

Teaching Stories in Online Police Firearms Training Videos:
Analysis of Content and Messages Carried

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to Margaret the most understanding, considerate and loving wife who uprooted her life and moved to another country to let me follow my dream to earn a PhD. She has listened to my successes, talked me through the challenges and there is no doubt that without her sacrifice and support I would not have reached this stage.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to identify teaching stories in freely available online police firearms training videos and examine the manifest and latent messages they may carry for a law enforcement audience. The literature recognizes that “well told stories have educational power” (Rae, 2016, p.2) and that adult educators traditionally use stories to teach (Clark & Rossiter, 2008) including some police academy trainers (Ford, 2003). However, there is less appreciation of story’s role in the informal learning setting of online videos that might influence the thinking and behavior of viewers. Randomly selected videos were analyzed to identify the teaching stories and messages they contain, revealing a structure in each video of a prime teaching narrative supported by subplot teaching stories. Three types of teaching stories, oral, visual, and narrated are apparent in the study addressing narratives of inherent occupational danger, use of emotive language and predominately positive views of this adult learning activity. The study suggests opportunities exist to apply adult learning theory to provide a more nuanced police training practice for workers in this unpredictable workplace.

Key Words: Police Firearms Training, Danger Narrative, Teaching Story Language

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Chapter 1

Introduction to the study

Storytelling is a ubiquitous (Abbott, 2008; Polkinghorne, 1988) and ‘uniquely human experience’ (Parkin, 2010), which has occurred throughout history and across cultures worldwide (Barthes, 1966; Costabile, Shedlosky-Shoemaker & Austin, 2018). Clark and Rossiter (2008), report “human beings are the creatures who tell stories” (p. 61), and Bruner (2002) found that our relationship with stories begins in childhood and thereafter, narratives permeate our lives. This intimate relationship results in most people finding it easy to understand the stories, myths, anecdotes, tales, or narratives, that follow us into adulthood (McNett, 2016; Polkinghorne, 2014).

In adulthood, story provides a counterpoint to the logico-scientific thinking (Bruner, 1986) favored by writers in the human sciences, where the narrative form is often suppressed (Richardson, 1990), despite its contribution to human communication. Stories feature in all forms of communication including training situations, where they facilitate learning by making complex concepts easier to understand (McNett, 2016), a process which gives “well told stories have educational power” (Rae, 2016, p.2). Recognizing this, adult educators have traditionally used stories to teach (Clark & Rossiter, 2008) and research indicates that stories are “the most natural and powerful formulism for storing and describing experiential knowledge” (Jonassen & Hernandez-Serrano, 2008, p.65).

As experience, a key factor in adult learning (Clark & Rossiter, 2008) is described by stories, the telling of stories is germane to adults locating their previous knowledge in new learning (Knowles, 1980; Merriam& Baumgartner, 2020). One benefit of teaching adults using stories is that it has been found to assist conceptual transfer to “situations not directly related to

the one in which they were taught” (Parkin, 2010, p.24). This benefit only occurs however, if educational storytellers ensure the relevance of the story to the learning point being stimulated (Brookfield, 2013).

In adult learning, stories are a means of making sense of our experience, in a way that does not have to be strictly scientific (Merriam & Baumgartner, 2020). Myth, fables, and allegory all have a role in adult learning. There is a long-standing classroom tradition of applying ancient parables to modern situations continues to be a powerful teaching strategy (Devine, Quinn, & Aguilar, 2014). Whether experiential teaching stories are factual or not, they can trigger an emotional reaction in a listener, making the learning process for them a memorable experience (Brookfield, 2013).

In oral traditions it is found that stories, “captured the imagination of their audiences in such a way that they were committed to memory” (Parkin, 2010, p.9). The oral tradition is augmented in this era by the near universal access to a mobile phone to instantly produce, distribute and re-play stories visually with the storyteller acting as the narrator. Educational use of visual stories from technology equips facilitators of adult learning with impactful examples of the teaching point they are trying to make. It should be noted that a story’s content is made by humans (Bruner, 2002) and often personally constructed to suit the storyteller’s feelings and biases (Brookfield, 2013). Many experiential stories provide listeners and viewers, who have not lived through an incident, with a vicarious learning experience of the described or filmed event.

The audience for stories in this study are law enforcement trainees in the United States about whom, Van Maanen (1973), referring to the vicarious role story has for this group of adult learners, found that, “sharing the exploits of predecessors, the newcomer gradually builds a common language and shared set of interests which will attach him to the organization until he

too has police experience to relate” (p. 411). Narratives of this genre are stories that describe or show the experience of others, carrying out tasks that the adult learners listening to them aspire to be able to perform, providing powerful motivation to remember the story and allow it to influence their thinking and behavior.

The Law Enforcement Context

The carrying of a firearm by law enforcement in the United States provides the ultimate method of last resort to protect themselves and others from a life-threatening attack by shooting an attacker. National statistics of police shootings are unreliable due to poor reporting procedures from some police departments and law enforcement agencies. One organization monitoring fatal shootings by police (*The Washington Post*) indicates it is around 1,000 annually, a figure others support (Hirschfield, 2015). While some officer involved shootings appear to many to be the justifiable response of law enforcement to a clear life-threatening event, others cause disquiet about the necessity for the use of lethal force. Of particular concern are incidents where the person shot is unarmed suggesting that there was not an obvious immediate threat to life that the officer was reacting to. In recent years in the United States a number of these incidents have involved young unarmed African American men which has raised significant concerns that officer’s shooting decisions are influenced by a suspect’s race. The harm caused to individuals, families, and communities by these incidents is significant and has focused the attention of the public, the media, academia, political representatives, and some in law enforcement on the use of deadly force. The societal focus on the use of deadly force by law enforcement makes this study timely on the assumption that teaching stories in online videos can influence viewers thinking and actions in the use of deadly force.

Not all officer involved shootings have a fatal result however, a similar difficulty exists with the number of non-fatal shootings by police which are also often poorly recorded at a local level and not reported nationally. While the number of firearm discharges by law enforcement in the United States is difficult to accurately assess, it is apparent that officers do use firearms and therefore they should be trained appropriately. Law enforcement employers sponsor firearms training at the initial police academy for recruits and during officer's in-service programs. In these venues the use of firearms stands out from other topics because of the consequences for the public, police, and society, if the training is used during police-public interactions (Thomasson, Gorman, Lirgg, & Adams, 2014). Despite the potential catastrophic results of the use of deadly force during these contacts, the quality of the training that underpins officer behavior, and the time allocated to it varies considerably between jurisdictions across the United States. Research has found that the least comprehensive in-service programs offer only an annual shooting test, which is usually a state mandated requirement for all sworn officers (Morrison, 2003).

The foundation of this workplace skill is the ability to accurately hit a subject who poses a threat to life, usually achieved by practical shooting at a firearms range. In addition, knowledge of tactics and decision-making are essential for operational competence, collectively this learning is often described in the United States as deadly force skills (Morrison & Garner, 2011). Tactics usually describe how incidents have been successfully dealt with in the past, which become a model that can be used for future action (Van Hulst, 2013). Often presented as stories of unattributed experiences of past practitioners, acquiring tactical knowledge is a classic adult workplace learning process in which current employees learn from the experience of their predecessors. Learning tactics provides law enforcement with options from which they can select and adapt if necessary, to resolve similar situations. The more tactical knowledge officers have

the more options they can select from to resolve confrontations safely using minimum force necessary to remove the threat to life.

Choosing tactical options to resolve a situation and making use of force decisions during high stress confrontations is easier if personnel have had the opportunity to physically practice tactics and decision-making skills during training. This is available in a comprehensive employer sponsored formal training program, however, as decision-making is a thinking process there is benefit in officers mentally rehearsing these skills. Informal sources such as peer discussions or viewing online videos could be a prompt for this adult learning process. Mental rehearsal can change the nature of the officer's 'split-second' decision-making to a rapid selection from a bank of pre-thought out options rather than trying to access everything rapidly scratch. Thinking through in advance how to resolve incidents enables officers to contemplate the consequences of their actions and consider alternative options, viewing stories that describe the solutions chosen by others in similar circumstances is potentially one psychological prompt. If the power of a story to teach is acknowledged (Rea, 2016; Parkin, 2010) then the person who selects stories of experience that become a model that influences others (Van Hulst, 2013) is a key individual in this adult learning process.

The storytellers in this study are the instructors, presenters or narrators of police firearms training videos posted online. Some video narrators self-declare as serving law enforcement personnel, retired police officers or claim military weapons training experience. While these instructors may have considerable technical and tactical police or military experience, their exposure to adult learning theory is less clearly documented in the literature. The curriculum of a firearm instructor's course at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center or FLETC (2018) suggests a focus on developing potential instructors weapon handling skills, rather than their

understanding of adult learning theory and practice. The course syllabus states, “The Firearms Instructor Training Program (FITP) is designed to provide newly assigned firearms instructors with a familiarization of a variety of firearms, to include care and maintenance and the skills necessary to function as a law enforcement firearms instructor. The program also introduces the new instructors to teaching techniques as well as identifying and resolving shooting problems/errors” FLETC (2018)

While two phrases, “skills necessary to function as a law enforcement firearms instructor,” and, “introduces the new instructors to teaching techniques,” potentially indicate the provision of some information on adult learning theory, the time constraints of a ten-day course reduce the likelihood of participants gaining adequate subject knowledge. Specifically, the lack of exposure of firearms instructors to adult learning theory might reduce their appreciation of the powerful nature of stories told during training videos and the potential affect those stories can have on the future behavior of the audience. The literature acknowledges the influence that educational stories can have on listeners, and Parkin (2010) encourages educational storytellers to “be aware of this power and ensure that the stories we tell have a positive effect on our listeners” (p. 42).

In this study educational storytellers include police instructors and non-police presenters such as TV news reporters narrating online videos that explain firearms training for law enforcement. When video stories address the subject of police firearms training, it could be argued that there is a need for presenters or narrators to recognize the power of the stories they tell. The subject matter of the stories and the potential for them to influence life and death decisions requires that they ensure stories are beneficial to the thought processes of an audience which might include law enforcement personnel.

Problem

All occupations have workplace learning that is necessary for effective job performance, the use of firearms is such a skill for law enforcement. One source of learning available directly to law enforcement are videos that are freely available online which address police firearms training issues. Police firearms skills are unique in non-military occupations, because lawful and appropriate use of this workplace skill can result in loss of life. In other occupations death or injury usually occur because of accident or human error.

The adult learning literature acknowledges the use of story in teaching adults. Rossiter and Clark (2007) found that “adult educators use stories in their teaching routinely, to illuminate content, to facilitate learning, and to link learning to the life experiences of the learners” (p. 9). However, the nature of stories told in online videos is unknown. Therefore, it follows that it is not known if the messages in the stories told in these videos have any influence on the actions or future shooting decisions of a law enforcement audience. The lack of understanding about how the stories told in online videos might influence this group of adults in their workplace behavior is an identified gap in the adult learning literature. This study will contribute to understanding online videos stories related to police firearms training by coding and analyzing the manifest and latent messages in the story content (Ford, 2003).

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to identify teaching stories in freely available online police firearms training videos and examine the manifest and latent messages they may carry for a law enforcement audience. Teaching stories told by trainers or presenters in these online videos will be collected for narrative analysis of content. Context was provided by comparing these stories with those told in other areas of policing such as cultural stories (Kurtz & Upton, 2017) or social

situations (Van Hulse, 2013) to assist in understanding the role they might play in the thinking and potential future behavior of a law enforcement audience.

Research Questions

The study will be conducted to answer the questions: -

What teaching stories are told in online police firearms training videos?

What manifest or latent messages might the teaching stories in these videos carry for a law enforcement audience?

Rationale

The gap in the literature includes the self-directed learning that law enforcement may acquire from the teaching stories in online videos prepared for this audience or which might be of interest to those in policing. Critically, the potential for these stories to influence trainees' shooting decisions during confrontations with members of the public is not known. However, when studying police academy recruits, Ford (2003) found that for most officers', stories told by instructors "did impact their values and attitudes" (p. 89), which strongly suggests the potential for story to influence action that can result in "inspiring, sustaining, or curbing harmful actions" (Presser, 2013, p. 29). Identifying teaching stories in online police firearms training videos in a narrative study will contribute to the gap in the literature.

Definitions

Unfortunately, in narrative research, the definition of the term 'story' and 'narrative' is not always clear from the terminology used (Squire, Andrews & Tamboukou, 2013). In this study I define terms as follows:

Story – I follow Van Hulst (2017) who adopted Chatman's (1978) definition, "Stories can be defined as descriptions of what happened to actors in a setting" (p. 356).

War story - one type of story, defined in the literature as ‘war stories’ (Kurtz & Upton, 2017; Ford, 2003; McNulty, 1994), provides a useful sub-group to comprehend the link between individual events and the creation of a narrative with the potential to influence trainee’s actions. War stories are told during formal events, such as training (Ford, 2003; McNulty, 1994), and informally in settings, such as police station canteens (Van Hulst, 2017), or when officers congregate socially outside the policing environment (Kurtz & Upton 2017). Ford (2003) defines war stories as describing “a particular incident or circumstance” (p. 89).

Narrative – practice in the narrative literature uses story and narrative interchangeably, while one dictionary (Merriam-Webster, 2019) defines it as “a way of presenting or understanding a situation or series of events that reflects and promotes a particular point of view or set of values” . In this study, a story that describe a single event or the accumulative effect of several stories might suggest that a video endorses a particular perspective.

Firearms training – is the term used in the study to include the acquisition of shooting skills, tactical knowledge, and decision-making ability, which collectively provide the level of competence required for law enforcement. In the United States the term used is often deadly force training which contains the same elements.

Firearms instructor – in this study a police firearms instructor, will include narrators or presenters of online videos who are described as a trainer by themselves or others.

Presenter – the term will be used to identify a person presenting or narrating an online video who is not introduced as a trainer.

Employer sponsored training – any workplace learning provided at the request or instigation of an official of the employing agency or department, who is empowered to organize such training.

It includes employer organized events using their own staff and facilities, programs outsourced to other agencies or contracted to independent companies or individuals.

Background of the Study

The storytellers in this study are police firearms instructors or other presenters of online videos who narrate or explain teaching stories intended for a law enforcement audience or that might be of interest to such an audience. The education and training literature (Brookfield, 2013; Clark & Rossiter, 2008; Devine, et al. 2014; McNett, 2016), shows that story is used in the teaching of adults generally but, only a few studies specifically examine the narratives told by law enforcement instructors (Ford, 2003; McNulty, 1994). McNulty (1994) found that during training, instructors “employed interactive scenarios, jokes, and “war stories” (p. 283), while Ford (2003) asserts that “stories remain a key component of police training” and that, for the recruits he studied, “war stories were common in both the academy and in their field training” (p. 101).

The ‘academy’ is the initial formal training new recruits are required to attend while ‘field training’ is a short period of mentoring of newly appointed officers by an experienced and specially trained colleague. At any time from before attending the academy to after successfully completing field training or during their service in general officers could view online videos on law enforcement related firearms materials. The researcher’s autoethnographic reflection on the practice of firearms instructors in the British police service confirms the use of stories to explain complex concepts to trainees. In the United States, reference to the use of stories by police instructors can be found in the autobiographies of retired law enforcement personnel (Earp & Fisher, 2014) academic research at police academies (Ford, 2003) and in non-formal locations (Kurtz & Upton, 2019; Van Hulst, 2013). What is not known is the content of teaching stories in

online videos, however, drawing on the literature facilitates the development of a conceptual framework for the study.

Conceptual Framework

This adult learning study is predicated on the concept that teaching stories told in online police firearms training videos have the potential to influence the thinking and subsequent action of law enforcement who view the material. The literature suggests police learn from stories told in informal gatherings (Van Hulst, 2013) and from police cultural narratives (Kurtz & Upton, 2017) but the link between learning from stories in online videos and behavior is less well documented. Although the use of story by police firearms instructors is unclear in the literature there is some evidence that police academy trainers tell stories (Ford, 2003). It appears that the intended audience of a story “shapes the structure and determines the purpose of the narrative” (Clark, 2010, p. 4) and that story is frequently used by adults to make sense of their experience, communicate and “understand the world” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 33). How adults perceive their environment appears to influence behavior particularly in the workplace where learning, “merges theory with practice, knowledge with experience” (Raelin, 2008, p 2). Online training videos contain teaching stories selected by storytellers to explain complex concepts, which likely carry the storyteller’s perspective of the event described.

The teaching role of storytelling is acknowledged in the literature (McNett, 2016; Parkin, 2010) and an acceptance that adults can learn from informal sources (Marsick & Watkins, 2001) including in the workplace (Manuti, et al., 2015) supports the development of this study. The research is conducted by viewing teaching stories as an experience the storyteller considers to be “meaningful for a particular audience” so they “are selected, organized, connected and evaluated” (Riessman, 2008, p. 3) and told for that purpose. The study builds on this work and

also draws contributions from several fields to use teaching stories told in online police firearms training videos as a lens through which to gather “various bits of evidence into a novel understanding” (Adams & Buetow, 2014, p. 94) that addresses the gap in the literature identified above. Story is often used by adults to describe their experience, giving an account that may differ from how others perceived a simultaneously experienced occurrence, that can provide “multiple realities, or interpretations, of a single event” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 9). Adult learning theory may contribute to understanding how story may influence officers thinking by examining the role of reflection-on-action (Schon, 1987) during firearms training. Identifying the occurrence of this backward-looking reflection potentially allows training to focus trainee’s attention to thinking about their actions in the moment, or reflection-in-action (Schon, 1991) which can influence action. The study is conducted on the concept that learning behavior in a training environment is then applicable to making decisions during operational interactions between police and public. Reflection is a powerful learning tool and is a constituent part of the adult learning theory of transformative learning (Mezirow et al., 2000) which can cause a shift in how adults see the world.

The study is also conducted on the concept that when adults listen to stories who the storyteller is influences their acceptance of the interpretation of events provided in the story (Van Hulst, 2013). Van Hulst (2013) found that some police storytellers were more influential and were given greater access to the role in the semi-social spaces of a police station. However, little is known if storytellers in police firearms training online videos exercise any influence, partly because there is so little research on the stories they tell or the messages these stories might carry. This study seeks to draw on the literature from across relevant fields to begin to explore

the influence these teaching stories might have and the how that might affect policing actions during confrontations with the public.

Significance of the Study

In the aftermath of a shooting by police Kurtz and Upton (2017) suggested that the case raised “the importance of analyzing narratives that may influence officer thinking and behavior” (p. 540). Teaching stories in online police firearms training videos may be such narratives, but there is a gap in the literature about the content and messages these stories might carry for a law enforcement audience. While the extent to which police officers use online videos as an informal learning source is not clear, the number of postings, blogs, and podcasts that exist together with statistics that show viewings of some material in the 10s or 100s of thousands suggest that it could be considerable. Little is known about what a law enforcement audience might learn from viewing these videos nor how it might influence their decisions and actions in confrontations with members of the public. This study seeks to contribute to the gap in the literature about the role of this potential informal adult learning source.

The degree of importance to learn more about the role of these videos can be assessed by the prospect that information gained from a video could influence an officer to shoot during a confrontation, making that teaching story literally a matter of life or death. Alternatively, messages in a teaching story could inappropriately restrain an officer from shooting when it is the only option to save the life of a member of the public or law enforcement. Data gathered in this study could assist law enforcement practitioners to appreciate the significance of teaching stories they tell trainees including in online videos. In addition, information gathered in the study could enable professionals in the adult learning field to identify narratives that may be unhelpful

in appropriately training law enforcement for this complex activity, a collaborative role not undertaken to date.

An awareness of the influence these online teaching stories may have on law enforcement trainees, could enable those responsible for police training working with academic collaborators to modify these teaching stories in a way that may change the outcome of future confrontations by making an avoidable shooting by police less likely. Until reliable data is available that reveals the content of videos and the messages teaching stories might be carrying it would be difficult for academics or law enforcement to make informed decisions. This study begins examination of the topic and as scholarly research it can be expected it will suggest routes for further research to continue to provide accurate data to contribute to the literature. As this study is being conducted in the United States in 2020 it may be a timely opportunity for law enforcement training practice to benefit from collaborations with specialists in adult learning to consider novel interventions that may contribute to learning that reduces the incidence of avoidable officer involved shootings.

Assumptions

The study makes assumptions in conducting this research including: -

1. That some of the many thousands of views of online police firearms training videos are made by members of law enforcement.
2. That law enforcement viewing these videos are influenced by the messages in the teaching stories they contain
3. That trainers, narrators, or presenters of study videos like their counterparts in other adult learning situations use story to explain complex concepts

4. That knowledge gained from this informal learning source is used by law enforcement viewers to develop the performance of a workplace skill.

Limitations

This study uses a qualitative research process designed to gather and analyze teaching stories told in online videos. The time constraints of the analysis process required to understand these stories restricts the number of stories that can be gathered, which is a limitation of the study. A limitation on data collection is that only freely available online videos are the subject of the study which limits access to videos that have been posted on an open access platform can be included. Therefore, while selected videos might be representative of this category of online videos, they may not be representative of the whole population of online videos. The study is potentially limited by the nature of this research process.

Delimitations

This study was conducted during the spring and summer of 2020, during the coronavirus pandemic, which restricted research to police firearms training videos available online at this time. Only videos that address police firearms training are included in the study, which excludes videos about the operational use of firearms by law enforcement. The geographical focus of the study is the United States of America which restricts the study to material that appears to be prepared in the United States or prepared for an audience in the United States. The focus of the study is police firearms training therefore videos about military training, development of sporting weapons skills or personal protection training are not included. As a narrative inquiry the focus is on the role of teaching stories in videos and not on the analysis of statistical information which is only included to provide context to the analysis of stories. It therefore follows that the study is not an attempt to document significant numbers of videos or the teaching stories they contain for

statistical analysis, but rather addresses the meaning stories have for the storyteller and the listener.

Organization of the Study

This study follows a traditional qualitative dissertation model, having five chapters, a bibliography, and appendixes (Roberts, 2010). This introductory chapter is followed by a review of the literature in Chapter 2, which draws together the most relevant theory and practice from the disciplines that impact the study. The major surveyed areas are adult learning, narrative inquiry, narrative criminology, and the policing literature. Chapter 3 details the study's method, data gathering process and procedures employed to ensure an ethical collection of data that has an appropriate degree of trustworthiness. Chapter 4 presents an analysis of the data and discusses the findings, followed by a summary, conclusions, and recommendations in Chapter 5. Lastly, the study's bibliography and appendixes follow Chapter 5.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Chapter One introduced this study and identified the gap in the literature about the content of teaching stories in online videos that it seeks to address. The chapter provided a structure for the study by considering the role of story in people's lives, particularly in the human learning process and gave the background to the evolution of the study including a law enforcement context. Chapter Two locates this cross-disciplinary adult learning study of online police use of firearms focused videos in the relevant literature. This includes adult education and learning, psychology, criminology, sociology, philosophy, and law literatures which underpin the relevance of a better understanding of the apparent content of the teaching stories in online videos and the influence they might exert on an audience. At the end of this chapter the study's method will be located in the relevant literature, but as an adult learning study it begins with a consideration of adult education and learning.

Adult Education & Learning

Narratives are important to those responsible for the provision of adult education because "understanding how narrative works will make the practice of adult educators more effective" (Clark, 2010, p. 3). Adult education is learning undertaken by people who have completed the educational requirements of childhood and are by age and life role adult (Merriam & Brockett, 2007; Merriam & Bierema, 2014). Formal adult education might be provided by the employer in the workplace, offered by a worker welfare group or organized independently by the adult learner. Formal adult education (Merriam & Baumgartner, 2020) involves a structured learning process that usually has an identified goal and often requires attendance at a set time and location for instruction or involves online classes. Online classes can be synchronous requiring all

participants to be online at the same time, or asynchronous where online material is posted and accessed at the discretion of each learner. The online videos that are the subject of this study are mainly asynchronous in nature, although some appear to begin as an online live streaming of an instructor taking questions on social media platforms. Thereafter, and in this study online videos become an asynchronous voluntary learning process undertaken at a time of the viewer's choosing.

Asynchronous online material can also be consumed not as part of a structured learning process with a set goal, but informally (Marsick & Watkins 2001) as something of interest to the adult learner for which they do not require or seek a formal qualification. Educational needs for adults are often workplace focused on learning required to perform a job or gain advancement in it, and workplace learning is considered to take place “during the activities and experiences of work” (Rowden, 2007, p. 6). A significant amount of workplace learning is acquired informally by adults from colleagues or relevant learning materials (Marsick & Watkins 2001), which could include freely available online videos.

This study is focused on one informal learning medium available to the group of adult learners being studied, online videos related to police firearms training. It is acknowledged that irrespective of the topic chosen for an online search the results are that “tens to hundreds of videos can be found that address the same topic” (Shoufan, 2019, p. 450). Merriam and Bierema (2014) found that “the sheer volume is not only overwhelming, but incomprehensible” (p. 199). The extensive availability of material raises the issue of quality and whether freely available online videos provide information that is fit for purpose, prompting concerns about viewers accessing unsound data (Shoufan, 2019). A particular concern relates to the perceived learning effectiveness of video material over the spoken word which some attribute as “people only

remember about 20 per cent of what they hear, but between 50 and 80 per cent of what they both see and hear” (Burns, 2002, p. 289). Lee, Osop, Goh and Keln (2017) concur with Burns describing online video as effective because “it provides the same information to students through simultaneous learning modalities. (p. 613). If these statistics are correct video material whether online or in class appears to be more effective for knowledge retention, making the current study to identify content of videos being accessed without the benefit of interaction with a trainer timely. This places these videos in a different educational position to those produced by trainers as part of a program that requires trainees to review material and interact with trainers orally or via a knowledge check to identify what they learned from the video.

The effectiveness of viewing videos for learning has some similarities with other learning methods including the quality of the presentation. A well delivered, informative and interestingly delivered in person lecture provides better learning for more people than poorly prepared in person events. In the same way that the quality of video material depends on how it is produced with the more professionally produced videos being more impactful (Campbell, Planinz, Morris & Truitt, 2019). Some features that make online video effective learning tools are specific to this delivery system and are not present in the in-person environment. The control that a learner has over the time they spend mastering the topic appears directly related to the effectiveness of this learning experience. Schmeeckle (2003) found that “most educators agree that time on task is a major variable contributing to learning outcome, with a positive correlation between student time and learning/performance” (p. 211). The ability of the learner to keep replaying the video and to stop and start it at will provides a different learning experience to in person delivery by a trainer. The ability to control the learning speed, going faster over known material and slower when new knowledge is presented is a feature that fits with adult learning theory which acknowledges that

adults wish to be in control of their learning (Knowles, 1980). A caveat to this apparent beneficial feature of learning from online videos is that “a combination of face-to-face and online was more beneficial than either totally face-to-face or online” (Merriam & Bierema, 2014, p. 198). In this study it is not known if viewers of online videos are also able to interact with a trainer to gain the apparent learning benefits of both face-to-face and online material.

Shoufan (2019) suggests one way to value online videos is the “learning or understanding it provides” (p. 451) which can be identified by the content of the stories in the videos and the messages they may be carrying for their audience. Further is a need to identify “quality features of educational on-line videos” (Shoufan, 2019, p. 450) to assist producers and presenters of the material to improve what is offered. Rossiter and Clark (2008) acknowledge the potential for online learning to be of benefit to narrative research and understanding because of the opportunity for learners to create their own communities of learning and collaborate in the building of collective knowledge. Freely available online videos that are the subject of this study can include an interactive feature dependent on the platform it is posted on that enables viewers to comment and producers to respond. This feature is available on the most prolific video posting website YouTube, which has “800 million unique visitors each month” (Lee, Osop, Goh & Kelni, 2017, p. 613), a statistic that suggests the audience might include some in law enforcement in the United States.

