RACIALIZED POLICING ON THE SOUTH TEXAS-MEXICO BORDER: MEXICAN AMERICAN POLICE OFFICERS' RACIALIZATION OF LATIN-ORIGIN UNAUTHORIZED IMMIGRANTS

A Dissertation

by

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ABSTRACT

Studies on the police have centered on a variety of issues such as racial profiling, citizen perceptions of police, and police malpractice. However, absent from this body of research is a specific focus on Latino police officers. There is little to no mention of Latino police officers in the current academic literature. Hence, the aim of this study is to illustrate the relationship between Mexican American police officers and their co-ethnic immigrant counterparts. In particular, this study examines how Mexican American police officers racialize Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants.

Data for this ethnographic study was collected in a medium-sized police department located on the south Texas-Mexico border over a twenty-month period from 2012 to 2014. The author was a police officer during the data collection phase of the study. Thus, the findings are illustrated from an auto-ethnographic context. The results reveal that Mexican American police officers racialize their co-ethnic immigrant counterparts through the use of derogatory terminology, and as being criminals or being a drain on U.S. social services. From this racialization process, the anti-Latin immigrant subframe emerges, which is derived from the white racial frame.

DEDICATION

To my uncle, Mario Garcia, who has always been there for me in good times and bad times. Thank you for all you have done for me.

To my brothers, Graciano and Hugo, who are the epitome of resiliency and perseverance. Thank you guys for your words of encouragement, support, and for believing in me when at times, I often doubted my academic capabilities.

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NOMENCLATURE

BP	Border Patrol
DMCSO	Del Monte County Sheriff's Office[1]
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DPS	Department of Public Safety
ESL	English as a Second Language
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FSP	Food Stamp Program
HSGP	Homeland Security Grant Program
IIRIRA	Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act
IRB	Institutional Review Board
IRCA	Immigration Reform and Control Act
LRGV	Lower Rio Grande Valley
OPSG	Operation Stonegarden
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
SSI	Supplemental Security Income

[1] Pseudonym

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The police have been widely researched and are well documented in academic literature. Moreover, research on the police has centered on a variety of issues, along with differing data collection methods, both quantitative and qualitative. Specifically, this body of literature has focused on several issues such as racial profiling (Smith and Petrocelli 2001, Grogger and Ridgeway 2006), citizen perceptions of police practices (Reitzel and Piquero 2006, Glover 2009, Weitzer and Tuch 2002, 2004, 2005), participant-observation of specialized police units[2] (Chambliss 1994), police-community relations within a homogenous African-American city (Weitzer, Tuch, and Skogan 2008), and black police officers' views on racism within their respective police departments (Bolton and Feagin 2004).

Irrespective of these broad topics, there is little or no mention of Latino police officers, and specifically their job-related experiences. Academic research has focused solely on ethnic self-identity (Irlbeck 2008). Hence, this study expands on the existing policing literature by providing much-needed insight into the work-related experiences of Latino police officers, and, more importantly, police-community racial relations in a homogenous Latino community.

[2] For example: Gang Unit, TAC (Tactical) Enforcement Team—patrol drug interdiction group, Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT), etc.

In particular, this study is concerned with police-community racial relations along the south Texas-Mexico border between Mexican-American police officers and Latin-origin immigrant. This study explores the central question as to how unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants become racialized by Mexican American police officers who work along the U.S.-Mexico border, and to what extent this racialization revealed evidence of nativism.[3] Racialization is defined as a fluid and changing entity, as noted by Omi and Winant (1994). They defined this racialization process as "the sociohistorical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed, and destroyed" (Omi and Winant 1994:55). Thus, racialization entails the organization of the social order along racial lines by the interaction between micro-level processes, such as personal interactions among individuals, and macro-level processes, such as social structures of social relations (Omi and Winant 1994).

The objective of this study is to expand upon the existing literature on racial and ethnic relations among Latinos as well the literature concerning police-community relations by examining how Mexican-American police officers who work along the US-Mexico border racialize their unauthorized immigrant co-ethnics.[4] Similar to Fassin (2013), this study focuses on the mundane, everyday routine work activities of police officers without highlighting the dangers of the profession. That is, even though the results are presented from an insider perspective, all media-sensationalized images of the

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[3] "A deep-seated American antipathy towards internal 'foreign' groups of various kinds–cultural, national, religious, racial–which has erupted periodically into intensive efforts to safeguard America from such perceived 'threats'" (Leonard and Parmet 1971:6). This term is also used interchangeably with anti-immigrant sentiment.

[4] Used interchangeably with Latin-origin immigrant counterpart.

police, i.e., the crime fighter image, are going to take a back seat to the concept of racialization.

As noted by Fassin (2013:22), "Here, it is the insignificant that carries the greatest significance." My conversations with fellow police officers carry the greatest significance in this study as opposed to calls for service.[5] Therefore, citizenship status (illegality) and the concept of foreignness are the main focus of the study even though the study deals with police officers.

One particular aspect of the racialization process that is analyzed in this study is the terminology used by police officers when racializing their co-ethnic unauthorized immigrant counterparts. The police, in general, use a variety of terms when referring to people with whom they come in contact with on a daily basis. As noted by Van Maanen (1978b:221), "The asshole—creep, bigmouth, bastard, animal, mope, rough, jerkoff, clown, scumbag, wiseguy, phony, idiot, shithead, bum, fool, or any of a number of anatomical, oral, or incestuous terms—is part of every policeman's world." This study focused on the terms used by police officers to categorize Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants by illuminating the dehumanizing and objectifying consequences of such terms.

It is noted in academic literature that derogatory terms of reference for immigrants have changed over time. The first racialized term of reference for

[5] Will be discussed in further detail in the methods chapter.

immigrants was "wetback"[6] in the early 1920s as a result of the creation of the U.S. Border Patrol in 1924 (Bustamante 1972). This racialized term of reference for immigrants continued well into the 1950s, but gave way in the 1980s to the term "illegal alien." Since then, this term continues to be the popular term of reference involving the racialized narrative of Latin-origin immigrants. It is important to examine how the usage of such terms helps facilitate stereotypes of immigrant criminality and welfare dependency.

This study is guided by Feagin's (2010, 2013) theoretical framework of the white racial frame. His theoretical framework is utilized in order to contextualize the racialization of Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants by Mexican-American police officers. Over the years, the white racial frame has been imposed on the minds of most Americans and serves as the popular "frame of reference" in regards to racial matters (Feagin 2013). In particular, the white racial frame is ethnocentric and negative toward minorities of color. It includes racial stereotypes, metaphors, and images involving minorities of color, along with positive views of whites (Feagin 2013).

As noted by Feagin (2010:190), Mexican Americans "are under constant pressure to adopt the white racial framing of racial matters, which facilitates the reinforcement of the continuing racialized advantage for whites." In this study, I argue that some Mexican Americans adopt and internalize the white racial frame and thus, from within this frame, a subframe emerges that operates as a mechanism to reinforce the white-racial-frame

[6] The term is derived from immigrants crossing the Rio Grande River in South Texas by swimming and wading across the river.

narrative of unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants. That is, from the perspective of the white racial frame, I illustrate how Mexican Americans become advocates and promoting agents of the anti-Latin immigrant subframe as a result of using racialized terminology whenever referring to Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants, and racializing Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants as criminals and welfare dependents. Hence, nativism is used as a tool by Mexican Americans for racializing their immigrant co-ethnics. This, in turn, results in the pitting of co-ethnics against each other—intra-ethnic conflict.

Research Location: The Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas (Del Monte County)[7]

The location of this study was the Lower Rio Grande Valley of South Texas (LRGV), which borders the Mexican state of Tamaulipas to the south. The LRGV consists of four counties: Starr, Hidalgo, Willacy, and Cameron. The LRGV is also known as "the Valley" or "Magic Valley" due to its mild winters and long growing season for fruits and vegetables (Jamail and Gutierrez 1992:7). Moreover, the Texas borderland area is one of the two poorest regions in the US,[8] which is characterized by a higher proportion of the population that is Latino—namely, of Mexican decent (Singelmann et al. 2012). Mexican-origin individuals represent the largest racial/ethnic minority group on the borderland, comprising approximately 80% of the total population (Singelmann et al. 2012). The research area was given the pseudonym of Del Monte County. In addition, all names and locations were given pseudonyms.

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[7] Pseudonym; All names and locations hereinafter are pseudonyms.
[8] The other impoverished region being the Lower Mississippi Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi), which is primarily comprised of African-American residents (Singelmann et al. 2012).

Most of the residents that are served by the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office reside in neighborhoods known as *colonias*.[9] According to Singelmann et al. (2012:295), colonias are "…unincorporated subdivisions with small plots and little infrastructure, where houses often lack such basic amenities as electricity and plumbing. Residents in the *colonias* are both socially and geographically isolated." Colonias consist of many houses and mobile homes that are often dilapidated and more than likely do not meet building codes (O'Hare and Johnson 2004). In addition, as noted by Ward (1999:3), colonia residents' "Homes are a mixture of trailers and self-built constructions, with the long-term goal of achieving a fully consolidated brick-built dwelling." Unfortunately, this long-term goal is rarely achieved, due to financial constraints. Thus, most houses within colonias consist of small trailers, mobile homes, or wooden-framed homes.

Poverty in colonias "is more visibly acute, from the one-room wooden shacks to the rusting oil drums which residents use to store drinking water hauled from nearby irrigation ditches" (Maril 1989:2). Similar to the adage, "out of sight, out of mind," so too are the residents of colonias. Colonias are hidden from the public's eye as they are located away from major highways and roads, situated between rural farm fields of cotton, sorghum, and corn (Maril 1989). If one drives through a colonia, you cannot help but notice the poverty of these rural geographic locations of the county.

Besides the physical isolation, colonia residents are also susceptible to legal isolation. They are not part of municipalities and therefore cannot benefit from many federal and state programs that are administered by municipalities (The Lyndon B.

[9] Hereafter, colonia, will not be italicized unless used in a direct quote.

Johnson School of Public Affairs 1977). Additionally, of those programs aimed at assisting rural area residents, most are not set up to meet the specific needs of colonia residents. As noted by The Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs (1977:5), "the one branch of government to which colonias might normally turn—the county—is often too poor and too powerless itself to be of much assistance." Thus, colonia residents suffer the negative consequences of both physical and legal isolation as a result of their poverty.

As of 2010, approximately 90% of the population of Del Monte County is of Latino decent (U.S. Census Bureau 2010). Regarding persons living below the poverty level in Del Monte County, the majority, which resides in colonias, live below the poverty level (U.S. Census Bureau 2010). Generally, for the Valley, as a whole, poverty is the norm among its Latino residents. Maril (1989:2) argued, "to live in the Valley and to be Hispanic is almost by definition to be in or close to poverty." The majority of Latin-origin residents of the Valley, who experience high levels of poverty, reside within colonias as authorized and unauthorized immigrants. In essence, colonia residents are "the poorest of the poor" of the Valley (The Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs 1977:5).

Aside from poverty in colonias, educational attainment lags behind state and national levels (Martinez 2010). All colonias in Texas are unincorporated and fall within the jurisdiction of county government. According to Martinez (2010), enumerating the exact number of colonias and its residents is an elusive task due to three reasons. (1), there is no census geography for colonias that is similar to county or census tract; (2),

most of the residents of colonias are an unauthorized immigrant, which means they most oftentimes go unaccounted for; and (3), there are varying definitions of what signifies a "colonia" according to federal and state agencies.

Research Methods

As previously stated, this study is an auto-ethnographic[10] examination into the social interaction between Latino co-ethnics on the U.S.-Mexico border. Moreover, participant observation of interactions between Mexican-American police officers and civilians[11] was utilized as the principle research method. Data for this study was collected by writing field notes of my daily observations of contact between police officers and civilians along with interactions between police officers. The fieldnotes were collected at the police department in the squad room[12] or while at a particular call for service. The data for this study was collected over a twenty-month period beginning on October 2012 and ending on May 2014. The data presented in this study was coded and analyzed by using the qualitative software of ATLAS.ti6 (Friese 2011).

Chapter Organization and Purpose

This dissertation is divided into seven chapters. The purpose of chapter two, the auto-ethnography chapter, is to situate my researcher role through an explanation of this qualitative research writing method in order to demonstrate how I navigated this study as both a researcher and active participant. The chapter contextualizes the practice of racialization through a chronological recollection of my experiences with the

[10] Will be explained in further detail in the methods chapter.
[11] US-born Latinos and Latin-origin authorized and unauthorized immigrants.
[12] Will be explained in further detail in the methods chapter.

racialization process throughout my life. The chapter begins by providing an example of my earliest recollection of the practice of racialization and of my next recollection, which was in high school. This section of the chapter highlights how racialized terminology is normalized that even I was subject to racialized terminology at the hands of my peers.

The chapter then focuses on my socialization as a police cadet in the police academy with regard to the practice of racialization. Further on, I discuss how I navigated my researcher role and police officer role in the study as a result of my socialization as a graduate student and police officer. The latter section of the chapter focuses on the discussion of my socialization with the concept of racialization throughout my life. The chapter concludes by discussing how I navigated my academic and police officer roles respectfully in this study. This was accomplished by contextualizing my dual roles through Bourdieu's (1977) theoretical concept of habitus. I was in a constant battle with my varying habitus', but in the end, as illustrated in the chapter, my personal habitus aided me with resisting racialized practices.

Chapter three, the methods chapter, describes the methodological strategies of this study. The chapter begins with a discussion of the research setting, which is twofold. Namely, calls for service and the squad room, which were the two research settings where data was collected. The chapter also provides a discussion of the primary method of data collection for this study, which was participant observation. The chapter then focuses on an overview of the participants of the study and the recruitment procedures undertaken in order to obtain participation.

The second part of the chapter is to familiarize the reader with auto-ethnography by providing a more thorough explanation of this qualitative research method. The chapter illuminates the three-step process of entry, going native, and my exit from the field to provide further insight into how I navigated my researcher role throughout these three steps. The latter part of the chapter describes in further detail the data collection techniques undertaken for this study. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the sampling methods and analysis of data.

The objective of the fourth chapter, the literature review and theoretical framework chapter, is to provide a discussion on the existing literature as it relates to the study. The first part of the chapter focuses its attention on the police by illuminating the social aspects of policing such as general demographic information of police officers. The chapter then explores the varying characteristics of police work that aid in forming a distinct police subculture. This section of the chapter concludes with an illustration of several ethnographic studies that have been conducted on the police. The second part of chapter four focuses on the social construction of the racialized term of "illegal alien." Following this discussion, the chapter explores the long standing history of local police participation in immigration enforcement campaigns. The chapter then illuminates the existing qualitative body of literature that analysis the racialization of Latin-origin individuals. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the white racial frame to contextualize the aims and significance of this study.

Chapter five, the results section, examines the thesis that the racialization of unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants by the use of dehumanizing and objectifying

terminology only reinforces the image of unauthorized immigrants as subhuman foreigner invaders. The chapter illuminates the various ways unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants are racialized by Mexican American police officers. Results reveal unauthorized immigrants as racialized as "illegals," "illegal aliens," "*mojados* [wetbacks]," and "mohankers." As a result of using racialized terminology, Mexican Americans internalize the white-racial-framed narrative of Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants and thus become advocates of the anti-Latin immigrant subframe. The chapter will illustrate how Mexican American police officers utilize nativism as a tool to racialize their co-ethnic unauthorized immigrant counterparts.

Chapter six describes how Mexican American police officers racialize Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants as menacing criminals and as being a drain on U.S. social services. The chapter illuminates the method by which police officers categorize unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants as being criminal-prone individuals. In addition, the chapter demonstrates the method by which unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants are racialized as criminals simply for utilizing clandestine methods of entry into the United States. The second part of the chapter reveals how some officers have internalized the white-racial-framed narrative of Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants by correlating citizenship status with welfare dependency. The chapter concludes by reiterating the claim that Mexican Americans become advocates and promoting agents of the anti-Latin immigrant subframe as a result of such racializations.

Chapter seven, the conclusion, explores the extent to which Mexican Americans internalize the white racial frame by racializing their co-ethnic immigrant counterparts as

an “other.” As a result of such internalization, Mexican Americans become advocates of the anti-Latin immigrant subframe which derives from the white-racial-framed narrative of Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants. Moreover, this study examines how nativism is used as a tool by Mexican Americans to racialize their Latin-origin co-ethnic immigrant counterparts. The chapter includes a discussion on its limitations and then concludes by providing policy implications in order to bring awareness to the detrimental effects of Latino intra-ethnic conflict.

CHAPTER II

AUTO-ETHNOGRAPHY, RACIALIZATION, AND SOCIALIZATION

Introduction

Auto-ethnography is a method of qualitative research writing in which the researcher illustrates their own experiences as a result of being an active participant in the research study (Reed-Danahay 1997, Marshall and Rossman 2006). Specifically, auto-ethnography entails a blurring between the researcher and the researched (Marshall and Rossman 2006). Aside from being a researcher in this study, I was an active participant in this study as I was a police officer as well. Consequently, I situated my dual roles of researcher and researched (police officer) through the qualitative research writing method of auto-ethnography. Being that this dissertation focused on racialization, I contextualize this practice through a chronological recollection of my experiences with the racialization process throughout my life in order to lay the foundation for this auto-ethnography chapter.

Grocery Store: First Encounter with Racialization

I was raised in a small impoverished community located on the south Texas-Mexico border. My hometown is part of a larger geographical region commonly referred to as the Rio Grande Valley of South Texas. In addition, this area is predominately a Latino-origin community as most of its residents are of Mexican descent. My earliest recollection of an experience with the racialization process dates back to a grocery shopping experience I had as an eleven-year-old adolescent as I accompanied my mother to a local grocery store.

This grocery shopping experience was no different than any other. I, as usual, was the only one of my siblings who was willing to accompany my mother to the grocery store. After shopping, my mother got in line to pay for the groceries and positioned the grocery cart behind a middle-aged woman who was transferring her groceries from the shopping cart onto the check-out counter. As the middle-aged woman transferred over the groceries, there was a young female (looked in her early twenties) standing in front of her, who was waiting as the cashier scanned her groceries. Basically, at this point, there was the young female standing in front of the cashier, the middle-aged female standing second in line, and lastly, my mother who was third in the checkout line. I was standing next to my mother as we waited for our turn to pay for the groceries.

After the cashier scanned all of the young lady's groceries, she reached into her purse and pulled out a several food stamp bills. The young lady was speaking Spanish with the cashier as she paid for her groceries. As this was going on, the middle-aged female turned back and voiced her discontent to my mother at the fact that the young lady was paying for her groceries with food stamps. The middle-aged woman told my mother, "Look at these illegals! I have a little bit of groceries and cannot afford to pay for more and then you have illegals like this one [pointing to the young lady] that are paying with food stamps who can afford to buy as much food as they want!" My mother just shrugged her shoulders and replied, "Oh well, there's nothing we can do." The middle-aged woman continued talking with my mother about how she was fed up with

the "illegals"[13] who just abuse the welfare system. The young lady did not hear what the middle-aged woman had said about her to my mother.

I do not recall what exactly was said further at this point, but I do remember the middle-aged female was visibly upset over something as minor as a young female who was paying for groceries with food stamps. After the young lady paid for her groceries and left the checkout line, the middle-aged female did not say a word, but still appeared frustrated as she nodded her head side to side when greeted by the cashier. I was still too young to comprehend what had just happened, since I did not ask my mother why the middle-aged female was so upset with the young lady. I did not think much of this incident at the time. This grocery store encounter is my earliest recollection of the practice of racialization as well as the term "illegals."

Racialization in High School: The "Mojos" [14]

After the grocery store incident, my next chronological recollection of the racialization process was in high school. All of the non-English speaking high school students were enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. Students enrolled in ESL classes generally associated with each other because they had the same classes together and usually kept to themselves. The ESL students at my high school were commonly referred to as the "mojos" because they did not speak English, and if they did, it was spoken with a heavy accent.

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[13] Discussion of the racial nature of this term will be explained in further detail in the literature review chapter.

[14] Spanish slang term for wetbacks; "mojados." "Mojo" is anglicized; pronounced "mo-joe."

I do not know how it started, but no one ever put much thought towards the idea that the ESL students were being racialized as "mojos." It was just assumed that if a student was in an ESL class, they were simply regarded as mojos. My high school was no different than any other, because you still had individuals categorized into separate groups such as jocks, cheerleaders, nerds, goths, gangsters, preps, emos, etc. However, my high school experience differed in the sense that at my high school, students were racialized as "mojos" based on several characteristics (i.e. language, music preference, dress attire, sport of choice, etc.).

Not only did ESL students bear the brunt of racialized terms such as "mojo," but students who spoke Spanish, listened to Spanish music, dressed a certain way, and played soccer were seen as worthy of being racialized as a "mojo." My first language is Spanish and therefore, I would occasionally speak Spanish to some of my friends who also happened to be my football teammates. I played football and baseball in high school, but was not caught up with the stereotypical "jock" label that is typically associated with student-athletes.

Every time I spoke Spanish, some of my teammates would make comments such as, "Oh, stop it you mojo." One common thing about athletes is that prior to a game, we normally listened to music to either relax us or pump us up. Most of my teammates would listen to rap music or rock music as we waited in the locker room prior to a game. I on the other hand, would always listen to Spanish music and was sometimes the butt of several jokes among my teammates. I was not ashamed of my musical preference, but what bothered me was the fact that some of my teammates would refer to me as "mojo"

for simply listening to Spanish music instead of English music as part of our pregame rituals.

Aside from speaking Spanish, the way one dressed also made them susceptible to being racialized as a "mojo." For those who cared or were caught up in trying to "fit in," what one wore to school said a lot about them. Therefore, it was very important for some of my high school classmates to dress in name brand clothes so that they could feel good about themselves. There were a few students, though, that did not care about dressing in name brand clothes and instead dressed cowboy style. Those students who dressed cowboy style would go to school dressed in cowboy boots (ostrich skin or crocodile skin).

One thing I must note is that there was a distinction among the students who dressed cowboy style. What differentiated the two groups of students who wore boots to school were the skin of their boots and the color of the boots. Students who wore boots made of exotic skin (i.e., ostrich or crocodile) usually wore boots that had bright colors such as yellow or orange skin. On the other hand, students who wore regular leather boots wore boots that were either black or brown. The students who wore boots made of exotic skin were racialized as "mojos," whereas students who wore regular cowboy boots such as Justin roper boots were not ridiculed.

I had a pair of orange colored crocodile boots, and for some odd reason I decided to wear them to school one day. Needless to say, that was the first and last time I ever wore my boots to school. One of my football teammates who saw me wearing the boots told me, "What's up mojo?"— "What do you mean mojo?" I asked — "Yeah,

you're wearing those mojo boots man." Another comment I received came while I was sitting in class during class lecture. I overheard a female classmate tell another fellow student, "What's up with Eric today? He looks like a mojo with those orange boots." I was somewhat bothered by the comments I received that day as a result of wearing my cowboy boots. I guess at the time I could not comprehend that I was being racialized by my fellow students as a "mojo" simply for wearing my cowboy boots, which were made of exotic skin.

In addition to dress attire, the sport one played in high school facilitated the racialization process. The athletes of my high school who played soccer were known as "mojos." It did not matter if you were a male or female soccer player, if you played soccer you were regarded as a "mojo." This was a general understanding among student-athletes who played other sports. To the best of my knowledge, soccer was only a popular sport among primarily Spanish speaking students in my high school as opposed to the rest of the student population. Therefore, as I think about it now, it is no surprise that student-athletes who played soccer at my high school were students who primarily spoke Spanish and at times, dressed cowboy style with bright colored exotic boots.

The last recollection I have of the racialization process during my high school years was when I was a senior and was reminded by one of my friends that I once was a "mojo" like the ESL students. My friend Humberto and I were walking through a hallway when all of a sudden he told me, "Remember when you began school? You were a mojo that didn't speak English...you're not a mojo like them [pointing to the ESL class as we walked through the hallway] anymore." I was born in Illinois, but raised in

South Texas. When my family moved to Texas and enrolled me in elementary school, I did not speak a word of English. Spanish was the primary language spoken in my household.

Humberto was in my first-grade elementary class and remembered that I was the only student in the class who did not speak English. My mother went against the wishes of the school administrators and had me enrolled in a regular class as opposed to an ESL class as they had suggested. Humberto was my classmate and remained my friend throughout the years until high school. He was the only one who remembered that I did not speak a word of English when I was enrolled in elementary school after moving from Illinois. According to Humberto, I was no longer a "mojo" because I showed mastery of the English language, unlike the ESL students.

Police Socialization

The Police Academy

After obtaining my Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Texas-Pan American, I began working at the Cicero, Texas Police Department. It was November 2005 and I was a twenty-three-year-old recent college graduate. As is customary of the policing profession, one must attend the police academy prior to beginning employment as a police officer. Hence, I attended the Cicero Police Academy as a police cadet for a period of five months, in which I became familiarized with the criminal and traffic laws of the State of Texas.

One of the several state-mandated courses I received as part of my police academy training, which I distinctly remember because it relates to this study, was the

eight-hour cultural diversity course given to the academy class. Every police officer in the state of Texas must complete a mandatory eight-hour course on cultural diversity as part of its overall seven-hundred and twenty-eight hours of police academy training. The purpose of the course is to make police officers racially and culturally sensitive when dealing with civilians from different racial/ethnic backgrounds. Being that the Cicero Police Department is located on the Texas-Mexico border, which is comprised primarily of Mexican-origin individuals, our cultural diversity instruction focused specifically on Latino civilians.

The cultural diversity course at the police academy was given by a Mexican American Studies professor from a local university named Dr. Paniagua. He was chosen by the police chief to teach this course based on his academic research expertise. Dr. Paniagua taught the course from a racial conflict perspective and was seen as a radical by the police academy training staff. For example, when talking about racial identity politics, Dr. Paniagua told us that he felt as if he was trapped "between two borders." He explained to the class that he could not understand how one needed to prove their citizenship twice when travelling north into the interior of the state from South Texas.

What he was referring to with the "two borders" analogy is first, the US-Mexico border and second, the Border Patrol checkpoints which are located several miles north of the US-Mexico border (i.e. Falfurrias Border Patrol checkpoint and Sarita Border Patrol checkpoint).[15] These checkpoints are located on two major routes of egress from the Rio Grande Valley. Therefore, for example, if one wants to travel to San Antonio

[15] See www.cbp.gov/border-security.

from the Valley, one must be inspected at a Border Patrol checkpoint at which one will be asked their citizenship status.

Dr. Paniagua told the class that even though he was a US citizen, he did not feel as one because he needed to prove his citizenship status when travelling north from the Valley. He said, "Why do we need to prove our citizenship status again when travelling out of the Valley? It's assumed that once we're on this side [points down with his right index finger] of the border, there is no need to be asked if we are citizens!" He talked about this for several minutes, and this is what I distinctly remember him telling us when talking about this issue.

While on lunch break as we talked with each other in the lunchroom of the police academy, Alex (fellow cadet) asked a police academy instructor (Officer Dimantero) why Dr. Paniagua was in charge of teaching the course. Alex was bothered by Dr. Paniagua's comment about being trapped between two borders because he felt that he was trying to indoctrinate us with his race and citizenship status issues. Officer Dimantero told him Dr. Paniagua was specifically chosen by the police chief due to his educational expertise on the subject matter. Officer Dimantero said that the police academy staff believed Dr. Paniagua was a radical who tried to brainwash the police cadets with his "race crap." Officer Dimantero then said, "Who cares how you feel about two borders, the checkpoints are there to stop drugs and illegal aliens from going northbound into the state." He further added that the Border Patrol checkpoints were needed in order to secure the border from "criminal aliens" who came from Mexico.

Aside from the socialization on cultural diversity within the police department, the academy instructors were the first to introduce us to the informal police organizational training with regard to police-community relations. As noted by Van Maanen (1976:67), "organizational socialization refers to the process by which a person learns the values, norms, and required behaviors which permit him to participate as a member of the organization." The police academy instructors made it clear to us that we were not going to be liked or even appreciated by civilians. They warned us that even though this was bound to happen, we needed to expect it because we were going to be "agents of social control." One instructor provided us with an analogy in order for us to be able to deal with this issue. He said, "For you to last in this profession, you need to put your heart in the freezer when you get to work, take it back out when you get home…as sad as it sounds; you need to be heartless while working." From the onset, the socialization at the police department with regard to police-community relations indicated that civilians were not going to be fond of us, and therefore we needed to be unemotional in order to succeed in the policing profession.

Everyday Police Practices: The Police Station

After graduating from the Cicero Police Academy, I began working as a patrol officer and was primarily responsible for responding to calls for service. When referring to unauthorized immigrants, the popular term of reference for immigrants was "illegals." Not all police officers racialized unauthorized immigrants as "illegals," but for the most part, "illegals" was generally the term used to describe this population. Basically, some

police officers would refer to immigrants as such whereas most would refer to them as "illegals."

Not only were immigrants subject to racialized terminology by police officers, but fellow police officers who spoke English with a heavy accent were as well. Two co-workers who I distinctly remember which remind me of this are "Pancho Pistolas [guns]" and "Yersey."[16] Those were the nicknames given to Officer Sombato and Officer Obstaquio due to their inability to speak English without an accent.[17] They were both veteran police officers within the police department with over ten years of policing experience.

Officer Sombato's first name was Francisco, but he preferred to be called Frank. He, however, was rarely addressed as Frank by fellow police officers. English was the primary language spoken among police officers when conversing with each other while either at a call for service or at the police station. Officer Sombato was one of the few police officers in the police department who spoke Spanish when conversing with other police officers. I never worked with Officer Sombato because he was assigned to a different shift than me. Consequently, the only time I interacted with him was during shift change[18] since we were assigned to different shifts.

Even though I did not work with Officer Sombato, one day during shift change I decided to ask him why he was referred to as "Pancho Pistolas [guns]." I did not expect

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[16] "Yersey" pronounced (yer-zee)

[17] The use of nicknames at the police department was nuanced. Some officers were given their nicknames as a result of their work ethic whereas others were given their nicknames as a means of teasing and bullying.

[18] Occurs when officers from different shifts converse with each other as some have just finished their shift whereas others are about to begin their shift.

the response given to me because I figured he was called that since Pancho is a common nickname for individuals who are named Francisco. Officer Sombato told me that he was called Pancho Pistolas [guns] because he spoke with an accent. After looking at him with a puzzled stare, he then asked me in a jocular tone, "What? Can't you tell I speak with an accent?" He was not upset with the question asked and, quite frankly, seemed amused that a rookie police officer would want to know or even cared why he was referred to as Pancho Pistolas [guns]. At the time I never put much thought into the fact that Officer Sombato was basically being racialized for his inability to speak English without an accent.

Officer Obstaquio was also racialized by fellow police officers for speaking English with an accent. Aside from this, he was given his nickname simply for how he pronounced the state of New Jersey. Oddly enough, we were both working on the same shift, and thus, I was present when he was given his nickname.

Officer Obstaquio had pulled over a vehicle and requested a license plate check on the vehicle. He came on the police radio and said, "Can I have a 10-28[19] on New Jersey[20] license plates…" Honestly, after hearing that through the police radio of my police car, I laughed as I drove while on routine patrol. It was known that he spoke with an accent, but for some odd reason, I laughed because I had never heard "Jersey" pronounced the way he pronounced it. As soon as Officer Obstaquio walked into the police department after our shift was over, several police officers mocked him for how

[19] Police 10-code for license plate check.
[20] Sounded as if he pronounced Jersey (yer-zee).

he pronounced Jersey. Since that day, he was given the nickname of "Yerzee." Officer Obstaquio was educated and possessed a bachelor's degree from a local university. A fellow police officer even disregarded this feat by telling me during a random conversation one day, "Yeah right, Yersey claims to have a degree, but he probably got it at Monterrey Tech![21]...he can't even speak English right." This officer of course was being humorous when making the comment by laughing, but it still does not negate the fact that he questioned where Officer Obstaquio obtained his bachelor's degree since he spoke English with an accent.

Not even I was not immune from being given a nickname by my co-workers. As is customary with some police officers, they listen to music while inside their patrol unit.[22] I was given my nickname as a result of the music genre I listened to. Every time a police officer transmits[23] via the patrol unit's radio, if one is listening to music, it will be heard in the background (if loud enough). I always listened to Spanish music—specifically, regional Mexican music (i.e., norteño, banda, duranguense, etc.) while inside my patrol unit at work.

One day during shift change as I was talking with several police officers inside the report writing room,[24] Officer Huerta walked inside and greeted me by saying, "what's up Durango Kid?" We all looked at him with a confused stare because we had no clue what he was referring to. Perplexed, I asked him why he had called me Durango

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[21] University located in Monterrey, Nuevo Leon Mexico.
[22] Police vehicle.
[23] Communication between police officer and dispatcher or other police officer via the patrol car's police radio.
[24] Room located inside the police department where police officers use computers to finish pending reports at the end of their shift.

Kid. I was not mad or upset with him; I simply wanted to know the reason for calling me Durango Kid. Officer Huerta then told me that he was calling me Durango Kid because every time I was transmitting via the patrol unit's radio that day, he could hear that I was listening to Spanish music.

Regional styles of Mexican music vary from state to state. *Duranguense* is a regional style of Mexican music, which originates from the Mexican state of Durango. Hence, I was called Durango Kid by Officer Huerta because I was listening to *duranguense* music. Some police officers on my shift referred to me as Durango Kid, but for the most part, I was usually addressed by my last name.

Officer Sombato, Officer Obstaquio, and I would talk in Spanish with each other while either at a call for service or whenever we saw each other at the police department. Additionally, we were few of the police officers in the police department who spoke Spanish when greeting other co-workers. I do not know why I greeted my fellow co-workers in Spanish by making comments such as, "que onda? [What's up?] or "que pasa? [What's up?], but I guess I was just trying to be my comical self.

Some police officers mocked me whenever I talked in Spanish because they knew I spoke English fluently so there was no need for me to talk in Spanish. I must admit however that this was done in a humorous manner. They wanted to know why I preferred to talk sometimes in Spanish as opposed to English. I took pride in being comfortable to speak Spanish with my co-workers. Not that speaking Spanish was frowned upon because the majority of my co-workers in the police department were Mexican-origin and thus, familiar with Spanish, but English was the dominant language

spoken among police officers. Nonetheless, I would tell them I was proud of being Mexican-origin whenever some co-workers teased because I spoke Spanish. I would simply respond in Spanish, "Soy mojado por herencia y Mexicano hasta la madre! [I'm a wetback by heritage and Mexican to the max!]." At the time I was not conscious that I was internalizing the racialized "wetback" term by using it as a defense mechanism with my co-workers whenever questioned as to why I preferred to speak in Spanish.

