FEARFUL, FORCEFUL AGENTS OF THE LAW: IDEOLOGIES ABOUT LANGUAGE AND GENDER IN POLICE OFFICERS' NARRATIVES ABOUT THE USE OF PHYSICAL FORCE

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Abstract

Sociolinguists and linguistic anthropologists have been far more likely to use ideology to understand the social relations of nation, racialized ethnicity and class than to understand the social relations of gender. This chapter investigates language ideologies and gender by examining narratives told by male and female, Black and White police officers in Pittsburgh about moments when they found it necessary to use physical force. Many of the workers in this traditionally working-class, masculine job describe themselves as "acting crazy" to instill fear and respect in those with whom they interact. "Acting crazy" is an ideology of interaction of personhood which describes and prescribes a way of acting like and unlike people "on the street" as well as a way of claiming and denying responsibility for action. A detailed analysis of reason adverbs and adverbials and agentive and non-agentive semantic roles shows that police officers construe themselves not as particularly powerful agents but instead as hapless victims, and as adopting a mask of anger, rather than being intrinsically angry people. The analysis of these narratives has implications for understanding whether and how the integration of women into a traditionally masculine occupation like policing leads to the reinscription or transformation of certain ideologies about how interaction should proceed. Such analysis also suggests that to understand how ideology works we need to consider not only how different genres make meaning but how they make meaning stick, and that more careful analysis of how narratives work and how structures of feeling are experienced and inscribed will be crucial for this project.

Keywords: Language and gender, Ideology, Narrative, Police officers, Agency, Violence, Language and emotion, Institutional talk

1. Introduction

In Philippe Bourgois's widely acclaimed and controversial ethnography *In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio*, he argues that in some areas of New York one can use the notion of "culture of terror" to describe the effect of widespread violence on a vulnerable society.¹ In such a culture people isolate themselves from the community and

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begin to hate those who participate in street culture. Mainstream society then uses the images of a culture of terror to dehumanize victims and perpetrators and to justify its unwillingness to step in with economic help.² From the crack-dealers' point of view, both criminals and the police play by the rules of the culture of terror, carefully manipulating an instrumental brutality (Bourgois 1996: 35).

Caesar: You've got to be a little wild for this neighborhood, Felipe. <gunshots> What did I tell you? You can't be allowing people to push you around, then people think that you're a punk and shit like that. And that's the whole point: Making people think you're cool so that nobody bothers you. You don't really want to be a bully or violent or nothing. But you can't let people push you around, because when the other guys see that, they want to do the same thing too. You get that reputation, like, "That Nigga's soft" (Bourgois 1996: 24-5).

Many male and some female police officers in Pittsburgh have developed complex strategies for "acting crazy" to instill precisely the kind of fear that this dealer hopes to inspire.³ They understand themselves as fighting crime in the streets. In this paper I consider some of the stories that such police officers tell about their own and about other officers' use of force. A paradox emerges in these accounts. In order to justify tactics which they understand are controversial, they emphasize the wildness and dirtiness of life in the streets. They describe people as animals, vermin, garbage, habitually drunk, reliably irrational. They emphasize the difference between the experiences they have and those which many people have, and they use this difference to explain why the interpretations passersby might attach to their actions are not only different from their own but misguided. They repeatedly note that their experiences with the worst parts of human experience - death, abuse, violence, poverty, distrust, betrayal - mean that they understand humans better than others. They profess to have no illusions about human nature, while others with more rosy views are seen as children, lacking knowledge and deluding themselves. As they describe this terrifying world, in order to justify their fear-inspiring actions, some officers themselves come to seem inordinately fearful. At the very moments when they exercise the most force they portray themselves as most helpless: "What else could I do?"

"Acting crazy" is a way of simultaneously acting like and unlike the people they deal with, a way of claiming and denying responsibility for action. It also is a linguistic

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² See also O'Connor (1997) for a description of prison inmates' narratives justifying violence. Briggs' (1997b: 456-7) comments on her article point out some of the complicated correspondences between inmates' attitudes and those of politicians who are intent upon being "tough on crime".

³ See McElhinny 1993, 2003a for more details on the police department and fieldwork procedures.

ideology, defined as "the cultural system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships, together with their loading of moral and political interests" (Irvine 1989: 255). As Woolard points out

ideologies of language are not about language alone. Rather, they envision and enact ties of language to identity, to aesthetics, to morality, and to epistemology. Through such linkages, they underpin not only linguistic form and use, but also the very notion of the person and the social group, as well as such fundamental social institutions as religion, ritual, child socialization, gender relations, the nation-state, schooling and law (1998: - see also Gal 1998: 323).

Linguistic ideologies are sometimes narrowly defined as ideologies about language structure (see e.g. Silverstein 1985). They also, however, have been broadly defined to include discourse and interaction, the traditional concerns of the ethnography of speaking, interactional sociolinguistics and conversation analysis (see e.g. Briggs 1998; Kulick 1998). For instance, Kuipers (1998: 5) investigates the ways that "linguistic ideologies about expressive performance, audience structure, naming and reference and grammar organize verbal shifts interpretively in a manner that reveals the powerful role that language has played" in transformations of local systems of authority in a postcolonial setting. Indeed, whether an analyst or a speaker chooses to focus on structure or discourse, grammar or interaction, and even whether these are understood as distinct domains is itself part of what the investigation of language ideology must take into account. Kuipers (1998) investigates the ways that angry displays in ritual speech legitimated the spiritual and political authority of "big men" on Sumba, the ways that the Dutch (and the Sumbanese themselves) came to see such behavior as indicative of the savage state of the Sumbanese from which they needed to be delivered, and the forms of emotional expression that came to replace "angry" speech. This paper looks at the ways that another set of powerful officials use displays of anger as a way to construct authority. The construction of authority in these ways, however, raises certain dilemmas that these police officers' theory of agency and model of personhood are meant to solve. In particular, they construe themselves not as particularly powerful agents but instead as hapless victims, responding to offensive action with defensive moves, and they understand themselves as adopting a mask of anger, rather than being intrinsically angry people.

Although the necessity for "acting crazy" is not as extensively challenged in Pittsburgh as "angry speech" is in Sumba, not all police officers support or value this style of interaction. Some officers perceive themselves more like bureaucrats or social workers than street fighters, and these beliefs lead to different models of agency and personhood, and thus different linguistic ideologies. Nonetheless a focus on fighting crime, often called the *crime control* or *militarized* model of policing, remains the dominant policing ideology in the U.S. and thus the ideologies for interaction associated with that stance are the dominant linguistic ideologies (Appier 1998; McElhinny 2003; Monkkonen 1981; Walker 1977).⁴ This model of policing arose during the 1930s in the United States and has persisted

⁴ I use the term "dominant ideology" in deliberate contrast with "hegemony." The utility of distinguishing these terms has been perhaps most clearly argued for by Comaroff and Comaroff (1991, 1992) (though see Briggs 1996a: 9-10 for a review of arguments against the distinction). For the Comaroffs, as for Marx, power can take two forms. It may be linked to human agency, especially the agency of dominant groups, and to the ability and capacity of human beings to shape the actions and perceptions of others by

(though not without challenges or modifications) ever since as the dominant model for policing.⁵ For police officers who orient towards the crime-control model, "acting crazy" is an interactional strategy that they deploy while using force, or in an attempt to head off the need to use force, and narratives about acting crazy serve to defend and continually reinscribe the significance of this strategy. "Acting crazy" is sometimes used to describe verbal actions and sometimes used to describe physical actions too. The crime control model characterizes the typical police officer as a crime fighter extraordinaire, a seasoned, well-armed, professional soldier in an unending and savage war on crime. It is also thus, clearly, a gendered model. Between World War II and the early 1970s, women were not seen as appropriate for policing jobs because women were thought incapable of being combat soldiers (Appier 1998: 160). The ideal police officers was aggressive and tough, authoritative and male. With, however, the advent of affirmative action hiring programs in police departments in the early 1970s (see McElhinny 1993; McElhinny 2003), the gendered ideal shifted a bit. For this reason, not all proponents of a crime-fighting ideology are men: We will look at the narratives of several women below too. A far greater percentage of men, however, embraced such a model, for a variety of complex historical

controlling the production, circulation and consumption of signs and objects. This is the sense in which Marx uses the term ideology in *The German Ideology*: Certain ideas that reflect the interests of the ruling class are impressed upon the false consciousness of the proletariat. Power may also be derived, seemingly naturally, from the very construction of economy and society. Ideology here is more like the sense of ideology used by Marx in *Capital*. It suggests that power is hidden in the forms of everyday life, in built forms, medical knowledge, aesthetics, body shapings. Power here is not experienced as power, since it shapes behavior in ways that are more internalized. The Comaroffs use the 'ideology' to characterize the first sense of power, and 'hegemony', to characterize the second. Ideologies may be articulated by dominant or subordinate groups, but a dominant ideology which becomes naturalized becomes 'hegemony', or signs and material practices, relations and distinctions, ideas and epistemologies that are so powerful they become taken-for-granted, and thus no longer appear as ideology at all. That which is hegemonic seems outside of human agency. The moments its internal contradictions are revealed, negotiable, contested, then hegemony becomes ideology. See Blommaert, Collins, Heller, Rampton, Slembrouck and Verschueren 2003 for a rich, and rare investigation into the role that hegemony can play in the analysis of language.

