

“POLICE DON’T LIKE BLACK PEOPLE”: AFRICAN-AMERICAN YOUNG MEN’S ACCUMULATED POLICE EXPERIENCES*

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Research Summary:

This study examined 40 African-American young men’s direct and vicarious experiences with police harassment and violence, and their impact on perceptions of police. Study findings highlight the value of using comprehensive and nuanced measures of police/citizen encounters and underscore the importance of examining the impact of accumulated adverse experiences.

Policy Implications:

The findings have implications for police oversight policies. In particular, police organizations should work toward developing complaint review processes that are not merely accessible to citizens but also inspire confidence among them. These efforts are crucial toward improving the image of police in minority communities and positively impacting citizen trust of, and satisfaction with, the police.

KEYWORDS: Policing, African-Americans, Vicarious Experiences, Racial Discrimination

The “cumulative impact of racial discrimination accounts for the special way that blacks have of looking at and evaluating” their experiences in public encounters (Feagin, 1991:115). For example, descriptions of black citizens’ mistreatment by the police are abundant in some African-American communities. Regardless of their accuracy, the dissemination of these narratives increases the likelihood that neighborhood residents will come to view local policing strategies as racially biased (Weitzer, 2002). Feagin’s (1991) examination of racial discrimination highlights the importance of understanding the impact of accumulated discriminatory experiences,

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including in interactions with the police. He calls attention to the "litany of *daily* large and small events" that African-Americans face (1991:114), and he emphasizes the need to examine assessments of their particular social interactions in the context of their *accumulated* experiences with discriminatory events, and in the collective experiences of African-Americans as a group.

In making appraisals, blacks not only draw from their own experiences, but also from patterns of events they are exposed to in their communities (Weitzer, 2002) and knowledge imparted by members of their racial group (Feagin, 1991; Feagin and Sikes, 1994). This is particularly the case in disadvantaged African-American neighborhoods, where aggressive policing strategies are widely used (Weitzer, 2000). Most studies regarding black citizens' perceptions of police have relied on survey research or official data on citizen complaints and have typically focused on discrete, one-time experiences rather than on cumulative measures of police contacts. And although these examinations have highlighted the importance of race and age differences, they have not elicited the kind of information that would allow researchers to acquire deeper understandings of meanings for study participants. On the other hand, in-depth interview techniques provide a unique opportunity to examine the interplay of direct and indirect contacts to better understand the range of experiences that may influence attitudes toward police.

The current study draws from in-depth interviews with 40 African-American adolescent males in a disadvantaged urban community to investigate their range of experiences with the police. Urban young black men are the focus here because they are disproportionately suspected and stopped by police (Hurst et al., 2000). The goal is to gain a detailed understanding of how respondents make sense of family members', friends', neighbors', and their own interactions with the police and how these collectively shape their perceptions. This methodological approach recognizes the importance of examining the accumulated experiences of young black males who are routinely studied as criminals and considered menaces in their neighborhoods but seldom have their own viewpoints used as a credible starting point for social inquiry. The study highlights the benefits of using comprehensive and nuanced measures of police/citizen encounters. In addition, research findings suggest that police organizations should work toward developing complaint review processes that are not merely accessible to citizens but also inspire confidence among them. These efforts are crucial toward improving the image of police in minority communities and positively impacting citizen trust of, and satisfaction with, the police.

LITERATURE REVIEW

BLACK CITIZENS' PERCEPTIONS OF, AND ACCUMULATED EXPERIENCES WITH, THE POLICE

One of the most reliable findings in research on attitudes toward police is that citizen distrust is more widespread among African-Americans than whites (Barlow and Barlow, 2002; Hagan and Albonetti, 1982; Sampson and Bartusch, 1998; Webb and Marshall, 1995; Weisburd et al., 2000; Weitzer, 1999, 2000; 2002; Weitzer and Tuch, 2002; but see Frank et al., 1996). Research examining the relationship between perceptions and the context of citizens' interactions with police suggests that unfavorable views of the police arise from negative (involuntary and voluntary) police contacts (Decker, 1981; Huebner et al., 2004; Murty et al., 1990; Webb and Marshall, 1995; but see Brandl et al., 1994). For example, Weitzer and Tuch (2002: 445) discovered that "net of other factors, race and personal experience with racial profiling are among the strongest and most consistent predictors of attitudes toward the police." Specifically, they determine that direct experience with racial discrimination "can have lasting, adverse effects" on individuals' perceptions of the police (2002: 452).

Although most research on minority citizens' perceptions of the police emphasizes direct personal encounters, scholars have recently begun to investigate the relevance of learning about other group member's police contacts as well. Feagin and Sikes (1994:16) note that "a black victim frequently shares the account with family and friends, often to lighten the burden, and this sharing creates a domino effect of anguish and anger rippling across an extended group." These indirect police contacts have been referred to in the extant literature as "vicarious" experiences. For example, Browning et al. (1994) note that citizen hostility and distrust of the police are likely to result from perceptions of pervasive vicarious police harassment.

Rosenbaum et al. (2005) analyzed survey data collected from African-American, Hispanic, and white adult Chicago residents regarding their attitudes toward police before and after personal and vicarious experiences. The primary goal of their study was to investigate whether there was a causal relationship between respondents' initial attitudes and how they viewed subsequent police contacts. They report that respondents' direct contact with police over the course of a year did not result in changes in their attitudes. However, they found that study participants' vicarious experiences had an impact on perceptions of police in the expected direction. In addition, they report that the effects of negative vicarious experiences were greatest for African-American respondents.

Rosenbaum et al. (2005) also observed racial differences regarding how

study participants obtained vicarious negative information. Specifically, African-Americans and Hispanics were more likely to acquire adverse vicarious information from family, friends, and neighbors, whereas whites were apt to receive such reports from the media. In addition, they note that respondents' original assessments of police not only played an important role in how they interpreted subsequent personal and vicarious experiences but also helped shape their long-term attitudes toward police. In particular, they found that, "negative initial attitudes were predictive of negative encounters for minorities, especially for African Americans but not for whites" (p. 359). Their findings highlight the cumulative nature of police/citizen encounters and further underscore that citizens' evaluations of the police are multifaceted and therefore require in-depth analysis.

