S.W.A.T.:
THE IMPACT OF EXTREME ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS ON
ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

by
CHRISTOPHER L. SIMMONS

A dissertation
submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
PSYCHOLOGY

MERIDIAN UNIVERSITY
2014
S.W.A.T.:
THE IMPACT OF EXTREME ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS ON
ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

By
CHRISTOPHER L. SIMMONS

A dissertation
submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN PSYCHOLOGY

MERIDIAN UNIVERSITY
2014

This dissertation has been accepted for the faculty of
Meridian University by:

__________________________
Aftab Omer, Ph.D.
Dissertation Advisor

__________________________
Melissa Schwartz, Ph.D.
Dissertation Chair

__________________________
Michael Barclay, Ph.D.
Committee Member
ABSTRACT

SWAT: THE IMPACT OF EXTREME ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS ON ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

by

Christopher L. Simmons

It is believed that various environmental conditions can affect organizational culture, influencing the formation, association, and development of the informal bodies of a given group. This study is founded in the Research Problem revolving around how the high risk nature of specialized enforcement groups operating in extreme environmental conditions impacts the organizational culture of such groups. The secondary research questions relate to the notion of interdependence and the social pressures that collectively drive the adaptive structures and perceived reference identities of the group. Such inquiry studies how a group perceives itself, as well as the ways in which a group references its behaviors and its sense of identity internally and externally.

Also, archetypal shadow formation and progression within these groups is at the forefront of this research. The study’s hypothesis postulates that those groups operating under extreme environmental conditions have a unique organizational culture where interdependence and a high degree of shared values exist. This culture compels members to adhere to distinct customs and rituals needed for the perceived
survival of the group. This interdependence can ultimately impact informal subgroup formation and propagate shadow formation.

The Literature Review considered sources from five clusters: organization theory, organizational culture and membership, shadow psychology, extreme conditions, and interdependence. Sources were drawn from a variety of disciplines including psychology, sociology, management, organizational development, political science, and law enforcement studies. Amalgamating literature from these clusters provided a comprehensive lens by which to examine the full significance of the impact that extreme environmental conditions have on organizational culture.

The methodology for this study employed the system of Imaginal Inquiry. A total of two separate meetings were held with seven participants; the participants met individually at each session. The intention of the initial meeting was to familiarize each participant with the forthcoming process and provide him or her with ground rules of the exercise, which involved a three-stage evoking arrangement. The participants were invited to experience three media segments related to groups immersed in the midst of extreme environmental conditions. Participants were then asked to express their experiences to the media in both written and verbal modalities. A second and final meeting after data collection and analysis served the primary purpose of presenting my interpretations of the data to the participants and soliciting further feedback on the research; four of the seven participants were available for the second meeting.

The cumulative learning of this research identified specialized enforcement group members’ tendencies to develop intense attachments to their host group in
attempts to cope with the extreme environmental factors they are routinely subjected to. This dynamic forms a constricted type of organizational culture and promotes a splitting approach to how members relate to influences outside of the group’s boundaries. Five distinct learnings emerged from this study. Learning One stated: The presence of extreme conditions in a group environment can likely bring about a perceived sentiment of profound inclusion among group members, where affiliates feel compelled to an allegiance and camaraderie within the identified group structure. Learning Two stated: Continued exposure to operating in a high risk environment enables members of specialized enforcement groups to embrace and endure extreme and intolerable images. Learning Three stated: Specialized enforcement group members are highly resolute and bifurcated, where archetypal shadow formations propagate, such as projection, other-izing and scapegoating. Learning Four stated: Perceived failure and noncompliance with formal and informal values of the organizational culture of specialized enforcement groups leads to archetypal shame. Finally, Learning Five stated: The organizational culture of specialized enforcement groups supports an emotional detachment from imagery related to traumatic events directly associated with the high risk or extreme nature of such groups.

The significance of these learnings highlighted team members’ intense interdependence behaviors, further emphasizing the pressures to conform to group ideals. This study also exposed the psychological conditioning team members experience in order to physically and mentally survive in extreme environments. A mythic lens was used to offer additional perspective, especially in terms of team
members’ reflections on the shame and trauma endured as a result of their environments.
# CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ........................................................................................................ iv

Chapter

1. INTRODUCTION .................................................................................... 1
   Research Topic
   Relationship to the Topic
   Theory-In-Practice
   Research Problem and Hypothesis
   Methodology and Research Design
   Learnings Overview
   Significance and Relevance of the Topic

2. LITERATURE REVIEW ........................................................................ 14
   Introduction and Overview
   Organizational Theory
   Organizational Culture and Membership
   Shadow Psychology
   Extreme Conditions
   Interdependence

3. METHODOLOGY .................................................................................. 57
   Introduction and Overview
   Participants
Four Phases of Imaginal Inquiry

4. LEARNINGS ................................................................. 70

   Introduction and Overview
   
   Learning One: All for One and One For All: The Draw of Battle
   Camaraderie
   
   Learning Two: Extreme Is as Extreme Does: Preparedness,
   Survivability, & Vigilance
   
   Learning Three: Stained Glass: The Shadow of Shared Values
   
   Learning Four: The Snake of Shame: The Poison of Projective
   Identification
   
   Learning Five: The Cat Behind the Curtain: Trauma
   
   Conclusion

5. REFLECTIONS ............................................................... 141

   Significance of Learnings
   
   Archetypal Reflections
   
   Implications of the Study

Appendix ................................................................. 163

1. ETHICS APPLICATION

2. CONCEPTUAL OUTLINE

3. CHRONOLOGICAL OUTLINE

4. INFORMED CONSENT

5. SCRIPT: INITIAL CONTACT

6. SCRIPT: PRE-SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE
7. SCRIPT: SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE
8. SCRIPT: FOLLOW-UP / CLARIFYING QUESTIONS SCREENING
9. SCRIPT: PARTICIPANT ACCEPTANCE
10. SCRIPT: PARTICIPANT REJECTION
11. SCRIPT: PRE-MEETING INFORMATION & CONFIRMATION
12. SCRIPT: MEETING ONE
13. SCRIPT: MEETING TWO (PART ONE)
14. SCRIPT: MEETING TWO (PART TWO)
15. DIALOGUE QUESTIONS #1 (HEAT VIDEO)
15a. ROLE PLAY #1 SCRIPT
16. DIALOGUE QUESTIONS #2 (NORTH HOLLYWOOD SHOOTOUT)
17. DIALOGUE QUESTIONS #3 (SWAT SLIDESHOW)
18. LYRICS: “IT’S NO GOOD” (SWAT VIDEO INTRO SOUNDTRACK)
19. LYRICS: “SERENITY” (SWAT VIDEO SOUNDTRACK)
20. LETTER: THANK YOU
21. RECRUITMENT ANNOUNCEMENT – FLYER

SUMMARY OF THE DATA

NOTES ................................................................. 233

REFERENCES ....................................................... 255
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Every society to which you remain bound
robs you of a part of your essence,
and replaces it with a speck
of the gigantic personality which is its own.

José Rodó

Research Topic

The general interest area of this study was organizational culture, which focused on group interactions as they relate to shared meanings and values that are adopted by the members of a given informal group. A body that has been established as a formal group is one that exists because it has an explicit and conscious set of purposes and tasks. It has been deliberately instituted and is comprised of a group of individuals brought together to interact in terms of their formal roles in the organization. Because of this, there is a constant and uniform membership distinguishing a certain organization and those who belong to it.

At the same time, an organization is an adaptive social structure, made up of diversified individuals who oftentimes bear a sundry of unpredictable and unconscious psychological idiosyncrasies. Though the overwhelming influence of the formal organization and its seemingly solidified group ideals and principle approach upon its members cannot be underscored, pliable social structures play a key role in institutionalizing the social location which authors membership into the
formal organization. The term “informal group” refers to these types of emergent patterns of social life that evolve within the framework of a formally established organization. It is within the boundaries of the informal group where the organizational culture of the group is formed.

Relationships between an organization’s individual members and its task environment must be evaluated through a lens that is empathic to the informal group’s subjective, relativistic view of itself. It is through this lens where the true notion of membership can be regarded. Just as there is formal membership, which simply requires that an individual be recognized as having been assigned to a particular organization, there is informal membership, which relies on such influences as acceptance and belonging. Those who are a part of a close-knit informal group have established a sense of belonging among other persons of that group. This is what it means to be a member of an informal group.

Membership in a group is outlined by obligatory standards, albeit expressed or implied, that the individual adheres to. If one is to transition into member status, he or she must learn the content and form of attitudes, behaviors, and values particular to that group. One must fit the group ideal and be able to adopt the group’s approach. This approach references the identity of the organizational culture. This homogeneous assimilation not only enables the individual to be a productive component in furthering the expansion of the organization’s formalized goals, but also references the individual in a status of sameness with his or her peers. Recall that informal groups are ideological and depend in a high degree of shared values. Harry Johnson explains this phenomenon as an individual’s attempt to reference him
or herself in relation to the group. “Any group is a reference group for someone if his conception of it, which may or may not be realistic, is part of his frame of reference for appraisal of himself or his situation.” Just as membership is established, so is non-membership. Group identity by way of membership distinguishes a “them” from “us” mentality, so much so that an individual’s identity becomes simply an extension of his or her membership in the collectivity.

Given that members of informal groups have distinct sets of assumptions they associate with themselves, they develop expectations for member behavior. In order for the group to survive, those assumptions must become communal and homogeneous, enabling the collectivity to effectively and uniformly manage various situations as presented by the external environment. The group’s adaptation and execution of shared assumptions is what shapes and reinforces its organizational culture. Elements of organizational culture revolve around systems of shared meaning, all of which act to reinforce and further imbed members into their associated customs and rituals. As a result, members have varying degrees of interdependence with one another. The continuance of the group model relies on this interdependence. It is a true system, where an individual member’s actions contrary to the perceived norms of the organizational culture are viewed as a betrayal to the group and its overall mission.

Never so much is the expression of organizational culture and the development of informal membership more evident than in the sphere of those teams and organizations that function in hostile environments or otherwise extreme conditions. Though it is somewhat subjective, jobs that might be considered
inherently extreme could involve those conditions that compel their members to operate in potentially life-threatening circumstances. Consequently, members who operate in non-permissive environments must be aware of the gravity of mistakes made in their respective professions. Examples of trades frequently functioning in extreme conditions could include military units in combat and specialized law enforcement units.

In the case of those teams operating in extreme conditions, it would seem as though informal memberships would be more frequently and densely formed. Although it can be theorized that all formal organizations have informal groups within them that influence and direct their formal host, the behavior complexities of informal groups formed among these group members appear to have an added component that further solidifies the bonds of informal membership. Performance cannot be predicted and evaluated simply by way of assessing particular job assignments and the basic functionality of such assignments. One must take into account the informal constructs formed as a result of the various responsibilities bestowed upon on each group member.

The nature of a team’s formalized tasks creates a unique membership quality that ultimately influences how the team operates in those intense conditions inherent to the team’s mission. Because these units operate largely within a higher risk potential and in crisis mode, they bear upon their members great, almost unfathomable responsibilities. This onus propagates a warrior mentality of sorts, with members bonding in an impermeable brother and sisterhood. As a result, members are taught to not only embrace team mentality, but also depend absolutely on it. At
times, “the bond between [members] in specialized units becomes too great and creates situations in which no one wants to question another member’s actions.”

Once an informal group has established its own unique and specific conduct, it begins to operate as an entity unto itself. Thus, the group isolates itself from other informal groups (both inside and outside of its formal host organization) under the cloak of cultural elitism, and at worst, corruption. This is best elucidated, in part, by way of the psychological language associated with what Carl Jung called the “shadow.”

The collective shadow exists within a given social aggregate and contains all that is not acceptable in the cultural collectivity to which an individual belongs. It is made up of ideals that distinguish what is rejected or accepted in a given culture, holding much of the dismissed sides of the collective ideals of a certain group. The analysis of the group (collective) shadow, acts as a lens by which to look at behavior patterns associated with how informal groups are formed, and how they evolve and transform while members interact within the formal organization that they all belong to. Those aspects of experience that do not conform to the group definition of its own image are often rejected and exiled into the psychic immune system of the shadow. The paradox of belonging fluctuates from membership to non-membership, inclusion to exclusion. With attempts to upset the informal structure’s status quo meeting brute resistance, cohesiveness can lead to indiscriminate conformity. Proposed changes in group practice are vehemently scrutinized and frequently attacked until the submission is dismissed.
This ultimately lays the ground for the dark territory of the informal group’s collective shadow, where the concepts of projection, blind certainty, scapegoating and other-izing thrive. Each of these products of informal membership gone awry threatens formal team effectiveness and obscures informal group identity. How the collective shadow is expressed in informal groups offers a lens by which to examine the ways informal membership impacts organizational efficiency and performance in such subgroups.

**Relationship to the Topic**

My relationship to the topic of organizational culture as it relates to high risk group members’ experiences of interdependence is intimately tied to my past profession as a Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Commander for a Sheriff’s Office in California. I was a SWAT team member for over twelve years. During my tenure on the team, I took on a number of different roles, both formally and informally. I was initially assigned to the team as a sniper, then as an entry/assault team member. Later, as a supervisor, I was a Team Leader on the tactical team. I ultimately finished my SWAT career as a Commander (Sheriff’s Lieutenant rank) of the full team. Other units are associated with the team, including a Hostage Negotiations Team (HNT), tactical dispatchers, and other support personnel. Each unit is a highly specialized unit within the already specialized larger team, creating a vibrant informal force full of wonderfully sharp and gifted individuals whose appreciation for duty and commitment are unparalleled. I was humbled to call them my friends and was honored to embrace them as my family.
For me, the organizational culture of this team was something I found extremely curious. The informal constraints attached to associated members were tight and select. We were a familial bunch, and I found myself becoming very protective of my teammates. Also, I absolutely loved the dynamic interactions I had with them. Camaraderie, loyalty, and ultimate conviction were the gifts that we gave each other every time we donned our uniforms. I witnessed amazing acts of bravery and selfless sacrifice, in return asking only for a pat on the shoulder and reciprocity in trust.

The fantastical world of tactical teams continues to be glorified and trounced in the same breath. The concept of SWAT has little to do with images of ninja soldiers wielding machineguns. It is instead about honor and teamwork. In the informal milieu, it is also about a system of personalities, each trying to form alliances with other team members, each trying to be an element of the interlinking parts that make up the whole. It is here where the hazy fusion of subjectivity meets the collective status quo. As such, it is also where bias meets judgment. The more extreme the circumstance, the more members unite, and the more they divide. I have been an accomplice in collusion and elitism, where spawned the projected angst of a team that sometimes struggled to find accord. In my least reflexive moments, I have summoned the shadow and flaunted its sword. I have also felt the prick of periphery, where my history with the team was paved with the occasional informal distance that came from being an “other.”

My relationship with my team was ever-changing, giving to and taking from my soul. It was especially in those times of high stress and crisis that I saw the
team’s true strengths and weaknesses in their rawest form. I further saw my own abilities and limitations put to the test every time my team was tasked with a daunting formal goal. I have been liberated and constricted by the informal boundaries of my perceived membership on the team. This duality, this remarkable tension, has compelled me to realize that the slightest shift in informal influence can cause a great wave of benefits and consequences in my own psyche, the greater body of the team, and the global community to which the team is tasked with serving.

**Theory-In-Practice**

This study was situated within various bodies of Organization Theory. Much of Organization Theory grounds itself in studies directly related to group dynamics, often using a systemic approach to analyzing human behavior within a given collectivity. My research established foundation in this theory, especially in association with the informal, adaptive social structures that evolve within the framework of formally established organizations. These informal groups are ideological, rely on a high degree of shared values, and give rise to dynamics that institutionalize social location, thus forming a references for membership by which individuals associate themselves with a particular group.

Organizational culture refers to an informal group’s adaptation and execution of shared assumptions, referencing the dynamics associated with the customs and rituals that are adopted by the group as a result of these shared meanings and values. Interdependence is a term used to describe a mutual, reciprocated dependence where individual members of a given set identify a need to rely on each other to accomplish
a certain goal or enact a happening for a perceived benefit. Kurt Lewin stated that acknowledging and cultivating this type of interdependence is the greatest challenge to the maturity of group functioning.¹⁹

Yet, within this interdependence lies the potential for an informal group’s shadow to materialize. In Jungian psychology, the theory of the collective shadow describes that which is not acceptable in the cultural collectivity and is constructed of ideals which distinguish what is rejected and do not conform to the group definition of its own perceived image.²⁰ Groupthink is a shadow phenomenon related to a damaged cohesive group dynamic where members of the group conform to a way of thinking or a course of action that is so colluded that ideas outside of the periphery of the shared belief system are viewed as a threat to the perceived interests of the group and its survival.²¹ Another practice where the shadow is disowned is scapegoating, a metaphor used to describe an identified or targeted object that is not accepted, projected, and ultimately rejected by a group culture.²²

Factors that can influence organizational culture and interdependence are the environmental conditions to which a group is exposed. Groups operating in stressful environments have unique characteristics determined by both the nature of their tasks and their hazardous operating environments.²³

**Research Problem and Hypothesis**

The Research Problem for this study was regarding how the high risk nature of specialized enforcement groups operating in extreme environmental conditions impacts the organizational culture of such groups. The hypothesis supposed that
those groups which operate under extreme environmental conditions have high degree of shared values and interdependence which foster informal subgroup formation and intensify shadow formation by compelling members to adhere to distinct customs and rituals needed for the perceived survival of the group. This interdependence can ultimately impact informal subgroup formation and propagate shadow formation.

**Methodology and Research Design**

This study utilized the methodology of Imaginal Inquiry, which is situated in the participatory paradigm and congruent with the orientation of Imaginal Psychology. Imaginal Inquiry is built upon four phases of engaging experience, including Evoking, Expressing, Interpreting, and Integrating. There were two meetings scheduled with the participants. The first meeting encompassed the main experiential interaction designed to evoke the participants’ core experience. A second meeting after data collection and analysis served the purpose of presenting my interpretations of the data to the participants and soliciting further feedback on the research.

Within the contours of the Evoking phase, participants experienced three items of media: two video productions and one audio-only segment. The overall purpose of this exercise was to expose participants to depictions of extreme conditions within the context of specialized law enforcement groups. Once exposed to the media, participants were invited to express their experiences of having viewed the segments. This process consisted of two distinct steps: a written exercise and a verbal interaction. After having viewed a given media segment, participants were
asked to engage in a written free-format documentation of any emotional responses evoked during their viewing. Using their written notes for reference, participants shared their experiences verbally and were asked to participate in a dialogue about their experiences.

The Interpreting phase involved identifying key moments, responding to those moments, exploring differences and parallels, and contextualizing with theory and myth. Key moments were identified and initially reflected upon in the first meeting, with further exploration, contextualization, and analysis through later interpretations of the data. The second meeting helped to facilitate integration, with participants offering further insight into their interpretations of collected data. A more universal integration can be facilitated later by way of publications, articles, and presentations to those teams related to this research.

**Learnings Overview**

The cumulative learning of this research identifies specialized enforcement group members’ tendencies to develop intense attachments to their host group in attempts to cope with the extreme environmental factors they are routinely subjected to. This dynamic forms a constricted type of organizational culture and promotes a splitting approach to how members relate to influences outside of the group’s boundaries.

Five distinct learnings emerge from this study. Learning One states: The presence of extreme conditions in a group environment can likely bring about a perceived sentiment of profound inclusion among group members, where affiliates
feel compelled to an allegiance and camaraderie within the identified group structure. Learning Two states: Continued exposure to operating in a high risk environment enables members of specialized enforcement groups to embrace and endure extreme and intolerable images. Learning Three states: Specialized enforcement group members are highly resolute and bifurcated, whereby archetypal shadow formations propagate, such as projection, other-izing and scapegoating. Learning Four states: Perceived failure and noncompliance with formal and informal values of the organizational culture of specialized enforcement groups leads to archetypal shame. Finally, Learning Five states: The organizational culture of specialized enforcement groups supports an emotional detachment from imagery related to traumatic events directly associated with the high risk or extreme nature of such groups.

**Significance and Relevance of the Topic**

Groups that interface with extreme environmental conditions carry high exposure and liability characteristics that place high stakes upon involved group members as well as those with whom the group interacts. These groups are faced with an extremely high risk potential. Many are responsible for saving human life in the most volatile of situations, while simultaneously being mindful of their own vulnerability to associated threats. It is quite possibly the ultimate task of tasks. As such, these groups must be highly scrutinized, and expected to perform as close to a level of flawlessness as imaginable. One cannot underscore the extreme importance of exploring how this high risk nature of a group’s work impacts and is impacted by
its own informal, subgroup behavior, and how shadow formation is heightened by those organizations which operate primarily in a crisis mode.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction and Overview

The literature structuring this research is founded in five main constellations. These concepts were identified and offered in the following clusters: Organization Theory, Organizational Culture, Shadow Psychology, Extreme Conditions, and Interdependence.

The first cluster centers on the collective body of literature associated with Organization Theory, which draws from the disciplines of business and political sciences, modern systems and organizational development models, and assorted studies in group psychology and sociology. Much of this literature focuses on the general operational definitions and classifications of a group, specifically the distinction between a group’s formal and informal characteristics. This initial cluster area also fashions the framework necessary to conceptualize the basic inner workings of group-life, especially as they relate to the notions of collective association and membership.

The second cluster of literature explores the Organizational Culture that inhabits a given group, focusing on the concepts associated with what forms, influences, and controls such culture. Here, the studies of basic group formation converge with the literature concerning how a group identifies itself in relation to other groups, as well as how individual group members reference themselves within
the group. This cluster also begins to shift the focus from generalized group behavior, to some of the factors connected to certain individual’s conduct that make up the group’s collective psyche. This speaks to the ways in which the organization comes to develop its informal culture.

The third cluster, Shadow Psychology, looks at the ways in which groups reject and project images that are identified as not acceptable in the cultural collectivity and do not conform to the group definition of its own perceived image. A foundational framework outlining a more macro view of informal group dynamics, coupled with analyses addressing the notion of organizational culture, membership, and their roles in group behavior patterns, acts as groundwork for exploring the realm of how informal memberships and identities can impact an organization’s formal goals. This is the area of study where an informal group’s collective shadow emerges. In this cluster, concepts such as groupthink and scapegoating are investigated through the lens of Shadow Psychology. This enables one to examine the pitfalls of informal group identity, and how such phenomena are contributing factors capable of obstructing group efficiency.

Armed with the studies associated with Shadow Psychology, groupthink, and the notion of the scapegoat, one can turn to how members experience these dynamics. This fourth cluster examines Extreme Conditions, tightening the focus to look at groups whose task performance can be categorized as extreme or carrying high risk-potential for group members. The literature in this cluster characterizes and details those high risk teams operating under life-threatening conditions.
The fifth and final cluster speaks to high risk team members’ experiences of Interdependence, and how such relations enable and disable members from effectively carrying out the formalized goals and responsibilities for their host organization. How the collective shadow is expressed in cohesive informal groups, and to what extent this phenomenon impacts team performance in extreme conditions is dependent much on how the members are able to observe, interpret, and assess their own behavior. Group members’ experiences of interdependence in such settings could be impacted differently due to the extreme situations they are presented with on a daily basis. Members depend on one another not only to protect the lives of the community at large, but also to protect each other, willingly entering into situations where the likelihood of death is elevated and immanent. Such grave conditions impact the organizational culture of the group in such a way that officers’ experiences of interdependence are acute. This cluster illustrates how one small error on the side of a particular member could stand to violate the trust among the predominant culture within the entire team.

Organization Theory

This cluster draws from literature based in the collective body of organization theory, wherefrom group establishment and configuration characteristics are grounded. Contemporary organization theory finds perspective in a complex, multidimensional systems mode of thought in that factors beyond individual human characteristics must be considered when analyzing social groups. This review
illuminates a systems approach to group analysis, recognizing that an effective means in evaluating an organization is as a complex social structure.

This cluster also focuses on defining an organization by its formal and informal traits, contrasting formalized goals and missions to the emotive, informal dynamics that circulate within the formal boundaries of the organization. The themes among the literature related to characterizing informal attributes provide a direct lead to the notion of group dynamics, further presenting content related to the ever-changing, vibrant forces that exist in the group setting.

The literature in the Organization Theory cluster is referenced by way of three sub-clusters: Systems Framework, Formal and Informal Groups, and Group Dynamics.

**Systems Framework**

Much of modern organization theory is born from the broad framework of a systems approach. William Scott’s position is that “the only meaningful way to study an organization is to study it as a system.” Edgar Schein shares this perspective, stating, “The organization is a complex social system which must be studied as a total system if individual behavior within it is to be truly understood.” The lens by which to develop a fundamental understanding of organizations and how they function is more visible through the premise of a systems framework, whereby dynamics of an organization are interrelated and “intimately tied to the social system of the organization as a whole.” Peter Corning talks of synergy, with individuals acting together producing a greater effect as opposed to when they act separately.
When referencing a systems approach, attention is commonly drawn to environmental influences, which can include external controls such as technology, task requirements, and available resources. Though much of Ludwig von Bertalanffy’s slant to systems theory is related to biological organisms, he concurs with Schein in its applicability to social sciences. Bertalanffy qualifies that there exists environmental complexities to a systems approach in the social milieu in that there are exchanges between social systems with other natural phenomenon.

Gregory Bateson submits that the “communicative interplay between assumed fundamental beliefs reinforcing social relationships, and the biophysical environment of the group,” cooperate to influence the overall systemic pressures affecting the group’s behavior.

As such, social systems must be considered as open systems, as they are highly dependent upon their external environment. Paul Lawrence and Jay Lorsch state, “At the most general level we find it useful to view an organization as an open system in which behaviors of members are themselves interrelated.”

George Homans, A. K. Rice, Robert Kahn, and other proponents of such systems models as Tavistock and Homans, concur that the environment, an external system, impacts the internal, informal systems of the organization. “The open system model of organizations as discussed by Rice argues that any given organization ‘imports’ various things from the environment.” This has a communal affect on the members of the organization. Homans additionally postulates that any change in either the external or internal system can produce a change in the other.
Though the formal aspects of an organization may inherently include environmental factors because of the established functions outlined by the structure of the duties that include specific surroundings, Edward Bakke and Mason Haire agree that it is important to make some effort at distinguishing between set formal goals and the unpredictable environment where the organization works within and around.\textsuperscript{13} For purposes of examination, the formal organizational goals and the notion of the organization’s environment are bifurcated.\textsuperscript{14}

With natural, non-human occurrences influencing a given collective, the idea that parts of a whole stand to behave differently when segregated than when surrounded by and immersed in company is germane in referencing organizational studies. Lars Skyttner suggests that the application of a systems framework to organizational research allows one to broaden and extend theoretical perspective, citing that the smallest of events or behaviors are capable of changing the configuration of an organization’s dynamic.\textsuperscript{15} This thinking is akin to Edward Lorenz’s butterfly effect, derived from chaos theory, taking into account that even presumably innocuous events could alter the course of a group’s direction, both formally and informally.\textsuperscript{16}

In essence, modern organization theory is supported by a systems concept. With regards to social organizations, a systems framework is essentially designed to analyze matters of relationships, determine in what ways these living systems are influenced, and evaluate how they interact within and outside of their formal boundaries.
Formal and Informal Groups

In looking through the lens of modern systems and organization theories, there exist distinct parts that make up the characteristics of a particular group. Scott describes specific components of a system, most important to this research being the two parts distinguishing “formal” and “informal” group mechanisms.17 This differentiation acts as the framework for honing in on those dynamics associated with informal and clique-like behaviors in groups. Though much of the literature on organizational classifications and associated behaviors was originally grounded in political science and business administrative studies, analysis has expanded into the realms of systems and organizational psychology.

Schein and Scott concur in the basic working definition of an organization in terms of its formal and informal elements. Schein provides the basic classification of a formal group as “the rational coordination of the activities of a number of people for the achievement of some common explicit purpose or goal.”18 Formal groups are systems of “coordinated and controlled activities…driven to incorporate the practices and procedures defined by prevailing rationalized concepts of organizational work.”19 Wilfred Bion talks of the primary or work task of “work groups,” whose main design is for the purpose of achieving explicit goals.20

Philip Selznick states that in viewing a particular organization solely as a formal system, individuals are viewed only functionally, in respect to their assigned roles.21 He proposes that considering a group only in terms of its formal structure does not account for the individual personalities in the group and how group members may or may not relate to the roles in which they have been formally assigned.22
Departures from a given role in the formal system cannot be accounted for under such a fixed lens, and thus must be considered a marker for an informal association.

Selznick states “deviations tend to force a shift away from the purely formal system as the effective determinate of behavior.” He suggests that analysis of formal groups only sets the stage for a broader theory of organization that involves the concept of unpredictable informal relations within the organization.

The informal organization is the interlocking social structure that governs how people work together in practice. It is the aggregate of behaviors, interactions, norms, personal and professional connections through which work gets done and relationships are built among people who share a common organizational affiliation or cluster of affiliations. It consists of a dynamic set of personal relationships, social networks communities of common interest, and emotional sources of motivation. The informal organization evolves organically and spontaneously in response to changes in the work environment, the flux of people through its porous boundaries, and the complex social dynamics of its members.

There is significant research that explores and connects a relationship between the highly institutionalized formal group classifications, in comparison with the group’s ever-vacillating informal elements. However, speaking in terms of these two entities as existing on completely separate fields is done more for the purpose of analysis. One must keep in mind that sub-group formation and actions do not occur within definitive lines. Whether it is conflict or collaboration, individuals’ behaviors as seen through the distinction of informal group assembly will oftentimes position how the formalized goals of the larger organization are performed and fulfilled.

Jessica Lipnack and Jeffrey Stamps speak of informal groups as highly unpredictable networks, capricious and impulsive as circumstances change for the group and its individual members. Networks are structures that do not know bounds, and can develop or decline at a moment’s notice. This is what causes these
networks to have fuzzy boundaries, making some of the group’s spheres of influence nebulous and unconscious. Lipnack and Stamps further state that such networks are based on a great degree of shared values, instituting the personal relationships that form the various informal groups within the organization.

With the basic foundational approaches sealed within the formal organization’s matrix, informal groups exist as kinetic entities, more so than their static counterparts. Though the formal defines what a group essentially is, with the informal providing insight into what a group does and how it behaves in terms of human relationship, informal group order, or dis-order, is nonetheless directly linked with the ways in which the formal product is fashioned.

[Informal groups] may be generated anywhere within a hierarchy, often with deleterious consequences for the formal goals of the organization, but they may also function to widen the available resources of executive control and thus contribute to rather than hinder the achievement of the stated objectives of the organization. The concentration of inquiry is with reference to how informal groups form, and how their formation influences the overall organization or formal group. Studies that focus beyond that of basic social interaction, and more on patterns of informal group life as they directly relate to their dynamics within the framework of the formally established host organization are key.

It is clear that organizations, whether they operate under extreme or relatively benign atmospheres, experience informal, sub-group formation among their members. People are social animals, and the duties that they carry out while in a group environment cannot be evaluated solely on the basis of quantitative task-performance assessment. In order to reference and categorize those dynamics of an organization
that are informal in nature, it is helpful to first identify and use language that distinguishes those principles most pertinent to informal behavior, in relation to and in contrast with, properties of an organization which are more formal. The purpose and focus of such a distinction is to highlight and examine the general influences of an organization’s informal properties, and how such properties flow through the matrix of an organization’s members.

**Group Dynamics**

Andrew Samuels poignantly asserts, “The psychology of the soul turns out to be about people in relationship.” In its most basic form, the study of group dynamics is simply an examination into how individuals in groups behave, and how the collectivity itself acts and survives as its own entity. The phenomena of such systems essentially consist of relationships and entities supporting these relationships. The specific focus of group dynamics that is significant to this study is related to the social interactions, interrelations, and influences (be it social or environmental) that group members experience that ultimately determine the given informal roles that members retain.

Kurt Lewin identifies the term group dynamics to illustrate the ways in which groups and their individual members react to each other and to the varying conditions that the group is exposed to. Sir Geoffrey Vickers sees this occurrence as a tension between a group’s internal and external relations.

There is an important relation and also an important difference between internal relations which enable any society or organization to act as a whole, and the external relations between it and all the other wholes to which it relates hierarchically or otherwise. Internal relations within a whole can either
limit or facilitate its powers to act as a whole at its own level for any specific purpose or indeed at all.\textsuperscript{35}

Some theorists of group dynamics focus on the ways in which these relations cause groups to split, especially in association with specialized roles certain group members assume, whether those roles be formal or informal.\textsuperscript{36} Gregory Bateson applies his concept of schismogenesis, which literally means “creation of division.”\textsuperscript{37} Bateson cites two main forms: complementary splits, where the parts of a group take on different roles that together make a whole, and symmetrical splits, where parts compete for desired social locations within the whole.\textsuperscript{38} Regardless, internal struggles within groups are commonplace, as individuals within informal groups, and informal groups within larger formal groups jockey for position and influence.\textsuperscript{39}

For Bion, the variation between individual and group dynamics is not so cosmic; he states, “The apparent difference in explanation between group psychology and individual psychology is an illusion produced by the fact that the group brings into prominence phenomena which appear alien to an observer unaccustomed to using the group.”\textsuperscript{40} Bion follows in accordance with Melanie Klein’s studies regarding primitive emotional conflicts that exist within the individual, and are at times brought to a culmination in a group environment, further intensifying the emotional manifestation. Bion supplements with the acknowledgement that individuals in a group environment are prone to falling into a “basic assumption,” or anxiety, noting three types: dependency, pairing, and fight-flight.\textsuperscript{41}

Lewin also believes that “social action, just like physical action, is steered by perception.”\textsuperscript{42} This gives credence to the belief that informal groupings are not only unpredictable, but somewhat unreliable in terms of evaluating such phenomena as
belonging and informal membership. Karl Weick uses the term “enactment” to suggest that aspects of group dynamics are created by those who evaluate them. Whether hanging loosely on the thin line of perception, or established in the field of scientific literature and theory, informal groups’ actions affect group dynamics in significant ways. Samuels agrees, stating that though the extent of our influence in groups is often unconscious, its intrusive impact is considerable.

Organizational Culture

This cluster examines research conducted in the area of organizational culture. Within every organization there are informal group pressures that influence and regulate individual behavior. Likewise, depending on one’s place and the perceived position of control and power of an individual within the group, individuals of a group establish and regulate norms fundamental to the perpetuation of informal group life. According to Kenwyn Smith and David Berg, individuals and their relationships with others in a group milieu can be seen as “both creating and being created by the groups to which they belong.”

Ideals and norms adopted by the informal group are often done so by way of decision-making, whether consciously or unconsciously, among those who have established some sort of social location within the group. Literature on assimilation and how individuals have come to reference themselves socially beyond formal assignment will help to illuminate the ways in which informal social structures survive, and how an informal organizational culture is established and maintained.
By examining the general behaviors of the informal group as they relate to its association with members and nonmembers, one is also better able to magnify and examine problematic and beneficial areas associated with the group’s psychological matrix and, ultimately, how formal performance objectives are achieved or come to fail.

Research into the dynamics of membership and shared values set the stage for further inquiry into inclusion and exclusivity, both of which can affect the informal group alignment, and ultimately the efficiency of the formal organization. Group identity by way of membership affects the way those inside and outside of the “referenced” group are distinguished. Informally, this expresses itself in a variety of ways. Literature on small group formation that focuses primarily on the informal aspects of group behavior shapes a clearer understanding of what it truly means to be a member of a group.

The literature in the Organizational Culture cluster is represented in three sub-clusters: Group Norms, Reference Groups and Membership, and Group Pressures to Conform.

**Group Norms**

According to Kingsley Davis, norms are the shared standards for group behavior, existing on a normative continuum of what is seen as socially correct, and often enforced to maintain compliance among the identified affiliates of the group. Peter Blau and William Scott affirm that informal groups “develop their own practices, values, norms, and social relations as their members live and work
These informal group norms do not operate in a vacuum, purely influencing the informal field, but also have roles in regulating performance and productivity in formal group functions. Schein states that group norms are the deeper and more ingrained social standards and beliefs that develop with, and ultimately make up a group’s organizational culture. These norms are imbedded in the group’s will to survive, both in its external environment, as well as with its own, often unconscious, matters associated with internal integration.