The use of video during in person presentations appears to improve learning (Merriam & Bierema, 2014) however, posting the material as a freely available online video seems to offer learning advantages not featured in the classroom. The literature appears to support the study of online videos as an informal learning source for adults because they offer the opportunity for trainee participation in the planning and delivery of learning that accords with adult learning

theory (Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 2011). The ability of trainees to allocate as much or as little time as they need to master the learning is also consistent with theory, Bloom (1976) in describing a method to enable learners to master content suggested that the allocation of time was the significant variable for learners with different entry level knowledge. Li (2019) found that the level of knowledge of learners using online videos was a factor in the success of the learning experience. A correlation between how often learners watched videos and learning performance was found (Li, 2019) suggesting that “watching video lectures may have a positive effect on learning performance” (p. 416). Online video appears to be an effective and efficient informal learning method for motivated adult learners irrespective of the subject, the study shows what is available for law enforcement in online firearms training videos.

The manifest content of videos in this study fits Marsick and Watkins (2001) definition of informal learning as intended but not planned because to access them the viewer would need to search for the video’s topic. The conscious act of searching demonstrates an intention to know or learn but with no necessity for a planned schedule of learning. The online video selected for viewing could have been prepared as part of an organized program with set goals but once it is freely available online it becomes a source of informal learning unless used by a trainer in a formal lesson. Such use could change the nature of the material because the trainer would put it into a context and ascribe a particular meaning to it, deliver it with the trainers’ perspective and likely taint it with their biases. It is acknowledged that “making informal learning visible” (Marsick, Watkins, Wofford & Ellinger, 2018, p. 23) is difficult however, analysis of the manifest content of the videos in this study may provide a route to visualize informal learning, while the latent content of the videos appears to be closer to incidental or tacit learning (Marsick & Watkins, 2001).

Incidental learning is a byproduct of activities not intended as learning experiences and because of that people are not aware that it is occurring most of the time (Marsick & Watkins, 2001). The latent nature of incidental learning results in adult learners being unaware of the influence on behavior of this learning hidden from their conscious mind. However, covert learning can affect how people perceive situations that changes how they act even though they do not fully understand why. Adults who are cognizant of incidental learning processes can both reduce the impact of undesirable habits or biases forming and increase the usefulness to them of positive incidental learning by recognizing it for what it is (Marsick & Watkins, 2001). Facilitating people's awareness of what they have learned covertly has been described as "critical to effective diagnosis, action, and learning from experience." (Marsick & Watkins, 2018, p. 15).

Experience is important for this study, which is focused on the learning of occupational skills, because workplace learning "often occurs through experience" (Raelin, 2008, p. 73) in which reflecting on an experience results in learning. The role and significance of experience to adult learning is one distinguishing feature between the learning needs of children who have a smaller base of experiences and those of adults who have more life experiences because they have lived longer (Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 2011). One reason why experience is important to this study is that adults described it in the form of a story, which are incorporated into lessons and learning material by trainers and presenters as teaching stories. The role of story as a teaching aid in adult learning is considered to be "one of the most powerful teaching tools available" and is "often regarded as central to the learning process" (Devine, Quinn & Aguilar, 2014, p. 273).

Teaching Stories

Stories often describe individual or group experiences in a way that helps people make sense of their lives (Stokoe & Edwards, 2006) particularly to “make sense of experience in new ways” (Foote, 2015, p. 85). Stories of experience told to support learning (Foote, 2015; Parkin, 2010; Todd, 2018) help listeners understand complex concepts and for most people it is easier to remember a story than other forms of data (Rea, 2016). While there might be various sources of stories in an adult learning process, the subject of this study is those stories told in online videos by trainers or presenters to make a learning point. These are called ‘teaching stories’ to distinguish them from stories told in other circumstances or for other reasons.

Teachers tell stories “to clarify and to illustrate abstract concepts” (Ford, 2003, p. 105) providing students with a link between new and previous knowledge in which “new learning occurs” (Clark & Rossiter, 2008, p. 65). Effective adult learning facilitators use story (Clark, 2010) because it provides a method to make new learning easier for trainees to acquire (Gagan, 2017). Adult learners receive, tell, and internalize stories as they learn, a process Clark and Rossiter (2008) describe as “stories heard, stories told, and stories recognized” (p. 64).

Hearing a well-told story engages listener’s attention at both a cognitive and possibly at an emotional level (Clark & Rossiter, 2008) if they “empathize with the experience in the story” (Sautner & Medina, 2018, p. 116). Adults have a “natural disposition for interpreting experiences as stories” (McNett, 2016, p. 185) and most people find stories of the experiences of others to be plausible and reliable (Rossiter & Clark, 2008), when “the events of a story are related to one another in some meaningful way” (Rossiter, 1999, p. 79). Carefully selected and well-told teaching stories help to “translate raw facts and concepts into an experience that [an audience]

can relate to, understand, and remember” (Rea, 2016, p. 5). In this way the stories they have heard become available for re-telling, to themselves and others as part of the adult learner’s knowledge base and personal experience.

Adult learners in particular bring experience to learning events (Knowles, 1980; Merriam & Bierema, 2014) that makes it possible for them to change roles from listener to storyteller as they “move from a cognitive understanding of a concept to link it to his or her own experience” (Clark & Rossiter, 2008, p. 64). The telling of stories by learners in a learning environment facilitates understanding in the learner as they explain their experiences and link them to new knowledge in the experience stories of others. Meaning is obtained by a combination of the story’s content and information drawn out of the listener’s “own store of knowing” (Rossiter, 1999, p. 80). Linking new knowledge with experience provides adult learners with a chronological relationship in which “an understanding of past and future is continually evolving in the present” (Rossiter, 1999, p. 82).

Clark and Rossiter (2008) found this process enabled learners to ‘recognize’ the role of stories in their lives particularly, how they receive and understand new learning that requires “higher-level thought and processing” (Devine, et al., 2014, p. 277). Recognizing stories occurs when learners can place themselves in the broader narratives of their life (Clark & Rossiter, 2008). Specifically, in the workplace building occupational knowledge requires more than being an attentive audience for a trainer or an online video delivered teaching story, it requires “insight, thought and reflection” (Gagan, 2017, p. 1092) to understand the story’s meaning for practice. The internalization of such stories and narratives enables learners to recognize the role and significance of stories, it therefore follows that a failure to do so has the potential to reduce the quality of the learning experience.

As is common with other educators, workplace trainers or other presenters of online videos tell stories describing the experiences of others that, for the listener or viewer, “can function as a substitute for direct experience” (Jonassen & Hernandez-Serrano, 2002, p. 69). In addition, workplace teaching stories are delivered to highlight key learning points and help an audience make sense of their working practice (Rossiter & Clark, 2007). Trainees can “gain experience vicariously” (Jonassen & Hernandez-Serrano, 2008, p. 69) from a story describing a colleague’s experience, which develops their job-specific practical knowledge and can influence their workplace performance (Conle, Li & Tan, 2002). Lewis (2011) found that adults reflect on stories they are told and retell them to others to “augment [their] understanding” of the points the teaching story is making (p. 505). Humans can form an emotional link to a story (Presser, 2009; 2018; Sautner & Medina, 2018) despite having no first-hand knowledge of the events it describes (McNett, 2016). In this sense the use of a story describing the experience of another is learned by the listener and becomes part of the listeners experience. An emotional link to a story can be a powerful motivator for the listener to take some form of action in response.

Stories Motivating Action.

Stories that motivate action are so common in people’s lives that many do not realize the power of stories operating in plain sight around them. People are bombarded with stories that motivate action, from a story of poor service at a restaurant resulting in people choosing to eat elsewhere, to narratives from friends that support the reliability of a particular product, which positively influences people’s buying choices. In addition to these prosaic examples, the actions of many professionals, actions which can have significant consequences for clients, are based on the story the client tells them.

A medical example might be the story a patient may tell their doctor to describe their symptoms. The doctor uses the story to help identify the complaint. Morrish (2009), a neurologist, stated that “listening to the stories and the way they are interpreted forms part of the interest in the job” (p. 341). The person’s story may contribute to the medical practitioner’s decision on the action to be taken such as prescribing a certain drug, carrying out a particular procedure, or recommending a lifestyle change. This example of the doctor listening to the patient’s story, then reflecting on it as they draw on their medical knowledge, and finally choosing an action in response appears to be a clear example of action motivated by story.

Professionals are also the tellers of motivating stories, Devine et al, (2014) reference a teacher prompting action in her classroom by telling her students a local story about a “lost mine” (p. 280) to motivate students to research the story’s veracity and the potential location of the mine, “if they thought it existed” (p. 280). This is an example of a story that both meets the role of a teaching story, to which students listen to understand a learning point, and one that lifts their thinking to the level of “stories recognized” (Clark & Rossiter, 2008, p. 64) by requiring them to engage in higher order thinking on the likelihood of the mine being real.

Story can also have a teaching role in presenting concepts that are so complex they are beyond the comprehension of many people. Being aware of the enormity of the concept of the destruction of the planet due to multi-interlocked human actions (and inactions) special interest groups often use stories of discrete events that identify climate change issues on a human scale. These assist people’s understanding of the multifaceted interactions of the effect of human activity on the planet (Bieniek-Tobasco, McCormick, Rimal, Harrington, Shafer & Shaikh, 2019) in a way that non-expert individuals can understand.

Actions motivated by stories, or the narratives they create, can also be seen in the origins and maintenance of social justice campaigns. Rodriguez (2002) posits that “narratives have the potential to shape and constitute us to make for a more just and humane world” (p. 3). The story of an incident, such as the fatal shooting of Trayvon Martin, can motivate action in response to a perceived injustice by people not directly involved. Trayvon Martin was a young African American, who was shot dead by a neighborhood watch member as he walked through a Florida housing estate. The neighborhood watch member was charged with murder but acquitted. The story of Trayvon Martin’s death and the subsequent acquittal of his killer is credited as a catalyst (Craven, 2015) for the establishment of the Black Lives Matter social justice campaign, that is now an international movement.

Members of the public also tell action-motivating stories. Citizens who believe that they are victims or witnesses to a crime report the matter to law enforcement as a story that describes their perception of what happened. Law enforcement take action to investigate the allegation by asking questions and gathering evidence, which may lead to a suspect being reported or arrested for an offence, all based on actions undertaken in response to a story. One common theme in stories that motivate action is that they refer to a previous experience that influences action somebody takes in the present that impacts the future.

The temporal ability of story to link past, present and future can be beneficial because if humans can recall events from their lives, or stories of the things others have done, they are able to plan for similar eventualities (Costabile, Shedlosky-Shoemaker & Austin, 2018, p. 425) such planning influences the action taken if confronted with a similar event. Bruner (2002) concurs that there are benefits of past events informing planning for the future, particularly to provide a coping mechanism to rectify previous errors or respond to unexpected events. There is

considerable agreement in the literature (Bridgeman, 2007; Bruner, 2002; Polkinghorne, 1988; Richardson, 1990) that the temporal nature of stories is a strength in its use to assist and facilitate learning. Additionally, Rossiter (1999) opines that “a temporal dimension” (p. 82) is a requirement for a narrative because “one moment frozen in time is not a story” (p. 82). When stories offer a cultural context for past conduct they can “guide future behavior” (Hochstetler, Copes & Cherbonneau, 2017, p. 74) towards creating more desirable future outcomes. A concept relevant to a study with a goal of developing awareness of the apparent and dormant content of teaching stories in online police firearms training videos to contribute to a safe reduction in the use of force by law enforcement.

Cultural stories have the power to persuade humans to consider the costs and benefits of a particular course of action as well as the potential result of inaction (Rodriguez, 2002). In this sense the content of stories can be focused towards achieving more desirable outcomes than the status quo. Studying the role story can have on learning from personal or community history Sautner and Medina (2018) found “storytelling is a tool that can be used to explore the past while simultaneously encouraging positive future behaviors and actions” (p. 116). If the link of the listener to the story is sufficiently strong to cause them to reflect on their experiences then they may make a “new or a revised interpretation of the meaning of one’s experience in order to guide a future action” (Mezirow, 2000, p. 5). Studies of stories in policing (Ford, 2003; McNulty, 1994; Woods, 2019) reveal that storytelling is a method used by police academy instructors to explain policing knowledge. It is also used to teach trainees the procedures approved by the employer and other stakeholders to deal with and process incidents (Champion, 2017). The trainees who listened and remembered the teaching story were provided with a guide for future action as Mezirow (2000) describes above.

Policing and Criminology Stories.

The teaching of approved procedures through the use of teaching stories is a direct link between the story that instructors tell (Conti, 2011) and trainees' operational behavior, assuming that the trainees actually comply with the departmental practices they have been taught. While "police storytelling is an understudied aspect of police culture" (Van Hulst, 2013, p. 624) law enforcement stories were found "that describe and explain police behaviors and attitudes" (Champion, 2017, p. 4). Using analysis of police storytelling to understand the role story has in creating and maintaining a narrative that influences officer behavior is supported by Kurtz and Upton (2017). In seeking to isolate teaching stories for analysis, it is appropriate to draw on the policing and criminology literature to identify examples of links between teaching stories and existing narratives.

Identifying the narratives established by stories in policing is a valid academic exercise that fosters new cross-field understandings of the phenomena. However, the effect stories and narratives might have on officers' actions is potentially the most important contribution of new knowledge. The criminology (Kurtz & Upton, 2017), policing (Ford, 2003) and law (Woods, 2019) literatures have all documented examples of stories and narratives that appear to establish thinking and attitudes that influence officer behavior. However, few studies have considered the influence that teaching stories in freely available online police firearms training videos might have on the actions of officers in armed confrontations. An exception is Woods (2019) findings that some academy instructors use the most violent dashcam and bodycam video material to make teaching points. This is an example of the storied nature of policing.

From gathering evidence in the form of witness accounts of an event, to narratives that maintain a prevailing police culture, stories are a feature of the law enforcement environment,

and Van Hulst (2017) found that “police officers tell many stories” (p. 356). The prevailing policing culture that teaching stories contribute to is one that celebrates “a confrontational approach to policing, and this created and reinforced a thirst for excitement and action” (Loftus, 2010, p. 7). Teaching stories in the academy contribute to the “crime fighter” self-image of trainees, (Loftus, 2010, p. 3) which motivates action because it facilitates the establishment of a self-narrative, and “narrative identity guides interpretations and actions” (Fleetwood, 2016, p. 175) for better or worse.

The law enforcement workplace is complex because it deals with interactions between humans, and the lives of humans are mostly complicated. It should come as no surprise that storytelling, a mechanism humans’ use to describe experience and make sense of their lives, is clearly visible in this work environment (Polkinghorne, 2007). However, it can be argued that the stories that describe the experience of law enforcement in the use of firearms are significantly different from others, because of the potential consequences when deadly force is used. Law enforcement might be unique in civil society, in that an appropriate decision and consequential action can result in a death, whereas in other non-military occupations only an error has such consequences. However, it is not the only occupation in which risk to workers is a real issue. Rea (2016) referring to teaching safety with stories about accidents notes that “past experience provides a template for understanding present danger” (p. 2). Stories of the dangers that officers have experienced in the past appear to influence the actions of recipients of the stories (Kurtz & Upton, 2017; Woods, 2019) with personal safety concerns influencing the degree of force officers chose to use in confrontations with the public (Paoline & Terrill, 2015).

One danger narrative, that traffic stops are inherently dangerous is not supported by the statistics of fatal attacks on officers during this activity (Woods, 2019). Concerns raised by

Woods (2019) include that this danger narrative informs the drafting and interpretation of the law, as well as “how officers are trained to approach and act during these stops” (p. 638). It was found that in many police academy classrooms images of the most violent vehicle stops taken from police vehicle dashcams or officer’s personal bodycams were used for teaching stories by trainers (Woods, 2019). In contending that police firearms training contributes to avoidable deaths in the United States Stoughton (2014) found that trainees are “shown painfully vivid, heart-wrenching dash-cam footage of officers being beaten, disarmed, or gunned down” (p. 1). As “stories enact and construct the world as it is lived and understood by the storyteller” (Ewick & Silbey, 2003, p. 1341), it appears that trainers perceptions about the dangers of traffic stops are being passed on to the next generation of law enforcement by exposure to this video material.

This brings consideration of narrative back to its role in adult learning theory (Merriam & Baumgartner, 2020) and the need for instructors to understand the significance of this powerful teaching tool as a motivator of action (Brookfield, 2013). Stories police academy instructors tell and the narratives they create appear to contribute to the socialization of recruits into the policing culture (Conti, 2011). In many police academies insular thinking is prevalent (Chappell & Lanza-Kaduce, 2010; Loftus, 2010) and the predominate narrative is a defensive one in which only law enforcement colleagues can be trusted. Stories that support the danger narrative run the risk of driving a wedge between the police and the policed by influencing an officer’s thinking (Fletcher, 1996; Kurtz & Upton, 2017; Fekjaer & Petersson, 2019) and changing their behavior to be more defensive and assertive at the same time.

A criticism of Woods’ (2019) statistical analysis approach, which found that officer fatalities in traffic stops is one in every “6.5 million stops” (p. 635) is that this provides no comfort to officers who do not know if the stop they are initiating is the one in 6.5 million that

will have fatal consequences for them. Despite this criticism, Woods (2019) presents a convincing argument that this key danger narrative is not supported by statistical data on assaults against law enforcement. However, there is evidence that for some members of law enforcement there is a real threat to life (Officer Down Memorial Page, 2019) that must be considered as a counterbalance to a purely statistical analysis of assaults on officers. An example of stories that might contribute to police recruits' concerns is one told to Kurtz and Upton (2017), "I mean you're constantly mindful that you're being watched. If you're on a quick trip getting a cup of coffee, people are sizing you up, they're watching you" (p. 550).

Stories that describe concern for personal safety are not restricted to law enforcement however, reporting findings of a study of people living in a volatile neighborhood Hochstetler, Copes and Cherbonneau (2017) found that "participants also made the case that they were surrounded by volatile and dangerous people who seldom deescalate conflict. This often led to interpersonal interactions where each person attempts to demonstrate who has the stronger character" (p. 77). This comment could have been made by a member of law enforcement about the policing environment and is similar in sentiment to views expressed by police to Kurtz and Upton (2017). However, narratives are not totally interchangeable between these groups, because while those living in violent neighborhoods "were nonchalant" (Hochstetler, Copes & Cherbonneau, 2017, p. 78) about death or injury from a violent attack, the law enforcement narrative is that survival is both paramount and possible. This narrative requires officers to be vigilant and take action to quickly gain situational control (Ford, 2003; Kurtz & Upton, 2017; Woods, 2019) an echo of the immediate action tactical option recommended by academy instructors referred to above.

Kurtz and Upton (2017) report that the study of story and the narratives they create is relevant to “criminals, victims, witnesses, or criminal justice practitioners themselves” (p. 542) thus providing a link between much of the criminology literature on this subject and the current study. The refocusing of some criminology research to include the consideration of the role of law enforcement in society and the effect of policing actions on offending behavior, developed since the 1970s in response to questionable police conduct (Bacon, Loftus & Rowe, 2020). Narrative criminology, suggests that the study of policing stories can be carried out in much the same way as the study of offenders narratives (Kurtz & Upton, 2017) with firearms instructors and other presenters of online police firearms training videos ideal candidates to provide one prospective.

However, analysis of the role of instructors teaching stories is complicated by a significant difference between general adult educational practice and that of policing, where prevailing teaching methods often focus on a military boot camp approach (Vodde, 2012; Conti, 2011) rather than adopting recommendations contained in the adult learning literature (Brockett, 2015; Brookfield, 1996; Knowles, 1980; Merriam & Bierema, 2014; Merriam & Brockett, 2007; Mezirow & Associates, 2000). In common with other workplaces, law enforcement employers provide formal training to their staff while informal learning (Manuti, Pastore, Scardigno, Giancaspro, & Morciano, 2015) occurs as officers interact with peers, trainers or supervisors and learning material such as online videos. In his analysis of peer to peer police storytelling, Van Hulst (2013) found that in this informal learning environment, tales of one officer’s experience became “future scenarios for all police” (p. 627). Videos that are the subject of this study could deliver stories that fulfil a similar role for a law enforcement audience. This is consistent with adult learning theory (Knowles, 1980) in which adults know the value of experience (Merriam &

Bierema, 2014) and often in the workplace (Rowden, 2007) workers informally acquire knowledge from colleagues (Marsick & Watkins, 2001) despite also being provided with formal employer sponsored training. The often practical ‘this is how to deal with this policing activity’ (Tyler & Mckenzie, 2014; Van Hulst, 2017) nature of informal police learning, can conflict with the procedures taught in formal training programs.

Even during formal training, instructors are known to adopt informal anecdotal teaching methods such as using “jokes, and war stories” (McNulty, 1994, p. 283) to highlight learning points. As the origins of instructor’s training stories is not part of the literature it is possible that some stories originate from trainers themselves listening to informal storytelling. The difficulty in identifying the truthful elements of informally told stories has “led some researchers to be critical of police officers’ own descriptions of what they experienced” (Van Hulst, 2013, p. 624). If teaching stories can originate from informal storytelling it follows that there could also be similar concerns about the accuracy of the content of these stories.

Whatever the source of the teaching stories that trainers tell, the narratives they create “are constructed in people's heads” (Bruner, 2002, p. 691) and have the capacity to motivate them to commit harmful acts (Fleetwood, 2016). Utilizing knowledge acquired from narrative research there is support (Paoli & Greenfield, 2013) for law enforcement to set policy priorities based on reducing harm caused by crime. Conceptually the narrative research, which is the subject of this study, could provide the evidence to support extending this to include a law enforcement review of police firearms training practice, to reduce ‘legal harms’ (Presser, 2013) such as the use of deadly force.

One route for such a change in practice could be learning interventions, designed to maintain officer and community safety while reducing the harm that flows from the use of

deadly force, by amending trainers teaching stories. This is consistent with the narrative criminology literature defined as “any inquiry based on the view of stories as instigating, sustaining, or effecting desistance from harmful action. We study how narratives inspire and motivate harmful action, and how they are used to make sense of harm” (Presser & Sanberg, 2015, p. 1). This study is partly founded on a personal transformative learning experience (Mezirow, et al., 2000) in which I recognized similarities between stories collected from offenders in narrative criminology studies, and the stories of police firearms instructors.

Transformative learning can occur when new knowledge conflicts with an established worldview that causes a reappraisal, it often involves using “ the experience of others to access reasons justifying these assumptions, and making an action decision based on the resulting insight” (Mezirow, 2000, p. 7). There is a strong link between transformative or “transformational learning and adult development” (Foote, 2015, p. 85) in which a catalyst can provide adults with a sudden realization that results in a transformative learning experience, or a discomforting awareness can gradually cause a change in perspective (Merriam & Baumgartner, 2020). My experience was both incremental, as my new learning and research evidence built up about the law enforcement environment in the United States, with an eventual ah-ha moment as I recognized similarities between offenders and police stories. For this study, what is important is that a major contributing factor was exposure to the stories of policing in the United States.

Stories that support narratives (Alpert, 2009; Bayley & Bittner, 1984; Woods, 2019), which maintain the boot camp style of police training also foster a defensive posture in many in law enforcement, (Conti, 2011) which isolates them from their communities (Loftus, 2010). Clinging to stories that are used to justify the aggressive instructional techniques often used by police trainers (Vodde, 2012) insulates them from the learning benefits that could be forthcoming

if appropriate adult learning strategies (Birzer & Tannehill, 2001) were adopted. This study narrows the focus to police firearms trainers or other presenters of online police firearms training videos, because their role as storyteller may make them influential teller of tales (Baldwin, 2016; Van Hulst, 2013) with the potential to influence the action of a law enforcement audience in the life and death decisions made in armed confrontations.

Storytellers and Narrative Truth

A story told in an educational setting as a teaching aid is selected by the storyteller to highlight a specific point. In selecting the points to highlight and the stories to use a storyteller delivers their perspective to the learning material, which may not provide an historically accurate record of the event described but a ‘narrative truth’ (Rossiter & Clark, 2007). What is important to narrative truth is the significance the story has for the storyteller and their audience rather than historical accuracy. Unless the storyteller fabricates a story with the intention to deceive, the story they tell could be the truth as they perceive it even if it is inaccurate (Merleau-Ponty, 1964). As the gatekeepers of story selection, tellers of teaching stories are key individuals who can if they wish deliberately skew a plot in their favor or present it as a narrative against the interests of a third party. Storytellers who can spin a plot include even young children who Bruner (2002) found could employ story to implicate an innocent other and reduce their part in an event under discussion.

The more often that a storyteller hears a story and re-tells it the greater the chance it will become “detached from source material” and “motives and actions” will show participants in the story in a “better or worse light” (Rea, 2016, p. 7) than the original narrative. Even if storytellers present an accurate description of an experience “multiple interpretations and conclusions” (Rea, 2016, p. 5) can be drawn by different people from the same story. It is recognized that changes to

content or emphasis may occur as teaching stories are personalized and re-told for different reasons in the future (Polkinghorne, 2007) partly resulting from how humans use story to make sense of their experiences (Bruner, 1991; Polkinghorne, 1988). In this study it is not suggested that police storytellers deliberately seek to confuse trainees, but it is acknowledged that some storyteller's perspectives could motivate them to deceive the listener, by only selecting the parts of the story that supports their view.

This phenomenon includes children avoiding blame, (Bruner, 2002) those accused of crimes presenting themselves in a better light, (Presser, 2010) and witnesses giving evidence in court that show their actions more positively than they were (Van Hulst, 2013). Stories told in these circumstances are historical, and although they may contribute to an injustice, i.e. the wrong allocation of blame, they report a version of events that has already happened. The temporal difference with the stories told by the storytellers of this study, is that they take a version of past events and influence listeners to act in the future, action that might cost a life. In this sense these storytellers' stories look forward in time not back. However, many people and groups have been exposed misrepresenting stories or being selective in which stories or parts of a story they select to tell, to place the most positive slant on their behavior. This indicates that stories can contribute to the construction of reality (Berger & Luckman, 1966) or rather, to building one of multiple possible realities, depending on the storyteller's perspective.

The influence that the narrator's perspective of the teaching story might have on an audience is enhanced when there is an unequal power relationship between storytellers and listeners. Baldwin (2016) found that storytelling "occurs within frameworks of power in which some voices are not only heard more readily but also frame the questions and set the agendas" (p. 5). In this study it is likely that the storytellers primarily make decisions about the video content

without consulting a potential audience. In this sense there is a power difference with all the control in the hands of the presenter and none with the audience, conflicting with adult learning theory which indicates that adult motivation to learn is increased if they are involved in the planning of their learning (Knowles, 1980; Merriam & Bierema, 2014).

While some law enforcement audiences of online videos might have equivalent policing knowledge and experience of the police use of firearms as the trainers presenting the videos, an unequal power relationship remains as the trainer is still in control of content presented from the trainer's perspective. The motivation for creating each video is not known but it can be assumed that when they are created by commercial organizations profit or the development of the business may influence content and presentation. Rossiter and Clark (2007) recommend "questioning of underlying assumptions, of power relations, of whose interests are served by a particular narrative and whose interests are being exploited" (p. 70). Without data on the content of online videos it is difficult to view the role the unequal power relationship between presenter and audience might have on subsequent on-street behavior.

In addition to an unequal power relationship, policing is an uncertain working environment in which, theoretically at least, an officer might need the firearms skills they learn from all sources including online videos to save their life. In 2019, there were 49 on duty shooting fatalities of law enforcement personnel in the United States, (Officer Down Memorial Page, 2019). This might be a small number statistically, Woods' (2019) found that a fatality occurred once in every 6.5 million traffic stops, however, it is difficult to deny that the potential that they might make that stop is a strong human motivator for trainees to listen, learn and develop skills to be able to have an instant reactive response to a perceived threat.

Teaching stories about police firearms do this work, carrying the storyteller's perspective with it (Van Hulst, 2013) to an audience, which is why in online videos where viewers cannot pose questions, the storyteller is so important. McNulty (1994) found that some police trainers recommended a "willingness to act" (p. 285) as a required feature to resolving the incidents in the stories they told. However, this apparent gung-ho approach was modified by instructors advising that one positive action that could be used to control a volatile situation was backing off to de-escalate the situation (McNulty, 1994). An unknown feature of stories used in this way is if they could influence trainees to escalate an incident by taking positive action, because they know so few tactical options to resolve it, due to inexperience or lack of training.