Weitzer and Tuch (2005) conducted a national survey of white, African-American, and Hispanic adults to examine how direct and indirect experiences with police shape citizens' perceptions of racially biased policing. They found that "exposure to media accounts of police misconduct significantly increases perceptions of police bias against minority individuals for all three racial groups" (p. 1018). They also observed that compared with whites, Hispanic and black respondents were more likely to report having been victims of racially biased policing and having had a household member experience similar treatment (p. 1025). Gallagher et al. (2001) also suggest that the sharing of secondhand experiences between affiliates might help explain racial disparities in attitudes toward police.

Most research concerning vicarious contact with police has focused on its role in shaping adult citizens' attitudes. Research suggests that juveniles have less-favorable attitudes toward police and that African-American youths have more negative attitudes than white youths (Hurst and Frank, 2000; Hurst et al., 2000; Leiber et al., 1998; Taylor et al., 2001). To the extent that personal experiences influence beliefs about the police, this is not surprising because juveniles are more apt to come into contact with the police than adults (Leiber et al., 1998:152; see also Snyder and Sickmund, 1996). Scholars have found that indirect contact with police contributes to youths' views as well. Hurst et al.'s (2000) school survey with adolescents found that "hearing and seeing police misconduct exerted the greatest effect on perceptions of policing" (p. 49).

In addition, prior research has documented that indirect experiences have the potential to amplify or validate individuals' interpretations of personal experiences and merit in-depth examination (see Rosenbaum et al., 2005; Weitzer 2000, 2002). Thus, it seems that research that goes beyond examining study participants' direct experiences has the potential to considerably advance our understanding of police/citizen interactions. Recent research has demonstrated that citizens' attitudes toward police are shaped by a collection of varied experiences. In addition, these studies

emphasize that individuals' evaluations of police are far more complex than previously thought.

RACE, PLACE AND AGGRESSIVE POLICING

Residents of disadvantaged communities have a considerable risk of experiencing direct and indirect contact with police because of the aggressive crime-control strategies to which they are exposed. In particular, several researchers offer that black citizens' consistent negative appraisals of police can best be understood by taking into account the nature of policing in their neighborhoods, and their feelings about their own encounters with the police (Anderson, 1990, 1999; Fagan and Davies, 2000; Leitzel, 2001; Sampson and Bartusch, 1998; Tyler and Wakslak, 2004; Weitzer, 2000; Weitzer and Tuch, 1999; 2002). There has been growing interest in the United States concerning racial profiling and racially discriminatory police practices. And although these are perhaps important issues for all racial minorities, they are particularly salient for African-Americans, who have a unique, longstanding, and tenuous relationship with the police (Bass, 2001a, 2001b; Websdale, 2001). Specifically, official and unofficial police patrols historically have been used to enforce unjust laws by monitoring and restricting black citizens' movement (Bass, 2001a, 2001b; Websdale, 2001). Sampson and Bartusch's (1998) analysis found that legal cynicism and dissatisfaction with the police were both strongly correlated with neighborhood concentrated disadvantage (see also Anderson, 1999). In fact, after controlling for concentrated disadvantage and neighborhoods' violent crime rates, racial differences in dissatisfaction with the police disappeared in their model (Sampson and Bartusch, 1998:800; but see Hagan and Albonetti, 1982; Weitzer and Tuch, 2002).

A substantial body of research has investigated the social ecology of policing and the disproportionate effects of police procedures and wrongdoing on black citizens (Bass, 2001a; Meehan and Ponder, 2002; Phillips and Smith, 2000). These studies detail the diverse injuries to residents of distressed communities, including unparalleled experiences with being watched and detained (Browning et al., 1994; Fagan and Davies, 2000; Hurst et al., 2000; Jones-Brown, 2000; Kennedy, 1997; Weitzer, 1999); irreverence (Mastrofski et al., 2002; Weitzer, 1999); arrests (Smith and Visser, 1981); the use of unwarranted physical and deadly force (Jacobs and O'Brien, 1998; Smith and Holmes, 2003; Terrill et al., 2003; Terrill and Reising, 2003; Weitzer, 1999; Worden, 1996); officer misconduct (Kane, 2002); as well as slower response times and fewer police services (Anderson, 1999; Klinger, 1997; Smith and Klein, 1984). In addition, it is particularly African-American young men who are disproportionately burdened by these negative experiences (Brunson and Miller, 2006a, 2006b; Hurst et al., 2000).

Thus, perceptions of unfair and disrespectful treatment, coupled with high rates of being targeted by the police, likely have a cumulative effect on urban black young men's perceptions of police. Prior research has shown that citizens' views of police are shaped by others' experiences as well. In-depth interview techniques offer a unique opportunity to examine not just the context and circumstances of events—including those experienced by family members, friends, and community residents—but also their meanings for those who experience and learn about them from others.

The investigation of direct and indirect experiences considers that "experiences with serious discrimination are stored not only in individual memories but also in family stories and group recollections" (Feagin and Sikes, 1994:16). With this in mind, my goal is to expand the methods commonly used to measure police/citizen interactions in the hope of acquiring more nuanced understandings of the collective experiences that shape citizens' views of police. This study draws from qualitative interviews and is based on the belief that an improved understanding of the relationship between the police and black male youth can be attained by paying attention to the views of those who are most likely to experience aggressive policing in the United States.

METHODOLOGY AND STUDY SETTING

Data for this examination hail from a larger study of African-American youths' experiences with community violence. The current investigation is based on information obtained from survey and in-depth interviews with 40 black males residing in St. Louis, Missouri.¹ Study participants ranged in age from 13 to 19, with a mean age of 16. Interviewing took place between spring 1999 and spring 2000. Participation in the study was voluntary, and respondents were paid \$20 and assured confidentiality.²

Respondents were recruited to participate in the project with the assistance of several organizations working with both "at-risk" and delinquent adolescents. These consisted of two alternative public high schools and one community agency. Roughly equal numbers of study participants were acquired from each research site. The community agency was a neighborhood-based recreation center on St. Louis' northside where youths were allowed to gather. The two alternative schools were attended by students who had been expelled from other St. Louis public schools for a variety of

1. A primary focus of the larger project, however, is violence against women and therefore includes interviews with 35 female study participants. For more on the study methodology and data collection process, see Miller and White (2003).

