

Local governments, if their geographical framework provides, may want to mine enacting curfew-type ordinances in specific areas where juvenile crime victimization is highest. This is particularly appropriate in areas where teens have no legitimate business, such as nightclub areas, commercial entertainment districts that cater to an adult crowd, daytime commerce centers, and the like. Predictions of displacement into other areas have been generally unrealized. Should placement occur, local governments have the authority and option to expand few areas.

Conclusion

Societal circumstances require ever-creative solutions. Curfews are merely a sound, active response to very real problems that affect our communities and the health, safety, and welfare of each member thereof.

DEBATE 5

Should a College Degree Be Required for Today's Law Enforcement Officer?

Editor's Note: As society continues to change at a tremendous rate, it seems clear that the organizational, societal, and technological demands placed on law enforcement officers are greater than ever before. With these increasing expectations comes a dilemma that has been subject to years of debate and only limited progress: must police officers be college-educated? The issue is critical enough that two sets of debates will be presented, each with a slightly different perspective, yet both with arguments overlaid by individuals characterized as "pracademics," recognized for their academic expertise and professional experiences.

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YES

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Higher education for police officers can be traced to 1929, when the University of Southern California offered an advanced degree in public administration with a specialization in law enforcement. Michigan State University initiated its Bachelor of Science Degree in Police Administration in 1935. Higher education programs for the police grew slowly until the 1960s.

During the 1960s, prominent groups, such as the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the International Association of Police Professors (now the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences), began to issue public statements in support of higher education for law enforcement personnel (Kobetz, 1977, p. 7).

The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice provided further impetus in its report, *The Challenge of Crime in a Free Society*. The Commission recommended that all police officers be required to have two years of college education at a minimum and that all future police personnel be required to possess a bachelor's degree (President's Commission, 1967). As they explained:

The police personnel need that the Commission has found to be almost universal is improved quality. Generally, law enforcement personnel have met their difficult responsibilities with commendable zeal, determination, and devotion to duty. However, Commission surveys reflect that there is substantial variance in the quality of police personnel from top to bottom.

...The Commission believes that substantially raising the quality of police personnel would inject into police work knowledge, expertise, initiative, and integrity that would contribute importantly to improved crime control.

The word "quality" is used here in a comprehensive sense. One thing it means is a high standard of education for policemen ... A policeman today is poorly equipped for his job if he does not understand the legal issues involved in his everyday work, the nature of the social problems he constantly encounters, the psychology of those people whose attitudes toward the law differ from his. Such understanding is not easy to acquire without the kind of broad general knowledge that higher education imparts, and without such understanding a policeman's response to many of the situations he meets is likely to be impulsive or doctrinaire. Police candidates must be sought in college.... (p. 107)

The 1960s was a decade of social disruption and violence. Police confrontations with students at universities and with anti-Vietnam war protesters were common events. Police inability to cope with the ghetto riots and their apparent helplessness to curtail the spiraling crime rate led both liberal and conservative politicians to believe that higher education was desirable. The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders and similar commissions of this period reflect these views (Jacobs & Magdovitz, 1977).

The police were charged not only with being ineffective in controlling disorder, but also with aggravating and precipitating violence through harassment of minority ghetto dwellers, student dissidents, and other citizens. The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders discovered that, in America's cities, aggressive police patrolling and harassment resulted from society's fear of crime. This practice created hostility and conflict between the police and minorities. Finally, President Johnson's Commission on Campus Unrest also advocated the belief that education for police might assist in decreasing police/citizen confrontations. That Commission found:

Law enforcement agencies desperately need better educated and better trained policemen. ... There should be special monetary incentives for all who enter the police service with college degrees or who obtain degrees while in police service. (p. 154)

The consensus was that, to improve law enforcement, the quality of police personnel had to be upgraded through higher education. There is little doubt that law enforcement personnel had limited education. The median educational level of police officers in 1966 was 12.4 years. In December 1968, *Fortune* magazine estimated that fewer than 10 percent of American police officers had been to college; in October 1968, *Time* reported that Detroit police recruits were from the bottom 25 percent of their high school graduating classes (Jacobs & Magdovitz, 1977).

The 1960s focused on the need of criminal justice education. This need is determined by "an analysis of the criminal justice system and by an assessment of the manpower requirements of the system's agencies (Stenna, 1974). Today, the need of the criminal justice field is for personnel with advanced degrees. New developments and techniques making criminal justice activities more sophisticated demand more sophisticated, well-prepared, well-schooled officers. Technology for policing has advanced by leaps and bounds to a point that a police officer in the 1960s would consider his role in the 1990s to be science fiction!

Education is usually based on a solid foundation of liberal arts. A law enforcement practitioner—or a potential practitioner—must perceive policing as it relates to American society and the democratic process. Higher education exposes students to ideas, concepts, and problem-solving techniques. The educational process aims to develop individuals who know how to live within a group, individuals who understand conflicts in our society and who possess an understanding of

motivation, stress, and tension of other people in our society. An individual with this knowledge and understanding has the ability to apply past information to new situations (Anderson, 1967).

A college education will not transform an intellectually wanting person into an accomplished one. But, all things being equal, the college-educated individual is more qualified and better prepared than the high school graduate. The college-educated person has more experience with people and new situations. His or her responsibility and adaptability to new surroundings have been tested. In addition, he or she has been exposed to various cultural characteristics and ethical and racial backgrounds. This exposure should eliminate or reduce prejudice and bias. More importantly, a formal education should teach individuals to check their judgments regarding prejudices in favor of more tranquil analysis (Hewitt, 1964).

A basic concern of higher education in law enforcement is the need to study and improve the system. Academic study of policing is needed to identify problems and to identify ways in which problems can be solved. Persons interested in research careers in criminal justice need higher education (Sienna, 1974).

As already noted, during the 1960s, the importance of high-quality personnel was finally recognized; the drive to upgrade personnel began. However, in the 1970s, the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals stated:

Police agencies have lost ground in the race for qualified employees because they have not raised standards. College graduates look elsewhere for employment. Police work has often come to be regarded by the public as a second class occupation, open to anyone with no more than a minimum education, average intelligence, and good health (1973; p. 367).

The Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals found it ironic that educational levels were not increased for the police, because studies found that police officers with a college education generally performed significantly better than officers without a college education. According to the Commission, upgrading the educational level of police officers should be a major challenge facing policing. Professions require a higher educational degree and, if the police hope to be recognized as a profession, they need to take notice of the professional criteria. The Commission recommended that all police officers be required to possess a bachelor's degree no later than 1982 (p. 367); in 1997, the police, as a universal standard, do not yet require an undergraduate degree. This is at a time when we are entering a new millennium with more college graduates than ever in our society, and still the police still do not require a college education. However, it should be noted that a study sponsored by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) found that approximately 62 percent of policing agencies serving jurisdictions with populations of more than 50,000 people had some form of incentive program to encourage education. This same study found that only approximately

14 percent of these departments had a *mandatory* requirement of a college degree as a prerequisite for employment (Carter, Sapp, & Stephens, 1988b).

In the last thirty years, police education has increased but not to the point where all entry-level police officers are required to have an undergraduate degree as a requirement for employment. If the police are to increase their professionalism and if they have any expectations of meeting the demands placed on them by their communities, they must improve the educational level of all police officers. The 14 percent of departments requiring a mandatory college education has to rise to 100 percent of all departments requiring a college education for all of their sworn police personnel. American society is becoming increasingly more complex, sophisticated, better educated, multicultural, and multilingual; its police should do no less.

