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**OFFICERS PERCEPTIONS OF THE NATURE AND
EXTENT OF POLICE DRUG CORRUPTION WITHIN THE
CITY OF MIAMI POLICE DEPARTMENT**

by

Robin N. Haarr

A THESIS

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ABSTRACT

OFFICERS PERCEPTIONS OF THE NATURE AND EXTENT
OF POLICE DRUG CORRUPTION WITHIN THE
CITY OF MIAMI POLICE DEPARTMENT

by

Robin Nancy Haarr

This study focuses on the nature of drug-related police corruption within the City of Miami Police department and on the factors that influence such corruption among police officers. This research is a preliminary study intended to investigate the nature and extent of police drug-related corruption in the Miami Police Department. The findings are based on a two week qualitative field study that was conducted within the City of Miami Police Department, and the information obtained is drawn from various sources: factual data from departmental reports and departmental rules and regulations, individual officers perceptions, and personal observations. The findings reveal that the conditions and combinations of factors that influenced, generated, and set the organizational atmosphere for corruption to occur among Miami police officers is part of a much larger problem of social problems, and social and political corruption; as well as based on individual motivations and justifications.

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To my parents, who supported me in
every way possible.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

This study focuses on the nature of drug-related police corruption within the City of Miami Police Department and on the factors that influence such corruption among police officers. Furthermore, the study provides discussion of some of the changes the department has made since the "Miami River Cops" corruption scandal of 1985, in an attempt to deal with and curb the corruption problem; and it presents some policy considerations and implications.

Purpose of the Study

Due to the recent influx of drugs and drug-related money there has been an increasing sensitivity to drug-related police corruption, and law enforcement agencies across the country have experienced increased problems of corruption and unethical behavior among its officers. Ward and McCormack (1987) point out that, "it is the actions of a few officers that has disgraced the majority of officers that are honest and who carry out their duties in a professional manner." At the same time, there have been occasions when entire police departments have experienced serious corruption problems, extending beyond simply a few officers (Eddy, Sabogal, and Walden, 1988; McAlary, 1987).

Within the past decade, several police departments have witnessed an increase in drug-related corruption problems

among its officers. In part, this is due to the fact that since the early 1960s, the drug problem within the United States has been increasing steadily. Beginning during the Reagan Administration, and carried over into the Bush Administration, the federal government has attempted to curb the United States drug problem by declaring attack on the drug problem, and enforcement of drug laws has been turned into a so-called "War on Drugs" (National Drug Control Strategy, 1989).

Over time, drugs have become a major problem which police agencies across the United States have had to address. Not only have police agencies had to lead a fight against the drug problem within their local communities, but they have also had to deal with an increasing number of police officers using drugs, involved in the drug trade, and involved in other types of drug-related activities (Langer, 1986a, 1986b; Carter, 1989). In fact, within the past 10 years there have been several major drug corruption scandals in police departments across the United States including: New York City; Chicago, IL; Flint, MI; Detroit, MI; and Miami, FL. Drug-related police corruption is a growing concern for police administrators in many police departments across the country. However, to date, nobody has been able to state exactly how extensive drug-related corruption is among law enforcement officers or law enforcement agencies across the country. But in the next decade, police drug corruption is expected to be a major issue which many police

departments and police administrators will have to deal with (Langer, 1986a; Ward and McCormack, 1987; Carter, 1989).

* * * *

This research is a preliminary study intended to investigate the nature and extent of police drug-related corruption in one police department. I chose the City of Miami Police Department as my research site because this police department has experienced one of the most serious drug-related corruption problems of any police department in the United States, referred to as the "Miami River Cops" Scandal of 1985. Furthermore, the Miami-Dade County area has been labeled as a major drug trafficking area for the United States. As a result, it is not unusual for Miami's police officers to be exposed to many high echelon drug traffickers and dealers, and to unimaginable amounts of drugs and money (Eddy, Sabogal & Walden, 1988).

In reviewing the literature it became apparent that within the field of drug law enforcement there exist many manuals that set forth standard policies and procedures for enforcing drug laws. However, many of these manuals tend to be limited to describing different law enforcement programs, as well as, discussing types of corruption problems that occur among police officers. There is a lack of quantitative and qualitative studies which discuss the problems and practices of drug-related police corruption, as well as the factors that influence police drug-related corruption; however, in the past couple years, there has

been a slight increase in qualitative studies of police drug-related corruption (Carter, 1989).

Thus, the purpose of this research is to add to the literature that exists in this area, and to gain a better understanding of the relationship between drugs and drug-related police corruption, and to identify the factors that influenced drug-related police corruption, and allowed the corruption to go to such extremes, within the Miami Police Department. Hopefully this study will provide police administrators, policy makers, and those within academia with helpful insights regarding police drug-related corruption and the potential influencing factors behind this type of corruption.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined at this point in the study so there is no confusion later as to their meaning.

Corruption: "Acts which involve the misuse of authority for the officers personal gain; and activity the officer engages in which compromises his/her ability to enforce the law or provide other service impartially; the protection of illicit activities from police enforcement; whether or not the officer is involved in promoting the business of one person while discouraging that of another" (Ward and McCormack, 1987:10).

Drug-Related Corruption: This type of corruption is established when an underlying component of an officer's actions is associated with drug use, drug trafficking, or drug law enforcement (Carter, 1989:9).

Individual Corruption: The situation in which a few corrupt individual officers may be found in a department which actively discourages corruption (Williams, 1986).

Organizational Corruption: The situation in which illegal and unprofessional acts are common in a department in which both officers and administrators, up and down the hierarchy

of command, are involved together in a widespread and organized practice of corruption in a community which may not generally condone corrupt behavior. Organizational corruption effects the functioning and effectiveness of a department. But simply because an agency is corrupt, does not imply that all its individual officers act in corrupt ways (Williams, 1986; Langer, 1986a).

Political Corruption: Corruption that exists among the political elite and public officials that operate under the command of the politicians. This type of corruption may be condoned either covertly or overtly by the political elite, and gain may be monetary or personal (for example, status, prestige, a position, or promotion). When political corruption exists it may often promote corruption at the organizational and individual level, either overtly or covertly (Langer, 1986b).

Environmental Corruption: Corrupt practices by the police, other public agencies, businesses, and average citizens are generally tolerated and perhaps actively supported by politically significant groups or even by the general population. Environmental corruption can go "to the extent that the political power of the authorities has been usurped by those who control the drug traffic". Where the institutions in a community break down due to the impact of the 'drugs-for-money' transactions flowing through the economic, political, and legal systems; and abuse of the drug is not uncommon among the local population (Langer, 1986a; Williams, 1986).

Illicit Drug/Narcotic: "The possession of an unlawful illicit narcotic or non-narcotic substance, or in the case of prescription drugs, the prescription was obtained or used fraudulently. The substance is ingested for the purpose of experiencing the substances psychoactive effects and/or for a non-prescribed therapeutic effect of the substance. Alcohol is excluded from this research in order to focus on illicit substances" (Carter, 1989:3).

Felony: A felony is a violation of penal law for which the convicted offender may be punished by death or imprisonment for more than one year, as well as any offense which is specifically designated by law as a felony (Shortreed, 1988). This study examines the following felonies: larceny, homicide, robbery (armed), bribery, racketeering, drug trafficking, conspiracy, drug possession, and tax evasion.

Bribery (criminal offense): An officer must have solicited, received, retained, or agreed to accept something of value or personal advantage which s/he was not authorized to accept. The officer must have known the bribe was offered with the intention of influencing official actions

(Goldstein, 1975).

"Drugs-for-Money" Transactions: A series of transactions involving drugs and money, each of which are illegal. These transactions lie at the heart of drug trafficking and require repeated acts over long periods of time. Often many persons are involved and large amounts of money are at stake, with high penalties for those who are caught; as a result, threats, intimidation, and violence become part of the equation (Langer, 1986b:319,320).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In this review of the literature I present many of the more important issues that need to be considered when developing an understanding of the nature of the drug business and drug-related police corruption. At this point I present a brief summary of what will be discussed throughout this literature review.

1. Defining corruption is a difficult task since there exists no national standard of police performance that local agencies should follow; rather, there is disagreement nationally as to a precise definition of corruption. Therefore, it is a local function to define police corruption and set policies (Ward & McCormack, 1987; Goldstein, 1975).

2. Throughout history scholars, researchers, and police administrators have attempted to explain what causes police corruption, and what it is that motivates individuals to commit corrupt acts. As a result, numerous theories now exist and are applied (Ward & McCormack, 1987; Rowe, 1987).

3. The temptation for an officer to become corrupt becomes greater as officers are exposed to drugs and ever-increasing amounts of drug money. Police officers, especially narcotics officers, often handle large sums of money, make drug buys, and work on the "invitational edge" (Manning & Redlinger, 1977). In fact, some officers have been known to steal seized property or drugs from the crime scene or from the police property room. Officers may also conduct illegal searches and seizures on individuals, in houses or cars in order to seek out drugs or money for their personal use or monetary gain (Carter, 1989; Goldstein, 1975).

4. Compared to other police functions, control of drugs is very expensive. Officers have to seek out their own information on drug dealers and traffickers through informants, which is difficult and expensive information to acquire. Informants must be paid; rewards must be paid; drugs must be bought; and more and more officers need to be hired across the country.

to enforce the drug laws (Williams, Redlinger, & Manning, 1979).

5. This literature review discusses the fact that the potential for police drug corruption exists due to the nature of the illicit drug business, the high profits and the risks involved. Corruption can exist in various forms in order to directly or indirectly control local police. For instance, dealers may try to bribe or pay-off officers in order to receive protection for their operations or for advanced warning for such things as raids. On the other hand, officers may rip-off drug traffickers or dealers; officers may use illicit drugs while on or off duty, and officers may become involved in the buying or selling of drugs. Carter (1989) points out that, "today, the 'drugs-for-money' transaction is the premier example of the kind of corrupt practice that exists." (see also: Carter & Baker, 1986; Langer, 1986a, 1986b; Manning & Redlinger, 1986).

6. Legal Control over police officer discretion is difficult due to the nature of drug enforcement. For instance, the circumstances that surround an arrest are often open to an officers interpretation. As a result, an officer may be tempted to perjure him/herself, violate the exclusionary rule, misuse informants, overlook and alter charges, or other violations of procedure and/or legal rules in exchange for something from the drug dealers or traffickers. Plus, with the mixture of discretion and drug enforcement comes the potential for violence (addicts and dealers tend to get roughed up by officers) (Goldstein, 1975; Manning & Redlinger, 1986; Ward & McCormack, 1987).

7. Furthermore, this literature review discusses how enforcement of vice crimes is difficult because laws against these types of crimes are rarely enforced with total agreement from the community; laws are supported differently by different segments of the community. As a result, there is the potential for an adversary relationship to exist between the police and community groups, making a job such as substance control more complex (Langer, 1986a).

8. Last, I tie all of the above factors together and look at corruption as a symptom of a much larger social problem of drug production, drug trafficking, drug dealing and use (Langer, 1986a, 1986b). Pointing out that drug traffickers have penetrated on a much larger scale, more than just the police department. Drug traffickers have corrupted the political, economic, social and legal systems of communities (Langer,

1986a, 1986b; Williams, 1986; Ward & McCormack, 1987).

* * * *

It cannot be stressed enough that police administrators within any police department have a special obligation to concern themselves with corruption, even if there is not an immediate corruption problem within the agency at the time.

Defining Corruption

The first step for any police administrator is to define corruption; however, defining corruption is not always simple because there is considerable disagreement as to what constitutes police corruption (Goldstein, 1975; Williams, 1986; Ward & McCormack, 1987). Recently, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) has been making efforts to establish a precise definition of corruption through the National Police Policy Center; but, because all police departments have different types of corruption related problems, and adopt different strategies to deal with these problems, consensus for one definition has been difficult.

For instance, in some police departments and communities the acceptance of a free cup of coffee by a police officer from a restaurant owner would be considered a corrupt act; while in other departments it would be considered the polite thing to do. However, most police departments do consider it corrupt if an officer accepts a free cup of coffee (or free anything) knowing s/he will be expected to overlook a criminal offense or infraction in

exchange. Still, the views on corruption vary across the country; therefore, it has been a local function, controlled by locally selected political representatives to define police corruption and determine policies (Williams, 1986).

In reviewing the literature, I found that corruption involves a wide variety of behaviors prohibited both by law and by departmental policy. Goldstein (1975) points out that:

"On the one hand, there is a tendency to define corruption so broadly that it can include all forms of police wrongdoing, from police brutality to the pettiest forms of questionable behavior. On the other hand, police corruption is at times defined so narrowly that patterns of behavior with all the characteristics and consequences of corrupt acts are excluded" (1975:3).

Goldstein goes on to define corruption as:

"...acts involving the misuse of authority by a police officer in a manner designed to produce personal gain for him/herself or for others...(It) is not limited to monetary gain, because gain may be in the form of services rendered, status influence, prestige, or future support for the officer or someone else" (1975:3,5).

Goldstein's definition focuses upon two important elements of corruption: "police authority" and "personal gain". Personal gain may be in the form of monetary gain, status, or prestige from organizational gain (Carter, 1989; Goldstein, 1975).

Sherman (1983), on the other hand, infers the definition of corruption to be the illegal use of organizational power for personal gain. However, this definition has been criticized for leaving the

interpretation of 'illegal' open to include the "violation of any kind of law-civil, criminal, or administrative (Carter, 1989:8).

Williams (1986) defines corruption to include "acts of brutality and excessive force, the display of prejudice and other uncivil conduct, the unequal distribution of police services, inefficiency and ineptitude, and the use of public office for purposes of private gain" (1986:271). However, this definition is too general, leaving private gain open to interpretation. "Private gain" can include all behaviors which already are defined as illegal (bribes, theft, extortion), or behaviors which have been defined as illegal but which can be classified as unprofessional (accepting gifts or discounts).

Although I do not use Williams' definition of corruption I do draw my distinguishing definitions of individual, organizational, and environmental corruption from Williams. These definitions are very general and in any actual instance of corruption some variation of one of these definitions would apply.

As Carter points out:

"collectively, the constituent elements of each definition are fundamentally the same; however, operationalization of the elements differ between the researchers." (1989:8).

I also found these definitions of corruption to be too general, leaving much for individual interpretation of such terms as "illegal", "personal gain", and "police authority".

Thus, for the purpose of this study I will use the definition of police corruption set forth by Ward and McCormack (1987), which was formulated from responses to questionnaires sent to approximately five hundred police departments by the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals. It reads:

"Police corruption consists of acts which involve the misuse of police authority for the police employee's personal gain; activity of the police employee which compromises, or has the potential to compromise his/her ability to enforce the law or provide other service impartially; the protection of illicit activities from police enforcement, whether or not the police employee's involvement in promoting the business of one person while discouraging that of another person" (1987:10).

Ward & McCormack point out that...

"when it comes to defining what constitutes corruption, police administrators have a certain amount of leeway to establish policy within legal limits, keeping in mind different community standards of what is considered sociable and what is corrupt. At the same time, police administrators must be careful not to over-corruptionalize certain behavior. When it comes to defining corruption and formulating policies, administrators should keep in mind that a good definition and anti-corruption policy should be well-defined, practical, enforceable, workable, and realistic" (Ward and McCormack, 1987).

Numerous Theories: Motivations of Corruption

Police corruption is not a new problem. Throughout history scholars, researchers, and police administrators have continued to ask the same question; why do police officers turn bad? In an attempt to answer this question scholars have applied numerous theories to explain the causes of police corruption (Ward & McCormack, 1987; Rowe, 1987).

One scholar, Robert Merton (1949) in his work "Social Theory and Social Structure", explained corruption as a manifestation and latent function of social groups (Ward & McCormack, 1987). Another more direct and simplified explanation set forth is "Abraham Lincoln's Theory on Overzealousness", which assumes that police officers become corrupt due to their attempts to cope with departmental pressures and to earn acceptance among colleagues. It is not uncommon in a police department to see this type of environment manifest corruption, as in the case of the "Miami River Cops".

In an attempt to relate both the concept of human weakness and Merton's concept of structural sociological theory is Lincoln Steffen's theory of temptation, more popularly known as the "Apple Theory". This theory contends that police officers are ordinary people that face extraordinary temptations. Steffen attempts to blame corruption upon the socio-economic system, where the value of money is a status symbol which produces corrupt businessmen and citizens who tempt these ordinary people that serve the public. However, money is not the only temptation that may cause an individual to become corrupt. For example, sex and the quest for power must also be considered as temptations (Ward & McCormack, 1987).

I found all of these theories useful in partially explaining causes of police corruption, but no one theory offers a full explanation. An all encompassing theory

should focus on explaining the causes of police corruption in relation to not only the individual, but also the organization and the environment in which the officer works. Basically, structural sociologists attempt to do this by theorizing that deviance in officers is a response to their special situation as a law enforcement officer; which is a normal social ambition, coupled with the presence of extraordinary opportunities of which police are exposed to because they work within an environment that puts them in a more vulnerable position to be tempted, then is the average citizen. This is coupled with the environment of the department, such as: the police supervision, inadequate public support, and inadequate pay (Rowe, 1987; Ward & McCormack, 1987).

Grass-Eaters and Meat-Eaters. The Knapp Commission distinguishes between corrupt police officers as "grass-eaters" or "meat-eaters". The distinction is that grass-eaters (the majority of corrupt police officers) will accept gratuities and solicit small quantities of money (\$5-\$25) as payments from gamblers, bar owners, or pimps, but do not aggressively pursue corruption payments. On the other hand, "meat-eaters (often only a small percentage of officers) spend a great deal of their working hours aggressively seeking out situations they can exploit for financial gain, including gambling, narcotics, and other serious offenses which can yield payments of thousands of dollars" (Barker & Carter, 1986:28).

* * * *

Scholars, researchers, and police administrators all tend to agree that one of the greatest temptations is money.

"The money involved in the drug trade is often in such large amounts that it staggers the imagination and tests the ordinary person...money is also one reason why federal agents that investigate the drug world say they do not trust police officers who have been exposed for any length of time to the temptations of the narcotics trade. A senior official with the DEA said, 'there is not a sheriff in Dade County, Florida that cannot be bought'...and this prejudice is claimed to be held throughout Washington, DC." (Eddy, Sabogal & Walden, 1988:70).

A supporting perspective from an article in Law Enforcement News (1987):

"In Miami, most of the money has traces of cocaine on it. It has been estimated that drug money has corrupted at least 1 in every 10 officers in the City of Miami Police Department." (1987, December 8).

Geoffrey Alpert, formerly Director of the University of Miami's Criminal Justice program, said "the temptation is unbelievable, police officers can be offered \$20,000 just to turn their heads. And since police corruption is a result of greed and opportunity, Miami is the perfect place since both are very abundant there." (Eddy, Sabogal & Walden, 1988:203).

In Miami (as well as in other cities), police officers, federal agents, and local politicians have all blamed much of the corruption that occurs within the community on the fact that Miami is a heavy drug trafficking location (Langer, 1986a, 1986b). Around 1980, Miami was actually referred to as "the heart of the drug trafficking area" and

"the crime capital of the United States" (Dorschner, 1989; Eddy, Sabogal & Walden, 1988).

By 1985, local and federal investigations into the Miami Police Department uncovered some of the drug-related criminal activities Miami police officers had been involved in. For instance, in 1985, seven Miami police officers were arrested for raiding a cocaine boat in a boatyard on the Miami River and stealing 350 kilograms of cocaine. Over time, it was found that a group of 12 officers had gone on a series of crime sprees, stealing and reselling more than 1,300 pounds of cocaine worth approximately \$16 million. The first of the 12 Miami Police officers to be charged in the "Miami River Cops" drug corruption case was found guilty of cocaine conspiracy, possession, and tax evasion. The officer had taken \$100,000 to guard 400 pounds of cocaine stolen from a boat yard on the Miami River (Law Enforcement News, 1987, October, 13:2). Law Enforcement News pointed out that police officers in Miami, as well as other major drug trafficking areas, face a situation where they have the chance to make \$1.5 million in several months by ripping off drug traffickers (1988 February 9).

However, the Miami PD is not the only police department in the country in which its officers have been tempted by the money involved in the drug business. Other departments across the country (New York City Police Department; Flint PD, MI; Detroit PD, MI; and Philadelphia PD, PA) have experienced incidents where police officers have been bought

by drug dealers, have stolen money and drugs from drug dealers, and have officers that have gone into the drug business themselves.

For instance, in 1985, the New York City Police Department (NYCPD) experienced serious drug-related corruption problem among many officers in the 77th Precinct. Officers were found to have been taking bribes and pay-offs from drug dealers and users, ripping-off drug dealers and users, selling and using drugs themselves (on and off duty), and even selling weapons. It was found that these officers were bringing in a couple of thousand dollars on the nights they worked. To be specific, these officers had stolen 67 pounds of marijuana and sold it for \$5,000; they were dealing heroin stolen from drug dealers; and would hit a new drug location every night they worked. At times, these officers were making \$1,800 each for the drugs, and if they were in on the drug deal they received an additional \$600 commission (McAlary, 1987). As a result of an extensive investigation, 13 officers from the 77th Precinct were suspended for conduct unbecoming of an officer, and the city transferred all of the 77th Precinct (205 officers and 20 or so supervisors) officers into new commands and new station houses throughout Brooklyn (McAlary, 1987).

McAlary (1987) concluded that in the beginning what motivated these officers was the fact that justice was not being served by the local criminal justice system. The officers took justice into their own hands and began to

punish the "bad guys" on the spot by taking their money and drugs. Soon the officers realized the profits of drug dealing and turned their activities into a money making operation.

What can be seen from both the occurrence of corruption within the Miami PD and the NYCPD is that the basic element of motivation was money-the profit to be made off drugs. Langer (1986a) discusses the series of transactions involving drugs and money (each one of them illegal) that is the basis of the drug trade. Due to the large amounts of money and the high risks involved, drug trafficking and drug-related corruption becomes a continuing enterprise; such that once an individual becomes involved in corrupt activities there is a continual demand upon that individual to commit further illegal acts. Often the use of threats, intimidation, and violence become part of the equation as well (Langer, 1986a, 1986b). Ultimately, the "drugs-for-money" transaction tends to lie at the heart of the motivation, and provides the willingness of an individual to repeat illegal acts over prolonged periods of time (Langer, 1986a; Alpert, 1989; Goldstein, 1975).

It is drug trafficking and the "drugs-for-money transactions" that occur that sets the atmosphere for degeneration and destabilization of a community, exposing citizens and public officials to the opportunities and temptations of drug-related corruption. The attitude that "everyone is doing it" tends to be a basic motivation to

corruption, as are "no one is harmed," or "if I don't do it, someone else will". Every police officer will ask him/herself why, and will find a way to justify his/her actions--whether from personal financial problems (debts or bills); greed; fear of exposure, intimidation, or black mail; social or psychological problems; or a combination of these (Rowe, 1987; Langer, 1986a).