In this sense stories contribute to the construction of a reality (Berger & Luckman, 1966) of police firearms training from the perspective of the storyteller who may select only teaching stories that show law enforcement in the best light. Extending Berger and Luckman's (1966) argument, Ewick and Silbey (1995) found that "knowledge is socially and politically produced" which allows the creation of "multiple truths" (p.199). In the law enforcement community stories that describe the actions of officers during incidents can be used to establish a 'truth' that those outside of this group would not recognize. The reverse is also apparent in the media coverage of the use of firearms by police which is often rejected by many in law enforcement as an 'untrue' account of events. In both circumstances story can create 'a narrative truth' by being repeated so many times that it becomes familiar to the listener and easier for them to process the information which "is interpreted as evidence of truth" (Wang, et al., 2016, p. 739). Van Hulst (2013) specifically referencing non-training police storytelling, posits that it "is not merely meant to represent reality" (p. 625) but rather it provides a specific police viewpoint of what is real, and that should be considered "as a cultural practice" (p. 625).

The rationale behind collecting stories in a narrative study is not to fact check them for accuracy, but to recognize the meaning a story has for the storyteller. Analysis in this study may indicate that telling inaccurate stories has an undesirable influence on the actions of trainees, information that is not yet available in the literature. While, generally, researchers consider whether respondents comments are truthful (Sandberg, 2010) narrative researchers can legitimately seek the “narrative truth” (Polkinghorne, 2007, p. 479). The two versions could be very similar or quite different. A story’s value in a narrative study is not diminished because it is not factually accurate, indeed seeking truth in narrative studies has been described as “a futile and ultimately dangerous exercise” (Rodriquez, 2002, p. 2).

Woods (2019) is an example of the use of video teaching stories, presented by academy instructors to recruits, fostering a danger narrative and establishing ground rules to be followed on all traffic stops. The work these stories do across the United States can be observed by watching fly-on-the-wall style television programs where cameras film police actions in several locations and broadcast them live. These programs follow officers simultaneously in different parts of the country who appear to conduct traffic stops in a similar way irrespective of where they are geographically. Unless, the risk of a traffic stop turning violent against the officer is identical across the country, which is not supported by the literature (Woods,2019) it could be expected that practice would reflect the reality of each policing environment.

Stories that establish and maintain policing narratives appear, from the scant literature on the subject (Ford, 2003) to include those told by instructors, who by their role, status and experience are potentially significant storytellers (Van Hulst,2017). Van Hulst (2017) found the “real storytellers” in a social police environment were “a handful of more experienced officers” (p. 625) who could command attention for their storytelling. This group of storytellers were

predominately male (Van Hulst,2017) and due to the lack of research in the area it is not known if this demographic fits the trainers and presenters of online police firearms training videos. Instructors, telling stories in a formal situation, could be expected to have the trainee's attention and have a status to potentially influence their thinking the status of trainers in this informal learning is not clear in the literature.

Relevance of This Literature to This Study

This study examines a teaching technique used in online police use of firearms videos that has the potential to influence the thinking and behavior of a particular group of adult learners. The adult learning and education literature confirm that the use of teaching stories is a traditional and widely used technique to render the complex understandable, aid memory and assist learning transfer to other situations. The role of story as a motivator of action in the lives of humans is a significant factor in this study that is supported by the literature. The literature provides justification for the collection of teaching stories from online police use of firearms videos to provide trustworthy research data.

The position of truth or accuracy of the content of a story is informed by reference to the narrative inquiry literature, establishing the appropriateness of a narrative truth focused on the relevance of the meaning that the story has for the teller and/or the audience. Analysis of story is made more complex because "narratives are subjective and relativist rather than markers of a fixed and objective reality" (Thompson, 2018). The story's meaning is relevant because this can motivate the storyteller and, or the audience to act in response to their practical or emotional link to the story. Analysis of data might raise issues of stories that are inaccurate representations of the original experience skewing an audience perception that could lead to undesirable

actions, which would require a reassessment of the significance of factual and narrative truth in these videos.

This study demonstrates the relevance of the cross-field literature to understanding the potential importance of a teaching story told in online firearms training videos to a law enforcement. The contribution from different fields of literature that provides a framework to conduct the study is laid out above. This literature review provides support for the procedures for data collection and analysis described below in Chapter 3. Narrative inquiry is a suitable framework for examining the stories of interest in this study.

Chapter 3

Method

The literature review in Chapter 2 referenced narrative studies conducted in criminology (Kurtz & Upton, 2017; Sautner & Medina, 2018; van Hulst, 2013), the social sciences (Bieniek-Tobasco, et al., 2019; Craven, 2015; Rodriguez, 2002;), education (Knowles, 1980; Merriam & Bierema, 2014; Rossiter & Clark, 2007), and workplace training (Parkin, 2010; Rae, 2016). This study is a narrative inquiry because it is the stories that are used to teach a point the storyteller is making that have the potential to influence trainees thinking and subsequent actions. While the use of story in police training is under researched, narrative studies cited in Chapter 2 gathered trustworthy qualitative data using methods in the literature (Andrews, Squire & Tamboukou, 2013; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Riessman, 2008). The research method for this study draws on these successful investigations, and Chapter 3 details the method used to identify, capture, and analyze data. However, the origin of the study is located in my professional experience as a British police firearms instructor.

Origin of the Study

Even the most cursory review of differences between the British police service and law enforcement in the United States would identify that while UK officers are typically unarmed American officers routinely carry firearms. The only exception to the unarmed tradition in the UK is the Police Service of Northern Ireland which is generally armed in response to historical political violence. Armed policing in the rest of the United Kingdom is a specialist role for which officers apply, are vetted for suitability, selected, and then extensively trained. The result is that in Britain the officers involved in the few shootings that occur each year are those most highly trained in the use of firearms. A significant challenge to my expectation that law enforcement in

the United States involved in police shootings are also highly trained in the use of firearms came when the literature that showed some American law enforcement employer sponsored programs only offered an annual shooting test (Morrison, 2003). Instead of the most highly trained officers who have completed Special Weapons and Tactics programs being involved in shootings in the United States, it is often patrol officers who may only have received a minimum level of firearms training (Morrison, 2003).

A concern raised by this new learning is that if the only in-service training is shooting an officer's reaction in a confrontation might be to default to a training stimulated response to shoot, which even if justifiable may result in an avoidable death. This became a transformative learning experience (Mezirow & Associates, 2000) for me that challenged my expectation of the quality of the firearms training provided to some of this group of American adult learners (Morrison, 2003). Consideration of how adults learn as documented in the adult learning theory literature suggests that officer's experience is an important aspect of their willingness to learn (Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 2011). The realization that story is the medium often used by adults to describe their experience (Merriam & Bierema, 2014) was a further transformative ah ha moment (Mezirow & Associates, 2000) in my learning in the doctoral program. A narrative inquiry course cemented a renewed appreciation of the power of story to teach, explain and influence an audience (Parkin, 2010; Rae, 2016).

The potential role of story in the appropriate delivery of police firearms training in the United States became apparent when the narrative inquiry and a criminology course developed my awareness of some similarity between stories collected from offenders about their offending (Presser, 2009; 2010) and police firearms training teaching stories (Ford, 2003). Storytellers in both situations for instance often claim that their actions are in response to others rather than

initiated by the individual telling the story or about whom the story is being told. This confirmed my desire to better understand the role story in police firearms training has in influencing the actions of officers in confrontations with the public. My intended route was to seek permission to attend law enforcement firearms training sessions to interview instructors collect their stories and analyze the content. Then the Coronavirus struck.

The impact of the 2020 Coronavirus pandemic on academic research for University of Tennessee researchers was to place a hold on person to person interviews and for my potential research population to suspend most law enforcement training as an unnecessary risk in gathering first responders together. Reflecting on the sources of adult learning in the workplace (Rowden, 2007) I moved my focus from formal settings with a trainer present to consider more informal learning (Marsick & Watkins, 2001) delivered without a live trainer. Online videos are a source of adult learning where there is not a live trainer. Therefore, with the intended source of data for the study blocked on public health grounds a revised method of data collection was developed based on collecting teaching stories already recorded in videos posted online. Support for this decision was found in the literature, Bock and Schneider (2017) recognized the similarity of video to film and photography but noted that “digital video’s communicative properties are evolving in unique ways that warrant scholarly attention” (p. 335). The benefits of video over other qualitative data gathering approaches, “in studies of human behavior and interaction” (Miller-Scarnato, 2019, p. 384) was identified as the ability to simultaneously collect contextual information.

Developing Selection Criteria

An online search for ‘police firearms training videos’ on the Bing search engine produced 416,000,000 hits. This was clearly an unmanageable number for a qualitative study and even a

cursory review showed a wide variety of material not applicable to this study. To narrow the search to conduct a narrative inquiry designed “to discover, understand, and gain insight” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 96) into the study’s subject matter a criteria to use in the selection of videos was devised. As this is a qualitative study of the manifest and latent messages in teaching stories in the selected videos, it is not generalizable to any other group of videos and certainly not to all 416,000,000 on the bing.com search engine.

To narrow the search to a relevant group of videos, and facilitate replication of the study this selection criteria was used, videos selected should:

1. Be freely available online – meaning that anyone with internet can access the video because it is on a platform that does not require payment, registration before access or sites that restrict access to specified groups.
2. Relate to police firearms training in the United States – videos about policing issues not associated with firearms training were excluded and only videos that related to firearms training in the United States were selected.
3. Contain at least one teaching story – this is a study of teaching stories in online videos, it follows that to be included in the study videos needed to contain at least one narrative told to make a teaching point
4. Have a storyteller – for a story to make a teaching point it must be selected and told by someone, therefore for a video to be included in the study it must contain a storyteller.
5. Not be unexplained dashcam, bodycam, mobile phone or security camera footage – while these videos may be narrative in nature, because it is possible to see a story in the images they are not being used to make a teaching point because there is no storyteller who has

selected the material as a teaching aid. Material that is not teaching stories, which is the focus of the study is not included in the study.

Using these criteria still produced large numbers of videos, requiring a further selection process to collect data appropriate to the study. Online videos provide descriptors that were used to make selections to achieve some degree of randomness. To establish differences in the videos selected the following variables were considered in making selections.

- a. title ascribed to the video by producers
- b. the source of the video
- c. the platform it was posted on
- d. the length of the video
- e. the number of viewings
- f. who was the storyteller?
- g. position on the search engine, priority was given to early listed videos to increase the randomness of the selection

Videos posted online usually have a title ascribed to them during the production process although who made the decision is not stated on the posting. The title usually indicates the video's topic therefore they were used as one variable to select material that differs from other videos with different titles. The source of the video is the individual or organization that filmed or produced the video, selection was made to ensure that videos did not all come from the same provider, although videos from the same provider were included if other variables indicated it was an appropriate selection. Videos had been posted on several platforms, which are the site locations that people can post material online, where possible material was selected from different sites.

However, even a cursory look at posting sites demonstrates that some sites (You Tube) have a significant dominance and as a result feature disproportionately in the selection process. The length of the video is documented on some posting sites and this was used to capture material of various lengths. Many videos have an indication of the number of times that they have been viewed that provided another variable to select videos that have been extensively viewed and those that have received less attention. Storytellers were found to be self-declared police trainers, a police officer involved in an incident under discussion, a law enforcement official, a product salesperson, an un-named narrator, a news reporter, or a TV show presenter. Where possible different storytellers were selected. Lastly, getting a degree of randomness by using videos listed early on the search engine. Collectively these choices provided some degree of difference in the material selected.

This study is concerned with understanding teaching stories in the selected group of online police firearms training videos, not making claims about all online material. The study sample size of 11 videos was influenced by the number of teaching stories collected from the selected videos, which was 76 and the appearance of repeated themes in the analysis of manifest and latent messages in the sample stories. To be able to identify what could be considered a “point of informational redundancy” (Gentles, et al. 2015, p. 1781) analysis was conducted on the visual and oral stories in the videos as they were transcribed. Adopting a process of data analysis as it is collected is often a feature of qualitative research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Teaching stories in this domain are frequently descriptions of the actions of practitioners because story is often the language adult use to describe their work experience. It therefore follows that many teaching stories used to point out errors may be critical of the law enforcement practitioner who is the subject of the story. To provide an uncontentious commentary in the

analysis of the role of teaching stories I tried to conceal the identity of incidents, even though the material is freely available online. The intention was to focus on the teaching story; not any criticism made of individuals involved in the incidents referred to.

To achieve some degree of anonymity the videos selected for the study are allocated a number by which they were referenced in the analysis process. To redact the identity of locations named in videos a pseudonym was allocated to a State, city, police department or agency where necessary. The names of law enforcement participating in training, narrating the video, or commenting have been removed from transcripts and replaced with the title of the role they are fulfilling such as trainer, presenter, or trainee. Where videos were produced by commercial companies or media outlets the names of the personnel given in the text have been replaced by a similar descriptor such as presenter, reporter, or narrator.

Data Collection Procedure

Identifying teaching stories in online videos is complicated by what constitutes a story. In the literature Abbott (2008) found that a story is “*an event or a series of events* (p. 19, italic in original), and he explains an event by comparing two sentences “My dog has fleas”, a statement about his dog, with “My dog was bitten by a flea”, a story, because “It tells of an event” (Abbott, 2008, p. 13). Support for identifying descriptions of small events as stories comes from Christmas (2018) who accepted often brief data as stories if, “they generally have an introduction and conclusion, with a context and clearly defined message that the subjects wished to provide” (p. 3121). Story length using this definition ranged between a paragraph and several pages.

Following Abbott (2008) and Christmas (2018) this study considers a single sentence a story if it contains a message and references an event. A story is considered a teaching story if it is referenced by a trainer, presenter, or narrator to explain or highlight a point in the plot of the

narrative being discussed. It is apparent that each video has a prime teaching narrative and subplot teaching stories, identified by searching the language of the transcripts for oral stories and the images of the video for descriptions of visual stories. As each story is identified it is given a title that characterized the nature of the story and provides a reference name for the data collection process, beginning with Video 1.

Once selected Video 1 is numbered, named, and viewed repeatedly. Working with video provides opportunities to collect comprehensive data because it enables “researchers to pay close attention to detail without having to rely on memory or written notes” (Miller-Scarnato, 2019, p. 387). After repeated viewings of Video 1 a transcription of all the words spoken in the video was made to create a record of the oral stories it contains. Because there are several speakers in the video who often interact with each other, the written document quickly takes the appearance of a film script with a speaker named on the left of the page and what they said noted on the right. After transcribing oral stories, a note is added into the text relating to what appears on camera as the video plays. Next the visual stories in the text are described and added to the transcript, to clarify where visual stories appear words written in purple are inserted as near to in sequence with the oral stories as possible.

It takes several iterations of the transcript to get oral and visual stories in the sequence they appear in the video. A result of this process is that synchronizing oral and visual stories identifies narrated stories, which occur when an oral story is spoken as a visual story plays providing contextual comments to the images on the screen. Throughout this process it is necessary for the researcher to add comments that clarify what is on the screen as words are spoken to create a transcript that makes sense of these oral, visual, and narrated stories. The

transcript now includes these three types of stories some of which include names of participants, locations, police departments or incidents.

A copy is made of the unredacted transcript to use as a working copy from which material that identifies locations, police departments, individuals or incidents is removed as part of the process to provide an anonymous transcript. To facilitate this process the transcript is color coded with quotes from the video in black, descriptions of visual stories and co-constructed comments in purple, and the researcher's thoughts in blue. As working copies of the first video transcripts are created words changed for the purpose of anonymity were altered to green ink to make the coding clearer. Color coding the working copy of some videos creates a complex script where the storyteller describes a teaching story as the visual scene changes from camera on the narrator to showing clips of dashcam or bodycam film. This process is a practical step to visually display the amount of researcher co-construction of data, and a visual aid to show where teaching stories might appear in transcripts.

To achieve as much anonymity as possible the transcript is now reviewed and identifying material removed. The name of an individual is changed for the role they perform in the video such as trainer, trainee, or reporter (in later videos a title and number is allocated, for example Officer A or Robber One). Anything that identifies locations is changed to a general descriptor such as a city in the West of the United States or given a pseudonym. It is necessary at this point to remove titles that identify organizations in the video using instead a non-descript designation such as law enforcement or local police. Combined these changes to the transcript remove the most obvious identification features from the text which makes it suitable for analysis.

Data Analysis

Three data sets are collected in this study, the content of stories, the apparent manifest message they contain and potential latent messages they might carry for a law enforcement audience. All three data sets are found in the transcript by an analysis process that begins by identifying individual teaching stories using the definitions above. The first task was to identify the prime teaching narrative which highlights the reason the video was produced. The main plot is usually apparent in the transcript which usually suggests a unique name that is noted in the results section followed by a paragraph that explains the selection. The most obvious prime teaching narratives are often from a video's title "Headshots are no guarantee" (Video 6) or presenter's statement "today's tip deals with cover versus concealment" (Video 7). Prime teaching narratives are supported by a varying number of teaching stories that developed the argument the trainer, presenter, or narrator is making, these stories are identified next.

Working systematically through the transcript teaching stories are identified, named, and explained in a results section format that eventually is written up as Chapter 4. As results are documented contextual comments to explain technical language or police procedures are added at this stage. The study sample size is influenced by the number of teaching stories collected from the selected videos and the appearance of repeated themes in the analysis of manifest and latent messages in the sample stories. To be able to identify what could be considered a "point of informational redundancy" (Gentles, et al. 2015, p. 1781) analysis was conducted on the teaching stories in the videos as they were transcribed. It is necessary to return to review videos analyzed early in the process as a more nuanced understanding of teaching stories is developed through familiarity with the material before turning attention to the manifest and latent messages teaching stories might carry for law enforcement.

The second study question sets two analytical tasks to identify the manifest message of teaching stories and then expose any latent messages they may carry. The manifest message of a teaching story is usually easy to identify as it is highlighted by the video title or a statement by the trainer, presenter, or narrator as described above. Where it is not fully explained by these devices it is usually identifiable from either visual or oral clues in the video. A hypothetical example of a teaching story based on the assumption that, most people know that frozen water ice is cold, shows how stories are identified in the study. A storyteller could use the knowledge that ice is cold to describe the pleasure of sucking on an ice in hot weather or conversely the less pleasant falling through thin ice on a frozen pond and risking hypothermia. Both comments are stories because they describe an event (Abbott, 2008) and both are about water ice but quite different in nature.

A manifest message in the frozen pond story is that hypothermia can be caused by falling through thin ice into very cold water, while a latent message from the same story is that walking on thin ice on ponds is dangerous. There is a significant difference between these messages as the manifest message is imparting knowledge about the potential health consequences of exposure to very cold water. The latent message of this teaching story, however, is a danger narrative that is likely to influence decision-making, i.e. not to walk on ponds covered with thin ice. This approach to analysis is consistent with Ford (2003) who found that teaching stories told by police academy instructors had “multiple messages, according to whether the manifest or latent content was coded” (p. 89).

Analyzing data requires careful consideration of a range of variables to reveal hidden meaning. These included the language used by storytellers and participants in videos, the activity shown as examples of the teaching point, identifying apparent bias in the preparation or delivery

of a teaching story, and bringing to the surface unconscious aspects of a story. This contextual material and the literature is a lens through which to view the covert themes these teaching stories may hold. If contextual information about the origins or source of a story is available, it can provide informative data about the selection process of storytellers and is included in the explanation of the narrative. After identifying manifest and latent messages in the teaching stories a cross video analysis is carried out to identify themes to fully answer the questions posed in Chapter 1.

During the analysis process policing and criminology narratives in the literature are compared with those emerging from the study data. This comparative analysis exposes similarities in study data themes with those found in stories from police academy instructors (Ford, 2003) informal peer to peer exchanges (Van Hulst, 2017) and in the policing culture (Kurtz & Upton, 2017). Within this literature common themes have been found that appear to influence officer thinking and behavior such as the ‘danger narrative’. This narrative theme, that police work is inherently dangerous all the time in all locations across the United States is challenged (Kurtz & Upton, 2017) claimed to adversely influence firearms training (Woods, 2019) and contribute to avoidable shootings (Stoughton, 2014). Data from this study contributes to understanding the role this narrative might have in influencing officer’s actions during confrontations that end with a police shooting. As this is an adult learning study, based on the principles of educational psychology, it presents an opportunity to identify learning interventions to address the accuracy of culturally established narratives like the danger narrative.

Narrative Inquiry

The purpose of this study is to identify teaching stories in freely available online police firearms training videos and examine the manifest and latent messages they may carry for a law

enforcement audience. The rationale for using a qualitative narrative inquiry to investigate messages in video teaching stories is to access the meaning of the story to the storyteller and consider the potential impact on law enforcement audiences. Narrative inquiry allows visual or oral stories to be described in a transcript that can be analyzed to access that meaning (Riessman, 2008). In describing stories, the literature advocates the use of ‘rich, thick descriptions’ (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) to provide the reader with the confidence that the study findings are a valid contribution to knowledge. Details of the circumstances or experience of participants provides a context in which story content can come alive to the reader, providing in the process the opportunity for other researchers to replicate findings or identify similarities in other data (Hayashi, Abib & Hoppen, 2019). Creswell and Miller (2000) found that when data is presented using “a thick description” (p. 129) it becomes credible because, as with story in other contexts, the narrative involves readers in the events. The study is predicated on the assumption that firearms or deadly force training influences the thinking and actions of law enforcement in interactions with the public. To better document results at an early stage a validity strategy is drawn up for the collection, analysis and recording of study data.

Validity Strategy

Conceptually, validity is a more complex construct in a qualitative study than in quantitative research, where an accepted statistical instrument can be used for the purpose. The language used to describe qualitative study validity can also be confusing, (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) with multiple words being given different meanings by various researchers (Golafshani, 2003; Hayashi, Abib & Hoppen, 2019). The literature confirms that qualitative research validity is not a yes or no answer, rather it is a sliding scale of the believability of the case the researcher lays out by drawing on evidence directly from data (Polkinghorne, 2007). Cypress (2015) found

that to achieve validity in qualitative research, a study needs to be “well-grounded or justifiable, relevant, meaningful, logical, conforming to accepted principles or the quality of being sound, just, and well founded” (p. 256). Achieving this level of transparency is my validity strategy for this study.

The literature (Creswell, 2014) recommends researchers to document a study’s validity strategy, because it needs to be thoughtfully applied to each stage of a study. My validity strategy is included in the study’s design, and influenced data collection, data analysis and writing the results. A three-pronged strategy of researcher reflexivity to influence planning (Darawsheh, 2014), a discrepant themes search during data analysis (Creswell, 2014) and using rich, thick descriptions to energize the language of the study’s results (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) is adopted. This strategy is designed to ensure that “tools, processes, and data” (Leung, 2015, p. 325) created the required level of confidence in the results. Providing a transparent record of my research steps that others could follow contributes to the result’s validity by demonstrating data quality, because “good narrative research persuades readers” (Riessman, 2008, p. 191). Cypress (2017) concurs with Creswell’s (2014) view that validity should be considered before, during and after collection of qualitative data, a strategy that is also applied to the consideration of reliability (Cypress, 2017).

Discrepant themes. The second method to improve validity concerns how data is collected and analyzed. All stories told in the online videos studied were included in the collection and analysis process, irrespective of the role the story played or if it contradicts other stories or themes. I did not hold pre-conceived ideas of what themes would be found, although I suspected that some would also be found in studies of the policing culture in the literature. I followed Riessman (2008) in this area and ensured that “negative cases are included, and

alternative interpretations considered.” (p. 191) to present evidence that readers can decide if it is true to the data (Polkinghorne, 2007). For example, this is achieved by taking each theme and revisiting data expressly looking for any evidence of the opposite of the identified theme, findings either way are reported.

Reliability Strategy

As with validity the concept of reliability is also a more difficult consideration in a qualitative than a quantitative study. However, it can be argued that the notion of reliability should become more apparent if an appropriate degree of detail about the method employed in a study is documented. This is because “reliability refers to exact replicability of the processes and the results” (Leung, 2015, p. 326) which requires other researchers to be able to follow the same method to provide findings for comparison. The ability of others to replicate the study’s process can ensure “consistency within the employed analytical procedures” (Noble & Smith, 2017, p. 34) the contribution of procedural consistency to reliability is also supported (Sykes, 1991).

Noble and Smith (2017) consider consistency to be associated with trustworthiness, which is delivered by “maintaining a ‘decision-trail’ in which the “decisions are clear and transparent” (p. 34). Sykes (1991) urges qualitative researchers that their method “is made ‘transparent’” (p. 7) to readers of the research, one strategy recommended to achieve this level of transparency is “meticulous record keeping” (Noble & Smith, 2017, p. 35). This high level of documentation of the researcher’s thinking and decision-making was extended to the selection of coding themes. This is done to make it possible for other researchers to identify links between what participants said, and themes in the study results.

However, processes of this study should not be considered defective if another researcher follows the method and reaches different conclusions, if the reason for the difference can be

identified (Sykes, 1991). An example might be a researcher replicating this study who reviews identified themes and decides to amend descriptors in search of different findings based on their understanding of the results of the current study. Alternatively, a researcher's perspective and previous work experience may influence their interpretation of their results (Noble & Smith, 2017). As the researcher of this study I acknowledge that my worldview and work experience influenced my perception of data and interpretation of results.

Reflexivity

Researchers, including me, have “assumptions, beliefs, and biases” (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 127) acquired by living the life they have lived. When conducting research, it is important to bring these attributes to the surface because “reflexivity is an internal understanding of one's perspective” (Yao & Vital, 2018, p. 194). Darawshah (2014) encourages researchers to be constantly mindful of their worldview, opinions, and biases. A study's validity benefits if the researcher “acknowledge and describe entering beliefs and biases early in the research process to allow readers to understand [my] position” (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 127). I am aware that my experience including new knowledge from doctoral courses has influenced the selection of this study and how it has been conducted.

Been there bias. As a retired police firearms instructor, I have a bias towards the law enforcement firearms trainer's role. The root of this bias is that as an instructor I strived to be professional, ethical, and effective in my delivery of appropriate training to my trainees, and I project my conduct onto others performing the same role. My worldview of people, not only police officers, is that most are good, honorable, and professionally competent, I hold this opinion until or unless they demonstrate that my faith in them is misplaced. The police firearms training environment, which is alien to most people, is familiar to me and I take many things for

granted. However, as an investigator of training and its effects on action, familiarity with how things should be done alerts me to the warning signs that something is amiss.

Relevant to this study, I know that in my practice as a trainer, I told teaching stories to explain key learning points, without reflecting on how they might motivate trainee's actions in the future. While this experience might bias me to be sympathetic towards participants in the study who also use stories in this way, I believe that recognizing it as I begin the study reduced the likelihood of me overlooking or misinterpreting relevant data. Although, I identify training stories with the potential to mislead trainees, I did not believe that this is a malicious, calculated act by instructors. However, as a police investigator, including into the circumstances of shootings by police which is the application of police firearms training I endeavored to only follow the evidence. As an academic researcher I strive to collect accurate data and write a transparent explanation of what is found in the data that is "plausible, reasonable, and convincing" (Riessman, 2008, p. 191).

Positionality. Despite my police service as a firearms instructor in Britain, which I acknowledge has the potential to create a bias in my outlook, I am aware of possible significant differences between my professional experience and that of law enforcement trainers in the United States who prepared videos used in this study. In the United Kingdom the use of firearms by police is a specialist role undertaken by about 6-8% of officers, who are screened before training and only the most suitable for this role selected. An advantage for me in the British police was that members of specialist armed units are given extensive training and develop their knowledge and skills carrying out armed operations. This presents British instructors with a different task than an American trainer who is required to teach every individual recruited to the agency or department they work for.