⁵ At the turn of the century police officers performed a much wider range of tasks than they currently do, including helping men find work, feeding the poor, and providing overnight shelter for the homeless in the corridors and jails of police stations (Monkkonen 1981). Such activities were understood as part of policing, since police officers were meant to control a class of people, and were sanctioned to use both coercive and positive means to do so (Monkkonen 1981: 160). It is not at all coincidental that the first significant wave of women in policing came at this time. These social welfare tasks have slowly been stripped away from police officers, as part of a general specialization and centralization of city services, but also partly as a way to control the immense power of the police and the party machine which once controlled them (Monkkonen 1981; Walker 1977). The task of police officers is now construed as controlling a specific class of behavior (though of course in practice certain behaviors are often associated with certain groups). By the 1950s and early 1960s the crime control model was securely in place, and this model equated effective policing with masculinity and a ready willingness to use force. This is a more narrow definition of the kind of masculinity that makes a successful police officer than before. Cities became combat zones, police officers became soldiers, and officers were perceived as under siege in ways that alienated them from communities. Female police officers largely disappeared from the picture, only to reappear again in the 1970s with the advent of affirmative action programs (for more details see McElhinny 1995, 2000, 2003).

and institutional reasons (see McElhinny 2003 for details).⁶

In this paper I will begin by reviewing recent works on language ideology, and why such studies have more frequently been associated with studies of nation, class and ethnicity than gender. I will suggest that this in itself reflects a particular ideology about gender that deserves to be re-examined. I will then suggest some ways in which the study of narrative can be particularly helpful for the study of ideology in general, and linguistic ideologies and gender in particular. After a review of a variety of narratives told by male and female, Black and White police officers about moments when they found it necessary to use physical force, I will return to the implications of these narratives for understanding whether and how the integration of women into a traditionally masculine occupation like policing leads to the reinscription or transformation of certain ideologies about how interaction should proceed in that institution.

2. Incorporating gender into linguistic studies of ideology

The study of linguistic ideologies has become increasingly central to the study of sociolinguistic and linguistic anthropology (see, for instance, Blommaert 1999; Fairclough 1989, 1992, 1995; Friedrich 1989; Gal 1989; Hill and Mannheim 1992; Kroskrity, Schieffelin, and Woolard 1992; Kroskrity 2000; Schieffelin, Woolard and Kroskrity 1998; van Dijk 1993; Wodak and Matouschek 1993; Woolard and Schieffelin 1994). Studying language ideology is a

much-needed bridge between linguistic and social theory, because it relates the microculture of communicative action to political economic considerations of power and social inequality, confronting macrosocial constraints on language and behavior (Woolard and Schieffelin 1994: 72).

Further, "[l]inguistic ideologies can provide an interpretive link connecting more radically subjective, experiential perspectives and more 'objective' system-based approaches" (Kuipers 1998: 14). This area is ripe for study, since many social theorists holding a "language as ideology" view do not adequately theorize notions of language, ideology and social control, while many linguists fail to explore the political implications of linguistic choices (Gal 1989: 359-360).

Sociolinguists and linguistic anthropologists have, however, been far more likely to use ideology to understand the social relations of nation, racialized ethnicity and class than to understand the social relations of gender (though see the recent studies of Briggs

⁶ For instance, though highly educated, middle class women were hired in small numbers to work in police departments around the turn of the century, their role was seen as crime prevention, or social work, rather than crime control. During the Depression, however, women were seen as occupying jobs that men should rightfully have. Police departments also began to professionalize, as part of attempts to rationalize city government in general and from attempts to place restrictions on police power in particular. The *crime-fighter* or *crime-control* model also represented police departments' attempts to gain more respect and authority by replacing reputations of police officers as uneducated, working-class thugs. Another factor which has contributed to the construction of a male and masculine workplace is a veterans' hiring preference on police departments, since veterans remain overwhelmingly male. This hiring preference has no doubt fed the paramilitary structure of police departments, in ways that remain little analyzed. For further details, see Appier 1998; McElhinny 2003a; and Monkkenen 1981.

1998; Hill 1998; Kulick 1998; McElhinny 1997; Philips 2000; Rathzel 1997). Since the notion of ideology is linked with a theory of social relations and social formations, the failure to link gender with such a theory promotes the individualistic accounts of gender which have been pervasive in studies of language and gender (McElhinny in press 2003). And yet studies of gendered talk which suggest that it is mostly a personal characteristic, or limited to the institution of the family, drawn attention away from the ways that "gender is a structural principle [organizing] other social institutions: Workplace, schools, courts, political assemblies and the state" and the "patterns they display in the recruitment, allocation, treatment and mobility of men as opposed to women" (Gal 1991: 185). The very omission of gender from studies of ideology thus has ideological force: It serves to naturalize gender, to essentialize it. Institutional definitions of gender have been influential in history (Appier 1998; Scott 1986), sociology (Connell 1987) and sociocultural anthropology (Ortner 1996; Silverblatt 1991) but have yet to be fully explored in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology. In order to begin studying language and gender in conjunction with systems of inequality, we need an analytic tool that does not simply result in a catalogue of difference, nor only imply (as *patriarchy*, *dominance* and *heteronormativity* do) a simply dichotomous model of inequality. We need a tool which incorporates a nuanced notion of social position and power. Incorporating studies of ideology into linguistic studies of gender may help us to do this.

Before rushing to embrace ideology as an analytic tool, however, we should consider why some analysts have decided to abandon it. Ideology is often talked about in highly rationalistic terms, as theories or assertions or sets of beliefs. Such views about ideology lead to debates about the truth value of ideological statements, and to critical concerns about distortion, mystification and illusion (see Eagleton 1991; Woolard 1998 for discussions). These often spiral towards debates about "false" consciousness. False consciousness implies a privileged ground from which some can see more clearly than others, and it implies a deeply skeptical view about the rationality of ordinary men and women. Many social theorists, including Foucault, thus have chosen to abandon the notion of ideology altogether (Woolard 1998: 7). However false consciousness need not be an intrinsic part of ideology (Eagleton 1991) and to set aside the possibility of asking when certain views suffuse a social field and when they come to be associated with certain interests is to set aside the possibility of asking theoretical and historical questions about the relationships between hegemony, ideology and resistance. The notion of ideology which I find most useful (see Eagleton 1991; Woolard 1998 for reviews of many different definitions) requires a specification of how ideas and beliefs promote the interests of socially significant groups, rather than a focus on the truth value of the ideas enunciated. Such a definition of ideology leads one to consider the denigration of other ways of approaching similar problems (in this case, other police officers or citizens critical of police actions). Linking up the study of ideology with the study of gender is one way to begin to attend to how dominant versions of gender spawn subordinate and subversive variants, to spell out the multiple and competing kinds of dominant gender ideologies that exist in a given setting, and to consider their meaning for different groups of people within a setting.

Rather than abandoning ideology, then, some have chosen to redefine it. Althusser, in particular, is associated with a shift from a cognitive to an affective theory of ideology. In ways reminiscent of how linguistic anthropologists have worked to redefine linguistic study, Althusser has argued that ideology "appears often enough on its grammatical surface

to be referential (descriptive of states of affairs) while being secretly 'emotive' (expressive of the lived reality of human subjects) or 'conative' (directed towards the achievement of certain effects)" (Eagleton 1991: 19). In Althusser's view, ideology expresses a will, a hope or nostalgia rather than describing reality. Ideology, in this view, is "fundamentally a matter of fearing and denouncing, reverencing and reviling, all of which then sometimes gets coded into a discourse which looks as though it is describing the way things actually are" (Eagleton 1991: 19).⁷

Williams (1977) coined the term 'structures of feeling' to suggest the need to move analytically beyond the systematically and formally held beliefs often associated with 'ideology' or 'worldview' to meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt:

"We are talking about characteristic elements of impulse, restraint and tone; specifically affective elements of consciousness and relationships: Not feeling against thought, but thought as felt and feeling as thought: Practical consciousness of a present kind, in a living and inter-relating continuity" (132).⁸

To begin to study structures of feeling is try to integrate what has been variously distinguished as social and personal, rational and emotional, mental and physical. To begin to study structures of feeling is to move beyond describing thought as fixed and explicit and known, and to try to present it as "alive, active 'subjective'". To do this is to try to integrate what has been variously distinguished as social and personal, rational and emotional, mental and physical. It is also to begin to ask questions about the relations between formally held beliefs and structures of feeling, relations which may range from formal assent and private dissent to a selection amongst or differential interpretation of certain beliefs, as well as a selection amongst and differential interpretation of certain experiences.

The power of ideology is not only in making meaning, but in making meaning stick (John B. Thompson, cited in Eagleton 1991: 195). This may take the form of philosophical discourse, but not all of social life takes the form of argumentative discourse for and about ideas. Nor, however, can social life be reduced to the visceral, subliminal, libidinal appeals that studies of consumerism document. To understand how ideology works we must attend both to empirical propositions and emotional appeals, with emotion being understood not as a psychobiological universals or as private, personal experiences but as embedded in, constituted of, and constructed by, social structure (Abu-Lughod and Lutz 1990). Eagleton suggests that an ideological discourse may be best understood as "a network of empirical and normative elements, within which the nature and organization of the former is ultimately determined by the requirements of the latter" (1991: 23). In this, he argues, an ideological formation may be more like a novel than an academic article. A novel may contain certain empirical propositions, but these statements are not usually present for their own sake; instead, they are selected and deployed to support certain views of experience. "'Constative' language, in other words, is harnessed to 'performative' ends; empirical truths

⁷ Althusser's approach to ideology has been critiqued for having an overly structural theory of consciousness, which postulates ideology as unconscious, and people as affected by, but helpless to affect, ideology (see Dunk 1991 for a useful critical review of this position). One can adopt his emphasis on the affective dimension of ideology without adopting these other aspects.

