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Canada

The Appearance of shared meanings: Ambiguity

and humour in police communication

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A Thesis

in The

Department of Communication Studies

of The Joint Ph.D. in Communication

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ABSTRACT

The Appearance of shared meanings: Ambiguity and humour in police communication

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In contrast to accepted notions regarding the necessity of shared meanings for effective organizing, the basic premise of this paper is that organizational meanings are not shared as such but rather overlap to varying degrees, while they are used by organizational members as if shared. That is, following Weick (1979) it is argued that it is only necessary for organizational meanings to overlap among members to the degree that sense can be made and organization enacted. Secondly, it is argued in this paper that organizational activity is enacted despite, or more likely because of, the partially shared or overlapped nature of communication meanings. That is, because of the inherent ambiguity in symbolic language forms such as humour and metaphor, organizational members communicate as if they share meanings and thus enact their organization on the basis of the appearance of shared meanings. Finally, it is argued that the sense of community that results from shared activity and the appearance of shared meanings is more important to the process of group development than whether meanings are, in fact, shared.

To test this argument, the ethnographic research presented in this dissertation focused on the communicative behaviours of the members of a temporary organization: a group of candidates — senior police executives — on a six week Executive Development Course at the Canadian Police College in Ottawa. Through observation of behaviour and conversation, survey questionnaires, sociometric analysis and semi-structured interviews, the meanings for organizational symbols (humour and metaphor) were identified. Then,

individual members' interpretations of these symbols, and the implicit social rules influencing them, were identified and analyzed for comparison and contrast.

The findings demonstrate that organizational activity was enacted under conditions of limited overlap of meanings. Furthermore, the data show that meanings themselves were not shared completely, but that a complex set of implicit rules regarding the meanings was shared. As well, importantly, a pattern of putdown humour was found, wherein subjects moved from putting themselves down, to putting down their shared occupation and other people, to finally putting each other down. Related to this pattern of putdown humour was a set of implicit social rules regarding putdown behaviour which appeared to be shared by the candidates. Finally, it is clear from the data that the sense of community that was created through the appearance of sharedness was of greater interest and import than whether the actual meanings were shared.

This dissertation thus focused specifically on the meanings held by organizational members, and, unlike any previous work, uncovers a number of layers of meaning and sharedness.

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CHAPTER 1:   INTRODUCTION

Increasingly, organizational communication theorists are turning to new directions for social research. One such direction is the interpretivist perspective, which assumes that organizations are systems of socially constructed meanings (Putnam, 1983). That is, though they are often housed in a concrete structure of walls and floors, and though they may appear to be tangible objects because they have a name and a logo and are referred to as such, organizations are nothing more than swirling masses of meanings and symbols constructed through and sustained by the communication of the members of the organization and the communities with which they interact. In referring to culture, Geertz (1973) takes a semiotic approach:

> believing... that man is an animal suspended in webs that he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning (Geertz, 1973, 5).

Organizations, I propose, can be viewed in the same sense, as symbolic constructions created by people, within which they interact. And furthermore, like Geertz (1973), I use an interpretive approach to gain insight and understanding of the meanings, and place as central the meanings and interpretations held by the members of organizations. This definition of organization is broad enough in scope to include couplings of two people to corporations of hundreds, if it is assumed that the group — whether of two or two hundred — is constantly enacted as systems of symbols by the communication of the members.

Weick (1979) has argued that organizations are not static entities but are in process — constantly being created and recreated by the communication of the members. Central to Weick's position is the notion that organizations are actively constructed by humans who do not merely react to environmental changes and

pressures, but who enact their organization through the creation of meanings. As Weick (1969) explains:

> Rather than talking about adapting to an external environment, it may be more correct to argue that organizing consists of adapting to an enacted environment, an environment which is constituted by the actions of interdependent human actors (Weick, 1969, 27).

Central to Weick's (1969; 1979) approach is the notion of "interlocked behaviours" which he defines as "the raw material that supplies the stable element" for organizing (Weick, 1979, 3). Interlocked behaviours are the actions performed in concert — or which are contingent on other members' behaviours — through which organizing occurs.

Thus, Weick's (1969; 1979) approach is characterized by a view of organizations as socially constructed, or enacted, by the interlocked behaviours of the members, and in constant process. This approach is considered interpretivist because of its assumption that organizations are systems of "consensually validated grammars" (Weick, 1979) or, in other words, "agreements of what is real and what is illusory" (Weick, 1979, 3) which are constructed communicationally. That is, Weick (1979) argues that through their communication, people socially construct their understandings of the meanings for objects and events, and that these consensually validated grammars are in process.

Based on this interpretivist approach, this paper assumes that there are concrete objects in the world (such as things in nature and material objects created by people) but that the meanings attributed to these things, along with the meanings for all events, objects and words, have been constructed by people throughout time in their ongoing interactions. In other words, social meanings are flexible — despite their seeming "objective realness" — and are constantly

created and recreated through communication. The role of communication is critical in this process because reality, as social knowledge, does not lie in the minds of individuals, but in the collectivity, and thus must be generated and maintained through interaction (Gergen, 1982).

The school of thought on which the interpretivist perspective is founded is phenomenology, which is generally considered to be the study of everyday life, and more specifically, the study of "the structure of the commonsense world of everyday life" (Berger and Luckmann, 1966, 16). That is, phenomenology takes as central focus the commonsense knowledge that people use in their ongoing activities to organize their daily experiences in the social world (Wuthnow et al., 1984). Further, it is assumed in the phenomenological perspective that this commonsense knowledge is socially constructed in interaction, and once constructed is, "following Durkheim, [1950] a *reality sui generis* in that it possesses a thing-like quality, or the quality of objective facticity" (Wuthnow et al., 1984, 24).

Phenomenologists from Husserl and Heidegger through Schutz (1967) and Berger and Luckmann (1966) to theorists of the present day (cf. Weick, 1969, 1979; Hawes, 1977; Litton-Hawes, 1977; Carbaugh, 1985; 1986; Gray, Bougon, & Donnellon, 1985; Donnellon, Gray, & Bougon, 1986; Morgan, 1986; Czarniawska-Joerges, 1989; 1992) argue that communication is central to the process. Phenomenology has been defined, in fact, as the "study of being as it manifests itself in and through speaking" (Hawes, 1977, 31). Hawes (1977) bases this definition on the work of Heidegger (1959), a hermeneutic phenomenologist, who argued that:

> ... words and language are not the wrapping in which things are packed for the commerce of those who write and speak. It is in words and language that things first come into being and are (Heidegger, 1959, p.13).

In other words, reality, or what is, is a linguistic construction, and it is through studying communication, Hawes argues, that an ontological understanding — or an understanding of that which constitutes reality — may be had.

Thus, the current research will focus exclusively on the communication of a group of organizational members, and will attempt to identify and define the meanings of the members symbolic language forms. Furthermore, because it has been assumed by numerous theorists in the fields of communication, management and sociology (cf. Pfeffer, 1981; Louis, 1980; Schein, 1985; Bormann, 1983; Poole & McPhee, 1983; Van Maanen & Barley, 1984; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Deal & Kennedy, 1982) that organizations are systems of *shared meanings* — beliefs, values, symbols and so on — the question of sharedness will be addressed. That is, these theorists, and many others, make the assumption that organizational members share meanings for events, beliefs, symbols and other organizational entities yet rarely, if ever, has any theorist attempted to verify — through systematic study — the actual meanings held by the organizational members. Rather, the assumption of sharedness has simply been taken as an accepted premise. The current research focuses specifically on this question, argueing that meanings may be shared to certain degrees only, but that a *sense of sharedness* — and thus community — may nonetheless exist.

1.1 Problem:

Certainly organizational members must have enough overlap of meanings to be able to communicate — on the surface there must at least appear to be overlap of meaning — but at deeper levels more interesting differences may lie. Thus, the current research places as central the question of the degree to which organizational meanings overlap — or are interlocked — among organizational members. Specifically, the research will examine the degree to which members actually share meanings for symbols which they appear to share, at least

superficially. Symbols are defined, following Geertz (1980), as "anything that denotes, describes, represents or exemplifies, labels, indicates, evokes, depicts, expresses — anything that somehow or other signifies" (135). Thus, a symbol may be verbal or nonverbal, as long as it in some way communicates some meaning.

In the research the following questions were asked:

1. What are the symbolic communication mechanisms constructed and used by the group members?

2. What are the meanings that the individual group members ascribe to these symbols?

3. What are the explicit and implicit rules influencing the behaviour of the group members?

4. To what degree do meanings for the symbolic language forms overlap among the group members?

5. How much overlap of meanings is necessary for coordinated – or interlocked — behaviour to take place?

6. What is the process through which a group enacts a sense of community over a limited time period?

1.2 Purpose:

Given the traditional acceptance of a system of shared meanings as a definition for organization, the current study seeks to demonstrate that meanings for organizational symbols are overlapped only to a certain degree and at certain levels. Furthermore, to contest the commonly accepted notion that overlapping meanings are necessary for organizing, this study argues, firstly, that because of the ambiguity of symbolic language forms, differing interpretations are inevitable. Secondly, the study argues that even with only minimal overlap of meanings, coordinated activity occurs. As well, a systematic look at the rules and norms that influence group behaviour is undertaken, and the level of sharing of understandings about these rules is examined. This dissertation also examines the influence of these symbolic language forms on the enactment of community,

because this area of research appears to be relatively untouched, yet is of great importance to communication scholarship, which assumes the important influence of language on group interactions and development. Finally, the methodological approach offers different insights than those of Donnellon et al. (1986), because their study was limited to a laboratory controlled examination of decision-making behaviour.

1.3 Overview of the research

Using a variety of fieldwork, or naturalistic methods, I have identified the symbolic language forms in use by the police executives participating in a six week Executive Development Course at the Canadian Police College in Ottawa. Specifically, I have selected from my observations and interview and questionnaire data a number of the recurring metaphors, jokes and rules used by the candidates, and then probed more deeply into the candidates' individual meanings, or definitions. Then, I have determined the degree to which members' individual interpretations of these symbolic language forms are shared, or overlap. Finally, I have supported the notion that organized activity — organizational enactment — can and does occur with minimally overlapped meanings and interpretations, and that the shared activity and the appearance of shared meaning is more important to organizational enactment and group development than whether meanings are, in fact, shared. As well, I have demonstrated the process of community enactment, or the bonding process that a group undergoes communicationally.

The data were collected during a six week field study period. I attended, as a class participant would, every class session, syndicate group discussion, coffee and lunch break, and many evening activities over the six weeks of one of the Canadian Police College's Executive Development Courses. The site seemed to be particularly conducive to the research project, because the course

candidates arrived from across Canada (and one candidate from Bermuda) for the six week session, armed with a set of expectations and a certain shared background, but a collection of individuals who had, for the most part, never met before.

Because the candidates were all police executives and, except for one woman, all white men, it was likely that they all had experienced a similar background and thus had a common set of values, beliefs, and perspectives. I expected there to be more overlap of meanings with this group than there would be with groups made up of less similar members. However, over the six weeks I observed that although it frequently appeared that group members were in agreement on the meanings of events, jokes, metaphors, and so on, in private interviews I discovered that there were a number of interpretations, some conflicting, for each symbol. Despite these differences of interpretations and meanings, there was nonetheless strong agreement as to the rules and norms influencing group members' behaviour.

The methodological approach — observations combined with questionnaire and interview data — appears to offer the best of both the qualitative and the quantitative worlds. During the very intense observation period, I made extensive notes and developed a very thick and rich set of data. Based on these data, I was then able to prepare and interpret two questionnaires with much more insight and understanding than would have been possible without the hands-on observation period. The questionnaire data provided me with a set of responses which I would not have been privy to through observation alone.

The data gathered during the semi structured interviews also appeared to be more useful than they would have been without the observations for a number of reasons. For one thing, without the observation data I would have had little

material to discuss with the candidates. That is, the contents of the semi-structured interviews were based entirely on my observations, and most of my questions were started with the phrase: "Do you remember when...?" Thus, if I had not spent the time observing, asking questions, and participating in the jokes and conversations, I would have been unable to come up with any interview material.

As well, the level of trust I had established through my intense period of observation — my constant presence, participation in jokes, and obvious non-alignment with the College staff — enabled me to probe more deeply with many of the candidates than would have been possible without this trust-building period.

1.4 Outline of the dissertation

Chapter One of this dissertation provides a framework for the study by mapping out the founding assumptions. Then, the problem is outlined, describing the research as an attempt to identify and define the meanings held by the members of a group for the symbolic language forms that they constructed and used throughout their six week training course. The goal was to compare and contrast the individual members' meanings to look for similarities and differences, in order to determine the degree of overlap that existed between members.

Chapter Two is a literature review of the relevant communication research in the area of shared meanings and symbols. A discussion of Weick's (1979) Means Convergence Model is included to provide theoretical support for the notion that group members may interlock their behaviours and thus enact their organization while maintaining little overlap of meanings. The impact of ambiguity on organizational meanings, and the role that it plays in creating the appearance of sharedness is also discussed. Finally, the main argument of the dissertation is presented, that the sense of community which is created through

the apparently shared meanings is more necessary to the group development process than whether the meanings are, in fact, shared.

Chapter Three is a review of the literature on two ambiguous symbolic language forms, humour and metaphors, and implicit social rules which influence the construction and use of these communication mechanisms. This examination also contains a discussion of the existence of multiple meaning systems.

Chapter Four is a literature review of the research on policing. Because of the idiosyncratic nature of policing and police officers, it was deemed important to provide a thorough analysis of the work done in this area in order to better understand the subjects in the current study. Because the subjects were a group of police executives, it was expected that there would be particular cultural influences which would have to be considered.

Chapter Five provides a complete description of the Canadian Police College by examining its history, its mandate, its staffing, and so on. Then, more specifically, the chapter gives an overview of the Executive Development Unit, where the research was actually conducted. Curriculum, staff, candidate selection, and evaluation are discussed.

Chapter Six describes and justifies the methodological approach to the research, namely ethnographic fieldwork, in the form of an intensive field study during a six week Executive Development training course. As well, the questionnaires, sociometric analysis and semi-structured interview methods used in the study are discussed, along with an analysis of the impact of the temporary nature of the group. Finally, methodological concerns, including a discussion of private and public selves and my role and influence as researcher are presented.

Chapter Seven presents the general findings, in order to familiarize the reader with the constraints, influences and problems associated with the research, as well as to describe the enacted culture. Specifically, the first section examines

the impact of the course coordinators, the second is a discussion of the development of the group and the candidates themselves, the third is an analysis of critical incidents which influenced both the group's development and the research findings, and the final section is an examination of the results of the sociometric analysis.

Chapter Eight examines and analyzes the research findings in terms of the evolution of humour patterns throughout the six week course. Then, the candidates' interpretations and understandings of the humour, based on observations and the interview data, are discussed and compared. Finally, the implicit social rules constructed and used by the candidates to influence and control their humour are discussed. The overlap of meaning regarding these rules is thoroughly discussed.

In Chapter Nine an analysis of a sample of the metaphors which were constructed and used throughout the course by the group members is presented. The candidates' interpretations of these metaphors, based on observations and the interview data, are discussed and compared.

Chapter Ten is a discussion of these findings, providing an analysis of them in terms of the question of shared meanings. The conclusion is that there was frequently little overlap of meanings, but that nonetheless candidates communicated and interacted without any perceived difficulty. As for the implicit rules, it was clear that these were more shared than either humour or metaphor, and thus it was concluded that they are a communication mechanism which must have greater overlap, in large part because the failure to understand and correctly interpret the rules results in obvious breaches of appropriate behaviour.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW: SHARED MEANINGS VERSUS SHARED ACTION

This chapter is a review of the two opposing viewpoints in the shared meanings argument, or more specifically, those who argue that shared meanings are necessary for organizing, and those who argue for the importance of shared action. This chapter first examines the work of theorists who argue that organizations are systems of meanings which are shared by the organizational members, and that these shared meanings are critical to organizational enactment. Then, the opposing view will be presented, which proposes that members only share meanings at certain levels, if at all, and that shared activity is more important to organizational enactment than shared meanings, but that the appearance of shared meanings is nonetheless crucial to the process. Weick's (1979) Means Convergence Model is included in this section, in order to present it as the theoretical foundation for the study.

This chapter lays the groundwork for the research, by demonstrating that a significant lack of communication research has been conducted in the area of shared meanings and organizational enactment, and by highlighting the conflicting viewpoints of shared meanings and shared actions. This study will take the perspective that shared actions are more necessary to organizational enactment, and that it is *the appearance of shared meanings*, created through the use of ambiguous symbolic language forms, which enables enactment to take place despite a lack of shared meanings.

2.1 Shared meanings perspectives

In contrast to the perspective on which this research is based, some theorists explicitly focus on the role of communication in the process of reality construction and argue that communication not only creates meanings, but that through communication organizational members come to share a common reality,

or more specifically, develop a system of shared meanings. In other words, these theorists assume that "a primary function of communication in organizations is to facilitate the development of shared meanings, values and beliefs" (Eisenberg, 1986, 90). This focus on shared meanings is applied by a number of researchers using a variety of labels such as: shared interpretations or reality (Pfeffer, 1981; Louis, 1980; Schein, 1985), symbolic convergence (Bormann, 1983), coorientation (Poole & McPhee, 1983), shared culture (Van Maanen & Barley, 1984), and "strong" cultures (Peters & Waterman, 1982; Deal & Kennedy, 1982).

From a functionalist perspective, Pfeffer (1981) views organizations as:

> ... systems of shared meanings and beliefs, in which a critical administrative activity involves the construction and maintenance of belief systems which assure continued compliance, commitment, and positive affect on the part of participants ... (Pfeffer, 1981, 1).

Thus, Pfeffer (1891) argues that not only are organizations "systems of shared meanings ... in which there exists a shared consensus concerning the social construction of reality" (Pfeffer, 1981, 9), but he also proposes that management plays a key role in creating this consensus.

Like Pfeffer (1981), Schein (1985) sees organizational culture as the "basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of an organization, that operate unconsciously, and that define in a basic, taken-for-granted fashion an organization's view of itself and its environment (6). Further, Schein argues that it is the role of leaders in organizations to manage and guide meanings, leading members to embrace, and thus share, the set of meanings that are most conducive to the achievement of the organizational goals.

In another example of the emphasis on organizations as shared meanings, Bormann's (1983) symbolic convergence theory assumes that when organizational members communicate they enact and share stories. He argues further that communication creates a sense of camaraderie and also facilitates

decision making and the achievement of other organizational goals (Bormann, 1983). Convergence, according to Bormann, occurs when "two or more private symbolic worlds incline toward each other, come more closely together, or even overlap during certain processes of communication" (Bormann, 1983, 102). In elaborating his notion of fantasy themes, Bormann stresses the importance of shared attitudes and emotions, or symbolic convergence:

> When members of an organization share a fantasy, they have jointly experienced the same emotions; they have developed the same attitudes and emotional responses to the personae of the drama; and they have interpreted some aspect of the experience in the same way (Bormann, 1983, 104).

Bormann thus assumes that it is possible, and desirable, for organizational members to not only share understandings of events and objects, but to also share the very emotions associated with these stimuli.

Coorientation, as developed by Scheff (1967), refers to the levels of agreement (the degree to which organizational members share beliefs) and accuracy (how well organizational members predict each other's beliefs and attitudes) that organizational members have (cited in Poole and McPhee, 1983). According to Poole and McPhee (1983), "the theory of coorientation was developed to study the knowledge and assumptions needed for social interaction, and, in a larger sense, how people create social realities that extend beyond and bridge their own perspectives" (205). Specifically, coorientation is designed to measure the attitudes and beliefs of organizational members, as well as their perceptions of the attitudes and beliefs of other members. Poole and McPhee argue that the study of coorientation offers organizational researchers a means to identify "qualitatively different organizational climates" (Poole & McPhee, 1983, 205).

Though Van Maanen and Barley (1985) argue that organizations are multicultural, and that the different occupational groups within a certain organization will have different understandings and values, they nonetheless assume that because group members can converse using a set of shared symbols (words), they share the culture. Specifically, Van Maanen and Barley argue that

Any outsider who observes naturally occurring conversation among self-defined members of an occupational community would quickly discover that members who have not previously met and who are of different ages, geographic regions, sexes, ethnic origins, or educational backgrounds are able to converse over a wide range of topics indecipherable to outsiders. Such is a manifestation of a shared culture (Van Maanen & Barley, 1984, 32).

Thus, the assumption is made that because people agree on acceptable word choices for a comprehendible and meaningful conversation, they share understandings and interpretations. However, it is not clear whether people do, in fact, share interpretations, or whether they merely share symbols. That is, Van Maanen and Barley (1984) assume, as do many other communication theorists, that because people share words, it follows that they share the meanings of those words. And this notion has not been tested.

Peters and Waterman (1982) argue that organizational culture is a system of shared values constructed through the communication of the members and that excellent organizations are characterized by tightly shared values, beliefs, symbols and meanings and that these constitute a "strong culture." The stronger (or more cohesive) the culture, Peters and Waterman argue, the better, or more successful the organization. In fact, they propose that "excellent companies are marked by very strong cultures, so strong that you either buy into their norms or get out" (Peters & Waterman, 1982, 77). In other words, Peters and Waterman (1982) propose both that managers develop and promote a set of shared values and

meanings, and that excellent organizations are characterized by these highly shared meaning systems.

Peters and Waterman (1982) also emphasize the role of organizational leaders in leading members toward a particular reality. They call this process "transformational leadership" and argue that transformational leaders envision a set of values and guide members to embrace it. This approach epitomizes the manipulative strategies employed by many modern managers hoping to control "corporate culture" in order to increase productivity. Interestingly, however, Eisenberg (1986) has suggested that these efforts to create shared values "tend to be "top-down" and entail the construction of myths and stories by top management to manipulate employees" (Eisenberg, 1986, 91).

Certainly Peters and Waterman's (1982) strategy allows managers to determine the most productive culture they can and then impose it on the staff. Then, to ensure that the culture will thrive, staff can be hired if they appear compatible with and willing to support the culture, and fired if they cannot or will not embrace it (or at least appear to embrace it).

Similarly, Deal and Kennedy (1982) assert that the stronger the culture, the more effective the organizational performance is likely to be, and emphasize the importance of a well defined set of shared values and beliefs. They argue, further, that a strong culture depends on the development of four key cultural attributes: Values, heroes, rites and rituals, and communication networks (Deal & Kennedy, 1982). If management is able to lead organizational members to embrace these four attributes, then a strong culture will be had, and the strong culture, they argue, will result in business success.

The common thread linking these and other researchers (cf. Van Maanen, 1979; Ranson, Hinings, & Greenwood, 1980) is the assumption that organizations are systems of shared meanings that are constructed through the communication

of the members. However, few, if any of these researchers appear to question this taken-for-granted assumption of sharedness. That is, these theorists use the construct of "shared meanings" but do not, for the most part, define the degree to which the meanings are actually shared. To further the study of organizational communication, therefore, it seems imperative to focus analysis on such a central concept.

Furthermore, as was discussed earlier, many of these authors assume that sharedness of meanings is necessary for the effective operation of the organization. That is, it is frequently accepted by these theorists that the more closely organizational members share meanings, beliefs and value systems, the more effectively they will work together and the more productive the organization will be. This functionalist notion seems out of place in communication scholarship, since it tends to produce research which focuses very much on the interests of management — productivity, profit, efficiency, and so on.

It should be noted that althyough these theorists refer to the notion of shared meanings as if to imply that organizational meanings, symbols, beliefs and so on are shared isomorphically, it is unlikely that any of them would argue that complete sharing can exist. That is, as two people can share an apple without taking the exact same bite, meanings can be 'shared' without complete overlap. However, looseness of such a central concept cannot be accepted, particularly by communication scholars.

2.2 Shared action: The appearance of shared meanings

In contrast to the authors discussed so far, who see sharedness of meaning as central and necessary to organizational activity is another area of theorists. These researchers agree that communication is central to organization, but argue that organizations exist in conditions of frequently little similarity of interpretations and meanings. These theorists have suggested that under

conditions of partially shared meanings, or ambiguity (Eisenberg, 1984), or equivocality (Weick, 1979) organizational activities may be enacted. Specifically, these theorists have suggested, firstly, that complete sharing may be impossible (cf. Bochner, 1984; Krippendorf, 1985; Parks, 1982), and secondly, that complete sharing of interpretations is unnecessary for coordinated action to occur, or enactment to take place (Weick, 1979; Eisenberg, 1984; 1986; 1990; Gray et al., 1985; Donnellon et al., 1986; Czarniawska-Joerges, 1992).

Of these, the more radical is the idea that not only is complete sharing of interpretations impossible, but that coordinated action can occur under conditions of minimal sharing. That is, organizational members can hold "equifinal meanings" (Gray et al., 1985) which are the individual interpretations that members have when they "... agree on the actions to be taken but not necessarily on the reasons for taking the actions" (90) and thus interlock their behaviours, but not necessarily their interpretations, to enact these actions.

This questioning of "message fidelity and shared beliefs [as the taken-for-granted] hallmark of effective communication" (Eisenberg, 1986, 88) was raised by Eisenberg (1986) in a review essay of three communication books (Putnam & Pacanowsky, 1983; Pondy, Frost, Morgan & Dandridge, 1983; and Sproull & Larkey, 1984). He asserts that these three collections of essays on communication epitomize the growing interest throughout the discipline in meaning and interpretation as phenomena central to the field. One of the specific questions that Eisenberg (1986) asserts is addressed in the texts that he reviews is: "How important are shared interpretations in organizations" (Eisenberg, 1986, 88). Thus, the question is deemed legitimate by a number of authors, but despite the time that has elapsed since the publication of these texts and Eisenberg's review, the question of shared meanings has still received little attention.

However, some theorists have focused attention on this question, and these will be discussed in the following pages.

A key figure in the development of these ideas is Karl Weick (1969; 1979), and it is on his work that many other theorists have grounded their research. Weick bases some of his notions on the work of F.H. Allport (1962), who argued, in his "Concept of Collective Structure" (Allport, 1962), that "people converge first on issues of means rather than on issues of ends" (cited in Weick, 1979, 91). That is, people may come together to perform some action without necessarily agreeing on "some agreed-upon end" (Weick, 1979, 239), and thus without sharing the meanings of their activity. This idea contrasts with more traditional understandings of group development, which assume that group members agree at the outset on *goals* and then choose the means to achieve these goals.

Although Weick (1979) refers to *means* and *goals* in his model, these terms have been taken, for this research, to mean *actions* and *meanings*. Weick (1979) uses means and actions as synonyms, given that the means to achieve an end must be behaviours and actions. Weick (1979) also argues that implicit contracts for action, or "mutual equivalence structures" (100) "can be built without people knowing the motives of another person, without having to share goals, and it is not even necessary that people see the entire structure or know who their partners are" (100). Thus, the implication in Weick's (1979) model is that goals are the meanings in people, their personal motivations, their beliefs and values, and who they are.

2.3   Weick's Means Convergence Model

Weick suggests in his Means Convergence Model (1979) (See Figure 1 below) that "people agree to exchange means and to facilitate the accomplishment of one another's designs — whatever they may be — before they try to exchange ends and work toward some common goal" (Weick, 1979,

91). In other words, people work together — or interlock their activity --
without necessarily sharing common goals, because, not surprisingly, they have
diverse needs, interests and desires. However, once they have begun to work
together, shared goals may follow these interlocked activities (shared means).
This idea goes against the commonly accepted view of group development which
argues that group members agree on a goal and work together toward it. Instead,
Weick argues that groups "form among people who are pursuing *diverse ends*"
(Weick, 1979, 91. Italics in original) but that these people are nonetheless able to
coordinate — or interlock — their activity.

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DIVERSE GOALS  ------------>  SHARED MEANS
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      |                            |
      |                            \/
DIVERSE MEANS  <------------   SHARED GOALS
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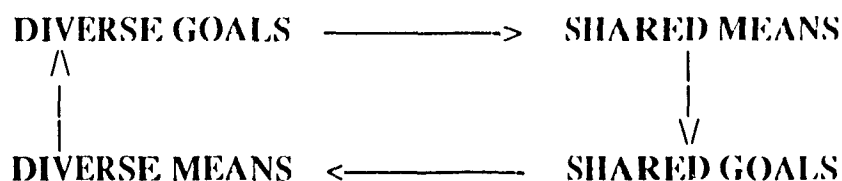
Figure 1: Means Convergence Model (Weick, 1979).

Weick's four stage model of group development proposes that the degree
to which behaviours are interlocked and meanings overlap varies throughout the
process of organizational enactment. The basic assumption of the model is that
people in groups have different interests, different values, and different personal
goals. Despite these differences, however, people are able to work together, or
share means, and even, at some point, come to share goals, if only temporarily.

The first stage of the model, then, is the notion that group members come
together around diverse goals: "they want to accomplish different things"
(Weick, 1979, 91). It makes sense that group members' reasons for being in the
group — their personal goals — are different, particularly at the outset. To
achieve their different goals, as a group, they must in some way combine their
efforts. In other words, "concerted, interlocked, actions are required" (Weick,

1979, 91) if a group of individuals with different interests and goals are to achieve, or enact (Weick, 1979) organizational activity.

In the second stage of Weick's Model, therefore, people converge on issues of means rather than on issues of ends. For organizational members to enact their organization, what is required is interlocked behaviours, without necessarily overt statements of *why* people are doing what they are doing, nor without behaviours being necessarily interlocked for the same reasons. As Weick argues, "individuals come together because each wants to perform *some* act and needs the other person to do certain things in order to make performance possible" (Weick, 1979, 91. Italics in original). Agreement by group members on the reasons for doing what they are doing, therefore, is not of critical importance for the activity to take place, or for organization to be enacted.

In the third stage of the model group members move toward common goals, because of, rather than prior to, shared means. Specifically, "common ends and shared meanings, rather than being prerequisites, may be the outcomes of organized action, as groups act first then retrospectively make sense of what they did together" (Donnellon et al., 1986, 43). That is, if in fact group members do share similar interpretations of why they are doing what they are doing, these may be the result of *shared actions*, which lead group members to interpret their actions similarly. Weick (1979) stresses, however, that the original diverse goals may still be held, but that they have been temporarily subordinated for the common goals.

Thus, shared goals, when they occur, may follow shared actions, or means. This move toward shared goals may be the result of the retrospective sensemaking that members engage in throughout the enactment process. As members reflect on their actions, they then can know why they did what they did. As Weick (1979) puts it:

> Actions occur for any of several reasons, and only when the actions are completed is it possible for a person to review them and know what decision was made or what intention was present (Weick, 1979, 92).

In other words, once members interlock their behaviours (through the shared means that they enact) then they may move toward common ends, or shared goals, perhaps because of their retrospective sensemaking behaviours (Weick, 1979). That is, as each member makes sense of his or her behaviour as a person interacting in a group, he or she may think: "We achieved this end as a result of our actions as a group, so therefore I must have had this result as my goal in the first place." This sensemaking process signals some of the research problems associated with asking group members, after a group task is completed, what their goals were when they started out.

The fourth phase of the Means Convergence Model then occurs, according to Weick. In this phase, common ends are followed by diverse means, as members differentiate — or move toward specialization and disintegration. This divergence may result from the division of labour implemented to aid task performance (Weick, 1979). That is, group members separate, to some degree, according to their areas of expertise and competence, to accomplish some aspect of the group project, they will be pursuing diverse means.

Finally, Weick proposes that "as means diversify, as persons act in more idiosyncratic ways, they begin to pursue different ends" (Weick, 1979, 94). Thus, the process has come full circle as group members working in an increasingly dissimilar manner begin to hold dissimilar interests, values and goals: "the group once again consists of members with *diverse ends*" (Weick, 1979, 94. Italics in original).

2.3.1 Applications of Weick's Means Convergence model

Though Weick's model has rarely been tested in research, even by Weick himself, many theorists do base their research on his ideas. For example, Donnellon, Gray and Bougon (1986) based their study of student groups

engaged in decision-making exercises on Weick's Model. These theorists propose that "the basis for shared action in the absence of shared meaning is a socially shared repertoire of communication mechanisms [that] may develop and sustain interpretations of group experience which, if not similar, at least allow members to coordinate their actions" (Donnellon et al., 1986, 43).

In their research, Donnellon et al (1986) found that without agreeing on the reasons for their decisions, group members nevertheless came to an agreement on an action to be taken. That is, "although members did indeed take a single action, there was at best only minimal similarity in their interpretations of the experience" (Donnellon, Gray and Bougon, 1986, 45).