2. Pseudonyms are used throughout the paper, both for young men and for the streets they occasionally name.

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TABLE 1. SELECT NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTERISTICS

	Respondents' Neighborhoods	St. Louis City	St. Louis County
Percent African-American	82.6%	51.2%	18.9%
Percent poverty	33.8%	24.6%	6.9%
Percent unemployment	18.0%	11.3%	4.6%
Percent female-headed families with children	43.1%	28.8%	10.7%

urban cities of similar size.⁵ Moreover, each is highly suspicious of the other, and claims of police use of excessive force (both physical and lethal) against black citizens periodically intensify feelings of distrust.⁶ In addition, the President of the St. Louis Police Officers' Association has questioned African-American leaders' motives for introducing legislation to create an external review panel (see Ahlbrand, 2006a, 2006b). The St. Louis Police Department is one of several law enforcement agencies that have adopted community policing concepts in hope of reducing crime and improving their relationships with the public. Whereas the department is guided by a philosophy that includes recognition of community-oriented policing strategies, in terms of policy this means that a public affairs officer is assigned to each of the nine police districts and is expected to attend neighborhood meetings. Respondents reported that policing efforts in their neighborhoods primarily consisted of frequent pedestrian and vehicle stops by district patrol officers, by detectives, as well as by members of specialized units and task forces. Although study participants understood that these strategies were intended to address particular problems such as drug and gang activity, they were also the basis on which young men came to view this style of policing as aggressive and characterized their experiences with the police as often constituting harassment.

Sampling was purposive in nature. The goal was to interview young men who were at-risk or involved in delinquent activities, as these youths would reasonably have more involuntary contact with police. However, youths known to have negative experiences with the police or who had expressed bias against them were not targeted. All of the young men

5. The U.S. Census Bureau reported the population of St. Louis city as 396,685 in 1990 and 348,189 in 2000.

6. St. Louis does not have a civilian complaint review panel, despite the efforts of several African-American community groups (see <http://stlcin.missouri.org/alderman/bbDetail.cfm?BBId=384>). Instead, the department's Internal Affairs Division investigates and adjudicates allegations of police misconduct.

reported having engaged in some form of delinquency in their lifetime. In all, 75% reported having engaged in serious delinquency, whereas 40% reported involvement in serious delinquency in the last six months. Half of the young men reported having been arrested in the last year, and 65% reported ever having been arrested. Thus, the sample captured variation in both delinquent involvement and official contact with the criminal justice system (see Appendix A).

The interview team consisted of four persons. Three of the four individuals were African-American, and they completed most of the interviews. Specifically, they included a male university professor, a female Ph.D. student from the same community as the research participants, and a female M.A. student with experience working in social service agencies. The final interviewer was a white male Ph.D. student from Holland. The professor was in his mid-forties, and the graduate students were all in their early thirties.

Data collection began with the administration of a survey, and youths were then asked to participate in an audiotaped in-depth interview that was typically completed on the same day. Respondents were given the opportunity to decline participation in the in-depth interviews; however, none did. The tapes from those interviews were later transcribed, and those records serve as the primary data for this contextual examination, whereas the survey interviews provide supplemental data. First, the survey supplied baseline information about youths' overall perceptions of police in their neighborhoods. Specifically, respondents were asked how often they believed the police do a good job enforcing laws, respond quickly to calls, work hard to solve crimes in the neighborhood, are easy to talk to, are polite to people in the neighborhood, do a good job preventing crime, and harass or mistreat people in the neighborhood. Responses to these items provided a basis for comparing how participants' perceptions compare with previous studies of attitudes toward the police. Youths were then asked whether they had been harassed or mistreated by the police, and whether they knew someone who had been harassed or mistreated.

Survey responses were used as a reference point during the in-depth interviews, where primary contextual and perceptual information was collected. The goal was to collect data that could provide a relatively holistic assessment of youth's experiences with, and perceptions of, police harassment and mistreatment. The in-depth interviews were semi-structured, with open-ended questions that allowed for considerable probing.⁷ The

7. The conversations flowed based on how individual study participants answered the previous question, and therefore, the exact guide cannot be presented in a standardized form. The questions, however, focused on neighborhood conditions and respondents' direct and indirect police experiences.

young men were reminded of their survey response regarding their experiences with the police (i.e., "you said before that you/your friend/family member had been harassed or mistreated by the police") and were asked to provide a detailed description of the circumstances leading up to these events, the events themselves, their consequences, and the youths' interpretation of what happened and why.⁸ They also were asked to describe and explain their perceptions of the police in their neighborhoods, and to discuss incidents of negative police experiences they had witnessed or heard about.

In-depth interviewing provided a method for understanding the social world from the points of view of the research participants. Rigorous examination of such accounts offers a means of "arriving at meanings or culturally embedded normative explanations [for behavior, because they] represent ways in which people organize views of themselves, of others, and of their social worlds" (Orbuch, 1997:455). This approach is particularly important for understanding young men's perceptions of their experiences with the police, because so few studies have examined these issues from the perspective of minority youth (see Phillips and Bowling, 2003). Moreover, as several policing scholars have recently argued, citizen's perceptions of police behaviors—regardless of their objective reality or legal parameters—are important to understand because they affect both police/community relations and individual perceptions of the police (Brandl et al., 2001; Weitzer and Tuch, 2002). As efforts to increase police legitimacy are often predicated on the input of community members, this approach—speaking with those individuals most likely to experience involuntary police contact—provides important insights for better understanding the impact of aggressive policing strategies on young black males.

In this analysis, care was taken to ensure that the concepts developed and illustrations provided typified the most common patterns in youths' accounts. This was achieved using grounded theory methods, including the search for, and explication of, deviant cases (Strauss, 1987). Reliability was strengthened through a triangulated data collection technique, by asking youths about their reports at multiple points across two interviews and by asking for detailed accounts during the in-depth interviews.

8. Although this strategy was intended to serve as a validity check, it also may have persuaded study participants to continue responding to questions in a specific way. The greater concern, however, is of nondisclosure where highly sensitive issues are concerned. This, however, was not the case—83% of study participants reported having experienced harassment themselves, and 93% reported that someone they knew had been harassed or mistreated.

STUDY FINDINGS

Appendix A demonstrates that most study participants reported having both direct and indirect experiences with police harassment. Specifically, 83% of respondents reported having experienced harassment themselves, and more than nine out of ten reported that someone they knew had been harassed or mistreated.⁹ This is not surprising given that respondents consistently identified frequent pedestrian and vehicle stops as the bedrock of neighborhood policing efforts. And for study participants, these procedures exemplified police harassment. In addition, it was not simply that young men objected to being routinely stopped, but they took particular exception to the way officers spoke to them during these encounters (see also Mastrofski et al., 2002; Tyler and Wakslak, 2004). For instance, several study participants expressed grave concern about being ordered to sit or lie on the pavement while enduring physically intrusive searches.