As this subsection of the chapter has illustrated, everyone at the police station was susceptible to being mocked based on certain characteristics such as: speech accent, music preference, and Spanish language usage among police officers. Officer Sombato, Officer Obstaquio, and I at different periods of time were teased for the aforementioned characteristics displayed among our co-workers. However, Officer Sombato and Officer Obstaquio bored the brunt of ridicule practices because of their inability to speak English without an accent.

This was the socialization process among police officers, which in turn served as a means to racialize those who spoke English with an accent, listened to Spanish music, and spoke Spanish while at work. This was just the way things worked at the police department. Some officers were susceptible to being racialized as foreigners. The next section will illustrate the socialization process at the police department when dealing with unauthorized immigrants during calls for service.

Everyday Police Practices: Calls for Service

Of all the calls for service dealing with unauthorized immigrants while employed at the Cicero Police Department, there are only two which I remember. One day while

on routine patrol, I heard, via my patrol unit's radio, Officer Gordado advise the dispatcher that he was going to stop two "suspicious" male pedestrians for questioning purposes. He said, "I'm gonna check these males to see what they're up to." After several minutes passed, he provided the dispatcher with the names of the two males and advised her to conduct a warrant check on them to verify if they were wanted.[25] The dispatcher told him they had no warrants or a driver license[26]. Shortly thereafter, Officer Gordado told the dispatcher, "okay, go ahead and send me B.P. [Border Patrol] to my location for these two illegals." I never found out what was so "suspicious" about the two males that warranted Officer Gordado's attention to check on them. Especially, since they were walking along a major thoroughfare of Cicero in broad daylight.

It was clearly stated within the policy and procedures handbook of the police department that we were not allowed to ask citizenship status related questions when dealing with individuals. Obviously, Officer Gordado violated the policy and procedures of the police department, but oddly enough, no one questioned nor sanctioned him for requesting that the two males be deported by Border Patrol. Why you might ask? Well, this is just the way things worked at the police department. This was part of the socialization process among the police when encountering immigrants out on the street.

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[25] Standard police procedure when making contact with someone is to ensure they do not have outstanding warrants with the police department or any other law enforcement agency. Normally, this consists of providing the dispatcher with the name and date of birth of the person or their driver license number (any state) if they have a driver license on hand.

[26] At times, not having a driver license is usually an indicator the person is an immigrant, which leads to the police malpractice of citizenship status questioning. This form of police malpractice will be explained in further detail in the results chapter.

If you encountered immigrants, you could request Border Patrol to have them deported at your discretion.[27]

The second recollection of my socialization at the Cicero Police Department when dealing with unauthorized immigrants is when Officer Lablico and I responded to a call for service at an apartment complex. We were both advised by the dispatcher that the police department had received a phone call from a concerned citizen[28] advising there were several people coming in and out of an apartment. The concerned citizen wanted a police officer to check the apartment because he/she believed it was being used to "stash" immigrants. Consequently, we were dispatched to the location provided by the concerned citizen as a "suspicious circumstance" call for service.

Officer Lablico arrived first at the apartment complex as I was several street blocks away from the location. Shortly before arriving, I heard him transmit on the police radio and say, "Cicero, I have several runners…I need more units!" Immediately thereafter, several officers notified the dispatcher that they were responding as well to the scene to assist. As soon as I arrived at the apartment complex, Officer Lablico told me that several "illegals" had run away from the location. I walked up to him as he stood by the entrance door of the apartment. The apartment complex was a three-story brown brick building, which was well kept. It was located next to several other apartment complexes. As I stood next to Officer Lablico by the door, I observed there were several

[27] Varied by police officer.
[28] A person who wishes to remain anonymous when is reporting an issue to the police.

individuals sitting down inside the unfurnished apartment. There must have been roughly about ten to fifteen individuals inside the apartment at that time.

I did not stay by the entrance of the door too long because Officer Lablico told me that the "illegals" had a head start on me already, so therefore, I needed to "go catch them." I informed him I was going to drive around the neighborhood and check the surrounding apartment complexes for the immigrants. As soon as I walked back to my patrol unit, Officer Ragero drove up to me and told me in a hurried and excited tone, "where'd they go?!" I responded by telling him that I had no clue where they went. He said he was going to check the area and left at a high rate of speed from the parking lot of the apartment complex. I then got inside my patrol unit and drove away from the apartment complex in search of the immigrants.

I must note that even though I was driving through the neighborhood and surrounding areas in search of the immigrants, I was not actively seeking to find them because of my own personal morality issues in regards to the idea of searching for immigrants when I knew that that objective was beyond the scope (and legal parameters) of my policing duties.[29] By this time, it was already confirmed by Officer Lablico that the individuals who ran from the apartment complex were unauthorized immigrants.[30] In addition, all of the police officers involved in this call for service were aware that Border

[29] The police department did not have immigration enforcement authorization. This will be explained further on in the chapter.
[30] The immigrants at the apartment notified Officer Lablico that they along with the persons who fled from the scene were unauthorized immigrants from Mexico.

Patrol was already on their way to the apartment complex to take custody of the unauthorized immigrants.

As I drove back to the apartment complex (approximately fifteen minutes had lapsed already at this point), I heard Officer Harterez notify the dispatcher that he had "two illegals in custody," which were found hiding in a nearby alley of the apartment complex. Upon arrival at the apartment complex, I observed several immigrants sitting down Indian-style with their backs to the driver side of a Border Patrol fifteen-passenger van. Some sat motionless with their heads facing down to the ground while others cried as they all waited to be placed inside the Border Patrol van. The immigrants had their hands tied behind their backs with zip ties.

Some of the officers (two additional police officers had responded as well) involved in this call for service including myself were standing next to the Border Patrol van as one of the two Border Patrol agents on scene along with Officer Lablico briefed our patrol supervisor inside the apartment of the incident. As we waited on the parking lot, Officer Harterez arrived with the two unauthorized immigrants he had detained. He then exited his vehicle and told me to wait by his patrol unit with the immigrants while he briefed our supervisor of the situation.

I walked to Officer Harterez' patrol unit and stood next to the left rear passenger door while he briefed our supervisor. The rear passenger windows of the patrol unit were rolled all the way down. As I stood next to the door, it was obvious the immigrants were distraught because they were crying as they sat handcuffed in the rear of the vehicle. One of the males then pleaded with me by stating in Spanish, "déjenos ir por favor

señor! Se lo suplico…nosotros nomas venimos a trabajar para sostener nuestras familias en México que dependen de nosotros! [Let us go please! I beg you…we only came to work to support our families in Mexico who depend on us!]. The other male made a similar plea as tears rolled down both of their faces.

I felt empathy for both individuals since I could personally relate with them[31] even though I knew I should not let the circumstances of the call for service affect me. In addition to empathy, I felt a great deal of hopelessness since there was nothing I could do to help them out. After pleading for several minutes, they stopped and then conversed with me. It was at this point that I felt the only thing I could do to give them solace was to let them know that even though they were caught during this crossing attempt, they should not be deterred and continue trying to cross into the U.S. until they were successful. I began sharing my own personal life experiences with them about my father being an unauthorized Mexican immigrant and how it had shaped the way I view the immigration issue. After conversing with each other for several minutes, their handcuffs were removed, zip ties placed on their hands, and then escorted into the Border Patrol van along with the other immigrants.

Racialization: Academia vs. Everyday Practices

My employment of four years with the Cicero Police Department ended upon being accepted into graduate school at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas. Even though I was accepted into graduate school, I still had a desire to be a police officer. Therefore, before moving to College Station, I maintained active status of my

[31] My father and most of my paternal family members were unauthorized Mexican immigrants.

State of Texas police officer license by being a reserve deputy [32] with the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office. During the three years that I lived in College Station, I was a reserve deputy with the sheriff's office. After successfully completing my preliminary examinations, I moved back to the Valley and began the data collection for this study. For the first three months of data collection, I continued with my reserve deputy status, however, after those three months, I began my full-time employment with the sheriff's office as a deputy sheriff for about a year and a half. I have since returned back to a reserve deputy status with the sheriff's office.

As part of my academic graduate school training, I became exposed to the concept of racialization and familiar with its process. However, my familiarity with racialization as a result of academia differed to some extent with what I actually experienced in practice as a Mexican American residing on the U.S.-Mexico border.

Latinos have been racialized at different historical periods of time to serve the interest of maintaining a white hegemonic dominant racial structure. This is the case as evident with the Mexican repatriation, Operation Wetback, and California's Proposition 187 (Save Our State initiative). Latinos have been and still continue to be racialized as foreigners because it helps reinforce the white racial, social, and economic hierarchy in the United States. Furthermore, Saito (1997:76) argues that this racialization serves two purposes: "first by placing them as a buffer zone between whites and blacks and also by constructing them as outsiders against whom real 'Americans' can unite in times of crisis." Additionally, if a person is identified as white or black, that person is presumed

[32] Part-time; nonpaid position.

to be legally a US citizen and socially a real "American" (Saito 1997). In contrast, Latinos (U.S.-born and foreign born) are not afforded that ability as a result of being racialized as "foreigners."

As this chapter has illustrated, Latinos are not immune from racializing each other as foreigners based on certain attributes, which serves to maintain the white racial hierarchy in the United States. Whether it was the grocery store incident with my mother, at high school with my teammates and classmates, or as a police officer, Latinos help reinforce the white hegemonic racial structure as a result of intra-ethnic racialization practices. In contrast to Latinos who have been racialized at different historical periods, my experience with racialization in practice has been constant throughout my entire life as a Mexican American residing on the U.S.-Mexico border.

Living on the U.S.-Mexico border presents Mexican Americans with a different set of mirrors, which reflects a different identity back to them. Being a U.S.-Mexico border resident ensures that the mirror that initially reflected their identity, is still present before them (Vila 1999). For example, Vila (1999) asserts that Mexican Americans who reside on the U.S.-Mexico border are always struggling with the recognition of their identity as an ethnic group. That is, Mexico, the country defining Mexican American ethnicity is still present, visible from the U.S.-Mexico border. Hence, for Mexican-Americans living on the U.S. side of the U.S.-Mexico border, the origin of their difference (Mexico), is always there and consequently, serves as a constant reminder of their ethnic identity (Vila 1999). It is this constant reminder of their ethnic identity that

causes Mexican Americans to try and distance themselves from their fellow Mexican co-ethnics who display signs of foreignness.

Academic literature focuses on racialization as a practice in which Latinos are racialized in order to maintain the white racial hierarchy. My experience with racialization in practice as a Mexican American residing on the U.S.-Mexico border illustrates that my friends in high school and my co-workers at the police department, racialized their co-ethnics as foreigners to distance themselves racially. This was accomplished by racializing certain individuals as either "mojos" or "illegals." In doing so, they tried to demonstrate that they were "Americans" because they did not speak English with an accent, did not dress as "mojos," and Spanish music was not their music of choice. Ultimately, my classmates and my co-workers were trying to associate themselves with "whiteness" by racializing their co-ethnics as foreigners since there is a general tendency to equate "Americanness" with "whiteness."

Law Technicality: Federal Law Enforcement Agencies vs. Local Law Enforcement Agencies

As illustrated in this chapter, local police departments do not need to be participants of immigration enforcement programs (e.g., The 287 (g) and Secure Communities)[33] in order to enforce federal immigration law. The Cicero Police Department was not a participant of the aforementioned immigration enforcement programs; however, as demonstrated with the vignettes of calls for service dealing with

[33] State and local law enforcement agencies receive delegated authority for immigration enforcement by entering into a partnership with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). www.ice.gov

unauthorized immigrants while I worked as a Cicero police officer, my co-workers acted as if they were immigration officials. They either stopped and questioned pedestrians about their citizenship status or chased and detained immigrants based on their citizens hip status, ultimately resulting in deportation in both vignettes.

There is a clear distinction between federal law enforcement agencies such as Border Patrol and local law enforcement agencies such as police departments in regards to the scope of their duties and responsibilities. The primary mission of the Border Patrol is to detect and prevent the entry of unauthorized immigrants and illicit drugs into the US. The duties of the Border Patrol fall beyond the scope of local police department agencies. The only way local police departments can enforce federal immigration law is when they are active participants in immigration enforcement programs or when they participate in clearly defined immigration enforcement operations on a supportive role basis. Such is the case with the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office's' participation in Operation Stonegarden (OPSG).

The sheriff's office is an active participant of this federally funded grant program under the authority of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Operation Stonegarden is one of three interconnected grant programs, which comprise the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP).[34] The purpose of Operation Stonegarden is to increase cooperation and coordination among federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies with the goal of securing the United States' northern and southern borders.

[34] See www.fema.gov/fy-2013-homeland-security-grant-program-hsgp.

Oddly enough most of the money allocated from this grant program is spent on securing the US-Mexico border.

Only local units of government at the county level are eligible to apply for this law enforcement grant. Hence, the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office is eligible to receive funding under Operation Stonegarden. The Del Monte County Sheriff's Office utilizes its participation in this federal grant program to enforce federal immigration law. Further elaboration on this point will be made in the last section of this chapter with current examples of everyday practices involving racialization of unauthorized immigrants. Basically, the sheriff's office uses its participation in Operation Stonegarden as a de facto immigration enforcement program.

Reflexivity

Not "Dr. Gamino"

No matter how hard I tried to "downplay" my educational background, everyone in the police department knew that along with being a deputy for the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office, I was working on my doctorate degree in Sociology at Texas A&M University. This caused me to be positioned by some as an "outsider" which affected the way some deputies would address me. Some would make comments such as "What's up doc?" and "What's up Gamino? Or should I say, Dr. Gamino?" when addressing me. Even though these comments made me feel uncomfortable, I must have been naïve to think that my educational attainment did not affect the way my fellow co-workers viewed me.

Not only was I addressed differently sometimes by my co-workers, but also even from some supervisors. For example, one day while in the squad room during briefing, Sgt. Zerin ended it by telling us who on the shift was going to be on vacation in the coming days. He said,

> Guys, Navajar is going to be out for the next week and I think Otero and Alarco asked for some days at the end of this month. So try not to call in sick because we're going to be shorthanded for the remainder of this month…I mean if you're sick you're sick, there's nothing that can be done about that. Only you know how you feel and if you're sick well then I guess you need to call in sick.

After saying this, Sgt. Zerin looked at me and stated, "Well guys unless you're a doctor; right Gamino? Only then can you self-diagnose yourself and claim to be sick." I just smiled and shrugged my shoulders after Sgt. Zerin made this comment. Deputy Otero, who was sitting to my left looked at me and stated, "Well he's right Dr. Gamino; right?" I then looked at him and replied, "Yeah, I guess." Sgt. Zerin continued talking as Deputy Otero made this comment.

Every time my co-workers referred to me as "doctor," I was bothered. One, because I felt awkward being addressed as such especially since I did not have my Ph.D. Secondly and most importantly, it bothered me because I simply wanted to be seen as "one of the guys" among my fellow deputies. I knew that my educational background was going to affect the way some officers addressed me, especially since I was working on my Ph.D. while working as a police officer. However, for some odd reason, I was hopeful that it would not have an impact on how I was addressed or treated

Not "Donnie Brasco"

For some odd reason, some of my fellow graduate school colleagues viewed this process as an "undercover" operation in which I was infiltrating the mystified subculture of policing.[35] Some of them already knew I was a police officer prior to beginning my graduate studies at Texas A&M University, whereas others were not aware I had prior policing experience.

While I lived in College Station, I had several social media accounts (i.e., Facebook); however, as soon as moving back to south Texas, I deactivated all of my social media accounts. There is no specific reason for doing so and oddly enough, I still have them deactivated. One day while I was back on campus, I ran into a fellow graduate student (Dan) who I had not seen since moving back to the Valley. It was my first time back on campus after being gone for several months. Dan's greeting was a humorous and surprising one to say the least. As soon as he saw me in the hallway, he yelled out loud, "What's up Donnie Brasco?" I smiled and then greeted him by giving him a handshake and a hug. I told Dan it was nice to see him after being gone from College Station for several months. As I smiled, I asked him why he had referred to me as Donnie Brasco. Nick replied that I was going "deep undercover" for my dissertation project and hence, the nickname applied to me.

Donald "Donnie" Brasco was the pseudonym of Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) special agent Joseph D. Pistone who worked undercover for six years to infiltrate the Italian Mafia in New York City (Pistone and Woodley 1987). Based on this

[35] For further discussion on the mystification of the police see (Bouza 1990).

undercover investigation, Pistone published a book detailing his experience of navigating the inner workings of the Italian Mafia. The book was the basis for the Hollywood movie *Donnie Brasco*, starring Al Pacino and Johnny Depp.

Consequently, every time I would run into Dan whether on campus or at an academic conference, he would always refer to me as Donnie Brasco. Dan was not the only person who addressed me as such. On one occasion while catching up with some fellow graduate students at an academic conference, one of them told me, "Damn Donnie Brasco, what happened to you?..It's as if you vanished off the face of the earth. You don't have Facebook or anything. Hmm, you're trying to make it hard for us to keep track of you right?" I laughed and told her that there was nothing special about my data collection process and that there was no specific reason for deactivating my social media accounts. There is nothing special about my data collection process because I just happened to be an active participant of my research study. Hence, I am simply using the data collection method of participant observation, which is one of several qualitative data collection techniques. In addition, I did not go "deep undercover" because all the participants in this study were well aware of my researcher role.

Another encounter with a fellow graduate student in which my research was associated with the film *Donnie Brasco*, was at an academic conference. After my presentation session was over, Scott greeted me and told me it was nice seeing me especially since we had not seen each other in several months. We talked about our progress with our dissertation projects and other mundane things. As we both went our separate way after conversing for several minutes, Scott told me, "Hey, you gotta be

careful out there while working as a cop. You're doing some real dangerous stuff right now you know…you're like Donnie Brasco going undercover so don't kill yourself for your research!" I told him I was appreciative of his concern for my safety, but that there was no more than minimal risk of harm to me during data collection that is already associated with the occupation of policing.

As I reflect on the dissertation phase of my graduate school experience at Texas A&M University, I really do not know why it is that some of my colleagues associated this phase of my graduate school experience with the film *Donnie Brasco*. For some, perhaps they believed there was some secrecy or danger involved in the data collection process of this study. In addition, maybe they found it odd that their peer, who once sat alongside with them in class, had infiltrated the "mystified" profession of policing by working as a police officer while collecting data for his dissertation study.

To a certain extent, during the data collection phase I felt as if I was doing undercover work on the police because I was an academic doubling as a police officer. Basically, I was an academic researcher who had full access to the inner workings of a local police department and its officers. As I reflect on the data collection phase of this study, a sense of otherness comes to mind. Some of my co-workers at the police department primarily viewed me as an academic whereas some graduate school colleagues viewed me as a conducting some type of dangerous "undercover operation" within the police department—undercover police operative.

Competing Worldviews

Racialization of Immigrants: Everyday Practices at the Sheriff's Office

Several Del Monte County Sheriff's Office deputies (patrol officers) carried out racialized immigrant practices on a daily basis. This was accomplished either at the police department during briefing and debriefing or out in the street during calls for service. While at the police department, several officers racialized immigrants by referring to them as "illegals" or "illegal aliens." This was a common practice as will be briefly illustrated with examples from what transpired in briefings on two separate occasions. Out in the street, the everyday practice involving the racialization of immigrants is best illustrated with calls for service.

One day while conducting a briefing, Lt. Lorenzo was informing us about a call for service that occurred the previous day, in which we (Del Monte County Sheriff's Office) assisted Border Patrol with a call for service dealing with a stash house.[36] The sheriff's office had received a phone call about suspicious activity coming from a residence. When the deputies responded to the house, they found thirty-five male and female immigrants inside. The immigrants had been inside the two bedroom house for about a week. Lt. Lorenzo then told us about the conditions of the residence. He said, "Guys, you should've seen how this house was. There was no running water and no electricity inside...The illegals had been there for several days and were all crammed in the two bedroom house." He then reminded us that we needed to be vigilant of the areas

[36] A house or dwelling where drugs and/or immigrants are hidden with the goal of being undetected is commonly referred to as a stash house.

we patrolled because there might be several stash houses within those neighborhoods. He stated, "Make sure that when you guys are patrolling in these neighborhoods, to check the houses carefully because for all you know, there may be a stash house there…Don't just drive by real fast through the neighborhoods without checking for any suspicious activity. Y'all need to be very vigilant out there!"

As seen with the above vignette, whenever referring to immigrants, Lt. Lorenzo chose to refer to them as "illegals." Several days later while conducting briefing, he reiterated to us that we needed to be cognizant of the neighborhoods we patrolled due to the amount of potential stash houses located in rural Del Monte County. He said, "…yesterday we had another call in which we found a lot of illegals. We received a call from a concerned citizen that there was suspicious activity going on in a mobile home located on Santi Carzzo Street. When the deputies went out there, they found thirty plus illegals in the mobile home who had been there for several days…guys it's like I've told you before, there's a bunch of stash houses out here in the county, so just make sure to watch out for any suspicious activity."

Lt. Lorenzo's preferred term of reference for immigrants was "illegals." He rarely referred to immigrants as such and, as seen with the two vignettes, the word "illegals" was used as if there were no negative connotations behind its use. Aside from racializing immigrants, he stressed to the officers that they needed to "watch out for suspicious activity" in the neighborhoods. This in turn sent the underlying message that officers should enforce federal immigration law by locating possible stash houses so that Border Patrol could be notified in order to deport the immigrants. He of course was

probably stressing this point to us in good faith in order to locate immigrants who might have been in stash houses due to the fact that the conditions inside stash houses were more than likely deplorable. The preferred terms of reference for immigrants at the sheriff's office were: "illegals," "illegal aliens," and "mohankers." It was rare for immigrants to be referred to as such at the police department.

Conflicting Worldviews

Even though the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office did not participate in immigration enforcement programs, it was understood that if one encountered an unauthorized immigrant during a call for service, Border Patrol should be notified. This was understood as expected behavior as a result of the socialization process within the police department. As noted earlier with the two vignettes provided when I worked as a police officer with the Cicero, Texas Police Department, if an officer came in contact with an unauthorized immigrant, the officer could have the immigrant deported at their discretion. It is the norm to notify Border Patrol to respond to ones location should the officer be dealing with a call regarding an immigration issue (an encounter with an unauthorized immigrant).

Notifying Border Patrol to have an immigrant deported is understood as expected behavior as a result of working on the U.S.-Mexico. The close proximity to the border entails that as a police officer, odds are that you will come in contact with an unauthorized immigrant. It is these constant encounters with immigrants which serve as socializing factors that lead officers to believe it is okay to enforce federal immigration law. When officers come in contact with an immigrant and upon further questioning

(most of the time which is done illegally; they do not have authority to ask citizenship related questions) it is determined that the immigrant is unauthorized to be in the U.S., the general trend is to notify Border Patrol (usually done by the dispatcher) to come to ones location to take custody of the immigrants. The reasoning behind this practice is that officers are socialized to notify Border Patrol to take custody of the immigrant(s) since it is a federal immigration law issue and not a state criminal law issue. The notification of Border Patrol is understood as expected behavior among police officers because it is continuously carried out during calls for service.

Oddly enough, police discretion is an aspect of policing, which grants officers flexibility in daily work decision-making activities such as how they choose to handle a certain call. For example, if an officer pulls over someone for a traffic violation, they have the choice between giving the motorists a ticket or giving a warning. Aside from traffic stops, officers have discretion with regard to arresting individuals. Just because a crime has occurred, does not mean that an arrest will be made. For example, if an officer responds to an assault call for service involving a husband and wife, they have the choice whether to make an arrest or have the aggressor leave the scene in order to avoid further problems.[37] Thus, if an officer makes an arrest the call for service will be classified as an assault report; however, if the officer chooses not to make an arrest, the call for service will be classified as a domestic disturbance (argument among individuals involved). Consequently, officers have discretion either when pulling over a motorists or responding to a call for service.

[37] Varies according to situational factors.

Discretion did not exist when one dealt with unauthorized immigrants during a call for service because officers were lead to believe that this was the norm. Officers have little autonomy when responding to calls for service that deal with federal immigration law issues. The following vignette illustrates the intense pressure that is placed on police officers to notify Border Patrol when encountering unauthorized immigrants.

One day while working the evening shift, I, along with Deputy Espolon, were dispatched to an unknown 911[38] call for service.[39] I was told by dispatch that they had received about ten 911 calls and did not have an exact location, but pinpointed the phone call from the location of the call. We were dispatched to a rural area of the county, which only had about four mobile homes adjacent to each other. Upon arrival, I made contact with a female who lived in one of the mobile homes. I asked her if there was anything suspicious that had happened at the location. She said everything was fine and when asked about the homeowners of the other three mobile homes, she said two were vacant and the homeowner of the other mobile home was at work. I checked the other mobile home and was unable to make contact with anyone at the residence. I then walked several feet to the other two mobile homes, which appeared as if they were unoccupied. There was tall weeds and tall grass surrounding the two vacant-looking mobile homes. As I approached one of the mobile homes on the west side (the east side was the front

[38] An unknown 911 call for service entails an unknown individual has dialed 911 and the dispatch center is unable to make contact with the individual dialing 911.
[39] I was the primary officer; therefore, I was responsible for generating the police report.

entrance), I saw a male exit the mobile home through a window (north side) and then run away southward into an open field.

At this point, I figured something suspicious was going on at the location and then walked to the other side to tell Deputy Espolon what I had just witnessed. He told me, "Yeah I think it's a stash house!" He knocked on the front door of the mobile home, but no one answered the door. After knocking, he peeked inside the mobile home through the south side bedroom window. Deputy Espolon screamed at me as I stood guard on the north side of the mobile home, "Hey, hey Gamino! Yeah, it's a stash house!...I can see several mohankers inside!" A male immigrant eventually opened the door and allowed us inside. While inside, I noticed there were several immigrants sitting down on the floor. I also noticed that the mobile home did not have any furniture and there were two large ice chests in the kitchen area. I then told the immigrants in Spanish the reason why we were there. I asked them if anyone had called 911, which they all said no. I also asked them if anyone had been assaulted or a victim of any type of crime, which they replied no.

Unconsciously without putting much thought into the idea and as part of the normal socialized routine, I told Deputy Espolon that I was going to let dispatch know there were several immigrants inside the stash house so that they could notify Border Patrol to come to our location. He stayed inside the mobile home with the immigrants while I walked back to my patrol unit to use the radio (my portable radio was not transmitting properly) and told dispatch, "Status 10-4, it's just a stash house. Go ahead and notify BP." Dispatch notified me that they were going to advise Border Patrol to

respond to my location, but they needed to know how many immigrants were at the location as is customary so that Border Patrol could know what type of vehicle to take to the scene.[40]

I called Deputy Espolon via my cell phone and asked him to get an exact number of the immigrants inside the mobile home. He notified me there were four female and ten male immigrants. I then told dispatch the amount of immigrants inside the mobile, and they advised that Border Patrol was notified and were on their way to the location, but did not provide an estimated time of arrival.[41] After notifying dispatch of the number of immigrants, I walked back to the mobile home (about ten minutes had elapsed already from my time of arrival), but it was at this point that I realized what I had done. It dawned on me that I had requested Border Patrol to come to the scene. I thought to myself, "Damn, what have I done. There was no need for me to request border patrol. They were all fine and if BP comes out here, they're gonna get deported." I walked back inside the mobile home and told Deputy Espolon that Border Patrol was notified, but had not provided an estimated time of arrival.

As I waited inside the mobile home, I began thinking of ways in which to cancel Border Patrol from coming to the scene, all while I was conversing with the immigrants about their country of origin and their destination. Luckily for me, dispatch called me while I was thinking of ways to solve my dilemma. The dispatcher asked me if I had

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[40] Depending on the amount of immigrants detained, Border Patrol responds to the scene with either trucks or fifteen passenger vans.

[41] When requesting assistance from another law enforcement agency such as Border Patrol, estimated time of arrival is requested so that the officer can know how long it is going to take Border Patrol to arrive at the scene.

seen anyone running from the location because they were still receiving the 911 phone calls except according to their map, the calls were being made from a location that was several streets to the west of our current location. I notified the dispatcher that I had seen an immigrant running from the location and that I was going to call my supervisor to make him aware of the situation.

After ending the phone call, I told Deputy Espolon that we should take off since the 911 calls were still being received at the police department and not being made from anyone we were making contact with. He said, "Uh, uhhh, I don't know…I'd call sarge if I was you before taking off from here." I quickly realized this was my opportunity to disengage Border Patrol from coming to the location.

I walked outside and called Sergeant Aviar, who was my patrol shift supervisor and informed him about the details of the call for service. I let him know that I was going to have the dispatcher tell the Border Patrol to disregard the request to come to the location because everything was fine with the immigrants and no one had called 911 from the mobile home. He said, "Yeah, go ahead and take off from there so you can attempt to locate the 911 caller…just let dispatch know that the mohankers are still going to be at the mobile home so they [Border Patrol] can go and get them later on if they want." I replied, "Okay, I'll go ahead and do that." I knew very well that my intention all along was to find a way to keep Border Patrol from being dispatched to my location.

After talking with Sergeant Aviar, I walked back inside the mobile home and told Deputy Espolon that Sergeant Aviar said we could take off so we could look for the 911

caller; the immigrants appeared nervous as I talked with Deputy Espolon. I then told the immigrants in Spanish, "*miren nosotros no somos de la inmigración ni ponemos en vigor lees de inmigración así es que se pueden ir si quieren* [look, we do not work for immigration nor do we enforce immigration laws; therefore, you are free to go if you want]." They said they had been there for about three days and that the human smuggler would bring them food only once a day. They were not allowed to go outside because they were told by their human smuggler that if they were to be seen outside, Border Patrol was going to be notified so that they could get deported.

I told them being that we were not immigration officials and that I was going to notify the dispatcher to cancel Border Patrol. I then said it was up to them if they wanted to stay there, but that more than likely the location was "burned"[42] because Border Patrol was made aware that the location had immigrants. The immigrants had a sigh of relief on their faces as I explained to them that they were free to leave the mobile home (not that they were detained to begin with). At this point one male stood up, walked up to me, and interlocked his hands in front of his chest and stated, "*Gracias señor, gracias señor, muchas gracias!* [Thank you sir, thank you sir, thank you very much!]." He began patting me on my back and I told him it was okay, that there was no need to thank me. He said, "*No sabe que tan feliz estoy. Yo nomas vengo aquí a los estados unidos a trabajar para mantener a mi familia…yo no estoy aquí para ser nada malo* [You don't know how happy I am. I just came here to the U.S. to work to provide for my family….I'm not here to do anything bad]."

[42] Location of call for service was compromised.

Another male stated ecstatically, "*Gracias señor, Gracias señor! Que dios lo bendiga!* [Thank you sir, Thank you sir! May god bless you!]." I told him there was no need to thank me because I understood their plight, and hoped they reached their final destination. Everyone inside continued thanking me and expressed how thankful they were that they were not going to get deported. Another male told me, "*Gracias señor por no deportarnos!* [Thank you sir for not deporting us!]." One of the females that was sitting towards the back of the kitchen area said, "*Ya ve senor, nosotros nomas venimos a los estados unidos para mejorarnos…no estamos aqui para causarle problemas a nadien* [You see sir, we just come to the U.S. to better ourselves…we're not here to cause problems to anyone]." I then said in Spanish, "*Que dios los bendiga en su viaje y que llegan bien a su lugar de destino* [May God bless you on your journey and may you arrive well at your destination]."

I told the immigrants we were going to leave, but that there was no guarantee Border Patrol was not going to come to the location so if for whatever reason they decided to stay at the mobile home, it was at their own risk. We walked back to our patrol units and left the location. As I drove away from the mobile home, I advised the dispatcher to have Border Patrol disregard the request to come to the call. The dispatcher seemed surprised at my request and stated, "Uh, 10-9[43] A1762[44]…just verifying, you're requesting to have BP disregard?" I notified the dispatcher that I did not need Border

[43] Ten: code for "repeat."
[44] My call sign

Patrol anymore at my location. The dispatcher said they were going to call Border Patrol to have them cancel.

Deputy Espolon and I searched the other area that the dispatcher had told us the 911 calls were coming from. We searched the area for several minutes and were not able to find anything. I advised the dispatcher that everything was fine and asked for a case number for a suspicious circumstance.[45] After obtaining the case number, we began to drive away from the location. As I left, Sgt. Ontario asked me via the radio, "A1762 what's your 20?"[46] I told him I was barely leaving the location and he then advised me to wait where I was until he arrived.

Shortly thereafter, he arrived at the location and while inside his patrol car, he asked me in an excited tone, "Hey Gamino uh, so where's the stash house?—it's further east from here—and why did you cancel Border Patrol?—it was basically a stash house with immigrants—well you shouldn't have cancelled Border Patrol!" I then advised him that I had already notified Sgt. Aviar that I was going to cancel Border Patrol. I told him that while I was at the location we were still receiving an unknown 911 phone call from a nearby location so obviously those immigrants we were talking with at the mobile home did not have anything to do with the unknown 911 call.

He then said, "Well that's fine, that's fine, if you already ran it through Sgt. Aviar then I guess it's alright…it just struck me as odd why would you cancel Border Patrol if that was a stash house and that's their [Border Patrol] job." I replied, "Yeah, I

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[45] Classification for a call for service where the call results in unfounded contact as a result of not making contact with anyone.
[46] 10-code for location.

know that's their job, but the reason we were dispatch to the location was in regard to a 911 call, which none of the immigrants there made….we had to continue looking for the 911 caller" He said, "Just for future reference, don't cancel Border Patrol!" Sgt. Ontario then called dispatch to have them notify Border Patrol to respond back to the mobile home (stash house). He told the dispatcher that we were not going to be at the location, but that the immigrants were still at the mobile home. The dispatcher advised him that they were going to notify Border Patrol to respond again to the mobile home.

This vignette illustrates the intense social pressure that is placed on patrol officers when responding to calls for services that deal with unauthorized immigrants. Upon discovering that this call for service dealt with unauthorized immigrants, my initial response was to have Border Patrol respond to my location since this was a federal immigration law issue. As evidenced with my initial reaction to have Border Patrol dispatched to my location, so too are the rest of the officers socialized into having Border Patrol respond to one's call as a method of resolving a call for service dealing with unauthorized immigrants.