To arrive at this conclusion, Donnellon et al. (1986) conducted a discourse analysis of a laboratory-controlled episode of communication. Their subjects (23 undergraduate students) participated in a simulation of an organizational decision-making meeting by attending 8-one hour discussion sessions which were videotaped by the researchers. Then, Donnellon et al. (1986) used the following five step discourse analysis technique to analyze the data: ethnographic description of the social context; "theoretical sampling of the full set of organizational communication episodes" (Donnellon et al., 1986, 46); transcription; semantic coding of the data; and linguistic analysis.

Their research identifies a number of communication mechanisms (including metaphors and other symbolic language) that enable group members to come to "equifinal meaning" (Donnellon et al., 1986). Equifinal meaning is defined as "interpretations that are dissimilar but that have similar behavioral implications" (Donnellon et al., 1986, 44). In other words "organization members may have different reasons for undertaking the action and different interpretations of the action's potential outcomes, but they nonetheless act in an

organized manner" (Donnellon et al., 1986, 44). In fact, it is on the basis of

equifinal meanings, these researchers argue, that coordinated action occurs at all:
> Often, for action to be taken, it is sufficient for meanings to be
> compatible in terms of action implications even though the actors
> do not share the same interpretations about what the action will
> accomplish (Gray et al., 1985, 84).

Thus, the importance of *shared meanings* is secondary, in this perspective, to the
importance of *shared action*

Furthermore, these theorists posit that though organizational members do
share meanings, these sharings occur to varying degrees. That is:

> ...meanings held by organizational members may be ordered along a
> continuum which varies according to the degree of coincidence
> these meanings have among the members of the organization (Gray
> et al., 1985, 83).

As well, this degree of coincidence, or sharing, is in constant flux, because it is
through the ongoing communication of the members that the meanings are
constructed. Thus, based on the work of Weick (1969; 1979), Gray et al. (1985)
argue that "organizations are dynamic processes, 'organizings,' rather than static
structures" (Gray et al., 1985, 83). Of relevance to the present study is Donnellon
et al.'s (1986) founding principle, that shared action, regardless of the meanings
that the group members attribute to the action, is critical to the enactment of
organization.

2.4 Other shared action perspectives

A number of other important communication theorists have also focused
their research on the question of shared meanings, argueing that meanings may be
shared to only varying degrees, but that sharedness at some level must exist,
whether shared understandings (Smircich, 1983), a shared sense of reality,
(Morgan, 1986), or actions (Czarniawska-Joerges, 1992).

Smircich (1983), for example, argues that "the stability, or organization, of
any group activity depends upon the existence of common modes of

interpretation, and shared understanding of experience" (Smircich, 1983, 55) and that these shared understandings must be maintained for coordinated action to occur. Specifically, Smircich defines shared interpretations as either members "making sense of their experiences in similar ways ("we maintain a smooth surface of agreement") or [members] sharing a rationale for why the situation was as it was ("we behave this way because of the president")" (Smircich, 1983, 57). Thus, when she finds that a group of organizational members agrees on these symbols — not necessarily the explicit meanings behind them — she argues that they are able to coordinate their activity.

At the outset of her work Smircich (1983) asserts that the purpose of her study is:

> to illustrate how organizations exist as systems of shared meanings
> and to highlight the ways in which shared meanings develop and
> are sustained through symbolic processes (Smircich, 1983, 64).

Thus, Smircich seems to assume firstly, that shared meanings do in fact exist, and secondly that they are created through communication. However, by the end of her paper, Smircich concludes that "organizations exist as systems of meanings which are shared, at least to varying degrees" (Smircich, 1983, 64). This contradiction between shared meanings, on the one hand, and meanings which are shared to varying degrees, on the other, may seem minor, but given the importance of this question to organizational communication research, it seems worth investigating. That is, though Smircich (1983) implies that the degree to which meanings are shared is not constant but varies from symbol to symbol and person to person, she does not identify the actual meanings that the members held, nor does she specify which kinds of meanings are more shared, nor which people in an organization share more meanings, and so on. These questions certainly merit further attention.

In a related approach, Morgan (1986) argues that it is important for management to guide the development of shared meanings, and thus create a cohesive group. Specifically, he asserts that "the formation of a group or the process of becoming a leader ultimately hinges on an ability to create a shared sense of reality" (Morgan, 1986, 133). Thus, without explicitly emphasizing the point, Morgan (1986) does acknowledge that the appearance of a shared reality, or a shared *sense* of reality may be important.

However, Morgan (1986) argues that "cohesive groups are those that arise around shared understandings, while fragmented groups tend to be those characterized by multiple realities" (133). Thus, although he does not define shared understandings, explicitly, Morgan (1986) does assert that a sense of sharedness is crucial to organizational effectiveness.

Recently, Czarniawska-Joerges (1992) has proposed an interpretation of Weick's (1979) work in which she argues that frequently it is collective *action*, not necessarily meanings, that are shared in organizational communication. Czarniawska-Joerges (1992) also argues that organizations are

> ...nets of collective action, undertaken in an effort to shape the world and human lives. The contents of the action are meanings and things (artifacts)... (32).

Thus, Czarniawska-Joerges (1992) proposes a definition of organizations as symbolic entities, and emphasizes that they are systems of multiple meanings and that these meanings are only shared to certain degrees.

Czarniawska-Joerges (1992) points out that shared meanings are necessary to a certain extent, using as an example two people carrying a table. In order to carry the table together (collective action) the two people must share basic understandings of what up and down mean, what forward and back mean, and so on (Czarniawska-Joerges, 1992). In order to achieve collective action, Czarniawska-Joerges (1992) argues that complete sharedness of meanings is not

necessary, simply that enough sharedness is required to accomplish the activity. In referring to her definition, that organizations are systems of multiple meanings, Czarniawska-Joerges (1992) states that shared meanings are indeed necessary to a certain extent, but that

... the plural form in the definition suggests that a collective action is possible in the face of many meanings that are only partly shared. It is the experience of a collective action that is shared, more than its meaning (Czarniawska-Joerges, 1992, 33).

Thus, Czarniawska-Joerges (1992) takes as a given that organizational members share meanings to a certain extent, and that only a limited degree of sharing is necessary to achieve collective action.

2.5 Meanings and Ambiguity: The construction of community

Similarly, Eisenberg (1986) bases his work on aspects of Weick's Model. In his study of the organizational communication patterns of managers, Eisenberg (1986) proposes that "through the limitation of communication or use of ambiguous or metaphorical language, groups can focus on a sense of community, while at the same time preserving unique beliefs and interpretations" (Eisenberg, 1986, 92). Members of a group may share in the development of an ambiguous and "restricted code to which only certain individuals are privy" (Eisenberg, 1984, 233). This restricted code can be made up of jargon, jokes, nicknames, and rituals, and is familiar only to members of the group, while

> to those outside of the language community, the discourse is
> strange, technical, or purposefully ambiguous; to those inside, it acts
> as a kind of incantation, an implicit expression of loyalty to the
> group... (Eisenberg, 1984, 233-234).

The development of camaraderie, or a sense of community, is thus one result of ambiguous language that is used as if shared by organizational members. Eisenberg (1984) does not identify the degree to which the members of a group

actually share ambiguous messages, but rather focuses on the effect that this sense of sharedness has on the group dynamics. However, he does introduce the idea that group members do not have to be in complete agreement on the meanings of ambiguous messages, and he suggests the process which group members undergo when analyzing ambiguous messages.

Eisenberg (1984) proposes that when confronted with an ambiguous message people will project their own understandings and interpretations, or "fill in what they believe to be the appropriate context and meaning" (Eisenberg, 1984, 233). The more the message is ambiguous, the more a person will project his or her own interpretations, Eisenberg (1984) asserts, and these interpretations will tend to be consistent with the person's own belief and value systems. Thus, because they create understanding using their own set of beliefs and values, people will tend to feel comfortable with their interpretation, or feel that they can "buy into it" and thus a sense of community is created between people who believe that they agree on the meanings for their ambiguous messages.

This notion of community was introduced before Eisenberg, by Becher (1981), who suggests that "agreement on common expressions, on feelings of solidarity and a "sense of oneness" at some grouping or level of the organization is more important than agreement on deeply held values and beliefs" (Cited in Eisenberg & Riley, 1988, 142). Carbaugh (1985) also suggested that meanings are not shared isomorphically, and stresses the role of communication in creating community:

Communication can be understood as an intersubjective symbolic activity constituting a degree of shared meaning and a sense of community (Carbaugh, 1985, 37).

Smircich (1983), too, has argued that a major aspect of communication between organizational members is the sense of commonality that this interaction

creates. Specifically, Smircich (1983) argues that "through the development of shared meanings for events, objects, words and people, organization members achieve a sense of commonality of experience that facilitates their coordinated actions" (Smircich, 1983, 55). Based on her study, Smircich (1983) concludes that:

> a sense of commonality, or taken for grantedness is necessary for continuing organized activity so that interaction can take place without constant interpretation and re-interpretation of meanings (Smircich, 1983, 64).

Thus, shared meanings, and more importantly the sense of community they create, Smircich proposes, are central to the process of organizing.

The sense of community, or commonality, that is created by the communication of the organizational members, then, may be more important to the process of organizing than whether the meanings are shared or not. In fact, Eisenberg (1986) argues that "the notion of sharing as a one-to-one correspondence should be rejected" (Eisenberg, 1986, 92). His work is based on the assumption that isomorphically shared meanings cannot exist, and thus the attempt to identify them in research (or create them in management, as many practitioners were proposing, cf. Peters & Waterman, 1982; Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Pfeffer, 1981) is fruitless. Instead, he proposes that researchers make problematic this notion and concentrate on the use and strategic management of ambiguity (cf. Eisenberg, 1984; 1986; 1990; Eisenberg & Riley, 1988).

Furthermore, Eisenberg (1986) argues that "the presumption that shared understandings are necessary for smooth coordination should be questioned" (92) and that alternative models should be advanced. Thus, Eisenberg (1986) proposes, like Weick (1979) that coordinated activity can occur even when only slight overlap of meanings exists, and that this may be a more realistic way to view organizational communication.

2.5.1 "Jamming" and the construction of community

In his essay on "jamming" Eisenberg (1990) explores this notion further by focusing on the behaviour of musicians and athletes coming together in "instances of fluid behavioral coordination without detailed knowledge of personality" (Eisenberg, 1990, 139). Jamming is defined as those activities which "celebrate the closeness that can arise through coordinated action" (Eisenberg, 1990, 139). These activities do not rely necessarily on shared interpretations for their production, but rather on a sense of community. This "often ecstatic way of balancing autonomy and interdependence in organizing" (Eisenberg, 1990, 139) allows group members to interact — and thus achieve coordinated activity — while maintaining their autonomy, in the form of their individual interpretations of meanings. The important thing, in jamming, is not whether those involved are interpreting and deriving meanings in the exact same way, but that their actions are coordinated so that music or sport occurs in a harmonious interaction.

Of particular relevance to this study is Eisenberg's (1990) assertion that "individual and organizational effectiveness depend more on the conviction that goals or values are shared than on the actual extent of agreement ... [and] more important, this perception of unity facilitates the smooth coordination of action (144-145). Thus, Eisenberg (1990) points out, the appearance of sharedness may be more important to organizational enactment than actual sharedness.

2.5.2 "Working consensus:" the appearance of sharedness

The idea that shared vocabulary does not necessarily imply shared interpretations was suggested, indirectly, by Erving Goffman (1959), who has argued that different people hold different interpretations, and, furthermore, that they agree, implicitly, to maintain agreement on the surface. In much of human communication, therefore, it is possible that there is only enough agreement on the meanings of words to continue a coherent conversation, and that under this

surface of agreement lie greater differences. Goffman (1959) proposes, in fact, that people strive to protect this conversational coherence.

Specifically, Goffman refers to a communication phenomenon which he calls a "working consensus." Goffman (1959) proposes that when people communicate they maintain a "surface of agreement" or "a veneer or consensus" (9) by virtue of "each participant concealing his own wants behind statements which assert values to which everyone present feels obliged to give lip service" (9). That is, individuals put aside their own interpretations and definitions in order to maintain an ongoing communication episode.

It appears, therefore, that a symbol may have a number of different meanings, though the organizational members use it *as if* they share a similar meaning. Further, until a breakdown occurs which reveals the differences (Garfinkel, 1967), members can continue conversation as if they are in agreement. As Eisenberg (1984) argues, ambiguity in conversation allows "people to retain their differences of opinion under the guise of consensus" (Eisenberg, 1984, 230). In other words, if meanings are ambiguous enough that people with different views and ideas can buy into them, then conversation can continue to function. When the meanings become too explicit, however, then a breakdown may occur as the differences in meanings are revealed.

2.5.3 Ambiguity in organizational communication

In an earlier study, Eisenberg (1984) probed into these questions of meanings and interpretations. Here, he focused on the role of ambiguity in organizational communication,

arguing that not only is ambiguity of organizational meanings necessary, but that it enables organizational members to communicate and thus enact their environment (Weick, 1979).

In this study, Eisenberg (1984) argues that ambiguity in organizations allows people with varying perspectives, backgrounds, and objectives to buy into a constructed meaning. In fact, Eisenberg proposes that "ambiguity is essential to organizing because it allows for multiple interpretations to exist among people who contend that they are attending to the same message" (Eisenberg, 1984, 231). Furthermore, ambiguity allows members *to appear to* agree on meanings and thus achieve coordinated action rather than engage in discussion or debate over meanings. That is, "the ambiguous statement of core values allows [people] to maintain individual interpretations while at the same time believing they are in agreement" (Eisenberg, 1984, 231).

Because people simply use a shared vocabulary does not necessarily imply that they mean the same thing by their shared words, and thus shared vocabulary does not mean shared interpretations (Eisenberg, 1986). However, because people do, in fact, share words and other symbolic forms, it may appear, both to the participants themselves and to a researcher observing them, that they share both the symbol and its meaning. Eisenberg (1984; 1986) asserts that it is erroneous for a researcher to maintain this assumption.

Although Eisenberg (1984; 1986; 1990) proposes an argument similar to that found in this paper, that shared meanings exist only to limited degrees but that nonetheless organizational members communicate as if they share interpretations and are thus able to interlock their behaviours, he has not, to date, tested the notion in an empirical manner. Therefore, methodologically, the current study takes the issue further, by identifying meanings and then having candidates define their personal interpretations for the apparently shared symbols.

2.6 Conclusion

This notion of ambiguity reveals the weakness in assuming that conversation, and organization, is a system of shared symbols and meanings.

Though the symbols may be shared (when people use the same word, for example), the meanings attached to these symbols may not be shared, though people behave, and continue their conversations, as if their meanings were shared. Thus, conversation occurs in a context of assumed, or apparently shared meanings, and it is this appearance of sharedness, created through the use of ambiguous symbolic language forms, which is essential to the enactment of organization.

This chapter has examined the literature on a number of areas of relevant communication research, specifically in the area of shared meanings and organizational enactment. First, the shared meanings perspective was presented, which assumes that organizations are systems of shared meanings, and that these shared meanings are critical to organizational enactment. Then, the opposing view was presented, which asserts that members only share meanings at certain levels, if at all, and that shared activity is more important to organizational enactment than shared meanings, but that the appearance of shared meanings is nonetheless crucial to the process. Weick's (1979) Means Convergence Model was included in this section, as the theoretical foundation for the study. In the next chapter two specific symbolic language forms will be examined: humour and metaphor.

CHAPTER 3: REVIEW: SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE FORMS AND AMBIGUITY

A variety of symbolic language forms allows for the sort of ambiguity to exist which would create this impression of shared meanings in the minds of organizational participants. Humour, which achieves much of its success through its ambiguity and equivocality, puns, metaphors and other rhetorical devices, all influenced by implicit social rules, are used by organizational members to communicate their thoughts and ideas. It is on symbolic language forms, and the implicit social rules influencing their construction and use, that the proposed research will focus, in order to identify the communication tools that people use to construct and negotiate meanings.

In this chapter, a literature review on the relevant work on humour will first be presented, followed by a review of the literature on metaphor and then a discussion of the possibility of multiple meaning systems.

3.1 Humour

Though it would seem to be a most interesting and entertaining area of communication research, the literature on humour as a communication phenomenon is rather sparse. Most current research on humour resides in the field of sociology, where the focus is frequently on the functions of humour in producing and maintaining social order (cf. Holdaway, 1988; Linstead, 1988; Fox, 1990) or as "a means of social control or resistance to such control" (Powell & Paton, 1988, xiii). Humour research also is found in the management literature, but there it tends to focus on the ways that managers can use humour to achieve certain organizational goals and cultures (cf. Khan, 1989; Duncan & Feisal, 1989; Vinton, 1989; Duncan, Smeltzer, & Leap, 1990). Certainly, studying a group's humour can provide important understandings of the group's culture, taken-for-granted assumptions, and implicit rules. As Berger (1976) and others (cf. Ott,

1989; Linstead, 1988) have argued, "because humour is intimately connected to culture-codes, it is useful in providing insights into a society's values" (Berger, 1976, 114).

In this section, a number of studies of humour in organizational settings will be discussed. Then, two theories of humour will be examined in terms of what exactly it is about jokes that makes them funny. Next, these two theories will be related to the central theme of this dissertation, the question of shared meanings. Then, a specific category of humour, putdown humour, will be examined, with a review of some recent work in this area. Next, research into the area of gender differences will be discussed, given that the traditionally male-dominated field of policing is clearly influenced by these differences. Finally, the impact of humour on group development, or the creation of a sense of community will be discussed.

3.1.1 Humour in organizational settings

It has been suggested that humour and work are frequently thought of as mutually exclusive activities (Duncan et al., 1990), but it would most likely be accepted by anyone who works in any sort of an organization that humour is a persistent influence on work and that "it is an essential and important part of organizational life" (Linstead, 1988, 123). As Duncan et al. (1990) point out, humour in the workplace serves a number of purposes: "it makes work bearable; it overcomes the monotony of 'earning our daily bread'; it reduces tension and adds a sense of belonging" (Duncan et al., 1990, 255).

Some authors, in fact, argue that not only is humour an integral part of organizational communication, but that it should be used by managers Malone (1980) exemplifies one of these more functionalist authors who proposes that humour be used strategically, and that it be considered "no less important than planning or time management" (cited in Vinton, 1989, 151). Further, Malone

argues that research should be undertaken into the "role of humour in increasing worker satisfaction" (cited in Vinton, 1989, 151). These statements seem humorous, given that humour, to be executed successfully (as determined by whether the audience laughs or is amused) usually appears to be spontaneous and natural, not planned and managed. However, these authors, and others (cf. Duncan, 1982) seem to take for granted that humour can be created and used in an organized manner to achieve management goals and objectives.

In contrast to these writers is Willis (1977) who conducted an ethnography of working class youths in Britain in order to understand how they constructed and reconstructed reality. In his work, Willis (1977) thoroughly examines the central place of humour in the communication patterns of the group of boys he studied. Willis argues that an important characteristic of the group is the "shaping and development of particular cultural skills principally devoted to 'having a laff'" (Willis, 1977, 29). As Willis describes it, the 'laff' is "a multi-faceted implement of extraordinary importance in the counter-school culture" and "the ability to produce it is one of the defining characteristics of being one of 'the lads'" (Willis, 1977, 29). Thus, the construction and maintenance of the culture of Willis' lads is highly influenced by their humour, including putdowns, practical jokes, silliness (for example, staring fixedly at the floor until they all break into laughter) and mischievous behaviour (such as doodling and writing on the seats of a bus).

Fox's (1990) ethnography of the humour of a group of MBA students provides methodological and theoretical support to the current study. Fox was a participant observer in an Executive Masters of Business Administration program in Britain. The main emphasis of Fox's (1990) work was "a concern with members' practices of social construction and maintenance of reality and in particular their use of humour, banter, and joking in this respect" (Fox, 1990,

436). Specifically, Fox tries to describe the reality of the MBA group, and argues that there are, in fact, multiple realities. As well, he argues that "rather than *saying* reality is manifold, [humour] *reveals* it and *presumes* it" (Fox, 1990, 441. Italics in original). Thus, according to Fox, the impact of humour is that it reminds the audience that there are multiple realities, or, in other words, "humour works by upsetting our unitary presumptions about reality" (Fox, 1990, 441). The ambiguity of humour, Fox (1990) asserts, allows a number of potential interpretations, until, finally, one interpretation becomes the prevailing one. In other words, humour first reveals multiple realities, and then reduces the number of possible interpretations of the world.

Fox does not focus specifically on the impact of humour in the group development process, so I extend his work further and argue that humour serves the important purpose of binding a group together, or creating commonality, and this despite, or because of, its ambiguity. That is, because humour is ambiguous, the fact that group members are able to share in the action of creating and appreciating humour is quite remarkable: without necessarily internalizing the same interpretation of the humour (ie. not everyone laughs for the same reason) people are able to enjoy the sharing of a laugh. This sharing a laugh, then, creates a feeling of commonality, or a sense of community.

3.1.2 Major issues in organizational humour research

Duncan et al. (1990) argue, based on their review of the literature on humour, that research on humour in organizations has concentrated on four major issues: group cohesiveness; the effects of humour on communication in group settings; the role of humour in organizational cultures; and leadership, power and status relationships. Because these are all communication constructs, there are relevancies found in Duncan et al.'s (1990) discussion of them. Specific findings

that have the greatest relevance to this dissertation will be discussed in this next section.

The work on group cohesiveness clearly is of interest. Duncan et al. (1990) point out that though humour can be cruel and divisive, if it is used to poke fun at and leave out some members of a group, "it may also be used to make members know they really belong" (Duncan et al., 1990, 268). In other words, as Eisenberg (1986) has argued, when group members share (or perceive that they share) a restricted code, such as a joke, a sense of community is created out of this apparent sharedness.

Similarly, the review of research on communication and groups is relevant. Duncan et al. (1990) begin this discussion on the premise that "the work group is frequently characterized by uncertainty and ambiguity" (Duncan et al., 1990, 268). Thus, they propose, humour can serve to decrease this inherent ambiguity. In other words, by using humour "to test the water" (Duncan et al., 1990, 268), organizational members can take a risk — for example challenging a higher level organizational official — while being able to fall back on the safety of saying: "I was only joking" if the risk fails.

Finally, the research on humour and organizational culture is of interest. In this area, Duncan et al. (1990) argue that it is important to understand the patterns of joking in order to fully appreciate an organization's culture. They cite Ott (1988) who proposes, in his study of organizational culture, that jokes and metaphors should be examined as important artifacts, or indicators of cultures. Likewise, Linstead (1985), is cited as finding humour to be one of the important factors in both changing and reinforcing existing cultures (Cited in Duncan et al., 1990).

3.1.3 What makes something funny?

In their review of the research on humour, Duncan et al. (1990) address the question of what makes something funny. They point out that though the field of humour research is limited, there does seem to be agreement that there are two distinct perspectives on what makes humour humorous.

One approach to the study of humour is that of incongruity (Duncan et al., 1990). The foundation of this perspective is that "those things that we find funny have to be somewhat unexpected, ambiguous, illogical, or inappropriate" (258). Duncan and Feisal (1989) define humour, in fact, as "any type of communication that intentionally creates incongruent meanings and thereby causes laughter" (19). Duncan et al. (1990) further argue that it is the unexpected twist, or the abrupt switch in the punch line of many jokes, that is humorous. However, they point out, it is not the incongruity alone which creates humour; there must also be a "meaningful resolution of the incongruity" (258). Specifically, they argue that after being confronted with an incongruity — or a "violation of expectations" (259) — the audience expects to discover a "cognitive rule that reconciles the incongruous parts of the joke in a manner that makes sense but that still violates the expectancy" (259). To exemplify the incongruity perspective, Duncan et al. (1990) provide the following joke by Woody Allen (1978):

> I must pause for one brief moment and say one fast word about oral
> contraception. I was involved in an extremely good example of oral
> contraception. I asked a girl to go to bed with me and she said,
> 'No' (Cited in Duncan et al., 1990, 259).

In this joke, the choice of the word "oral" results in an unexpected twist: the audience expects one meaning of the word, which, they discover at the punch line, is not the intended meaning. However, even with this resolution of the incongruity (the intended meaning has been discovered), there is still an inherent

incongruity, in the interpretation of oral contraception as a verbal negative response to a request for sex.

The other perspective on humour is the Cognitive-Appraisal viewpoint (Duncan et al., 1990). In contrast to the incongruity perspective, which focuses on the structure of jokes and how this structure elicits humorous responses, the cognitive-appraisal perspective attempts to explain *why* an event or a joke may be perceived as humorous by an audience. Specifically, this perspective argues that "the discovery of the incongruity in a joke produces an increase in cognitive activity [and that] this is accompanied by a modest increase in arousal, that is, in turn, accompanied by pleasure" (Duncan et al., 1990, 259). Thus, it is assumed that when a listener responds to a joke with laughter, he or she is undergoing a physiological state in response to the incongruity, or the surprise, in the joke. Duncan et al. (1990) do point out that the whole cognitive process depends on the unique and diverse experiences of individuals, and that there is, therefore, considerable variation among people.

3.1.4 Humour and shared meanings

As far as shared meanings go, it is likely, then, based on the work of Duncan et al. (1990), that there is limited similarity in people's interpretation of jokes, even if there is shared laughter. In other words, different people may laugh at the same stimulus, but not necessarily because they have interpreted it in the same way. Rather, what may have occurred is that each person has had an individual (and perhaps different) expectation, the expectation was violated, resulting in incongruity, then the incongruity was resolved — perhaps differently for each person — and a pleasurable arousal is noted. The individual interpretations, then, may not be shared, but the experience of interpreting a joke is shared.

This notion is supported by Powell and Paton (1988), who argue that group members share an understanding of what a joke *is*, rather than what a joke *means*, and thus find their own interpretation of humour in it. Specifically, they argue that:

> ...it is the shared recognition and communication of something as 'nonsense' that invariably evokes humorous expression and establishes jokelore" (Powell & Paton, 1988, xxi).

Powell and Paton (1988) thus do not assume that shared interpretations are required for a shared action — laughter and the appreciation of a joke — but that, rather, shared knowledge of the communication mechanism of joking is required.

Throughout this section numerous references have been made to the sense of community that is created through the sharing of jokes, humorous incidents and a laugh. Although few of the authors discussed in this section overtly mentioned the role that humour plays in the group development and bonding process, there were implicit acknowledgements of its importance (cf. Vinton, 1989; Duncan, 1984; Holdaway, 1988; Linstead, 1988; Duncan et al., 1990). Vinton (1989), for example, makes a comment which supports the current study. Specifically, she states that at the company she studied, "humour appeared to *create* bonds among the employees and facilitate the accomplishment of work tasks" (Vinton, 1989, 165. Italics in original). Like Vinton (1989), Duncan (1984) found that work groups that were characterized by joking and teasing were more cohesive than groups that did not have this kind of communication patterns. Thus, teasing and bantering could have an impact on the group dynamics, and more specifically, on the bonding process that the group undergoes.

Other theorists have considered the place of humour in the development of group cohesiveness. LaFave and Mennell (1976), for example, found that when done in a supportive and trustful context, ethnic humour could help to assimilate members of different ethnic groups into one, larger group: the work group.

3.1.5 Functions of humour

Along with creating a sense of community, humour has been shown in other studies to serve a number of organizational functions. For example, Holdaway's (1988) examination of the humour of police officers shows that police officers use humour to define and redefine reality. The data for Holdaway's study were collected by the author during a two year participant-observer study of policing in a British urban police sub-division. The author, a police sergeant during this time, tried to detail and analyze the occupational culture of the lower ranks of the police force.

Holdaway (1988) provides a study of "how the world of policing is routinely sustained from day to day" (108). In his study he focused attention on joking and humour in order to study "one of a range of controls and techniques employed by the lower ranks to sustain a semblance of what they regard as normal policing" (Holdaway, 1988, 108). Thus, by looking at their humour, Holdaway (1988) attempts to identify the means by which the police officers constructed and maintained their reality.

Holdaway (1988) argues that through their humorous narrative, the definition of reality espoused by the police officers is maintained and passed on to new recruits, who very quickly must buy into the reality in order to survive. As well, the socialization process is critical both to the survival of the new recruits, and to the survival of the culture of police work. As Holdaway (1988) states:

> So the individual working experience of an officer is placed within the collective tradition, being gathered up into the stock of knowledge which orients practical police work and retains for officers the semblance of commonsense. The shift of constables, sergeants and inspectors gathered together for a chat and a laugh are literally sustaining police work itself (Holdaway, 1988, 121).

Thus, the main emphasis of Holdaway's (1988) work is on the maintenance of culture, or reality, and he concludes that it is in large part through their humour

that police officers do maintain and pass on their reality. Implicit in Holdaway's work is the notion of community, which is shown in his descriptions of the tightly-knit group of police officers and the web of jokes, stories and anecdotes which bind them together. Interestingly, it is not just that the sharing of stories and jokes brings the group members together. As well, the group members use their relationships and sense of community as the material for jokes and stories:

> The fact of team membership, the social relationships that bind members together into an interdependent group which includes supervisory and rank-and-file staff, and the risks of breaching team discipline are all the subject of humorous narratives" (Holdaway, 1988, 110).

Other researchers argue that one of the main functions of humour is to help group members to interact and to define situations. Linstead (1988), for example, argues that jokes provide group members with an important interactional tool. Specifically, Linstead (1988) proposes that "the ambiguity [of jokes] allows the possibility that acts may be retrospectively defined (e.g. 'I was only joking' is a typical serious response when a gesture has run into difficulties on a serious level)" (125). That is, group members can redefine reality, using the ambiguity of humour, if they see that their humorous attempt was unsuccessful.

Fox (1990) also argues that humour is a device which can be used to explore and construct definitions. Fox describes the communication of the part-time students in the Executive MBA program which he studied: "...through banter and joke-work members 'playfully' experimented with alternative readings of their scenes, settings and experience of the course" (439). Fox (1990) refers to this experimentation and construction of meanings, following Garfinkel (1967), as "fact production in flight" (Fox, 1990, 439).

Though Fox (1990) argues that humour can be used to construct alternative meanings, Linstead (1988) proposes that humour can also be used to suspend definitions of reality. In other words, "the capacity of humour to

suspend the normal definitional criteria of everyday acts is most commonly exploited in testing out interpretations in uncertain or unfamiliar situations" (Linstead, 1988, 125). Humour can be used, then, to give people enough time to gather information necessary for an understanding and definition of reality. Definitions of reality can be suspended, in fact, while people wait for a clearer understanding of what is going on; joking and bantering can bridge the space between understanding and not understanding what is happening. As Linstead (1988) puts it, humour can act as a "protective device until real world ambiguity is resolved" (125) because it allows people to appear to interpret and to communicate coherently, and then to appear to have understood, all along, when the definition of reality becomes clear. For example, when faced with a potentially frightening situation, people sometimes joke nervously and kid each other, despite their anxiety, in order to wait until they know what is going on.

3.1.6 Putdown humour

Some of the earliest anthropological work on humour and social organization was done by Radcliffe-Brown (1940). He defined humour in terms of a joking relationship between two people in which "one, by custom, is permitted, and sometimes required, to tease or make fun of the other, who, in turn is required not to take offense" (195). Thus, central to humour, according to Radcliffe-Brown (1940), is the putdown joke, which is described as an interpersonal communication phenomenon.

A number of theorists argue that putdown humour has a negative effect on group development. That is, rather than create bonds, these writers argue, putdowns break down relationships. In their study of putdown or "disparagement humour," Duncan et al. (1990), for example, propose that this form of humour involves "the notion that mirth is a spontaneous reaction of pleasure resulting from a favourable comparison of the self to others" (260).

Unlike Willis (1977), these theorists emphasize that the success of disparagement, or put-down, humour lies in the comparison of one's self to another, and the finding that one is better, in some way, than the other. Furthermore, they argue that "the degree of humour experienced in disparagement situations depends largely on the affective disposition toward these persons" (Duncan, et al., 1990, 260). In other words, the more a person is disliked, the funnier the putdown is, and the more the person is liked, the less funny the putdown is perceived to be by the audience. This conclusion differs from that of Willis (1977), who argues that "pisstaking" is a form of communication used by a group of friends with each other, and that dislike has little to do with it.

Putdown humour has been the focus of other studies as well. In her study of the communication patterns in a small, family-run business, Vinton (1989) found that there were different kinds of humour, including "teasing to get work done, joke telling, bantering, and teasing to get across a message to a higher status person" (Vinton, 1989, 154). Of relevance to this study is Vinton's discussion of teasing. Vinton (1989) defines teasing, following Howell (1973), as:

> a type of familiar behaviour that is employed to mark, test, and affirm social boundaries. However, just as social boundaries encompass different degrees of closeness, the precise nature of the liberties taken differs for close and distant relationships (Howell, 1973, 3).