The literature (Morrison, 2003; 2006) indicates further differences exist between British and American police firearms trainers in the level of training provided to prepare them for the role. While nationally accredited firearms instructor's courses are mandatory in the British police service some trainers in the United States are offered only minimum training opportunities to develop their knowledge of educational psychology, adult learning theory and practical teaching strategies (Vodde, 2012). As a British firearms instructor I attended developmental courses, national and international conferences, visited other firearms instructors and hosted visits from other trainers that generated peer to peer learning opportunities for me. My circumstances were also unusual because, in addition to developing my professional practice, I took opportunities to pursue academic qualifications and conduct subject specific research. This combination of skills was recognized as evidence of expertise and in consequence I operated at a national level as an instructor, policy maker and court appointed expert witness.

I expect these opportunities position me differently (Yao & Vital, 2018) from most of the United States law enforcement instructors who were involved in the production of online videos in this study. As a retired firearms instructor researcher I consider myself as having an insider perspective, which is mitigated by my police firearms training experience being in the United Kingdom, and my academic background which positions me in an outsider role (Noh, 2019). This partly insider, partly outsider situation is accepted in the literature as the researcher's positionality in some circumstances (Milligan, 2016).

Conclusion

This study considers that online police firearms training video teaching stories have the potential to influence officer thinking, which may in turn influence officer's actions during armed confrontations. Collecting stories from the videos selected provides data for analysis to

identify this process. The study is designed to understand these video teaching stories, not to generalize findings across the internet. The method details how the study was conducted to allow others, should they wish, to replicate the study which may eventually provide a wider perspective of the role of teaching stories in online police firearms training videos. Using the method detailed in this chapter teaching stories are identified, analyzed and results documented in Chapter 4 below.

Chapter 4

Findings

This study was designed to identify the content of teaching stories in online police firearms training videos and the manifest or latent messages they might carry for a law enforcement audience in the United States. Chapter 1 outlined the gap in the literature and posed two research questions “What stories are told in online police firearms training videos?” and “What are the manifest or latent messages, stories might carry for a law enforcement audience?” (Chapter 1, p. 8). To answer these questions this chapter is organized to report findings about the content of teaching stories in study videos, then to detail the manifest or latent messages they might carry for law enforcement viewing the material. The nature of teaching stories in study videos were found to be of three types.

Story Types

Transcripts prepared from study videos revealed that they contained three types of teaching story: oral, visual, and narrated. In the transcripts used in this study an oral story consists of the words spoken in the video, a visual story is a description of images in the video and a narrated story is comprised of words spoken to video images. These three types of story became apparent as the first transcripts were prepared using a color-coded text originally designed to highlight the word changes providing anonymity and to make text co-constructed by the researcher obvious. Co-constructed material in the text consisted of the researcher’s description of on-screen images, which when interlaced with oral contextual stories produced a film script style of transcript.

Two study videos contained only one teaching story type (Videos 6 & 7 only oral stories) while other videos had two or all three types. A subtle but noticeable difference between visual

stories found in film from police vehicle dashcams, officer bodycams or security cameras, (Videos 3, 4, 8, 9 & 11) and images filmed specifically to produce a visual story (Videos 1, 2, 5, 8 & 10) is differences in the soundtrack. The first of the above category of stories tended to have a simultaneously recorded soundtrack, whereas only some of the second group of visual stories had audio taped with the images. Turning the sound off while viewing suggests that a visual story ‘produced’ to support an oral story requires the spoken word to fully grasp the teaching point being made. In contrast, where visual stories are clips of actual filmed events (Videos 3, 4, 8, 9 & 11) the story’s plot is still usually apparent without sound, a feature that requires repeated watching of the video to appreciate and that is not apparent from simply reading the transcript.

Additional evaluation of the visual and oral stories in the videos studied reveals a further nuanced concept in the possible link between them. If the oral story is a close description of a visual story of actual images, it can stand alone without simultaneously viewing the video. It was also apparent that the transcript of oral stories in the videos generally made sense without the video playing when read as a written version. However, where there is any discordance between the visual and oral story the point being made in a teaching story is only fully apparent when the oral narrative is heard with visual images. Some study videos (1, 2, 8, 9 & 11) suggest that often the role of an oral teaching story is to provide contextual information to assist an audience to understand the visual story they are viewing.

The contextual information role of an oral teaching story is apparent in the soundtrack of Video 8 that tells the story of officers resolving an active shooter incident in a supermarket. The visual story uses security camera film of officers moving tactically around the store searching for the active shooters. If the video is viewed without sound the officer’s movements appear to be random, but the soundtrack reveals that the officer’s actions are being coordinated over the

police radio by an officer in the store's security control room. This officer tells an oral contextual teaching story that he was monitoring the movements of the suspect using the store's security cameras and informing his colleagues of suspects location via the police radio who moved in response. Informing the audience that although they could not hear police radio messages from the officer in the security control room the officers shown in the visual story could hear the messages. Contextual information of this kind might be helpful to those in the audience who have not experienced the benefits of information passed on a radio system. The production style and language of this video appears to be directed to include a non-police audience. The style of video production suggesting the apparent intended audience is a feature that is noted across the study.

Intended Audience

The narrator, presenter, or storyteller of the videos in the study usually do not state the intended audience; however, reviewing language, content, and style suggest that it is possible to identify the intended audience as police, public or both. Suggested categorization in this study is made by reference to all or any of the following data, the title shown on the video clip, the narrator's description of the video's purpose, the producer, the platform it is posted on, the topic covered and the narrator's language. Most of this information is acquired directly from data in the video, however the narrator's language is an outlier in these categories because it is a subjective decision by the researcher. How these features collectively suggest the intended audience is described below.

For example, the language, content, and style in some videos is rather technical, such as the discussion of ballistics in Video 9, which might be difficult to follow without a background in the use of firearms. While ballistics knowledge can come from an interest in shooting sports or

military weapon experience, the video's producer and the storyteller's language suggest it is intended for law enforcement. At the opposite end of the spectrum are videos produced by TV news providers (Video 1, 2 and 10), which are clearly intended for a public audience. This view is reinforced by the production style of the video in which a presenter or narrator typically provides a more detailed explanation of teaching stories. In contrast videos produced by police training organizations (Videos 4, 9 or 11) appear to make more assumptions that the audience will understand the story and provided less explanation of technical points or language. Teaching stories in videos produced by different organizations appear to have different roles with TV producers informing the public and police trainers facilitating adult learning.

While TV news providers gave information about policing that the public may not usually be aware of an unexpected result of the study was identifying a difference in the level of criticism between these videos and those made by police training providers primarily intended for a law enforcement audience. Videos produced for TV seemed less critical of police firearms training than material produced by police training organizations or independent law enforcement trainers. While TV produced videos recognized the difficulty of armed policing and showed the training that supports it in a positive light, police trainers often started a video being critical of police behavior or subject specific knowledge. This identified a problem the trainer described, usually providing little evidence to support the claim. The trainer then provides a solution to the problem they identified in the training advice the teaching stories they tell carry for a law enforcement audience. These teaching stories appear to collectively support the storytellers prime teaching narrative.

Prime Teaching Narrative and Subplot Teaching Stories

A common feature of qualitative research is that data is analyzed as it is acquired to facilitate the analytical process as the researcher begins to understand the significance of data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Conducting this process in this study resulted in the early realization that each video contained more than one teaching story. It became apparent that each video had a prime teaching narrative that could be described as the reason for making the video, and between three and ten subplot teaching stories that support the storyteller's position in the prime teaching narrative. The literature recognizes prime and subplot stories. Barthes (1977) found that "to understand a narrative is not merely to follow the unfolding of the story, it is also to recognize its construction in stories" (p 87). The storyteller in all videos developed the prime teaching narrative by telling subplot teaching stories that pulled different threads together to build the storyteller's case for the prime narrative.

The number of subplot teaching stories in study videos ranged from three to ten with an average of just under six stories per video. The length of videos varied between the shortest (Video 2) at 2 minutes, 29 seconds, and the longest (Video 6) running for 14 minutes, 48 seconds, collectively videos ran for 69 minutes, 1 second with an average length of just over six minutes. There was some correlation between video length and the number of teaching stories identified, the longest (Video 6) had the second most stories (8) while the second longest (Video 8) had the most stories (10). The video (7) with the fewest stories (3) was the second shortest at 2 minutes, 37 seconds. However, an outlier appears to be the shortest video (2) which revealed an above average seven teaching stories.

An explanation for the discrepancies in the correlation between video length and the number of stories appears to be the detail, storytellers put into each teaching story (Video 6) the

availability of visual material to tell stories (Video 8) or the presentational abilities of producers and presenters (Video 2). The longest video (6) is a technical explanation of ballistics and the effects a bullet has when it hits a particular part of the human head, in which each teaching story takes several sentences or a paragraph to explain, producing an above average eight stories. The second longest (Video 8) has extensive visual material from the security cameras in and around the supermarket where the incident took place that contributed to this presentation producing the most teaching stories at ten. The influence of media professionals on the style of the presentation was also apparent in Video 8, a feature that also seemed to be a contributing reason why Video 2, the shortest in length, revealed an above average seven teaching stories.

The number of teaching stories per video is also influenced by a selection process in which most stories are overtly present in the transcript, while others are latent messages from questions raised by the content of overt stories. The overt stories develop prime teaching narratives while latent ghost stories may challenge the content or present a discordant view of an overt story. An overt story is a visual, oral, or narrated story supplied by a participant in the video, while ghost stories are co-constructed by the researcher using the content of video stories or gaps in narratives that the stories reveal.

This study identifies the prime teaching narrative and subplot teaching stories in each video. Initial indicators of the prime teaching narrative the storyteller of each video believed they were telling are taken to be the video's title, the narrator's opening description of content and the topic the video covers. While this process usually provides an indication of the prime teaching narrative, the stated reason for the video's production is sometimes further in the material or in one case (Video 3) towards the end. Each teaching story identified in the study is numbered and named to facilitate reference to it throughout the results and analysis process.

Study Data

The 11 videos and their topics are listed below:

Informative data detailing study videos

Video	Subject	Number of Stories	Length	Platform	Number of views
1	News report police training	5	4 Mins 11 Secs	You Tube	29,000
2	News report police training	8	2 Mins 29 Secs	You Tube	111,000
3	Fatal shooting of 2 officers	5	6 Mins 54 Secs	You Tube	2000+
4	Fatal shooting of officer	6	8 Mins 46 Secs	You Tube	75,000
5	Ballistic penetration demo	5	3 Mins 10 Secs	You Tube	75,000
6	Incapacitation & Ballistics	9	14 Mins 48 Secs	You Tube	17,904
7	Cover & Concealment	4	2 Mins 37 Secs	Police Training Organization	Unknown
8	Active shooter – Fatal shooting of 2 officers	11	11 Mins 12 Secs	You Tube	2,012,690
9	Danger of hesitation	8	4 Mins 24 Secs	Police Training Organization	Unknown
10	News report – rifle plates	7	4 Mins 18 Secs	You Tube	14,000
11	Multi subject vehicle stop	8	6 Mins 8 Secs	Police Training Organization	Unknown
Totals		76	69 Mins 1 Sec	You Tube 8 Other 3	2,336,594 Unknown 3

Analysis of these 11 videos produced the results described below that detail the content of teaching stories in each study video and the manifest and latent messages the stories may carry for a law enforcement audience.

Video 1: TV news report of police training

Video 1 is 4 minutes, 11 seconds in length and is a TV news report that was posted on You Tube in 2016 and the version used in the study had been viewed 29,000+ times. The video is a segment prepared for a TV news program that shows law enforcement trainees using a firearms training simulator under the guidance of a trainer and an individual described as a senior law enforcement official. After discussion of the actions of law enforcement trainees the reporter undertakes a scenario on the simulator and describes her experience. This video presents a positive view of police firearms training showing how detailed it is and the difficulty of making an appropriate decision in an armed confrontation. The narrators are two TV program anchors and a TV reporter. This designed for TV video appears to be intended for a general audience, such groups may or may not include law enforcement personnel. Teaching stories are visual, oral, and narrated, as described above.

Prime teaching narrative - police firearms training prepares for dangerous encounters.

Probably because this video was produced for a TV news slot; it was given the catchy and possibly emotive title of “Shoot Don’t Shoot.” Despite the dramatic title it appears from an early presenter’s comment “our reporter looks into how law enforcement is preparing to make those split-second decisions that can forever change the lives of everyone involved”, the video’s prime teaching narrative is a more nuanced police firearms training that prepares officers for difficult to resolve dangerous encounters. The police firearms training in Video 1 uses a computer-controlled training simulator that has a screen on which a filmed scenario is projected. Trainees interact with the computer via a modified firearm that is adapted to discharge a pulse of laser light when fired that interacts through the computer with the scenario on the screen. Several

companies manufacture this type of training system and several generations of each simulator now exist offering different levels of sophistication.

Some scenarios do not present a situation in which trainees would be justified in shooting, while others show a threat to life that make a shooting response appropriate. Typically, scenarios are short, and a traditional training pattern is that the trainee is given a briefing to set the scene for a training event, either by an instructor or directly from the simulator's computer before on-screen action commences. The computer software then provides a window of opportunity during which the trainee must decide to shoot or not. If they perceive a simulated threat to the life of an actor in the scenario or to trainees using the system, usually a threat with a gun or edged weapon then shooting might be an appropriate response. To shoot or not is one of the subplot teaching stories that support the prime teaching narrative.

Decision to shoot.

The manifest message of the shoot or do not shoot teaching story is that when officers perceive a risk to life in an incident they must make a decision to shoot or not to shoot and the firearms training simulator allows them to practice this skill. This presents the shooting decision-making process as a binary one in which not acting becomes a decision by default, because the action of a suspect in real life or an actor in a training scenario can render officer's actions to a threat pointless. It is this that leads to a possible latent message delivered by this teaching story that shooting decisions are only binary, that officers either shoot or take no action. Viewing shooting as a binary decision may ignore other tactical options that may be appropriate such as a less lethal option, which is used in this video or disengaging to await backup as suggested in Video 11. Police firearms training would be more comprehensive if it clarified that while

shooting is a definitive decision, choosing not to shoot should initiate a series of further decisions of positive actions to de-escalate and resolve volatile interactions.

Despite presenting shooting decisions as a yes or no choice, the manifest message of a teaching story in Video 1 appears to be a discrepant theme. A trainer states that “there’s no instruction manual when it comes to these life and death decisions” while a law enforcement official comments “there isn’t a specific, shoot or no shoot, this is when you can, this is when you can’t.” This appears to contradict my thesis that this video’s prime teaching narrative is “police firearms training prepares officers for difficult to resolve dangerous encounters”. It may be correct that the organization involved in the training in Video 1 do not have an “instruction manual” but parameters on shoot or no shoot decisions are documented in the law, ethical standards, and agency policy. If trainees are not provided with these parameters, they may take an inaccurate unintended message from this training that there are no limits on their shooting decision making. Additionally, from an adult learning perspective what are trainees expected to learn if trainers and officials cannot define the content of courses they offer.

Frequency of shootings.

While data might be unclear on course content, the need for officers to be trained was apparent in a teaching story that officers are making shooting decisions “more and more these days” (first presenter) and “in this locality we are seeing the real-life consequences of those scenarios” (second presenter). The manifest message of this teaching story that shootings by police are increasing is not supported by statistics on fatal shootings by law enforcement in the United States, quoted above (p. 4) which at around 1,000 is “remarkably stable by year” (Hirschfield, 2015). A clue to what might have prompted the remark and created this teaching story is provided by presenter two’s comment suggesting that a police shooting may have

occurred locally, or there is an increase in the number of nearby incidents, rather than evidence of a rise in national fatal shooting statistics.

While the public might be concerned that police are shooting more people when viewing Video 1, the language in this teaching story could produce a latent message to a law enforcement audience that normalizes shooting as a response to an incident. It might influence the thinking of officers, particularly recruits or inexperienced personnel, to think that shooting is a usual police response to confrontations. Also, the use of potentially de-humanizing language, use of the term ‘target’ to refer to an actor in a scenario on the training simulator, might normalize shooting and reduce the natural instinct of most people not to kill another human being. There is insufficient detail in the video to ascertain if language in these teaching stories normalizes shooting, but another teaching story, states that opening fire is a split-second decision.

Split-second.

The presenter’s comment that officers are trained to make ‘split-second’ decisions is echoed by a trainer who states that officers’ shooting decisions must be made in ‘milliseconds. The trainer referring to the role of training also states that “speeding up the decision-making process is critical.” It could be argued that the scenarios shown on the training simulator in this video demonstrate the need for officers to be able to make rapid decisions to respond to the aggressive actions of actors in the vignettes presented. The learning process that facilitates “speeding up the decision-making process” is not specified, nor is the nature of the ‘split second’ decision that needs to be taken explained. Familiarity with the type of decisions the scenarios on training simulators present to trainees might be a factor that contributes to speeding up their response to threats when using the system. Evidence that this learning is applied when officers perceive a threat in the operational setting is not apparent in video teaching stories.

A potential hidden message of teaching stories that use language such as ‘split second decisions’, is that officers learn that it is imperative at an incident to make a rapid decision to shoot or not. The potential for this language to influence an officer’s thinking to make a speedy and possibly inappropriate decision to shoot is not discussed in the video. Nor does the video explain how the learning process that facilitates rapid decisions is taught, or comment on any difference in the reaction speed of novice and more expert users of these systems. A possible reason for more experienced users of firearms training simulators to increase their reaction time to scenarios, is that they build a bank of options from which to make quick selections. It is not clear from the manifest messages of the training scenarios in Video 1 if trainees are learning to think their way out of incidents or only shoot their way out.

Threat assessment.

One operational narrative present in a Video 1 teaching story is the link between subject non-compliance with officer’s instructions and the likelihood of a police shooting. It is apparent in an interaction between trainer and trainee, who is encouraged to verbalize her perception of the scenario events. The trainee lists the following plot elements from the scenario that creates a teaching story that justifies her decision to shoot. The focus of all the points is the behavior of the suspect, who she describes: -

- a. pulled away from the officer
- b. had told people he is not going back to jail
- c. resisted arrest
- d. currently is resisting officers
- e. is going for a weapon
- f. did not comply with an officer’s commands

All these factors can be summed up in the term non-compliant subject, which is not discussed in the video as a contributing factor to the potential for an officer involved shooting. There is no discussion of options other than shooting in this teaching story.

Video 2: TV News Report of Police Training.

Video 2 is 2 minutes, 29 seconds in length. It is a TV news report posted on You Tube in 2014 and the version used in the study had been viewed 111,000+ times. The video is a segment prepared for a TV news program and shows law enforcement being trained in deadly force decision-making using a training simulator. A reporter narrates the video, which appears to be intended for a public audience a viewing group that may or may not include law enforcement personnel. Stories are told by a trainer, the trainees and the reporter as narrator and participant on the training simulator. The video presents a positive view of police deadly force training using visual, oral, and narrated stories.

Prime teaching narrative – training to resolve complex armed incidents.

The prime teaching narrative of this video is how detailed the training of officers to use deadly force is, and it shows the use of a simulator (described in Video 1 above) for these officers to practice decision-making skills. Scenarios replicate the type of incidents the group of officers in training might have to resolve and show the difficulty of making an appropriate decision during a confrontation. Officers in training, an attorney, and the reporter narrating the video undertake scenarios on the simulator. A teaching story explains that a complicating factor in training simulator scenarios is the speed required to respond, supporting the prime narrative the reporter describes as “seconds between the words and the shots.”

Shooting decision speed.

In Video 2 a teaching story that permeates the video and can be found in comments from three individuals in the presentation is the speed at which shooting decisions must be made. A law enforcement supervisor tells the story that the complex life changing decision to shoot or not must be taken in a “fraction of a second”. While an attorney who attempted a scenario on the training simulator said he was surprised by “how quickly you have to react to the situation” and the reporter observed that “things changed quickly” as the scenario she attempted switched from one in which there was no threat to one in which she opened fire. The manifest message of this teaching story is that police shooting decisions must be taken in a split-second, while the potential that this language might influence some officers to make a rushed unconsidered decision to open fire is not addressed, but this could be the latent message this story carries for some in law enforcement.

Threat Assessment.

The first training simulator scenario in Video 2 presents a teaching story with the potential to influence future officer behavior because it describes how the trainee assessed the threat posed by the actor in the scene. The video shows an officer facing the simulator screen with a laser pistol in his hand, pointed at the screen. The scene projected on the screen shows a corridor at the end of which is stood a large black actor holding a knife in his right-hand who starts walking towards the camera and hence reducing the apparent distance to the trainee. The trainee shouts a command to the actor to drop the knife, but the actor keeps coming and the officer fires several shots at the on-screen actor. The instructor tells the reporter that the trainee would be asked to explain why deadly force was used and the trainee tells the reporter that he fired because he perceived the man to be a threat since he:

- a. was approaching him
- b. coming closer
- c. with a knife in his hand.

The manifest message in this teaching story is that these three points justify the use of deadly force by the officer. The trainee did not include a fourth point that when he first sees the actor with the knife, he immediately issued the command “Don’t move, drop it. Drop the knife”, an instruction the actor ignored, instead he began to walk forward. Adding the failure of the actor to drop the knife when instructed strengthens the threat assessment and the potential justification of the use of deadly force. Without this fourth point, an unintended latent message in the story could be that any person walking towards an officer holding a knife can be shot. This could place a person attempting to pass a weapon they have found to an officer at risk if this story teaches that officers do not need to tell that person to drop the knife or stand still first. Neither did the trainee mention the 4th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which is claimed in this video to be the standard for making a shooting decision.

Administrative law.

The manifest message of this teaching story, according to the reporter, is that the trainer, who was introduced as an attorney and law enforcement official, must ensure trainees understand the 4th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. This states “The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized” (Congress.gov., 2020). While compliance with the 4th Amendment may be a legal requirement for law enforcement in the United States, it could be argued that basing use of

deadly force training on what appears to be a point of procedural law may miss some relevant teaching points.

The instructor comments specifically on the term “seizure” in the wording of the 4th Amendment and called shooting someone ‘seizing them permanently’, which appears an obtuse, legalistic way to describe shooting a person. The video does not include reference to trainees understanding reasonableness, proportionality or using lethal force as a last resort, all of which have featured in ruling from the United States Supreme Court. Nor does the video address the potential for a hidden message to be taken from the story by law enforcement, that the main or only requirement when making a shooting decision is an administrative process of compliance with the 4th Amendment to the United States Constitution.

Shooting in the back.

The firearms training simulator shown in Video 2 appears to be an early version, as the scenario seemed to be pre-set. This means that the simulator’s computer will continue to play the same scenario irrespective of the actions of the trainee. Later models of some simulators have a feature called branching which allows the computer to respond to some actions of trainees, such as firing at the on-screen actor, which delivers a different ending to the scenario. The scenario in the system used in this video played out even though the officer opened fire. The on-screen actor in the first scenario can be seen to turn around and run away as the last shots are fired by the trainee, which hit the suspect in the back.

Shooting subjects in the back also featured in the second scenario, in which the trainee is facing the simulator screen on which a rural roadway with bushes and trees on the verge can be seen. A white female with her hands in the air is stood on the road facing the trainee and slowly turning around. When she is fully turned away from the camera and the trainee, she runs away,

turns screen right into the undergrowth and disappears. The trainee shoots her in the back as she runs into the bushes. There is no contextual commentary offered about prior actions of the woman or the reason that would make shooting her in the back as she runs away justifiable or even legal. Without contextual information it could be argued that this simulated shooting was available.

However, the reporter explains after the scenario ends, that the manifest message of the stories shown on the simulator is that officer's "must justify their life, or somebody else's life is in danger when they use deadly force." She adds that policy says officers can "shoot when somebody has a weapon or if they are running away to hide and shoot back." Further she says that deadly force can also be used "when suspects aren't armed but they can still hurt or kill." The source of this policy information is not given but, unless the reporter has a law enforcement or legal background it is likely that it was provided by members of law enforcement featured in this video.

The story that officers can shoot somebody "if they are running away to hide and shoot back", appears a curious policy because it would require the officer to know the intention of the subject that is running away. Evidence is not apparent in the scenario to support the argument that the female suspect has a weapon or is about to hide in order to shoot back at the officer that would justify shooting her, even by the policy standard given by the reporter. There would appear to be a real risk that officers who viewed this teaching story could take from it a latent message that they can shoot people in the back if they just think they are going to hide and shoot back at them, a concept that appears to be ethically suspect and could be legally flawed.

Telling the audience that the manifest message in this teaching story is that "deadly force can also be used when suspects aren't armed but they can still hurt or kill", appears an equally

clumsy comment and likely to lead to confusion about the legality of the use of lethal force without detailed contextual information. The language of this comment is dubious because it fails to define ‘armed’, which some viewers may consider a reference to a firearm while others might think applies to other weapons such as knives. As almost anything can and has been used as a weapon to strike a person it appears that covert learning from the messages in this teaching story could justify shooting people possessing almost anything. Clearly, it is possible to imagine the limited circumstances where a person who does not have a gun or any other weapon could “still hurt or kill” but this language appears loose and unfocused.

This video is a film clip from a news program and a program editor primarily concerned with creating a discrete informative video to fit into a time slot might have excluded a more detailed explanation of the law, police policy and practice. However, they may have been keen to retain the visually impactful scenes of officers shooting at scenarios presented by the training simulator. This may have disconnected the visual story from a contextual narrative of the law in the United States, that deadly force can be used to remove a perceived threat to life even if the suspect is not armed in the conventional sense. If it is not a prerequisite for the suspect to be armed, the concern is that there is nothing in this video to show how the woman featured in the second scenario might kill or harm.

The potential latent learning in this video, if viewed by law enforcement personnel without the benefit of an instructor to add an explanation of the law, policy and practice, is that if confronted by a similar situation in real life, they might instinctively shoot a fleeing suspect believing that it is an appropriate, lawful and justified act. However, such a shooting could be inappropriate, unjustified, and illegal, as well as ethically unsupportable and a violation of police policy. Potentially it contravenes the United States Supreme Court ruling in *Tennessee v Garner*

that specifically removed the right of law enforcement to shoot fleeing suspects just because they are fleeing, and established that to be lawful a continuing threat to life is required (Tannenbaum, 1994; Garrett & Stoughton, 2017).

Small departments.

This video included a short teaching story from a law enforcement senior supervisor, with a manifest message that providing access to a firearms training simulator, “can make a huge difference in small departments” and although no evidence is provided to support this claim it may at face value be true. However, it is not explained why the training should be particularly helpful to small departments, nor if the manager believes that the same comment applies to large agencies. A latent message that might be generated by this comment in the mind of a law enforcement viewer of this video who is a member of a large department, is that this training is unlikely to improve that department. The story may also carry a latent message that small departments are less well trained than larger ones without providing any evidence in support, and this might also suggest to members of bigger departments that they are better trained than they actually are.

Non-compliant subject.

When the reporter takes a turn on the training simulator, the scenario she is presented with shows officers serving an arrest warrant on a man wanted for fraud. A uniformed officer is seen on the screen walking towards a man who is approaching a parked vehicle and appears to be unarmed. As the actor playing the officer reaches the man playing the suspect, the officer is pushed away and the suspect draws a gun, the reporter shoots the image of the actor playing the suspect. After the shooting, the reporter describes what she saw for the audience and tells them she fired when she did to protect her on-screen partner. After listening to her explanation, the

instructor tells the reporter that her shooting is justified. The manifest message of this teaching story appears to be that suspects who assault an arresting officer and draw a gun can be lawfully shot.

This would appear to be a lawful and justifiable action at point of contact with the subject as he approached his vehicle. However, a latent message carried by this story might be that non-compliance by a subject justifies the use of deadly force, without the nuanced understanding that a live trainer might make that it is non-compliance with a threat to life that justifies officers' use of deadly force. Also, questions are raised by this teaching story that could have been handled differently if better intelligence about this offender's access to a firearm was obtained as he is wanted for a non-violent crime. A canine could have been available as an alternative to shooting the suspect or officers could have used subterfuge to get close enough to the subject to physically overpower him. It is not that the simulator teaching story is incorrect rather that it keeps adult learning at a basic, rather than a more sophisticated level.

Shooting justification.