Another thing worth noting from this vignette is the dispatcher's surprised reaction after requesting to have Border Patrol cancelled. I had to reiterate to the dispatcher that, indeed, I did not want Border Patrol to be dispatched to my call for service. Aside from the dispatcher's reaction, Sgt. Ontario still had Border Patrol respond to the call for service even though I had already notified and gotten approval by Sgt. Aviar to cancel Border Patrol. As mentioned earlier, there is no official written agreement between the Border Patrol and the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office

indicating that the sheriff's office has the authority to enforce federal immigration law. This is just another aspect of the socialization process within the sheriff's office. Officers are socialized into thinking that they need to notify the Border Patrol to come to their call for service whenever it entails unauthorized immigrants.

I too was susceptible to this socialization process as evidenced with the above vignette. I unconsciously requested Border Patrol to my call for service because it was just another call for service dealing with unauthorized immigrants. As soon as I realized what I had done, I knew that I quickly needed to find a way to cancel Border Patrol. However, Deputy Espolon's "hands-off" approach,[47] the dispatcher's insistence for me to confirm that I wanted to cancel Border Patrol, and Sgt. Ontario's request to have them sent to the mobile home even after I cancelled Border Patrol, demonstrates the lack of autonomy one has when handling a call for service that deals with unauthorized immigrants. From dispatchers to patrol officers (even supervisors), we are socialized into thinking that we needed to request Border Patrol at calls for service that deal with unauthorized immigrants.

Socialization throughout the Years

As a Mexican American who has lived most of his life on the U.S.-Mexico border, I was socialized to believe that there was nothing wrong with racializing co-ethnics as foreigners. From my earliest recollection as a teenager to my current examples as a police officer in the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office, immigrants are racialized

[47] He was hesitant that I call Sgt. Aviar to inform him that I wanted to cancel Border Patrol.

based on certain characteristics. Not only are immigrants racialized, but fellow Latino co-ethnics as well.

The grocery store incident demonstrates my earliest recollection of my exposure to the racialized term "illegal." Next, while I attended high school, students racialized each other based on certain features such as dress attire, the way one spoke, music genre preference and sport of preference. My socialization with the racialization process continued as I began my law enforcement career as a police officer. Some of the police officers in the Cicero Police Department racialized immigrants as "illegals." Some officers including myself were susceptible to being racialized as a foreigner. Racialization was not limited to the terminology used, for it also entailed racialized police practices based on citizenship status.

As noted with the two calls for service examples while I was employed as a Cicero police officer, officers enforced federal immigration law by having unauthorized immigrants deported. This racialized police practice has been part of my socialization as a police officer in South Texas while working for both the Cicero, Texas Police Department and the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office. In sum, throughout the years, I have been socialized into thinking that it is fine for immigrants to be racialized as "illegals," "mojos," or "mohankers," even by fellow co-ethnics. As a police officer, I have also been socialized into thinking that the terminology used to racialize immigrants is acceptable and even to accept racialized police practices such as having an immigrant detained and deported based on an unauthorized immigration status.

Battle of the Habitus

Being that I was a full participant in this dissertation study, I had to navigate both my academic and police officer roles respectfully. This is best contextualized through Bourdieu's theoretical concept of habitus, which he defines as, "a system of lasting, transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions" (Bourdieu 1977:82-83). Everything I have experienced as a Sociology graduate student such as my academic training influenced the creation of my academic habitus, similarly, my socialization and experiences as a police officer throughout the years influenced the creation of my police officer habitus.

According to Bourdieu (1977:86), "the habitus could be considered as a subjective but not individual system of internalized structures, schemes of perception, conception, and action common to all members of the same group or class…" Essentially, the habitus is comprised of "the attitudes, beliefs, and experiences of those inhabiting one's social world" (MacLeod 2009:15). One thing I had to cope with while I worked as a police officer dealt with everyday police practices involving immigrants. Issues such as racialized terminology used to refer to immigrants and racialized police practices during calls for service set the stage for the battle of my habitus.

As noted by MacLeod (2009:15), "the habitus engenders attitudes and conduct that enable objective social structures to succeed in reproducing themselves." The social structure within both police departments I worked for facilitated the racialization process with regard to unauthorized immigrants by the use of racialized terminology and

racialized police practices. This fact filters down to the police officer such as myself situated in my habitus as a result of my socialization within the police department. Responding to the objective structure as evidenced by the vignette where I cancelled Border Patrol from answering my call, Border Patrol was still dispatched to my location, ultimately reinforcing the racialized police practice of immigration enforcement.

As a result of racialized terminology used in the police department and racialized police practices, I was in a constant battle with my academic habitus and police officer habitus. MacLeod (2009:15) argues, "…[the] habitus functions as a regulator between individuals and their external world, between human agency and social structure." Even though I was a police officer like my fellow co-workers (participants), my academic habitus enabled me not to forget my researcher role. By being a full participant or, simply stated, "going native," I could have easily conformed to the social structure by using racialized terminology when referring to immigrants and when responding to calls for service that dealt with unauthorized immigrants.

As previously stated, there was not much dissent among police officers in both police departments when referring to immigrants in general. They were always referred to with racialized terminology. In addition to racialized terminology, police officers at both police departments were socialized into thinking that it was acceptable to have Border Patrol respond to ones call for service at their discretion. Obviously, my familiarity with the racialization process differed from when I was a Cicero police officer to when I was a deputy for the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office. I had formal

graduate academic training when I worked as a deputy because of my graduate student status with Texas A&M University.

Besides the difference of my educational background when I worked at both police departments, both police departments differed in regards to the communities they serve. The Cicero Police Department serves its local residents, whereas the sheriff's office serves residents of rural Del Monte County. Cicero is a municipality that lies within Del Monte County. Most of the individuals who reside in rural Del Monte County are immigrants. Thus, as a deputy sheriff for Del Monte County, I encountered immigrants more often than when I was a police officer for Cicero. In addition to more encounters, immigrants were more frequently the topic of discussion when I worked for Del Monte County Sheriff's Office as opposed to Cicero Police Department.

As a deputy sheriff, there was constant conflict between my academic habitus and police officer habitus due to the socialized structure within the police department to conform to racialized terminology and racialized police practices. My academic habitus was in constant battle with my police officer habitus throughout the study in that it kept me from conforming to the social structure within the police department. My police officer habitus enabled me to carry out my daily work routines as a police officer, but my academic habitus intervened when my daily work routines dealt with the immigrant population.

Conclusion

Personal Habitus: Resistance to the Structure

The preceding section of the chapter, discusses the conflict I had between my academic habitus and my police officer habitus when confronted with the racialization process. Both played an important part in influencing the way I dealt with the racialization process. As an academic, I have become familiar with this concept and its function. As a police officer, I have learned how this concept is carried out in daily work routine through either conversations or calls for service. However, besides these two competing habitus, the overarching and superseding habitus that has influenced my comprehension of racialization practices—specifically, my tolerance towards immigrants is my personal habitus.

This habitus is a result of my own personal experiences through socialization at home. My father and most of my paternal family members were unauthorized Mexican immigrants. Early on at a young age as an adolescent, I was socialized to have a positive image of unauthorized immigrants based on what my father and uncles told me. They said that the only reason they migrated to the U.S. was to better themselves. Every time I talked with my father or uncles about their migration experiences, they always shared their stories of hardship and perseverance based on what they experienced when they crossed into the United States. Aside from these stories, they also shared their experiences with me about being unauthorized immigrants. I learned about the discrimination they endured as recent immigrants in the U.S. as a result of their

unauthorized immigration status. Consequently, from an early age, I was socialized to have a positive perception of unauthorized immigrants.

My personal habitus with regard to unauthorized immigrants is also influenced by my own personal experiences as a migrant farm worker. As a teenager, I spent my summer vacations working in the corn fields of Illinois, detasseling corn.[48] It is here where I worked alongside Mexican-origin unauthorized immigrants. When I became of legal age to work in a factory (18-years-old), I stopped working in the corn fields and began employment in a local vegetable canning factory. I worked at this factory for several years during my summer vacations while I attended college. Several of my co-workers at this facility were unauthorized immigrants from Mexico.

Working alongside with immigrants, I learned about their hardships of the migration journey and their reasons for coming to the United States. Several of the immigrants I worked with always stressed to me that I should take advantage of being a U.S.-born individual. They told me that I should not take for granted that I was a U.S. citizen and that I needed to become a productive member of society. As a result of working alongside unauthorized immigrants, I realized they had similar stories such as my father and other members of my family.

Based on my personal experiences of my father's citizenship status and other family members, and of my migrant farm working experience, I was socialized to believe that immigrants are hard-working individuals whose sole purpose of coming to

[48] Detasseling corn entails the removal of pollen producing flowers (the tassel) from the tops of corn plants.

the U.S. is to live a productive and prosperous life. Therefore, these experiences have impacted my personal habitus, which in turn has influenced my tolerance towards immigrants. In sum, my personal habitus has helped me resist the use of racialized terminology as an individual and of racialized practices as a police officer even though I was a member of that social structure.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The study discussed in this dissertation is qualitative and uses a combination of auto-ethnography and participant observation as the principal research methods. This chapter discusses the aforementioned data collection methods undertaken for this research project. Furthermore, it reveals why participant observation was appropriate for this study. This chapter also includes an analysis of the researcher's positionality[49] within the study and sampling methods employed.

A Qualitative Inquiry

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2002:3), qualitative research is defined as "a situated activity that locates the observer in the world." Moreover, qualitative researchers study matters in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings individuals give to them. In addition, qualitative research does not favor one research method over another—that is, "qualitative researchers use the methods and techniques of ethnography, auto-ethnography, interviewing, participant observation, and survey research, among others" (Denzin and Lincoln 2002:7). I chose the research methods of auto-ethnography and

[49] According to Merriam et al. (2001:411), "The notion of positionality rests on the assumption that a culture is more than a monolithic entity to which one belongs or not.…Positionality is thus determined by where one stands in relation to 'the other.'"

participant observation for this study because of my positionality within the research site.[50]

Research Setting: Calls for Service and the Squad Room

The data collected for this study were collected in two social settings, either while at a call for service or while inside the squad room. I wrote detailed fieldnotes of my observations between fellow deputies and civilians while responding to a particular call for service.[51] Moreover, because this study is auto-ethnographical, I also wrote detailed fieldnotes of my interactions with civilians when responding to a particular call for service by myself. I followed the same data collection techniques when responding to a call for service alone as when I had a partner.

Routine patrol work involves handling different calls for service.[52] Each call is an isolated incident that a police officer handles accordingly (Walker and Katz 2013). Moreover, calls for service consist of criminal law enforcement calls,[53] order maintenance calls,[54] or service calls.[55] Calls for service are either officer initiated, in which an officer makes contact with a civilian regarding a certain issue without being dispatched to the particular location, or civilian initiated, as when the 911 communications center[56] of the police department receives a phone call from a civilian

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[50] Will be discussed in further detail later in this chapter.
[51] Explained in further detail in the data collection techniques section of this chapter.
[52] An assignment that requires police presence in order to resolve or correct a particular situation.
[53] Include incidents such as murder, robbery, assault, and so forth (Walker and Katz 2013).
[54] Include incidents such as minor fights and disturbances, domestic incidents, and public nuisances (Walker and Katz 2013).
[55] Responds to incidents such as welfare checks, general assistance, and medical emergencies (Walker and Katz 2013).
[56] Location (dispatch room of the police department) where calls for service are received and generated.

needing police intervention. The latter occurs when "the communication center receives incoming call from citizens, makes a series of discretionary decisions about how to handle those calls, and in many but not all cases dispatches police cars to the scene of the incident" (Walker and Katz 2013:208).

Patrol work is associated with the monotony of paperwork. Contrary to popular belief, the policing profession is writing intensive as police officers have to write reports for most calls for service they respond to during their workday. In addition, partner-patrolling facilitated both the conversations used for data gathering and the use of language to characterize unauthorized immigrants.

The other setting where data were collected was inside the squad room. I collected fieldnotes of my observations between fellow deputies inside the squad room—specifically what was said during briefing and debriefing.[57] Collecting fieldnotes in this setting allowed me to illustrate police officers' behavior behind the scenes and, more importantly, to illustrate what is said among police officers when they are away from the public.

The squad room is the center hub of all police activity in the police department because it is the location where briefing[58] and debriefing[59] is conducted. Both patrol officers and detectives have briefings inside the squad room but at different time periods.

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[57] Explained in detail in the data collection techniques section of this chapter.
[58] Briefing involves attendance being taken, quadrant assignments being given to the police officers for the particular workday, and information being provided about previous shift activities (Pogrebin and Poole 2003).
[59] Debriefing consists of the shift supervisor reviewing officers' reports, clearing up any questions they may have, and offering constructive advice to officers at the end of the workday (Pogrebin and Poole 2003).

The squad room included in this study is a large room furnished with several white plastic tables and rolling black plastic chairs. In order to walk into the squad room, officers must swipe their employee ID card on the ID scanning machine, which is located outside the entrance door. There is only one entry door into the squad room.

There are three offices along the right side of the squad room. All of the offices are the same size and have large glass, see-through windows. Shift supervisors have their own offices, which are utilized as a place to conduct a one-on-one meeting between the police officer and the shift supervisor (a sergeant or lieutenant) if need be. The offices are also used as places where each shift supervisor has all shift information stored and files his or her paperwork accordingly. The white plastic tables and black rolling chairs are positioned so that the police officers are facing the south end wall when sitting at the tables. The south end wall has a large State of Texas flag and a U.S. flag placed on it. In between both flags is a black, 52-inch plasma TV, which is used to announce pertinent departmental information.

Located several feet from the south wall is a brown five-foot podium that is used by the shift supervisor when conducting a briefing. The podium has a large sheriff's office departmental logo placed in the front. Situated along the north wall of the squad room are several black computers that are used by the patrol officers who wish to type out their pending reports at the end of their shift inside the squad room, as opposed to finishing them inside their patrol car. The east wall has a large brown board, which is where all the departmental postings are placed (e.g., vacant positions, overtime job information, departmental changes, etc.).

Participant Observation

The primary method of data collection for this study is participant observation. The methodology of participant observation is appropriate for research dealing with roughly every feature of human existence (Jorgensen 1989). Participant observation is defined as a research method in which a researcher takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of the research subjects, during which time data, in the form of fieldnotes, are collected, as one of the means of learning the certain aspects of participants' life routines and their culture (Bogdan 1972, Dewalt and Dewalt 2002). Furthermore, participant observation is a method of collecting data in naturalistic settings by ethnographers who observe and/or take part in the activities of the research subjects (Jorgensen 1989).

By using participant observation, "it is possible to illustrate what goes on, whom or what is involved, when and where things occur, and how they transpire" (Jorgensen 1989:12). Additionally, participant observation is suitable for scholarly research when there are differences between the views of insiders and outsiders (e.g., ethnic groups, management, labor unions, and subcultures such as police officers; Jorgensen 1989). Participant observation is also appropriate when certain minimal conditions are met; "the researcher is granted access to a setting, research is observable within an everyday life situation or setting, and the research problem is concerned with human meanings and interactions viewed from the insiders' perspective" (Jorgensen 1989:13).

Participant observation seeks to unveil, make accessible, and demonstrate the meanings people use to make sense out of their daily lives. For instance, Egan (2006)

was a participant observer in two New England area strip clubs for the purpose of illustrating the everyday life experiences of female exotic dancers and their male clients from the perspective of exotic dancers. Moskos (2008) described the experiences and meanings of being a police officer in Baltimore, Maryland, from an insider's viewpoint. Jorgensen (1989:15) asserts that "the world of everyday life is for the methodology of participant observation the ordinary, usual, typical, routine, or natural environment of human existence." Consequently, this study focuses on the everyday, work-related experiences of Mexican American police officers who work along the U.S.-Mexico border.

The participant's role in participant observation requires that the researcher become directly involved as a participant in people's daily lives. The participant role provides access to the world of daily experiences from the perspective of a member or insider (Jorgensen 1989). Moreover, participant observation is a unique way of gaining access to the interior, apparently subjective aspects of human existence (Krieger 1985, Jorgensen 1989). Participation involvement ranges from the performance of insignificant and unimportant roles to native, insider, or membership roles. Participant observation focuses on human interaction and meaning from the insider's perspective in everyday life interactions and is a method for gaining access to otherwise unfeasible aspects of human life and experience (e.g., the arena of police work; Jorgensen 1989).

According to Moskos (2008:4), "Prolonged participant observation research is the best and perhaps only means of gathering valid data on job-related police behavior." Participant observation implies that "the raw material of ethnography lies out there in the

daily activities of the individuals one is interested in, and the only way to access those activities is to establish relationships with individuals, to participate alongside them in what they do, and to observe interactions" (Agar 1996:31). By employing this method, I was able to observe the interactions between the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office deputies and the civilians they came in contact with.[60] Additionally, I was able to observe the interactions between fellow deputies while we were at the police department.

Participants

Even though the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office has several divisions (e.g., patrol, criminal investigation, jail, and communication) within the police department, I focused on the patrol division (patrol officers) and the criminal investigation division (detectives). I focused on these two police divisions since the majority of the calls for service deal with police officers from these respective divisions. The Del Monte County Sheriff's Office is a medium-sized police department, which like most police departments, is male dominated.

With regard to shift structure and shift hours, I made arrangements with the shift supervisors to serve on all the shifts in rotation. This aided the data collection process because I was not limited to observations of deputies from only one particular shift. Civilian participants for this study consisted of civilians with whom the other police officers and I came in contact either during a call for service or a traffic stop. Civilians

[60] As previously mentioned in the introduction, all individuals, organizations, and locations were assigned pseudonyms.

ranged from legal residents of Del Monte County to unauthorized immigrants of a foreign Latin American country who came in contact with the police.

Recruitment Procedures

Police Officers and Civilians

When informing police officers of the purpose of this project, I told them that this study was concerned with police-community relations among co-ethnics on the U.S.-Mexico border and not the police officers themselves—specifically Latin-origin police officers' interactional experiences with their civilian counterparts along the U.S.-Mexico border. Moreover, similar to Marquart (1986), when revealing the aims of this study, I kept the specifics of the study vague. Correspondingly, civilians were notified that this study dealt with police-community relations between Latino co-ethnics along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Akin to Murray (2003), I informed all participants that my ultimate objective with this study was to write a book based on Mexican American police officers' daily work-related interactions with each other and with their co-ethnic civilian counterparts. Furthermore, police officers were advised that I planned on writing fieldnotes of my experiences and observations but were not told what exactly I would be observing or what "writing fieldnotes means" (Murray 2003:390). Similarly, civilians were also notified that I planned on writing fieldnotes based on my interaction with them and with a fellow deputy (if one was at the scene). Police officers and civilians were simply notified that writing fieldnotes meant that I would write down my observations of our interaction on a notepad.

Police officer participants were selected from the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office. My official status with the sheriff's office at the time of participant recruitment was reserve deputy. In order to maintain my State of Texas peace officer license, I was required to conduct 15 ride-along hours every month with a chosen police department. Thus, the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office allowed me to keep my license active by conducting the monthly required hours with this police department. I did not receive any monetary benefits from being a reserve deputy or any other kind of benefit. By being a reserve deputy with the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office, I was simply able to maintain my Texas peace officer license as active.

I respected and protected the participants' privacy during recruitment by not revealing who participated in this study. This was accomplished through my blind memo recruitment method.[61] I informed the police officers in person, during briefing, through a presentation of my recruiting script[62] that detailed the purpose of my research. I also provided them with an Institutional Review Board (IRB)-approved information sheet so that they could view the details of the study. In addition to the information sheet, I handed out a short form[63] that stated "I agree/disagree to participate in the research of Eric Gamino" and asked those who wished to participate to circle the agree option; those who did not wish to participate were asked to circle the disagree option. Furthermore, everyone was asked to print their last name and badge number on the participation

[61] This recruitment procedure was conducted on all shifts.
[62] Refer to Appendix A—Recruiting Script.
[63] Refer to Appendix B—Participation Request Form.

request form. I requested everyone's badge number along with their last name just in case I had last name duplications.[64]

I took a ballot box to the presentation and asked everyone to drop their form into the ballot box. Thus, no one but me knew who had agreed or disagreed to participate in the study. This ensured confidentiality for both those who chose to participate and those who did not. I informed them that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time, even if they had initially agreed on the participation request form. They were also advised that they could notify me in person or via cell phone of their withdrawal.

Furthermore, I notified the officers that in instances in which someone who had not agreed to be in the study was involved in a group interaction, I would leave his or her actions out of my fieldnotes. The participation request forms were destroyed immediately after I viewed who agreed or disagreed to be in the study. I personally shredded the participation request forms. Because we referred to each other either by last name or badge number, it was not difficult for me to remember and distinguish who did not wish to participate in the study. Of all the police officers that I recruited, only a small number declined to participate in the study. I do not know why nor was I concerned with an explanation for their non-participation in this study.

With regard to civilians, participants were identified as being individuals who resided in Del Monte County[65] or unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants from a Latin

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[64] Because this study focused on Latin-origin police officers and their civilian co-ethnic counterparts, I only recruited Latin-origin police officers.

American country who had an interaction with either a Del Monte County Sheriff's Office deputy or me. Moreover, I asked for permission to include my observations of the police-civilian interaction only after it had taken place. After the interaction occurred, the civilians were given an IRB-approved information sheet detailing the purpose of the study. If the civilian was Spanish speaking, he or she was given the Spanish IRB-approved information sheet.

Contrary to police officers, who were recruited at the police department, participant recruitment for civilians was conducted out in the field, either when responding to a call for service or when conducting a traffic stop on a civilian. As previously mentioned, I informed the civilians of my study after they had an interaction with a fellow deputy or me. For example, before leaving a particular call for service, I talked with the civilian involved in that call for service privately by stepping away from anyone else and my partner (if one was at the call for service) and gave him or her an IRB-approved information sheet so that he or she could view the details of the study. I notified him or her that agreeing or disagreeing to participate would have no bearing on the outcome of the call for service.

My recruitment procedures for civilians during a traffic stop was similar to the civilians I encountered during a call for service. For example, after the pulled-over civilian was given a citation or warning (verbal or documented), I informed him or her of my study. I followed the recruitment procedures by giving the motorists an IRB-approved information sheet. Similar to a call for service, I talked with the individual

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[65] U.S.-born, authorized immigrants and unauthorized immigrants.

involved privately for his or her protection. I advised the motorist that agreeing or disagreeing to participate would have no bearing on receiving or paying a citation.

I felt that it was not only ethical but also logical to ask for participation after the interaction so that it would not affect the police-civilian encounter, whether it was at a call for service or traffic stop. I informed civilians, as I had informed the police officers, that their participation was voluntary, and they could withdraw from the study at any time without having to give an explanation. They were advised that they could get in contact with me via my cell phone number, as provided on the IRB-approved information sheet, to notify me of their withdrawal.

When asking civilians to participate, I was always cognizant to not make them feel compelled to participate in order for their particular call for service or traffic stop to have a favorable end result for them. I was careful not to make civilians feel as if they had to participate even though they did not want to. I ensured this by certifying that they understood the IRB-approved information sheet before agreeing to participate. Even though several civilians initially agreed to participate, there were some participants who contacted me several days or weeks later to inform me that they wished to withdraw from the study.

Whenever a civilian participant wished to withdraw, I did not ask his or her reason for withdrawing. Some, however, voluntarily informed me of their reasons for withdrawal. For example, they told me that they wished to withdraw because they were relocating or simply because they did not want their call for service (e.g., domestic

dispute, family violence assault) to be included in my fieldnotes.[66] Therefore, to the best of my knowledge, there is no reason to believe that civilians felt coerced to participate since several participants withdrew from the study for various reasons after initially agreeing to participate.

My success rate with civilian participation, to a certain extent, was comparable to police officer participants. A majority of police officers recruited for the study were willing to participate. Civilians, on the other hand, were somewhat willing to participate, but not without some doubt. I received some "I don't know, sir" responses when asking for participation. On those occasions when a civilian replied that he or she "didn't know" whether he or she wanted to participate, I simply took the response for the time being as "no." I did not want to make anyone feel as if I were coercing him or her to participate. Therefore, I simply responded, "It's okay. Don't worry. I'll take your response as a no, but if you decide to participate at a later time, contact me." Those who "didn't know" were still given an IRB-approved information sheet.[67] Some civilians could not comprehend the idea that a police officer could also be a doctoral student at the same time.[68]

Finally, I believe my success rate with civilian participation was influenced by my own biases. There were instances when I was well aware that I would not get civilian

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[66] Of those participants who voluntarily told me of their reason for withdrawal, none indicated that they wished to withdraw because their particular call for service or traffic stop ended in an unfavorable result for them. In addition, none of these withdrawing civilian participants indicated that they wished to withdraw from the study because they felt coerced into participating at the moment of recruitment.

[67] A few civilians who replied that they "didn't know" whether they wanted to participate contacted me later to participate in the study.

[68] On one occasion I was told, "How's it possible for you to be a cop and a PhD student at A&M at the same time? It's nice to know there are educated cops out there."

participation from certain civilians (explained further in the next section). Therefore, I must acknowledge this bias and be cognizant that it affected my success rate for civilian participation.[69]

Non-Inclusion and Participant Protection Measures

There were several occasions in which I did not bother to ask for participation from certain civilians. These occasions mostly dealt with traffic stops. A number of times when I pulled over civilians, upon making contact with them, I saw that they were visibly upset and irate with me. Therefore, I did not bother to ask them for participation because I felt it would only make them angrier. Only on one occasion did I ask an irate civilian if they would be willing to participate in the study. The response I received did not surprise me, but I wanted to see what would happen if I asked an irate motorist to participate in my study. In this particular interaction, I had pulled over a female for disregarding a stop sign in a residential area. The woman appeared to be in her early 30s and was traveling with an elderly female. The woman told me that she wanted me to hurry up and do whatever I was going to do because she was in a hurry. Once I informed her that she was going to receive a ticket for the traffic violation committed, the female became infuriated. After issuing the ticket, I decided to ask for her participation in my study, even though she was upset the whole time I interacted with her. She replied, "Are you fucking serious?! You just gave me a damn ticket and you want me to participate in your college bullshit! Hell no! You gotta be kidding me!" Therefore, after that, I did not

[69] Similar to police officers, I only obtained Latin-origin civilian participation due to the nature of the project.

invite irate civilians to participate in the study because I knew it would only worsen my interaction with them by aggravating them.[70]

In addition to irate civilians, there were certain calls for service, such as incidents of rape, in which I deliberately chose not to seek participation. Specifically, after four participation withdrawals following such incidents, I discontinued asking for participation in these cases.[71] It was clear that a rape victim had suffered severe emotional trauma and did not need such an intrusion, and their being asked to participate was disrespectful due to the nature of their victimization. Consequently, I did not include calls for service dealing with sensitive issues such as rape in my fieldnotes.

I did not obtain documentation of informed consent because it was improper for this study due to security purposes.[72] Not obtaining documentation of informed consent ensured law enforcement officers and civilians that there would be no record linking them and the research. I simply obtained oral consent from all law enforcement officers and civilians for their protection. They were given an IRB-approved information sheet. In addition, I respected law enforcement officers and civilian participants by treating them as human subjects; they were assured confidentiality. This was accomplished by assigning all participants, neighborhoods, regions, and any other identifying locations

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[70] On several incidents, irate civilians during a call for service were more willing to participate than irate motorists because I was not the direct cause of their frustration.

[71] The first four rape victims, who initially did agree to participate, withdrew from the study. Therefore, I discontinued asking for participation from individuals involved in incidents such as rape. I must note that I should have known better than to ask rape victims for their participation, but my intentions were made in good faith.

[72] I wanted to protect the identity of all law enforcement personnel due to the nature of their job. I also wanted to protect the identity of civilians since some were victims of a crime, the nature of their involvement for a particular call for service dealt with a sensitive issue, or they were unauthorized immigrants.

pseudonyms for their protection. Moreover, I obscured revealing details such as statistics and scheduling norms within the police department. I also obscured sites of interactions (colonias and neighborhoods) by assigning pseudonyms and masking descriptions. Therefore, whenever describing a certain colonia or geographical location (e.g., streets or neighborhoods), I either added or omitted certain descriptive aspects so that it could not be identified.

U.S. Border Patrol Agents, Texas Department of Public Safety Troopers, and Unauthorized Immigrants

On several calls for service and traffic stops, I interacted with law enforcement officials from other agencies. I sought participation specifically from BP agents and DPS troopers because these two agencies were the ones I frequently encountered when dealing with a call for service or a traffic stop. The recruitment procedures for these officials were similar to civilian participation. Thus, after I had interacted with a BP agent or DPS trooper, either at a traffic stop or call for service, they were given an IRB-approved information sheet detailing the purpose of the study. Similar to police officers, almost all of these state and federal law enforcement officials were willing to participate. With the exception of three females, the rest of the state and federal law enforcement official participants were male.

Similar to my interaction with state and federal law enforcement officers, I encountered unauthorized immigrants[73] on several calls for service and traffic stops. My

[73] These unauthorized immigrants were not residents of Del Monte County. Therefore, my interaction with this population normally dealt with stash-house-related incidents.

recruitment procedures for unauthorized immigrants were the same as with other civilians. After I had an interaction with them, they were given an IRB-approved information sheet detailing the purpose of my study. Most of the immigrants that were asked to participate were willing participants. I do not know whether or not they felt compelled to participate in the study. However, I can only assume that they were willing to participate because they understood that this study would one day be made public by being published. For example, on one particular call for service involving unauthorized immigrants, several immigrants expressed their desire to participate in the study so that the U.S. public could be made aware of their reasons for migrating into the United States.

Other immigrant participants shared similar reasons for participating in the study. I must note here that illiterate immigrants were excluded from participation because I felt it would be unethical to ask an illiterate person for participation if he or she could not read and comprehend the IRB-approved information sheet handed to him or her.

These unauthorized immigrants, along with the other state and federal law enforcement officers, were guaranteed the same protective measures as the rest of my participants. I assured them confidentiality by assigning pseudonyms for their protection. Similar to the rest of the participants, I did not obtain documentation of informed consent; I simply requested oral consent. I informed them that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without having to give an explanation. They were also notified that they could get in contact with me via

my cell phone number or work phone number as provided on the IRB-approved information sheet to notify me of their withdrawal.

In sum, all of the participants in the study were notified that if they decided to withdraw, their actions would be left out of my fieldnotes, and they would suffer no penalties from any organization, such as the police department or Texas A&M University. I ensured all participants that if they participated, their participation would remain confidential because they would be assigned pseudonyms. This research project[74] was approved by the IRB of Texas A&M University at College Station.

Unanticipated Outcomes

The recruitment process came with some unanticipated outcomes. As part of the recruitment procedure, my cell phone number needed to be listed on the IRB-approved information sheet that I handed out to all participants so that they could contact me if they had questions about the study or chose to withdraw. To my surprise, a small number of the civilian participants contacted me days and even weeks after our interaction to ask me non-project-related questions. Some called just to check the status of their case.

I made it clear to all civilians I interacted with during a call for service (participants and non-participants) that as a patrol deputy, my primary duty was to conduct the initial police report. Then, after approval by my supervisor (patrol sergeant or patrol lieutenant), the police report would be forwarded to the appropriate division

[74] Project 2012-0301F.

(e.g., criminal investigation division—offense report;[75] records division—information report.[76]). Even though I took the time to explain this process to civilians before leaving a call for service, I still received a small number of phone calls from several civilian participants. Some callers were cordial, whereas others were rude and upset because they had to call me to check the status of their particular case since they could not get in contact with the detective assigned to their case. Others called because they simply wanted faster access to the police than having to resort to dialing 911 for police intervention. These phone calls varied from the mundane—callers stating that they wanted more police presence in their neighborhood—to callers with more serious issues such as family disputes.

One problem with listing my cell phone number was that I received phone calls at all hours of the night and day. There were times when I was working the graveyard shift, which meant that I would sleep during the day, and I received phone calls from civilians while I was asleep. All of the phone calls I received from civilian participants were clearly from unregistered phone numbers. Therefore, I could not ignore these phone calls because I was not sure of the reason for the phone call.

Another unanticipated outcome dealt with my co-worker participants. At different points in time during this study, a few of the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office participants individually expressed a desire for me to include their real names in the study instead of their assigned pseudonyms. Those deputy participants who

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[75] Assigned to a detective for further investigation (criminal report).
[76] Assigned to clerical staff for filing purposes (non-criminal report).

expressed a desire to have their real names included in the study were not aware that I had already been approached by other deputies who expressed a similar desire. None of the deputies who expressed a desire to have their real name included in the study gave me any problems. They were neither insistent nor demanding about the inclusion of their real names in the study. After I reiterated the reasons for using pseudonyms, they told me that they understood.

Using Auto-ethnography in Sociological Research

Auto-ethnography uses the self as both subject and object; its inquiry arises out of several layers of consciousness connecting the personal with the cultural (Ellis and Bochner 2000, Marshall and Rossman 2006). Auto-ethnography has a double sense of meaning, referring either to the ethnography of one's own group (e.g., police officers) or to the autobiographical writing that has ethnographic interest. Moreover, auto-ethnography is defined as a form of self-narrative that situates "the self within a social context" (Reed-Danahay 1997:9). Thus, this method allowed me to illustrate what was occurring within the research setting from my own perspective.

Ellis and Bochner (2000:742) define auto-ethnography as "autobiographies that self-consciously explore the interplay of the introspective, personally engaged self with cultural descriptions mediated through language, history, and ethnographic explanation." Their definition, similar to Reed-Danahay (1997), focuses on connecting the self to the cultural (e.g., police officers). Furthermore, auto-ethnography asks its readers to "become co-participants and to feel the truth of the researchers' stories by engaging the storyline on a moral, emotional, and intellectual level" (Ellis and Bochner 2000:745).

Auto-ethnography entails a blurring between the researcher and the researched, and the findings are illustrated through the chronology of fieldwork events, drawing attention not only to the culture under study but also to the experiences that are important to the culture description and interpretation (Marshall and Rossman 2006).

Auto-ethnography is a method of qualitative research writing in which the researcher illustrates his or her own experiences (Reed-Danahay 1997, Marshall and Rossman 2006). In a similar vein to ethnography, "auto-ethnography pursues the vital objective of cultural understanding underlying autobiographical experiences" (Chang 2008:49). By utilizing auto-ethnography, I am able to illustrate my unique positionality of being a police officer and researcher at the same time. It allows me to demonstrate the findings in a way that make my experiences meaningful with regard to the culture under study (police officers). In sum, the results of this study provide a clear understanding of the racialization process of immigrants by the police as illustrated through my own personal work-related experiences.