Group norms establish commonplace to keep a group functioning as a true system, rather than just a collection of individuals with various separate characteristics. They also institute directives. According to Max Weber, norms are one of two fundamental components of order in any group, the second component being authority or compliance to a command structure. An organization “rests upon orientation to a rule or principle,” even if that rule has nothing to do with a group’s formal task requirements.

Arthur Deikman states that norms shape what a group is, and also what it is not; it establishes distinctiveness within the group, as well as what the group identifies as normalcy. His research further explores the notion of the cult side of group behavior, citing that all groups seem normal to the group referencing itself. “Society can be viewed as an association of informal cults to which everyone belongs…groups most of us belong to do not appear strange, flamboyant, esoteric, or unnatural.” Norms are so ingrained into the behavior patterns of groups that they are frequently unconscious.
A group’s collective identity is housed in its norms; in order to be in good relations with the group, one must adopt the unwritten, social laws that exist in the group. Smith and Berg attest that as soon as norms are established, so are pressures to conform. “When there is conflict between how an individual wishes to act and how the norms prescribe that he or she ‘should’ behave, the pressure is invariably on the individual to change and adapt to the group.”

Group affiliation is directly dependent on conformity and consensus, and can ultimately affect formal goals. When informal norms conflict with formalized objectives, overall organizational effectiveness suffers.

As a result, norms must be stressed in order for the core group identity to remain stable. This further solidifies the notion of membership, increasing the perceived welfare and security of group member’s attachment to the group.

**Reference Groups and Membership**

The issue of membership and non-membership is a crucial factor associated with how informal groups establish themselves. How one references him or herself within a particular social construct, and with regard to the framework of the greater formal organization of which he or she is a part, is at the heart of the institution of membership in the group. Such models of association chart the path to properly examine how a group operates and its various stages of internal identity, cohesiveness, and separation.

Sigmund Freud stated, “Identification is the original form of emotional tie with an object.” Harry Johnson further adds that referencing one’s self to a
particular group is an informal practice of referring to a group in relation to
evaluating oneself, even if that evaluation is unrealistic, inaccurate, or not in accord
with the ways in which others perceive that individual’s relationship to the group.  

Any group is a reference group for someone if his conception of it, which
may or may not be realistic, is part of his frame of reference for appraisal of
himself or his situation, aspirations for one of the groups to which he
belongs.  

Johnson further adds that the notion of a reference group is conceivably more useful
in that it situates others as non-members, referencing groups to which one does not
belong.  As one’s loyalties to his or her group’s norms are heightened, so are the
characteristics and merits of his or her membership; the norms become the index for
judging who is within the informal group circle, and who is not.

Robert Golembeiski refers to individuals who are bonded together due to the
sharing of like traits as being members of a “social category,” further focusing on the
quality of the interaction that members have with each other as the “touchtone of
group life.” To Golembeiski, member interaction is the way to evaluate reference.
It is in the interactions among members in their social category that can influence
how the boundaries of informal structures are delineated, how membership
constellations form, and how individual members learn to establish where they fit in
with the group.

In his research with more closed groups, Michael Rustin looks at informal
referencing as not only the status of belonging to a group, but also the obstacle one
must overcome to obtain membership status and link his or her identity to that
group.  This addresses a training aspect of becoming a member, and the informal
acceptance that is necessary for the group to accept the prospective member.  Erving
Goffman, like Rustin, studies the establishment that governs how one becomes a member, or ends membership. He notes that whether one wants to become a member or is considered a member, the informal group workings target the soliciting of what norms exist in the group and what is expected of those wishing to institute or maintain member status in the group.

Anthony Giddens looks at patterns of normative behavior as determining factors in establishing membership structure. Every member knows what norms the group has, what it values, what rituals exist, and what the command structure is; members behave according to these configurations, attempting to conform to them and routinely establish their membership status. Members develop ways for getting everybody to understand what is commonly believed and expected of them, as well as mechanisms for insuring conformity.

**Group Pressures to Conform**

Group members feel a need for acceptance and belonging, and also believe that their social membership in a particular group is more important than certain informal judgments made by the majority. Robert Zajonc’s literature on social facilitation and inhibition speaks to individuals’ tendencies to behave differently while in the presence of others. His focus is on audiences, and how the company of others could positively or negatively affect one’s decision-making ability. The more complex, demanding, or contentious the problem, the more difficult the decision was to make, especially if the decision meant going against either the individual’s principles, or those of the group.
Studies conducted by Solomon Asch show that individuals in a group setting will agree with the majority judgment, even if that judgment is known to be incorrect. Group members conform to the mass opinion or decision despite the individual privately differing with the ruling; the pressures the individual perceives are being employed by the group ultimately sway individual judgment.

Bibb Latane’s social impact theory supplements Asch’s studies by citing three components associated with conformity: the strength of the importance of the group to the member, how ingrained the member is in the group, and the number of people in the group.

In relation to group norms, this behavior can have notable bearing. When a group adopts a distinct set of beliefs or norms, a member may restructure his or her entire belief system solely to preserve his or her dutiful membership status. Peter Ekeh considers a member’s need to assimilate as an ultimate effort to maximize his or her perceived gains in the group. Prolonged time in the group and repetition of customary practices seem to have a direct affect on frequency and severity of this behavior.

Jerry Harvey states that people conform because they frequently fear being isolated or censured from those groups to which they associate themselves with; thus, they conform to survive within the boundaries of the group. Harvey’s concept of the “Abilene Paradox” describes how “organizations frequently take action contrary to the desires of their members, and thereby defeat the very purpose they set out to achieve.” Harvey contends that the paradox occurs when a “group of people
collectively decide on a course of action that is counter to the preferences of any of the individuals in the group.”

Depending on what a group has adopted as its ideals, and the ways in which the group exudes pressure upon its members, a member risks rejection or acceptance based on his or her ability or inability to conform to the informal group structure. Irving Janis states, “Powerful social pressures are brought to bear by the members of a cohesive group whenever a dissident begins to voice his objections to a group consensus.” The desire to belong dissuades expressions of opposition or incongruous thought. As Freud supposed, “A religion, even if it calls itself a religion of love, must be hard and unloving to those who do not belong to it.” This is better elucidated, in part, beneath the umbrella of the psychological language associated with what Carl Jung calls the “shadow.” This psychological construct encircles the nucleus of the next cluster area.

Shadow Psychology

This cluster explores literature related to shadow psychology. In collective terms, the abstract body known as the shadow is best and most simply described by Adolf Guggenbuhl-Craig as an entity within a given social aggregate that “contains all that is not acceptable in the cultural milieu to which [an] individual belongs.” The dark sides of collective ego-ideals are held within the vacillating boundaries of the shadow, manifesting themselves in the forms of collusion and projection.

When a group has consciously or unconsciously identified an object of negative group projections, it is in a state of dis-ownership from itself and its shadow.
In this condition, the organizational culture fuels the need for an “other,” or enemy-image to fulfill a Narcissistic need to feel superior to that which the group has objectified. It is here in these rich soils where the notion of the scapegoat is cultivated. Also, dynamics such as those related to what Janis coined groupthink are also important avenues of research that need to be considered.

The literature in the Shadow Psychology cluster is represented in four sub-clusters: The Shadow, The Projected Other, The Scapegoat, and Groupthink.

The Shadow

A method of examining various behaviors associated with informal groups is by way of the psychological language related with what Carl Jung coined the “collective unconscious” and the “collective shadow.” Jung theorized that a collective unconscious existed within the boundaries of every group. The collective shadow is archetypal in that Jung believed it was typical in the consciousness for all groups; thus, all groups have a collective shadow. Analyses of the collective unconscious and collective shadow act as a lens in which to look at behavior patterns marking how informal groups are formed, and how they evolve. The collective unconscious, of which the collective shadow is a part, is made up of cultural ideals that distinguish what is rejected or accepted in a given culture.

The collective shadow is the image that Jung described as housing those qualities in a group that are repressed because they are unacceptable to the group’s “ego ideal.” As with Jung, Sylvia Perera sees the shadow as the dark contributor signifying a group’s ideals and approach, outlining the group’s behavior identity in
such a fashion that anything outside of the established belief system of the group is
considered something to discard. The dark, rejected, or dismissed sides of a certain
group are held by the collective shadow.

Many theorists and philosophers, including Mary Louise Von Franz, agree
that the shadow always exists, and is often referred to as the whole unconscious in its
primitive stage, that which is unknown or repressed. James Hillman writes,

The unconscious cannot be conscious; the moon has its dark side, the
sun goes down and cannot shine everywhere at once…Attention and
focus require some things be out of the field of vision, to remain in the
dark. One cannot look both ways.

This dynamic has a tendency to become problematic and dangerous when a group’s
shadow-potentials are not known and unconscious to the group itself, and
consequently disowned, breeding the susceptibility for reactive enactment. It is as if
to say to not know what you do not know can be the most harmful. Krishnamurti
writes, “The evil of our time is the loss of consciousness of evil.” Deikman
supplements this belief, deeming such discounting of the shadow as cult-like
behavior.

We need to bring into awareness the unconscious motivations and excluded
information that influence our behavior…such understanding can provide us
with tools for detecting cult behavior – our own as well as that of others – and
enable us to step outside the cult circle…cults are mirrors of ourselves.

Jung also believed that if the shadow is “repressed and isolated from consciousness, it
never gets corrected.”

Rollo May also sees the shadow not as itself evil, “but there is a capacity in
human beings to use the shadow to run amok.” When the shadow is not brought
into awareness, the idea of evil can never be used for constructive purposes. May,
following Jung, believes that the shadow is not something that could or even should be erased, “wiping evil out;” quite the contrary, in fact. The shadow must be considered something to recognize, work through, and even embrace.

Art Warmoth correlates the dynamics of the collective shadow to the breakdown in communication among group members. He believes that when members are unable to relate and interrelate their different experiences within and outside of the group, the overall collective lens becomes discolored with the shadow. “Objectivity is simply what a certain set of observers agree on…it is merely a general, subjective consensus.” The group is limited by its experience, and further, what knowledge it chooses to extract from those experiences.

The Projected Other

The organizational culture of a given group has ideals that the informal matrixes of the cluster identify with as being associated with the group’s accepted identity. That which is not within the paradigm of the group’s informal standards is rejected, projected and displaced as “other than,” denied as being part of the group’s potential, thus becoming part of the group’s shadow. A group’s collective projection can be considered a consequence of the abandoned shadow, a manifestation of those objects that the shadow wants not to be a part of. For this reason, the shadow is most visible in masses, where it can be personified.

Edward Whitmont states that since everything unconscious is projected, “we encounter the shadow in projection – in our view of the other fellow.” Jung’s
literature pointed to the notion that unconsciousness of the shadow frequently led to projection and cloaked judgment on others outside of a perceived moral value.

A man who is unconscious of himself acts in a blind, instinctive way and is in addition fooled by all the illusions that arise when he sees everything that he is not conscious of in himself coming to meet him from the outside as projections upon his neighbor.\footnote{101}

According to Jung, when a group does not become consciously aware of its “inner opposite,” it establishes a way of thinking that constantly considers everything in “opposing halves.”\footnote{102} Hillman states, “The sun goes down and cannot shine everywhere at once, and even God has two hands. Attention and focus require some things to be out of the field of vision, to remain in the dark. One cannot look both ways.”\footnote{103} The dark becomes an “outer” place, a place to project those characteristics of the team that are both unconscious and unaccepted.\footnote{104}

Andrew Samuels asserts that projection is indeed a splitting, an “obsession with the superior-inferior dynamic.”\footnote{105} Samuels also targets a perceived “original morality” as the chief enabler of such shadow projections.\footnote{106} Gerhard Wehr states that this is a group’s tendency to separate, with “the ‘in’ group projecting its collective shadow qualities onto the ‘out’ group.”\footnote{107} With no place for the shadow to go within the group, it has no choice but to be displaced outside of the group’s frontiers. Thomas Moore states in reference to approaching the imagery of the shadow, that a group’s inability to simply “hold” the shadow and “give it a place” causes it to be cast outside to the realms of the projected other.\footnote{108}

Connie Zweig & Jeremiah Abrams state, “For this reason, we see the shadow mostly indirectly, in the distasteful traits and actions of other people, \textit{out there} where it is safer to observe it.”\footnote{109} When something is “other-ized,” it is removed from a
reflexive state, and thrust into a realm where the group’s identifying lens is warped, and the object of projection is targeted as other than how the group perceives itself. Zweig and Abrams also speak in these terms when referencing the collective shadow.

While most individuals and groups live out the socially acceptable side of life, others seem to live out primarily the socially disowned parts. When they become the object of negative group projections, the collective shadow takes the form of scapegoating, racism, or enemy-making.\textsuperscript{110}

Literature that speaks to images of “the enemy” and the processes associated with enemy-making are critical to this research. This is fundamental to tying in much of the shadow potentials of an extreme group, and spotlights how members of these groups justify their actions to themselves. “The basic aim of a nation at war in establishing an image of the enemy is to distinguish as sharply as possible the act of killing from the act of murder by making the former into one deserving of all honor and praise.”\textsuperscript{111} Once an image of the enemy is solidified, acts against the projected entity can be excused and justified by the projector; the distorted aspect of this dynamic sometimes makes right versus wrong acts unclear, where the line between unjust tyrant and noble defender is obscured by the haze of subjectivity.

In Clare Graves’ studies of Jung, he finds that the archetypal shadow represents “a collection of all the impulses and exceptions contrary to the society’s dominant systematization of Truth.”\textsuperscript{112} This notion of the truth highlights the tendency of groups to self assure themselves, becoming lost in their own certainty, further enabling the noxious split between friend and foe. Warmoth’s notion of “objectivity” coincides with Graves’ “Truth,” where the group attempts to solidify and justify its experiences into something more formidable than its otherwise
subjective container. Once a group believes what is right by its standards, it has then established what is wrong in the form of a projected other.

The premise of the projected other is supported by Aftab Omer’s explanation of the model of center-periphery group dynamics. When two polar forces cross, those forces will experience each other as “others.” For example, those in a group who identify with the “center” are in a state of “other-ness” with the periphery; that is, the center of a group experiences the periphery as other-than, believing that the periphery is iconoclastic, fragmented, and in opposition of the group norms. The periphery in turn experiences the center as other-than, deeming the center as having a colluded, purified identity. Each is the other’s shadow, projecting each lens on the other. As such, each becomes a mirror for the other; the neglect or snubbing of the mirror helps to facilitate the pursuit of a scapegoat phenomenon.

The Scapegoat

The term “scapegoat” originates from the ancient practice of sending a goat into the wilderness to be sacrificed on the Day of Atonement; the goat represented the “symbolic bearer of the sins of the people.” The notion of the scapegoat is a metaphor for the peripheral other in that a scapegoat is too a projected target of the shadow. Scapegoats typically represent projected individuals, but can include groups, actions, theories, ideas, or anything that can be painted to be other-than that which the purified identity of the entity participating in the scapegoat cultivation accepts as a norm.
To Sylvia Perera, individuals are scapegoats when they are “rejected because they offend against the aesthetic norm.” The scapegoat holds those values that a group culture prefers to keep in shadow, “moving against the current of collective evolution at the moment.” Perera notes that the paradox of the scapegoat is that the group cannot totally purge a scapegoat, as it needs it to hold its shadow; with nothing to project and displace negative aspects contrary to the group’s norm, it is faced with having to look into its own mirror of reflexivity. Perera also speaks to the projective identification that those who have been labeled as scapegoats experience, namely guilt and shame at having been excluded from the collective.

Guggenbuhl-Craig refers to the scapegoated other as “an object of [our] power drive,” a manifestation of psychological weakness and an inability of a group to become powerful through true empowerment and strength, and instead through positional judgment. Much of the scapegoat complex has to do with jockeying for locations of power. When a scapegoat is marked, it is an attempt to regain perceived power by placing identified weaknesses on something outside the group’s boundaries.

In order to facilitate a scapegoat act, the target must be seen as “less-than” by the group. With the group’s misguided push to deny its own weaknesses, it sees the other as threatening the norms of the group. To do this, the object of the scapegoating becomes less human; Sam Keen states that the group has to “obscure the sweet individuality of each face” of whom it makes into a scapegoat...exaggerate each feature until man is metamorphosized into beast.” Khalil Gibran states, “I have heard you speak of one who commits a wrong as though he were not one of you, but a stranger unto you and an intruder upon your world.”
Smith and Berg surmises that when a group targets a scapegoat, it is a response to what it perceives as “deviance,” something that threatens to compromise the perceived integrity within the frame of the group’s most central ideals.

The group’s response to deviance is usually to keep it in check, use it as an indicator of what is not acceptable, or reject the individual(s) expressing the deviant side of the group. Since the deviance seems counter to the group’s norms, the group is unable to see that its very norms created the deviancy. If the group sees the deviancy not as an expression of itself but instead as a characteristic of the individual who is expressing it, then the group may elect to eliminate that individual or at least his or her troublesome behaviors. The group can then pretend that it has repaired itself without attending to the fact that it has just rejected a piece of self-knowledge. Such behavior by the group is implicitly based on ‘framing’ its collective identity struggle as being in opposition to the identity struggles of individuals.123

A retort to this behavior can occur when the individual who was initially the intended scapegoat in turn attempts to “develop a heroic stance toward changing the group into something that he or she would wish to be a part of.”124 The individual wants to change the “center” of the group into what it is not, bestowing his or her own group ideal on the group that is in reality not part of the group norm. Representing the periphery, the individual attempts to draw the center into the periphery’s ideals.

Omer states that scapegoating is a field phenomenon, as it is very much related to “proto or primitive theorizing” about polars.125 If someone or something has been made a scapegoat, it has been made a taboo. Taboos are enactments of prototheorizing, a non-embodiment of given conceptualizations. A scapegoat is based in “unconscious identification and unconscious rejection,” where the subjective landscape becomes fixed, and causality more narrow and static.126

**Groupthink**
Abraham Maslow states that if all you are given is a hammer, you go around treating everything else like a nail. If the tools by which a group uses are few, and the theories by which it hypothesizes are narrow, it loses the capacity to complexly theorize; its lens becomes positivist and less in lines with a participatory paradigm. A participatory paradigm incorporates the use of systems, holding that when life is lived relationally, there is “relational regulation” that is formed by input from others in the group.

According to Omer, a group that has a “good theory” is able to regulate itself in such a way that it avoids colluded, restricted, non-systemic thought. In collusion, there is no relational regulation because the group is drawing upon only one group ideal; there is nothing else to relate or integrate the ideal with, limiting group members from recognizing the dynamics of causality.

Complex theorizing revolving around the issue of causality can bring to light the different ways in which one phenomenon interacts and affects other phenomenon, how one vantage point affects the ways other vantage points are seen. Being in relation while theorizing amalgamates input from various sources, thus, enriching the complexity of the ability to theorize.

In cases where a group is unable to bridge its approach with other approaches, and its subjective landscape and the landscape of the other is lost in primitive, unconscious, shadow formation, it becomes caught in the center of colluded thought.

Once a group is fortified in collusion, group members operate in more of a vacuum of interaction. Selzick thinks that members oftentimes conform simply to uphold an uncertain or questionable group norm and avoid conflict, fearing ostracization from the group; such unity can cause segregation to those who do not subscribe to the group’s established ideals.
Irving Janis uses the term “groupthink” to describe a particular phenomenon of colluded thought where there is little or no range of shared opinions among group members. William Whyte states that groupthink is more than just collusion or blind group agreement.

We are not about mere instinctive conformity – it is a perennial failing of mankind. What we are talking about here is a rationalized conformity – an open articulate philosophy which holds that group values are not only expedient, but right and good as well.

Janis believes that when groupthink is active in a group, there is a significant amount of suppression of deviant thoughts; this ultimately leads to attempts to displace and project-away shadow qualities of the group.

The more amiability and esprit de corps there is among members of a policy-making ingroup, the greater the danger that independent critical thinking will be replaced by groupthink, which is likely to result in irrational and dehumanizing actions directed against outgroups.

According to Shafritz and Ott, “Attempts to upset the informal structure, either frontally or as an indirect consequence of formal reorganization will normally be met with resistance.” Janis speaks of “mind guards” that a group creates who suppress those ideas that stand to disrupt the group norm and sway an otherwise perceived consensus, especially if the consensus is aligned with the view of an informally or formally recognized leader in the group.

Clark McCauley considers leadership as only a third of the impetus driving groupthink. He believes that directive leadership, homogeneity of members’ social backgrounds and ideologies, and isolation of the group from sources of feedback and critical analysis are the three conditions under which groupthink occurs. Janis cites eight symptoms of groupthink. They are the following:
1. Illusions of invulnerability, which promoted extreme risk taking.
2. Rationalizing-away warnings that challenge the group’s norms.
3. Unquestioned belief in the morality of the group, causing a lack of accountability.
4. Stereotyping opposition to the group norm as weak, malevolent, or unintelligent.
5. Direct pressure causing members to feel disloyal if they questioned the group.
6. Self-censorship of thoughts that depart from group consensus.
7. Illusions of unanimity where silence is seen as consensus.
8. Mindguards who shield the group from nonconforming information.  

Edward Bernays acclaims that groupthink is a directed “engineering of consent,” where opinions of the masses are molded to fit the motivations that best supports the survivability of the group. Groupthink behavior is also a manner of avoiding undue internal, informal pressure, carrying on team standards without risk of individual banishment from the group by maintaining its cultural norms. This susceptibility to collusion may also be a response to an unconscious attempt to create harmony among team members, while the outside environment in which the team is required to operate in is storming around them in a state of chaos and peril. Charles Heal furthers this belief. “It [groupthink] is especially prevalent in established groups and teams that have more amiability and esprit de corps…the most vulnerable to this pitfall are the groups most likely to be called upon to handle dangerous situations, such as SWAT teams.”

**Extreme Conditions**

This cluster looks at literature that aids in attempting to create and detail a working account for those groups which operate under extreme conditions, describing some of the defining conditions that make these groups unique from others. In this study, the operational definition of such a group will find its foundation in that of a
high risk team classification. The components of such a sorting are described by
the nature of the group’s predominantly abnormal and excessive setting, coupled with
and directly related to the formalized mission of the group and the situations the
group finds itself in as a result of its duties and assignments.

Examination into some of the particular conditions under which such groups
operate will find residence in this cluster. In conjunction with the duties that tactical
teams are tasked with, the environment under which they operate plays a role in how
the informal dynamics of these groups work. The bridges leading to insight about the
group’s informal culture, and more specifically the psychological dangers that exist in
such cultures, appear to be built on those factors related to their formalized duties as
well as the group’s environment.

Time urgency, exposure to personal risk, and dealing with the substantial
repercussions of one’s decisions are core effects. These factors draw influence
directly from what the group does and under what conditions it is tasked to operate
under. Furthermore, the dynamics associated with a high risk team compared to a
group operating in various conditions that could be considered intense or critical may
be similar, but this cluster concentration will tighten focus on those groups where the
members themselves are potentially in a state of jeopardy, and the taking of another’s
life by group members is a characteristic feature of their job duties.

This cluster is offered in two subclusters: High Risk Teams and The Anatomy
of Killing

**High Risk Teams**
Amy Fraher describes a high risk team as “two or more people working together in an environment where there is significant risk of injury or death to themselves or to others as a result of their profession.” In defining and studying these teams in terms of their subgroup behaviors, Fraher notes the importance of distinguishing high risk teams from other groups.

All groups and organizations have subtle, and not so subtle, dynamics that influence team behavior and performance. Yet teams operating in stressful environments also have unique characteristics determined by both the nature of their tasks and their hazardous operating environments…which often combine to make decision-making in high risk teams a stressful activity.

With Fraher’s definition, high risk teams are such because of two main components: their environment and their mission, both of which are diametrically interrelated.

Kelly Krokos agrees with Fraher, focusing on the product of group mission error as determining the categorical significance of high risk. Krokos considers high risk teams to include “any job for which the possibility of error is significant and for which the consequence of error is likely to result in harm, physical injury, or death to not only the individual performing the job, but for others as well.” Krokos lists law enforcement, military, and other public safety professions among the most evident high risk occupations.

For many researchers of crisis decision-making and high risk operations, any profession which attempts to operationally restore social order in the midst of violence or chaos is considered at the apex of high risk. Heal talks of policing in relation to the concept of battle, and the different interpretations of the idea of war. “Although we don’t usually think of law enforcement tactical operations as war, they share many of the same attributes.” Participation in open warfare is inarguably
high risk, as it contains the elements of an environment so non-permissive that the risk of personal injury or death is evident and unremitting. In other public safety atmospheres, the setting is often more acute and centered on specific events; the arena of law enforcement in comparison to military operations is more up close and personal, where the enemies are our own citizens.152

Tacticians and tactical command staff tasked with coordinating efforts in critical incidents, like Chief Chris Thorsen and Captain Donny Gordon also cite environment and mission as the two primary systems making a particular group’s operations high risk. “If people are shooting at you, and you are supposed to go in and neutralize that threat, while at the same time rescue and protect hostages, I’d say that’s about as high risk as it gets.”153 Thorsen further adds that the mere fact that the profession, in this case policing, requires its employees to use deadly force if the situation arises is itself something that illustrates the elevation of risk involved in their everyday duties.154 Further add the element of a staged critical incident, for example a hostage takeover or an armed barricaded subject, and the risk can be even greater.

Ben Tisa supplements Thorsen’s “requirement to kill” factor with specific regards to group performance. “The efforts involved in coordinating and executing a team to address the threat and engage him in a deadly force scenario are as crucial and dire as anything.”155 Tisa cites conditions that are associated with an elevated risk or critical environment, using the phrase, “suspect initiated incidents.”156 Much like Fraher’s assessment, Tisa includes the following factors marking a situation at its most critical: No advanced timing as to awareness of situation, minimal resources,
minimal information available, no control over timing or initial sequence of events, and no initial command and control structure.\textsuperscript{157}

Craig Ojala supplements Tisa by adding that in the midst of these critical events, the command structure in place is preparing his team to “remove a person from this earth by their coordinated hand…at that point, that team needs leadership and each other; ‘teamwork’ never meant so much.”\textsuperscript{158}

**The Anatomy of Killing**

As Thorsen, Tisa, and Ojala state, a significant factor in defining a high risk team is the part of the team’s mission which includes a protocol that potentially involves the act of dispensing injury or death to others as a means by which to accomplish their overall goal. For example, a team of miners would be a high risk team in that there is significant risk for injury or death to the team itself, but their mission does not involve the potential act of taking another life as part of their job description. This definition draws the primary focus of inquiry toward high risk teams that are specialized military and law enforcement units.

In his extensive studies on combat, Dave Grossman characterizes the act of killing as a conundrum to those who attempt to envision it without ever having performed it. Grossman refers to those coming to grips with their duty to kill as “a world of virgins studying sex.”\textsuperscript{159}

Killing is a private, intimate occurrence of tremendous intensity, in which the destructive act becomes psychologically very much like the procreative act. For those who have never experienced it, the depiction of battle that Hollywood has given us appears to be about as useful in understanding killing as pornographic movies would be in trying to understand the intimacy
of a sexual relationship. A virgin observer might get the mechanics of sex right by watching an X-rated movie, but he or she could never hope to understand the intimacy and intensity of the procreative experience. Grossman also states that because of this naivety, there is an innate human resistance toward killing one’s own species. Charles Heal calls this resistance “friction,” where one is overwhelmed by the amount of risk, when chance favors an opponent, or when fear overcomes the will to fight. Most would assume submit or take flight than acquire an aggressive posture or proceed further with an actual lethal fight response. Like anything, one does not know how he or she will truly react until the moment is brought before him or her.

Those who are compelled to respond to situations by virtue of their task requirements or formal mission hope that forms of “posturing,” over dispensing fatal methods, will end the conflict. The former is sometimes subtle; the police officer’s uniform and badge represent a posture of authority; a Special Weapons and Tactics team surrounding a house and attempting to negotiate or call-out a barricaded subject is a posture. It is the hope that these stances will be enough.

What is ultimately required if the time comes is follow-through. A posture is only as good as what the opponent perceives is viable and imminent. Dave Bliss states,

If you take posture and cannot carry out what you threaten, you either have to surrender or retreat; these are not typically options of a [SWAT] operator. Only if you are overpowered can you make these considerations. They are paid to bring the fight to the suspect. Operators must come to terms with this fact before they encounter the suspect.”

In their research of SWAT team members, Tisa and Bliss note qualities and behavior traits identified as significant to peak performance in high risk critical incidents. At
the forefront, Tisa and Bliss affirm that members must first acknowledge the progressive reality that killing the suspect can happen, it is happening, and it is the member’s duty to carry out the act. At this point, “survival is the extreme motivation.”

Heal speaks in more mechanical terms, categorizing the act of killing as an intricate conflict, where “an adversary is actively engaged in thwarting the will” of the team. Heal’s solution is one having to do more with logistics than that of emotive hurdles. “An implied objective inherent in these situations is to impose the will of the tactical commander on the suspect.” Basically, when duty calls, one must do. Grossman sees the logistics of killing to be of little consequence, instead focusing on what Marshal Lord Wavell calls the “actualities of war,” the psychological factors associated with fear. He states that “fear, combined with exhaustion, hate, horror, and the irreconcilable task of balancing these with the need to kill, eventually drives the soldier so deeply into a mire of guilt and horror that he tips over into that region we call insanity.” High risk teams seek to avert the potentiality of Wavell’s “insanity” by harnessing the shared strength of the group while collectively having to manage such experiences. Like Wavell, Jesse Glenn Gray acknowledges that a high risk team member’s “moods and disposition are affected by the presence of others and the encompassing environment of threat and fear.” Ernest Becker notes, “The irony of man's condition is that the deepest need is to be free of the anxiety of death and annihilation.” However, such teams do not have the luxury of denying the possibility of receiving or dispensing death, as it is a potential “destiny” high risk team members are subjected to more frequently because of their required job tasks.
With all of the individual psychological challenges associated with carrying out the duty of having to kill, most notably the fear of dying and the fear of having to engage in the act of killing, Tisa and Bliss observe that fear in a critical situation may also manifest as a shared group fear. They note that a unified team dynamic is essential for groups of individuals to perform in high risk situations. The only way to psychologically survive a critical incident as it unfolds in real-time is by having “team integrity,” consisting of “mutual support and cohesive bonding.”[^172] This bonding increases while in the throes of a high risk situation because the fear is magnified. Members rely on the group to filter how they are experiencing this fear.[^173]

Much of an individual’s willingness or unwillingness to kill seems to be directly related to his or her association with his or her group members, and the allegiance he or she feels with them. Peter Watson states, “Disintegration of a combat unit usually occurs at the 50% casualty point, and is marked by increasing numbers of individuals refusing to kill. Motivation and will to kill has evaporated along with their peers.”[^174] As one’s group fragments, so does his or her feeling of association and partnership with his or her collectivity. Grossman agrees, asserting that self-preservation is not what draws one toward killing or dying, but instead his or her sense of responsibility and companionship with his or her team members.[^175]

The topography of these groups’ features of their environment and mission emphasize the nature of how the group informally gels, and in what ways individual members perform as a group and as a culture. They are required to rely and depend upon one another, carrying the group through intense, sometimes unfathomable situations, namely dispensing death or dying themselves. There exists a nebulous
bridge that spans these situational determinates and the degree in which the informal cohesion that occurs in most groups is formed; it is called interdependence.

**Interdependence**

This cluster examines the concept of interdependence, and the unique unions that are developed among members of high risk teams. This section is presented as one cluster, with no sub-clustering of topics.

Interdependence is essentially a dynamic of group members being mutually responsible to one another. Stephen Covey differentiates interdependence from independence in that the former exists in “organizational reality,” as opposed to the purely individual motivations of independence. Karl Weick employs a theory of “loose coupling,” which speaks to the interdependence shared among group members. Originally applied to computer science, loose coupling in organizational studies concentrates on interdependence, a mutual dependency, addressing the degree to which each member of a group relies on the other members, both formally and informally.

Within the organizational culture of high risk groups, the notion of solidarity is a protected commodity. Members refer to this happening as “teamwork,” where the individual is recognized as second to the supportive qualities of the group to which he or she is bonded. Teamwork is usually used to denote an action associated with accomplishing a goal or the mode by which a particular objective is carried out.

Another term to describe such a union is “dependency.” Abraham Maslow cites dependency as more of a psychological need to associate with someone or
something in an attempt to fulfill a sense of a perceived lack of completeness; he believes it often arises out of one’s search for meaningfulness.\footnote{180} Yet, the boundaries between teamwork and dependency are fuzzy, and not well defined. Operationally qualifying these terms is necessary to mark their subtle, distinguishing features. But they are not mutually exclusive, as both exist within and around each other.

Thus, members rely on a hybrid of teamwork and dependency, an interdependence with investment. It materializes as camaraderie, but with an association, commitment, and tension that signifies that the ultimate sacrifice is at stake. The interdependence that such groups experience seems to be cloaked under the umbrella of mortality, where anxiety associated with killing and dying further gels the group connection.

Teamwork and dependency both imply relationship, occurring amid the presence of others. The former aligns itself with a more positive, collaborative view. It implies a vigorous and healthy working relationship, where individuals are competently functioning together; it signifies efficiency. To Deikman, dependency is “a rather damning label when applied to adults. We are supposed to be autonomous, self-sustaining, with the capacity to go it alone.”\footnote{181} Branding this sort of mark on a member of a group could be devastating.

But, there is truth to the notion that much of what enables team members to survive physically is by surviving psychologically as a cohesive group. Deikman adds that interdependency is a parental wish to be sheltered by one’s group, ultimately transforming the group into a close, accepting “family.”\footnote{182} According to Tisa and Bliss, on a high risk team where members are constantly besieged by
extreme conditions, dependency is born less by the desire for psychological attachment or a deeper sense of worth, but more from the seed of survival. As Grossman states, if a group is fragmented psychologically and lacks unity, such discord can have effects on the group’s survivability in a real sense.

A tremendous volume of research indicates that the primary factor that motivates a soldier to do the things that no sane man wants to do in combat (that is, killing and dying) is not the force of self-preservation but a powerful sense of accountability to his comrades on the battlefield...among men who are bonded together so intensely, there is a powerful process of peer pressure in which the individual cares so deeply about his comrades and what they think about him that he would rather die than let them down.

Roger Soloman highlights the significance of being affiliated with a high risk team by stating that the foremost matter affecting all members of such groups has to do with the detail that being submerged in such environments emphasizes members’ own mortalities. “Any situation beyond the realm of a person’s usual experience that overwhelms his sense of vulnerability or lack of control of the situation” causes him or her to experience his or her life in a state of criticalness. Soloman further states that the added responsibility of having a mission that stands to be deadly, for example an officer involved in a shooting situation, “shatters the ‘myth’ of invulnerability that [high risk team members] often need to function on a day to day basis.”

Because of this constant face-to-face interaction with mortality, group members involved in extreme conditions can feel internally isolated, needing the interactions of others to feel secure against whatever is targeted as that which could take the member’s life. The interdependence that members experience amongst one another overshadows even their mission or cause that they are tasked with
performing. Like Grossman, Gray sees that “the original purpose becomes obscured; the fighter is often sustained solely by the determination not to let down his comrades.”\textsuperscript{188} Gray calls this “instinctive recognition of the connection between unity and strength [as] ‘fighting morale,’” deeming it “the result, and not the cause, of comradeship.”\textsuperscript{189} Gray believes this to be at the crux of a positive and united affinity. “The experience of communal effort in battle even under the altered conditions of modern war, has been a high point in [soldiers’] lives.”