The last overt story in this video is comprised of comments made by the reporter referring to the necessity for law enforcement to be able to justify shooting a suspect. This manifest story is clearly factual and one purpose of an investigation into police shootings is to discover the circumstances and provide the evidence to allow decisions to be made about criminal or disciplinary misconduct by officers. However, it could be argued that there should also be a review of the circumstances to consider if the shooting was avoidable, which is not incompatible with it being legally justified. The intention of this review process is to identify changes to policy, practice or training that may contribute to reducing the likelihood of a shooting outcome to similar incidents in the future. An unfortunate latent message from a

concentration solely on whether a shooting was justified or not is that if it is deemed to be justified it might be considered that changes or improvements are not required. Reflecting on the consequences of decisions of other practitioners enables adults to learn vicariously from stories of experience.

Video 3: Fatal shooting of two police officers.

Video 3 is 6 minutes, 54 seconds in length and the version used in the study that was posted on You Tube in 2013 received 2,000+ views. A version of the video posted on You Tube in 2015 received 130,000+ views as the incident occurred over 20 years ago it is likely that there are other versions posted online. Video 3 is security camera footage of the murder of two police officers in which all participants were Spanish speakers. A description of the incident is a story in an autobiographical book about the author's law enforcement experiences, written after retirement. A description of the visual story was prepared for the study by the researcher without the benefit of an audio transcript. Using the author's version, the video and the study's visual description a co-constructed transcript was prepared, that is used for analysis in the study. The book appears to have been written for general readers who may or may not include members of law enforcement.

Prime teaching narrative – never turn your back.

According to the author of the book from which the transcript was obtained, the manifest message in this prime teaching narrative is “even if you believe a person is unarmed, never, ever, under any circumstances turn your back on that person” (author). The book states that the video is used extensively in recruit training and has been for many years. It shows the murder of two police officers who respond to a silent robbery in progress alarm at a store. Although the author tells teaching stories in the book, he self-describes as a manager, not a trainer, which might

explain why he did not highlight other learning stories in his description of the video. Subplot teaching stories are oral and visual, but there are no narrated stories in this video because oral and visual stories were obtained from different sources.

Hypervigilance.

The author implies in an oral teaching story, a manifest message that when officers go to arrest suspects they must be ready for any reaction; this story appears to highlight the need for officers to be vigilant. This seems to be an example of the ‘danger narrative’ that considers policing an inherently dangerous occupation. At face value it seems reasonable to advise officers to exercise caution when interacting with subjects who may react violently to the prospect of being arrested. It could be argued that if trainers link the concept of exercising care in conducting arrests with showing recruits film of the murder of two police officers making an arrest there is the potential to create a latent message that their practice must be hypervigilant. This level of caution might be counterproductive to appropriate decision making as a hypervigilance response can be “panic, confusion, freezing and/or performing an irrational act” (Martinelli, 2010, p. 36).

Telling teaching stories that advise officers conducting an arrest to be cautious may be appropriate to create a proper level of vigilance or watchfulness. There may be circumstances when intelligence about a subject would justify a high level of vigilance but showing graphic images of police murders might create a state of hypervigilance in recruits. It might be thought that an officer being more vigilant can only be beneficial to officer safety in a potential violent confrontation but that ignores one of the dangers of hypervigilance, some perceived dangers are not real (Healthline.com, 2020). There are some glimpses into the role training induced fear may have on the causative thinking of officer’s shooting decisions (Stoughton, 2014). Also, videos of violent assaults on officers used in training (Woods, 2019) may contribute to nervousness that

makes them more likely to open fire (Nieuwenhuys, Savelsbergh & Oudejans, 2011). This latent message in the oral teaching story attributed to learning from this video could be significant.

Failing to search.

An oral and visual teaching story in the video is the ease with which Robber 1 hides his gun inside his loose-fitting T-shirt under his left armpit immediately before officers enter the store. After officers have entered, the visual story shows that he is even able to wipe his face with his T-shirt without revealing the gun, a teaching point emphasized in the oral story of the author. A latent message in this teaching story could be that officers should search for weapons on arrival at a staff activated alarm incident. In this incident officers check the call by first asking the clerk and then Robber 1 if “everything is OK” (Officer1) and accepting their reply that it is. Only when Officer 2 finds Robber 2 in the rear room do they react; a law enforcement audience may consider that if Robber 1 had been searched on the officer’s arrival the outcome might have been different. This appears to contradict the manifest message of the need for vigilance described above, yet it appears to be a contributory factor in the murder of the two officers.

Surrendering to murderer.

Law enforcement reviewers of this video might conclude that one manifest message is the teaching story, that it is illogical for the second officer to ‘surrender’ to the man he has just watched murder his partner. This event is described in the book as follows “Robber One raises his gun and fires at him. The gun misfires, and Officer Two raises his hands in surrender. Without hesitating, Robber One cocks the weapon again and at point blank range shoots him. Officer Two falls to the ground. Standing over Officer Two, Robber One brutally executes him”. The visual story described in the study transcript suggests that this explanation is the narrative truth, rather than the historical truth, but the difference is irrelevant to the potential learning

point. A trainer concerned with officer safety might highlight these events as an overt teaching story, rather than leaving them to be a latent learning point that trainees might or might not pick up. It is acknowledged that the study does not know if trainers raised this teaching story with recruits, just that it did not feature as an issue in the book, and that a dramatic visual story is evident in the video.

Everyone is a threat.

At the end of his description of the events of that day, the author includes a teaching story with the manifest message that, “the moment an officer stops thinking of another individual as a potential threat, that person becomes far more dangerous.” This explicit message might be accurate, and the video could be used as an example of the consequences for officers of not thinking that Robber 1 is a potential threat. The manifest message appears to speak to potentially raising officer’s anxiety levels possibly making them hypervigilant, which may have undesirable consequences (see above). Accurate threat assessment is clearly an officer safety issue, however, if unnecessary caution changes how officers deal with the public, resulting in a more aggressive approach that prompts a similar reaction from the subject of police attention, it could increase the risk of assaults on officers. This is a difficult balance for trainers to achieve and why the stories they tell are so important to understand.

Video 4: Fatal shooting of a police officer on a vehicle stop.

Video 4 is 8 minutes, 46 seconds long. The version used in the study was posted on YouTube in 2016 and has received 8,000+ views. It was produced by an organization that provides online training for law enforcement. Two storytelling techniques are used, first. the instructor appears as a ‘talking head’, that is his head and shoulders are filmed as he faces the camera and talks to it. The second technique is the prime teaching narrative which is material taken from the

dashcam of the murdered officer's police vehicle. The producer of the video, how it is presented, and the language used indicates that the intended audience is law enforcement. The video addresses the bad habits of the murdered officer to alert the audience to the dangers posed by them. It is generally positive about police training but is critical of some behaviors shown on the officer's dashcam video and described by the narrator. Subplot teaching stories in this video that contribute to the prime teaching narrative are visual, oral, and narrated.

Prime teaching narrative – bad habits.

This video is primarily a tactical training lesson that identifies divergence from standard operating practices taught at the police academy with an increased risk to officers. It also addresses a command and control issue for supervisors, with a plea for them to perform a mentoring role to point out the bad habits they see that could affect officer safety. Using visual stories, the storyteller identifies what he considers to be bad habits seen in the video and adds an oral or narrated story to highlight what he attributes to be the consequences of the officer's bad habit. Uniquely in the study, the trainer raises as a teaching story the status of the dashcam film has in law enforcement training, a sure indication that he is talking to that community.

Video status.

The trainer introduces the presentation by stating that he will be using "one of the most famous videos in law enforcement training." Why the video is famous is not stated, but in addition to this freely available online training video, there were entries posted from other trainers who stated they used the dashcam video of this incident as a teaching story. Also, a commercial training company advertises videos for purchase by law enforcement, one deals with the murder, another is a reflection 20 years on and a third is an interview with the murderer who

is still in prison. The overt message of this story is that the incident in this video appears to have a significant profile in law enforcement training in the United States.

What is not documented is if the profile of this incident and the dashcam video of the murder is more impactful on the learning of law enforcement who view it because of the notoriety of the video. It could be argued that to start a training video by announcing that the material is ‘famous’ is a good teaching technique as it might gain the attention of the audience. While this should be considered a positive psychological process that supports learning, it is possible that raising the status of the incident in the mind of the audience could also have negative effects. These could include an increased perception that traffic stops are inherently dangerous which is challenged by some (Woods, 2019) or that viewing the video might increase officer anxiety, a known factor in officer’s shooting decisions that make it more likely that they will open fire (Nieuwenhuys, Savelsbergh & Oudejans, 2011).

Traffic or crime stops.

The visual story in the police vehicle dashcam material and the trainer’s oral story highlight the concept that stopping vehicles by law enforcement can be considered as either for a traffic infringement stop or a suspected crime stop. In this video an oral teaching story is provided by the trainer, that identifies the reason for the vehicle stop as excessive speed, a traffic law infringement. The trainer compliments the officer on his conduct of this aspect of the vehicle stop. The dashcam video is used to show when the officer completes the traffic law infringement inquiry and changes the focus to the investigation of possible criminal activity, the possession of illegal drugs. The trainer suggests that obtaining permission to search vehicles for drugs is the real motivation for this officer stopping vehicles, and that finding a traffic law infringement just provides a legal reason for him to stop vehicles.

Up to this point the driver has been cooperative and the officer's procedure is held by the trainer to be appropriate; however, once the driver realizes that the officer wants to search his vehicle, it is assumed that he realizes that the drugs he has in the car will be found. While the trainer highlights the point when the officer's focus changes from traffic law to the criminal law, an overt teaching story is not told that relates to officer safety. The literature describes a statistical difference in assaults on officers between conducting a traffic infringement stop and a crime investigation stop (Woods, 2019). The latent message that a law enforcement audience might take from this teaching story is that all traffic stops are equally dangerous, which may influence their behavior as they initiate stops. However, the literature indicates that a more appropriate threat assessment would include the reason for the vehicle stop, with crime stops or traffic stops, which develop into a crime stop being potentially more dangerous. Officer safety measures such as calling for back up could be referenced in vehicle stops teaching stories. However, the trainer attributes a different reason why the officer in this video is killed.

Willing to kill.

The trainer states the main reason the officer in this video is killed as “number one he stopped a subject with a pre-disposition willing to kill us.” The manifest message of this teaching story appears to be accurate, as every year there are murders of law enforcement, so clearly there are some people prepared to kill officers (Officer Down Memorial Page, 2020). There is no accurate data on the number of people ‘willing’ to kill officers, but a logical assumption is that it applies to a small proportion of the United States population or murders of law enforcement would be higher. The literature supports the trainer's comment, Kaminski (2004) found that the risks to officers' lives comes primarily from “conditions external to potential victims” (p. 1) which it appears would include the willingness of a sub-group of society to kill officers.

However, this should not be taken to mean that there is nothing officers can do to reduce this risk, and in-depth research of the circumstances surrounding fatal incidents suggests poor pre-assault tactics contributed to some attacks. There are two aspects to learning tactics acquiring knowledge about options to resolve incidents and physically practicing using these options. Clearly the most comprehensive learning will come from gaining knowledge and practicing using it, which is usually something that employing agencies would facilitate. Where employers do not offer opportunities to practice tactical options, officers can access at least the knowledge from informal sources such as the online police firearms training videos that are the subject of this study.

A potential latent message in the content of this teaching story is that policing is dangerous all the time because officers never know if the next interaction with a member of the public will be with someone who has “a pre-disposition willing to kill.” It seems appropriate for police training to establish an accurate level of the dangers of policing for trainees, but it could be considered counterproductive to cause unnecessary anxiety to officers with such statements. The danger narrative features in the policing cultural literature (Kurtz & Upton, 2017) but Woods (2019) makes the argument that this narrative is inaccurate and adversely influences how officers are trained to conduct vehicle stops implying that sometimes it increases the level of force used by law enforcement.

Level of force.

The trainer creates another teaching story with comments about the level of force that is used during an interaction between police and public when he states, “the subject is the one who decides the level of force, not us.” It could be argued that the ‘decision’ about the level of force used goes back and forth between the officer and a subject, as each perceives the intentions and

actions of the other and responds accordingly. What the two believe about the intentions of the other may be accurate or inaccurate; either way humans react to what they perceive is occurring which may or may not be what is happening. Social harmony is achieved because most of the time most people correctly perceive the intentions and actions of others, discord is often the result of misunderstanding intentions.

The instructor's statement would be true if the subject sets out to use force against the officer as in an ambush. It would clearly be incorrect in circumstances where officers set out to arrest a suspect as they would be the ones who have already decided to use a degree of force, albeit legal and appropriate, to take the subject into custody. The latent message of this language in the teaching story appears to absolve a law enforcement audience from any responsibility for the level of force that is used by either party to an interaction. It is possible that use of language that removes responsibility for the level of force, could create a 'they got what they deserved' thought pattern in trainees. If that thinking extends to the use of deadly force in an officer's mind, it is possible that it could make a shooting more likely because the subject 'decided' the level of force. A variable associated with an officer's decision to shoot is non-compliance by the subject of police attention likely because it effects the officer's perception of their control of the situation.

Situational control.

A manifest message of the trainer's narrative, that offenders dictate the level of force in incidents above is not fully explained but could be based on the concept that law enforcement only uses the force required to attain the lawful objective they are trying to achieve. This is a challengeable concept and appears to ignore the fact that vehicle stops are initiated by the officer and the manner of the initial approach to the occupants of the vehicle might contribute to the

level of force that is used during the incident. However, law enforcement is trained that it is critical to officer safety for them to gain and maintain situational control of any interaction with the public. This would appear to conflict with the message of this instructor's teaching story that it is the subject who is in control of the level of force they use, not them.

A latent content of this story is the potential that officers might perceive a psychological loss of control when told that they are not in control of the level of force during an interaction with the public. Currently the consequences of this potential mental conflict are not in the literature, however, if trainees are apprehensive as already stated above the literature suggests that anxious officers are more likely to shoot (Nieuwenhuys, Savelsbergh & Oudejans, 2011). Could the conflict between these two teaching stories contribute to officer-involved shootings in the United States and conversely could resolving this teaching story conflict contribute to a reduction in that number?

Video 5: Ballistic penetration demonstration.

Video 5 is 3 minutes, 10 seconds long presentation on the You Tube platform. Although it seems to have also been posted on a local online news website, the version used in the study had been viewed 75,000+ times. The video appears to show a lesson to police academy trainees conducted on a police firearms range, with the trainer also acting as the narrator for an audience beyond the teaching site. The content is a series of demonstrations of shots being fired at different materials to show the degree to which the objects shot at resist penetration by bullets or debris. The storyteller is a police trainer who presents a positive view of the training given to law enforcement and the objectives of the use of deadly force training.

Prime teaching narrative – proper use of cover and concealment.

The prime teaching narrative of this video is described as “to explain to the students how to use proper cover and concealment” (police trainer who presents the video). It appears from the trainer’s language, the detailed explanation of police procedures, the production style, and the posting of the video on a news website that the public is one intended audience. As filming takes place on a firearms range with a police academy class being shown the dangers of inappropriate use of cover and the stated prime teaching narrative the video is apparent that it is also intended for a law enforcement audience. The teaching stories in this video are visual, oral, and narrated.

Cover from fire.

The instructor states that the lesson filmed is intended to show trainees “how to use proper cover and concealment.” Cover and concealment are not defined other than giving the rationale for the lesson to be so that “during active shooter situations and shooting situations they need to understand what they can get behind to provide cover to themselves and innocent people” (trainer). The term cover usually refers to cover from fire specifically having bullet resistant materials between you and a shooter, suggesting a level of safety higher than being exposed to gunfire. Hiding from a shooter behind non-bullet resistant materials is often called ‘concealment’ generally referring to simply being visually obscured from a shooter.

The difference between the concepts is complex because a bullet’s penetrating power is dependent on the bullet’s configuration, the charge placed behind it, the weapon it is fired from, the material it strikes and the angle at which it strikes an object. Some bullets are designed to penetrate body armor, glass windows or common building materials, although some require the bullet to strike at a right angle to be most effective. Further complication comes from the visual appearance of some materials that appear to offer cover from fire but are manufactured and have

a reduced or varying density. Columns in public places that appear to be made of stone can be hollow rings of concrete that offer dramatically reduced levels of protection from gunfire because they lack the volume of material to stop a bullet.

To clarify this complex concept, the trainer chose to create powerful visual and spoken teaching stories to facilitate the learning of this group of adult learners. A visual story in this video that is likely to be remembered is the demonstration of concrete splinters embedded in the wooden target that represented an officer taking cover behind concrete blocks. The visual story is more powerful than an oral story told by a trainer that described what could happen. A potential unhelpful hidden message that this teaching story might convey is that it might make officers hesitate in an exposed position as they search for the best cover. It could be argued that extending the teaching story to include that cover from view is better than no cover and moving out of the line of fire is the imperative in an active shooter incident.

Learning by seeing.

Demonstration is a powerful teaching technique and the trainer in this video is clearly aware of this and arranges to show his police audience the practical application of his oral story on a firing range. The audience appears to change when he tells the story of the planning undertaken by himself and his police department to provide the materials to carry out the demonstration, rather than just telling trainees what happens when shots are fired at the materials chosen. This teaching story appears directed to an audience away from the police academy classroom to those who might not appreciate the preparation involved in teaching the academy class on the range. In this video the trainer who presents it moves between teaching stories that address each of the audiences, police and public.

Wound cavity.

At the extreme end of the emotional impact of a visual teaching story influencing actions rather than a cognitive response, the demonstration of the wound cavity that a bullet produces in the human body might be at the top. A block of a thick gel is traditionally used to graphically show what happens when a bullet enters flesh. The instructor arranges for a shot to be fired at a gel block showing the bullet size entry hole and the wider hollow as the power of the projectile's shock wave causes extensive damage. The instructor referring to the wound cavity in the ballistic gel states, "That's what's happening inside your body if you get shot". This narrated teaching story could be very impactful as it likely triggers human survival instincts, but it could be argued that it is unnecessary to have such a graphic example just to make the point that trainees should try not to be shot. An unintended message of this teaching story could be to feed into the hypervigilant narrative that can have undesirable consequences (discussed above).

Level of force.

In the last paragraph of the transcript of this video the trainer refers to the role firearms training has in the level of force used during interactions between the police and the public. The teaching story is the need for officers to always make appropriate decisions, use deadly force only when absolutely necessary and avoid injury to innocent people. This narrative is delivered as an oral story without any visual re-enforcement, although the video shows officers looking at the door and other items shot at earlier during the demonstrations. The trainer closes this video by articulating a legal, ethical, and practical description of the intention of firearms training in that police department.

Video 6: incapacitation and ballistic knowledge.

Video 6 is a 14 minute, 48 second monologue by a self-defined firearms trainer sitting in the driver's seat of a vehicle speaking to a camera that appears to be placed on the vehicle's dashboard. Information on the video indicates that this was originally a live streamed, podcast style presentation posted on You Tube in 2017; the version used in the study had been viewed 17,904 times. The video discusses ballistics, the significance of shot placement and tactical consequences of the interaction of these two concepts. The style of the video, the highly technical content of the material, the fact that the narrator is a self-declared firearms trainer and the language used indicates that this video is intended for a law enforcement audience. The video is both positive about police firearms training and critical of the knowledge levels of some viewers of previous podcasts. All the stories are oral spoken by the storyteller to the camera to explain the prime teaching narrative. Visual stories are restricted to the facial expressions and hand gestures of the trainer used to emphasize or explain the oral story.

Prime teaching narrative – headshots are no guarantee.

The manifest message of the prime teaching narrative of this video is that it is incorrect to expect a bullet wound to an attacker's head to always produce instantaneous incapacitation. This is an objective of the use of firearms by police because it immediately removes the threat posed by the suspect. The trainer discusses ballistics, using teaching stories that address the point of aim taught to officers and the circumstances of fatal and non-fatal head wounds in people shot in some neighborhoods. In these incidents police are not involved in the shooting but are dealing with the aftermath including making the area safe for the arrival of medical help.

Point of aim.

A teaching story the trainer tells discusses the term point of aim, which means exactly what it says, it is where a person firing a gun points or aims the weapon. Because police firearms training assumes that law enforcement is responding to a threat to life when they open fire, they are usually trained to aim at the central nervous system to achieve instant incapacitation of the individual posing the threat. During training, wooden boards with a human shape outlined on paper fixed to the board are used. The usual point of aim taken by a trainee is the center of the head or the middle of the chest. This training practice is designed to develop officers shooting accuracy and provide the greatest chance of achieving instant incapacitation if they open fire in a life-threatening incident.

The manifest message of this story, that the point of aim it describes is the only way to achieve instant incapacitation is probably medically correct. A concern not addressed in this teaching story is the potential that training law enforcement to aim at the center of the head or middle of the chest often causes the death of the subject. To avoid an unintended latent message from this teaching story that the objective in shooting is to cause the death of the individual, it might be beneficial to emphasize that officers should stop shooting once incapacitation is achieved. A potential logical question posed is, do officers continue shooting even after incapacitation is achieved because of how they have been trained? The thinking of officers might be clarified by the trainer's explanation of where confusion about the result of head shots might have come from.

Rifle bullet ballistics.

The trainer develops the point of aim teaching story to set the parameters of the discussion by describing the role of a military sniper. He explains that a soldier is usually armed

with a high caliber rifle that has a bullet with a powerful charge to drive it accurately over a considerable distance. The energy in the bullet is so great that if it hits an enemy soldier in the head it usually causes catastrophic damage that results in instant incapacitation. The manifest message of this teaching story appears to be that some officers who responded to the trainer's previous video were confusing the effects of a military caliber rifle shot to the head with lower powered handgun rounds. The trainer graphically describes the level of damage to the human head that high caliber military bullets can cause, before, changing the teaching story to address the lethality of lower caliber handgun rounds.

Low caliber lethality.

The trainer tells a teaching story with the manifest message that while lower powered bullets fired from handguns may not produce instant incapacitation, they can still be lethal. To clarify he points out the lethality of the .22 bullet, a small low powered projectile, that is demonstrated by a significant number of people in the United States who die after they are shot in the head with this size of bullet. However, the trainer states that statistics require caveats regarding the circumstances of the shootings, one being the availability of medical treatment for victims. The trainer continues the teaching story with an example of one set of circumstances that might delay medical treatment reaching a victim. He explains that delayed medical treatment is "very common in bad neighborhoods because they will be delayed because the police have to get there and secure the scene for the ambulance to come in" (trainer Video 6). The manifest message of this or any other delay in medical treatment is that it can contribute to deaths from being struck in the head or chest by small caliber low powered bullets. This the trainer claims is part of the confusion in the minds of some viewers of previous videos about the power of head shots with low caliber bullets.

Low caliber incapacitation.

The trainer tells a teaching story that compares the lethality of small caliber low powered bullets with the ability of this round to achieve the instant incapacitation desired in officer involved shootings. The manifest message of this teaching story claims that in the United States there are many people who are shot with .22 bullets, but who neither die nor are deterred from the action that caused someone to shoot them. The death of shot subjects is not an objective of police action; rather it is to stop them doing what prompted police to open fire. The manifest message of this teaching story is that using this small caliber, low powered bullet is ineffective for police use.

Police calibers.

The trainer develops a teaching story with a manifest message that extends the failure of the .22 bullet to produce instant incapacitation to other calibers of handgun carried for personal protection or police use. A latent message in this teaching story is that officers should not choose to carry a low powered handgun but instead should opt for bigger caliber weapons with as high-powered bullet configuration as possible. Only if they are required by the employing agency to carry a lower powered weapon should they do so, because bigger calibers have more potential to achieve instant incapacitation. The trainer does not specify the caliber of firearm that he recommends officers' carry.

Shot placement.

As part of his explanation of the interaction of where an officer aims his handgun and the type of weapon being carried, the trainer tells a teaching story about shot placement when trying to achieve instant incapacitation. The manifest message of this story is that unless shots are placed with great accuracy they will be ineffective because the skull is not flat "so if you don't

hit dead center, square, it's gonna bounce off"(trainer Video 6). The trainer emphasizes this point with a visual story showing the use of his hands, holding his left palm vertical and setting the fingers of his right hand horizontal at an apparent 90° angle. Developing this teaching story, he states that some advocate hitting the 'T zone', which he describes as "the triangle between the tip of the nose and the edge of the ears" (trainer). The trainer again supports his oral story with a visual story by indicating on his face the area he is referring to with his hands.

The trainer expands the teaching story with a manifest message that acknowledges the difficulty in firing a shot that hits the head at an angle to penetrate the skull with any caliber of bullet fired from a handgun. Pointing out that this objective is made more difficult in a volatile incident where both the officer and the suspect are moving, using cover, and the subject is not facing fully towards the officer. The trainer reminds the audience that "gun fights don't happen straight on like with a paper target", making it less likely that a suspect's head would be exposed to a shot fired at 90° to the skull. A latent message in this story might be for officers to realize that the firearms training provided to them is unrealistic, a message reinforced by the lack of statistical evidence that learning on the firing range transfers to shooting accuracy in operational incidents.

Video games.

One teaching story told by the trainer suggests that the audience might have gained the idea that a shot to the head is always incapacitating from video games. He describes characters hit in the head during video games being instantly removed from the game. Although no evidence is produced to support his comment the trainer believes that this might have contributed to officers thinking that the same process works with a human adversary. The manifest message of this teaching story is that playing video games influences officers thinking about the power of

handgun ammunition. Even more concerning than the thought that officers may be learning tactics from playing video games is that it appears the manifest messages learned from video games are technically flawed.

Academic support.

A teaching story told at several points in the video asserts that there is academic support for claims made in this video that would be posted at the end, however, links to academic studies were not apparent on the version used in the study. It is probable that support for some or all the claims made in the teaching stories in this video can be found in the literature, but that is not an issue for this study. What is of interest to this study is that claims of academic support for the teaching stories in the video is itself, a narrative with a latent message designed to influence an audience to accept the teaching stories told. This is an example of a teaching story that is not focused on developing the prime teaching narrative but rather to increase the believability of that narrative.

As this is a narrative study, it is not concerned in the accuracy of a story but rather the potential role it might play in influencing the thinking and actions of law enforcement audience members. The teaching stories in this narrative collectively contribute to explaining the complex ballistics and training concepts of the topic of the prime teaching narrative. I do not suggest that links were not provided on the original podcast, and the fact that this video was in response to posting to a previous video indicates that the presenter is engaged in a back and forth with members of the audience. Collectively the narratives in this video tell a compelling story to explain the ballistics issues with instant incapacitation and shots to the head.

Video 7: Cover and concealment.

Video 7 is 2 minutes, 37 seconds in length and was posted on the website of a police training organization; however, it is produced by a different police training agency and there is no indication of the number of viewings on the video. The storyteller is a self-proclaimed risk management expert who stands facing the camera and talks to it about cover and concealment. The platform it is posted on, the declared role of the organization that produced it and the language used indicates that the video is intended for a law enforcement audience. The video is critical about the knowledge levels of some in law enforcement but is positive about police firearms training. All the stories are oral and spoken by the narrator.

Prime teaching narrative- difference between cover and concealment.

The manifest message in the prime teaching story is that understanding the difference between cover and concealment is a vital officer safety issue for law enforcement. The trainer gives a description of the terms as “Cover stops bullets, concealment doesn’t.” The central point of the teaching story is a simple assertion that “concealment stops someone seeing you” while “cover hides and protects you.” However, he then wraps this simple message in a series of subplot teaching stories to explain the boundaries of these concepts, which is complicated by the range of bullets, the weapons to fire them and the range of materials that can stop the bullets that law enforcement might encounter.

Problem statement.

The manifest message of the problem statement teaching story is that “there are too many cops out there that don’t get the difference”, between cover and concealment, or that it is “often ignored or just plain forgotten” (presenter). No evidence from the literature is provided to support either contention. While the presenter could be correct in both statements, what matters

for this narrative study is the significance of the story, to his audience. Logically, it would seem relevant for law enforcement to know the difference between being hidden from view and protected from incoming bullets.