Vinton (1989) divides teasing into two categories based on her observations of the humour of the employees at the company she studied. The two categories were "teasing that deals with a specific work task and teasing that is non-task specific" (Vinton, 1989, 156). Task-specific teasing focused on work in order to "get things done" (p.156), while non-task specific teasing (or bantering, as Vinton calls it) focused on non-work issues such as sex lives, sports, and interests. The function of this kind of teasing, Vinton argues, is "to deflate the importance of status at QRS" [the company she studied] (Vinton, 1989, 156).

3.1.7 Gender differences in putdown humour

Another area that Duncan et al. (1990) review is gender differences in the appreciation and production of putdown humour. Firstly, they propose that men and woman react differently to putdown humour, and argue that "empirical evidence exists to support the seemingly commonsense notion that jokes perceived as disparaging to members of one sex are not enjoyed by its members" (Duncan et al., 1990, 261). Thus, they assume that men do not enjoy jokes which are seen as disparaging to men, and that women do not enjoy putdown humour targeting women. Furthermore, they cite Zillman and Bryant (1974), who found in their research that "males are more offended than females when a friend is the focus of the "putdown" joke [and] if the friend is not present the offense is perceived as even greater" (Duncan et al., 1990, 261). According to Duncan et al. (1990), Zillman and Bryant (1974) "speculate that a male ethic is violated in this situation" (Duncan et al., 1990, 261).

Tannen (1990) also looks at gender differences in the appreciation and construction of humour, but takes a different approach. The basis of Tannen's (1990) argument is that men and women interact differently, and that the differences stem from men's orientation toward competition, and women's orientation toward cooperation. Specifically, Tannen (1990) proposes that boys and girls grow up in essentially different cultures, because of these differing orientations, and thus frequently conflict in their appreciation of each other's humour.

As well, Tannen (1990) argues that playing practical jokes is a form of "one-up-manship" because the one who plays the joke is "in the know and in control" (139), and that making people laugh is a "fleeting form of power" (140). Because men are more competitive than women, who tend to be cooperative, according to Tannen, (1990) men use jokes to establish relationships between

each other, including negotiating status, while women cooperate in the telling of each other's jokes, even laughing supportively on the mere announcement by a woman that she is about to tell a joke or funny story (Tannen, 1990). Tannen's (1990) work on gender differences is particularly relevant to the current study, given that policing has traditionally been an almost entirely male institution. Based on Tannen (1990), it could be assumed that putdown humour and other forms of competitive banter will play an important role in the communication patterns of the group to be studied for this research.

In the outset of this section it was pointed out that there is a lack of research in the area of humour and communication. Although a number of studies have been cited in the preceding pages, it is still the case that few theorists have attempted an ethnographic study of the humorous communication patterns of a group, and fewer still have investigated the specific interpretations and understandings of the group members about their humour. It appears from the literature, in fact, that no theorists have examined the meanings that organizational members hold, and then compared each member's meanings and interpretations to those of the other members in order to advance the notion that what may be shared in humour is not interpretations so much as the act of laughter itself. The current research does examine these questions.

3.2 Metaphor

Metaphor, like humour, is constructed socially, provides insight into organizational reality, and is used as if shared. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980), "the metaphor form 'A' is 'B' represents the perception, conceptualization, and understanding of one object or event in terms of another" (Cited in Koch & Deetz, 1981, 5).

Furthermore, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) suggest that people's understanding of reality is structured, to a certain degree, by the metaphors they

use, and that the identification of these metaphors is useful in organizational culture analysis. Specifically, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argue

... that metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language, but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature (3).

To understand organizational reality, therefore, Lakoff and Johnson propose that theorists identify and understand the metaphorical concepts (for example, "time is money" or "Communication is sending") because these concepts influence how people perceive, think and act.

The notion of studying metaphors as a means to understand organizational communication has been proposed by a number of theorists. Morgan (1986), for example, asserts that whether intentionally or not, theorists, managers and employees have adopted a number of different metaphors to describe and understand organizations. These metaphors may be observed in the speech and behaviour of the organizational members, and, most certainly, in organizational practices. Metaphors not only provide a potentially powerful means to understand organization, but their use "implies a way of thinking and a way of seeing that pervades how we understand our world generally" (Morgan, 1986, 13).

Thus, associated with the metaphor that one chooses, or uses without necessarily *choosing* it (Smircich, 1983), are a number of implications for the practice of organizing (what one assumes will influence how one behaves, whether manager or employee), for researching organizations (what one assumes about organizations will significantly influence what one *sees* as a researcher), and for the future of organizations (what one assumes about organizations will limit what one imagines an organization can be, what people can do, what people need, and so on). For example, the metaphor of "organization as machine" has

long influenced organizational practices, research, and development. Managers who think of organizations as machines "tend to manage and design them as machines made up of interlocking parts that each play a clearly defined role in the functioning of the whole" (Morgan, 1986, 13) and may consider employees as simply "cogs in the wheel." Morgan (1986) asserts, therefore, that organizational researchers should observe the language, symbols, humour and other devices of organizational members in order to identify the influential metaphors-in-use.

Conrad (1983) also argues that "analysis of dominant metaphors provides a means of delineating the interpretive frameworks of organizational members (187). Conrad (1983) cites the work of Weick, 1979; Deetz, 1982; and Koch and Deetz, 1981 as examples of research which focuses on metaphors as symbolic forms and their relationship to organizational power. Likewise, Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo (1982) include metaphor as one of the indicators of organizational sensemaking, which in turn reveals the organization's culture or reality.

Pondy (1983) argues not only that the study of organizational metaphors is critical, but that n :taphors have an important position in the very fabric of the organization:

> The use of metaphors in organizational dialogue plays a necessary role in helping organization participants to in-fuse their organizational experiences with meaning and to resolve apparent paradoxes and contradictions ... the use of metaphors helps to couple the organization, to tie its parts together into some kind of a meaningful whole (Pondy, 1983, 157).

Because of their ambiguity, then, metaphors may allow members to communicate as if they share their meanings, when in fact their individual interpretations are, to varying degrees, different. In other words, "Metaphors are one communication mechanism that can function to reconcile discrepancies in meaning, that is, 'rough metaphors equifinal meaning can be created"

(Donnellon et al., 1986, 48). To clarify, Donnellon et al. (1986) argue that metaphors enable organizational members to maintain their own interpretations while at the same time interacting with other members on the basis of shared meanings (ie. as if they are in agreement):

> ... [metaphors] redefine reality ambiguously by leaving the specific
> details of similarity and dissimilarity between two entities undefined
> and thus open to individual interpretation (Verbrugge, 1980. Cited
> in Donnellon et al., 1986, 52).

Metaphors allow organizational members to interlock their behaviours (to share means) while achieving diverse goals, therefore, because the individual meanings they attach to the metaphors-in-use are ambiguous enough to allow for varied interpretations. In fact, ambiguous linguistic devices, such as metaphors, may actually enable organizations to be enacted because they allow for the existence of multiple meaning systems.

3.3   The possibility of multiple meaning systems

A number of researchers (cf. Weick, 1983; Eisenberg, 1984; 1986; Eisenberg & Riley, 1988; Gray et al., 1985; Donnellon et al., 1986; Czarniawska-Joerges, 1992) propose that "symbolic investigations of organizations should explore the potential for multiple or competing meaning systems, and the degree to which they are shared across time and space, in order to better understand the maintenance and transformation of organizational reality" (Eisenberg & Riley, 1988, 142). It is critical, for communication scholars in particular, that the actual meanings held by organizational members be examined in order to assess the degree to which they are shared, and to identify the different meaning systems in place. As Eisenberg (1986) asserts: "Rather than being a given in organizations, the degree to which interpretations are shared is an empirical question" (92).

Analysis of the degree of sharedness of the meanings held by different members of an organization is also proposed by Gray et al. (1985). These

researchers point out that because of the individual experiences and memories of different people, it is highly unlikely that they will share, to any great degree, interpretations of meanings. Specifically, Gray et al. (1985) suggest that:

> Since the meaning of ... concepts flows from their embeddedness in a network of other concepts, obtaining coincidence of meaning among several organizational participants may be inherently problematic, since it implies that they hold in memory not only the same concepts, but also the same pattern of relationships among the concepts (Gray, et al., 1985, 86).

In other words, these theorists argue for more stringent focus on the actual meanings used by organizational members, and analysis of the degree of sharedness of those meanings to garner understanding of organizational life.

3.4 Implicit social rules

Along with a focus on the humour and metaphors constructed by people as they enact their daily life, it is important to consider the implicit social rules that they construct, which influence behaviour and restrain and liberate communication. Guiding people's behaviour, linguistic choices and relationships is a complex set of cues, or social rules (Shimanoff, 1980; Cicourel, 1973; Cushman & Whiting, 1980; Schall, 1983). These rules are defined as:

> ...tacit understandings (generally unwritten and unspoken) about appropriate ways to interact (communicate) with others in given roles and situations; they are choices, not laws (though they constrain choice through normative, practical, or logical force)... (Schall, 1983, 560).

These cues, or rules, are constructed and maintained through the ongoing communication of the group members, although many of the rules may come from the larger social culture of which the group members are all part. The course candidates, for example, did not arrive at the Canadian Police College with a tabula rasa of rules — they already carried with them a number of tacit understandings about the way people behave in Western society, about the ways

men and women behave in mixed company in the 1990s, and about the ways people behave who are involved in policing as a career.

This is not to say that each group member simply conforms to the social rules — that he or she makes no choices about his or her behaviour. Rather, it means that individuals arrive with a set of understandings and, with these as a guide, are able to make sense of the interactions, and are able to choose, to a certain degree, how to behave. As Pearce (1976) has argued, the behaviour of an actor is only considered to be controlled when it is determined by physiological reasons — such as a shy person blushing while speaking to a group of people. In Pearce's words, behaviour that is guided by social rules is called *influenced communication behaviour* (Pearce, 1976), which is "structured by socialization and is appropriately explained by describing the rules that persons follow as they conduct purposive action" (Pearce, 1976, 19). Thus, within a guiding framework of appropriate communicative behaviour, people make choices — sometimes without being aware of the fact that they have chosen at all. These social rules, furthermore, must be examined in relation to the humour, metaphor and other symbols used by group members, in order to understand the origins, the impact, and the enactment of these symbolic language forms.

3.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, a literature review on the relevant work on humour was presented, followed by a review of the literature on metaphor and then a discussion of the possibility of multiple meaning systems, and a review of the literature on social rules. Of importance from the reviews was the argument that symbolic language forms such as humour and metaphor are inherently ambiguous and thus allow people to communicate as if they share meanings, whether they do or not. It is on these symbolic language forms, and the implicit social rules influencing their construction and use, that the current research will focus, in

order to identify the communication tools that people use to construct and negotiate meanings which appear to be shared.

CHAPTER 4:   REVIEW: THE POLICE CULTURE

Given the idiosyncratic nature of police work, and police officers, it is important to present a review of the literature on research into policing in the areas of communication and humour, as well as cohesiveness. In this chapter, it will be shown, firstly, that the police culture is unique, as an occupational culture, and that there is a general assumption, secondly, that police officers are a tightly knit, cohesive group, as a result of their training and socialization processes. This cohesiveness, finally, has resulted in what has been called a "cop's code" (Reuss-Ianni & Ianni, 1983) of implicit social rules which it is assumed is shared by police officers, which will be discussed.

4.1 Police as a homogeneous culture

A great deal of research has been done on the police as an occupational culture, because it is both accessible, given that it is a public institution found in every major city in the world, and, probably more importantly, because of its nature. That is, unlike most other occupations, there is a mythical quality to police work, created in part by popular culture's representations of the police culture (Van Maanen, 1973), and partly constructed by the police officers themselves.

Popular culture portrays policing as a dangerous, exciting, powerful and extremely active career, where the majority of an officer's time is spent pursuing and arresting criminals. However, in the words of one writer, the traditional images of the police that have been communicated by the print and electronic media — "the strong, aloof, fast talking, hard drinking, fast driving, hard boiled, cynical, courageous, incident-oriented crime fighters who administer curbside justice" (Adamson, 1990, 155) — bear little resemblance to the real world of policing, but "do wonders for recruiting" (Adamson, 1990, 155). In other words, the glamorous world of policing, in many ways not realistic, attracts young people to the career.

Whether or not real danger does exist in daily police work, strong bonds develop between officers, and a tightly-knit subculture is constructed by the police officers as they enact police work. This sub-culture becomes mythologized, indicating to the public and to the police officers themselves that policing is a unique and distinct occupation (Van Maanen, 1973). The relationships among officers are constructed:

> ... in such a way that they are mutually supportive, and their common interests bind them into a cohesive brotherhood that personalizes task performance as well as social relationships (Reuss-Ianni and Ianni, 1983, 258).

As well, police officers go through a highly ritualized and rigorous training program in order to join the ranks of an occupation which they perceive to be a different and very special culture of its own. In other words, as Van Maanen (1973) has argued, whether in the media or in the stories that people — the public and police officers themselves — tell each other, the "police are almost always depicted as a homogeneous occupational grouping somehow quite different from most other men" (408). Furthermore, Van Maanen (1973) argues that not only does society see police officers as different, the police officers themselves recognize the implied differences and consider themselves to be outsiders. In short, Van Maanen (1973) asserts, "when the policeman dons his uniform, he enters a distinct subculture governed by norms and values designed to manage the strain created by an outsider role in the community" (408).

Part of the distinction between police forces and the publics they serve may be the homogeneity of the police forces and the heterogeneity of the publics. Certainly, extreme homogeneity in police forces has existed well into the 1990s. White males make up almost the entire population of police organizations (Jayewardene & Talbot, 1990), and this most certainly affects the existing subculture, as much as the media portrayal, socialization process, and other

influences. That is, although it has not been the focus of much research, it is likely that the communication patterns and implicit rules constructed by the organizational members would be male oriented in nature, and would be perceived by each member as:

> a hierarchical social order in which he was either one-up or one-down [where] conversations are negotiations in which people try to achieve and maintain the upper hand if they can, and protect themselves from others' attempts to put them down and push them around (Tannen, 1990, 24-25).

Because they perceive communication as a competition, as a "struggle to preserve independence and avoid failure" (Tannen, 1990, 25), while at the same time establish a cohesive culture, male police officers have a number of pressures on them which influence the cultures in which they work. Furthermore, it is likely that the homogeneity of sex and race would indicate some homogeneity of values, beliefs and meanings as well. As will be seen in later sections, the Executive Development Course candidates did meet this example of homogeneity. All were white, all were between the ages of 38 and 54, and 26 of 27 candidates were male.

4.2 Shared beliefs and values

Because of the expectations of the police recruits, as well as the training regimen and the intense socialization process, as well as this intense homogeneity, there seems to be an acceptance among both researchers and police officers that the police culture is a strongly shared set of common beliefs and values (cf. Dowling & MacDonald, 1983; Deszca, 1988; Adamson & Deszca, 1990; Van Maanen, 1973; 1978; Stroud, 1983; Reuss-Ianni, 1983).

Dowling and MacDonald (1983) for example, argue that the Canadian police ideology, which they define as the values, beliefs and attitudes which create "a strong and positive guide to action" (iv), is shared and taken for granted to a certain degree in police circles. The authors propose that this shared

Canadian police ideology is "a need for individual police officers to believe in the legitimacy of their own acts... to have a feeling of 'I'm OK and I'm contributing to my organization and to society'" (Dowling & MacDonald, 1983, 53).

Like Dowling and MacDonald (1983), Deszca (1988) has examined police ideology in a Canadian context. In his work, Deszca (1988) has focused more specifically on the communication of ideology, which he equates with "purpose and meaning, and culture" (240). Deszca (1988) argues that though it may be desirable to police managers, it is extremely difficult to manage ideology because "police beliefs about what to do and how to do it are deeply ingrained, widely shared by the officers, and highly resistant to change" (240). Interestingly, Deszca (1988) acknowledges that "although shared purpose and meaning represents an important determinant of why organizational members behave as they do, it remains a construct that is notoriously difficult to pin down" (241). In other words, it is a major challenge to identify and define organizational meanings.

Deszca (1988) proposes that the development of a shared meaning system is the result of characteristics found particularly in police organizations which grant all of the members a "common heritage" (245). Specifically, Deszca (1988) argues that police officers "experience similar training, commence their careers as constables, and most sit through promotional evaluations procedures at least once thereafter. In addition, they typically share the desire for a credible, respected, high quality police service" (245). Deszca (1988) concludes that the shared experiences of police officers result in "many areas where shared objectives either exist or have the potential to exist" (245).

It could be argued that these characteristics are found in a number of other occupations, for example university professors, where there is a similar training period (graduate school), similar assignments (the doctoral dissertation), similar

selection processes (the curriculum vitae) and similar progress through the various levels of the academic hierarchy. However, the culture in police circles is undeniably more cohesive and tightly knit than that of academic circles, and this could be the result of the intensive socialization processes of police officers which result in what has been referred to as "the brotherhood" or the "blue wall" (Deszca, 1988, 243). The paramilitary training program that all police officers must undergo ensures that a very explicit socialization process — including values, beliefs, language, and rituals — is followed by all group members. As well, it is a rare organization (fire fighters, soldiers, and professional athletes excluded) that demands such rigorous training and such reliance on a partner or small group for the success and, in fact, survival of the group members.

Adamson and Deszca (1990) also assumed the shared values perspective in their work, and they discuss, like Deszca (1988), the inherent difficulty in trying to change the values systems of police officers. Specifically, they argue that "officers share a congruent and deeply ingrained/reinforced set of beliefs about policing" (157) and thus are highly resistant to "communications that attempt to bring about significant shifts in the existing belief set" (Adamson & Deszca, 1990, 157). They propose however, that management of organizational meanings is possible if change attempts are accompanied by "fundamental changes in what is being communicated through various organizational channels and processes" (Adamson & Deszca, 1990, 156). That is, because communications are the means through which officers come to share beliefs and values, it is by influencing the "shared language, rituals, symbols, stories/myths, heroes and interpretive schemes that do so much to socialize and reinforce the sense of shared meanings" that change will occur (Adamson & Deszca, 1990, 156).

In support of the thesis of this dissertation, that organizational meanings may only appear to be shared when in fact they are only partially shared,

Adamson and Deszca (1990) conclude that officers' interpretations of messages sent by management were often quite different from the intended meanings. For example, "in general, managers had a much more positive view of what they were communicating through the channels than was perceived to be the case by subordinates" (Adamson & Deszca 1990, 166). Thus, though it may seem obvious that managers and subordinates perceive messages differently, it is nonetheless assumed throughout the literature that organizational members generally share meanings, including values and beliefs about the organization. Because the group members in the current study are all police managers, it is possible that they would interpret meanings more similarly than would a mixed group of police managers and police officers, but the point is still important: the assumption that group members share meanings has not been tested, and in fact the meanings that group members ascribe to words and other symbols has not been measured to any degree.

4.3 Police socialization: The construction of community

Other researchers have examined the construction of meanings and values through the intense socialization process that all police officers undergo. For example, during a nine month observation period, Van Maanen (1973) examined the process of becoming a police officer, specifically focusing on what he identified as a four-stage socialization process which enabled the development of "a community of purpose and action among the police recruits" (Van Maanen, 1973, 407). The four stages of socialization induct the recruits, according to Van Maanen (1973) into a unique and special language system and culture, and it is the process of coming to share this culture that results in a sense of belonging, or a "in the same boat collective consciousness" (Van Maanen, 1973, 407). The sense of "being in the same boat" is particularly strong in police circles, Van Maanen argues, because of the intense training program, combined with the

foreign nature of the work. That is, because the police recruits know little about what it is really like to be a police officer, they are wide open to the stories, hints, warnings and admonitions of the more experienced police officers at the police academy. As Van Maanen (1973) states:

> The novices' overwhelming desire to hear what police work is really like results in literally hours upon hours of war stories told at the discretion of the many instructors (410).

It is through repeatedly listening to these war stories, Van Maanen (1973) asserts, that the individual learns and absorbs the department's history and culture, including personalities, events, places and relationships. Furthermore, outside of the classroom "the recruits spend endless hours discussing nuances and implications of war stories" (Van Maanen, 1973, 411). It is in these discussions, Van Maanen argues, that "collective understandings start to develop" as the newcomer gradually builds a "common language and shared set of interests which will attach him to the organization until he too has police experience to relate" (Van Maanen, 1973, 411).

Thus, it is the sharedness of talking about the experiences of more advanced police officers that leads to a sense of community and commonality, according to Van Maanen (1973). From Van Maanen's work, however, it is unclear whether the recruits actually interpreted the stories in the same way, applied the stories to their own practices in the same way, or understood the implications of the stories in the same way. It would seem likely, however, that the war stories would bear little resemblance to the original events, given the impact of human communication — the telling and retelling of stories usually changes the contents of the stories, because of selectivity in selection, retention, and re-telling — on a story's evolution.

As well as building a common vocabulary and a feeling of camaraderie, the telling of "war stories" has important ramifications for the recruits' socialization program. Given that they have not yet acquired a set of experiences and knowledge about police work by actually *doing* police work, the recruits rely on the "vocabulary of precedents" (Ericson, 1987) of the more experienced police officers. That is, police officers, like the journalists that Ericson (1987) studied, learn how to be police officers (or journalists) by "experience and precedent on the job" (133), which is a subtle process of interaction with and observation of fellow workers. Ericson (1987) proposes that new members must acquire through experience three basic components of the work: "recognition knowledge" which is knowing what constitutes an important and relevant piece of information, behaviour, clue, and so on; "procedural knowledge" which is how to go about doing the work, how to communicate with others on the job, and so on; and "accounting knowledge" which includes "how to justify actions taken if someone questions what was done" (Ericson, 1987, 133). The "vocabulary of precedents," then, is the

> ...ongoing verbal articulation of the current state of recognition,
> procedural, and accounting knowledge required to accomplish a
> competent performance of the work (Ericson, 1987, 133).

Eventually, as they develop their own experiences and war stories the young police officers will establish, and pass on to new recruits, their own vocabulary of precedents. However, the initial learning of these officers is heavily influenced by the linguistic choices, as well as the behaviours, of the more experienced officers who provide them with the foundation of their "vocabulary of precedents." The degree of sharing between group members is not discussed by Ericson (1987), but it is assumed that the recruits would have to demonstrate enough of an understanding to appear to share the meanings of the experienced officers, because otherwise sanctions would be imposed. In Ericson's (1987)

discussion of journalists, he points out that one way a journalist learns what is expected in terms of a story is whether or not the story actually gets published in the newspaper. The journalist must pay attention to these signals and develop the common sense ("common" to journalists) necessary to know what good journalism is. Likewise, young police officers learn through experience what is and what is not good policing. As Weick (1979) argues, it is demonstrating knowledge of appropriate actions that is important, in order to be part of the group, not by demonstrating shared meanings, necessarily.

4.4 Implicit social rules in policing: The "Cop's code"

Work by Reuss-Ianni and Ianni (1983) on the "Cop's code" in fact, demonstrates, inadvertently, that meanings, while appearing to be shared, may not be shared in terms of their behavioral implications, and thus are not really shared at all. Specifically, in their field study of a precinct in New York City, Reuss-Ianni and Ianni (1983) attempted to identify the institutionalized (or shared) "code of rules governing social action and defining a pattern of behaviours that are productively efficient in maximizing social or individual gains" (253). Reuss-Ianni and Ianni (1983) found that police organization in New York City was characterized by "two competing and increasingly conflicting cultures" (253). One of the cultures, the street cop culture, was labelled the "good old days" by Reuss-Ianni and Ianni (1983), because it was characterized by the memory (albeit retrospective) of a time in policing when officers were respected and admired by the public, when fellow officers were trustworthy, and when management was supportive. The other culture, the management cop culture, is described as "bureaucratically and valuationally juxtaposed to the precinct street cop culture" (Reuss-Ianni & Ianni, 1983, 254), a position which leads to frequent conflict between the two groups.

Of greater interest to this dissertation is Reuss-Ianni and Ianni's (1983) discussion of the "cop's code," which they described as a "charter for action, a set of shared understandings that, while not written or codified, are understood by all members of the precinct and limit the degrees of variability of behaviour permissable for individuals" (264). Thus, the code emphasizes appropriate behaviour, implicitly demonstrating for all members of the group what is acceptable. Reuss-Ianni and Ianni (1983) stress that the though the "cop's code" is usually considered to be informal, it "is also formal, in that while it isn't written, it is understood by everyone" (265).

However, though the code appears to be shared and understood by all members of the group, there is enough discrepancy of understandings to ensure that the implicit rules in the code will be broken from time to time, thus resulting in repercussions. Reuss-Ianni and Ianni (1983) acknowledge this, saying:

> Violating one of these rules, which reach through the peer group structure into the street cop culture, will mean social criticism and peer-imposed sanctions because 'you're n t behaving like one of us'" (265).

To say that all group members understand and agree on the code, and then to discuss what happens when someone violates the code indicates, therefore, that the sharing of meanings about the code is less than a perfect sharing. That is, when people violate the behavioral implications of a code then this violation indicates that they have translated differently the behaviours associated with a particular aspect of the code than other members have. That sanctions are necessary at all clearly demonstrates that people do not interpret rules, no matter how much they appear to be shared, in the same ways.

Another matter of interest is the means by which Reuss-Ianni and Ianni (1983) determined whether the code was, in fact, shared by police officers throughout the precinct. Specifically, after coming up with a list of the rules that

they had observed, Reuss-Ianni and Ianni (1983) repeated the list to police officers and asked if they recognized them. It seems questionable whether, by simply responding positively to a recognition test, the actual interpretations and understandings of individual police officers are examined. That is, shared *recognition* of the rules making up the code does not necessarily imply that the behavioral implications of the code are shared.

More specifically, the "cop's code" identified by Reuss-Ianni and Ianni (1983) consisted of a set of twelve maxims aimed at defining relationships with other police officers. For example, one maxim, or rule is "Watch out for your partner first and then the rest of the guys working that tour," which Reuss-Ianni and Ianni (1983) argue is "fundamental and expresses both the strong sense of dependency and mutuality, and the sorting that takes place even among peers" (266). The other maxims are along the same lines, such as "Don't give up another cop," "Be aggressive when you have to but don't be too eager," "Hold up your end of the work" and "Don't tell anybody else anything more than they have to know."

These examples from the set of twelve maxims identified by Reuss-Ianni and Ianni (1983) make it very clear that the ambiguity and broadness of the rules would allow, firstly, multiple interpretations and secondly, multiple implications. A maxim such as "Don't tell anybody else anything more than they have to know" leaves a great deal of judgment up to the individual, and thus a great range of behavioral responses. Because of the ambiguity of each maxim, the individual police officer may agree with the maxim itself, but interpret and act on it in vastly different ways from other police officers, thus activating sanctions and corrective actions.

It is useful, at this point, to refer to Weick's (1979) discussion of "grammars," which he argues are the foundation on which behaviours are based.

That is, as Weick (1979) has proposed, "organizing is like a grammar in the sense that it is a systematic account of some rules and conventions by which sets of interlocked behaviours are assembled to form social processes that are intelligible to actors" (3). The emphasis here, then, is on each social actor's ability to interpret rules and conventions such that the behaviours appear appropriate for the situations in which they occur. In other words, like a rule of grammar, it is unnecessary for native speakers to explicitly state their knowledge of grammar rules, it is only necessary that they demonstrate their knowledge. Thus, again, actions are paramount, while interpretations are secondary, as each actor demonstrates his or her understanding of the grammar, or the "recipes for getting things done when one person alone can't do them and recipes for interpreting what has been done" (Weick, 1979, 4). In a later section, the implicit rule system — or "cop's code" — constructed and used by the Executive Development Course candidates will be discussed, with concrete examples from the data.

Like Reuss-Ianni and Ianni (1983), Douglas (1971) argues that police officers refer to a set of social rules to construct social order. Stroud (1983) also argues that police officers share an implicit code of behaviour. He describes the set of unwritten rules by which operational police officers do their jobs to be: a) stand by your partner at all costs; b) do the job, including being willing and able to act when needed; c) don't trust the public or the media very far; d) be careful when it comes to trusting management; and e) don't cross over the line and engage in unethical behaviour.

Ericson (1982) also discusses the impact of an implicit code of behaviour on police officers' behaviours. He describes this code as "an array of 'recipe' rules which guide [the patrol officer] on how to get the job done in ways that will appear acceptable to the organization" (Ericson, 1982, 14). Ericson (1982) gathered the data for these findings during an in-depth ethnographic examination

of the daily realities of policing in a Southern Ontario police force. He argues that police work is much more than fighting crime, but that, rather, police officers spend most of their time reproducing the existing order. In other words, the everyday activities of police officers are to "...employ a system of rules and authoritative commands to transform troublesome, fragile situations back into a normal or efficient state whereby the ranks of society are preserved" (Ericson, 1982, 7).

Of interest to the current study is the assumption that Ericson (1982) makes regarding the sharedness of this system of rules and authoritative command. That is, Ericson (1982) does not address the question of whether the police officers actually do share the motivations and meanings involved in reproducing meanings, and in fact does not consider it significant. Rather, he focuses on the process of reality construction by a group of members who appear to create a somewhat similar reality. Ericson (1982) thus takes a methodological and ontological approach very close to that advocated in this dissertation, although he does not compare the individually held meaning systems.

4.5 Conclusion

From this review of the literature on police culture, and specifically on the issues of shared meanings and social rules, it is clear that there is strong theoretical support for the notion that, as a result of their socialization and training, police officers have a strongly shared set of meanings for the symbols — including humour and metaphors — that they construct and use. As well, it was shown that there is support for the notion that the police construct and adhere to a set of implicit social rules about appropriate behaviours: what to do and how to do it. With this literature in mind, the current study will identify and compare members' interpretations of the meaning systems constructed and used by the group, and

then examine the communication patterns of the members to identify and compare interpretations of the implicit social rules in place.

In the next chapter, an overview of the Canadian Police College, along with an in-depth discussion of the Executive Development Course, will be presented to create a deeper understanding of the research site.

CHAPTER 5:   THE CANADIAN POLICE COLLEGE: BACKGROUND

This chapter is designed to describe the nature of the research site by providing a complete description of the Canadian Police College, its history, its mandate, its staff, and so on. Then, more specifically, the chapter gives an overview of the Executive Development Unit. Course curriculum, staff, candidate selection, and evaluation will be discussed. The information contained in this chapter is based on the researcher's observations and interpretations, which are supported by information brochures and articles about the Canadian Police College, as well as conversations with staff from the Canadian Police College.

5.1 History

In 1938, before the Canadian Police College itself was established, a single course, the "Canadian Police College Course", was set up for senior non-commissioned officers and experienced constables. This course was designed to teach senior level police officers the fundamentals of management theory, with topics such as leadership, planning, communication and performance appraisal. A need had been expressed by the police community for some sort of advanced training for police managers, so the course was developed and offered in existing RCMP facilities. The establishment of this course, which is considered the foundation of the Canadian Police College, dealt with matters of law enforcement and related police practice and procedures. The course was designed primarily for the RCMP, but was also offered to candidates from other Canadian police organizations and the Canadian armed forces, as well as to police organizations from other countries.

Then, at the Federal-Provincial Conference on Organized Crime, in 1966, it was recommended that a national police college be established to train and educate experienced police officers. The emphasis of the college's courses was to be in the areas of management, administration, and specialized investigation.

Based on this recommendation, five years later six courses were offered — one in instructional techniques and five related to criminal investigation — along with the original "Canadian Police College Course" (see above), which was later renamed the Senior Police Administration Course (SPAC). Because there was not yet a facility to house them, these courses were held at existing RCMP facilities in Regina and Ottawa. In the years following, government support — as well as funding — grew for the establishment of an autonomous police college where all of these courses could be offered. Thus, in 1973 the federal Treasury Board approved the creation of the college as part of the Canadian Police Services under the RCMP. Paid for by the federal government, the buildings were ready in 1976, and thus the college opened officially for business.

5.2 Mandate

The stated goals of the Canadian Police College are to "provide advanced courses relevant to the police profession" (C.P.C. Information Brochure, 1990). These courses are considered part of "ongoing education; education with practical application to a changing society and its need for a responsive police community" (C.P.C. Information Brochure, 1990). Thus, the mandate of the Canadian Police College is to educate police personnel — with both a national and an international scope — in the "latest investigative, scientific and administrative techniques involved in police work" (C.P.C. Information Brochure, 1990). By bringing course candidates, as the students are called, to the Police College rather than conducting training on-site throughout Canada, a greater level of intensity and attention is achieved (ie. when candidates arrive for a course, they are able devote themselves to the course and not be involved in the daily routines of their jobs and families).