It is critical that the police be familiar with the socioeconomic and cultural makeup of the community they serve. They must identify the cultural diversity among the people they protect. America's communities are heterogeneous, and a police officer with an adequate educational background should function better in the community than an officer unaware of various cultural differences among the numerous ethnic and racial groups. The police need to continue their pledge toward professionalism. In some areas the police have made great strides; in other areas they have not. Excessive use of force, as in the Rodney King fiasco, is one area that needs to be addressed and amplified. Police corruption, including police officers buying and selling drugs, stealing, and robbing, must be curtailed. Our newspapers have an overabundance of police officers being criminally involved with illegal drug activity. The police pledge of professionalism has to become more than rhetoric. It is time it became a reality.

Yet professionalism implies standards and proficiency. Have the police nationally recognized uniform standards and proficiency? Who can respond "yes" to this question? Do those individuals who believe that a college education is unnecessary for police officers realistically believe that the police are professional? How can anyone in our society recognize the police as a profession without the formal requirement of a college degree as a minimum prerequisite for professional recognition? The Police Executive Research Forum study (Carter, Sapp, & Stephens, 1988) hypothesized several advantages of college education for police officers:

- It develops a broader base of information for decision making.
- Course requirements and achievements inculcate responsibility in the individual and a greater appreciation for constitutional rights, values, and the democratic form of government.
- College education engenders the ability to flexibly handle difficult or ambiguous situations with greater creativity or innovation.
- Higher education develops a greater empathy for diverse populations and their unique life experiences.
- The college-educated officer is assumed to be less rigid in decision making and more readily accepts and adapts to organizational change.

- The college experience will help officers better communicate and respond to crime and service needs of a diverse public in a competent manner with civility and humanity.
- College-educated officers exhibit more "professional" demeanor and performance.
- The college experience tends to make the officer less authoritarian and less cynical with respect to the milieu of policing.

It should be obvious to all rational thinking individuals that not all college graduates are eligible to be police officers. There will always be individuals who will be considered unsuitable or unsuited for police work based on physical abilities, physical illness, and emotional temperament. Of course, individuals with felony records or a history of violence should be barred from the police field. However, all things being equal, the college graduate has to be considered the more qualified to perform police work. The PERF list of advantages for a college education for sworn police officers is both logical and rational. This is especially true in a period in which politicians and police administrators are claiming to support problem-solving and community-oriented policing as crime control strategies. To operate successfully, these strategies require that first-line police officers be decision makers and work closely with their communities. The police organization has to be less bureaucratic and less authoritarian if the community-oriented and problem-solving strategies are to be successful. College-educated officers will function better under a system in which they are given the opportunity to use their problem-solving skills. Community-oriented policing will be more successful with a college-educated police officer who has the proven ability to be trainable and who should be more readily open to new ideas and concepts.

The 1960s gave a major impetus to the college education movement. This trend continues into the 1990s. It will not be achieved until every police agency in this country requires, as a prerequisite to employment, that all police officers have, at a minimum, a baccalaureate degree. With the twenty-first century upon us, our politicians, police managers, and police officers, along with their professional organizations, must throw the dinosaur back to antiquity and open a new page for policing in America. The American citizen has the right to be policed by professionally educated police. More importantly, how can the police expect to be viewed or treated as professionals when they lack the minimum prerequisite of a profession... preparatory advanced education?

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Rejoinder to Professor Palmiotto

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Professor Palmiotto's argument in support of requiring a college degree for today's law enforcement officers revisits the formative years of the modern era of criminal justice in our nation. The period falls generally between the mid-1960s and the late 1970s. Ironically, this timeframe roughly corresponds to the existence of a federal agency that was largely responsible for supporting the growth of higher education in policing, namely, the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (L.E.A.A.). As we know today, more money was made available from L.E.A.A. in support of higher education for police than at any time before or since its inception. With the demise of L.E.A.A. in the early 1980s, the support for college-educated police officers became less of a federal priority as other issues came to the forefront. Significantly, universal acceptance of college-educated requirements for entry-level police officers was never achieved.

On the surface, it appears difficult to argue against a college degree requirement for entry-level police officers in our country. As Professor Palmiotto points out, the President's Commission of 1967, the President's Commission on Campus Unrest in 1968, and the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals of 1973 each supported requiring college education for police officers. The National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals actually recommended that all police officers be required to possess a bachelor's degree no later than 1982.

The recommendations of these well-intentioned commissions were just that—recommendations made without any real legislative or regulatory means to carry

them out. Although our society generally places high value on higher education and ascribes additional status to those professions requiring college education, the linkage has not apparently been made to policing.

In his argument, Professor Palmiotto notes that, in the study by Carter et al. (1988) conducted for the Police Executive Research Forum, 62 percent of the responding agencies had some form of incentive programs that encourage employed police officers to attend college. Ironically, only 14 percent of these same departments had a mandatory college requirement for new hires. Likewise, in a nationwide demographic study of police agencies for the Bureau of Justice Statistics, Reaves (1996) found that only 12 percent of the local police departments require new recruits to have some college education. In addition, only 8 percent require "some type" of degree, with only 1 percent requiring a four-year degree (Reaves, 1996). These data would appear to indicate less than substantial support at the local level for college education for police officers entering the workforce. One of the legitimate questions to be asked in light of these findings is, why is that the case?

Professor Palmiotto suggests that the demands placed on today's police officers are becoming greater as this country becomes more diverse in its population. For police personnel to be more professional and for officers to behave more appropriately in dealing with citizens, he argues that a college education is a necessity. Some thirty years ago, the earlier listed commissions made these same arguments. As I will point out later, with respect to the effect of college education on the performance and attitudes of police officers, research results have been, at best, mixed.

Professor Palmiotto also offers a list of advantages of a college education for police officers. Intuitively, it is difficult to refute many of the points appearing on this list. However, as noted, the limited research conducted in this area over the last twenty-five years is less than conclusive in supporting college education for police officers. Professor Palmiotto concludes by noting that, as police departments employ new strategies such as community-oriented policing and problem-solving policing, a greater number of college-educated officers will be required. He assumes that the evolving police organizations will be less bureaucratic and less authoritarian than the current ones. Although not totally discounting Professor Palmiotto's suggestion, I will propose a different way to resolve some of these issues.

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NO

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Responding to this question in a negative fashion may at first appear to be a suggestion that policing as a profession move backward. The "no" response to this critical question also may be viewed as strange coming from someone who had been a campus police administrator for over two decades and now serves as a university professor in a discipline that encourages its graduates to enter police work and the criminal justice field. However, the "no" response is provided to critically review the college education requirement within the context of the last thirty years experience and is meant to serve as a catalyst to develop a more realistic approach to enhancing police professionalism as we enter the next century.

The remainder of my position will review results of some of the research conducted with regard to college-educated police officers; raise questions regarding the vagueness of the college education requirement; discuss whether a college degree is a realistic requirement for entry-level police officers; and question why there isn't more obvious support for such a degree requirement from political leaders and citizens. In addition, I'll raise concerns regarding the obstacles to requiring college degrees that exist within police organizations, as well as offer some suggestions as to what needs to be done with this issue in the very near future.

Prior Research

Ideally, policy decision making in the public sector (e.g., policing) should be based at least in part on research findings. This is of particular importance if the policy change involves human resources and ultimately is linked in some fashion to public funding. It is difficult to imagine a Fortune 500 company making a major modification in its requirements or practices for personnel hiring without first obtaining data from research that would substantiate the change. As noted earlier, the impetus for adopting a college degree requirement for police officers was based primarily on the recommendations of several national commissions. Most empirical studies regarding the performance of college-educated police officers were conducted after many departments across the country had acted on such commission recommendations.