A latent message that this teaching story may have for the analysis of officer involved shootings is the potential that a lack of knowledge about materials that provide ballistic protection may place officers at risk. The possible importance of this could be that because they place themselves at risk, officers then must resort to deadly force to protect their life. While it might be unlikely that an officer would intentionally place themselves at risk of being shot, an unintentional exposure could have the same result. Learning from this latent message should extend to police trainers and managers who should ensure that trainees understand the concepts in this teaching story as a matter of officer safety. However, the presenter explains that some locations are only relatively safe.

Relative protection.

A significant part of the manifest messages in the teaching stories that support the prime narrative above, describe ballistic information on the protection from gunfire offered by a variety of structures that officers might select to get behind when under fire. One teaching story cautions an audience that “the term protection here is very relative” (presenter) giving a manifest message that selecting a ‘safe’ place to take cover is not straightforward. The presenter develops this teaching story with examples of materials that stop handgun bullets, such as police body armor or brick walls that are unlikely to stop bullets fired from rifles. While the intention of this video appears to be informing or reminding officers of the difference between concealment and cover, describing the difficulty in selecting cover might have an unintended latent message for officers.

Despite stating that knowing the difference between these concepts “isn’t a difficult idea to grasp” the presenter warns officers of materials, street furniture and other items officers might use for cover that may not stop some bullets. Teaching stories in this video have the potential to unnerve trainees who may consider that there are few places in the policing environment in which they work where they can get protection from fire. While it can be argued that telling officers viewing this teaching story that “understanding the whole concept can save your life” is appropriate officer safety advice, it could also increase their fear of attack. This could be a latent teaching story message that might increase the risk of an officer shooting because they are fearful, which has been suggested as the main reason officers open fire (Stoughton, 2014).

Presenter’s status.

The presenter in this video appears to be knowledgeable about this subject matter and presents a logical argument explained by teaching stories to make his case. It is not apparent in the video if the presenter has any practical policing experience or qualifications in ballistics on which he based his presentation. It is of course possible his subject expertise was acquired by subject specific study and field experience, a recognized route to becoming expert in a subject. It could be argued that a contribution from a risk management expert to policing scientific and tactical issues highlights the multi discipline nature of law enforcement, which has many stakeholders and attracts many perspectives. A latent message that this video might deliver to viewing officers is that adopting the advice of a risk management expert might reduce the risk they face from gunfire. Alternatively, they may prefer to seek the advice of a presenter who self-describes as a police firearms trainer or law enforcement professional. The storyteller’s status is known to influence police audiences particularly in social storytelling situations (Van Hulst, 2013).

Video 8: Active shooter and fatal shooting of two police officers.

Video 8 is an 11 minute, 12 second production by or on behalf of the Police Department in a major city in the Western United States. It was posted on You Tube in 2015 and has been viewed 2,012,619 times. The video documents the response to an active shooter situation in a large supermarket that began with the murder of two police officers at a nearby location. The video appears to have been professionally produced for a mixed law enforcement and general public audience by the language used and nature of the presentation, the version used in the study had a category marker of 'Education' but did not clarify the statement. The video has the benefit of describing the experiences of a group of practitioners in their own words, and purports to be an accurate narrative of the events, at least from the perspective of the storytellers.

The story is narrated by a senior supervisor who details the response to the incident. The teaching stories are visual, oral, and narrated as nine responding officers contribute commentary describing their contribution to resolving the incident, often talking as security camera footage shows what they are describing. The video is positive about how the officers put their training and experience into action. There is no criticism of officers, their training, or actions in the video. The production of this video creates teaching stories in the thoughts and actions of all participants. The content of this video format is different to others in the study because there is more than one storyteller, who tell more than one teaching story linked by contributions from a narrator who progresses the prime teaching narrative.

Prime teaching narrative- training and experience counts.

The prime teaching narrative tells the story that a group of officers working together, combining their training and experience, can rescue community members from danger. The video shows how this group of officers removed the threat to the lives of public and police posed

by active shooters in a crowded public space. Teaching stories that support the narrative are mainly told in the first person by each participant. The prime narrative is narrated by a senior supervisor who appears to not to have been at the scene during the incident but may have been in control of the deployment of officers. Teaching stories are visual, oral, and narrated in this video.

Setting the scene.

Visually the video begins with the narrator, a female senior supervisor standing in police uniform in front of a line of marked police vehicles in what appears to be a police parking lot. Her first comment delivered to camera is a personal recollection of the day the incident occurred, “I remember, the sun was shining, it was warm out, and” at this point the title page ‘Officer Ambush’ flashes onto the screen. The commentary left hanging by the narrator’s ‘and’ at the end of her introductory sentence continues with “the call comes out that there are shots fired at a pizza store”. The visual impact of the peaceful scene of the narrator stood in front of a line of police vehicles is reinforced by an oral story about the weather on the day in question both stories are shattered by the narrator reporting the shots fired call. This is a very effective opening to the narrative in the video and appears to have benefitted from the work of media professionals in setting the scene, engaging the audience in the emotion of the event and humanizing policing, which was probably intended for a non-police audience.

The first responding officer takes up the scene setting by describing the distance he was from the location of the incident when the shots fired call was put over the radio. The manifest message of his story as he travelled to the scene was that all he knew was that there could be two victims shot in the pizza store. There is nothing in the teaching stories at this point in the video to indicate that the officer knew that the victims were police officers. A latent message of this simple story is that when police respond to incidents, even serious ones such as shots fired, they

often only have limited information. This narrative frequently becomes a critical component in the justification of the use of force by law enforcement as post incident acquired knowledge of the on-scene circumstances can challenge the basis for the use of force.

The level of information officers had or should have had before arriving on the scene of an incident can be difficult to ascertain, however, it can be argued that it is a critical issue because it influences the officer's pre-arrival decision-making that in turn may contribute to a decision to shoot because they believe their life is at risk. A latent message in this teaching story is that officers should be provided with as much information as possible about the incident they are attending. Personnel receiving emergency calls from the public should be trained to interrogate informants for relevant information and keep them on the line if possible, for updates of events at the scene, it is unclear in the video if more intelligence was available to police responders before they arrived at the scene. As stories can motivate action, the story first responders have about volatile incidents should be as accurate and current as possible. What responding officers knew and what they did as they arrived at the scene, they describe in personal vignettes that become teaching stories.

Personal vignettes.

Personal vignettes from responding officers are featured throughout this video, often delivered as a narrated teaching story while the visual story captured from security cameras showing officer's actions plays out on the screen. Each anecdote describes an experience that becomes a teaching story. Most develop the prime narrative while others explain a point the individual responders are trying to make as the storyteller of a part of the overall incident. The first officer to arrive on scene captures the distress and fear of some members of the public who appear to have witnessed the escape of those responsible for the murder of the officers in the

pizzeria. The full extent of what community members at the scene knew about He describes running in the direction indicated by witnesses towards the supermarket and passing people who “were standing and screaming and pointing south.” The overt message of these stories registers that community members were horrified, frightened and keen to help law enforcement find the perpetrators.

A latent message in this vignette is that while the public shelter in place or flee the area, they have an expectation that law enforcement will run towards danger. It could be argued that this expectation is demonstrated by the number of members of the public that indicated the direction that the offenders had gone. The corollary to this expectation of the public is that law enforcement accept that their role is to run towards danger to protect the public, which is why officers are armed and trained in the use of firearms. This exemplifies the social contract that should exist between law enforcement and the community they serve, in which police protect the public and in return the public support policing actions. The overt and concealed messages in this video are supportive of police, which should be expected from a professionally produced video from the police department involved in an incident

Encountering the public.

The number of people in the supermarket when the offenders ran in is not described in the video. However, one teaching story describes one of the officers involved in searching the supermarket aisles for the offenders discovering a group of people that could have included the suspects. At the time he was unaware of the suspects’ identity or descriptions, so they could have been hiding among the group to ambush him as they had ambushed the officers in the pizza store. He relives the moment of contact “as I confront them, I show them and I tell them, let me see your hands and you know I could see the fear of God in these people.” Realizing the suspects

are not in this group the officer reassures them, tells them he will get them out but for now they must keep quiet and shelter in place.

The perception of the messages of this teaching story may appear to be different to different audiences. The public hearing the description of this encounter may view the manifest message as a description of the fear and horror of being caught up in an active shooter incident. However, a law enforcement audience may relate to the experience of the officer confronting a group of people that may include suspects who have just murdered two people. The message law enforcement might take from this story is the danger of an error in differentiating innocent people from armed suspects. Officers know if they get it wrong, they might shoot an innocent person or be shot themselves if they hesitate as they evaluate the members of this group.

Surprise suspect.

A responding officer tells a teaching story that when he arrived at the rear door of the supermarket a worker said “he’s killing everybody”, and with these words the worker leads the officer into the store and indicates where the suspect was. Because the worker said, “he’s killing everybody”, when referring to the person inside the store the responding officer expected to confront an armed male suspect. Instead, he sees a woman with a shopping cart and describes the questions that rush through his mind “Why is this woman standing there? Why is she not leaving? Why is she not running? Why is she still shopping?” The fleeting moment of confusion that the presence of this woman causes in the officer’s mind as he searches for the ‘he’ that is ‘killing everyone’, could have cost his life. A manifest message of this story is the significance of the language used to brief the officer about the circumstances of an incident particularly when it contributes to deadly force actions by law enforcement.

It should be noted that the worker did not lie to the officer. There was an armed male in the store, and it is possible that in the confusion of the incident the worker was unaware of the armed female accomplice. However, deeper consideration of messages in this interaction expose a significant learning point about stories that provide information on which law enforcement rely as they act. Such stories referred to in Chapter Two of this study are a regular feature of policing and prompt officers to make inquiries, take statements (in the form of a story), issue tickets for minor infractions or make arrests in more serious cases. There are instances of innocently provided inaccurate information, such as alleging a person has a gun, being a constituent part of an officer's deadly force decision-making. Fortunately, in this instance the officer responds appropriately to the anomalies between the information and the scene before him.

Either because of his firearms training, operational experience or both the officer sees the woman's left hand begin to raise up and realizes she is holding a gun. Mentally he grasped that there must be two offenders and that the second, to that point unknown suspect was confronting him. He tells the audience that he had already pointed his gun past this woman in anticipation of engaging a male suspect who he expected to be further down the aisle. The latent message of this story that a law enforcement audience might appreciate is how police firearms training kicks in when officers are confronted by life threatening incidents. Other viewers might consider the message tells of the dangers of policing.

Sense of direction shooting.

This teaching story includes the officer's description of trying to regain a point of aim with his weapon (where he points his gun) on the female suspect to be able to return fire as she begins to shoot at him. It is probable that during firearms training the officer had been taught and had practiced a technique known as sense of direction shooting. This technique allows an aim on

a hostile subject to be acquired quickly by looking at them, bringing the weapon up until it breaks the line of sight of the firer and then discharging several shoots. The description given by the officer in this video is consistent with him instinctively using this technique to overcome the disadvantage of the suspect already aiming a gun at the officer and opening fire.

A message from this teaching story that sense of direction shooting probably saved the officers life would only be relevant to those with knowledge of this shooting technique. This knowledge would most likely be more prevalent among law enforcement than the public. The officer describes an exchange of shots that leaves him unsure if he has hit her and in the heat of the moment, he was also unsure if he had been hit. Before he can further engage the female suspect he sees the male suspect he was expecting running towards him and he moves out of the line of fire. He is unaware that he has removed the threat posed by the female suspect.

De-escalation.

The decision to disengage and make a tactical withdrawal after an exchange of gunfire by the officer who was confronted by the female suspect had the effect of temporary de-escalating the incident. Not hearing any members of the public in distress, he took the decision as the male suspect ran to assist his accomplice and he was “not hearing any of the gun shots... not hearing any screaming, not seeing anyone running around” he backed off from the gunfight. He also knew that without backup he could not “stay in a two on one battle and succeed”, at the time he did not know that he had hit the female suspect. A positive latent message in this teaching story is that it is acceptable and practical for officers to disengage even after exchanges of gunfire if danger to the public or police is not increased by the action. If they can do so safely it can stop shots being fired by both police and suspects thus reducing the likelihood of anyone being shot.

Cameras, intelligence, and control.

Throughout this video officers explain the tactical decisions they made that might be interesting information to a general audience and become teaching stories for law enforcement viewers. An example of an explanation of a tactical decision comes from an officer who had previous experience of this supermarket and was aware that it had a control room where the security cameras are monitored and controlled. He decides to immediately head to this location so he can use the security cameras to find the suspects, pass their location to other officers and coordinate the search of the supermarket. This he believed would enable officers to contain the offenders and remove the threat they pose to the public and officers alike. Containment is a tactic of isolating suspects from the public, preventing their escape and resolving the incident by arrest or other means. It is a tactic intended to stabilize situations and provide the time to achieve the most desirable and peaceful outcome. The manifest message of this story is that information and control can contribute to resolving violent confrontations as safely as possible.

Search to contact.

A law enforcement audience would recognize a manifest message in the stories told by responding officers of the use of a tactical option known as search to contact. This tactical decision was made by officers who arrived at the same time but who split up as they entered the supermarket to take different aisles in search of the suspects. This tactic speeds up the rate at which areas are searched for suspects and when contact is made, suspects can be contained (see above) or the threat they pose removed by other means. In the process of searching for suspects officers can rescue members of the public trapped by the shooting. As the video does not detail the firearms or active shooter training these officers had received it, is not possible to know if they had practiced search to contact techniques. There is an indication that they had trained in the

tactic in comments of the narrator, that she was proud of how officers conducted themselves and she mentioned “from training to the way they conducted themselves” (the narrator was a senior supervisor).

Incident resolution.

The combination of the dispositions that officers adopted as they arrived (see above) and the use of the security cameras to locate the suspects (described above) in the store allowed officers to deploy to locate and contain them. One officer provides a teaching story in which he describes arriving at a doorway as the male suspect fires some shots. He backed into the doorway for safety, but while he cannot see the suspect, he listens and hears the suspect’s shopping cart roll and hit the sides of the aisle. Using this audio information, he realizes that the suspect must be exposed and side steps to gain a view of the suspect but in a position to take the opportunity to open fire if necessary.

As he sidesteps into the line of fire the suspect picks up his gun and fires at the officer who sees that his optical sight marker is on the subject’s chest, so he fires one shot. A colleague pulled him back into cover and although he did not know it at the time, by this act he had ended the incident. Shortly after firing the shot the situation was clarified over the radio by the officers in the control room who could see both subjects were down and no longer posed a threat. The manifest message of this story notes the bravery of the officer and his willingness to place himself at risk to resolve an active shooter incident.

Emotional aftermath.

The last section of the video is a teaching story concerned with the emotional aftermath of the incident for the narrator and the responding officers. The manifest message of the story is that it provides closure to the narrative of the events of that day and gives officers involved in the

response an opportunity to honor their fallen colleagues. A latent message is that police officers are human and are affected by the same things members of other occupations feel, including the sadness at the workplace death of colleagues. It could become a powerful teaching story in the right situation, and it re-enforces that this video is produced by the police and hence shows the police in the best light.

Video 9: Danger of hesitation when attacked.

Video 9 is 4 minutes and 24 seconds in length and was posted on the website of the police training company that produced it in 2018. The number of views is not registered on the video. This video highlights the danger to officers if they hesitate before using appropriate force when it is required to resolve a situation and being injured as a result. The platform it is posted on, the content of the video and the language used indicates that law enforcement is the intended audience. The storyteller is a trainer who speaks to camera and introduces a dashcam video of an arrest that required physical force, using this as his teaching story he discusses his belief that officers should fight ferociously when attacked. Teaching stories are oral, visual, and narrated.

Prime teaching narrative – need for fighting spirit.

The presenter, who describes himself as a police trainer, states that one issue he finds difficult to convey is “the importance of having a fighting spirit when you are under attack”, to recruits that have been taught a technique they can use to protect themselves. The manifest message in the prime teaching narrative of this video is that if attacked officers should react immediately and with all the force they can muster. The latent message is that if officers do not do this they will be hurt or even killed. The trainer sets the scene with a teaching story that states what he considers to be the problem that the video addresses.

Describing the problem.

The trainer begins the video with a teaching story that states the problem that is the motivation to produce the video. He states that currently a frequently discussed topic is the reluctance of officers to immediately defend themselves when attacked. To support his claim, he points to the existence of videos showing officers hesitating to defend themselves against deadly or physical force and that “you often see them get hurt or injured.” The trainer clearly addressing his remarks to law enforcement tells them that his objective in this video is to get them to “defend yourself effectively.” He demonstrates his awareness that promoting a robust use of force by police is problematic in the current environment by explaining that when he speaks to non-police audiences he tells them that physical force “is going to be violent and it needs to be otherwise you simply can’t gain control over something.” The sensitivity of this subject is foreshadowed in the abstract written under the title on the version used in the study.

Backstory.

This video had a short abstract written under the title that described the content of the video and provided the backstory that was instrumental in the decision to produce the video. The start of the problem of “deadly hesitation” described above is attributed in the backstory to an officer involved shooting incident that had occurred some years before in the central United States. After the shooting there was considerable community unrest, extensive investigation of the officer and the police department, as well as national campaigns for police reform and reduction in the use of force. The trainer suggests that this was the catalyst for the deadly hesitation that is the subject of this video.

The manifest message of this written teaching story is that because of the aftermath of this incident, officers were reluctant to use force even when it was justified for self-defense. The

realization of this reluctance of officers to use force, termed “deadly hesitation” in the video, caused “a great deal of concern in the law enforcement community” according to the backstory in the abstract. The city in which the officer involved shooting incident occurred is given in the abstract and it is likely that a law enforcement audience, and many non-police viewers would recall the incident and its aftermath. To show the need for officers to respond immediately to an attack, the narrator in this video used a police vehicle dashcam video of an assault on an officer from a city in the north of the United States.

Dashcam video.

The teaching story the trainer presenting the video introduces is police vehicle dashcam film of an officer attempting to arrest a suspect during a felony vehicle stop. The teaching story dashcam video shows a vehicle stopped in front of the police vehicle and an officer stood next to the open driver’s door. The driver steps out of the vehicle, turns his back to the officer and the officer attempts to place handcuffs on the driver when the driver suddenly spins around and fights with the officer. The officer grapples with the driver as he tries to regain control of him, and both fall onto the ground fighting as the trainer continues to narrate his oral story to the visual action on the screen.

In an example of how a narrated oral story can change how the visual story is interpreted, the trainer informs the audience that the subject attempts to take the officer’s gun. It is difficult to see the detail of what each of the combatants do because the fight is aggressive and fast moving, it is possible that this information was given to the trainer from the officer’s supervisor that the trainer said he had spoken to at a later date. The fight continues and goes out of the range of the camera, the trainer informs the audience that the driver escaped but was captured shortly after as other officers arrived. The manifest message of this teaching story is that officers must go all out

in fighting with a subject immediately when they are attacked. A latent message that law enforcement might take from the story is that even if they do respond as the trainer recommends, they might still lose the fight as the offender escapes this officer to be captured when others arrive. This chain of events might also create a hidden message in officers' minds that the most important feature of officer safety is the availability of immediate back up, rather than their fighting spirit.

Fighting spirit.

In addition to not hesitating when force is required, the trainer also encourages officers to use physical take down techniques they have been taught with a "fighting spirit", which he describes as "that explosive power that you're gonna get when someone tries to hurt or injure you." He had previously quoted another trainer as saying "When you get in a fight, you want to fight like a raccoon in a dumpster" delivered as though his audience would know the fighting prowess of raccoons and be able to relate to the analogy. Most people would consider it appropriate for police to fight back when attacked by a suspect they are trying to arrest, although some might want to place caveats on the manner of a police response to ensure that it is reasonable and proportionate.

The manifest message of this teaching story appears to be that "fighting spirit" is a good thing for officers to have. It is presented as an officer safety issue that is an appropriate use of force, because officers who fight all out are less likely to be injured, although evidence to support this is not given. It is apparent that there is less concern that an unintended latent message from the story could be that encouraging a "fighting spirit" might result in excessive use of force where a subject is resisting arrest but not attacking the officer. In this video the trainer extends the justification for a vigorous response from the officer by encouraging the audience to

“watch this officer fight like a raccoon in a dumpster, as the guy tries a gun take away.” It can be argued an attempt to take an officer’s gun changes the level of force that could be considered reasonable for the officer to use, because the officer could perceive this as a threat to his life.

Weapon retention.

The trainer develops the teaching story from a felony arrest to a potential life-threatening struggle with the comment “especially if they are going for your firearm, that’s a bad deal and we know how dangerous that is.” Conflating the subject fighting to escape with attempting to take the officer’s gun changes the seriousness of the incident. Now the manifest message of the teaching story is that in this incident, and by extension in similar incidents, officers are fighting for their lives because they “have to be able to defend that weapon” (trainer). Preventing the escape of an offender, the original teaching story may justify a degree of force dependent on the nature of the crime and the danger the subject poses to public or police. Whereas, fighting for your life, the morphed teaching story, could justify the use of any degree of force including the use of deadly force.

While the intended overt message of this teaching story might be that law enforcement should deploy fighting spirit when attacked, which might be a justifiable concept, a covert message that might travel with this teaching story is that subjects who fight officers will also try to take their gun. If such a message is conveyed to officers by this teaching story, it could influence them to make a more aggressive response and possibly an earlier recourse to the use of deadly force. It is possible that inexperienced officers or recruits might be most susceptible to this inference, should they view the video. As always with teaching stories the trainer needs to consider the significance of the language used and test that the intended learning is what trainees have acquired. Clearly a drawback with learning acquired from online videos is potentially the

lack of feedback the trainer can get from the audience or testing they can use to identify what has been learned. These are complex learning situations in which the study suggests it is beneficial if trainers know that what they are teaching is what trainees are learning.

Post incident, the subject might claim that trying to take an officer's gun was to assist their escape and that they would not have shot the officer or anyone else. They may also make a claim that they were taking it so that the officer could not shoot them to prevent their escape. Either of these claims could be true but clearly, it is unreasonable to expect the officer to allow a subject to take his gun on the assumption that the offender is just trying to escape and will not shoot him. A point reinforced by the trainer pointing out that every year some officers are shot with their own weapons.

Confrontation framing.

The trainer frames how confrontations between police and public should be viewed by a law enforcement audience by stating, "For us we cannot lose a physical confrontation." While it can be argued that officers cannot lose a fight over possession of a gun because it might end their life, it is harder to claim that officers must win every physical struggle. A policing analogy that might assist in considering this teaching story is to consider the vehicle pursuit policies of police departments. Some departments have a policy to always pursue stolen vehicles or those who do not stop for police, while others have a more nuanced policy, which requires a supervisor or controller to decide about continuing each pursuit. Factors that are usually considered include the risk each pursuit poses to the public; the police and the subject being chased.

The rationale for stopping a pursuit that places the public at risk is that it goes against the prime role of police to protect the community they serve. An unfortunate by-product of this policy is that some offenders will escape justice and if the fleeing driver is a career criminal, they

might commit further crime that affect public safety. Also, not pursuing and stopping recklessly driven stolen vehicles or dangerously driven vehicles due to the driver's impairment by alcohol or drugs may put the safety of other road users at risk. Included in this balance between pursuit and safety is the risk to police officers engaged in a chase often at high or dangerous speeds and the policy considers if this is acceptable in each instant. Also considered is the risk to the subject driver and the potential for them to crash in response to being chased by police. This becomes more significant if police are aware of passengers in the vehicle particularly children, and this can contribute to a decision to stop a pursuit. Some police pursuit policy appears to be different to that of officers in a physical fight as indicates in study teaching stories.

The counter proposition to the statement that officers must always win a fight is the question could policy and training include a 'stop the fight' option like the 'stop the pursuit' decision? Framing the teaching story of physical fighting as one officers must win, without the caveat of only applying it to life threatening encounters might result in a win at all cost thought pattern. This thinking could ultimately result in the use of deadly force, rather than allowing an offender to escape to be arrested later, as occurred in this case. Teaching stories might serve better if they address winning the war, that is achieving protection of the community, rather than a must win every battle narrative that may result in unnecessary force, including deadly force being used.

Story sharing.

The trainer concludes the video with a teaching story about using stories of experience to learn from colleagues he questions "What have they seen? What have they experienced?" He encourages officers to "learn and grow from each other's experience", story is the usual medium adults use to describe their experience and the telling of stories between police colleagues is

recorded in the literature (Van Hulst, 2013). The trainer ends his presentation with “Share your stories today and then you go out on the street.” The overt and covert message appears parallel, adults learn from story and stories of experience are important to workplace learning. However, none of this considers the potential for officers, particularly recruits, to learn inappropriate policing models from stories of colleagues’ experiences.

Video 10: TV News report criticism of the purchase of rifle plates.

Video 10 is 4 minutes, 18 seconds in length. It is a TV news presentation posted on YouTube in 2017 that has been viewed 14,000+ times. The news item addresses the ballistic capabilities of body armor recently purchased by local police to stop bullets fired from an assault rifle. The style of the video and the producers indicate that it was intended for a public audience originally as part of a news broadcast. Content includes demonstrations of two body armor plates being shot at with an assault rifle, examination of the result and discussion of the differing views of stakeholders. The storyteller is a reporter who both narrates and is filmed questioning stakeholders or retelling quotes they have made. There are several teaching stories that are oral, visual, and narrated when video of relevant material is talked over by the narrator or stakeholders being interviewed in support of the prime teaching narrative.

Prime teaching narrative – questions with police purchase.

The prime teaching narrative is that local police have recently purchased rifle plate inserts for body armor that will not stop bullets from an assault rifle, while locally made plates that they did not purchase can stop assault rifle bullets. The demonstrations of the ability of the two manufacturers plates to stop assault rifle bullets is conducted on a range and claims are then investigated by the reporter. The prime narrative appears to be constructed and developed by

four teaching stories beginning with describing the issue being investigated. The manifest message is that the purchased plates are not fit for purpose but locally made plates are.

Unspoken backstory.

The presenters of this video appear to assume that the audience has sufficient background knowledge of the subject to understand the report of what they believe is a local news issue. They do not clarify that the item is reporting on the purchase by local police of what is known as ‘rifle plates’ which are ridged panels shaped to cover the chest of an officer to upgrade body armor to protect against assault rifle bullets. The repeated showing of the tests conducted on the rifle plates and an explanation further into the presentation of how they are used, make it clear what the segment is about. The latent message and the lack of explanation of what a rifle plate is, appears to indicate the existence of an unspoken local backstory. The narrators of the segment begin by describing the issue as they see it.

Describing the issue.

The TV presenter sets the scene for viewers by stating the issue to be investigated in this segment of the broadcast, “questions tonight on the type of body armor chosen to protect local officers. Do they have the best equipment?” This oral story is supported by a visual story that shows body armor being shot at as the presenter continues the introduction and then passes the role of narrator to a reporter. The reporter establishes the investigation’s parameters by explaining the need for police body armor to be able to stop bullets fired from assault rifles because these weapons have been used in a number of high-profile mass shootings in the United States that police have responded to. This is an oral story with the reporter stood talking to the camera although there is a supporting visual backdrop of the local police department badge on screen.

The sequence continues with a visual and narrated story that provides evidence that the claims made by the presenter and the reporter are valid. This consists of film of a shooting test conducted by the owner of the local company who did not get the police contract. The local company owner is shown firing an assault rifle at both his company's body armor plate and the one purchased by the local police. Throughout the playing of the shooting test and examination of the results the narrator provides the oral story to support what viewers can see.

The reporter then reveals the results of a similar test that was carried out by an independent ballistics laboratory. This test found that the plate made by the local company stopped three assault rifle bullets while the plate purchased by the local police only stopped the first of the three rounds. The format of the story is again narration over film of the actual test being conducted on the local made plate and the one purchased by local police. Having set the scene for an investigation as to why local police purchased rifle plates that appeared in tests not to stop assault rifle bullets the reporter details the rationale given for the purchase choice. The manifest message in this story is that there is a question over this purchase.

Purchase rationale.