Drug Enforcement: The Nature of the Business

Since the early 1900's, the use, distribution, and possession of various drugs has been made illegal due to the implementation of laws and policies by our government (Inciardi, 1981). Since the 1960's, drug manufacturing, trafficking, and sales has been made out to be a serious problem here in the United States, and in fact in many ways is. As a result, both federal and local government officials and agencies have faced political and community pressures to control the drug problem in this country. In turn, federal and local governments have made several attempts to eliminate the market for drugs. One attempt has been to control the drug market economically by controlling the flow of drugs via eradication and interdiction by way of law enforcement agencies and use of criminal law (Manning & Redlinger, 1986; Langer, 1986a). However, "while more effort is put into drug law enforcement, actually more dollars are spent on drug interdiction" (Carter, 1989). What has happened is that the United States has reached a critical point in the so-called

"War on Drugs", where the problem has overtaken the resources that law enforcement agencies have available to deal with the problem.

Infiltrating the drug market is not an easy job since law enforcement officers face various constraints. Manning and Redlinger (1977) point out several structural constraints that police and narcotics officers face in an attempt to infiltrate the drug market. It is also these structural constraints which may promote infractions of laws, job frustration, and corruption among officers.

Officers and narcotics agents face both internal and external pressures to enforce drug laws (Manning & Redlinger, 1977). From the top, pressures from formally elected or appointed political officials are sent down through the chain of command to police and narcotics officers. At the same time, the media--through editorial feature stories and comments on the rising crime rate--informs the community, and place pressure upon the local police department for action. Plus, with external agencies providing money and additional manpower to fight the drug problem in a specific area or jurisdiction the police department is pressured to produce big busts, arrests, and prosecutions to show they are fighting the drug problem. It is these pressures, the competitiveness of drug law enforcement which is further aggravated by the "profit" law (asset seizure laws), and the poor cooperation between and among individual officers and agencies for information

that exists at times that makes drug enforcement difficult (National Drug Control Strategy, 1989).

Not only do police agencies and its officers face pressures to perform and constraints in performance, but police agencies also have to deal with internal problems that result when they face a community saturated with drugs (Goldstein, 1975; Manning & Redlinger, 1977; Williams, Redlinger, & Manning, 1979; Langer, 1986a; and Carter, 1989). For instance, problems such as police officer misuse of discretion, police use of excessive force, and officer misconduct and corruption.

One major obstacle in drug enforcement (as well as reason why the potential for drug-related police corruption is such a problem), is that the very nature of the narcotics market--a "secretive victimless market"--makes the enforcement of drug laws difficult, forcing officers to operate in a "grey area" of law enforcement which is on the "invitational edge" (Manning & Redlinger, 1977) of corruption. A "grey area" of law enforcement is where both patrol officers and narcotics officers have one foot in the criminal world and one foot in law enforcement, where officers are exposed to unimaginable amounts of drugs and money, and where officers are exposed to the opportunity and temptation of drug-related corruption (Carter, 1989; Manning & Redlinger, 1977).

To get some idea of the money involved in the illicit drug business, it was estimated that in 1987, \$110 to \$130

billion was exchanged in drug deals (Gates, 1988); and only a small proportion of those illegal drugs smuggled into the United States had been seized by drug interdiction agencies (National Drug Control Strategy, 1989; Gates 1988). In fact in the early 1980's, the City of Miami found it was unable to keep up with the funding necessary to fight the drug problem the city had, so it appealed to Vice President Bush for federal assistance. Out of the appeal came the South Florida Drug Interdiction Task Force and hundreds of thousands of dollars in federal resources. Still, even with all the federal efforts and United States Coast Guard and Customs interdictions it is estimated that only between 5 to 10 percent of all drugs coming into the US are interdicted. Today, large quantities of drugs continue to flow in through Miami and the Dade County area. However, since we have witnessed a shift in drug trafficking routes; traffickers are now moving drugs across all borders of the United States. As a result, more police departments across the country can expect to experience what the City of Miami Police Department has experienced, if they have not already.

Langer (1986b) points out that our society has placed a great burden upon the criminal justice system, especially the police, to deal with a situation (the illicit drug business) that is as much as social problem as a law enforcement problem. This burden is coupled with problems that law enforcement agencies are not provided with adequate resources to meet such new and complex problems.

The Nature of Drug-Related Corruption

Due to the very nature of the drug business-a "secret victimless market"-and the nature of drug enforcement (the fact that incredible amounts of money are involved) it is almost inevitable that police would eventually become involved in the "drugs-for-money" transaction and corrupt activities (Manning & Redlinger, 1986; Langer, 1986a, 1986b; Ward & McCormack, 1987; McAlary, 1987; Eddy, Sabogal, & Walden, 1988; Alpert, 1989).

Langer (1986b) points out that:

"Prior to the onset of the international drug problem, corruption was not as evident or as characteristic of entire societies. However, drug-related corruption of social institutions and governmental agencies has changed this and raised the problem to unprecedented magnitudes and visibility." (1986b:329,330).

Drug-related police corruption can occur in various forms and throughout various stages of the production, trafficking, and dealing of drugs; as well as throughout various stages of the law enforcement process. For instance, a police officer may become involved in illegal drug activities anywhere between the production and smuggling of drugs, to the investigation of illegal drug activities and the legal proceedings (Langer, 1986a, 1986b; Ward & McCormack, 1986). But the opportunity for a police officer to consider the acceptance of a bribe or favor comes most often during the investigation stage; partly because it is at the investigation stage that officers conduct surveillance, seize drugs and money (as well as other

related evidence), and arrest suspects. It is also at this stage that undercover work is conducted, informants are used, payments are made for information, there is direct contact with criminals on a frequent basis, and drugs are bought. There is also a considerable amount of personal police discretion and need for integrity at this stage.

At the same time, there have been instances in which police officers have been employed by the police while they were already involved in drug-related activities (Langer, 1986b; Williams, 1986). Other officers become involved in drug-related activities because they become aware of the drug-related activity and see it as an opportunity to make some extra cash. Some public officials may become aware of the corruption, but due to inadequate controls, laws, or lack of power, cannot or will not do anything (Langer, 1986a).

As has continually been stressed, the consequences of drug trafficking involve not only specific actions that are illegal, but also a series of transactions involving drugs and money, each one of them illegal. Due to the amount of people and money involved in the drug trade, and the high penalties for those caught, it becomes a continuing enterprise in the sense that once a person has accepted money to perform an illegal act, s/he is part of the conspiracy and can no longer withdraw from it without the likelihood of being implicated. Thus, the bribe causes an infection which corrupts the individual and begins the whole

process of disease (Langer, 1986a).

Over the past 25 years or so, police at different times and in different cities have been found to have, for money or favors: ignored drug law violations; permitted drug traffickers to carry on their activities unreported; actively participated in drug smuggling or drug dealing; intimidated drug dealers into making payoffs; stolen seized drugs and drug money from dealers, traffickers, and their own departments property room; sold drugs to users; protected and even killed for drug dealers; financed drug deals or actually become drug dealers; become drug users; and some have violated almost every law they were charged with upholding or enforcing (Langer, 1986a). But keep in mind that these corrupt law enforcement officers are only a small minority of all officers (Ward & McCormack, 1987).

Police-Community Relations: An Adversary Relationship

Every community, as well as segment (groups, families, individuals) of a community, holds certain attitudes toward drugs and drug-related crimes. These attitudes tend to vary in relation to the extent of drug business and trafficking that exists within the community. For instance, in a community that is involved in drug trafficking, that benefits from the profits of drugs, and that experiences drug-related crimes that accompany such an illicit business, there tends to exist some degree of disagreement between the community and the police as to how drug laws should be enforced and to what extent. This conflict creates the

potential for the existence of an adversary relationship between the police and certain community groups (Williams, Redlinger, & Manning, 1979; Langer, 1986a, 1986b).

Langer (1986a) sets forth several social and psychological factors that a community may possess and that local police have to contend with when enforcing the laws; however, the extent and effect of these factors vary from community-to-community. For instance (Langer, 1986a; Ward & McCormack, 1987):

- the public may be indifferent to drug-related crime or these types of crimes may be of low social priority to certain community groups;
- drug traffickers may be seen as entrepreneurs rather than criminals, and the public desires the financial benefits of the business;
- drug abuse and a level of drug trade may be tolerated in the area;
- the public may have little confidence in the authorities or local justice system to deal with the trafficking and the traffickers; or
- the public may be in fear and simply not report drug-related crimes.

All of these social/psychological factors that the public possess in turn effect the way the local police perform their job, and can make effective enforcement of laws against drug traffickers and dealers complex and difficult. The public also has the ability to generate within the police certain negative or positive attitudes about drug traffickers and drug-related crimes that the community holds. Langer (1986a) supports the understanding that public views of the police have a strong influence upon

police behavior (see also: Williams, 1986; Ward & McCormack, 1987). Adding to the problem, a general awareness tends to develop among the public that when drug trafficking and drug-related crimes are significant in a community, officials may be indifferent, unable, or unwilling to deal with corrupt drug-related activities. For instance (Langer, 1986a, 1986b; Williams, 1986):

- the public may be hostile, suspicious, or indifferent to the local police;
- the local police departments internal security unit may be ineffective and the public recognizes this and in turn this may affect the attitudes and willingness of the public to cooperate with the local police;
- the public may believe that the local police are unable to deal effectively with the drug problem, possibly as a result of police ineffectiveness or lack of communication;
- the public may lose respect for the local police and the police department as a whole;
- the public may be reluctant to come forward and report criminal activity, witnesses may be distrustful of the authorities, and criminals may become more active.

Due to this disagreement/adversary relationship that tends to exist between the public and the local police under these circumstances, especially in regards to drug enforcement, at times the standards for local law enforcement officers becomes unclear and hard to define.

In fact, when a large number of people in the community become involved in the sale and use of illegal drugs, the community begins to deteriorate, and the public's attitudes toward drug-related crimes becomes lax (Langer, 1986a, 1986b; Wilson and Kelling, 1982). In turn, this can make it

difficult for the police to enforce drug laws within the community (Langer, 1986a, 1986b; Williams, 1986). It is at this point that the stage is set for social, political, and economic corruption (environmental corruption).

Economic and Demographic Factors

Langer (1986) stresses the need to examine individual, organizational, and environmental corruption on a macro-sociological level, examining the context and social environment in which drug-related corruption occurs. Therefore, in addition to examining the public factors that directly impact police activity and behavior there is a need to examine more general factors (such as economic and demographic factors) that affect police efficiency and create circumstances that give rise to police misconduct and corruption.

Langer (1986a) sets forth that economic factors of the drug business are the most extensive of all the factors which result in corruption within the community. Several of the economic factors to be considered are:

1. The illegal drug profits that flow into local businesses and the local population (or a large portion of the population) depends upon the amount of drug profits that are incomes.
2. Local businesses and banks willingly accept the new economic activity without questioning its source.
3. Currency, banking, and other financial controls in the area are lax or inadequate, allowing funds to be transferred while avoiding accounting and tax controls.
4. There is noticeable increased spending by those who are profiting from drug trafficking and the drug

business, as well as increase in commercial activity in the area.

Due to the large amounts of money involved in the drug business not only are drug dealers and buyers affected, but so are those individuals who manage the money, the goods, the services, and the property within the community where "drug-for-money" transactions have become an important part of the economic activity. The movement of money in the South Florida area is very rapid and greatly affects the local economy; however, in some areas it may take longer to notice this economic activity (Langer, 1986a). For instance, in larger communities the economic impact can be hidden for a longer period of time because the effects of the influx of money remain less obvious for longer; while, in smaller communities the economic effects upon the community are more easily noticed.

In addition, the economic effects of the drug business not only effect those involved in drug transactions, drug-related economic activity, and the use of drugs; but the economic effects of the drug business also effect those who are not involved in the drug business, although they may be aware of it. For instance, the experience of many areas has been that money moves more rapidly, prices rise, there is a need/pressure to maintain a specific standard of living in the area which the majority of the population does not/or is unable to maintain, and overall the community experiences greater poverty among its population. These economic

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impacts upon a community resulting from drug trafficking and drug dealing will vary with time and type of community (Langer, 1986a, 1986b).

Another factor that needs to be examined is the demographics of the community (Langer, 1986a). Drug traffickers tend to seek out communities, or portions of a community that (Langer, 1986a, 1986b):

- are close-knit and isolated from, or some what kept separate from the local authorities;
- have a source of control outside of law enforcement;
- can maintain both secrecy and integrity;
- have drug-related activities which can go almost unnoticed (at least for some period of time);
- are receptive to the drug business and drug-related activity;
- will accept or tolerate the new activity;
- give some active support to drug traffickers and dealers, especially active support from the local leadership and/or authorities;
- are vulnerable, an area where possibly:
 - a political establishment is indifferent to or actively supportive of the drug business;
 - a political or administrative structure that is unable to control its population, drug business, financial transactions or criminal activity in the area;
 - transportation systems exist that give traffickers access to secure routes by which drugs and drug couriers or large quantities of packaged or partially processed drugs may be shipped to target consumer areas.
- have a police department that lacks resources, or which is indifferent to, untrained, undirected, corrupted, or actively cooperates in illegal activity already.

Often these factors can be found in areas with large populations such as urban ghettos. Even more, urban ghettos tend to have some sort of underground economy that lacks adequate police presence or knowledge of, as well as possess the needed support from local criminal elements that is

needed to maintain an active illegal drug market. For example, the Columbian and Black communities in Miami and New York City (as well as other US cities) possess the needed demographic factors, as well as economic factors, for drug-related activity to exist and flourish.

In sum, the large amounts of money that enter the economy have a major effect upon the community, and the results tend to be cumulative and tend to result in other indirect social consequences.

Corruption as a Symptom of a Larger Social Problem: Drugs

"Drug-related corruption no longer remains a secret in today's world, and due to the onset of an international drug problem corruption has become a characteristic of both entire communities and societies" (Langer, 1986b:329). To obtain a clearer picture of the corrupting effects of drug trafficking, Langer (1986) asserts the need to look beyond the specific acts of any individual police officer and examine the circumstances in which police corruption occurs; in other words, look at police drug-related corruption on a macro-sociological level. Langer states that:

"we must look at the context and the social environment so that the true nature of the problem and some indication as to solutions may be found." (1986a:297).

Today's international drug trafficking in its advanced states affects almost every facet of a society. Police are very visible and important but alone they cannot control the flow of drugs, the legal and judicial systems play a significant role as well. In general the criminal justice

system is only a single component in the larger system of social, economic, and political control; and drug traffickers possess the necessary resources and power to effect the very fabric of communities/societies (Langer, 1986b:323).

Maintaining the integrity of police and other criminal justice officials in the face of the financial inducements of the one-hundred billion dollar drug business is a major challenge that faces law enforcement agencies throughout the country. However, when a society or community has large numbers of police officers that are not performing their duties in accordance with regulations and the law, in almost every case the causes go beyond the money involved in the drug business, such misconduct is a symptom of more serious social corruption. (Langer, 1986a, 1986b; Williams, 1986; Ward & McCormack, 1987).

Langer (1986a, 1986b) recognizes police drug-related corruption as a symptom of a larger social problem: drug production, drug trafficking, drug dealing, and drug use. It has been verified both statistically and through experience that where drug trafficking becomes a serious problem, crimes of many kinds follow. Drug addiction and crime, against both persons and property (as well as other types of crimes), tend to go hand-in-hand (Langer, 1986a; Inciardi, 1981). In order to give some perspective to the social corruption that accompanies drug trafficking I present various types of crimes that a community/society will

experience: drug production, smuggling, selling, and use; tax evasion, money laundering, and illegal banking investments; corruption of public officials and the criminal justice system; extortion, intimidation, and blackmail; theft, robbery, and burglary (Langer, 1986a; Ward & McCormack, 1987).

Langer hypothesizes that:

"police misconduct involving drug-related criminal activity is in most situations a single component in a much larger pattern of societal corruption and illegal activity...that exists within the community in which the police carry out their activities." (1986a:293).

As a result, any efforts made to deal with police misconduct alone without considering the larger context of social, political, and economic corruption will be doomed for failure. It does little good to declare that a police department take swift action against corrupt officers when the community served by that police department tends to avoid certain areas, certain dockyards, and specific places at certain times due to drug business (Williams, 1986; Langer 1986a, 1986b; Ward & McCormack, 1987).

The consequences from drug trafficking and dealing are not only drug-related crimes, but also corruption of public officials and community values. Corruption may exist to the point that communities become so dependent upon the money generated by the drug business that when a community attempts to protect itself from the consequences-increased drug use and crime in their own neighborhoods--they cannot do so by themselves. If corruption within a community has

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reached a peak and is condoned by local political authorities, the police may be forced to simply go through the motions, but be ineffective. The police will make some arrests and prosecutions in order to appease the public and encourage them to believe that action is being taken (Langer, 1986a, 1986b).

Where corruption exists within the local criminal justice system there are often sources of corruption within the community. In fact, the public may condone the indifferences and neglect of power by local authorities. Such a problem develops and evolves over time, it is the consequence of an erosion of social consciousness and individual involvement, and it is promoted by a community and public officials who are indifferent to the consequences of the drug business (Ward & McCormack, 1987; Langer, 1986a, 1986b).

In sum, on a macro-level drug traffickers have penetrated the political, economic, social, and legal systems of different communities (Langer, 1986a, 1986b). Wherever drug trafficking of any significant quantity exists, corruption of public officials, community leadership, and the police is probable. This vulnerability to social and political corruption is a major threat to the order and stability of a community/society (Langer, 1986b:322). However, there is no specific length of time needed for such a process of corruption to develop; it may take months, years, or decades. Ultimately, the

degeneration is the same and the consequences are similar, only the scale of corruption and the amount of time it takes to corrupt a community will vary.

Conclusion

Researchers, scholars, and police administrators have all faced problems in defining police corruption (especially drug-related corruption), explaining the causes of such corruption, and controlling such corruption. Not only does the drug business and drug trafficking bring with it problems of corruption among criminal justice officials, public officials, local business people, and local citizens; but it brings with it economic, social, and political problems.

This literature review was an attempt not only to explain drug-related police corruption in regards to the nature of the drug business and the police work of drug enforcement; but also to explain drug-related corruption in a larger context (not only among police officers, but other members of the community as well), as a social problem that "needs to be further" examined at the macro-level. Thus, in the proceeding chapters I examine the extent and nature of drug-related police corruption from a macro-sociological perspective, only briefly touching on micro-psychological individual motivations and justifications.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

This is a qualitative field study conducted within the City of Miami Police Department, a major metropolitan police department in an area known as a transit center for drug trafficking and distribution.

Site

The City of Miami in Dade County, FL is located at the Southern end of Florida on Florida's East Coast. Dade County, Florida, is a unique county, as Miami is a unique city. There are many aspects of both Dade County and the City of Miami that resembles no other county nor city in the United States. Dade County consists of about 2,000 square-miles of land that lies in between the ocean and the Everglades (Alpert and Dunham, 1988); this area has been referred to as Paradise, the Murder Capital of the United States, the Cocaine Capital of the United States, and the home for a wide variety of immigrants, illegal aliens, and refugees from the Caribbean Islands, Latin America, South America, and Cuba. Furthermore, Dade County and the City of Miami have been uniquely portrayed by the media with scenes from Miami Vice and Scarface for its beautiful beaches and illicit drug trafficking.

The City of Miami's demographics are very unique:

In 1988, it was estimated that Dade County, FL consisted of approximately 1,776,000 people and a daily average of about 42,000 tourists. Of the 2,000 square miles of Dade county, which are divided among 26 municipalities, only 340 square miles are populated, and 53% of the residents live within the

unincorporated area. The largest among the municipalities are Miami with 400,000 estimated residents; Haialeah with 144,000, Coral Gables with 42,000, and Miami Beach with a population of 91,000" (Alpert, 1989: 480).

"In 1970, the City of Miami had an Anglo population of approximately 67%, the black population was 16%, and Hispanics accounted for 17% of the 1,167,792 residents" (Alpert & Dunham, 1988:32). "In 1980, the census showed that Dade County's resident population was about 17.3% black and 35.7% Hispanic. That same year more than 250,000 Cubans immigrated to South Florida, and 25,000 Haitians took refuge on the shores of Miami's beaches. By 1988, it has been estimated that about 18.7% are black and 41.3% Hispanic" (Alpert, 1989: 480).

Table 3-1: Population Breakdown by Race (Percentages)

	<u>1977</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1988</u>
Anglos	67.0%	47.0%	40.0%
Blacks	16.0%	17.3%	18.7%
<u>Hispanics</u>	<u>17.0%</u>	<u>35.7%</u>	<u>41.3%</u>
<u>Total %</u>	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100.0%</u>
<u>Population</u>	<u>1,167,792</u>	<u>* * *</u>	<u>1,776,000</u>

"In 1985, approximately 47% of the population was male, 62% between the ages of 18 and 64, and 15% of the population 65 or older. In 1983, more than 10% of the County's total labor force was unemployed, and approximately 11.9% of the population was living below the national poverty level" (Alpert & Dunham, 1988:32).

In 1980, the Miami-Dade area employed a police force of 3,374 officers county wide; and by 1986, the force increased

to 4,622 sworn and 1,659 civilian police employees who responded to over 213,000 crimes (1986) and 1,018,049 calls for police service (Alpert & Dunham, 1988). The growth in the police force was largely due to the increase in drug importation, an increase in crime, the Mariel boatlift, and the 1980 riots.

Data Collection

I received approval from Chief of Police Perry Anderson of the City of Miami Police Department to examine the nature and extent of police drug-related corruption that the Miami Police Department has experienced throughout the 1980s. Chief Anderson then turned my study over to former Police Administrator Howard Rasmussen and Major Ken Harrison who set up several of my interviews and provided access to the information needed.

The information obtained in this study is drawn from various sources: factual data from departmental reports and departmental rules and regulations, individual officers perceptions, and personal observations. Due to the difficulty of gathering information on a sensitive issue such as corruption, as well as conducting research in a police working environment in which there is a so-called "code of silence" among officers, there are a variety of threats to the validity and reliability of information received that needs to be mentioned. Threats such as: individual officers racial and ethnic biases and prejudices; officers political biases; officers biases toward other

individual officers, mid-management, and police administrators; and secrecy and paranoia of officers may prevail at times.

Given the sensitivity of the issues, I used various techniques to assure that as much interactive information as possible was obtained on the "Miami River Cops" case, the nature of the corruption, the influencing factors, and the officers perceptions of the situation; in attempt to maximize validity and reliability of information presented. The three research techniques utilized in this research were interviews, participant observation, and historical analysis.

Interviews. I used a method of snowball sampling in which approximately thirty officers within the City of Miami Police Department were interviewed. These officers represent mid-management level, patrol officers, narcotics officers, and special assignment officers to name a few (all of these officers were given the option to participate, and those that did participate were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity).