Perhaps the fairest way to characterize the results of the various research studies is to describe them as mixed. For example, Hudzik (1978) noted that,

"Existing research findings cannot be accepted as conclusive evidence that a college education should be a prerequisite to law enforcement employment. The lack of sufficient research controls in the projects measuring the effects of college education results in our being unable to conclude which effects are attributable to college education." (p. 78)

Others have also questioned the effects of college education on police officer performance. For example, Lewis (1970) and Livermore (1971) questioned the value of college education as well as the actual relevance of college course offerings. Wilson (1974) found college-educated officers to be resistant to authority within the command structure and more likely to leave police service within the first few years when compared with non-college-educated officers. Griffin (1980) found an inverse relationship between patrol officer education level and performance evaluation ratings, noting that it was not until college education and years of practical experience were combined that patrol officers attained higher performance evaluation ratings.

Eisenberg and Reinke (1973) noted that the relationship between a college degree and better job performance on the part of police officers was inconclusive. Similarly, in 1981, Sherman and Blumberg conducted research regarding the impact of higher education on use of force by police officers. Once again their findings were mixed. Their study of police officer use of weapons covering a seven-year period in the Kansas City, Missouri, Police Department, led to inconclusive results. "In short, the present study is far from conclusive about higher education and the use of deadly force. It is even less conclusive about the value of higher education for improving police performance, the many components of which are not necessarily consistent for individual officers" (Sherman & Blumberg, 1981, p. 328).

In the late 1980s, Carter and Sapp conducted research regarding the effect of higher education on police civil liability. Theoretically, better-educated officers are less likely to be involved in cases of civil liability. They found no prior research that directly addressed the effect of higher civil liability lawsuits. With regard to their own findings Carter and Sapp (1989, p. 154) stated: "While the evidence is indirect, the arguments suggest that higher education may reduce liability risks." They conclude their study by suggesting that further policy research is necessary (Carter & Sapp, 1989).

Vagueness of the College Requirement

A second issue is relative vagueness of requiring a college degree for entry-level police officers. In American society, a certain aura of professionalism is granted to those individuals who have obtained a college degree. It is generally accepted that persons having college degrees will make more money in their lifetime and secure a better quality of life as compared with non-college-degree holders. In addition, certain occupations, such as teaching, accounting, nursing, medicine, and the law, are viewed as professions. For these occupational specialties, college training and

even postgraduate degrees (in the case of law and medicine) are necessities, and specific curricula must be mastered before one can be employed as a professional.

It is hard to imagine that the American public would accept services from an accountant whose degree was in fine arts or accept health assistance from a nurse whose college degree was in banking and finance. Yet, in discussing the requirements for upgrading the professionalism of law enforcement on the basis of requiring higher education, terms such as "some college," "two years of college," or a "four-year degree" are used to describe minimum-level entry requirements for police officers. The lack of specificity with regard to not only the level of degree but also the curriculum content does little to enhance policing as a profession. If college education is to be a requirement for entry-level police officers, questions regarding the nature of the curriculum and the preferred level of degree (i.e., A.A., B.A., etc.) need to be raised, debated, and settled.

With respect to curriculum content, one of the problems that has been raised in the past is the differentiation between what is to be taught in the police academy training curriculum versus what should be included in an academic college curriculum. College programs that include academic credit courses on crime scene investigation and firearms use are not consistent with the traditional expected content of college academic courses. To not clearly differentiate between the two types of programs (training versus academic) creates even more ambiguity with respect to requiring a college degree for police officers. Recommending a generic college degree requirement for all law enforcement officers assumes that the impact of such a degree will have a positive effect on all degree holders. Yet there is little evidence and support of this assumption. Furthermore, as noted by Sherman and Blumberg, "The impact of higher education may be less homogeneous than some have suggested" (1981, p. 318).

Obstacles within the Police Organization

Historically, the police organization has been described as paramilitary and bureaucratic in nature. This implies characteristics such as a formal rank structure, a chain of command, emphasis on discipline, and a rule-oriented approach to managing operations on a day-to-day basis. There is little evidence that this will change in the near future (Swanson, Territo, & Taylor, 1993). This style of organization may be conducive to responding to major emergencies, but it does not necessarily foster individuality or creative problem solving on the part of college-educated employees. It tends to produce a type of organizational setting within which college-educated officers may become frustrated. As noted by Maslach (1982), "People with higher levels of education have higher expectation for what they want to do in life" (1982, p. 61). Dantzker (1990) also suggested that, although police officers may have high expectations, they often experience a difference between reality and theory in their jobs.

In an hierarchical organization in which there are relatively few supervisory or administrative positions, promotions are relatively infrequent, and this may further frustrate college-educated officers. In their study of veteran police officers, Fischer, Golden, and Heining (1985) found that those officers with higher levels of education often desired to be promoted but were frequently frustrated when they were not able to achieve a higher rank within their organization. Swanson (1977) also noted that there are relatively few promotional opportunities for officers with most police organizations, which in turn leads to frustration on their part. He also described a lack of career paths available for college-educated police officers (Swanson, 1977). According to Scott (1986), even in departments that have higher education requirements, it is the police culture itself that inhibits the development of police officers as change agents. Smith (1978) suggests that the key to changing police officer attitudes may have less to do with college requirements and training curricula and more to do with the police organizational working environment.

The placement of college police officers within a rigid bureaucratic environment that tends to stifle their creativity may do little to actually enhance police officer performance within the community. Swanson (1977) noted that police agencies are essentially line and line and staff organizations. This type of structure assumes that persons at the lower level of the department "must be closely controlled and often coerced to achieve agency objectives." (Swanson, 1977, p. 314). He goes on to note that college-educated officers are "Quite capable of being self-controlling and creative" (Swanson, 1977, p. 314). Thus there may be a lack of congruence between organizational structure and college-educated officer desires and abilities.

Breci (1997) provided another more recent example of a lack of organizational support for higher education. In this study of 915 police officers in Minnesota, the majority of officers indicated a lack of support on the part of their departments for them to continue their higher education. For example, "80 percent of the departments did not provide pay incentives for a return to college, 62 percent did not offer tuition assistance and 67 percent failed to adjust their work schedules to allow attending college classes." (Breci, 1997, p. 55).

Is the College Degree Requirement Realistic?

A final area that I would like to address regarding the requirement of a college degree for police officers is the question as to whether such a requirement is realistic. This is both a political and budgetary question within the criminal justice system. Does the public place such emphasis on the value of higher education for police personnel that they are willing to invest the tax dollars necessary to fund the proposed requirement? Are political leaders and police executives willing to divert dollars from other portions of their budgets to financially support higher education initiatives? Weirman and Archambeault (1983) raised these and related

questions in their assessment of the demise of L.E.A.A. funding in the 1980s. At present, federal level budgetary support under the Clinton administration is directed at simply placing more police officers on the street through the C. O. P. S. program, with little emphasis on enhancing services through requiring higher educational standards for police officers.

Powell (1986) noted a variety of reasons that a bachelor's degree requirement for police personnel has not yet been implemented:

First is the time that would be involved for those non-degree police officers already in the system to obtain baccalaureate degrees. Second is the geographic inaccessibility of colleges and universities to many areas, combined with the cost of tuition and books. Third is the minimal manpower resources available to police agencies to allow schedule adjustments for education. Finally, there is the ever present ambivalence within the police agencies on the real need for higher education. (Powell, 1986, p. 2)

In his survey of police supervisors, criminal justice educators, non-criminal justice higher education faculty, and citizens in the state of Michigan, Powell (1986) found general support for improving the quality of policing through higher education but did not find conclusive evidence that the majority of those surveyed supported the need for mandatory implementation of such a requirement.