Auto-ethnographic Research

For auto-ethnography, practically any aspect of one's life can become a research focus (Chang 2008). A variety of topics have been examined in book-length, chapter-length, and article-length auto-ethnographies. Moskos's (2008) study demonstrated what being a police officer in an inner city entails by drawing on his personal experience as a Baltimore, Maryland, police officer. Moskos was a Ph.D. student in the Sociology Department at Harvard University who then trained and worked as a police officer in Baltimore. This was fieldwork for his dissertation that later became *Cop in the Hood:*

My Year Policing Baltimore's Eastern District. With his book, Moskos was able to capture the autobiographical nature of a culture (police) that most people know only through the distorted image of the media.

Other book-length auto-ethnographies include Egan's (2006) research on female exotic dancers and their male clients. Egan was a sociology graduate student who also worked as an exotic dancer as part of her dissertation research. She conducted interviews and participant observations at two New England area strip clubs from 1996 to 2000. This was fieldwork for her dissertation, which became *Dancing for Dollars and Paying for Love: The Relationships between Exotic Dancers and Their Regulars*. Her book provides an inside look into this aspect of sex work, which is illustrated through her auto-ethnographic methodology.

Article-length, auto-ethnographic research often covers sensitive topics, sometimes including those typically kept private, such as child sexual abuse (Fox 1996), teenage pregnancy (Muncey 2005), and domestic violence (Olson 2004). However, not all auto-ethnographic research topics deal with sensitive issues (Chang 2008). Other topics within this body of research deal with racial identity issues such as black-white multiculturalism (Gatson 2003) and white privilege (Magnet 2006). Accordingly, auto-ethnography is the most suitable method for addressing sensitive topics since it allows researchers to illustrate findings dealing with sensitive issues from an insider perspective.

Benefits of Auto-ethnography

There are several benefits to conducting auto-ethnographic research. First, auto-ethnography is researcher-friendly; this method facilitates the access to the primary data source from the beginning because the source is the researchers themselves (Chang 2008). Furthermore, auto-ethnography is also reader-friendly in that the personally engaging writing style tends to appeal to a broad audience. As far as the researcher is concerned, auto-ethnography is an excellent method by which researchers come to understand themselves and others (Chang 2008). Last, conducting, sharing, and reading auto-ethnography can also aid the transformation of researchers and readers (listeners) in the process (Chang 2008). That is, the personal engagement in auto-ethnographic research often raises the self-reflection of readers.

This study makes several methodological contributions by its use of auto-ethnography as one of the two primary methods of data collection.[77] For instance, scant academic qualitative research has been conducted on the police. This is due to the fact that police are wary of outside social researchers (Van Maanen 1978a, 2003, Bouza 1990); in other words, "police simply—and usually correctly—don't see how an outside researcher will help their work" (Moskos 2008:61). Hence, this study extends the existing qualitative research on the police by utilizing the methodological research method of auto-ethnography.

In addition, as previously mentioned, this study is auto-ethnographical, which means that data collected for this dissertation is analyzed from an insider perspective.

[77] The other being participant observation.

The majority of police-community relations literature focuses on this relationship from the citizens' perspective. As a result, "Two major pillars are missing: police officers' own attitudes toward citizens and officer behavior while on patrol, interacting with Latino members of the public" (Weitzer 2014:2000). Furthermore, and more importantly as related to this study, "Research is lacking on officers' interactions with or views of Hispanic civilians and on Hispanic officers' behavior and attitudes per se" (Weitzer 2014:2000). Consequently, the auto-ethnographic nature of this study allows for the aforementioned issues to be addressed.

Entry

Gaining entry into the everyday lives of police officers is a difficult task. Moreover, this entry is complicated due to the shared features of "isolationism, secrecy, strong in-group loyalties, sacred symbols, common language, and a sense of estrangement" (Van Maanen 2003:77) among police officers, which in turn creates a "brothers in blue"[78] mentality that seems perplexing to an individual who is oblivious to the profession of policing. These shared features among police officers "are almost axiomatic subcultural features underpinning a set of common understandings among police in general which govern their relations with one another as well as with civilians" (Van Maanen 2003:77). Therefore, the fact that police officers share a "brothers in blue" mentality may preclude "outside" researchers from the ability to conduct truthful research on police officers with the hope of gaining entry into this "mystified"

[78] Refers to the police uniform, which signifies fellow police officers.

subculture (Bouza 1990:74). As noted by Van Maanen (1978a:319), "Many policemen feel that a person has no business studying them unless he too belongs to the club."

I began this study as a reserve deputy with the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office and later became a full-time deputy sheriff.[79] I was granted permission by the sheriff to conduct my research within this police department. This facilitated my entry into the study of police officers, which as mentioned earlier, is a difficult task. One method by which to honestly and accurately analyze police officers' interactions with civilians is to have an insider perspective, which, fortunately for me, is something I possessed. As argued by Moskos (2008:4), "Because data on policing are iffy at best and cops, like everyone, love to tell a tall tale, the best way to see what happens on the street is to be there as it happens." Therefore, the insider role that I possessed aided me with the data collection process because I was able to have intimate private conversations with fellow deputies, and it also allowed me to personally and accurately experience the interactions between the deputies and civilians because I was able to capture the essence of social interaction between deputies and civilians as it unfolded in front of me.

Going Native

Since I was a member (reserve deputy and later full-time deputy) of the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office, "going native" was something that I had to do during this study. Going native implies that the fieldworker is "immersed in the field to such an extent that the fieldworker becomes a member" (Warren and Karner 2005:86). Additionally, the concept of going native entails that the researcher has knowingly

[79] I will explain this status change further in the participant request section of this chapter.

become a member of the group under study (Warren and Karner 2005). Since I was a police officer and considered an insider for research purposes, it was inevitable for me to go native in this research project, particularly since I was already a member of one of the researched groups (police officers).

The dangers that come along with a profession such as police work dictate that one must be security conscious first and a researcher second (Marquart 1986). As a police officer conducting participant observation research, I was well aware that my police officer role would sometimes have to supersede my researcher role. Thus, I had to go native in this project and keep in mind that "the official work role in these cases must supersede, when the situation arises, research interests" (Marquart 1986:23).

The practice of going native is considered problematic because it may result in the researcher ignoring the research and becoming a member of the group under study instead (Warren and Karner 2005). However, for those who have gone native in their research, writing fieldnotes serves as a reminder that even though they are already members of the particular group under study, they are conducting research within their group of membership. As Emerson and Pollner (2003:38) argue, "Writing fieldnotes provides one concrete method for reminding and recommitting to research purposes. The fieldworker may get caught up in the moment-by-moment, day-after-day experience of living in the field.…Taking up the task of writing fieldnotes draws the fieldworker back into the space of research and observation." Hence, even though I was a fellow police officer similar to the police officer participants of this study, the data collection process

of writing fieldnotes served as a daily reminder of my other role—namely a researcher role.

Besides writing fieldnotes, there were other measures I took in order to obtain objectivity in this study. First, I rarely associated with my co-workers outside of work. I did socialize with a select few, but only on certain occasions. I got along with all of my co-workers, but I probably associated with about three co-workers at most outside of work. This association was mostly in social outings, such as going to a bar to have a couple of drinks. Second, I did not participate in work-related charity functions such as golf tournaments and other fundraising events. I wanted to remain objective in this research project by making sure that I limited my association with other sheriff's office employees by not attending work-related extracurricular functions.

Exit: Leaving the Field

Just as my entrance into the research setting was a straightforward task, so too was my exit. The sheriff, along with my co-workers, was aware that the length of my employment at the sheriff's office would only be for a limited time. They knew that aside from being a deputy, my future professional aspiration is to become a professor. Therefore, this entailed that I would eventually have to end my employment as a police officer. Consequently, everyone at the sheriff's office knew that my employment would last as long as it took for me to complete this research project.

Insider/Outsider Positionality

The debate of insider/outsider positionality has been an ongoing debate. This debate is centered on the question of whether research positions are either static or fluid

and evolving. According to Merton (1972:15), insiders are "endowed with special insight into matters necessarily obscure to others," while outsiders have a "structurally imposed incapacity to comprehend alien groups, statuses, cultures, and societies." In short, he viewed the insider/outsider research position as a static one in which insiders are the members of a particular group or specific social status, whereas outsiders are simply the nonmembers (Merton 1972).

Baca-Zinn (1979) challenged this simplistic notion of insider/outsider single dimension by arguing that race and ethnicity should also be taken into consideration. Her claim was based on the supposition that when conducting research in minority-of-color communities, white researchers often lack insight into the nuances of behavior. De Andrade (2000:271) reiterates this point by stating that "because race and ethnicity are ever-present factors in field research, insider/outsider status is also an ongoing presence or dynamic in the research process." Therefore, race is also an important factor for researchers who are conducting participant observation research with regard to the notion of insider/outsider. However, just sharing race/ethnicity with the participants will not guarantee an insider status role. Other factors such as region, class, and other cultural variations can make one an outsider.

Both Moskos (2008) and Goffman's (2014) research was conducted in urban inner-city settings. Moreover, their research was based on participant observation of predominately black, crime-infested neighborhoods. Moskos (2008) was a Baltimore, Maryland, police officer who conducted insider research while working in a black, low-income, crime-ridden neighborhood. Goffman (2014) was a sociology graduate student

who conducted insider participant observation research in a predominately black Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, neighborhood. Both were white Ivy League sociology graduate students who conducted participant observation research in predominately black communities. They were considered insiders based on their qualitative data collection methods; however, one must also take into account their race, especially since they were white ethnographers who conducted research in a majority black, inner-city setting.

As noted by Baca-Zinn (1979), white researchers often lack insight into the nuances of behavior when conducting research in communities of color due to racial differences. The fact that I shared the same racial/ethnic background as my participants added to the qualitative notion of insider/outsider. I was able to accurately illustrate my results from an insider perspective because I shared the same ethnic origin as my Latino participants.

Due to the increase in education of members from minority of color communities, "additional research employing the insider perspective has been undertaken, and one can assume that it is not only valid and significant but also more efficient than outsider research" (Chavez 2008:476). With regard to occupation, certain professions (e.g., doctors, lawyers, teachers, police officers, etc.) form distinctive occupational subcultures worth analyzing from an insider perspective (Labaree 2002). It is also important to analyze this insider perspective from an outsider status as well.

Analyzing the insider as outsider status entails the researcher viewing his or her research project from the outside looking in and from the inside looking out and being

able to comprehend both (Merton 1972, Beoku-Betts 1994, Labaree 2002). Consequently, as argued by Labaree (2002:111), "…it is critical to conceptualizing how observers as insiders are positioned by the respondents due to their status." In addition, Labaree (2002) notes that insiderness is no guarantee to avoiding unintended and unanticipated positioning by respondents.

Because I shared two common elements with my police officer research participants—namely race and occupation—I was able to demonstrate how I navigated the dual insider/outsider role. Even though I shared a common identity with the police officer participants, my educational background served as a marker of differentiation between the police officers and myself. From the outside looking in, I could be seen as an insider because I shared the same occupation and ethnic background as the participants (police officers), but from the inside looking out, my educational background made me an outsider among several police officers within the police department.

In sum, although I could be considered as going native, the data collection process of writing fieldnotes and my educational background made me cognizant of my researcher role for this study, even though I was a fellow "brother in blue" with the participants (Del Monte County Sheriff's Office deputies). Similar to other research (Baca-Zinn 1979, De Andrade 2000, Labaree 2002, Chavez 2008), this study illustrates that an insider/outsider research position is not static, but rather evolving and ever-changing based on shared characteristics with respondents and how respondents position the researcher.

Data Collection Techniques

As noted previously, this study was qualitative and utilized participant observations (between police officers and their co-ethnic civilian counterparts[80] and among police officers during briefing and debriefing) as one of two principle research methods. Data for this study were collected through the process of handwritten fieldnotes of the daily observations between police officers and their co-ethnic civilian counterparts, and of police officers during briefing and debriefing—essentially conversations among police officers.

When taking notes for research, it is helpful that pen and paper are required for police officers (Moskos 2008), which in this case simplified the data collection process because I was able to write down my observations and conversations with fellow deputies without raising suspicion. For example, while at a call for service, I didn't raise suspicion because the individuals involved (police officers and civilians) assumed that I was only writing call-for-service related information on my notepad. Every time I conversed with a fellow deputy or while at a call for service, I wrote my observations on my notepad. In addition to call-for-service information, I made notes about anything particular about that call, which then served as a reminder when writing the fieldnotes in full detail later on.

In addition, having a notepad is required during briefings because officers must write all the pertinent information on their notepad, such as quadrant assignments for the

[80] Residents of Del Monte County (U.S.-born Latinos, authorized and unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants) and non-residents of Del Monte County (unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants)

particular day, previous shift work activity, and other departmental-related information (e.g., departmental vacancies, wanted fugitive information). Thus, while inside the squad room during briefing, I was able to write notes about everything that was said, along with the pertinent information given by the shift supervisor, and my co-workers likely assumed that I was simply writing notes on the information provided by the shift supervisor. Note taking for debriefing differed, however. Because debriefing occurred at the end of the shift, I simply made mental notes of what was said during this time period and reconstructed these conversations when I got home after work. I also had a digital voice recorder at home and would record my observations for the particular day when I got home after work if I was too tired to write.

Data for this study consisted of fieldnotes collected over a 20-month period beginning in October 2012 and ending in May 2014. During this period, my official status with the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office was twofold. First, at the beginning of this study and upon receiving IRB approval from Texas A&M University, I was a reserve deputy with the sheriff's office. I was a reserve deputy during the first three months of data collection (October 2012 to December 2012). Then, during the remaining 17 months of data collection, I was a full-time deputy. My status change did not change the way I performed my duties or how deputies perceived me.

Conversational Data: The Go-along Method

I did not record my conversations with police officers because they are more revealing and less suspicious if one talks with them through the process of casual conversation. Moskos (2008:8) affirms, "I found that when the tape recorder is running,

police officers remain on guard, talking in a stilted and formal style." Bear in mind that Moskos was already considered an insider while working within his own police department. Hence, the conversational method employed in this study was the go-along, which combines field research with interviewing, but the interviewing is conducted in an ethnographic context (Warren and Karner 2005). According to Warren and Karner (2005:67), this method involves "walking along with, driving with, or basically shadowing key informants as they go about their daily routines, seeing what various aspects of their environments mean to them."

In addition, the go-along method permits the researcher, having obtained entry to the setting, to build rapport with the individual and to gain access to the making of meanings through participating in interaction. By utilizing this method, I was able to privately converse with police officers in an informal way, which allowed them to open up to me more freely as opposed to if our conversations had been audio-recorded. Warren and Karner (2005:68) note, "When personal approaches to interaction are being studied in a localized community, the go-along form of ethnographic interviewing can be invaluable." The conversational data presented in this dissertation were collected in a twofold manner: first, as I conversed with fellow deputies while we were parked in the classic police style—driver's-side window adjacent to driver's-side window (Moskos 2008); second, as we conversed with each other at the police department during briefing and debriefing.

Shadowing Police Officers

Similar to Rios (2011) and Fassin (2013), I also "shadowed" my police officer research participants. Rios (2011) utilized this research method as a means to familiarize himself with his research participants (40 black and Latino youths) as they went about their daily life routines. He interviewed them, met their friends and family, and hung out with them at various venues during the entire three-year tenure (2002 to 2005) of the study. He basically shadowed the youths by accompanying them as they went about their everyday routine activities, such as riding the bus or meeting with their friends. Rios noted that shadowing enabled him to observe regular punitive encounters and the method by which such encounters became manifest in the lives of youths.

Fassin (2013) shadowed police officers as part of his data collection technique. He shadowed officers by having informal conversations with them while he rode along with them, when they stopped at a local police station, or while they interacted with civilians. Shadowing gave him full access to police officers by enabling him to observe officers as they conducted daily work-routine activities such as making arrests, chasing suspects, and questioning suspects. Fassin stated that he was never prevented by security reasons from following officers in an action that involved physical danger.

Similar to Rios (2011) and Fassin (2013), I also shadowed my research participants. However, my shadowing was done in a policing context. That is, I shadowed officers by serving as a backup officer during a call for service. There are certain instances in which officers are dispatched to a call for service by themselves. Therefore, on certain occasions, I would show up unannounced to a call for service to

check on a fellow police officer to make sure everything was fine. This is commonly referred to as providing a "roll-by" for a fellow officer. It was during these calls for service that I, as a backup officer, shadowed my participants[81] by observing what was occurring at the call for service.

The Sample Method: Convenience and Purposive

Unlike quantitative researchers who attempt to have unbiased samples so that they can generalize to populations, qualitative researchers strive for rich information about purposeful samples without extraordinary consideration to the issue of generalization (Orcher 2005, Marshall and Rossman 2006). Convenience sampling, as the name suggests, is employed when participants are convenient to a researcher's needs. Even though convenience samples may be understood to be biased samples, they have a justifiable role in qualitative research—specifically, "they permit researchers who do not have access to better samples the ability to make preliminary investigations related to their research questions and hypothesis" (Orcher 2005:47). Furthermore, purposive sampling methods are employed when individuals are selected to be participants because they have characteristics that make them good sources of information (Orcher 2005). Because this study was concerned with Mexican American police officers, I took advantage of my status within the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office to purposively select my participants from this police department.

[81] Both police officers and civilians who agreed to participate in the study.

Analysis of Data

The data collected in this study followed a threefold step analysis: coding, thematic analysis, and description (Loftland et al. 2006). Warren and Karner (2005) note that the analysis of data is just as time consuming as the data collection phase. First, I coded my fieldnotes and organized my data into analytic patterns through multiple readings (Warren and Karner 2005). Next, I utilized the specialized qualitative software of ATLAS.ti6 (Friese 2011) to code my specific themes—dividing them into the appropriate dimensions of language terms (1) "illegals"; (2) "mohankers"; and (3) "illegal aliens." I also coded specific themes relating to "manners of socialization," which were broken into different types such as (1) "the police academy"; (2) "calls for service"; and (3) "the squad room." Next, I coded specific themes relating to (1) "immigration and crime"; and (2) "immigration and welfare dependency." Then, thematic analysis was employed as a strategy to analyze the fieldnotes. I created themes related to "recurring patterns, topics, viewpoints, emotions, concepts, events, and so on" (Bailey 2007:153). Consequently, the aforementioned themes were organized according to this strategy.

I compared and contrasted the themes until I reached saturation. Vera Sanchez and Rosenbaum (2011:161) note that saturation is "a method proposed by qualitative researchers suggesting when the data has been exhausted and few new themes appear to emerge." Specifically, I detected similarities and differences in my observations between police officers and civilians until I reached saturation. Last, I utilized a descriptive approach to organize my fieldnotes. Bailey (2007:153) points out that this "involves

detailed descriptions of the setting, interactions, and observations that have occurred over a prolonged period of time." I organized my fieldnotes according to my observations of the interactions between police officers and civilians, along with the descriptions of the squad room and different calls for service.

CHAPTER IV

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

The study of police behavior is well documented in academic literature. However, the vast majority of research on police behavior focuses on issues such as arrest decision making and police use of force. Additionally, this body of research reinforces the distorted "crime-fighter" image that society has of police in general. In order to address this gap in the literature, this study sought to illuminate what occurs in day-to-day work activities between police officers and civilians.

What follows is a discussion on what police work actually entails, which is contrary to the media-sensationalized crime-fighter image of the police. In addition to this discussion, an overview of several background characteristics (i.e., education, pay, personality, etc.) of the police is provided in order to comprehend what makes the profession of policing appealing to certain individuals. Included in this discussion of the police is an overview of several ethnographic studies on police behavior.

After providing an overview of the police, and being that this study focused on Latin-origin immigrants, I center the attention on U.S.-born and unauthorized Latino immigrants. I focus my discussion on several historical events that have severely impacted the Latino community. I begin with a discussion on the social construction of the racialized term "illegal alien," which is followed by providing an overview of the Mexican repatriation campaign of the 1930s. Next, I examine the literature on nativism discourse to illustrate how deportation campaigns and anti-immigrant sentiment is driven

by nativistic hostility between "real" Americans and perceived "incorrigible foreigners." Specifically, I illustrate how nativism has been utilized as a tool to racialize the Latino community throughout history. Last, I end this discussion of the review of literature by presenting qualitative research that has focused exclusively on the racialization of Latinos. After examining the review of literature section, I conclude this chapter by exemplifying the theoretical framework that guides this dissertation project—the white racial frame.

The Sociology of Policing

Police Work

Depending on whom you ask, people have varied perceptions of the police and even have unclear images of their function and role in society. Put simply, "To some, a police officer is a 'fucking pig,' a mindless brute working for a morally bankrupt institution. To others, a police officer is a courageous public servant, a defender of life and property, regulating city life along democratic lines" (Van Maanen 1978c:115). However, to most, police officers are a representation of the social institution of social control—namely, they are seen as agents of social control (i.e., enforcers of laws). Alongside the different views held of police officers, there is also a sense of ambiguity as to their role in society.

Citizens tend to have the distorted crime-fighter image of the police, which is based on the media's portrayal of police work. This portrayal of the police gives rise to impracticable expectations of the police—crime solvability (Bouza 1990). Contrary to popular belief, a very small amount of the work conducted by the police entails major

crime. Approximately 80 percent of police work involves calls for service that have nothing to do with crime (Bouza 1990, Bayley 1994). Specifically, a police officer's daily work routine consists of monotonous and mundane activities such as answering calls for service, enforcing traffic violations, and making minor arrests for offenses such as public intoxication. Police officers basically spend a significant amount of time waiting for something to happen—conducting routine patrol until dispatched to a call for service (Bouza 1990, Bayley 1994, Van Maanen 2003, Moskos 2008).

Only those tasks involving criminal apprehensions are assigned symbolic importance by police officers, whereas other tasks (non-criminal enforcement) are completed with indifference as part of everyday work routine activity (Van Maanen 1976). In essence, "most police work is neither social service nor law enforcement, but order maintenance—the settlement of conflicts by means other than formal law enforcement" (Reiner 2010:144). A majority of police officers' workday involves order maintenance functions such as serving as a mediator between individuals who either have a domestic or civil dispute among each other. Order maintenance continues to be the primary function of the police and is the main mission of police services. In sum, "Seeing crime as the be all and end all of the police mission is to dispatch them to pursue a quixotic impossible dream" (Reiner 2010:147).

Status of the Police Officer: Patrol Officers, Education, and Pay

One of several divisions within a police department is the patrol division. Officers assigned to the patrol division hold a rank in the bottom of the police organization; they are commonly referred to as rank-and-file officers (patrol officers).

Patrol officers are the face of the police department since they are responsible for a majority of the interactions with community members—responses to calls for service and arrests. Generally, the vast majority of patrol officers are young (20 to 35 years old), even though most people believe patrol officers are older and significantly experienced.[82] Bayley (1994:69) notes the following:

> Communities take these inexperienced young men and women, equip them with guns, high-speed cars, and the latest communications technology and thrust them into the street with the authority to deprive people of liberty, to make life-and-death decisions on the spur of the moment, and to pry into the deepest secrets of personal lives.

It is these young individuals who are molded into the police organization once they begin their careers as police officers due to the varying characteristics that are associated with the policing profession (further discussion of these characteristics will follow).

The fact that policing is not an appealing profession to most individuals is no surprise, especially since the police are primarily responsible for dealing with society's "dirty work." Bayley (1994) states that there are three factors that contributes to the unappealing nature of police work. First, policing is a physically demanding profession because there are certain instances in which police officers are forced to use physical force (hands-on contact) while responding to calls for service. Police officers come in contact with people who are dirty, foul smelling, and at times covered with vomit or

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[82] I am not claiming most patrol officers are young and inexperienced, but as they get more experience within the police department, patrol officers generally tend to promote to other divisions within the police department that require several years of patrol experience.

blood. Aside from physical contact, the 24-hour shift work of the police takes a toll on a police officer's body since they are required to work all hours of the day and night. Second, there is the ever-present aspect of danger within the policing profession. Police officers are cognizant that they run the risk of being killed in the line of duty and are willing to pay the ultimate sacrifice as part of their policing duties. Third, police officers deal with the unglamorous aspect of society, or, simply stated, society's "dirty work." The police interact on a daily basis with certain individuals who are viewed as being problematic. Police officers come in contact with people who have a wide array of issues such as lust, greed, anger, and ill will, just to name a few.

If the abovementioned factors cause the policing profession to be unappealing, who then is willing to become a police officer? There is no reason to think that occupation selection for police work is any different than other professions, such as doctors, lawyers, teachers, electricians, and clerical staff. One explains recruitment to the police in a similar manner as the aforementioned professions, that is, "in terms of status, rewards, minimal educational requirements, and conditions of service" (Bayley and Mendelsohn 1969:32). Most police officers come from a low socioeconomic status background (Bouza 1990), which makes the profession of policing an attractive means of achieving upward social mobility for individuals who fall within this socioeconomic class.

Unfortunately, for the most part, police recruits normally lack the skills or education attainment that would make them marketable. Thus, only a small number of police officers who are employed in their respective police department possess a

postsecondary education. This lack of an advanced education in the police can be traced back to class differences. Bouza (1990:76) claims, "The job peculiarly belongs to the upper segment of the lower class, who generally don't send their children to college. Cops come from hard-working blue-collar families." Based on their study of Denver police officers, Bayley and Mendelsohn (1969) found that police officers in Denver shared several socioeconomic characteristics. The police officers in their study came from working-class or lower-middle-class backgrounds and had on average a slightly better than high school education. In general, the starting salary of a police officer ranges from $35,000 to $40,000, whereas supervisors (depending on the rank) earn from $50,000 to $100,000 (Bayley 1994).

Even though the salary of some police officers can be associated with those of white-collar professionals, policing remains primarily a blue-collar occupation. In any case, it should come as no surprise that certain individuals (people of low socioeconomic status) view the policing profession as a means of upward social mobility irrespective of the danger and the aforementioned unappealing aspects that are normally associated with the police occupation. Now that I have contextualized the social conditions that make the occupation of policing appealing to certain individuals, I turn the discussion of this review of literature to the two aspects of policing that generate a distinct police subculture—isolation and solidarity.

Police Culture: Social Isolation and Solidarity

It is commonplace now that within the large amount of sociological literature on police culture, the patrol officer is the primary source examined when studying police

behavior (Reiner 2010). As previously mentioned, patrol officers (officers assigned to patrol division) are the "face" of the police department since they are responsible for a majority of contact with civilians. The socialization process of police officers begins at the police academy, where new recruits are familiarized with occupational environment. The socialization process continues once the officers begin patrol work and are assigned to a field training officer. Socialization within the police academy represents a more formal method of teaching police recruits the inner workings of the occupation. In contrast, field training is the typical informal method of socialization for police officers after successful completion of the police academy. In essence, "The former reflects most of the 'what to do and expect' teaching, while the latter is more of the 'here's how things operate in the real world' teaching" (Paoline 2001:15).

Once newly hired police officers begin working on the streets, they soon realize that their role is to control irritable and defiant individuals who despise their presence. Instead of being appreciated for their work, police officers encounter hostility. The need to maintain order and their own authority governs every aspect of their occupation. This gives rise to a feeling of misunderstanding; police officers internalize an "us versus them" mentality since they feel society does not understand them. Bouza (1990) argues that this way of thinking that develops between the police and civilians helps to forge a bond of mythical strength between police officers. In addition, it increases the dependence they have on each other for assistance and safety. Skolnick (1966) and Van Maanen (1978) reiterate this point by noting that the danger innate in policing is part of

the central force that pulls police officers together and contributes to their role as strangers to citizens.

Skolnick (1966) argued that a police officer's occupational environment consists of their relationship to society and includes the two elements of danger and authority. Specifically, with regard to the element of danger, it makes the police officer attentive to potential violence and lawbreaking. In contrast, authority reinforces the element of danger in police offices by isolating them as a result of requiring them to enforce laws. Danger and authority "are mutually dependent in the occupation of policing, which leads police officers to come up with rules, rhetoric, and rites to deal with those tensions" (Reiner 2010:119). The element of danger that is associated with the occupation of policing alienates police officers from both criminal-prone individuals and law-abiding citizens (Skolnick 1966).

Social isolation and occupational solidarity is the price paid by police officers as a result of their occupational culture. Internal solidarity not only results from isolation but from an interdependence police officers have for each other as a result of the danger associated with the profession (Reiner 2010). Thus, police solidarity seems to be stronger than solidarity within other occupations, such as industrial fishing, which are far more dangerous than policing. A disturbing discovery for police officers is that they need to suppress their feelings in order to perform the job well. This is necessary in order to be able to cope with the various issues they are confronted with, such as seeing dead people, encountering injured adults and children, and dealing with society's ill will, among other things. Police officers cannot let their feelings get the best of them, and

therefore they must distance themselves from all emotions. This is another aspect of police socialization that police officers learn as part of police culture in order to carry out their daily work routines successfully.

This study extends this aspect of policing by demonstrating how the frequent interaction with unauthorized immigrants contributes to the racialization of Latin-origin immigrants. Most of the interactions between local police officers and unauthorized immigrants come as a result of calls for service dealing with stash houses. It is during these calls for service that police officers get a firsthand look into the inhumane treatment of unauthorized immigrants.[83]

In order to cope with the stories of inhumane treatment, officers must cut off their emotions from the horror stories of hardship told to them from the immigrants in order to carry on with their work routine. Thus, police work entails "emotion work." As noted by Hochschild (1979:561), "'Emotion work,' refers more broadly to the act of evoking or shaping, as well as suppressing, feeling in oneself." In essence, similar to the aforementioned issues that police confront, they too need to be desensitized from all the inhumane treatment suffered by immigrants as a result of being held in stash houses.

One method by which officers cut off their emotions is to utilize racialized terminology when referring to unauthorized immigrants, which thereby objectifies immigrants and suppresses the officers' undesired feelings (Hochschild 1979). In summation, with regard to police culture, "The world of the police, shaped by isolation

[83] Some of the immigrants who are housed in stash houses suffer psychological and physical abuse at the hands of their caretakers.

and dependence on each other for safety, might be likened to a latter-day Atlantis because of the mystery in which police operations are shrouded and the public's ignorance about the internal realities of the police world" (Bouza 1990:75).

Police Ethnography

Sociological studies between police and civilians are nothing new. However, most recently, Moskos's (2008) auto-ethnography study on police/community relations in a predominantly black community captured the essence of what policing in a disadvantaged neighborhood entails from a police officer viewpoint. Moskos was a Harvard sociology graduate student who decided to conduct research on police behavior. He presented the scope of his dissertation project to several police departments, but after getting several refusals from these agencies, the city of Baltimore, Maryland, allowed him to conduct research within its department. He was a police cadet for 6 months and then spent 14 months as a patrol officer for the Baltimore Police Department.

He was assigned to the Eastern District—an almost entirely black neighborhood plagued with poverty and a great deal of drug-related crime—where he spent his entire tenure as a police officer. Moskos (2008) argued that police behavior is based on arrests, and therefore, it was no surprise that the majority of residents who were arrested in the Eastern District were arrested for drug-related crimes. Furthermore, Moskos noted that although about 7 percent of the city's population resided within the Eastern District, the district accounted for about 25 percent of the city's roughly 100,000 annual arrests. He pointed out that the "get tough" approach to the war on drugs, based on arrests, is ineffective and disparately affects the black community. Moskos (2008:121) illustrated

how police officers are motivated to make drug-related arrests as a means of making overtime money, which he referred to as "collars for dollars."

Moskos (2008) offers policy recommendations to the war on drugs initiative by noting that in order to comprehend this phenomenon, an understanding of police discretion and behavior in high-drug communities is essential in order to effect change. His central argument is that the government needs to start at the root of the problem, which is ineffective drug policies, in order to prevent collateral consequences, such as the mass imprisonment of minorities of color—specifically, African Americans.

Moskos's (2008) study provides much-needed insight into the analysis of subordinate groups (African Americans) and social institutions (the police) in order to obtain a better understanding of the causes of urban despair and disarray and how social institutions respond to those problems plaguing inner-city communities. In contrast to several police ethnographies (Van Maanen 1973, 1976, 1978b, 2003, Rubenstein 1973, Manning 1977, Pogrebin and Poole 2003, Vera Sanchez and Rosenbaum 2011, Fassin 2013), Moskos's (2008) study is a first in that it provides a firsthand account of police work from a police officer's perspective, which as previously mentioned, is difficult to achieve.

This study expanded on Moskos's (2008) ethnographic study by examining police-community relations in a homogenous Mexican-origin community from an insider perspective. I contextualized my study based on the racial conflict perspective of

the white racial frame (Feagin 2010, 2013)[84] to illustrate how Mexican American police officers racialize their immigrant co-ethnic counterparts by the use of dehumanizing and objectifying terminology.

I must note here that even though Moskos was an insider (police officer) while conducting his study, we differed in our approaches as a result of our backgrounds. He was a sociology graduate student who then trained and worked as a police officer, whereas I was a police officer first, then obtained graduate school training, and later returned back to the field as a police officer to conduct this dissertation study. Thus, our police socialization differs in that even though we were both full participants (police officers) in our respective studies, my prior policing experience helped me view the profession from a different perspective. Specifically, I benefited from my graduate school training because I was able to experience being a police officer with and without academic training. Nonetheless, this does not take anything away from Moskos's (2008) study.

The vast majority of empirical studies of the police focusing on issues such as racial matters are devoid of a theoretical orientation, which can bring much-needed insights into the causes of racial discrimination. In order to address this gap in the literature, Bolton and Feagin (2004) interviewed 50 African American officers from various law enforcement agencies in the Sun Belt[85] to illustrate how these officers are affected by racial discrimination from their white coworkers within their department.

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[84] Described in detail in the theoretical framework section of this chapter.
[85] States located on the southern tier of the United States (e.g., Arizona, Texas, Georgia, etc.).

Bolton and Feagin argue that the racial discrimination that is suffered by black police officers is a result of institutionalized racism—namely, it is systemic in nature.[86] Both authors also note that similar to most professions, the policing occupation is coveted "white space," which precludes the full integration of minorities of color into these types of social institutions. Bolton and Feagin found that, given the often negative view held of the black community by white police officers, black officers face a difficult time trying to become fully integrated into police departments, which have been and continue to be made up of a white majority. Consequently, black police officer respondents revealed that their white coworkers see them as intruders into white networks and comfort zones (Bolton and Feagin 2004).