Table 3-2: Breakdown by Race, by Gender, By Rank, the
Number of Miami Police Officers Interviewed

	Hispanic	Anglo	Black	Other	Total
Race/Ethnicity	7	14	7	3	31=N

Gender (by race)					
male	7	13	6	2	28
female	0	1	1	1	3

Rank (by race)					
Major	0	1	1	0	2
Lieutenant	1	2	1	0	4
Sergeant	0	3	1	0	4
Patrol officer	6	8(1)	4(1)	3(1)	21

()=number of those that are female

Table 3-3: Breakdown of the Number of Officers Interviewed
by Rank and Assignment of Officer

Assignment of officer	Major	Lt.	Sgt.	P.O.	Narcotics officer

Street Narcotics Unit (SNU)	0	1	2	0	11(1)

Special Investigations Section (SIS)	1	3	0	1	0

Patrol officer	0	0	1	4(1)	0

Special Assignment	1	0	1	(1)	2

Total	2	4	4	6	14

()=number of those that are female

* * * *

Interviews were conducted not only with officers within the Miami PD, but also with public officials outside of the Miami PD that were involved in the investigation and prosecution of the "Miami River Cops"-an attorney from the State Attorney's Office that was assigned to the Miami River Cops case, and the lead investigator of the Miami River Cops case from Metro-Dade Police Department. The purpose for these interviews was to get an outside view of the corruption problem and corroborate their views with those of Miami police officers. Again, all these interviewees were assured confidentiality and anonymity in order to obtain as honest and truthful of responses as possible.

The purpose behind the interviews was to find out the attitudes and perceptions of individual officers on general issues and specifically identified problems of police drug-related corruption the Miami Police Department has experienced. I specifically sought out what officers perceived to be the influencing factors of such corruption, and why the corruption was able to go to such extremes. Furthermore, I questioned officers as to what changes have been made within the department since the 1985 corruption scandal, to assure that the same problems will not reoccur in the future, and what changes they feel need to be made in order to curb future corruption problems. Last, I asked whether they see this type of corruption occurring again in the future.

Interviews conducted at the mid-management level were

conducted in a fairly formal manner, in which a more structured baseline set of questions was asked. Most of the interviews conducted with Sergeants, patrol officers, and narcotics officers were more informal and less structured; questions asked of them often depended upon the individual officer and the situation. Questions and issues discussed with officers were often based upon the concerns unique to each individual interviewee. Very generally, some of the questions addressed were:

1. What factors do you think influence the corruption problems the department faces?
2. Did you know any of the corrupt officers?
3. What sort of temptations and opportunities for corruption are you exposed to as a police officer in Miami?
4. What is your perception of the political influences in the department?
5. What was occurring in the department in the early half of the 1980s?
6. What changes (policy and/or procedural) has the department made in order to assure that corruption will not go to such extremes as in the case of the Miami River Cops?
7. How do you define corruption? Where do you draw the line between corruption and what is not corruption (accepting gratuities)?

* * * *

Notes were taken during the more structured and formal interviews conducted with mid-management. However, I found that patrol officers and narcotics officers felt more comfortable and were more apt to open up if notes were not taken at that time; under these circumstances, notes of the

officers comments were often written following the interviews. Those notes and summaries were then later used as a source for drawing evaluations and assessing the issues. Keep in mind I was only seeking officers perceptions as to the problem, not looking for confessions of committing corrupt acts or any incriminating evidence to use against these officers.

Participant Observation. Interviews were integrated with the use of participant observation. I rode five consecutive days with five different patrol officers on B shift (3:00pm-1:00am) in different areas of the city, and rode 6 consecutive days with the Street Narcotics Unit (SNU). In every instance, I was able to participate in all of the officers activities.

Basically, I used the participant observation as a means to acquire first-hand experience and knowledge of how officers perform their job, what officers face on the streets, the community's reaction to the police, how the police deal with the community, the nature of the city's drug problem, and how the department manages the drug problem and their effectiveness.

I also conducted interviews with these officers with regard to the "Miami River Cops" case and problems of police drug-related corruption/misconduct that the department has experienced. The officers were questioned with regard to the job (job stress, community relations, department morale, and officer comradery) and their actions. More

specifically, officers were questioned in regards to the tasks they perform, their views of the legitimacy of the task performed, their views of the procedures used to perform the task, and how these procedures could be improved.

Observations also entailed observing the officers behavior, the degree of decision making and discretion used on the job, and the degree of uniformity between different officers actions.

Review of the Literature and Historical Analysis.

Interviews were supplemented with a review of the literature to serve as a research foundation and a brief historical analysis to gain insight into the specific nature of the Miami Police Department's and the city's demographic changes and drug-related problems. Also, material (books, magazine articles, and newspaper clippings) regarding specifically the Miami River Cops case was gathered and reviewed in order to gain insight as to what occurred within the police department and the city since 1980.

Supplemental reviews were made of departmental policies, reports, and other documents which address officer misconduct, and disciplinary procedures and actions that can and should be taken in the case of such incidents of officer misconduct.

When the review of the literature and the historical analysis was combined with interviews and observations, I was able to obtain a clearer understanding of the

departments operating procedures.

Items to be examined during the field study (through interviews, participant observation, and content analysis) are:

Data Item	Comments
Organization Chart	Chain of command within the department and vice units. Relationship (formal and informal) between the different levels of the hierarchy.
Procedures	Examine formal guidelines for comparison employees actions and job performance.
Undercover Work	Report procedures. What function do undercover officers perform and are the units protected against corruption? Types of investigation strategies.
Surveillance and Raids	Team size and composition, strategies, equipment and weapons, communication devices, finding and handling of evidence. Warrants and search and seizures procedures. Look at street-level performance.
Evidence Handling	Chain of evidence and property room security (drugs, money, and other).
Training Manual	Training-formal and/or informal for recruits and officers.
Division of Labor	Shift schedules, what time periods are well covered, what times are not and why. Do shifts rotate? Shift tasks and personnel assigned. Unit manpower and backup available to units.
Formal goals	What is the departments objectives? What level of the drug market does the department expect to impact?

Informants	Control over informants and confidentiality.
Drug Arrests	Type of drugs, amount of drugs confiscated. Use of uniformed patrol officers, undercover detectives, federal agents informants, and others.
Attitudes	Officers attitude toward the job, toward drug enforcement, toward corruption, and toward administration.

* * * *

All the information that has been gathered has been classified into categories, such as: individual, organizational, political, and community factors that influence or generate corruption. Comparisons are also made between individual officers attitudes and attitudes between the ranks, especially variation in attitudes between mid-management and line officers.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The conditions and combinations of factors that are descriptive of the environment wherein corruption and corrupt police departments develops vary in time and space (geography). Thus, I am not discussing my findings in the language of causality, but rather in terms of contributing factors that facilitate, generate, encourage, or present opportunities for individual officers to resort to corrupt activities and police departments to breed corrupt activities among its officers.

The data from this study was collected between June 7, 1989 and June 18, 1989, through the various research techniques outlined in Chapter 3. My historical analyses has been a continual process that began prior to the collection of my data, and has continued there after.

All of the information gathered has been compiled and the most important influencing factors to drug corruption (those continually repeated and stressed to me by various officers) will be presented. While reading this report, keep in mind that everything that was told to me was told with the assurance that the officers name would not be revealed in my report. Assuring these officers their confidentiality was also an attempt to assure that the information I was gathering was reliable. In order to strengthen my reliability of information I have made every attempt to corroborate information between officers

statements, with statements from other public officials outside of the Miami PD, and with information obtained through historical analysis.

* * * *

The findings indicate that there are several influential factors that have occurred within the Miami area and the Miami Police Department that have set the organizational atmosphere for corruption, as well as has allowed individual officers to take corruption to such extremes (as in the 1985 "Miami River Cops" case).

I have attempted to present my findings in such a way as to move from a broad over view of the city (its politics and the community), to the department (its problems and weaknesses), to the influence of the drug market and human nature on drug-related corruption. This chapter presents a quick overview of the characteristics of the City of Miami, Florida (the city's uniqueness, its demographic and economic changes, racial tensions, and crime problems).

Chapter 5 discusses Miami's politics (the Cuban influence) and the influence politics has on the Miami PD and its officers, and the officers perception of that influence. Discussing the role of the ties between the police administration, politics, and corruption; and officers perception of the whole situation. In relation to political influence on the department I discuss the Miami PDs mass hiring push (a politically influenced hiring frenzy) and the long-term effects the push has had on the

police department in relation to problems of corruption. This included a discussion on: lowered hiring standards, lack of training to rookies, lack of supervision and control over officers.

Chapter 6 focuses on the role of the local community, the influence the community has on the police department, individual officers, and corruption. Looking at the overflow of community problems (racial tensions and drug problems) into the Miami PD, to the extent that the Miami PD has become a reflection of the community. Touching on the various cultural/ethnic factors that have shaped officers behaviors and exposed them to the opportunities and temptations of corruption.

Chapter 7 addresses the drug problem that Miami experiences and the problems the market generates within the Miami PD, as well as the problems drugs generate for individual officers (frustration officers experience attempting to deal with the local drug problem). Furthermore, addressing the fact that the drug market presents officers with the opportunities for and temptations of corruption; which ties in to the last discussion on human nature and corruption (temptations, opportunities, greed, and justifications for one's actions).

Finally, Chapter 8 draws all the findings together into a conclusion and discusses where scholars and researchers need to think about going from here.

THE CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA

Miami: "A Unique City"

Miami is a unique city for several reasons. For one, "Miami has undergone a more dramatic ethnic transformation in the last two decades than any other American city" (Dorschner, 1989: 251). Since 1960, the City of Miami has undergone drastic demographic changes, mostly as a result of the massive influx of immigrants and refugees from Central America, Latin America, and the Caribbean Islands.

Originally, greater Miami had been a fairly quiet rural Southern town, made up of predominantly white Anglos. Miami attracted many wealthy tourists due to its warm climate and miles of sandy beaches.

In 1960, approximately 75% of Miami's population was Anglo (in Miami, if you are white but not Hispanic you are Anglo, even if you are Jewish, Greek, Italian, or whatever). By 1980, the Miami-Dade County population grew to 1.65 million people, approximately 650,000 of those people were Hispanic-Americans (more than 500,000 of that 650,000 being Cubans). Then by 1987, only 15% of Miami's population was made up of Anglo's, 85% were American blacks, Haitians, Salvadorians, Jamaicans, Puerto Ricans, Nicaraguans, and others (60% of that 85% being Cubans) (NY Times Magazine, 19 June 1987).

With the influx of Cuban's in the 1960's, Miami began to change into a booming commercial and internationally oriented city. But rather than the more than 500,000 Cubans

assimilating into Anglo mainstream, they gave the Miami area a strong Latin atmosphere; in fact, turning Miami into the nations only truly bilingual and bicultural metropolitan area (NY Times, 9 June 1980). Today, Miami is as much a reflection of the United States as it is a reflection of Cuban immigrants and an extension of Latin America.

Cuban Influx

Demographic Changes. In late 1960 and early 1961, when Fidel Castro's revolution occurred, democracy disappeared from Cuba and Communism was established; as a result, Miami was flooded with Cuban refugees-predominately middle- and upper-class businessmen and professionals. Within the first two years of the Cuban revolution the total number of refugees fleeing Cuba was 64,000. For the next 20 years, legally and illegally, hundreds of thousands of Cuban refugees arrived in Miami.

By 1971, due to the large influx of Cuban immigrants and their rapid advancement in the community, the city experienced new development and its boundaries increased. In turn, local authorities were forced into forming the Metro-Dade Public Safety Department (later becoming the Metro-Dade Police Department) to police unincorporated parts of Dade County. As a result, Miami experiences jurisdictional boundary problems between the City of Miami Police Department and that of the Metro-Dade Police Department, which can be frustrating to both officers and residents of the community. For example, in some areas

simply by crossing the road one can go from the jurisdiction of the Miami Police Department to that of Metro-Dades.

In 1980, Miami experienced a second influx of Cubans, known as the "Mariel Boatlift" (Cubans from the Port of Mariel, Cuba), which produced the single biggest influx of Cuban refugees into Miami--totaling over 250,000 people and putting Miami into a total crisis situation. Part of the problem is that this second influx of Cubans was of a different class than the earlier wave of Cuban refugees. These new arrivals were much younger (average age 34), half were unmarried, and approximately 70% were men (Eddy, Sabogal & Walden, 1988). In addition, by Castro's design, thousands of the refugees from the "Mariel Boatlift" came directly from Cuba's prisons, including: dissidents, homosexuals, prostitutes, minor criminal types, and some of Cuba's most hardened criminals and criminally insane.

With the second influx of Cubans also came a variety of social problems: housing shortages, unemployment, severely strained social programs, and a lack of necessary resources to handle the massive number of refugees.

Increase in Crime Rates. In 1980, accompanying the second influx of Cubans (the "Mariels") also came a drastic increase in crime rates in the Miami area. Rates for major crimes at least doubled from 1979 to 1980, mainly due to the fact that within that year Miami received an additional 10,000 killers and thieves as a result of the "Mariel Boatlift" (NY Times Magazine, 19 June 1987).

For example, in 1980, Miami reported 175 murders; than between 1980 and 1981, Miami reported the highest murder rate of any city in the country, with 70 homicides per 100,000 residents-3.5 times the national average for large cities, and more than twice the rate of New York City's homicide rate (Eddy, Sabogal & Walden, 1988). In 1981, on the average, 66 refugees were arrested in Miami for homicide, and 72 Mariels were murdered (often by other Mariels). By 1987, Miami's murder rate decreased, ranking sixth as murder city in the nation, partially because by this time most of the Mariels that were hardened criminals had killed each other (NY Times Magazine, 19 June 1987). However, by 1987, half of all violent crimes in Miami were still being committed by Mariels and refugees represented 20 to 30% of the city's jail population (Time, 12 October 1987).

The impact of Cubans on Miami has not only been in the number of people and increased crime rates, but also has been an increase in drug trafficking and dealing. By 1980, with the second wave of Cuban immigrants, crimes, drug trafficking, and drug dealing increased in the Miami area, and Miami experienced what has been referred to as the "Cocaine Wars" (narcotic wars between big time Columbian and Cuban drug dealers). In 1984, police statistics showed that 1 in 4 murders were connected to drug trafficking; by 1986, the figures were 1 in 6. However, in 1986, murders of unknown motive increased 100% over 1985, and 1000% over 1984 (New York Times magazine 19 June 1987). Today, drug-related

murders have slightly decreased, and most of these murders are between small time drug and crack dealers.

Influence on Corruption. In addition to crime, these Spanish-speaking criminals brought with them corrupt practices that were characteristic of the politics in their native country. In fact in the last seven years, police officers within the Dade county area have been accused of some of the flashiest crimes-racketeering, multiple murders, extortion, drug dealing, stealing money and drugs from drug dealers and users, as well as from the police department property room.

Haitian Influx

In 1980, the Haitian population in Miami also increased; officials estimated that the Haitians numbered 70,000 (NY Times, 19 June 1987). However, unlike the Cubans, the Haitians were not accepted with open arms by the US government because Haitians were not coming to escape political repression, but rather were fleeing poverty. Therefore, Haitians did not receive the financial and local support the Cubans did.

Furthermore, the Haitians that arrived in Miami were not self-sufficient like the Cubans, the majority of Haitians were unskilled and uneducated; and they brought with them a host of social and medical problems (such as: poverty, medical needs, and disease-tuberculosis, AIDS, and pregnancy problems) which cost the state and local taxpayers highly.

Nicaraguan Influx

Since 1987, Miami has also been experiencing a large and growing community of Nicaraguans (numbering 75,000) which are more the middles-class and business types that have come to this country to escape Nicaragua for political reasons.

Racial Tension: Riots

With the massive influx of immigrants and refugees from Latin America, Central America, and the Caribbean Islands, as well as the migration of Anglos out of Metropolitan Miami (it has been estimated that 115,000 Anglos left the Dade County area between 1980 and 1985), the city has shown signs of ethnic and racial strains (Newsweek, 25 January 1988).

Often Miami has been described as a tense multi-racial, multi-ethnic community (the two largest minority groups being Hispanics, mainly Cubans, and blacks). The cultural differences of Miami's population has complicated the task of ethnic cooperation. Adding to the tension, as Anglo's moved out of Miami they also moved out of Miami's political arena and the Cubans began to move toward controlling a greater share of the cities political power. Today, the balance of power in Miami has shifted to the majority being Hispanic, mainly Cuban; as a result, blacks have been politically misrepresented in Miami's City Hall and other bureaucratic organizations, such as the City of Miami Police Department, and as a result racial tensions have increased. For instance, through interviews it was expressed that black

police officers in the Miami PD have accused colleagues of discrimination, and the black community has expressed dissatisfaction with the way Miami's police officers treat members of the black community.

While the Cubans have moved into the city, into the job market, and into politics, the American blacks in Miami have not been able to integrate into the community as such, and as a result Miami faces serious ethnic and racial problems; this is also the root causes of Miami's black riots.

There have been four riots among Miami's blacks since 1968, and three have occurred over the last ten years. The first riot in 1968, was a protest by Miami's blacks over a Republic National Convention. Within the past ten years, the other three riots were touched off when a police officer killed a black individual under suspicious circumstances. For instance, the riot of 1980 was sparked when a police officer beat a black insurance executive to death when the officer stopped the man for a traffic violation. In 1982, Miami experienced the Overtown Riot after a Hispanic police officer shot and killed a black youth; and again in 1988, Miami's blacks rioted when a Hispanic officer shot and killed a black youth on a motorcycle.

Even though the catalyst igniting violence was the same for all the riots of the 1980's, the reasons for the violent reactions are more complex. The root causes of the riots are that Miami's American blacks are frustrated with seeing immigrants receiving favored treatment, blacks complain that

they are being displaced in the job market by Cuban's because employers seek bilingual workers (which disadvantages both blacks and whites). It is a fact though that American blacks in Miami face extremely high rates of unemployment; for example, in 1980, unemployment of black adults was 13%, and unemployment of black youth was 30 to 35%. Miami's blacks have expressed that they have become third-class citizens, behind Miami's whites and Latins. Obviously, economics are an underlying force of Miami's black riots.

Since 1980, political, economic, and social concerns, as well as racial tensions have been increasing between the Spanish-speaking and non-Spanish speaking elements of the community.

Miami's Economy

With the first wave of Cubans to Miami, multinational corporations came to the city to set up Latin headquarters, as well as did banks. Today, the Miami area is an international banking community, the biggest south of New York.

This economic boom in Miami continued into the 1980's, until Miami's ties to Latin America cooled and the price of oil collapsed. In the early 1980's, when dozens of multinational corporations began to depart from Miami, foreigners (mostly Latin's) bought nearly 45% of the commercial real estate in Greater Miami; but by 1986, foreigners bought out less than 10%. Throughout the 1980's, the economy in Miami has been everything but certain, in

part these economic ups and downs are a reflection of the cities trade with Latin America (NY Times Magazine, 19 June 1987).

Miami's expansion and economic instability also owes a lot to the steady growth in drug trafficking, which has become an important part of Miami's economy; it has been estimated that approximately \$20 to \$40 billion dollars in untaxed revenue passes through Miami in one year.

Summary

In sum, Miami has undergone drastic demographic changes (including ethnic changes), economic changes, and political changes within the last 30 years. And 1980, was a turning point for Miami due to the drastic changes the city underwent. For one, there was an influx of Cubans from the port of Mariel, as well as an influx of Haitians. Two, the city had been described as "a city under siege", as the fires were burning in Liberty City with the riots. Three, Miami's crime and homicide rate drastically increased due in part to the new arrival of Cubans, and the city was experiencing "Cocaine Wars". In addition to the cultural changes and racial tensions, Miami was undergoing drastic economic and political changes as the Cubans gained control and the Anglos moved out.

Since the changes began to occur, the Miami Police Department and its police officers have been in the middle of it all. Police officers jobs have become more complicated and more dangerous, and the temptations and

opportunities for corruption have greatly increased as did everything else the city was experiencing.

CHAPTER 5
POLITICAL INFLUENCES IN THE MIAMI POLICE DEPARTMENT

Miami's Form of Government

Miami has a City Manager form of government which is made up of a Mayor, a four member City Commission, and a City Manager that is appointed by the City Commission. Under the City Charter, the City Manager is responsible for making all appointments to top city posts--except that of the City Attorney--and is responsible for the operations of the Police Department, including appointing the Chief of Police. However, the City Commission and the Mayor do have input into the decisions of the City Manager. In reality, Miami's politicians have the ability to exercise a substantial amount of influence over city officials, especially the Chief of Police and the City of Miami Police Department.

Political Influences in the Miami Police Department

Through historical analysis I gained a sense of the type of influence Cubans have had on running the politics in Miami, the media commonly refers to it as the "Latinization of Miami's politics". I used historical analyses to corroborate the information given to me by various interviewees, allowing me to draw distinctions between officer's political, ethnic, and racial biases and their actual knowledge and understanding of the Latinization of Miami's politics. As a result, I found that race and ethnicity of the officer interviewed tends to be a factor

that needs to be considered when understanding the officers attitude/perception of the political system and its relationship to the police department; therefore I provide the officer's race and/or ethnicity throughout this section.

There was common agreement among police officers interviewed that members of the local government (City Hall) have a substantial amount of influence in the Miami PD, especially with regard to the departments operations. However, depending upon the rank of the officer, their perception of the influence varied. For instance, officers nearer to the bottom of the hierarchical ladder (patrol officers and sergeants) tend to perceive political influences as 'over-interference' by City Hall in police business; while ranking officers nearer to the top of the hierarchical ladder (Majors, Lieutenants, and Captains) were less inclined to discuss the influence politics plays in the department. In addition, line officers were more apt to complain that too many police officers try to play the organizational political game.

Many patrol officers and Sergeants that were interviewed tied many of the problems the Miami PD has experienced since the late 1970s (corruption problems, low morale among officers, untrustworthiness up and down the hierarchy of command) to the 'over-interference' in police business by City Hall. Many officers expressed the attitude that it is this continuous, over-involvement by City Hall in police business that has resulted in the departments

inability to run effectively and efficiently. For instance, Sergeant A (Anglo) pointed out (keeping in mind the officers racial/ethnic and political biases) that...

the City Commission has continually replaced Police Chiefs; in fact between 1984 and 1989, the Miami PD has gone through five police chiefs. Rarely is a Police Chief in office long enough to actually take any sort of action or develop any actual power source; this is a strategic move on the part of the City Commission and Cuban politicians to maintain tight control over the runnings of the police department.

Several law enforcement officers expressed that...

the politicians at City Hall (that run the police department) do not even know the streets and what it is like to be a police officer in this "zoo of crazies" (an expression used by many patrol officers to describe the City of Miami).

Below are several examples set forth by patrol officers to describe what they mean by 'over-interference' by local politicians in police business.

Example 1:

Patrol officers tend to agree that Miami's three black riots during the 1980's, occurred because of the interference by local politicians at a crime scene (a police matter) where they had no business at the time. Officer A (Anglo) pointed out that all three riots were triggered when a Miami police officer shot and killed a black individual under suspicious circumstances. Officers expressed that in most of these shootings the politician (often the Mayor) arrived on the crime scene and expressed his desire to use this officer to set an example for other officers; rather than having a calming effect on the crowd, the politicians

presence and actions only instigated the racial tensions that pre-existed.

Officer A (Anglo) described the politicians actions as:

"throwing the officer that shot the black to the wolves to be torn apart".