Table 2 shows young men's responses to questions in the survey portion of the interview regarding their evaluations of policing in their neighborhoods. This particular set of questions allowed respondents to make assessments of police behavior and perceived effectiveness based on both their direct and their indirect experiences. For example, approximately two thirds of the young men said the police are almost never easy to talk to, half said the police are almost never polite, and slightly under half reported that the police often harass and mistreat people in the neighborhood. On the other hand, less than one in six young men believed the police were easy to talk to, one in ten reported that the police are often polite, and 17.5% said the police almost never harass or mistreat people in their communities. Respondents' general evaluations of the police highlight their perceptions of the extent and nature of police harassment in their neighborhoods.

Although young men offered harsh criticisms regarding how officers acted toward neighborhood residents, they were also frustrated by slow response times, how calls for service were prioritized, and their overall perception that local law enforcement was incapable of effectively preventing and solving crime. Again, Table 2 demonstrates that just under half of the sample reported that police almost never do a good job responding to calls quickly and 50% answered the same regarding how successful they thought officers were at preventing crime. Although these numbers suggest low levels of citizen satisfaction, perhaps they are higher than one would expect given that respondents lived in high crime neighborhoods. In particular, several study participants commented that they did not expect much from the police when it came to protection and

9. In fact, only one young man answered no to both questions.

TABLE 2. PERCEPTIONS OF NEIGHBORHOOD POLICING*

	Often	Sometimes	Almost Never
The police do a good job enforcing the laws	25% (10)	42.5% (17)	32.5% (13)
The police respond quickly to calls	22.5% (9)	30% (12)	47.5% (19)
The police work hard to solve crimes in the neighborhood	32.5% (13)	42.5% (17)	25% (10)
The police are easy to talk to	12.5% (5)	22.5% (9)	65% (26)
The police are polite to people in the neighborhood	10% (4)	40% (16)	50% (20)
The police do a good job preventing crime	12.5% (5)	37.5% (15)	50% (20)
The police harass or mistreat people in the neighborhood	47.5% (19)	35% (14)	17.5% (7)

*The data shown here are based on survey responses alone. The actual numbers of respondents are in parenthesis.

responsiveness (see Brunson and Miller, 2006b for a discussion). Moreover, young men felt that police resources were disproportionately directed toward specific neighborhood problems such as drugs and gangs instead of toward assisting crime victims. For instance, Eugene reported, "I had got robbed one time. And I went up to the cop and he said he can't help me." And Ronald noted, "You call [the police], they ain't never on time, especially [depending on] what kind of neighborhood you live in." And Ricky described strategies citizens might use in the hope of increasing police response times:

You have to lie to get the police to come as fast as you would expect them to come. You'd have to say something like, "It's a gang fight and we fear somebody have a gun" or something like, "Four or five guys just ran up into somebody house and jumped on somebody, we need the police *right now!*"

The fact that Ricky specifically mentioned gangs and guns in his hypothetical call to police illustrates that young men believed such concerns to be the center of neighborhood policing efforts.

Young men's comments provide support for Klinger's (1997) ecological theory of police responsiveness as they demonstrate how neighborhood conditions negatively impact the deployment of police services. In addition, because of respondents' perceptions about high levels of crime in their neighborhoods, young men believed there was little the police could do to improve the situation. Andrew remarked, "Sometimes [people] call the police and then sometimes they just don't care 'cuz calling the police it ain't gonna do nothing." Likewise, Darnell stated, "The police can't change nuttin'. Only thing they gonna [do is] lock up the person for twenty hours and they get right back out." And Kevin noted:

Sometimes [the police] get a little something off the street, but it really don't matter, they [might] lock somebody up and take two stones [small pieces of crack] off the street [but] it's still a million other people out there selling dope. [And] the person they lock[ed] up be out the next week.

Kevin's comment illustrates that young men's assessments of the police are multifaceted. Although he acknowledged officers' crime-control efforts, he was also aware that they were often hindered by the nature and extent of drug activity in his neighborhood. Nonetheless, attempts to combat drug sales seemed to contribute to the aggressive policing strategies that he and other young men considered harassment.

Next, I examine in detail young men's experiences with aggressive crime-control efforts along with their perceptions of how race and neighborhood shape their interactions with the police.

AGGRESSIVE POLICING

Many young men were particularly frustrated when they were stopped in situations in which they believed there was no basis for suspicion, and about a quarter of the sample (ten study participants) described direct experiences that went beyond what they believed was harassment, to include violence and other forms of police misconduct. Likewise, 45% of respondents (18 young men) reported learning of, or witnessing, such things happening to others. The most frequent kind of wrongdoings reported were allegations of physical abuse. However, respondents also described other forms of malfeasance such as officers taking money and leaving suspects stranded in rival neighborhoods.

Young men's views about the police stemmed largely from aggressive policing strategies. These strategies seemed insidious to respondents and formed the basis of their direct and indirect experiences. Although study

participants acknowledged that such initiatives produced modest, short-lived successes, they nonetheless felt that the result was their neighborhoods being besieged by police. For example, William explained, "if they see us every five minutes go around or in a different part of the neighborhood, they think we selling drugs or something, and they'll stop us like five, six times a day. Just to pat us down and ask questions." Likewise, Shaun stated, "They a trip, we be sitting on the front [porch] or something, they'll pull up just 'cuz we sitting there. Or we be chillin' in front of the store, [they] get out checking everybody. And Terence observed:

On certain days, [the police] might do a sweep through the neighborhood. They'll come in like, three or four cars deep, two paddy wagons, and they'll just roll down every block that they think mainly sellin' drugs or whatever. And anybody outside, if they think you got something, they gon' check you. Just everybody that happen to be on the block. If you look like you got something or look like you fina do something, so they say, then they just come up to you, tell you to assume the position or whatever. [Tell you to] put your hands on the hood [and they] check you. If you do got something, you in the paddy wagon and they take you downtown. If not, they gon' check you, talk bad to you for a lil' minute and then tell you to go on about your business.

Due to the pervasiveness of aggressive policing in young men's neighborhoods, they questioned whether the police were really concerned with addressing crime or were merely interested in hassling people. Most concluded it was the latter. For example, Darnell commented, "Police over there by me, they stop you just to mess with you for real. That's what they do. Sometimes they'll pull up and be like, 'get that damn crack out your mouth boy!' and keep going."