5.3 The College Today

Today the Canadian Police College offers some thirty different courses ranging from advanced specialized courses such as Hostage Commander Training, Collision Analysis, Computer Crime Analysis, Counterfeit Investigative Techniques, Drug Investigative Techniques, Gambling Investigative Techniques, Explosives, and Forensic Identification, as well as management and communication skills courses. (See Appendix 1 for a complete list of current course offerings). In the management skills area are the Senior Police Administration Course (SPAC), Instructional Techniques, Computer Technology, Media Communications, and the Executive Development Course.

Although most of the courses are offered at the Canadian Police College in Ottawa, a few are also offered elsewhere, for practical reasons. For example, a course on gambling investigative techniques is offered in Winnipeg, because gambling casinos are legal there and so the resource people can hold some of the class sessions in actual gambling casinos. Most of the courses are offered at the Canadian Police College in Ottawa, which is situated just off of the Ottawa River on the Eastern Parkway. Course candidates live on campus during their course, a period of time ranging from four days (for the Commanders Course/Hostage Barricaded Persons) to 9 weeks (for the Polygraph Examiners Course). For the shorter courses, that is from 4 days to 2 weeks, candidates stay on campus throughout the entire course, including weekends (unless they live within close enough proximity to drive to their homes) when they work on course assignments and socialize. For the longer courses (from 3 to 9 weeks duration) candidates receive one paid return trip home halfway through the course.

The site offers a variety of activities and services, including the residences, a library and resource centre (with materials, books, and journals related to all

aspects of policing), a swimming pool and gym, a lounge and a cafeteria. Candidates sleep in one of two sleeping accommodations at the college, depending on the type of course they are on. Candidates who are taking a longer, more intense course stay in "A" Block, which has all single rooms, is a newer, more modern building, and which has bathrooms in the rooms. Candidates on shorter courses stay in "D" Block, where the rooms are set up as double rooms with communal bathrooms and showers on each floor. If space permits, the candidates are given a double room to themselves in "D" Block. Women, however, always stay in "A" Block, because of the shower and bathroom facilities.

Also sharing the facilities is the Research and Program Development Branch. According to the Canadian Police College Information Brochure, the mandate of the Research Branch is to pursue research relevant to the practice of leadership and management within law enforcement. Research coming out of this branch is, in theory, applied to the development and ongoing evaluation of courses offered by the college. As well, information is disseminated into the public community in order to increase public knowledge of policing, and into the police community to increase knowledge of police issues and trends. There are a number of journals, newsletters and magazines directed at the police community, so the information produced by the Research Branch would be contained in these sources. Furthermore, the Research Branch produces the Canadian Police College Journal, a quarterly publication which is "devoted to the objectives of increasing the exchange of police related information within and beyond the Canadian police community, to the advancement of the police profession, and to a greater awareness of policing by the general public" (Canadian Police College Journal, Journal Policy). Some of the articles in the journal are written by members of the Research Branch (in a random perusal of fifteen articles in six

journals, three articles were written by Research Branch staff; some are written by the resource people who give course sessions (in the same perusal, five articles were written by resource people); and the remainder are written by interested outside parties (the remaining seven articles were all written by either academics or public servants involved in law enforcement). Thus, the Journal provides an outlet for the College's staff and resource people to publish their work.

The Research Branch is headed by a Civilian Member of the RCMP who is a Ph.D. in Sociology. Under him are 5 other Ph.D.s. These staff members conduct research, attend conferences and present papers, and conduct class sessions in some of the College's courses. For example, during one Executive Development Course, the head of the Research Branch presented an afternoon's session on "Future Issues in Law Enforcement" after attending a conference on this topic.

5.4 The Executive Development Course

5.4.1 Goals and Objectives

As described in a College Information Brochure publication, the Executive Development Course (EDC) is an advanced course designed for "police executives" which "presents principles, concepts, ideas and issues critical to the area of law enforcement management." Specifically, for the 25 to 28 candidates in each of the 5 courses offered each year, the EDC "provides a means for law enforcement leadership to further design its purpose, values and goals ... [and] is committed to excellence in leadership and to developing the ability to influence and manage change" (EDC Course Training Standard, 1.2.1).

According to the Course Training Standard, the general objective of EDC is to prepare candidates in the course "to analyze current issues, forecast the impact and effect of those issues, study probability and alternatives for the future, and thereby influence the future of law enforcement" (EDC Course Training

Standard, 1.2.3). The specific objectives of the Executive Development Course are listed in the Course Training Standard.

To achieve these objectives, candidates spend six weeks at the College following a rigorous program of modules, which are 1, 2 or 3 day sessions. Generally these modules are taught by professionals from Canadian university programs, and professional consultants, as well as retired police officers. (See Appendix II: Course Schedule, for a complete, day by day overview of the course).

5.4.2 Class Location

The three Executive Development Courses that I attended were offered in a second floor classroom set aside specifically for this purpose (See Appendix III for a detailed map of the classroom). The classroom is a bright, sunny room with a bank of windows facing South. The desks are long rows of tables with comfortable chairs (two to four candidates sit at each table). The tables can be arranged in a variety of patterns, depending on the course coordinators, such as a half-moon or little groupings of 3 or 4 candidates facing the blackboard, where there is a screen and an overhead projector. The walls are covered with information: Course Schedule; Fitness Schedule (there is a daily fitness activity such as volleyball, swimming, jogging, or cycling organized by the Phys-ed Staff. Candidates are expected, but not forced, to participate. See Appendix IV for a Fitness Schedule); Nominal Roll (the names, ranks, addresses and phone numbers of all the course candidates); Social Activities; newspaper clippings about policing; and cartoons and drawings clipped from newspapers and magazines or created by former EDC candidates.

As well, there are posters titled "Diary Dates", which have the dates of class elections, assignment due dates, and any social activities that have been planned by the course candidates. For example, for week four in one course the

following social events were listed on a poster on the wall: "Tuesday — Movie Night; Wednesday — Barbecue at 5:30; Thursday — Lunch in Officers Mess at 11:30 (La Lunch)." There are also sign-up sheets for the Course Electives (See Appendix II: Course Schedule) that the candidates take for a one day and a two day period during the course, such as computer training, media relations, and intrapersonal awareness.

At the back of the classroom is a desk with two chairs. At this desk sits whoever might be observing the class session, such as one or both of the course coordinators, the course director, and me, the researcher. This spot, about three feet from the last row of desks, offers a clear vantage point of the classroom, and of the candidates, or of their backs at least,

Also at the back of the classroom are two tables. One has college publications and information as well as samples of former candidates' final written projects and other essays for the candidates' to look at. The other table has a stapler, glue, pens and highlighters, sheets of looseleaf, recent class handouts, and cue cards. These materials are available for the candidates, if they need them during class.

For more elaborate creative construction (such as making overhead transparencies, posters, flipcharts, and so on, for class presentations) the candidates use a room down the hall which is equipped with the necessary tools and equipment, including three computers and a photocopier. This room is used by all course candidates at the college, not just the EDC candidates.

The EDC classroom is used for all the lectures, except those that are off-campus, such as computer skills, which is offered downtown at a computer training centre. When the class breaks up for "syndicate work" or group discussion of 7 or 8 people on a specific topic according to the class session, one of the small groups stays in the classroom while the other 2 or 3 groups use

assigned syndicate rooms in the building. All the groups meet back at the classroom, however, to present their findings.

5.4.3 People involved in EDC

The College Director

During the period of research, there were two Directors. The first replaced by a new Director about halfway through the research. These personnel changes occur about every 2 or 3 years, and the College Director is appointed by the staffing and personnel officers in the RCMP. The Director's job is to oversee all of the courses offered by the college.

Course Director

The Course Director, supervises the work of the course coordinators, discussed below. He meets with the coordinators, ensures that the course is running smoothly, visits the class periodically to check on things, and deals with problems that the candidates may have.

Course Coordinators

The course is planned, organized and run by one or two Coordinators (and their supervisor) who set up the delivery of the sessions and then attend (usually one of the coordinators attends at a time) to evaluate the course, the candidates, and the resource people. As well, the coordinators beg'n each day's session by making announcements, dealing with problems, complaints, and so on, and then introducing the day's session and resource person.

The course coordinators meet with the resource person periodically before the course begins to discuss the instruction techniques, objectives, and so on. The coordinators expect the resource people to teach the courses using a variety of instructional techniques. These include lecturing, discussion, and small group exercises, or syndicates, as they are called.

The course coordinators attend the lectures in order to conduct these ongoing evaluations of the candidates, but also to monitor the resource people's performances. Specifically, the coordinators listen to the presentation and judge whether the resource person is following the objectives, is staying on track, is using a variety of teaching techniques, and is maintaining the interest and attention of the candidates. This evaluation is based on whether the resource people heed the Course Training Standard, (See below for a discussion of the Course Training Standard) which was prepared by the course coordinators and their supervisor, and then approved by the College Director. There is, however, flexibility, in that if the candidates seem to need or want more time on a particular topic then the resource person can and should spend the time, even if it means leaving something else out.

The resource people are given feedback, based on these evaluations a number of times. If there is need, the coordinators will offer the resource person feedback during the session, for example if something has been misunderstood by the candidates. As well, the resource person will be given a feedback sheet written up by the candidates after each session. If necessary, the coordinators will also communicate their feedback — in the form of advice and constructive feedback — if there appears to be a problem in the resource person's session.

After each Friday session, the course coordinators rearrange the seating in the classroom (See below for a description of the EDC classroom) by moving the candidates' name cards to different seats from where they were the previous week. Thus, each candidate will arrive on the Monday to find him or herself sitting in a different location from when he or she left the classroom on the Friday. The coordinators explain that by controlling the seating arrangements, they can, to some extent, influence the interactions that go on. For example, after two particularly outspoken candidates were seated side by side the first week of one

course, the coordinators decided to put a quiet, older, more serious candidate between them for the next week, hoping that this would calm them down. Thus, though the coordinators do not actually teach the course material, they nonetheless can ensure that the resource person maintains control over what transpires in the classroom.

Other College Staff

Support for the Executive Development Course also is provided for the course by the Administrative Staff, who do secretarial work and take care of room arrangements, and the cleaning staff, who clean the classrooms.

The Commissionaires, or retired armed forces personnel, also are involved in the candidates' experience. These men (entirely) sit at the reception desks of all the buildings and verify identification, because the college is designated a high security and thus all visitors must have a pass card, and be accompanied by an authorized person. That is, unless a person is at the college on official business (ie. a resource person, a course candidate, or a staff person) he or she must sign in a register and be accompanied by one of these authorized people. Everyone who is authorized must wear, at all times, an ID card which is plainly visible to the Commissionaire. Thus, the Commissionaires have daily contact with everyone who enters the buildings, and learn most people's first names.

Resource People

The actual delivery of the EDC is provided by professionals hired from within the police community and from the academic community. These resource people, as they are called, are selected to provide a high quality program which "has been structured to bring candidates together with scholars and practitioners to explore effective means of anticipating and planning for current and future management challenges" (EDC Course Training Standard, 1.2.1).

According to one of the course coordinators, the real role of the resource people is to "act as a catalyst ... to plant the seed so that the candidates will discuss the issues among themselves." Furthermore, according to the coordinator, a lot of the learning in EDC goes on at night, when the candidates are discussing the day's course material, as well as when they are sitting in the classroom

Candidates

From 25 to 28 candidates are selected for each course, and because the course is perceived as important to a senior officer's career advancement, these positions in the course can be coveted. According to the Course Training Standard, the Selection Criteria are as follows:

a.   If the department has 15 to 40 police personnel, only the chief qualifies.

b.   If the department has more than 40 personnel, then the following qualify: an officer confirmed in the rank of inspector; or the civilian equivalent or higher with three years in that rank to fully benefit from the course content (Course Training Standard, I.2.4).

Thus, only senior officers are eligible for the course, the reasoning is that these officers will most benefit from the course. In fact, one member of an EDC class told me that only "climbers" would be taking EDC, because these people were looking to advance their careers as much as possible.

To select course candidates, positions on the Executive Development Course are allocated to provincial police commissions by the college, depending on the police population. Then, the police commissions reallocate positions to each of the police departments within the province. Next, the police departments select the candidates that they want to send on the course. Therefore, if a police officer would like to attend an EDC, it is likely that he or she would have to make this desire clear to his or her superiors.

So far, according to one of the course coordinators, most of the candidates on EDC have been men, although there have been women on the course. The explanation for this phenomenon is that there are not yet enough highly ranked women in the RCMP or other police forces. It is anticipated by the course coordinators that in the future, as more women are hired into these high ranking positions in the police forces, they will attend the EDC.

As for ethnicity, the majority of the candidates are white, with a small minority (one or two per course) being black. According to the course coordinator, the same explanation as for the women holds: not enough high ranked members of ethnic minorities exist in the police forces for them to have reached the higher ranks, and thus they are not in a position to take the course. The few black police officers who have attended EDC have tended to be from the Caribbean or the West Indies, and not from Canadian police forces.

Candidates from police forces in other countries have, in fact, requested to attend EDC. In 1991, there were candidates from police forces in Switzerland, Jamaica, Antigua, New Zealand, Australia, Bermuda, and France. According to the coordinator, the college encourages this sort of exchange to offer a more international perspective for the candidates rather than just a Canadian perspective. There is an average of about 120 foreign students a year at the Canadian Police College, taking a number of the different course offerings.

The ages of the course candidates usually ranges from 35 - 55 years old, which would put them anywhere from 25 to 1 year away from retirement.

5.4.4 Curriculum

The Executive Development Course is divided into four major areas of police management, according to the Course Training Standard: Individual Development; Police in Society; Organizational Behaviour; and Personnel issues. Within each of these areas fall all of the course modules. In the Course Training

Standard, the objectives of the four areas are defined, along with a description of the topics and issues to be discussed in each one.

A. Individual Development

The main emphasis in this area is the personal growth and development, according to his or her own needs and interests, of each candidate. The modules included in this area are mainly covered during the first week of the course. Course candidates are taught, on the third day of the course, about the adult learning process, in order to prepare them for the intense six weeks of learning that they are supposed to do at the college. Finally, in this area there are electives (see below) which are designed, according to the Course Training Standard, to enhance the candidates' self awareness and personal development.

The modules that would be included in Individual Development are: *Lifestyles* (fitness, stress management, risk factors and nutrition); *Adult Learning*; *Written Communication*; and One-day and two-day electives (see descriptions below).

B. Police in Society

"Central to this module is the idea that the police role and function have evolved over time in concert with the socio-economic and political development of society" (Course Training Standard, 1.2.2). Thus, this area is supposed to give candidates an understanding of this process and their place in it, as well the opportunity to study the general role of the police in society. Specifically, according to the Course Training Standard, "Police must be prepared to challenge paradigms and deal with such issues as diversity, globalization, and society changes if they are to be effective in the future" (Course Training Standard,

1.2.2). To achieve this, the following topics are to be covered:

- thinking globally, acting locally
  alternative futures
- information revolution
- cross cultural mind sets
- cultural economics
- post industrial world
- longevity revolution
- trends in values and lifestyles
- thinking strategically

These topics are covered during the second week, which includes Values, Police in Society (a sociological and historical examination of policing), legal issues of policing, and future trends in law enforcement.

C. Organizational Behaviour

According to the Course Training Standard, "a major new factor in police management is severe resource limitations, a factor that will persist through this decade" (Course Training Standard, 1.2.3). Based on this premise, the course is designed to cover aspects of leadership, strategic management, the process of change, organizational communications, resource allocation, and program budgeting and evaluation, and microtechnology in order to train police managers to better use the limited resources they have.

D. Personnel Issues

Because of the nature and severity of personnel problems facing police, according to the Course Training Standard, this is a critical area of study for police managers. To deal with the problems associated with police forces where there is little room for advancement as the members age, new skills are necessary, and these are to be covered in this area.

The topics of this area revolve around research, writing and communication skills, which are considered important for the police managers to understand and guide personnel.

Two of the topics to be included are project proposal instruction, and project design and format. These topics are included in the Program planning, Program budgeting, and program evaluation modules, during the fifth week of the course. Research skills are discussed during the first week, during the Research Methods module.

As well, oral communication skills are to be developed, both through theory (a one day module on Oral Communication skills) and practice (there are numerous opportunities to present information to the rest of the class).

5.4.5 Electives

Three days of the course which are different from this typical day are the one-day, on the Friday of the first week, and two-day electives, on the Tuesday and Wednesday of the last week. For these days, candidates choose which of three options are most relevant and interesting to themselves. The options are:

One-day electives:

A)   Computer Skills

Candidates who choose this elective are to have no previous computer experience. For instruction and hands-on training, they go to a computer consultant in downtown Ottawa where they are taught, the basics in microcomputer technology. The candidates are trained in DOS and Wordperfect.

B)   Personal Awareness

Candidates in this session (which, interestingly, is not included in the Course training Standard) spend the day undergoing a series of exercises designed to enhance their self knowledge and personal awareness.

C) Media Relations

This session is designed to enhance the skill of police managers at dealing more effectively with the media. Staff and an actual television interviewer are used to interview candidates, to give them practice in a number of different situations.

Two-day Electives

A) Social Protocol

Because police executives are often expected to attend social functions and events on behalf of their organization, to which they may be unaccustomed, this elective is designed to prepare candidates for these duties. According to the Course Training Standard, some of the functions that candidates may need to prepare for would be planning royal visits, escorting VIPs, organizing banquets, or large social events.

Though most of this session is theoretical, candidates also practice the skills in a practical exercise — a formal dinner — at the end of the session.

B) Journal

Though there is no description of this elective in the Course Training Standard, it can be described as a self awareness workshop in which the candidates spend the two days at a retreat centre in Kingston Ontario. According to one of the Course Coordinators, this location was selected because it is quiet and away from the activities at the college and thus offers a chance for the candidates to focus on their own feelings, beliefs and values while completing a series of written exercises in their journal.

5.4.6 Course Training Standard

For each of the course modules a detailed outline is prepared, following a set of prescribed headings.

The first item for each course module is a **Task Description** which is a general description of why the module is included in the course. For Organizational Communication, for example, the Task Description is as follows:

> Police executives are required to identify and eliminate barriers to communication and facilitate effective two-way communication within their organizations (Course Training Standard, II.13.1).

Next is the **Instructor Centred Statement** which states what the College expects the resource person to do. The Instructor Centred Statement includes the specific topics to be covered in the module. For example, in Organizational Communication "There should be an examination of the police force communication process in terms of its orientations to vertical and lateral communication flow. There should be a discussion of a need for force communication and messages related to rank, structure, recognition and promotion, goal setting, participation as defined by the model and examined and evaluated for congruence with stated force objectives" (Course Training Standard, II.13.1).

Also included in the Instructor Centred Statement is a description of how the session will be taught. In Organizational Communication, for example, "the primary focus should be on a "workshop" environment in which participants assess their organization in terms of its values and the processes by which these values are being communicated. Strategies for developing more effective communication and message value congruence should be sought through syndicate exercises and in depth discussion of the problems identified from previous police force communication research" (Course Training Standard, II.13.1).

The resource people who currently teach the different sessions participated in a three-day series of meetings to discuss and negotiate the contents of each of the course topics. Although the class sessions are controlled by the Course Training Standard, the resource people did have some input into the Course Standard, and thus have some control over how the sessions are taught and what is included in each session.

The next section, **Teaching Points**, lists the content (definitions, models, ideas and theories) that should be covered by the resource person. These provide something of a checklist for the course coordinators as well, when they are doing their monitoring and evaluation of the resource people. For example, in the Organizational Communication session, the resource person is expected to cover:

Introduction·
- the communication of values
- communication and culture
- police force ideology: front line versus management
- Organization as a communication process and message generator
- defining values

Other Organization Cultures:
- how values are communicated

Police Force Communication Module:
- communication subsystems
- problems from the firing line: common force problems)

Interpersonal Communication:
- open communication.

A list of **Objectives**, the specific things that each candidate will be able to do following the session, is the next item in the Course Training Standard. These are very concrete actions, such as "given a case study, identify the barriers to interpersonal communication within an organization ...[and] recommend solutions to correct the problem" (Course Training Standard, II.13.2) in Organizational Communication.

Finally, a list of **References** for each topic is included. According to the course coordinators, these reference lists were solicited from the resource people themselves, and are supposedly updated frequently as new publications become available. In fact, many of the course topics have numerous references from 1989 and 1990, so these reference lists are indeed kept up-to-date.

5.4.7 Evaluation Procedures

On completion of each module, candidates fill in an evaluation of the resource person, and the module itself, which is submitted to the course coordinator, and then in turn to College administrators for review. Occasionally, these evaluations are also submitted to the resource person for his or her information. For example, if candidates gave a particularly negative review of a resource person, then the course coordinators would probably not give the actual written evaluations to the resource but would inform him or her verbally of the problems, criticisms and suggestions. If a resource person had received negative evaluations in the past but had changed his or her lecture, style, or some other aspect of the session, and subsequently was receiving positive evaluations, then the coordinators would probably submit these to the resource person for positive reinforcement.

Likewise, the course candidates are each evaluated by the course coordinators and an evaluation report is submitted to the candidate's chief, or supervisor. The evaluation process is well known to the candidates, many of whom anticipate a promotion on returning from the course. A poor evaluation, therefore, could negatively influence the candidate's chances of promotion, and of this they are well aware.

There is, interestingly, no formal evaluation conducted of the effects of the course. That is, after the candidates leave the Police College, there is no follow up to ascertain whether the course has had a favourable impact on the candidate's

performance of his or her job, nor, in fact, whether the course has had any sort of impact at all. Thus, although the course is thoroughly evaluated throughout the session, once the candidates leave there is no formal follow-up by the course administrators.

5.4.8 Assignments

Candidates are required to submit 3 essays, which are evaluated by resource people. The first assignment is a 1000 word opinion paper, on any topic, submitted to the resource person who gives the Adult Learning and Written Communication sessions. She provides feedback on these papers but no letter grade.

The second assignment is a 1500 word paper related to "Police in Society" (one of the course modules) which is evaluated and graded by one of the resource people. Finally, candidates are also required to submit a 2500 word research paper on a topic related to police management. This paper is evaluated and graded by another resource person.

Interestingly, although the candidates are encouraged to use the computers to write their papers, and many do, some of them write out their papers by hand and then ..end them back to their offices (as far away as Vancouver Island) for typing. The secretaries then courier them back to the candidates for submission. Alternatively, the candidates hire someone, usually one of the College secretaries to type their papers.   The evaluations received by the candidates on these papers are also given to the course coordinators, who incorporate them into the evaluations of the candidates which are submitted to the candidate's superiors. Thus, there is some stress associated with writing the papers, especially for those candidates who have not been in a classroom situation for twenty or thirty years.

5.4.9 A Typical Day in EDC

For a more clear understanding of exactly what happens every day for the course candidates, this next section will follow a typical candidate through the daily routine. For interest, we will look at the daily routine for the first day of the two day organizational communication session, given by Dr. Ray Adamson, of the School of Business and Economics, Wilfred Laurier University.

0645 Arise in private room. Use toilet, etc. in own room. Shower and shave. Get dressed. (Some of the candidates get up as early as 6 a.m. to either swim, walk, or run.

0730 Go to cafeteria for breakfast (No money is exchanged, because the candidate's own police force would have already paid a set fee for the duration of the course). Meet up with any number of other candidates who are also having breakfast, sit with them at one of the long tables that seat six people, enjoy the view of farm-like fields, and the Ottawa River.

0755 Go to classroom. Take seat and chat with neighbours.

0800 Listen to announcements from class president, Social director, Athletic Director, and anyone else who wants to say anything. For example, the Social Director might announce that there is going to be a movie night that night (ie. videos will be rented from a nearby shop, and a VCR borrowed to show the videos in the floor lounge). Perhaps someone else will announce something like the birthday of someone else. This information session, which lasts until 8:15 a.m., is chaired by the class president.

0815 Course Coordinator makes announcements (For example, that certain forms, such as travel expenses should be filled out, that everyone should sign up for their two day electives, or that Fitness Retesting has been postponed) and answers questions of the candidates. He or she introduces the session's resource person, Dr. Ray Adamson, giving some background and an overview of the topic.

0830 Dr. Adamson goes to the front of the room. Many of the other resource people will begin their session with a joke (of the canned variety). Ray Adamson is older and more serious than the other resource people, however, so he simply begins by introducing his topic. He begins his lecture. The candidates take few notes, only occasionally jotting anything down.

0920 The resource calls for a "stand-up break" (perhaps after receiving a signal from the course coordinator, who is sitting at the back of the room). (He or she comes in and out throughout the sessions, slipping into a chair at the back desk. He or she usually arrives 5 or 10 minutes before a scheduled

break, and thus makes sure that the break is given by the resource people. A stand-up break means just going out into the hall to stand and chat with other candidates (except for the smokers, usually five or six of the candidates, who may dash outside for a quick smoke.

0930 Back into the classroom for continuation of lecture.

1015 Coffee Break. Candidates and resource person, and maybe course coordinator, all go to cafeteria for a coffee, and maybe a donut or muffin.

1035 Back to classroom for lecture.

1130 Lunch Break. The candidates mainly all go to the cafeteria, where they line up and select the meal of the day, such as chili, or spaghetti, or liver and/or take a sandwich, dessert, and a drink. The candidates are allowed to eat as much as they want. Sit with other candidates and chat while eating. Go back to room to work on any reading or assignment, if necessary. Pick up dry cleaning, if necessary (from the on-campus depot).

1230 Back to the classroom for lecture. The first hour is spent doing syndicate work, so the candidates go to their designated rooms with their syndicate group (the groups are set up by the coordinators and changed every week so that each candidate will have contact with all the course members). The purpose of the syndicate groups is for the resource person to give the groups a problem, such as a case analysis, to discuss as a group. If chosen "Syndicate Leader" by the group (everyone gets a turn at this — sometimes a person will be named Syndicate Leader if he or she arrives first or last, if he or she has not been leader yet, or if he or she seems to just take the initiative by picking up the chalk or felt pen and writing on the blackboard or flipchart) the candidate will be required to write the group's decision/findings on a flip chart and then present the information to the class.

1345 Come back to the classroom for the syndicate group presentations. Listen to other groups' presentations, ask a question or make a comment, then present own group's findings. Each Syndicate leader spends 5 - 15 minutes presenting, using the flip charts, which are usually thrown in the garbage afterward. Resource person does a "wrap up," by summarizing the main points and conclusions brought up by each group.

1415 Coffee Break.

1435 Back to classroom for more lecture by resource person.

1530 Class over. Go back to room, collect gym clothes or bathing suit and go to gymnasium for fitness activity. (Some candidates skip this altogether, although they are encouraged to attend. Instead, they may meet congregate up in the lounge — a sunny lobby on each of the floors in the building where they all sleep, which has lounge chairs and a couple of

coffee tables. They might bring out some liquor and mix and sit talking, possibly smoking, and drinking. Some candidates do this in their room with two or three other candidates. Some candidates may just retire to their room to work on their paper or to rest.)

The planned fitness activity might be volleyball or aquacizes, according to whatever is scheduled that day (See Appendix IV for the Fitness Schedule). If the candidate prefers, he or she can use one of the available mountain bikes and go for a ride along the Western Parkway, possibly with other candidates. Or, he or she can do a workout on the equipment in the gym, on his or her own, or with other candidates, or go for a walk or run.

1700 After showering and changing at the gym, the candidate may join the others for a drink on their floor, or he might go the Lounge, which is located in the basement of the sleeping building, has a giant screen T.V. and a bartender, and is one of the only place on the campus that smoking is allowed. After a drink, the candidate might go to the cafeteria for the scheduled dinner, or he and a few other candidates might go to a restaurant in the city, or order a pizza. This decision might depend on how long he spends at the Lounge, because the cafeteria closes at 6 p.m.

2000 After dinner, if there is no social activity planned, the candidate may work on one of his assignments. Since this typical day is the Organizational Communication day, and since this day falls in the middle of the fourth week of the course, the candidate would probably be working on the final research paper. Or, if not working on course assignments, meet with other candidates to play cards in the lounge.

2100 Meet other candidates in the lounge for a beer, chat with candidates from other courses, watch television (hockey or football).

2230 Go to bed.

The other course days when lectures are given would be similar to this typical day, with variations perhaps in the physical fitness activities — an organized volleyball game against the candidates of another course, for example — and with variations in the evening's activities. Throughout the course there are a number of social activities organized by the social director, or by anyone else who would like to put something together. Activities could include: barbecues (the food is ordered through the cafeteria, and each candidate pays a small fee (approximately $5) to eat steak at the barbecue rather than the regularly scheduled cafeteria meal; movie nights (video rental); going out for dinner to a

restaurant or going out to a bar (by taxi and car — candidates who live close to the college may drive their own car there, for which they are reimbursed gas and mileage; cycling to a restaurant or bar. Thus, the evenings pass with a variety of activities, as well as work on the course assignments.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has given a complete overview of the Canadian Police College, the Executive Development Course, and the course candidates. As well, an in-depth examination of a typical day on the Executive development Course was covered, in order to give the reader a more clear understanding of the research site, as well as the experience of the researcher, who participated on a daily basis in the routine. What is clear from this chapter is that the Executive Development Course is a highly structured experience for the candidates, held in an institution where procedures are known and followed by the staff and the course candidates. This structure attempts to achieve a uniformity for the candidates, such that each candidate on a course will have the same experience, and that each course will be pretty much the same. Clearly, within these guidelines there is variation, and in the actual enactment of each course differences are observed, as a result of the different backgrounds and experiences of the candidates, the coordinators, and the resource people. Thus, the reality -- including the symbolic language forms — that is constructed during a course is unique, as are the meanings and understandings that each candidate takes away.

In the next chapter, which outlines the research methodology, the means by which the data were gathered — observation, questionnaires, sociometric analysis and semi-structured interviews — will be discussed. As well, the next chapter will provide an examination of two methodological concerns, the issue of private versus public selves in research, and the impact of the researcher's presence on the data.

CHAPTER 6: METHODOLOGY

6.1 Overview

As was discussed in previous chapters, the goal of this study was to identify, categorize and provide definitions for the meanings of the symbolic language forms used by the members of a temporary group of police officers. The meanings were to be those that the group members constructed socially throughout their six week Executive Development Course, and which they used as if shared. Clearly then, methods such as pencil and paper tests would not produce the kind of data required to be able to draw informed conclusions about the meanings themselves and the degree of sharedness existing between the group members. Instead, it was decided that an intensive field study period, combined with more quantitative methods based on the observations, would produce the most useful data. Specifically, detailed notes of the activities and conversations (exact written records) would be necessary, as well as some questionnaire data, such as candidates' demographics, personal goals and objectives, perceptions about the course and values and beliefs.

These data — the qualitative and the quantitative — were necessary in order to provide the material on which the semi-structured interviews were based, because the interviews were designed to explore and probe the meanings that each member of the group held for the various symbolic language forms identified through these other methods. Thus, the observations and questionnaires were to uncover the symbolic language forms used by the candidates — metaphors and jokes — and the interviews were designed to identify the meanings held by the candidates.

6.2 Subjects

6.2.1 Course Candidates

The candidates of one section of the Executive Development Course at the Canadian Police College were studied. There were 27 people enroled in EDC 91-5 (October through December, 1991). There were 26 men and one woman, ranging in age from 38 to 53 years old (with an average of 46.3 years old) with a range of policing experience from 17 to 31 years (with an average of 22.4 years). The ranks of the candidates were: 1 Directeur, 1 Deputy Chief, 1 Chief Inspector, 3 Staff Inspectors, 10 inspectors, 6 RCMP Superintendents, and 3 Civilians. The candidates were all middle level managers in their organizations, all reporting to one, two or 3 supervisors, with the majority having just one supervisor. The candidates had a range of 1 to 470 subordinates directly under their supervision. More specifically, four candidates had more than 200 subordinates, eight had more than 100 subordinates, twelve had more than 50, and six candidates had less than 10 subordinates.

As far as previous experience at the Police College, only one candidate (a Civilian) had never attended a course at the Canadian Police College; the other 26 candidates had all attended at least one course previously.

All candidates except six returned to their homes during the mid-term break (a long weekend after the second week). The six who did not return home lived too far away to make the long trip worthwhile, so one went to Toronto with another candidate, three had their wives visit in Ottawa (and spent the weekend in hotels), and two visited friends in the Ottawa area. Throughout the course, there were various comings and goings in the evenings and weekends. No one is required to stay at the college every night (although it appears to be an implicit understanding that it is important to spend at least some nights there, in order to participate in networking) so those candidates who lived in the Ottawa area

would spend some nights at their homes. These candidates spent every weekend at home. Of the candidates who lived within driving distance, all went home on some weekends. That is, on a given weekend, some or most of these candidates would have left for the weekend, sometimes accompanied by one of the candidates who lived too far away to travel home for a weekend.