In their nationwide study of police agencies serving populations of 50,000 or greater, Carter, Sapp, and Stephens (1988b) found that only 20 percent of the departments had a "formal or informal promotion policy requiring some form of higher education" (Carter et al., 1988b, p. 23). Therefore, most of these agencies serving large populations do not include higher education as a promotional requirement. This indicates a lack of commitment to higher education on the part of police executives or the political leadership within those communities.

Finally, the question of agency size must be raised regarding the plausibility of requiring a college education for police officers. According to Reaves (1996), there are approximately 9400 police agencies serving populations of less than 10,000, and there are 6400 departments (or 52 percent of all departments) who employ fewer than ten officers in our country. With regard to the budget of these smaller police agencies, "departments serving populations of 2,500 to 9,999 persons spend an average of \$45,800 per year on each officer" and those agencies serving populations of less than 2500 spend \$29,000 annually on each officer (Reaves, 1996, p. 7). By way of comparison, "police agencies who serve populations of 50,000 up to 1 million or more, spend between \$67,800 and \$77,200 on each officer" (Reaves, 1996, p. 7). Without a dramatic increase in the police budgets for the smaller departments, it does not appear realistic to expect them to be able to attract college-educated officers. Further, even if college-educated officers were hired, the smaller agencies who have limited potential promotional opportunities would in all likelihood experience additional officer turnover at the entry level.

What Needs to Be Done First?

Although my position in this chapter has been negative with respect to the appropriateness of requiring a college degree for police officers, that does not imply that this issue should not be examined further. The goal of requiring a college degree for police officers may be worthwhile within the context of an ever-changing society. However, there needs to be additional discussion, serious debate, and effective political leadership as characterized by new legislation and fiscal support before change can occur. I propose that a number of steps need to be taken to more comprehensively examine the proposed educational requirement.

First, additional research should be conducted on a nationwide basis with respect to the effect of higher education on police officer performance. Sophisticated sampling techniques need to be employed to control for a variety of variables, including agency size, populations served, and other appropriate variables or demographic features. In addition, a survey of police executives, political leaders, and citizens should be conducted to determine their perceptions of the need for college-educated police officers. I also suggest that there be a thorough examination of the current criminal justice curriculum in higher education for police practitioners. Clear distinctions must be made between skill development training taught in police academies and academic course work that is part of a college or university curriculum. Higher education professionals in criminal justice and police executives should collaborate to develop the framework for a content-specific curriculum that produces college graduates who possess the intellectual skills necessary to be successful as police officers. For any curriculum to be successful, it cannot be developed in a vacuum and certainly needs critical input from all parties effected.

Next, I argue that the emphasis on requiring a college degree for entry-level police personnel has focused on the wrong stage or step in the organizational ladder. Instead, it would seem more appropriate that a higher education requirement first be enacted at the managerial/executive levels of police organizations. As noted by Witham (1985, p. 70), "Some advocates of police professionalism have argued that all officers should be required to possess a minimum of a bachelor's degree. Many people would argue that college level education is even more important for the police managers than patrol officers."

In police agencies where it is financially feasible, alternative entry-level career opportunities, such as community service officers or police aides, should be developed. This would allow non-college-educated individuals a chance to work for a police department, gain experience, and work toward a college degree. Departments could phase in these persons as fully certified, degree-holding police officers on completion of their college coursework and police academy training.

Finally, it appears that changes must be made to the typical police organizational culture and its traditional hierarchical structure. Traditional police bureaucracies are not sufficiently flexible to attract and retain large numbers of college-educated officers. The lack of an adequate number of career-enhancing

opportunities and the failure to support officers in their efforts to continue their higher education are perceived as negatives for college-educated officers. Although authorities have argued that the traditional police organization must be altered for community-oriented policing to be successfully implemented, a similar case could be made with respect to requiring a college education for police officers. To change the police organization and its culture, police executives, with the support of their political leaders, must exert strong leadership. Police departments should attempt to hire college-educated officers and encourage current personnel to continue their education; however, it is not realistic at this time to require all police officers to have a college degree.

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Rejoinder to Professor Bromley

MICHAEL J. PALMIOTTO

Professor Max Bromley makes a valiant effort to attempt to explain in a logical and rational manner why police agencies should not mandate a college education for all police officers. To his credit, he presents several rational arguments against the requirement that all police officers be required to have a college degree. Many of Professor Bromley's points have a definite appeal to those police officers who are anti-education. However, Professor Bromley raises several key issues related to a college education for police officers. What is more important, he raises basic issues pertaining to police organizations. The concern he raises regarding education and police organizations evokes the question "Which comes first, the chicken or the egg?" In this rejoinder, I hope to respond to Professor Bromley's major premise.

Professor Bromley emphasizes that the impetus for adopting a college degree requirement for police officers was "based primarily on the recommendation of several commissions." Although he is correct in stating that national commissions were major stimuli for advancing higher education for police officers, he fails to recognize that the educational movement can be traced to a single, progressive individual—August Vollmer—in the 1920s. The movement to require a college education for police officers has occurred throughout most of the twentieth century. This movement will not go away.

According to Professor Bromley, research pertaining to the value of a college education is mixed. The studies he cites are studies from the 1970s, with one from

the late 1980s. Can a true assessment of a college education be obtained when the research probably included officers in various stages of their college educations? Can accurate evaluations of college-educated officers be expected when supervisors and administrators may not be supportive of college education for police officers? Does not the individual with the greater education stoop to the standards of the less-educated individual? If college-educated officers have a limited impact on policing, is it because they are a minority in the organization with limited authority and power to influence the organization? It should be recognized that the noncollege police officer often feels intimidated and threatened by the college-educated officer. That noncollege officer will often debase the performance of the college officer. Noncollege supervisors have been known to give college-educated officers poor annual evaluations simply because of their anti-education attitude.

It appears to be Professor Bromley's contention that a college education is an unnecessary requirement because police organizations are "paramilitary and bureaucratic in nature." Are not federal law enforcement agencies, such as the FBI, Secret Service, and U.S. Marshal Service, paramilitary and bureaucratic organizations? Yet, these policing agencies require a college education for employment. Are not municipal, county and state policing as important to the welfare of citizens? Should local police officers be less educated than their federal counterparts?

The argument that, because of limited promotions in police agencies, a college education should not be required for the police field is weak. When we examine all of the professions and fields that require a college education, we find that the same argument can be made for every other field. For example, are all accountants in a CPA firm promoted? Are all lawyers in a law firm made partners? Do all FBI agents become supervisors? We all know that promotion in any organization is limited. Some individuals who fail to obtain a promotion may leave the organization, others who are not promoted will remain, and some individuals do not want to be promoted.

In a period of problem-oriented policing and community-oriented policing, there is a greater expectation of creativity and problem solving by police officers. If police organizations give more than lip service to community policing, then, for this philosophy to be successful, the rigidity of the police organization needs to decrease and disappear. An officer with a college education should be better able to cope with the changing philosophy of policing than a non-college-educated police officer.

The survey of the Minnesota police officers, in which most indicated that they did not support their department's continuing higher education policy, should not come as a surprise. Police officers are not known for their ready acceptance of change. Usually, when change occurs, the city "fathers," state legislative branch, state or federal laws, and the courts will dictate it to the police organization. How many police chiefs would require recruit training if state law did not require it? How many police departments would employ ethnic or racial minorities? How many police departments would hire female police officers? Police departments are usually

content with the status quo and resist change. It is the rare police administrator who implements change and the even rarer organization that supports it.