**Conclusion**

The cluster on organizational theory explores the body of literature associated with models in systems theory and organizational development, drawing from various authorities from branches of psychology, sociology, political science, and business administration. Happenings within the boundaries of a group are studied with the collectivity in mind. One of the major classification differentiations has to do with defining the group’s informal characteristics, enabling the exploration into informal group dynamics.

The cluster on organizational culture seeks to delve deeper into the realms of informal group behavior. Formalized goals coupled with individual belief systems of those affiliated with the group establish expected normative conduct among group members. Group values and norms are established within the informal culture of groups. Because of these solidified customs and standards, pressures exist to conform to these practices. Conformity to these norms is what establishes membership in the group. A group’s organizational culture is established by way of its members
adhering to and enacting in an expected fashion to these norms. Those who challenge a group’s belief system or do not integrate well within the informal assembly of the group stand to be the target of projection.

The cluster on shadow psychology investigates literature relating to the ways in which groups maintain and fortify their informal norms. This cluster focuses primarily on the notion of the projected other, whereby an object is brought to focus by the group which is used as a projection of the group’s shadow qualities. Those images that the group does not want to hold are contained in shadow, and frequently manifested in the form of a scapegoat. Collusion and narrow theorizing can house the informal group in corrupt standards.

The cluster on extreme conditions supposes that those groups who operate in extreme conditions are more susceptible to informal attachment and bonding, and in some cases colluded behavior. Groups that are considered high risk in their missions and environment are detailed in this cluster. Members who are exposed to those elements that force them to be confronted with the ever-present theme of mortality develop tight bonds, relying on each other for both formal and informal support.

The cluster on interdependence addresses the extent by which members of high risk teams experience this reliance on each other. Severe environments where the probability of death, either by or to a group member, is imminent can affect how members bear various responsibilities for each other, especially psychologically. This cluster takes the concepts of trust and camaraderie, and examines them through the lens of a high risk team experience. Perceived deviations stand to breach
members’ expected dependences of one another, threatening survivability of the group not only on an informal basis, but quite literally as well.

This study seeks to add insight to the already existing literature on group dynamics of informal factions who operate under extreme conditions. More specifically, this research is founded in the quandary of how the high risk nature of specialized enforcement teams operating under perilous orders in extreme environmental conditions impacts and is impacted by the group’s organizational culture. The study examines the unique organizational culture of these groups, where interdependence and a high degree of shared values drive the group’s informal normative behavior patterns. This culture builds upon distinct customs and rituals needed for the perceived survival of the group. This interdependence can ultimately impact informal subgroup formation and propagate shadow formation.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction and Overview

The research problem for this study was: How does the hazardous nature of high risk teams operating in extreme environmental conditions impact the organizational culture of such groups? The hypothesis considered that those groups operating under such extreme conditions have unique organizational cultures where interdependence and an elevated degree of shared values exist. This culture necessitates members to adhere to distinct customs and practices needed for the perceived survival of the group.

The research design for this study consisted of two meetings scheduled with seven participants. The first meeting encompassed the main experiential interaction designed to evoke the participants’ core experience. A second meeting after data collection and analysis served the purpose of presenting my interpretations of the data to the participants and soliciting further feedback on the research. This research utilized the methodology of Imaginal Inquiry, which is built upon the engaging of various stages of experience, including Evoking, Expressing, Interpreting, and Integrating. ¹

¹ The Evoking phase in the methodology for this study requested that participants experience three items of media, consisting of two video productions and one audio-only production. The overall purpose of this exercise was to expose
participants to depictions of extreme conditions within the context of specialized law enforcement groups. Once exposed to the media, participants were invited to express their experiences of having viewed the segments. This process consisted of two distinct steps: a written, note-taking-style exercise and a conversational interaction. After having viewed the given media segment, participants were asked to engage in a written free-format documentation of any emotional responses that may have been evoked during their viewing. Using their written notes for reference, participants shared their experiences verbally and participated in a dialogue about their experiences.

The Interpreting phase involved identifying key moments, responding to those moments, exploring differences and parallels, and contextualizing with theory and myth. Key moments were identified and initially reflected upon in the first meeting, with further exploration, contextualization, and analysis through the later interpretations of the data. The second meeting helped to facilitate integration, with participants offering further insight to the interpretation of collected data. A more universal integration will later be facilitated by way of publications, articles, and presentations to those teams related to this research.

There were inherent limitations of this study as dictated by the nature and structure of the research design. The demographics of the research participants were restricted to those with either a military or law enforcement background. Participants were screened relevant to those characteristics necessary to influence this study’s data in a sinuous manner, particularly as it related to participants’ abilities to be psychologically aware and articulate their responses to the experiences evoked.
There were also delimitations of this study that I intentionally imposed on the research design. In this research, the nature of the participants’ employment supported the need to suspend the use of recording devices and not collect anything written by the participants. Such recordations are potentially discoverable in the judicial system and could be used in a way not intended for this research. Also, I have limited the number of participants to seven and the number of meetings to two in order to maintain the integrity of both the effectiveness and efficiency of the research. Lastly, the participants’ activities have been limited to written and verbal modes of expression; though art-making or other forms of expression will not be discouraged, they are not be part of the original research design.

Participants

This study is designed to use seven participants. Two extra participants were originally screened and reserved as standbys (for a total of nine initially screened participants) in preparation for possible attrition, but were not used.

The motivational factors for the participants stemmed from their interest in the research subject matter and their willingness to take part in a study that focused on the lives that the participants lead in their work environment. It was the hope of this study that participants would desire further insight into the extreme world they are a part of on a daily basis, how that world has affected them, and how they have potentially affected others.

Recruitment consisted of recruitment flyers. I attempted to diversify the participant pool by drawing from different groups in various areas of the state. There was a large collection of law enforcement and prior military personnel that I drew
from in Northern California. The recruitment flyers were distributed via email announcement and facsimile, as they were the most expeditious methods of circulation.

Demographically, I sought to recruit participants who were male or female, ages 30 to 50, who were either in or had been in specialized law enforcement or military units. No further restrictions related to demographics were applied, such as ethnicity, socio-economic status, religious beliefs, education, or other past experiences or present situations not directly related to this research.

The main characteristics not already listed that participants had were related to their abilities to theorize psychologically, at least in basic terms, including a willingness to be reflexive and accountable and the capacity to express themselves either verbally or in writing about their thoughts or feelings on given matters related to this research. I assessed these characteristics through an initial contact in person and on the phone, using the written screening questionnaire to determine their eligibility.

The screening interviews were conducted in person and on the phone. I did occasionally use email in order to schedule the aforementioned contacts; the actual screening process was not conducted through email exchanges. I then conducted the screening using the questionnaire. I conducted the screening verbally, as the participants’ abilities to respond verbally were important to this study. From the questionnaire, I asked follow-up clarifying questions when needed, but stuck primarily to the questionnaire. Ultimately, the participants were accepted or rejected
based on the results of the screening questionnaire. Refer to Appendix 5 to 11 for the screening questionnaire and other contact scripts.

During my contact with participants, I informed them about the nature of the study. I described the study by advising the participants that I was conducting research into group dynamics and was interested in collecting data related to the various emotions people have while in a group atmosphere. I told them that I was interested in the type of work they do or have done (related to their law enforcement or military background) and that I would encourage them to be reflexive of their experiences within the context of the given vocations. I did not tell participants that I was researching extreme conditions in particular, nor did I use the term organizational culture. I also did not talk about shadow psychology specifically, or any such terms associated with the shadow. I told participants that I considered any emotional response important to this study, encouraging them to be open to the various emotions that may come up during the meetings I was to have with them.

During the initial contact, I conducted the verbal screening interview using the questionnaire. Once the screening was concluded, I told the potential participants that I would get back to him or her within a week, by which time I will have decided whether to reject or accept the participant. For those who were rejected, I contacted them via telephone and informed them of my decision. I contacted those who were accepted by phone and asked if they were willing to participate in the study, re-ensuring they were able to take part in the two meetings necessary for the data collection. Refer to Appendix 4 to 17 for a copy of these scripts.
I discussed confidentially as part of the initial contact, before conducting the screening questionnaire. I opened up every following conversation with a reminder about confidentially. I explained to the participants that their identities were to be kept private, and any of the information that they provided would be used completely anonymously. I explained what information could be used in the research, who would have access to the information, and in what general form it would be presented in, again emphasizing confidentiality.

All meetings took place in an environment most conducive for data collection, as well as an environment where the participants felt comfortable. I discussed with the given participants where they felt the most able to meet where there was total privacy and no interruptions. Because I was meeting with the participants individually, and the modes of evoking experience could be conducted on a laptop computer, I only required that the room was quiet, absent other distractions, had two chairs, an electrical outlet, preferably a table for both the participant and me to write on, and enough space in the room to allow the participant to become engrossed in his or her experience without feeling cramped or awkward.

Informed consent forms were shown to the participants at the beginning of the first data collection meeting. The forms were not signed, and the participants were not required to write anything down on the form. The consent was given verbally by the participant. Refer to Appendix 4, a copy of the Informed Consent Form.
Four Phases of Imaginal Inquiry

One of my intentions during this research was to invite participants to experience various levels of emotional awareness as they related to the extreme conditions under which they had operated in. I further intended for participants to frame these emotions within a relational context, with reference to the groups that they had undergone these experiences. The core experience was evoked in the first of two meetings, with the second meeting designed for feedback, sharing, and periphery experiences.

I first established a container that was conducive for reflexive participation. The format did not specifically call for reflexive pathologizing or call directly for images of the shadow to come into form per se, though there was always room left open for that during the participant’s disclosure when he or she found embodying an image to be supportive. This practice was a bit unfamiliar to these participants. I wanted to make sure the format was not brought forward in such a way that participants felt put off or ultimately shut down the open sharing of their experiences. As a result, the focus for evoking experiencing concentrated on my attempts as a researcher to guide the participants through their journey so that they were attentive to what emotions were being evoked during their disclosure. There was a fine balance between experience before explanation and properly making foundational and preparatory measures to ensure participants’ experiences of sharing were safe and not strained. This was an important component for gaining the greatest amount of information, as well as facilitating and maximizing creative transformation in the participants during their involvement in the process.
Participants were given scripted ground rules of the exercises, including the necessary disclaimers pertaining to disclosure, anonymity, consent, and confidentiality. I did not record my interactions with the participants on audio or video. I limited my recordings to my own note-taking, which did not include participants’ names or specifics that might tend to reveal the identities of the participants.

For evoking experience, my initial intention was aimed at building rapport and generally familiarizing participants with the forthcoming process. I instructed participants to experience three items of media: two video productions and one audio-only segment. The overall purpose of this exercise was to expose participants to depictions of extreme conditions within the context of specialized law enforcement groups.

The first of three media segments was played. The participant was then allowed time to express what he or she had just experienced, both written and verbally. The second media segment was then played; again, the participant was allowed to express his or her reaction to the media in written mode, and then verbally. The same format was applied to the viewing of the final media segment. The following are brief descriptions of the three segments of media:

1) An eight minute scene from the motion picture *Heat*. This fictitious scene depicted a bank robbery where police confronted the suspects as the suspects exited the bank. Subsequently, a long exchange of gunfire ensued, where multiple suspects and officers were shot. The scene is very chaotic and loud, with intense and dramatic confrontations among the involved parties. This
scene is frequently referenced by members in law enforcement for its gripping footage, serving as a medium by which to potentially evoke an affective responsive by the viewer.

2) An audio-only portion of the actual communication between L.A.P.D. officers who were shot and dispatch personnel during the infamous North Hollywood shootout, where two heavily armed gunmen attempted to flee after robbing a bank. There is screaming and panic that can be heard in the background as those involved desperately seek aid from the dispatcher. This audio track is a short snippet of what it is like to be caught within the pandemonium of extreme conditions.

3) A slideshow presentation that I created depicting members of a SWAT team in both live operations and in various training environments. The slideshow was coupled with the audio track, *Serenity*, performed by the band Godsmack. The slideshow shows the team in various states of interaction. None of the participants were in the slideshow; thus, this did not evoke any supplementary personal sentiment in addition to those affects generated by the slideshow.

For expressing experience, the participant partook in a written and verbal exercise in relation to his or her watching the aforementioned media segments. After each segment, I instructed the participant to write on a notepad for at least ten minutes. If the participant needed additional time, he or she was permitted to write additionally for no more than twenty minutes; no participant wrote more than ten minutes.

The style that the participant was encouraged to use was open, as I recommended that he or she use journal, short-hand, notes, or any sort of informal
type of written recordation. I informed the participant that the notes were his or hers to keep (and/or ultimately destroy); I did not ask to view the notes. The written materials were for the sole purpose of the participants’ referencing for the verbal story-telling portion of expressing experience.

After the participant wrote about his or her experience of having viewed the first video, he or she was asked to share his or her experience verbally with me. Participants referenced their notes, but were not bound by them. When the participant was done writing after each media viewing, I initiated a conversation about what the participant had watched, using scripted questions (Refer to Appendix 15 to 17).

I believe that the practice of story-telling ultimately fostered and brought about creative action. The ground rules for this portion of the research asked the participant to be mindful of what he or she was experiencing as he or she shared information, and what emotions were brought up during the course of his or her participation in the research. By focusing the dialogue in a way that evoked complex theorizing, the images in the stories became active and alive. Imaginal Inquiry orients itself in story. Through a mindful exploration of the participant’s unique story, he or she was better able to deepen his or her level of experiencing, thus, ritualizing the experiences. Again, in line with the participatory paradigm, storytelling enables one to become more familiar with his or her cultural history, his or her unique story, through the multiplicative dimensions of relational experience. Participants were encouraged to respond to the questions in verbal, story-telling
fashion. While participants were expressing themselves in this form, they showed affect, and demonstrated various emotive responses.

Participants were asked to share with me some of the things that came up for them while watching the media. They were asked to talk about particular portions of the media that stood out for them. Participants were also asked if they were able to relate any events or experiences that they had in relation to the media presented or if viewing the selected media reminded them of any experiences that they had in the past. What feelings came up for participants while they were watching the media was also a pertinent aspect of both evoking and expressing experience. The absence of emotions while participants were watching the media also served as telling data. Refer to Appendix 12 to 17 for scripts related to the research design and the planned interactions with participants during the meetings.

In the spirit of the participatory paradigm and the experiential learning process, hearing these participants’ lived stories offered new insight into the informal workings of extreme groups. As participants told their stories, the phenomenological energy and vigor associated with re-living such experiences through the voice of the personal narrative evoked soulful sentiment in the participants, and further enriched the nature of the research. Much of the research design revolved around stories of the past. Yet, it too brought present emotive and insightful properties by way of these stories because the mere telling of these stories carried with it such passion. Whenever participants talked about their experiences on the team, they were frequently emphatic and animated, reliving the events as they articulated their happenings on the team.
For interpreting experience, I used primarily a narrative approach, though incorporating a condensation approach was used in conjunction with the narrative approach when I identified those moments in the dialogue that were key to this research. I was particularly interested in those moments where the participant seemed especially emotive in his or her relaying of information. Those flashes of time when participants locked into an expressive state during their stories highlighted those instants where the soul was being triggered. How the subject matter was communicated became crucial over what was being communicated.

The warrior archetype was especially pertinent to this research. I incorporated this theoretical lens when interpreting the data. I also drew from my own personal narrative in order to find parallel themes associated with this archetype. Also, the lens of the shadow was employed when interpreting the data.

I facilitated a second session (divided into two fluid parts) with available participants to present my interpretations of the data to them. This served two main purposes. First, the participants’ feedback helped to authenticate my interpretations of the data, and allowed them opportunities to further supplement my interpretation with their own interpretations of what was experienced. Such solicitation augmented the practices associated with utilizing the participatory paradigm. Secondly, a meeting that focused on the interpretation of the data showed the participants what could potentially be included in the body of the research, and ultimately the dissertation. Any objections by the participants to the specific data to be used in the research was addressed at that time. This acted as Part One of the second session. Part Two embodied the integration of experience.
During Part One of the second session, participants had the opportunity to respond to my preliminary findings. In Part Two, I described in further detail my purpose and intent on conducting this research, and how the participants had contributed to the research. This was at the forefront for integrating experience. I wanted to further explain some of the intent of my research to the participants after the data has been collected. This way, a format was set up to allow the participant to ask any questions or voice any apprehensions concerning what was disclosed, as in Part One. This process was fairly straightforward in that it was mainly an opportunity for participants to feel comfortable with what they had shared. I also wanted to concentrate on honoring the individual participant’s needs for closure at the end of the session.

I challenged participants to bring some of the insight that they might have gained from their role in this research back to their respective groups in an attempt to bring a greater consciousness to the other members.

Ultimately, I hope to bring the final research back to SWAT administrators to facilitate discussions during team trainings and team command meetings about the future of team operations. Additionally, I would like to design a short written article outlining the core findings of my dissertation for distribution to tactical teams and other extreme groups. I feel as though I can reach more people this way in an arrangement that is accessible, easy to comprehend, and short enough in length that others would actually invest the small amount of time that it would take to read the article.
CHAPTER 4

LEARNINGS

Introduction and Overview

This study was concerned with the Research Problem: How does the high risk or extreme nature of specialized enforcement groups, for example SWAT teams, impact the organizational culture of such groups? The research hypothesis supposes that those groups that operate under extreme environmental conditions have a unique organizational culture where interdependence and a high degree of shared values exist; this culture compels members to adhere to distinct customs and rituals needed for the perceived survival of the group. This interdependence is framed in a network of unconscious, habitual standards, ultimately impacting informal subgroup formation and propagating shadow formation.

Cumulative Learning: Collective Survival in a Divided World

To cope with the extreme environmental factors that they are routinely subjected to, specialized enforcement group members can tend to develop intense attachments to their host group. This dynamic can promote a splitting approach to how members relate to influences outside of the group’s boundaries. As such, a constricted type of organizational culture can form as a direct means of coping with such punishing stimuli.
Five learnings resulted from the research data that was collected. Learning One was drawn from the examination of participants’ experiences related to their feelings of attachment to their respective specialized enforcement groups. Participants expressed a deep connection and identification to these groups, linking this sense of attachment to the tactical aspects of policing and military enforcement, and the proverbial chaos that comes with having to partake in such duties in concert with a given collectivity. As such, Learning One states: The presence of extreme conditions in a group environment can likely bring about a perceived sentiment of profound inclusion among group members, where affiliates feel compelled to an allegiance and camaraderie within the identified group structure.

Learning Two reflects participants’ expressions of the need and desire for sustained states of alertness. Participants’ articulations of those factors that determined survivability were linked in part to their ability to condition themselves to cope with anything that might be perceived as extreme; instances of constant acclimatization to intensity for the purpose of flattening affective reactions to extreme stimuli were cited. Additionally, their ability to endure extreme conditions appeared to be based in part on a sustained sense of vigilance. Learning Two states: Continued exposure to operating in a high risk environment enables members of specialized enforcement groups to embrace and endure extreme and intolerable images.

In Learning Three, participants’ polarizing was interpreted. Participants’ expressions concerning their comparative views of non-members, both informally and formally, were partisan and intolerant, especially towards those who did not emulate
sameness with the principles of the participant group members. Learning Three states: Specialized enforcement group members are highly resolute and bifurcated, whereby archetypal shadow formations propagate, such as projection, other-izing and scapegoating.

Learning Four is based on participants’ expressions of shame. Because participants seemed unaware of the ways in which they project their aversion to weakness onto other team members, a shame-based, interpersonal field surging with projection, projective identification, and scapegoating is formed. With fragility perceived as a threat to the team’s ability to physically survive the obligatory risks of the trade, these defensive strategies rebuffing the notion of weakness may aid members in coping with the intensity of their fear and pressure to perform for their own and their colleague’s survival. Learning Four states: Perceived failure and noncompliance with formal and informal values of the organizational culture of specialized enforcement groups leads to archetypal shame.

Learning Five is based upon participants’ experiences of their acute and prolonged exposures to trauma while interacting within the environment associated with specialized enforcement groups. Participants’ reluctance to engage in affect related to such trauma suggests a disassociation with participants’ emotional responses to critical incidents. Dissociation from affect further appeared to be a part of informal group principles, reinforced in the collective setting as a means by which to psychologically manage task performance and team expectations. Learning Five states: The organizational culture of specialized enforcement groups supports an
emotional detachment from imagery related to traumatic events directly associated with the high risk or extreme nature of such groups.

The learnings in this chapter are presented from the six following perspectives: a description of what happened, how the researcher was affected by what happened, the researcher’s imaginal structures present during the research, interpretations of what happened, theoretical concepts assisting in such interpretations, and considerations associated with validity.

Learning One: All for One and One for All – The Draw of Battle Camaraderie

Groups operating in the throes of extreme conditions harbor perceived sentiments of inclusion among members; such adherents are compelled to an allegiance and camaraderie within the identified group structure that feeds a sense of intense causal attachment to their respective specialized enforcement groups.

The data analyzed in this learning was collected by evoking participants’ experiences through the use of audio and video media, followed by data collected through analyzing discussions, expressions, and actions in response to scripted dialogue questions and role-play interactions. To express their experiences, participants were given opportunities to write down any responses that may have been evoked during their viewing of the media segments. Participants were further invited to participate in dialogues about their experiences as well as respond to questions associated with the given media segment. Additionally, after the first media segment, participants were involved in a role-play, where they responded to questions during the role-play outside of personal identity to stimulate an additional mode of dialogue
about their experiences. To preserve anonymity, participants’ names have been replaced with pseudonyms, which appear throughout the Learning’s chapter.

1. What Happened

Participants revealed personal connections and alignments with their respective groups that were defined and distinct. Dialogue related to the relationships participants had with their specialized enforcement groups yielded generally high affects associated with a sense of exceptional belonging and inclusion, sensations of profound camaraderie, and an arcane guardianship and concern for fellow group members, especially related to members’ safety during critical incidents. The frequency of active team deployment, which appeared to be directly related to the size of the specialized enforcement team and its respective department, was noted by some participants as directly affecting their ability to connect with their team.

For example, “Gil” (pseudonym) described his feelings of inclusion as analogous to what he deemed a “Musketeer mentality,” where his sense of belonging to his Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team was embodied by the mantra, “All for one and one for all.” He detailed accounts of a team society, where thrived an intense sense of sameness and uniformity. He further described an absence of individuality while in the presence of his team, stating, “Like a lot of us, I was taught that there was no ‘I’ in ‘Team;’ that’s constantly fed to you because it has to be that way. If you’re in it for yourself, then you need to go work at Target or something.”

When describing how it felt to be part of a group operating under extreme or life-threatening situations, Gil reported instances while participating in SWAT
“callouts” and live operations (as opposed to performing in a training environment) where he lost a sense of self; the team culture took over, better enabling him to deal with the related tasks at hand. This always involved some feeling that he was not only a *part* of a whole, but that he and the team were *the* whole in what Gil described as an “absolute teamwork” fusion phenomenon.² Gil added that without this feeling of wholeness, he would be vulnerable and exposed. Gil directly related his team unity with his ability to feel secure, capable, and focused while in the throes of life-threatening situations.³ Gil related his feeling of inclusion to what was necessary for his sense of safety.

> I have to be able to die for the mission and die for my men. If you’re not like that, you’re no brother to me… What can I do with someone who doesn’t have that mindset and dedication… I mean, no offense, but I’m making sure my guys go home at the end of the night, so you better make damn sure I go home, too.⁴

When reporting outside of personal identity, Gil’s affect was especially high and his gestures animated while speaking about “his” would-be team of detectives involved in the shootout on the *Heat* video segment. His fists were clenched, lightly pounding against his knees, and his voice volume was elevated as he described the concern he had for the detectives in the video segment. Gil described feelings of anger and paralysis as he watched officers “taking rounds” (being shot at); he said, “It’s like having to watch someone in your family get murdered right in front of you, and it’s my fault cuz I was supposed to stop it and I didn’t.”⁵

At times during the slideshow presentation, Gil would smile as he viewed the segment; he would recline in his chair, displaying an open and more relaxed affect. He categorized his experiences on SWAT as positive, connecting a familial
appreciation for not only his team, but other members of SWAT in the greater law enforcement community. Gil continually used the word “camaraderie” to explain the senses of brotherhood and duty in the greater community of the “tactical world,” citing the oftentimes “crazy responsibility” he feels for other team members’ safety, and how the weight of accountability to his team members “should always be on your shoulders.”

Gil routinely showed an elevated affect, relating senses of pride and honor towards his respective team. Gil regularly spoke possessively and masculine of SWAT, terming it “my team,” “my guys,” and “my brothers.”

“Tom” (pseudonym) described his experiences of inclusion as a member of a special operations group in the Marine Corps known as the Fleet Anti-Terrorism Security Team (F.A.S.T.). Tom described instances of feeling included in his team, as well as a deep bonding and kinship with other team members. He spoke of his “Band of Brothers” in relation to the solidarity shared among his team members.

Tom noted specifically that it was in times of crisis that he felt especially bonded to his team. To Tom, crisis represented an initiation on to the team; members who had limited tenure on the team, and thus had not been exposed to the multitude or magnitude of extreme conditions, lacked an informal position on the team. Tom clarified, “They [less-tenured members of the team] are my brothers, but there’s something to be said for earning your place on the team;” he continued, “You gotta be deep in ‘the shit’ at least once with your guys before you can know for sure you can trust them.”
After the slideshow presentation, I asked Tom to describe how he had relied on other members of his team. Tom chuckled, raised his hands in the air and stated, “To survive, man; to live. Pretty simple.” Tom stated that his concern for his teammates’ safeties would often override any safety concerns that he had for himself, though this would vacillate depending on the specifics of the circumstances and who and where the perceived danger was focused upon. He said that the team and the team’s mission took priority over Tom’s individual interests. He referred to it as “the discipline.”

Though Tom’s affect in general was emotionally flat as he spoke throughout the majority of the process, it became more elevated, euphoric, and animated when storytelling about extreme situations he and his group had been involved in. In particular, when asked to describe an example of an extreme situation he was involved in while with his team, Tom spoke more lively and rapidly, recounting an event where his team was being shot at. Tom said that there were two things he remembered most about the event. He initially noticed the absence of movie theme music during the exchange of gunfire. His exposure to such an event was previously limited to fictional cinematic shootout scenes with action theme music. Tom stated, “The shots were so loud, and then it was silent in-between rounds. It kinda hit me that it was real then.” After coming to realize the extent of the situation he was involved in, Tom had feelings of fear, stating that the only thing that enabled him to “press on” was knowing he was supported by his team. He said, “When you’re with people in ‘the shit’ like that, they kinda become a part of you always.”
Another participant, "Leane" (pseudonym), described inclusion dynamics with her SWAT team. Leane prefaced many of her responses by declaring that she was the only female on her team. When asked in what ways she has felt a kinship to other members of her team, she likened her experiences to having an entire family of older brothers. She laughed, stating, "With ‘the guys,’ they’re always looking after me, like an older brother ready to beat up a bully for me." She said that being a part of the team has given her a unique sense of familial belonging, mainly because of “what we’re all thrown into the middle of,” referencing the task environment (extreme conditions) as the primary factor for this sense of attachment.

When speaking outside of personal identity in the role play, Leane voiced concern for the team in the Heat video segment. She continually spoke of having to “help my guys,” and displayed an apprehensive and anxious affect throughout the role play. She said that a sense of belonging comes with “a price;” that price manifested itself as a heavy responsibility and apprehension for the lives of other people, in addition to one’s own life. She said, “They could die because of something I did, or didn’t do. I always ask myself if I’m prepared. It’s ‘game-time.’ Am I the best I can be right now, today, this very second?” She said she felt closest to her teammates when she was involved in live operations with them, but prefaced that she was usually too focused on the tasks at hand in a crisis situation to express anything but her “business face” persona to other members at that time.

After the slideshow presentation, Leane said she felt proud of her team. She spoke in a softer voice than during the previous two video segments. She said that the camaraderie was the true payoff to being a part of her team. Leane added that she
oftentimes “over-identified” with her team, having feelings of attachment towards her peers at the expense of those in her personal life. Leane accounted instances where she had spent time with her team outside of work when she knew she should have been spending time with her family. Leane admitted that she has intentions of quitting her team because of “personal reasons.” Leane said it is one of the hardest decisions she has ever had to make.

Two participants, "Phil" and "Pete" (pseudonyms), had limited exposures to extreme conditions within the confines of their given specialized enforcement teams. However, both participants cited their participation in extreme conditions where partial tactical team involvement was present, which further solidified inclusion dynamics associated with the overall team structure. The fact that the situations did not involve the participants’ respective teams operating as a full body did not affect participants’ feelings of comradeship with team members. Participants were not operating in a specific SWAT capacity, nor interacting with other team members in such a capacity, but were nonetheless involved in extreme conditions with team members who happened to be working in a generalized police capacity during the incidents.

For example, Phil said that although he has never been a part of a live SWAT operation, he has been involved in what he dubbed “life-threatening” situations with officers in his department who were also members of his SWAT team. Although the incidents were not SWAT operations per se, those participating in the events included tactical team members, stating they were still “his boys.” During these events, Phil said that he felt a certain added trust and kinship to his team members who were on-
scene over the other involved officers. Phil said, “I’ve spent time with them [SWAT members], trained with them. Thinking back, they were my ‘go-to’ guys at the time, and after it just reminded me of how much I rely on them.”

Phil stated he had felt a sense of belonging and inclusivity to the various members of his SWAT team during his contacts within and outside of the specific team environment. In times of crisis, Phil described an additional link or connection to those specific team members, stating, “They’re like you’re friends, more than friends, but not social friends like that. I’m not sure what you call them.” Like Tom, Phil cited other members’ increased levels of tenure, experience, and exposure as main factors associated with his increased confidence and connection to the team at given times.

Additionally, as membership and size on his team has fluctuated, Phil cited various degrees of connection. Phil said that his department is a smaller police agency serving a small municipality; his team is a part-time unit, and trains somewhat infrequently, as little as once every six months. The team has not been involved in a “callout” as long as Phil has been on the team. Phil stipulated that his team “trains for the real thing,” adding that the component of real-life scenario testing places one in the “mindset of battle.” He said that every time his team trains, it is an instant bonding experience. He stated, “I feel a part of them and a part of the team. That’s why I signed up in the first place.”

More so than Phil, Pete said that he and his team were involved in a limited number of live operations. Pete stated,

We still talk about it, partially because we don’t have a lot of events like that
to talk about, but mainly because it was a time when we were doing something together, earning our money, and seeing what each other is made of. You learn a lot about people and their limits when thrown into the thick of things. Respect is earned in those times. Once you have respect, you’re a teammate.  

Pete said that his ability to depend on his team members was directly related to how much respect he had for them. How much respect he had for his team members was directly related to two factors: the individual’s integrity, and the individual’s ability.  

If the team member had both of these qualities, the only other factor that would cause Pete to feel a closer bonding or kinship to that member would be “time in the field.”  

Pete would continually use this term synonymously with the phrase “extreme conditions.”  

Phil’s affect was flat to somewhat irritable and disturbed when mentioning the administrative hardships that have negatively affected his team, such as the lack of training, the infrequency of live callouts, and the downsizing of his team. Yet, Phil displayed excitement, raised voice tone, and animated body gestures when speaking of “life-threatening” situations and stories which related to the furtherance of his affiliation with his team members.  

Pete also tended to show a blunted and flat affective response when discussing the particulars of formal administrative politics which have decreased the size and use of his team. Pete showed a raised affect consistent with his accounts of having endured extreme conditions with team members.
2. How I Was Affected

During the beginning portions of the interviews, I generally felt anxious and tense. I initially worried about the logistics of the interview process, concerned that I was going to be judged by the participants on my ability or inability to administer and facilitate a meaningful and worthy dialogue. Because of this projection, I found myself fighting the urge to revert to casual conversation with the participants, much in the way I might converse with members of my own SWAT team. Though I did not deviate from the scripted dialogue, I felt a pull to do so.

As the interviews progressed, I experienced a perceived sense of connection with the participants. I was ever-cognizant of such transference, which again, heightened my apprehension about whether I could efficiently maintain what I believed to be objectivity. Waffling between silently paying attention to my own mirrored affective responses related to kinship, and the cerebral consciousness that came with knowing and monitoring my transference and projections during the process, became challenging at times. However, knowing that I was ultimately going to be responsible for candidly documenting how I was affected in this process enabled me to better allow my affects to internally present themselves more naturally, and also gave me permission to release some control over the raw emotions I was experiencing at given moments. Writing occasional notes focused me, allowed me to be more present with the participants, and relieved much of my overall anxiety.

When participants would use terminology I associated with over-masculine, ego-based lingo, I noticed my wanting to disassociate with and distance myself from the participants. I caught myself occasionally sitting back in my chair and folding my
arms across my chest. The affect felt similar to a contemptuousness I often experience when narcissism and macho posturing find their ways into the SWAT world; my mind would drift to constructs affiliated with “Boy Psychology.” I also noticed my progression from scorn to a curious sense of shame; I began to see the mirror of my ego that the participants had created for me.

During these times, I again began to worry about the dynamics of transference and projective identification. I had to continue to remind myself that no matter what happened with the participant or me, everything was data; I struggled with wanting to label my recordations as good or bad data. I wanted to control the data, knowing full well that it was not “my” data to control.

I did feel validated and excited during those times where participants’ responses were congruent with my research hypotheses. I became even more energized when I supposed that the information I was receiving from the participants would in fact be considered “data” for purposes of this study. Additionally, the more easily that the participants fell into what I perceived to be a more comfortable psychological place during the process, my spirits lifted, too. I associated their comfort levels with the “value” I would place on this process and this research. When I believed the participants were more comfortable, I hoped that the level and depth of their disclosure would be richer and more authentic.

3. Imaginal Structures in Use

Because imaginal structures are psychological models for human experience, they are somewhat unpredictable and obscure, like vacillating phantoms whose
images appear, transform, and reappear as warped effigies of their original forms.

When in a place of soulful psychological inquiry and awareness, I find that these structures are more inviting and are better able to convey their meanings to me more clearly. I, in turn, am able to take in a deeper understanding of the images in-play.

However, as these structures are not fixed, neither is my ability to constantly maintain an open doorway for them to enter and exit my psyche. Regrettably at times, as my reflexivity softens, so does my tendency to allow imaginal structures to inhibit and control the expansion of the knowledge that comes from otherwise soulful learnings.

Initially, and most predominantly, dialogue about members’ senses of belonging within their team-societies activated images and affect associated with my need for acceptance and emotional assimilation. Early imaginal structures that I have developed which are linked to the fear of rejection and the shame of exclusivity were triggered. Dominant cultural ideologies reinforcing the notion that being and feeling accepted by a group (or simply by one other person) means being “acceptable” and of worth, further stimulated older, embedded structures associated with anxieties about loneliness and isolation.

Self images of rejection created by my own personal history and life-story, conspired with archetypal reactivities and imaginal structures to craft a resistance in my willingness to expand and transform my psychological knowledge in this area. These deep-rooted imaginal structures feed on my desire to exist in a participatory paradigm; inclusion under this standard brings me perceived psychological safety and assurance. I sometimes erroneously interpret any departure from this partiality as a
damaging digression, ultimately appearing for me as shame and fear of disgrace and dishonor.

Yet, in general, my involvement in this dissertation project has allowed more of an open exchange with these structures. A willingness to transform older and myopic structures into those that have the ability to cultivate and expand greater psychological meaning has been generated by this dissertation venture, and even more specifically, by this particular learning about camaraderie. Nevertheless, a common structure that was prevalent throughout most of the project materialized from primitive belief systems where gatekeepers of isolation-anxiety loom.

4. Theoretical Concepts Assisting in the Interpretations

When talking of the informal aspects of group conduct, we are essentially focusing on people’s behavior in relationship, and the components of a group’s anatomy that support and allow these informal dynamics to exist and flourish. Selznick concludes that informal group order is directly linked with the ways in which the formal control within a given collectivity is fashioned.  

Tactical team members have distinct social locations and orientations that frame their perceived ideals and normative reference standards. Smith and Berg identify members’ adoptions of these norms as directly contributing to their senses of “belonging.” This is the cornerstone for membership, and the instituting of familial-like bonds; Schein describes this in terms of the organization’s “culture.”