⁸ See, also, Williams (1983) entries on "hegemony" and "ideology".

are organized as components of an overall rhetoric" (Eagleton 1991: 22). Brenneis (1996: 49) also notes that conflict narratives are not solely about disputes, and do not solely serve instrumental ends: They can create feelings of pleasure, amusement, injustice, and anger. Significantly, this means that someone who has bought into a particular ideological view may not be dissuaded from it simply because arguments are presented which show that some of the assumptions upon which it is based are false, a fact that any teacher or political activist will need to take into account. Adding an affective conceptualization of ideology to linguistic anthropology's move to understand the performative dimensions of genres (Duranti 1994; Bauman and Briggs 1990; Briggs and Bauman 1992) opens a fruitful avenues of research which would consider the distinctive roles that different genres might play in promulgating, reproducing, challenging and resisting ideology. Part of such a research program would consider when and how appeals to reason and emotion are launched, and indeed when and how and why these are understood and experienced dichotomously. We should not expect to find certain genres used for ideological inculcation and others for resistance. Instead, the very ways that genres vary in terms of relative monologicity and dialogicity (Foley 1997: 361) may indicate different possibilities for ideological resistance or imbrication, as will different strategies of retextualization, decontextualization and entextualization (Briggs and Bauman 1992; Silverstein and Urban 1996).

In this paper I am concerned with elucidating the way narratives are connected to ideology⁹. In particular, this paper considers the ways that the narratives seven police officers tell about the use of physical force are connected to a crime control ideology of policing.¹⁰ Conflict narratives may constitute a privileged site for the construction - and thus the examination - of identities and social order because of the ways that the differentiation of self from other is crucial in the construction of selves and communities, perhaps even more crucial than the elaboration of a shared identity (see Briggs 1996b: 5, 10). Narratives are also a crucial site for the examination of conflict because "it is more the moments in which conflicts are *represented* than the times in which they erupt that crucial contestations shape discursive and social relations and inequalities" (Briggs 1996c: 237).¹¹ I have elsewhere considered the ways that the crime control model was historically established and unpacked its connection to the development of a particular type of masculine policing persona (McElhinny 2003). Here I consider narratives as an interactional event in which officers themselves make sense of, as they often enact, reenact or construct interaction. As they do so, they elaborate ideologies for police officer-citizen interaction.

Narratives are here understood as "authoritative statements, making an argument

⁹ For critical reviews of the enormous literature on narrative, see Berman 1998; Ochs and Capps 1996; and Mattingly 1998.

¹⁰ Six of these officers tell stories about themselves; one tells a story about another. Five are White, two are Black. Four are women; three are men. The ways and extent to which gender and ethnicity shape the stories is a question I consider throughout.

¹¹ See the contributions in Briggs 1996a, 1997a for examples and discussion of the particular role that narratives play not only in the representation of conflict and violence, but in constructing violent acts and naturalizing and challenging their political significance.

about what happened as part of describing what happened" (Mattingly 1998: 31). They have three features which make them useful for studying structures of feeling in general, and how police officers' make sense of their experiences in particular.¹² First, they are *event-centered*, that is, they focus on human action and interaction (see Mattingly 1998: 8). Second, they are *experience-centered*, and thus allow us to infer something about what it feels like to be in the story world. Third, they are *performative, seductive and evocative*. That is, "narratives do not merely refer to past experience but create experience for their audience...They request a different response from the audience than denotative prose. Narrative offers meaning through evocation, image, the mystery of the unsaid. It persuades by seducing the listener into the world it portrays, unfolding events in a suspense-laden time in which one wonders what will happen next" (Mattingly 1998: 8). Indeed, it is precisely because of these features, and because analysis of narratives is not predicated upon their truth value, that narratives have recently assumed such a central place in social and cultural analysis in both the humanities and the social sciences (Klein 1999). Narratives are an analytic bridge between the exchanges police officers engage in, and police officers' own explicit articulations of their beliefs in other genres.

Analyses of narratives helps us to understand how stories are given shape by their tellers but also how stories shape the way tellers see and experience themselves. Indeed, "we *become* the stories we tell about our lives" (Capps and Ochs 1995: 14). Narratives are not merely epiphenomenal reflexes of sociopolitical relations, representing action going on elsewhere. "Rather, they constitute both important opportunities for and means of carrying out such action" (Brenneis 1996: 47). The temporal structure of Western stories presents a certain theory of events: Those elements which precede others are also seen as causing them.¹³ It also constructs, and re-enacts, and reinforces, a certain affective stance towards events. Stories thus can provide crucial insights into how ideologies around certain styles of policing are forged or reinforced on the ground by police officers, in conjunction with the institutional structurings that also shape certain approaches to policing. Police officers who embrace a crime control model frequently rehearse how they will behave in certain situations if confronted with a recalcitrant husband, or drunken prisoner, or fleeing burglar. They also frequently review the moments in which they have found themselves embroiled in such situations. Narratives allow officers to simultaneously present their own views on past conflicts, shape the on-going interaction (here, with an anthropologist), and rehearse how they would, ideally, talk in the future (see also Briggs 1996b: 21). The very reiteration of these stories serves to keep alive for these officers the need to be prepared, always, to use force. It is these reiterations which help construct these particular officers' notion of what is common sense, that is, their locally authoritative versions of "things as they are" (Capps and Ochs 1995: 24). Since police officers who challenge a crime control

¹² Story and narrative are often distinguished in contemporary theory, with the first understood as the sequence of events which the narrative is about, and the second as the actual discourse that recounts the events. The distinction assumes the possibility of experience outside narrative, and assumes that experience, unlike narrative, is unordered. Both of these assumptions can be challenged (see Mattingly 1998). Since the ontological status of narrative is not my question here, I use the terms interchangeably.

¹³ For an account of narratives which are quite distinct from Western narratives, in part in that they are not temporally structured, see Berman 1998.

model do not tend to tell stories about moments when they used force (McElhinny 2003), the story structures themselves - what is emphasized, downplayed or omitted - attest to the social and moral standards of the narrator, at least at that moment. Stories thus can provide crucial insights into how ideologies around certain styles of policing are forged or reinforced on the ground by police officers, and for beginning to trace how structures of feeling shape the gendered task of policing. In the next few sections, then, I will examine the narratives that a variety of different officers (men and women, Black and White) tell about the use of force, and then return to considering these narratives' implications for the study of gender and language ideology.

Police officers often find themselves in situations where courts, or superior officers, or other investigating bodies, are concerned to get at the "facts of the matter" through the stories police officers tell. Paradoxically, this may make police officers even more keenly aware of the significance of the construction of narratives. Many of the narratives below display police officers' exquisite awareness that their own actions are often regarded critically. Aesthetic criteria about what constitutes "a good story" shape these narratives as well.

To the extent that narratives of anger are good narratives, they may inflate the incidence or intensity of anger or aggression. The shocking attack, the reckless threat makes the better story. From this standpoint, the less dramatic contribution may be omitted, or not fully represented, in favor of the more dramatic act of physical aggression. The narrator, in relating an incident in which she got angry or committed a retaliative act, may consciously legitimize her action after the fact or may unconsciously portray her response as more incontestably legitimate than it was (Miller and Sperry 1987: 14-5).

But, as Miller and Sperry also argue, the story structures themselves - what is emphasized, downplayed or omitted - attest to the social and moral standards of the narrator, at least at that moment. Not all police officers have the same moral values, thus not all police officers tell stories which emphasize the inevitability of the use of force. Narratives are thus an invaluable tool for understanding what anger and fear mean to those police officers who do.

3. The grammar of craziness: Linguistic analyses

There may be, on the face of it, few similarities between police officers who range widely throughout a city regularly plunging into situations where the threat of danger is always present and a woman who often confines herself at home because of the fears and anxieties she associates with certain places. And yet Capps and Ochs' (1995) portrait of the interactional tactics of Meg Logan, an agoraphobic woman, proves remarkably useful for analyzing the narratives told by these police officers. Capps and Ochs point out that while "telling stories of anxious moments, Meg habitually draws upon a set of grammatical structures and lexical items to paint a portrait of herself as abnormal, helpless and out of control" (1995: 55). Meg, that is, portrays herself as crazy, in the sense of mentally ill. Although Meg associates her panic attacks with certain places, Capps and Ochs associate them with certain interactional situations in which Meg accommodates to the desires of others rather than satisfying her own needs. When she subsequently panics, others must accommodate to her. She thus gains a kind of control over the immediate social situation.

Some police officers also portray themselves as crazy, in the sense of being out of control. For both the agoraphobic women and for police officers, allowing others to think them crazy is a useful strategy for gaining control over an interactional situation, and for refusing to negotiate. The difference between them lies, in part, in the fact that most police officers claim to retain some awareness of how they are constructing their persona: They see themselves as **ACTING** crazy:

You're not really a hard person, but you have to act that way, because they'll brick you. [PO 30A, black male, 30, 2 years on the job]¹⁴

Meg, however, portrays herself as **BEING** crazy. The difference, then, is that police officers see themselves as remaining largely in control even when they are out of control, while Meg sees herself as out of control even when she is in control.