The following chart describes the police forces that each member of the class belonged to:

Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). 6 class members were RCMP sworn members from the following detachments:
Ottawa Headquarters (2 people)
One detachment in Northern B.C.
One detachment in Northern Alberta
One detachment in the Yukon
One detachment in New Brunswick

Municipal forces: The smaller forces have been described regionally, rather than by naming the city or municipality, to protect the confidentiality of the candidates (Number in brackets indicates number of people in the organization):

Southwestern Ontario: (34)
Toronto (3 people) (7000)
Southwestern Ontario (160)
Suburban city, National Capital Region (196)
Montreal (4660)
Calgary (2 people) (1600)
Southwestern Ontario (163)
Edmonton (1500)
Vancouver (1500)
Bermuda (470)

Regional Forces:
Niagara RPF (800)
Hamilton-Wentworth RP (924)
Peel RPF (1400)
Durham RPS (700)

Other:
Ports Canada Police (25)

Civilian: 2 from RCMP (HQ) in Ottawa. One of these worked in computer security, in a department which provides consultation to federal government departments. The other RCMP civilian did not describe his work location. The

third civilian in the class was employed by a provincial government department as an advisor to police forces across Ontario.

6.2.1.1 Gender issues

Because there was only one woman in the course, it was clear that her presence had an influence on the constructed reality of the Executive Development Course. The degree to which her presence influenced the findings, however, may have been minimized by the manner with which she interacted with the rest of the group. For example, she told me, during her interview, that she considered herself to be "one of the guys" and explained that this was why she was "more comfortable with the guys than maybe some other women would be." In contrast, she said, "there are women who would have a very feminist stance, and go totally the other way" (meaning not integrate themselves in order to be one of the guys). As evidence, the candidate cited an example of a woman she knew who had been on another EDC who had not been part of the joking, of the activities and the sitting around in the evenings together drinking and talking, and who had spent most of the time in her room, working on her papers. She went on to say:

> "Sometimes I think: "What am I doing playing murder ball with the boys, I mean, you know, playing floor hockey and volleyball and... I would never have survived, if I couldn't fit in, because I've always worked in an all-male environment, and I've always been the only woman, and it's only the last maybe year, or two years that there have been women coming into the office" (DS).

The female candidate did appear to me to be well liked and well respected by the other candidates, and she was certainly integrated, as evidenced by numerous things:

- many times when I was in "A" Block I observed DS in sweatpants or tights sitting in someone's room having a drink with two or three other candidates;
- she was nominated and voted for by 3 people in the election of the president;

- During one syndicate group discussion, at the end of the third week, I observed a conversation about the fitness class the previous evening when DS had been hit in the head with a medicine ball:

AC: "She's hanging in there real good. "She's a good person."
HE: "She knows her stuff, too."

- she actively participated in the group activities such as water polo and murder ball, and seemed to be considered as much a part of the group as anyone else.

Along with being actively involved in the daily life of the EDC candidates, the female candidate was able to be part of the group by accepting the teasing and joking, and laughing along with jokes, even when, as she explained during her interview, she was sometimes thinking: "DS, why are you laughing, why do you find that funny? You shouldn't." Thus, by her integrative behaviours and the respect she garnered from the rest of the candidates, the female candidate appeared to fit in well and be well accepted.

As a woman, I also found it important to ensure that I did not excessively influence the interactions of the group members. It was likely that the male candidates were more aware of their language (after swearing, for example, a candidate would usually excuse himself to me) and their behaviour (for example, I observed candidates looking back at my observation table for my reaction to comments, jokes and so on), but I tried to make them feel at ease to enhance the authenticity of the data in a number of ways, as is thoroughly discussed in Section 6.7 of this chapter.

6.2.2 Staff Members

The staff members who coordinate the course also provided data, both when they attended the class sessions themselves, and during their discussions and meetings about the course. There were two course coordinators, one who had coordinated one previous Executive Development Course, and one who had

never coordinated an EDC before this one. The course supervisor had been in charge of the unit for three years.

6.2.3 The temporary nature of the EDC group

Because of the temporary nature of the Executive Development Course group, it is more likely, according to Miles (1964) that the candidates would come to share a "common language with special meanings" (467). Specifically, Miles (1964) proposes that four features of temporary groups — those with a predetermined time limit working toward some goal — encourage intense communication among participants. First, during the temporary group's existence, communication to groups outside is far less than communication within the group, and thus the participants spend more time and energy communicating with each other than they usually would and this fosters the development of shared meanings (Miles, 1964). Second, according to Miles (1964) "new channels of information transmission tend to develop between persons whose roles in former permanent systems have kept them apart" (467-468), and the use of these channels, apparently, would result in more intense communications. Third, Miles (1964) argues, the increased interaction of the members of temporary groups leads to increased liking, and thus increased self-disclosure by the members, which in turn leads to increased knowledge about each other. Finally, because this is a situation of equal status relationships, Miles (1964) argues, group members do not have the right to withhold information (as they would in their daily lives) from each other, and thus there is increased communication, and increased opportunities for shared meanings.

Temporary groups have special characteristics, and, as Miles (1964) has pointed out, there are a number of features which lead to an increase in the frequency, intensity, and openness of communications, which, in turn, lead to a shared system of symbols and meanings. Because of this expectation, that the

members of a temporary group would share meanings more than the members of a permanent group would (Miles, 1964), the Executive Development Course group offers a unique and potentially fruitful set of data.

6.3 Design

The data collected in this dissertation were mainly gathered by fieldwork, using a variety of techniques and methods. Triangulation, as this approach is called, involves "multiple strategies of field research" (Burgess, 1984, 144) to produce data which are more valid than those obtained using only one method (Burgess, 1984; Fetterman, 1989). Specifically, this study used methodological triangulation, or a number of methods, to examine the same object of study (Denzin, 1970). The methods, including observation, semi-structured interviews, before and after questionnaires, and the analysis of documents, was conducted over approximately ten months of on-site research, with an intensive six week participant-observer period. That is, for the first eight months, I spent from one to four days a week at the Canadian Police College, while for the last six weeks I spent from 7:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. (or later) five days a week. More specifically, the ten month period was spent as follows:

February to March 1991	Met all college staff, gathered data on the college and the Executive Development Course, attended planning sessions for the upcoming Executive Development Course, observed the two course coordinators as they prepared for the course.
March 11 to Ap. 19 1991	Attended, for 1 to 4 days a week, the EDC 91-2. Observed class sessions, syndicate discussions, spent time with candidates.
April 22 - 28	Observed course coordinators as they wrote evaluations of EDC 91-2 candidates, and as they prepared for EDC 91-3.
April 29 to June 7 1991	Attended, for 1 to 5 days a week, EDC 91-3, observed behaviour and activities of the course coordinators and other staff, attended meetings with coordinators, participated in course preparations (for example, helping to set the desks up on the Friday evening of each week for the following week).

June 1991	Observed and participated in post-course evaluations, spent time with coordinators.
Sept. 1991	Met new course coordinators, spent time with them.
Oct. 28 to Dec. 7 1991	Attended EDC 91-5 as a participant observer, every day, from 7:30 a.m. to at least 3:30 p.m. Observed all class sessions, participated in class activities, attended social functions, interviewed candidates, distributed questionnaires.
Jan. 1992	Followup questionnaires sent to each candidate's office, designed to produce personal and organizational profiles, and sociogram.
Jan. 1992 to Sep. 1992	Analysis of data and writing of the dissertation.

During the six week EDC data collection period described above, I used the following design:

1. *Observation of activity* to identify recurring patterns of speech, particularly recurring humour, metaphors and so on. I took extensive notes during observations (see discussion above), and these provided the data for the semi-structured interviews.

2. During the last two weeks of the course, *semi-structured interviews* with 24 of the 27 course candidates to identify individual meanings for the symbolic language forms used by the members. The data from the Analytic notes collected during observations provided the material on which I had the subjects focus during the individual semi-structured interviews. Specifically, I asked each candidate to define a number of the metaphors I had heard used, and to discuss a number of the jokes and humorous incidents, describing what they meant and why they were funny (or not funny). See Appendix V for the complete Interview Protocol.

3. *Two questionnaires were distributed* to the course candidates. The first questionnaire (See Appendix VI) was given on the second day of the course, and it identified demographics such as the candidates' backgrounds and experience,

as well as their personal goals, and their perceptions of the College's goals. There was a 100% (27 of 27) response rate on this questionnaire.

The second questionnaire (See Appendix VII) was given at the beginning of the sixth and final week of the course. This questionnaire examined candidates' impressions of the course, their goals, their suggestions for changes, their interpretations of the impact of the course, and their perceptions of the impact of having me there as researcher. There was a 67% (18 of 27) response rate on this questionnaire, probably low because of the timing of distribution. That is, because the candidates were scrambling to turn in their research papers, to pack, and to organize their things, it is possible that they were just too busy to bother completing and handing it in.

4. *A Sociometric Analysis was conducted*, to "determine the degree to which individuals in the group are accepted or rejected, and the basis for that acceptance or rejection" (Rosenfeld, 1973, 173). Two months after the course was completed, I sent each candidate the sociogram questionnaire (See Appendix XIII), as well as a brief questionnaire focusing on their organizational and personal profiles. For the sociogram, the candidates were asked to select, from all of the other candidates the person (or 3 people in 4 questions) for the following categories:

1. For a boss
2. To work with in a syndicate group (3 people)
3. To be marooned with on a desert island
4. To tell something personal to
5. To discuss a new idea with
6. To not work with in a syndicate group (3 people)
7. Most intelligent
8. As a friend
9. To kick out of a liferaft
10. For help on a problem
11. To invite to a party (3 people)
12. To not invite to a party (3 people)

Then, the candidates' selections were charted on a Sociogram, which is a "diagrammatic representation of the interrelationships in a group" (Rosenfeld, 1973, 177). Thus, the Sociogram indicated the various groupings and subgroupings of the course candidates. There was a 93% (25 of 27) return on this questionnaire, although one candidate did not include the sociogram, and one did not include the personal and organizational profiles (See Appendix IX).

5. *Official documents were studied*, including reports, the "Course Training Standard" (which include specific objectives and course outlines), and internal memos and letters, for reference to metaphors and other symbolic language.

6.4 Procedures

I attended the lectures of the Executive Development Course every day for the six weeks of the course to identify recurring symbolic language forms as they were used by the course candidates during class sessions. Specifically, I sat in the back of the classroom (See Appendix III for a map of the classroom) taking notes and observing behaviour during all class sessions, I sat in on syndicate discussions involving 7 or 8 people, and I sat with different groups of candidates at lunch and coffee breaks. As well, I participated in activities such as sports, barbecues, drinking, and so on, and in conversations to identify symbolic language forms used by members during casual conversation.

At the end of the fourth week of the course, I carefully studied the Analytic notes to identify a number of different symbolic language forms, in order to put together the semi-structured interview questions. A particular symbolic language form was selected for the interview protocol if it met any or all of the following criteria: it was idiosyncratic to this group; it had elicited laughter; it was repeated on more than one occasion.

Once a number of symbolic language forms had been identified, I conducted semi-structured interviews with 24 of the 27 course candidates to discern their

interpretations and definitions. These interviews lasted from 25 minutes to 120 minutes, depending on how much time was available, and how verbose the interviewee was. That is, if an interview was held at lunchtime (from 11:30 to 12:30), there was a limit of 40 minutes (after eating lunch) to talk, and thus I would have to guide the interviewee in order to cover all or most of the questions. If the interview was held in the evening, however, then there was enough time to allow the candidate to guide the discussion, and I would allow him or her to go more off-track, as long as all, or most, of the questions were covered. I conducted the interviews almost entirely in the rooms of the candidates, in order to ensure enough privacy that they would feel comfortable talking. The first two interviews, however, were each conducted in an empty classroom.

During the interviews, I explicitly asked subjects to define metaphors (by saying, for example: "Do you remember when the Director of the College, on the first day of the course, told the group that EDC was the "flagship course?" What does that mean?") or to define the humour behind a joke or humorous incident (By saying, for example: "Do you remember this joke: (retell the joke)? Did you laugh? Why was that funny? What did it mean?"). Once I had asked the question, I generally let the candidate take the response where he or she wanted to, in order to allow for freedom of thought. I would guide the candidates, though, when it seemed that they were a long way from the topic, by reminding them of the original question.

6.5 Treatment of the data

6.5.1 Observation data

The data acquired through the observations were recorded in the field notes under the following headings:

1. *Substantive Fieldnotes* — "a continuous record of the situations, events and conversations in which the researcher participates" (Burgess, 1984). These records were organized into the following sections:

- *Contextual data:* Notes on the conditions under which each set of observations was taken (Who was present, What was the activity, Where was the activity taking place, When were the observations/interview conducted, and so on);

- *Impressions:* The actual observations, transcripts of conversations, and behaviours.

2. *Methodological Notes* — "personal reflections on my activities in the field" (Burgess, 1984, 172). These methodological notes are meant to allow researchers to "consider their methods and speculate on ways in which these methods can be adopted, adapted and developed in particular settings" (Burgess, 1984, 172). Thus, validity was enhanced by this reflexive exercise of analyzing my own role, as researcher, and the impact of my presence, as researcher, on the setting under study;

3. *Analytic Notes* — "the preparation of preliminary analyses that are worked out in the field ... a set of ideas from the data itself" (Burgess, 1984, 174). These notes served as summaries indicating the "themes that have emerged, and concepts that can be developed, together with preliminary thoughts about the analytic framework" (Burgess, 1984, 174). In other words, these notes provided me with an ongoing analysis of the data to identify themes and patterns which then received attention in further observations. As well, these analytic notes provided the material on which the interviews, conducted during the last two weeks of the course, were based.

Once the data were collected and organized into the previous headings, they were then examined and categorized, according to whether they were examples of humour, metaphor, or .ocial rules.

6.5.2 Questionnaire data

The Demographics, final questionnaire and Sociogram (Personal and Organizational Profile section) were studied and tabulated, in order to extract means such as age, years of service, marital status, size of police force, years to retirement, and so on. The Sociogram results were tabulated into a two-fold table on which the names of the candidates were listed both horizontally and vertically, following Borgotta (1951). Candidates' choices were then placed in the boxes, for example a "1" to indicate that candidate A had selected candidate D as "a boss." This table allowed for the summation of the number of choices made and received by each candidate, and enabled a comparison of mutually selected candidates (ie. candidates who had selected each other for a category).

6.5.3 Interview data

The interviews were all transcribed verbatim by the researcher, by listening to the tape recorded conversations while entering them into the computer. The transcribed interviews were then printed out in order to compare individual candidates' responses to the questions, by content analysis.

6.6 Methodological concerns: Private versus Public selves

The question of the reality, or truthfulness of subjects responses, is rarely brought up in qualitative research texts, and in fact, seems to be avoided altogether. At issue here is not whether respondents are being outright dishonest, but rather, whether they are revealing their "true" private meanings, definitions and interpretations, or their prepackaged, carefully rehearsed public meanings.

It is clear that all people present themselves in a desirable way, most of the time, and that, in fact, social interaction may be a kind of dance of interpretation,

as those involved in a conversation strive to present themselves in the best possible, and relevant ways. Goffman (1959) argues that in interaction people are packaging themselves for interpretation, whether consciously or unconsciously. The packaged self that people present is called the "public self," while the "real" self, hidden from many or most people, is called the "private self" (Goffman, 1959). As Goffman (1959) points out, it is rather difficult to access the private meanings of people, particularly research subjects, who are not close to the researcher as friends and family would be:

> the "true" or "real" attitudes, beliefs and emotions of the individual can be ascertained only indirectly, through his avowals or through what appears to be involuntary expressive behaviour" (2).

Thus, although a person may believe that he or she is being truthful when responding to a questionnaire or an interview question, it is likely that he or she is responding according to a number of constraints and considerations, including:

- What the interviewer wants me to say.
- How I actually perceive myself.
- How I want to present myself.
- What would be appropriate for a person of my age, status, position, sex, political affiliation, religion, and so on to say.
- What would be the politically/socially correct thing to say.

In interaction, people present themselves to others, who then evaluate them, making judgments and conclusions about their personality, honesty, and integrity. These judgments are based on both what the people say, or their overt signals, and by what they do, or their covert signals. Goffman (1959) refers to these indicators as

> ... two radically different kinds of sign activity: the expression that [a person] *gives*, and the expression that he *gives off*. The first involves verbal symbols or their substitutes, which he uses admittedly and solely to convey the information that he and the others are known to attach to these symbols. This is communication in the narrow and traditional sense. The second involves a wide range of action that others can treat as symptomatic of the actor, the

> expectation being that the action was performed for reasons other
> than the information conveyed in this way (2. Italics in original).

In other words, an individual both gives information, overtly, and gives off information, perhaps without knowing it, such as when a person denies being nervous or uncomfortable, yet gives off the impression of nervousness through hand and facial gestures, tics, and other nonverbal signals.

Goffman (1959) further argues that not only do people interpret each other through the information that is given and given off, but that consideration should be given to the individual, and to the presentation that he or she makes of him or herself in public. That is, the private self, which is sometimes "given off" is separate from the public self, which is "given" to an audience. As Goffman (1959) puts it, the individual

> may wish [others] to think highly of him, or to think that he thinks
> highly of them, or to perceive how in fact he feels towards them, or
> to obtain no clearcut impression; he may wish to ensure sufficient
> harmony so that the interaction can be sustained, or to defraud, get
> rid of, confuse, mislead, antagonize, or insult them. Regardless of the
> particular objective which the individual has in mind and of his
> motive for having his objective, it will be in his interests to control
> the conduct of the others, especially their responsive treatment of
> him (3).

Thus, complete and unquestioning acceptance of what a person says, or the information that he or she "gives" would be foolish, according to Goffman, because whether they are aware of it or not, people are actively involved in the presentation of self in everyday life (Goffman, 1959). Sometimes this presentation of self is planned, perhaps to achieve a desired result, and sometimes it is spontaneous, and perhaps more "true," but all interaction, Goffman (1959) argues, is influenced by the dance of presentation and interpretation. As Goffman (1959) states, how an individual behaves will influence the interpretation of the situation that other people will hold. Furthermore, as described below, people are able to control the other people's interpretations about their behaviour:

> Sometimes the individual will act in a thoroughly calculating manner, expressing himself in a given way solely in order to give the kind of impression to others that is likely to evoke from them a specific kind of response he is concerned to obtain. Sometimes the individual will be calculating in his activity but be relatively unaware that this is the case. Sometimes he will intentionally and consciously express himself in a particular way, but chiefly because the tradition of his group or social status require this kind of expression, and not because of any particular response (other than vague acceptance or approval) that is likely to be evoked by those impressed by the expression" (Goffman, 1951, 6).

In the case of the Executive Development group, this desire to be accepted would probably be one of the stronger motivating factors in impression management. That is, in the highly structured and "cohesive" nature of the police culture, it is important to comply with "socially correct" behaviour. For example, one of the course candidates was not part of the central group, and this was in part because he gave off information that seemed to set him apart — for example not sitting with the group at lunch and coffee breaks. In response, the group showed him some unacceptance and disapproval. The group's disapproval of this candidate was demonstrated by the fact that no one made jokes to or about him, he was not invited into candidate's rooms for drinks, and no one seemed to particularly pay attention to him, other than when they discussed him, negatively, during interviews.

Under the pressure of these constraints to complete truthfulness discussed above, as well as other factors such as psychological barriers (for example, repressed information), it is extremely difficult for a researcher to ascertain any sort of "truth." Therefore, what is perhaps more useful is, firstly, an acknowledgement of this limitation, and then a celebration of it. That is, included in any analysis of human behaviour can be a discussion of the public and private selves of the subjects, and the data which illuminate both of these continually influential entities. This approach is rarely taken, however. Nonetheless, given the limitations discussed in this section, it is interesting that so much reliance is

placed on qualitative data, and that the usual area of concern is interviewer bias (cf. Burgess, 1984; Fetterman, 1989).

In the next section I will draw examples from the interview transcripts, as well as from my observational notes, to show that I observed both public and private information. Frequently, especially in interviews, when there was an awareness of being interviewed, candidates would answer my questions with definite care. That is, on certain topics, such as the use of sexist humour, candidates would appear to be careful about what they said, offering a public response, and in fact would sometimes contradict themselves. For example, when asked about a "dirty joke" many candidates would chuckle or laugh, and then report that they had either not found the joke funny or else found it inappropriate for the setting. At these times, I felt that the private meaning for the joke was that it was, in fact, funny, but that publicly the candidates did not feel comfortable expressing this. In this way, I was able to ascertain some levels of private meanings.

At other times, I was privy to the more explicitely private meanings of the candidates. Although it is more difficult to determine whether a candidate is being "truthful" than it is to identify carefully worded public responses, there were examples of these private meanings. It may be obvious, but the candidates who appeared to be most revealing to me were those with whom I had the closest relationships — those with whom I had previously had personal conversations and to whom I had revealed personal things about myself. It is possible, therefore, that these comments were more honest. That is, because the candidates were offering me insights into how they "really" felt — or at least into what they thought was what they really felt — this information could be considered more honest, at least to the extent that the candidates were not consciously controlling the impression that they were trying to establish.

However, just because the candidates were offering their private meanings to me does not mean that they were not packaging a certain self to me. In other words, a candidate could have his or her self-perception so firmly entrenched that what he or she offers as a "true" statement about self could still be a prepackaged vision. Perhaps almost nothing that humans give or give off to each other is "true." Perhaps there are only layers and layers of desirable impressions to give to others. That is, a person can be as honest as she or he can be, to another person, while there is still a kind of self-editing going on: "I don't mind telling this religious friend that I don't believe in God, but I like him so I'm not going to say that I think anyone who believes in God is weak-minded, easily influenced and non-intellectual, which I would feel comfortable expressing to someone else."

Thus, any researcher, perhaps especially the qualitative analyst, must be aware of the limitations of his or her observations, because it is quite likely that these observations will be largely, if not entirely, the presentation of the public selves of the subjects. Although I have stated, and it would be generally accepted by most people, that "private meanings" are more "honest" and real than public meanings, public meanings are nonetheless important data which can offer insights into the implicit rule systems in play. That is, if many members of a group respond in a similar, and probably public manner, then it is likely that they are revealing a rule, or an implicit understanding, about the way that things *should be*. These implicit understandings reveal a great deal about the culture of the group.

6.7 Methodological concerns: My role and influence as other

I was constantly on the lookout for signals regarding my influence on the group's behaviour, and the attitude of the candidates toward me. By the third

day of the course, people were asking me what exactly my thesis was about, and what I was interested in about them. My standard response was the following:

"I'm looking at your language and the patterns that develop over the six weeks, and I'm interested in the culture that develops in the course. I'll be writing about the process that the group goes through together, and the kind of patterns that emerge."

Other people asked, from time to time, what I was looking at. Interestingly, only one person outright asked if I would let them see my notes. Specifically, on the Monday of the second week, AC came over to my desk at the back of the room and said: "Are you going to let us read your notes so we can tell you if you got them right?" I responded by saying: "No, but when I interview you you'll be able to verify that I've understood." AC seemed to accept this answer, and ended the discussion by saying: "OK. I was just kidding anyway." These last words indicate a bit of awkwardness, which was felt because, I think, I responded quite seriously to a lightly asked question, and also because I had denied him something —to read what I had been writing about the group, including himself. I did try to appear non-secretive, particularly from then on, by not shielding my notes with my arm, by not moving my papers away if I noticed someone reading what I had written (Although I did keep the handwriting rather scrawled, in order to inhibit people's ability to glance at and read the notes).

As well, though, I would frequently leave my notebook open on my desk, with a pen tossed onto it, while I went out in the hall for a standup break, and even sometimes when I went for coffee (after which I would come back and jot notes about the previous activity — ie. standup or coffee break). I felt that by making my notes seem open for public viewing it would make them less mysterious and thus less interesting. In fact, other than the coordinators, when they sat beside me at the back table, no one seemed to try to read my notes ever.

On the Tuesday of the second week, I asked a group, with whom I was sitting at lunch time, what impact they thought my presence had on the group. The response was that I was accepted by the group and trusted, and that I would know if I wasn't accepted because I would feel it in the classroom. When I asked for clarification on this point, that I would know if I wasn't accepted, one of the group members said that because they joke with me, tease me, and generally include me in the conversation, that I am considered part of the group, and that if they didn't communicate with me in this way, then I would know I wasn't accepted.

As an example of my acceptance, just prior to this conversation at the table a joke occurred when I asked LR a couple of questions about how he was finding the session that day. When he answered in a vague manner, I asked him again, and he, laughing, said: "That's one." I asked what that meant so he told a joke describing a cowboy who says "that's one" when his donkey trips, then says "that's two" when the donkey shies away from something, and then says "that's three" and shoots it when it refuses to move forward. His new mail-order bride responds to this apparent cruelty by saying "what did you do that for?" to which the cowboy responds to her: "That's one."

The implication of this joke is that the mail-order bride had better watch how she behaves around the cowboy, because if she doesn't she'll have the same fate as the donkey. Thus, when LR said "that's one" to me, he was teasing me and saying that I had better watch myself. However, a little later in the conversation, when LR again teased me about something else, another group member at the table said, to LR: "That's one." This remark elicited laughter, because it implied that I also had the power to keep LR in line, and that I now had "one" against LR. Regardless of the "putdown" nature of this episode, it does show the acceptance that the group seemed to be extending to me, by teasing me

and including me in the joking. To not laugh and accept it good naturedly, I am sure, would show the group that I was not interested in joking and teasing, and that I was not part of the group. Thus, as researcher, I seemed able to integrate myself into the group, by laughing at the jokes, by being part of the teasing system, and by making jokes and gentle putdowns, myself. For example, on the Thursday of the third week, I participated in a bet against one of the candidates which resulted in laughter and joking about my bet. Specifically, that day a lunch was held in the Officers Mess, and a bet was made that RP would fall asleep after lunch. RP did not fall asleep so the winners' names were announced by UJ, who had organized the bet. When someone said that I had bet against him, RP said: "What? You voted against me? I can't believe it." Other people then joined in the banter.

As well, group members made comments about me, in an inclusive manner, as they would about other group members. As the course progressed, I noticed a change from discussing me as an outsider, to discussing me in a much more inclusive manner. For example, on the Wednesday of the second week, LJ was asking how many people would attend a luncheon the following week. One candidate said: "We want the coordinators to come, too" and this was followed by another candidate saying: "And Jenepher, don't forget about Jenepher, LJ." These comments seem to be saying that I was not part of the group, but an outsider who was, nonetheless, welcome and liked.

However, on the Monday of that same week in a syndicate group discussion, one candidate said: "OK, the first thing we have to do is elect a chief" and then pointed to me saying "Why don't you be?" This type of incident was repeated during the rest of the course, where someone would jokingly suggest that I present the syndicate group's findings, or that I chair the discussion.

By the third week, joking comments were being told about me, such as the following, which was said on the Tuesday of the third week, during another discussion of the luncheon:

PS: "Who will be our guests, ER, SP, Gene, Jenepher..?"
AC: "Jenepher said she was going to take us out for lunch.
WS: "No, she said we're out to lunch."

Throughout these first few weeks, different candidates reminded me that I should be there in the evenings as often as I could because that was when the real communication was going on. Unfortunately, I could not be there every night of the week, but I did try to spend some evenings at the college, and on occasion I sat and played cards with a group of candidates. During the last two weeks of the course I spent almost every evening in "A" Block, interviewing candidates, and occasionally having drinks with them. I always felt welcome, and it appeared that people were generally being very frank with me.

One critical incident, both for the candidates and for me, however, told me that not everyone was comfortable with my presence. Specifically, this incident began on the Monday of the fourth week. The session was Strategic Management, and the resource person wanted to know if anyone from the Montreal police force was in the class. When PD said that, yes, he was, the resource asked if he would describe the strategic plan that had been implemented following the shootings at a Montreal university in 1989. PD said "No," and the resource person, said "Oh, you don't know?" PD said "Yes, I do know, but .... no." This was followed by silence, and then the resource person tried to explain what the Montreal force had done.

The next day, when I arrived at the classroom, ER, the course director, was there along with some of the candidates. He was putting sheets of paper on the desks, and then he came over to me and asked me to leave, with SO, during the first few minutes because he had something personal to discuss with the class.

When I came back into the class, three of the candidates turned to me and smiled, or said "Hi." I did not think this was unusual, because this often happened.

However, at the standup break an hour later, RP asked me: "Did anyone say anything to you about you being here in the course?" He then went on to say that ER had wanted to ask the class if there were any problems with my presence. LR then joined us, and there was some joking by RP about "LR voted for you to be out of the class." From RP and LR I gathered that someone had spoken to ER because he (or she) felt uncomfortable speaking with me there. Apparently, however, many people had spoken up on my behalf, and had made it clear to ER that they enjoyed me being there and that I added another point of view to the discussions. (Though I usually never spoke up during class discussion, I sometimes would say something, or would be asked to comment on something during the syndicate discussions, and I spoke freely during coffee and lunch breaks, as well as before and after sessions). Later, I learned that PD had told PS, as class representative, that the previous day, when the resource person was asking him about his force's strategic plan, he had not wanted to say anything because he did not know what exactly I was writing and did not want to share confidential information in front of an observer. ER apparently felt that I would not be able to stay in the classroom if the group was not speaking openly because of my presence. Fortunately, for me, enough people spoke up for me that I did not have to leave.

Another incident, late in the fourth week, reminded me of the influence my presence had. During a group discussion around a table in the classroom, one candidate said: "He told Berger across the river to 'go fuck yourself'".... "Ooops, sorry, 'scuse me" (to me, meaning "excuse the swearing". Before I could respond, another candidate said: "Never heard that word before?" (meaning, from his tone of voice, that I probably was not offended by the swear, and that I

had probably heard it before). I replied: "Don't worry, I say it myself" (meaning, "speak as you usually do, because it doesn't bother me).

The last week of the course, during the Social Protocol session, I found that my role as researcher had been transformed into that of active participant. ER had suggested that if I was going to take part in this elective I should sit at a table like everyone else, rather than at the back of the room. Thus, a nameplate was made for me, and I was seated with the group. To the resource person, I was no different than any other candidate, so he asked me questions and included me in the discussion, as if I were a regular candidate. During the two days he had me do a variety of demonstrations, including introducing in the proper manner two candidates to a third, demonstrating the use of a finger bowl, and demonstrating pouring wine into a glass. As well, when he selected people to fulfil various functions at the formal dinner the next day, he asked me to make a short speech, as the guest speaker. Thus, I was treated as a regular participant by the resource person, but also by the class members. BD came up to me on the second day to say that PS (the class president, who was attending a different session) had asked him to ask me to say the thank-you to the resource person on behalf of the class, something which, as discussed earlier, was something every candidate was supposed to have a chance to do.

The next day, at the graduation, I was further included by the candidates when they asked me to join them for their group photo. A class photo is taken at the end of each course, and all the candidates receive a copy to keep. Symbolically, then, I am part of the group photo for the Executive Development Course, 91-5.

6.7.1 Questions regarding my influence

One could question whether as researcher I was able to maintain enough distance from the subjects to allow them to interact naturally. I think that it was

important that I be accepted and well-liked, in order to create the trust in me which would allow me access to the thoughts, beliefs, and feelings, as well as time and energy (filling out questionnaires, being interviewed, answering endless questions) of the candidates. Therefore, I feel that the close and in some cases very close relationships that developed between me and the candidates were important to my integration into the group. Without this integration, I would never have been able to learn as much as I did, nor observe and listen to the things I did. At times, it is true, I found it difficult to be critical of the group, for example, when I would laugh at a sexist joke, later wondering why I had laughed and feeling a bit guilty. However, overall I feel that my observations were useful, and, to the degree that they could be, distanced.

A further question could be, to what degree did I appear to be aligned with the coordinators and staff of the college. Because I wanted the candidates to be frank with me, I did not want it to appear that I was telling the coordinators things I had been told. Therefore, I took a number of measures to enhance the impression that I was not aligned with the staff.

At first I felt shy and found myself sitting, at lunchtime, with the staff members who were friends. By the second week, however, I sat every coffee break and lunchtime with the candidates. As well, I tried not to spend any time in the offices of the coordinators, though I had previously (for the first two EDC's) used their offices as my base. Specifically, I began to leave my coat and briefcase always in the classroom, rather than in the offices, and I stopped sitting in the coordinator's office for conversations and visiting.