As Spencer notes, a group’s cultural norms “rest upon orientation to a rule or principle” defined by its members, even if those rules have nothing to do with group’s
formal tasks.\textsuperscript{26} Giddens, as well as Horne, extrapolate on Spencer’s notion, recognizing that in order to maintain the stability of this culture, members must faithfully adhere to their established norms; a stabilized group culture not only reinforces informal membership, but bolsters group members’ senses of safety.\textsuperscript{27,28} Gray too recognizes that a tactical team member’s disposition is directly affected by the presence of others, coupled with a surrounding environment of “threat and fear.”\textsuperscript{29}

As Lewin identifies, the phenomenon of informal group “dynamics” not only has to do with how members interact with each other, but also how they are influenced by the conditions that their particular group is exposed to.\textsuperscript{30} The advent of this environmental factor, in conjunction with the tendency for groups to intuitively want to maintain those normative identities which best support the perceived interests of the collective, is what Fraher considers fodder for the archetypal behavior of high risk teams.\textsuperscript{31}

Recall that Fraher, along with Krokos, also notes a team’s mission, especially one involving the component of death, as a key element in establishing a team’s “high risk” designation.\textsuperscript{32,33} Heal, Thorsen, and Tisa specifically regard military and law enforcement’s “requirement to kill” as high risk, reinforcing the interpretative notion that this crisis component further heightens the intensity of team members’ senses of belonging.\textsuperscript{34,35,36}

What participants called “camaraderie” and “family” when referencing their fellow team members to whom they depend on for psychological and physical survival, Grossman characterizes as “team integrity” and cohesive bonding.\textsuperscript{37} Grossman specifies,
The primary factor that motivates a soldier to do the things that no sane man wants to do in combat (that is, killing and dying) is not the force of self-preservation but a powerful sense of accountability to his comrades on the battlefield...among men who are bonded together so intensely, there is a powerful process of peer pressure in which the individual cares so deeply about his comrades and what they think about him that he would rather die than let them down.\textsuperscript{38}

Deikman describes this “interdependency” as a need for familial or parental sheltering, a way in which teams feel protected, especially when encircled by extreme environments or gripped by crisis situations.\textsuperscript{39}

5. My Interpretations of What Happened

The research data yielded two core themes directly related to the first learning: participants strong senses of inclusion with their related groups, and a crisis component which further heightened the intensity of such belonging.

All participants reported elevated senses of informal unions to their collectivities; consistent with literature on informal group formation, participants provided insight into the cultivation of human relationships in these types of groups as familial networks.\textsuperscript{40} Statements made about kinship and bonding reflected participants’ strong affinities for other team members. They identified feelings of responsibility, loyalty, devotion, and duty.

Moreover, participants spoke of such a sense of group cohesion, that their individualities felt absent at times. Recall that Gil spoke of a “team society,” where a sense of one’s self is second to the needs of the team.\textsuperscript{41} Participants all made similar references to their groups as “teams,” where the “discipline” requires one to sacrifice personal interests for those of the team.\textsuperscript{42}
I interpreted these sorts of references as stemming from one of the main informal components that make up the organizational culture of these teams. In order for a group to survive, it requires that its members do not act on behalf of their own selfish interests. Any acts in line with maintaining the customs of the team or that coincide with group norms, are seen as altruistic. This particular data pointed to the notion of membership, and how the pressures to conform to group norms often demand that the individual restructure his or her belief systems in order to preserve the solidarity of the collective.43

Many of the participants’ responses to questions about their teams were often in possessive form. Such intimately personal “referencing” is a common informal practice that further demonstrates the inclusion phenomenon.44 The research data also revealed that the pull for participants to associate with these teams was principally intrinsic, and did not rely on motivational factors outside of internal drives. Phil exemplified this best when he stated, “I feel a part of them and a part of the team; that’s why I signed up in the first place.”45

Data associated with participants’ animated affective responses to questions related to group dynamics further pointed to lively cohesion aspects of informal team allegiance. When describing team behavior associated with extreme conditions, participants’ affective responses were more energetic. What’s more, when allowed to express themselves through the vehicle of role-playing, or through the mode of story-telling, the participants’ affects were even more heightened and vigorous.

Interpretations associated with extreme conditions and the crisis component that tactical teams are tasked with operating under, linked thriving team cohesion and
entrenched informal group propagation with the perilous environment these teams perform in. Recall that Gill related his feelings of inclusion with his need to be safe. His sense of brotherhood was conditional on the notion that a “brother” was someone who would “die for the mission and die for my men.” He also emphasized his familial-like connections with his teammates by revealing the “crazy responsibility” he felt for them, especially as it related to their safety. Leane referenced her task environment as a chief rationale for her sense of strong attachment for her team, stating that she felt closest to her team members during “live operations.” Tom spoke of being in “the shit” (a life-threatening situation) with others, and how such a situation memorializes allegiances among those involved.

This type of data established that adding an extreme environmental element to group dynamics further solidifies the informal gel which bonds the group. It also points to a unique type of interdependence where the anxiety connected with mortality drives group reliance and cohesion ever deeper.

Whenever participants made familial references to their teams’ associations with their extreme task environments, I deduced that they were speaking about interdependence. While speaking outside of personal identity during the Heat video segment, Gil acknowledged that having to watch other officers get shot was like “having to watch someone in your family get murdered right in front of you.” Statements like these showed just how deep participants’ senses of accountability to their colleagues were.

To the participants, relying on their team members meant trusting in those established bonds to truly protect the team in a real sense. Experiencing the various
states of criticality connected with tactical team life necessitates members to rely upon unity to counter perceived and real senses of vulnerability. As such, depending on each other psychologically corresponds with depending on each other to survive physically.

6. Validity Concerns

Identifying and transparently declaring the researcher’s subjectivities, biases, and paradigms can institute validity. Also, realizing that “certainty” and “truth” are never born without first honoring the relativism of the lenses by which all parties involved view information, is key to legitimizing the data presented throughout the dissertation process. Learnings develop validity as the capacity of the researcher’s tolerance for intolerable images and imaginal structures increases.

This awareness also helps in identifying any potential transference or projection issues that surface during dialogues with the participants. Additionally, ensuring that interpretations are supported with theoretical concepts or, if such theoretical references are unavailable, are explained with pragmatic and specific diligence, facilitate a more foundational, supportive understanding of the knowledge acquired.

**Learning Two: Extreme Is as Extreme Does – Preparedness, Survivability, and Vigilance**

Survivability amongst groups operating in extreme environments was comparatively linked to their abilities to prepare for and maintain states of sustained alertness and to condition themselves to endure extreme and intolerable images.
When participants were questioned about the affects that were activated for them during the media segments, recurrent references to mental conditioning and psychological preparedness surfaced. Participants frequently spoke of the need to survive in extreme conditions as often being contingent on one’s ability to access an adaptive tolerance to acute and prolonged stresses. Participants consistently cited an ability to endure extreme conditions because of a sustained sense of vigilance.

1. What Happened

When asked about what emotions came up for him while watching and participating in the media segments and role-play, Gil spoke of “that place you go [in your mind], put on your ‘game face,’ and handle business,” whenever a situation presents itself where one must potentially take “swift violence of action” against a hostile threat. Gil described a reactionary excitability that occurred anytime he was in tactical situations; he stated,

I have to train to win, every time...not just ninety-nine percent of the time, but every time. The one time I don’t win, is the time I don’t survive, or someone else doesn’t survive... I know I’m not invincible, but I have to have that same sort of confidence so I can do my job. It’s not like ego; it’s just, I can’t be asleep at the wheel. I have to be ready at any time to ‘be ready.’ I’m not some spaz; anything but that actually...but I do have to get fired-up!

As Gil spoke of being ‘fired-up,’ he displayed an excited affect. His voice rose and sped up, as the intensity on his face increased; his brow was furrowed as he stared at me directly. He also became more animated with his hands.

During the role-play scenario after having watched the Heat video, Gil was asked how it felt for him to see the bank robbers coming out of the bank. Gil shook his head from left to right, put his hands in the hair, and responded, “Game-on. Let’s
do this. They brought the fight to me. They dictated my actions, my response. And now here I am, ready to play. Fuck it; it’s on! It’s time to do what I get paid to do.”

He talked about feeling excited and anxious.

Gil said that there was always an element of fear that existed when he has been in similar situations, but that he has had to suppress it in order to best focus on the duties he was tasked with. He stated, “It all comes into play: the honor and duty of why I chose this job in the first place, the training kicks in, and me mentally preparing myself for the fight.” Gil also said, “And I’ll tell ya something else; my guys better be ‘dialed-in’ too, or we’re all fucked.”

Gil said that he looks forward to “SWAT callouts.” He stipulated that a callout meant that someone was usually in danger; as such, he did not necessarily want there to ever be a situation where someone could be in a position of peril. He said his job was to protect people and save lives, not to wish for people to be in danger. However, he said, “If it was gonna happen anyway; I’m glad I’m getting the call to go.”

Gil did disclose that he usually feels like he is in a state of preparedness, trying to be mentally primed for the next callout. Gil admitted that part of the “price” one pays for having to always be “at the ready,” involved a hyper-vigilance he would often maintain, even during times when he was not surrounded by extreme conditions.

He added,

You could be walking down the street off-duty and something could happen; you gotta be ready...you can’t undo that awareness. How would it look if I was walking down the street, some guy started shooting people right in front of me, and I did nothing? The headlines would read, “Suspect kills ten victims while off-duty SWAT cop does nothing.” People’s expectations of me are higher, so my expectations of me have to be even higher than that.”
During the role-play, when Tom was asked about what it felt like as Vincent Hanna to initially see the robbers exiting the bank, he replied, “I know it's in that moment, that defining moment when it’s up to me...me, to fix that problem. I better be right in the head...and ready.”

Like Gil, Tom also stated that being “right in the head” meant having to live his life “mentally prepared” all of the time, “pushing away the emotions I don’t need, and using the ones I need to get the job done; to be alert and ready.”

Tom recounted another scene in the movie *Heat* (from a time in the past where Tom had seen the entire movie - not presented during this research), when Hanna talked about having to always be “on edge.” Tom related to Hanna’s character when Hanna said, “I gotta hold on to my angst. I preserve it because I need it. It keeps me sharp, on the edge, where I gotta be.”

Tom referenced his “Marine Corps discipline” when describing his ability to endure “some pretty wild shit.” He said,

> In the military, away from home, it’s worse; you’re always wondering what’s gonna happen to you and your buddies. But police work is kinda the same, especially cuz a lot of times you never know who the enemy is until ‘it’s on.’ Gotta be ready, even if you’re ‘off duty.’ It’s hard to unplug.

Tom believed that a tactical team member’s “love for the job” is what has to drive him or her to “always have it [a ‘tactical mindset’] going on in your head; it affects everything you do; and if it doesn’t, shame on you, [because] it should.” Tom quoted actor John Lithgow in the movie *Cliffhanger*, where he said, “Do you know what real love is? Sacrifice!”

According to "Carl" (pseudonym), the ability to condition oneself to endure extreme facets of life with limited or flat affect is an attribute. “It shows that you can
deal with shit, that you’re not some pussy or something who gets distracted by a dead body or something stupid.”

Carl said that someone who is not always honing his ability to stay mentally prepared, and who is unable to put their “business face” on instantly, does not belong on a tactical team. Like Carl, "Todd" (pseudonym) added,

> It’s okay to get worked-up for an ‘op’ [operation]; you want that in your teammates...all of them. You drop into that mindset; that’s how you prepare, get focused. You can’t start acting like a little girl with a skinned knee every time you see something shocking. That’s not what we get paid to do.”

All participants spoke of their “need” to always maintain a sense of alertness. Todd said that his sense of “awareness” is always “on” to some degree; “you can’t just shut it off when you go to Disneyland or something.” For Todd, stages of his vigilance were analogous with a traffic signal. He said, “You’re never red! You should never be asleep. You may be yellow when you’re at home, and green on a callout; but you’re never red like the rest of the world...besides, it’s more fun being green anyway. I like it.”

For some participants, including Leane, Phil, and Pete, doubts about competency would oftentimes drive the desire for intense states of being. These participants noted that one of the primary factors in wanting to be in extreme conditions, had to do with honing their skills and training themselves to be even more alert and poised. For example, Leane stated, “I worry about letting others down. The only way to fix that is to train more, and always be thinking about stuff. You’re supposed to ‘what if’ every scenario in your head, so when it’s time, I deliver.”

Phil added, “When I look down the front sight of my gun, my first thought isn’t who will die, it’s more like, ‘Shit, I hope I don’t screw this up.’” Phil reiterated that his
fear of failure in a given situation extended to his overall fear of letting his teammates down. For Phil, the impact of failure on any level was “unsat” [unsatisfactory].

Vigilance was often equated with competence. The most competent members were typically part of what Pete called “active teams.” Connections between lack of team activity (live callouts) and diminished mental fortitude were expressed by participants, especially Phil and Pete. Fear of becoming “soft” was common among participants. For example, Pete described “losing your edge when the team stagnates.” Like other participants, Pete expressed feelings of melancholy when his team did not train often nor have any live operations for extended periods of time. He said, “You look like Tarzan, but play like Jane; it’s stupid. You don’t want your team to be a bunch of junior varsity posers; that’s ‘bush league’ [amateurish].”

All participants admitted that other team members regularly reinforce the belief that senses of constant readiness and mental resilience are essential to performing the mission-critical job functions that tactical team members carry out. Carl said that his other teammates associate this with having to become a “hard and solid” team member. His team will frequently use mantra-like expressions, such as, “Go hard or go home,” or, “Pain is simply weakness leaving your body.” When choosing new applicants for his SWAT team, Gil added, “You want someone who wants it, the action of it; you want someone who drives to the storm, not away from it. The team knows that’s the expectation.”

Participants’ affects were generally excited and aroused, especially during the role-play questions about their reactions to the Heat video segment. Some participants displayed affects that were contradictory to their statements. When Carl
spoke of his need in maintaining an unruffled and controlled demeanor in crises situations, he would become animated and excited.

2. How I Was Affected

When participants answered questions in the role-play, I was surprised how excited they became, and how willing they were to share their thoughts about what it felt like to prepare for and endure extreme conditions laden with potentially “intolerable” images (by normative standards). I too felt increasingly excited as they spoke about their vigilance. I was energized at the points in this learning that arose out of these dialogues.

I noted potential transference influences as I fought off the urge to equate their reported vigilance with their dedication to the job. At times, the lines between my interpretations of their hyper-alertness and my projections about their competence blurred, especially during portions of the dialogues where participants described their desires to be “called out” in live operations. I noticed the desire to commend the participants on their commitments and sacrifices.

I was not expecting this data to morph into this type of learning. I was surprised at how the data itself began to shape “Learning Two” with little guidance from me. It caused me to become excited and anxious about entering into portions of my own shadow that were connected to the participants’ data.

I empathized with the participants’ disconnects with their lives outside of work, and, as Tom described, their abilities to “unplug.” I wondered if and how they were ever able to truly relax. I sporadically felt restless as I fought off
occasional thoughts about my own inability to find a sense of calm in my life. Asking follow-up questions about the participants’ mindsets in extreme conditions helped to temper such distractions, and better focus my efforts on gathering the participants’ data. Noting and documenting my affect during these times in the dialogues further helped to center my thoughts and better direct the overall inquiry.

I felt joy and happiness with certain participants’ usages of slang verbiage during portions of the dialogue process. I found some of their metaphors refreshing and familiar. Yet, I would sometimes feel unsettled, placing judgments on the verbiage they would use, deeming them unprofessional, vulgar, sexist, or egotistical. I felt shame when such labels passed through my mind.

3. Imaginal Structures in Use

Participants’ fervor and attachment to their vigilance prompted my own desire to explore my dependencies to various psychological constructs which I have convinced myself I need to have at the forefront in order to “survive.” Imaginal structures related to trauma framed and activated images concerning my reliance to my own physical and emotional survival. Thoughts around the need for this vigilance versus a psychological desire to maintain and enact it for a perceived, superfluous (and possibly unconscious) motive, caused the most activity in imaginal structure stimulation.

Distinguishing between a real or perceived necessity for readiness in order to best deal with potentially intense states of being activated imaginal structures around the notion of protection and safety. Deeply ingrained imaginal structures that acted as
defense and coping mechanisms for me in the past were triggered by my felt sense of the participants’ reluctances to let their emotional guards down. I felt like the data in this particular learning was closer to their hearts than they (and I) realized at the time.

Images of the masculine warrior archetype, and the armor one uses to protect oneself, surfaced. In order to talk about and explore the armor one uses, one must admit to and reveal the armor’s underlying vulnerabilities; once one knows how something is built, one then knows how to better destroy it. Because of this dynamic, moving into deeper inquiry about vigilance felt strained at times, and was met with some resistance by the participants and me.

Imaginal structures associated with belonging also emerged. The more I felt as though I related to the participants’ feelings of needing their vigilance to survive, the more I felt a sense of connection to them. Such transference accentuated those imaginal structures that seek to avoid the pains of isolation and, instead, yearn for acceptance and support.

4. Theoretical Concepts Assisting in the Interpretations

Tacticians assert that humans have an instinctive psychological opposition toward killing other humans. According to Heal and Grossman, most would rather yield or flee from threats of aggression. However, because this is frequently not an option for tactical team members in crisis situations, they must constantly condition themselves to respond to acts of violence. Recall that Bliss states,

If you take posture and cannot carry out what you threaten, you either have to surrender or retreat; these are not typically options of a [SWAT] operator.
Only if you are overpowered can you make these considerations. They are paid to bring the fight to the suspect. An operator must come to terms with this fact before they encounter the suspect.\textsuperscript{78}

As both Bliss and Tisa contend, because team members must come to terms with the progressive reality that killing a suspect can happen, and it is their duty to carry out that act, they are constantly in a state of readiness, preparing for the potentiality of that very moment.\textsuperscript{79}

Wavell and Gray, along with Bliss and Tisa, note that an “encompassing environment of threat and fear” affect one’s general day-to-day disposition; the fear of dying and the task of having to kill magnifies how one experiences his or her environment.\textsuperscript{80} Bliss and Tisa add that team members rely on other team members to filter how they experience this fear, thus accounting for the promulgation of common collusion and pressures to conform regarding heightened readiness as a need for survivability.\textsuperscript{81} The organizational culture reinforces a team member’s “need” to stay alert at all times, even when outside the team’s extreme task environment.

\textbf{5. My Interpretations of What Happened}

Participants’ disclosures of those phenomena which drive their desires and needs for ever-active vigilance were key to corroborating how one’s extreme environmental conditions, coupled with the requirement to carry out certain critical job functions, can impact both individual and organizational behaviors. Without some sort of adaptive tolerance to the oftentimes-intolerable images associated with extreme environments, members of high risk teams are subject to paralysis. With a
failure to act not a viable option, members have to condition themselves for intense states of being in order to perform their jobs.

When participants spoke of their needs to be alert and mentally prepared while performing their formalized task functions, for example, being involved in a SWAT operation, I interpreted this to be both a learned and instinctive necessity constructed in order to best deal with extreme environments. Part of doing the job in those particular situations includes being mentally prepared to involve one’s self in conditions where there is the most significant of risks. I interpreted terms such as “game face,” “dialed-in,” “at the ready,” and “in the green” to be participants’ ways of commonly explaining the concentrated and motivated mind-frames they must be in to survive in such non-permissive environments.

High risk teams are essentially tasked with handling problems, usually under the most grave of circumstances. Participants conveyed the need to maintain a controlled sense of alertness and responsiveness to deal with these critical problems. Team members expressed “the discipline” they needed to adopt and maintain a courageous calm in order reduce disorientation and chaos in their own minds in response to or in preparation for their insertion into a disorganized environment; then they are best able to influence and control that environment and neutralize any potential threats to further disrupt that environment. Not feeling adequately prepared to respond to these situations increases participants’ anxiety, leaving them with feelings of vulnerability, weakness, and incompetence.

Also, with this practice of preparedness comes habitual characteristics related to a team’s cultural norms. When participants made references to their team’s
expectations of them in this area, I interpreted this as relating to the intertwined relationship between the conviction that trained tactics, practices, and mindsets increase survivability, and the informal pressures of interdependence which fuel this regimented belief system. In knowing that they have a cohesive group to support their senses of survival, participants seem to feel even more empowered to maintain these states of vigilance; to temper this vigilance would be to compromise their aptitude and edge, as well as their loyalty to the team.

I also interpreted participants’ needs to always maintain vigilance while not actively involved in crises as stemming from deeper, more ego-driven heroic styles of leadership. Comments related to their “needs” to maintain alertness illustrated desires to exert control and exercise their authorities and directions in a general sense. For example, Tom stated that it was “more fun” being in a state of constant readiness than not. 82 This behavior further parrots the “command and control” adage commonly reinforced in military and policing fields. 83

Participants showed excited affects and emotionally strong desires for the conditions they have set for themselves, both on and off-duty. Aside from Leane, who voiced her intentions to quit her high risk team for “personal reasons” (as mentioned in Learning One), none of the participants spoke of desires to leave their teams, change their responsibilities, or modify their ways of interpreting their extreme or benign environments. Tom’s “love for the job,” as well as Gil feeling “glad” to receive callouts, spoke to the pleasure component to their continuous applications of vigilance.
6. Validity Concerns

Validity was founded in the awareness and understanding of various imaginal structures which arose during the process, coupled with the acknowledgement that perceptions and lenses can affect paradigm construction. Though any interpretations are laced with subjectivity, they are grounded in recognized edification. Empirical understandings to data which could conceivably be more qualifiable in nature were also substantiated by theoretical concepts from professional sources, further assisting in validating interpretations and findings.

Also in this learning, much of the understanding of the data was a direct result of participants’ self-reporting. Participants explained both the need and desire for vigilance, adding comments on their calls to intense states of being. Though there are gaps in self-reporting analysis, there are some basic accuracies that are inherent in such accounts; thus, reinforcing the validity of this learning.

Learning Three: Stained Glass – The Shadow of Shared Values

Specialized enforcement groups’ relative views and attitudes are often partisan and intolerant toward non-members or those who do not emulate sameness with the principles of the participant group members; subsequently, archetypal shadow formations propagate among such group members, such as projection and scapegoating.

In this learning, participants explored how they view others inside and outside of their team environments. Questions referencing exclusivity prompted discussions on those forces within participants’ given tactical teams which have eclipsed
participatory belief systems. Participants’ categorical expressions of positional and situational orientations developed when questioned about some of their interactions with other group members. Participants spoke particularly on such forces in relation to their views of others assigned to particular formal “units” in their given collectivities. Further dialogues surfaced perceptions that participants maintained of others who were not part of their formal groups. In these cases, participants showed intense polarization when speaking of the comparative views they had of others to whom they had identified informally as non-members.

1. What Happened

As were camaraderie and inclusivity foundational themes of the first two learnings, so too were enmity and exclusivity key premises in this and the following learnings. The tension between these poles of belonging fueled participants’ intolerances of others. Those who participants did not resonate sameness with, both formally and informally, were viewed as “other than,” often considered adversaries of the participants. Individuals or groups of individuals who did not correspond to participants’ particular reference groups were subject to the psychological mechanisms of displacement and projection. According to participants, the organizational culture of their teams often reinforces other-izing as a means and justification of survivability. In general, all of the participants’ affects were elevated and excited as they spoke about “others” within and outside of their teams.

When questioned about having felt “let down” by other team members, participants demonstrated an immediate willingness to not only address the specific
technical deficiencies of other team members, but added how they viewed those members on more informal levels. For Gil, perceived incompetency in another member meant justification to dismiss that member from informally belonging to the otherwise “squared-away” members of the team. He stated, “Everyone hates it when some ‘newbie lame’... some three-legged antelope in the herd, gets on [the team]. It’s a bummer for everyone else on the team; just leave, please! I just ignore them and try to work around them.”

Gil talked about “one piece of shit, glory-hound” team member who Gil perceived as always seeking superficial recognition and attention; Gil said that having “that kind of ego” is a betrayal to the team, “placing selfishness in front of the team,” and was good reason to discount a member’s informal “place” among his or her teammates. Gil continued, “Someone like that ‘outs’ himself on the team...he sabotages himself. We don’t have to help him do it.”

Carl also cited “image [and] ego” as reasons to cast out a team member from the remainder of the team; Carl said that every team member has an ego, but added, “There’s a big difference between confidence and ego...thinking you’re something you’re not... You’ll get someone killed thinking like that.”

Gil, Carl, and Tom admitted that they have “hated” certain members on their teams. Carl stated that his disgust for certain members stemmed from their “laziness” and “big heads.” Carl added,

It’s always the lazy ones who think they’re ‘the shit.’ They wear the tight shirts, watch too many SWAT movies, and make us all look like idiots. They’re posers... I hate everything they stand for; a bunch of wanna-be celebrities. There’s nothing worse than a baby SWAT cop who thinks he’s God’s gift. They don’t know sacrifice... It’s always just about them... selfish. Retards.
Like Carl, Tom also cited other team members’ lack of “commitment [and] sacrifice” as motive for informally distancing himself from them. When asked how he thought his interactions with these members were affected by his feelings about them, Tom said, “I just stay away [from them] if I can help it. They reflect all of us...one rotten apple. I’m not like that, but we wear the same uniform. I hate that.”

Leane said that she had a high degree of distrust and animosity for members of her team who acted like “egomaniacs” and “show-offs,” believing that “you can’t trust someone who’s only in it for himself.”

Phil differentiated between what he called “A player” and “B player” subgroups when describing informal hierarchies within the team. He said, “Everyone knows who the ‘A players’ are; it’s just a fact of life. Then you got the ‘B players’ who never step-up [and] probably never shoulda’ been cops.... now they’re my partner? [I] can’t respect that.”

Phil also said, “I’m not here to be someone’s babysitter or cuddle-buddy. I have friends on the team, but those guys [‘B players’] aren’t them.”

Participants added that team members’ formalized assignments within their teams also influenced informal division and separation. Participants spoke of the formalized sub-structures or “units” within their specialized enforcement teams and the informal divisions that have occurred between the various units; those units mentioned included hostage negotiators, entry team members, sniper or scout units, bomb squads, and dispatchers. Pete likened the dynamics among these groups to “sibling rivalry.”

Gil, Carl, and Phil stated that these groups are often segregated and labeled with certain stereotypes, many of which participants categorized as
“justified” and “true.” Gil, an entry team “operator,” stated, “It’s kinda’ like a running joke, but there’s a lot of truth to it.” He continued,

The negotiators just sit at the C.P. [Command Post] with the dispatchers and ‘the brass’ [administrative personnel] talking on the phone and sucking on Starbucks; the perimeter guys [snipers] are too scared to go through the front door, so they just hide out in the bushes; my guys [entry team] are the ones who go in and actually take care of business… We all joke about it, but… you know. It’s more like talkin’ shit about each other. Sometimes people get too sensitive about it.94

Participants all believed that the informal hierarchies on their specialized enforcement teams typically arranged the entry team members at the apexes of the echelons, and descended by order of what was considered the most dangerous to the least dangerous positions on the team. Tom called the entry team members “the stars of the show... even if the ‘Sierra guys’ (snipers) are usually the ones to get an actual shot off.”95 Positions where members had a higher probability of encountering suspects were seen by participants as the most important and esteemed. Dispatching and communication personnel were considered the least revered, especially because they were civilian employees (not sworn peace officers).

All participants believed that assignments to particular units demanded members’ allegiances to those units. Competitive and prejudiced scrutiny among members of the various units was common and accepted behavior. All participants showed disgusted affects when speaking about others with whom they thought did not “deserve” recognition for being considered part of their specialized enforcement teams. Again, civilian employees, and those sworn or military personnel who did not have occasion to have direct contact with the “target,” “suspect,” or entity creating the violence, were seen as substandard. Participants would shrug their shoulders,
smirk, and shake their heads in discouragement when talking about these other
members of their teams. Gil said that they “did not really count,” and were, at best,
“support” personnel for the “actual” members of the team.\textsuperscript{96}

Participants admitted that they are sometimes less personable and more curt
with others who they viewed as having less dangerous responsibilities. “Let’s be
honest, who do you respect more, the ones sitting in the radio room drinking coffee,
or the ones out there ‘doing’ the actual job?”\textsuperscript{97} Todd said,

I know how to be professional; and we all are. But you know the truth is
dispatchers and negotiators wanna wear the SWAT patches just like the rest of
us, like we’re the same or something. They always whine about being part of
the team, but they don’t do what we do. I’m not sayin’ I’m better than them,
but come on, don’t act like we do the same job…and then you’re going to
complain if I’m not friendly enough to you? Now I’m all of a sudden a jerk
cuz I’m not your best friend or something? How annoying is that?!\textsuperscript{98}

Leane admitted that she is more emotionally distant to female dispatchers and
negotiators because she believes that they reflect negatively on her as a female.

Leane believed that her gender is always in question by her male tactical team
members, “and all it takes is one other female to make us [females] look bad.”\textsuperscript{99}

Participants also spoke critically about persons outside of their teams,
specifically other law enforcement and military personnel who were not in
specialized fields or a part of participants’ tactical teams. All participants cited
“respecting” other officers as a whole, but admitted that officers who were not tactical
team members were not “part of what we [team members] have.”\textsuperscript{100} Pete stated,

“Some [officers] aren’t up to it [being on a tactical team]; that’s fine, but it does say
something about what they’re about…the jump from officer to operator is a big one.
You don’t get it unless you’ve done it.”\textsuperscript{101} Phil said, “You find out what most of
them [tactical team members] are made of; other guys [non-members], you don’t really know, except that they’re too afraid or whatever to be on the team.”

2. How I Was Affected

I was initially unsure if participants would speak frankly or critically about their perceptions of other members on their teams. I felt as though the dialogue questions offered opportunities for participants to talk about their “negative” feelings about informal tactical team life, but I was unsure how much guidance it would take from me to attempt to siphon that information from them. I had a great deal of doubt about how much information would actually be shared with me regarding participants’ positions on how they viewed “others” within their teams.

I was confident that participants would talk about non-tactical officers, non-law enforcement personnel, and non-military personnel as “others,” but I wanted the focus of “organizational culture” to center more on how members viewed other members within and outside of the informal bubbles which seem to wax and wane within the larger formalized team. Ultimately, I was surprised at the amount of information that was shared. From a statistical standpoint, I would have always wanted more data. However, I felt relieved that participants shared more than I had anticipated. Even still, I worried (and continue to worry) that those outside of law enforcement would underestimate how significant it was that participants spoke as freely as they did on this particular matter. The maxim, “What happens on SWAT, stays on SWAT” was silently repeating itself in my head every time a participant shared information that I perceived as “snitching,” and I was encouraging it. This
was the learning that I was most concerned about in terms of my betrayal of the tactical community; it is what almost caused me not to do this study in the first place. It was a very conflicting feeling.

Despite my internal struggles and reservations about this learning, I felt engaged and energized with the participants, especially in their candidness about “egotism” and its relation to laziness. At times, I had to closely monitor my own urges to over-identify with participants on this topic, as it was a direct mirror into my own struggles with judgments I have of team members on my tactical team.

I especially felt the vigor of Gil and Carl as they relayed their views of others on their teams. I felt as though I had to revert to the academics of reflexivity and projection in order to avoid becoming too drawn-in to the affective attraction of their words. I was confused and dissatisfied by Pete’s seeming unwillingness to talk about the culture within his team, beyond what he had mentioned about his needing to respect team members’ integrity and ability in order to accept them (referenced in the first learning), and his brief reference to “sibling rivalry.” I thought that his apparent reluctance to disclose further might have some correlation with his limited exposure to extreme conditions with his team, or might possibly just be related to his strong sense of allegiance to his team members; yet, I still felt unfulfilled with his data.

3. Imaginal Structures in Use

Much like in the first learning, dialogue associated with participants’ inclinations to separate themselves from other members in their teams activated
imaginal structures in me which were linked to pressures to assimilate and belong. I also felt a transference pull with some participants, where my feelings toward members of my own tactical team were coalesced and redirected toward those meanings I was interpreting from and attaching to the participants. I initially dealt with this dynamic by attempting to intellectualize the occurrences. Until I acknowledged the underlying emotions of fear and shame, I was often stuck in an overly-academic defense mechanism which prevented me from experiencing the deeper emotive meanings that were subtly dancing through our dialogues.

Images and affect associated with power and supremacy were noticeably juxtaposed with personal and archetypal vulnerability. In my identification with the forces associated with a desire to influence and direct others, I was drawn to condemn the same team members that the participants were judging. I felt a subsequent connection to the participants particularly because of this transference. The gatekeepers of control were omnipresent, as were those of belonging and rejection.

The shadowy structure of betrayal also emerged, spawned from the shame of participating in a study which allowed and advocated dialogue and exploration into the deficiencies of other tactical team members. An image of the tattletale surfaced, somewhat laughably for me, in the form of Cindy Brady. The need to feel wanted by a parental figure because of acquired information that tended to discredit “the other” who competed for the parent’s attention, brought symbolism to my primitive fear of abandonment. Hesitation on the part of some participants to speak openly about their perceptions of fellow team members, and the heightened emotional conveyances from participants when they did in fact speak to that regard, lent
credence to the notion that the lurking figures of judgment and shame were interlinked and at play.

4. Theoretical Concepts Assisting in the Interpretations

Many of the foundational theoretical concepts associated with the first learning are also directly applicable to this learning. As Smith and Berg state, just as tactical team members have distinct social locations and orientations which frame their senses of “belonging,” so too do they have reference standards and identities for those values that are viewed as not belonging to the group. As Schein and Spencer affirm, though one may be a formal member by assignment, informal rules and norms may still define that individual as a non-member in the shifting eyes of organizational culture. Some of those “rules” may affect and be related to the formal assignment, but are intertwined with informal conventions set by variable informal standards.

Jung established the notion that the collective shadow holds a group’s inner opposite, housing those cultural ideals that distinguish what is rejected or accepted in a group. Jung stated that the unconsciousness of the shadow, of the opposite, is what leads to projection. Guggenbuhl-Craig also speaks on projection, collusion, and those collective shadow behaviors which can often occur in social groups; “all that is not acceptable in the cultural milieu to which [an] individual belongs” can manifest itself in displaced forms. In his examination of a group’s shadowy need to displace that which it rejects, Samuels sees projection as a group’s attempt to unconsciously institute a personified split between the “superior [and] inferior.” Like Jung,
Samuels notes a link between this type of splitting and a sometimes distorted “moral” lens, further enabling shadow projections. Participants’ attacks on others “outside” of the “in” group support Wehr’s notion that because individuals of a collective strive to shift adverse qualities away from their “in” group, they have a tendency to displace perceived negative values onto others outside of the informal group’s boundaries. Devaluing others because of their inadequacies allows group members to establish a “systemization of truth,” building an “objectivity” which assures group members that others are indeed as they are being perceived. This reinforces the cycle of displacement and projection.

Participants’ concentrations on allegiances with their informal groups were sharply polarized by their abilities to “other-ize.” Zweig and Abrams state that some individuals and groups concentrate on the “socially disowned parts” of life, forming scapegoating and enemy-making. Guggenbuhl-Craig links this dynamic with a group’s need to find power through positional judgment. As tactical team members’ needs to feel safe in an extreme and unpredictable environment increase, so do their needs for power. With this comes the desire to “frame” a group identity that is fixed and stable. As Omer considers, a primitive “heroic” stance can develop in highly resolute groups; everything outside becomes an embodiment of what has to be rejected by the group.