Two key sets of grammatical forms that Capps and Ochs identify in Meg's speech are also found in police officers' narratives: (1) the use of reason adverbs and adverbials like "unaccountably", "all of a sudden" and "out of the blue" that mark the speaker's emotions as being out of control, and (2) the casting of themselves in non-agentive semantic roles. Reason adverbs and adverbial phrases mark a transition from a normal to an abnormal condition (1995: 56-58). When Meg portrays herself as relatively powerless to control the way she feels or the way the world affects her, she does so by casting herself in non-agentive semantic roles, as experiencer or affected object (e.g. *the worst symptoms I've ever had overtook me*). She may also undermine her own agency by using verbs of necessity (e.g. *I've got to get out of here*), negation (e.g. *I couldn't seem to shake this*), intensifiers that amplify her anxiety (e.g. *I felt real helpless*) and deintensifiers that minimize her own actions (e.g. *That was kind of how I coped with the ski trip*) (Capps and Ochs 1995: 67-70). All of these strategies are evident in police officers' accounts of moments when they engage in the use of verbal or physical force, and will be examined in more detail in the following sections. In addition, police officers also use some other

¹⁴ Each transcribed example is followed by information about the tape that the example can be found on, as well as the police officer's sex (male or female), ethnicity (Black, White, Mixed ethnicity) and years of work on the Pittsburgh police force (where available). For example, [PO 11A, white female, mid-30s, 2 years on the job] indicates that the transcribed example is on side A of PO 11. The officer is white, female, and in her mid-30s. She has worked as a police officer for two years. This paper also draws on the following transcription conventions:

(pause)	All pauses are marked between parentheses.
We were walk-	A dash marks a word or phrase broken off before it is finished.
LOUD	Capital letters indicate increased volume.
eve::ry	Semi-colon marks lengthened sound.
(laughs)	Laughter is marked between single parentheses.
"quote"	Indicates quoted speech.
<text>	Parentheses surround barely audible speech for which the transcription is uncertain
....	Three or four dots indicate that some material from the original transcript has been omitted.
<<comment>>	Double brackets enclose transcriber comments.
bold	Part of transcript highlighted for analyst's purposes

strategies which have similar effects. They are strategically vague in otherwise detailed stories about fights about who started the fight, they tell narratives about the use of force which are studded with laughter in ways that work in part to minimize the seriousness of the events, and they use certain devices in telling stories about the use of force (present tense verbs, unmodified nouns) which are meant to iconically capture the rapid sequence of events and justify police officer's sudden actions. Rather than undermining their authority, I will argue that these strategies for the displacement of agency are part of the way that institutional representatives construct and even disguise authority. Police officers use these strategies to suggest that they are simply responding to events, rather than shaping or constructing them (see Briggs 1997c for a detailed account of the role that the displacement of agency plays in the ways that legal and medical authorities construct an alleged crime).

4. Runts and Robocops

Bob, a short and lightweight White police officer whom the other officers regularly referred to as "Little Bobby," found that height and weight restrictions barred him from the police force when he got out of the service in 1970. According to his account, police officers at the time had to be five foot seven, and a hundred and fifty pounds. He didn't qualify in terms of height or weight. He parked cars for six years, then a friend of his who was taking the civil service test persuaded him to come along too. There had been changes in height and weight requirements largely because of women's challenges about what counted as job-related restrictions (see Fleming and Shanor 1977: 26-7 for a review), and Bob was hired.

One evening, the police dispatcher advised Bob and other police officers that a man was threatening some people with a gun and holding them against their will. When we arrived, an African-American youth had already been arrested by another White officer. As we came out we were surrounded by a group of 10 or 15 people, all African-American, mostly relatives. One kid tried to hit the man who was already in custody and the arresting officer told him to back off. Bob later told me (I couldn't see past the crowd) that he pushed that kid up against the wall, saying "Look, you know, I'm preventing you from going to jail." The crowd packed around those two, and around me, with everyone talking loudly, some saying "He wouldn't have hit NOBODY!" Another officer said "Let's get out of here", "He's going to start a riot up here." He left. Bob only slowly backed away, all the while trying to justify what he did as for the good of the youth, while a middle-aged Black woman shouted at him over and over again, "That's why you cops get no respect up here." When we were back in the car, Bob was quick to justify his own actions, arguing that more polite speech would have been ineffective.

ASSHOLES UP HERE. Really. You lock them up, they complain. You do something to KEEP them from going to jail, they complain. I'm working up here for fifteen years- that guy was going to pop that kid and hurt him. That's the way they do things up here. They want to take care of it themselves. Most of the time, they don't even want us getting involved. That's why they was all waiting outside that door. They would have caught that kid coming out that door, they would've killed him. And that other young kid would have ended up in jail, except the fact that I **grabbed** him. They didn't like the way I **gra::bbed** him. If I would've said now, "Wait a minute, now you better back off sir or you're gonna" he would have jumped right over and cracked that kid. The only thing he was going to understand at that point- was a **sudden JOLT**- you know- to his- conscious

mind. That he was NOT going to crack that kid. Soon as I seen his fist coming up. That's why I **grabbed** him. His fist was ALREADY moving. But you can't make some of these people happy. [PO 45, white male, 42, 15 years on the job] (**BOLD** = my emphasis)

The passage's defining feature is the police officer's attempt to justify his actions as professional, emphasizing them as rapid and forceful. Because these actions could also be understood as sudden and violent, Bob also seems to be carefully building up a play-by-play account of the action, much as would be required in a written account (a report, or an account to the Office of Professional Responsibility, an internal investigative body). He carefully substitutes "conscious mind" for "jolt to his head", a phrase itself modelled on "blow to his head" and hedges his action with "you know."

Rapid, perhaps unpredictable behavior features in most accounts of police officer's use of force. In the following narrative, a White female officer is describing the actions of a towering young African-American officer ("David") who has come to be called "Robocop" by some of the people in the neighborhood, in part because of his weight-lifter's physique, in part because he's six foot three inches tall, and in part because of his policing style.¹⁵

This one time he- (laughs) I was see I was working behind a desk last um, last SPRING.... David's brought these two people in, a guy and a girl and the guy he had handcuffed to a chair and the girl he had handcuffed to the other chair and the guy's were l- he was talking and ta::lking and talking and talking and David's like "SHUT UP." He told him like twenty times and Zellini's sitting behind me going- (laughs) singing these little songs like <<in song-song voice>> "You better shut u::p, David's gonna get ma:::d." (LAUGHS) and like right when he says that **all of a sudden** David PICKED this guy up, chair and all and just like **slammed** him down to the ground. He's like "I told you to SHUT THE FUCK UP. NOW SHUT UP." (LAUGHS) and then he comes over to me afterwards he goes <<she mimics him mumbling under his breath>>, "I'm sorry. I lost my temper." He goes "I can't- I can't stand when I do that you know." (LAUGHS) I'm like, "That's cool David y:::- you don't have to apologize." He's like "I didn't mean to swear that much in front of you. He's like real polite and stuff too you know but- They call him Robocop. [PO 25A, white female, 28, 3 years on the job]

Although the narrator concludes by suggesting that David's size and strength alone are enough to intimidate the public, the story suggests otherwise. He (even he) needs to construct a police persona. This female officer portrays him as being unpredictable, crazy, wild. "All of a sudden" is an adverbial phrase which marks Robocop's transition from one condition to another, and which describes him as being out of control. "Slammed", with its connotations of violence, noise and unexpectedness, is used to similar effect, as are the profanity and shouting in David's reported speech. Although David's action is portrayed as perhaps being sudden from the handcuffed man's point of view, it is also portrayed as intelligible and even predictable from other officers' points-of-view. The narrator manages this by portraying the actions of the handcuffed man as unreasonable ("he was talking and ta::lking and talking and talking and David's like 'SHUT UP.'" He told him like twenty

¹⁵ I have chosen to use the terms *Black* and *White* throughout this paper because they are the terms which police officers usually use. Female officers tend to use *policeman* or *police officer* to describe their own role; male officers tend to use *policeman*. I have opted to use *police officer* as the default term throughout, adding a description of sex or gender where it seems relevant.

times.")

What, however, is the point of this story? Skillful narratives often include an evaluation, that indicate why a story was told and what the narrator was getting at (Labov 1972: 366). Evaluations may be external (in which the point is made explicitly) or internal (in which the narrative dramatizes this information). Here the narrator's laughter throughout the end of the story draws our attention to the hilarious juxtaposition of the fearsome giant with the pussycat who then apologizes to the young female officer. The juxtaposition itself implicitly suggests that David's actions are not an intrinsic part of his character, but part of a display. Indeed the narrator, here relying on the U.S. folk ideology which associates people's real selves with those they display to family and friends (see McElhinny 1997), may even be suggesting that the real man is the "real polite" man and not the real angry man. Such a story thus minimizes the actions that "Robocop" takes while acting out his violent role.

5. Armed robbers and agency

If this story begins to illustrate the theory of personhood associated with acting crazy, the stories of Jay, a White officer in his mid-20s from a policing family (his Dad and his wife are also officers) elucidate the interactional and professional dilemmas for which "acting crazy" is a solution. One of Jay's principal fears - and it is a fear he articulates repeatedly even in the few days I ride with him - is that his firearm will be wrestled from him in a fight, or that the firearm of another officer will be taken and used against him. Even if most policing doesn't require guns or physical force, Jay repeatedly pointed out that it only takes one incident to get him killed.