The college degree requirement is realistic, and, perhaps more important, a sufficient number of college graduates are willing to enter the field for a police officer's salary. Currently, college graduates are being recruited along with high school graduates. In many areas of the country, police officers with high school diplomas are receiving higher salaries than elementary and secondary school teachers with college degrees. College graduates are attracted to the teaching field because they want to work with children and not necessarily because of the salary. Should we not expect college graduates inclined toward police work to become police officers?

Professor Bromley makes an excellent point that small police agencies with fewer than ten officers may not be able to employ a college graduate. The salaries of very small police agencies are often so low that one has to wonder why anyone would accept these positions. With extremely low salaries, the caliber of the people employed is often subject to question. With a college education requirement, many of these departments may have to be eliminated or, at least, consolidated. The emphasis should be on quality and not just having a "good old boy" as a police officer. Rural, suburban, and urban police departments should recruit quality people. Only with quality police officers will a community have an effective police agency.

According to Professor Bromley, we need "additional discussion, serious debate, and effective political leadership." Over the last several decades, there have been enough discussion and debate about the value of a college education for police officers. What has been lacking is *police leadership*. If there had been police leadership supporting college education, a college education would be a requirement today. Not only have police administrators shown a lack of leadership, but heads of police organizations and unions have failed to live up to their responsibility.

According to Professor Bromley, additional research on the issue of college education for police officers should be conducted. It is difficult to support this position. New research will not reveal any new findings. It will only rehash what already is known. The police field first must determine whether it is on the path toward professionalism. If the answer is yes, then police agencies should immediately put in place the college education requirement. The suggestion by Professor Bromley that criminal justice professors and police executives should collaborate to develop a curriculum for college graduates interested in police work is an excellent recommendation. There definitely must be dialogue between the academic profession and the police field. The police practitioner should understand the academic field if he or she is to appreciate the value of a college education. The academician should understand where the police are "coming from" and what the police consider to be important issues to their field.

No reason exists for only advocating a college education for police managers, as Professor Bromley proposes, and not for the line officer. Although the police

manager may need a formal college education emphasizing management principles and concepts, this in no way should detract from the college education requirement for the line officer. Police managers most frequently are taken from the ranks and, eventually, a line officer can become a manager.

I strongly disagree with Professor Bromley that it is not realistic at this time to require all police officers to have a college degree. Professor Bromley does not provide a timetable to require all police officers to have a college degree. If one is to accept Professor Bromley's assumption about college education for police officers, then there never will be a realistic time to require college education for all police officers!

RANDALL L. GARNER

Unarguably, policing is becoming more complex in today's ever-changing society. What was once described as maintaining order and keeping the peace has developed into problem-solving, statistical analysis, technological innovation, and innumerable social intervention strategies. The information one must possess to become a police officer appears to be increasing exponentially. Additionally, the level of scrutiny police officers receive has never been greater. The quickly advancing societal landscape, as well as a few high-profile events, have rekindled the drive to increase the educational requirements of police officers.

The idea of requiring police officers to obtain a college education is not new. During his tenure as Berkeley, California's, police chief in the early 1900s, August Vollmer, known as the father of police professionalism, was a staunch supporter of increased educational requirements for officers and encouraged the hiring of degreed applicants (Walker, 1992). Vollmer required his officers to attend classes at the University of California at Berkeley and designed a sequence of courses he believed were important to an officer's education and professionalization. Because he believed so strongly in the importance of education, the cadre of college students he recruited for police service became known as "Berkeley's college cops" (Carte, 1973).

Vollmer's thinking, however, was not widely embraced at a time when "professionalism" was more a consideration of reducing outside political influences than increasing the standards and requirements of those in policing. It was not until the latter 1950s and early 1960s that a minimum requirement of a high school or general equivalency diploma (GED) was established and minimal training standards begun.

With the widespread civil unrest of the 1960s, a renewed call for increasing officers' formal education was reestablished. As Palmiotto discussed in an earlier debate, the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice (1967) identified the need for college-educated personnel to address the increasing complexities of society.

One government "solution" to address this issue was to infuse educational funds through programs such as the Law Enforcement Educational Program (LEEP), professedly to increase the educational standards of officers throughout the nation. Unfortunately, with little oversight or program evaluation, LEEP became a total "leap of faith." Some officers did benefit from a college degree, but the curricula were often inadequate to meet the Commission's goals, and some were little more than "advanced" academies. Researchers suggest that the colleges and universities' rush to acquire the flowing federal funds overshadowed proper consideration of the Commission's ideals, that is, to provide a broadened educational background that would facilitate present and future officers in their chang-

College-Educated Cops: Is the Time Now?

Editor's Note: Professors Palmiotto and Bromley have argued the need for college-educated police officers forcefully and from a firm theoretical perspective. At the center of this complex issue is change . . . in the police organization, in the technology its personnel use, in the community it serves. In this debate, Dr. Garner and Mr. Lynn move us to the next practical level. If higher education is a desirable prerequisite for entry-level police officers, is it needed NOW? And, if not now, WHEN?

Dr. Randall Garner holds a B.S., an M.A., and a Ph.D. in Psychology and currently is Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice at Sam Houston State University and Director of the Texas Community Policing Institute. Dr. Garner began his law enforcement career in 1976 and has served at all levels of command, most recently as Chief of Police for a Houston-area agency. During his tenure as Chief, he was active in national, state, and local law enforcement organizations. Dr. Garner is an honors graduate of both the FBI National Academy (139th Session) and the Southern Police Institute (66th Administrative Officers Course, University of Louisville).

R. Lynn has been in law enforcement for more than sixteen years and has held numerous supervisory positions. He is currently an instructor at a regional police academy where he teaches courses on Police-Community Relations, Cultural Diversity, First Line Management, and other related areas. Mr. Lynn has been active in police policy issues and has served as the president of a local police officers association. Mr. Lynn holds a degree in Police Administration and has taught several college courses as an adjunct professor of criminal justice.

ing and increasingly challenging roles. The National Advisory Commission on Higher Education for Police Officers (1979), in fact, found that many criminal justice college programs were simply extensions of academy-based courses. This was contradictory to the broad-based social sciences approach to understanding and dealing with human behavior that Vollmer and the President's Commission had envisioned.

Research conducted during the early 1970s and 1980s addressing the benefits of college-educated police officers was equivocal at best. Some researchers found the college experience to be of little value, and others supported the notion that a college-educated police officer was better able to handle rapid changes, increased diversity, and technological innovations that were becoming more prevalent in law enforcement (Buckley, McGinnis, & Petrunik, 1992; Carter & Sapp, 1990; Radelet & Carter, 1994). It is not surprising that these contradictory findings developed. Proper analysis was virtually impossible, given the large curriculum variances, the few officers who actually attained baccalaureate degrees, the naturally occurring delay between attaining increased education and its impact on the profession, and the spate of confounding variables that could not be experimentally controlled. Additionally, those officers who did obtain a college degree were often viewed as suspect by fellow, nondegree officers, and few if any organizational changes occurred to attract or retain college-educated individuals. Only now are we seeing those with higher education becoming the chiefs and administrators of police agencies and the resultant impact they can have on the policy and philosophy of law enforcement.

Unfortunately, the ongoing debate over the potential benefits of receiving a college education dominated the 1970s and 1980s. Rather than moving forward to enhance entry requirements and modify curriculum, decision makers continued to struggle over the merit of higher education. There seemed to be an interminable argument over the training versus education issue, a debate long ago resolved for other professions in favor of college degree requirements. Yet, critics of enhanced police college education requirements continued to reference the problems encountered in the early 1970s and 1980s to de-emphasize the potential importance of a college degree. Only now, possibly because of the increased attention on the philosophy of community policing and the need to have educated officers who are better communicators and better able to handle diverse situations and populations, is there a renewed call for increased educational standards.