As Giddens suggests, reinforcing informal membership is accomplished, in part, by establishing what are not acceptable normative values in the group. Part of adhering to their established norms includes the predilection for projecting perceived informal threats to these standards. This is the shadow of Deikman’s
“interdependency,” where group members cast out non-compliant members to feel safe and protected so as to conceivably best function in real-world environments which are extreme and engulfed in crisis.118

5. My Interpretations of What Happened

Participants’ statements supported the notion that those who did not resonate with the informal reference identities of other team members became products of projection. Participants were highly resolved, and displayed an elevated affect when disclosing their thoughts on how they viewed other members who did not emulate sameness with their ideals and principles. Certain forms of polarization seemed as though they were accepted, and even open practices among member interactions, especially when coupled with the formal separations of different specialized units, such as the comparisons among the entry team members, snipers, negotiators, and other units.

Many of the participants’ comments about others with whom they did not informally accept centered around perceived incompetence and inabilities. Laziness, lack of commitment, selfishness (isolative; unable to operate in a ‘team’ environment), inexperience, and over-confidence were some of the deficiencies mentioned by participants. When participants spoke of these behaviors in others, I interpreted this to be a constructed necessity designed for the formal and informal “survival” of the team.

In a formal sense, much like a pack mentality, the strongest survive; the weakest link can compromise the integrity of the entire group. In a very real sense, a
behavior trait such as over-confidence could lead to hazardous and unsafe conduct while in a crisis. This could cause team members to be killed. Someone who is incompetent, for example, potentially poses a real threat to the safety of the team. I considered that one of the factors driving participants to become so unsympathetic and adversative about the deficiencies of their peers was because of a real concern for the safety of themselves and other team members. Carl epitomized this trepidation when he stated that overconfidence and ego could “get someone killed.”

However, I did interpret this belief system to not be without its shadow, whereby the lines between the safety concerns one might have for a particular team member’s deficiencies, were blurred by the lure of engineering and projecting supposed deficiencies in a team member as a means to informally ostracize that member from the collective. It is one thing to be worried about the safety of your team members, and another to generate projected intolerance upon others who do not emulate similitude with the tactical team ideal.

I perceived the propensity for calculated, concentrated projection more when the participants spoke of those qualities in others which seemed to affect the image of the team, rather than the safety of the team. Participants would validate their rebuffing of others because of their perceived incompetence under the pretext of safety concerns, yet, would use highly critical terminology when referencing others. Participants disclosed that they had “hatred” for other team members, branding them as “retards,” “lames,” “idiots,” and “pieces of shit.” Affects among participants were high and energized during these dialogues. This further validated the idea that the
reference identities of specialized enforcement team members can be highly acute and piercingly divided.

6. Validity Concerns

Participants reported openly about their perceptions of other members on their teams who they believed did not conform with the recognized positional orientations essential for normative informal assimilation on the teams. Talking about and outwardly displaying their highly contextualized sensitivities to those who do not conform to the tactical team principle, brought about compelling data which pointed to archetypal shadow behaviors; participants’ direct reporting about their projections fortified much of the validity of this learning.

Theoretical concepts on the subjects of projection, scapegoating, and otherizing, interlaced with express disclosures by participants, further added to validate the interpretations of the presented data. The combination of participants’ overt displays of projection, integration of relative theoretical references, and reflexivity by the researcher which exposes any potential subjective skewing, help to temper validity concerns.

**Learning Four: The Snake of Shame – The Poison of Projective Identification**

Because of specialized enforcement teams’ strong aversions to perceived weaknesses and noncompliance behaviors associated with the formal and informal values of the organizational culture, an archetypal, shame-based interpersonal field is intensified whenever other team members exhibit apparent failure. This culture also
aids members in coping with the intensities of their fears and pressures to maintain heightened performance levels necessary for the survival of the team.

Data analyzed in this learning unearthed themes of fear of failure and transgression, felt senses of exclusion by their counterparts, inferior self-image, and self-loathing and shame. Again, through the use of audio and video media, participants’ experiences were evoked and expressed. Also, in direct dialogue and role-play interactions, participants disclosed their personal experiences related to their trepidation with lack of power in informal team sects, thus exposing transference, counter-transference, projection, and projective identification manifestations linked to psychological shame.

1. What Happened

When describing having experienced senses of exclusion from the team, participants cited incidents of “failure,” where they believed as though they had fallen short in their performances. They subsequently perceived being informally exiled from the team. They remarked on feeling “ashamed” and “totally disappointed” in themselves, identifying with projections that were formed and reinforced by other members of the team. Participants also noted feeling as though they “deserved” being excluded from the team because of their “mistakes.”

Gil contrasted his notion of “absolute teamwork” with the belief that team vulnerability and exposure can occur if even one team member’s mindset is not “on point” with the rest of the team ideal. He mentioned an occasion where he felt as though he should have shot a suspect who was posing a threat to the team during an
operation. He said, “I didn’t drop the hammer on him; it all worked out in the end and he [the suspect] got hooked up [arrested], but I could tell they [Gil’s team] were wondering why I did what I did, or [rather] didn’t do.”121 Gil said he felt the “cold shoulder” from his team. He added, “That happened years ago, but I still feel bad about it; it’s the only time I really felt like I let them down. [It’s the] worst feeling ever.”122

Carl, Tom, and Todd also recounted experiences where they felt as though not having used more force to neutralize a situation caused informal dismissal from the team for a period of time. Like Gil, Tom remembered an incident where he thought he should have employed more force in order to subdue a suspect. Tom stated that no one on his team ever told him after the fact that he should have used a greater level of force toward the suspect, but Tom said he thought his team treated him “differently” after the incident. “Maybe it was just me, but it felt like some of them thought I fucked up or was scared or something. [It] makes you feel like your stock just went down or you’re a pussy or something.”123 When referencing feeling as though he had failed his team, Carl said, “I get it. If I screw up, I got what’s coming to me. I’d do the same thing. All it takes is one fuck up for things to go all bad.”124

Leane mirrored Carl’s belief that a mistake on the team, specifically “cowardice,” was deserving of informal “discipline” and exile from a team, especially a tactical team.125 She stated, “No one wants a wimp on the team. I’m a girl, so I always have to prove I’m not weak. They expect me to be weak. They are waiting for me to prove their suspicions right.”126 When asked how situations of feeling excluded have affected the ways she interacts with her team, Leane stated, “It makes
me stronger; it gets old though. I just don’t want them to feel like I can’t ‘hang.’ So, I get pissed, and I push.” Leane said that focusing anger at herself for her perceived shortcomings on the team is her way of dealing with the embarrassment of having let the team down. She stated that showing the team her anger is better than showing disappointment, and ultimately, disgrace. Leane continually reiterated that the pressures of being a female member on a team that operates with “man’s world” mentalities are constantly elevated.

Participants also mentioned “masculine team image” as a force driving them and other members to feel ashamed. While Gil spoke about other team members being “too sensitive” at times, he acknowledged that seemingly insignificant exchanges between members (unrelated to the formal work-related duties of the team) could change overall team opinion about individual members.

Gil described feeling outcast and “shamed” by his team during a conversation he had with other members about sports. When Gil told his team members that he did not follow organized team sports, “like football, and baseball, and shit like that,” the other members ridiculed him for not being masculine. Gil added, “What they’re really saying is that I’m not cool cuz I don’t watch man-sports or whatever...that I’m a wimp. To this day I still get shit for that.” Gil said that members’ interests in male team sports are indicative of the team image that is bred on his particular tactical team. He drew a parallel between football and SWAT teams, stating that the mentalities of team members seem similarly masculine and ego-driven. Leane also made mention of a predominant “jock” attitude existing in her tactical team, where
“bullying” other members into feeling ashamed about weakness or minority opinion is common.

Participants’ personal feelings of shame were specifically evoked in response to dialogue question eight of the North Hollywood audio, dialogue questions twelve and thirteen of the Heat video, and the scripted role-play questions related to how it felt for participants to watch other officers being shot. As the concepts of team responsibility, duty, and concern were intertwined with suggestions of failure, blame, and judgment, participants focused on exclusion and dishonor; the mention of another officer being hurt brought about anger and disappointment among participants. They blamed themselves for not being able to stop or “fix” the situation. Phil stated, “We’re brought in to solve problems. When we fail, and someone dies, we’re partially responsible.”

Affects of participants varied from excited and animated, often seeming irritable and angry, to melancholy and constricted. Gil would laugh sporadically throughout that latter dialogue questions following the SWAT slideshow, but would then become dismissive and visibly annoyed. Leane’s affect was somewhat blunted; she would speak in a soft, monotone voice, comparatively lower than the majority of the time she would engage in dialogue. Phil’s sentiment was similar to Leane’s, with continually flat affective responses. He stated that he did not like talking about other officers dying. Carl was remarkably loud and excited; he spoke very fast and choppy as he described his shame in “fucking up” in front of his tactical team.
2. How I Was Affected

I initially felt my own sense of guilt and shame for having asked those dialogue questions that evoked feelings of shame in the participants. My identification with their senses of shame entrenched my sense of guilt. I again began to question why I was “forcing” the participants to dredge through these mires of self-loathing. During these moments, my discourse with the participants felt more like “therapy” than “dialogue questions.”

In varying magnitudes, my internal struggle with how this dissertation might be seen as a betrayal to my own tactical team became ever-present. However, this internal struggle invited more self-reflection, encouraging me to examine the conflict I was having with my loyalties to other tactical team members in relation to this research. Again, I had to regularly remind myself to be aware of my personal influences on the way I sought data from the participants, as well as the ways in which I interpreted the data presented.

I found that my monitoring of counter-transference had to be dedicated. I felt closer to the participants the more I identified with their vulnerabilities; however, I also felt that they did not want me close to them in those moments. Because of this dynamic, my attempts to delve into issues associated with shame felt like a shameful act against the participants. I felt keenly aware that I was not part of “their” particular teams. I felt like an outsider, a ride-along and passenger, witnessing only blurred fragments of the lived experiences with their teams. My own sense of feeling intimately excluded from their experiences exemplified the archetypal counter-
transference I was having with the participants; a primitive sense of radical solitude was activated for me. My inner isolation activated shame in me.

Participants’ accounts reminded me of my former SWAT Commander who used to tell the team that he was always searching for the “three-legged antelopes” to kick off the team for their would-be incompetence. Members of the team were always looking to identify a scapegoat so they would not have to face condemnation, and ultimately shame.

At times, I was confused with some of the participants’ affective responses during the dialogue. Carl appeared to want to rush through the dialogue. I wondered if his excitability and rapid speech were associated with nervousness, and his desire to move on to other, less sensitive topics. I was also a puzzled by Gil’s irregular and inconsistent reactions. When I believed he was nearing moments of openness and vulnerability, he would immediately use humor and anger together as seeming defense mechanisms. I had hoped to explore more of these mannerisms, but I felt unsatisfied in my estimation that further prying did not produce more profound demonstrative psychological affects.

This learning was somewhat of a surprise for me in that I had not originally directly equated exclusion with shame. It was indeed one of two “elephants in the room,” the other being trauma (as explained in the next learning).

The exchanges I was having with the participants seemed more soulful when feelings of isolation and segregation were bridged with shame. This territory felt like a progression into deeper psychological inquiry. Accordingly, it also resembled a very primitive landscape.
3. Imaginal Structures in Use

Imaginal structures activated in this learning continued to revolve around the need for one’s sense of belonging. Participants’ desires for acceptance and emotional assimilation, and ultimately their underlying fears of loneliness, lived in those archetypal structures that house fundamental models of radical solitude. The fear of rejection, and the subsequent shame triggered when a perceived dismissal had occurred to a participant, stimulated these isolative structures.

Power archetypes surfaced as participants struggled with the draw of gaining power through the projection of shadow features onto other members, while also recognizing that they (participants) too had been victims of such displacement. The doctrine obliging the warrior archetype to embrace both strength and mercy, paralleled the tension participants seemed to have with inclusion and exclusion dynamics. With participants swift to fault and informally dismiss other members who had seemingly betrayed the team, usually through a perceived weakness or some sort of failed allegiance, the quest to maintain a power structure within the team (of which the participant saw him or herself to have a righteous place in) embodied the punisher piece of the warrior. The surfacing of shame signified a shift in the power paradigm, mirroring the underbelly of the warrior’s desire to maintain honor.

Failure and shame triggered images of dishonor, but also prompted those of soulful self-reflection, introspective clarity, and humility, reminiscent of Narcissus viewing his true reflection. This was exemplified by participants willingness to often accept their role of “shamed,” as a consequence to their own perceived failures
and feelings of being distanced by the other team members. Consequently, the projective identification associated with the scapegoat was active in this learning.

Also, figures analogous to the Sumerian myth of Inanna peeling back her layers of innocence, signified deeper psychological inquiry and shadow exploration, and pointed to a path some of the participants took in delving into shame’s association with exclusion. Profound imaginal structures supported in the exploration of the core of exclusion’s relationship with power and shame.

At times, participants’ fluctuating affective responses to dialogue linked to this learning appeared to traverse assorted figures of the child. Like a scolding parent punishing a child, reprimands toward the participants by the team produced emotional paroxysm-like reactions. The recognizable pointing finger, denoting, “You’re in trouble,” emerged. This further produced the transference response of shame, fueled by the imaginal structure of the archetypal child not wanting to disappoint his or her parents or familial relatives.

4. Theoretical Concepts Assisting in the Interpretations

Theoretical concepts associated with previous learnings were applicable to this learning, including Golembeiski and Johnson’s studies on “reference groups” and “social categories,” which create the initial setting for loyalist behaviors in these specialized enforcement subgroups. Latane’s social impact theory, which summarized certain heritages of conformity, outlines how ingrained affiliation can strengthen the bond of informal membership, and ultimately set the stage for
profound anxiety when perceived group goals are not fulfilled by the individual member who is assessing his or her own failed actions on behalf of the group.\textsuperscript{136}

Shame is entrenched in the analyses of shadow and projection. Because members unconsciously exhibit shadow propensities in their projected views of others, as Whitmont purports, they enable and reinforce their informal membership to the group any time they identify “an other” in contrast to themselves.\textsuperscript{137} When members view the world in strict, linear oppositions, “obsessed with the superior-inferior dynamic,” their psychological displacement ensures safeguarded location within the “in” group.\textsuperscript{138} Furthermore, Jung stated that placing a perceived moral value on the projected other buttresses the displacement and reinforces its perceived acceptability.\textsuperscript{139} Mary Ann Mattoon adds that shame actively promotes the adaptation to moral norms, which may explain why groups overly established in such norms make every attempt to avoid shame.\textsuperscript{140} Thus, lacking the capacities to honor “the other,” makes for the inability to recognize, manage, and value shame.

Bonifacio explains that because many police officers’ ego ideals are set so high, any failure, however small by comparison, is experienced internally as an overly shameful event.\textsuperscript{141} Any time an officer anticipates feeling shame, overwhelming anxiety surfaces.\textsuperscript{142} Shame is experienced as a fragmentation from the group; when a team member “fails” the team, he or she is overwhelmed by “a powerful sense of accountability to his comrades.”\textsuperscript{143}

Grossman concludes that failure and the subsequent manifestation of shame create sensitivities among those operating in extreme environments where they care so deeply about each other, they “would rather die than let them down.”\textsuperscript{144} Also, the
vulnerability of shame reinforces the fear of isolation, further strengthening the need for “the interdependence that members experience amongst one another…the fighter is often sustained solely by the determination not to let down his comrades.”145

5. My Interpretations of What Happened

It was apparent that participants, while in the midst of displaying projection and displacement on other team members who did not adhere to participants’ team ideals, both abhorred and feared weakness, equating it to a toxin that could thwart their teams’ ultimate survivability, as well as participants’ own informal survivability on the team. Just as participants described and exhibited splitting and projection as a means by which to gain power upon and control informal membership within their teams, so did they describe moments where they felt excluded, ultimately fearing the loss of power and alignment within their respective groups.

Just as participants described moments where they felt excluded, so did they believe that the exclusion was warranted. Such segregation, whether perceived or existent, was an acceptable response from the group, given that a participant’s “failure” could not only stand to compromise the integrity of the group ideal, but could have actual life or death consequences. Because these behaviors have formed a culturally acceptable dynamic in the tactical world, projection and projective identification associated with sequestration and shame are able to form and fester. As is frequently the case with projective identification, participants appeared to have created a paradox in their relationship with shame. The inclination to ascertain and implement the scapegoat as the projected, coupled with participants’ willingness to
receive themselves as potential scapegoats, creates a standard that both condemns and justifies shame.

With the acceptance and identification of the shame projection, cyclical activation and further entrenching of internalized shame among participants occurred. The scapegoat complex also reinforced collusion related to the endorsement and reification of the projection; participants corroborated that informal group power is found in the routine identification of a condemned. Ascertaining and isolating a scapegoat feeds the shame projection, with participants, in turn, seeking to avoid being targets themselves.

Participants’ comments related to this learning spoke to the constant state of anxiety encompassing their lives. Because “failing” appeared to be perceived by participants as absolute in every form, any potential missteps on participants’ given teams were always intolerable. Relentless situational awareness and states of readiness produced anxiety that was ultimately tied with shame.

Also, the dynamics associated with the anxiety of participants failing to properly execute task performances had formed tangential projection behaviors directed at informal, non-task-related traits. Participants talked of feeling shamed in regards to personal preferences and individualities that did not fit the group norm, and were totally unrelated to their teams’ formal duties.
6. Validity Concerns

As with other learnings, participants’ direct reporting was a primary source for data collection. Express statements authenticated by quoted accounts of participants’ experiences enhanced legitimacy to the study.

Investigative interpretations were reinforced by theoretical citations directly related to the data collected from participants’ statements and actions. As with all theoretical concepts mentioned in this study, references were declared accordingly, and originated from legitimate and reliable sources.

As transference and projection issues arose during dialogues with the participants, careful consideration was given to honoring and making place for such dynamics. In order to maintain complete transparency, analyses from reflexivity regarding the filtering of transference and affect were considered as core elements of the learnings of this study.

Learning Five: The Cat Behind the Curtain – Trauma

As a means by which to psychologically manage task performance and team expectations, the organizational culture of specialized enforcement groups supports an emotional detachment and dissociation from imagery related to traumatic events associated with the high risk or extreme nature of such groups.

In this learning, data emerged suggesting that participants had detached affective relationships with trauma. Though those events endured as part of their experiences on specialized enforcement groups were often cognitively and conceivably recognized as distressing, participants’ responses revealed emotional
disconnects from the active emotive imagery associated with such events. Furthermore, the organizational culture of participants’ specialized enforcement groups habituated this detachment as a means by which to enhance task performance while operating in extreme environmental conditions. Added data from the second learning regarding preparedness, survivability, and vigilance was applied to this learning, as what proliferated participants’ vigilances were relative to their abilities to repress emotion.

1. What Happened

All participants routinely spoke of explicit personas needed to successfully perform their operational responsibilities as part of their specialized enforcement groups. These personas’ enactments were dependent on the common need to set aside and entomb any emotional connections to the task environment. Also, these personas were typically ascribed with masculine overtones.

Leane, Carl, and Gil spoke of the “business face” and “game face” they must routinely assume.146 Carl said that this “face” was not “soft;” he further juxtaposed this persona by relating its antithesis as “a pussy” or a “weak-ass.”147 He stated, “You can’t be some pussy; you gotta put on your big boy pants and get your game face on. Whatever happens, you have to stay dialed-in no matter what.”148 Carl chuckled after making the statement. Todd also expounded, “You can’t start acting like a little girl with a ‘boo-boo’ every time you see something shocking. That’s not what we get paid to do.”149 During segments of the Heat video where officers were shot, Carl mentioned, “It sounds corny, but I don’t get paid to be emotional; I get paid
to act.” Tom referred to his ability to act without emotion as “the discipline,” where he “push[ed] away emotions I don’t need.”

Gil said distress he has experienced or has anticipated experiencing as part of his duties on his tactical team were merely “training moments,” and not things to “get upset about.” He added, “I may go home and think about stuff over a beer or something, or ‘debrief’ with my buddies, but I’m not going to lose it [emotionally] or anything like that.” He stated that getting caught up in emotions leaves one vulnerable and exposed, which could lead to paralysis or cowardice.

Similar to Carl, Gil said that his job is to “stop the problem, not go run[ning] away…that’s what everyone else is doing: crying and hiding.” Gil also spoke about that “place in [his] mind” where the fear of both mortality and having to kill are suppressed in order to best focus on his duties.

During the role play in the Heat video, participants were asked about their “feelings” when “Detective Bosko” was shot in the neck. Participants, like Tom and Gil, stated that they felt “bad” or “guilty,” but more emphasized the need “to press on and eliminate the threats still out there.” Tom stated, “When stuff like that happens, it is pretty crazy I guess. But what can you do, really? Take cover and handle business.” He also added he had seen others shot in combat, calling it “surreal…kind of like it’s not really happening, but it is. So you just do what you’re trained to do and hope it’s enough.”

Leane showed a slight depressed affect and diminished tone volume when she talked about “Detective Bosko,” but did not appear visibly emotional or demonstrative. She stated that she would “have to worry about the bagpipes
[typically played at police funerals] later; if I can’t do anything for him, I have to triage and leave him for other stuff I gotta do.” She said, “It is what it is. Harsh I guess. I help my guys, the team, but you also have the mission…helping the citizens. You can’t stop until it’s over. That’s how they train us.”

Gil appeared marginally excited, with elevated affect and more rapid speech. Tom would frequently smile and timidly laugh, shrugging his shoulders and looking down toward the ground. Other participants showed limited-to-no affect, answering in a more matter-of-fact fashion.

2. How I Was Affected

I was concerned when I started to recognize this learning as it unfolded before me. I wanted to ignore it because it felt so cliché to me: “I did a psychological study on cops and, surprise, surprise, the big, bad hammer of trauma was to blame for everything!” I knew the “T word” always looms somewhere in the dark closets of the psychology of policing. I further knew with tactical teams, the shadows of trauma could potentially be even stronger. However, I was resistant to make this study about trauma. I thought it would distract from the other learnings in the study. I thought it would be the “Ah Ha!” moment for everyone else reading who had weighty letters of education after their names; I felt the others would use the information to reinforce what they thought they knew already. But for me, I struggled to care. At points, it had become anticlimactic.

Of course, as soon as I could hear myself say I had a near-apathetic approach to the exploration of trauma in this study (much like the participants), I became the
poster boy for projective identification. The very tip of the index finger of hypocrisy was pointing right at my temple. I could hear the ancient grumblings of psychological scholars interrupting every voice in my head telling me this trauma thing was, “No big deal.” I became more internally frustrated with myself, having secret conversations in my head, arguing with the ghosts of theory about why I was different and immune to trauma just because I was not a participant. I was aware but not affected; or so I thought. But of course, we were all participants in the study of this dynamic.

I was also concerned for the participants. Specifically, I did not want them to be perceived by others as categorical sexist, grossly masculine cops. I wanted to protect them from the stereotypes and the stigmas. I felt as though anyone not having been a peace officer would not understand. There were points when participants spoke where I felt an urge to yell to all the naysayers, the “other-than” tactical team members, “They [team members] are not broken; don’t you dare call them ‘traumatized!’ They are the reason you’re allowed to sleep at night and cry when you feel like it. They stay strong so you have the luxury of being weak.” I had thoughts of Darwinist survivability hierarchies, placing participants in the upper echelon because they had been though the wild, when others simply looked safely through the cage from the outside. Again, I wanted to protect the participants because I worried I had emasculated them in some way.

I found the way in which the participants’ dissociation dynamic manifested very interesting, in that participants seemed extremely skilled in bifurcating their emotions from much of the content they discussed with me. They were often able to
articulate the fact that an emotion should be attached to particular statements they made, but were unable or unwilling to allow the affective component of their statements to emerge. They recognized the “crazy” or “harsh” aspects of their stories, but did so with removed sentiment. I found myself somewhat impressed by their “disciplines” and abilities to divert emotional surfaced. Of course, I feared the consequences for the participants; I knew anytime one sidetracks emotions, they stand to resurface in varying, often adverse ways in the future.

3. Imaginal Structures in Use

Much like the constructs associated with participants’ hyper-vigilances from the second learning, imaginal structures related to psychological fortification were activated and layered in the shadowy underworld of archetypal trauma in this learning as well. Structures associated with emotional defense mechanisms were ever-present. With participants’ primary foci on survival and security, vulnerabilities were subjugated and unexplored, indicating potentially stunted ego-awareness and emotional development. Subsequently, structures feeding off of repressed fear and anxiety were present.

Because the aversion to examining trauma is seemingly accepted in the culture of tactical teams, the collective and cultural imaginal structures related to shadow played heavily in this learning. The communal personality of tactical teams is built from determinates associated with the often emotionally indifferent shadow. Consequently, the allure of apathy showed its weight as a coping and surviving contrivance for participants. Again, emotions were seen as deficiencies, further
reinforcing the figures of apathy to combat such unwanted sensitivities. Just as the warrior must regulate aggression and power, so too must he or she regulate emotions in order to perform as a warrior; this mechanism enables the management of fear while in crisis or in the face of death.

Figures common in previous learnings between the jaded warrior and the vulnerable, wounded child were linked in this learning by the chain of trauma. The warrior and hero archetypes are often troubled by the suffering they endure for others. As such, scapegoat and projection-related forms were operational in this learning, both with the participants as well as in my own affective responses to their disclosures. Participants characterized their teams as isolated silos (compared to the community at large), operating for the sake of others and at the risk of participants’ own lives. The challenges presented to tactical teams by “the enemy” (the criminal element) create a conflict between two parts, exemplified and personified by the scapegoat archetype.

4. Theoretical Concepts Assisting in the Interpretations

Models and theories in this learning are tied intimately with the second learning, particularly as they relate to what Gray categorizes as an “encompassing environment of threat and fear.” Bliss and Tisa further note that because tactical team members rely on each other to filter how they experience such threats, a culture is formed that promotes the suppression of emotions in order to better the odds for survivability. Since the organizational culture continually reinforces the need for members to stay alert at all times, even when outside the team’s extreme task
environment, members’ psyches are subjected to various states of disassociation, and ultimately masked anxiety, in attempts to divert and bury trauma.

Heal points out that tactical team members are always “standing on the last line of departure,” waiting and hoping for the next enforcement action where they will have to perform. Participants’ explanations of feeling the need to bear “business face[s]” supports Heal’s notion that persons who operate in extreme, “high adventure assignments” create personas specifically designed to swiftly move through and distract from the trauma they face. Heal states,

If one person gets hit by gunfire, everybody on the team flinches. However, if that flinch is a fraction of a second too long, it means no one is responding to the threat. SWAT teams are trained to respond with violent force of action to any lethal threat. Their training is obsessed with focused physical action and reaction, and specifically promotes the suppression of emotional reactions…they are skilled at emotional evasion.

Gilmartin’s hyper-vigilance model states that law enforcement officers’ “immersion into a culture of potential risk” causes them to define themselves by “a singular dimension of their police role.” In this role, officers create a persona whose solitary identification is associated with the notion, “I am a cop,” instead of “I work as a cop;” the former “cop role” is a constrictive sense of self, where normative emotional identity is often detached because officers fear appearing as a “victim,” which is seen as someone who has “control taken away from [him].” Loss of control is a vulnerability tactical team members believe they cannot and should not employ.

Rehorn believes that because “top SWAT performers are hypercritical of themselves and others, and have an absolute aversion to mediocrity,” they focus on “the mission” at the expense of their personal or emotional well-beings.
Unacceptable emotional responses can also threaten members’ places in the cultural hierarchy of their team, as well as disable them from properly doing the job they are tasked with. Snow’s training criteria for determining the “qualities and selection of SWAT team members” includes purposely creating situations “to pressure SWAT applicants into showing how they will really respond under stress…this can weed out those you don’t want…no SWAT Commander wants an officer who is so emotional.”

This philosophy coincides with Bradstreet’s comments where even generalized police and military units are taught to quell emotions. “Initial police training and the cultural norm of emotional stoicism add life and death pressure on police recruits to ignore and suppress their awareness of internal emotional reactions.” Saville adds that officers must “separate human emotions” from the duties they are tasked with performing. Saville further acknowledges “police training and education efforts have downplayed if not ignored the role of emotions.”

5. My Interpretations of What Happened

Universal emotional detachment or dissonance among participants tends to point to an organizational culture that necessitates and promotes such regulations. Participants appeared to have enough awareness to cognitively recognize certain events as having traumatic impact. However, they seemed to lack the affective link necessary to bridge such intellectually based recognitions with the emotion itself. They were either unable or unwilling to activate images associated with the emotional aspects of their experiences.
Participants’ approaches to trauma and traumatic events were universally consistent with theoretical and research-based notions concerning the ways in which military and law enforcement personnel cope with the stress, anxiety, and trauma related to their job functions. With specialized enforcement teams, the underlying organizational culture, coupled with the strong forces of interdependence propagated by such culture, intensified participants’ diligence in suppressing emotional responses from the extreme environments they are tasked with attempting to control. As examined in the second learning, hyper-vigilance acted as both a catalyst for and a byproduct of continued emotional quashing. Any images related to trauma were generally minimized by participants to apathetic narrative, devoid of the emotionally expressive attachments typically accompanying the recalling of such events.

Participants also presented their emotional detachments as clear means by which to improve job performances while operating in extreme environmental conditions. Preparedness for and sustainability in crisis was relative to participants’ abilities to repress emotion. Their hardened “game face[s]” spoke to a collective confidence in the way participants viewed themselves as capable, adept, and proficient. In the culture of specialized enforcement groups, masterfulness in survivability appeared to have much to do with task performance skill sets and the ability to maintain emotional diligence in order to efficiently operate in the extreme environment. As Tom stated, a team member’s ability to “press on and eliminate the threats still out there” must supersede whatever emotions might attempt to surface for the team member while in the midst of a crisis situation.
6. Validity Concerns

Learnings were developed by way of participants’ direct reporting in response to inquiries and images posed by the evaluator. The intent of inserting various media and dialogue questions into the discussions was to enhance and engage participants in the verbal exchange and evoke images and emotions true to the participants’ own ways of experiencing and reflecting upon the topics discussed and presented. Inquiries by the evaluator were meant to be more evocative and drawing than suggestive or contaminative; reflexivity and soulful inquiry into the motivation of the questioning and subsequent interpretation of participants’ responses were key to maintaining the validity of the data collection and learnings deduced.

As has been the case throughout the study, express testimonials and quotes used by participants’ were inserted when applicable, supporting validity to the learnings by transparently sharing participants’ direct and pure statements. Contextual interpretations of participants’ statements were noted unreservedly and without misleading intentions. Also, the structure of the study separates personal interpretations and transferences from theoretical concepts used in the analytical process. This helped to assure the minimization of confusion between constructs themselves and the analysis or interpretation of such constructs.

References to theoretical concepts were cited. Theories used were derived from sources who were known, reliable, and had high degrees of expertise in those fields directly linked to this study. Participants’ approaches to trauma and traumatic events were universally consistent with theoretical and research-based notions.
concerning the ways in which military and law enforcement personnel cope with the stress, anxiety, and trauma related to their job functions.

Transference and counter-transference dynamics were identified and noted in this learning. Further imaginative inquiry and reflexivity appraisals were conducted and presented in efforts to further bring transparency to relativism and subjectivity to the forefront.

**Conclusion**

Collected and analyzed research data ultimately resulted in five distinct learnings. Though the crosspollination of assorted findings occurred among the learnings, each learning defined its own set of related understandings connected with how the organizational cultures of specialized enforcement groups interrelated with their extreme task environments.

Learning One examined participants’ attachments to their specified tactical teams. Profound senses of connection and regard for their team members were identified among the participants; data collected in the first learning further linked these inclusion dynamics with the extreme conditions participants were tasked with operating in. It was universally evident that strong allegiances within such group structures were commonplace.

The second learning spoke to participants’ abilities to endure extreme conditions, producing hyper-vigilance associated with perceived needs to increase survivability. Interpretations of participants’ direct reportings outlined adaptive
psychological conditionings culturally practiced among members in order to best cope with environmental intensity.

Learning Three revealed that constricted referent identity formation and decisive polarization behaviors were customary in specialized enforcement groups. Projection and scapegoating were characteristic archetypal structures propagated by participants.

The interpretations in Learning Four reflected participants’ expressions of shame. Anxieties directly related to participants’ fears of task failure and resulting exclusions from their teams brought about distinguishable examples of archetypal shame. It was evident that pressures to maintain culturally established similitude intensified this dynamic.

In Learning Five, participants’ affective dissociations with trauma attested to the pressures brought about by the organizational culture of specialized enforcement groups to emotionally disengage from sentiments associated with their extreme environments. It was clear that participants maintain and embrace a detachment from emotional imagery related to critical and traumatic events.

The culmination of data collections and interpretations revealed that the extreme nature of specialized enforcement groups impacts the organizational cultures of such groups in ways that foster resolute value systems and interdependence. The perpetual high risk complexion of these groups is directly linked to the social pressures eliciting and driving members’ unyielding reference identities and duties to conform. Adherence to strict, bifurcated convictions was made even more institutionalized by a perceived need for enhanced survivability while operating in
extreme environments. Archetypal shadow formations supported by a strong projection dynamic cyclically reinforced participants’ aversions to a reflexive individuation distinct from the collective.
CHAPTER 5

REFLECTIONS

Significance of Learnings

The core of this inquiry focused on the ways extreme and high risk environments associated with specialized enforcement groups impact their organizational cultures. The research hypothesis considered that those groups operating under extreme environmental conditions have an idiosyncratic organizational culture where elevated levels of interdependence and shared values exist. This dynamic can impact subgroup formation and also spark shadow formation.

Five major learnings arose from this research. Learning One revealed the draw of battle camaraderie, focusing on profound attachment beliefs and shared mannerisms that participants experience toward their specialized enforcement groups. These attachment and allegiance behaviors were directly associated with some of the tactical task requirements characteristic of certain policing and military practices. Gil’s “total, absolute teamwork, total camaraderie, total discipline, beyond just working together to get ‘the job’ done…that you would die for them,” exemplified this collective sense of attachment.¹

Participants’ abilities and needs to cope with extreme situations formed the foundation for Learning Two. Maintaining constant states of conditioned survivability under intense surroundings flattened participants’ affective reactions to
extreme stimuli and further empowered them to bear punishing and intolerable environments and circumstances.

Learning Three explored participants’ propensities for harsh polarizing, specifically when referencing identified non-members or those who did not follow matching principles of the participant group members. Here was where instances of archetypal shadow formation such as projection and scapegoating were their strongest. Such formations were especially robust in reference to feebleness, blossoming as projected senses of disgrace and shame within the group. Noncompliance and individualist conduct in conflict with the perceived values of the organizational culture of specialized enforcement groups were met with these shame-based systems in order to repel the perceived threat of weakness in the group. These expressions of shame among participants produced Learning Four.

Learning Five focused on trauma and participants’ disassociations with their emotional responses to critical situations. “You have to separate from those feelings; you have to find that place inside where you are trained to push through…to do what you gotta do.” The organizational culture supported this detachment from imagery related to those traumatic events directly associated with the high risk nature of such groups.

The learnings in the study supported much of the research hypothesis. Participants did in fact show intense, attachments to their host groups, expressively recounting their personal distinct associations with their respective team members. Responses to questions and images focusing on camaraderie were of high affect and demonstrative of a profound devotion toward fellow group members. Gil’s
“Musketeer mentality” epitomized the sense of belonging collectively shared among participants who partook in this study. The absence of individuality and the ever-present push for selfless uniformity under the umbrella of the “absolute team concept” were emphasized. This type of reporting was also congruent with literature on informal group formation and communal networks.

Participants also drew nexuses to their feelings of inclusion with their needs to remain physically and psychologically safe while operating in life-threatening situations; “to survive” incentivized their disciplined culture so heavily reliant on familial-like solidarity. As cited in the research hypothesis, this crisis component is what further heightened the intensity of such interdependence. Tom emphasized the “real world” aspects of maintaining cohesion in crisis, as well as a constant and “acceptable survival level.” Membership and the pressure to conform to group norms demanded that group belief systems persist for the preservation of the informal and actual survival of the collective and its affiliates.