The "wolves" being the media, the community, or anybody or any organization that is outraged. "Torn apart" meaning having the officer investigated, taking the officer's badge and gun away, brought up on charges and dragged through the press.

Several patrol officers perceive the politicians presence at a crime scene such as these as simply an attempt on the part of the politician to gain political support of the black community for the benefit of the next election. Patrol officer A expressed his belief that...

"the politician does not care about the black community or if the blacks riot (as long as the destruction is kept within the black community); and do not care about the officers that have to patrol the streets. All the politician is concerned with is maintaining his political position, and being re-elected in the next election."

Furthermore, several officers pointed out that it is incidents such as these (riots) that the politicians interference results in an undermining the officers power and authority in the publics eyes.

As mentioned earlier, I found the point of view of ranking officers to be less cynical than that of patrol officers when it comes to describing the influence of politics in police business. On the issue of the riots,

Major A (Anglo) explained that...

like in any other city or police department, politicians at City Hall do not want any members of the PD to make headlines for wrongdoing. In Miami, because City Hall (under the City Charter) is responsible for running the Miami PD, the politicians are answerable to the public and the media when something goes wrong in the police department, or when an officer screws up. At the same time, police administrators do not want officers screwing up because they do not want City Hall, the Police Chief, or the community down their backs.

Due to the relations between politicians at City Hall, police administrators, ranking officials, and line officers many patrol officers and several Sergeants interviewed expressed distrust of City Hall's politicians and some of the police administrators in the department that have political ties.

Example 2:

Sources both inside and outside the Miami PD explained that political involvement in the Miami PD is more complex than it appears on the surface. In fact, at times I found myself having a hard time figuring out who actually runs the police department. Asking whether it is the Mayor of Miami? The City Manager? The Chief of Police? Or the Deputy Chief?

One officer (Anglo) stated that...

"the power of the police department does not truly lie in the hands of the Chief of Police."

This officers pointed out that the police department is run by both City Hall and Deputy Chief Walter Martinez (the Cubans). He described Martinez as the business type, the one that makes the macro-decisions that effect the

department in the long run. In addition, Martinez has strong ties to City Hall, specifically City Manager Ceaser Odio.

Geoffrey Alpert (former Criminal Justice professor at the University of Miami, currently at the University of South Carolina) corroborated this officers statement. Alpert (1989) stated:

Martinez is the department's token Cuban, with strong political ties to City Hall. Furthermore, Martinez is the departments businessman, the one that makes the macro-decisions. While Police Chief Anderson handles the micro-decisions, the day-to-day street decisions.

Various ranking officers expressed their perception that Perry Anderson was appointed to the position of Police Chief because he is black, and because he made an agreement with the members of the City Commission that he would not make waves. Officers of various ranks continually described Police Chief Anderson as "a black political pawn controlled by City Hall." One Sergeant informed me that Chief Anderson, much like Chief Dickson, was put in office to keep the black community and black officers from shouting racial discrimination. In fact, several officers, as well as sources outside of the department, described the Chief's appointment as a ploy by the Cuban politicians to give Miami's blacks the misconception that a black is in a position of power.

* * * *

Hopefully, examples 1 and 2 give you a sense of the officers perception of the relationship that exists between

politics and the functioning of the police department, as well as a sense of the cynicism that exists among line officers towards this relationship. From example 2, it is obvious that Miami's political system and the ties that exist between City Hall and the Miami PD are complex, even more so when one considers the role race and ethnicity plays in the relationship. In regards to ethnicity, it is public knowledge that Cubans are the majority in City Hall and hold majority of top city posts. There have even been public accusations made that political promotions and appointments (re: the position of Chief of Police and Deputy Chief) are made on the basis of political affiliation and/or connections and ethnicity and/or race.

Political Influence on Appointments and Promotions within the Miami Police Department

As pointed out in the beginning of this section, under the City Charter the City Manager is responsible for the operations of the Miami PD, as well as for appointing the Chief of Police. Through various sources within the Miami Police Department I found that members of City Hall use this power given to them under the City Charter to influence the police department in various other ways, such as having a say in who gets appointments and promotions within the Miami PD. In order to assure that individuals with political connections of the desired race and/or ethnicity are given the position.

One ranking officer (Anglo) used the example below to

explain how politics and ethnicity/race are interwoven, and the role the two play in departmental appointments and promotions.

Example 1:

Those that run City Hall (Cubans) have promoted Deputy Chief Walter Martinez (a Cuban) to as high a position of power without making him Chief of Police. It was a tactic by Cuban politicians to put Cubans in top positions of power within the city (the mayor, the city commission, and the fire chief), without letting it appear so. The Cubans at City Hall recognize that if they appointed a Cuban as Police Chief, blacks and other ethnic groups within the city would not stand for it, would most likely scream racial discrimination. Anyways, Cubans do not want it to appear on the surface as though they run the city; however, below the surface they actually do.

* * * *

This officer's example was reinforced by what another police officer (Anglo) stated..."it's not always what you know, but who." This officer pointed out that the way politics work in Miami, it is not uncommon for pre-made deals to be made between politicians at City Hall and officers within the department prior to their appointment or promotion. Just as it is not uncommon to see public officials removed from their office and replaced practically overnight.

In sum, various ranking officers have expressed that



selection for promotions and appointments (in the past and to date) at times is based upon who you know and your political ties more than anything else. The selection of recruits and political influences is discussed in more detail under the section on mass hiring.

Fragmentation and Lack of Support between City Hall and the Miami Police Department

Through the use of historical analysis and interviews I found that since the Latinization of Miami's politics, fragmentation and lack of support between members of City Hall and members of the Miami PD (both horizontally and laterally) is common place. Even though on the surface the political ties between City Hall and the Miami Police Department seem tight, in all actuality relations tend to be fragmented, and as a result there is a lack of support which lends itself to distrust.

The factors which I found generate the fragmentation and lack of support that exists are race and ethnicity, especially racial and ethnic tensions within the city, which overflow into the politic system, as well as the police department. Blacks versus whites, Hispanic versus blacks, Anglos versus everybody; tension has been mounting over the past 15 to 20 years. Furthermore, the new mixture of politics (Latinization) and law enforcement (the affects of the Affirmative Action program and the Consent Decree) that have existed since 1980, do not blend well.

Due to the influence each of these factors has had on

relations between City Hall and the Miami PD (the fragmentation and lack of support), paranoia, suspicion, and distrust runs throughout City Hall and the Miami Police Department, to the extent that free verbal expressions are not exchanged at times for fear that the halls, phones, desks, and offices are bugged. Miami police officers (more so sergeants and patrol officers than lieutenants and majors) describe the department as a "confused, chaotic, demoralized department driven by rumors, leaks, and fear of other officers within the department, as well as politicians at City Hall" (Dorschner, 1989). In effect, morale in the department is low, some officers are cynical, and some officers have lost sight of priorities when it comes to the job.

The example below is one example of the fragmentation and lack of support that exist between City Hall and the Miami PD.

Example 1:

In the beginning of 1984, City Manager Howard Gary (a black), dismissed Police Chief Harms (an Anglo). Gary claimed Harms dismissal was the result of insubordination and differences of opinion about how the police department should be run.

Harms received the news of his dismissal in the middle of the night; while Gary had been searching Harms's office and safe for confidential files that Harms' possessed. The files were part of a private investigation Harms had been

conducting, supposedly the files contained incriminating evidence on Gary and other political officials.

Because of Harms's dismissal, Harms tipped off federal agents about City Manager Gary's ties to the Sunshine State Bank in Miami, which was a bank under investigation for laundering drug money. And in October 1984, Gary was accused of having relationships with known drug dealers. However, Gary was never accused of any wrongdoing in connection with the bank's operations or his associations with known drug dealers. Meanwhile, the State Attorney's office was looking into allegations that Gary had run a bill of over \$8,000 for repairs to his personal cars to the city motor pool, which was ruled that Gary had no right to do.

Later in October 1984, the Mayor and the City Commission dismissed City Manager Gary. However, the circumstances surrounding his dismissal were never fully explained and all of Mayor Ferre's (a Cuban) notes describing the events that led to the decision were destroyed by Ferre himself (Eddy, Sabogal, and Walden, 1988).

This incident is one example of the way the Miami political system operates--the fragmentation, lack of support, as well as the ethnic and racial differences; there are other examples similar to this one; in fact within the last five years, the City of Miami has had 3 City Managers and 5 Police Chiefs. Furthermore, the example made of Harms and Gary has been a warning to future police chiefs and

members of City Hall that if you want to keep your job do not make waves, do not say to much, or at least do not say or do something to upset the wrong person(s) or ethnic group(s).

Officers Perceptions of the Lack of Support

Due to the lack of support and fragmentation that exists between City Hall and the Miami PD, officers express their dissatisfaction. Many patrol officers express that they feel as though they walk a thin line when it comes to performing their job (this can be true in just about any police department). However, in Miami, this line is thinner at times due to the serious racial and ethnic tensions that exist.

More so, many of Miami's officers expressed their feelings of paranoia (which stems from the lack of support and fragmentation that exists), Miami officers have learned from personal experiences and/or situations other officers have been in, that if they screw up on the job they may not be backed by the department or City Hall. Many officers think the department is too quick to blame the patrol officers when something happens--quick to suspend, and take away officers badge and gun. Due to this perceived lack of support the department faces low morale problems, cynicism among officers, and loss of priorities by officers.

For instance, in regards to loss of priorities, both patrol officers and undercover officers implied that because of the way the department treats them as officers they have

lost site of priorities when it comes to doing their job. They claim what used to be their first priority ("catching the bad guys" and "making statistics"), is no longer first. In fact, many of the street-level narcotics officers have re-prioritized their everyday routines to eating, working out (lifting weights), running personal errands, and than catching the bad guys. However, from participant observation it appears that when they do perform their responsibilities, they are very efficient.

Many patrol officers and several Sergeants freely expressed their dissatisfaction with the job and the department. Dissatisfaction stemming not only from lack of support and trust, but also from what they claim to be senseless and menial tasks that are required of them as part of their job. Tasks the department requires for purely political or community relations reasons. For instance, Street Narcotics officers at times have to spend several hours a day conducting what they call ticklers-checking out supposed drug dealing houses that have been reported as such by members of the community. Narcotics officers claim this is a waste of time, that they know where the "dope houses" are and could be out making more busts, rather than running around checking abandoned houses all day. Also, patrol officers in Coconut Grove are required to patrol certain houses of local politicians' and their family members on a daily basis. These officers expressed frustration because they felt as though they were running around checking

someone's house when there were more important calls backed up a couple of hours.

Dissatisfaction also stems from what officers express as frustration with the department and the political games that many police officers play. For instance, several patrol officers express frustration that stems from seeing police administrators commit corrupt acts/misconduct and have their actions covered by individuals in higher positions of power, some being politicians; while an officer that does something wrong is often exposed to the public and the media. My historical analysis confirmed this, in newspapers and other publications I did not find near as much information on police administrators involved in corruption/misconduct, as I did patrol officers. However, this could possibly be explained by the fact that there is a smaller probability that administrators will be involved in corruption, due to the nature of the job and the quality of officers that get promoted.

For instance, in researching the Miami River Cops corruption scandal I found very little literature on the police administrators, neither simple allegations of their involvement, nor information about those that were under investigation at the time. The media focused mainly on the actions of the patrol officers and their corrupt activities. When in fact, I was informed that there were some administrators that knew of the corrupt activities that were occurring, and there were other ranking officers that were

turning their heads or excepting pay-offs. Several of the departments police administrators were investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) on corrupt activities (spin-off cases from the original Miami River Cops investigation), and some are still under investigation today. Several officers informed that police administrators are simply better at covering their tracks (due to their political ties) and/or are able to place the blame upon someone else (often an officer of a lower rank, if possible). For instance, one ranking officer told of some police administrators that were under investigation by the FBI:

Look at Major Harrison, Deputy Chief Martinez, and Sergeant Blanco. All of these brass were and are under investigation by the FBI (spin-off investigations from the Miami River Cops case); however, no evidence was ever found that these brass were involved in corrupt activities or misconduct. Sergeant Blanco was just reinstated because neither the feds nor the department could find the evidence to prosecute him for misconduct or corruption. Actually, these officers have their asses covered for various reasons, one being their political ties.

Under these circumstances, it seems that patrol officers were more so the one's that faced the formal allegations, and were charged and tried. They were the one's that made the media headlines. Many patrol officers on the force recognize this and express their loss of respect for some police administrators; even more so some have lost respect for the whole department and the whole system.

However, even though there is lack of support and trust

up and down the hierarchy, I did find that there is a good deal of support among patrol officers on the street, patrol officers watch out for each other and back each other up. This is typical of any police organizational culture.

The Influence of Political Corruption upon the Miami PoliceDepartment's Corruption

As discussed in the literature review (Langer 1986a, 1986b), when a community is corrupted it is not uncommon for political corruption to facilitate or generate the corruption that exists within other local bureaucratic organizations, as well as other parts of the community; and vice versa. From the observations made and the information gathered during my field study I found a relationship between political and organizational corruption to exist.

In support of this hypothesis, many individuals interviewed (both inside and outside of the Miami PD) expressed the perception that the Miami PDs corruption problems are not isolated to the police department; that corruption in Miami exists across the board-from the community, to private business, to politics, and to local bureaucratic organizations (such as the police department).

More specifically, Sergeant A added...

the organizational corruption that the Police Department has experienced, to some extent is politically influenced. It is corruption that is generated by over-interference by corrupt politicians in police business.

Both Sergeant A and Patrol officer A explained that:

Both political and community corruption are factors that have influenced the corruption that exists within the Miami PD. Corruption in Miami has become a way of life. And the only difference between the corruption of the past and the corruption that occurs today is that the corruption that occurs today is more low key. In fact, today (about 4 years after the MRC case) the FBI is still conducting investigations into actions of members of the Miami PD, as well as members of City Hall.

Summary

In sum, there are strong political ties that exist between City Hall and the Miami PD, as well as fragmentation and lack of support between politicians and members of the Miami Police Department (the result of Cuban influence in politics). It is a combination of these factors that have played an influential role in corruption among politicians and within the City of Miami Police Department.

Many officers conclude that some of the departments corruption problems can be attributed to political interference and corruption that comes from above (from City Hall and local politicians); as well as, attributed to the corruption that flows up from the community (to be discussed in a later section).

* * * *

This next section of this chapter examines, the Miami Police Department's mass hiring that occurred in the early 1980's. This was a program set up and implemented by those at City Hall, which entailed both an affirmative action program and a consent decree with two restricting

provisions. The mass hiring push is one example of political influence by City Hall in the Miami PD; as well as an example of how politicians do not understand police business and the effects their decisions have in the long run on the operations of the PD. The police department has been severely affected by the mass hiring push to the extent that the program, in combination with the other factors presented throughout this study, has set the atmosphere needed for corruption to exist and to flourish to the extreme levels it did in the case of the Miami River Cops corruption scandal of 1985.

MASS HIRING PROGRAM (1980-1983)**Political Decision to Implement a Mass Hiring Program**

In 1980, due to budgetary constraints, a large scale desertion by senior officers, and a three year hiring freeze, the Miami PD was at its lowest strength in five years. The department was left with only 654 sworn officers, 60% less than there were supposed to be, and 300 less than that recommended for a city the size of Miami.

In panic, Miami's city commissioners authorized a program of mass hiring which resulted in filling all the department paper vacancies within one year (October 1980-September 1981), in addition to hiring an additional 270 officers, making it 330 in all. The following year, the department increased in size, opening up another 186 sworn positions to be filled by new recruits, and 140 more officers were hired that year in order to replace those old officers that quit, making it 326 in all. Within 2 years, the size of the Miami police force almost doubled, and more than half of those individuals in uniform (56%) were new recruits. By the end of the third year, 70% were new recruits (Eddy, Sabogal, & Walden, 1988).

Affirmative Action and the Consent Decree

At the same time that the Miami Police Department began its mass hiring program the department was also being forced to meet federally established affirmative action quotas and abide by a local consent decree established by City Hall.

Both the affirmative action program and the consent

decree (a legally binding promise that stated who could be hired as new recruits for the Miami PD) were established in order to avoid severe financial penalty; which the city was facing due to a lawsuit which was brought by black officers within the PD in the mid-1970's. The blacks claimed they had been discriminated against in recruitment, pay, promotion, and work assignments. Thus, as part of the affirmative action program the PD was required to hire more blacks and other minorities, and treat them equally (Eddy, Sabogal, and Walden, 1988).

So in 1975, the courts approved a consent decree that had 2 crucial provisions:

1. that 56% of new recruits would come from minorities; and
2. all new recruits must live within the city limits of Miami.

However, the Consent Decree was not officially put into action at that time.

By 1979, the Cubans had gained a 3-2 majority on the City Commission, and they were pushing to form a police department that better reflected the make up of the community. Therefore, the Mayor and the City Commission altered the consent decree, establishing a new severe requirement:

That 80% of all new recruits must come from minority groups within the city limits of Miami. This rule was still in force when the City Commission declared the size of the PD would be doubled (Eddy, Sabogal, and Warden, 1988).

So in 1980, the City of Miami Police Department was

subjected to a mass hiring program, the 2 provisions of the consent decree, and the affirmative action program. An attorney from the State Attorney's Office (one of the prosecutors for the Miami River Cops case) corroborated the above facts and added that...

if the department was not forced to establish an affirmative action policy, there would still be no blacks within the Miami Police Department to date. In fact, every officer on the force was a white male up until 1975.

The Impact Mass Hiring Has Had on the Miami PD and Generating Corruption

It seems to be common agreement among local politicians, members of the State Attorney's office, various Metro-Dade officers, and police administrators and officers within the City of Miami Police Department that the Miami PDs mass hiring program of 1980 to 1983 was one factor that influenced many of the corruption problems the department later experienced. More specifically, one of the factors that influenced what was later uncovered as the 1985 Miami River Cops corruption scandal.

One reason the mass hiring program has been seen as an influencing factor to later corruption problems the department experienced is because all of the Miami River Cops were hired during the program of mass hiring. However, the corruption problems did not immediately stem from the fact that the department was forced to hire on such a massive scale. In fact, other police departments across the country have undergone mass hiring in the past and have not

faced the problems the Miami PD has experienced. Part of the problem in Miami was that the Miami PDs mass hiring program was forced upon the department by City Hall (the department had to fill so many vacant positions so quickly), along with the affirmative action program and the two provisions of the consent decree, at a time when the City was facing various tensions.

Various patrol officers expressed their opinion that...

mass hiring is not necessarily the problem if done correctly; however, because the department was forced to hire on a massive scale while abiding by the affirmative action program and the consent decree, the department underwent drastic demographic changes over a short period of time. The size of the department practically doubled, and the number of minorities (re: blacks and Hispanics) increased to make up over 50% of the department.

In corroboration, Lieutenant A pointed out that...

it was not just that the department had to hire on such a massive scale, but the department was limited to hiring only from within the city limits of Miami.

It has been documented, and pointed out in interviews that the members of City Hall did not understand the implications of the consent decree; an example of what I referred to earlier as "over-interference" by local politicians in police business. In which case, politicians were not allowing the police department to run efficiently and effectively. Had members of City Hall understood the operations of the police department better they would have recognized the "implications" the consent decree was to have on the Miami PD, prior to its implementation. Not only recognize the implications of restricting the department to

recruiting only from within the city limits of Miami, but more importantly recognize the implications of increasing the number of required minorities from 56% to 80%. One of the most serious implications members of the City Commission should have recognized is that the provision restricting the department to hiring from only within the City limits of Miami was putting the department at a high risk of ending up with the same immediate problems the local community was experiencing, within the police department. And in the early 1980s, as pointed out earlier, the community was facing a series of unique problems.

Due to pressures and limitations City Hall had placed upon the Miami PD, the department was limited to hiring some of the most un-educated and un-motivated individuals. The department was forced to take applicants that barely met the required standards--hiring less desirable, less qualified, less educated individuals. Had the department been able to recruit outside the city limits of Miami (state or nationwide) they could have recruited more desirable and more qualified individuals. For instance, Metro-Dade PD recruits individuals on a national scale (looking for the most desirable applicants). More so, City Hall is not given the power over Metro-Dade that it has over the Miami PD; therefore, Metro-Dade PD does not face the same extent of political interference in police business that the Miami PD does.

Officers Perception of Affirmative Action

Different officers at different ranks expressed varying opinions about the affects the affirmative action program has had on the Miami PD. However, the common perception that prevails among the majority is that...

affirmative action is not totally to blame for the corruption that occurred; however, you must consider that all of the Miami River Cops were hired as minorities (Cubans) under the affirmative action program and the consent decree.

Officers also pointed out that there were other factors to consider at that time that influenced the corruption problems; therefore, many officers did not want to totally blame affirmative action. However, when officers discussed the Miami River Cops they emphasized that the group of corrupt officers were all hired under the mass hiring program, the affirmative action program and the two provisions of the consent decree.

To present some more specific and varying viewpoints officers (of various ranks and races) hold toward affirmative action and its affects on the department and corruption, I present the below statements that were made.

Major A (Anglo) supported the common perspective presented above, he stated that...

affirmative action is not necessarily to blame for the corruption problems the department has faced, other police officers were hired under the same conditions and did not take the corrupt route.

Patrol officer A (Anglo), often a cynic, expressed that...

affirmative action was to blame for the departments later problems, such as corruption.

Sergeant B (Anglo) expressed his opinion:

"Affirmative action sucks."

Many officers freely expressed that they feel affirmative action has no place in policing. Major B (Black) attempted to explain why this attitude prevails among many officers in the department...

In policing it is important that the department is able to choose officers that best qualify for any position, be it recruitment of officers, or promotions. Not having the opportunity to choose the best; but being forced to choose an individual that ranks say 42, because that individual is a minority, is not right.

Affirmative action in the Miami PD has been described as "a source of organizational frustration" for many officers, especially those that get passed over for selection or promotion because they are not a minority.

Major B went on to point out that the problems ran deeper than simply the implementation of an affirmative action program. He expressed that...

there have been several attempts to blame affirmative action for many of the problems the department has faced since the program has been implemented; however, all the blame cannot be placed upon affirmative action. Other departments have implemented affirmative action plans and have had no problems as a result. The problem in Miami was that the department was forced to hire on such a massive scale (700 positions) so quickly, while abiding by the restrictions of the affirmative action program and the consent decree. In addition the department was pressured into lowering its selection standards and speeding up the training process.

Furthermore, at that same time the Chief of Police promoted so many senior officers practically overnight to ranking positions, in order to open the patrol positions for new recruits, that there were not enough senior officers in patrol to use as Field Training Officers (FTOs); therefore, the department was forced to use rookies as FTOs. Another problem was that supervision of patrol officers was poor because the department had promoted some unqualified senior officials to positions of supervisor.

It is a combination of all of these factors that has allowed corruption to flourish in a city where drugs and drug money are so abundant.

* * * *

Both the affirmative action plan and the consent decree have affected the quality of law enforcement that Miami residents receives (being less desirable and less qualified individuals were recruited), and the image of the department has been tarnished as a result of the corruption problems that stemmed from these programs. The Miami PD will be feeling the effects of these two plans for quite a while.