Aside from the difficulty of full integration into the police organization, several black police officer respondents noted that they bared the brunt of racial attacks, in particular, racialized mistreatment. Several black police officer respondents noted that on separate occasions they had been called "niggers" by their white coworkers, and also, most strikingly, by their supervisors as well. This illustrates how the use of racialized terminology is systemic in nature and is embedded in the social fabric of the social institution. The racialized mistreatment suffered by these respondents exemplifies the method by which police socialization influences the use of racialized terminology—it normalizes it. Thus, everyone from low-ranking patrol officers to high-ranking police

[86] For further discussion on systemic racism, refer to Feagin's (2006) book entitled *Systemic Racism: A Theory of Oppression*.

supervisors were active participants in the use of racialized terminology when referring to black police officers (Bolton and Feagin 2004).

It is import to examine how the racist climate within police organizations as a result of racialization affects minority of color police officers, as Bolton and Feagin's (2004) study indicates. However, of more importance is a closer examination into the methods by which racist discourse that permeates a police organization influences how civilians are perceived by police officers. One study that addresses this gap in the literature is Fassin's (2013) ethnographic study on the Paris, France, Police Department.

Fassin (2013) rode along with a specialized anticrime squad of a local police precinct in Paris, which was primarily assigned to the banlieues.[87] This was a 15-month participant observation study, even though he clearly pointed out that it was non-participatory in nature since he only observed the police while riding along with them during their work shift. Not surprisingly, the anticrime squad that Fassin rode along with was comprised primarily of white officers. The unit was responsible for addressing quality-of-life issues such as crime prevention through interactions with civilians and traffic stops.

Fassin (2013) found that police racialized minority of color youths they came in contact with by using the derogatory term "bastard." A majority of these youths resided in low-income neighborhoods. Consequently, "bastard" was the chosen racialized term of reference used by police whenever describing black and Arab teenagers. Fassin (2013:99) notes, "It [bastard] is usually used to refer to young people from immigrant

[87] Suburbs of France located outside of the city.

families but who often have French nationality, for whom the French language has no adequate term." Essentially, he further pointed out that these teenagers are children of immigrants, second generation, and their true ethnic background, such as of North African and African descendant, is not known.

Fassin (2013) argues that by using racialized terminology toward minority of color youths (blacks and Arabs), the police signify this group as an "other," consequently meriting less respect than white teenagers officers may come in contact with during their daily work routine. Fassin also found that Romanians, who also reside in the banlieues of Paris, were also susceptible to being racialized by the anticrime squad he rode along with. Though less frequently mentioned than blacks and Arabs and deemed less problematic (meaning they were not seen as menacing criminals and remained confined to their campgrounds), Romanians were still racialized by officers because of Romanian culture. Police officers described them as being parasites who tended not to settle in one place for a long period of time and instead moved periodically from their campgrounds (Fassin 2013).

Even though the concept of racialization was not the focus of Fassin's (2013) study, his research brings much-needed insight into the discriminatory practices of the police, namely the use of racialized terminology by police officers. His results suggest how officers from the anticrime squad unit had adopted the dominant white racial frame of reference when referring to minorities of color. However, it is only logical to assume these officers would adopt and operate out of the white racial frame since the vast majority (if not all) of these officers were white.

My study addresses this gap in the literature by demonstrating how several police officers in the study participated in racialized mistreatment of Latin-origin immigrants as a result of their chosen terms of reference when referring to the immigrant population. Specifically, this study demonstrates how Mexican American police officers adopt the dominant white racial frame narrative when referring to Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants by referring to immigrants as "illegal aliens," "illegals," "mojados" (wetbacks), and "mohankers." In order to understand the use of these racialized terms of reference, it is important to contextualize the emergence of the "illegal alien" term since it is basically the most widely used among anti-immigrant proponents.

The Social Construction of "Illegal Aliens"

The racialization of immigrants as "wetback"[88] was crystallized by the creation of the U.S. Border Patrol in 1924. Before the creation of the U.S. Border Patrol, unauthorized immigrants did not have a term that described their clandestine act of immigrating into the United States (Bustamante 1972). Moreover, with the creation of the U.S. Border Patrol, the primary focus was to apprehend and deport unauthorized immigrants. Thus, the term "wetback" acquired a new meaning—namely, it became a status or stigma by which the unauthorized immigrant was known (Bustamante 1972). The freedom of interaction the unauthorized immigrant had before the creation of the U.S. Border Patrol was significantly reduced by this new label of "wetback."

[88] The term is derived from immigrants crossing the Rio Grande River in South Texas by swimming and wading across the river.

As noted by Bustamante (1972:709), "He [an unauthorized immigrant] now had to walk, to speak, and to bear any treatment with the fear of being caught by or 'turned in' to the Border Patrol." The usage of the term "wetback" continued well into the 1950s but gave way in the 1980s to the term "illegal alien." Since then, the term "illegal alien" has been used as the popular term of reference involving the racialization of unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants.

Johnson (1996) argues that the term "illegal alien" helps rationalize the harsh treatment of individuals from other countries. Moreover, the definition of "illegal aliens as a group distinct and apart from citizens facilitates in guaranteeing that unauthorized immigrants are only short-term, conditional, and temporary members of the United States" (Johnson 1996:269). Johnson further argues that the derogatory term of "illegal alien" implies criminality, thereby suggesting that individuals who fall within this category deserve unjust punishment and not legal protection. De Genova and Ramos-Zayas (2003:3) note that the term "illegal alien" has emerged as a media-sensationalized term of racial difference, which serves as a racialized description of Latinos in general, regardless of immigration status. However, as seen in the results section of this study, the term "illegal alien" serves as a racialized description of Latin-origin immigrants.[89]

This kind of terminology is common to the current debate in the Southwest, if not the entire nation, about unauthorized immigration (Johnson 1996). Even though the term "illegal alien" is apparently race neutral, the term popularly refers to unauthorized Mexican immigrants and facilitates stereotypes of Mexicans as criminals (Delgado and

[89] Regardless of documented and undocumented citizenship status.

Stefancic 1992, Johnson 1995, 1996, De Genova 2002, De Genova and Ramos-Zayas 2003). Moreover, the racialization of Latin-origin immigrants as "illegal aliens," which often aids their negative portrayal as criminals, does not necessarily mean that they have committed a crime against someone. Instead, "When undocumented migrants are criminalized under the sign of the 'illegal alien,' theirs is an 'illegality' that does not involve a crime against anyone; rather… [it] stands only for a transgression against the sovereign authority of the nation-state" (De Genova 2004:175). Unauthorized immigrant farm workers are not even afforded the ability of being referred to as "undocumented worker." Most immigrants who occupy low-wage sector jobs (i.e., farm workers) are overlooked as "undocumented workers," and are instead criminalized as "illegal aliens."

It is this stereotype of Latino-immigrant criminality that contributes to the anti-immigrant rhetoric, which particularly affects Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants. For example, as seen with past anti-immigrant enforcement efforts (i.e., Operation Blockade and California's Proposition 187), fears of criminality and unauthorized immigration focused solely on Mexicans by emphasizing that the United States must secure its border from Mexico (Andreas 2009, Nevins 2010). Therefore, as a result of their immigration status, unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants will always be under the scope of the public's eye.

Pyke and Dang (2003:170) argue that there has been limited examination into the basis by which terms such as "wetback" and "illegal alien" are applied (i.e., level of assimilation, economic and academic success, or phenotypic characteristics) and how these terms are used for control purposes in order to distinguish group boundaries and

create internal hierarchies. Consequently, this study analyzed the basis on which these aforementioned racialized terms are ascribed by Mexican American police officers toward Latin-origin immigrants. Aside from the creation of the Border Patrol, the racialization of Latin-origin immigrants—specifically the Mexican-origin population—became prominent during the Mexican repatriation campaign of the 1930s.

The Mexican Repatriation

Immigration Raids: Instilling Fear in the Mexican Community

Examination into the repatriation campaign[90] revealed that the peak period during which poor Mexican immigrants returned to Mexico was preceded by deportation drives focused on Mexican communities throughout the entire United States (Hoffman 1973). Unfortunately, as argued by Johnson (2005:2), "The lack of awareness of the repatriation is consistent with the general invisibility of Latina/o civil rights deprivations throughout much of the U.S. history." This part of Mexican American history is often omitted and not talked about since it negatively impacted the Mexican-origin community in the United States during the Great Depression. Therefore, the Mexican repatriation "deserves sustained attention because of the impact it has had on Mexican American civil rights in the United States, as well as its general lessons about the rights of minorities in times of national crisis" (Johnson 2005:4).

As noted throughout history, during times of economic crisis in the United States, the immigrant community becomes the center of attention and bears the brunt of

[90] Deportation campaign during the Depression era that lasted from 1929 to 1939 in which approximately 2 million Mexican-origin individuals were deported from the United States.

anti-immigrant sentiment by natives who claim that illegals (immigrants) are to blame for economic conditions during a time of crisis (Santa Anna 2002, Chavez 2008). This was evident during the Great Depression of the 1930s, as immigrants were blamed for this period of economic turmoil in the United States. Believing that immigrants were holding jobs that could be held by native-born U.S. residents, President Herbert Hoover endorsed a draconian immigration deportation campaign (continued with President Franklin D. Roosevelt) that focused on curtailing both authorized and unauthorized immigrant entries into the county (Hoffman 1973).

The apprehension and deportation campaign was built along two simple factors that caused immigrants to leave the United States. First, there were public announcements made to announce the deportations, and second, arrests were made to illustrate that the U.S. immigration officials were carrying through with their deportation campaigns. As noted by Balderrama and Rodriguez (2006:66), "Deportation proceedings were also implemented against Mexicans when the American government initiated action to expel persons who were deemed to be undesirable. This procedure consisted of issuing an arrest warrant citing the alleged violation and entailed conducting semi-judicial hearings." Mass immigration raids and arrests were often performed without benefit of warrants. The most common reason for deportation was for immigration violations such as the unauthorized entry into the United States or being an unauthorized immigrant. These practices were standard procedure during the 1930s (Balderrama and Rodriguez 2006).

Once the immigrants were apprehended, they generally had a choice between two courses of action. Balderrama and Rodriguez (2006:64) describe their options:

> First, they [immigrants] could ask for a hearing in the hope of finding a sympathetic immigration officer. […] Hopefully, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) official could be convinced that being returned home would place the detainee in a life-threatening situation. […] In most cases, Mexicans in the United States illegally were readily persuaded to exercise their second option: "voluntarily" returning to their own country.

Basically, most exercised the latter option because if they chose to have a formal hearing and were denied entry, they were banned from ever entering the United States again, whereas if they chose to voluntarily deport themselves, the deportees were eligible to re-enter the United States legally at a later time. The second option "offered a flicker of hope" (Balderrama and Rodriguez 2006:64) to the Mexican-origin community who bore the brunt of racialized immigration enforcement practices during this time period.

The apprehension of immigrants served as a "psychological gesture" (Hoffman 1973:208) to the Mexican community that established an environment of hostility and fear. The deportation sweeps occurred in cities across the United States (e.g., New York, Boston, Chicago, Detroit, Kansas City, and Oklahoma City), and all Mexicans, whether authorized or unauthorized, looked similar to immigration officials. Hence, "In street sweeps throughout the nation's major cities, people who 'looked Mexican' found themselves at risk of being picked up and taken into custody" (Balderrama and Rodriguez 2006:70). Since Southern California apparently contained most of the

unauthorized immigrant population in the country, it became the main target area of deportation raids. Local police departments were criticized by the civilian population for being active participants with the INS in carrying out immigration raids (Hoffman 1973, Balderrama and Rodriguez 2006).

The most infamous raid during this period was the La Placita raid in which 400 Mexicans were detained within the grounds of La Placita park over a one-hour time period. The local police department and immigration officials surrounded the park to ensure that no one left the park. This raid was unlike others in that it was conducted in broad daylight at a public venue. Although the interrogation process lasted a little over an hour, the message was clear to the Mexican community: the U.S. government wanted to get rid of the Mexicans (Balderrama and Rodriguez 2006). As a result of the deportation campaign, hundreds of residents were deported on a daily basis. Specifically, during 1929, "More than 17,600 Mexicans were deported from the Rio Grande Valley, alone" (Balderrama and Rodriguez 2006:75). Consequently, the deportation campaign set the groundwork for the repatriation movement of the Mexican community and contributed significantly to the mass exodus of Mexicans from the United States back to Mexico (Hoffman 1973, Johnson 2005, Balderrama and Rodriguez 2006).

Returning to Mexico

Forced with an excess of workers in the United States during the Great Depression, repatriation became a viable option for the United States to get rid of unwanted unauthorized immigrants. Unlike the deportations that involved the federal government, the repatriation effort was carried out by local and state governments. In

particular, "The intent of repatriation was threefold: to return indigent nationals to their own country, in this case Mexico; to save welfare agencies money; and to create jobs for real Americans" (Balderrama and Rodriguez 2006:120). The message was simple: Mexicans would be better off in their home country rather than in the United States, which was in a state of economic crisis.

As the depression worsened, agricultural workers and individuals who worked at factories, shops, mills, and mines also suffered as a result of the depression. Therefore, voluntary or induced departures seemed practical options for Mexicans residing in the United States. Relatives and neighbors hosted parties for those who chose to return to Mexico as a way to bid farewell, but these parties often resembled a wake. Balderrama and Rodriguez (2006:123) note that "half-hearted attempts at gaiety fell flat and were punctuated with sorrowful tears—*abrazos* (embraces), and hugs. The sorrowful scene was repeated at the dock as relatives and friends exchanged tearful farewells" with each other before boarding Mexico-bound ships.

While ships were used as a common method of shipping Mexicans back home, trains of every type were used to expedite the process. For those who lived in the interior of the United States, the trip to the United States–Mexico border usually took over a week. Trains were utilized as the primary mode of transportation to repatriate Mexicans because it was the cheapest form of transportation. These trains at times were accompanied by government officials (law enforcement officers and social workers) in order to ensure that no one jumped off the trains. In order to further guarantee that no

one jumped off, it became common practice for trains to travel into Mexico without stopping at railroad stations on the U.S. side before entering into Mexico.

Most Mexicans despised any form of government assistance and chose to return to Mexico in their own vehicles. Those who chose to depart in their own vehicles were given incentives to persuade them in repatriating. Arrangements were made with welfare authorities to have their belongings and household goods shipped at reduced rates (Balderrama and Rodriguez 2006). In a similar manner to the deportation campaign, during the Great Depression, Southern California became "ground zero" of the repatriation movement. Whether employed or unemployed, Mexicans were the primary targets of the Southern California repatriation campaign. A special group of employees (Latin-origin individuals) was even recruited to encourage the Mexican community to repatriate to Mexico.

Women whose husbands were either deported or had returned to Mexico agreed to repatriation in order to have family reunification. Aside from women, among the repatriates were individuals who were independent business owners who owned mom-and-pop businesses. These Mexican entrepreneurs were affected by the deportation and repatriation campaigns because most of their clientele returned to Mexico. As a result of dwindling sales, they too faced economic disaster and had to shut down their businesses (Balderrama and Rodriguez 2006).

Even though "repatriation" is the term used to describe the mass departure of Mexicans (approximately 1 million) from the United States during the Great Depression of the 1930s, the term does not accurately describe this process (Johnson 2005,

Balderrama and Rodriguez 2006). Repatriation was anything but voluntary, as evidenced with the anti-Mexican deportation campaigns that instilled fear in the Mexican community. Consequently, the appropriate terms for the repatriation movement are "coerced immigration" and "unconstitutional deportation" (Balderrama 2005). As argued by Balderrama and Rodriguez (2006:305), "'Coerced immigration' denotes the involuntary aspect of the forced relocation of American citizens to Mexico […] 'unconstitutional deportation' signifies the illegal nature of the action states, counties, and cities engaged in to accomplish the expulsion of legal and illegal residents."

Aside from the total number of Mexican-origin individuals forced to repatriate during the depression of the 1930s, the most alarming figure is that approximately 60 percent of them were U.S. citizens, many of whom were children who were deported to Mexico alongside their parents (Johnson 2005, Balderrama and Rodriguez 2006). In sum, the Mexican repatriation campaign of the 1930s was driven by anti-immigrant hostility and nativistic sentiment from natives who perceived that incorrigible foreigners (Mexicans) were taking jobs from "real" Americans during the Depression era.

Nativism Discourse: Evidence from Social Research

The concept of nativism may be defined as a potential relationship and standpoint between self-identified natives and perceived foreigners (Johnson 1996). Inhabitants mark the boundaries of natives and their claims in relation to foreigners through processes such as anti-immigrant media campaigns (Blumer 1958). When addressing the issue of nativism, critical race theorists illustrate the historical process of nativism and how it has affected minorities of color at different points in time (Delgado

and Stefancic 1992, Scharf 1999). In addition to addressing the issue of nativism, Latcrit theorists such as Johnson (1996, 1998) specifically focus within this body of research on border and immigration issues. Furthermore, nativistic antipathy toward unauthorized immigrants has occurred periodically in U.S. history (Johnson 1996). Irish immigrants in the 1800s were targets of anti-immigrant animosity (Higham 1955). Near the end of the nineteenth century, nativistic hostility focused on Chinese immigrants with the controversial Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 (Chang and Aoki 1997). In addition, animosity was directed at Japanese immigrants and Japanese-origin citizens, culminating in their internment during World War II (Johnson 1996).

Following World War II, nativistic animosity shifted toward Mexican immigrants with the infamous draconian immigration deportation program of the 1950s dubbed "Operation Wetback" (Samora 1971, Garcia 1980, Lopez 1981). Since then, Mexican immigrants have been the targets of anti-immigrant sentiment campaigns. During the 1990s, Mexican immigrants were the focus of nativistic sentiment, as evident in California's controversial Proposition 187 and the government's Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA). IIRIRA allowed state and local police departments to perform immigration law enforcement functions through its 287 (g) section of the act. In contemporary times, Arizona Governor Jane Brewer exacerbated police-community relations in that state by signing the country's first and most controversial anti-immigrant police enforcement act—Arizona SB 1070 (Archibold 2010). Other state governors soon followed her anti-immigrant onslaught by proposing similar bills in their respective states.

There are three different anti-immigrant sentiments that marked nativistic hostility at the end of the twentieth century. Sanchez (1997) illustrated that fear of linguistic difference, multiculturalism, and drain of public resources by immigrants became the three prominent anti-immigrant sentiments directed at immigrants. Fearing that immigrants would refuse to learn English caused nationwide proposals of "English Only" movements during the 1990s.

In addition, fearing that immigrants would not assimilate caused distress among anti-immigrant proponents concerned with the issue of multiculturalism. As noted by Sanchez (1997:1020), "fear that immigrants would be a drain on public and social services gave rise to California's Proposition 187, which targeted the use of welfare, education, and health care services by immigrants." These anti-immigrant measures of the 1990s were mainly directed at Mexican immigrants. In addition, some of the popular misperceptions of immigrants currently held today by nativists include the following beliefs:

> That most or a large proportion of immigrants to the United States come here illegally, that public benefit programs are generally available to and widely used by immigrants, and that the "generous" U.S. social welfare system serves as a magnet attracting immigrants. (Kilty and Haymes 2000:14)

I will now speak to the racialization literature by demonstrating several qualitative studies that have focused specifically on the racialization of Latinos.

The Racialization of Latinos: Evidence from Qualitative Research

Though limited, qualitative research has been conducted examining the racialization process of Latinos. Moreover, this body of research focuses on the racialization of Latino co-ethnics, Latino immigrants, and Latino youths. De Genova and Ramos-Zayas (2003) conducted their ethnographic study in Chicago by focusing on the relationship between its Mexican migrant and Puerto Rican residents. They analyzed the interplay between the politics of race and citizenship in the U.S. racialization and in the politics of citizenship as a formation process of Latinidad. Their findings reveal that impoverished U.S. citizens (Puerto Ricans) held nativist attitudes toward Mexican immigrants who were supposedly displacing American workers from American jobs (De Genova and Ramos-Zayas 2003). In contrast, they found that Mexican immigrants held negative views of impoverished U.S. citizens (Puerto Ricans)—namely migrants viewed them as unproductive or lazy.

Even though both groups suffered the negative consequences of belongingness and deservingness at the hands of Latinos with other ethnic backgrounds, their counterviews of each other, such as Mexican immigrant illegality and Puerto Rican welfare dependency and abuse, generated opposition between these two Latino groups under study. Furthermore, they found that Latino identifications emerged as racial formations, mostly in relation to the social order of inequality as seen in the hegemonic division between whiteness and blackness (De Genova and Ramos-Zayas 2003). Hence, race relations in the U.S. are mostly centered on the black/white binary paradigm. These Latinos based their identification along this popular binary paradigm by having an “us

versus them" mentality. In sum, as noted by De Genova and Ramos-Zayas (2003:215), "Our ethnographic examination of moments of Latino possibility necessarily has had to be coupled with an unflinching analysis of the fragmentations of Latinidad by racialized divisions between Latinos." Hence, the racialization of both Latino groups resulted in intra-ethnic conflict among Mexican immigrants and Puerto Rican residents.

In her analysis of congressional debate arguments made by legislators, Newton (2008) illustrated how immigrants were racialized differently at different points in time by Congress members in regard to the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) and the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA). Findings revealed that legislators socially constructed immigrants differently during both periods in seeking support for their policy position. With regard to IRCA, legislators racialized the Mexican-origin immigrant population positively by depicting them as hard-working individuals who would make a significant contribution to the U.S. economy if granted legal citizenship status.

In contrast, during the 1996 floor debates over IIRIRA, Newton's (2008) findings revealed a strong sense of anti-immigrant sentiment by legislators who, during this period, portrayed Mexican-origin immigrants as a criminal population not worthy of being granted legal citizenship status. During this period, undesirable immigrant narratives such as criminality and a drain on U.S. social services (freeloaders) were the popular racialized social constructions of Mexican-origin immigrants by legislators. In sum, Newton's study illustrates how race and legal status work in tandem to racialize

immigrants, which, as seen by the results, serves the intended consequence of marginalizing immigrant populations.

Analyzing the racialization process of Latinos at the hands of law enforcement officials has been an elusive task for social researchers. However, one qualitative study that particularly examined the racialization of Latinos by police officers was that of Vera Sanchez and Rosenbaum (2011). Primarily, they illustrated how urban police officers, who work within predominantly low-income minority of color communities, racialize Latino and African American residents living within those communities. Their findings revealed that Latino residents were racialized favorably in contrast to the African American residents. More specifically, Latino residents were racialized as a cohesive ethnic group of hard-working individuals, whereas the African American residents were racialized as a crime-ridden group of individuals living in neighborhoods of disarray. Furthermore, their findings suggest that police officers do not racialize minorities of color except in situations in which these minorities of color (Latinos and African Americans) reside side by side in a heterogeneous neighborhood (Vera Sanchez and Rosenbaum 2011).

These authors focused exclusively on racially heterogeneous neighborhoods. If one compares the racialization process in a racially homogenous neighborhood, will the results be similar to their work? Goldsmith et al. (2009) provide a starting point based on their study of barrio residents from South Tucson, Arizona. They found that individuals residing on the U.S.-Mexico border are most likely to be racially profiled by the Border Patrol based on "Mexicanness" (speaking Spanish, lacking a U.S. education, and

Mexican self-identification) attributes rather than actual citizenship status. In a similar vein, by focusing on local police and using a case study approach, Romero (2006) analyzed data from two official investigations of a 1997 immigration raid known as the "Chandler Roundup" to argue that immigration officials and the police profiled individuals based on racial attributes rather than probable cause.

Romero (2006) noted that based primarily on interviews with police officers assigned to patrol the target area during the five-day operation, investigators found that unauthorized immigrants were arrested in residential areas, in front of convenience stores, in mobile home parks, and while driving in the early hours of the morning. Furthermore, official investigations of the roundup found no evidence that stops and searches were based on probable cause. Based on her analysis of the two investigations, Romero (2006) argues that racialized immigration stops establish and reinforce second-class citizenship while also limiting certain rights and opportunities. She further argues that in minority communities, "racialized policing practices results in identifying urban space racially, classifying immigrants as deserving and undeserving by nationalities, and causing the division of Latino communities based on citizenship status" (Romero 2006:409).

Theoretical Framework

The White Racial Frame

This study is guided theoretically by Feagin's (2010, 2013) racial conflict theory, the white racial frame. Over the years, this frame has been imposed on the minds of most Americans—specifically white elite men—and has become the dominant "frame of

reference" in the U.S. with regard to racial matters (Feagin 2010:10). More specifically, most white Americans have combined at least three important features that influence this racial framing of society. White Americans' racial frame includes negative racial stereotypes, images, and metaphors involving minorities of color along with positive or superior views of whites. In essence, this dominant racial frame is both negative and ethnocentric toward minorities of color (Feagin 2013).

Similar to other aspects of everyday life, the racial frame is learned through everyday socialization aspects of human interaction. Particularly, as evidenced in the auto-ethnography chapter, my classmates in high school racialized certain classmates along with myself as "mojos" based on several displayed attributes. In addition, my coworkers at the Cicero Police Department racialized fellow police officers based on "Mexicanness" attributes (Goldsmith et al. 2009), along with racializing Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants they encountered during calls for service. This demonstrates that elements of the white racial frame are widespread. According to the white racial frame narrative of Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants, my classmates and coworkers learned the dominant frame and how to act out of it by watching their parents, other adults, and peers—a socialization process (Feagin 2010:94).

Once inculcated in the mind, the white dominant frame is durable and opposed to change. As argued by Feagin (2010:15), "Frames as entrenched as the dominant white frame are hard to counter or uproot." Hence, the internalization of the white racial frame can pose serious consequences for minorities of color because once internalized, it is difficult to counter such racist thinking. Mexican Americans advocate the white racial

frame as a means through which to distance and differentiate themselves from their co-ethnic immigrant counterparts. By doing so, the maintenance of the white frame is ensured because of its inability to be opposed, which will lead to the hierarchical racial standing of whites within the racial hierarchy by pitting co-ethnics against each other. Additionally, the dominant racial frame overlaps with and is connected to other related frames or subframes.

Creation of Subframes

According to Feagin (2013), the dominant white racial frame overlaps with and is connected to other collective frames that help individuals view and make sense of social worlds. The white racial frame consists of racialized emotions, images, and stories of minorities of color along with racial ideology. Specifically, once a person operates out of the white racial frame, it in turn triggers related subframes. These subframes are differentiated ways to understand and interpret society. That is, individuals can integrate new items into the dominant white racial frame and apply its stereotypes, images, and interpretations through discriminatory actions to marginalize and oppress certain individuals (Feagin 2013).

With regards to the racial framing of Latinos, Molina (2011:3) argues that the white racial frame is "something that predates the Mexican and American War, and as a result, two important subframes emerge from this racial frame: (1) a subframe that views Mexican-origin individuals from an old racial perspective of inferiority—the anti-Mexican subframe; and (2) a contemporary subframe that centers on anti-Mexican immigrant sentiment—the anti-Mexican immigrant subframe." The next section details

how Mexican Americans internalize the dominant white racial frame to create new subframes with regards to their anti-immigrant sentiment of Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants.

Subframes of Racialized Oppression: Pro-white and Anti-Latin Immigrant

In contemporary times, whites as a group are located at the top of the racial hierarchy, and for the most part, there is little dissent with regard to this view. In essence, some Mexican Americans "adopt a 'pro-white subframe' where they 'act white' by discriminating against, with the goal of marginalizing, the undocumented immigrant" (Molina 2011:4). As illustrated in the auto-ethnography chapter of this dissertation, some police officers adopt this pro-white subframe as a result of being involved in racialized immigration enforcement practices. Consequently, from the perspective of the pro-white subframe, the results of the auto-ethnography chapter exemplifies how Mexican American police officers function as agents of the pro-white subframe with the aim of pushing themselves toward "whiteness" through racialized police practices (e.g., immigration enforcement).

Aside from the pro-white subframe, the use of racialized terminology such as "illegal aliens," "illegals," and "mojos" when referring to Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants becomes an instrument to openly discriminate and marginalize the immigrant community. Thus, I extend on Feagin's (2010, 2013) theoretical framework by illustrating the creation of a new subframe, namely the anti-Latin[91] immigrant

[91] Even though I am aware that using this umbrella term is problematic, I chose to use this term to refer to the entire Latin-origin immigrant community because the results chapter will exemplify how Mexican

subframe, which becomes evident as a result of dehumanizing terminology. As with all other subframes, the anti-Latin immigrant subframe derives from the white racial frame and entails anti-Latin immigrant sentiment with regards to "racial ideas, terms, images, emotions, and interpretations" (Feagin 2010:3). In addition, I also extend on Molina's (2011) discussion of theoretical subframes by illustrating how Mexican American police officers become advocates of the anti-Latin immigrant subframe as a result of racial dialogue through everyday conversations. A closer examination into this subframe will be analyzed in the results chapter of this dissertation.

The white racial frame is pervasive in various aspects of U.S. society today. Moreover, it operates unexpectedly through acts such as local police participation in immigration enforcement practices and expectedly through the use of racialized terminology. Therefore, whenever local police departments (predominantly comprised of Mexican-origin officers) are involved in immigration enforcement practices and when Mexican American police use racialized terminology to refer to Latin-origin immigrants, it can pose several problems for the Latino community. Specifically, these practices pit co-ethnics against each other, resulting in the maintenance of white privilege and white dominance at the top of the racial hierarchy.

Resisting Oppression: The Use of Counter-Frames

After years of continued white domination and racialized oppression, minorities of color—blacks in particular—"continue being the central focus of the dominant racial

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American police officers racialize Latin-origin immigrants as one ethnic group regardless of country of origin. Thus, this differs from Molina's (2011) theoretical conception of the anti-Mexican immigrant subframe.

frame's verbal, visual, and emotional interpretive dimensions" (Feagin 2010:103). Moreover, as of today, the system of racial oppression continues to be highly organized and institutionalized, and still operates in conjunction with the modern economy of the United States, governmental bureaucracies, and the complex legal system (Feagin 2010). Furthermore, minorities of color can also create and use counter-frames for resisting racial oppression and racism. For example, given the aggressive targeting of black youth and adults by police, black parents often give advice to their children to be cautious of white police officers. This is basically the basis of Russell-Brown's (1998) concept of "the lesson," [92] which helps minorities of color—blacks in particular—deal with racialized police practices.[93] These lessons about being wary of the police and other government officials have long been important elements of black counter-framing (Feagin 2013).

Latinos, on the other hand, also make use of counter-frames to resist racism and racial oppression. Unlike blacks, Latinos use home-culture frames, frequently choosing Latino cultural values over those of the dominant culture. These values include having to deal with "daily choices in regard to language, food, music, and religion" (Feagin 2010:188). Moreover, because many cities in the southwestern part of the United States are predominantly comprised of Latinos, they are able to avoid much of the dominant white culture and operate typically out of the home-culture frame. However, instilling

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[92] The lesson refers to advice and warnings passed down across generations among minorities of color that offer wisdom on how to deal with the police when being subjected to racialized policing practices (Russell-Brown 1998).

[93] When law enforcement officers use race as a factor in enforcing a law (i.e., racial profiling).

and maintaining the anti-racist counter-frame is difficult because of the constant racial attacks on minorities of color (Feagin 2013).

Mexican Americans are under constant pressure from whites to adopt the dominant white frame of racial matters, and when they do, they help reinforce the racialized domination of whites—that is, "it signifies the continued racial advantage of whites and racial oppression of subordinate groups" (Feagin 2010:190). When Mexican Americans use racialized terms such as "illegal," "mojo," or "mohanker," it suggests that they are evidently operating out of the white racial framed narrative of Latin-origin immigrants and, thus, become advocates of the anti-Latin immigrant subframe. The subframe serves as a method by which minority co-ethnics (Latinos) alienate each other in society in order to achieve whiteness. Even though the use of home-culture frames is available for Mexican Americans living on the United States–Mexico border, as evidenced in the auto-ethnography chapter, Mexican Americans racialize their co-ethnic immigrant counterparts in a negative manner through racialized terms and racialized police practices. Thus, by doing so, these Mexican Americans are adopting the white racial frame, which serves to ensure and maintain the racial hierarchy standing of whites by pitting Latino co-ethnics against each other.

Conclusion

In sum, the theoretical concept of the white racial frame was employed in this study to contextualize the racialization of Latin-origin immigrants by Mexican American police officers to exemplify that police officers are operating out of the white racial frame when racializing their co-ethnic immigrant counterparts. Specifically, the anti-

Latin immigrant subframe and the pro-white subframe provide a clear understanding of how the adoption of the white racial frame by Mexican Americans is carried out in everyday social interactions by the use of racialized terminology and racialized police practices.

This chapter provided an overview of police demographics, police subculture, and ethnographic studies of police behavior in order to obtain a better understanding of the police. In addition, this chapter presented a discussion on the emergence of Mexican illegality—in particular, the racialized term "illegal alien." Next, this chapter exemplified several deportation campaigns that affected the Mexican community. The discussion of these deportation campaigns illustrates the long-standing history of local police participation in immigration enforcement. Moreover, these deportation campaigns, in addition to the racialization of Latin-origin immigrants, are centered on nativistic sentiment by perceived natives toward menacing foreigners.

This study fills the gaps in the academic literature on the police by illustrating how police behavior is carried out in daily work routines among police officers and in relation to the residents they serve. I also demonstrate how the racialization of Latin-origin immigrants is still influenced by nativistic sentiment, which results in intra-ethnic conflict between Latino co-ethnics. Last, this study utilized the racial conflict perspective of the white racial frame to theoretically contextualize the racialization of Latin-origin immigrants at the hands of Mexican American police officers.

CHAPTER V

ADVOCATING THE ANTI-LATIN IMMIGRANT SUBFRAME: "ILLEGAL ALIENS, ILLEGALS, AND MOHANKERS"

Introduction

As noted in the literature review, animosity toward certain ethnic immigrant groups has occurred sporadically in U.S. history. Irish immigrants in the 1800s were the focus of anti-immigrant sentiment. Moreover, during the late nineteenth century, the focus of anti-immigrant hostility centered on Chinese immigrants—as demonstrated by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Individuals of Japanese ancestry also bore the brunt of nativistic sentiment as a result of World War II, which resulted in their internment (Johnson 1996). Since then, the center of attention and target of anti-immigrant sentiment has been Latin-origin immigrants, namely Mexicans.

When analyzing racialized terminology such as "wetbacks," "illegal aliens," and "illegals," one must note the impact of race in the creation of the "illegal alien." The creation of the Border Patrol in 1924 crystallized the identity of the "wetback/illegal alien" since the use of these derogatory terms became the official designation to describe those individuals who bypassed border enforcement controls and found clandestine methods to enter the United States (Bustamante 1972, Ngai 2004, Chavez 2008). Hence, U.S. immigration law produced the "illegal alien" as a political subject (Johnson 1996, Ngai 2004), thus rendering "illegality" as a juridical status in relation to U.S. immigration law (De Genova 2002, 2004). Moreover, Johnson (1996) and Ngai (2004) argue that the term "illegal alien" has been associated with minorities of color—

specifically Mexican immigrants—and it is no coincidence that the general public at times still refers to Mexican immigrants as "illegal aliens."