Survivability also came in the form of an adaptive tolerance to acute and prolonged stresses, with participants retaining an ability to endure extreme conditions because of sustained senses of vigilance and abilities to repress emotions non-conducive for tactical work. As Vincent Hanna stated in the movie Heat, “I gotta hold on to my angst. I preserve it because I need it. It keeps me sharp, on the edge, where I gotta be.” Leane added a retrospective view after having left her team, “It wasn’t until later, when I was out, that I realized how much I stored inside…how much you live in another world just to maintain focus; you are always so focused.” Carl also commented on his “business face,” and the benefits of disassociating
himself from affect in order to better mental state and increase his tactical efficiencies.\textsuperscript{11}

It appeared as though this matter of survivability came down to a specific type of psychological conditioning. Without an adaptive tolerance to the oftentimes-intolerable images associated with extreme environments, members of high risk teams can be overwhelmed by fear and subject to indecision and paralysis. Thus, members have to condition themselves for intense states of being in order to perform their jobs. Much of the theoretical concept data listed in Learning Two supported the fact that the tactical trade requires of its adherents a sustained sense of readiness whereby they are continuously preparing for the possibility of either dying or having to kill.\textsuperscript{12} This clearly magnifies how members experience their environment, especially with the organizational culture routinely reinforcing team members’ needs to stay alert at all times, even to the point of prolonging that pressure when members are outside of the team’s extreme task environment. This was a key piece to supporting the notion that the specific extreme environments associated with specialized enforcement groups distinctively and directly impact their organizational cultures.

As it was clear that extreme environmental conditions influencing the development of the informal bodies of tactical groups intensified interdependence and reference identities so as to increase solidarity, and in turn survivability, so too was the notion that these social pressures drive the individual and collective reference identities to points of exclusion and marginalization of others. Archetypal shadow formation in this regard was especially revealed in the third and forth learnings, and
coincided with the foci of the research hypothesis and questions. Participants’
comments about others who they perceived as other than their principle belief
systems were often categorically harsh and exceptionally dismissive. Participants
were quick to divorce themselves from unfit or unworthy members who “could get
you killed,” showing how significant the idea of membership to their tactical team
meant to them. Once again, this sort of projected, prejudiced scrutiny was
reinforced by the collective as common and accepted behavior.

Throughout the study, participants unforgivingly pointed to believed
deficiencies in others such as cowardice, laziness, lack of commitment, inexperience,
and egoism. Tom stated,

The [Marine] Corps is a brotherhood with a code. You are trained to make the
commitment from day one. You are loyal to your brothers. If you strayed
from that, you’d have to get schooled back into shape…you get disciplined to
be disciplined. You are right, it is conditioning; there’s a way to be
conditioned, and then there’s the other way, the weaker way.

These shortcomings were alleged threats to the group, jeopardizing the livelihoods of
members in the most literal of senses. The swift and punitive bifurcation between
member and non-member surfaced as a constructed necessity designed for the formal
and informal survival of the team. This was yet another example of how the same
theme of survivability materialized regularly through the study. Emerging as an
animalistic, Darwinist approach to organizational development, this informal pack
mentality where only the strongest survive exists as a real concern for the safety of
other team members. As such, with a tight inclusion comes an unforgiving exclusion.

Though this resolve to shield the team does show as a noble cause, there also
appeared to be a notable shadow within the shadow. There exists the unconscious
temptation to concoct projected faults in certain targeted members as a means to informally excommunicate them from the team. Such revealed intolerance upon others who did not emulate homogeny with the tactical team ideal showed participants’ propensities for calculated projection of those qualities in others that seemed to affect the image of the team rather than the safety or survivability of the team.

In contract, and quite unexpectedly, participants openly disclosed comprehensive accounts of their own apprehensions and fears about their informal memberships with their teams. Citing fear of failure and moments of a subsequent lack of informal power, participants divulged transference and projective identification forces ultimately linked to psychological shame. Leane said, “I just never wanted to be looked at as a disappointment; that would be horrible in that group. I would totally be ashamed. If I failed someone on something major, I’d be fucked.” In its simplest form, participants were extremely hard on themselves, usually stating they expected and deserved the adverse treatment they received from their team members. “If you’re acting like a retard on the team, you got what’s coming to you.” Cowardice and weakness were specific cause for feeling shame and for receiving informal reprimand and ostracism; participants readily accepted receipt of these exclusionary behaviors put upon them by the team as part of the team dynamic and culture. Additionally, participants were expected to behave similarly to those others targeted for like conduct.

Furthermore, shame in this study seemed to have found a second sight through the lens of betrayal. Because of the intense attachments of tactical team members to
each other, any failure is seen as a brand of betrayal. With even the slightest of
manifested deficiencies in any one team member standing to compromise the safety
of the entire team, failure literally does not become an option. As Tom said, “It
sounds silly, but like I said before, if you don’t have my back, or you’re just a friggin
idiot, you’re dead to me. You’re useless.” The betrayal associated with, “You
could have gotten us killed because of your mistake!” plays in to how tactical teams
respond to missteps from members.

With this, members are pressured to perfection. “The presence of an all-or-
nothing thinking style (e.g.: ‘If I’m not perfect, I’m worthless’) may contribute to the
tendency to readily experience shame.” As noted in the theoretical concepts of
Learning Four, tactical officers’ ego ideals are so high that any failure is experienced
as a betrayal and fragmentation from the group. The resulting effect of participants’
shame and avoidance of believed dishonor is a need to incessantly appease the
requisites of the team. This “powerful sense of accountability to [their] comrades”
can be clearly overwhelming, and as Grossman concluded, the subsequent
manifestation of shame from a perceived or real failure can create sensitivities among
those operating in extreme environments where they care so deeply about each other
that they “would rather die than let them down.”

The various shame-based mannerisms participants displayed and reported
during the study pointed to a twofold corollary, not only to the “social threats” of
exclusion, but also to the real threats of danger and mortality. This magnification
reveals a compromised social self and vigilant visceral self ultimately rooted in
distinctive aspects of trauma.
Tactical team members struggle to preserve balance by attempting to control how they experience extreme events in the moment. They also seek to manage and restrain the intense re-experiencing of extreme events that have occurred (in a post-traumatic sense), as well as make an effort to cope with the anticipation and anxiety of extreme events to come. Additionally, members must juggle these impelling internal forces amid the influences of working within a very distinct group dynamic that seeks to repel emotions in order to optimize an exacting focus on task performance.

Ashwin Budden describes a “peri-traumatic shame,” referring to emotions arising as “direct responses to intensely stressful circumstances.”\(^2\) Budden goes on to affirm,

> Shame mediates peri-traumatic injuries (i.e.: occurring at the time of the stressful events) that threaten and damage the social self, and orchestrates many of the post-traumatic sequelae that unfold in the field of social relations and collective meanings. The social self is defined as the symbolic and subjective sense of a stable, core identity and the integrity of that identity structure in relation to the social environment.\(^2\)

Like revelations into shame analysis, the notion of post-traumatic stress and the elaboration into trauma’s latent significance to this study was not in the foreground at the time of the initial conception of the research hypothesis. Additionally, though obvious in retrospect, the links to operant conditioning-like behaviors and combat identities driven by shame avoidance and task enhancement were not clearly delineated until specific learnings were defined. It was evident that members sought to firmly maintain their “tactical identities” in order to best support the job-mission and boost their abilities to perform their duties. Thus, the relationship between members’ pursuits to avoid shame associated with
failure and betrayal, and their detachment from trauma defined a need and a method by which they could and should (by their organizational culture standards) repress emotive imagery associated with extreme events in order to directly enhance individual and organizational operations. Just as Carl declared, “I don’t get paid to be emotional; I get paid to act.”

The group culture further reinforced a drive defined by a habituated severance from emotional pain. Participants’ descriptions of having to maintain their “business [and] game faces,” coupled with theoretical research, both support the view that because members principally rely on each other to filter how they experience their extreme environments, a culture is formed that promotes the suppression of emotions in order to increase survivability. Consequently, members’ psyches are subjected to states of disassociation to divert and bury trauma. Sid Heal reminded us that members who operate in “high adventure assignments” create personas specifically designed to move through and distract from the traumas they face. Heal also addressed this dynamic as further carrying a group persona, stating that collective tactical cultures are so obsessed with focused physical action and reaction that they specifically promote the suppression of emotional reaction; he stated, “They are skilled at emotional evasion.” Rick Bradstreet also added, “Initial police training and the cultural norm of emotional stoicism add life and death pressure on police recruits to ignore and suppress their awareness of internal emotional reactions.” Leane stated that her “focus” is what enabled her to distance herself from having to experience traumatic events associated with the environment she was operating in.
Tom’s statement about his team’s necessity to first build in its members the abilities and mindsets to “press on and eliminate the threats in crisis situation[s]” and forego “emotions that can distract from the mission,” exemplified the entrenched group principles and pursuits pushed upon the adherents of specialized enforcement groups. The strong interdependence within the organizational culture of these groups further appeared to intensify participants’ persistence in quashing their emotional responses to their extreme environments. Participants exhibited the cognitive awareness to logically deduce the fact that extreme events can have potential traumatic effects. However, they seemed to lack the affective link necessary to associate such understandings with the emotions themselves. They were either unable or unwilling to activate images linked to the emotional aspects of their experiences.

Archetypal Reflections

Throughout this study, mythical and archetypal constructs emerged. As mentioned throughout the context of this research, the key recurring archetypal figures that stood to influence the behaviors of specialized enforcement team members the most were the projection-breeding forces generated from the shadow archetype. Scapegoating and other-izing represented common practices by members where the disowned shadow attempted to find institution in the projected perceived deficiencies of others. A byproduct of those repressed and denied emotions linked to stifled trauma recognition, the shadow of team members focused heavily on those who were attributed with weakness, fear, and disloyalty.
In turn, shame and fear of failure as described by participants also illustrated the projective identification propensities associated with the scapegoat complex.\textsuperscript{29} Being on the receiving end of the positional judgments of other members allowed for introspective mirrors of inquiry to emerge for participants to explore their own senses of shamed selves. Participants’ experiences of being projected upon, leading to subsequent shame, lead to an emasculation effect, especially due to the fact that specialized enforcement teams are profoundly virile in their gesticulations. As is frequently the case in modern and ancient myth, many overly patriarchal cultures are often cited as denying the feminine; shame occurs when members are faced with the often-affixed vulnerability of the feminine, equating this with a failure to the team. Mary Ayers writes of the ensuing archetypal “masculine shame,”

Patriarchy’s deep myths shape the nascent rejection of the feminine in the mother as sacred and generative to masculine being. In turn, a male psyche is formed whose deep trauma and fear of the feminine supports the maintenance of such mythic expressions of shame…the wounded masculine…the assertion of the masculine as sufficient alone.\textsuperscript{30}

Also, imaginal figures related to the stripping of feminine innocence, as cited in the Sumerian myth of Inanna, paralleled the relationship between exclusion and the power/shame continuum.\textsuperscript{31}

With imaginal structures linked to masculine, warrior archetypes, participants’ heroic fixations with their work missions and respective specialized enforcement teams pointed to narcissistic-like ideals where members, like Narcissus, see themselves as modern-day hunters and protectors.

Though much of the myth of Narcissus is focused on cursed self-hubris, which was certainly displayed by individual participants, the myth’s application also
offers group perspective in the ways members’ intrinsic motivations toward and adorations for their own team collectives mirror the profound attachment beliefs participants have experienced toward their specialized enforcement groups. Much of the basis for Learning One was founded on the notion that members of specialized enforcement groups hold a sentiment of profound inclusion with other group members. Their allegiance and camaraderie found within their respective group structure demonstrates a “collective Narcissus” persona, one where the group’s affection and attachment to its own characteristics and traits are exclusive of others and conditional in the sole reliance on conformed allegiance.

Narcissus ignored and looked down at all who loved him, “scorning and refusing” the many nymphs who sought his attention.\textsuperscript{32} This offers a compelling perspective into the accepted exclusivity and polarizing members displayed toward those who were either outside of their team peripheries or who did not conform to group ideals. Some of the statements made by participants in Learning Three revealed disparagement among members within and outside of the team. For example, like the talkative nymph Echo and the other nymphs in the Narcissus myth, hostage negotiators and dispatchers were shunned by other tactical team members believed to be in the informal upper echelons of the group.

Going further with the symbolism in the myth of Narcissus, the vulnerability and the collective fear of weakness and failure that permeates through specialized enforcement teams can equate to a symbolic as well as literal death. The “death” of Narcissus comes about when he recognizes his own vulnerability (through the recognition of an inaccessible love after falling in love with his own image).\textsuperscript{33}
Additionally, Narcissus’ body was then “metamorphosed into the flower called after him.” The obvious feminine reference to a flower can be contrasted to the overtly masculine nuances of tactical team practices; to these teams, femininity signifies the antagonist of what should embody a thriving team. Leane even referenced her gender in relation to weakness. “Girls are supposed to be flowery and feminine, but you gotta leave that girly shit at home to do business.” Femininity is representative of weakness, which in turn is characteristic of death. Additionally, in both sessions, Carl routinely used verbiage associated with the feminine in negative connotations; he used words such as “pussy,” “little girl,” and “bitch” to describe weak and cowardly characteristics.

Finally, “Narcissus literally mean[s] sleep or numbness,” which touches on tactical team members’ disassociated relationship with trauma and the respective apathy that comes from failing to activate imagination associated with extreme environments. Members of specialized enforcement teams fear becoming the flower (the representation of the recognition of death, trauma, and weakness). And so, in the name of maintaining a warrior persona, members repel its powerful vulnerability that perceivably threatens team survival.

It is also from a warrior belief system where the “heroic police archetype” must maintain an aversion to emotions and the believed weakness that comes from accessing affective images. Just as the hero must regulate aggression and power, so too must he or she regulate emotions in order to perform as a warrior; this mechanism enables the management of fear while in crisis or in the face of death. The fixation
with the warrior-battle component of a hero’s mission is hard-wearing in the psyches of specialized enforcement team members.

This archetype also purposely differentiates itself from the weaker masses; as a protector, the hero must believe he or she possesses skills and traits above those being protected. In a law enforcement setting for example, researcher Norman Conti calls this intrepid assimilation “police socialization.”39 Members of specialized enforcement teams are expected to aspire to an “idealized sense of what it means to be an officer (i.e.: strength) to the exclusion of a discredited idea of civilian characteristics (i.e: weakness)…the lesser image of an average citizen.”40

Hero archetypes carry the troublesome burden of others’ sufferings. The suffering, the pain, and the darkness are often occupied by and personified in an antagonist persona. Enemy-making is a necessity for the hero to maintain his or her place as the protector of all that which is viewed in his or her organizational culture as good and moral. The hero’s cause becomes maintaining those culture’s philosophies that are thought to be principled and virtuous. With nothing to protect others from, without an enemy, the hero can hardly hold the marque of the courageous protagonist. As in nearly all myths and stories, light and dark need each other to offer contrast, to offer each other’s existence. A shadow of the hero’s nobility and honor is his or her need for an enemy. Members’ senses of self are greatly defined by their “targets of externalization” and ever evolving need to identify and differentiate allies from enemies, members from non-members.41 This also coincides with underdeveloped belief systems and behaviors affiliated with what Robert Moore calls “Boy
Psychology,” where a pull toward the immature masculine can turn a warrior into a “grandstander bully” or sadist.\textsuperscript{42}

**Implications of the Study**

As with most studies and inquiries, especially those focused on a particular collective, the aim is to better understand the inner workings of a system and those conditions that stand to impact that system. In this case, the concentration of the research centered on the impact of extreme environmental conditions on the organizational cultures of specialized enforcement teams. The study’s labors developed five interdependent learnings, each of which outlined specific behaviors formally and informally unique to these teams and their operational milieus. The effects of such a study’s cumulative data on assorted populations can be categorized as multifarious, as wisdom gleaned from this study illustrates both the values and troubles of tactical team life and the belief systems allied members adhere to.

Specialized enforcement teams are commissioned to manage and resolve some of society’s most complex and dangerous tactical problems. Their formal task requirements dictate that they maintain resilient senses of vigilance and unwavering loyalties to their respective teams and mission. Their jobs are to control chaos and bring resolution to grave and sometimes seemingly impalpable situations. They are a research population who are often considered brute, resolute, intolerant, and emotionally apathetic. They allow very few outsiders into their culture and grant even fewer into their hearts. And there is good reason for this. In many ways, their communal constituents expect and rely upon these teams’ senses of unwavering
principles in order to best do what they get paid to do; anything that might otherwise
distract members from their tasks at hand is understandably unwelcome.

With these types of teams, the greater community is their consumer. There is
an adage in police work that essentially states, “When you call 911, you need a
warrior not a social worker.” When members of the community call for help, the
kind of help where lives are at stake, they want someone who will show up and
annihilate whatever threats seek to hurt them. Though we like to envision our heroes
as charming, sensitive, and handsome, when it comes down to brass tacks, we want
someone who is capable, swift, and able to resolve the problem with the utmost of
proficiencies and save us from those real threats that are unfortunately still prevalent
in this world. A citizen once told me, “If I am about to get raped or killed, I don’t
care who shows up at my door to save me as long as he has a big gun and isn’t afraid
to use it.”

Members of specialized enforcement teams are highly conditioned and trained
in specific, concentrated practices and unyielding mindsets for the primary purpose of
increasing survivability for themselves and others. The participants in this study were
not questioned about generalized practices that might be part of their jobs. This study
was not about how, for example, a police officer should behave when he or she is
helping an old woman cross the street, or called to offer solace to a grieving victim.
This study was not about how it feels to be part of a military convoy carting supplies
to and from Europe. This study was focused on extreme environments and what it
means to be part of a team that is specifically designed to be deliberately thrown in
the midst of absolute chaos.
Much of the figurative idioms about life and death become quite literal when referencing specialized enforcement team behavior and the punishing conditions they are pushed to operate in. As Gil reiterated, “You have to be prepared to die for each other [and] for the mission…that is stronger than anything the suspect can bring to the table; that’s how we win; we have to win always.” Their future and sustainability rely on continued strategic insight into the workings of their enemies and greater understanding of members’ own interdependence dynamics.

Tactical team members see great benefit and need in establishing a “them versus us” approach, and their organizational cultures continue to support belief systems that promote these ways of thinking. Some may be quick to question these practices. But again, there are reasons and methodologies that support their applications. They must reduce and depersonalize every complex, chaotic, and dangerous situation, sanitizing it in their minds so that their every action fits into the categories of what will be later evaluated as lawful, justified, reasonable, and proper.

“Because I felt like it,” “Because I had an emotional connection to the victim,” or “Because I hate the suspect,” can play no part in a team member’s defense in his or her decision-making during a lethal force encounter. Privately, internally, these emotions may and every so often do exist, but cannot drive the ultimate decision to engage. This study revealed the true need to separate one’s self from the emotive association of the event and related environment. It further emphasized team members’ needs to bond to one another in order to collectively complete their required tasks. Of course, this study also revealed the psychological shortcomings of having to maintain such a temperament and the ways in which participants’
psychological assessments of “others” can become skewed and excessively and undeservedly bifurcated.

As revealed in the learnings, participants emphasized the internal discipline they needed to adopt and maintain a courageous calm to best stay mentally oriented in preparation for their insertion into a chaotic and extreme environment. With such a disposition, members believe they are best able to influence and control that environment and neutralize any threats disrupting that environment. Lapses in mental commitment and physical preparedness and proficiency equates to vulnerability, weakness, and incompetence.

In terms of job readiness, the levels of intensity and types of training and conditioning, coupled with a psychological character needed for this particular research population to perform their jobs efficiently are what define their overall capabilities. Countless hours of time and money are spent selecting, training, and utilizing these individuals. The implications of this study may offer breadth into the ways in which members are trained and at what points and in what ways this type of “discipline” can create complications. Having outlined individual and collective qualities and pathologies associated with this research population, this study seeks to offer institutions that employ these teams a perspective that ultimately enables them to capitalize on the values and minimize the hazards of this vocation. The key lies in reinforcing that crucial bridge between enabling members to do their jobs by focusing their efforts on training and tactical proficiency (which continues to include the necessary component of emotional detachment in order to survive and make judicious decisions), and ensuring they enhance their abilities to understand perspectives
offered by shadow exploration. Education focusing on the dynamics associated with colluded thought, projection, shame, and trauma are important topics for future discussion among team members as part of their training matrix.

Future research into how to best identify, select, and train tactical team members based on their physical and psychological aptitudes should continue to include a focus on the overall group component, especially aiming to thwart Groupthink dynamics that can obstruct formal and informal objectives. However, prospective researchers in this field should remember to always consider a lens that does not totally dismiss the idea of collusion as having a beneficial element to team interaction. It is true that diseased, colluded thought occurs when a group’s subjective landscape is forever split from the landscape of the other, ultimately resulting in collective, primitive perspective and shadow formation. Yet, the notion of teamwork and a commitment to duty in high risk team environments, which at times means following direct orders and not questioning the rationale behind those orders, is healthily dependent on conformity. This is not to underscore a team’s susceptibility to Groupthink’s malevolent lures, but rather to point out the true need for a team operating in extreme environments to conform to group ideals under the valid justification of survivability.

Crisis decision-making involves a component of restricted time. In fact, it is this reduced time ceiling that is central to extreme environment determination. When time is limited, the luxuries of enacting deep psychological inquiry, complex theorizing, and interactive participatory regulations are not feasible in the moment. In those instants, team members have to act. “It’s kinda simple. You just have to be
There is no time for debate, for inquiry, for reflection. Their chain of command is their observing ego; their training is their “good theory” guiding decision-making. When looking down the sights of their weapons, their only decision is whether to shoot or not shoot. Divorce from emotion at that moment in time is not only a useful coping mechanism, but offers the shooter the ability to focus on the objective, articulable facts by which to make the legal and justified decision to kill.

The profession of psychology must remember that tactical team life is an institution where their whole culture is based upon a build-up and preparation to those split-second moments in time where the only points of reliability are the other members of the team. In these cases, internal team dissonance is not an option. As Craig Ojala states, to “remove a person from this earth by their coordinated hand…at that point, that team needs leadership and each other; ‘teamwork’ never meant so much.”

What’s more, in order for team members to engage in the act of potentially killing another human being, they must make an enemy of their target. They must come to terms with purposely, consciously, making an “other” out of their mark. In the field of psychology, the act of killing and enemy-making is not generally thought of as healthy. There is a natural resistance to such acts. Psychologists and philosophers may generally declare, “There has to be a more peaceful solution; killing is never an option.” But in these rare cases, it may just be what enables team members to do the unforgiving job of taking another life under the umbrella of a greater good, and it may just be the one act that saves the lives of others and allows
for restored peace and societal civility. The definition of peace becomes uncomfortably skewed. Future studies involving this research population must continue to hold these different versions and interpretations of peace with equal hands.

Personally, I conclude this study with conflicting feelings, especially as they relate to the latter learnings. I admittedly support and believe in the mission and overall cause of these teams. Because of my own allegiance to these teams, I harbor anxiety about my perceived betrayal to the sanctity of tactical life, and that members will look at me as someone who is promoting the softening of the tactical community. Challengers of these types of teams often declare that it is passé to endorse a warrior psychology that emphasizes the courage, commitment, leadership, and teamwork necessary to get a sometimes-unpleasant job done. Risk manager Gordon Graham states, “Those who like law and sausages should not watch them being made.”

Continuing with Graham’s food analogy, in American culture we have been so removed from the farming aspects of the meals we eat that we just like to see the outcome; we like pretty food neatly put on our plates for us to consume without shame or disgust. The thought of the process shocks and traumatizes even some of the heartiest of human carnivores; so, we choose to disassociate from it. For example, no one wants to watch a film on cows being brought to the slaughter right before they enjoy a steak dinner. The illusion of a civilized society does not include the thought of slaughtering other life forms.

Tactical enforcement is similar in that arguably most modulated people do not really want to experience the true fear of dying or the anxiety of having to kill another
person. We tend to want to watch the celebrity of tactical enforcement, the presumed adventure and action of extreme environments. However, we want to separate out the ugliness of what it really means to have to act and make dire decisions in such environments. It is safer to watch it all on the television, removed from it, sanitized from it. On top of it, those who know nothing about the business then unreasonably inject critiques into these sometimes-unfathomable decisions team members have to make in the name of protecting the lives of others. The very people team members save are those who criticize how they were saved.

Marine Colonel Jessep, as portrayed by Jack Nicholson in the movie *A Few Good Men*, states,

> We live in a world that has walls, and those walls have to be guarded by men with guns. Who's gonna do it? You? I have a greater responsibility than you can possibly fathom. You have the luxury of not knowing what I know…My existence, while grotesque and incomprehensible to you, saves lives. You don't want the truth because deep down in places you don't talk about at parties, you want me on that wall; you need me on that wall. We use words like “honor,” “code,” “loyalty.” We use these words as the backbone of a life spent defending something. You use them as a punch line. I have neither the time nor the inclination to explain myself to a man who rises and sleeps under the blanket of the very freedom that I provide and then questions the manner in which I provide it. I would rather that you just said, “Thank you,” and went on your way. Otherwise, I suggest you pick up a weapon and stand the post.

My personal wish is that the participants in this study were humanized. Underneath the hardened exterior, I hope they were recognized as simply ordinary people placed in extraordinary situations, trying to make the best of the duties they are tasked with performing. In many cases, they do not know love; they are dissociated from it, and they have to be. So, as a thanks to them for allowing most of us the freedom to spend the majority of our lives safe from danger, we must learn to love them.
APPENDIX
APPENDIX 1

ETHICS APPLICATION: SECTION IV – ETHICS REVIEW

1a). The participant population will consist of present or former members of military or law enforcement organizations who have worked in smaller specialized groups within those institutions. These units will be limited to those which operate under hazardous conditions, including the risk of great bodily injury or death to the members of the group, and also include the dynamic of a member having to potentially take the life of another individual while in the performance of the member’s duties. Examples of these units include, but are not limited to, police Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Teams, felony and/or violent crimes enforcement teams, special investigations units (Narcotics, Vice, Homicide, or violent crimes suppression or investigative units), and military Special Forces. Participants will be either males or females between the ages of 30 to 50. No further restrictions related to demographics will be applied, such as ethnicity, socio-economic status, religious beliefs, education, or other past experiences or present situations not directly related to this research.

Recruitment will consist of my contacts with local law enforcement and military venues, seeking subjects who I believe may qualify in terms of their characteristics and demographic criteria. I will attempt to diversify the participant pool in that I will draw from different groups in various areas of Northern California, particularly the San Francisco bay area. There is a large collection of law
enforcement and military personnel that can be drawn from in Northern California. I will initially contact potential participant sites, either law enforcement or military, via a recruitment flyer (distributed by facsimile, email announcement, or direct mail, whichever is most expeditious).

1b). The primary characteristics participants should have are related to their abilities to engage psychologically, at least in basic terms, including a willingness to be reflexive and accountable, and the capacity to express themselves either verbally or in writing about their thoughts or feelings on given matters related to this research. I will assess these characteristics through an initial contact either in person or on the phone, using a written screening questionnaire that I will use verbally to determine their eligibility.

1c). This study is designed to use a minimum of seven participants, allowing for the attrition of three (for a total of ten initially screened participants).

2. The first process that will involve the research participants is the recruitment and subsequent screening process. I will describe the study in general terms and then ask participants if they are interested in participating in this study. This will be conducted in person, on the phone, or via email if personal or phone contact is not preferable or possible.

   Once met with an affirmative response, I will conduct a screening using the questionnaire. The screening will be conducted in person or over the phone. From the questionnaire, I will verbally read the questions to the potential participants, noting their responses. If necessary, I will follow-up with clarifying questions.
Once the screening is concluded, I will then tell the potential participant that I will get back to him or her within a week, by which time I will have decided whether to reject or accept the participant. If I decide to reject them, I will contact them via telephone and inform them of my decision. If I decide to accept them, I will contact them either personally or by phone, and ask they are willing to participate in the study, and ensure they are able to take part in the two meetings necessary for the data collection.

There will be a total of two individual meetings following the screening interview. The first meeting will involve the concentration of evoking, expressing, and integrating experience. This meeting invites participants to experience three items of media: two video-productions and one audio-only segment. The second and final meeting is designed to facilitate integration, with participants offering further insight to the interpretation of the collected data. This second meeting is intended to allow for feedback from the participants, and create a dialogue about the data collection between the participant and me.

Those procedures which will involve the research participants are covered in the following appendices:

Appendix 4 - Informed Consent Form: This form provides the participant with a general understanding of the purpose of the study. It also outlines the basic structure of the meetings to be conducted, potential risks involved, and the ultimate request for the participant’s consent.

Appendix 5 - Script: Initial Contact: This script is an introduction to the study and an affirmation of the participant’s willingness to commit to those time-frames associated with the meetings.

Appendix 6 - Script: Pre-Screening Questionnaire: The questionnaire outlines a series of questions to be asked to determine if the participant would be appropriate for further screening.
Appendix 7 - Script: Screening Questionnaire: This form addresses the key foci of the study, asking the participant questions related to his or her experiences in group dynamics and specialized enforcement units.

Appendix 8 - Script: Follow-Up / Clarifying Questions Screening: This is a script designed to address any follow-up questions that I have with a given participant.

Appendix 9 - Script: Participant Acceptance: This script outlines how I will address a participant who I am interested in having participate in the study.

Appendix 10 - Script: Participant Rejection: This script outlines how I will address a participant who I will not have participate in the study.

Appendix 11 - Script: Pre-Meeting Information & Confirmation: This script details a confirmatory contact with the participant ensuring their availability to participate in the study.

Appendix 12 - Script: Meeting One: This is the script for the first meeting. There is an initial welcome and orientation portion of the script, as well as a review of the participant’s informed consent. The main portion of this script focus on the sequential guidelines for Evoking and Expressing Experience, delineating them in scripted detail. Dialogue Questions 15-17 are cross-referenced as part of the scripted material for Meeting One.

Appendix 13 - Script: Meeting Two (Part One): This is the first portion of the script for the second meeting with the participant. After an orientation and an informed consent review, this script launches the conversation with the participant about the initial learnings, providing the edifice for the Interpreting-Integrating Sequence.

Appendix 14 - Script: Meeting Two (Part Two): This is the second portion of the script for the second meeting with the participant. The intentions of the study are discussed in more detail in this script. It also cross-references the Evaluation Form for Participants, asking for the participant’s feedback.

Appendix 15 - Dialogue Questions #1 (Heat video): These are the questions to be asked upon completion of the first video designed to evoke experience in the participant. The questions seek to invite the participant to express experience through dialogue.

Appendix 15A – Role Play #1: This is a script that seeks to allow the participant to express experience by drawing the participant outside of personal identity. It invites the participant to explore the video segment through the eyes of one of the main characters in the video, Al Pachino’s character, Vincent Hanna.
Appendix 16 - Dialogue Questions #2 (North Hollywood video): These are the questions to be asked upon completion of the second video designed to evoke experience in the participant. The questions seek to invite the participant to express experience once again through dialogue between the participant and me.

Appendix 17 - Dialogue Questions #3 (SWAT video): These are the final questions to be asked related to the completion of the video segments, specifically the third video segment. The questions seek to invite the participant to express experience through dialogue.

Appendix 20 - Letter: Thank You: This memo acknowledges and thanks the participant for his or her efforts. It is designed to accompany the Summary of Learnings that will be enclosed with the thank you letter.

Appendix 21 – Recruitment Announcement – Flyer: This is the flyer that will be used as an indirect method for recruiting potential participants. It will be distributed via facsimile, email announcement, or direct mail.

3. I will discuss confidentially as part of the initial contact, before conducting the screening questionnaire. I will open up every following conversation with a reminder about confidentiality. I will explain to the participants that their identities will be kept private, and any of the information that they provide will be used anonymously. I will explain what information could be used in the research, and who would have access to the information, and in what general form it will be presented in, again emphasizing confidentiality. There may be limitations associated with my ability to protect participants’ confidentiality in the case of legal subpoena, participants will be made aware this matter.

4. The potential risks or discomforts will be addressed during the screening process. Some of the media presented to the participant, as well as some of the following discussions may evoke various emotions where the participants may feel vulnerable or have varying degrees of emotional discomfort. I will also mention to
the participants that there are potential legal risks involved if they discuss specific
details related to criminal, civil, or administrative cases within the scope of their
professions that have not yet been adjudicated. As previously mentioned, there may
also be limitations associated with my ability to protect participants’ confidentiality in
the case of legal subpoena

5. I will inform participants that my goal is for them to feel as though they are
safe to share their feelings about any emotion that comes up for them. Safeguard
procedures are in place, especially contained within the contexts of consent form and
the confidentially agreement. I will remind the participants that they are free to stop
the meeting at any time, ask for a time-out, leave the meeting at any time, and can
quit participating in the study at any time.

6. The main benefits that this study can bring to participants include exploring
the nature of their work in relation to their emotions, and bring space for reflection in
an otherwise harsh and high-anxiety profession. Participants will have the
opportunity to work with their capacity for self-reflection, particularly as to how they
live their lives relationally in these types of groups. Finally, the published research
may increase their understanding about the topic.

7. When the study has been completed, and the dissertation approved, I will
present all participants with a Summary of Learnings, outlining the key learnings and
aspect of the learning process which contributed to the research. The Summary of
Learnings will be brief, with ease in reading in mind.

8. All appendices are attached. Refer to the Appendix section for supplemental
information related to participant contact in data collection.
APPENDIX 2

CONCEPTUAL OUTLINE

**Evoking Experience**

Meeting One

- Media segment: Heat video
- Media segment: North Hollywood shootout audio
- Media segment: SWAT slideshow

Meeting Two

- Verbal sharing of researcher’s initial learnings

**Expressing Experience**

Meeting One

- Private journaling on Heat video
- Journal sharing – dialogue on Heat video
- Role Play #1 (Al Pachino roleplay)
- Dialogue Questions #1
- Private journaling on North Hollywood shootout audio
- Journal sharing – dialogue on North Hollywood shootout audio
- Dialogue Questions #2
- Private journaling on SWAT slideshow
• Journal sharing – dialogue on SWAT slideshow
• Dialogue Questions #3

Meeting Two

• Verbal responses to researcher’s initial learnings

Interpreting Experience

Meeting One

• Participant identifies key moments
• Researcher identifies key moments

Meeting Two

• Dialogue between researcher and participant on initial learnings
• Identifying key moments

Integrating Experience

Meeting Two

• Dialogue between researcher and participant on initial learnings
• Closing statements and researcher thank you
• Proposed article and information sharing of learnings for SWAT teams
APPENDIX 3

CHRONOLOGICAL OUTLINE

Meeting One (4:00 pm – 6:40 pm)

I. Welcome & Orientation, Informed Consent (4:00-4:20pm)
   A. Welcome participant (5 minutes)
      1. Researcher will greet participant upon entrance
      2. Researcher will introduce self
   B. Orientation (5 minutes)
      1. Overview of schedule
      2. Overview of location (bathrooms, water, and exits)
   C. Informed Consent (10 minutes)
      1. Researcher will review confidentiality and guidelines
         a. Identities always confidential
         b. Participation is voluntary – may stop at any time
         c. How information is used for data collection
      2. Clarifying questions or concerns

II. Guidelines for Evoking-Expressing Sequence (4:20-4:30pm)
   A. Researcher will explain video/audio sequence (5 minutes)
   B. Researcher will explain journaling sequence (5 minutes)
      1. Private journaling
      2. Sharing of journaling
3. Role Play #1

4. Dialogue Questions #1-3

III. Evoking-Expressing Sequence #1 (4:30-5:20pm)

A. Heat video (10 minutes)

B. Private journaling (10 minutes)

C. Role Play #1 (10 minutes)

D. Sharing of private journaling (10 minutes)

E. Dialogue Questions #1 (10 minutes)

IV. Evoking-Expressing Sequence #2 (5:20-5:55pm)

A. North Hollywood shootout audio (5 minutes)

B. Private journaling (10 minutes)

C. Sharing of private journaling (10 minutes)

D. Dialogue Questions #2 (10 minutes)

V. Evoking-Expressing Sequence #3 (5:55-6:30pm)

A. SWAT slideshow (5 minutes)

B. Private journaling (10 minutes)

C. Sharing of private journaling (10 minutes)

D. Dialogue Questions #3 (10 minutes)

VI. Closing (6:30-6:40pm)

A. Researcher will give closing remarks and thank you (5 minutes)

B. Researcher will remind participant of Meeting Two (5 minutes)
Meeting Two (4:00 pm – 6:00 pm)

I. Welcome & Orientation, Informed Consent (4:00 – 4:15pm)
   A. Welcome back participant (2 minutes)
   B. Orientation (3 minutes)
      1. Overview of schedule
   C. Informed Consent (10 minutes)
      1. Researcher will review confidentiality and guidelines
         a. Identities always confidential
         b. Participation is voluntary – may stop at any time
         c. How information is used for data collection
      2. Clarifying questions or concerns

II. Interpreting-Integrating Sequence #1 (4:15-5:30pm)
   A. Participant to identify key moments
   B. Initial learnings read and participant invited to respond (60 minutes)
   C. Closing comments or clarifying questions (15 minutes)

III. Interpreting-Integrating Experience #2 (5:30-6:00pm)
   A. Researcher to explain overall purpose of research (10 minutes)
   B. Participant dialogue regarding overall purpose of research (10 minutes)
   C. Evaluation form and thank you (10 minutes)
APPENDIX 4

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

To Participant,

You have been invited to participate in a study on group dynamics. The purpose of the study is to better explore and understand group dynamics in specialized units of the military and in law enforcement.