Young men came to understand that particular contexts and seemingly innocuous objects might heighten police suspicion of them. And although they acknowledged this reality, they nonetheless found it unjust. For example, Jamal described how certain symbols of affluence would subject black males to negative police attention: "It's like, because the clothes that the teenagers wear, [police] feel that if you have fancy clothes or you have a lot [of] money, you selling drugs. They can't see a black male these days having a good job. They always want to pull you over or search you to find something." Likewise, Gary noted, "they see you out there, black, with gold in your mouth, and they think you out there selling dope or something."

Ricky described how hanging out on the street with other young men usually attracted unwelcome police attention, regardless of whether anyone in the group was involved in criminal activities. He stated, "The police

will ride up on a group of guys, they'll get out, they'll make you lay on the ground, they'll pull your clothes all off you. Or they make you take your shoes and socks off. I mean, just unnecessary stuff." Likewise, Leon explained:

I was sittin' on the front [steps] and two police they pulled over or whatever and got to askin' me all the [usual] questions like, "Where the dope at?" and all this kinda stuff and I said, "Aw, man, I don't know what y'all talking about." [The police said,] "Come on man, you know what we talkin' about." [One officer] tried to get [out of the car] and he wanted to search me and I asked him why and he said he just *wanted* to. So I said, "I feel [like] you harassing me 'cuz *every* time you see us you out here you stop[ping] somebody and checkin' 'em. He said he was gon' show me what harassment was and locked me up.

Leon's account emphasizes the cumulative impact of frequent negative, involuntary police contacts. In particular, he perceived being routinely detained and searched by the same officers as harassment. Young men expressed that the police behaved as if their participation in crime was a forgone conclusion and that they merely needed to locate the supporting evidence to make an arrest. As Leon found out firsthand, several young men reported that there were negative consequences associated with questioning the appropriateness of officers' actions.

Consistent with research on the relationship between race and place, respondents came to expect poor treatment from the police, as they believed that it was the combination of being black and living in a distressed neighborhood that put them at greater risk for abuse. For example, Lamont explained:

[The police] they crooked. I mean they try to do anything [to you]. I ain't tryin' to be prejudice[d] but I think the police don't like black people. You know like all the crooked cops always be in the ghettos, where all the black people at and they try to get as many black people off the street as they can.

Most respondents shared Lamont's view that the urban policing mission disproportionately focuses on poor blacks. His statement also illustrates that perceptions of racially biased policing have the potential to undermine police legitimacy by weakening officers' moral authority in the eyes of community residents. Youths' accounts of aggressive policing included both personal and indirect experiences and emphasize how commonplace the behaviors were for all young black men in their neighborhoods.

POLICE MISCONDUCT

In addition to objecting to aggressive policing strategies, a handful of respondents also complained about their direct experiences with various

forms of misconduct, such as theft and being abandoned in potentially dangerous neighborhoods. And although young men reported personal experiences involving such police behavior, many more described such incidents occurring to friends and family members. Furthermore, in part because of their own negative police experiences, study participants seemed to readily accept as fact others' stories regarding misconduct. For example, William described how the police took \$300 from his cousin who they suspected of selling drugs. He explained:

[The police] took his money 'cuz he had like a large amount of money on him, but he didn't sell no drugs or nothing. They couldn't find no drugs or nothing like that either but he just had large amounts of money and they took his money and they left him somewhere. He had to walk from, I think the West side.

Likewise, Maurice reasoned that officers' presumption that young black males were involved in crime seemingly allowed them to disregard the law themselves. He remarked, "If you ain't got no proof of where your money coming from, then they automatically suspect that it's drug money and they take as much as you got. It don't matter if you say 'I got that for a birthday present,' they still can take it. That's messed up."

Several young men also reported that when officers lacked the physical evidence to arrest them, they would put them in their patrol cars and drive to another neighborhood before forcing them to get out. For example, Kevin stated, "When I used to live downtown, what the police used to do was like, when they lock you up or they arrest you, instead of taking you to the station they'll take you somewhere like the North side or something [and] let you go. [You'll] have to walk home and might walk to the wrong place. Similarly, Doug explained how officers treated him shortly after he moved into a new neighborhood. He noted:

When I first move[d] over there, I was walking down the street one day, me and my friend and [the police] picked us up. They asked us our name[s]. We told 'em our names and stuff, they was still [acting] like they didn't believe us for some reason, so they took us to the station. Well, that's where we thought we was goin to the station, but they took us somewhere far, I didn't even know where I was at. I still don't know to this day. And they dropped us off. Told us to get out there and that was it. I called someone and they knew where I was at. [They] shouldn't be police if they gotta do all that. What's the point? You supposed to protect and serve, not put us in a place where you know we don't know where we at. [There] could be gangs over there. We might get jumped, killed, anything. It's like you tryin to make us find trouble when we're not tryin to.

Doug questioned the appropriateness of the officers' actions, and more

importantly, their fitness as law enforcement personnel. In addition, whereas respondents offered that police used this practice largely to inconvenience them, they fully understood that being abandoned in unfamiliar neighborhoods had potentially dangerous consequences.

Although young men considered aggressive policing practices and the various forms of misconduct that sometimes ensued troubling, respondents came to understand them as *normal* features of police/urban black male youth interactions. However, despite their being routine, study participants viewed aggressive policing strategies as repressive and this belief helped shape their general assessments of police. Respondents were specifically asked how they felt about policing efforts in their neighborhoods. Raymond answered, "I don't trip off the police 'cuz I know they ignorant." Jermaine replied, "It make me feel mad that just *looking* suspicious will get you pulled over." And Andrew explained, "I start feeling violated sometimes, but then I think, nah, that's something I should expect 'cuz that's just the police. I figure since they got some authority and can do whatever they want to do, they gonna do it."