The rationale behind the purchasing decision is explained by a visual and oral teaching story. The oral story provided by the reporter as narrator of the prime narrative, is that the assault rifle bullet plate is meant to be worn in conjunction with the regular body armor that officers are required to wear all the time. Then when they need to protect against assault rifle bullets, they put the plate over the top of the regular armor, which it is claimed produces the same level of protection as that of the locally made plate. While this explanation is given a parallel visual story provided by the use of an animation, which shows a mannequin that represents an officer on to

which soft body armor that officers always wear is placed and then a set of body armor with the assault rifle plate inserted in it is added.

As the reporter is saying that the same standard of protection is reached, an animated rifle appears pointing at the mannequin and a bullet is fired that the armor stops. The overt message of the combined visual and oral stories is that both plates provide the same standard of protection, but in different ways. The reporter's story appears to have been provided by the purchasing agency and fails to remind the audience that the locally produced rifle plate would also be worn over the soft body armor that officers are required to wear. An example of a narrative that carries the perspective of the storyteller and that stories are important not because they are 100% accurate but because they have meaning for the teller. The manifest message of this story is that the rationale for purchase provided by the local police explains the apparent anomaly that the purchased rifle plate appears to only stop the first rifle bullet fired at it. Having established the positive reason for purchase, a story that addresses some negative features of the local company's rifle plate is told.

Negatives of local plates.

A similar combination of a visual and oral story being told in parallel continues as those that made the purchase justify, their decision by highlighting some negative features of the locally produced rifle plates. The reporter states "Additionally, the new vest weighs 8lb's versus the locally made armor that weighs 16", the animation brings forward first a plate with 8lbs written on it and then one with 16lbs on it. Clearly the manifest message in this story is that the plate purchased is half the weight of the locally made plate. The last point made about the factors in the purchase decision was that the local police believed that bullet shrapnel from the locally made plate "presented a significant hazard." This appears to indicate that there was a concern

that the local plates stop rifle bullets causing them to break up on impact with the plate material, which creates a danger of injury from bullet fragments. No evidence is provided to prove or disprove this concern, but the power of the story is not its accuracy but the significance the storyteller believes it has. This oral story was again supported by visual material showing first a bullet hitting the locally made plate and then the words quoted appearing on the screen as the reporter spoke them. The manifest message in the story is that local police had good reason not to select the locally made plate.

Counter argument.

A teaching story that presented a counter argument to the official explanation of the purchasing decision was created by making phone contact with a retired senior official of the purchasing police department. This oral story is provided by the conversation between the official and the reporter, supported by visuals that included the photo of the official on the screen, words that he used appearing on screen and the use again of the mannequin and animation to show rifle shots hitting body armor. The retired official introduced a new teaching point about the risk of death or injury due to trauma caused by the impact of the bullet on the rifle plate even if the purchased plates stopped penetration of an officer's body. This potential significant issue is not addressed in the rest of the program and is an example of a story that is not considered by a narrator to fit the prime narrative being discarded. Again, in this video the point that is being emphasized in a teaching story is applied to only one side of the discussion, when it would apply equally to both rifle plates.

Closing argument.

The segment is closed with a contribution from a local police union official who explains the union's perspective and the reporter raising two unconnected points. First, the reporter

repeats the concerns the purchasing officials had about the “inherent risk associated with shrapnel and ricochet” of the locally made body armor plate. Second, he introduces a new teaching story to justify the purchase that after several officers were shot in another part of the United States, another large local police agency made an emergency purchase of 12,000 of the same plates purchased by the local police department. This closing story line is an oral one with the reporter talking to camera before the segment ends.

Video 11: Maintaining control on a multiple subject vehicle stop.

Video 11 is 6 minutes and 8 seconds long and was posted on a company website in 2020. There are no details of the number of views of this material. A trainer narrates the video and uses material from a police vehicle dashcam, and an officer’s bodycam of a vehicle stop of a car occupied by a driver and a passenger sitting in the rear seat behind the driver. The trainer says that the video is a lesson about maintaining control in a multiple occupant vehicle stop, which indicates law enforcement is the intended audience, language used and the platform it is posted on supports that assumption. Two filming techniques are used in stories, the trainer talking to camera and the use of the dashcam and bodycam videos. The video is positive about the training and operational behavior of officers in this video. Teaching stories in this video are visual, oral, and narrated as the trainer talks over the action of the dashcam or bodycam.

Prime teaching narrative – need for control.

The manifest message of Video 11 is that stopping vehicles with more than one occupant when the officer is alone needs thought, patience, and planning to maintain control of the situation. The example shown is a vehicle stop because the driver is using a mobile phone while driving which is a traffic infringement in the city in the West of the United States where the incident occurred. When the officer sees a passenger in the backseat hide something behind him

the circumstances of this traffic stop quickly changes. The officer is also concerned because the backseat passenger could have sat in the empty front passenger seat, typically where a single passenger would sit. All these points alert the officer to issues of control of the situation.

Backup.

The first teaching story highlighted by the trainer begins with him identifying the ‘policing instinct’ of Officer One who has conducted a traffic law infringement vehicle stop. The trainer provides a short descriptive oral story, “So, he pulls the guy over and as he approaches the driver he sees a subject in the back seat who is hiding something and of course, like any good officer this stresses our officer as he sends for backup.” This oral story runs parallel with a visual story that shows dashcam video of the officer walking up to the driver’s door of the stopped vehicle, observing the man in the rear of the SUV hiding something and calling for backup. The trainer makes the overt message of this teaching story, that it is appropriate for an officer to call for backup if they perceive that something is not right, even if they do not know what is wrong at that point.

Arguably a covert message from this teaching story that law enforcement personnel might appreciate is the need to visually scan all the occupants of a vehicle they have stopped as they approach the driver. The necessity to particularly observe the behavior of rear seat passengers is because officers must pass them to speak to the driver, on whom they then traditionally focus their attention. While a general audience without policing experience might not have the same understanding of this nuanced covert message, officers may have been told stories of rear seat passengers shooting police at vehicle stops. A policing cultural narrative is that vehicle stops are inherently dangerous (Kurtz & Upton, 2017; Woods, 2019) it is likely that

this story would create a heightened awareness of danger in officers that community members may not have.

Non-compliance.

When a second officer arrives to back up Officer One, the rear seat passenger fails to comply with the instructions to show his hands or to get out of the vehicle. In these initial stages of his interactions with the officers, they did not know that he had a gun hidden behind him. His possession of a gun only becomes apparent when he eventually complies with the officer's instruction to step out of the vehicle and the weapon is seen in his hand. The manifest message of the non-compliance teaching story is that the aggressive actions of the subject lead directly to the officer's opening fire as the subject points his weapon at officers and tries to shoot them. A latent message that the story may carry for a law enforcement audience, is reinforcement of the policing narrative that vehicle stops are inherently dangerous, a concept challenged statistically in the literature (Woods, 2019).

Criminal motivation.

A story that is not provided in this video with the potential to influence officer behavior in the future is the motivation of the back-seat passenger to open fire. Factors that might have motivated the back-seat passenger to attempt to shoot officers are not provided, if known. It would be beneficial to comprehend why the incident became a fatal shooting if background information about the passenger's history was available. This not present ghost story could still influence officers shooting decisions if the latent message they take from its absence is that offenders do not need a reason to shoot them. Fear of the potential for unreasoned attacks could make officers more likely to use excessive or even deadly force in an incident that is not life threatening. This is an example of the absence of a story to answer questions posed by stories

told being as potentially influential on officer's future behavior, as the teaching stories in the videos studied. A possible reason for what prompted the backseat passenger to exit the vehicle shooting at police is his concern that a police dog might be used to remove him from the vehicle.

Police dogs.

Officer Two who arrives as backup is a K9 officer and has his dog in his police vehicle but does not bring the dog with him as he approaches the stopped vehicle and the non-compliant back-seat passenger. The potential for a police dog to influence the behavior of the suspect is referenced by the trainer, "now when the officer advises that he is going to send his K9 things really deteriorate". The back-seat passenger who would not get out of the vehicle when told to exits the vehicle immediately after this comment from Officer Two, the K9 officer "listen, there is a dog." The trainer's teaching story does not address the possibility that fear of being bitten by the dog prompted the subject's exit from the vehicle, although why he chose to come out shooting remains a mystery.

The manifest message of the story appears to be that the threat of the dog being used concerned the back-seat passenger more than the threat he perceived from two armed police officers. If accurate this raises the need for consideration of the most effective ways to use or threaten the use of a K9 in confrontation with non-compliant subjects. Had the K9 officer brought his dog with him to the stopped vehicle, would the passenger have complied with instructions to exit the vehicle, and if so, would he have left the gun behind? The visual story shows that once he had engaged with the passenger, Officer Two could not return to his vehicle to collect the K9. A latent message in the teaching story appears to be that reconsidering the use of police dogs as a less than lethal option that motivates compliance in uncooperative subjects might be beneficial.

Shots fired.

The story of shots being fired is presented by the trainer, as the narrator of the event, as a narrated story using the bodycam footage from Officer Two and the dashcam film from Officer One's vehicle. The visual story is dramatic because it shows a fatal shooting of a subject who aims a gun at officers and pulls the trigger many times. The manifest message of this teaching story is the speed of the change in the incident from a vehicle stop to a shooting described as from "zero to 110" (trainer). From the point that Officer Two draws his gun, moves away from the back-passenger door towards front of the vehicle to shots fired is 20 seconds. During that time, the passenger exits the vehicle and points his gun at Officer Two. Although the gun did not discharge, evidence that the suspect had tried to fire at the officer was obtained by forensic examination of the weapon.

Offender's firearm.

The trainer tells an oral story that provides context to the visual story of the subject's actions by explaining that the .22 revolver he pointed at Officer Two was defective and would only fire in single action mode. It appeared by his actions that the subject believed the weapon would fire in double action mode, that is if he squeezed the trigger which would mechanically cock the gun then release the hammer to fire it. However, post incident forensic analysis showed that the weapon was defective, and the firing pin only exerted sufficient force on the cartridge case to fire the gun in single action mode. To fire a revolver in single action mode, the hammer must be manually pulled back before the trigger is squeezed to release the hammer each time to fire a single bullet. The forensic firearms examiner confirmed that each cartridge in the revolver's cylinder had been struck by the firing pin, but due to the defect none had discharged a bullet. The manifest message of this story appears to be justifying the shooting, summed up with

the comment “now don’t mistake that bad guy not shooting or him not trying to kill a cop or suicide by cop or anything” (trainer). Pointing a gun at armed officers is always likely to result in officers opening fire even if the weapon is not discharged.

Reflection.

The trainer encourages his police audience to reflect on the prime teaching narrative and supporting stories he has told and think what they would do if in the position of the officers in this incident, asking,

“So, what I want you to think about now is how would you handle the situation? What if you do have a passenger sitting in an odd position that’s an atypical position in a vehicle and he’s doing furtive movements. Obviously intending to hide something. How do you buy time? Have you practiced mentally, how would you verbalize that to give yourself time? Remember if necessary, you can disengage and get backup so that’s one of the things officers have to understand. It’s ok to disengage if you feel that you can’t contain or control a situation”

The manifest message of this teaching story is that mental rehearsal of how they would deal with a similar incident is beneficial. A second overt message from this closing statement is the last line that rationalizes the need to control situations and reminds officers that they always have the option to disengage if they do not think they can control it until back-up arrives. A covert message that the trainer’s approval of disengagement might carry is that officers can use it as a de-escalation strategy with the potential to reduce the likelihood of being involved in a shooting. It is of course necessary to consider if this option carries a risk that subjects not challenged might commit crimes against the community, that the officer has a duty of care to serve.

What Teaching Stories Are Told in Online Police Firearms Training Videos?

Analysis of the prime teaching narratives and the individual teaching stories in each video suggests themes common to all or most of the study videos. It was found that most videos (3 to 9 & 11) contained a manifest or latent message of a gap in the professional knowledge of law enforcement. The remaining three videos (1, 2 & 10) made by TV news organizations focused on a perceived lack of public information about the policing issues they addressed. The perceived law enforcement knowledge gap or lack of information to the public often related to the danger of policing as an occupation. All videos studied had a theme of officer safety or the need for officer vigilance in the content of teaching stories. This was noticeable in videos that used visual stories drawn from police vehicle dashcams, officer's bodycams or security cameras (Videos 3, 4, 8, 9 & 11). These themes appear to be common enough in the study material to be considered major themes as described below.

Knowledge Gaps

Knowledge gaps appeared to be a theme across the study videos. Material apparently prepared primarily for a law enforcement audience (Videos 3 to 9 & 11) identified what the presenter perceived as gaps in policing knowledge, while those made for TV (Videos 1, 2 & 10) focused on informing the public about a policing issue. Various formats were used to reference the perceived knowledge gap from a trainer beginning with stating a problem the training video resolves, (Videos 6, 7, 9 & 11) to referencing a perceived knowledge gap towards the end (Videos 3, 4 & 5). One video (8) appeared to have been produced by or with the assistance of media professionals in a style designed to enlighten a public audience to the difficulties officers face dealing with an active shooter, could also inform law enforcement on strategies to resolve

such incidents. Perceived gaps in officer's knowledge highlighted by presenters in study videos almost always referenced in some way another identified theme, officer safety.

Officer Safety

Teaching stories that addressed officer safety in the study included three videos (3, 4 & 8) telling of officer's murders, one (Video 11) an attempted murder, one a physical assault (Video 9), four gave survival knowledge (Videos 5, 6, 7 & 10) and even the two training simulator videos (1 & 2) showed scenarios of attacks on officers. Story types varied from the oral stories of survival knowledge to graphic visual stories from police vehicle dashcams or bodycams of officers being murdered or violently attacked. All study videos appear to support the narrative that policing is inherently dangerous in the manifest or latent messages of teaching stories, while the messages in some categorically stated a perceived constant danger in policing (Videos 3, 4, 8, 9 & 11).

Having identified officer safety as an issue, teaching stories offered different suggestions as to how to reduce risk. Two of the TV news segments (Videos 1 & 2) highlighted the need for firearms training to allow officers to practice the tactical and decision-making skills required to resolve incidents. In contrast most police firearms trainer produced videos focused on the need for a constant high degree of watchfulness from officers during interactions with the public to prevent an attack. The level of caution advocated in some videos (3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11) appears to elevate a prudent safety attitude to one more closely associated with hypervigilance where officers consider everyone a threat to their safety all the time. Generalization from a description of one event to all interactions seemed most noticeable in oral teaching stories that accompanied visual stories of violent assaults on officers from dashcams, bodycams and security cameras. It is then not surprising that officers' shooting decisions was also a theme found in the study videos.

Shooting decision-making

Five videos addressed officer's shootings decisions (Videos 1, 2, 6, 8 & 11), with three of them referring to the speed required for survival shooting decision-making (Videos 1, 2 & 11). Considering that all the study videos were available from a police firearm training online search, it is perhaps surprising that over half (Videos 3, 4, 5, 7, 9 & 10) did not reference shooting decision-making. While these proportions only apply to the study cohort of videos and cannot be generalized across the internet, it appears to be an interesting theme. One point of interest for this finding from the study is that it may suggest that learning about the use of firearms by police from this informal source is not only about shooting. Conversely it could be a non-repeatable coincidence caused by video selection or an indication of the complex nature of police firearm training. One aspect that showed as a theme in study videos was threat assessment.

Teaching stories that addressed issues around assessing the threat to officers from armed and dangerous individuals were apparent in seven videos (1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9 & 11). These ranged from an explicit threat assessment oral teaching story, (Videos 1, 2 & 3) to exposing audiences to graphic visual evidence of the risks of policing (Videos 3, 4, 8, 9 & 11). Assessing the threat officers face appeared to be a more rational feature of study videos rather than the blanket assumption that policing is inherently dangerous, referred to above. Emphasizing situational threats rather than occupational risk produced officer safety teaching stories that were focused on the circumstances of specific incidents.

Video 3, despite language and stories that could influence recruits to be hypervigilant, also contains an oral story that simply urges officers to be cautious when they enter a room to execute an arrest warrant. Stressing the situational nature of threat assessment with accurate, analytical teaching stories such as this one in Video 3 could have a beneficial effect on how

officers interact with the public when the apparent risk is lower. There appears to be a reluctance in study videos to tell stories that present a realistic threat assessment, presumably in case it reduces officer's vigilance with a resultant injury or death. However, officer safety should be more than protection from offender violence, the effect of stress caused by being hypervigilant every working day could also result in injury to mental health, deterioration in physical condition or even death from suicide. Accurate threat assessment teaching stories may have a place in maintaining officer safety while reducing the workplace stress of policing.

What Manifest or Latent Messages Might the Teaching Stories

In These Videos Carry for A Law Enforcement Audience

Each teaching narrative identified in this study had a manifest message the storyteller intended to convey. It was apparent that some also carried latent messages, but it was unclear if storytellers wished teaching stories to convey these messages. While messages in the content of teaching stories in each video are described above, some messages appeared as themes across the study material. When considering messages in teaching stories, the intended audience is relevant because how video viewers perceive messages might be influenced by their experience of the issues discussed. Below are descriptions of manifest or latent messages that appeared in sufficient teaching stories to be considered themes in the videos, beginning with the messages that officer safety (discussed above) presented.

Danger Narrative

Every study video had teaching stories with a manifest or latent message highlighting the need for officers to exercise caution in their workplace. This speaks to the law enforcement danger narrative, a policing cultural story that the occupation is inherently dangerous (Klinger, 2004; Kurtz & Upton 2017). Videos contained descriptions of assaults, injuries, and deaths of

law enforcement to support the narrative, but this narrative needs to be put in perspective. Law enforcement is not in the top 10 most hazardous occupations in the United States (Department of Labor Statistics, 2019). However, Marenin (2016) found that for police “real-life danger is not measured by statistics but by the unique circumstances of each encounter, dramatically retold in squad rooms, blogs, and media” (p. 446). This apparent example of the power of narrative truth to influence the thinking of law enforcement prompted a search of study teaching stories for a possible reason why the perception that policing is inherently dangerous remains a powerful narrative. This analysis suggests a possible source for the persistence of the danger narrative is that the threat to law enforcement is perceived to be different to the risk in other occupations.

The cause of injury or death in the most hazardous occupations in the United States (Department of Labor, 2019) appears primarily to be accident or unintended consequences of a human act or omission. Regulators, employers, and workers can endeavor to change working practice to prevent the repetition of circumstances that resulted in injury or death. Individuals in these occupations’ have, or at least believe they have the ability to effect change by personal action or collective negotiations with regulators or employers. Supporting this belief is the presence of safety laws and regulations enforced by local, state, and federal agencies. In theory, this gives workers recourse to criminal or civil penalties against employers or others if a safe working environment is not provided. In these occupations injury or death is unintentional.

In contrast, teaching stories in the study videos generally view assaulted officers differently in the simulator training videos (1 & 2) officers are responsive to actions of actors in the scenarios. In two videos officers are ambushed and murdered (3 & 8); Video 4 claims offenders decide the level of force. Video 5 commentary includes “he’s getting ready to shoot us” (trainer Video 5), Video 9 shows a violent physical assault on an officer, Video 10 reports

officers under attack with assault rifles, while Video 11 describes the attempted murder of officers. In contrast to accidents or unintended injury and deaths in other occupations, teaching stories in the study videos of attacks on law enforcement describe intentional acts. Could a contributing factor in the maintenance of the law enforcement danger narrative be that death and injury results from intentional acts that are perceived as worse than inadvertent actions?

Highlighting intentionality as a potential contributing factor in the maintenance of the policing danger narrative is not intended to diminish the record of attacks on officers, nor to claim that this narrative accurately represents the law enforcement workplace. Rather it is intended to make the point that while statistics might show policing lower on the hazardous occupation chart, which may be the historical truth, teaching stories tell the narrative truth that is significant for the perception of law enforcement. Teaching stories carrying manifest or latent danger narrative messages are also significant for communities because “officers’ actions are grounded in their expectations” (Stoughton, 2014, p. 2). If officers’ expectations are that policing is inherently dangerous, their actions will reflect that potentially changing how they interact with the public. Teaching stories of unique policing occupational dangers persist despite at least anecdotal evidence that some other occupations such as medicine also suffer intentional assaults, often for the same reasons law enforcement are attacked, offenders have mental health issues, have consumed alcohol to excess, or are reacting to a drug. It also appears from study videos that the law enforcement danger narrative frames police public interactions as high-risk confrontations and teaching stories in some study videos reflected this.

Framing Interactions as Confrontation

Law enforcement in the United States interact with the public in response to calls for service, to conduct investigations or because of observed behaviors that prompts contact. Some

study videos' teaching stories framed interactions with the public as confrontations. For example, the oral story in Video 3 states "the moment an officer stops thinking of another individual as a potential threat, that person becomes far more dangerous." The manifest message in this sort of teaching story suggests the need for officer vigilance that might be presented as a sensible officer safety issue. A similar comment is made in Video 11, referencing the use of officer bodycams that many thought would reduce the force used by police, as a learning tool for law enforcement teaching "how important it is to be ready for that spontaneous assault."

The paradox that images from officer bodycams thought of as a restraint to use of force overreach provide a teaching story that may encourage a more aggressive physical response to a non-compliant suspect appears in Video 9. A short teaching story in Video 9 has the manifest message that in a physical altercation, officers are "fighting for their lives", but it could be argued that this does not apply to the incident shown. The subject begins to fight with the officer when he attempts to arrest the subject on felony warrants after initially turning around and placing his hands behind his back to be handcuffed. After a brief violent struggle, the subject frees himself from the officer, runs away and hides. If his intention were to kill the officer, disengaging and running away seems counterproductive. There is an action the subject is alleged to have made during the fight that could indicate his willingness to escalate his attack to be life threatening in the claim that he tried to take the officer's gun from his holster. If officers believe a subject is trying to take their weapon it could be appropriate to consider officers are "fighting for their lives", but the description of this encounter continues with comment that the events of the incident appear to contradict if officer safety is the concern.

Appearing as a statement that appears to be applied to all incidences is the comment "we cannot lose a physical confrontation", it could be argued that as the subject in Video 9 frees

himself by physical force the officer lost the confrontation at no physical cost to his safety. The overt message of the ‘officers must win confrontations teaching story’ is consistent with a self-image of some law enforcement that they are warriors in a battle with criminals (Kurtz & Upton, 2017). In this study murdered officers are described as warriors in Videos 4 and 8, while it could be argued that the theme of Video 9 is the need for officers to be warriors “to fight like a raccoon in a dumpster” if attacked. This is potentially important because “for warriors, hypervigilance offers the best chance for survival” (Stoughton, 2015, p. 228) and hypervigilance language can be seen in teaching stories in six study transcripts (Videos 3, 4, 8, 9, 10 & 11) with vigilance a teaching point in the five others (Videos 1, 2, 5, 6 & 7).

The hypervigilant, crime fighting warrior self-narrative of some in law enforcement is not supported by what they do but is a facet of stories told between colleagues (Van Hulst, 2013), a learning process encouraged in study videos. While telling officer safety teaching stories that recommend members of law enforcement are always aware of their surrounding is appropriate, teaching stories describing “every individual they interact with as an armed threat and every situation as a deadly force encounter in the making” (Stoughton, 2015, p. 228) may create a hypervigilant officer. This perspective of interactions with the public as confrontational is reflected in some teaching stories in the study, such as “every traffic stop has potential risk” (Video 11) which some consider undesirable (Stoughton, 2014; 2015; Kurtz & Upton, 2017; Woods 2019).

In accordance with the study’s validity strategy (Chapter 3) I have searched for and present a discrepant theme. Two videos (3 & 4) have a manifest message that in the circumstances described in the teaching stories of these videos’ officers did not act ‘aggressively enough, quickly enough’ and the consequences were fatal for them. Latent messages in other

videos, shooting decisions in Video 8, or the need for officers to react instantly and forcefully in Video 9 carry the same suggestion, that in these incidents a more assertive response was required for officer safety. Possibly, the appropriate level of aggressive police action is apparent in Video 11, where officers only hold the vehicle's non-compliant back seat passenger at gun point when the man is reaching for a firearm, exiting the vehicle and pointing it at officers. Video 11 is one of only two study videos (8 & 11) in which officers fatally shoot suspects, but two videos show officers shooting actors in training scenarios, a process that might normalize the shooting option.

Normalizing Stories

The introduction by the TV news presenter in Video 1 states, "Tonight. Shoot or Don't Shoot, those are the choices law enforcement officers seem to be making more and more these days". The phrases "Shoot or Don't Shoot" and "more and more" or from later in the same video 'split second' referring to the need for speed in making shooting decisions appear to be popular narratives. Analysis of the use of these terms in study teaching stories raises concerns that they may present latent messages that might not be factually accurate. Using the term 'Shoot or don't Shoot' for example, appears to reduce officer's shooting decision to just a binary choice, but is this crucial life changing decision really an option of shooting or doing nothing?

Analysis of study videos suggest that one of the factors in the continuing level of police shootings in the United States could be that teaching stories and training practice normalize a binary decision to the exclusion of other equally feasible options, such as disengagement or the use of less lethal weapons. Teaching stories in some study videos included reference to officers disengaging from a confrontation or using non-lethal weapons (Videos 1, 8, 9 & 11) but still presented the decision as a binary shoot or disengage. While shoot don't shoot appears to be a convenient shorthand to describe an initial survival decision officers should make if there is an

immediate threat to their life, a more accurate shorthand for the decision-making process might be ‘shoot or choose option’ to reflect its multi-choice nature.

A potential advantage of a change in language in teaching stories is that it may persuade officers, trainers, and managers to consider alternatives to shooting. Identifying the multi-choice less lethal alternatives to shooting such as taser, contact munitions, police dogs, chemical incapacitants, disengagement, de-escalation or negotiation may also motivate departments and agencies to have a range of alternative available for use by trained personnel. Unfortunately, the shorthand language for this option is not as catchy as shoot don’t shoot and trainers would be challenged to provide meaningful training. The study suggested that training simulators as used in some videos are an appropriate training method providing the interaction between the trainer and the trainee, develops critical thinking in officers.

Trainers can ensure trainees are making appropriate decisions based on what they perceive occurred in the scenario by encouraging them to describe their perception of the events and their decision making in response. Trainers do interact with trainees in the videos (1 & 2) that show training simulators in use, but do so by statements not questions, which tells the story of the trainers understanding of the scenario’s events rather than the trainees. In adult learning, trainers making statements shows them teaching by imparting information rather than trainees answering questions that cause them to reflect on the decisions they made and facilitate their learning. Not challenging trainees to explain their decisions may lead to normalizing the decision to shoot as a binary one rather than them being open to the range of non-shooting options, such as ensuring that a less lethal option is available or that suspects identities are acquired maybe via dashcam or bodycams for an arrest at a future date.

Equally, potentially problematic is the use of language such as ‘more and more’ in training and other online videos, implying that shooting by police are increasing which appears not to be supported by the annual statistics of incidents. This is not to suggest that the annual figure estimated to be around 1,000 fatal shootings should be accepted as a non-reducible norm. Rather that it may be beneficial to encourage media and police training organizations to reconsider the language often used when discussing shootings by police because it might influence officers to believe that shooting is the norm for resolving incidents. The study finding that language use is important is supported in the literature. Rossiter and Clark (2007) found that “the choice of language, the very way things are said and not said, to convey meaning as forcefully as content.” One type of story where the language used is frequently hyperbolic is the telling of ‘war stories’ by law enforcement.

War Stories

Before discussing the existence of war stories in study videos and the potential influence of the language used to tell them might have on law enforcement thinking, it would be remiss not to comment on the term itself. While the term might have arisen as convenient shorthand for a story about action policing, it implies that officers are engaged in a war. This military language raises a concern that the term ‘war story’ might carry a latent message that different standards of behavior and use of force are acceptable when at war. This becomes particularly disturbing if Fletcher (1991) is correct in her description of war stories as “the basic unit of police instruction” (p. 300). If war stories are common in policing and are a source of adult learning, understanding the significance of the language used on officer’s thinking appears important.