Participation will involve the following: two individual meetings with me, the viewing of various evocative media during the first meeting, private journaling, the sharing of journal material, and role-play about the research topic. The first meeting will last approximately two-and-a-half hours. The second meeting will last approximately two hours. Available meeting dates for the first meeting will be the weeks of January 11th and January 25th, starting at 4:00 PM. Available meeting dates for the second meeting will be the week of February 15th, starting at 4:00 PM. Dates and times are flexible, and to be determined based on your availability during the months of January and February.

The meetings will not be recorded on audio or video. The only recordation will be notes that I take and notes or journaling material that you choose to employ during the meetings. Any written material that you have is yours to keep, and can be retained or disposed of at your discretion. Only the notes that I take will remain with me, memorializing the meetings that we have. Any materials generated as a result of these meetings, including this informed consent form, will be secured and retained
solely by me. Any data collection and ultimate documentation in published form occurring as a result of these notes will be recorded in such a way that your identity will remain private, to ensure your anonymity. Any information that might tend to identify you will be altered to maintain confidentiality of such specificities. In the case of legal subpoena, there may be limitations to the protection of your identity; in such cases, all efforts will be made to maintain your anonymity. You always have the option to seek legal counsel if you think you might require legal advice prior to your participation in this study.

This study may or may not offer any direct benefits to you. The published material as a result of this study, however, may prove useful to groups operating in the research’s target environment.

Although I have made all effort to minimize potential risks to you, the study may contain certain processes that some might find difficult from an emotional standpoint. Facets such as watching or hearing emotionally charged images or sounds, individual journaling, and dialoguing or sharing certain subject matter may prove difficult for some. You may experience various emotional discomforts as a result.

I am not a therapist, and neither these meetings nor this research have been designed for therapeutic purposes. I do encourage you not to hesitate to inform me if you develop any questions or concerns throughout the term of this research and our interactions with each other. I can also facilitate referrals to an appropriate mental health professional if you should need such assistance.
Though this form acts as a medium for your consent should you choose to participate in this research, you may at any time withdraw your consent or discontinue your participation in this study at any time as you see fit. Additionally, I maintain the right to also terminate your participation in the study for any reason. If such a need arises on my part, I will notify you immediately.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me at 415-847-6886, Monday through Friday, 8am–4pm. You may also contact the Dissertation Director at Meridian University, 47 Sixth Street, Petaluma, CA, 707-765-1836.

Meridian University assumes no responsibilities for any psychological or physical injury resulting from this study.

____________________
Signature of participant:

____________________
Signature of researcher:
APPENDIX 5

SCRIPT: INITIAL CONTACT

Hello, thank you for agreeing to speak with me about the possibility of participating in this study.

My name is Chris Simmons and I am a doctoral student at Meridian University; I am currently working on my Ph.D. in psychology. This study is the basis of my research for my doctoral dissertation, which is a requirement for the completion of my Ph.D.

This study revolves around the topic of group dynamics. I am specifically interested in information related to specialized groups that exist in certain settings. Participants in this study will be asked to meet with me for a total of two meetings. You will only be interacting with me, as you will not be having any interaction with or knowledge about any others participating in this study. Each of the two meetings will require approximately two to three hours of your time. During the meetings, you will be asked to watch various media, journal on the media, and dialogue with me about your experiences of the media and other subject matter relevant to the research topic.

I will attempt to do everything I can to accommodate scheduling the meetings in a way that is most convenient to you. These coming months of December and January are the target months for the first and second meetings, respectively.
If you were to be chosen as a participant, would you be able to commit to these time frames?

*(If answer in the affirmative, refer to “Appendix 6. Script: Pre-Screening Questionnaire.”)*
APPENDIX 6

PRE-SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE

In order to facilitate the most efficient and effective data collection for this study, I have a few questions for all potential participants to determine if those interested in contributing to this study would be acceptable for this type of research. If I may ask you a few brief, initial questions, it will better help me determine if we should move on to the remainder screening process.

Do you agree to continue?

Great, I’d like to ask you a few questions:

• What is your age?
• Can you briefly describe your employment history?
• Have you ever been or are you currently employed in the military or in law enforcement? (If not covered in prior employment history question)
• Have you ever been involved in any specialized units in the military or law enforcement? Please describe.
• Can you briefly describe your interest in groups or group dynamics?

If applicant is acceptable for further screening:

Thank you for answering these questions. I would like to ask you some more detailed questions and continue with the screening process. Are you interested in continuing with the screening process?

(If answer in the affirmative, continue to Appendix 7: Screening Questionnaire)
If applicant is NOT acceptable for further screening:

Thank you for answering these questions. Part of the requirements for this research dictate that specific criteria be used to best form the research design. Because of (one of the following), I will not be able to use you as a participant in this study:

- Age (must be between 30 and 50)
- No military or law enforcement background
- No specialized unit or a tactical team experience
- No interest in groups or group dynamics

Thank you again for taking the time to talk with me and for you consideration in participating in this research.
APPENDIX 7

SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Please describe your experiences in the military or law enforcement.

2. Please describe your experiences directly related to the specialized unit(s) that you have participated in.

3. Please describe how you feel about your experiences in the military or law enforcement.

4. What kinds of feelings come up for you now when you talk about these experiences?

5. Did you form any friendships or relationships in the specialized units you were a part of? Describe/explain.

6. Did you have any negative feelings associated with the people in the specialized units that you worked?

7. What aspects of being in a group do you like?

8. What aspects of being in a group do you dislike or find challenging?

9. Describe how you tend to behave when surrounded by group members in specialized units?

10. How do think others in groups experience you?

11. In a setting where you might be asked about personal or emotionally sensitive topics, would you have difficulty engaging with your emotions to the extent where you would be unable to function or control yourself physically? If so, please describe.

12. Do you have any concerns about your consumption of alcohol or drugs? If so, please describe.

13. Are you currently, or have you ever taken psychotropic medications? If so, please describe.
14. Have you ever been hospitalized for psychological reasons? If so, please describe.

Okay, those are all of the questions I have at the moment. Thank you for taking the time to talk with me. I will let you know within a week what has been decided in terms of your participation in this study. Thanks again.
APPENDIX 8

SCRIPT: FOLLOW-UP / CLARIFYING SCREENING QUESTIONS

Hi, this is Chris Simmons. Thanks again for taking the time to answer all of the screening questions that I had for you. I just had a few follow-up questions if you have a few minutes to spare?

(If answer is in the affirmative, researcher will ask clarifying questions.)

Thank you again for taking the time. After I’ve reviewed all of my screening questionnaires, I’ll let you know within a week what has been decided in terms of your participation in this study. Thanks again.
Hi. This is Chris Simmons. I wanted to call and talk to you about the research study that we’ve spoken about recently. After reviewing your answers to the questions I asked you during the screening process, I determined that you could be a good match for the study. I wanted to ask if you were still interested in participating in the study?

*(If answer is in the negative, researcher will thank participant for their time and conclude.)*

I know we’ve gone over most of this before, but I did want to take a few minutes and review with you again some of what the research is about and a few of the logistics associated with the study.

*Re-read Appendix 5 – Script: Initial Contact*

*Then, re-read Appendix 4 – Script: Informed Consent Form*

Do you have any questions about any of the aforementioned information?

Do you have any questions or concerns about anything pertaining to this study?

If you need some time to think anything over or consider whether or not you are still interested in being a participant, please feel free to take a day or two. After 2 days, I will need to have your decision so I can factor in your participation or your absence for the study.
(If answer is in the negative, researcher will thank participant for their time and conclude.)

(If answer is in the affirmative, researcher will thank participant, and schedule the first meeting.)
Hi. This is Chris Simmons. I wanted to call and talk to you about the research study that we’ve spoken about recently. Part of the requirements for this research dictate that specific criteria be used to best form the research design. Because of the various criteria for participating, I will not be able to use you as a participant in this study.

Thank you again for taking the time to talk with me and for you consideration in participating in this research. I truly appreciate the time and effort you took in speaking with me and discussing this research.
APPENDIX 11

SCRIPT: PRE-MEETING INFORMATION & CONFIRMATION

Hi. This is Chris Simmons calling regarding the research study on group dynamics. I just wanted to make sure you are still able to participate in the study we have talked about. I have you scheduled for (date/time/location); does that still work for you?

As this meeting, and the second meeting following this upcoming initial meeting will require you to sit for a couple of hours, you might want to wear comfortable, casual clothing. If you could do me a favor and plan to be free for the entire time of the meeting. I would ask that you turn all electronic devices off. If you have any special needs that come up between now and then, please don’t hesitate to let me know, and I’m sure we can work it out so as not to place a burden on you. Of course, I would ask that you block off this time from other commitments that you might have, so you can devote your full attention to our meeting, without interruption.

I will have all of the necessary items for your participation in the study. You will be invited to watch two video clips, so if you have any visual needs, such as glasses or contacts, I would ask that you to bring/wear them in order to best facilitate your participation in the exercises. I will have a notepad and pens for you, as well.

Prior to our meeting, I would like to send you a copy of the consent form so you have a chance to look it over. Is that okay? Do you have an address or email address that you could give me where I can send you the form? (Researcher to obtain
participant’s address). At the first meeting itself I will have a copy of the consent form for you to review, ask questions, and sign.

I look forward to our meeting. If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact me at 415-847-6886, Monday-Friday, 8:00AM-4:00PM. See you then!
Welcome & Orientation, Informed Consent

Hi. Good to see you. Thanks for coming in. (Introduce myself in person if I have not done so already). Nice to meet/see you. I appreciate you coming in. (If participant is unfamiliar with the meeting location, inform him/her of the layout of the facility – bathrooms, snack areas, break areas, exits).

Have a seat if you would; I’d like to briefly talk to you about the basic format associated with how we’re going to conduct the meeting and a little about why we are here. I’m sure you’ll find it fairly straightforward. If you have any questions during this process, please let me know.

As I have mentioned previously, I am a doctoral student at Meridian University; I am currently working on my Ph.D. in psychology. This study is the basis of my research for my doctoral dissertation, which is a requirement for the completion of my Ph.D.

The overall focus of this study revolves around the topic of group dynamics. I am specifically interested in information related to specialized groups that exist in certain settings. This meeting will be the first of two meetings. This meeting should last approximately two-and-a-half hours. You will only be interacting with me, as you will not be having any interaction with or knowledge about any others participating in this study.
Let me take a few minutes and go over the Informed Consent form. Here is a copy of the form. We’ll go over it together, and I’ll read it aloud.

*(Researcher to read Appendix 4: Informed Consent Form)*

Do you have any questions or concerns you’d like to discuss at this time? Do you have any other commitments during the time we will be spending together? *(If not, researcher is to proceed with the following guidelines).*

**Guidelines for Evoking-Expressing Sequence**

Today’s meeting will be approximately two to two-and-a-half hours in duration. I would estimate that we will end this meeting around 6:30 PM or so. We will take breaks for a maximum of five minutes in between each of the three media sequences, after we have had a chance to engage with the media you just watched or listen to. Before the next media is introduced, I will see if you or I want to take a short break. If neither of us feel as though we need or desire a break, we can agree to continue with the exercises. As I’ve mentioned before, I would ask that if you have a cell phone or any sort of electronic device that might distract us during the meeting, that you turn it off or place it on to some sort of silent mode.

Okay, great. Let me explain the sequence of media that you will have an opportunity to watch and how I envision this exercise going. I have three forms of media; two of them are video and audio format, and one is an audio-only media segment. They will be presented in the following order: a video segment from movie, fictitious (approximately ten minutes in length), a non-fiction, real-life dispatch audio
segment from a critical incident (approximately five minutes in length), and a slideshow presentation (approximately five minutes in length).

Once I start each media segment, I will ask that you watch it in its entirety. I will not stop the segment or make any comments about it. I will ask that you not make any comments to me. However, allow any reactions you may have to the media to emerge freely; try to pay attention to how the segments make you feel, and how you find yourself reacting to the media. Here is a notepad and pen (researcher to hand participant a notepad and pen). If during the media segment you feel as though you want to write something down regarding a particular feeling or emotion, or referencing a particular part or scene in the segment that drew your interest, please feel free to do so.

After the completion of the segment, I will ask that you take a few moments to write down some notes about what you just watched. I am interested in what interested you about the media segment, what came up, if anything, emotionally, and anything in particular that sparked your interest or held some sort of meaning for you. I am especially interested in how you identified or did not identify with the various persons depicted in the segment, and how and why these individuals stood out for you. I encourage you to write openly, in whatever form you feel comfortable: notes, brainstorming, free-format, or whatever writing style you would like. You will be given ten minutes for this private journaling portion of this exercise. Don’t worry about the time or hurrying to finish. I will keep track of the time, and am flexible if your writing exceeds that ten minutes. I will let you know at the ten-minute mark just
to give you an idea of time; it does not mean you have to stop writing if you are finishing an idea or have something that you want to continue journaling about.

The notes that you write will be yours to keep. I will not be collecting them, or even looking at them. They are purely for your reference only when you are sharing your experiences of the media presented. You can keep, destroy, or do whatever you want to with your notes once we have concluded this meeting.

After you have completed journaling on that particular media segment, just let me know. I will then ask you to share whatever you feel comfortable sharing with me regarding what you watched, what you wrote, or anything that you might be feeling regarding this meeting as it pertains to this study. I would encourage you to share as much as you feel comfortable with, as even the most seemingly minute things that might have been evoked for you could be of potential interest to this study. Basically, I might ask you a few clarifying questions about what you have shared with me, or possibly ask you to elaborate something you might have said, but I won’t have a distinct script or line of initial questions. We will spend approximately ten minutes with the sharing of your journaling.

Then, I have a series of questions that I have already written out that have a particular focus to this study. I would like to ask you these questions regarding each media segment that you watch. I will ask you these questions after you have had a chance to share your journal writing. The series of questions that I have prepared for you should take about ten minutes to complete. I will simply ask you the questions verbally, and ask you to respond verbally. If the question draws you to answer in written form, feel free to do so; I will want to discuss in dialogue form what you have
written. If at any time you are not comfortable answering a question, just let me know. If you feel comfortable enough to discuss with me what my asking of that particular question evoked for you, that information could be helpful for this study. Otherwise, I’ll move on to the next question.

So in short, the sequence is like this: you’ll watch the media, you’ll have a chance to write down some notes, we’ll talk about what you wrote, and finally I’ll ask some specific questions regarding the experience of watching the media. We’ll repeat this format for each of the three media segments. Also, on the first media segment, I will invite you to participate in a role-play type of interaction, where you and I will engage in a dialogue as though you are a character from the movie (I’ll explain that in a little more detail after the media segment is played, you have had a chance to journal, and we’ve finished with the some of our discussion about the first media segment).

Do you have any questions?

Great. Let’s get started. If I could turn your attention to the monitor, I’ll play the first media clip.

*Evoking-Expressing Sequence #1*

*(Researcher to play video clip from the movie Heat, directed by Michael Mann. The clip is a bank robbery scene that ultimately ends up in a major exchange of gunfire.)*

Okay. Let me give you some time to do some writing. I would be interested in how the segment affected you, how you might have identified or not identified
with the characters in the media segment, and any other emotions that came up for you. As I mentioned before, I’ll let you know when we’ve reached ten minutes.

(Researcher to allow participant to private journal)

Now as I had mentioned a little earlier, I want to invite you to try out a role-play type of exercise. Is that something you would be willing to try out with me? Great.

(Researcher to read Appendix 15A: Role Play #1)

Thank you for your sharing; as I mentioned, I also have a few questions in particular that I wanted to ask you. I that okay? Great.

(Researcher to read Appendix 15: Dialogue Questions #1)

Thanks for your answers. I appreciate it.

Okay. Great. I’d like you to invite you to share what you wrote or anything that came up for you while you were watching that scene, participating in the role play, or answering the questions.

(Participant to share evoked experience. Researcher to ask open-ended clarifying questions, encouraging participant to expound on his or her thoughts).

Well, before we continue on to the next media segment, I would like to take a five minute break. (Researcher and participant to take a five minute break).

Welcome back. I’m going to play the next media segment. This will be an audio-only segment; let me know if the volume level is okay.
**Evoking-Expressing Sequence #2**

*(Researcher to play audio clip from a portion of the dispatch communications between Los Angeles Police personnel during the infamous North Hollywood shootout where two armed gunman attempted to rob a Bank of America and opened fire on police.)*

Okay. Let me give you some time to do some writing. Again, I would be interested in how listening to the segment affected you, how you might have identified or not identified with the voices in the media segment, and any emotions that came up for you. As before, I’ll let you know when we’ve reached ten minutes.

*(Researcher to allow participant to private journal)*

Okay. Great. Would you like to share what you wrote or anything that might have come up for you while you were listening to that clip?

*(Participant to share evoked experience. Researcher to ask open-ended clarifying questions, encouraging participant to expound on his or her thoughts.)*

Thank you for your sharing; I again have a few questions in particular that I wanted to ask you. That okay? Great.

*(Researcher to read Appendix 16: Dialogue Questions #2)*

Thanks for your answers. Again, before we continue on to the next media segment, I would like to take a five minute break. *(Researcher and participant to take a five minute break).*

Welcome back. I’m going to play the next media segment. This will be a slideshow presentation.
Evoking-Expressing Sequence #3

(Researcher to play slideshow presentation of photographs of a Special Weapons and Tactics team in various stages of live operations and training. The presentation is coupled with music. The preparatory index before the slideshow begins is accompanied with the song “It’s No Good” performed by Depeche Mode – Refer to Appendix 18 for the lyrics. The slideshow itself is accompanied with the song “Serenity” performed by Godsmack – Refer to Appendix 19 for the lyrics.)

Okay. Let me give you some time to do some writing. I am interested in how the segment affected you, how you might have identified or not identified with the people you saw in the media segment, and any emotions that came up for you. Do you see any relationship between the team you just saw, and the team(s) you are a part of? I’ll let you know when we’ve reached ten minutes.

(Researcher to allow participant to private journal)

Okay. Great. Would you like to share what you wrote or anything that might have come up for you while you were listening to that clip?

(Participant to share evoked experience. Researcher to ask open-ended clarifying questions, encouraging participant to expound on his thoughts.)

Thank you for your sharing; I again have a few questions in particular that I wanted to ask you. I that okay? Great.

(Researcher to read Appendix 17: Dialogue Questions #3)

Thanks for your answers. Well, before we continue on to the next media segment, I would like to take a five minute break. (Researcher and participant to take a five minute break).
Welcome back.

**Closing**

That concludes our meeting today. I truly appreciate you taking the time to meet with me and engage with this experience. Are there any questions that you have about our meeting today, or anything that you would like to comment on regarding what we did here today?

As I have mentioned before, we have plans to meet again for our second and final meeting next month. During that time, I will be spending some time looking at the collected data, including what you and I talked about today. I will be identifying various learnings from the data collection. I will share some of the initial learnings that are identified with you in hopes that maybe you can provide me with some feedback on those learnings. It is my intent to integrate your feedback into the research, further adding to the depth of the study.

Do you have any questions about this meeting? Okay.

Before we finish today, I just want to close with us taking half of a minute to breathe. As you know, we sometimes feel like we can barely catch our breath in this line of work. So, in closing, I’d just ask that we both close our eyes and take five long, slow, deep breaths, keeping our eyes closed after the final breath for a few seconds. So just relax in your chair, close your eyes, and take a deep breath.

*(Researcher to guide participant through short breathing exercise)*

If you could, I’d like to invite you to share a brief sentence or phrase about how you are affected by our meeting.
(Participant to share sentence or phrase if he or she is able)

Thank you. We’ll see you at our next meeting. If any questions or concerns come up for you in the meantime, please don’t hesitate to contact me. Take care.
APPENDIX 13

SCRIPT: MEETING TWO (PART ONE)

Welcome & Orientation, Informed Consent

Welcome back. The purpose of this meeting is to share some of the initial learnings that came about during the course of this research. I want to go over some of the learnings with you, and talk to you a little about what those learnings might mean to you. I'd like to hear any and all feedback you might have related to these learnings and to the research as a whole.

This meeting should take approximately two hours. I have essentially broken this meeting into two parts. The first part of the meeting will consist of discussions about the learnings and the feedback that you might be able to offer this research. We’ll take a ten minute break, and then commence with the second half of this meeting. The second portion is related to the sharing of some of the overall constructs of this study. I want to shed light on some of the general purposes of this research, and further solicit feedback.

Do you have any questions on this second meeting so far?

Do you have any time constraints or any other matters that you’d like to discuss before we get started? If I could ask you to make sure that your cell phones, pagers, or anything else that might otherwise be a distraction, are turned off. I appreciate it.
As with the first meeting, I’d like to go over the Informed Consent form and address issues related to confidentiality. Here is a copy of the form. We’ll go over it together, and I’ll read it aloud.

(Researcher to read Appendix 4: Informed Consent Form).

Do you have any questions or concerns you’d like to discuss at this time?

Interpreting-Integrating Sequence #1

I would like to ask you about those moments during our first meeting that stood out for you. Can you think of any key moments where something affected you in a way that it stayed in your mind for some reason; or maybe you attributed a particular moment with some sense of significance in some way?

(Researcher to note and inquire on key moments as conveyed by the participant)

Great; thank you. I will now go over the initial learnings. We’ll go over each initial learning, and I’ll ask you to take a few minutes to write down your feedback on those learnings. Again, any notes you take will be yours to have at the end of the meeting. I’ll invite you to share your feedback on each initial learning.

(Researcher to go over initial learnings and participant to journal on each learning and offer feedback)

Let’s take short break and meet back here in ten minutes.
APPENDIX 14

SCRIPT: MEETING TWO (PART TWO)

Interpreting-Integrating Sequence #2

As I have mentioned previously, this study is the basis of my research for my doctoral dissertation, which is a requirement for the completion of my Ph.D. The overall focus of this study revolves around the topic of group dynamics. I was specifically interested in collecting information related to specialized groups that exist in certain settings, primarily focusing on law enforcement special operation and tactical groups.

The data that I collected and the initial learnings that we just discussed are the basis for researching how members of these groups interact. I have been looking at how informal groups, that is, groups, kind of like cliques, that exist in more of a social arena, where membership isn’t based so much on assignment as it is on other aspects of social life, like perceived leadership, popularity, friendships, and camaraderie.

I have also been interested in how certain members of groups associate and distance from different individuals in the group, as well as different informal groups within the whole formal team. All of this seems to create a kind of culture in the group. I am interested in this organizational culture, and how it is formed and reinforced.
Finally, the data collection’s purpose is also to shed any light on what it means for individuals in these groups to rely on each other, based on the nature of work they do and the extreme environments that they work in. I hypothesized that that environment that these groups work in, coupled with their task assignments, had some relation to ways in which the members of the groups experienced interdependence.

Ultimately, once my dissertation has been approved, I will present you with a summary of the final learnings from this research.

Do you have any questions or comments?

(Researcher to go read/go over Appendix 20: Evaluation Form for Participants)

And as I mentioned at the end of our first meeting, we sometimes feel like we can barely catch our breath in this line of work. So again, in closing, I’d just ask that we both close our eyes and take five long, slow, deep breaths, keeping our eyes closed after the final breath for a few seconds. So just relax in your chair, close your eyes, and take a deep breath.

(Researcher to guide participant through short breathing exercise)

If you could, I’d like to invite you to share a brief sentence or phrase about how you are affected by our meeting.

(Participant to share sentence or phrase if he or she is able)

Thank you. Be safe and take care.
APPENDIX 15

DIALOGUE QUESTIONS #1 (HEAT VIDEO)

1. Briefly describe what emotions came up for you while watching this media segment.

2. What part(s) stood out most for you?

3. In what ways would you consider that situation to be occurring under extreme conditions, with the co-workers involved to be operating in an extreme environment?

4. In this situation, can you talk about how the different characters each relied on one another to get their respective jobs accomplished?

5. Imagine you are the beat patrolmen assigned to the perimeter / roadblock with the other uniformed officers (specify who I am referencing if necessary). What sorts of feelings would you have? What would be going through your mind during all of this? After the immediacy and exigency of the situation has ended, can you imagine what would be going through your mind? What do you feel like thinking about it right now?

6. What character in the film do you most identify with?

7. In imagining you are (character mentioned in #6) in this situation. What sorts of feelings would you have? What would be going through your mind during all of this? After the immediacy and exigency of the situation has ended, can you imagine what would be going through your mind? What do you feel like thinking about it right now?

8. If you can, describe a situation where you have been with a group of people in a situation that you would consider extreme.

9. If you can, describe a similar, real-life situation or a situation that reminded you of the situation that was depicted in the media segment.

10. In what ways have you felt a certain bonding or kinship to other members of those groups that you have belonged to where part of your job is to operate under extreme or life-threatening situations? Describe. How did it feel being part of such a group? (positives/negatives).
11. Have you ever felt let down by a team member(s) while in the throes of an extreme or life-threatening situation? Explain. How did this affect the dynamics of the team in your eyes after this had occurred? How did you view this team member(s) henceforth?

12. When speaking in the role play, did you experience in any of the positions being blamed or judged by other team members? If so, could you elaborate?

13. When speaking in the role play, did you experience from any of the positions being excluded or feeling on the outside of your team? If so, could you elaborate?

14. When speaking in the role play, did you experience a sense of belonging and inclusion as a team member? If so, could you elaborate?
ROLE PLAY #1 SCRIPT (AL PACHINO – “VINCENT HANNA”)

Now, talking about Al Pachino’s character (Lieutenant Vincent Hanna), I want you to imagine that you are him; I’d like to have a conversation with you in the first person, with you answering as Vincent Hanna. It’s a role-play. When I talk to you, I’ll be doing so as though you are Hanna; in turn, you’ll talk to me as Hanna (using “I” and “me,” for example when you are explaining Hanna’s experiences). For instance, once you are “in character,” so to speak, and if I was to ask you what it felt like to do something, you would answer as Hanna, possibly stating something like, “I felt like I wanted to get the robbers,” or “I felt like I was overwhelmed when I was running to the initial scene.” Again, it’s a role-play, like acting, but I want you to answer in regards to how certain experiences in that scenario would have made you feel as Hanna. Does that make sense?

When I say begin, I’ll give you a few moments to imagine you are Hanna (We’ll let it be silent for a few seconds), then we’ll begin the dialogue. I will be gently directing the dialogue. During our conversation, if you want to go “out of character” at any time, just let me know by asking for a “Timeout;” I will call a “Timeout” if I think there is reason to as well. Otherwise, we will continue on with the dialogue with you as Hanna. Make sense? Do you have any questions?

Accuracy is not important in terms of what “really” happened in the video segment. What I am interested in is you making an attempt to really put yourself in
Hanna’s shoes, and what it might have been like for you to be Hanna in this particular situation. I will be talking to you as though this incident has just occurred – as in the video). If possible, try to stay “in character” as much as possible, and avoid coming “out of character” in the middle of the dialogue. We’ll have time to discuss our interaction after. Again, any questions? Okay, great. Let’s begin.

Take a few seconds to put yourself in that role.

(Allow for a short amount of time to pass).

“Vincent, can you first talk to me about what it felt like to see those guys coming out of the bank; you and your team just get there and are moving in, running down the sidewalk toward them as they are getting into their car. What did that feel like?”

“Were you scared/excited/mad?” (If yes) “Talk to me a little about that.” (If not mentioned during former question/dialogue).

“Were you concerned for your team?” (If yes) “Talk to me a little about that.”

“Who else were you concerned for?” “Talk to me about that a little please if you could.”

“Vincent, talk to me about what happened to ‘Detective Bosko’ [actor Ted Levine]. He was shot in the neck in the very early stages of this event. I know he was one of your detectives, and you were there when he was struck. I know you ran to him and tried to help him. It looked like he died in your arms. Can you talk to me about that? What kinds of feelings do you have about what happened to him?”

“Other responding patrol officers were getting shot as well. How did that feel, watching that happen? What did seeing that make you want to do? What do these other officers represent to you? What sort of responsibility or kinship do you feel, if any, to your fellow officers who are being shot by these criminals?”

“Now Vincent, you were chasing down Neil and his crew [actor Robert De Niro]; he’s shooting up the grocery store parking lot as you’re trying to get everyone out of the way, including yourself. People are continuing to be shot in front of you. What is going through your mind?”
“At the end of this, two of the criminals, Neil and Chris [actor Val Kilmer], stole that station wagon and fled the scene. They got away. How did it feel knowing that you weren’t able to stop them?”

“Who do you blame for this incident happening the way that it did? Talk about that if you would.”

“You have lived through an extraordinary event, and had to press forward toward the threat regardless of the fact that you were likely to die. In all likelihood, you could have died that day. How does that affect you as you reflect on this incident? Can you speak to me about what it’s like to know you have been through an event like this, while others did not make it.”

“Thank you for what you did in this situation. Thank you for what you do every day. And thank you for talking to me about what it was like to have been through that situation.”

(End role-play by calling a ‘Timeout,’ asking participant to take a moment to come ‘out of character,’ and tell them they are no longer in the form of Hanna).

How was that for you? If you would, talk to me about what you are feeling right now.

Do you have any questions?
APPENDIX 16

DIALOGUE QUESTIONS #2 (NORTH HOLLYWOOD AUDIO)

1. Briefly describe what emotions came up for you while watching this media segment.

2. What part(s) stood out most for you?

3. Describe examples of when you might have felt included or excluded from the group during life-threatening or extreme events. How did you feel?

4. Did those situations of feeling included or excluded affect the ways in which you interacted with other members of the group? Describe.

5. Would you consider what you heard an extreme or life-threatening situation? Please describe.

6. Does listening to this media segment remind you of any situation(s) in your own life that you would be willing to share? Describe. (if not, go to #8).

7. How would you describe the dynamics of the team before, during, and after these events?

8. Imagine you are the officer on the audio recording; one of your fellow officers has been shot. Tell me what is going through your mind. What sorts of emotions are you feeling? Who/what does this officer represent to you? What are your allegiances to him?

9. Is there anything else you’d be willing to share?
APPENDIX 17

DIALOGUE QUESTIONS #3 (SWAT SLIDESHOW)

1. Briefly describe what emotions came up for you while watching this media segment.

2. What part(s) stood out most for you or were most evocative for you?

3. Did the slideshow remind you of a group that you have been involved with? Describe what that group meant to you?

4. Describe how and why you might categorize your experiences in that (those) group(s). (e.g.: positive, negative, a combination of both?) Describe in detail if you can.

5. Describe how you rely, or have relied on other members of such groups.

6. Did the formal tasks of these groups involve life threatening situations, where you were in potential danger, and you were also required to potential dispense lethal force upon another? If yes, describe how that affected you.

7. Describe examples of times when you felt included in the team. How did you feel? Was there an event(s) that happened which led up to you feeling especially included? Explain.

8. Describe examples of times when you felt excluded in the team. How did you feel? Was there an event(s) that happened which led up to you feeling especially excluded? Explain.

9. Did those situations of feeling included or excluded affect the ways in which you interacted with other members of the group. Describe.

10. How would you describe the dynamics of the team before, during, and after these situations?

11. Is there anything else you’d be willing to share?
APPENDIX 18

LYRICS: “IT’S NO GOOD” BY DEPECHE MODE

(Plays in the title section, before the slideshow begins – Participant will only hear the beginning portion of the song before the slideshow begins)

Going to take my time,
I have all the time in the world,
To make you mine;
It is written in the stars above,
The god’s decree,
You’ll be right here by my side
Right next to me;
You can run but you cannot hide.

chorus
Don’t say you want me,
Don’t say you need me
Don’t say you love me,
It’s understood;
Don’t say you’re happy
Out there without me,
I know you can’t be
Cuz it’s no good.

I’ll be fine,
I’ll be waiting patiently,
Till you see the signs
And come running to my open arms;
When will you realize?
Do we have to wait till our worlds collide?
Open up your eyes,
You’ve got to back the tide.
APPENDIX 19

LYRICS: “SERENITY” BY GODSMACK

(This song plays throughout the entirety of the slideshow, with the music coordinated to the full length of the slideshow)

As I sit here
And slowly close my eyes,
I take another deep breath,
And feel the wind pass through my body,
I’m the one in your soul,
Reflecting inner light,
Protect the ones who hold you,
Cradling your inner child.

chorus
I need serenity
In a place where I can hide
I need serenity
Nothing changes, days go by.

Where do we go when we just don’t know
And how do we relight the flame when it’s cold,
Why do we dream when our thoughts mean nothing
And when will we learn to control.

Tragic visions
Slowly stole my life,
Tore away everything,
Cheating me out of my time;
I’m the one who loves you,
No matter wrong or right,
And every day I hold you,
I hold you with my inner child.
APPENDIX 20

LETTER: THANK YOU

Dear [participant],

I just wanted to extend my gratitude to you for your time and effort in the recent study you participated in regarding group dynamics. The dissertation has received final approval; enclosed you will find the final Summary of Learnings.

This study would not have been possible without your participation. I truly appreciate all of your interest and willingness to share your experiences with me.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Chris Simmons
APPENDIX 21

RECRUITMENT ANNOUNCEMENT - FLYER

SWORN LAW ENFORCEMENT AND MILITARY OFFICERS WANTED FOR A STUDY ON GROUP DYNAMICS

If you are a member of a police or military specialized unit such as SWAT, Special Investigations, Crime Task Forces, or Special Forces, you are invited to take part in a study.

Participation Involves:
- A 2 ½ hour confidential, one-on-one, interactive interview process
- A 2 hour confidential, one-on-one, post meeting and interview
- Men and Women officers ages 30-50 are invited to participate

The sharing of your experiences will help others better understand the dynamics associated with being part of specialized enforcement units.

If you are interested and want to discuss this study
Please contact:
Chris Simmons
415-847-6886 or csimm1161@yahoo.com

Chris Simmons is a doctoral student researcher in Psychology. The information used in this study will be the basis of research for a doctoral dissertation. All associated names, agencies, or any other information tending to identify participants in this study will remain strictly anonymous and confidential.
SUMMARY OF THE DATA

Participants

SESSION ONE

Phil, Martinez, CA, January 19, 2009.
Pete, Santa Rosa, CA, January 24, 2009.
Carl, Martinez, CA, February 6, 2009.
Todd, American Canyon, CA, February 20, 2009.

SESSION TWO

Carl, Martinez, CA, April 22, 2013.
Gil, San Francisco, CA, April 21, 2013.

GIL #1

SWAT Team = entry = society = total teamwork
ABSOLUTE TEAMWORK = fused together as one working machine/unit = camaraderie
Like its own civilization = team society
(A=high/elevated/happy?)