This author contends that the time has come to put an end to this protracted debate. While decision makers have been wallowing in a quagmire of semantic conflict, the complexities of policing have continued to burgeon. The state of college education for police officers has improved significantly over the years. Most of the programs created in the mid-1970s, primarily in pursuit of federal dollars, have been discontinued, however, the more carefully planned and encompassing programs have survived. This is not to suggest that more improvement is not warranted; however, many of the past decade's mistakes have resulted in a natural

"course correction" as a consequence of demanding increased standards and reduced discretionary funding.

From a research standpoint, as enough time has elapsed to examine the role of the college educational experience, a more well-rounded scenario has emerged. Recent studies, many of which are cited by Dr. Palmiotto in the previous debate, have, in spite of some detractors, emphasized the benefits associated with a college education.

Of course, many decision makers would prefer the debate to continue, seeking an absolute answer as to whether a college education is beneficial for police officers. Unfortunately, such an absolute is not possible in law enforcement—as it is not in medicine, law, psychology, teaching, counseling, or other professions that require such education. Some argue that one could become an adequate surgeon, forego all of those "pesky" college requirements, with ample technical training—as was once practiced in the armed forces. Yet, as medicine becomes more complex, few of us today would want to be exposed to a "technically" trained surgeon. We cannot quantify everything, and many other professions do not question the value of a college education in preparing to meet the challenges of their chosen field. A quote often attributed to Einstein suggests that "everything that counts cannot be counted, and everything that can be counted may not count."

The bottom line is that this debate is not easily resolved, especially when nondegree officers may perceive their advancement potential to be threatened. Buckley (1991) found that officers who possessed a four-year degree believed that education enhanced their performance, and those without college suggested that "instincts," common sense, and experience were more important. A college environment challenges the student to seek and answer questions and to develop a proclivity to inquiry. Conversely, training is oftentimes developed around solutions that can be quickly implemented through a one-way dispersal of procedures, skills training, and presentation of facts.

This discussion is not to suggest that college is the answer to all of the challenges associated with policing or a replacement for valuable academy training. Education must complement both field experience and the technical training necessary to carry out law enforcement activities. Some states have adopted tailored education models that incorporate both aspects. In Texas, for example, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education (TCLEOSE) adopted a program designed to encourage the hiring of college-degreed police officers. The Criminal Justice Center at Sam Houston State University was the first four-year institution to put such an approach into practice (Blair, 1988). The curriculum provides students with a sequence of college classroom courses (in addition to the many university-designated degree requirements) recognized by The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. These courses meet more than one-third of the 230+ performance objectives of TCLEOSE's Basic Peace Officer Licensing Course. "Hands-on" training is conducted and coordinated within the traditional academy setting and is offered on a schedule that coincides with most

Texas college and university summer semesters. On the student's graduation from the university, this program results in a college-educated *and* academy-trained individual prepared for police service.

The importance of a college education for police officers should not be confined to criminal justice programs. In fact, research demonstrating the benefits of a college education on policing finds little distinction in one's major course of study. Although there may be some advantages in programs geared toward criminal justice, those officers with degrees in psychology, sociology, public administration, accounting, government, etc. also benefit. Research suggests that the college experience, coupled with the required courses that colleges and universities demand, combine to form a more well-rounded and better-prepared officer. Worden (1990) found that higher-educated police officers (regardless of major) tended to be less rigid, had better discretionary judgment, exhibited more positive attitudes toward policing's legal challenges, and held a broader perspective of the police role. Clearly, the college experience can provide the future officer with a well-rounded background and a level of performance beyond a high school diploma or a GED.

Now Is the Time for Change

Many of the educational recommendations for police officers proposed by presidential commissions, task forces, and other groups have never fully been realized. At the time the recommendations were made, several impediments were present, including inadequate salaries to compete for college-educated individuals, a cultural bias among long-time officers opposed to requirements that might jeopardize their positions or promotability, insufficient college programs, and a fear of litigation against those departments considering raising their standards. However, some researchers contend that several events have converged, making this the time for change. Many of the impediments of a college educational requirement have been addressed and overcome. For example, the salaries in most major police agencies are commensurate with other occupations that require a college degree, and the organizational climate opposed to increased standards has changed. In fact, although few departments require a college degree, many find that their best candidates are those who have one. In many ways a degree has become a *de facto* requirement in departmental hiring and promoting (Sheehan & Cordner, 1995). Finally, the courts have consistently held that college education requirements for police officers are a Bona Fide Occupational Qualification (BFOQ) (e.g., *Davis v. Dallas* 777 f.2d 205, 5th Cir. 1985; see also Scott, 1986), and these standards have not had an adverse effect on women or minority recruitment (Carter, Sapp, & Stephens, 1988; Carter & Sapp, 1990). In fact, Carter and Sapp (1990) found that among police officers "all minority racial/ethnic groups contained higher percentages of graduate degrees than did whites" (p. 67).

Requiring a College Education for Entry-Level Police Officers

There are sound arguments to be made in support of a college degree requirement for entry level police officers. These are discussed under three general headings and attempt to show how the benefits of a college education can positively impact organizational changes, societal changes, and technological changes.

Organizational Changes

Today's policing organizations are much different from those that existed when LEAA and LEPP were begun in the 1970s. More officers involved in police service have college degrees, and the bias of the police culture against "college cops" has abated significantly. In fact, Carter and Sapp (1990) found that 65.2 percent of officers had one year or more of college credits and 22.6 percent had attained a bachelor's degree. As a result of time and experience, more police managers and administrators are college-educated and are incorporating organizational changes that are commensurate with the needs of a college-educated force. The challenges of community policing require today's officers to exert more discretion in problem solving and decision making. Officers must be attuned to the cultural differences and sensitive to the community's needs and recognize and value the diversity that they encounter. Studies have suggested that a successful community policing approach is dependent on the quality of educated police officers an agency can attract.

Because of these organizational changes, today's officers are more highly educated than at any other time in history. Departments can now recruit college-educated officers and provide them with salaries commensurate to those of other entry-level occupations requiring degreed candidates. Furthermore, many police organizations offer incentives—in the form of increased educational pay, tuition assistance, or preferential semester scheduling—to those officers who continue their education or pursue a college degree.

Although few states require a college education as a minimum qualification for police service, more and more departments are moving in this direction. Many require at least some college, some require an associate's degree, and others mandate an entry-level bachelor's degree (Carter & Sapp, 1990). Agencies also may require entry-level officers to have sixty hours of college but stipulate that only those with baccalaureate degrees or higher are eligible for promotion. Again, although the number of agencies that mandate higher education are increasing, much more needs to be achieved.

Interestingly, although the qualifications posted by many agencies do not necessarily require a college degree, researchers have found that, in the hiring and promotional process, college is a clear advantage. Hooper's study (1988) indicated that four-year college graduates rated highest in police academy performance, and

Garner (1996) found that 97 percent of those graduating in the top 10 percent of a preservice regional police academy were college graduates. In some ways, a college education has become a *de facto* requirement, although not always formalized into policy. When police chiefs and administrators were surveyed, they overwhelmingly identified a college education as an essential requirement for those entering police service today.

An interesting corollary to the college debate is the decreased confidence of police administrators in those officers holding only a high school diploma. Once an indicator of a minimum skill and education, high school diplomas today may be awarded through social promotion rather than demonstrated competence. Many university professors contend that, as a group, the communication and analytic skills of incoming college freshmen are less developed than a decade ago. Again, this issue further supports the argument favoring a college education requirement for police officers.