Because I was aware of things from the two previous EDC's I had been part of, I sometimes gave out information to show that I was not on the coordinators' side. For example, after one particularly bad session, I heard from the coordinators that, given the previous poor evaluations of that resource

person, they would not be having him back again. When I was discussing the session with a few candidates, I said that I had heard that they were planning to not have the resource person back. It was difficult to maintain the trust of the coordinators and staff, while at the same time enhancing my trustworthiness to the candidates, and this may seem like a breach of the trust that the coordinators had in me. However, it was worthwhile in that the candidates increasingly seemed to feel comfortable talking to me, and often shared their feelings of dissatisfaction with the course, with the college, and even, on occasion, with the coordinators. Specifically, a few times people asked me about one of the coordinators, wondering what his role was, wondering why he appeared to be such a junior staff member when they were executives, and wondering why he never had any contact with them.

As a researcher I seemed to be trusted and included, and this enabled me to collect the data in the most thorough and complete manner possible. Without the close relationships that I established, it is unlikely that the police executives would have "let me in" as one candidate put it.

6.8 Conclusion

This chapter has described the methodology used, which was a field study including questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and sociometric analysis. As well, a discussion of the "truthfulness" or public and private selves of the candidates was included, and an analysis of my impact as a researcher and outsider. The next chapter will be devoted to a preliminary discussion of the findings. Specifically, questions will be addressed such as how the course coordinators influenced the group dynamics. Then to create a greater understanding of the culture that developed over the six weeks, as well as the process of group development, a number of critical incidents will be examined in detail.

Then, in Chapter 8, a thorough analysis of some of the jokes and humorous incidents, metaphors, and implicit rules will be conducted, with emphasis on similarities and differences between candidates.

CHAPTER 7: FINDINGS RELATED TO THE GROUP CULTURE

This chapter presents some of the research findings in order to create understanding of particular aspects of the culture of the Executive Development Course and its participants which influenced the development and use of metaphor, humour, and social rules by the course candidates. The first section of this chapter will discuss the impact that the course coordinators had on the enacted reality, followed by an examination of critical incidents throughout the course which influenced the emergent culture. Finally, the results of the sociogram will be presented.

7.1 The impact of the course coordinators

As was discussed in Chapter 5, there are 2 Course Coordinators and one Course Director involved in each Executive Development Course. Over the time period that I was involved with the EDC, there were 4 different coordinators, always under the supervision of the same Course Director. The coordinators perceived that they had a strong impact on the development of the course, and in fact the group. Interestingly, however, the impact of the coordinators seemed to interact with the expectations and preconceived notions of the candidates about the course. That is, the coordinators attempted to influence the course and the relationships of the candidates, and may have succeeded, but at the same time the candidates also seemed to have clear understandings — most likely from two main sources — about the course. These sources of knowledge for the candidates would have influenced most of them before their arrival. These influences will be discussed next, followed by a deeper analysis of the role of the Course Coordinators in the development of the group.

The first influence would be the prior experience that most of the candidates had had with the Canadian Police College. Every candidate except one had already been on at least one (and sometimes several) course at the

College, and thus would have participated in cultural activities such as challenging the members of other courses to a volleyball match, collecting money for a charitable donation, electing a class president, and organizing a final graduation These activities, then, were expected and accepted prior to their arrival for the Executive Development Course.

The candidates would also receive, by mail, a set of "Joining Instructions" describing the course and the course requirements, as well as addressing issues such as clothing and personal effects needs, living arrangements, athletic activities and so on.

As well, on their previous courses at the College, it is very likely that the candidates would have observed other Executive Development Course candidates who were enroled in the course at the time. Thus, they would have noticed, for example, that EDC candidates always wear a dress suit and tie, and never a uniform except on the last day of the course, for the graduation ceremony. Support for this example comes from my observations that the foreign students on EDC who had never been at the College before sometimes wore a uniform for the first day or two, and then wore their suits, on realizing that it was inappropriate to wear a uniform. The candidates would also have noticed the plaques on the walls around the Mess Hall commemorating donations made by different classes to various charitable organizations. Thus, the fact of having already been at the Police College on other courses would have prepared the candidates for many of the cultural activities.

As well as having already attended courses at the college themselves, it is extremely likely that most of the candidates would know at least one person, probably from their own police forces, who had attended the Executive Development Course. These predecessors would have warned the candidates about what to expect, would have complained about perceived problems, would

have gossiped about people at the Police College, and would have alerted the candidates about the course assignments. Most of the candidates would have arrived, therefore, with some understanding about what the Executive Development Course would be like. One of the candidates told me, in fact, that he had been thoroughly briefed by a fellow officer, who had attended a previous EDC. In particular, the candidate had been told about the course assignments, about the class sessions, and the resource people. Furthermore, this same candidate told me that when he returned to his home for the long weekend during the course, he had seen some fellow officers, who had attended previous Executive Development Courses, and they had compared notes on the course so far, as well as described what still lay ahead.

Thus, the impact of the course coordinators is probably diminished, somewhat, by the expectations and understandings already possessed by the candidates. Nonetheless, the coordinators do play a role in influencing the outcome of the course and the development of the group, and this influence will be discussed in the next section.

7.1.1 Set up of desks

Even before the arrival of the candidates, the coordinators have already influenced their group dynamics in at least two ways. First, the coordinators decide on the format for the desks. In two of the EDCs I was involved in, the desks were placed in horseshoe shapes with the resource person/speaker standing in the opening at the front:

```
              I__X__I (Speaker)

    X X                    X X
    X X                  X X
    X X                X X
     X XX            XX
        XXXXXXXXXX
```

For the EDC during which the data for this dissertation were collected, the coordinators decided to set the desks up into "pods" or little groupings, in order to let "people get to know each other" according to one of the coordinators (See Appendix III: Map of EDC Classroom for a complete description). The seats were arranged in pods in groups of either three or four. It appeared, from my observations, that the group members did get to know each other better in the pods, although given that the seats were changed at the end of every week, it was likely that each candidate was able to sit with almost every other candidate. The Pod set up was roughly as follows:

```
|__X__| (Speaker)

  XX          XX
  XX    XX    XX  XX
        XX        XX
                  XX
XX  XX  XX    XX  XX
XX  XX  XX        XX
```

As well as the way that the desks were set up, the coordinators also influenced the interactions by deciding who would sit with whom. In other words, every Friday the coordinators would change the seating plan (by moving the candidates' name plates to different seats from where they had been). The coordinators made comments such as "We don't want to put two RCMP guys together," or "Let's give him a break and put him at the back" or "These two were together two weeks ago, let's split them up" or "We don't want to have two guys from Metro [Toronto] together" or "These two talk up a lot, let's put them on opposite sides of the room" or "These guys don't seem to get along, let's not put them together," or "Let's put these three together and see what happens" were heard every Friday as the seats were rearranged (I sometimes stayed after class for this, to observe how it was done). Where, and with whom a candidate was seated would certainly influence his or her experience, because it

was with these people that the candidate would chat while waiting for sessions to begin, would whisper comments to during sessions, would write notes to during sessions, and would possibly walk out with and thus sit with during breaks.

7.1.2 Orientation Session

The first morning of the course, which is called "Orientation," has the most potential for influencing the candidates. Specifically, the coordinators spend this first morning going over the course outline, the goals and objectives of the course, and their expectations. The coordinators attempt to influence the course and the candidates in a number of ways. Some of these were quite explicit, for example when the coordinators suggested some of the things the candidates could or could not do. For example, one of the coordinators pointed out that there were sample "Class Books" (like a High School Year Book, put together by the candidates with names and addresses of the candidates, descriptions of them, anecdotes, maybe photos and drawings,and so on) at the back of the room in case the group decided to make one. In fact, the "samples" were all of the books that had been created, so certainly, given that there were about twelve of them, not all of the courses actually produced them, however the possibility was suggested by the coordinator.

As well, the coordinator suggested that the candidates elect a class president, who could then appoint other officials, to "plan and organize any social activities, like barbecues, and sports and that kind of thing." On the topic of the kinds of activities the candidates could choose to organize, the coordinator again repeated:

> "I'm sure you won't be any different from other groups, so you'll want to have a formal graduation, some barbecues, and a group photo."

Later, when the coordinator discussed the last day of the course, she emphasized that the candidates were free to do what ever they wanted, because it was "Your time." Interestingly, despite the freedom to choose granted to the candidates, she went on to say:

> "You can have a graduation, a formal dinner, or lunch, rather. You decide if you want to do it. We've already booked the dining hall in anticipation."

Thus, though she gave the candidates the impression that they were free to choose, the decision had already been made, pretty much, and it would obviously behoove the candidates, according to the college staff, to hold a formal graduation.

The Course Director also influenced the group interaction by telling them what they could not do (and thus implying what they could do). Specifically, because of previous problems with setting up a "bar" on each floor (where a few candidates would stock a fridge with beer, ice, mix and liquor, and then the other candidates would pay and serve themselves) the Course Director told the candidates that they would not be able to set up a bar:

> "You can take a bottle and sit in the lounge on your floors, we could care less. Just don't set up a bar with a fridge and ice and leaving the bottles out, and so on."

Thus, the Course Director indicated to the group that it was acceptable and normal for them to drink, to drink on their floors (rather than in the bar on the campus) and that they would gather somewhere to do it.

7.1.3 During the Course

As well as the first morning of the course, the coordinator's had a significant impact on how the candidates perceived the resource people, the sessions themselves, and the ongoing activities, particularly by the way they talked about them and described them. For example, in one of the first Executive

Development Courses I attended, during the preliminary data collection, I observed the following significant incident. The course coordinators always begin each session by introducing the resource person, saying a few things about his or her background, about his or her experience with police forces, and about the session itself, while the resource person is in the room, waiting to begin. As well, however, the coordinator may say a few words about the resource person and the session before the resource person's arrival. While discussing one of the resource people, before his arrival in the classroom, the coordinator told the group what the session would

be about, and then said:

> "See if he looks like Tim Conway. Every time I see him and hear him tell a few jokes I always think of Tim Conway. See if he looks like him."

The impact of these comments clearly would be to frame the class members' expectations and perceptions, and perhaps even would lead the candidates to perceive the resource person as having less credibility, given that they were expecting him to look and act like the rather goofy comedian Tim Conway.

On occasion the course coordinators would attend a social function outside of the class. For example, the class members usually invited the coordinators to attend the lunches held every other week or so in the Officer's Mess (a small dining room and lounge), and the Barbecues held in the evening three or four times during the course. The coordinators told me that they thought it was important that they have one of them attend each barbecue, not to supervise the candidates but rather to make a show of camaraderie, and to enhance their approachability. That is, by occasionally socializing with the candidates, the coordinators hoped to establish a climate where the candidates felt comfortable approaching the coordinators with questions or problems.

In these ways, then, the staff of the Executive Development Course made it clear for the candidates what some of the events and activities would be, as well as how the course would unfold and the group dynamics develop. Along with the influence of their prior experiences and expectations, then, there was a well established structure in place to help the candidates with their socialization processes.

7.2 Critical Incidents

7.2.1 Class election

As the candidates had been told by SO during the first day's orientation, on the Monday of the second week an election would be held to elect a class president. Then the class president would elect other "officials" and thus the various activities that the group could have could be planned. The group was told, the week before, to be thinking of nominations for the Monday election. After lunch that day, SO went up to the front and asked for nominations. People began to call out names, and SO wrote them on the board in a column.

Then, once these names were on the board and there was a half-second pause, SO said: "I think we have enough here," and the nomination process was over. SO then asked the nominees to leave the room and said to those remaining that they were to raise their hands as she called each of the names. The distribution was as follows:

MJ   1
PS   9
DS   4
UJ   3
AC   2
WS   1

Since it was clear that PS, the Newfoundlander, had won, there was no second vote, which would have been done if there had been a tie, so SO erased all the names, except PS's, and all the numbers. Then someone went to the door and

asked the group to come back in. They filed back into the room, looking at the board to see who the winner would be. As the group walked into the room and took their seats, someone from the class said: "Don't he have to be from Canada?" This elicited light laughter from a few people. SO then congratulated PS, and said to the class: "PS will choose the other officials and get together with them to start planning." Then someone called out: "Speech, Speech" and SO said to PS: "They've indicated they'd like an acceptance speech." PS went up to the front and said:

> "A president is only as good as the people behind him, so we'll organize committees to plan fundraising, the closing out ceremony, and any get-togethers we want to have during the next few weeks. We'll explore these ideas and crystallize them during the course of the upcoming days. Thank you very much."

Applause followed his speech, he sat down, and the resource person came up to the front to continue the day's session. The whole process had taken seven minutes.

This incident was critical for at least two reasons. First, it was of great interest that such agreement was had on the making of a good president. Of the nominees for class president, 47% of those who voted selected PS, while only 21% of the votes went to the second most voted-for candidate. Interestingly, this second candidate was the only woman on the course.

The second reason for this being a critical incident was that in many ways it set the tone for the remaining five weeks of the course. Specifically, with PS as president, and thus a central figure and daily speaker, the number of Newfie jokes and references to Newfoundlanders increased. These will be discussed further in a later section. As well, the election gave the class members a spokesperson, and one who would initiate a lot of laughter and colourful language.

For example, the morning following the election, PS came to the front of the class to make his first morning announcements (the time from 0800h to 0815h

was set aside for the class to make announcements, take care of business, or whatever). PS began his first announcements by saying "A scribe dropped by my room and gave me this president's address" which he then read aloud. BD had written the president's address on a sheet of printed stationary, which was decorated with ships, waves, and whales. Much laughter followed the reading of each line.

After reading the President's address PS asked LJ, who, it had been decided the evening before, would be in charge of the graduation dinner, to say something about the graduation (LJ would have asked PS before the announcements to give him a few minutes to speak to the class). LJ handed out a sheet of menu suggestions (those that are available from the College's food services) and asked each candidate to read it over and then circle his or her choices for the graduation, which he would collect later.

Next, PS announced that from that day on, he would choose someone to say the thank-you to the speaker at the end of each session (prior to this, one of the coordinators would ask someone from the group to stand up at the end of each session to say a 1 to 2 minute thank-you: "So and So, on behalf of the class I'd like to thank you for a very interesting two day session. I know that when we all go back to our forces..."). Thus, the job of choosing a person to say thank-you now belonged to the class rather than to the coordinators.

Then, PS announced an upcoming Newfie comic who would be putting on a show at the Ottawa Police Club (a bar for police officers) in three weeks, for which they could get tickets. PS then asked MJ, who had asked about booking the gym for volleyball once a week, in addition to their daily phys-ed activity, to be in charge of setting it up:

> "I was wondering, seeing as you seem so athletically inclined, if you'd look into that, MJ."

This comment elicited laughter, as people realized that if they made a suggestion they would end up in charge of seeing the suggestion through. This was confirmed a few minutes later, when PS said:

"Anyone who speaks up you'll notice what happens" which was followed by more laughter, but no suggestions or questions. The point of this discussion, anyway, is that PS very quickly set the tone for the next 5 weeks, by the laughing and joking that went on, and by the variety of activities and events that were initiated, including the volleyball games, a barbecue that week, the uniform to wear to the graduation, a dinner outing to a restaurant, a yearbook and photos, a donation to a charity and a plaque commemorating the donation.

Another aspect of the election of PS as president was, firstly, his ability to tell a joke, and secondly, his suggestion that the group start off each morning with a joke told by one of the group members. PS suggested that they do this on the Monday of the second week, but it was not until Thursday, when he told a joke, himself, about a Newfoundlander, that the joke-telling in the mornings was launched. This joke involved a Newfoundlander who found a bottle with a genie in it who granted him two wishes. He asked, for his first wish, to be on a beach in Tahiti, where he immediately found himself. For his second wish, he said (in PS's words): "'I don't want to work no more' and now he's walking the streets of Sydney Nova Scotia." This joke elicited lots of laughter and also lead to ER coming up to tell a joke. The resource person that day also began his session by telling a few jokes.

Clearly, the election of any of the candidates would have had an impact on the group's development and dynamics. However, because of PS's accent, his sense of humour and his dynamic personality, he had a strong impact on the resultant culture — perhaps more of an impact than a candidate with less of these qualities would have had — as has been demonstrated in the preceding section.

7.2.2 Missing the first week

Because of a death in his family, one of the candidates had to leave the course after the first day, and thus missed the first week's sessions, and perhaps more importantly, the socialization which occurred during the sessions, during free time, during sports and during the evenings. That this candidate was not socialized into the group was obvious by his non-acceptance by the rest of the group. That is, it is possible that he would not have been well-accepted regardless of the missed week, but because he did, he appeared to not fit in well, and thus was not well-liked. The sociogram results show that this candidates was one of the least liked candidates, and it may well have been because he did not behave according to the established norms and rules of the group.

As an example of the candidate's lack of socialization, he became hostile and angry during one heated discussion, where he was defending his role play performance (saying that it was realistic, while the other participants in the class discussion were saying that no one would say and do what he had said and done during the performance), humour played a part in diffusing a potential conflict. Specifically, it appeared that a number of candidates were questioning and appearing to disagree with the candidate, DK, who was trying to defend himself. At one point MJ broke in and said: "DK, that's not what we're saying" to try to calm him down, and perhaps, to avoid an outright conflict. This comment elicited laughter by most of the candidates, except DK, himself. Thus, although the incident was perceived as humorous, because of the laughter it elicited, there was an underlying note of seriousness which was covered up by the humour.

7.2.3 Complaints about the research paper

An issue which became critical concerned the research paper that all of the candidates were required to do. As discussed in Chapter 5, one of the course assignments was a 2500-word research paper on a topic related to police

management. This paper would be evaluated and graded by a resource person, whose comments would be included in the evaluation of the candidate prepared by the course coordinators and sent to the candidate's superiors. Thus, there was some pressure associated with the research paper, because of the evaluation aspect, and many of the candidates felt that it would be rather a lot of work.

Some of the candidates showed hostility toward it, saying that it was a waste of time and something that they would get nothing out of. These candidates repeatedly complained about it to the coordinators, who tried to explain that the assignment was not as bad as it seemed and that because each candidate could write on a topic of his or her choice — something relevant to his or her career — then the assignment itself was relevant and useful. However, these responses did not seem to placate the candidates, who continued to complain to each other and to the coordinators.

On the Thursday of the first week, to try to deal with the problem, the coordinators asked ER, the Course Director, to speak to the group. He came to the classroom and told the group that he had heard that they were disgruntled about the research paper. He then said that there were a number of reasons for including the paper as an assignment, and that he would like to go over them to help the candidates see the paper more positively. ER concluded his talk by saying "we're still growing with the program" and so changes could be made in the future. For emphasis, ER repeated twice: "We're looking for a process here" and "the emphasis is on the process of putting together research."

In response, one of the candidates said: "ER, just so you know, there wasn't a mini-mutiny going on here," perhaps to respond to the seriousness with which ER appeared to be taking the discussion. That is, some of the candidates were not heard to complain at all about the research paper, and this candidate

appeared to not want ER to think that there was an angry uprising about to occur.

After some more discussion, ER finally said: "Think of this first week as a developmental thing, and as an orientation into the course. It was clear from ER's tone of voice and words that there was no negotiation to be had on the issue of the research paper. His goal in discussing the concerns of the candidates seemed to be to show them that he did care about their views, and that he did appreciate that they were angry, but that the case was closed.

The incident was critical to the group's development and dynamics because the group seemed to come together on the issue against the course administrators. Although the fee ing that the research paper was a waste of time was not shared by all of the candidates, the incident did have the appearance of sharedness because no one voiced an alternative point of view; no one verbally supported the assignment. That is, the more verbose candidates seemed to create an impression that everyone felt the same way, and thus there was a rallying together about it. Many candidates felt strongly about the issue, and they, along with the candidates who felt less strongly about it but who nonetheless supported the view by virtue of not speaking out in favour of it, enacted a certain reality around the research paper.

All of the candidates were executives in their usual daily lives — giving orders, commanding troops, making decisions, hiring and firing people — and they did not like the role of being told what to do. They enacted a response to the issue, it did not achieve the results they wanted, and thus they seemed to band together in defense. After the incident, there were still many grumblings and comments about the research paper, with the theme being: "It's a waste of time and we don't want to do it." Thus, the reality was one of defeat, where the group had tried to rebel and failed, and they did the assignment grudgingly. Of

course, no candidate refused to do the research paper, and on the last day of the course the coordinators had received 27 neatly typed assignments.

7.2.4 Confidentiality: The impact of a breach

On another occasion, two candidates told me that one of the coordinators had made a serious mistake which had cost her quite a lot of credibility. During the third week of the course, one of the resource people had asked the syndicate groups to write down the main problems their forces were facing, and then each syndicate group would present the problems they had identified. The resource person then collected the sheets and appeared to keep them. This bothered some of the candidates, because they said that they thought he was collecting data for some research project without telling them or asking permission.

During the oral evaluation the following Monday, RP brought up the candidates' concerns to the resource person, saying "... when he gathered the information from all the syndicate groups it really put me off," and the coordinator said that since the resource person was coming back for another two days the following day, she would find out what he was planning to do with the data. The next day, the coordinator, from the back of the room, told the class that she had brought up their concerns with the resource person, and that he had assured her that he was not using the information for anything. Then, the resource person reiterated this and assured the group that it would be unethical for him to use the information without their consent.

At that point, the coordinator turned to RP and said "RP, your concerns were very legitimate and I think it's good that you brought them up." Immediately after this, the coordinator asked the resource person to leave the class for a minute, and she apologized for "putting her foot in her mouth," saying that she should not have used the candidate's name, because it removed all the

confidentiality that the candidates had been assured of when they made their comments about the resource people. RP appeared to accept her apology.

I had not perceived the whole situation as being as critical as the coordinator, and later the candidate, told me it was. That is, as soon as the coordinator sat down beside me at the back of the room, she whispered to me about the mistake she had just made, and that she couldn't believe she had used his name. Immediately after that, she made the formal apology. Later, two candidates told me that they felt that they couldn't trust the coordinator as much as they had before because they felt she had breached the confidentiality of their comments during evaluations. To conclude, I found the incident interesting, because it showed the emphasis that the police officers put on confidentiality, and because the candidates felt that they could tell me that they did not trust the coordinator as much as they had before.

7.2.5 Drunkenness: Supportiveness and disgust

Drinking was certainly supported by the candidates, as evidenced by the time spent most evenings in either the college lounge, the Officer's Mess, in the floor lounges, or in bars in the city having a few drinks. As well, numerous jokes were heard, particularly during the first week, when drinking was an activity that the group members had in common, even if they did not know each other well. Thus, drinking was an important part of the Executive Development Course culture. However, there was an unspoken limit. That is, as evidenced by the fact that no one spoke about "getting wasted", no one bragged about their drinking exploits, and no one mentioned having a hangover at any time throughout the course. In other words, it seemed to be assumed that everyone did drink, but that no one would drink too much.

This unspoken limit was surpassed, with negative repercussions, by one of the course candidates. On the second last night of the course, following the

social protocol dinner, one of the candidates drank himself sick and was perceived very differently by many of the candidates from then on. Specifically, HE became extremely intoxicated after the dinner, and became violent, unmanageable, and very ill that night. The next day he stayed in bed, only getting up to deliver — in a robot-like manner — his final presentation, after two or three of the candidates went to his room to help him get up and get dressed (the two other candidates from his police force and DS, who had become close to HE throughout the course). HE missed the class photo and the graduation that afternoon, as well as the drinking and partying of the final evening. Late that night (of the final evening) HE was taken to the hospital for treatment, because other candidates were worried about his health. I heard many comments, of disgust and dismay, really, that someone would end the course on such a bad note. Two people told me that they had really looked forward to the last night, to drinking and celebrating the end of the course, but that because of HE's behaviour they did not know if they felt comfortable about drinking much.

Furthermore, people told me that they would be ashamed if someone from their own force had behaved that way, because while at the college everyone represents his or her own force. Candidates were ashamed of HE, anyway, because as a classmate he gave a very negative impression to the rest of the college of the Executive Development Course. In fact, I was told that a few younger police officers from other courses had seen HE drunkenly being taken to his room and had laughed and talked about it. Certainly the story would spread quickly throughout the college. One candidate, in fact, said that he thought that word of the incident would get back to HE's police force before he did.

Thus, within limits, it is desirable and admirable to drink, but overstepping the bounds can result in condemnation. In fact, many of the candidates seemed to feel very negatively toward HE, following this incident. In the Sociogram

responses twelve respondents said that they would not invite HE to a party (and a different five respondents answered that they would not want to work with him). Seven respondents (included in the twelve noted above), in fact, selected HE for all three of the negative responses: Not to work with, to throw from a lifeboat, and not to invite to a party. Thus, it must be thought that, at least in part, the groups responses to HE were influenced by his performance on the day before graduation.

The disappointment in HE, shame for his actions, and disgust with his drunkenness demonstrated by the rest of the candidates clearly showed that they did not approve of nor admire his behaviour, and that they felt he had thrown a pall over the final day and evening of the course. It appeared that the candidates felt that everyone had to make the effort to be responsible and mature — which their executive status seemed to demand — and that no one should let the group down in this effort. By letting the group down, HE clearly ostracized himself from many of the other candidates, and negatively influenced the conclusion of the course; what should have been a joyful party atmosphere that last day and evening became a more sombre occasion, whereby people just did not feel like partying in a big way. HE's final performance, while making him sick, and possibly ashamed of himself, also made many of the other candidates sick and ashamed, and thus influenced both that last day and evening, as well as the memories of the course.

7.3 Sociogram results

7.3.1 Summary of Sociometric Analysis

As was explained in the Methodology chapter, the candidates filled out a Sociogram after the course, to establish groupings and subgroupings in the class. The findings of the sociogram were plotted on a matrix chart, where each

candidate's name was placed on the left side column, for "Person selecting" and along the top row for "Person Selected." The data were then analyzed.

7.3.2 Results

The previous incident, where HE drank too much the evening before the last day, did seem to have an impact on the sociogram results. Although it had appeared throughout the course that HE was well-respected, particularly because he had innovative ideas and was an outspoken communicator, when the candidates filled out the sociogram their feelings toward HE were rather negative. HE was selected by 18 candidates to either not work with or not invite to a party, and he was selected seven times to kick out of a life raft. Thus, the incident seemed to provide the candidates with the opportunity to select someone — a scapegoat, perhaps — for the negative choices, which, needless to say were difficult to make.

Other than the selection of HE for many of the negative things, two of the other candidates were also perceived negatively by the group. One of these two seemed to be an outsider, in that he did not fully participate in either the group discussions, the group activities, nor the evening's activities. The other candidate who was negatively perceived by some candidates did not have any specific characteristics, other than that he missed the first week of the course due to a personal problem at home. It could be that this candidate missed the opportunity to socialize, be socialized, and learn the implicit rules and culture of the group during that important first week.

It had been expected that there would be clear subgroupings evident in the sociogram results, where candidates selected each other to work and party with on the basis of some common interests or attitudes or backgrounds. However, of interest was the actual finding, where candidates seemed to generally select each other on the basis of room location in "A" Block, where the

candidates' rooms were. The candidates' rooms were on two floors of the building, on the outside perimeter, and the candidates were assigned to these rooms in alphabetical order, according to their last names. Each candidate had neighbours on each side, but no one across from him or her.

According to the results, 15 candidates selected their next door neighbour (or both neighbours, in the case of four candidates) for the positive selections. Thus, more than half of the candidates who completed the sociogram (or about 62%) selected their next door neighbour as a friend or a colleague, and when combined with the candidates who selected their next door neighbours for negative choices, there were 19 out of 24 (or 79%). Furthermore, when the neighbours of two doors away were included in the analysis, the numbers jumped to 22 out of 24 (or 92%). That is, a remarkably high number of people selected either their next door neighbour, or the person two doors away, as a friend or colleague. By increasing the analysis up to the neighbour four doors away, 24 out of 24 of the candidates were included in this analysis.

Thus, there is a clear connection between location in the residence hall and selection as friend or colleague. Interestingly, there is also a connection between proximity and not liking (or not selecting). Specifically, six candidates selected their next door neighbours for negative choices, while six selected the neighbour two doors away and six selected the neighbour three doors away for negative choices. Thus, 14 out of 24, or 58%, of the candidates selected the people within three doors of their own to either not work with, not party with, or to throw from a liferaft.

Clearly, then, there is a connection between location — and more specifically, proximity — and liking and not liking. Candidates tended to select their neighbours to work with or socialize with (and in some case, to not work with and not socialize with). It makes sense that people would select those who

were close to them in the residences, because it was most likely with these people that the candidates spent their free time in the evenings, and in each other's rooms that they would gather for a drink. Those candidates who selected their neighbours for the negative choices also would have had more reason, given the increased opportunities to form judgments about these people, to perhaps come to hold negative feelings about them.

The finding that people are attracted to those who live close to them is the one finding that emerges most frequently from the literature on interpersonal attraction (DeVito, 1989). In a relevant study of the Maryland State Police, Segal (1974) found that candidates at the Training Academy named as their friends those people whose last names came from the same part of the alphabet as their own did. Because the seats at the Academy were assigned according to alphabetical order, the people whose names began with the same letter sat near each other, and thus had a greater opportunity to become friends. Proximity, then, more than any other variable was significant in terms of interpersonal attraction in this study. Festinger, Schachter and Back (1950), found similar results in their study of the development of friendships between students in a student residence.

This finding, that people are most attracted to those people who are in close proximity to them, seems to have special significance in a temporary group such as the Executive Development Course. That is, it has also been found that proximity is most important during the early stages of relational development and that it decreases, but is still important, as time goes on (DeVito, 1989). Thus, in a temporary group there is not as much time to spread further in the development of friends (as would happen over a longer time period) so it is not surprising that people tended to select each other on the basis of location. The implication of these findings, then, is that the placement of candidates, by alphabetical order, has

an important impact on the development of friendships and the dynamics of the group.

7.4 Conclusion

This chapter has examined some of the research findings in order to create understanding of particular aspects of the culture of the Executive Development Course and its participants which influenced the development and use of metaphor, humour, and social rules by the course candidates. The first section of this chapter examined the impact that the course coordinators had on the enacted reality, the second section discussed the critical incidents which occurred throughout the course, and the third section presented the results of the sociogram, showing that proximity was the major determinant of attraction to other group members.

The next chapter will present the research findings in terms of socially constructed and enacted humour, along with the implicit social rules which emerged throughout the course, and the following chapter will examine metaphor as a symbolic language form.

CHAPTER 8:   SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE FORMS: HUMOUR

In this study the initial goal was to identify and examine metaphors and humour as symbolic language forms, granting equal attention to each. However, as the research progressed it became evident that humour was a much more important form of communication in the culture of this group, and thus this chapter is devoted entirely to an examination of the humour created and used by the candidates, as well as the implicit social rules that pertained to humour.

Humour quickly emerged as the dominant form of communication for the EDC candidates, particularly putdown humour and, to a lesser degree, dirty jokes and sexist humour. As will be discussed in this chapter, the development of putdown humour over the six weeks of the course followed a clear pattern, where the focus of the putdowns moved from putting down oneself, to putting down shared activities, to putting down other people and finally to putting down each other. This pattern was influenced by a set of implicit social rules, which will also be examined. These implicit rules appeared to be shared, as was the recognition of a joke, while the individual interpretations of the humour were varied and, sometimes, unrelated. As will be seen, furthermore, humour served a number of functions, the most important being the enactment of the group, and thus community. Related to this finding, that humour was an important player in the enactment of community, were notable gender differences in the appreciation and construction of humour: putdown and sexist humour, and dirty jokes are all generally male forms of humour which are constructed and appreciated more by men than by women.

In the following sections firstly the patterns of putdown humour will be examined, followed by an analysis of the impact of putdown humour on the group's development, and a discussion of the issue of gender differences in the appreciation of putdown humour. As well, the social rules which emerged

regarding putdown humour will be discussed. Next, two other forms of humour, dirty and sexist jokes, will be examined, along with the social rules pertaining to these forms of humour.

8.1 Patterns of putdown humour development

Putdown humour was the most prevalent form of humour in the entire six weeks of the Executive Development Course. Within the first five minutes of the EDC 91-5, I observed a friendly verbal putdown, by ER, the Course Director. Specifically, as he walked around shaking hands with the newly arrived candidates, he said to the one woman on the course:
"It's nice to see a fresh face around here, not that these guys aren't fresh.. but you won't have to sit with these ugly guys for the whole time."

Following this comment, ER laughed, and then was joined in laughing by the woman, and the two candidates he had just put down. Then he introduced himself to the three of them, making it clear to me that he had never met any of them before (sometimes the Police College staff have met some of the candidates before, such as on a previous course).

8.1.1 Putdowns of self

The candidates themselves, from that first morning, also engaged in putdowns. However, they began by putting themselves down, during the mutual introductions (when each candidate and staff member introduces him or herself, stating where they are from, and so on). Some of the candidates introduced themselves with gentle self-putdowns:
PS: "I'm a Goofie-Newfie, so you have your token"
SP: "I've got all zeros in my bank account"
PD: "I'm trying to learn English, so if you'll help me out"

HE: "Like my friend over there, I'm trying to learn English too."