HEAT – great scene = a lot going on
(A=high/elevated/attentive/fists tight knees/loud?mad?smiling?up/down)
Tough to watch my guys taking rounds; chaos need to control it; like having to watch someone in your family get murdered right in front of you; my fault cuz I was supposed to stop it and I didn’t.

Want to get the bank robbers = Game-on. Let’s do this = They brought the fight to me. = Suspect drives the response = They dictated my actions, my response. And now here I am, ready to play. Fuck it/it’s on = It’s time to do what I get paid to do. Tense situation right before engage suspects = so focused – tunnel vision = Job is to stop the problem not go run away from it
(A=fear?excitability/wants to engage)

In the end, it’s rough to go through that and then go home at night = cant get upset about it = may go home and think about stuff over a beer or something or debrief with my buddies but I’m not going to lose it or anything like that = that’s not what we do = not what I do at least = I’m human but when you’re part of something bigger than you, you have to hold it together = some can’t do that = open selves up to vulnerability, emotions, weakness. You have to have that place in your mind where you hold it all down to focus on what you gotta do = can’t be scared about what you gotta do or what might happen.

Movies don’t show the aftermath, just the action part. Everytime they get one of us, it’s friggin devastating.

Myself is #2 = team first = I am second to needs of the team = discipline

All for one and one for all. = “Musketeer mentality” = SWAT
Work together with same goals = Constantly fed to you because it has to be that way. If you’re in it for yourself, then you need to go work at Target or something.

Like a lot of us, I was taught that there was no ‘I’ in ‘Team.’ Have to be “the whole” = no wholeness equates to vulnerable and exposed (A=serious)

In it for yourself = bad (A=scowl)
Have to be responsible/accountable/dedicated
Crazy responsible = weight of the world always on shoulders = better be = has to be that way = a crazy responsibility when you think about it = try not to overthink it.

Unification = secure, capable, focused = gotta stay focused when extreme environment. while in the throes of life-threatening situations. Safety! Need to be safe dependent on others = brotherhood.

Brothers = need to be squared-away = hates incompetence = had to babysit newbies = Everyone hates it when some newbie lame comes on = some three-legged antelope in the herd, gets on = a bummer for everyone else on the team = just leave please = I just ignore them and try to work around them but it’s everyone’s responsibility to bring them up or get them out.

Different personalities on the team = people poke fun at each other = Kinda’ like a running joke, but there’s a lot of truth to it = The negotiators just sit at the CP with dispatchers and brass talking on the phone and sucking on Starbucks = kinda not worthy of recognition the same way = the perimeter guys are too scared to go through the front door, so they just hide out in the bushes (A=laughing)

My guys are the ones who go in and actually take care of business = we blow off steam going back and forth = We all joke about it, but it’s kinda for real you know =
basically it’s more like talkin’ shit about each other = Sometimes people get too sensitive about it but that tells you something right there too about who they are.

Some people get ego just showing up on periphery = not even tactical guys = they don't even count = do not really count cuz they are at best support staff on the sidelines and not actual tactical guys.

Bad = they are there sometimes/get on the team = Had one piece of shit, glory-hound that was just full of himself/big head = look what I can do type shit = he just one of those guys = had that kind of ego = selfish really, puts us at risk = placing selfishness in front of the team = F-him ya know? = got no place on this team = someone like that outs himself on the team = not our fault = he sabotages himself with all his BS

We don’t have to help him do it = try to school him down but in the end that on him = on all of us not to be that way.

Some get too sensitive = cant let it show = but still internally feel bad = keep to yourself = cant show the weakness = part of it is walling off that = I’ve felt shamed by the team and I get it = sometimes about the stupidest shit = conversation about sports = Not into football, baseball, basketball, shit like that etc = just I’m in the minority on something so they are like sharks = what they’re really saying is that I’m not cool cuz I don’t watch man-sports or whatever

Trying to find that way to get at me to see if I’ll break or that I’m a wimp or whatever = to this day I still get shit for that = thinks there is link between male team sports and tac teams = team = SWAT vs. football similar = ego man stuff.

SLIDESHOW
(A=smiling/quiet/frowning?)
Working as team; camaraderie = looks like a good time

Training = Have to do it = I have to train to win, every time when you get focused and have to push on = every time = not just ninety-nine percent of the time, but every time. The one time I don’t win = is the time I don’t survive, or someone else doesn’t survive = have to fight. = That place you go to put on your game face just so you can handle business (A= stoic/proud?)

I know I’m not invincible, but I have to have that same sort of confidence so I can do my job. Ego = Not ego It’s not like ego. It is just I can’t be asleep at the wheel. I have to be ready at any time to be ready = being ready to be ready = I’m not some spaz; anything but that actually = I stay calm, but a focused calm I guess = but I do have to get fired-up when going to op.

Have to be focused and on point = flash of a second and missed opportunities sometimes = shooting that didn't happen = probably should have shot a suspect = I didn’t drop the hammer on him = it all worked out in the end and he got hooked up
but I could tell they were wondering why I did what I did or didn’t do really = I’d wonder the same = shit happens fast = they give you the cold shoulder for a bit = happened years ago, but I still feel bad about it = it’s the only time I really felt like I let them down = gotta be the worst feeling ever = (A=low/sad/?/disappointed)

Extreme = SWAT missions/callouts/operations = real life = fun/lucky/like it
SWAT = my other family/likes it = looks forward to it seeing/doing it
All SWAT = bigger family of cops
CATO conference = SWAT family reunion = brothers/sisters
World surrounded by tactics = tactical world of SWAT people
Possessive = my team, my SWAT team

I have to be able to die for the mission and die for my men. If you’re not like that, you’re no brother to me… What can I do with someone who doesn’t have that mindset and dedication… I mean, no offense, but I’m making sure my guys go home at the end of the night, so you better make damn sure I go home, too.

And I’ll tell ya something else my guys better be dialed in too, or we’re all fucked – I’m not about to compromise act, act now = requires swift violence of action in those situations = I want others to want to be part of this (intrinsic)

Don’t want bad things, but that’s what we get paid to do = If it was gonna happen anyway I’m glad I’m getting the call to go = I feel ready and able and willing (A=aggressive/direct/staring/intense/glaring)

Gotta be dialed in = Have to revert to training = It all comes into play = the honor and duty of why I chose this job in the first place. The training kicks in and me mentally preparing myself for the fight. Gotta be at the ready = gotta be always prepared = Want someone who wants it – new members - the action of it = you want someone who drives to the storm, not away from it. The team knows that’s the expectation = they know not to be lazy with it.

AUDIO
(A=high)
Never know what’s gonna land in front of you = You could be walking down the street off-duty and something could happen. You gotta be ready to respond = I don’t know if you can undo that = can’t undo that awareness. How would it look if I was walking down the street, some guy started shooting people right in front of me, and I did nothing = I’m the face of the profession, right? The headlines would read, Suspect kills ten victims while off-duty SWAT cop does nothing.

People’s expectations of me are higher, so my expectations of me have to be even higher than that = gotta be at the top of my game = just like everyone on my team.

Disappointed = didn’t take down a guy once = heard chatter 3rd hand like I should’ve done something better or more force or that I fucked something up = team treated me
differently after that a little = maybe it was just me but it felt like some of them thought I fucked up or was scared or something = makes you feel like your stock just went down or you’re a pussy or something

So you just gotta be harder next time I guess = don't like mistakes = chalk it up as a training moment and move on.

**TOM #1**

Marine
FAST = Fleet Anti-Terrorism Security Team – in Middle East

HEAT-
(A=smiling)
Seen this scene a hundred times

Feel bad when guy is shot in neck = have a guilty feeling if that was my guy = but even then he had to press on and eliminate the threats still out there = when stuff like that happens, it is pretty crazy I guess = But what can you do really but take cover and handle business = it can’t paralyzed you.

AUDIO
Shows the chaos/what can happen = those moments where life kinda slows down = I know it’s in that moment, that defining moment when it’s up to me = me to intervene = up to me to fix that problem. I better be right in the head = not filled with bullshit = and ready to focus/mentally prepared = able to push away the emotions I don’t need and using the ones I need to get the job done; to be alert and ready

Saw a guy shot in combat = surreal in a way kind of like it’s not really happening, but it is so you just do what you’re trained to do and hope it’s enough = gotta hold on to the edge = Earlier in movie (Hanna) – Gotta hold on to angst – gotta stay on edge = hard to unplug.

But that’s what you love about job = on edge = that mindset = glad it keeps me awake in life = gotta love it = always have to have it going on in your head = affects everything you do = If it doesn’t shame on you = It should/It always should = Don’t like those who don’t love the job = just for a pay check

Gotta have the love of the job

Related to other movie Cliffhanger = true love is like sacrifice = bad guy in movie said

SLIDESHOW
I have seen some pretty wild shit I guess in the military = oversees away from home, it’s worse = You’re always wondering what’s gonna happen to you and your buddies. But police work is kinda the same, especially cuz a lot of times you never know who the enemy is until it’s on.

Gotta be ready, even if you’re off duty. It’s hard to unplug. But oversees the enemy is easy to spot usually = here it could be anyone.

War initiates team members – like fraternity?
The new guy = don’t try to just walk on this team with no experience. Gotta get your boots dirty. Still respect, like my brothers, but there’s something to be said for earning your place on the team = in the shit = You gotta be deep in the shit at least once with your guys before you can know for sure you can trust them or if they are messed up or don’t have backbone.

When you’re with people in the shit like that, they kinda become a part of you always = in your head = like bonded to them = allegiance
Proud
(A=smile/chest out/sat upright/strong)

Time when he was shot = real = hurt like a MF = not like movies theme music = loud then quiet then loud again = crazy = in “the shit” = extreme situations = with others = solidifies relationships = gotta survive = tactical mindset

Tactical edge = press on and eliminate the threats in crisis situation = focus = emotions that can distract from the mission you gotta avoid.

Group vs individual = Concern over others override for himself = team over individual = takes discipline to refocus on others/team always– depends?

Bad = Hate people who don't have dedication/sacrifice/sense of team. I just stay away if I can help it. They reflect all of us = Sometimes have to step up and break them off though = one rotten apple = I am not like that, but we wear the same uniform. I hate that = conflicting to have someone wearing same uniform but they aren’t me or others on team = they are selfish.

Hierarchy = Internal / within team = Entry are the stars of the show = even if the Sierras are usually the ones to get an actual shot off. = they don't go in though = image of warriors = men usually thought of as the fighters

Outdated thinking but masculine team image still out there = most teams men anyway = just the way it is.
(A=smile/attentive/serious)
Asked-You guys still wear black?
(A=excited)

Extreme = (A=high/elevated/sit forward) = talked about shot in Middle East = No theme music like in movies, action movies, weird = AK frag round hit = shootout with enemy = Shots were so loud, and then it was silent in-between rounds

It kinda hit me that it was real then. You don’t wanna be scared = had to keep pushing forward, hunker down for a bit, but then press on to objective “press on” = you prepare yourself for scenarios = have to stayed plugged in = have to be mentally prepared to push on.

LEANE #1

SWAT – only female – qualifies = might leave soon?
(A=anxious/uneasy/nice/accommodating)

HEAT
(A=flat?a little/attentive/anxious/uneasy at end=had seen segment before in movie/soft voice)
Want to help my guys = my brothers/sisters
Shot = that’s the price I guess. Sucks. Price for yourself, community, team, sacrifice. Can’t make mistakes. They depend on me They could die because of something I did, or didn’t do. = always ask myself if I’m prepared = It’s ‘game-time.’ Am I the best I can be right now, today, this very second or am I gonna mess up = can’t mess up even a little.

Re: shot in neck = horrible = sucks = but is what it is = harsh I guess = have to worry about the bagpipes later if I can’t do anything for him = I have to triage and leave him for other stuff I gotta do cuz those guys are still out there

I help my guys on the team but you also have the mission to go out there – it’s why we are there – the robbery = helping the citizens = Can’t stop until it’s over = That’s how they train us = push push push.

SLIDESHOW
(A=flat/attentive/bored?trying to be polite?lowered)
Kinda shows how proud teams are. Am proud of what we do = my team proud of her team = camaraderie = what really matters = makes it all worth it = feel like you accomplished something really important and only a select few to share it with who
really understand what you’re talking about = it’s like your everything = your special talent

You get absorbed and over identify with it sometimes = its all I want to talk about at home; not always good.

Rather be with them than at home sometimes (A=laughed) = is that wrong = joke = ha ha = you know what I mean, it’s more fun = you burn out for good and bad reasons = pretty sure I’m gonna try to promote off team = might go somewhere else = not sure = off SWAT at somepoint sooner than later I think = kinda don’t want to think about it = hard decision = hardest ever = one of hardest

SWAT = like a family = have two lives = family at home and family at work = then family on SWAT = like your favorite family of older brothers = protect me but I gotta prove myself to them = otherwise I’m just some lame little sis = stupid.

They look after me and each other = and I look after me and them at same time = With the guys, they’re always looking after me, like an older brother ready to beat up a bully for me = except bully is suspect = but I take care of business too so its not one-sided (A=with authority/adamant)

AUDIO -Extreme- Get thrown into a lot of stuff together = thrown in middle of makes us stronger bond = attachment = ops/live operations and extreme stuff makes you stronger everytime cuz you have that experience together = trust (environment = attachment)

Looking back on ops = closest you ever feel with your tem = live operations = but busy too, with tasks and not messing up and remembering your duties and the plan = business = business face
Gotta put on the business face/game face when game-time

Cant let them down = worry about letting them/others down = only way to fix that is to train more and always be thinking about stuff. You’re supposed to what if every scenario in your head, so when it’s time I deliver and give 110% or you need to get off

Discipline yourself or the team has to do it for you = cant be scared, weak = cowardice cant have it = No one wants a wimp on the team = I’m a girl, so I always have to prove I’m not weak. They expect me to be weak.

They are waiting for me to prove their suspicions right = I can’t be that girl.

Gender = It makes me stronger but it gets old though. I just don’t want them to feel like I can’t hang so I get pissed, and I push as hard as I can = at least if they see I’m pissed it means it matters to me = it shows them I’m aware of the problem and I'm
going to fix it right now = it’s a man’s world so I gotta show man feelings (A=laughs).

Bad = Don’t trust selfish showoffs = jock and muscle guys and all that = egomaniacs = just show-offs = can’t trust someone who’s only in it for himself and doesn’t care about anyone else = supposed to be a team. “discipline”

Internal hierarchy – strive? Keep distance fro others = females especially = perception of either bitch or slut = female dispatch and HNT = reflect negatively on her as a female sometimes = all it takes is one other female to make us look bad = it happens all the time = always fighting stereotype.

They /guys treat me good but its always underlying feeling.

PHIL #1

HEAT
Bad = rough scene = heart racing kinda want to jump in and help = just wanting to chase the suspects = get the guys = be the one that helps everyone and catches the bad guys

Rely on team = rely on them for everything – inclusion = life threatening situations all around you = have to depend on each other – been in some hairy stuff = SWAT guys more bonded with = I have more in common and we train together a lot (when we do train) = less than big agencies (twice a year?) = train to win = train for live ops/real deal/real thing.

Bad= B players = no good = like a disease = have to be an A player as much as possible = Everyone knows who the A players are = just a fact of life = Then you got the B players who never step-up = probably never shoulda’ been cops for whatever reason they are no good at the job = now they’re my partner I can’t respect that = how do you respect that = not here to be someone’s babysitter or cuddle-buddy. Friends are different then partners on team = friends on team is ok but not if B players = I have friends on the team, but those guys aren’t them. You find out what most of them are made of = other guys you don’t really know, except that they’re too afraid or whatever to be on the team or if they get on somehow cuz they kissed ass to get on or something, then your stuck with a B player until you can get them off.

Don’t want to screw up = horrible if I think/over-think = When I look down the front sight of my gun first thought isn’t who will die = more like shit I hope I dont screw this up at all = unsat to do that = don’t want to disappoint = shameful to fail = the whole team knows this = the whole team pushes for zero failure = if you fail you should be ashamed = and the team reminds you of it till you get it right or redeem yourself.
We still train though – and everyday on street with them we still have that bond = I’ve spent time with them, trained with them. Thinking back = they were my ‘go-to’ guys at the time and after it just reminded me of how much I rely on them = retrospect = look back and care for people like you that sacrifice.

They’re like you’re friends, more than friends, but not social friends like that. I’m not sure what you call them except for friends but closer like best work friend = I feel a part of them and a part of the team.

That’s why I signed up in the first place. Now know why I got in this business. I feel a part of them and a part of the team. That’s why I signed up in the first place.

(A=elevated – a little- cracked a smile/excited - half)

AUDIO
Hard to listen to = We’re brought in to solve problems = eventually worked out, but could have been so much worse = cant fail = failure not an option = but sometimes doesn’t work out = when we fail and someone dies we’re partially responsible = my fault too is the feeling.

SWAT – entry team – warrant unit more
Limited/not a lot of ops = Periphery ops = patrol street team
Small department
Not just SWAT ops, but police = generalized = calls for service = partners are also on team = camaraderie in field

(A=matter of fact/flat/vacant?)

Extreme – every cops job is that way. Car stop could be your last I think = always on edge = always nice to have a partner nearby or with you to help = could save your ass = have to rely on that person wholeheartedly = you are part of the in-crowd = my guys/boys

Gotta earn your way on SWAT. Can’t just get on and expect respect. Prove yourself sometimes depends on event = cant have chink in armor = you’ll get eaten alive = as soon as you walk onboard, the team teaches you what to do

You either do it, or get out = respect is earned = like piranhas if the team smells weakness.

(A=serious/mad?)

PETE #1

Small agency – part-time SWAT

HEAT
Wanted to get those guys = my job = my people = no hesitation
But you have to have trust in Extreme Conditions
= proficiency – DO the job – If I trust you but you start slacking – lost skills – I cant
trust you anymore. Skills+Trust+ops/time in field = team member

My brothers/sisters being shot = no good = have to stop that as well = just my job =
sure there’s blame if mistakes made = depends on circumstance = totality of
circumstance = everyone is gonna judge us = hard on ourselves the most

Re: DV call/Man with gun calls/hit a house(S/W)

SLIDESHOW
Itching to get callouts. Not very often, but when they do happen everyone is geared
up for it = most memorable points of career = kinda stuff you talk about at retirement
dinners = After beer go out and debrief = We still talk about it, get going on our
stories, debriefing, partially because we don’t have a lot of events like that to talk
about, but mainly because it was a time when we were doing something together,
earning our money, and seeing what each other is made of. You learn a lot about
people and their limits when thrown into the thick of things.

Respect is earned in those times. Once you have respect, you’re a teammate you can
trust forever – in theory = you see the talents my guys have and you respect them for
that = if I trust/depend on you = respect.

Don't train a lot – frustrating = hard for some to take seriously when don't train much
together – I train as much as I can by myself or with others – informally
Admin has reasons for not training - $/politics = wish I was on more active team
sometimes = get more training so don't get soft = more competent = more hard – in
good way = lose your age when the team stagnates

You look like Tarzan, but play like Jane = stupid – not how you want team run =
don’t want your team to be a bunch of junior varsity posers = bush league shit = like a
one-arm little league team = lose your business face / tactical edge.

Rivalries among teams / units = sibling rivalry = harmless but kinda serious
sometimes = Respecting others goes on for sure = but if not part of what we have on
the team = difference = distance from others = don’t mean to purposely = it’s just
some aren’t up to it = that’s fine but it does say something about what they’re about

Just don't pretend to be something youre not = braggers and such sometimes = others
just not wired that way I guess = the jump from officer to operator is a big one =
don’t get it unless you’ve done it = even if did it once, doesn't mean you did it well.
AUDIO
(A=flat)
thank god no one killed except dudes –S = extreme = crazy unprepared =
communications bad = equipment bad = brave group of guys… everyone brave

Puts me there = audio reminds me of everyday I guess = Dispatch = rely on them =
there for you = forget they can get emotional too = trhey believe in you = cant let
them down either

CARL #1

SWAT

HEAT
Oh man = and they still got away= sucks = cops died?
(A=shake head/smiling/)
Gotta drive through the mess = lots of emotions but you bury it = everyone on the
team has to = cant be caught on the curb crying = sounds corny, but I don’t get paid
to be emotional I get paid to act = it’s a discipline you either have or don’t have or
have to train it out of yo so you can function = I have to push away emotions I don’t
need.

Others = need to know how to deal = It shows that you can deal with shit = not afraid
= that you’re not some pussy or something who gets distracted by a dead body or
something stupid. Some can deal and some cant = gotta know business = business
face = otherwise go home = please = gotta be hard and solid = go big/go home = go
hard/go home = Pain is simply weakness leaving your body = Mike Taylor training.
(A=excited/sat up straight/focused)

SLIDESHOW
About control = its all about being in line with training and control of emotions
Bad = incompetent / ego / confidence ok, but ego blatant is selfish = image = not
keeping eye on prize = not about yourself = get out – no need for that = I need
confidence = don’t want a weakling = honestly hate that in people

I’m confident but I don't think I’m over the top = a big difference between confidence
and ego = If you walk around thinking you’re something you’re not then you’re not
concentrating on the team = You’ll get someone killed thinking like that = laziness =
hate people lazy = boils down to laziness and entitled = that’s why so strict on the
right fit for the team = can kill someone/get someone killed with laziness or on flip
side over-confidence.
(A=serious/shake head/irritated?)
Always the lazy ones who think they’re the shit = wear the tight shirts, watch too many SWAT movies, and make us all look like idiots = posers = hate everything they stand for; a bunch of wanna-be celebrities

Nothing worse than a baby SWAT cop who thinks he’s God’s gift. They don’t know sacrifice or anything about it = It’s always just about them and in my world that’s just being selfish/retards = totally commitment = not cool.

No one likes fucking up = we all make mistakes = just sucks when you get caught fucking up in front of your whole team. (A=short/blunted/then laugh?). Gotta keep trying to not make mistakes = cant be weak = weakass = just cant be a pussy = you can’t be some pussy = you gotta put on your big boy pants and get your game face on whatever happens, you have to stay dialed-in no matter what

The team teaches you that!! = your training teaches you that = it’s just something you know to do, or have to know to do = the team reinforces everything you do on the job and modest of time off the job = never not on the team until you are off-off the team – like leave – but on team is always watching over you kinda = sounds silly maybe

Internal - Hopefully no one looks at me that way = hopefully I don't screw up enough to make them think that way of me = I get it if I screw up I got what’s coming to me = only fair = I’d do the same thing

All it takes is one fuck up for things to go all bad = cant allow for mistakes in live operations.

AUDIO
(A-flat/solemn?)
Don’t like hearing that = just listening is hard = want to be there to fix the issue = want to be in the thick of things = just sitting and listening would be impossible = could never be a Dispatcher

We are all family out there = especially when something like that goes on (extreme) = represents my brother/sister = represents the sacrifice I have to do and they do to = you are supposed to know how to handle when it jumps off like that

**TODD #1**

SWAT = medium team

HEAT-
(A=quiet/matter of fact/curt)
Programmed to deal with the situation = get the fuck in there and eliminate the threat = You can’t start acting like a little girl with a boo-boo every time you see something
shocking = it’s time to move = that’s what we get paid for = it’s my job = breaking down and running away - that’s not what we get paid to do.

Gotta kill those MF = snap into it = you’re the cops who gotta save the cops = work together = gotta be on =on a lot = especially now gotta kick it into high gear

(Hypervigilance) = awareness = cant turn off = always on = can’t just shut it off when you go to Disneyland or something with the fam and kids.

Put on the smile with family around = but don't totally disengage = always checking phone = never red/asleep = should never be asleep = may be yellow when you’re at home and green on a callout but you’re never red like the rest of the world/asleep/ignorant = besides, it’s more fun being green anyway =desires/likes it = has to hide from fam how much likes it.

Ops = get worked up about it = it’s okay to get worked-up for op = you want that in your team mates...all of them. You drop into that mindset; that’s how you prepare

Get focused = can’t start acting like a little girl with a skinned knee every time you see something shocking = that’s not what we get paid to do. (A=excited/smiled/moving in seat)

SLIDESHOW
(A=flat/uncomfortable?squirming?)
Well, that’s cool = Teamwork is the name of the game = seem like a good bunch of people = never know til something happens = training is only the test the real test is when you get the call = then you see how someone reacts = see what someone is made of = sometimes you see the side of people you don't want to on the team cuz they get scared or whatever = get split from team if that happens

Bad = exclusion = internal hierarchy = To be honest, who do you respect more - the ones sitting in the radio room drinking coffee or the ones out there doing the actual job = I know sounds like a jerk to say out loud = and I don’t.

I’m professional for sure = I know how to be professional and we all are. But you know the truth is dispatchers and negotiators wanna wear the SWAT patches just like the rest of us = like we’re the same or something. They always whine about being part of the team, but they don’t do what we do = not sayin’ I’m better than them, but come on don’t act like we do the same job and we are equals at least on the job front = then going to complain if I’m not friendly enough to you I’m all of a sudden a jerk cuz I’m not your best friend or something = How annoying is that when that happens.

AUDIO
(deep breaths/anxious?moving around)
I remember this = heard before = makes me think of the video = helicopter = cant believe no cops killed

When Disp cant raise cop on air = sucks = when someone is MIA in an OP you get worked up and worried I guess = get panicked a little

Have to stay focused though = extreme = yes = of course = tense situations = before ops people can get quiet = focused = edgy = serious = weight of whats happening sinks in a little but gotta stay on guard = cant get lost in the ‘what ifs’

**TOM #2**

The Corps is like a brotherhood - a brotherhood with a code = trained to make the commitment from day one = You are loyal to your brothers = loyalty

If you strayed from that loyalty, you’d have to get schooled back into shape = the guys would take care of you and you’d either make it or you wouldn’t = discipline from discipline = you get disciplined to be disciplined = conditioning

You are right, it is conditioning = being conditioned = strong mentally and physically = there’s a way to be conditioned and then there’s the other way, the weaker way = can’t be on the team effectively.

You can become a threat to the group from within cuz you can die or get someone killed = that’s what drives you = sometimes you don't even know why you tell someone not to do something = you just know its wrong and is stupid

Anything that can split the team can get us killed
Don’t’ be a Jackass and get us killed = simple = I guess is exclusion in group = that's the way it is = not everyone is fit for it = has to be a STANDARD

To outsiders sounds strange = you cant be honest because people get offended = its real easy really – be up to the standard or fuck off = sounds silly but like I said before if you don’t have my back or you’re just a friggin idiot you’re dead to me = what use are you = You’re useless.

I need you to survive – I got enough going on that I don't need to babysit someone. Then you have two people off the team – the idiot + me – the one who has to watch the idiot. Now we’re all distracted. No good.

Family = no good family = Like having a leach in the family that is just in your family for inheritance = weasel like.
Re: Extreme Environ. = real world ops test how good you are. Again gotta survive – focused = acceptable survival level is no losses – if someone died or got hurt, we failed at something somewhere = talk about membership – that’s what it is – striving not to have loss or open up to liability for loss – if you are f-d up then you are a liability – gotta cut you loose – the whole team will have no problem shedding you = we can’t dick around all day waiting for someone to get up to speed = youre either there or your not

Trauma I guess = not like you cant function = otherwise you got other problems = gotta DFO = bow out = go out on Psych

All about discipline

Trauma = I get it what you say = I agree about PTSD stuff = some can handle it, others cant I guess = a lot of pressure I know = but you just gotta deal.

**LEANE #2**

Left SWAT while ago = It wasn’t until later when I was out that I realized how much I stored inside = so much pressure = cant breathe sometimes – but that's just what it is – like that everywhere I think = weird how much you live in another world just to maintain focus = you are always so focused on the team = its all I would think about sometimes = wanted a callout but I didn't want a callout = we all move on.

Re: shame - I just never wanted to be looked at as a disappointment = that is shameful to fail the team – the weakest link = feared that so much = that would be horrible in that group to do something wrong or not as good as everyone else on the team – not as strong, not as good a shot, not as fast – sucks = I would totally be ashamed if I failed someone on something major = I’d be fucked and I’d have to bow out if I couldn't suck it up.

Re: Trauma – I don't feel traumatized like the way people think of that like a victim or something = stay focused to push out emotions = all about drive/focus = distances you from all the other stuff = blood/guts/bad stuff = I focus on my focus (A-laugh).

Gender - Girls are supposed to be flowery and feminine but you gotta leave that girly shit at home to do business = focus = broken record = but walking in as a girl is already seen as weak so I have to battle that from day one – I walk in and they’re like who is this chick gonna keep us down – now we gotta behave = like having me slowed them down = they never ever said that but I just felt that way = like if anyone was going to get us killed it was gonna be me – like if they had to pick like in that game.
CARL #2

Emotions/trauma – like said before = business face = don't let em see ya sweat = that kind of stuff = training = use your training to do the job = concentrate just on that = focus just on what you need to get job done = distractions like feelings could get you killed = I’m not all about that.

The whole team needs every one person to do their job – cant have someone bitch out and the whole team collapses.

Shame = I cannot fail = make mistakes = that's what training is for. I remember when people mess up, so I know they remember when I mess up. I have a bad day at training it tells the team I may have a bad day in the field = and that cant happen

I don't want to be the village idiot = I don't want to go to officer X’s house and tell his wife something stupid I did got your husband killed = oops my bad, I know I’m a puss but woops – doesn't cut it

If you’re acting like a retard on the team you got what’s coming to you = no offense but take a hike = harsh = reality = some are traumatized by that? = don't know about that = extreme situation = yeah = get it = can leave you looking at world differently = look at people differently = high standards = people are constant disappointment = don't want to be that guy ya know

Not in business of making friends

Team drives everything you do = how you feel = how you’re supposed to feel = SHAME AGAIN? = don’t want to let people down = obviously disappointed each time = I’m hard on myself sometimes = but the team is hard on you too = good reason = makes sense = I get it.

GIL #2

Cohesion = total, absolute teamwork, total camaraderie, total discipline, beyond just working together to get the job done = you would lay down everything = that you would die for them.

Attachment = yes = but more than that = sounds to much like what doctor would say – attachment – it's a bond you cant describe I guess = you don't talk out loud about it = corny but you have to be prepared to die for each other cuz that's your job
But I don't want to die – and I really don't want to die for nothing or because I was stupid or someone else was stupid = for the mission = that's stronger than anything = that is stronger than anything the suspect can bring to the table = that’s how we win – have to win = we have to win always.

Extreme = It’s kinda simple. You just have to be ready = now, always, all the time. = eats at you = it can = Trauma = just getting exposed to things = but you get exposed as a group = helps = not just by yourself = but when not with group = can feel empty = naked kinda I guess = not healthy? = just part of business = people read into it too much.

Burnout rate = trauma/extreme connection = cant last forever doing that kind of work = gotta pull plug at some point
NOTES

Chapter 1


10. Ibid., 62.


Chapter 2


2. Ibid., 7.


4. Ibid.


7. Ibid., 195.


22. Ibid., 27.


24. Ibid., 130.


28. Ibid., 8.


35. Ibid., 2.


41. Ibid., 457.


48. Ibid.


50. Ibid., 5.


52. Ibid., 124.


58. Ibid.


61. Ibid.


66. Ibid.


68. Ibid.


70. Ibid.


72. Ibid.


76. “Abilene Paradox.” *Supervisory Leadership Institute, Session 6* (Sacramento: CA, P.O.S.T., 2007).


84. Ibid.

85. Ibid.


90. Aftab Omer, Imaginal Process IV course notes (Petaluma, CA: Meridian University, June, 1997).


95. Ibid., 74.

96. Ibid.


98. Art Warmoth, Learning Community course notes (Rohnert Park, CA: Sonoma State University, 1994).


106. Ibid.


110. Ibid., xx.


115. Ibid.


118. Ibid., 13.

119. Ibid.


124. Ibid., 92.


126. Ibid.


130. Ibid.


136. Ibid.


146. Ibid., 2.


149. Ibid.


154. Ibid.


157. Ibid.


160. Ibid., 2-3.


166. Ibid.


171. Ibid.


179. Ibid.


182. Ibid.


186. Ibid.

187. Ibid.
Chapter 3

1. Imaginal Inquiry is a participatory research methodology developed by Aftab Omer.

2. Ibid.

Chapter 4

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

3. J. Glenn Gray details in his book, *The Warriors: Reflections on Men in Battle*, (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1970), xi, that men in battle become so much a part of the world of war that they are “thrown outside their selves,” into a compulsive camaraderie, with their ‘I’ passing insensibly into a ‘we.’


5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. *Band of Brothers* (Home Box Office, 2001) was a ten-part television miniseries centered during World War II, depicting the lives of members of the United States Army, 101st Airborne Division’s “Easy Company;” the series details and dramatizes real-life, historical events that the group endured in training and on the battlefield.


9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid.


14. Ibid.

16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.

19. Pete, Dissertation Research Data (Santa Rosa, CA, January 24, 2009).

20. Ibid.
21. Ibid.


32. Ibid.


38. Ibid., 149-150.


42. Tom, Dissertation Research Data (Sacramento, CA, January 18, 2009).


47. Ibid.


49. Tom, Dissertation Research Data (Sacramento, CA, January 18, 2009).


51. Ibid.

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid.

54. Ibid.

55. Ibid.

56. Ibid.

57. Ibid.

58. Ibid.


60. Ibid.

61. Ibid.

63. Tom, Dissertation Research Data (Sacramento, CA, January 18, 2009).


67. Ibid.

68. Ibid.


70. Phil, Dissertation Research Data (Martinez, CA, January 19, 2009).

71. Ibid.

72. Pete, Dissertation Research Data (Santa Rosa, CA, January 24, 2009).

73. Ibid.


75. Carl, Dissertation Research Data (Martinez, CA, February 6, 2009).

76. Gil, Dissertation Research Data (San Francisco, California, January 25, 2009).


78. Dave Bliss, SWAT Team Leader Course (Anaheim, CA: Orange County Sheriff’s Office, May, 2005).


82. Todd, Dissertation Research Data (American Canyon, CA, February 20, 2009).

84. Gil, Dissertation Research Data (San Francisco, California, January 25, 2009).

85. Ibid.

86. Ibid.


88. Ibid.

89. Tom, Dissertation Research Data (Sacramento, CA, January 18, 2009).


92. Ibid.

93. Pete, Dissertation Research Data (Santa Rosa, CA, January 24, 2009).


95. Ibid.

96. Ibid.


98. Ibid.


100. Pete, Dissertation Research Data (Santa Rosa, CA, January 24, 2009).

101. Ibid.


103. Pete, Dissertation Research Data (Santa Rosa, CA, January 24, 2009).

104. Cindy Brady was the youngest of six siblings on the fictitious television series The Brady Bunch (ABC, 1969-1974). In season #2, episode #35, Cindy was “tattling” about various members of the family to other members of the family. She was reprimanded because of her incessant behavior. Cindy Brady was played by actress Susan Olsen.


111. Ibid.


121. Ibid.

122. Ibid.

123. Tom, Dissertation Research Data (Sacramento, CA, January 18, 2009).


126. Ibid.

127. Ibid.


142. Ibid.


144. Ibid.

145. Ibid.

146. Carl, Dissertation Research Data (Martinez, CA, February 6, 2009); Gil, Dissertation Research Data (San Francisco, California, January 25, 2009); Leane, Dissertation Research Data (Napa, CA, January 25, 2009).

147. Carl, Dissertation Research Data (Martinez, CA, February 6, 2009).

148. Ibid.


153. Ibid.

154. Ibid.

155. Ibid.

156. Tom, Dissertation Research Data (Sacramento, CA, January 18, 2009).

157. Ibid.

158. Ibid.


160. Ibid.


164. Ibid.

165. Ibid.


167. Ibid., 87.


Chapter 5


2. Ibid.


4. Ibid.


7. Ibid.


21. Ibid., 1032.


24. Ibid.

25. Ibid.


34. Ibid.


39. Ibid.

40. Ibid.


44. Gil, Dissertation Research Data (San Francisco, CA, April 21, 2013).