Background Investigations: The Selection Process

Police Administrators in Charge

Through content and historical analysis I found that Colonel Dick Witt, in charge of training recruits in 1980, had told Mayor Ferre that it was impossible for the Miami PD to implement City Hall's consent decree within the rules for hiring. Allegedly, Mayor Ferre told Witt to bend the rules. In Miami, as in other cities where the Mayor maintains tight control over the PD, what the Mayor says goes. (Eddy, Sabogal, and Walden, 1988).

In a "60-Minutes" interview (1986), Ex-Chief of Police Harms stated that...

the City Commission passed down the laws and the department did whatever they were told in regards to mass hiring. Harms said, he had predicted a disaster, but it was not his decision because being Chief of Police in the Miami PD does not mean that you run the police department (implying that politicians at City Hall truly run the department).

In the same 60-Minutes segment, Mayor Ferre stated that...

the blame should be placed on Harms, since Harms is responsible for running the department and what ever happens in the department.

And Colonel Dick Witt (60 Minutes) said that...

City Hall was partly to blame because they were pushing for 80% of the recruits to be minorities, to be hired strictly from within the city limits of Miami; but at the same time, Chief Harms was responsible for not rejecting the 80% push by City Hall. Lower ranks were even responsible for not complaining more and louder.

As interpreted from the above statements, it is obvious that nobody is willing to take the blame for the problems the police department experienced; in fact those individuals that were in charge are all trying to place the blame on the other. Officers recognize this, which reinforces the distrust, lack of support, and fragmentation that already exists. Various officers pointed out that because the department was forced into hiring so many officers so quickly, while abiding by the two provisions of the consent decree and the affirmative action program, that the department was forced to lower its selection standards; therefore, the finger cannot be pointed at one single person, but rather at various specific individuals and

groups of individuals that were in charge at the time.

* * * *

Through interviews I attempted to develop an understanding of what was going on at the time the department was hiring on such a massive scale, in order to understand why the department had so many problems with those they hired. What was wrong with the hiring practices and policies? Or was the problem with those who were in charge of the selection process?

One Major discussed the selection process with me, and expressed his belief that...

those individuals that sat on the hiring board during the time the mass hiring program was implemented should be commended, not condemned. It is the "brass" that were in charge of the selection process and training program that should be condemned for not bringing it to the attention of the board that there were problems. However, the "brass" are only willing to take the responsibility for successes, not failures.

Patrol officer A supported the Major's statement, he expressed that...

the blame lies with the "brass", those that supervised the hiring during that period.

Therefore, I attempted to find out who was in charge of the selection process and background investigations during the early half of the 1980's, when the department was hiring on a massive scale. What I found is that Walter Martinez, now the Deputy Chief, was the Lieutenant in charge of the Backgrounds Unit during the hiring push. Ken Harrison, currently the Major in charge of the Special Investigations

Section (SIS), was in charge of hiring and training officers between 1980 and 1985. I was told by an officer that worked selections during that time, that Martinez's job was to make sure that the files of those selected to be officers looked fine (that they did not appear to have bad records).

Sergeant A explained that...

supposedly both Martinez and Harrison knew of some of the activities that were occurring in the police department at that time, and they knew that some of the officers being hired were trouble.

Later, Martinez was promoted to Major and transferred to Dispatch. Ironically, between 1985 and 1988, Harrison was transferred to the Internal Security Unit (ISU) where he was one of the officers in charge of investigating officers alleged misconduct and/or corrupt activities, those same officers that he helped hire previously. Harrison's transfer to ISU occurred after the FBI came into the department with subpoenas to pull between 100 to 200 files on officers, including files on police administrators (including himself and Martinez). It is both interesting and ironic that while Harrison was being investigated by the FBI, he was one of those in charge of investigating other officers on allegations of corruption.

One informant within the department confidentially informed me that to his knowledge...

after the FBI began investigating corruption within the Miami PD and Harrison found himself under investigation, Martinez and Harrison (through City Hall) made a deal that Harrison could remain with the department. Part of the deal was that Harrison was to clean out ISU of officers and investigators that knew

too much about the true workings of the police department--that is what was going on in the way of

corruption within the department (between the department and politicians, as well as the unethical standards of political ties and involvement between members of the department and City Hall).

So Harrison transferred those individuals out of ISU to other units where they could be kept an eye on. Later, Harrison received a promotion to Major in charge of SIS where he remains today.

Recruitment

As previously noted, the Miami PD filled about 700 vacancies within two years; however, due to the restrictions of the consent decree and the affirmative action plan, the population the department was restricted to hiring from was very limited in size and qualified applicants. At the same time, City Hall was pressuring the department to get officers on the streets as quickly as possible. In turn, department administrators were pressuring those in the Backgrounds Unit (the unit that conducted the background investigations and participated in the selection of applicants) to hire applicants as quickly as possible. As a result, it did not take long for those working backgrounds to realize the City of Miami was populated with some of the most un-educated and un-motivated individuals, not necessarily the most desirable and most qualified for the job.

In fact, the department had a hard time finding good recruits (especially among minorities) from within city limits that met all of the requirements. The department soon realized that it was going to have to lower several of

its standards, bend some of the rules on occasion, and even alter departmental policy in order to get applicants to qualify while still abiding by the provisions of the consent decree. At that time, the departments philosophy was: make sure the applicant's file looks good, get him/her into the training academy, give him/her a gun and a badge, and get him/her out on the street.

Entry Test

As part of the hiring process all applicants were required to take an entry test designed to measure the academic ability and suitability of candidates to be police officers. The entry test was a psychological test devised and administered by the University of Chicago, it consisted of written questions, each accompanied by multiple choice answers (a test much like those used by many other police departments use across the country). For example (Sabogal, Eddy, & Walden, 1988):

If someone insults me, I:

- a. sulk
- b. walk away
- c. punch him in the nose

This was not a test one passes or fails, but it was used to draw a psychological profile that might raise a warning, indicating that a candidate was maybe too reckless or too timid to be entrusted with a badge and gun. These tests are not perfect measures. For one, they were devised by white males with no cultural empathy of the candidates taking it; which in Miami, with the cultural diversity and

the fact that so many of the applicants were minorities (considering the push to hire minorities at that time) both black and Cubans, the test was unreliable.

Another problem with the testing procedures was that Chicago University gave the Miami Department of Human Resources (the city's personnel experts) only a summary of the test results. In turn, the Department of Human Resources passed onto the police department a list of allegedly qualified candidates; however, these were only the results of the written test, and the background screening and oral interviews were conducted by the Miami PD.

Lowered Standards of Recruitment

In the "60 Minutes" segment it was uncovered that some of the officers conducting the background investigations in the early 1980's, overlooked disqualifiers of applicants, such as: prior and current drug use, past misdemeanor criminal records, and past job performance. In some cases these disqualifiers were simply overlooked and in other cases covered up by certain officers working within the Backgrounds Unit. At times, some applicants were hired regardless of their disqualifiers.

One specific example involved Officer Joaquin Miranda (an Hispanic), who was assigned to carry out background investigations of Hispanic recruits. It was later found that Miranda had associations with drug dealers, and in at least 6 situations he had left out of his reports

potentially damaging information about recruits, including their use of illegal drugs (Eddy, Sabogal, & Walden, 1988).

To my knowledge, none of those officers involved in backgrounds and selection have ever faced any formal administrative or legal charges for unprofessional performance.

* * * *

I was unable to get interviews with any officers currently working within the Backgrounds Unit (due to paranoia and the fact that some of these officers are still under investigation); however, I spoke with several officers that worked backgrounds in the early 1980's, but have since transferred out. I learned that during the efforts to hire officers on a massive scale the department lowered its standards, overlooked some disqualifiers, and altered some departmental policies (especially policies pertaining to drug use and prior criminal records) in order to fit the departments needs at that time.

Patrol officer D had at the time worked in Backgrounds and he pointed out that...the department faced two major problems during that time period:

1. Applicants were not meeting the departments standards. "The standards for hiring were to hire 21-30 year olds, physically fit, good eyesight, high school diploma, fluent in spoken and written English, has a drivers license, not a convicted felon and not associated with criminals, and a non-user of drugs." (Eddy, Sabogal, & Walden, 1988).

2. The department did not have enough minority applicants to choose from within the city limits.

...Therefore, those working Backgrounds (either upon Martinez's command or someone higher up) began lowering

standards, especially for minority groups, in order to get officers on the streets and meet the affirmative action quotas. In some instances, the administrators in charge told us, "just make sure the applications look good".

I questioned this officer about the rumors that some individuals were allowed to "slide" through the selection process because of their political ties or ties with individuals higher up in the department. His response was that he had no knowledge of any personnel files that were altered or changed; at least he did not change any. However, this officer pointed out that drug use policies were lowered so that occasional cocaine or marijuana use was overlooked with some individuals, exactly how many he did not know. However, several other patrol officers pointed out that...

supposably some applicants were hired because they had friends in powerful places (such as City Hall or department administrators).

One attorney from the State Attorney's Office informed that...

with pressure on the Miami PD to hire so many officers so quickly, while limited to hiring strictly from within the cities limits (from a population of individuals barely qualified), those in the Backgrounds Unit were told by superiors to simply overlook or ignore certain priors of applicants (such as: prior drug use, prior criminal records, or minor abnormal psychological tendencies).

Below are several specific examples (given by officers) of steps the department was taking in order to get around

departmental policies, in addition to the lowering of standards in the early 1980's.

Example 1:

When the department realized it was having problems recruiting qualified and desirable individuals from within the city limits, it began to hire individuals that lived outside the city limits, as well as outside the state of Florida. As long as they had some sort of mailing address on their application that was within the city of Miami, it did not matter if the address was fake, somebody else's, or simply a P.O. Box.

Several patrol officers pointed out that they were hired during that time and did not even live within the state of Florida. They simply got around the requirement by giving a fake address.

Example 2:

Reading and writing standards were lowered because literacy was not the departments overriding priority. Applicants that had problems with reading and writing were simply enrolled in remedial English classes after they were hired; today, these classes still exist. In addition, supervisors were ordered by higher ups to clean up officers reports in an attempt to cover up the problem.

* * * *

In effect, due to lowering the hiring standards, bending some of the rules for hiring, and altering departmental

policies in some instances in order to get individuals to qualify, Major B pointed out that...

as a result, "many of the applicants the department hired were not the 'cream of the crop'. But keep in mind, the department was under political pressure, and forced to grab up just about anybody that applied."

In corroboration Lieutenant B expressed his opinion about the departments mass hiring program, and its failings. He stated that...

due to the combination of the mass hiring program, the Affirmative Action program, and the Consent Decree the department was having problems finding individuals that qualified, especially minorities from Miami's inner-city.

In the past, the department had never undergone hiring on such a massive scale, it had always been able to choose choice applicants from lists of those that qualified (for instance, choose the top 30 applicants out of maybe 150). However, due to the push to hire on such a massive scale the department was forced to recruit hundreds of applicants in such a short period of time, and was unable to be choosy. As a result, the department was hiring practically anybody that applied, and in some cases that meant hiring individuals that barely met the requirements. In turn, the department was pressured into lowering its standards in order to get applicants to qualify.

At that time, the police department was desperate, trying to fill positions and meet quotas.

Lowered Standards and the Hiring of Corrupt Officers

In regards specifically to the Miami River Cops and the circumstances under which that group of corrupt officers was hired, I spoke with several officers that knew some of the corrupt officers. They pointed out that...

some of those guys looked like trouble from the beginning of the selection stages; however, for various reasons--demand for officers and/or ties with someone in power (at City Hall or within the department)--these officers were able to slide through the selection process, the training academy, and the probation period.

In fact, when some of these guys were going through the training academy they were labeled as 'trouble', but because the department was under pressure to fill positions these recruits were allowed to slide through the academy.

Undercover officer A told me he know two of the River Cops back when they were in high school, and as youth these two River Cops were in youth gangs and in his opinion, the officers should have never been hired by the department.

The attorney with the State Attorney's Office (corroborated by Major A as well) expressed that...

some of the Miami River Cops would have been hired by any police department in the country. There was simply nothing in their backgrounds that made these guys look bad, at least nothing visible or documented. At the same time, some of these officers should have never been hired, but they managed to slip through the cracks of the system.

Furthermore, it eventually came out in court trials and newspaper articles that several of the River Cops had family members involved in the officers corrupt activities. Some family members were even known criminals (drug traffickers and dealers) or had criminal ties.

However, both the State Attorney and Officer E expressed that...

if we were able to exclude applicants on the basis of family history, some of those corrupt officers may not have been hired by the department; however, you can't do that.

* * * *

Thus, even with the best selection method you cannot control an officers future actions, you can only make predictions based upon ones past actions and past

performances. However, in the early 1980's, the Miami PD failed to abide by their selection policies and standards and as a result were not selective in who they hired. Had they abided by the rules and policies of their selection method and been more selective, they probably could have controlled for some of the problems they later faced (corruption and disciplinary problems).

Changes in the Selection Process of Applicants Since the Mass Hiring Program

Many Miami police officers, of various ranks, were asked what changes have been made in departmental selection policies and requirements since the mass hiring program and/or the occurrence of the Miami River Cops corruption scandal of 1985, in order to assure the department would not face the same problems it did at that time.

Through interviews I got the impression that the department has not made any major changes in departmental policies or recruitment and hiring practices since the mass hiring program, other than the fact that the department has become more stringent when it comes to prior drug use. In fact, most of the officers I spoke with expressed that...

"nothing is really different, there have been no major changes in departmental policy regarding the selection process."

Both Major A and Major B informed me that...

there have been no major changes in departmental policies; however, there have been some minor reinforcements on drug use policies and prior criminal history policies (the problem areas back when the

department was hiring on a massive scale).

Patrol officer A pointed out that...

now the Miami PD is able to recruit state and nationwide.

Major A even went as far to state that he feels "the departments system of selection is a good damn system." This may be true. The policies and procedures (rules and regulations) of selection may look fine in writing; however, the problem does not necessarily have to be bad policies and procedures, the problem is whether in practice these policies and procedures are implemented and followed. As previously mentioned the Miami PD did not follow departmental policies, procedures, and standards for selection and hiring during the mass hiring push of 1980 to 1983.

Conversely, through historical analysis I uncovered that after the massive hiring program ended the police department eventually changed its hiring procedures so that in the future both the Police Department and the Department of Human Resources would carry out separate background checks. However, by this time it was too late for the department to go back and re-screen recruits that had joined since 1979, and it has been estimated that hundreds of those selected during the mass hiring push had disqualifiers in their past that never showed up because screening procedures were poor during that time (Sabogal, Eddy & Walden, 1988).

Problems That Reach Beyond the Selection Process

As Major A touched on earlier in this section on the Selection Process, many of the problems the department has experienced (such as corruption) reach beyond simply the effects of the mass hiring program, the affirmative action program, the consent decree, and the selection process. There are other extraneous factors that existed at that time, such as: lack of proper training for rookies, and lack of supervision and control over officers.

Major A expressed that under these circumstances you can probably say...

the police department is partially to blame for the corruption problems it faced, because between 1980 and 1985, the police department's standards and policies for hiring were relaxed, the department failed to train officers properly, there was a lack of quality supervision over patrol officers, and the department failed to discipline trouble and problem officers.

Lack of Training

The training officers received in the early half of the 1980's, was simply not of the quality that it should have been. Not only were recruits rushed through the academy, but the department was using rookies as Field Training Officers (FTOs)--using rookies-to-train-rookies. For instance, Rudy Arias (one of the corrupt River Cops) was trained the first few months by an FTO that had been on the force for less than one year (Sabogal, Eddy, & Walden, 1988).

Both Major B and Sergeant B pointed out that...

The use of rookies-to-train-rookies resulted not only from the departments need to quickly expand its force, but also from the Police Chief's move to promote senior officers to higher positions.

In some cases, rookie FTOs were teaching other rookies to use force to handle police situations. Part of the reason force was taught was because a large portion of the population that these officers were dealing with were immigrants from other countries (such as the Cuban Mariels) that would allow police to use force, and they would not complain because they were used to this sort of treatment by the police back in their home county. For instance, Mariels tended to allow police to physically abuse and harass them, as well as steal from them, because they did not know otherwise; plus, many of the Mariels were ex-convicts and were used to that sort of treatment by Cuban police and prison guards.

Basically, the Miami PD hired less desirable individuals, failed to train them properly, and used rookies-to-train-rookies (and in some cases both the rookie being trained and the rookie FTO would be less desirable recruits). In combination with the massive influx of Cuban immigrants from the Port of Mariel (many being criminals), it did not take long for some officers to learn they could use their power and authority as a police officer in an abusive manner and get away with it.

Lack of Supervision and Failure to Discipline

In addition, it was continually expressed (by Miami

officers and City public officials), that in the early half of the 1980's, the Miami PD faced a problem of poor supervision and control over patrol officers. In fact, this was one of the more influential factors that facilitated the opportunities for officers to involve themselves in corrupt activities, because officers recognized they could get away with it.

The Metro-Dade Homicide investigator that headed up the Miami River Cops investigation expressed that...

"low supervision was a serious problem for the Miami PD, especially low supervision over the officers that worked on the midnight shift."

I interviewed one ranking officer who had worked the midnight shift at the North end of Miami (known as Liberty City) at the time the department was experiencing corruption problems, and he explained the extent of the lack of supervision problem.

In the early half of the 1980s, the department lacked qualified supervisors (such as Sergeants and Lieutenants), both quality and quantity.

As a supervisor you should only have a span of control over about 6 to 8 officers-especially if the supervisor is unqualified, as several of them were at that time.

For instance, in the Liberty City sector, the amount of supervision that existed was continually fluctuating. For one, the district Lieutenant was not always around; therefore, at times there was no one responsible for that sector of the city. Two, at times there could be three Sergeants in charge of the sector, and at other times there could be only one Sergeant in charge. On occasion, there were no Sergeants available and the Sergeants job was left to the senior officer on duty; and at that time, because most tenured senior officers had been promoted or transferred out of patrol, many of those senior officers that took over for the patrol Sergeant were not as senior as you would think.

Major B corroborated the above statement, expressing that...

because the department lacked patrol supervisors, both Sergeants and Lieutenants, it was not unusual to use patrol officers to supervise other patrol officers (allowing younger officers to supervise rookies). Under those conditions it was simply a matter of time before control over officers was lost.

Major A attempted to justify the use of patrol officers supervising patrol officers by expressing that in the city of Miami the average patrol officer experiences more action in one week than small town patrol officers experience in one year; claiming that Miami patrol officers are no longer considered a rookie after about one or two years. I found myself questioning this reasoning, just because an officer experiences more action this does not mean that the experience the officer has is good, or that the officer knows anything about supervision. When is an officer no longer a rookie? And why? Is it how much crime or action an officer is exposed to? Is it the amount of time an officer is on the force? Is it the manner in which an officer deals with situations he/she confronts on the job? Unfortunately this is not the topic of this paper; however, these are important questions that need to be answered when a department is considering using rookies or young officers as FTOs or supervisors.

Through participant observation I observed that there is still a lack of supervision. Since supervisors are rarely around patrol officers are allowed an extensive

amount of personal discretion in doing their job. Patrol officer C pointed out that...

we as officers use a lot of personal discretion on the job, especially when the Sergeant in charge is rarely around. Under these circumstances, officers tend to

watch out for each other, back each other up, and depend on each other for advice as to how to handle a situation at times. Under these circumstances, if you were to have a bad group of officers working together, as the River Cops did on the Midnight Shift in Little Havana you can have some serious disciplinary and corruption problems, just as occurred.

* * * *

Along with the problem of lack of supervision, the Miami PD was also confronted with the problem that supervisors shied away from taking disciplinary action against problem officers. In the early half of the 1980s it was not uncommon for supervisors to deal with officers with disciplinary problems by transferring them to another squad or shift, often the midnight shift.

Sergeant A expressed that...

part of the reason the department faced so many problems with officers that were hired between 1980 and 1983, as because this group of officers were rarely punished or reprimanded when they "screwed up" or got into trouble. At that time, it was common practice for supervisors to let disciplinary problems with officers "slide", or even overlook officers actions. Otherwise patrol supervisors dealt with these officers by transferring them to another shift (midnight shift) or patrol squad for another supervisor to deal with. There was both a lack of supervision and a failure to discipline at that time.

Due to the lack of training these officers received coupled with the lack of supervision that existed at that time, it did not take long for the deficiencies of training

academy classes 1980, 1981, and 1982, to begin to show. I found that by 1981, new recruits were reported for harassing and intimidating supervisors. In fact, many problems that were occurring were brought to the attention of ranking officers and police administrators; but, it seems nothing much was ever done (Sabogal, Eddy, & Walden, 1988).

In the absence of proper training and proper supervision some officers were finding and teaching each other that they could do what they wanted because they were the law, especially in their dealings with some of Miami's immigrant population (such as the Mariels). I was told, and observed, that there is often little concern among officers as how the immigrants (even American blacks) are treated, whether excessive force is used on them, or they are harassed. In turn, it did not take long for officers to learn that they could cover their wrong doing by creative report writing.

I observed that to date there is still a lack of supervision over line officers. For instance, when riding as a participant observer (with various patrol officers) it was rare to see a Sergeant, either on the streets or at a call (which is not uncommon in many police departments). When riding with the street narcotics unit, it appeared that narcotics sergeants tend to be more involved at the street level (supervising drug buys and raids) than patrol sergeants were involved in supervising how patrol officers handle calls.

Furthermore, both Sergeants and Lieutenants rely heavily on police radios to keep in touch with patrol officers and undercover narcotics officers. The job of any good supervisor is to know where the officers under their command are and what they are doing while on duty; however, this is not always the case in practice. For instance, one patrol with whom I rode showed me all over the city of Miami while we were suppose to be patrolling only one sector of the city. Despite the fact that we were not supposed to be out of our sector, we were able to leave the sector for almost four hours without the supervisors and/or dispatchers knowing. We never checked in with dispatchers to see if we had any calls, we simply responded to calls that the officer thought sounded exciting. Is supervision still so lax that it is that easy for officers to do as they please while on patrol?

Even when riding with the Street Narcotics Unit I found that for at least half of the officers shift (4-5 hours) supervisors did not know where the officers were or what they were doing. In fact, since narcotics officers are assigned to unmarked undercover cars, these officers are able to move about the city more freely than can a patrol officer in a marked squad car. For instance, when riding as an observer with the narcotics officers I observed that it was not unusual for these officers to spend almost half of the work day away from the office running personal errands

(not work related); and most of the time supervisors had no knowledge of these officers activities, or if they did they did not seem to mind.

For instance, based upon may week long observations, this was a routine day for narcotics officers:

1:00 p.m.: officers come on shift and get briefed.

1:30 p.m.- 5:00 p.m.: officers run personal errands (eating lunch, shopping, banking, picking up film, visiting the doctor).

5:00 p.m.: officers meet with the Sergeants (occasionally the Lieutenant would be there) and other narcotics officers in a parking lot for a briefing.

6:00 p.m.-10:30 p.m.: conduct police business-drug buys and arrest drug dealers.

