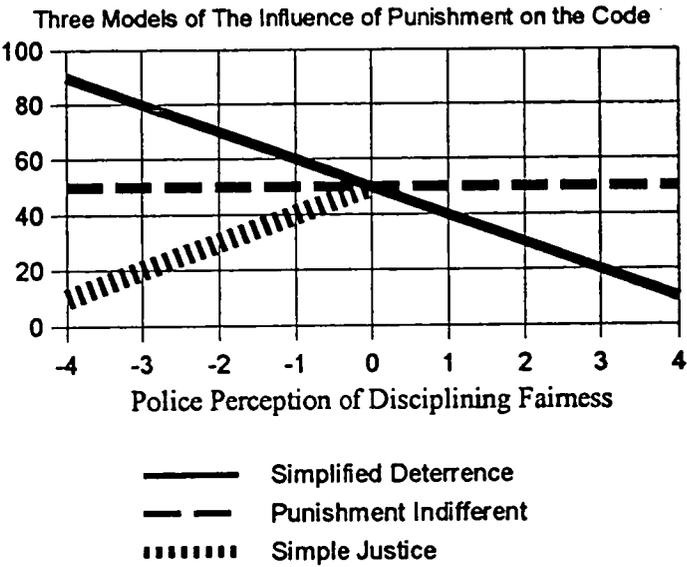
Three Models of the Relationship Between Perceived Severity of Punishment and The Code.

On the graph below we have displayed three models of the possible relationship between the perceived severity of punishment and the willingness of officers to report the misconduct of fellow officers. The first of these models

is a simplified deterrence model. It simply holds that the more severe the punishment threatened, the narrower the Code will be circumscribed. Among the reasons that we refer to it as a "simplified" deterrence model is that it ignores the effects of certainty and celerity as well as all other motives except the severity of punishment on reporting misconduct. It holds as well that

if punishment becomes perceived as too lenient the Code will expand its coverage. An additional assumption in this model is that failure to report with the same punitive severity as the original misconduct. A police administration that was severe or lenient in its punishment for a given offense would also be severe or lenient in its punishment of an officer who failed to report it. This simplified deterrence would yield a line on our graphs with a uniformly negative slope.

The second model of the relationship between the perceived severity of punishment and the Code describes the Code as largely immune to manipulations of the perceived severity of punishment for misconduct. Any number of relations between the Code and the perceived severity or leniency of punishment might explain this relationship. For example, it may be the



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case that most police officers regard the question of severity of punishment to be unimportant and without effect because they regard the likelihood of being punished for not reporting to be virtually non-existent. Alternatively, with respect to certain offenses the Code may be so strong and the collegial opprobrium for violating it so great that those effects override any punishment the agency might threaten. Still a third interpretation of a model of the Code that found it indifferent to the severity of punishment is that it might reflect a situation in which the underlying offense was regarded as so trivial or so serious that that consideration overrides all influence of threatened punishment, no matter how severe or lenient. This model of the Code as indifferent to manipulations in the severity of punishment is marked by a line with a uniform slope of zero.

A third model, one we will call "simple justice," describes the relationship between punishment and the Code as influenced primarily by officers' desires to see misconduct punished justly. Under the terms of this model punishment that was perceived as too severe would discourage the reporting of it. This would imply a line on our graphs to the left of the zero point with a positive slope. We are, however, uncertain as to what a "simple justice" model would predict under conditions of inappropriately lenient punishment. The motive of simple justice would offer no reason for increased reporting of misconduct under conditions of excessive leniency. Thus, we believe there is no case for arguing that the line describing simple justice ought to continue to increase with a positive slope to the right of the zero point. However, we are uncertain as to whether the slope of the simple justice line should be zero or negative to the right of the zero point. One might argue either that simple justice is better served by too lenient punishment than no punishment at all thus suggesting a level line to the right of the zero point.

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Alternatively, one might argue that inadequate punishment decreases the impetus to do justice and thus suggests a line to the right of zero with a negative slope.

Examining the data displayed in the eleven graphs above we may make the following observations.

1. In only two of the eleven cases is the slope negative for any lines to the left of the zero point. The cases in which this very modest negative slope can be detected are Case 4 (involving receipt of holiday gifts from merchants) and Case 2 (involving receipt of free meals and discounts on one's beat.) These are behaviors that officers regard as among the least serious incidents in our survey and for which most officers believe either no punishment or only a verbal reprimand is appropriate or expected. In Case 2 the slope is minimally negative only for most other police officers. None of the other cases conforms in any other way to a simple deterrence model which predicts that the more excessive the expected punishment for misconduct is perceived to be, the more officers will be intimidated into reporting it.

2. Police officer perceptions of other officers' willingness to report misconduct is either not substantially affected by whether or not that officer perceives the punishment for the offense would be fair or is enhanced by a perception of fair punishment. Officer perceptions of other officers' willingness to report appears, overall, to conform to a "punishment indifferent" model.

3. Police officers' own willingness to report misconduct appears to be generally enhanced by perceptions that the punishment for those offenses will be of appropriate severity. In nine of the eleven cases the slope of the line for officers' own willingness to report is positive, in one it is neutral, and in only one (Case 4 - Holiday Gifts from Merchants) is it modestly negative.

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This last aberrant case involves a very small number of police officers (less than 100 out of our sample of 1600) who perceived the expected punishment to be too severe.

4. In situations where the expected punishment is too lenient, the relationship to officers' own willingness to report appears to depend upon the seriousness of the offence. In case where the underlying offense is perceived as of minor seriousness and merits little or no punishment in the opinion of most police officers, an expected punishment that is too lenient is associated with an increased willingness to report. In case in which the underlying misconduct is judged to be either of moderate or great seriousness too lenient punishment either appears to have no relationship or is associated with a reduction in officer willingness to report.

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