Jay believes that liberals and the media systematically misunderstand the realities that police officers deal with every day. He partly understands this in class terms: Liberals are not only those who possess a different set of political beliefs, but a different class position (upper middle class), a position he associates with a lack of common sense. As we were riding through a public housing project he exclaimed:

People live with their heads in a hole all their lives. They have no idea. Especially these yuppie assholes. They see the way you interact with these people, they get all FIRED up. Start throwing bottles and bricks and you start hammering on them and the- y'know just to protect yourself. "You're just a racist." They grew up in Upper St Clair or Mt. Lebanon <<two of Pittsburgh's upper middle-class suburbs>>, don't have a CLUE.... [PO 114B, white male, 26, 5 years on the job]

Those liberals and yuppies are portrayed as naive precisely because they are not able to see the situation as clearly as working men like Jay can (see also Dunk 1991: 118). Such a formulation suggests that anyone in Jay's position would have the same views as he does. The existence of different views is put down to incomplete knowledge; shared knowledge would mean shared views. The recognition of different views need not, therefore, challenge a prevailing view (see Briggs 1996b: 29 on other ways that narratives can prevailing dominant points of view).

In the following statement Jay's general critique of "liberals and the media" narrows to a critique of those opinions which affect him on the job.

The news is pretty goddamned lopsided. It's always bad shit. When I get to fighting- if you want to fight, it's not fair. I'm gonna do anything- if I have to pick up a brick slam you on the head I'm gonna do it. That's brutality. But there are bricks thrown up here <<the Federal housing projects>>. If you get ticked or hit, that's different. That's really bugs the shit outta me. I'm gonna protect myself, I'm no punching bag. You punch me, I'm gonna punch you back, even harder. Anything I have to do to make you quit. [PO 114B, white male, 26, 5 years on the job]

He justifies police force in this account by describing it entirely in terms of self-defense, as a reaction to other actions. Any struggle between a police officer and another person is seen merely as a fight between individuals rather than one between an individual and an institution. Jay offers one example of series of events which were, he says, distorted by the media.

I caught an armed robber on Polka Street. Guy runs out. "Hey some black guy-" had a big knife, runs at the car. I say, "Hey, what the fuck are you doing?" Andy sees <the robber> hiding between these homes, crouched down. I hear Andy yell. Guy was supposed to be armed so Andy had his gun on him. Guy could have gone straight up on this porch. Andy couldn't see his hands--he said, "Show me your hands, real slow, or you're gonna get whacked." **Now we're in a fist fight, he got his ass beat**, <community members> saw this brutal act, by a police man, was a bunch of shit. This brutal police man. Man falsely accused. He was the guy that robbed the place. He wouldn't show Andy his hands. Community leaders saw it, and they said it's wrong. "You police man are wrong." [PO 114B, white male, 26, 5 years on the job]

In the part of the narrative where Jay is catching the robber, he regularly uses historic present tense ("*I say*", "*Andy sees*", "*I hear*") and leaves "guy" unmodified by a definite or indefinite article. This iconically captures and conjures up the breathless rapidity with which events happen and with which officers must make decisions about appropriate actions (see also Schifffrin 1981).¹⁶ The suddenness of the movement from threat to force ("*Now we're in a fist fight*") emphasizes the danger of police work, and justifies the rapidity with which he too must make a transition from one emotional state to another. Most surprising here is the vagueness at a crucial moment: Who exactly initiated the fist fight? Although police officers have a kind of discretionary power over others' freedom that would justify a portrayal of themselves as super agents, they often downplay their own agency. The complicated understandings of what constitutes reasonable and unreasonable acts, and police officers' keen awareness that their own interpretations may not be shared by others, leads some officers to another interactional strategy shared with the agoraphobic woman portrayed by Capps and Ochs: De-emphasizing their own agency. "Now we're in a fist fight" and "He got his ass beat" leave unmarked the agent or agents of the acts. The

¹⁶ There is an extended literature on the use of the present tense (sometimes called historic or conversational historic present tense) in narrative. For a discussion of other uses, including the use of the historic present tense to mark narrator interventions in the story, focus attention on certain portions of the narrative and divide up the flow of action into distinct events, see Schifffrin 1981 and Wolfson 1982. Toolan (1988: 166-169) provides a useful overview. Schifffrin found the historic present was often concentrated in the sections of narratives containing complicating actions, which is significant since tense does not have to do the work of temporal ordering in these sections. Schifffrin also notes that the historic present is an internal evaluation device which "allows the narrator to present events as if they were occurring at that moment, so that the audience can hear for itself what happened, and can interpret for itself the significance of those events for the experience" (1981: 58).

use of impersonal "you" also displaces agency from the police officer.

In the following narrative, Jay also de-emphasizes his own agency by arguing that he wasn't looking for trouble, but just happened into it (...*"came across a truck parked in the middle of the road"*).

Two weeks ago, in <one of the housing projects. I was patrolling and came across a truck parked in the middle of the road.> Some guy drinking, talking to his buddies. "Hey how about pulling the truck over to the side." "Fuck you" he said. "Well if you're gonna be a jagoff, I'll be a bigger jagoff." He gets outta the truck. I said, "Get back in your truck." "Fuck you, I'm not gonna do nothin. I didn't do nothin, you ain't doing nothin to me." All this dumb shit. Picked up a brick in each hand, threw one. <Goes whizzing past my head.> I put my gun on him. I said, "Go ahead you simple fuck." They see that, then they don't have the guts no more. He starts running. But I knew him. That's what amazed me. I knew who he was. Inside the truck he left a driver's license, owner's card and everything. I charged him with aggravated assault which the statute clearly reads--attempts to cause or causes bodily injury to police officer. They said, "That's not aggravated assault. You didn't get hit with no brick." I TELL you what. I'll pull out my gun, shoot at you two times, miss and walk out. What the fuck?... I- I be harassing them, that's what they say. Any time you pull one of them over, or arrest them, it's because they're black and you're white. "You be a racist." [PO 114B, white male, 26, 5 years on the job]

Jay portrays each of his actions as reactions to the person he is talking to. He consistently blames the other person for escalating the interaction from a polite to an impolite one (*"Fuck you, he said"*), from a verbal interaction to one which is physically threatening (*"he gets outta the truck"*), and finally from an interaction in which the threat is implicit to one in which it is realized (*"picked up a brick in each hand, threw one"*). Jay's use of AAVE (*"I be harassing"*, *"You be a racist"*) also serves to dismiss the views of community activists. Like the examples of junk Spanish analyzed by Hill (1993, 1995), Jay's use of AAVE is meant to be pejorative and parodic. Rather than indicating knowledge about, and regular access to Black speakers, it is meant to distance himself from them. Portraying the use of force as self-defense contributes to a siege mentality. It is perhaps not coincidental that Jay is known as one of the police force's most skilled marksmen. He has participated in, and won, a number of competitive shooting contests. Jay frequently mentions how poor the training is for Pittsburgh police officers. He believes officers should receive considerably more training in the use of nightsticks, in self-defense techniques, and in the use of firearms. He is particularly interested in taking one training course, because the trainer will testify at the trial of anyone charged with excessive use of force about the ways that the officer has been appropriately trained in the use of force.

If Jay accounts for his actions in terms of the activities he must respond to, Frank, a burly man who looks like Hollywood's stereotype of an Irish policeman, justifies his in terms of the character of the people he must deal with. He half-jokes, "Anymore when someone asks me what I do for a living, I say garbageman" [9A]. He uses other metaphors for criminals ("vermin" and "maggots") which serve to downplay the agency and humanity of those he interacts with. He portrays his actions as an agency-less obligation, as inevitable: "What am I supposed to do?"

I don't usually confess up to too many things, but the one time I did beat a man I didn't really have to, whereas we get a call for child molestation. We could look in the window we could see this little girl about four years old bleeding from the vagina-area. This maggot's in the corner, crying. I hit him. More than once. **What am I supposed to do.** [PO 9B, white male, 39/40, 13 years on the

job]

The short story includes several features that mark a police officer register. The conjunction "whereas" is not used in the dictionary sense of "when in fact" or "since" but it still conjures up a legal register. The precise imprecision of "little girl about four years old" and "vagina-area" marks the discourse of those subject to challenge over details (Woodbury 1978). "Maggot" jumps out by contrast, but is also partly domesticated as appropriate usage by virtue of its collocation. Frank offers no apologies for actions that he sees as natural, in the circumstances. Like Jay, he sees his role as reaction, not action.

Even in seemingly frank descriptions of the emotional distress the job causes ("I've cried"), Frank uses agency-masking grammatical devices. After he described this child abuse call, I ask if it was difficult not to take the job home.

Not to sound like a wimp, but more than once I've gone home and cried. I don't see myself as a wimp but...**it catches up to you**. One time I had to take little girls, I didn't actually take them, I helped carry them out of the fire, they'd died. That bothered me. Thinking of those girls--nobody gets a break on a fire hydrant. [PO 9B, white male, 39/40, 13 years on the job]

"It catches up to you" doesn't even give him the relative passive role of experiencer (compare "I felt"). Frank then moves quickly away from a more-or-less open admission of how the job affects him to describing the sort of tough professional action he takes as a result (writing tickets for people illegally parked near fire hydrants).

Paradoxically, given dominant ideologies which oppose reason and emotion, these narratives imbued with emotion also serve to construct police officers as the ultimate rational actors, even when "acting crazy." Others are alcohol- or drug-crazed, animals, assholes, living with their heads in holes. Their actions are construed as irrational in ways that challenge, yet again, the feasibility of applying universal principles of conversational inference based on the mutual presumption of rationality (see also Haviland 1997), and suggest the importance of considering how rationality is invoked in interaction and to what strategic ends.