Based upon my observations, I conclude that there is still some degree of lack of supervision over officers in the Miami PD which could provide officers with the opportunity to commit corrupt acts without the knowledge of other officers or supervisors. How much more or less than existed in the early half of the 1980s, I do not know.

Midnight Shift

As mentioned earlier, the midnight shift (officially referred to as shift C) was a sort of dumping ground for problem officers. This was also the shift that many officers (especially rookies) preferred to be assigned to because it had the worst supervision (most of the time there were either not enough supervisors or none at all) and there was less work and more "down time" which gives officers a lot of free time. It was also the easiest shift on which

rookies would make it through probation.

Major A expressed that...

between 1980 and 1985, the department tended to put problem officers on the midnight shift. Since the supervision was poor on this shift these officers were able to get away with doing just about whatever they desired. Initially, the midnight shift is the shift on which the Miami River Cops came together.

Sergeant A added that...

the Miami River Cops had a lot of downtime working the midnight shift, which gave these officers the opportunity to do what they wanted and made it easier for them to cover their tracks. The only way the department could have caught these officers, would have been to put them under surveillance and watch what they were doing.

For example, shift C comes on at 9 p.m. and those officers are busy until about 2 a.m. (there is an overlap between shift B and C at that time); then after about 2 a.m. it dies down and these officers receive only a couple of calls the rest of the night. Several officers expressed that working the midnight shift is easy, for the very reason that after 2 a.m. you rarely get any calls and you can spend the rest of the night driving around looking for bad guys, or just sleeping.

In the early half of the 1980's, most of the officers that worked the midnight shift in 60 sector (Little Havana) were American-Cubans, that referred to themselves as 'The Godfathers' because they ruled the streets. Many of the officers that worked this shift were trained by rookie FTOs, and some were acting rookie FTOs themselves. What they were teaching each other was how to use aggression and force.

One Sergeant expressed that this group of officers held the attitude that it was their job to retake the streets every night after midnight; this was because after dark Little Havana was where many of the criminal types (Mariels, drug dealers and users, and gamblers) "hung out" and frequented the bars. At that time, this attitude was reinforced by supervisors that rarely made an effort to discipline these officers or break them up. The Miami River Cops were part of this group known as 'The Godfathers'.

Lieutenant A pointed out that...

due to the lack of supervision over patrol officers (especially on the midnight shift) during the early part of the 1980's, some officers (especially officers involved in corrupt activities) held the attitude that they could do what they desired without fear of being caught because they were above and beyond the reach of the law, since they were the law.

It has been found in past research that this is not an uncommon attitude to be held by officers in other police departments that have become involved in corrupt activities at other times (such as in McAlary's Buddy Boys, a look at the corruption problems experienced in the New York City Police Departments 77th Precinct).

* * * *

In sum, the combination of the atmosphere (stressful and dangerous) of the midnight shift and the fact that there was almost no supervision, it was not uncommon for officers that worked that shift to feel they were alone out on the streets, risking their lives.

Due to lack of time, I was unable to ride the midnight shift, however, I did get a sense that supervision on the midnight shift is still lax, considering the lack of supervision that I observed exists on shift B (3 p.m. to 1 a.m.). Between the overlaps in shift B and C I did come in contact with some officers that work the midnight shift, and from what I observed and what B shift officers told me about C shift officers, I got the impression that it is not uncommon for C shift officers to be paranoid and that they do not like observers.

Setting the Organizational Atmosphere For Corruption

Since the Miami PD was forced to hire a large number of officers very quickly, the department hired some officers that had "disqualifiers" in their past that should have kept them off the force in the first place. However, these disqualifiers were overlooked for various reasons (as discussed earlier).

Once on the force, some of these same officers should have been fired almost immediately for showing unethical behavior; however, because the department was under pressure from City Hall to put officers on the street and fill positions, the department was not about to fire anyone. At that time, officers were a much needed number, especially if they were a minority.

Considering the lack of training these officers received, coupled with the lack of supervision and control over these officers, and with the various social stresses

(racial tensions, the influx of Mariels and Haitians, and the drug wars) the city was experiencing in the early part of the 1980s, it is not unusual that the department experienced disciplinary and corruption problems with its officers.

In sum, the majority of officers expressed that corruption (referring to the Miami River Cops corruption scandal of 1985) was able to occur because of the combination of factors that set the organizational setting for corruption to flourish. These factors (as discussed throughout this chapter) were:

- deficiencies of the screening process;
- relaxed hiring and firing standards;
- lack of proper training for rookies;
- lack of supervision (the minimal span of control for supervisors due to budget constraints);
- failure to discipline; and
- the fact that police departments are affected to some extent by the community in which it exists.

Furthermore, the breakdown of discipline occurred not only throughout the training stage and probation stage, but continued on into the officers career. And what was so unusual, was that the department allowed all of these factors and problems to continue to the extent that corruption among officers within the Miami PD was actually allowed to go to such extremes.

CHAPTER 6

COMMUNITY INFLUENCES ON CORRUPTION

Miami Police Department: A Reflection of the Community

This section discusses the type of impact the local community has upon the City of Miami Police Department and its officers; presenting the officers perceptions of those influences. The focus is mainly on community influences on corruption among local police officers and the police department as a whole.

Even though my field study did not entail questioning the public with regard to what they expect and except from the Miami police; I was able, by use of participant observation to observe citizens reactions to police officers actions in various situations. At the same time, observe the officers reactions and get their comments in regards to the actions and attitudes of members of the community towards them as law enforcement officers.

Police Departments as Reactive Bureaucratic Organizations

Since a police department is a reactive bureaucratic organization, the community has a substantial amount of input as to the organizations role in the community. For instance, the community, often through civic leaders, expresses what it expects out of the police department and its officers in terms of enforcement of laws and non-enforcement of certain laws, and officer conduct and actions. The community influences the police department, and vice versa.

I discussed the expectations the community holds for the police with both Major A and Major B and they both pointed out that..."the community wants a police department that reacts."

For instance, Major A pointed out that...

on the whole, not only are patrol officers jobs reactive, but even the departments Internal Security Unit is reactive. The Unit reacts to citizen complaints and investigates already made allegations of officer misconduct. Rarely is the police department, or any of its specialized units proactive; the department does not seek out corrupt activities among officers on its own initiative. Even the Anti-Corruption Squad, who's name implies proactive corruption seeking tactics, was formed as a reactive squad to seek out corrupt officers within the department on the basis of complaints.

Being a police department is an organization open to the influences of the community I felt it necessary to examine drug-related police corruption within the Miami PD at the macro-level; examining the impact the local community has upon the organization and its individual officers in regards to corruption.

Investigator A discussed looking at police corruption from a macro-sociological perspective versus a micro-psychological perspective. He explained that...

police corruption can be examined from both perspectives; however, he tends to lean more towards examining corruption from the sociological perspective (corruption as an effect of larger social problems), bringing in psychological factors and explanations secondary. In other words, society shapes individuals, and vice versa.

Community Overflow into the Police Department: The Miami Police Department a Mirror Image of the Community

Major A expressed...one problem the Miami PD has faced, as have other police departments across the country, is that the local community's problems can overflow into the police department at times. In Miami, social problems such as: drugs use and abuse, drug trafficking and dealing, drug-related crimes and other criminal activities, as well as racial problems have overflowed from the community into the police department.

In addition, the communities perception towards certain issues are reflected within the police department, issues such as: the lax attitude among a larger portion of the population toward drugs and the communities involvement in drug trafficking, dealing, and use.

Lieutenant A expressed that...

the corruption problem the department has experienced is a symptom of larger local social and political problems. Corruption problems flow up from the community, as well as down from City Hall. The most influential factors being the ethics and values (as well as lack of) that the majority of the local community holds and which overflows into the local criminal justice system, including the police department and the political system.

* * * *

Major B went as far to express that...

"the Miami PD has become a mirror image of the community in which it exists"--just as any police department can become.

When you have a community with serious social, racial, political, and drug-related problems (such as Miami does);

and the police department is being forced to hire on such a massive scale in a short period of time, while restricted to hiring only from within the city limits, the probability of the communities problems overflowing into the police department, and the department becoming a reflection of the community (to varying extremes though) is fairly high. While at the same time, the local community to an extent dictates what type of policing it desires (what laws to enforce and not to enforce, what they expect and except out of officers).

An investigator from Metro-Dade PD in support of this hypothesis expressed that:

The corruption that has occurred in the Miami PD (the Miami River Cops corruption scandal) is simply a reflection of what was occurring within the community. It was an overflow of the communities problems into the police department. In effect, the police department has become a mirror image of the community in which it enforces the law--a community that faces serious drug problems, crime problems, racial problems, and other social problems (poverty, lack of social services, unemployment, housing shortage).

Sergeant A expressed that:

in the early 1980's, and still today (but not to such an extreme degree), corruption has become an accepted way of life in Miami--accepted within the community, within the police department, and within the local political arena. Most of the corruption that exists within Miami is drug-related, motivated for the sake of the money, and the power and prestige that comes with the money.

In fact, it has been expressed (by officers within the Miami PD, as well as officials outside of the department) that between 1980 and 1985, in Miami there was a portion of the community that wanted corrupt police officers

(especially those citizens involved in criminal activities such as drug trafficking and dealing), and that is what Miami got. Today, the demand for corrupt officers and other public officials still exists, and Miami still faces problems of corruption among both police officers and political officials.

Major B stated that...

"the drug market in Miami has bred corruption on a large scale within Miami's community, within the Miami PD, and within the local political system. As long as drugs continue to pour into Miami, and the community continues to accept the drugs, corruption within Miami will continue."

Obviously the criminal justice system as a whole is not immune from the evils of the rest of the world or the community in which it functions; and police officers are only one part of the criminal justice system and the law enforcement process. However, due to the very nature of police work, officers operate within a grey area of the law and the community (police officers deal with criminal types within the criminal community on a day-to-day basis), and officers are exposed to opportunities and temptations of corruption more so than the average citizen, and often more so than other members of the criminal justice system. At the greatest risk are undercover officers and narcotics officers, since they are expected to lead a double lifestyle at times-play the role of the drug buyer/dealer and then turn around and be the police officers. Being a police officer is not easy, especially in Miami.

Therefore, it is crucial that police officer have the necessary integrity and ethics so as not to lose sight of what is right and wrong; however, not extraordinary to the extent that police officers are placed upon a pedestal by the community. Traditionally, it has been believed that police officers should and do possess ethics and values above those of the citizens of the community (this is what is meant by placing a police officers upon a pedestal). Actually, through personal observations, I found officers to be no different than citizens of the local community, they possess the same ethics and values (and lack of) that the local community possesses. Police officers are no better than the average citizen, and in some cases some officers use their position as a law enforcement officer to break the law (especially minor laws) or get a free meal or discount on merchandise. For instance, I observed that police officers (on and off duty) did not feel they had to wait at red stop lights, they would litter, and often drink and drive (off duty); however, I did not observe any officers committing any corrupt activities.

What is being said is that even though citizens may view police officers as exceptionally moral and ethical individuals; many of the officers I observed and spoke with did not believe that they were any more moral or ethical than the average citizen, and they did not attempt to live up to any exceptional standards.

Major A pointed out that when officers are hired from a

community that lacks proper ethics, the department can expect to hire some unethical individuals, and when those officers work within that same community the department can expect to experience some ethical problems among its officers. Under these circumstance, the Miami PD has become a mirror image of the community, the problems the community experiences have overflowed into the police department.

Cultural and Ethnic Diversity within the Community

As discussed in Chapter 4, since the 1960s, Miami has become culturally and ethnically diverse, as well as divided. In Miami, as in other cities, various cultural and ethnic groups have segregated themselves into separate sections of the city. For instance, the Cubans and Nicaraguans are the majority in Little Havana; Liberty City is mostly American blacks and Jamaicans; Overtown is mainly American blacks and Haitians; and Coconut Grove is mostly middle- and upper-class Hispanics (mostly Cubans) and Anglos.

More importantly, individuals of different cultures and ethnicities hold different views of the police, as well as different types of respect for police authority. I asked officers what they perceived to be the stereotypical attitude held by the various cultural and ethnic groups toward the police (as based upon their interactions with members of these groups on a day-to-day basis). Officers pointed out that:

Cubans (especially Cubans from the first wave) are often pro-police, respectful of police and their authority. This is partially because they have been taught by their elders to respect police and authority. The majority are hard working individuals that are willing to help each other out (close knit), as well as help the police.

Mariels (Cubans from the second wave) tend to dislike the police, and are often more resistant to police authority than the first wave of Cubans. This is partially due to the fact that the majority of Mariels were young unskilled males, many Cuban prisoners.

Miami's American blacks tend to hold a negative attitude of the police, and have very little respect for police authority. Part of the reason this is so is because American blacks are in a different situation than the other immigrants that have resided in Miami, American blacks have faced oppression for over 200 years. They have continually watched other immigrants arrive in Miami and pass them by both economically and opportunity wise; as a result. American blacks are frustrated with their oppressed status. Furthermore, American blacks resent bureaucratic government agencies because they feel blacks are racially discriminated against by these agencies (as well as discriminated against based upon their socio-economic status); in turn, they tend to act negatively and hostile (trying to provoke the use of force by police officers) toward the police.

Haitians are poor, but tend to be hardworking individuals. While they may hold negative attitudes toward police officers; the majority tend to respect police authority. However, several officers pointed out that they noticed some of the Haitians are picking up "bad habits" from Miami's American blacks, and are learning to be street smart.

Nicaraguans tend to be abusive to the police; **Puerto Ricans** often hate the police; and **Jamaicans** tend to be hostile toward police authority.

A majority of the police officers I spoke with pointed out that Miami's cultural and ethnic diversity creates tensions within the community, as well as tensions for the officers performing their jobs. However, explanation of

these factors is beyond the scope of this study (see Alpert and Dunham, 1988).

More importantly, one must understand that many of these cultural groups have brought with them distinct attitudes toward corruption. In fact, several cultural groups are actually accustomed to corruption among politicians, judges, and police, because in their home countries corrupt activities are a way of life. In several of the countries that immigrants have fled from, drug traffickers actually control or manipulate the political system. Therefore, for many of the immigrants and aliens that reside in the City of Miami, drug business and drug-related corruption is a recognized and accepted way of life--an attitude they brought with them to the United States. It is these culturally diverse views and attitudes of police, police authority, and corruption that Miami police officers have to contend with on a day-to-day basis.

Riding as a participant observer with patrol officers allowed me to observe the extent of cultural and ethnic diversity that exists in Miami, and get a feel for the cultural and ethnic tension, and segregation that exists. To me, being in Miami was much like being in a foreign city.

Cultural and Ethnic Influences on Police Corruption

Many officers expressed the perception that the corruption problems the Miami PD has experienced, since the early 1980's, are culturally influenced to some extent. Culturally influenced to the extent mentioned above, that

various cultural groups residing in Miami have brought with them attitudes and practices of corruption, especially drug-related corruption.

Patrol officer C pointed out that...

the different cultural groups expect and expect different actions out of police officers. For instance, the Haitian women tend to expect leniency from male police officers, while the Latin Americans are more apt to give you a bribe.

Also, corruption has been seen to be culturally influenced to the extent that all the Miami River Cops were Hispanic (either Cuban or of Cuban descent). Like many Cubans the Miami River Cops were very tight knit, cautious, and secretive about their corrupt activities, and careful as to who they would allow to participate. Not an uncommon stereotypical trait of Cubans.

I spoke with the homicide investigator from Metro-Dade that headed up the Miami River Cops investigation and he stated...

"I perceive much of the corruption the Miami PD has experienced since the early 1980's to be cultural to some degree."

One State Attorney explained that to some degree the corruption the Miami PD experienced was cultural:

Knowing that Cubans tend to be very tight, it was not unusual that all the MRC were Cuban, and it was not surprising to find that several of these officers family members were involved in their corrupt activities (they were spending the money, accepting gifts from the money, holding drugs in their houses), as well as the drug trade. We found that some of these officers had brothers, uncles, and cousins that were involved in drug trafficking and dealing; some family members had close ties with drug families in Cuba and Columbia.

In fact, throughout the department's investigations, federal investigations, and court trials family members covered up and lied about the corruption. "Some of the lies these family members told were so ridiculous it was hard for the judge, attorneys, and jurors to hold back from laughing."

To many of the officers it seemed obvious that there were cultural factors that can explain the Miami River Cops corruption scandal. However, many pointed out that..."it is not just Cubans (Hispanics) that are corrupt in the Miami PD, it just so happens that all of the Miami River Cops were Cuban. There are black and white corrupt officers as well, the only difference is that they have not been caught yet."

Communities Perceptions of the PD as a Result of the Corruption

Many police officers explained how after the MRC corruption scandal of 1985, many Miamians did not trust Miami police officers. Upon responding to a call it was not unusual for citizens in the community to demand to see a police badge and identification before allowing them to enter their home or place of establishment (especially in areas such as Coconut Grove). In the community's eyes, as well as in the eyes of all America, Miami police officers badges were tarnished, and they still are today.

One officer expressed his frustration..."the community hears of one bad officer and questions the integrity of all officers."

Police officer B explained (as I observed) that a large proportion of Miamians tend to be anti-police--partially the

result of the cultural traits that were previously discussed, and the fact that the departments and its officers image has been tarnished due to corruption. I observed that overall Miami police officers do not get treated with much respect by members of the community--because either the community does not trust the officers, looks down upon them, and/or actually hates the police (for various reasons). These views of the police are not only held by those in the poorer areas of the city (Overtown and Liberty City) but also by members of Miami's wealthy community (Coconut Grove).

Narcotics officer D expressed that:

citizens that inhabit areas such as Overtown and Liberty City set forth an anti-police attitude, even if they are pro-police, they will do this because they must live within that area. Many individuals within these sections of the city do not show respect for the police respect, especially the American blacks--some of who will fight and provoke an officer until the officer is forced to use physical force. You drive through the city and many citizens look at you with disgust and hate (as I observed).

Officers that patrol areas of Liberty City and Overtown ride around prepared for anything (their seat belt undone, their hand on their gun, and the window partially rolled down in order to hear what is being said on the streets). You leave work feeling dirty from dealing with dirty people, dirty streets, and "the heat of the city".

One officer added..."these people will shoot at you, they do not care what or who you are."

Do to the bad image the Miami PD and its officers have attained due to the corruption scandal of 1985, morale within the department is low, and the public's confidence and trust of the officers and the department is low.

However, compared to a couple of years ago, residents of the Miami area are more apt to complain if they feel an officer has done something wrong.

* * * *

In sum, prior researchers and scholars (Carter, 1989; Ward & McCormack, 1987; Langer, 1986a, 1986b; Williams, 1986) and police officers have pointed out that there exists a strong relationship between ethics and corruption." Thus, as ethics within a community decrease, most often ethics within the police organization will decrease; or as as ethics within a community increase, most often ethics within the police organization will increase. In turn, police organizations can become a reflection of community/society in which they exist; in this case, the Miami PD became a reflection of the City of Miami and the abundance of social problems and racial tensions that existed.

CHAPTER 7
THE DRUG MARKET AND POLICE DRUG-RELATED CORRUPTION

The Illegal Drug Market: An Influencing Factor Behind the Corruption

The Drug Market in the City of Miami

Miami's illicit drug market is the strongest influence behind the corruption that has been occurring within the Miami Police Department since the mid-1970s. The illicit drug market is big business, involving large amounts of money and big risks; therefore, drug traffickers rely upon corruption so they can conduct their business and continue importing drugs.

Through historical analysis I developed an understanding of the growth of the drug market in the Miami area. Early on, the Columbian racketeers entered the US cocaine market as suppliers and by the mid-1970's they had taken control of most of the distribution. Meanwhile, the Cubans tended to dominate the trafficking of marijuana. Both the Latin mafias and the Columbian drug cartels are organized much like multinational corporations, with separate divisions for imports, transporting, distribution, and finance; with anywhere between 100 to 200 employees, many illegal aliens that reside in the US (such as the City of Miami). There are also Florida based organizations that traffic drugs, but again they are usually supported by the larger Latin mafias and/or Columbian drug cartels in the producing countries.

The Lieutenant that heads the Miami Police Department's

Narcotics Unit corroborated my above findings by pointing out that...

the majority of drugs that come into this country are brought in by the Latin's and the Columbian drug cartels. They rely heavily on thousands of Columbian and other Latin American aliens that reside in areas such as Miami for importing the drugs into the area and distributing them throughout the rest of the US.

Throughout the 1970's and into the 1980's, the drug market was recognized as a new frontier of opportunities, especially for many of the foreigners that arrived in the Miami area at that time (especially for foreigners with ties to drug producing countries such as: the Caribbean, Latin and South American countries, and Cuba). For instance, with the influx of Cubans throughout the 1960's and 1970's, and than the influx of Mariels and Haitians in the 1980's, drug trafficking in the Miami area increased, and the attitude that seemed to prevail became one of "anything goes" (Eddy, Sabogal, & Walden, 1988).

The State Prosecutor expressed that...

the local community (mostly made up of immigrants, refugees, and illegal aliens) see the drug business as a way of life. Some immigrants come to the United States and realize that it is not as easy as they thought to make the "big bucks", and soon they realize the profits that can be made on drugs (especially if they can bring them over themselves from their home country). In fact, it is not unusual for these same individuals to become involved in other illegal activities, such as stealing, selling, and sending stolen goods back to their home countries (the Haitians are especially into this type of business, and they tend to exchange the stolen goods for drugs back in Haiti).

By 1980, Miami was referred to as "the drug capital of the United States", because an estimated 70 to 80 percent of

the United States drug supply was flowing through Miami. At that same time, Miami was experiencing what has been referred to as "the Cocaine Wars", a time when drug traffickers and dealers were being killed on a regular basis, and there were huge amounts of drugs and money in the area. Today, the drug situation in Miami has not changed that much, huge quantities of drugs still flow into the city, drug dealers are still killing each other, and Miami still has many of the same drug-related problems it had during "the Cocaine Wars" (such as: corruption, drug-related illegal activities, and drug-related crimes). Several narcotics officers pointed out that...

the drug business in the City of Miami is a twenty-four hour business, where drug dealers have street dealers working the street corners in shifts, day and night. No matter where in Miami you live a drug dealer lives near by.

There is both a big demand for drugs and a big supply of drugs in this country. In order to get an idea of the profits involved in the illicit drug trade take a look at the distribution process of an average shipment of drugs. In 1979, 1 kilogram of almost pure cocaine delivered to Miami would be cut by wholesalers and sold to a distributor as 2 kilograms (50 percent pure) to be sold at \$37,000 each (now that same kilogram of cocaine costs about \$13,000 to \$15,000). In turn, the distributor would cut the cocaine again to produce 4 kilograms, and pass that on to the retailer who again cuts the cocaine producing almost 8 kilograms to be sold in smaller quantities, at approximately

\$70 to \$100 a gram. So what started out as \$625 worth of cocaine in Columbia could fetch approximately \$560,000 on the streets of America; in this respect, cocaine has been referred to as "one of the most valuable commodities on earth"--that the revenues from drug trafficking and dealing are greater than those for tourism, exports, health care, and all other legitimate businesses combined (Eddy, Sabogal, and Walden, 1988).