POLICE VIOLENCE

Although police stops typically began with some type of aggressive, bodily contact (i.e., pushing, shoving, rifling through pockets, forcibly undressing suspects), most young men's involuntary, negative contacts with officers did not result in any serious physical harm. However, study participants expressed deep concern about what they considered more serious forms of police misconduct—specifically, the excessive use of force. The most common forms of police violence that young men reported included pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, and the use of mace. Although 18 respondents described such incidents happening to friends and family, 10 young men also recounted direct experiences. It is worth noting that young men's firsthand accounts of police violence paralleled their descriptions of others' experiences. I present study participants' descriptions of both their personal and their indirect experiences below.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

Some young men reported numerous direct experiences with police violence, and for them, this was an unfortunate but routine aspect of neighborhood life. For example, Ricky noted, "I been thrown on the ground, I been kicked [laughs], I been choked, man I could go on forever." And Lamont explained, "sometimes they'll beat you up and let you go. Sometimes they'll beat you up and take you to jail." Travis explained how an undercover officer who incorrectly believed he was concealing drugs choked him in an attempt to obtain the requisite evidence:

I was standing on the corner and we got these police we call the jump out boys. They the police [that be] riding them regular cars and look like regular people. They like "what you doing on this corner?" And I'm just steady talking to 'em and they thought I had some dope in my mouth. So this one cop grabbed me and just started squeezing [my throat]. I was coughing and spitting up stuff and I'm like "what you all doing this for?" and they kept on like "don't swallow it son." I'm like "swallow, I ain't got no dope!" I opened up my mouth after they let go. I was showing them and everything. I mean that's they job to make sure dope isn't on the street but I mean I don't think it is their job to literally squeeze someone's Adam's apple.

Young men felt particular outrage when they were aggressively confronted in situations that did not carry contextual suspicion. Nonetheless, as young men recognized that law-abiding status did not insulate them from aggressive policing strategies, they likewise found that it did not protect them from physical abuse. Although study participants remarked that violence at the hands of the police was not an everyday occurrence, it happened **enough to** convince them that it was a real possibility during *any* encounter with police officers.

Whereas some respondents described being assaulted when they were in law-abiding contexts, young men also experienced police violence when they were caught engaged in illegal activities. Study participants offered that, in this context, police typically used physical force to gain compliance from uncooperative suspects or when they sought evidence in an investigation. For example, Wayne described being roughed up by the police as they tried to determine what he had thrown after spotting them:

I was real young at the time, I was twelve years old. I learned a lot from that mistake I made. I was carrying a pistol for somebody. It was about twelve o'clock in the morning. I was walking up an alley and I'd seen [the police] ride past the alley first and I tossed the gun or whatever. And they came back up the alley. They pretty much threatened me that they would lock me up for something I didn't do if I didn't tell them what it was [that I threw]. . . So I was saying, "I didn't throw nothing, I didn't throw nothing." And they like, "we know you threw something," and holding my arms real hard, like cramping them up a little bit. They're like "we know you threw something." . . . [Then] he kind of like pushed me down on the car, put the cuffs on me like pretty rough, but not beating me or nothing like that.

Frank described a more serious beating that took place after he and another suspect refused to divulge where their partners in an auto theft were hiding:

[The police] was like "where the rest of 'em at, where the rest of

'em?" I'm like "where the rest of who at?" They like, "oh you wanna play?" [The] Po-Po, white police hit the reverse, he drives out to the dark, stops and pow, pow, pow, pow, pow, got to hittin' hard, he hittin' us with a stick, hurting us. [I'm like,] "dang, I don't know where anybody at." He like, "you lying." Pow, hit me again in my face. Next thing I know I'm just going to sleep. I wake up in a little cell, like up in the county [jail] cell.

And Carlos reported that the police sprayed him with mace because after his arrest, he repeatedly complained that the handcuffs were too tight. He noted, "Fuck, they mace[d] me 'cuz I kept talking. They wouldn't let me out the handcuffs, they were too tight." Although young men who were physically assaulted while engaged in crime readily acknowledged their guilt, they did not dismiss the inappropriateness of the arresting officers' actions. In particular, study participants expressed that despite their participation in illegal activities, they expected that officers would perform their duties within the confines of the law.

WITNESSING POLICE VIOLENCE

Young men felt that police officers had many tools to assist themselves in skirting the law while simultaneously holding citizens accountable to it. For instance, youths believed that officers routinely charged suspects with resisting arrest in situations where they had not been justified in using force. In particular, respondents noted that police were more apt to respond with violence when suspects inquired about the legality of their actions or directives. Although study participants were not particularly surprised that officers sometimes used violence, they were especially bothered when police used, what was in their view, excessive force on handcuffed, helpless, impaired or otherwise nonthreatening persons. For example, Doug explained:

I saw my uncle [get beat up by the police]. They said he had a gun, but they didn't find no gun so they couldn't say that. Then they said he was resisting arrest so they beat him up and stuff like that. But I ain't see no resisting arrest [especially] when they have the cuffs on you, you can't resist no more. Then they maced him, and I felt like how is he resisting now? Only thing he tryin' to do is get that [mace] out his eyes. And then I still saw 'em hitting him with clubs and stuff.

Whereas young men recognized that certain situations called for the police to use force, they did not believe that the police always used the appropriate degree of force required to control a suspect. In addition, young men felt that the police were perhaps too quick to use force without considering other options that were available to them. Respondents believed this was particularly the case when police encountered black males. For

instance, Robert wavered in the following example regarding whether his cousin actually resisted arrest, but he was nonetheless highly critical of the amount of force the police used in subduing him:

My cousin [got beat up by the police]. Well, see he was drunk though, he kind of deserved it, but I mean he ain't really deserve to get no straight beating like that. He was kind of resisting arrest, but he was drunk, you know, so he really couldn't control himself. And so they beat him, they said he was resisting his arrest.

Youths believed that the widespread presumption of guilt toward adolescent males in their communities served as a convenient justification for inappropriate police behavior. As noted, respondents suggested that the police were more inclined to break the rules themselves when dealing with those they believed to be lawbreakers. For example, Cooper complained that a team of officers forcibly entered his cousin's home claiming they were responding to a citizen's request for assistance. He contends, however, that the report of a call was fabricated and that officers forced entry to conduct an illegal search of the residence for drugs and weapons. Cooper was especially angered when officers responded to his wheelchair-bound cousin's inquiries (concerning the legality of the search) by spraying him with mace. He observed:

They came in talking about someone had called [911] saying that someone fell out the wheelchair, which wasn't [true]. And they used illegal force to get through the door. Why you all come through the door without no search warrant? He didn't [do] anything wrong. He handicapped. What you mess with a handicapped person for?