These narratives serve here to illustrate what a crime-fighter ideology looks like when implemented on the street by police officers. Each telling of such a story also, however, serves to reinscribe such an ideology. In Capps' and Ochs' analysis of Meg's stories, they point out that her description of moments when she was anxious leads to her continually reliving those moments, and thus continually replenishing her sense of herself as an agoraphobic woman. If one accepts their account, then finding another way to tell stories about the same events, perhaps in conjunction with a therapist or others diagnosed with the same disorder, would be one way to move towards the construction of a new kind of self. When the police officers tell stories, to themselves or to the public or to me, about moments when the use of force was necessary, they are not merely describing those experiences, but recreating them, seducing themselves and others into believing that the sequence of events that they describe was not only justified, but inevitable. Given the emotional power of these stories, simply instructing officers to behave in other ways, where such seems appropriate, seems unlikely to be a productive strategy for changing the way they approach these scenarios. One needs, instead, to find a way of restructuring these structures of feeling. Activists have repeatedly found that in numerous settings presenting research which suggests to people that their beliefs are "false" is not sufficient for

engendering support for change, or even agreement that the activists are right. Understanding how social change takes place thus requires understanding and addressing rational and emotional responses to events.

6. "If you more or less yell at them....": The dilemmas of being an African-American police officer

So far the stories considered here have largely been stories told by White men, but a crime fighter ideology is not limited to these officers. Doug, a young African-American officer, came on the job with a college degree but no street experience. He notes that when he first became a police officer, he tried to be polite and nice and he tried to go by the book, but these strategies did not work. He offers the task of dealing with homeless people as an example:

If you let them run and dictate what they're gonna do and when they're gonna go, they'll just talk and yap and everything else. **If you more or less yell at them**, tell them "Get the hell outta here, we're not gonna have this", they'll get real quiet, they'll get real soft, and everything else. And different things, you know. Like when I first came out I tried to be Mister- Officer Friendly. Well you know:::w, this and that, then one of the older officers came up, and said, "What the HELL, WE'RE NOT GONNA HAVE THIS SHIT" and the person was like, "Okay officer ." [PO 30A, black male, 30, 2 years on the job]

"If you more or less yell at them" uses a hedge to downplay the police officer's action. The use of impersonal "you" rather than "I" has a similar effect.

Doug uses many military metaphors to describe his work. He describes the drug trade in Pittsburgh as a "drug war", and says that the job of policing sometimes becomes so overwhelming that police men become "just like Vietnam vets - they need to get away." He emphasizes the amount of drug-trafficking, the increasing violence in Pittsburgh, and younger and younger age of the criminal actors who all seem to know the criminal justice procedures better than he does. Doug describes his own style of policing as aggressive. In the accounts of officers like Doug, there often seems to be a surprisingly thin edge between displays of anger and aggression and accounts of fear. Doug himself is most aware of this when discussing other officers, especially White officers dealing with Black citizens. As part of his training period, he worked with a White officer in a largely Black district. He said that his training officer was tense every time he found himself around a group of Blacks.

To me I don't know if that's right or wrong, but to send a person like that to a predominantly Black area, they're just scared to death. It's not that they're mean or anything else they're just up there and they're scared to death (pause) of Blacks. They pull over a car with two Black males in it. And they're terrified. And they pull out their gun. And if he goes for the seat then they shoot. Then he's wrong. But you put them up there knowing this. [PO 30A, black male, 30, 2 years on the job]

Though Doug is critical of white officers' actions here, he also excuses them to some extent by suggesting that they're not "mean" just "scared." He reserves his harshest critique for the supervisors who deploy their officers without sensitivity to what they can and cannot do.

Like Jay, Doug argues that people's critiques of cops arise because they do not fully understand what it is like "out here", not because people might have different moral or legal views about force. Doug's comments arose when we were talking about his reaction to the Rodney King beating in L.A.. He quickly noted that he believed the L.A. police officers were wrong, but followed that with comments on the ways that people tend to misinterpret police actions. His comments condense a number of the strategies discussed thus far in this paper.

Say for instance you would like be in a window and you would see me run up on some kids you seen right across the street. And you- they don't look like they're doing anything to you. But I go up and choke one of them, just running out of my car and and I go up and choke one of them. It seems like for no reason at all. It would be hard for me to explain that I told them to get off the street, I knew they were dealing drugs, I wouldn't have it, I told them if I came back, you know. Now if they would have pulled him out of the car and and somebody would have shot that saying that "Oh they just beat him." Now how do they know he didn't have a gun or whatever? Now like I said, that <<the beating of Rodney King>> was excessive force, and that was ridiculous, to beat a guy like that. But I mean if they would have beat him a couple times or whatever and that was filmed, it would look kinda one-sided. See as a police officer, you have enough problems worrying about yourself (pause) being ali-getting, you know, being shot, being- existing out on the street. But to worry about if you're gonna get sued, if your family's gonna, you know if you're gonna lose your house and all that stuff. Every time you question something, or move you make, it could cost you your life. If you're afraid that someone is watching you, you're afraid you don't want to hit this guy or snatch him up, and then he turns around and stabs you, and kills you. You're between a rock and a hard place. [PO 30A, black male, 30, 2 years on the job]

Doug is torn. He wants to critique what happened in L.A., but reserve the right to use force for himself. He wants to critique outsiders' views of policing at the same time that he is an outsider to what happened in L.A. All African-American officers in Pittsburgh critiqued what happened in L.A.; the views of white officers were split. Doug's conflict can be seen as the result of the particular dilemmas that being Black and being a police officer pose for thinking about the beating of Rodney King in particular and perhaps the exercise of force in general. In this brief passage a cluster of grammatical features mark anxious preoccupation and serve to heighten the officer's message about his double bind, namely how immobilized he feels by needing to balance a need for self-defense with a concern for citizens' rights. Some of these features are also those that show up in Meg Logan's descriptions of being trapped by panic. There is a cluster of verbs and adjectives that describes worry and fear, though note that here again the officer does not construct himself as the agent or actor or even the experiencer ("*to worry about if you're gonna get sued, if you're afraid*"). The author also piles up the potential consequences of any act, with a series of "if" clauses that together imagine the worse that could happen: *if you're gonna get sued, if your family's gonna, you know, if you're gonna lose your house, if you're afraid...then he turns around and stabs you and kills you*. Finally, impersonal "you" serves to distance these concerns from him in the second half of his account: "*you have enough problems worrying about yourself*", "*if you're gonna get sued*", "*if you're gonna lose your house*", "*every time you question something*", "*if you're afraid*", "*you're between a rock and a hard place*". Like other officers, Doug notes that some of his actions may seem crazy, inexplicable to others ("seems like for no reason at all"). Though he tries to establish an interactional context by quickly going through a litany of phrases that could have preceded his action ("*I told them to get off the street, I knew they were dealing drugs, I wouldn't have*

it, I told them if I came back...."), he is dubious about the utility of this move. If Jay largely emphasizes the physical dangers of policing, Doug adds to these concerns a preoccupation with the moral and legal hazards of the job. This spiral of panic may reflect the particular dilemmas that being Black and being a police officer pose.

7. Girls who freak: Turning rapport talk on its head

To understand the stories told by the young women who embrace a crime-fighter model of policing, one needs to understand the ways in which they are simultaneously distinguishing themselves from other women, as they are claiming an affiliation and similarity with certain men (see Eckert 1989: 254 on the ways that gender is often more defined by differences within groups rather than between them). The young women (Black and White) who subscribe to a crime-fighter ideology had hoped and planned to be police officers all their lives. These young women distance themselves from older women officers who are still on the job, and thus from many older women's critique of a crime control model (see McElhinny 2003), by arguing that these older women may have been qualified for the job, but they took it for the wrong reasons: "They only do it for the money." Indeed, many of the older women did enter policing at times of financial hardship (e.g. a divorce, a husband's loss of a job in a steel mill), and they do not describe policing as a job they had always dreamed of doing. The very fact that the job wasn't open for them to aspire to becomes a reason they are critiqued by men and younger women alike. Because they "only took the job for the money" they are not seen as professional. These young female officers see themselves as markedly different, in ways that show how increasing numbers of women in an institution may, over the long range, lead to less change in that institution than reinforcement of its dominant norms. By contrast, the younger women see themselves as professionals, persisting even when certain barriers (an unexpected pregnancy, a failure on the first police exam) appear in their way.

After having repeatedly heard how masculine Cissy was, I was eager to meet her. I was startled to find she was a short, plump woman with long, curly black hair. Though following department regulations would have meant pulling it up into a bun, she wore it loose down around her shoulders. It was the week before Halloween and she was wearing a pumpkin tie pin. Though regulation socks are dark blue, her socks had pumpkins on them. She looked like a police officer-cum-PTA mother. My surprise at the fact that she was perceived as masculine reflects some dominant gender ideologies that link the performance of femininity and masculinity to appearance. For police officers, however, it is interaction which is a more salient characteristic, in part because interactions are so carefully scrutinized by the public and by supervisors, but also because interactions shape the work environment for other officers. Cissy's enthusiasm for "acting crazy" leads to her being perceived as masculine, and is evidence that the crime control ideology is gendered as masculine, regardless of who embraces it. There was, however, a stronger negative connotation in labelling her as masculine than in labelling male officers as such. Other officers saw Cissy as an impatient, impetuous officer who did not treat people right. Indeed, she was being sued by one woman for an excessive use of force. Cissy frequently flew to calls, lights flashing and siren blaring (police officers call this "red-balling"), even when the calls were routine, and occasionally, as for a call that came in as "burglary-in-

progress", when it might have been better to approach a scene less obtrusively so as to catch the burglar. She didn't always wait for backup. When she arrived at one call that had come in as "violent domestic" she found a screen door that had been ripped apart. Though the officer backing her up told her to wait since he was only a block away, she entered the house anyway. When the other officer arrived, she was in a scuffle with the woman, from which she emerged with clumps of hair pulled out and badly ripped pants. Other officers shook their heads, saying that when she arrived at a scene and saw signs that it was already violent, she should have waited for her backup, especially since it was so close. More than any of the other officers I rode with, Cissy's image of the kind of police officer she was differed from my observations and from the perceptions of other officers. Cissy repeatedly painted herself as an active officer who was interested in helping people, and who had a knack for establishing rapport with the public. She describes the reaction of people in a racially-mixed, lower-to-middle income neighborhood to her and her female partner.