Typically, war stories are a narrative truth about police “as crime fighters on a mission in a dangerous environment” (Van Hulst, 2013, p. 624) rather than necessarily an historically

accurate account of an incident. War stories appear in some study videos; indeed, some videos could be described as a war story because they appear to “carry a message celebrating police values or techniques” (Ford, 2003, p. 86). Videos 1, 2 & 5 provide visual teaching stories from training sessions, and Videos 6 & 7 are oral stories describing required survival knowledge, while stories of attacks on officers often promote policing ideals of courage, loyalty to colleagues and community protection (Videos 3, 4, 8, 9 & 11). In 2013 Van Hulse referenced both Van Maanen (1973) and Ford (2003) to demonstrate the at least 40-year long documented history of the telling of war stories in policing.

The results of this study suggest that the type of anecdote or war story police firearms trainers choose to use as a teaching story in online videos, may influence officers thinking because stories are potentially “engaging and powerful” (Gagan, 2017, p 1092) compared to other data. The role that stories might have in fostering police cultural attitudes and transferring them into actions is beginning to be understood (Kurtz & Upton, 2017). The literature indicates that officers’ perception of their role as “the thin blue line” protecting against anarchy had an underlying influence on policing styles” (Loftus, 2010, p 3). The study also implies that one disadvantage of law enforcement acquiring knowledge from online police firearms training videos is the difficulty in this medium to ensure that what trainers and presenters think they are saying in the stories they tell is what the audience actually learns. As Doecke (2015) puts it, there “is no guarantee that you can control how readers [or viewers] interpret what you say” (p 153).

Conclusion

The results of this study inform across several research fields. However, the focus of this study is to better understand the teaching stories in study videos to inform the adult learning process. Therefore, the results detailed in this chapter will be used in Chapter 5 to consider how

teaching stories might be changed to improve the workplace learning of law enforcement from online police firearms training videos. Chapter 5 will reprise the study, place results in context, consider the adult learning process of teaching stories and identify questions for future research that the study poses.

Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusion

Chapter 5 summarizes the study's origins, purpose, method, and results. It locates study data about manifest and latent content of online police firearms training videos in the literature and draws conclusions from the results documented in Chapter 4. Some implications for online video producers of this material are suggested, as are examples of how the application of adult learning theory might benefit police firearms training practice including the production of online videos. Several areas where the literature might benefit from future research are identified and concluding comments are made. The chapter begins with a summary of the study.

Study Summary

This adult learning study grew from the researcher's background in firearms training for law enforcement, doctoral adult learning theory courses, and exposure to narrative inquiry as a research method. Collectively, these experiences facilitated transformative learning that changed my perception about some police training in the United States, the role of story in motivating action, and the influence teaching stories in online police firearms training videos might have on officers' thinking. The realization that story is often the medium adults use to describe and understand experience (Merriam & Bierema, 2014) that then provides them with a model for future thinking and behavior was pivotal to development of the study. Similarly, the potential role of story as a motivator of action for law enforcement, which is under-researched with even the causal link between training and conduct sparsely documented in the literature was important. Some studies suggest a tenuous link between training and performance, as when police academy firearms training improves recruits' shooting scores (Charles & Copay, 2002), which does not translate to officers' accuracy in armed encounters (Morrison & Villa, 1998).

These findings appear to suggest that a review of some practical skills training might be appropriate, and studies show that not all in-service firearms training is comprehensive (Morrison, 2003). This situation might be compounded by many trainers not using methods that foster adult learning (Brookfield, 2013; Brockett, 2015) relying instead on a military boot camp teaching style some consider outdated (Vodde, 2012). However, the study suggests that even in less learner friendly classrooms teaching stories about the experiences of other practitioners can still be found.

The use of stories describing the experience of others by police academy instructors (Ford, 2003) and specifically video stories used to teach officer safety (Earp & Fisher, 2014) is evident in the literature. Van Hulst (2013) and others (Kurtz & Upton, 2017) found that stories told in informal settings can influence officers' thinking and that peer to peer adult learning in law enforcement often consisted of a practical story explaining how to carry out a policing task. Many stories are visual, impactful and readily available online now that images from police vehicle dashcams, officer bodycams and everybody's mobile phones are common. However, some dashcam or bodycams material is so impactful that Woods (2019) found videos of violent attacks on officers have influenced not only how officers are trained to conduct vehicle stops but how the law surrounding the topic is interpreted. Teaching stories in study videos contain graphic visual material as describe by Woods (2019) and others (Kurtz & Upton, 2017) in the criminology literature.

One of this researcher's transformative learning experiences (Mezirow, 2001) identified similarities between offenders' stories in narrative criminology inquiries and police firearms training teaching stories. This realization initially suggested a research focus on interviewing police firearms trainers to ask them to tell the stories they use in teaching, recording their

answers and analyzing the resulting data. The need for restrictions on person to person contact due to the coronavirus pandemic in the spring and summer of 2020 guided the study to consider stories already recorded. The uploading to the worldwide web of freely available online police firearms training videos by presenters and producers of this material facilitated examination of manifest and latent messages in the content of teaching stories, which Ford (2003) found produced different results. At a time of cancelled training in law enforcement to comply with pandemic counter measures, teaching stories in these videos remained available to officers with the potential to influence their thinking and actions. Gaining a better understanding of the content and messages video teaching stories might carry became the rationale of the study.

Purpose and Questions

The purpose of this study is to identify teaching stories in freely available online police firearms training videos and examine the manifest and latent messages they may carry for a law enforcement audience. Teaching stories told in these videos are collected for narrative analysis of content and messages. Context is provided by comparison with stories in the literature that describe policing narratives from other sources to assist the understanding of the role these stories might play in the thinking and potential future behavior of a law enforcement audience. To achieve this purpose the study is conducted to answer two questions, “What teaching stories are told in online police firearms training videos?” and “What manifest or latent messages might the teaching stories in these videos carry for a law enforcement audience?”

Method

The first stage in the study is to identify videos that contain teaching stories by initiating an online search with the term “police firearms training videos.” This produces a response of 416 million via the Bing search engine, showing the enormous number of online videos related to

police firearms training available online. The random nature of how an online search engine operates means that the same search term might produce different results if entered on different occasions. To acquire a variety of relevant material two stage selection criteria is used, the first stage identified videos that were: Freely available online.

1. About police firearms training in the United States.
2. Not unexplained dashcam, bodycam, mobile phone or security camera footage.
3. Inclusive of at least one teaching story.
4. Narrated by a storyteller.

The second stage selection criteria is applied to videos identified by the first level of selection intended to provide some variety in the unknown content of videos by using descriptors on the videos, these variables are identified and used in second stage selection:

- a. title ascribed to the video.
- b. source of the video.
- c. the platform it was posted on.
- d. length of the video.
- e. number of viewings.
- f. who was the storyteller?
- g. then priority was given to early listed videos to increase the randomness of selection by allowing the search engine to influence choices.

As much variety as possible is achieved by using these two stages in a selection process. Each video selected for the study is scrutinized for teaching stories which are named to identify each discrete narrative for descriptive analysis. This analysis process is begun by replaying the video

over and over to become familiar enough with the content to be able to begin to develop a written transcript.

The structure of the transcript is provided by the words spoken in oral stories. Once these stories are on the page a description of visual narratives is added to the text. Where spoken and viewed stories were linked, as when the storyteller is a participant in an incident captured on film which they describe as the film plays, they become narrated stories. Positioning narrated stories in the transcript requires lines of text of oral stories and descriptions of visual stories to be interspersed. The process of obtaining an accurate transcript of oral, visual, and narrated stories requires repeated playing of the video in parallel with repeated reading of the developing text. When a complete and accurate transcript is achieved it is duplicated to make a working copy to be used in the analysis process.

The working copy transcript is then color-coded to provide a visual representation of words spoken on videos in black, researcher's co-constructed comments and descriptions of visual stories in purple, changes made to create anonymity in green, and researcher comments, questions, and additional informative notes to self in blue. Highlighting in green ink (any color so long as it is different to others) changes to names, locations, and descriptions that could identify material in the videos are removed from transcripts, if necessary, pseudonyms are inserted into the text. The anonymized transcript is then used for analysis of teaching stories which is begun with a pilot study consisting of four videos that are analyzed for the teaching stories they contained and the messages they carry, the use of the color-coded transcripts is particularly helpful in this early analysis process. The first narrative content analysis seeks the obvious teaching message of the story, which is identified and documented. A second analysis process then addresses any concealed or apparent unintended teaching message that might be

contained in each teaching story in the videos. It is this process that identifies themes found in study data, one of which is the terminology or language used in teaching stories (reported in Chapter 4). At a basic level, a question is even raised about the descriptor used for this law enforcement workplace adult learning activity.

Discussion of Findings

The conceptual framework of the study was predicated on there being a link between stories told as a teaching aids in online police firearms training videos and the thinking and potentially the future actions of a law enforcement audience. Literature that demonstrates the power of story in education (McNett, 2016; Parkin 2010) and that show police learning from storytelling (Van Hulst, 2013) and police academy trainer telling anecdotes (Ford, 2003) provided the scaffolding for this framework. The study showed the potential for reflection-on-action (Schon, 1987) following a training event to influence thinking during training or reflection-in-action (Schon, 1991). Van Hulst (2013) found that in the policing environment some storytellers are more influential than others, the study identifies several storyteller types in the online videos studied, trainers, incident participants and TV presenters. The stories they tell differ in presentation style, story content and the degree of explanation of technical language they provide.

The study findings suggest that the four most notable themes are training terminology, more sophisticated training, the unpredictable policing workplace, and the volume of data in these online videos. These themes are described individually below but, they are interlocked one with another. For example, because the study suggests that the policing workplace is unpredictable the training that supports it needs to be at the most sophisticated level it can be to provide for officer safety and community protection. One aspect of delivering a more nuanced

safety message through appropriate narratives is the vocabulary used in teaching stories. This is particularly relevant when the medium is pre-recorded videos posted online where there is little or no feedback to presenters about the learning that an audience is acquiring from the material. The study suggests consideration of language used should include the term deadly force training.

Training Terminology

Comment has been previously made in this study on the term used to describe the teaching/learning activity that supports the use of weapons by law enforcement in the United States. Deadly force training is the term often used to describe this teaching activity; although poorly documented it is apparently intended to indicate that the training covers more than just learning weapon skills but also includes acquiring tactical knowledge and decision-making ability (Morrison & Garner, 2011). Using a term apparently intended to make clear that officers are trained in more than just shooting skills is clearly a positive objective. However, a criticism of the use of this term could be that the language may carry a latent message that the police use of firearms is about achieving a fatal shot, that is deadly force, rather than minimum force to remove a threat to life. The study findings suggest that some teaching stories might have the potential to support a message that the training is about using force that is deadly. an officer survival shooting techniques teaching story stated, “until you have dumped enough blood pressure or hit a neurological center, keep shooting” (Video 4). There is a gap in the literature about the effect, if any, of calling the learning activity deadly force training might have on officers’ thinking or behavior. Consideration of the use of language in this context could refine terminology with the potential to modify the influence training has on trainees and create a more nuanced training program.

More Sophisticated Training

The visual, oral, and narrated teaching stories in this study show manifest and latent messages that a law enforcement audience might acquire from these online videos. Many teaching stories display both an appeal to rational thought and a potential emotional link to the story or characters described in them. While it is possible to question what is being taught or to criticize how it is presented in some study videos, in general it is not that the material is blatantly wrong or inappropriate but rather the criticism is that it is at times simplistic. An example of a possibly naive teaching story found across study videos is the narrative that in the United States policing is inherently dangerous, everywhere, all the time. This narrative appears to set an elevated threat level irrespective of workplace location or incident nature. Stoughton (2014) found that “research strongly suggests that more sophisticated training could lead to more accurate threat identifications” (p. 2). Arguably, this would be beneficial to officer safety, officer health via reduced stress and helpful to police public interactions. While the need for vigilance appeared in study material, any adverse effects of excessive watchfulness were not discussed in teaching stories, nor are they fully explored in the literature. The policing is inherently dangerous narrative is a feature in many study teaching stories describing or displaying violent encounters between police and public graphically illustrating the volatile nature of some policing activities.

Unpredictable Workplace

As stated above in Chapter 4, there are clearly risks in policing. However, a danger narrative that describes the activity as inherently dangerous, everywhere, all the time (Klinger, 2004; Marenin, 2016) is perhaps too dismal a picture of the law enforcement working environment. The study suggests that perhaps, while acknowledging a constant potential for danger, it would be more accurate to describe the police workplace as unpredictable. On many

occasions the level of risk to officers is slight because of the area they police, the time of day they are working, the type of incident they are dealing with and other variables. Telling teaching stories that focus on the unpredictable nature of policing rather than on an inherent danger narrative should not reduce officer safety. This is because clearly operating in an unpredictable environment requires an appropriate level of alertness but teaching stories could identify features in incidents that indicate a situation is under control or likely to become more dangerous and require a more forceful response.

Researching this policing cultural narrative, a law literature study (Woods, 2019) found that police instructors who took this perspective of traffic stops changed how they taught trainees to conduct them. Woods (2019) uses a statistical analysis that shows traffic stops result in few assaults on officers and suggests that current traffic stop training located in the danger narrative makes officer involved shootings more likely. If storytellers in online police firearms training videos used language in teaching stories to reframe vehicle stops as ‘unpredictable’ instead of ‘inherently dangerous’ it would more accurately reflect reality for most officers. Even a small change in language could make a difference to the perception of risk for a law enforcement audience and more accurately reflect the threat this policing activity presents (Woods, 2019). There is support for the contention that some police deadly force training may contribute to avoidable police shootings (Stoughton, 2014) and analysis of messages in video teaching stories in this study suggests reflecting on presenter’s language could be an appropriate training intervention. To be inclusive of all potential learning from video teaching stories the review of language would need to include the selection of impactful visual images, such as police vehicle dashcam or officer bodycam material.

Three videos in the study (Videos 4, 9 & 11) used violent dashcam or bodycam material as a visual teaching story. Video 4 is the story of a fatal shooting of an officer by the driver of the vehicle the officer has stopped. Manifest and latent messages in this teaching story appear to support the ‘vehicle stop danger narrative’ including the storyteller’s statement that some drivers are “willing to kill us” and the emotional comment that “the tragedy of this video shows us our warrior in the highway dying.” The video (4) describes a vehicle stop for a traffic infringement that is completed without any violence shown to the officer, which appears to contradict the narrative that all vehicle stops are inherently dangerous. It is when the officer attempts to gain the driver’s permission to search the vehicle that the driver assaults the officer, draws a gun, and shoots him. It could be argued that the murder of this officer demonstrates that traffic stops are ‘unpredictable’ as much as it points to them being ‘inherently dangerous’ if the storyteller chooses to present that perception. Consideration of the potential significance of this change of teaching story language might benefit from further study.

Data Volume and Criticism

As stated in Chapter 3 the Coronavirus pandemic influenced the selection of online police firearms training videos as the source of teaching stories in this study. It was expected that each video would produce a teaching story with a manifest and possibly a latent message. What was unexpected was the volume of data study videos produced, which rather than providing a single teaching story revealed several subplot stories in each video that built the narrators prime teaching narrative. Data multiplies as manifest and often latent messages became apparent as videos are viewed repeatedly and transcripts of the oral, visual, and narrated teaching stories documented. This study suggests that online police firearms training videos are a rich source of data that provides insight into how law enforcement thinking, and behavior might be influenced

by what they view and hear. The analysis of 11 videos produced 76 separate teaching stories and 80 pages of results (Chapter 4).

An unforeseen feature allied to data volume was what did not appear in most study videos. There appears to be little criticism of police firearms training and scarcely a comment on the potential influence the teaching stories being told might have on officers thinking or future behavior. This positive view of police firearms training was noticeable in videos prepared for TV news broadcasts, but even material prepared by police trainers or training organizations tended to be supportive of training and usually did not comment on potentially undesirable consequences. This is despite the literature suggesting that some police firearms training may contribute to avoidable officer involved shootings (Stoughton, 2014; Woods 2019). A reason for these points not being featured in study videos might be that some police firearms trainers have not had an opportunity to include adult learning theory (Merriam & Baumgartner, 2020 ; Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 2011; Brookfield, 2013; Merriam & Bierema, 2014; Brockett, 2015) in their practice. Instead many police trainers rely on a traditional military boot camp teaching style (Chappell & Lanza-Kaduce, 2010; Vodde, 2012) despite subject specific analysis and recommendations for practice to change to adopt teaching style to appropriate adult learning theory (Birzer & Tannehill, 2001). The findings suggest opportunities for training interventions prompted by the application of adult learning theory to police training.

Implications for Practice

The study finds opportunities for the application of adult learning theory to police firearms training practice with the potential to improve the sophistication of the manifest and latent messages in online video teaching stories. There is no conflict between the focus on the perceived danger of policing in study teaching stories and suggesting more nuanced stories that

acknowledge the need for officer safety while facilitating a more reflective learning process. An example of how adult learning theory could compliment police firearms training practice is a process leading from reflection-on-action (Schon, 1987) to transformative learning (Mezirow & Associates, 2000) via reflection-in-action (Schon, 1991). Teaching stories of reflection-on-action (Schon, 1987) were apparent in study videos, either directly (Videos 1 & 2) or indirectly (Videos 5, 6, 7, 9 & 10) providing an appropriate starting point to apply adult learning theory.

Schon (1987) describes reflection-on-action as “thinking back on what we have done in order to discover how our knowing-in-action may have contributed to an unexpected outcome” (p. 26). Knowing-in-action is the occupational knowledge and skills that become the automatic behaviors of practitioners (Schon, 1987). An example of this from the study is the interactions between the trainer and trainees using the firearms simulator in Videos 1 and 2, where after responding to the scenario the system presented trainees, they are asked why they reacted as they did. Their response is prompted by their knowing-in-action occupational knowledge which is developed from prior training, experience, and reflection. The better the quality of the trainer’s questions to trainees the more likely trainees’ reflections will be deeper, more comprehensive, and challenge their automatic knowing-in-action response. It should be noted that this style of questioning of trainees is consistent with adult learning theory because it is to access the trainee’s experiences and involve them in the learning process (Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 2011). There are examples of stories in the study (Videos 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 & 9) where trainers simply inform the audience if they are right or wrong, a difficult concept when dealing with decisions to shot people, can it ever be considered right? Changing trainers from providers of knowledge into facilitators of learning, in accordance with adult learning theory (Brockett, 2015; Brookfield, 2013) should assist with better interaction with trainees that help them reflect on their actions.

Achieving this deeper reflection provides the potential for trainees to respond differently to future scenarios as they move from reflection-on-action Schon (1987) to reflection-in-action (Schon, 1991). This apparently subtle change is significant because it has the potential to change how trainees perceive the scenario which may influence how they choose to resolve it. Study teaching stories described officer involved shootings as typically being “split second” decisions (Video 1 & 2) or rapidly “from zero to 110” (Video 11). While the incidents in study teaching stories suggest that shooting is a rapid decision, the lead up to the discharge of firearms is a much longer aspect of the overall incident. Facilitating the development of officers’ reflection-in-action skills may equip them to make decisions that change a shooting outcome in some incidents, based on learning by reflecting on their training and operational experience. This in turn may amend their automatic occupational knowing-in-action response, thus allowing rapid decision making that study results indicate supports officer safety but widening the options officers have available to resolve incidents. This presents the opportunity for trainers to collaborate with trainees in their learning rather than just teaching them what they know a process that carries the trainer’s perceptions and biases.

In addition, including trainees in the preparation of learning could put police firearms training on a par with the more dynamic and enlightened workplace learning programs turning trainers into facilitators in the process (Brockett, 2015; Brookfield, 1996). Properly trained and experienced facilitators of adult learning are more likely to convey an accurate perspective in a teaching story enabling learners to acquire the knowledge or skills they require. This is because a facilitator’s task is to explore trainees’ learning needs so that the learning opportunities they offer in response, are designed to meet trainee not trainer’s needs. Often a verbal agreement or written learning contract (Knowles, 1986; Brockett, 2015) details the learning needs and how they will

be addressed. This process respects the adult learner's experience and allows the facilitator to provide professional guidance to trainees to ensure topics required for a comprehensive understanding of the subject are covered. While adult learners are often self-directed to seek the learning they need, it is appropriate for a facilitator to expose trainees to novel concepts that develop their knowledge and workplace skills. Brookfield (1996) documents the rationale for this action by a facilitator as "it is misconceived to talk of the self-directedness of learners who are unaware of alternative ways of thinking, perceiving, or behaving" (p. 124). A route to achieve more nuanced learning could be by amending the manifest and latent messages of teaching stories to better reflect the reality of the trainee's workplace. Identifying how to encourage a change in teaching style of producers of online police firearms training videos, where appropriate, would benefit from further research.

Recommendations for Research

This study suggests topics for further research that broadly can be described as either the application of adult learning theory or the consideration of the terminology used in police firearms training online videos. The adult learning category includes examination of the curriculum and length of firearms instructor's courses to assess if exposure of candidates to adult learning theory such as andragogy (Knowles, 1980) may result in more sophisticated training practices. In this group of topics also is the prospect of helping training of trainers courses to transition candidates from providers of knowledge to facilitators of learning (Brookfield, 1996) in the process changing the classroom culture from a traditional (Vodde, 2012) to a modern learning practice (Birzer & Tannehill, 2001; Brockett, 2015; Brookfield, 1996). A cultural shift in the classroom could include a change in terminology to foster critical thinking (Brookfield, 1993) rather than the possibility of a more automatic response to armed incidents. The role of the

language in police firearms training video teaching stories in motivating action appears to also be a candidate for further research.

The language of danger narrative teaching stories when addressing the very real issue of assaults and attacks on officers may benefit from analysis in future studies. It appears from the study that language may influence thinking and further research would be beneficial to assess if this language prompts any unintended actions in trainees. Developing more refined and nuanced training programs may contribute to changes in terminology that reduce the potential for trainees to miss-acquire concepts. An objective to document story content and the messages they might carry could contribute to the literature and suggest more sophisticated training terminology. This could retain an appropriate degree of alertness in officers while reducing the generalization of the danger narrative. The potential benefit to police firearms training practice of a focus on localized situational threat levels is that officers would be better informed about the reality of their workplace. Involving officers as adult learners in the planning and delivery of the knowledge they require to safely carry out their job is consistent with adult learning theory (Merriam & Baumgartner, 2020; Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 2011). Research on the language of teaching stories might facilitate the application of this feature of adult learning theory to police firearms training practice.

Equally beneficial could be an exploration of factors that maintain the policing danger narrative. The study suggests a candidate concept for the widespread belief in policing that the occupation is particularly dangerous could be that injury to officers is caused intentionally. This research may link narrative criminology storytelling (Van Hulse, 2013; Kurtz & Upton, 2017) that reveals stories that appear to influence officers' perceptions that some communities are hostile environments, with police firearms training videos teaching stories. Using teaching

stories to provide these adult learners with information that allows them to view workplace assaults in context (Woods, 2019; Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2020) could be a beneficial result of such a study. An example of a contextual teaching story could be to explore statistics showing that of the 89 members of law enforcement killed in line of duty in 2019 nearly as many died from accidents (41) as felonious acts (48) (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2020).

Throughout the study, danger narrative teaching stories address the risk of injury or death to officers with visual and oral stories of violent assaults or fatal attacks played in support of this narrative. Some study videos (8 & 11) describe actual officer involved shooting and two (Videos 1 & 2) show officers using a training simulator shooting actors performing in the scenarios. There is some comment about reducing risk to officers, teaching stories in Videos 4, 5, 7 and 9 advise on adopting practices that may reduce risk, but only one (Video 5) cautions against excessive use of force by police. It can be argued from these examples that study data accepts that deadly force incidents cause harm to suspect, public and police. What is less obvious in study data is a practical method to review training to identify interventions that may reduce the risk to officers, increase community safety and make shootings by police less likely. That is, the study data and the literature agree that the police use of firearms causes harm but there is not a harm reduction strategy applied to police firearms training policy and practice with a view to reducing avoidable officer involved shootings. This might change the language used in training from making sure officers' actions in shootings are justified to an increased consideration of can the shooting be avoided if alternative tactical options are used or different decisions made. The study data suggests that language in teaching stories might be a significant influencer of officer's thinking and action.

This is a complex issue that is receiving some attention in the criminology field including suggestions for a framework to assess the harms of crime (Greenfield & Paoli, 2013). There are aspects of Greenfield and Paoli's (2013) framework that might make it difficult to apply directly to a review of police firearms training, but I believe an opportunity exists to consider a different approach. While Greenfield and Paoli's (2013) framework appear to exclude financial harm of crime from the framework it may be relevant to this discussion. On the assumption that for every law enforcement agency in the United States there is only one pot of money available, if an avoidable officer involved shooting siphons thousands or millions of dollars from policing it may harm the community and police alike. The cost of police firearms training may be a deterrent to law enforcement managers organizing formal training that encourages officers to seek out informal and unregulated venues such as the online videos in this study. A review process of police firearms training to reduce harm in incidents might encourage managers to put resources into training before a shooting rather than spending on the consequences after it. While finance might be the catalyst to prompt action the real benefits may be a reduction in the harm caused to all those who become involved in a shooting. This study suggests that this is an issue that would benefit from consideration in future research.

Lastly, the question raised in the study (discussed above) about the terminology used to describe the activity of acquiring knowledge about shooting skills, tactical knowledge and decision-making ability would benefit from review. While deadly force is the term often used in the United States (Morrison & Garner, 2011) another jurisdiction (United Kingdom) tends to call the practice 'firearms training' which may cause a less emotional response in both a law enforcement audience and community members. Possibly neither term provides a comprehensive and appropriate descriptor of the training activity and other options might need to be identified

and considered if research suggests any unintended or unwanted connotations to terms used to describe this training practice.

Concluding Comments

This study implies that online police firearms training videos are potentially a source of informal learning (Marsick & Watkins, 2001) for law enforcement by the sheer number of views recorded for some of the material. These videos appear to provide rich data on the teaching stories used to explain subject specific concepts that are complex to learn and difficult to apply, as both rational thought and emotional response seem factors in the learning process. Some implications found in study teaching stories parallel findings in the literature about the role of story in adult learning, the benefits of applying adult learning theory to workplace learning, and the need for a better understanding of how a story may influence thinking or motivate action. All these features are relevant adult learning concerns; however, the nature of police firearms training is that it may influence the use of firearms by law enforcement, making it literally a life and death issue.

If teaching stories might carry messages that may influence behavior when delivered to a law enforcement audience, the study suggests that it would be beneficial if storytellers had a better appreciation of this educational power of story. Study videos appeared to include images and language that may appeal more to viewers' emotional responses rather than rational thought processes. Contextualizing teaching stories might reduce the confrontational messages some may carry and make shootings by police less likely. The study offers analysis of online videos teaching stories, implications for action and suggests where further research might provide police firearms trainers with a better understanding of the effects of storytelling on adult learning.

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Vita

Born in London, England Alan attended high school there and in Bristol, achieving Ordinary and Advanced level certificates required for college entry. His educational career began at Shoreditch College on a 3-year London University, Certificate in Education course, qualifying as a high school teacher. After graduation, he made a career change to the British police resulting in 30-years of service with two tri-county departments and an extended secondment to a national post on the faculty of the Police Staff College. During this service he acquired a Bachelor of Education (Hons) degree via Worcester University and a Master of Arts (Education) degree from Coventry University. This program at the University of Tennessee will complete his academic career with a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Educational Psychology and Research, Adult Learning Concentration.

During his police career in a traditionally unarmed service Alan was selected as a firearms officer, a specialist role in the UK, then as an experienced armed officer, he qualified as a national firearms instructor, combining his educational knowledge with his specialist policing role. He commanded a national firearms school delivering firearms, instructor, and command courses for officers from across the UK. Following promotion, he attended local, regional, and national supervisory and managerial courses, while his roles included frontline supervisor, firearms training manager, incident commander and training department head, he retired as a Superintendent. He was involved at a national level in operational, training and policy matters associated with the police use of firearms, serving on several subject area committees. Following his police career, he provides consultancy services in this area.