Although respondents described witnessing police violence against seemingly law-abiding citizens, they also described incidents of excessive force involving persons who were engaged in illegal activities. They were insistent, however, that young men's illegal activities did not justify their being beaten by officers. For example, Curtis remarked that officers beat his friend who had earlier eluded arrest for auto theft. The friend altered his appearance by cutting his hair but was nonetheless eventually recognized by the officers who had initially pursued him. Curtis explained:

My friend was wanted by the police because he had [stolen a car] and got away and the police didn't catch him. He had long hair so he had cut his hair. One day we was walking in the alley and the police just pult' up and told us to stop. I was fina run then I had thought about it and I couldn't really run that fast 'cuz I had hurt my leg. [So I] said no, I ain't runnin'. So they had beat and drug him down the alley to the [police] car and then I'm like, "man, what you all doing?" then they threw him in the car and [told me], "shut up, shut your ass up!"

Young men said even when they did not directly experience such assaults,

these incidents shaped their overall views of police. For example, Ronald explained how he felt after watching police beat his friend with clubs. He noted, "That made me not trust the police. Seein' what they did to him you know. How [do] I know that something like that wouldn't happen to me?" Likewise, Curtis remarked, "When I see [the police] mistreating people it make[s] me mad."

LEARNING ABOUT POLICE VIOLENCE

Respondents offered detailed secondhand accounts of people being beaten by police. However, most study participants acknowledged that they had heard about many more instances of police violence than they had actually seen. For example, Tyrell noted, "I know people getting beat up by the police all the time." Likewise, Doug stated, "I only seen [the police beat someone] once, but I hear that it happens a lot. I hear about it. You know, dudes come up and say police jump[ed] my peoples the other day or you know, a lot of stuff like that." Similarly, Lamont noted, "My cousin say police be beating people. [He] say they'll beat you up. They tried to get my cousin to fight back. He ain't fight 'em back so they could say he was resisting arrest. So they'll beat you up and take you in and be like, 'he resisted arrest.'"

And Wayne offered:

I've heard, but never really witnessed nobody get beat by the police. A couple of my friends came back [after being led away by the police] beat up and stuff and it's like the police had to have beat them up for no reason. They said they was just standing outside on the corner and the police pulled up and put them in handcuffs 'cuz they said they had a little marijuana or whatever on them and they had put them in handcuffs. They said they took them to St. James Park and beat them and I was like "damn I'm glad I wasn't no where around."

Young men's comments underscore the relevance of hearing about other's negative police experiences and speak directly to the importance of collective group experiences (see Feagin, 1991).

Parallel with earlier discussions, study participants also reported frequently hearing about officers' use of violence in order to obtain evidence during criminal investigations. In particular, several young men reported having observed friends' and family members' injuries, including bruises and lacerations. These seemed to corroborate allegations of police brutality. For instance, Tyrell explained:

I know people getting beat up by the police all the time, but I'll give an example like about two years ago. [The police] came over [in my neighborhood] and got everybody [that's] on gang file. They took 'em into a little room [in the police station] and tried to make 'em tell on

people, but uh my friend had got beat up real bad. They took him in there and beat him up real bad. When he came back, they had bust[ed] his head, bust[ed] his forehead open. He got a [scar] on his forehead. He had something on his arm like a brace or a cast or something like that. . . bruises, they'll go down in a week and a half, [and it] don't look as bad, but you can tell though.

Frank described an incident during which his friend's siblings witnessed him (the friend) being assaulted by the police.

I wasn't there, but they said it was two—make it so bad—it was two black cops who did it. They had grabbed him, threw the dude on the car, they maced him. He couldn't see nuttin'. Got to punching him, slamming his head against the car. Dude's brother like "ya'll leave my little brother alone!" Little sister like, "call momma! call momma! call momma!" Got to slamming his head against the thing, boom, boom, boom. They had took the handcuffs off and scurried off. Man, that's wrong. How they gonna do it front of they little sister?

Frank was extremely troubled by this incident not just because the officers who administered the beating were black,¹⁰ but also because he felt that at the very least, the suspect's younger sister should have been insulated from such violence.

This incident also highlights that aggressive policing efforts, and their byproducts, routinely took place in public settings. Thus, they were highly visible to a sizeable number of community residents and helped shape collective views of police. Although respondents did not report hearing about incidents involving police violence every day, it occurred enough to generate high levels of mistrust and resentment toward the police. Finally, regardless of whether such secondhand accounts were true, they reinforced study participants' widespread beliefs about discriminatory policing practices. In fact, due to numerous experiences with what study participants considered police brutality and harassment in their community, many of them reported that neighborhood residents closely monitor situations involving male relatives, friends, community members, and the police.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Citizens' distrust of the police is a weighty topic. Officers often enlist the help of neighborhood residents in the performance of their duties, and citizens are more likely to assist when they view the police favorably and

10. For the most part, respondents failed to report differences between how black and white officers treated them. However, despite expecting to be treated poorly by all officers, young men considered black officers' mistreatment treasonous and therefore especially disconcerting.

ACCUMULATED POLICE EXPERIENCES

with legitimacy (Decker, 1981). Moreover, because police officers in disadvantaged communities, who are typically composed of African-American residents, citizens' experiences with police may impact how they ultimately feel about the justice system. In particular, unfavorable views of the police by community residents acquiring an overall lack of faith in the justice system. Because African-Americans constitute a significant portion of victims and witnesses, citizens' misgivings about police may impact crime-control efforts in their communities. For instance, citizens may decide not to testify as witnesses in court or when serving as jurors, they may refuse to cooperate with prosecutors and defendants (see Butler, 1995 for a discussion of justice system distrust). Finally, accumulated negative police experiences may result in secondary deviance. Finally, the justice process may increase the likelihood that citizens are compelled to settle disputes on their own, thereby increasing community violence (Anderson, 1999).

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

This research suggests that it is important for police scholars to look beyond official complaints when assessing citizen satisfaction and monitor the prevalence of police misconduct. Most incidents described by the respondents were not reported to the department's Internal Affairs Division.¹¹ In fact, many respondents did not believe that making formal complaints against police was worthwhile. In particular, young men expressed a lack of confidence in police investigating themselves and doubted that their complaints would be taken seriously due to the confounding influence of their low economic status, and in some cases, prior criminal records. Young men were not comfortable with having to go through the process of initiating complaints against officers.

Some citizen groups have persuaded local government officials to establish civilian panels to investigate police wrongdoing. Critics of external review boards, however, argue that they lack the requisite knowledge of police procedure to effectively oversee the complaint process. On the other hand, critics of internal handling of police complaints worry that police officers who are knowledgeable about police work may lack objectivity. Thus, efforts aimed at reforming police complaints

11. This is particularly important given that African-Americans are disproportionately represented among complainants.

hinge on the question of who is best suited to investigate charges of police misconduct.