[I]t was funny cause they would see two females come down in the car and it was like, "We're not afraid of you" so you kinda had to get real hard-nosed with them at first, but it was funny cause after you like really got out of the car and you show them this is the way it's gonna be, they kinda like you. You got a rapport going with them, where when they would see your car, they would just leave. We have worked out such a good rapport with those people down there. I've NEVER had no problems. Those other officers they go down there and they give them a real hard time....I had one problem and after that. "I'm not moving, you're not nothing." I'm like, "Oh yeah. We're something. Let's go." And we were out of the car. And it was like, " **Those girls are CRA:zy** . They'll actually make you move." [PO 11A, white female, mid-30s, 2 years on the job]

In the literature on language and gender, seeking rapport has been largely associated with women's talk. Tannen (1990: 77) defines rapport-talk as a way of establishing connections and negotiating relations in which emphasis is placed on displaying similarities and matching experiences. She contrasts this with report-talk, in which she maintains many men display knowledge or skills as a way to preserve independence and status in a hierarchical social order. Cissy's definition of rapport is much more like Tannen's definition of report-talk. For her, rapport seems to be understood as everyone recognizing her right and ability to use verbal and physical force, and fearing that possibility.

The extent to which women officers are licensed to use physical force and tough talk is at least partly linked to the class and ethnic persona they present, and to stereotypes about White and Black femininity in the U.S. Though Cissy was labelled as masculine by other officers partly as a sanction for being too angry, for "not treating people right" and using "too much" profanity, a young Black woman (Ayanna) who was seen as ready, willing, and able to use force did not receive similar sanctions. Ayanna was one of the few young female police officers who received the accolade of "knows her way around out there" from older White male officers. She was in her mid-20s and had been on the force for 2 years. She was a slight African-American woman (weighing about 100 pounds, she confessed, and trying to gain more), with tightly cropped hair. Though many smaller women were ignored or babied by male officers, Ayanna was, at the time I rode with her, being actively recruited by the City's prestigious (or notorious, depending upon your perspective) Drug Task Force which at the time of my fieldwork had no female officers. She grew up in an area of the city now known for its drive-by shootings and other drug-related violence. She tells stories about fights with relish.

We had to chase this guy...when I first came on. We had to chase him cause they were going on a drug bust.... and they wanted him and Jimmy Baker, was a big thing on the news right....We got a tip right, we had to chase these boys, they were supposed to be armed....We really didn't know if they were armed or not. Police officers been chasing them for months and they been lying to them, blowing them off, me and my partner caught these guys....When I finally caught them I had these fake nails on. I used to go and get my nails done every week. Broke my nail. Fifty dollars. When I seen he broke my nail, I **freaked**. I said, "You broke my nail!" **pounded** him in his head, **acting like I was crazy**. "I can't believe you broke my nail!" I'm **tripping** over my nail right. I'm still huffing and puffing from the run. Was fun. We had a great time that day. [PO 58A, black female, early 20s, 2 years on the job]

In a curious reversal of feminine stereotypes, here a broken fingernail does not reduce a woman to ineffectiveness, but rather leads to the use of physical force. Though a fake fingernail is a symbol of femininity, perhaps especially a symbol of a certain kind of Black femininity, her physical reaction is precisely that of other officers who are spat upon, or punched, or whose authority is questioned in any way. Like the male officers above, she describes her actions as a masquerade ("*acting like I was crazy*"). Again verbs mark a sudden change of state ("*was tripping*", "*freaked*", "*pounded*").

Ayanna also invoked the necessity for "acting crazy" on another, rather different call. She was on her way to a call that had been described by the dispatcher as "complainant says her boyfriend's on the way over to her house and she expects trouble." As Ayanna drove to the largely White working-class area she said that this was an area where people were known for fighting police officers, and for their dislike of Black officers. She described the strategy she would try to adopt to handle the call (*First I'll try to start off nice*), but points out that sometimes "you gotta act crazy."

The centrality that the use of force has in Ayanna's constructions of her policing persona is evident when I ask her for an example of a situation that she had defused by using talk. She told me a brief story about a mother-daughter fight that she settled by coaxing them to talk: "I told them 'You gonna talk to me. Tell me what's wrong.'" She does not permit this story to stand alone, though; she quickly follows with this story.

A lot of situations though, I can't really use talk. One situation, it didn't work, this guy had a knife, he'd already cut his wrist, and X called me and Drew to hold onto the ankles. He was standing with his knife like you know, "You pigs come on. I'm gonna kill you or you gonna kill me." At first Drew pulled his gun on him and I said, "Drew don't shoot" and we all started walking towards him and tried to talk to him, tried everything talking to this guy, it didn't work. He was swinging at my partner, my partner was like running backwards and tripped and he came down and I had my gun out to shoot him cause he was intoxicated and my partner kicked it out, we talked to him for a while, X knocked the knife out of his hand, and we all just charged him, he would have stabbed him, if it hadn't been for my partner kicking the knife out of his hand. I couldn't shoot him, I would have been justified, but I'd have shot my partner. [PO 57B, black female, early 20s, 2? years on the job]

My questions already had a story evaluation (Labov 1972) embedded in it, one which presupposed the value of talk in settling conflict. By telling this second story, one in which she points out that there are a lot of situations which she can't use talk to defuse and in which she describes a defensible use of force, she resists my imposition of a point-of-view upon her.

It is clear that women, too, can embrace a crime control ideology, and that younger women in particular are likely to do so. They are not trying to establish a distinctively

feminine or womanly style of policing as a way of creating space for themselves in this predominantly masculine workplace (as women did at the turn of the century, when they saw policing as an extension of social work - see Appier 1998). Instead, these younger women choose to assimilate to, and reinscribe the power of, the dominant ideology of how to act, and interact, as a police officer, in ways that end up allying them with certain male officers, and against older female officers who often adopt a more critical stance towards the crime control model. They thus distance themselves from the problems faced by the older female officers, many of whom are still on the job, understanding them as difficulties faced by particular individuals rather than challenges linked to breaking down the barriers to women working on this job. Measures such as affirmative action are seen as less necessary with such an approach. Young women may therefore overestimate the extent to which simply being a "good" police officer allows them to succeed on the job, and the ways that their presence on the job was and is linked to certain institutional measures (like affirmative action). Their views do not allow them to see the ways that gender remains linked to the definition of what being a good police officer is, albeit in a less marked way than when women were seen as incapable of becoming police officers.

8. Conclusions

Researchers in language and gender have recently called for shifting our research focus from what gender differences are (a question which assumes and essentializes gender difference) to asking what difference gender makes. One strategy proposed for doing this is drawing on the notion of gender performativity to consider how people use linguistic resources to produce gender differentiation, and to better understand how gender is repeatedly and publicly displayed and constructed in accordance with certain cultural norms (Cameron 1997: 49). Using ideology as an analytic concept in studies of language and gender allows us to build on such insights about gender, while it offers a more precise tool for figuring out what is at stake when people embrace certain gendered ideologies. To study ideology, defined as the specification of how ideas and beliefs promote the interests of socially significant groups, is more specific than the study of "cultural norms", and allows more attentiveness to variation within a "culture", as well as contestation between and hierarchies among different gendered ideologies (see Comaroff and Comaroff 1991, 1992; Philips 1998, and Woolard 1998 on the relationship between culture and ideology). It forces us to ask what's at stake in certain gender formations, who and what benefits. Many men and some women embrace the crime fighter model of policing because of the ways that it automatically allows them to be seen as professional police officers. Officers who embrace an alternative risk being seen not as resistant, but as incompetent. Understanding what's at stake in embracing one model of policing or another, and all that each implies for interaction, leads us towards historical analysis of the development of institutional and interactional norms, as well as richer ethnographic understandings of how individuals embrace certain speech styles (for instance, it is significant that many of the women who embrace this ideology come from policing families). It also leads us to ask why other officers (men and women alike) choose to critique it, as well as to consider which critiques might be most successful, and what criteria are used to evaluate what constitutes a "successful" challenge to dominant norms. It does not ask us to assume that

men and women are different; rather it asks to consider what advantages and disadvantages accrue to men and women embracing different interactional ideologies, which in turn are associated with different understandings of gendered institutional norms. To add ideology to the study of language and gender is to add the study of history, require the further development of ethnographic methods, and enhance the nuanced study of power.

The wide distribution of the ideology of police officer as crime fighter among Pittsburgh police officers is partial evidence for its dominant status among Pittsburgh police officers. Police officers who espouse it may be White or Black, men or women. Some have college educations and others have high school educations, some are veterans and some are not, some are rookies and some have been on the force for close to fifteen years. Among those who espouse the ideology there is, perhaps, an unusually high cluster of people who come from policing families, that is, people whose fathers or stepfathers, husbands or wives are also police officers. A siege mentality may be particularly common in this group. And yet the crime fighter ideology remains associated with a certain kind of masculinity, irrespective of the people who hold it. This makes it difficult for women, and men who have not traditionally been police officers, to be perceived as competent, and thus gives them a tenuous foothold within the job. As affirmative action hiring plans have been rolled back or challenged in police departments in recent years, hirings of women and (to a lesser extent) minority men have immediately dropped because they still are not seen as fully capable of doing the job (McElhinny 2003). As Gal points out

societal institutions are not neutral contexts for talk. They are organized to define, demonstrate and enforce the legitimacy and authority of linguistic strategies used by one gender - or men of one class or ethnic group - while denying the powers of others. Forms that diverge are devalued by the dominant ideologies (1991: 188).