The literature continually states that most of the currency in circulation in Miami has traces of cocaine on it. Figures show that from the drugs that flow in through Miami, an estimated \$20 to \$40 billion a year in untaxed revenue pours into the state's economy; in fact, Miami has been referred to as "the Wall Street of the illegal drug world" (Newsweek, 9 June 1980). Miami officers point out that the increased flow of currency has drawn major banks to the Miami area; in fact, in the past ten years, five major high rise banks have gone up in downtown Miami.

In an attempt to combat this countries illicit drug market, on January 30, 1982, the war on drugs was formally declared "The War on Drugs" when the Reagan Administration established the South Florida Task Force (under the authority of Vice President George Bush) to coordinate the activities of the federal agencies engaged in the fight. Within the Task Force's first year the United States Attorney's Office had prosecuted 664 drug-related cases, an increase of 64 percent over the previous year, and seized

six tons of cocaine in the South Florida area. By 1985, the task force had seized 25 tons of cocaine in South Florida alone, almost twice as much cocaine as the DEA had estimated to be Columbia's entire cocaine production just six years before. By 1986, the cocaine seizures in South Florida topped 30 tons (Sabogal, Eddy & Walden, 1988).

Despite the task forces efforts to fight the drug problem, by the beginning of 1987 (five years after the war on drugs began), there was in fact more cocaine on America's street than there had been, and it was cheaper and purer. For instance, in 1982, the cocaine averaged 12.5% purity (meaning that it was cut eight times); by 1987, the average purity (at least in Miami) was 33% pure (meaning it had been cut 3 times). In addition, when the task force began in 1982, in Miami, one kilogram of cocaine of any purity cost \$47,000 to \$60,000; by late 1987, one kilogram of cocaine cost between \$9,000 and \$14,000. Regardless of the task forces efforts, there still exist areas in Miami where cocaine is easily and openly available, where drugs are sold on the street corner like candy, and where dealers work 24 hours a day in shifts (Eddy, Sabogal, & Walden, 1988).

In support, Lieutenant A expressed that...

regardless of the fact that large amounts of money and drugs are confiscated regularly (for instance it was not long ago that 6,000 kilograms of cocaine were seized in the Miami area), rarely does this have any effect on the availability of the drugs or the prices of drugs in the Miami area. There are so many drugs (especially cocaine and crack) in the Miami area, and more continually coming in, staying, and moving through that nobody knows exactly what amount of drugs are in

the area.

Right now there seems to be no end to the drug market, especially since the profits to be made from the business are so great.

In various documentation it was reported that intelligence information shows that approximately 1,000 to 1,500 kilograms of cocaine move through the city on a weekly basis (a low approximation, higher figures were stated by officers), and only about 10% of those drugs are confiscated, which is a very small portion of drugs in comparison to the amount of drugs that flow through the city. One State Prosecutor assigned to prosecuting drug cases in Miami pointed out that the role of local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies in fighting the "war on drugs" in the Miami area, as well as nationally, has had very little impact on the amount of drugs that come into and pass through the City of Miami, as well as the rest of the country.

The Miami Police Departments Attempt to Deal with the Drug Trade.

The Miami PD has three units assigned to handling drug investigations: the Street-Level Narcotics Unit (SNU), the Narcotics/Gambling Unit in the Special Investigations Section (SIS), and C.I.T.A.T..

In reviewing departmental reports in regards to their efforts to handle the drug situation in Miami it was stated that the department has been facing various problems attempting to deal with the drug situation; one reason being that the department's credibility is very low due to the

corruption scandal that has altered the public's and other agencies' perception of the Miami PD. The report stated that the Law Enforcement Commission does not feel the department is seriously attacking the drug problem, and that the federal investigation the department has faced has seriously hurt the department's credibility and image.

In addition, the report set forth that in 1989, the amount of manpower the Miami PD had assigned to fighting the local drug problem was lower than other departments in the area had committed to the task. As stated above the Miami PD has only 3 units assigned to handling drug investigations. The Street Narcotics Unit (with a total of 1 Lieutenant, 4 Sergeants, and about 40 officers) which does street-level drug dealing. This unit is broken down into an Interceptor Unit (1 Sergeant over 6 to 7 officers), 3 Street Narcotics Units (3 Sergeants, and 6 or 7 officers to each unit) and a Prostitution and Gambling Unit. The Narcotics/Gambling Unit in SIS is a vice control unit that investigates trafficking and smuggling (with 1 Lieutenant, 2 Sergeants, and 13 officers); and on occasion C.I.T.A.T. conducts drug investigations, but there is no specific manpower committed specifically for the job under this unit.

In comparison, the Metro-Dade Police Department has twice as much manpower assigned to narcotics investigations, with 5 Lieutenants and 9 working squads, each having one Sergeant with a span of control over 6 to 7 officers.

The Major that heads up SIS expressed that...

the Street Narcotics Unit exists primarily to satisfy the public and the politicians, it simply provides the numbers/statistics for the department, so as to show the quantity of drug-related arrests they have made. The Narcotics Unit under SIS deals more with large quantities of drugs, they make "quality arrests"--they are not as statistics oriented.

Another problem the Department's drug units face is that they do not have enough equipment (cameras, car telephones, and tapes) for each narcotics unit, so the equipment is spread out throughout the various units. As a result, the department faces problems such as equipment is uncared for by members of these units, broken equipment goes unreported because nobody is willing to take the blame, and equipment comes up missing at times.

* * * *

The reality is that the "war on drugs" is burdened with routine and enormous frustrations caused by bureaucracy, and lack of money and resources. In addition, the war on drugs is burdened with the fact that we live in a society in which members of the community participate in the drug trade and support it; this is the main reason why the drug market has flourished to such an extreme in the Miami area. For instance, within Miami, local merchants cater to drug dealers in various ways: real estate brokers continually rent or sell homes to individuals who pay with cash; auto dealers sell fleets of cars to corporations and private parties for export to Southern and Central America; local banks profit by accepting huge amounts of cash deposits to

be put in accounts under fake names; and lawyers, accounts, and other professionals provide services to the smugglers as a lucrative sideline. Patrol officer A pointed out that...

practically a whole generation of Miami's population has grown up knowing nothing other than the risks and rewards of the drug business, especially trafficking and dealing drugs such as cocaine and crack. They have been exposed to the fast life, where individuals can earn more in one day than most people earn in one year--allowing for the purchase of \$57,000 cars for cash. However, the downside of the business and the fast life is that many individuals of this generation also use and abuse the drugs.

Another downside of the massive influx of drugs and drug money into the Miami area (as pointed out by various Miami police officers), is that the Miami police must work within a social environment that is saturated with crime, drugs, and drug-related problems, such as: drug use and abuse; drug-related crimes; corruption among public officials and local business people; and a wide range of other illegal activities.

The Influence the Drug Market has had on Crime

Crime is a major concern from many of Miami's residents. In fact, there is believed to be a strong positive correlation between Miami's various social stresses (increasing racial tensions, the influx of Mariels and Haitians, the increased drug trade) and the increased crime rate Miami has experienced. In 1980, in response to these various social stresses and the increasing crime rate, as well as various communal and political pressures, the Miami Police Department was forced to enlarge its police force; and

the city assigned more judges to the city's criminal circuit. Still, the city was still unable to cope with the increasing crime rates.

In 1980, the rates for major crimes in the Miami area at least doubled over the previous year. This major increase was largely due to the influx of Mariels in 1980, many who were criminals from Cuba (when Castro emptied his prisons during the Mariel boatlift). Figures show that in 1980, approximately 66 Mariel refugees had been arrested in Miami for homicide; an additional 72 Mariels had been murdered (often by other Mariel refugees). That same year, the Governor of Florida announced that half of all violent crimes in the City of Miami were being committed by Mariels, and that the refugees represented 20% to 30% of the cities jail population (Time, 12 Oct 1981).

Not only was the city facing crime rates, but also an increasing drug trade--too large of a load for the Miami PD to handle. In the early 1980's, Miami police officers were reluctant to accept any more drug cases because the department had no more room to store the evidence (drugs), even after they turned to burning tons of marijuana in furnaces of the Florida Power and Light Company.

With both an increase in crime and an increase in drug cases, Miami's jails and the State of Florida's prisons were becoming seriously overcrowded. In attempt to deal with the overflow of prison inmates and to make room for the convicted drug traffickers and dealers, the state (between

1978 and 1980) was forced to parole many of the burglars, armed robbers, and other criminals that filled the prisons. Still the prisons were overcrowded and most of the drug traffickers only served in prison for a short time, the average sentence was less than two years with eligibility for parole after one year (The Nation, 18 Feb 1984).

By 1983 and 1984 crime rates were still increasing, Miami's homicide rate jumped more than 400% (the second highest murder rate in the nation), making Miami one of the most dangerous cities in the United States. Authorities became overburdened attempting to deal with the murder rate that all they could do was keep a count of the bodies that were accumulating. In fact, the Dade County medical examiner had to rent a refrigerated hamburger van to house the overflow of corpses.

The Influence the Drug Market has had on Corruption

Since the 1960's, the influx of drugs to the Miami area has been increasing. As a result, police officers in the area have been increasingly exposed to vast amounts of drugs and drug money, as well as to the monetary rewards and fast life that accompanies involvement in the drug market. In fact, much of the corruption that occurs in South Florida has been blamed on the lure of the life among South Florida's "cocaine cowboys" and the free-flowing cash.

The majority of Miami police officers interviewed agreed that the influence of the drug market in the Miami area (the large amounts of cash) has bred corruption both

within the local community and the Miami PD. Several officers expressed that "the corruption has become interwoven into the fabric of Miami's society." In corroboration, patrol officer A pointed out that...

corruption is not a new occurrence in the Miami PD, the department has experienced corruption problems in the past (as have other police departments across the country); however, with the increased flow of drugs and the increase in drug-related problems that accompanies the drugs in the Miami area, the problem of drug-related corruption within the local police departments (Miami PD being one of those), as well as the whole community, has become more prevalent.

Many officers agree that drug-related corruption problems among police officers (as well as among other public officials and members of the community) in Miami will continue to grow as long as the market for drugs continues. It was expressed by Miami officers that the Miami River Cops corruption scandal of 1985 was "only the tip of the iceberg" of drug-related corruption problems to be uncovered in the Miami PD.

Through both historical analysis and interviews I developed a sense of what types of drug-related corrupt activities Miami officers were involved in, giving one a sense of the extremeness of the acts. In reviewing the local and national newspapers and magazines I found that drug-related corruption among Miami police officers has not been a rare nor uncommon occurrence in the past; but since the 1980's, the stories and allegations of drug-related corruption among Miami police officers has increased. The 1985 Miami River Cops corruption scandal grabbed the

attention of the media on a national scale, because the corruption that was being uncovered was so rampant and extreme, officers were committing more violent crimes and on an extraordinary scale. These stories also grabbed the media's attention because the major influencing factor that produced this sort of anarchy in the Miami PD and on the streets of the city was the drug market. Throughout the 1980's, with "the War Against Drugs", just about anything drug-related was making the headlines. Under these circumstances, many Miami officers feel that the media sensationalized the corruption.

True, the Miami PD has experienced an extraordinary serious corruption problem, different from that experienced by any other police departments across the country. For one, it was not simply individual officers engaged in traditional corrupt activities (such as accepting bribes, taking pay-offs, and protecting criminals), even though this type and extent of corruption was occurring; but, it was also an extensive network of uniformed Miami police officers (all male and mostly Hispanic) that had organized themselves into a group of about a dozen, that were using their official positions to commit violent acts and other types of crimes that they were hired to protect the community against. The corrupt activities this group of officers was committing, in addition to the large number officers being investigated, the Miami PDs corruption scandal was declared by the media to be one of the largest police corruption

cases in US history.

To give a perspective of the various types of corrupt activities Miami police officers have been involved in (especially throughout the 1980's) several incidents are presented (based upon knowledge obtained from newspaper articles and stories told to me by officers):

- there were officers within the department that would not arrest some drug traffickers and dealers in exchange for money or drugs;
- officers were "ripping-off" drugs and drug money from drug traffickers and dealers;
- officers were involved in trafficking cocaine;
- officers were robbing individuals they had arrested;
- officers were invading homes and stealing property;
- officers were using unnecessary and/or excess physical force on these same individuals; and
- there have been several incidents in which the department has found that confiscated drug money and drugs have been stolen from the department property room and the departments safes.

One rare incident was when the department found that 20 bales of marijuana, weighing more than 5,000 pounds, was taken out of the storage room at police headquarters, only several blocks from the center of downtown Miami.

Throughout the 1980's, several Miami police officers have faced such charges as racketeering, robbery, cocaine trafficking, aggravated battery, and even murder as a result of drug-related activities. More specifically, in 1985, what started as the Miami River Cops case--an investigation by the Metro-Dade PD into the drowning of three

men--resulted in the arrest of eleven Miami police officers and one former Miami officer on drug-related charges (charges ranging from drug dealing to murder), and mushroomed into a large scale corruption investigation. Soon, the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) and other federal agencies began their own investigation into the possible corruption within the Miami PD, as well as police and political corruption in the whole Miami area.

By the end of 1986, continuing departmental and federal investigations uncovered more corrupt officers within the Miami PD, as well as the Miami area. For instance, triple murder charges were filed against two former Miami police officers, as well as charges for stealing \$2 million worth of cocaine during a 1,000 pound drug bust. Two other police officers were charged with cocaine possession; and another two from Miami's vice squad were relieved of duty pending investigation of \$150,000 missing from the department's safe. Twenty-five other police officers, some of them of high rank, had been subpoenaed as witnesses or targets of the investigation. By 1987, a total of 72 officers had been dismissed, suspended, or resigned under pressure from the force. More than 36 Miami police officers have faced criminal and/or administrative charges. It was predicted that as many as 2000 officers, or one-fifth of the police force, might face investigation; and several investigations are still pending.

As noted earlier, the Miami River Cops corruption

scandal was not the first corruption problem to be experienced by the Miami PD--many of those interviewed did not think it would be the last. In fact, several individuals, both inside and outside the PD expressed that corruption still exists within the department at various ranks.

Several officers pointed out that...

the only difference between the corruption that occurs today and that that occurred in the early half of the 1980's, is that corruption back then was more extreme (as in the case of the Miami River Cops mutli-million dollar cocaine ripp-offs), and more openly and frequently committed by officers. Today, the drug-related corruption that occurs is not as extreme and is more subtle.

In fact, corruption will continue to exist until the real problem is confronted, that being the estimated \$10 to \$40 billion worth of drug money that flows through Miami annually. Until something is done to deal with these numbers, corruption of Miami police officers will remain at some level. Today, corruption has become such a common story in Miami that the community is no longer shocked; however, the actual level of corruption that exists in Miami is unknown, and if it were to be known it is expected to stagger the imagination.

Drug Use Among Officers

Another type of drug-related corrupt activity that the Miami PD has had to deal with is the use of drugs (on and off duty) by police officers. This is becoming a more common problem that many police departments across the

country have had to deal with in recent years (Carter, 1989).

Major A pointed out that there have been several incidents in which Miami police officers have been found to be using drugs, as pointed out earlier the department had even hired individuals--under the mass hiring program--that had prior history of drug use and/or that had reported currently using drugs on occasion.

In attempt to deal with the problem of drug use among officers, the Miami PD has recently made it part of the screening process to require new recruits to take a mandatory urine analysis test that would indicate whether they were drug users or not. The department than started conducting random mandatory urine analysis tests on officers, in several incidents officers were fired from the force for refusing to take the test. However, due to a recent Florida court ruling it was declared that the department cannot conduct random urine analysis or drug testing on officers already on the force. As a result, the Miami PD has turned to, once a year, randomly selecting officers for a physical that entails a urine analysis test. Under the provisions of the court ruling, if there is rumor or accusations made that an officer is using drugs the department cannot give the officer an on the spot urine test; rather, the department would have to conduct some sort of surveillance on the officer or wait for the yearly physical.

Major A pointed out that...

in the past, several officers have tested positive on their first try of the test. If an officer tests positive on the first test they are given a second chance at the test; and if both tests show positive results the officer is released from duty.

At the time I was there, the department was conducting the yearly physicals, and the Major expressed that eight officers had already tested positive on their first try of the urine analysis test.

* * * *

With all the drugs and drug money floating around the Miami area, corruption among police officers, lawyers, judges, and political officials is almost inevitable; as is the use of drugs by these same individuals.

The Nature of Police Work

The nature of police work is another major influencing factor behind corruption of any police officer. Not only does the nature of police work expose police officers to the criminal elements of society, but it exposes officers to the temptations and opportunities for corruption. When the temptations and opportunities for corruption are coupled with the amount of discretion officers are allowed to use on the job and the quality of supervision over the officers corruption becomes a possibility. When there is no sergeant keeping an eye on officers, officers have the opportunity to misuse their discretion and become involved in corrupt activities.

Even more so, the nature of narcotic investigations increases officers exposure to temptations and opportunities. Considering drug-related crimes are often

victimless crimes (there is no physical evidence and no crime scene) and those that are involved in the illegal activities are unlikely to file a complaint with the police; thus, police officers (especially detectives, investigators, and undercover officers) must rely heavily upon informants for first-hand information about drug deals, drug-related crimes, and specific individuals. This type of work continually exposes officers to criminals and degenerates.

The needed knowledge that informants possess and police officers want is often acquired by officers through such methods as trickery, deceit, or a deal--exchanging leniency or immunity for a crime they have committed for information. There are two types of confidential informants (CIs): those who are usually caught red-handed; those who in return for leniency and immunity agree to provide information and testimony against their drug sources or other criminals that are worth a deal; and confidential sources who are in between worlds that keep an ear to the ground. Narcotics officers find that the best sources of information tend to be those individuals that are most involved in the drug business, especially trafficking.

In addition, narcotics officers (especially those that do undercover work) are often expected to pretend to be a part of the criminal world--to associate with known criminals, and attempt to buy or sell drugs to with these individuals. They are expected to switch back and forth between playing the role of the criminal and playing the role

of the police officer--arresting the same criminals with whom they were associating. For instance, in the early part of the 1980's, in Miami, patrol officers that worked the Little Havana section and the seedy riverfront district were suppose to police the bars--places frequented by drug traffickers, dealers, and gamblers. They eventually developed informants out of some of these individuals that frequented the bars, and were able to use the information they received for their own corrupt activities, creating their own opportunities.

The State Prosecutor that prosecuted the Miami River Cops expressed that...

the nature of police work, the influence of the drug market in Miami, and the social environment in which they must work, are all factors that influenced and/or motivated the corrupt activities of these officers.

Frustration Officers Experience Dealing with the Drug Trade

Police work, which entails drug enforcement, can be a source of frustration for police officers. This frustration can stem from various aspects of the job, such as: the fact that the job creates a problem of unrealistic expectations from the community, the community holds an idealistic view of the police, and drug enforcement is a never ending battle. These sources of frustration are coupled with the frustration officers experience in dealing with other agencies within the criminal justice system (the courts, the prosecutors, and the corrections department) that work along with the police to fight the drug problem. Many officers I

spoke with questioned how effective and efficient the system truly is?

Various patrol and narcotics officers expressed the frustration that they experience when dealing with other agencies within the criminal justice system. They expressed that...

we (the police) are making arrests, we are doing our job; but because the jails and prisons are so overcrowded, and the courts so backed up, the drug problem (the influx of drugs and the use of drugs) in Miami (and across the country) continues to worsen.

Adding to this source of frustration, many narcotics officers pointed out that...

because the jails are so overcrowded, and the courts so backed up, we often see drug dealers and buyers that we have arrested out on the street within a matter of hours or a day, sometimes before the we even finish the paper work on the individual.

Under these circumstances, some officers express that they feel as though the criminal justice system is not functioning effectively; justice is not being served. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that at times officers may believe it is better to use their discretion and give out street-level justice (be the enforcer and the judge right there at the crime scene), rather than arrest the individual.

Another source of frustration for both patrol and narcotics officers in their efforts to enforce drug laws is that their efforts do not seem to have any effect on the demand or supply of the drugs in the area. Several officers I spoke with question whether the drug problem is one that

can be dealt with in a law enforcement manner? Or is it a social problem that is beyond the scope of police authority?

In corroboration with the above view, Major A explained that...

from federal to local efforts to enforce drug laws and fight this countries drug problem we are not succeeding. Two reasons we are losing the war on drugs in Miami is because the drug business is so abundant, and because the local community expects the local police to deal with a social problem in a law enforcement manner.

Adding to this perspective that the drug problem cannot be dealt with in strictly a law enforcement manner, several patrol officers expressed that...

true, the responsibility to enforce drug laws lies with the police; but the police cannot take on all of the responsibility of dealing with the cities drug problems, the court and the prison systems must play their role in punishing drug dealers.

Several officers stressed the role of local social agencies and education in an attempt to deal with local drug problems. Education is needed in order to attack the demand side of the drug market. In support of education patrol officer A expressed that...

even though many of today's adults and youth are currently caught up in the drug trade and drug use we need to think about the future and educate today's youth and the future generations about the negative effects of drugs. For those that are beyond education, we can only deal with them through rehabilitation and/or punishment (incapacitation); simply get them off the streets.

* * * *

Under the circumstances presented above it is not unusual that police officers question the influence police

actually have on the drug market (supply and demand), as well as the effect the whole criminal justice system has. It has been presented in prior research on police corruption (as discussed in the literature review) that this type of frustration has been found to be an influencing factor behind corruption, as well as a motivator and/or justifier for police officers to start handing out street-level justice based upon their own discretion. The problem is that the criminal justice system has built in barriers against drug and law enforcement which can breed corruption.

HUMAN NATURE AND CORRUPTION

When one talks of human nature, broadly one is talking about the psychological and social qualities that characterize mankind; but when the term is used more specifically, one is referring to the social and psychological qualities that characterize a specific individual or group of individuals. In this section the term human nature is used more specifically to talk about the human nature of specific officers and/or officers in general. Focusing on human nature in relation to corruption, motivators, and justifiers.

Defining Corruption: Where Do Officers Draw the Line

Through talking with police officers I attempted to develop an understanding of where these officers draw the line between what they consider corrupt activity, and what they do not. I found that different officers define corruption differently, some officers are more conservative

when it comes to drawing the line between what they consider corrupt and others are more liberal.

Most officers emphasized the difference between accepting "courtesies" (which are violations of administrative regulations) and corruption (which is both violation of administrative regulations and violation of law). Many officers defined "courtesies" as: accepting free meals, free videos, and discounts on meals and/or merchandise.

However, officers did not consider accepting "courtesies" to be corruption. Many officers pointed out that it becomes wrong, or corrupt, when an individual officer goes into a store and flashes his/her badge demanding discounts and/or free services or items.

Some officers were specific and pointed out that an act can be considered corrupt...

if an officer accepts free meals, items, or services in exchange for overlooking something illegal, or for providing some form of police intelligence information (information which concerns one or more aspects of criminal activity and which is significant to police planning). It is also corrupt for an officer to take drugs from an individual.