According to Chavez (2008:25), "Being an unauthorized migrant, an 'illegal,' is a status conferred by the state, and it then becomes written upon the bodies of the migrants themselves because illegality is both produced and experienced." This study provides further insight into the examination of illegality and the maintenance of illegality among police officers in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas. The structure of this chapter consists of analyzing how the concept of illegality is maintained as a result of everyday racial dialogue. The use of racialized terminology (illegal aliens, illegals, *mojados* [wetbacks], and mohankers) by Mexican American police officers when referring to unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants illustrates the manner in which they become advocates for the anti-Latin immigrant subframe, thus resulting in the maintenance of illegality.

The anti-Latin immigrant subframe derives from the white racial frame (Feagin 2013), and is the nativistic view of unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants with regards to "racial ideas, terms, images, emotions, and interpretations" (Feagin 2010:3). Consequently, the anti-Latin immigrant sentiment expressed by police officers is driven by their white racial framing of unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants. The latter part of this chapter ends with a conclusion section that summarizes the maintenance of illegality as a result of racialized dialogue.

Invaders from Outer Space: "Illegal Aliens"

The use of racialized terminology through racial dialogue reinforces the image of Latin-origin immigrants as permanent outsiders in U.S. society—"the other." Molina (2011:108) reiterates this point by stating, "The racialization of people of color, specifically undocumented immigrants, occurs through racial dialogue, which transforms the manner in which subordinate groups interact with each other as well as with mainstream Americans."

Mexican American police officers racialize their co-ethnic immigrant counterparts through racial dialogue. Specifically, the following vignettes exemplify the usage of terms such as "illegals," "illegal aliens," "*mojados*," and "mohankers" by police officers when referring to unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants. These racialized terms are based on anti-immigrant sentiment by perceived "natives" toward "incorrigible foreigners" (De Genova 2004), which, when used by subordinate groups, only serves to maintain the white hegemonic standing of whites in the racial hierarchy by pitting co-ethnics against each other. The vignettes that follow illustrate this point.

One late evening, while inside the police department at the end of the shift, Sgt. Noriego was sitting down on his desk checking pending reports and began talking about the political correctness of using the term "illegal alien" when describing the immigrant population. At this point, there were about five police officers inside the squad room including Sgt. Noriego. He said:

> I don't know why the media is always worried about trying to use correct words when talking about illegals. Some reporters call them undocumented immigrants

> or illegal immigrants. Why don't they just call them [immigrants] illegal aliens? They're just basically illegal aliens and should be called as such…I mean, who cares what they're called. Bottom line they're illegal aliens plain and simple [smirking as he made the comment].

This vignette demonstrates that Sgt. Noriego disagreed with the way the media talks about using proper terminology when referring to unauthorized immigrants. He believed the media should not put too much emphasis on using politically correct terminology whenever referring to unauthorized immigrants. Furthermore, his racialization of unauthorized immigrants as "illegal aliens" reinforces the common image of immigrants as being nonhuman invaders from outer space.[94] This, in turn, can pose several problems for the immigrant community because they will be seen as not being worthy of protection on behalf of the law. Sgt. Noriego is not the only person in the police department who uses the racialized term of "illegal alien" when referring to unauthorized immigrants. Other officers also utilize this term of reference when talking about the immigrant population.

After Sgt. Noriego released us from debriefing, we walked outside and continued the discussion of what should be the proper term used when referring to immigrants. I told the other officers that I always refer to immigrants as either undocumented or unauthorized immigrants. Deputy Frometa then stated,

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[94] The official use of the term "alien" when describing unauthorized immigrants can be traced back to the Alien and Sedation Acts of the late 1700s (Watkins 2004).

> Yeah, well, it's like the other day. I heard Polez [deputy] come on the radio and say, "Show me out with several UAs [undocumented aliens]" while he was at a stash house. After hearing him say that, I thought to myself, "What do you mean UAs?" Whenever I come across them [immigrants] I just refer to them as IAs [illegal aliens] because that's what they are, illegal aliens.

Deputy Valido stated that he also uses the same terminology as Deputy Frometa and refers to immigrants as IAs. We then looked at Deputy Girona and asked him how he refers to unauthorized immigrants. He replied,

> Well, I just call them what they are. They're illegals; it's no big deal. Whenever I go to a call with illegals, I tell dispatch that I'm at the location with several illegals…I don't get into all that political stuff about what is the correct term to call illegals; I just keep it simple.

These officers, similar to Sgt. Noriego's manner, utilized objectifying terminology by not referring to immigrants as such. They also shared the same belief as Sgt. Noriego that one should not care about how immigrants are racialized because immigrants should be referred to as "what they are"—illegal invaders. According to these officers, immigrants are simply seen as committing an illegal act, which renders their illegality visible, namely the illegal act of immigrating into the United States through clandestine means. Thus, they are in essence naturalizing the use of such dehumanizing terminology.

In addition, these officers were trying to be politically correct by using the acronyms IAs and UAs when referring to unauthorized immigrants. One can make the

argument that these officers use acronyms to refer to immigrants because it is shorter than having to pronounce two combined terms (e.g., undocumented aliens). However, if that is the case, officers who use the acronyms of IAs and UAs to describe the immigrant population can just simply refer to immigrants as illegals. Still, there were several supervisors who specifically referred to unauthorized immigrants as "undocumented aliens" when talking about unauthorized immigrants. The following two incidents while in a briefing illustrate this point.

Lt. Ocanto (previous shift supervisor) was talking about suspect information he had with regard to two vehicles that had been transporting drugs and immigrants. We (my shift officers) were sitting down in the squad room listening to what was being said and taking notes. He said,

> Guys, you need to be on the lookout for a white Jeep Cherokee and a white Ford Mustang on 815 and 445 [roads]. We've been trying to get those two vehicles because they led us on two separate pursuits already.…They more than likely were transporting delta [drugs] and UAs when they fled from us. So just be 10-0[95] with these guys if you come across them because as I said, they more than likely might be transporting UAs and delta traffic.

On a different day during briefing, Sgt. Lisardo was talking to us about an immigrant who was found dead after washing up on the river bank. He said,

> We had a call involving a Hispanic male who died while trying to cross the river. He was found in the area west of Catarina Road on 2915 Road and looked as if

[95] Ten: code for "use caution."

> he had been dead for several weeks. As you all know, that area is high for illegal alien smuggling, so we don't know if he is a UA or what, but he probably is. The male had typical alien clothing…he had heavy boots and a long sleeve shirt. You should've seen him guys, he was in pretty bad shape. His body smelled real bad and was practically decomposed.

As previously mentioned, the racialization of unauthorized immigrants occurs through racial dialogue, which enables the use of racialized terminology to be viewed as the norm. This is an example of how dehumanizing labels lead to discriminatory actions. In addition, though not explicitly stated, these two supervisors were trying to be politically correct by referring to unauthorized immigrants as "undocumented aliens" as opposed to "illegal aliens" or "illegals." A deconstruction of the usage of the "undocumented alien" term by the aforementioned officers illustrates how the usage of its second component (alien), serves as a means to strengthen the objectified image of unauthorized immigrants as being something subhuman—an extraterrestrial.

By focusing on the undocumented and not the illegal status of unauthorized immigrants, these supervisors believed they were using appropriate terminology when referring to immigrants. Moreover, the specific use of "UAs" illustrates that these officers were, at best, trying to emphasize the undocumented method of entry by immigrants into the United States. Consequently, by not placing much importance on the illegality aspect of the migration experience, these officers assumed they were being politically correct by racializing unauthorized immigrants as "undocumented aliens."

In contrast, as evidenced in the above vignettes, both supervisors discriminately racialized unauthorized immigrants as "undocumented aliens" because of the negative connotation of the term's second component—alien. Particularly, when describing the clothing of the immigrant who had drowned while making an attempt to enter the United States, Sgt. Lisardo depicted this immigrant as subhuman. He said, "…the male had typical alien clothing…" Even though he was associating the term "alien" with "immigrant," his underlying message was that the unauthorized immigrant was an "other" as a result of wearing clothing that is typically worn by "aliens." Moreover, as argued by Johnson (1996:272), the word "alien" brings forth rich imagery—one automatically thinks of space invaders—as a result of popular culture (the media). When one thinks of the term "alien," they normally tend to equate it with terms such as "intruder," "stranger," and "outsider," just to name a few. Therefore, by using racialized terminology, Sgt. Lisardo was implying that the unauthorized immigrant was a subhuman foreign invader who unsuccessfully made an attempt to enter the United States.

Envisioning a Mexican Reconquest: "Illegals"

Words are leading agents of the white racial frame because "they present images in the mind and thus manifest themselves in the physical world through discriminatory practices" (i.e., racialized terminology; Molina 2011:110). Similar to the aforementioned officers, there were other officers in the police department who expressed anti-Latin immigrant sentiment as a result of racialized terminology. The following officers preferred the term "illegals" whenever talking about unauthorized immigrants. The use

of this term by officers is just as discriminatory toward unauthorized immigrants as is the term "alien" because it ultimately results in dehumanizing and objectifying immigrants.

One weekday evening while conducting a briefing, Lt. Samanego was providing us with the prior shift-work activity. He began talking about an immigrant who drowned and washed up to shore on the U.S. side of the Rio Grande.[96] Lt. Samanego stated, "And last but not least, they [previous shift] found a floater earlier in the shift. It was a male illegal who seemed as if he had been there for several hours.…Other than that illegal floater, they didn't have anything too significant going on."

Again, we see how words, in particular the term "illegal," function as a method of dehumanizing unauthorized immigrants who unfortunately die during their migratory journey to the United States. According to this supervisor, the immigrant was just another "illegal floater" who drowned just like the others who wash up on the banks of the Rio Grande on the U.S. side. It is apparent that Lt. Samanego sees immigrants through a white racialized lens—subhuman intruders. This is consistent with the white racial framing of immigrants who die during their journey into the United States. Namely, the white racist framing of deceased immigrants implies that unauthorized immigrants are worthy of being regarded as "illegal floaters"[97] as opposed to drowning victims, thus dehumanizing the immigrant population. Consequently, whenever officers refer to deceased Latin-origin immigrants who drown as an illegal floater or floater, they

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[96] River located on the U.S.-Mexico border that divides the two nations.
[97] This term and "floater," are the preferred terms in the police department whenever referring to unauthorized immigrant drowning victims.

are operating out of the white racial framing of unauthorized immigrants and become promoting agents of the anti-Latin immigrant subframe. Aside from dehumanizing immigrants by such racialized terminology, there were other officers who openly expressed anti-immigrant sentiment whenever referring to illegals. Though notably alarming, the following vignette illuminates how officers utilize nativism as a tool for racializing unauthorized immigrants by describing them as a menacing group of foreign invaders.

On one particular day, I needed to pick up my patrol unit and was given a ride by Sgt. Quirola to the mechanic shop so that I could get my patrol unit and begin my work day. On our way to the body shop, we talked about mundane topics. However, as we drove through Basila,[98] he began talking to me about immigration. He said, "Look around, all you see here [Basila] is nothing but illegals. The north side [of the county] is full of these illegals. Shit, the Valley is full of fucking illegals, bro…no matter where you go, they're fucking everywhere!" I then asked him if he believed it was good for us to be involved in immigration enforcement. He replied,

> Shit, that ain't gonna help one bit. We don't have the time or the resources to be catching all these damn illegals. Like I said, this area is full of illegals, so we can't be wasting our time rounding up illegals all day. That's what we have BP [Border Patrol] for.

[98] Small town located within the northern part of the county that has a large concentration of unauthorized immigrants.

As we continued driving through the town, Sgt. Quirola then switched the conversation to what he believed was a Mexican reconquest (Chavez 2008). He stated, "Look at this (pointing with his right index finger to a gas station). Everywhere you look, all the language is in Spanish." I observed the decaying wooden yellow sign of the gas station, which read *Gasolinera el Halcon* [The Falcon Gas Station] in red lettering. There were other businesses located along the road; the businesses varied from restaurants to flower shops to gas stations. As we drove, Sgt. Quirola continued venting his frustration and discontent with me about the businesses having their advertisement signs in Spanish. He stated, "You see? Look, everything is in motha' fucking Spanish. *Pacas de venta* [bales for sale],[99] what kind of fucking shit is that?! *El burrito loco* [The crazy burrito],[100] hmm? These motherfuckers are taking over!"

Sgt. Quirola then began making comments about how one cannot differentiate between the United States and Mexico since Basila looks as if it is located in Mexico. He said,

> If I was you, Gamino, I'd take a picture here in Basila and one of Mexico so that you can put them in your book—why should you take a picture of both places? (Looked at him with a puzzled gaze) This place looks like fucking Mexico! If you put both pictures in your book, your readers won't be able to tell the difference between Basila and Mexico.…This way, whoever reads your book, they will be able to see how we've been taken over by Mexico.

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[99] Advertisement sign outside a hardware store.
[100] Mexican restaurant.

I simply replied that I would look into that as our conversation continued with his discussion about believing the United States is being taken over by Mexico.

> We're being taken over by people from Mexico. That's why I side with the crazy racist bastards because I'm also frustrated with these fuckers crossing over from Mexico. Everywhere you look, everything is in Spanish. Shit, even the language spoken is mostly Spanish. It's as if we got annexed by Mexico!...I'm not trying to talk shit about Guidero [police officer], but he's one example. Half the time you can't understand what the hell he is saying 'cuz of his fucking heavy accent. He writes his reports the same way as he talks, all fucked up!

This vignette sheds light on how minorities of color internalize the dominant white racial frame narrative in racialized conversations and perceive Mexican immigrants as posing a threat to the social fabric of the United States. Consistent with Huntington's (2004) view of Mexican immigration, Sgt. Quirola believed the Valley is being taken over by Mexicans, which will lead to significant changes such as language usage. Huntington (2004) argued that due to the large influx of Latin-origin immigrants coming into the United States and the spread of the Spanish language in the United States, the national identity of the United States (i.e., Anglo-Protestant culture) is in danger, which will lead to a "Hispanization" of the United States. Moreover, Sgt. Quirola also shared the common belief that there is a movement toward the Mexican reconquest of the southwestern part of the United States (Chavez 2008).

First, he openly revealed his discontent with the fact that the ethnic demographics of the Valley are changing because this area is being taken over by "illegals." He

believed nothing could be done (local police participation in immigration enforcement) with regard to unauthorized immigrants because it would cause a strain on police department resources. According to him, unauthorized immigrants are located throughout the entire Valley and only Border Patrol agents are capable of dealing with the "immigrant invasion." Second, he was disturbed by the fact that local businesses in Basila prefer to advertise their establishments using Spanish language instead of English. Reflecting concern similar to the "English Only" movements of the 1990s (Sanchez 1997), Sgt. Quirola feared that, due to the widespread use of Spanish by local business owners, the United States is currently being taken over by Mexican-origin immigrants. Last, his visual image of the Valley—in particular, that Basila is similar to Mexico in that it is difficult to distinguish between both geographical regions—equates the community of Basila with Mexico even though this community is located several miles north of the Rio Grande. The anti-immigrant sentiment expressed by Sgt. Quirola, such as his racialized ideas and emotions (Feagin 2013) of Mexican-origin individuals, illuminates the internalization of the white racial frame by minorities of color and results in them becoming advocates of the anti-Latin immigrant subframe.

In addition, the above vignette illustrates that not only are civilians susceptible to racialized terminology, but fellow police officers are as well. Sgt. Quirola provided me with the example of Deputy Guidero to prove his point that "we've been annexed by Mexico" as a result of Spanish being the dominant language spoken in the Valley. Deputy Guidero is one of the few police officers in the police department who speaks with a heavy accent.

Like Officer Sombato (*Pancho Pistolas* [guns]) and Officer Obstaquio (Yersey),[101] who were my co-workers while I was employed as a police officer with the Cicero Police Department, Deputy Guidero was also subject to racialized practices. Namely, just like the aforementioned Cicero officers, he too had a nickname assigned to him as a result of speaking English with an accent. Deputy Guidero's nickname in the police department was "chu chu" because that is the sound he made when pronouncing the numbers "two-two."[102] As argued by Feagin (2010:14), the white racial framing of individuals includes "deep emotions, visual images, language, and the everyday sounds of spoken language such as accents."

Evidently, Sgt. Quirola, along with the rest of the police officers from the sheriff's office, operated out of the age-old white racists' framing of minorities of color as a result of racializing one of their own as a foreigner based on language accent. And just like my two aforementioned former co-workers, Deputy Guidero was well aware that he was referred to as "chu chu" by several police officers. Moreover, since Sgt. Quirola was a supervisor who read all the reports, he placed judgment on Deputy Guidero's report-writing ability because he spoke English with an accent. Reiterating what was said, Sgt. Quirola stated, "He writes his reports the same way as he talks, all fucked up!" Thus, according to Sgt. Quirola, Deputy Guidero had terrible writing skills because of his inability to dominate the English language. Sgt. Quirola was not the only

[101] Discussed in detail in the *Everyday Police Practices: The Police Station* section of the auto-ethnography chapter.
[102] The numeral two was repeated as the last two digits of his badge number; badge numbers consist of four digits.

officer who openly expressed an anti-immigrant sentiment while working with me. The following example of my conversation with Deputy Sayago demonstrates how unauthorized immigrants are perceived to be menacing foreigners who do not deserve to be treated humanely.

On a particular weekend afternoon, I was parked next to Deputy Sayago as I worked on my reports from two previous calls for service (both calls dealt with unauthorized immigrants). We were parked in an open field talking with each other; driver-side window adjacent to driver-side window. He told me, "*Oye me, andas muy recio con los illegals o que?*" [Hey, you're real busy with the illegals or what?] I asked him, "What are you talking about?" He replied, "Well, yeah, your first call of the day was with one illegal and apparently that wasn't enough because the call right after that dealt with a stash house full of illegals." I said, "Nah, well it wasn't my doing. I simply responded to the calls I was dispatched to."

Deputy Sayago then asked me what happened on my first call for service, which dealt with a teenage unauthorized immigrant male. I explained to Deputy Sayago that the teen had crossed the previous night, but that he wanted to go back home (Honduras) because he was separated from his group and was now traveling alone. I told Deputy Sayago that as I waited for Border Patrol to arrive at the location (gas station), I entered the store with the teenager and bought him some food. At this point Deputy Sayago seemed surprised (he jerked his entire body in a backward motion) and said, "What? You bought this illegal some food?" I retorted, "Yeah, what's wrong with that?" He exclaimed, "Well, yeah, shit, they come into our country illegally and then you're still

helping them out by giving them food?" I answered, "Yeah, so? The kid wasn't doing anything wrong. He's obviously gonna go back to his country of origin. Besides, he hadn't eaten since yesterday, so I figured I'd get him some food before BP arrived since we were already at the convenience store." He said, "Well, I sure hope that if I were an illegal and crossed into this country illegally, and if I were to get caught, I would want to get caught by a cop like you." I asked him what he meant, and he said, "Well, yeah, you know, I'm gonna get fed and I'm gonna get treated right and all that good stuff for committing a crime."

After he said this, I looked at him with a confused stare and asked, "What do you mean crime? What crime did he commit?" He replied, "They're here in the country illegally." I said, "Uh, they're just immigrants. They haven't committed any crimes." He exclaimed, "Yes, they are here in the country illegally! They don't have a legal right to be here!" I said, "Uh, that doesn't make them a criminal. They haven't committed a criminal offense." He argued, "Yes they have." I replied, "No, they haven't committed a criminal act. They're not murderers, they're not rapists, they're not burglars, and they're not thieves. What makes them a criminal?" He said, "Because they're stealing." "Stealing from who?" I asked. He said, "From you and me, the tax payers! Don't you get it? All they come to the U.S. to do is leech off the government.…Were paying for them to come over here illegally. We pay for them to have children, to use the hospital, to go to school, to get food stamps, and all that. We're the ones that are supporting them! They're stealing from us; the US government." I said, "Well, that doesn't make them criminals." He responded, "Yes, all illegals are just criminals!"

I then told Deputy Sayago that "illegal" is not a proper term of reference when referring to immigrants. I said, "Well, they're not illegals, they're unauthorized immigrants." He replied, "Oh, c'mon, Gamino, you're just with your damn crap. Whatever it is; they're illegals either way…you're just like the left-wing liberal media trying to use different terms for the illegals so that people can feel bad and sorry for them."

Deputy Sayago continued discussing the appropriate term for immigrants. He then gave me a scenario and said, "Think about it. It's like the call you responded to after the call with the Honduran kid [a call for service that dealt with a stash house in which 55 Mexican and Central American immigrants were found inside a residence]. What would sound better on the headlines? Fifty-five illegal aliens caught or 55 immigrants caught?" "Immigrants," I said. "Well that's why. You and the left-wing liberal media want to change the words around because, of course, immigrants is going to sound much better than illegal aliens. Bottom line, they're here in the country illegally! You just don't get it, you just don't get it; illegals, that's what they are!"

I then asked Deputy Sayago what he would have done if he were in my situation when responding to the call for service involving the Honduran teenager. He stated, "I would've been like, 'Screw you, fucker. It's not my fault you haven't eaten. It's not my obligation to feed you after being in the country illegally.'" I told Deputy Sayago that I did it out of the kindness of my heart, but above all because the teenager is a human being and deserved to be treated as such. His response did not surprise me. He stated, "Well, like I said before, if I were to ever be an illegal alien, I would want to get caught

by someone like you…..Bottom line, they're illegals plain and simple. They're criminals for being in the country illegally."

This conversation with Deputy Sayago exemplifies all of the typical common nativistic sentiments some individuals have with regard to Latin-origin immigrants. Racial dialogue is an active agent of the white racial framing of the immigrant community. Thus, it is evident through his racialization of unauthorized immigrants that Deputy Sayago is advocating the anti-Latin immigrant subframe by viewing all Latin-origin immigrants as criminals and being a drain on U.S. social services. First, Deputy Sayago viewed unauthorized immigrants as subhuman intruders who do not deserve to be treated as human beings. He was appalled at the fact that I had purchased food for the Honduran teenager and said he would not have done the same. Deputy Sayago felt immigrants do not deserve to be treated humanely because it is the immigrants' own fault for putting themselves in that situation, and if they should go hungry, then so be it.

Second, he believed all unauthorized immigrants are criminals based on their clandestine migration methods. It does not matter whether the immigrant has committed a criminal violation or not; if he or she used clandestine methods to enter the United States, Sayago racialized the unauthorized immigrant as a criminal. Aside from criminalizing immigrants, his views of unauthorized immigrants are consistent with the Latino threat narrative (Chavez 2008). That is, an unauthorized immigrant's sole purpose for immigrating to the United States is to benefit from social welfare programs and, in the case of females, to give birth in order to benefit from social services.

Last, Deputy Sayago referred to unauthorized immigrants by using the racialized terms "illegal aliens" and "illegals." Hence, as a result, he internalized the common white racial framing narrative of Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants without realizing that he was a promoting agent of the anti-Latin immigrant subframe by using such dehumanizing terms. When debating with each other what should be the appropriate term of reference for unauthorized immigrants, he was clearly upset with me and believed that I was just like the "left-wing liberal" media who tend to be empathetic toward the plight of the immigrant community. His anti-immigrant sentiment reflects the commonly held misperceptions of unauthorized immigrants, that is, criminality and welfare dependency. One thing I must note about the use of derogatory terms such as "illegals" is that several other police officers within the police department and dispatchers also referred to unauthorized immigrants in this manner. The following two examples show this point.

One particular morning some other officers from my shift and I were in the squad room talking with each other after our shift (graveyard) was over. Lieutenant Ubando walked into the squad room to talk with one of the supervisors from my shift. He began to vent his frustration with us about two morning shift deputies who were at a call for service involving unauthorized immigrants at a stash house. Lieutenant Ubando stated, "I don't know what the hell these two guys are doing at the call. I had to call Ruenes [one of the deputies at the call] to ask him why there was two units [deputies] tied down on that call. I was like, 'Why the fuck do we need two guys to be with three illegals? …C'mon, they're just fucking illegals; they're not going to go anywhere anyways!'"

According to Lieutenant Ubando, unauthorized immigrants are a docile group of individuals, so there was no need to have two deputies at the call for service. He, however, was using objectifying and dehumanizing terminology when referring to the immigrants. His quote reveals that racialized terminology is not only prevalent among rank and file[103] police officers, but among shift supervisors as well. Aside from police officers, several (if not the majority) dispatchers in the police department also used racialized terminology whenever referring to unauthorized immigrants. The following vignette illustrates this point.

I was on routine patrol on a weekday afternoon and heard via the police radio that an Ogle County Sheriff's Office deputy was in a pursuit and headed into our county. The deputy notified our dispatcher, "I'm chasing a Ford F-250 full of immigrants. We're headed into your [Del Monte] county.…I need assistance, S.O. [Sheriff's Office]; the truck is traveling at about ninety-five miles an hour and refuses to stop!" The dispatcher answered, "10-4 Tom 18.[104] I'm going to send you a unit to assist in the pursuit with the illegals." After several minutes, the Ogle County deputy came back on the radio and advised the dispatcher that a tire had blown out of the truck. He said, "S.O., the truck has a blown-out tire and is still traveling southbound on Canalport Road." The dispatcher said, "10-4. Are the illegals still in the truck or did they bail out?" The officer replied, "Negative, ma'am, the immigrants are still in the bed of the truck." The truck eventually crashed into a fence on the side of the road, at which point the immigrants ran away

[103] Term used to refer to low-ranking police officers (patrol officers).
[104] Call-sign of the deputy (pseudonym).

from the scene. The dispatcher then told the deputy, "Be advised, Tom 18, BP [Border Patrol] has been notified of this traffic with the illegals. Just give me the last direction of travel of the illegals so we can notify BP where to start their search for the illegals."

Here we note that dispatchers are also susceptible to internalizing the dominant white racial framing narrative of unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants. The police officer was making it clear that the unauthorized immigrants in the truck were human beings by referring to them as such. However, consistent with the organizational culture, the dispatcher chose to refer to the immigrants inside the truck as "illegals." Thus, the organizational culture of using racialized terms whenever referring to unauthorized immigrants reinforces the imagery of unauthorized immigrants as something subhuman—namely an illegal. As evidenced in the auto-ethnography chapter, my experience with the concept of racialization has been constant throughout the years. That is, Mexican Americans racialize their Latin-origin immigrant counterparts as an "other" through racialized terminology. Consequently, the organizational culture of using racialized terminology is no different from the culture of the community with regards to the racialization of unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants.

As mentioned earlier, utilizing terms such as "illegals" and "illegal aliens" when referring to unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants is problematic because such terminology only serves the purpose of objectifying immigrants, and thus, advocating the anti-Latin immigrant subframe. Moreover, a new derogatory term that is used to racialize unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants has emerged in some police departments, as discussed next.

The New "Wetback:" The "Mohanker"

Language plays an instrumental role in defining and guiding individuals to act out certain behaviors (discriminatory practices). In addition, the usage of certain language such as racial epithets by the dominant group suggests that the other group (minorities of color) is not as good. Now, certain police officers use the racial epithets "mohankers" and "*mojados"* to racialize unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants. As a result of using such derogatory terms when referring to immigrants, these officers are in essence trying to suggest that the other (unauthorized immigrant) is not as good as them. More importantly, the usage of the term "mohanker" is synonymous with the racial epithet "nigger," which is associated with the African American community.[105] The following example sheds light on how the term "mohanker" is part of daily racial dialogue in the police department during briefing whenever talking about unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants.

One day while conducting a briefing, Sgt. Almejo was talking to us about being careful when responding to assist another officer or law enforcement agency. He provided the example of a deputy who was involved in an accident days earlier while assisting Border Patrol with a pursuit involving immigrants. He said,

> You need to be careful when responding to back up each other. It's like yesterday; we had a moron who was involved in a fleet.[106] And to make matters worse, he was assisting BP with a call involving mohankers.…He ran a red light

[105] Personal conversation with Joe R. Feagin (02-13-15). The equation of "mohanker" with "nigger" is one expert's interpretation (e.g. Joe R. Feagin), not a universal.
[106] Vehicular accident while on duty.

> and t-boned another vehicle in the intersection as he was traveling on the road in an attempt to assist BP. And for what? All they [BP] wanted him to do was pull over a vehicle so that they could ID the driver.

Sgt. Almejo warned us not to be rushing to calls when Border Patrol simply needed our assistance to pull over a vehicle for identification purposes. He said,

> There's no need to be killing yourself by trying to catch up to a vehicle to pull it over. Especially if it's to assist BP with mohankers. They're just mohankers, guys, there's no need to endanger other people for mohankers.…An innocent motorist was injured because a deputy made a dumb mistake for a call involving mohankers.

Several months later, the topic of police chases was emphasized again by Sgt. Almejo while conducting briefing. After giving us the quadrant assignment for the day, he reminded us about the departmental pursuit policy. He stressed that we needed to follow the pursuit policy and follow protocol in order to avoid a reprimand. The reason he was reminding us about the pursuit policy is because two days prior, several deputies were involved in a pursuit with a truck carrying eight immigrants. The truck eventually crashed, resulting in the injury of all occupants aboard the truck. Sgt. Almejo said,

> You need to be careful whenever you're involved in a pursuit. I know your adrenaline is probably running and you get tunnel vision. You may take it personal because someone is taking off from you and you say to yourself, "How dare you take off from me." But the thing is, guys, if you see four or five heads in the back of the truck, what do you think it is?" [No one replies] "Yeah, exactly,

> more than likely they're mohankers and that's it. If you have a pursuit involving mohankers I am going to disengage you.…You're not going to continue. Why? Because it's not a crime. There's nothing wrong with being a mohanker. That's a violation of federal immigration law and not a criminal violation; there's nothing criminal about that because it doesn't pertain to us.…I am simply going to tell you guys to stop and disengage the pursuit; you're not going to continue.

Sgt. Almejo continued his discussion on pursuits by reminding us of the dangers of being involved in pursuits. He said,

> It's not worth it. I'm not going to allow you to put your life, the public's life, and the mohankers' life at risk because the vehicle is refusing to stop.…You need to be more careful in your decision making process.…For me, as far as I'm concerned, I'm just going to tell you all to cancel. That's it, big deal, it's just a vehicle full of mohankers. We got their license plates; we'll get 'em next time.

Sgt. Almejo then told us about another separate incident several weeks prior in which a deputy was involved in a pursuit. As soon as Sgt. Almejo heard the deputy notify dispatch that he was involved in a pursuit, he asked the deputy the reason for the pursuit. The deputy told Sgt. Almejo that he was chasing a truck that had committed a traffic violation and was refusing to stop. The deputy further told Sgt. Almejo that he could see several individuals in the back of the truck. As soon as the deputy advised Sgt. Almejo of the individuals in the back of the truck, Sgt. Almejo ordered the deputy to stop chasing the truck because the driver was more than likely transporting mohankers.

After mentioning this incident, Sgt. Almejo continued with his discussion of police chases. He said:

> It's all fun and games guys, until someone gets hurt. And unfortunately, it's not until that point when someone gets hurt that you realize what you did. At the end, is it worth it? No, it's just a vehicle full of mohankers.…Granted, sometimes they may be transporting drugs, but just use common sense, guys. If you have a vehicle or truck that is refusing to stop and you see several people, more than likely we all know what you have; it's just a vehicle full of mohankers.

The two above examples demonstrate that even though Sgt. Almejo thought he was not explicitly dehumanizing and criminalizing unauthorized immigrants, just by the mere usage of the derogatory term "mohankers," he was reinforcing the common white framing of unauthorized immigrants and advocating the anti-Latin-immigrant subframe. The irony is that he is one of the few officers in the department who disassociated criminality with mohankers (unauthorized immigrants). As evidenced in the previous examples of what was said during briefing, Sgt. Almejo was trying to make it clear to police officers that they should not continue a pursuit if it were established that the fleeing vehicle was transporting unauthorized immigrants. Hence, he did not think it was important enough to continue with the pursuit for such a trivial issue as opposed to a pursuit where a vehicle is refusing to stop that is transporting drugs. Sgt. Almejo placed more importance on criminal offenses (e.g., a vehicle transporting drugs) as opposed to immigration offenses (e.g., a vehicle transporting immigrants) when deciding if the

pursuing officer should continue with the pursuit because he was aware that drugs pose more danger to society than unauthorized immigrants.

There has been an ongoing debate about whether unauthorized entry into the United States is actually a crime. According to Section 8, Title 1325 of the U.S. Code, which is the official compilation of the general and permanent federal statutes of the United States, unauthorized entry into the United States is a criminal offense.[107] However, the punishment imposed for this criminal offense is consistent with civil violations. That is, if an unauthorized immigrant is caught entering the United States, the immigrant will be fined for such offense (unauthorized entry) or be imprisoned for not more than six months. Each subsequent unauthorized entry into the United States is subject to additional fines. In essence, unauthorized entry into the United States is a crime subject to penalty in the form of fines, thus making it a civil matter. According to Sgt. Almejo, police should not be involved in pursuits involving unauthorized immigrants for safety reasons and for the fact that no violation of state criminal law has been committed (i.e., it is outside the scope of state and local police departments).

A conversation I had one day with a BP agent clarifies this point and provides insight into the interpretation of the law from an agent's perspective. He said:

> Yeah it's basically an administration violation. It's not a crime per se, it's just a charge. The main issue is whether someone has entered illegally into the United States. Whenever someone enters the United States illegally, that's when it becomes an administration violation, which is just a charge.…Heck, even [U.S.]

[107] www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/8/1325

> citizens can be charged with entering the country illegally. Why, you might ask? Because they didn't enter the United States through an authorized port of entry like, say, a bridge or something.…If someone doesn't enter the United States through an authorized port of entry, then they will be charged with the administration violation. If the person is caught a second time entering the United States illegally, then they will get what is known as an expedited removal regardless of their [immigrants'] country of origin. If they get caught time after time entering the United States illegally, then they will go before a judge to get a formal ban from the United States.

We can note from the conversation with the Border Patrol agent that there is a bit of ambiguity with how agents perceive the law as it is written. According to the aforementioned immigration law, unauthorized entry into the United States is considered a crime. However, the punishment rendered for such crime is consistent with civil violations. That is, the punishment rendered is in the form of a fine or simply deportation from the United States. As stated by the Border Patrol agent, if someone, regardless of citizenship status, chooses to enter the United States through clandestine means, then the individual will be charged with an "administration violation," which is basically a civil offense subject to a fine or removal from the United States.