These findings suggest that a two-tiered system, involving local prosecutors and police executives, holds considerable promise toward increasing citizen trust in the police complaint process. Specifically, citizen complaints against officers could be initiated in the prosecutor's office rather than in police stations. There are several advantages to having prosecutors act as the chief investigators. For instance, prosecutors (1) have subpoena power, (2) are familiar with investigatory processes and police procedure, (3) are already charged with safeguarding the public, and (4) their offices are often sufficiently funded and could perform these tasks efficiently.

Prosecutors could be required to forward their findings, recommendations for disciplinary action, and policy changes to police administrators as well as to the complainant within a specified time period. In addition, the complaining party could receive regular updates throughout the course of the investigation. Police executives could inform citizens of changes (perhaps through media campaigns) to the complaint review process and further advise them that an increase in allegations of misconduct may result from these reforms (see Worrall, 2002 for a discussion). Likewise, police administrators should be mindful that short-lived increases in citizen complaints might thwart efforts to improve police/minority community relations. Nonetheless, police agencies that are serious about increasing citizen trust of, and satisfaction with, the police should not be deterred by temporary increases in the number of complaints.

DISCUSSION

Research concerning citizens' attitudes toward police has consistently found that black adults and adolescents report more dissatisfaction and distrust than their counterparts from other racial groups (Hurst and Frank, 2000; Hurst et al., 2000; Leiber et al., 1998; Taylor et al., 2001). Recent research has also emphasized the importance of considering individuals' personal and vicarious experiences in shaping their perceptions of police. However, most examinations have been based on surveys with adults and have not been able fully to capture the nuances of police/minority citizen interactions.

This investigation extends previous research by focusing specifically and qualitatively on the collective experiences of urban African-American young men—a group that is consistently the disproportionate target of aggressive policing strategies—but whose perspectives are rarely included in scholarly examinations of police/citizen encounters. The goal of the current study was to use in-depth interviewing techniques to examine the interplay of young men's direct and indirect police experiences and how

these shaped their views of the police in their communities. The study highlights how respondents' perceptions of place and racial discrimination combine to shape their experiences with, and attitudes toward, police.

Involuntary police/citizen encounters are more apt to occur in disadvantaged neighborhood contexts where aggressive policing strategies are disproportionately used. In fact, respondents noted that most of their personal and indirect experiences with police stemmed from officer-initiated contacts and described officers' demeanor as hostile, combative, and threatening. The combination of frequent involuntary police contact, coupled with what study participants considered poor treatment during such encounters, contributed to an accumulated body of unfavorable experiences that collectively shaped young men's views of police. Feagin and Sikes (1994: 16) note that, "experiences with serious discrimination not only are very painful and stressful in the immediate situation and aftermath but also have a *cumulative* impact on particular individuals, their families and their communities."

Frequent harassment and discourteous treatment were the most common forms of police misconduct young men reported. Study participants directly linked these behaviors to aggressive policing efforts. Respondents also complained of other kinds of police malfeasance. For instance, they described incidents where officers stole money because they believed the funds were drug proceeds. In addition, they said that some officers engaged in the potentially dangerous practice of dropping youths off in strange neighborhoods when they could not find sufficient grounds to justify an arrest. Finally, young men commented that these and other types of wrongdoing served to undermine officers' legitimacy.

Descriptions of police brutality were prominent features of both young men's direct and indirect experiences. In fact, study respondents came to view police violence as a common feature of urban policing. For example, young men explained that police often used or threatened to use violence against them both to gain compliance and as an investigative tool. In addition, respondents said that officers routinely filed resisting arrest charges against suspects to conceal their use of excessive force. Although most did not report serious cases of police violence in their direct police encounters, most described incidents in which officers "put their hands on" them. For example, young men reported that many of their personal encounters with police began with some kind of aggressive physical contact by officers. And respondents described similar negative police behavior among their vicarious experiences.

Just as young men's law-abiding status failed adequately to protect them from general police harassment, it also did not insulate them from police violence. In fact, being innocent could increase young men's chances of

being assaulted, as they were more likely to challenge the inappropriateness of officers' actions when they were not engaged in unlawful acts. On the other hand, despite their strong negative feelings about police violence, study participants acknowledged that there were situations when officers' use of force was warranted. However, they believed that the amount of force typically used, even against guilty persons, was often gratuitous. Although police violence did not occur as often as it was spoken about, the cumulative impact of these incidents had negative consequences for police community relations.

In addition, researchers should consider the cumulative properties of police/citizen interactions in order to fully comprehend the nature of conflicts between minority communities and police (see Feagin, 1991; Feagin and Sikes, 1994). Thus far, survey research has been unable to entirely represent such complexities. Although this qualitative examination is not widely generalizable, it calls attention to the injury that results from young black men's accumulated adverse police experiences. In particular, the study sample and methodological approach have highlighted a myriad of police/citizen encounters that collectively help shape urban young black men's attitudes toward police.

The findings offered here corroborate prior research concerning the relationship between negative direct police experiences and unfavorable attitudes toward police. In particular, the study raises significant issues that may direct additional studies concerning the relationship between African-American youths and the police. The sample and methodological approach have provided a nuanced understanding of a wide range of young men's police experiences. More importantly, the study highlights the cumulative nature of police/citizen encounters. However, the current study does not attempt to establish temporal order of respondents' personal and indirect experiences. Future research should specifically address this issue and work toward determining the relative strength and power of different kinds of experiences. Such an approach will further emphasize that citizens' assessments of the police are multifaceted and therefore require comprehensive methods to allow us to better understand the myriad of experiences that ultimately shape their perceptions of the police.

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APPENDIX A. EXPOSURE TO POLICE
HARASSMENT AND SELECT RESPONDENT
CHARACTERISTICS

Survey Responses to Questions Regarding Police Harassment		
	N	Percent
Harassed or mistreated by the police	33	83%
Knows someone who has been harassed or mistreated by the police	37	93%
Survey Responses to Questions Regarding Delinquency and Arrest		
	N	Percent
*Delinquency ever	30	75%
*Delinquency within past six months	16	40%
Arrest ever	26	65%
Arrest within past year	20	50%

*Delinquency = Serious—serious delinquency consisted of stealing over \$50, stealing a motor vehicle, attacking someone with a weapon with the intent to seriously hurt them, robbery, and selling marijuana or other drugs.