Although, in general, the candidates were only putting themselves down, at this point, one candidate did put down his mother-in-law during the mutual introductions. Specifically, when MM introduced himself, he said: "My mother-

in-law lives with us so I'm glad to be with the guys for six weeks." This comment elicited lots of laughter. in fact, the most laughter that had been observed so far. This putdown can be classified as a putdown of self, in a way, since it puts down a close family member. However, the real humour in this comment may lie in the putting down of mothers-in-law, which appears, from the data, to be a common focus, along with generic "wives" for male putdown humour.

8.1.2 Putdown of policing

The next observed putdown came during the second day of the course when there was a putdown of policing in general:

> Resource person: (describing how police officers usually die very shortly after retirement): "The average number of months of pension cheques for police is *nine"*.
> Candidate: "Is that days or weeks?" [lots of laughter].

Later, the resource person was speaking about spelling ability, saying that it is not connected to intelligence. She concluded by saying:

> "So, if you're a poor speller, don't worry. I suspect a lot of police officers were more interested in recess than in spelling."
> Candidate: "Still are" [laughter].

8.1.3 Putdown of common activity

Shortly afterward, the resource person was discussing the transition, for retirees, from active to less active activities. Her comments lead to a putdown of duck-hunting by one of the group members which implied that, for this group of unsuccessful duck-hunters (if in fact there were any hunters at all), duck-hunting does not result in ducks actually being shot at.

> Resource person: Duck-hunting can become birdwatching.
> Candidate: Usually is, anyway. [laughter].

The candidate who put down duck-hunters as unsuccessful seemed to be putting himself down while at the same time putting down the group as a whole, without having to confirm that other group members were, in fact, duck-hunters. This

putdown was not aimed at anyone in particular, but it did seem to imply that many of the group members were included in the putdown.

Thus, the group moved from people making fun of their own selves, to making fun of the occupation that they all practice, to making fun of a general activity that some may engage in. In these early days of the course, there was none of the hearty and very hearty laughter that was heard later on, nor were there the direct putdowns of individual class members by other class members.

It should be noted here that the observations took place only during the day, while the candidates were in the classroom, in syndicate discussion groups, and in the cafeteria, hallways, and so on. I did not spend time with the candidates during the evening until the third week, and thus, much of the group development process was occurring during the evening in my absence. This is an important point, because of the speed with which the group members moved from putting themselves down, to putting down the group as a whole, and then to putting down their occupation.

8.1.4 Beginning to putdown each other

On the third day of the course one of the candidates seemed to set himself up for a putdown — at least one which was perceived as such by the other candidates — which was applied by the resource person. Specifically, MB asked the resource person a style question about starting a sentence with the word "and." She responded that it was indeed acceptable to start a sentence with "and," to which he returned: "That must have changed, though, in the last few years?" The resource person retorted with: "20 or 30 years ago" which broke the class up into laughter. The implication was, judging by the laughter, that MB was old and out of touch with reality, and thus he would think, as old people sometimes do, that the passage of a few years was actually 20 or 30 years. This was the first instance of hearty laughter being used to indirectly put someone

down. That is, no one directed a concrete put-down toward MB, but by their laughter they implied a putdown.

That same day, the first Newfie joke emerged during a discussion of the differences in pronunciation of Newfoundlanders and other Canadians. The resource person asked one of the candidates, who was from Toronto: "What if PS (the Newfoundlander) wants to write to you in Toronto?" He responded: "I'd be right" (meaning, in a dispute over writing or pronunciation, the person from Toronto would be more correct than the Newfoundlander). The resource person responded: "We won't be judgmental" and then someone called out: "Wait 'til he writes." This comment elicited lots of laughter, because it seemed to imply that PS, as a Newfoundlander, would not write well, and that the resource person would observe this when she saw his writing.

8.1.5 Putdown of own group

One syndicate, during the second week, seemed to be having difficulty coming to any conclusions for their presentation, or, more specifically, they could not seem to figure out what they were supposed to be doing. At 11:25 a.m., another syndicate group came back into the classroom, where this first group was meeting, and one of the members of the first group asked: "Is it lunchtime?" (Meaning, "are we out of time?") and another group member said: "I think we're toast!" This comment elicited laughter, partly because the second group seemed to be further advanced in their presentation (given that they were leaving for lunch five minutes early) and partly because the putdown of the group's own presentation created humour.

8.1.6 Putdown of own force

Another example of the putdown of the institution of policing came when PD described a recent shooting by his police force, in which the wrong person was shot and killed, or as PD said: "We killed the wrong guy." As PD described

it, the police chief issued a press release the following day, stating that the police officers had been after another su pect when they shot and killed another person. This story elicited laughter, and was followed by other remarks, including MT's: "The right guy came in and gave himself up after that." This whole scene seemed to be thoroughly enjoyed by the candidates.

8.1.7 Putdown of another police force

A discussion was ensuing about a police officer who said he wouldn't hurt animals in any way, at the beginning of the second week, and UJ responded: "Better not work for the Hull Police." This comment elicited laughter, because it was a day or two after the incident in which the Hull Police had shot a Great Dane with 14 shots, including a rifle shot, while a person videotaped the whole thing (unbeknownst to the police). This incident created a great deal of negative reaction in the public, and the Hull Police were, at the time, the focus of bad media attention. Thus, UJ's comment was an amusing putdown of the Hull Police Force.

During the fourth week of the course, there was another putdown of a specific force, but this time it was a force to which one of the group belonged. While presenting his syndicate group's findings, AC said that if recruits failed the training phase of their course they would be hired by Ports Police. This comment elicited lots of laughter. PS, from Newfoundland, was a member of the Ports Police, so while puttir down the Ports Police, this comment also putdown PS.

8.1.8 Putdown of military

A resource person, during a discussion of values at the beginning of the second week, asked "what do they teach in military schools?" One of the candidates answered: "How to kill people" to which the resource person responded: "No, I meant in military *primary* schools." The same candidate then called out (in his strong Scottish accent): "How to kill wee people." This comment elicited laughter. It must be said, however, that the strong accent of this

candidate also seemed to help to elicit the laughter that was observed in this example.

8.1.9 Putdown of another syndicate group

On the Tuesday of the second week, MJ came up to do his syndicate group's presentation, carrying a flipchart pad that he was going to attach to the flipchart. He had to first move the previous group's flipchart pad, which they had left on the flipchart. MJ took the flipchart pad off the flipchart, and tossed the pad on the floor, saying: "Good presentation, guys" while making a face that seemed to say that he was being sarcastic. Lots of laughter followed this putdown. In his interview, MJ reminded me of this incident, contrasting it with the group's reaction to a candidate who was perceived to be acting like a "suckhole." MJ described his humorous action as follows:

> "You can be a shit disturber but you can't be a suckhole. Were you there the day that I made the presentation and I pulled the other charts off and said "Good presentation, guys" [and threw the charts on the ground]? It was funny because ... you can have fun, and you can get your point across, and be very convincing, and you can cover the material well, but don't push it on us."

That is, in contrast to the LJ presentation, where he was overly flamboyant and dynamic, a person can create a good presentation, while still being a humorous and relaxed speaker.

8.1.10 Putdown of an ethnic group

After a presentation on the family as a factor that policing must take into account, LA stood up and said: "What is the definition of chaos in Jamaica? Father's Day." This joke elicited laughter.

8.2 Putdown of another candidate

On the third day, a direct putdown of a candidate emerged. Two candidates were looking at a copy of Toronto's annual report, which had been left on the desks for people to read. The two were softly discussing something

when the resource person asked one of them if they were looking at mistakes in the report (this was during the report writing session). Before the candidate could respond, another member called out: "No, he's just looking at the pictures, he'll get someone else to read it for him." Laughter followed this putdown, and the implication was that the person wasn't able to read, but just looked at the pictures.

So, the putdowns, by the third day, had become more direct, focusing on individual members of the group, and pointing out things such as their background (such as "Newfie") or their lack of certain abilities. In interviews, it was stressed by people that these putdowns were in no way meant to insult or hurt anyone, but that, rather, they were just "gently poking fun." In fact, many people commented on the Newfie jokes, assuring me that they were sure that PS enjoyed the attention. In support of this, they pointed out that he had initiated it by introducing himself as a "Goofie Newfie," and that if he hadn't laughed at the first Newfie joke (which he did) then they would not have continued. Furthermore, because PS continued, throughout the course, to tell Newfie jokes, it became clear for the candidates that this was an acceptable arena for joke telling.

Another putdown was observed during morning announcements, on the Friday of the second week. Specifically, PS asked LJ to discuss the graduation luncheon. He went over what the group had chosen for the meal, and when he finished one of the candidates asked: "That's for next Thursday, LJ?" (meaning, was that the menu for the luncheon that was to be held the following week at the Officer's Mess?). This question was met by groans and "Oh, geez" and "Oh, Jesus" by a few membei..)f the group, and then LJ responded: "The graduation dinner, not the lunch next Thursday!" This answer elicited lots of laughter, but the laughter was more directed at the candidate, who was perceived as having asked a dumb question, than the respondent who had clarified for him.

During a discussion about bringing in highly specialized people at upper levels in a police organization, LJ said: "You could put me in there and I wouldn't know the first thing about ..." to which PS responded: "We know that, LJ." His comment elicited laughter, so LJ returned with: "I was just trying to be humble" and FJ said "You don't have to, PS will do it for you."

8.2.1 Direct putdown jokes

The first joke that was told that directly put down someone was told by RP on the Tuesday of the third week. After the morning announcements, and just before the day's session was to begin, RP came up to the front and told the following joke:

> "Some of us have had a little trouble sleeping, and last night when I was in bed I started to dream, and I saw myself before the great pearly gates. I was speaking to St. Peter at the gates, and he told me that if I wanted to come in there's some things I'd have to do. He said: "To pay your penance, you're going to have to spend your life in heaven with this woman," and out of this cave came the worst looking hag you've ever seen. St. Peter pointed to her and said: "latch onto her, son, she's yours." Then I saw LR walking along with the most beautiful woman on his arm, so I went over to St. Peter and said: "Hey, what's the score? I know LR's a lady's man — (aside to class: he is you know) — but how come he got her and I got this hag?" And St. Peter responded: "Hey, she's got to pay her penance too, you know."

Following this joke, the group erupted into very hearty laughter and then applause.

8.2.1.1 Indepth coverage of the LR Heaven joke

This joke had elicited more laughter than any other joke or incident, so far, and thus it merited closer attention. During the interviews, I asked all of the candidates why that joke had worked so well. An analysis of the responses shows that although the candidates had a number of different interpretations of the joke, they nonetheless fell within 6 categories, summarized in the following section. Under each general category a representative example from the

interview transcripts is provided. The number in parentheses represents the number of candidates whose response fell in that category.

1. Makes a shot at LR. (6)
"I was probably laughing at the cheap shot at LR" (VC).

2. Turns it around so that guy is made fun of rather than woman. (6)
"This whole sudden role reversal ... as a guy you're always thinking as a guy, and at the end you're reminded of the female point of view" (BB).

3. Unexpected punchline, or twist or surprise at the end.(5)
"It's not what you expect, it's a surprise ending" (FJ).

4. That purgatory was maybe ugliness. (1)
"...not because it was a male or a female, but because of ugliness. I wasn't thinking about the male or the female, I was thinking that maybe purgatory is attached to some kind of ugliness" (LJ).

5. Our ability to laugh at ourselves (2)
"It shows that we have the ability to laugh at ourselves" (LA).

6. Didn't find it funny (2)
"I don't know if I laughed at that one or not, I didn't get much out of that one" (MT).

Thus, there were a number of interpretations, some related, some very different, of this joke. The majority of candidates were split on the meaning being either the putting down of one of their classmates, which in itself usually elicits laughter by this group, or, the putting down of men, by a man. This approach, to put down one's own group, tended to be perceived as very humorous, and thus was a successful humorous attempt.

Though there was some agreement on the gist of the joke as being either a putdown of LR, specifically, or a putdown of men, generally, there were also some other interpretations. Some candidates were in agreement that the meaning of the joke, and the humour therein, lay in the pleasurably surprising ending, or the twist at the end. This interpretation was quite different from the first, which emphasized the putdown of LR, but related to the second, in which the expected

ending would be a putdown of women, but which was reversed (the surprise ending) to putdown men.

Interestingly, this interpretation of the humour in the putdown — the surprise or unexpected twist at the end — strongly supports Duncan, Smeltzer and Leap's (1990) incongruity explanation of what makes something funny. That is, as was discussed in Chapter 2, Duncan et al. (1990) argue that one of the main explanations for what makes a joke funny is the incongruity associated with not knowing what the ending, or the punchline of a joke, will be. The expectation of a surprise, or an unexpected twist is, they argue, pleasurable.

However, Duncan et al. (1990) point out that it is not the incongruity alone which creates humour. There must also be a "meaningful resolution of the incongruity" (258). In other words, that after being confronted with an incongruity — or a "violation of expectations" (259) — the audience expects to discover a "cognitive rule that reconciles the incongruous parts of the joke in a manner that makes sense but that still violates the expectancy" (259). That is, the audience expects, and derives pleasure and humour from, an incongruity which is resolved, but which is resolved in an unexpected manner. The explanation that six of the candidates offered, that the unexpected twist at the end of the joke (rather than being a putdown of the woman it was a putdown of LR), seems to fit the incongruity perspective described by Duncan et al. (1990).

The remaining three categories of interpretation of the LR joke were all quite distinct, with the rather different "ugliness as purgatory" interpretation, the "ability to laugh at ourselves" category and the "Not funny" category. It should be noted here that it was *not* observed that people were not laughing, and that it may have been only in retrospect that the candidates who said they had not found the joke funny reported this interpretation. In other words, these

candidates may well have laughed at the time, but in retrospect could find no reason to laugh and thus reported that they had not found the joke funny.

8.2.2 Other putdowns of candidates

During a discussion of new technologies that are capable of searching a person when they leave a store or a library, HE said: "... you don't even know you've been searched when you come out of a library and a buzzer goes off." This statement was followed by a few people saying "ouch, ouch" including LJ. HE then said, "you'd enjoy it, LJ" and this statement was followed by lots of laughter. The group seemed to be saying, as evidenced by their laughter, that LJ had a strange sense of pleasure, or that he didn't have a very active sex life, and in other words that there was something deviant about him.

LJ was the subject of another putdown when he did a syndicate presentation and brought up a coloured transparency to use. This brought on a number of comments, such as "awww," and "professional" and then WS calling out: "Suckie-poo," which elicited laughter. Then, when LJ turned on the overhead projector, the machine was pointing away from the screen and the transparency thus could not be read. The laughter swelled, at this point, which lead MT to say "It's impolite to laugh" which was followed by MJ saying "It's impossible not to." It seemed that the group was poking fun at LJ because he appeared to be trying too hard to impress the group.

On the Friday of the third week, when HE was making a syndicate presentation, he did a putdown, firstly, of the whole group, including himself, and then quickly changed it to a putdown of half the class, without including himself. Both parts of this putdown elicited laughter, but the second half, when it was a putdown of the other half, elicited more laughter and comments. The putdown was as follows:

HE: "It turned out to be a social group, and not a working group, just like EDC 91-5 [laughter] ... the eighth floor [laughter and ahhh, ohhh].

To clarify, HE, and half the class, had their rooms on the seventh floor of "A" Block, while the other candidates had their rooms on the eighth floor. This separation caused some minor rivalry, but also influenced with whom many of the candidates chatted, drank, and spent their time. That is, people tended to socialize with their floor mates, especially those who were nearby, probably because those would be the people they saw the most of outside of the classroom. This was not true, however, for the smokers, who tended to spend more time together, because in the words of one of the smokers, "I'd be a lot more likely to go to one of the other smokers' rooms (there were four smokers in all) because then I can feel comfortable about smoking."

HE was again the focus of a putdown after a resource person asked him for an answer to a question. When the resource person heard HE's accent, he asked HE if he was Scottish. When HE responded "yes," the resource person said to the class: "I hired one of those guys on the faculty of Wilfred Laurier so I sympathize with you guys." The resource person then laughed, and this was met by much laughter from the rest of the class, including HE.

That resource person also created a humorous putdown when he asked about the candidates sitting at the front of the room: "Do you have to stay here the whole six weeks? Are they punishing you?" RP, in response, called out, from the back of the room, "The Sleepers." This comment elicited laughter from a few people, indicating that they found his putdown of the front people funny. However, the next thing was that about half the class turned and looked at RP, and this action created even more laughter. The humour here was that RP was putting down some people as sleepers, when he was actually considered one of the main sleepers of the class.

8.2.3 Putdown of physical aspect

Putdowns which focused on some physical aspect of one of the candidates seemed to be thoroughly enjoyed by the group. For example, during the session on leadership, in the fourth week, a discussion on the qualities of a leader was ensuing. The resource person had brought up the quality of size, and was saying that "people with large physical stature tend to emerge as leaders" to which HE responded: "Napoleon wasn't large." Then the esource person responded, explaining that Napoleon was an exception, and that small people tended to not assume leadership positions. HE finally ended the discussion by saying: "Don't get personal." This comment elicited laughter, because HE, at about 5'9", was the shortest of the candidates.

A putdown of one's own physical characteristics was definitely appreciated. During the fourth week, for example, FJ put down his own penis size, in the following comment:

RESOURCE PERSON: (talking about something unrelated to body parts) "... it had a big chunk taken out of it."
FJ: "That's what my wife keeps saying."

Putdowns of the physical characteristics of someone outside the group also elicited laughter, depending on whom the recipient of the putdown was, and who made the putdown. For example, on the Monday of the third week, during the coffee break, HD put down his own wife, and the joke elicited lots of laughter. Specifically, HD told the coffee group that his wife's waist was so small when they got married that he could put his hands around her, but that now he couldn't get his arms around her. Though this joke was found to be very funny by the group listening, it would most likely not have worked if the putdown had been directed by HD at somebody else's wife, or if someone else had made the joke about HD's wife.

In an interview with MJ, he made this distinction clear for me, assuring me that there are limits as to what is appropriate:

> "You wouldn't insult the other guy's family, you just wouldn't do that, guys are very cautious about comments about their girlfriends or anything like that, no religious jokes, very seldom that kind of thing, so there are limits" (MJ).

This particular limitation, or social rule, creates a constraint and provides a guideline for appropriate behaviour. Specifically, it seems understood that the person chosen for a putdown should not be a family member, or a spouse or other close friend. There are many other implicit social rules influencing the behaviour of the group members, as there are in any group. In a later section, these other social rules will be discussed in detail.

8.2.4 Putdown of candidate's skill

The first putdown which directly focused on one candidate's skill and effectiveness at his job occurred during the leadership session, halfway through the fourth week. The resource person was discussing "leadership styles" and had argued that a good leader changes his or her style depending on the situation and the people involved. AC spoke up in protest, saying: "...I haven't changed my leadership style for the last five jobs I've had." In response, SA called out: "That's why they moved you." Hearty laughter followed this putdown, by everyone, including AC himself.

Because this putdown seemed to be potentially hurtful, given that it focused on a candidate's skill as a police executive, and given that it was the first time such a putdown had been observed, this putdown merited closer attention. Therefore, during interviews I had the candidates discuss their interpretations of it. Specifically, in the interviews I asked the candidates if they remembered the incident and if they had found it funny, and then to explain why it was (or was not) funny.

8.2.4.1 Indepth coverage of the AC/leadership joke:

To summarize the responses to the question of why the AC/leadership putdown was funny, I have categorized the data into the following six general responses. It should be noted that all of the candidates considered the joke to be a putdown of AC, but their interpretations of why it was funny, or why they had laughed, were different. Furthermore, some of the candidates did not find it funny, and thus did not share that interpretation with the rest of the group members, and two candidates did not even remember it happening. Below are the six general categories that the candidates' responses fit into, and under each general category a representative example from the interview transcripts is provided. The number in parentheses represents the number of candidates whose response fell in that category.

1. He screwed up: (4)
"I wonder why you've had 5 jobs, you've been tried in every area because you screwed up in the areas you've been in..." (FJ).

2. He seems rigid/should change style/he's not flexible: (4)
"he seems very rigid, and very straight, and I know sort of what his reputation is, and to me, that fit right in with it [reputation?] As being sort of a "nose in the air" stiff, unbending, unflexible individual..." (UJ).

3. Banter: the kind of humour we do: (3)
"...that's the kind of banter that goes on when a bunch of guys get together, there's always this prodding back and forth" (WS).

4. Sarcasm: (1)
"Sarcasm, lowest form of wit. Extremely funny" (LA).

5. Didn't find it funny: (3)
"No, no. [why not funny?] Because you're picking on the guy, you know" (HE).

6. Didn't remember it: (2)

Thus, when looking at the responses, it appears that eight of the respondents (those who said he had screwed up and those who said he was rigid and thus probably had not changed his leadership style) seemed to be saying that

AC really had "screwed up" and therefore it could be assumed that there was a certain seriousness to the putdown (AC could have taken it as an insult, if it really was true that he had been transferred because he was an incompetent leader). In contrast, unlike the emphasis that the candidates had placed on not hurting anyone or offending anyone, it appears that this putdown had the potential of hurting someone, and in fact was perceived by some to be a truthful putdown, and thus not so much "just in fun."

Unlike the earlier putdown of LR, which everyone agreed was all in fun, and which suggested that LR was an undesirable catch for the ladies, this putdown seemed to poke at AC's skill as an executive, and seemed to be interpreted by a number of candidates as at least somewhat truthful. In this joke, only 3 of the candidates mentioned that the putdown was just in fun, and that no offense had been meant, whereas in the discussion of the LR joke it was emphasized by numerous candidates that the joke was not serious and that no offence had been meant nor taken. Interestingly, according to the Sociogram results, AC was well-liked and well-respected by the other candidates. Five people, in fact, selected AC as boss and four people selected him to work with. These indicators alone would lead one to assume that the putdown was not meant to offend, despite the few people who interpreted it as offensive.

Another putdown of a candidate's skill which elicited laughter by those who could hear the comment occurred while the group watched a film during the leadership session. In the film, a young soldier was being questioned by the general in an office. Following the interview, the young soldier went outside, took off his hat and wiped his brow. At this point, RP called out: "After a meeting with HE," a comment which elicited laughter because it seemed to be putting down HE as a very tough boss who would cause a young man to sweat.

8.3 Putdowns which did not work

8.3.1 Putdown of lawyers

To begin his session on Policing issues, which was a focus on the impact of the law on policing and legal changes, the resource person told a joke which had a person calling a lawyer's office whose secretary told the caller repeatedly that the lawyer was dead. After several of these phone calls, the secretary asked the caller why he kept asking for the dead man, and he responded: "I just like to hear you say it." This joke elicited laughter from only two people. This joke, in other words, was not perceived as at all funny by the group, and it appeared to not work for at least two reasons. First, the resource person was not very adept at telling a joke, and the ability to tell a joke was cited by numerous candidates during interviews as critical to the success of the joke. Second, it could also be that the target of this put-down joke was one which the group did not find humorous. Perhaps it was because the group did not feel strongly enough about lawyers to appreciate a putdown against them, and perhaps it was because there was a lawyer, who is also an RCMP officer, among the course candidates. This candidate seemed to be well-liked and well-respected by the group, and perhaps they felt defensive of this candidate when the resource person, an outsider, poked fun at him, indirectly.

8.3.2 Putdown of DS

Another putdown which apparently did not work well occurred at the end of the third week, at the very end of the Friday afternoon session. The resource person had told the candidates that he would finish up early, so that those travelling to their homes for the weekend could get on the road. After running about 15 minutes past the time he had told them they could leave, the resource person said: "OK, any drivers can go now and those who aren't driving can stay for the last two presentations" (because the presentations were running

overtime). Thirteen people got up to leave, and this elicited quite a lot of laughter. When DS (the only woman in the course) stood up and went to the door, MJ called out: "Oh, DS, you changed your mind, you decided to go, eh?" This comment elicited laughter, because it was showing the class, and the resource person, that DS really wasn't leaving for the weekend, but that she just wanted to leave the class session early. In his interview, MJ explained that this joke had not gone over very well with DS:

> "All I had done was I treated her exactly the same way I would have treated a man. And she was hurt by it, she said, "why did you say that?" and I said "Because it was funny." She said "I don't think it was funny...You knew I wasn't going to Toronto, you embarrassed me" And I said "I'm sorry, I didn't mean to embarrass you, but I was beating you up like I would beat up one of the guys and how one of the other guys would beat me up, and I would turn around and I would have stuck my hand back in the door [making a finger] and run, or I when I saw him later I'd say "You fucking asshole." And that's not a man-woman thing. Afterwards though everyone laughed just to see DS turn red, she did turn red. But it did hurt her feelings, and so I apologized" (36).

Thus, what had been funny to MJ and the other candidates was not funny to DS, because she felt that it made her look bad to the resource person. It is questionable, however, whether any of the other candidates, including MJ himself, would have reacted as MJ described, by laughing it off or calling the person names afterward, because this putdown does seem offensive in that it clearly indicates to the entire group, including an outsider (the resource person) that DS was being untruthful. As well, as Tannen (1990) points out, males tend to use putdown humour more, and find putdowns funnier, than women do, and this difference, in contrast to what MJ himself said about the incident, could have influenced the outcome.

8.5 Analysis of putdown humour

Putdown humour was very prevalent in the EDC candidates' communication, similarly to that described by Willis (1977) in his work. Willis'

group referred to putdowns as "pisstaking," which not only included "ribbing" or teasing, but also a great deal of physical and rough treatment of each other. The putdowns of the EDC candidates by each other, however, did not seem to have the goal of pinpointing each other's weaknesses in order to exploit them; rather, it was more of gentle teasing than hurtful barbs. As well, the putdowns observed in the EDC group's communication did not appear to be personal and pointed, nor usually sexually oriented, unlike the lads' "pisstaking":

> Very often the topic for the pisstake is sexual, though it can be anything — the more personal, sharper and apposite the better. The soul of wit for them is disparaging relevance: the persistent searching out of weakness" (Willis, 1977, 32).

There are certainly differences between the "pisstaking" of the boys studied by Willis and the putdowns enjoyed by the police executives in the current study. This is not surprising, however, given the vast difference in social realities of these two groups, one a gang of youths who amuse themselves by, among other things, breaking the law, the other a middle-aged group of police executives who have spent much of their careers dealing with boys such as the lads.

Though differences do exist between the two groups, of greater interest is the similarity in the humour of the two groups: the continuous laughter and bantering, the putdowns (although sharp and pointed in one group, and gentle and friendly in the other), and the bond that this form of communication seems to help create.

8.5.1 The enactment of a group through putdown humour

Although putdown humour is considered part of the bonding process in both the group of lads in Willis's study and the police executives in the current study, there are, as was mentioned earlier in this paper, a number of theorists (cf. Duncan et al. 1990) who argue that putdown humour has a negative effect on group development. That is, rather than create bonds, these writers argue,

putdowns break down relationships. It has been suggested by Duncan et al. (1990) that putdowns are meant to hurt, and that they tend to target those group members who are not well liked. In fact, Duncan et al. (1990) argue that the more a person is disliked, the funnier the putdown is, and the more the person is liked, the less funny the putdown is perceived to be by the audience.

However, it appears from the observation and interview data collected during the current field study of the EDC group that putdown humour was not meant to target less-liked people, and in fact those group members who were less popular, according to the sociogram results, were not the targets of putdowns. Thus, in this setting, putdown humour is not a vehicle to put one's self above another, but rather to "poke fun" at each other in a friendly, inclusive way. Though not mentioned by Duncan et al. (1990), it seems that disparagement, or putdown, humour plays more of a role in the creation of cohesiveness and feelings of belonging than in ostracizing the target of a putdown. That is, the process that the group went through in their increasing use of putdown humour seemed to be a positive and important part of the group dynamics, rather than a negative and splintering one.

It is important to note, however, that the development of putdowns during the course followed a rather organized pattern, in order to assure the group members that there was no hurt intended, and in order to create a strong enough bond to support this kind of humour. As was discussed above, the group moved through a series of putdowns, beginning with those which were not focused on other group members to those which directly targeted group members, and which seemed to be enjoyed by everyone. At this later point in the course, the putdowns which elicited the most laughter were those which targeted popular, well-respected group members Furthermore, it was mentioned by numerous candidates during interviews that the putdowns were not meant to offend

anyone, and that a person would not put down someone who he or she did not like, because this would then be seen as offensive, and thus not funny.

An analysis of the data collected during the field study support an alternative to Duncan et al.'s (1990) claim that putdowns lead to splintering and group disintegration. That is, in the data collected during the field study it was repeatedly emphasized by the candidates that putdown jokes were not meant to be taken seriously, nor to offend anyone, particularly the target of the putdown. As well, if the target of the putdown appeared to be hurt or offended, it was frequently pointed out that no one in the group would laugh, and that the person putting down the group member would be ostracized. Thus, the objective was merely friendly bantering, not hurtful barbs. By ensuring that group members were not visibly hurt by the putdowns, a sense of community was enacted whereby no member was clearly ostracised or left out.

In support of the comments of the candidates during research interviews, which repeatedly made clear that putdown humour was all in fun, it should be said that I never observed a putdown which appeared to be meant to hurt, or which appeared to hurt anyone. Thus, it is likely that there are forms of disparaging humour which are meant to be hurtful and offensive, and that these serve to put the targeted person down while elevating the person doing the putdown and those who laugh. However, in this setting, it appeared that this form of humour was neither appreciated nor sanctioned. Thus, I would conclude that putdown humour in this context was different than that described by Duncan et al. (1990), in that it appeared to have a positive impact on the group and was meant to be pleasant. Thus, rather than have a negative effect on the group, putdowns served to enact the community, by making clear for all the candidates that they were a group, a community, by virtue of their apparently shared humour and their inclusive putdowns of each other. As one candidate put

it "You would know you weren't part of the group if nobody ever made fun of you."

As discussed earlier, Vinton (1989) studied the communication patterns of workers, and specifically focused on the role of teasing and putdowns in their communication. As was said earlier, the function of teasing, Vinton argues, is "to deflate the importance of status at QRS" [the company she studied] (Vinton, 1989, 156). Vinton (1989) found, as is argued in this dissertation, that a great deal of organizational communication involves teasing and bantering. Her conclusion, that teasing and bantering serve mainly, if not exclusively, to "put everyone (more or less) on the same plane and [to] make the job more enjoyable in such close quarters" (Vinton, 1989, 161) is too limiting for the current work, however. That is, the levelling effect of putdown jokes — bringing everyone to the same status — does not at all seem to have been the main goal, nor the sole result, of putdown humour in the Executive Development group.

According to the data gathered in this study, putdown humour seems to go further than just making work more enjoyable and levelling workers. More important are the bonds and sense of community which were created through putdown humour.

8.5.2 Gender differences in putdown humour

The work of Duncan et al. (1990) was discussed earlier in this paper. Of interest here is their work on gender differences in the appreciation of humour. Specifically, Duncan et al. (1990) argue that "empirical evidence exists to support the seemingly commonsense notion that jokes perceived as disparaging to members of one sex are not enjoyed by its members" (Duncan et al., 1990, 261). According to the data gathered in this study, however, these arguments are only supported to a certain degree, and there is an important exception. That is, in contrast to Duncan et al.'s (1990) assumption that putdown humour is damaging

and unappreciated, in the Executive Development Course group, putdown jokes played a significant role in the construction of a sense of community, and were the form of humour most often employed. When putdowns were targeted in a friendly manner toward a group member by a group member, by one of the College staff, or by one of the resource people, then they were perceived as funny and enjoyable by everyone, including the person who had been put down.

This exception to Duncan et al.'s (1990) claims is observed in the earlier discussed example of the enjoyment by the EDC men of the putdown of one of their group. The incident occurred when RP told a joke that put LR down. Briefly, in the joke, RP and LR were in heaven, RP had to pay his penance by spending his time with an ugly woman, RP saw LR with a beautiful woman and was told by St. Peter that "she had to pay her penance too, you know." The exception, therefore is that if one person puts down another person who is perceived as his or her friend, then the joke is potentially considered funny, and can elicit a great deal of laughter. It was emphasized by many of the candidates during interviews, in fact, that RP would not have picked LR, in that example, if they had not liked each other, because then it could have been perceived as a cutting attack on LR.