Organizational policing challenges are greater than ever before. The move toward community, problem-solving, and solution-oriented policing requires officers to possess reasoning skills beyond those that were required in the past. Research has shown that officers with college degrees possess a greater sense of problem solving and analytic ability and a greater sensitivity to the community's diverse needs. The philosophical shift toward community policing has caused departments to realign their management and organizational goals. Line officers, for example, are given greater discretion and are encouraged to develop innovative ways to address their mission. According to Radelet and Carter (1994), "given the nature of this change, the issue of college education is even more critical. The knowledge and skills officers are being asked to exercise in community policing appears to be tailored to college preparation" (p. 156).

Societal Changes

Today's police organizations are encountering a more culturally and ethnically diverse population than previously known. Ethnic slurs that were once pervasive throughout many police organizations are no longer tolerated. Officers must be culturally sensitive and willing to value ethnic differences. Interestingly, most college degree programs emphasize courses in areas such as cultural diversity, ethics, and cross-cultural comparisons, and some even require a foreign language. These courses are invaluable to the repertoire of today's police professionals. Research has indicated that those officers who are exposed to such an educational experience fare far better when dealing with diverse community groups.

In addition to the need for officers who are better attuned to cultural and diversity issues, departments must recognize that members of the community are also becoming more educated. As this occurs, the citizen's expectations toward police services and activities will also increase. One would expect nothing less than to re-

quire police officers to raise their educational levels to represent the populations they serve. In a recent survey (Garner, 1997), 89 percent of citizens reported that a college education was an important requirement for police officers. Interestingly, most respondents were surprised that a college degree was not already required.

Psychology, sociology, and human behavior courses all can contribute to a better understanding of the complex social world. The academy approach represents only one dimension of the knowledge continuum needed by the professional officer of today. The minimal amount of training hours devoted to "cultural diversity or human relations" is much less than the equivalent of an intense semester covering each topic.

Technological Changes

Today's police officer is faced with more modern technology than ever before. The regulation field notebook has been replaced with the laptop. Fingerprints and mug shots are now taken through photo digital transfer. The traditional teletype is practically a machine of the past, as more powerful and sophisticated computers can perform millions of calculations per second and speed information to police agencies in ways unimaginable only a few decades ago. Video retrieval systems, mobile digital computers, and computer-based dispatch and tracking are the policing technologies of the present. We have traded our ten-code for binary transfer protocols. In addition, the Internet, World Wide Web, and e-mail have expanded resources and data collection techniques, and the emphasis on solution-oriented policing has placed greater demands on crime analysis, problem solving, and computer sophistication.

As innovative ways to address crime and social disorder are developed, departments must have officers who are able to accurately measure the impact of these approaches with methodologically sound techniques. Again, this sophistication level was not a part of the "increased educational equation" during the time when the presidential commissions and others were emphasizing the importance of a college education—making it all the more important now. Fortunately, most college degree plans require courses that are beneficial in today's technologically rich environment (i.e., computer sciences, information systems, research methods, statistical analysis, etc.).

In sum, now is the time to increase the educational standards envisioned more than eighty years ago by August Vollmer. A baccalaureate degree should be the minimal requirement for entry into police service. The societal, technological, and organizational sophistication of policing requires this minimum criterion. If policing is ever to be viewed as a true profession, we must demand the types of educational standards commensurate with that designation. To reduce the potential difficulties that could be encountered by local and political influences, state Police Officer Standards and Training (POST) commissions should adopt and

mandate the minimum baccalaureate standard. The American Police Association now lists among its goals to require at least a baccalaureate degree for all officers with law enforcement authority ("College-Educated Police Form APA," 1997).

Policing is an occupation that demands the education and skills of a teacher, lawyer, counselor, social worker, doctor, psychologist, and minister. Yet it is interesting to note that all of these professions long ago required a college degree—even before receiving their advanced training. Clearly, one could argue that the challenges of policing in today's society are equally or more demanding. Now is the time to provide our officers with the educational tools and professional acceptance that is needed in policing our rapidly changing environment.

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Rejoinder to Dr. Garner

R. LYNN

Dr. Garner offers a compelling treatise regarding the implementation of a college degree requirement for entry-level police officers. He makes sound arguments for the potential benefit that a college education may have, as one considers all of the organizational, societal, and technological changes that have occurred in the last two decades. Let me emphasize, I am not opposed to increased educational requirements—we just have to think it through. I agree with Dr. Garner that the more recent research on college-educated officers is promising, but this is still a long way from mandating that we should require a degree as a minimum standard. As Garner correctly states, few agencies have actually implemented such a proposal. Despite any discussion regarding a degree as a "de facto" requirement, police agencies have been hesitant to make it formal policy. We must ask ourselves why this might be and consider the implications involved.

On another level, many of my concerns are of a more practical nature—how will we fairly implement this proposal, how will we pay for it, and how will it impact our ability to attract dedicated personnel? It is easy to offer the suggestion; the devil is in the details, however. Garner and others cite reasons why a degree might advantageous in policing, but few offer recommendations on how to implement these ideas in a way that will not be disruptive to the organization. I can envision many potential conflicts between the degreed and nondegreed officers, especially in areas of pay, assignment, and promotion. Furthermore, smaller agencies may be unfairly burdened with the expense of competing for and retaining qualified applicants. How can small agencies expect to attract qualified applicants on limited budgets and meager resources?

Again, I support the need to provide our law enforcement officers with the education that they believe necessary to meet the demands of the profession. My reservations regarding many of the issues I have outlined in my segment of this debate, however, remain. Certainly the argument is not that a college degree is detrimental; in fact, many, if not most, may benefit from this educational experience.

The major question, however, is whether there is sufficient evidence to *mandate* this as a minimum requirement, thus excluding many potential applicants from the pool. In my judgment, the jury is still out on this issue.

NO

R. LYNN

There has been much debate about the value of a college education for police officers over the years. National Commissions (e.g., President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice), international police organizations (e.g., the International Association of Chiefs of Police), and others have argued that the road to the solidification of policing as a profession leads to America's colleges and universities. Despite these declarations, little evidence has been offered that this is truly the case.

Much of the discussion regarding upgrading the professional standards for policing originated after a period of social and civil upheaval in the late 1960s and early 1970s. This was a time in which the police were seeing growing social unrest coupled with an increase in judicial intervention into what was deemed to be acceptable police practices. Many celebrated Supreme Court cases placed significant restrictions on police enforcement and investigatory activities. Tales of alleged police indiscretions or abuse were met with a call for increased professionalism, stringent hiring requirements, and a substantial enhancement of educational standards.

The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice (1967) called for increasing the minimum education for police officers to a bachelor's degree, suggesting that, by the mid-1980s, *all* individuals in police service should meet this standard. This sentiment was echoed by the Task Force Report: The Police (1967b), as well as other influential commissions, foundations, and research institutions. Unfortunately, in their zeal to suggest increased educational standards, the important issues of the *quality* of that education and the caliber of the curriculum were not addressed. It seems that the idea of having police officers with a college education was so enamoring that the concept of how that education would be achieved or delivered was lost. It was almost as though there was a notion that, by merely sending cops to college, many of the problems associated with the profession would be solved.