But the majority of officers I spoke with simply expressed that...

basically, corruption begins when an officer takes money and/or drugs that are either offered to him/her, or steals them. In general an act is considered corrupt if it can tarnish the badge and/or if you can go to jail for it.

Sergeant C pointed out that...

there are different types of corruption, they differ on

the basis of the scope and magnitude of the act committed. For instance, there is traditional corruption which occurs in practically every police department, such as: when an officer accepts money in exchange for overlooking a traffic violation; protection rackets; or when an officer accepts gifts (not especially money) for things overlooked and arrests that are not made. Then there are more extreme and untraditional forms of corruption (which can also occur at different levels). The type in which police actually engage in the actual commission of crimes either at the street-level or at an upper-level (where officers do not engage specifically in the street-level act but receive a portion of the benefits from street-level acts, and use them for personal use, such as officers using money from street-level corruption to buy into land deals, or buy expensive items).

In the case of the Miami River Cops their corruption extended beyond the traditional types of police corruption (bribes and pay-offs). It was a small group of officers committing a much deeper level of corruption, these police officers found that they could make more of a profit ripping-off drug shipments and drug traffickers. This case is a perfect example of how corruption can start at the traditional small scale level and move up to large scale corruption--in extent, scope and magnitude.

I found that line officers can often draw a distinction between what activities they consider corrupt and what they do not; however, where the line is drawn between what is considered a courtesy and what is corruption is vague (different ranks recognize these actions differently). In addition, in different sections of the city (depending upon the ethnic make up of the community) officers are offered and receive different types of courtesies from the community.

For instance, when riding as a civilian observer, I rode with one patrol officer that seemed to over-extend his use of courtesies offered to him by the community.

Throughout the shift this officer went from hand out to hand out accepting free meals, free and/or discounted items from stores, and free video rentals. He did have justifications for his actions though, such as: I caught a man that was going to ripp-off the store so the manager told me I could get free videos; and, I was the responding officer to a crime at the establishment and I was offered free meals for my service. Even more so he expressed...he did not believe his actions were corrupt, they were simply a violation of administrative regulations which all officers do, so it is no big deal.

One officer summed it up when he stated that...

"legally there is no difference between accepting courtesies and corrupt acts, but morally there is."

It comes down to a matter of personal discretion when drawing the line between what is corruption and what is not.

Temptation and Opportunity

What motivates one officer to commit corrupt activities, and another not to (to stop at the acceptance of courtesies)? Many officers pointed out that it is a matter of human nature in relation to the opportunities for and temptations of corruption--these should be discussed simultaneously considering the opportunity for corruption must be present in order for an officer to be tempted.

Major B expressed that...

human nature includes opportunity, temptation, and especially greed. Whether an individual gives into the temptations and opportunities of corruption, or not, depends upon the individual, his/her human nature and

level of tolerance. It takes different types and extents of opportunities and temptations to encourage different individuals to cross the line between breaking administrative regulations and committing corrupt acts. What one is willing to accept in exchange for breaking or giving up his/her values or ethics depends upon the individual (it may be sex, money, or something else).

Along these lines, the homicide investigator from Metro-Dade PD that headed up the Miami River Cops investigation, perceived the motivators behind corruption and the corrupt activities of the Miami River Cops to be money. He expressed that...

money is the key corrupter in Miami, because money is essential. Everything in today's society centers around having money, and the average person feels they never have enough money. In fact, money and greed go hand-in-hand, they are the key components that corrupted the Miami River Cops, as they have corrupted many other officers in other departments over the years, and will continue to do so. Overtime, the Miami River Cops got more greedy, they kept looking for bigger sources of information and bigger drug shipments that they could ripp-off.

Other factors that need to be considered are: human nature, integrity, and maturity of officers. When these factors are combined with the opportunity for corruption they are what determines whether an officer will give into the temptations.

In corroboration, Geoffrey Alpert pointed out that...

the main factor behind the extensive corruption that exists in Miami is economics, greed, and opportunity for money. In the case of the Miami River Cops, the opportunity was to some degree more prevalent among the Cuban officers because of their extended families and the ties they had to Cuba.

Several Miami police officers pointed out that...

some of the Miami River Cops came onto the police force looking for opportunities to use their power and authority to make a profit.

In relation to human nature and drug-related

corruption, it was pointed out earlier that there is significant evidence to support that much of the corruption that occurs within the Miami area (and other areas like Miami where drug trafficking and dealing is so abundant) is influenced by the massive amounts of free-flowing drugs and money that accompanies the illicit drug market; and the fact that the opportunities and temptations that present themselves in an area saturated with drugs and drug money can be very extensive.

Several officers pointed out that it is not unusual in Miami for police officers to be exposed to various opportunities and temptations of corruption (such as bribes and payoffs) by those involved in the drug trade. For instance, it is not unusual for a patrol officer to stop a car on a routine traffic violation and find that the individual has drugs and/or a large sums of cash on them (such as paper bags full of hundreds or thousands of dollars in cash and/or containers of drugs--grams, ounces, kilograms). Or at other times, to come across large sums of cash that have been abandoned in buildings, or money nobody is willing to claim. Police officer F informed that...

the money you sometimes come across is so awesome. Once I came across a guy with \$60,000 or more in cash on him, and the guy told me to just take the money and let him go. In Miami it is not unusual for the opportunity to commit a corrupt act to present itself, and at times the temptations can be great. That is why it is crucial that officers have integrity and ethics such that they do not lose sight of what is right and wrong.

Furthermore, it is not unusual for officers to come

across individuals that are dealing drugs, and often the individual will throw down the drugs and money and deny that it is theirs. This occurred on several occasions when riding as an observer with the narcotics unit, and in some cases if the money involved was small (about \$50) the officers would give the money to a boy in the crowd and tell him to go home. Officers tend to use their own discretion under these circumstances.

But what makes one officer turn in the money and another officer take the money? Or when does an officer that always turned in the money before, decide to take the money on one occasion when the opportunity presents itself? Why does an officer give into the temptation? One officer expressed that the temptation maybe so great. Considering a Miami officer makes between \$25,000 to \$50,000 a year, the officer may need the money to pay bills. Once an officer takes the money, it often gets easier and easier from him/her to do it again and again, as does justifying his/her actions.

Other officers pointed that an officer may give into the temptations and opportunities of corruption if the officer recognizes that the circumstances that surround the drug business often make it difficult for a dealer to report that he has been ripped-off by the police. This is true for several reasons: the dealer may have told the arresting officer that the money was not theirs; the activities the dealer is involved in are illegal anyways; and it is the

word of a police officer against that of a criminal. In the early to mid-1980's, when Miami was at its height in police-drug related corruption, on occasion a drug dealer would report to the department that the police "ripped them off"; but, often these reports were not taken seriously because the individual was unable to describe the officer(s). Today, a drug dealer or citizen is more apt to come forward and file a complaint, and the police department is more prone to investigate.

In order for corruption on any scale to exist, officers must recognize to some degree that they will be able to get away with their actions. In fact, opportunities that present themselves to officers may become more tempting if the officers know the chances of somebody finding out are slim. Most often this means there is a lack of official supervision and strong control over officers, as was the case in the Miami PD throughout most of the 1980s.

Unique to Miami, there are two other factors that occurred simultaneously in the early 1980's, that presented officers with the opportunity for corruption. One is that the department was hiring on a massive scale under 2 provisions of a consent decree, lowered standards, and poor training (as was discussed earlier); the second is that during that same time over 100,000 Mariels arrived in Miami, many of them hardened criminals that were released from Cuba's prisons. Thus, it did not take long for the ill-screened, ill-trained, and ill-led rookies to realize that

they could use their power and authority in an abusive manner toward the Mariels, and get away with it; this is because many of these immigrants were used to that abusive treatment by the Cuban police, and because supervision of officers was poor. Soon, some of the officers began stealing from the Mariels. One officer said he (like other officers he knows) look back now and think about what was going on at that time and what various officers were doing; what he had recognized at that time as police work (roughing up and stealing from Mariels), he now recognizes was probably where some of the corruption actually began. The situation with the refugees is part of what makes Miami so unique, as well as the type of corruption experienced in Miami so unique.

All of these various factors combined, some more influential than others, it is not surprising that the Miami PD experienced corruption problems. One officer even expressed that the corruption was "practically inevitable".

* * * *

Today, in an attempt to provide officers with the opportunity to earn extra money in order to reduce the temptations of corruption, the Miami PD has been made it official policy that officers be allowed to moonlight to earn extra money, and moonlight in uniform (up to 80% of Miami police officers have second jobs). Many officers are security guards at private clubs and restaurants, which are also favored entertainment spots of drug dealers, bankers,

lawyers, real estate brokers, and others who benefit in some way from the drug trade.

Justifications

Most officers feel a need to justify their actions no matter if it is simply a violation of a minor law (littering or running a stop light), a violation of administrative regulation (accepting courtesies), or all out corruption; but more so when their actions are illegal. In most cases when corrupt officers are uncovered they can give some sort of justification for their actions; and often an officer only needs to justify his/her actions the first time.

While riding as a participant observer, I found officers justifying their actions to me, whether they were minor infractions of the law or violations of administrative regulations. For instance, for a minor violation of law, such as littering the officers stated that "there is so much garbage on the streets already it does not matter". And when accepting free or discount meals and merchandise in stores officers had several justifications, such as: "we deserve it", "everyone else is accepting them", "after all I protected their establishment in the past", and finally "the community wants to give it to us".

Several officers explained that in more extreme cases of corruption, where officers are committing all out criminal activities they tend to justify their actions in much the same way, such as:

- "everyone else is doing it";
- "everyone else is making money on drugs";
- "it's not hard earned legitimate money anyways, it's easy money earned by criminals in an illegitimate business";
- "its dirty money, and who is going to complain that it was stolen";
- "we deserve the money for the risks we take on the job"; and
- a common one is that "we are not going to get caught because we are the law".

In court the Miami River Cops pointed out that they felt they deserved more money considering all the risks they were exposed to on a day-to-day basis as a police officer.

These are common justifications used by officers, many of these same justifications have appeared in prior literature on police corruption. Justifying our actions is part of our human nature.

* * * *

In sum, police officers are no different than the average citizen when it comes to human nature, ethics, values, and greed; but, due to the nature of police work, officers are exposed to the opportunities and temptations of corruption more so than the average citizen. As in the case of the Miami River Cops, some officers came onto the force seeking out opportunities for corruption, while other officers simply gave into the temptations of the opportunities that were presented to them as part of the job.

CASE STUDY

THE MIAMI RIVER COPS CORRUPTION CASE

The Miami River Cops corruption scandal of 1985, involved an organized network of about a dozen Miami police officers, all males and most Hispanic, that called themselves "the Enterprise". They used their uniforms and badges to commit both illegal and violent acts, as extreme as murder.

Where the corruption actually began or stemmed from among these officers is hard to say; however, there are several factors that have influenced the corruption as were discussed in detail throughout this paper. This case study is simply an attempt to present a brief scenario of how the River Cops came together, present some of the activities they were involved in, where the investigation began, and how the FBI got involved.

* * * *

It is known that some of these River Cops were good honest officers in the beginning, but do the nature of the job and the exposure to the opportunities and temptations of the drug market and corruption these officers became corrupt. At the same time, some of these other officers came on to the police force as trouble (some had committed petty thefts prior to being hired, others admitted using cocaine and marijuana), looking for opportunities to use their position and authority for their own personal gain.

It is also known (as was pointed out by various Miami

officers and public officials outside the Miami PD) that the corruption started off as individual officers committing traditional forms of corrupt acts such as: accepting cash in exchange for over looking traffic violations or other minor violations, accepting bribes and pay-offs, and small-scale shakedowns of drug dealers. At times a couple of these officers would pair up to act as musclemen for people trying to collect their illegal numbers. These guys were quick to figure out how to profit from the job.

The State Attorney that prosecuted the Miami River Cops stated that...

some of the Miami River Cops were on the pay roll from the start. They were being paid by bar owners to not come in and make their routine bar checks and harass the patrons.

The Miami River Cops eventually came in contact with each other when they were riding together on the same shift, the midnight shift (C shift from 9 p.m. to 7 a.m.), in the same district (Little Havana). Officers that worked the midnight shift knew what the other officers on that shift were up to, they knew who were the bad cops and who were the good cops, who could be trusted and who could not. Soon the word was out that these officers were bad and that they were looking for a piece of the profit; thus it did not take long for these officers to find each other and join together.

I spoke with several officers that worked with the Miami River Cops, and many of them expressed that...

they did not care for the officers, they felt these guys were the pushy types with macho attitudes, often

it was though they had a chip on their shoulder.

Originally, it was two loosely organized groups of corrupt officers that knew of each other through associations in the department and outside, and that came together at times for "drug ripp-offs". It was not until late 1984, early 1985, when one of the corrupt officers on routine patrol work came in contact with a bar owner in Little Havana (a Mariel that was an ex-convict from Cuba) who acted as an informant feeding the officer with information about people, drug deals, and drug shipments, that these two groups of officers joined together as one organized group. Overtime, these officers became a well organized network of corrupt officers that were allied with an unsavory collection of men that committed violent crimes, were involved in the drug business, and were contract killers. These were the same criminals that the men on the midnight shift had been in contact with day-after-day as part of the job.

At this point, the officers were seriously involved in corrupt activities, they had moved on to big time criminal activities, such as hijacking million dollar cocaine shipments, "ripping-off" drug traffickers and dealers, dealing cocaine, and running connections-stealing drugs and selling them back to connectors. Some of the officers found that they were in deep real quick, while other officers had worked up to such extensive involvement in corrupt activities. This group of officers even went to the extent

of carrying beepers with them so as to alert each other when transactions were about to take place.

Once an organized group, the first major ripp-offs these officers attempted were not successful. On the first try, the boat was seized by customs officials while it was en route to Miami; and on the second try, the freighter turned out deserted. Soon they became successful, and pulled off approximately 20 successful ripp-offs. These officers were using marked patrol cars to transport the stolen drugs, filling duffle bags of quantities as large as 400 kilograms of cocaine worth approximately \$12,000,000 into the patrol cars. All together these officers cleared \$16 million in their corrupt ventures. It eventually came to the point where these officers were out looking for any opportunity to profit, their greed got the worst of them; as justification for their actions they claimed that there was no big loss to these drug dealers, they have so much money anyways.

It was the ripp-off of the Mary C which lead to the death of three men after they jumped into the Miami River to escape arrest, that also led to the arrest of this group of officers; as well as a large scale investigation into the corrupt practices of Miami officers and other officials in the area. It is ironic, if the bodies had washed up on the other side of the river the Miami PD would have handled the investigation, but since the bodies ended up on the left bank it was Metro-Dade's jurisdiction.

As pointed out earlier, those that worked the midnight shift knew what the other officers on that shift were up to, so it was no surprise to some Miami officers when three dead bodies washed up on the banks of the Miami River and their were allegations made that it was the result of the corrupt activities of Miami officers.

* * * *

In the beginning, the Metro-Dade Homicide Unit began the investigation into the three dead bodies that washed up on the bank of the Miami River. However, when the investigators from Metro-Dade began to find that all allegations centered around the corrupt activities of Miami police officers they brought the FBI in. Through wire taps, surveillance investigators learned that they were dealing with a well organized network of active policemen, consisting of a ring of 10 current and 2 former police officers.

I spoke with the Metro-Dade Homicide investigator that headed the investigation and he pointed out that...

when it was uncovered that allegedly officers were involved in the deaths of these three men, not only did it shock the investigators, but also officers within the Miami PD. Supposably nobody expected it, not even the Miami PDs police administrators. The department was denying that such corruption was possible.

Several ranking officers within the Miami PD expressed that part of the reason some members of the department were shocked was because many of those officers were good cops if you looked at their records--their arrest statistics--some

were high producers. Some of those corrupt officers had been named 'officer of the month' in the past, and at the time the allegations were being made one of the corrupt officers was up for 'officer of the year'. Supposedly, the Miami PDs Internal Security Unit and supervisors did not anticipate looking for such extensive corruption.

May 7, 1986, the FBI arrived at the Miami PD headquarters with a subpoena, that was issued by a federal grand jury, entitling them to remove boxloads of files. The Miami River Cops case had tripped off a secret investigation by the FBI into the unsolved murders of three men, the possible suppression of evidence, and the disappearance of seized narcotics.

When the investigation started off it focused on the Miami PD's Special Investigations Section, a section of the department that is manned by hand picked officers to handle everything from probes into major narcotics trafficking and organized crime to anti-terrorism and VIP protection.

Today, the FBI still as ongoing investigations into the corrupt activities of Miami police officers, as well as other public officials in the Miami area.

* * * *

I questioned various officers as to why they thought the Miami River Cops corruption scandal occurred? Major B's perception was that...

there is no one reason. Human nature. The opportunities presented themselves.

The Miami River Cops were a group of individuals

that all just happened to have latent tendencies that emerged with the opportunities that were presented to them on the job. It is known that some of these officers had some measure of corruption in them prior to coming onto the police force, and others did not. When all these factors are combined you have the potential for corruption.

Sergeant A pointed out the corruption occurred because...

of greed and money, the two key motivators. These officers started off small (stealing jewelry from people they would stop on the street or stopped for traffic reasons); and when they were no longer satisfied with the profits in that they moved on to bigger money making crimes.

* * * *

I questioned officers as to whether or not this type and extent of corruption among officers could happen again in the Miami PD?

Major A expressed that...

it is possible. The department was suppose to tighten up its standards for narcotic use among officers hired; however, it has not actually done so.

Major B expressed that...

to the degree of the Miami River Cops, no. The community will simply not lend itself to that activity. Part of the problem back then was that the Mariel refugees had just arrived, giving the officers a group of individuals to harass and abuse; today, that target group of people does not exist.

Plus, since the Miami River Cops many of the drug dealers will not put up with being ripped-off by the police. Some are more likely to file a report or a complaint with the department if it happens. Now also, supposedly the department is more apt to check out any allegations of criminal activity or corruption made against officers.

On the other hand, several patrol officers and patrol Sergeants were not afraid to point out that corruption is

still occurring within the department today. So their response to the question was that...

sure it can happen again; however, maybe not to such extremes. In fact, corruption is still occurring in the department today, up and down the ranks; the only difference is that now the corruption is more subtle.

CHAPTER 8 CONCLUSIONS

The conditions and combination of factors that influenced, generated, and set the organizational atmosphere for corruption to occur among Miami police officers (as discussed throughout this paper) was not presented in the language of causality for obvious reasons. For one, we cannot say that any one factor caused the corruption, eliminating spuriousness. Two, there is no time order, many of these factors occurred within the same time frame, the early 1980s, which intensified the situation and the circumstances surrounding the corruption.

The conditions and factors that were found to influence corruption were:

- Miami's demographics (the City's population characteristics, geographic location, economy, and high crime rate);
- Miami's political system (influences on the police department, over interference in police business, political corruption);
- the Mass Hiring Program (1980-1983), including:
 - the 2 provisions of the consent decree,
 - the affirmative action program,
 - lowered standards of selection,
 - lack of proper training for officers,
 - lack of supervision/lack of discipline;
- community influences (the adversary relationship between the community and the police department, cultural and ethnic diversity, racial tension, overflow of community's problems into the police department, communities perception of the police department);
- Miami's illegal drug market (the nature of police work/drug enforcement, the environment officers work within); and

-human nature (temptation, opportunity, greed, money, justifications).

Sum of the factors presented above and throughout this paper were unique to the City of Miami and the Miami Police Department.

Based upon the findings it appears obvious that corruption needs to be examined from a broad sociological perspective. In Miami, the police departments corruption problem is a part of a much larger problem of social problems and social and political corruption--corruption that exists across the board, from the community, to local business persons, to politicians, and to other city public officials (such as: the police, lawyers, prosecutors, and prison guards).

In fact, the corruption that was examined occurred within a city that has one of the greatest concentrations of law enforcement manpower and resources (such as municipal and county police forces each with their own narcotic squads and specialized units; the Florida Department of Law Enforcement; the Florida Marine Patrol; plus other federal agencies and departments) ever assembled in the US, to tackle a specific problem of crime, "the War on Drugs".

DISCUSSION

Some comparisons between what was found in the field study and what was found in the literature review is that corruption within a police department does not occur in a vacuum; therefore, corruption needs to be examined in the

much broader social context in which it occurs. Though some of the literature stressed this notion, the majority of literature has examined corruption strictly within the organizational setting of the police department, disregarding the demographic characteristics, the local community, and the political influences.

Another problem is that a limited amount of literature on drug-related police corruption exists (while there seems to be a wide array of literature on traditional corruption, such as the Knapp Commission), as well as a limited amount of literature that examines corruption from a macro-sociological perspective. At times, I found myself searching for information at times.

However, I did find that some of the terminology and concepts presented in the traditional literature on corruption (such as the Knapp Commission) applies to drug-related corruption. For instance, the terminology set forth by the Knapp Commission--meat eaters and grass eaters--can easily be applied to the corruption that occurred in the Miami PD. Obviously the Miami River Cops were meat eaters, while some of the other officers (some I rode with that over used their courtesy privileges) could be considered grass eaters. Still, I feel that corruption needs to be re-examined, considering the impact the illicit drug market has recently had on corruption (moving corruption practices away from the more traditional forms).

In fact, I attempted to use the literature review in

this paper to develop a view of drug-related corruption from a sociological structural perspective; much as Langer (1986a, 1986b) and Ward and McCormack (1988) stress the need to do. Langer asserts that...

"with the onset of an international drug problem, corruption has become a characteristic of entire communities and societies" (Langer, 1986b:329).

I assert the need, as other scholars and researchers have, to look beyond the specific acts of any individual police officer and examine the circumstances in which police corruption occurs (the social environment). In fact, this field study was carried in such a manner as to do just that; in order to developing a broad overview of the various circumstances surrounding the drug-related corruption problems the Miami PD experienced. I listened to the voices of the police officers in order to develop an understanding of their perceptions, their day-to-day struggles as law enforcement officers, and the problems and frustrations they have in dealing with a drug problem (a social problem) in strictly a law enforcement manner.

This study was also an attempt to corroborate what a limited amount of researchers and scholars have conceptualized in their writings; to apply those conceptualizations to what actually took place in one police department (such as the Miami PD) that underwent an extremely serious drug-related corruption problem in 1985.

Obviously, the findings show use that the corruption problem was not isolated to the police department alone;

but, was the result of much larger social problems and forms of corruption that existed within the local community, the local political system, as well as the whole local criminal justice system. In a larger context, drug-related corruption has affected all level of government-city, state, and federal government agencies.

I encourage that further studies of corruption, especially drug-related corruption, be examined from a macro-sociological perspective and/or sociological structural perspective. In order to provide a larger selection of literature, to provide sources so that comparisons can be made between departments and communities; as well as for practical use, to help police administrators recognize potential problem areas and/or situations. Both qualitative and quantitative research in the area of drug-related police corruption can provide police administrators with useful information which can be used for drawing up and implementing departmental policies and regulations to assure that incidents such as Miami's are not repeated. Most importantly, research in this area needs to be done simply to keep up with the times.

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