There were some incidents in which unauthorized immigrants were referred to as *mojados* and "mohankers," and it was indicated that one should not feed unauthorized immigrants if encountering immigrants during a call for service. The issue of feeding

unauthorized immigrants rarely came up during conversations at the police department. The following illustration describes this point.

On one particular day, I was talking with officers from my shift inside the squad room about the recent media coverage on the influx of Central American unauthorized immigrants who had been coming through the Valley. I was standing in front of Deputy Onate and Deputy Tapanes while Deputy Calvera was standing to my left. Deputy Onate said, "*Nah pos esta carbon ese pedo. Pagan chingos para cruzar para aca* [Nah, well that's some tough shit. They pay a lot to cross over here]. *Y ahora es un chingaso de ellos que vienen* [And now, it's a shit ton of them that come]." Deputy Tapanes then said, "Yeah, it's all over the news now. There's a lot of them that come all at once… that's all you see on the news. So and so amount of illegals are surrendering at the border so that BP can take them in." Deputy Onate then looked at Deputy Tapanes and, pointing at me with his left hand and smirking, said, "Well, that's the thing, Tapanes, you have a lot of them coming here, and if a deputy comes across them, he wants to feed them all. Everyone laughed. Deputy Tapanes asked me, "*Que onda Gamino?* [What's up, Gamino?] You're gonna let Onate talk about you like that?" I laughed and replied, "Well, haters be hating." Again, everyone laughed, and Deputy Onate then said, "*Pos si, Gamino le da de comer a todos los mojaditos* [Well, yes, Gamino gives food to all the wetbacks]. I don't know how he does it, but he does."[108] Deputy Calvera joined the

[108] Several days prior to this work day, I purchased food for several unauthorized immigrants while at a call for service. My squad mates found it humorous that I purchased hamburgers for a group of approximately nine unauthorized immigrants during that particular call as opposed to just simply giving the immigrants a snack. For example, some police officers carry snacks with them in their police car just in case they come across unauthorized immigrants during a call for service. However, these officers who

conversation, and with an emotionless facial expression he said, "Nah, fuck the mohankers, I won't ever give them food again!" Deputy Calvera then explained:

> One time while at a call with a stash house of mohankers, they were asking if they could eat some packs of tuna that were in the kitchen. I let them eat the packs and then several minutes later before you know it, it's as if those fuckers got reenergized. After eating the tuna, they took off running from the stash house.…We chased after them, but we weren't able to catch all the ones that ran away. That's why now whenever I go to a call at a stash house and if they ask me if they can eat, I tell them, "Nah, don't worry, BP will feed y'all once you get to their station."

Deputy Tapanes then stated, "Yeah, poor bastards. All they [Border Patrol] give them are sandwiches and a juice if they're lucky." Deputy Calvera responded, "Well, at least they get something to eat, but as far as me, I won't let them eat. For what? So they can get reenergized and take us over. Hell no!"

We can note here that aside from the racialized terminology used to describe the immigrant community, unauthorized immigrants are seen as individuals not worthy of being fed should an officer be confronted with a situation such as the one described above. I often bore the brunt of indirect comments whenever a conversation dealt with immigrants being fed. Moreover, "mohankers" was a common term used among officers

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carry snacks (only two that I am aware of), carry them for preparedness measures. That is, aside from carrying snacks, they also carry other optional items such as first aid kits, ammunition, night goggles, etc. Basically, they are prepared officers and believe that carrying snacks is just as important as being supplied with the other aforementioned items.

whenever referring to unauthorized immigrants. Whether the topic dealt with immigrant criminality or other immigration issues, some officers generally equated unauthorized immigration with the term "mohanker." The above narrative illustrates that contrary to Sgt. Almejo, who made it clear that he believed there was nothing wrong with being a "mohanker" (not a state criminal offense), officers such as Deputy Calvera clearly believed that "mohankers" do not deserve basic human rights such as food.

In addition to actions, language has the power to objectify and dehumanize individuals based on the meanings being conveyed through racial epithets. Using derogatory terms ("*mojaditos*," "mohankers") reinforces the belief that Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants are foreign invaders. Therefore, whether being involved in immigration enforcement practices or simply the act of choosing not to provide food for immigrants, language has the power to dehumanize individuals just by its utterance. The following conversation with a deputy illustrates this point.

One day I was talking with Deputy Borero while we were parked in the parking lot of a business about a call he had earlier in the night. Our conversation then led to a discussion of hot spots.[109] He told me the areas where he tended to patrol more frequently as a result of high drug-related activity. Deputy Borero notified me where the "crack houses" within certain neighborhoods were located. After talking about this issue for several minutes, the discussion then changed to immigrant stash houses. Deputy Borero said,

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[109] An area that receives a disproportionate amount of calls for service and/or has a very high crime rate (Walker and Katz 2013).

> *Mira, si te vas* [Look, if you go] north of Second Street on Gold Street then turn left on Huskie Street and go all the way to where the street dead-ends, there's going to be a white two-story house and a blue mobile home that have *chingos of mojados* [a lot of wetbacks]; there's *chingos of mojados* in those two places. So just conduct surveillance over there and you'll be able to get 'em.

"So you do that often?" I asked. "*Si*, I'm always there looking for those *pinches mojados* [damn wetbacks], but I haven't been lucky; I know they're there." After telling me about these two stash houses, Deputy Borero continued the conversation by giving me the location of another potential stash house. He then advised me that he pulls over the residents who reside in the neighborhood to enforce traffic violations. He said:

> I always pull over those *pinche mojados* [damn wetbacks]. Most of those fuckers don't have a driver license or insurance. I don't think it's right for us [citizens] to be required to have a driver license and insurance and then you have these *mojados* that don't have both. It's not fair. *Yo por eso me chingo a los mojaditos* [That's why I screw over the wetbacks].…*Si, tienes que estar filoso por eso siempre ando alla buscandolos* [Yes, you have to be sharp (aggressive); that's why I'm always over there looking for them]. Sometimes I've gotten lucky *con los mojaditos* [with the wetbacks] and sometimes I haven't.

After hearing this, I asked him if he had ever received a reprimand for his aggressive policing tactics. He said, "Nah, they [shift supervisors] don't tell me anything. They're more concerned that I don't get into shit prior to the end of the shift

because if I do, I'm gonna have to claim overtime or comp time pay."[110] Deputy Borero told me to be on the lookout for potential stash houses because there was plenty just in case I "wanted to get *mojaditos*." Throughout our conversation, we were parked classic police style: driver-side window adjacent to driver-side window. Deputy Borero then raised his left index finger, pointed it at me, and said,

> Look, man, the only reason I'm telling you all my hot spots is because you're a hard worker just like me. That's why I'm willing to share my hot spots with you. Some of these other fuckers [co-workers] work and others don't. Just keep in mind all these areas I told you about just in case you want to bust drug dealers or if you want to get *mojados* [wetbacks] also.[111]

Though probably extreme, we can see in Borero's comments an alarming example of a Mexican American's internalization of the white racial framing narrative of Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants. Not only did Deputy Borero advocate the anti-Latin immigrant subframe through his racialized terminology and police practices, he was actively engaged in racial profiling. Namely, he openly admitted to me that he targeted the immigrant community so that he could "screw them over."

Deputy Borero took it upon himself to enforce federal immigration law by conducting surveillance on stash houses and by conducting traffic stops on people who reside in certain communities. Contrary to popular belief, a police officer's daily work routine involves a significant amount of down time that is spent conducting routine

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[110] Time off with pay in lieu of overtime pay for overtime work.
[111] This officer is notorious for receiving citizen complaints as a result of his aggressive policing tactics, and I do not understand why he is still employed as a police officer.

patrol as he or she waits to get dispatched to a call for service. Evidently, Deputy Borero took advantage of this downtime to conduct surveillance on crack houses or stash houses. His desire to target the immigrant community was obviously so immense that aside from conducting surveillance on what he believed were stash houses, he also targeted local residents who resided within those communities by using false justifications (checking motorists for license and insurance) to single out potential *mojados*. It is overt acts such as the use of racialized terminology, and covert acts such as racialized immigration enforcement practices,[112] that clearly point out how one can be an active agent in promoting the anti-Latin immigrant subframe.

Conclusion

In the preceding sections, I have discussed the manner in which unauthorized immigrants are racialized by Mexican American police officers. The results reveal unauthorized immigrants are generally racialized as "illegal aliens," illegals," and *mojados*, or its slang equivalent in English, "mohankers," by various employees of the police department.

Several officers believed unauthorized immigrants should be called "illegal aliens" and demonstrate that they do not have any qualms with racializing immigrants as such. The use of such derogatory terminology serves the purpose of dehumanizing immigrants and reinforces the imagery of unauthorized immigrants as foreign intruders. This section also illustrates that aside from racializing unauthorized immigrants as

[112] I say covert because no one is aware that he is actively conducting surveillance on stash houses in a similar manner as if he were to conduct surveillance on a drug-selling house.

"illegal aliens," officers racialize unauthorized immigrants as "undocumented aliens." Officers believe that if they focus on the first component of the term "illegal alien," they are being politically correct by referring to unauthorized immigrants as undocumented aliens (instead of illegal aliens) without realizing that the second component of the term is just as dehumanizing and objectifying as "illegal aliens."

In contrast to "illegal alien," several officers racialize unauthorized immigrants as "illegals," which also serves the purpose of dehumanizing the immigrant population. This point is evident with the chosen term of reference for immigrants who die as a result of drowning in the Rio Grande River—illegal floater/floater. Instead of referring to unauthorized immigrants who drown as drowning victims, their method of migration (unauthorized) takes center stage and subsequently influences the way police officers refer to them. This section also illustrates how some police officers internalize the Latino threat narrative (Chavez 2008) by demonstrating notions of a Mexican reconquest of the United States (the Valley).

As evidenced with my conversations with Deputy Sayago and Deputy Calvera, unauthorized immigrants are seen as individuals who should not have access to food. Deputy Sayago believes the inhumane treatment of unauthorized immigrants is their fault for putting themselves in that predicament. He is essence placing the blame on immigrants for going days without eating. In addition, Deputy Calvera stated that whenever he encounters unauthorized immigrants, he chooses to not grant immigrants access to food if possible. Unauthorized immigrants should be treated with dignity regardless of their citizenship status. What these officers do not realize is that

unauthorized immigrants migrate to the U.S. to escape economic turmoil and crime that is plaguing their respective country. In addition, certain U.S. policies such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) force individuals to migrate to the United States (Bacon 2008).

This chapter reveals that not even fellow police officers are immune from racialized practices, as consistent with the auto-ethnography chapter. Officers who display signs of "Mexicanness" attributes (Goldsmith et al. 2009) bear the brunt of racialized terminology. Moreover, some officers simply racialize unauthorized immigrants as "illegals" based on an immigrant's clandestine method of entry into the United States. Last, this section on the concept of "illegals" illustrates that racialized terminology is not only prone to officers in the police department, but by dispatchers as well.

The last section of this chapter describes the internalization of the "wetback" term by some officers to create an English slang equivalent, namely "mohankers." Several officers racialize unauthorized immigrants as "mohankers" without realizing that they in essence are denigrating their co-ethnics just as African Americans denigrate each other whenever they refer to each other as "niggers." Language has the power to dehumanize and objectify individuals as a racial "other." Some officers who racialize unauthorized immigrants as "mohankers" believe there is nothing criminal about being an unauthorized immigrant, and thus it should not be criminalized. The irony about these officers, however, is that they are still dehumanizing and objectifying unauthorized immigrants by racializing immigrants as "mohankers." Last, as noted in this section,

some officers believe that they should be involved in racialized immigration enforcement practices in order to rid the street of "damn *mojados*."

The dangerous and persisting power of the white racial frame is evident in its impact on those who are generally its main target in the Rio Grande Valley—Mexican-origin individuals (Feagin 2013). This chapter has illuminated the use of a new derogatory term for unauthorized immigrants—"mohankers." Hence, by racializing immigrants as "mohankers," police officers accomplish two things. First, they dehumanize unauthorized immigrants as a person not worthy of protection or rights. Next, officers distance themselves from their co-ethnic immigrant counterparts by using such language as, "I'm not a nigger; I'm not a spick!"[113] In essence, as demonstrated through the conversations with fellow deputies, it is a possibility that Mexican Americans racialize their co-ethnic immigrant counterparts in order to move up the racial ladder and to gain social, political, and economic status in white American culture.

This chapter focused on the language used by police officers when racializing unauthorized immigrants and consequently, discourse analysis aids in deconstructing the use of racialized terminology by police officers. Jaworski and Coupland (1999:1) argue that the "analysis of discourse is, necessarily, the analysis of language in use." Clarke (2005:150) further argues, "In essence, a discourse claims to properly and adequately describe how X is (or should be) in the world, and a strong discourse analysis would deconstruct and analyze *both* the descriptions and the claims." As evidenced in this

[113] Personal conversation with Joe R. Feagin (02-23-15).

chapter, the results reveal the varying methods by which unauthorized immigrants were racialized.

Mexican Americans discriminate against unauthorized immigrants in the hopes of gaining certain status (e.g., social, political, economic) in white American culture (Feagin 2013). Movement within the racial hierarchy for Mexican Americans is based on oppressing the new underclass—unauthorized immigrants. Hence, nativism is used as a tool by Mexican Americans for racializing their co-ethnic immigrant counterparts. Consequently, Mexican Americans become promoting agents of the anti-Latin immigrant subframe as a result of racializing their co-ethnic immigrant counterparts as "illegals," "illegal aliens," *mojados*, and "mohankers."

CHAPTER VI

"DAMN JOSE NO PAPERS!": RACIALIZING CRIMINALITY AND WELFARE DEPENDENCY

Introduction

Current anti-immigrant rhetoric is centered on criminality and welfare dependency. Specifically, Latin-origin immigrants are associated with white-racial-framed narratives of danger, invasion, and a draining of U.S. social services. This belief remains quite common among policy makers, analysts, some academics, and part of the general population. Moreover, anti-immigrant sentiment is reinforced by the media's portrayal of unauthorized immigrants, which is often negative and causes the general public to have a misconception of immigration. Not only do the media play an important part in reinforcing anti-immigrant sentiment, but policy makers, who at times propose anti-immigrant discriminatory laws (i.e., California Proposition 187; Arizona S.B. 1070) that disparately target immigrants, do as well.

Policy makers such as Arizona Senator John McCain and former Arizona Senator Russell Pearce create a "moral panic" about the surge of unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants coming into the United States, arguing that something must be done to secure the porous U.S.-Mexico border. Senator Russell Pierce was the sponsor of Arizona Senate Bill 1070,[114] which was a strict, anti-immigrant bill that targeted the Latin-origin community. In addition, public discourse accuses Latin-origin immigrants

[114] State bill authorizing local and state police officers to ask immigration-related questions of individuals they have "reasonable suspicion" to believe are unauthorized immigrants.

as being a menacing group of criminals whose sole purpose for immigrating into the United States is to commit crimes and deplete U.S. social services. Hence, the dominant white racial framing of Latin-origin, unauthorized immigrants legitimizes and rationalizes their oppression, thus relegating immigrants to the bottom of the racial hierarchy.

Several studies have been conducted regarding the correlation between immigration and crime that help analyze whether immigration increases crime in the United States. Specifically, these studies seek to debunk the myth that areas with a prevalence of immigration will result in higher crime rates. This body of literature is concerned with the immigration-crime nexus as it occurs in communities across the United States. Lee, Martinez, and Rosenfeld (2001) examined the relationship between immigration and levels of homicide at the tract level in three heavily immigrant cities: El Paso, Miami, and San Diego. Their findings reveal that the arrival of immigrants to these cities between 1980 and 1990 generally did not increase race-specific homicide levels for the years 1985-1995.

In a similar vein, Lee and Martinez (2002) utilized crime maps to examine the relationship between Haitian immigration and homicide for the years 1985-1995 in two predominantly black Miami neighborhoods. They found that recent immigration did not disorganize the communities in northern Miami. Their results also indicate that homicide levels decreased as one moved from the predominantly African American neighborhood of Liberty City to the heavily immigrant Little Haiti community (Lee and Martinez 2002).

Stereotypes of immigrant criminality are one aspect of the immigration-crime nexus that have been utilized to reinforce the imagery of unauthorized immigrants as menacing foreigners. In particular, Martinez, Lee, and Nielsen (2001) focused on Cubans who arrived in Florida via the Mariel boatlift in the early 1980s. The "Marielitos" were stereotyped as being heavily involved in crime by a variety of public pundits, and terror stories about crimes attributed to them were used to perpetuate the myth of the criminal immigrant. This is evident with the movie *Scarface*, which depicted a Mariel immigrant as a crime-prone drug lord. Their findings reveal that Marielitos were not excessively involved in homicides involving strangers or mainly violent homicides.

Orozco Flores (2014:34) provides a contemporary analysis of the Latino-crime nexus narrative by illustrating how the "anti-Latino discourse concerned with gangs, crime, and national security is a crime-focused variation of the Latino threat narrative," which he referred to as the Latino crime threat. He noted that as a result of the war on drugs, the war on crime, and the war on terror, Latinos have been disparately impacted by laws that have ensured the development and maintenance of the Latino crime threat discourse. The Latino crime threat discourse has been used as a means to target Latino street gang members with the hopes of curtailing street-gang-related violence that has plagued the city of Los Angeles.

Orozco Flores (2014) illuminates how Operation Hammer, which was an aggressive policing initiative in Los Angeles during the late 1980s, was a salient institutional response by the government that targeted Latino men. This operation was in

response to the internalization of the Latino crime threat, which categorizes Latinos as posing a threat to the city of Los Angeles. In essence, Flores argued that the Latino crime threat narrative originated out of the racialized image of the menacing inner-city Latino gang member.

Stereotypes of immigrant welfare dependency are another common misperception of immigrants aside from the immigrant-crime nexus. Capps et al. (2009) analyzed the use of public-assistance programs such as the Food Stamp Program (FSP) by comparing legal U.S. permanent residents, naturalized U.S. citizens, and Native-born U.S. citizens. Unauthorized immigrants were excluded from the study because they are ineligible for the types of governmental assistance (e.g., Medicaid and food stamps) examined in their study.

Capps et al. (2009) found that legal permanent residents had lower use benefit programs than among U.S.-born families, thus demonstrating that immigrants do not have a higher tendency to welfare use than U.S.-born individuals. Capps et al. (2009:132) argue, "Nonetheless, among the major public-assistance programs we analyzed, the Food Stamp Program appears to show a greater decline among legal immigrant families than among the native-born." Consequently, contrary to popular belief, immigrants have a lower tendency to utilize public assistance such as food stamps in comparison to native-born individuals.

An examination of the racialization and marginalization of Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants is necessary to demonstrate the manner in which Mexican American police officers along the South Texas–Mexico border adopt the white racial

framing of Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants by racializing them as criminals and welfare dependents (Feagin and Cobas 2008). In particular, this chapter extends the discussion of the Latino crime threat (Orozco Flores 2014) by illustrating that officers internalize the racialized image of the menacing Latino by categorizing all Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants as a group of foreign criminally prone individuals.

First, there is an examination of the immigration-crime nexus; next, there is an analyzation of the immigrant-welfare dependency association. Finally, there is a summary of the manner in which Mexican Americans racialize Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants as criminals and welfare dependents. Consequently, the results reveal how Mexican Americans reinforce white-racial-framed stereotypes of Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants as a result of racialized ideology, thus becoming advocates of the anti-Latin immigrant subframe.

Constructing Immigrant Criminality

Generalized Criminality

As I worked the graveyard shift one night, I was parked next to Deputy Retta near the outskirts of a colonia having a conversation about mundane things. As we talked with each other, a Border Patrol vehicle drove up and parked on the passenger side of Deputy Retta's police vehicle. Two Border Patrol agents greeted us and asked how our night was going. Deputy Retta then asked them if they were looking for someone or if they were just on routine patrol. One of the agents replied, "We're just driving around, partner. We're pretty bored so we decided to drive around for a while." Deputy Retta replied, "Ah, well, if you guys go in there (points to the colonia) you'll catch a lot of

illegals." The BP agents laughed at the comment. One said, "Really?" Deputy Retta answered, "Yeah, there's *chingos* [a lot] of illegals, bro, so they'll keep you busy for the remainder of the night." One agent said, "Damn, is it that bad?" Deputy Retta replied, "Shit, yeah, why do you think me and my partner (points at me) are parked here talking with each other. There's a bunch of criminals that live here [colonia]. We're here just in case these shitheads [residents of the colonia] decide to get out of hand. We need to control the criminal element."

The above conversation with the Border Patrol agents demonstrates the manner in which Deputy Retta generalized all the residents of the colonia as "criminals." In addition to the generalization, he, like several others in the police department, used racial coded language whenever referring to unauthorized immigrants—illegals. I must note that even though this colonia has a reputation for having a high rate of gang-related violence, it is not any different from all the other neighborhoods/colonias located within the county with regard to crime rates. Moreover, this colonia, like most located within the county, has a high concentration of unauthorized immigrants residing within it. According to him, based on the actions (deviant behavior) of a select few, all the residents fell under one umbrella term (criminals), which is problematic since most of the residents of the colonia are law-abiding citizens.

As evident with the above example, we can note here the general way in which criminality is associated with unauthorized immigrants. Furthermore, as depicted below, there exists an association between citizenship status and criminality that demonstrates

how some police officers racialize Latin-origin immigrants as criminals based solely on citizenship status.

Criminalizing Citizenship Status

One late afternoon while I was parked at the rear of a building, Deputy Esqueda drove up next to me and began talking politics. Since we were on the subject, I asked him how he felt about Arizona's controversial SB 1070. He stated:

> I have nothing against illegals, but I do believe something must be done in order to secure the border. I mean, helloooo, they're called illegal aliens for a reason. They are here illegally and that's a crime in itself. That is something most people don't realize about illegals. Once they've crossed the river, they are already committing a crime by crossing illegally into the U.S.

Deputy Esqueda adopted the dominant white racial framing of unauthorized immigrants by equating an immigrant's clandestine method of entry into the United States (illegality) with criminality. As argued in the previous chapter, De Genova (2002) asserted that illegality is a socially and politically constructed juridical status and, thus, an immigration law violation, not a state criminal law violation. According to Deputy Esqueda, any individual who decides to immigrate into the United States through clandestine means is worthy of being labeled as a criminal. He is in essence labeling all unauthorized immigrants as deviants (Becker 1963) because he believes that any individual who violates the law (e.g., immigration law) should be deemed as a criminal for not following the proper procedures of the migration process, such as obtaining a temporary or residential visa.

In addition, the vignette demonstrates that he believed something must be done in order to secure the U.S.-Mexico border and that one way to accomplish that goal is through race-conscious, immigration enforcement programs such as Arizona's SB 1070. Hence, he accepted the white racial framing of unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants by racializing immigrants as a menacing group of foreign invaders who will cause problems on U.S. soil if the United States continues to have an unsecure and porous border. Such framing of unauthorized immigrants illustrates that Deputy Esqueda is a vigorous advocate of the anti-Latin immigrant subframe. The next conversation with a fellow deputy further illustrates how some officers associate immigrant criminality with citizenship status.

One day Deputy Girona and I were talking about an overtime detail (in conjunction with DPS) that focused on traffic enforcement with the goal of reducing the high rate of uninsured motorists in the county.[115] I told him that the initiative was going to have collateral consequences because the residents of the county were going to live in fear and become distrustful of the police. He replied,

> Yeah, bro, I agree with you, but just think about it, the majority of the people that live in the colonias drive recklessly. They speed, peel out, and don't make complete stops. I'm all for the initiative because I see where DPS is coming from; they're just trying to reduce the number of uninsured drivers.…As far as the immigrants, well, I sympathize for them because they're going to be in fear.

[115] According to the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS), the Valley had the highest rate of uninsured motorists in the state.

> Now don't get me wrong, I do feel bad for them, but the majority, bro, only come here to commit crimes. There are some of them who are hard-working individuals who come to work, but I believe the majority only come to the U.S. with bad intentions.

This vignette illustrates how he distinguished between the residents of the colonias (most of whom are mixed status—authorized and unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants) and unauthorized immigrants. Deputy Girona empathized with the immigrant population, but as a paradox, still generalized and categorized most unauthorized immigrants as criminals. That is, he acknowledged that he was empathetic to the immigrant community; however, consistent with the white racial-framing narrative of unauthorized immigrants, he believed that the majority of immigrants have sinister motives for immigrating into the United States. Several conversations with deputies in which they racialized unauthorized immigrants based on crime-related behavior made this fact clear.

Correlating Violent Crime with Citizenship Status

One morning as Deputy Onate and I talked with each other while writing reports, our conversation led to the topic of shift change (changing from working morning shift to graveyard shift). I told Deputy Onate, "I'm not looking forward to working graveyard. All we're going to deal with is *pinche* [damn] assaults, robberies, and domestic disputes all night long. That's all we deal with on that shift." Deputy Onate then said:

> *Pues sabes que vato* [Well, you know what dude], *toda esa pinche gente que hace ese desmadre son los pinches mojados* [all that damn people that make that

chaos are the damn wetbacks]. *Osea, yo se que mi jefito era de alla pero chingado, puro pinche mojados estan chingando la madre* [I mean, I know my dad was from over there (Mexico), but, damn, only fucking wetbacks are fucking shit up.]…*Me pongo a pensar, chingado vato si no tienes papeles pa' que andas cagando el palo* [I think to myself, damn dude if you don't have papers, why are you fucking around].

Deputy Onate was unmistakably racializing all unauthorized immigrants as criminals alongside the adoption of the white racial dialogue regarding immigrants. He was using the racial epithet of *mojados* to dehumanize the immigrant population whenever referring to unauthorized immigrants. As evidenced in the vignette, I was voicing my discontent with changing shifts by having to work graveyard because the nature of the calls for service were going to change.[116] Deputy Onate automatically equated the violent nature of these calls for service with unauthorized immigrants. Moreover, he acknowledged that he is Mexican American but firmly believes violent-natured calls for service are solely committed by unauthorized immigrants. At the end of the conversation, one can note that he clearly associated unauthorized immigrants with deviant behavior as a result of the label he applied to the immigrant population (Becker 1963), which, when combined with racialized terminology, further exacerbates intra-

[116] In comparison to all shifts, the nature of calls for service in graveyard is serious in nature (e.g., assaults, robberies, shootings, etc.). I'm not implying that these calls are only prone to the graveyard shift, but the majority of the aforementioned calls for service are disproportionately representative of the graveyard shift.

ethnic conflict among Latino co-ethnics. The next conversation I had with another deputy demonstrates an exaggerated link between unauthorized immigration and crime.

I was having a conversation with Deputy Aguayo as we were parked in the parking lot of a gas station. We were discussing the recent rise in media attention the Valley was receiving due to the influx of Central American women and children immigrants crossing into the United States through the Valley. Deputy Aguayo then began talking about his generalization of immigrants as being criminals. He said, "Look, man, I'd say about sixty to eighty percent of the illegals that come here are criminals. Yeah, some come for a better life, which I understand, but we know very damn well that most are criminals." I responded (shrugged my shoulders upward), "Well, to each their own; everyone's entitled to their own opinion."

Deputy Aguayo continued talking about his immigration-crime nexus. He said, "Fuck, *vas a ver* [you'll see], there's going to be an all-out war pretty soon. I'm calling it already. Nobody believes me, but I can honestly say that I feel we're going to have a real bad war pretty soon.…And the place of that war is going to go down here in the Valley." I did not reply; I just let him continue talking about this concern he had. Deputy Aguayo further stated:

> All this stuff that's going on right now with the cartels and illegals, we better be ready because it's bound to happen here. We're going to need to arm ourselves as good as the cartels. They're already on this side of the border and it's only a matter of time before we go to war with them….Like I said, most of these illegals that come to the U.S. are criminals and the border definitely needs to be secured!

This conversation with Deputy Aguayo demonstrates an erroneous association between unauthorized immigrants and crime rates. His belief that about 60 to 80 percent of unauthorized immigrants that come into the United States are criminals is farfetched. Police officers deal with approximately 10 percent of the community about 90 percent of the time. Hence, police officers interact with a small segment of the population (criminals) a majority of the time. It is this constant interaction with criminals (i.e., job-related experiences) that reinforces the white-racial-framed ideology of Latin-origin immigrants as criminals.

Aside from racializing unauthorized immigrants as a menacing group of criminally prone foreigners, he believed the border (the Valley) is going to be the staging area for an all-out war between unauthorized immigrants and local police. Deputy Aguayo adopted the white-controlled mass media framing of Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants (Feagin and Cobas 2008), namely the criminality aspect of the Latino threat narrative (Chavez 2008). Thus, unauthorized immigrants—Mexicans in particular—are viewed as threatening invaders whose sole purpose in migrating to the United States is to be involved in criminal acts. Near the end of the conversation, it was evident that he was assuming all cartel members are also unauthorized immigrants. That is why he argued that the border must be secured from unauthorized immigrants in order to ensure the safety of residents of the United States.

Criminalizing Language

During one particular briefing, Sgt. Capiro was talking to us about an aggravated robbery[117] that occurred several days prior in which two masked gunmen entered a department store and robbed the store clerk at gunpoint. He reminded us, "Guys, it's like I keep telling you every day, we're gonna get into shootouts with these suspects! It's bound to happen, guys; these illegals are desperate and are willing to get into a shootout with us if they are caught!...So be careful out there and watch each other's back." It is unknown to me why Sgt. Capiro assumed that the suspects were unauthorized immigrants.

Ironically, I was the primary responding officer to the aggravated robbery, and the only suspect information I received from the store clerk was that the suspects spoke Spanish when demanding the money. The store clerk did not see their face, nor did she have any getaway vehicle information for the suspects. Thus, this incident illustrates how the use of certain language (e.g., Spanish) is criminalized by associating the language with unauthorized immigrants. In particular, Sgt. Capiro believed that the suspects of the aggravated robbery call I responded to were unauthorized immigrants because the only suspect information I received from the store clerk was that the suspects spoke only Spanish while robbing the store.

Sgt. Capiro believed that we needed to be wary of unauthorized immigrants because we were bound to get in a shootout with them. Consequently, he was advocating

[117] The act of using or displaying a deadly weapon or causing seriously bodily injury to another person during the commission of a theft.

the anti-Latin immigrant subframe as a result of racializing language spoken, which he correlated between Latin-origin unauthorized immigration and crime. Several weeks later, as I was conversing with Sgt. Capiro during debriefing, I found out how he actually felt about unauthorized immigrants.

We were having a conversation about my research as we sat inside the squad room. We talked about how I was going to structure my chapters for my proposed book based on this project. I told him that one chapter was probably going to focus on police-community relations. Sgt. Capiro stated, "I think it's cool you're gonna put how we interact with residents and illegals." I replied, "Yeah, that's part of it, but I think that chapter will focus more on immigrants." He then said:

> Well, if you wanna know, I fucking hate illegals! They're nothing but a bunch of shitheads, bro! Before becoming a sergeant, I was a narcotics detective assigned to the narcotics division. During my time there, I would say that most of the guys I 95'd[118] were mostly all illegals. These guys were in charge of taking care of the stash houses.…Shit, I don't care, bro, I'll let everyone know, I can't stand fucking illegals! All they come here to do is fuck shit up.

I then asked him, "In what way?" He replied, "They just come over here to commit crimes and try to make quick cash, bro." Sgt. Capiro had adopted the dominant white racial framing of Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants by viewing all immigrants as criminals. Hence, nativism is used as a tool by Mexican Americans to racialize their co-ethnic immigrant counterparts as menacing foreign invaders.

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[118] 10-95: ten code for arresting an individual.

It also evident that he distinguished all unauthorized immigrants as an "other," first by the use of racialized terms such as "illegals," and second by differentiating between residents and illegals. He drew upon the binary construction of resident/foreigner, which only serves the purpose of reinforcing unauthorized immigrants as the "other." Consistent with previous conversations with deputies, Sgt. Capiro also criminalized all unauthorized immigrants as a result of his interactions with immigrants. Although his categorization was based on his encounters (arrests) with a small segment of the immigrant population, he felt it was sufficient to racialize and categorize all Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants as criminals. Hence, job-related experiences serve as a means to reinforce the white racial frame narrative of Latin-origin immigrants as criminal-prone foreigners.

The combination of racialized terminology when referring to unauthorized immigrants coupled with the criminalization of unauthorized immigrants contributes to the oppression of the new underclass—Latin-origin, unauthorized immigrants. In order to explore this phenomenon more in depth, an exploration of further conversations with deputies will demonstrate the manner in which the officers racialized unauthorized immigrants as welfare dependents.

Welfare Dependency: "Getting Ripped off by Illegals"

Deserving vs. Undeserving

I was partnered with Deputy Guidero one day and was having a random conversation with him as we conducted routine patrol through *Colonia El Tapatio*. He began talking about his wife, who was a fifth-grade teacher at a nearby elementary that

serves the residents of *El Tapatio*. He stated, "My wife is a fifth-grade teacher at Cascada Elementary and teaches these kids that live here. She teaches them while I have to deal with them when they're out in the streets getting in trouble."

As we talked about this issue, we drove past a convenience store that had a large banner placed on the front wall that read, "Food stamps accepted here." After seeing the sign, Deputy Guidero said, "These people [unauthorized immigrants] are ripping off the government in so many ways." I asked him how so, and he replied,

> Well, my wife tells me that there has been an increase in parents wanting their children to get diagnosed with a learning disability so that they can get a monthly check from the government. She said that some parents tell her to sign some paperwork so that their children can get classified as having a learning disability, which will help them get a monthly check.

I then asked him, "What does your wife do? Does she sign the paperwork for the parents?" He replied, "No, she doesn't sign any paperwork because she knows that the parents are just looking for another way to rip off the government."

He told me that if a parent claims their child is suffering from a learning disability, the teacher must sign paperwork to corroborate their story so that they can then take the paperwork to the respective state agency and begin the approval process. If granted approval, the parents will receive a monthly check from the government for a certain amount. He stated, "For any little thing now, parents want their children to get diagnosed with a learning disability because that will be another check for them apart from the food stamp checks that they already receive." He then said that he is upset with

the federal government for helping out the immigrant community. He told me, "It pisses me off that the government helps out all of these illegals and we have to bust our ass for what we have. It's the government's fault that they are getting ripped off by illegals." I asked, "How is it their fault?" He replied, "Well, they keep on helping the illegals without even checking how much they earn…if the parents claim that their child has some type of learning disability, that's another government check for the family. It's their [government] fault they're getting ripped off by illegals since they don't put an end to this. They just keep helping illegals out!"