With the advent of the Law Enforcement Educational Program (LEEP), an offshoot of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, money began to flow to both officers and the colleges and universities who were to educate them. These educational institutions, however, were ill equipped to provide the type of generalized education suggested by the Commission. This seemed to be of little consequence to many of these institutions. As one politician put it, "if Uncle Sam

is passing out the feed (read as 'easily obtainable money'), everybody will show up to the trough." The resulting "educational movement" was fraught with problems, incompetencies, and misdirection. The "quality" education offered by some institutions was little more than an upgraded academy class (e.g., Handcuffing 101) and bore no resemblance to the liberal educational ideals that had been suggested. To make their programs look successful and attract police students, some institutions offered "life experience" credit for one's time as an officer, hardly what the President's Commission had in mind. In fact, many colleges merely hired academy training staff as adjunct faculty to begin their program.

The Sherman Report (1979) (officially, the National Advisory Commission on Higher Education for Police Officers), which examined the state of higher education on police officers, was very critical of these practices and highlighted this misguided approach. Nearly a decade later, Southerland (1991) continued to find little consistency in criminal justice curriculum offered by institutions of higher learning.

Around the time of the Sherman Report, many researchers were beginning to examine the value of a college education for police officers. Griffin (1980) found no significant relationship between various education levels of police officers and their performance as patrol officers; although when combined with experience (months of service) the aggregate measure was related to performance. Smith and Ostrom (1974) found that increased education had a negative effect on performance ratings, and Gotlieb and Baker (1974) found no difference among officers with college versus those who had no college education. Fenster and Locke (1973) examined IQ scores among officers who had at least some college education and compared them with those with no college. They found only a slight (although statistically significant) difference between the two groups.

Still other studies have found that better-educated officers tend to have a greater level of dissatisfaction and may be more prone to leave a department after a short time (Burbeck & Furnham, 1985; Fielding & Fielding, 1987). Although this could be due to the unchanging organizational bureaucracy, it calls attention to the need to have a greater scrutiny of the educational requirements that have been proposed.

In fairness, much of the research examining the relationship between a college education and police performance involved sampling and other methodological flaws (see Hudzik, 1978; Southerland, 1984); however, these inconsistent findings should register as alarm bells that the complete picture on requiring a college degree is not present. Before we move to mandated college education as a minimum standard for policing, we should ensure that such a requirement would be advantageous to the officers, the departments, and our communities. If the empirical evidence reflects little consistency in the various educational programs and dubious quality in the curriculum, we should question any political or administrative movement to significantly alter the educational requirements for policing.

Certainly the argument here is not that a college education would be overtly detrimental to aspiring police officers. In fact, more recent research tends to show

some positive trends (see Carter & Sapp, 1990). However, many officers who now have college degrees received them *after* they were already employed as law enforcement professionals. Given the suggestion of changing the minimum standard, how many quality individuals would we be *unable* to hire simply because they do not currently possess a college degree? Equally interesting to consider, how many excellent officers on the force today—some who now possess college degrees—would have been rejected had this new standard been in place?

No one would argue against the proposition that policing is becoming more complex as technology, society, and policing philosophies are changing. Nor would one suggest that increasing the education and training of police officers to meet these demands would be unwarranted. In fact, we must keep pace with the needs of our profession and the demand of our communities. The caution, however, is that we not move to uncritically implement the requirement of a college degree without fully assessing the impact this would have on policing through the United States. Many questions concerning this proposal remain unclear or unanswered; we must critically assess, for instance:

- How beneficial will a college degree really be to the officer on the beat?
- Do we need to require four-year degrees?
- Are there appreciable differences in officers who have four-year versus two-year degrees?
- Has the management of our police agencies kept pace with the times, providing a more accepting environment for the college-educated officer?
- What curriculum is appropriate? Will any degree do? Is a Liberal Arts degree equivalent to a Criminal Justice degree?
- Are we to hold law enforcement agencies of all sizes to the same educational standard? Should a department comprised of three officers meet the same minimum college degree requirement as a thousand-person force?
- Do we have the financial resources to attract, recruit, and retain college-educated officers?

In sum, only after these issues are more adequately addressed should we begin to set policy on what types of educational requirements are most advantageous to the law enforcement profession. Would we want to exclude otherwise qualified persons from law enforcement simply because they do not have a college degree? In our striving for increased professional status, we must not react with emotional decisions or politically correct platitudes. To do so may cause us to overlook the far-reaching impact that such a change in our minimum standards may present.

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Rejoinder to R. Lynn

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Professor Lynn's article shares many of the characterizations I discussed regarding the early attempts at enhancing police education. We both articulate many of the problems found when L.E.A.A. infused money into an unprepared educational system. Our point of departure, however, appears to revolve around the "absolute certainty" issue that I addressed. Although Lynn does not seem opposed to increased educational requirements, the tone of his article suggests that we must continue to wait for more evidence to verify the absolute nature of such an education. Unfortunately, this status quo thinking is exactly the problem.

Lynn acknowledges the increasing complexity of society and the associated difficulties of policing, yet would delay action that might address these needs. I can appreciate the cautious approach he offers; however, we cannot continue an intractable debate—we need to make progress. The policing environment is changing daily, and we cannot wait to ferret out every nuance of this issue. Recognizing and addressing the changing societal circumstances and their implications for the policing profession are what leadership is all about. The demand for “ultimate proof” is not a reasonable standard. The courts have regularly supported the position that educational requirements both are constitutional and represent a Bona Fide Occupational Qualification.

Additionally, many of the research references cited by Lynn to support his position are decades old and bear little resemblance to the information we have today. As I addressed in my own segment of this debate, the early equivocal findings concerning the impact of a college education on policing were not surprising given the newness of the movement (at that time) and the methodological complications. He fails to offer the more recent evidence that provides greater support for college-educated police personnel, although he does allude to this material in his text. A college degree certainly does not ensure complete competency in policing; however, as a recruitment tool, it can provide us with a more reasonable standard from which to select qualified applicants. As I previously suggested, the belief that there must be absolute certainty regarding the direct impact of a degree on policing before it can be instituted is not a position shared by other professions or the courts. We now have ample evidence regarding the benefit of a college education and should move forward to implement this standard.

Lynn also expresses concern regarding the application of the same educational standard to all departments, regardless of size. Although this is worthy of consideration, one must recall that the recommendations offered over the years have been from *national* organizations and commissions. These proposed standards were offered for *all* police officers with enforcement authority—regardless of the number of officers employed at any particular agency. To institute a system of varying standards based on personnel numbers would be to miss the point and create a class system within the law enforcement community, something that most would consider to be undesirable.

I agree with Professor Lynn that we should adequately assess any systematic changes we make in our police organizations, including enhancing police educational requirements. However, this assessment has been ongoing for more than twenty years, and the current evidence supports the implementation of the recommendations offered by the President's Commission on Law Enforcement thirty years ago. To protract the discussion further would be to ignore the important empirical, political, and social support for this proposition and leave our officers ill-equipped to deal with our rapidly changing world.

DEBATE 7

Police Executive Contracts: Are They a Foundation for Successful Tenure?

EDITOR'S NOTE: For most law enforcement officers, job protection takes many forms. Civil Service acts were an early method of protecting officers from unwarranted political interference. Contract efforts by police unions also clearly spelled out circumstances under which an officer could be disciplined or fired.¹ When creative politicians and agency officials discovered ways to circumvent such laws or union power, police unions and associations successfully lobbied many state legislatures for a “police officer bill of rights,” offering increased control over improper, and sometimes proper, administrative or criminal investigations. Yet, in most agencies, the individual afforded the least protection and involved in the most pronounced political environment is the appointed chief executive. With the high turnover rates traditionally associated with such positions, a major controversy becomes clear: how to protect an agency head from political interference with law enforcement operations and a community from an ineffective or incompetent chief.

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