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0521546753 - Understanding Police Use of Force: Officers, Suspects, and Reciprocity

Geoffrey P. Alpert and Roger G. Dunham

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Understanding Police Use of Force

Understanding Police Use of Force focuses on the extraordinary and rare event that develops when physical force is used by the police. Whenever police officers come into contact with citizens, there is always a chance that the encounter will digress to one in which force is used on a suspect. Fortunately, most police activities do not result in the use of force, but those that do take on an interesting pattern of interaction between the officer and the citizen. This volume presents a brief survey of prior research on police use of force as well as original data reported for the first time. The original data on police use of force include the Force Factor, or the relative use of force compared to the level of suspect resistance. The data also include the sequential order of the event and a view from the suspect's perspective. The book proposes a new conceptual framework for examining and assessing police use of force: the Authority Maintenance Theory.

Geoffrey P. Alpert received his Ph.D. from Washington State University. For more than twenty years he has specialized in research on high-risk police activities. His work includes research on police use of force, deadly force, emergency and pursuit driving, racial profiling, police decision making, early-warning systems, and the impact of performance measures. Dr. Alpert has been awarded numerous research grants from the U.S. Department of Justice and other governmental funding agencies. He has also worked directly with police departments by assisting with policy development and officer training and has worked with agencies in Canada, England, France, and the United States. Dr. Alpert has written more than fifteen books and 100 research articles. He has been interviewed on leading television news programs in England and the United States.

Roger G. Dunham is professor and associate chair of sociology at the University of Miami, Florida. His research focuses on the social control of deviance and crime, including police decision making with respect to use of force, pursuits, and racial profiling. He has coauthored four books on policing with Geoffrey Alpert and has published more than fifty professional papers and chapters. Recent coauthored books include *Critical Issues in Policing*, 4th edition (2001); *Policing Urban America*, 3rd edition (1997); and *Crime and Justice in America*, 2nd edition (2002). In addition, he has coauthored several research monographs with the Police Executive Research Forum, including *Police Pursuits: What We Know* (2000) and *The Force Factor: Measuring Police Use of Force Relative to Suspect Resistance* (1997).

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PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
 The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
 The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK
 40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
 Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
 Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa
<http://www.cambridge.org>

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First published 2004

Printed in the United States of America

Typeface ITC New Baskerville 10/12 pt. *System* L^AT_EX 2_ε [TB]

A catalog record for this book is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Understanding police use of force: officers, suspects, and reciprocity / Geoffrey
 P. Alpert, Roger, G. Dunham.

p. cm. – (Cambridge studies in criminology)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-521-83773-1 – ISBN 0-521-54675-3 (pbk.)

1. Arrest (Police methods)–United States. 2. Restraint of prisoners–United
 States. 3. Police brutality–United States. 4. Police discretion–United States.

I. Alpert, Geoffrey P. II. Dunham, Roger G. III. Series.

HV8080.A6U53 2004

363.2'32 – dc22

2003063883

ISBN 0 521 83773 1 hardback
 ISBN 0 521 54675 3 paperback

Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>page</i> ix
Introduction: The Context of Police Use of Force	1
1. Police Use of Force: The History of Research	17
2. The Crucial Element: Finding Research Sites	54
3. Findings from Miami-Dade Police Department Study	65
4. The Sequential Steps in Use-of-Force Incidents in the Miami-Dade Police Department	87
5. Miami-Dade Police Department: Inconsistencies between Officer and Suspect Accounts of the Use of Force	124
6. Findings from Prince George's County Police Department	135
7. Findings and Summary	155
8. Explaining Police Use of Force: The Breakdown of an Authority Maintenance Ritual	170
Appendix: Frequencies of Force Sequences for First through Tenth Actions	188
<i>Index</i>	189

Acknowledgments

All researchers and authors rely on their training and experience as well as on support they receive from colleagues and family members. Our relationship began as students at Washington State University in the 1970s, and we must acknowledge the professor there who pushed us the most and made us realize the importance of quality research and scholarship. Since graduate school we have been trying to live up to the demands and expectations of our mentor, James F. Short, Jr. Jim pushed us to be critical thinkers and social scientists. Over the years he has reviewed our work, guided our progress, and encouraged our efforts. The contents of this book reflect our best efforts to integrate sociological theory and research into an explanation of police use of force.

This research would not have been possible without the support and assistance from the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and the Miami-Dade Police Department (MDPD). The National Institute of Justice funded several projects that provided the data on which this research is based. The Miami-Dade Police Department and its director, Carlos Alvarez, allowed us to scrutinize their files and spend hours in their offices. We are especially thankful for the personal assistance provided by Dan Flynn, who was in charge of the Professional Compliance Bureau and is currently chief of the Savannah (Georgia) Police Department.

A special thanks goes to Carl Jenkenson, who provided brilliant editorial assistance and humor, but not always at the proper time or in the correct order! Additionally, Randy Shannon helped us understand how police–citizen interactions can unfold in an environment of distrust and suspicion. Roy Black walked us through the maze of issues regarding defending officers charged criminally with using excessive force. Professor Mike Smith worked on the original grants and provided invaluable assistance during the analytic phases. Professor John MacDonald helped us with the conceptual

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

issues involved in Chapter 8. Dean John Skvoretz at the University of South Carolina permitted a work schedule and support that facilitated work on this project. His help and support were invaluable. Professor George Wilson reviewed and commented on several chapters and continually encouraged us to strive for higher levels of excellence. We greatly appreciate his support. Spencer Alpert also reviewed several of the chapters and offered his insight. These efforts were informative and are appreciated.

We also thank the reviewers who provided excellent comments and suggestions for improvements. The manuscript went through multiple versions and each was improved because of the reviewers' comments.

Last but not least, our families were supportive and understanding when we were spending long hours away from home. Our wives, Margaret Alpert and Vicki Dunham, as well as our children, Angie, Amanda, Ryan, and Cory Alpert and Benjamin, Seth, and Zachary Dunham, were all subjected to our short tempers and untimely travel. We appreciate and love them for their acceptance and understanding. The help we received from Cambridge University Press was invaluable. Without their assistance, we would never have been able to negotiate through the maze of reviews, rewrites, and production.

Geoffrey P. Alpert
Roger G. Dunham