Deputy Guidero equated the imagery of welfare dependency with unauthorized immigrants. Thus, the sign that read "food stamps accepted here" served as a trigger for Deputy Guidero to bring up the conversation of immigrant welfare dependency. It was not until he saw this sign that he decided to talk about his discontent with the U.S. government for helping out the immigrant community. This conversation with Deputy Guidero exemplifies that aside from the stereotypical assumption of welfare dependency (e.g., food stamp assistance), unauthorized immigrants pose the threat of causing additional strains on U.S. social services as a result of having their children diagnosed with a certain learning disability.

Contrary to popular belief, unauthorized immigrants cannot receive food stamps easily unless certain requirements are met. That is, they can receive governmental assistance only on behalf of their U.S.-born children.[119] In contrast, children from birth up to the age of 18 may receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for

[119] www.fns.usda.gov/snap

learning disabilities if certain conditions are met. In order to qualify, children must be U.S.-born, must have a physical or mental condition that hinders their activities, and the condition must have lasted or be expected to last at least one year.[120] In addition, the Social Security Administration considers the household's income and resources as part of its eligibility requirements. If the requirements are met, the Social Security Administration makes monthly (SSI) payments to children; however, the amount of the payment varies from state to state.

Deputy Guidero was drawing upon a deserving/undeserving binary construction (Chavez 2008) that is similar to the citizen/illegal binary to racialize unauthorized immigrants as welfare dependents. He believed unauthorized immigrants, in this case children with learning disabilities, are undeserving illegal immigrants who come to the United States to take from deserving citizens like him. Hence, he believed certain individuals (unauthorized immigrants) should be denied access to U.S. social services, which is similar to other nativistic discourse that argues unauthorized immigrants are undeserving of organ transplants regardless of if it is a matter of life and death (see Chavez 2008:113).

Based on my conversation with Deputy Guidero, it was evident that he assumed that most unauthorized immigrants receive food stamp assistance from the government, and in addition, will further drain the U.S. social services by receiving another assistance check from the government. He was in essence taking a nativistic stance with regard to

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[120] See www.socialsecurity.gov/disability. Children must meet the Social Security Administration's definition of disability for children.

individuals who need assistance from the government by viewing this issue through the white racialized framing of Latino-origin unauthorized immigrants as a group of undeserving/illegitimate foreign invaders.

Ironically, as mentioned in the previous chapter, Deputy Guidero was one of the few police officers in the police department who was racialized as a foreigner by fellow officers (i.e., he was known as "chu chu"). Therefore, it is ironic that he wanted to take a nativistic stance with regard to the issue of the use of U.S. social services if he too was seen as a foreign invader by his fellow co-workers. Another conversation with a different deputy illustrates just how embedded this mindset is and how certain individuals believe unauthorized immigrants receive governmental assistance over a prolonged period of time, as discussed in the next section.

Generational Welfare Dependency

One time I was having a conversation with Deputy Esqueda about racial profiling. Deputy Esqueda then shifted the topic of conversation to immigrants. We began talking about immigrants because while we were parked next to each other in an open field, the topic of conversation on the Glenn Beck radio show (he was listening to the radio show as we conversed) was on the immigration issue. He said, "As far as the illegals, I have no problem with them receiving governmental help, but I do have a problem with them receiving help and not working. There's some that get food stamps and don't worry about getting a job because they know they'll get governmental assistance. Sometimes it's even a generational thing where these illegals get help each generation." I asked him if he could elaborate, and he replied:

> Well, if kids grow up in a family in which their parents receive food stamps, they're going to see how easy it is to live off of the government. The parents are setting the example for the children, and then when the children become parents themselves, they're going to raise their kids the same way they were raised….It's basically a cycle; illegals are showing their children how to live off of the government and the children will do the same thing once they become parents.

This conversation with Deputy Esqueda provides further insight into the discussion of welfare dependency and generational status. First, he correlated welfare dependency with citizenship status because he believed unauthorized immigrants are individuals who benefit from U.S. social services. Second, he believed welfare dependency by unauthorized immigrants is intergenerational. He was under the impression that with each succeeding generation, welfare dependency among unauthorized immigrants is going to continue.

Deputy Esqueda had a white racialized framing of unauthorized immigrant welfare dependency because he viewed this issue as a prolonged problem akin to "career criminals." He assumed that unauthorized immigrants who receive governmental assistance will be "career welfare" dependents, and that, in addition, welfare dependency will continue with each succeeding generation. This perspective bleeds into the vernacular of police jargon, as illustrated in another encounter, discussed next.

"Damn FSRs"

I was parked on the parking lot of a rural convenience store having a conversation about school with Deputy Sotillo and Deputy Ordono. Deputy Sotillo was

talking about his educational background and told us he had a Bachelor of Science degree in Mexican history. He said his emphasis was Mexican history because he was fascinated with Mexico. We continued talking about his fascination with Mexico for several minutes and then changed to a discussion of immigrants. Deputy Sotillo said, "I have no problems with illegals; well, uh, just one: I don't like the fact that they come here illegally. Other than them coming here illegally, I really don't have any problems with them" (laughing as he made the comment). After Deputy Sotillo shared his views of unauthorized immigrants with us, Deputy Ordono openly expressed his discontent with unauthorized immigrants. He revealed,

> I used to be a member of La Raza Unida party and cared about the cause for the Mexican Americans, but the problem I had with the organization was when they decided to start helping the illegals. I mean, I'm all about helping people, but when it comes to people who are here illegally, I say, fuck 'em! The organization should've focused on helping us, the Mexican Americans, not those damn illegals!

Deputy Ordono continued, "My parents came here the right way—the legal way. They waited until they were able to fix their papers, then they crossed legally over here. I say fuck all these illegals because all they are are FSRs!" After this comment, I looked at him with a perplexed facial expression and asked him, "What? What do you mean FSRs?" He replied, "Yeah, they're all food stamp recipients. They're just fucking leeching off the U.S. government....I say to them, 'Fuck you! Get your own damn

help!’” As he said this last part, he placed his left hand palm down onto his right bicep, bent his right arm, and lifted his right arm upward with a closed fist.

The conversation with these deputies reveals how their view of unauthorized immigrants was loaded with white-racial-framed stereotypes of unauthorized immigrants. That is, they shared some of the commonly held misperceptions of immigrants today by white nativists, which is a belief that a majority of immigrants who enter the United States are unauthorized and that U.S. social services serve as a magnet to attract Latin-origin immigrants (Kilty and Haymes 2000). In addition, this conversation also illustrates how Deputy Ordono had adopted the white ideological framing of Latin-origin immigrants by pointing out that all immigrants are welfare dependents. Hence, he was racializing all immigrants as FSRs because he believed that all immigrants are (1) unauthorized, and (2) dependent on U.S. social services. Consequently, both deputies were strong advocates of the anti-Latin immigrant subframe. Another conversation, presented next, shows how some officers racialize immigrants as being a drain on U.S. social services regardless of whether immigrants have the potential of contributing to the United States.

Brain Drain or Brain Gain?

One particular day I was partnered with Deputy Armenda and we were conducting routine patrol inside *Colonia El Tepehuaje*. As we drove through the colonia, we noticed that some individuals were having a cookout in their front yards. Deputy Armenda stated, “Look at these people; they’re barbequing in the middle of the week. Then again, they’re probably receiving food stamps which cause them not to worry

about wasting money on food." I told him that if that was the case, then it was the government that was granting the people the opportunity to have a cookout during the middle of the week. After I made this comment, he glared at me and said, "Are you serious? It's not the government which allows these leechers to have barbeques all the time. It's me and you, the taxpayers! We're the ones who pay for their food!"

Deputy Armenda continued talking about the immigrant population by making comparisons between recently arrived immigrants and past immigrants. He stated, "Don't get me wrong, I don't have anything against these immigrants, but they're not the same as past immigrants." I asked him if he could elaborate, and he replied,

> The immigrants from the past[121] used to come to the U.S. because they wanted to better themselves by working hard here in the U.S. They would come so that they could have a better life here…the immigrants nowadays only come here to leech off the government. That's why they're all mostly on food stamps and come here just to give birth to their kids so they can receive governmental benefits.

The discussion then changed to DREAMers.[122] He said, "It's the same thing with the dreamers. Our tax dollars are paying for their education. As a matter of fact, do you know what Obama is doing lately?" I replied, "No." He then stated, "He's going to reduce the funds for the G.I. bill. Now that's messed up; I'd rather pay for a soldier's education than pay for Jose No Papers' education." "How so?" I asked. He replied, "The soldier deserves it more because he's earned it by one, being here legally and two, by

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[121] Later on it was established he was referring to early twentieth-century, white European immigrants.
[122] Unauthorized immigrants who can benefit from the Obama Administration's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Initiative as a result of being brought to the United States as children.

fighting for our country. Jose No Papers, on the other hand, is here illegally and is just leeching off the government." I then asked him if he believed all immigrants were a drain on U.S. social services, to which he replied, "C'mon, Gamino, are you serious? Of course! These people just come here to leech off the government. They're not like the immigrants of the past who came here to bust their ass. Immigrants nowadays just want to be supported by the government!"

Again, in this conversation I had with Deputy Armenda, we can see the general trend of equating unauthorized immigration status with welfare dependency. He believed all immigrants are a burden to the country because it is the U.S. citizens who have to foot the bill when it comes to providing assistance to low-income individuals. Evidently, this belief was based on his anti-immigrant sentiment toward Latin-origin immigrants, which illustrates how he was viewing welfare dependency through the white racial framing of unauthorized immigrants (Feagin and Cobas 2008, Feagin 2013), namely, that Latin-origin immigrants are dependents of U.S. social services such as food stamps.

We can note how he also drew on the racialized binary construction of citizen/foreigner at the end of the conversation by making the claim that he would rather have his tax dollars pay for an American soldiers' education than an unauthorized immigrant's education. Hence, Deputy Armenda adopted the common white framing of unauthorized immigrants by believing that unworthy Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants come to America to take from worthy American citizens. Even though Deputy Armenda did not use racialized terms when referring to unauthorized immigrants, he nonetheless racialized Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants by using

racial coded language as a result of referring to Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants as "Jose No Papers." Similar to the aforementioned officers, he is yet another example of an advocate of the anti-Latin immigrant subframe because of his white-framed ideological stance toward Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants.

Conclusion

In the sections above, I analyzed and demonstrated the various ways in which Mexican American police officers internalize the white-framed stereotypes of Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants by racializing immigrants as criminals and welfare dependents. The first section reveals how Mexican Americans racialize their co-ethnic immigrant counterparts as criminal-prone individuals. Some officers categorized residents of an entire community as criminals based on the actions of a select few, which reinforces the white-racial-framed ideology of Latin-origin criminality. Other officers, in turn, racialized unauthorized immigrants as criminals based on the act of immigrating into the United States through clandestine methods. Hence, for some officers, immigrants are worthy of being labeled as deviants for simply violating civil immigration law (undocumented entry into the United States) as opposed to state criminal law. In contrast, some officers correlated crime rates with unauthorized immigrants to argue that all violent crime is committed by the unauthorized immigrant population. Last, a select few equated language use with criminality, thus associating unauthorized immigration status with criminal behavior.

The internalization of the white racial frame by Mexican American police officers will lead to the fragmentation of police-community relations in racially

homogenous Latino communities. One important component of the white racial frame is negative visual images of minorities of color, in particular, the ways Latinos are viewed, for example, as criminals. The Del Monte County Sheriff's Office serves residents who reside in colonias, the majority of which are Latin-origin immigrants. Thus, if police officers categorize immigrants as criminals, the police in turn will alienate law-abiding immigrants from cooperating with them. Immigrants, both authorized and unauthorized, will become wary of the police and will not want to come forward to report a crime or testify as potential witnesses to a crime out of fear of the police. Further discussion of policy implications will be discussed in the conclusion chapter of this study.

As previously noted, academic research (Martinez and Valenzuela 2006, Martinez et al. 2008, Wadsworth 2010) has been conducted to dispel the myth of immigration and crime since one aspect of anti-immigrant rhetoric is centered on criminality. Namely, Sampson (2008) found that concentrated immigration at the neighborhood level is associated with lower levels of violence after controlling for a host of other structural variables. Despite the growing body of academic literature that seeks to debunk the immigration-crime nexus, this belief remains quite common among policy makers, analysts, and part of the general population.

The second section of this chapter illuminates the manner in which Mexican Americans racialize their co-ethnic immigrant counterparts as welfare dependents—"a problem." Conversations with officers revealed that they internalized the white-racial-framed narrative of Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants by correlating visual cues with immigrant welfare dependency. As evidenced with Deputy Guidero, as soon as he saw

the “food stamps accepted here” sign, the visual image elicited the nativistic sentiment he had toward unauthorized immigrants by equating food stamp services with immigrant welfare dependency. Furthermore, other conversations with officers demonstrate how certain officers have the misperception that (1) the majority of unauthorized immigrants receive food stamps, and (2) that welfare dependency will continue with each succeeding generation.

The welfare dependency section of this chapter also reveals how certain officers use racial coded language to racialize unauthorized immigrants by referring to immigrants using racialized acronyms. As evidenced with Deputy Ordono, he believed a majority of unauthorized immigrants are welfare dependents, so he objectified immigrants by referring to them as FSRs (food stamp recipients). However, as argued by Capps et al. (2009:142), “…it is hard to argue that LPRs [legal permanent residents] and other legal immigrants have or ever had a greater propensity to use public-assistance programs than citizens.” In addition, when referring to naturalized-citizens, they argue, “despite the fact that they face no eligibility restrictions, naturalized-citizen families use benefits at a lower rate than their native counterparts” (Capps et al. 2009:143). Even though studies such as Capps et al. have be conducted, certain individuals such as the aforementioned deputies still have the misperception that unauthorized immigrants are dependent on public-assistance programs.

Based on my conversations with deputies who racialized unauthorized immigrants as being a drain on U.S. social services, results illuminate the manner in which they have adopted the white- racial-framed binaries of citizen/illegal and

deserving/undeserving (Chavez 2008) in order to further objectify and marginalize the primary targets of nativistic hostility—Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants.

Mexican-origin individuals are the main targets of nativistic sentiment with regards to certain matters such as national security issues (e.g., spillover violence). Thus, Mexican Americans are under constant pressure to adopt the white-racial-framed narrative of unauthorized immigrants in order to distance themselves from their co-ethnic immigrant counterparts to prove that "we are not like them." In order to accomplish this, nativism is used as a tool by Mexican Americans to racialize their fellow co-ethnic immigrant counterparts as a menacing group of foreign invaders who are criminal-prone and welfare dependents. Consequently, Mexican Americans take a nativistic stance toward immigration by believing Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants pose a threat to the safety of the United States and whose other purpose for immigrating to the United States is to deplete social services. As evidenced in this chapter, Mexican American police officers in the Rio Grande Valley become advocates of the anti-Latin immigrant subframe as a result of reinforcing the white-framed, anti-immigrant narrative of immigrant criminality and welfare dependency.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Summary

The objective of this study was to extend the body of race research by exploring the racialization of Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants. Nativistic hostility has been a central feature of the integration of immigrant groups into the United States. At different periods of time, anti-immigrant sentiment has targeted certain ethnic immigrant groups who have been perceived as posing a threat to the social fabric of U.S. relations. That is, whether it has been European immigrants (e.g., Irish and Italians), Asian immigrants, or Latin-origin immigrants, at one point or another, immigrants have borne the brunt of nativist hostility and cultural marginalization. Currently, Latin-origin immigrants continue to be the aim of anti-immigrant sentiment, from both politicians and the general public alike.

Similar to U.S.-born minorities of color, immigrants take their place in society by falling somewhere along the racial ladder of U.S. race relations. Immigrants, however, fall within the bottom rung of the racial hierarchy in the United States. Therefore, this study heeded the call of Saenz and Douglas (2015) to analyze unauthorized immigrants as racialized individuals as opposed to ethnic people, and also heeded the call of Martinez (2007), by including Latinos and immigrants into policing literature. In addition, the objective of the study was to incorporate race perspectives (Romero 2008, Goldsmith et al. 2009) into the examination of Latin-origin immigrants by exploring the various methods by which Latin-origin immigrants are racialized.

This study examined the central question of how unauthorized Latin-origin immigrants become racialized by Mexican American police officers who work along the U.S.-Mexico border. In order to accomplish this, the study was contextualized theoretically by employing the racial conflict theoretical framework of Feagin's (2013) white racial frame. The white racial frame includes racial images, stereotypes, and emotions—along with distinctive language and imaging tools—that impose the racial hierarchy (Feagin 2013). In essence, this popular frame involves the common superior view of white individuals and an inferior view of minorities of color. It is through the white racial frame narrative of minorities of color and immigrants that poverty, low levels of educational attainment, and oppression are legitimated.

As argued by Saenz and Douglas (2015:176), "The capturing of race talk and racists actions are most likely to be captured in the field, where race is played out, rather [than] in structured questionnaires." Thus, this study employed the qualitative research method of auto-ethnography and the data collection method of participant observation in order to explore how Mexican American police officers racialize Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants. The findings are illustrated from an auto-ethnographic context, which utilizes the self as both subject and object of research inquiry.

Racialization throughout the Years

As explained in Chapter Two, the auto-ethnography method set the groundwork for the entire study by providing a chronological recollection of my experiences with the racialization process as a resident of the U.S.-Mexico border. As evidenced in the chapter, my first experience with the racialization process dated back to when I was an

adolescent accompanying my mother to the grocery store. It was during this shopping experience that I recall being exposed to racialization, but above all, to the dehumanizing and objectifying term of "illegals."

Chapter Two also included a discussion of my recollection of how certain students were racialized based on their accent, music preference, and fondness for playing soccer. These students were subject to racialized terminology such as "mojos," which is the English slang equivalent of "wetback." In addition, findings revealed that I also, at different times, bore the brunt of racialized terminology. Certain peers in high school and I were seen as foreigners by our classmates because we displayed certain attributes.

My experience with the racialization process continued into the professional work domain of my police officer career. As a police officer, I came to realize that no matter how strong the "blue brotherhood" bond of policing was, if certain officers displayed certain signs of "Mexicanness" attributes (Goldsmith et al. 2009), they were subject to racialized dialogue. Namely, certain officers, including me, acquired nicknames because of certain factors that were deemed by other officers as worthy of racializing someone as a foreigner.

Even though not the scope of the study, the latter part of the chapter illuminated a surprising aspect of routine police activity on the U.S.-Mexico border—the participation of local police departments in immigration enforcement. What is noteworthy is the local police department's willingness to participate alongside federal counterparts (e.g., Border Patrol) in everyday immigration enforcement practices when there is no official

agreement among the law enforcement agencies. Still, as noted in the literature review chapter, local police participation in immigration enforcement predates the Mexican repatriation campaign in which approximately 2 million Mexican-origin individuals were deported from the United States (Hoffman 1973, Johnson 2005, Balderrama and Rodriguez 2006). Of most importance, this section revealed that aside from racialized terminology, local police departments are still active participants of racialized police practices that disparately affect the unauthorized immigrant population.

Police and Race

This study was concerned with police-community racial relations within a predominately Latino co-ethnic community. Specifically, this study explored how Mexican American police officers racialize their co-ethnic immigrant counterparts through everyday conversation and when responding to calls for service. Vera Sanchez and Rosenbaum (2011:173) assert that the gap in the literature related to police-community relations needs to be addressed, stating, "Police are attuned to race in heterogeneous neighborhoods where different racial and ethnic groups live side by side. But for homogenous minority neighborhoods, a new conceptualization of racialization or biased policing may be needed to understand police interpretations of the environment." As noted in the introductory chapter, the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office serves residents who reside in rural Del Monte County. The majority of these residents reside within impoverished subdivisions commonly referred to as colonias.

The results of the study revealed that the conceptualization of racialization for Mexican American police officers who work along the U.S.-Mexico border is based on

foreignness attributes, in particular, citizenship status. Mexican American police officers internalize the common white-racial-framed narrative of Latin-origin immigrants to racialize immigrants through the use of dehumanizing and objectifying terminology such as "illegals," "illegal aliens," "*mojados*," and "mohankers." In addition, the results illuminate that alongside the use of racialized terminology, the officers internalize the conventional white framing of Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants by racializing immigrants as menacing, criminal-prone individuals and welfare dependents.

Minorities of color must constantly struggle with the pressure from whites to adopt the white racial frame in order to achieve upward social and economic mobility in the racial hierarchy (Feagin and Cobas 2008). As evidenced in the results chapter, police officers racialize their co-ethnic immigrant counterparts as a means of differentiating and thus distancing themselves from their co-ethnics. Consequently, police officers become advocates of the anti-Latin immigrant subframe, which derives from the white racial frame. This subframe emerges as a result of nativistic sentiment that is solely targeted toward Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants. Policing in a racially homogenous Latino community revealed that citizenship status (illegality) plays a vital role in how police officers conduct their daily work routines. That is, unauthorized immigrants are dehumanized by being racialized through derogatory terminology and other police practices.

Limitations and Future Research

Since this was an auto-ethnographical study of police officers, it will be difficult for social researchers to replicate this study. In order for researchers to replicate a study

such as this one, they will need to be a police officer within their respective police departments; that is, they must conduct research from an "insider" perspective, such as Moskos (2008) and I did. Further research should address the issue of the "insider" versus "outsider" positionality perspective on studying the police to examine how this research position affects the study of job-related police behavior.

In addition, the data collected for this study are limited to one county, namely Del Monte County. Therefore, the results of this study cannot be generalized to other counties that are located along the U.S.-Mexico border. However, qualitative researchers strive for "rich" information about social settings and participants without extraordinary concern to the issue of generalization (Orcher 2005; Marshall and Rossman 2006). Even though the findings for this study cannot be generalized to other borderland communities (i.e., counties located outside the Lower Rio Grande Valley), the results provide much-needed insight into race relations between Latino co-ethnics in a borderland community.

Due to the scant research of Latino police officers in academic literature, further research should focus on Latinos to examine whether Latino police officers who work along the U.S.-Mexico border differ from those who work in urban, inner-city settings in relation to job-related behavior. Specifically, with regard to academic literature on race relations, further research needs to analyze whether Latino police officers who work in Latin-origin, urban, inner-city neighborhoods racialize their co-ethnic immigrant counterparts differently from officers who work on the U.S.-Mexico border.

Last, most police officers in this study were male; consequently, with regard to gender of police officers, this study is male dominated. Researchers have noted that the

profession of policing has historically been male dominated and perhaps may continue that way for the foreseeable future (Barlow and Hickman-Barlow 2000, Sklansky 2006). Therefore, just as Latino police officers are an underrepresented group in academic research, female police officers are also understudied. Hence, further research needs to illustrate how female police officers differ from male police officers with regard to job-related behavior. However, that was beyond the scope of this study.

Policy Implications

Diversity Training

As noted earlier, all police officers in the state of Texas are required to complete 8 hours of diversity training in order to make officers more culturally sensitive whenever dealing with minorities of color. It has been my experience at both police departments that officers do not take this class seriously. Some officers do not take the class seriously because of its content; that is, the class focuses on unauthorized immigrants. Other officers do not take the class seriously because of the lecture-based aspect. Police officers are not fond of being lectured to and get bored easily. Therefore, similar to other training courses (e.g. mental crisis intervention), diversity training should be more interactive and scenario-based in order for officers to realize the importance of diversity training instead of being dismissed as something insignificant.

Local Police Participation in Immigration Enforcement

The empirical findings of this study addressed the analysis of the intersection between race, policing, and immigration. As a result, the findings of this study illuminated what occurs in a racial homogenous Latino community between police

officers and their civilian co-ethnic immigrant counterparts and, more specifically, how Mexican American police officers racialize Latin-origin unauthorized immigrants. The findings of this study begin to "help clarify the ways in which the policing of Hispanic […] immigrants are both similar to and distinct from that experienced by other racial and ethnic groups" (Weitzer 2014:2009). As evidenced in the results, local police departments are participants in immigration enforcement.

The results from the auto-ethnography chapter illustrated that even though the Cicero Police Department and the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office are not official participants of immigration enforcement programs, officers from both police departments operate as de facto immigration agents involved in racialized immigration enforcement practices and programs (e.g., Operation Stonegarden) on a supportive-role basis. Local police departments rely on the government funding that they receive for participating in governmental programs such as Operation Stonegarden. From an organizational perspective, the police department sees participation in such programs as just another means of acquiring economic revenue for the police department. However, participation in these programs can have unintended consequences for civilians and the police department alike.

Mistrust and lack of cooperation are two main examples of the negative impacts of a local police department's participation in programs like Operation Stonegarden. As previously mentioned, the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office serves residents who reside in rural Del Monte County, many of whom are immigrants who live in colonias. If residents (authorized and unauthorized immigrants) observe local police officers

involved in racialized immigration enforcement practices, they will become wary of the police, which reinforces strained police-community relations. Residents will not view the police officers as individuals on whom they can rely for help or protection. The immigrant community will be hesitant to call the police because of fear that they might be deported based on their immigration status. In fact, findings herein showed that whenever some police officers encountered unauthorized immigrants, they chose to detain the immigrants, who were subsequently picked up by the Border Patrol.

Mistrust among the immigrant community toward the police can in turn hinder the police department's efforts to curtail violence. Crime will go unreported in immigrant communities, which will affect the actual knowledge of crime rate trends. In addition, cooperation from potential witnesses to a crime will also be negatively affected. If an immigrant is a witness to a crime, the immigrant might not be as willing to cooperate with police out of fear of deportation. Consequently, it is of utmost importance that we reanalyze immigration policy, in particular as it relates to federally funded grant programs (e.g., Operation Stonegarden), in order to prevent the aforementioned consequences that can result if local police departments continue being dependent on and involved in such grant programs.

Does Local Context Matter?

Due to the rise of strained police-community relations in minority of color communities, there is growing concern that local police departments are not racially representative of the communities they serve. As a result, there has been a demand by residents for police departments to hire more minorities of color that are racially

representative of the communities they serve. One recent study found that there is a growing trend for more employment of minorities of color in police departments. According to Reaves (2015), about 27% of police officers currently employed in police departments are minorities of color, compared to 15% in 1987. In addition, between 2007 to 2013, there was an increase of 16% in the employment of Latino police officers.

Even though these statistics illustrate that there is a growing trend for minorities of color to be employed in local police departments, historically, racial composition of police departments has had very little effect on police-community relations. In fact, Kuykendall and Burns (1980) argued that black police officers are often harder on black citizens compared to white police officers. Likewise, Kephart (1957) found that black police officers believed they needed to be harsher with blacks than with civilians of other ethnic groups. With regard to citizen compliance with specific police requests for orderly, legal behavior, Mastrofski et al. (1996) found that minority of color police officers were less successful with minority of color civilians than were white officers. In other words, minorities of color were more compliant with white officers than minority of color officers.

The aforementioned studies illustrate that in light of the widely held belief that hiring more minorities of color will promote greater harmony among minority of color communities, the recruitment and employment of minorities of color in police departments will do little to repair fragmented police-community relations. The current anti-police rhetoric that is reinforced by the media's negative portrayal of police officers

is one reason why it will be difficult to repair the strained relationship between the police and minorities of color.

Minorities of color are visibly upset with the police, as evidenced by incidents such as the Michael Brown shooting, the death of Eric Garner, and the death of Freddie Gray, to name a few. Protests and the well-known crying chant of "black lives matter" have been utilized to bring awareness to the issue of police malpractice, namely the use of force against blacks. Police officers, irrespective of race, are at times vilified by the media. Thus, whenever civilians see police officers, they do not look at the race of the officer, but instead look at the signifying marker of the police, which is the badge and uniform—seeing only an authoritative figure.

In turn, the current anti-police rhetoric only serves the purpose of distancing police officers from the communities they serve. From a policing standpoint, as noted by Skolnick (1966), police officers form a distinct subculture—an "us versus them" mentality—that distances them from civilians. Police officers, irrespective of race, will side with their fellow police officers as opposed to their co-ethnic civilian counterparts because they feel that only fellow officers know the dangers and troubles associated with the policing profession.

For the reasons stated above, the current anti-police rhetoric that is plaguing the United States will lead to further division among police and the communities they serve, and hiring more minorities of color will do little to repair fragmented police-community relations. Instead, one viable option that may help bring more transparency to policing is the use of body cameras by police officers. From a policing standpoint, the use of body

cameras is not popular, as police officers feel that they will be under scrutiny for every action they take. However, body cameras will demonstrate what occurs when officers and civilians interact, providing both sides of the story. Even though there are logistical concerns about using body cameras, such as how the technology will be implemented, the costs of the cameras, and how long to store the data, the benefits will outweigh the costs.

Conclusion

When explaining the project and presenting my intentions to potential participants, I did not get into specifics about what I was interested in studying within the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office. I told police officers that I was interested in what it is like to be a deputy for the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office, specifically a police officer on the U.S.-Mexico border (Van Maanen 1978a). Because I sought to analyze how Mexican American police officers who work along the U.S.-Mexico border racialize their co-ethnic immigrant counterparts, I was vague about my intentions because I wanted an honest assessment, and I knew that the results of this study might shed a negative light on several police officers of the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office, and possibly even the entire police department itself. Although some social researchers might have sinister motives for studying the police with the goal of exposing police malpractice (Van Maanen 1978a), that was not my intent, and I did not want any of the officers to act differently because they thought I had negative motives.

As a fellow police officer, I cannot help but feel a sense of betrayal with the way the results of this study might be perceived. According to Fassin (2013:33), "Writing

always means betraying," and I felt that I was betraying the trust confided in me by my participants, at least until I accepted Fassin's contention that "not writing is also a betrayal." I had to stay focused on the fact that "research in police organizations can be a challenging, adventurous undertaking in a sociologically rich environment" (Van Maanen 1978a:312) and that the findings would serve an important purpose.

One thing I want to make clear is that as alarming as some of the results might be, Mexican American police officers are not the only individuals prone to racializing fellow co-ethnics. It just happens that police officers were the focus of this study.[123] In the auto-ethnography chapter, through a chronological recollection of my experiences with the racialization process, I illuminated how racialized terminology was common and even normalized among my school peers and other members of the public (e.g., grocery shopping experience). Thus, the main reason I chose to conduct this study was that throughout all my years as a resident on the U.S.-Mexico border, I have witnessed and experienced several incidents of Latinos denigrating each other through the use of racialized terminology.

As previously stated, police officers generally come from a low-socioeconomic household, which makes the profession of policing appealing irrespective of the dangers associated with this profession. Moreover, in the literature review chapter, I provided demographic information regarding the residents of Del Monte County. Close to half of its residents live below the poverty line and are relegated to colonias. It is these residents

[123] I also found that fellow Latinos (civilians) used racialized terms such as "*mojados*" to denigrate each other while I tended to a particular call for service.

that the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office serves. Coupled with poverty levels is the factor of citizenship status, which further serves to distance officers from the communities they serve.

One reason why officers are distant from local residents, aside from the subcultural factors of danger, isolation, and solidarity (Skolnick 1966, Reiner 2010), is socioeconomic status. Fassin (2013:219) asserts, "Comparison of the sociological profiles of police and residents might suggest that their common working-class origins would bring them closer together. In fact, as has been observed in other contexts, this apparent similarity only serves to accentuate the effects of separation and the desire to mark the distinction." None of the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office deputies at the time of this study resided in a colonia. Some lived in rural Del Monte County, but not one resided within the neighborhoods (colonias) they served. Therefore, police officers were detached from the colonia residents, many of whom were Latin-origin immigrants.

Mexican Americans are always under constant pressure to adopt the white racial framing of race matters in the hopes of gaining certain social, political, and economic statuses in the white American culture (Feagin 2013). In essence, some Mexican Americans are prone to behaving like whites—elite white men. Some minorities of color will conform to the white-dominated system and not represent their racial background in order to gain the aforementioned status within the white American culture. Whites do not even need to be present within a group in order to maintain their white hierarchical standing in the racial hierarchy. As evidenced herein, the Del Monte County Sheriff's Office deputies were of Mexican origin; however, the daily practices of the police

officers, such as racialized terminology and racialized immigration enforcement practices, ensured the maintenance of the white racial structure.

Once that system (white structure) is in place, racial order is maintained. That is, Mexican Americans buy into the notion of "whiteness," and as a result, their actions, such as the use of racialized terminology and racialized immigration enforcement practices, are carried out in order to achieve social, political, and economic status. Consequently, nativism is utilized as a tool by Mexican Americans to racialize their co-ethnic immigrant counterparts. From the perspective of the white racial frame, the anti-Latin immigrant subframe emerges by pitting co-ethnics against each other. Even though Latinos who reside on the U.S.-Mexico border can make use of home-culture frames to resist racism and racial oppression, the results reveal that some choose instead to distance themselves from their co-ethnics by becoming advocates and promoting agents of the anti-Latin immigrant subframe.

However negative and alarming, the results reveal that in order to address issues of intra-ethnic conflict amongst Latinos, we must first remove the veil from our faces and acknowledge that racial conflict exists among Latinos as a result of a desire to gain social, political, and economic status in the white American culture.

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APPENDIX A

RECRUITMENT SCRIPT

You are being asked to be in this study because you are a Mexican-American police officer who works in a police department located along the U.S.-Mexico border. The purpose of this study is to document and illustrate the relationship between Mexican-American police officers and their co-ethnic community members (Latin-origin immigrants). Additionally, this study aims to investigate how police-minority relations are affected when the interaction involves members of the same ethnicity. For those of you who choose to participate in this study, no identifying information will be obtained. If you agree to participate in this study, you will be given a pseudonym for your protection.

Moreover, the only thing I will state about the research location is that it was conducted in a rural community along the south Texas-Mexico border (The Lower Rio Grande Valley). This means that whoever reads the findings from this study will not be able to pinpoint exactly where it was conducted. Information about you will be kept confidential to the extent permitted or required by law. Your participation is voluntary and you have the choice whether or not to be in this study. You may decide to not begin or to stop participating at any time. If you choose not to be in this study or stop being in the study, there will be no affect on your employment status.

APPENDIX B

PARTICIPATION REQUEST SHEET

I agree / disagree to participate in the research of Eric Gamino.

If you wish to participate, circle agree

If you do not wish to participate, circle disagree

- Note: Print your last name and badge number then fold this paper in half and place it inside the ballot box

Last Name: _____Badge Number: _____