Thus those who challenge the dominant ideology may not be judged as policing effectively. Rather than "acting crazy" some officers focus on constructing another affect-laden persona, that of the rational, calm, cool bureaucrat. These officers produce detailed, even impassioned accounts of the importance of writing, rather than fighting (McElhinny 1995, 2003). Officers who orient towards this way of thinking about policing tend to be women (especially older women), or Black men, or White men with college educations. These officers may be portrayed by others as unwilling or unable to do "real" police work. Still, those who fall in with dominant norms may not be seen as effective police officers either. Recent redefinitions of policing as community policing, or "social workers with combat boots" which offer a significant challenge to the crime-fighter ideology may create more permanent niches for women and minority men in policing. In Pittsburgh, however, community policing has not been embraced in Pittsburgh by either administrators or police officers.

These narratives about police officer violence tend to work to legitimate it as justified violence, necessary violence, legal violence. Yet the tough attitude displayed here shares important similarities with the tough attitudes displayed by dealers (see Bourgois 1996), prisoners (O'Connor 1997) and even by politicians who strike a "get-tough-on-crime-pose" (see Briggs 1997a). The full significance of these American discursive patterns, ideologies and attitudes will be revealed once sociolinguists have done more comparative research investigating police officer actions and stories in other locales. Developing this comparative portrait will require a careful consideration of the roles that

guns, violence and other kinds of (para)military training play in legal codes and legal institutions. It does not seem inconsequential for understanding the particular stances towards violence expressed here, for instance, that veterans of the U.S. military receive preference in hiring as police officers (McElhinny 2000), any more than it seems accidental that many convicted U.S. mass killers also received significant training in legitimized violence in the course of U.S. military service. The particular militaristic stance adopted by the U.S. and other imperial powers has been shown to have ramifications for aspects of social design like sport (Kanitkar 1994) and suburban design (Gillham 2002) much farther removed from legitimized state violence than policing. Nonetheless, as these complex connections are slowly investigated, it remains important to attend to some of the significant differences one can find in the elaboration of a tough attitude in the U.S., even amongst police officers and those they regularly interact with. O'Connor's (1997) investigation of narratives told by male prisoners in an maximum security prison notes that acts of violence within the prison were often explicitly justified and explained in terms of gender: "You gotta be a man or a girl." Being violent, protecting one's space, reacting with bravery in the face of violence, being dangerous and heterosexual were seen as manly, while being a victim, a coward or a passive sexual partner were seen as feminine. In the narratives she analyzed, agency was far from de-emphasized; indeed, in terms of both content and form, the narratives seem to exaggerate the narrator's agency in controlling any given altercation. Violence was not deplored, indeed it was portrayed as necessary for survival in prison; it was a matter of self-defense, even when one initiated it. The absence of any explicit mention of gender in police officer's justifications of their own violence, as well as their own frequent displacement of agency is markedly different.

The discursive strategies which accompany these officers' descriptions of and justifications for their use of force focus on the ways they elicit respect and fear by acting crazy, and by acting in abrupt and unpredictable ways. These narrators also (with attentiveness to public perceptions of the use of force) often de-emphasize their own role as agents of the law. This denial of agency may be one of the defining features of legal and medical institutional talk in many settings, and one of the key ways that authority and power not only justified but disguised (see also Briggs 1997b).

Many of these officers' stories about the use of force are accompanied by sheer fear about the potential crumbling of their police power. By emphasizing the danger they face "out here", they justify the use of force in self-defense. Other working class jobs - mining, construction, agriculture - are, in fact, more dangerous than police work but police officers' constant sense of fear distinguishes them from these workers (Reuss-Ianni 1983: 19-20). Still, these officers are careful to distinguish themselves from rogue officers. Certain officers, often portrayed as male and older, are seen as "going off", or "blowing their tops" that is, breaking out into unexpected rages that they are not in control of. Though the suddenness of their anger is similar to "acting crazy", other officers distinguish their actions by suggesting that some of these older male officers ARE crazy, rather than ACTING crazy. By contrast, officers who "act crazy" see themselves as conscious of and in control of their actions. Indeed, the critiques of Cissy arise partly because she is seen as truly out of control, vs. acting out of control. The discourse on fear here shares with studies of colonial violence, where talk about fear of the dominated was used to justify suppression, as well as a way of bargaining with other elites for resources and support needed to face down the purported threat (see Stoler 1985; Taussig 1987; as well as Abu-Lughod and

Lutz's discussion (1990: 14)).

The distinctive features of narratives grant them a special role in any analysis of ideology. Few scholars any longer argue for a realist, or mimetic, stance which assumes that narratives simply capture or reproduce experience. The distinction between the formlessness of experience and the structure of discourse is embedded in the conventional distinction between *story*, defined as a sequence of events which a narrative is about and *narrative*, defined as the actual discourse that recounts events. Ethnographers of communication argue instead that actions do not precede stories, but rather stories precede and help us make action coherent.¹⁷ In this view, police officers tell stories which conjure a world full of menace and darkness, jeering voices and crazed actors where police officers are constantly threatened, and therefore frequently licensed to use physical force. Within this narrative frame, they, too, must act crazy, in ways understood as self-defense. The constant reiteration of these narratives shapes the world police officers see, and thus the actions they take. It is in this way that they become the stories that they tell. Narratives are distinguished here from prayers or accounts or lists or philosophical treatises because of the distinctive ways in which they evoke experience for both tellers and audiences.¹⁸

Finally, recent scholarship has challenged the distinction between institutional and ordinary talk that has been elaborated in some studies of conversation (cf. Drew and Heritage 1992) as itself ideological. Gaudio (to appear) and McElhinny (1997) notes that the assumption of the distinction does not allow one to explore the culture and political economic conditions underlying the elaboration of such distinctions, or the ways that the privilege of insisting on such a distinction (like that of insisting on the distinction between

¹⁷ Mattingly (1998) cites the work of Richard Baumann as exemplary in elaborating one anti-mimetic approach that she calls the "performative" approach (33). She argues that despite many marked differences between structuralist and performance-centered approaches to the analysis of narrative (indeed, in many ways performance approaches challenge dichotomies upon which structuralist accounts are predicted), they both share an indifference to the relational meanings of narratives, since structural accounts see the meaning lying in some deeper layer of meaning which one can get at by analysing relations among elements while performance theorists believe the meaning of the narrative lies in what the narrative does, in the event of narration, rather than what it says. Though Mattingly has identified something important about the continuing legacy of much of linguistic anthropology to structuralism (see also McElhinny 2003), she oversimplifies the ways that linguistic anthropology approaches the study of narrative. See, e.g. the work of Capps and Ochs 1995.

¹⁸ Mattingly (1998) argues there may be problems with the argument that it is narrative which transforms and shapes experience. She suggests that the claims made on the behalf of narrative imply that experience, if it exists at all, is (a) formless and fragmented and (b) derivative or prior discourse, a simple enactment of pre-given stories. This is, she believes, an inaccurate characterization of experience. "If lived experience is treated as more structurally complex than brute chronology - one thing just happening to come after another - "she argues, "then this necessarily lessens and muddies the division between the two" (1988: 44). Mattingly argues that narrative imitates experience because experience already has in it the seeds of narrative: "Life is not experienced as one thing after another because actors work to create a story-like quality to their actions" (47). Such a view diminishes the significance of narrative analysis. It suggests the need for an account of meaning that acknowledge the powerful role of discourse, including narrative, in shaping meaning, but also attends to non-linguistic action. It also however suggests, as linguistic anthropologists long have, that one should not privilege narratives as a discursive genre, but instead look also at the shapes of other kinds of interactions, including institutional and conversational exchanges. In this way, Mattingly's views may be less distinct from the ethnography of communication than she claims.

public and private spheres, and on spheres in which the state may not exert its influence) can be linked to one's position in society. Privileging and idealizing "ordinary" conversation has led to the neglect of certain kinds of data thereby construed as extraordinary, especially acts of conflict and violence and institutionalised inequalities (see Briggs 1997a: 453, Briggs 1997b: 523). The study of conversation has been justified as the investigation of the primary site at which social order is regularly produced. Nonetheless, there have been a number of recent challenges to these functionalist approaches to speech and social action which suggest that disorderly talk may be just as common, and that any approach which privileges order is best understood as rooted in ideologies of language rather than language itself (see Briggs 1997a for a rich overview).

Perhaps what is most striking about the worldview of police officers is precisely the ways in which they assume that social interactions are built around conflict and mayhem. They repeatedly insist that the world is violent and that no one is trustworthy. Though some may lament the loss of innocence and trust that comes with repeatedly dealing with perpetrators and victims of domestic violence, aggravated assault, suicide, homicide, most police officers were convinced that the dark, Hobbesian view of human nature which this led them to have was much more accurate than the blinkered and rosier view of others. The stories they tell about instances in which they use physical force, and the justifications which they offer for it, are built around this linguistic and social ideology. For them, instances of lying, conflict and violence are not extraordinary, but ordinary, everyday occurrences. Indeed, for many of police officers, these defined humanity.

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