Another of Duncan et al.'s (1990) arguments is not supported in this study. Specifically, Duncan et al. (1990) equate disparaging humour of one gender as sexist humour, but do not seem to acknowledge that group members can engage in disparaging humour about themselves when they state that "ethnic humour is similar to sexist humour; it is most humorous when the originator of the humour is not a member of the joke's focus group" (262). According to the data in this study, however, disparaging humour which targets men is not necessarily sexist humour, particularly when the originator of a joke which puts down men is a man himself, and thus is a member of the focus group

telling the joke to the focus group itself: a group of men. There seemed to be no negative impact of friendly jokes which put down group members, in fact, it appeared that these putdowns provided a positive and bonding form of communication which lead to a sense of community. As was seen above, for the Executive Development Course candidates putdown humour played a key role in the gradual development of a communal group.

As well, it was seen that there was a limited degree of sharing in the candidate's interpretations of the reasons a joke or incident was funny (and even whether a joke *was* funny, in fact). However, it was also seen that where sharing of meanings did seem to lie was in the candidates' understandings about putdowns and about a number of other "rules" of interaction. Thus, it was clear that though the candidates did not necessarily share interpretations and definitions for words and incidents, they did seem to share an implicit set of instructions or "recipes" (Weick, 1979) for appropriate behaviour.

8.6 Social rules associated with putdown humour

The preponderance of putdowns observed throughout the six week Executive Development Course were influenced by a set of implicit rules about appropriate and inappropriate putdowns. Some of the implicit rules influencing the group are not unusual, in that they exist in the larger culture — Western society in the 1990's — but because they were specifically observed they thus merit greater attention. It is likely, then, that group members come to share an understanding of the *informal social rules*, regardless of the degree of sharing that they have of the actual meanings of the behaviours and symbolic language forms. In other words, as Donnellon, Gray and Bougon (1986) have argued, it may be that group members do not necessarily have to share meanings, but that, rather, they may share a repertoire of "communication mechanisms" (Donnellon et al., 1986, 43), including social rules, which enable them to achieve equifinal

meaning (meanings which are dissimilar but which have similar behavioral implications, or which result in shared activity).

Throughout the research interviews many candidates either explicitly commented, or implicitly alluded to the fact that there was a system of rules which served to inform the candidates of the appropriateness of their behaviour. At times, the rules were revealed directly, for example if a candidate offered information such as: "No one would..." or "You would never see..." For example, as was discussed earlier, one rule mentioned by a candidate during an interview is that there are limits on who should be the recipient of a putdown.

At other times, the candidates would allude to a rule, through their choices of language, through their actions, or through their nonverbal cues. For example, as described earlier, when one of the coordinators inadvertently revealed the name of a candidate who had made a criticism of a resource person, both the coordinator and the candidates felt that it was a breach of trust, and that it should be rectified immediately. The rule here, that one must respect the confidentiality of sources, was revealed by the coordinator's swift formal apology, and the candidates' obvious expectation of the apology. In the next section the rules which emerged, from observation, interview, and other data will be discussed, supported with examples from the data.

8.6.1 You can't be critical of another candidate

Despite the tendency of the EDC candidates to put each other down and to point out each other's weaknesses in this manner, there appeared to be an agreement that it was in violation of a social rule to speak about someone else if the person was not there. The understanding seemed to be that it was some sort of backstabbing or betrayal if a candidate said something about someone else.

However, since a number of my interview questions involved commenting on another candidate's words or actions, it was necessary for them to discuss

each other. Often, to justify speaking about someone else, a candidate would say something like: "Not to criticize him, but..." thus justifying his or her comments as acceptable and not breaking the rule. The contents of the comments, or the specific criticisms, varied from respondent to respondent, but it seemed that there was adherence to this rule. The following excerpt from one interview is representative of this rule: "... and LR, and I'd say this in LR's presence, I'm not saying anything behind his back... LR is smooth with gir.. with women, with ladies." (RP).

8.6.2 You can't be perceived as a suckhole

It should be noted, however, that there were occasions when a respondent would make apparently negative comments about another candidate without excusing the comments. These negative comments were almost all related to one social rule, which was broken by one of the candidates. That is, the candidate was perceived as a suckhole — or one who tried to suck up to superiors. The following comments are representative of the candidates' views about this rule:

> "it's something in the police crews...you have to be very cautious of sort of, setting yourself isn't the right word, but of being perceived as a suckhole... You can be a shit disturber but you can't be a suckhole" (MJ).

> "There's a general feeling in the class that LJ's got his head about half way up the rear end of the commissioner" (UJ).

Thus, although a rule exists to not be critical of another candidate, the rule is easily broken, seemingly if the opportunity to talk about someone comes up, and if the respondent feels comfortable enough to be open.

8.6.3 You have to be able to laugh at yourself

Another interaction rule which was mentioned by eight different people during the interviews was that in order to be accepted, or as one respondent put it, *to survive* in policing, a person had to be able to laugh at him or herself — most

notably when one was the recipient of a putdown. The following comments exemplify the rule:

> "Sure it was a putdown, I mean if we can't laugh at ourselves, or allow other people to laugh at us at times, and laugh at us with us, then we're taking this world too seriously" (FJ).

> "If you can't take humour, in policing, you will not survive, guys are just merciless with each other, and it's part of the team building" (MJ).

This rule, that "you have to be able to laugh at yourself," is closely related to the category of Putdown Rules, because it specifies that when you are the recipient of a putdown, you should laugh and take it good-naturedly. It is likely, too, that candidates will have many opportunities to practice the "you have to be able to laugh at yourself rule" because it appears, by examination of the next rule, that it is considered part of the "police culture" by the candidates themselves to put each other down, "to prod back and forth," to "throw shots at each other," to "chop the shit out of each other," or to "jab" "stab" or "tease" each other.

8.6.4 Putdowns: something that policemen just do

As was discussed above, it is necessary to be able to laugh at oneself, because it is clear that other people are going to, and it is certainly more acceptable to join in than to appear upset. Furthermore, as was mentioned earlier, putdowns are considered by the candidates to be part of the culture of policing, and are accepted as normal and natural by the candidates. The following comment provides a good example of the understanding these candidates have of the role of putdowns in police culture, and of the centrality of putdown humour to their culture:

> "I think in our world you're always trying to chop the shit out of each other, and when somebody leaves the door open... I've dealt with a lot of people, and I didn't see anybody who was as cutting in their humour as policemen, we're always on each other's cases" (MJ).

Along with the general rule that putdown humour is an integral part of the daily routine, a number of putdown rules were mentioned by the candidates during interviews.

8.6.5 Putdowns can't be meant to be offensive

The most frequently cited, and seemingly the most apparent to the candidates was the rule that to be a successful putdown the joke had to be funny, or in other words, could not be serious, or could not offend the recipient. The contradiction here, that putdowns are acceptable but that they can't be hurtful was accepted, seemingly, by all of the candidates. Because a large portion of the interview focused on putdowns, it is not surprising that most of the respondents mentioned, in some way, that the putdowns were never meant to harm, and were just "poking fun." Fourteen candidates mentioned, at some point in their interview, that putdowns were not meant to be offensive. The following examples are representative of these strong feeling held by the candidates:

> "The other fellows wouldn't do it if he didn't take it so well...If he was offended by it, they probably wouldn't do it because nobody wants to offend anybody..." (LR).

> "No one was trying to offend him, they were trying to poke fun at him, but there's a big difference [between?] poke fun, have a laugh at his expense, but in a nice way, no one was trying to offend him" (MT).

8.6.6 Some people should not be chosen for a putdown

Related to the social rule that a putdown must not offend the recipient was another rule, this one less explicit and more reliant on the judgment of the putdowner to ensure that it be followed. Specifically it was mentioned by numerous respondents that there were certain people who one would *not* choose to be the recipient of a putdown. The understanding seemed to have at least two sides to it. First, although it is a rule that police officers have to be able to laugh at themselves and that putdowns are part of the communication system, it is

nonetheless understood that there are some people — police officers included — who do not respond well to being put down, or who *do* become offended. Thus, it is incumbent upon the putdowner to carefully choose the recipient, in order to not offend someone and break the rule of not offending. If the recipient is offended, the result would be, according to at least one respondent, embarrassment and discomfort for everyone:

> "But if somebody said that specifically about somebody's wife, that could be a little embarrassing or offensive, because now you're dealing with ..., especially if you knew that woman" (MT).

The second side of this rule is that it is, as some candidates said, really a police officer's form of humour, and thus outsiders — spouses, parents, family members, and so on — should not be the recipients of a putdown. This rule, that one does not put down someone else's family members, was explained by at least one candidate (and was discussed earlier).

The candidates seemed to agree that there were certain people who should not be put down. However, when asked in interviews, they came up with a number of different people or categories of people who should not be the recipients of putdowns. In the next section these responses have been categorized, with representative examples, under the general rule of "Some people should not be chosen for a putdown."

A. A person who would be hurt by a putdown

> [Is there anyone you wouldn't choose for that joke?] "Oh, probably somebody who was totally, horrifically ugly. You certainly wouldn't, if you were sitting with a minority in class you certainly wouldn't centre them out like that, or if you had a quadriplegic, you certainly wouldn't centre them out" (FJ).

B. A person the putdowner doesn't like

> "RP wouldn't do it to somebody that he didn't like, because that would be an obvious thing, you know, it's done to embarrass somebody, not to tell a joke. For example, if you didn't like

somebody and you used them as the butt of a joke like that, I think the effect would be far more serious, than to somebody who you just happened to pick" (LR).

C. A person related to someone else in the group

(About a putdown of a wife) "it's not specific, you see, nobody's being specific with these things, they're not being pointed at anyone in particular so they're funny." (MT).

D. A loner, an outsider

(About LR Heaven joke): [would it have worked with anybody?] Ummm, no, there's probably a couple of individuals, two in particular, and they're the one's who have sort of stayed apart from the group" (DS).

(About the LR Heaven joke) "You've got to pick out a good individual that you want to give a rub to, and I guess that's the point of humour [would it work with anyone?] No, I think the only way for the joke to be effective, i: o have somebody that's, like you've got to pick an individual tha. , in the crowd, for that joke to be successful" (MM).

8.6.7 Repercussions will result if a rule is broken

Along with an understanding of the kind of person to choose or not choose for a putdown, there seemed to be agreement on what the result would be if one of these implicit rules about putdowns was broken. Candidates were able to clearly visualize the impact of an inappropriate putdown, although they described the result in different ways. These variations are categorized with representative examples under the general rule of "Repercussions will result if a rule is broken."

A. No one would laugh

"if it was meant in a, if it was stated seriously, then no one would have laughed, no one would have laughed" (MT).

B. The putdowner would be ostracized

"...as a matter of fact, the person who told that joke would be ostracized" (FJ).

C. The recipient would be protected

"That's why the group becomes very defensive, if some teacher, or instructor, or whatever, really got onto somebody's case, like today the joke was made about BB, well, it was made in a way that we accepted that, but if he'd have been serious, a wall would have come up from the class, and BB would have been protected by the class, because the group's sort of saying, "bugger off, leave him alone" (MT).

8.6.8 You'd know if you were putting the wrong person down

As well as knowing who not to put down or poke fun at, many candidates related their assumptions about how they would know if they were putting down the wrong person, or how they would know that they had gone too far. The following representative example shows that there are strong assumptions among the candidates as to their ability to discern the effects of a put down, and whether a recipient is responding positively:

"I think police officers are going to read body language very well, and they can soon see if they're, you know, overstepping that line sometimes, or they see how the man is taking these jokes... " (MT).

8.6.9 Timing of putdowns

Respondents seemed to feel that it was important to establish a level of trust, or a "bonding" as many put it, before it was acceptable to make a putdown of someone else. Many of the candidates offered as a rule that the first day of the course it would be inappropriate to put someone down, as the following representative examples show:

"... there's got to be timing to it. You wouldn't say that to a guy who's there the first day" (FJ).

"the first day of the course it wouldn't have been a good joke to say, [why?] well, there's a bonding that goes with all these things, the first couple of weeks we weren't very close to each other, I didn't know you and I didn't know most of these other fellows, it takes that while to build that trust factor" (MT).

"...like if he had have told that joke the first day, it wouldn't have gone over, because you don't know the people" (MM).

Thus it was clearly understood, by these respondents that a level of bonding has to happen before it is acceptable to put someone down, because, firstly, a putdown could come across as rude and hurtful, and secondly, because a person would not know yet which of his or her classmates would be able to take a putdown.

8.7 Analysis of Implicit social rules

Thus, it has been seen in this section on putdown and interaction rules that, as Tannen (1990) has suggested, men are much more inclined to "express and create affiliation by opposition" (162). That is, it may not be simply a police culture rule that to fit in a person must be able to laugh at him or herself, but it may be a male rule: tease and be teased and take it. In fact, Tannen (1990) argues that boys (and men) show their affection for each other by teasing and hurting each other, as the following description of two boys, who identified each other as best friends, illustrates:

> Jimmy's repeated teasing, making Kevin think his hair is standing up when it's not...Jimmy also pretends to shoot Kevin, saying "You're under arrest." And says something intentionally mean: "I know William doesn't like you" (Tannen, 1990, 250).

The above description is based on Tannen's (1990) analysis of videotaped interactions between children. She found striking differences in the conversations and actions of grade two boys and girls when they were asked to discuss something serious (in pairs of either two boys or two girls). While the girls sit and talk, telling each other stories (interestingly, about accidents and mishaps, illnesses and hospital stays — serious topics) (Tannen, 1990), the boys spend most of their time moving about, wrestling, teasing each other and trying to find something to do.

The conclusion that Tannen (1990) draws from these findings is that the boys engage in oppositional communication, which is characterized by teasing and poking fun, while the girls engage in supportive communication, characterized by agreement, mutual approval and compliance. The differences in communication styles found in grade two boys and girls is surely indicative of differences to be found in the styles of grown men and women, Tannen (1990) argues, and thus would be influential in the communication patterns of the traditionally male dominated domain of policing.

It has been shown in this section on implicit rules that there was more overlap of meanings among the candidates than there was for either humour or metaphor. It is clear that in order to interact in appropriate ways and be accepted by the rest of the group members, an understanding — often achieved through trial and error — of the implicit but powerful social rules must be had. Unlike the meanings for humour and metaphor, where differences and discrepancies can pass by unnoticed — the demonstration of one's knowledge of social rules is clearly evident for others to judge and either approve or disapprove of.

8.8 Other forms of humour: dirty and sexist jokes

Along with putdowns, another main focus for humour — that is the subject of nearly as many jokes and humorous comments — were "dirty" or sexist jokes. I define dirty jokes as those which have sex as their main focus, and which do not degrade or humiliate women. Sexist jokes, on the other hand, could have sex as part of their content, but have as main form of humour the goal of degrading and humiliating women.

In this work, these two jokes — usually both using women as the focus — have been differentiated because the candidates seemed to feel that they should treat the two differently. That is, the candidates seemed to feel that dirty jokes were acceptable, though many said that they were not acceptable in the company

of women, while sexist jokes were no longer appropriate. The use of "no longer" is important, because clearly the men in the group had been accustomed, until fairly recently, to putting down women (to each other) as vigorously as they put down each other. Now, however, most likely because of the high level of rank they have all attained, and thus the influence they exert over younger members of their police forces, the candidates seemed to feel that these jokes were inappropriate and unacceptable.

Of course it is questionable whether the men would have felt that sexist jokes were wrong, or at least would have verbalized their objections, if there had been no women present. It is my feeling that dirty jokes would have been told more frequently and would have elicited more laughter, while sexist jokes would have still, though to a lesser degree, been considered inappropriate. Many candidates told me, during conversation, that as executives, they must be careful of the image they project, and thus they avoid sexist and racist humour (at least in public).

Despite the presence of women in the classroom, a number of dirty jokes were told, always eliciting laughter, during the course. During research interviews, however, a number of candidates expressed discomfort with the dirty jokes told in the classroom, and claimed that these jokes were inappropriate. The most frequently cited joke, for being inappropriate, was the following, told by BD on the Friday of the fourth week:

> "A lumberyard owner was looking for a new assistant. He was conducting interviews when a blind man walked into the office. The lumberyard owner explained that a blind man would not be able to do the job, but the blind man protested, saying that he would prove that he could do it. To show the lumberyard owner that he could identify any piece of wood, he had the lumberyard owner bring in a piece of wood and place it on his desk. Then the blind man leaned down and took a long, slow sniff of the board, and then, finally, stood up and said: "That's a six year old piece of oak, a lovely piece of wood." The owner was quite surprised, and he

> hurried out to bring in another board. The same thing happened, and the blind man said: "This is a five year old piece of Japanese Cedar, very nice piece of wood, and rare, too." The owner was astounded. To test the blind man further, he asked him to wait out in the hall, and then went and got his secretary. He had her lie down on his desk and then called the blind man back in and asked him to identify this one. The blind man took several sniffs, and then finally stood up, saying: "Well, you almost had me fooled. This here is the forty-five year old shithouse door of a tuna-boat."

This joke resulted in very hearty laughter from the class, and seemed to be appreciated so much that it was requested (one of the only jokes to be asked for) twice more during the remaining weeks of the course. The first time was when a resource person, who had told a lot of jokes himself, asked if anyone had a joke and six or seven people called out: "BD, the wood joke, the wood joke." The second time it was requested was following the formal dinner for the social protocol session, the last week of the course. Again, many members of the group called out: "BD, do the wood joke" when joke telling began.

8.8.1 Social Rule: "Dirty jokes not appropriate here"

Given the great appreciation for the wood joke, it was surprising that a number of people commented, during interviews, that they had either not found the joke funny, or that they outright found it offensive, embarrassing, or inappropriate. The following comments illustrate the stated feelings of several of the candidates about the wood joke, and about other dirty jokes.

> [about BD's wood joke]: "...but there's lots... We haven't had anybody tell any gross jokes, and there's lots of really gross jokes about women, about women's sexual organs — calling them fish, lots of really crude jokes about that but... not that that was crude... it was subtle, and that was what made that joke funny, it didn't rise up and hit you... it was subtle" (RP).

Thus, first of all, RP shows me that the men are holding back on the dirty jokes, in the women's presence, and second, he is able to justify the dirtiness of the wood joke by saying that it is not actually dirty at all, but that it is subtle. BD, himself, seemed to agree with RP, in saying that the joke was just funny, and that

it wasn't really dirty at all: (About the wood joke) "it's a funny joke. I mean it's not really disgusting, but it's funny."

As well, MJ stated that the humour of that joke did not lie in the "female part of it" but rather in the fact "that this blind guy would, think, would put together this shithouse door from a tuna-boat, and that's what's funny about it... the quantum leap this guy would be going through" (MJ). Interestingly, however, MJ did acknowledge that this joke was insulting to women, and that he had heard it before and had once told it to his wife, who had not found it funny. As well, MJ said that it was not a joke that he would have told, ever again, himself, and especially not in the classroom.

Other candidates simply stated that the joke was inappropriate for this group, even if, in fact, they reported laughing at the time. The following example is representative of the candidates who reported this view:

> [About BD's wood joke] [laugh?] Yeah, I suppose I did, but that's starting to get a little beyond what I would call acceptable for... I suppose in a group of men, if it was just men there, I wouldn't have a problem with that joke, but there were women in that class too, you being one, and others and I think that's sort of ... to me, even though we're talking about men and women are all the same, I'm old school, and I still think there's certain things you say in the company of men and there's certain things you say, or certain things you don't say in the company of women, and that probably was over the line for me, like I would never get up and tell a joke like that if there were women. But I still thought it was witty" (WS).

Some candidates said that they found the wood joke to be inappropriate, and that they had not even found it funny in the first place. For example, when I asked FJ what he thought of this joke he said: "It shouldn't have been in the classroom. It was inappropriate" (FJ).

FJ followed this comment by saying that he had not laughed, but when I asked him if it was inappropriate because there were women in the room, he responded: "No, this is the age of liberation, you know, if you object to it you can

stand up the same as I can if I object to something and object to it. I don't have to be protective of you any more" (FJ). He then explained that he had heard the joke before, that he had laughed the first time, "no doubt" but that "I just don't laugh the second time." There was a contradiction in his explanation, therefore, which started out to say that the joke was not funny because it was inappropriate, ended up being not funny because he had heard it before.

The social rule was that dirty jokes were inappropriate in this setting. However, it is clear that this rule is more of a public rule than a private one, given that people *said* that these jokes were inappropriate, but told them and laughed heartily every time a dirty joke was heard.

8.8.2 Sexist jokes

A number of the candidates commented during interviews that sexist jokes were out of place in a group such as the EDC candidates, much like racist or ethnic jokes are not appropriate in most circles. These comments are interesting, because despite the certainty with which candidates described sexist jokes as inappropriate and not funny, there were, nonetheless, numerous sexist jokes told during the course, and many of the candidates who said they were inappropriate also admitted having laughed at the jokes when they were told. The following excerpt from one interview exemplifies this phenomenon of telling and laughing at sexist jokes, and then saying they are inappropriate:

> "it was a funny joke, it was a little degrading to women, maybe. I
> don't think it was gross for the class, although maybe because there
> w. ~e women here" (DK).

It is clear that there is agreement on the notion that sexist jokes are wrong, or at least that they are inappropriate in a setting such as the Executive Development Course. However, what is less predictable is different people's definitions of what is sexist, or what is "going too far" in decency. That is, when asked about a number of the jokes which, it was said by some candidates, put

women down, and thus could be defined as sexist, the candidates held different opinions on whether the jokes were, in fact, sexist. However, they did seem to agree, for the most part, that sexist jokes were out of place. For example, one of the resource people told a joke the second week of the course which went as follows:

> "A man calls up his wife and says: "Honey, I just won five million dollars! Start packing!" The wife answers: "Summer or winter?" And he responds: "I don't give a shit, just be out of the house by the time I get home."

In response to my questions about this joke, some of the candidates admitted having laughed heartily at it, which is supported by my observational data, but then either denied that it was a sexist joke, or seemed to become embarrassed by their response, which could have been perceived as sexist by me. A representative response was the following: "... it's cruel really, but people laugh at cruel jokes" (SP).

8.8.3 Social rule: The person telling the joke has to not seem offensive

A comment made by one candidate had the appearance of being a rule, in that it stated that to be successful, a dirty joke should be told by an inoffensive person. Although he was the only candidate to make this comment, I include it because in contrast to it is another candidate's comment. The first, that the teller should seem inoffensive, was explained as follows:

> [About the wood joke] "BD's such a cute little guy, that he can get away with it because he's harmless, you know, whereas if you had someone who's aggressive, male, testosterone-driven ... If I had told that joke I don't think you'd find it funny, because he's a real cute cuddly thing, he's not trying to be rude at all, and I would come off as rude" (MJ).

In contrast to this statement of MJ, UJ later said the opposite. Specifically, he was describing why he had not found a joke particularly funny. He explained that:

"If you had someone who was really macho who said that it would be much funnier, because that's the type of behaviour you would expect of that person. That resource person, in my mind, is not the type of person [is he a gentleman?] yeah. So, what I saw was that it was his sort of attempt to identify with people in the room, and that sort of put me in the class of being a little bit of a neanderthal, and I didn't really appreciate that. " (UJ).

The point that UJ was making was that because the resource person would not usually be the type of person who would say a joke like that, it seemed odd, and the conclusion that UJ drew was that he was saying an out-of-character joke to associate himself with the group, but that because it was a joke that put down women, then it implied that UJ and the other candidates were the type who would put down women, and UJ did not like this insinuation.

8.9 Conclusion

From the first morning of the Executive Development Course, humour was the dominant form of communication, particularly putdown humour and, to a lesser degree, sexist humour and dirty jokes. As was described in this chapter, the candidates' construction and use of putdown humour followed a clear pattern of evolution, where the focus of the putdowns moved from putting down their own selves, to putting down policing and shared activities, to putting down other people and finally to putting down each other. This pattern was influenced by a set of implicit social rules regarding when to put someone down, who to put down, how to put down so as to not offend anyone, and what would happen if a putdown was unsuccessful. These implicit rules appeared to be shared, as was the recognition of a joke, while the individual interpretations of the humour were varied and, sometimes, unrelated. As was seen, furthermore, humour served a number of functions, the most important being the enactment of a sense of community. Related to this finding, that humour was an important player in the construction of community, were the notable gender differences in the appreciation and construction of humour: putdown and sexist humour, and dirty

jokes are all generally male forms of humour which are constructed and appreciated more by men than by women.

The next chapter examines metaphor as a symbolic language form which was noted in the EDC candidates' communication patterns. Specifically, a number of the observed metaphors will be discussed, with emphasis on the candidates' interpretations of the metaphors constructed and used by the candidates.

CHAPTER 9:   SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE FORMS: METAPHORS

Along with humour, the Executive Development Course candidates constructed and used a variety of metaphors in their communication patterns. As Lakoff and Johnson (1980) suggest, metaphors are pervasive in both language and action, and in fact any word, behaviour, object or event is potentially metaphorical if it represents another meaning symbolically. Metaphors of all of these types were observed during the course, and those used most by the candidates have been classified into three categories: verbal expressions; jokes; and objects. From the data, I have selected a number of typical examples of metaphors-in-use, and these will each be discussed thoroughly.

As Donnellon, Gray and Bougon (1986) have argued, metaphors are an ambiguous linguistic device, because they allow a number of different interpretations by leaving specific detail of meanings undefined, and thus up to the listener to define in his or her own mind. In other words, metaphors allow people to perceive and define them differently, while maintaining an appearance of agreement because metaphors are meaningful without a great deal of definition: people quickly grasp *a meaning* upon perceiving a metaphor, whether the metaphor is clarified or not. Therefore, attention will be given to the ambiguous nature of the metaphors discussed in the next section.

As far as shared meanings go, it is clear from the data, and will be shown in this section, that there was limited overlap of meanings, and that the amount of overlap that occurred varied between metaphors. As will be seen, although individual group members' interpretations were quite different from each other, according to the interview data, candidates were always observed as able to communicate and interact smoothly despite these differences, or, in the words of Weick (1979), to interlock their behaviours.

9.1 Verbal expressions

There were numerous verbal metaphors, some created by the candidates themselves, and some introduced by staff of the college, but which appeared to be understood by the candidates. During interviews, I asked the candidates what the various terms meant, and of interest were at least two things. First, as will be seen in the examination of the metaphors below, the candidates had a number of different, although related definitions for their metaphors-in-use. Second, the certainty with which the candidates responded, and the certainty of the correctness of their own definitions was remarkable. That is, although many of the candidates had different definitions than other candidates, there was no doubt expressed by any candidate when he or she reported his or her personal definition for the metaphor under discussion. As Kahneman and Tversky (1973) have argued, people may be influenced by an "illusion of validity" when they make judgments, such that they "behave as though information is to be trusted regardless of its source, and make equally strong or confident inferences, regardless of the information's predictive value" (Cited in Fiske & Taylor, 1984, 269). In other words, based on their own observations, people assume that their perceptions and interpretations are correct, unless there is solid evidence to show them otherwise.

9.1.1 Flagship Course

During the first morning of the course, the Orientation Session, the Director of the college spoke briefly about the course and the college. He described the Executive Development Course as the "Flagship Course of the College" saying that it was "the most important course" the college offered, and that the coordinators would say so, as would people in the field. Certainly no one looked confused, or asked the Director to clarify, so one would assume that all of the candidates shared the meaning of "Flagship Course." True, the candidates did

each have a meaning, but it may not have been the meaning that the Director had intended.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (1990), a "flagship" is defined as "1. a ship having an admiral on board, 2. Something that is held to be the best or most important of its kind; a leader" (445). Thus, the metaphor represents symbolically the Executive Development Course as the one of the Canadian Police College with the admiral, or rather, admirals, in it ("on board") and by extension, as the best and most important course of the College, a leader. Certainly, given that the Director clarified his use of the metaphor by adding "the most important course" of the college, it could be assumed that this is what he meant. An analysis of the responses shows that the candidates did share a general understanding of the metaphor, but that they nonetheless varied in their specific interpretations of it. The candidate's responses can be categorized into the eight headings described in the next section. The number in parentheses represents the number of candidates whose response fit into that category.

1. Nautical term: (4)

Four of the candidates did associate the metaphor with the Navy, three candidates even explaining that it meant the ship that carried the admiral or commander. From there, the four took slightly different directions with their definitions. One described the flagship course in the following terms: "they're saying this course is the most important course because the highest ranking people come here, so they try to make it the best course..." (RP). Thus, the ranks of the candidates, and the excellence of the course were emphasized by this respondent.

Another explained the usage of the flagship metaphor by saying: "...it's the fact that it's for police executives who are at the management level, who are involved in the decision making process" because "you'd have your directions

coming from the flagship" (PS). In other words, this candidate described the candidates as leaders, with directions and leadership coming from them.

Another interpreted the Director's metaphor as meaning "it's the top course in the college... it's the one course in Canada for executive police officers to take" because "the flagship, if you refer to nautical terms, was the leader, so this course is the leader of all the other courses" (LA). Thus, this candidate, like the previous one, mentioned the leadership position of the course, but placed more emphasis on the course itself being a leader, rather than the candidates who attended it being leaders.

Finally, the fourth candidate to mention the nautical root of the metaphor described it as the "top course, it's the most elite course, it's the one that obviously the Canadian Police College considers its top course, and probably the one they're most concerned about" (BD). Like the previous candidate, this interpretation emphasized that the course was the best one available in Canada. However, unlike any of the three previous interpretations, this candidate also pointed out that the College put most of its resources into the Executive Development Course.

2. Necessary for career advancement: (3)

Interestingly, three candidates responded to the question "What does "Flagship Course" mean?" by emphasizing the role the course played in the career development of the candidates. The following is the comment of one of these candidates: "It just means it's something you have to have in your career to go any further" (FJ).

3. Best course there is/Premiere Course: (3)

Whether they agreed that the Executive Development Course was, in fact, the best course there was, a number of candidates defined "Flagship course" as the "premiere" course, meaning the best, or used other adjectives to describe it in

this way. For example, one of the specific comments was the following: "This is their top course. Their number one course, it's the course that they put the most resources into" (DK).

Interestingly, some of these candidates who defined it as the "best there is" were quick to point out that it was not, in fact, the best course available, and that if it was then there was a serious problem in Canadian police training. Another angle that a number of candidates took was that, as the best course, the most resources would be put into it. It is actually questionable whether the most resources (in terms of money and materials) are put into the Executive Development Course.

4. Course as leader: (2)

Another two candidates emphasized that the course should be a leader, and that the material and the resource people should be forward-looking and progressive. In the words of one candidate, the course should lead "in the direction that candidates should be taught, the things that should be learned" (SP). An example of this interpretation is: "this course sets the tone for the rest of the college and all its other courses. The rest of the courses are subordinate to this one" (UJ).

5. Most senior course in the College: (2)

Other candidates did not focus on either the quality of the course nor the quality of the candidates, instead emphasizing the level of seniority of the course candidates, saying that the most senior officers attend the Executive Development Course, and thus that it was the most senior course available. The following comment exemplifies this interpretation: "It means that's where your most senior and highest ranking people are and that's to set an example" (RP).

6. Final course in a series: (2)

Along the lines of the most senior course available, two candidates interpreted the metaphor perhaps more literally, defining it as the highest course, meaning the final course that the candidates would take. The following comments are typical of this interpretation:

> "it's the peak or the pinnacle of a whole series of courses, meaning the last one, and that's a common thing that police officers express, this is the last course they'll take" (HA).

> "It's the end course, they don't offer anything higher [in which sense?] Well, it's the last management course you get. At this time, there's no next step, there's no level above EDC" (MT).

7. Best people come on it: (1)

Though some candidates emphasized that the course itself is the best, another candidate interpreted the metaphor as meaning that the *best people* attend the course. This candidate seemed to think that whether or not the course was the best, the people who came were the best and the most experienced: "...being a flagship course I would think they would send the best people on the course" (MM).

8. Candidates as leaders: (1)

In contrast to the candidates who interpreted "flagship course" as implying that the course should be a leader, one candidate interpreted it to mean that *the candidates* should be leaders: "We're looked upon as being leaders, this is the way things should be done, so we're the ones that carry the flag" (SA). Thus, the emphasis here seemed to be that the candidates themselves, rather than being lead by the course, would lead the future of policing.

9.1.1.2 Analysis of the Flagship Course Metaphor

It is clear that there are a number of possible interpretations to an ambiguous term such as a metaphor, and particularly when it is used in a presentation where there is little opportunity for questioning. That is, given that the College Director used the metaphor in a presentation, it was extremely

unlikely that any of the candidates would ask for a clarification — few would risk appearing to not know something. Because of the limited opportunity to clarify, for themselves, the meaning of the metaphor, each candidate heard and interpreted it in his or her own way. It appears, however, that this apparent lack of agreement on the exact definition of the metaphor had little impact on the communication of the candidates, given that it was not necessary for them to define it to each other nor share their interpretations.

As well, it is likely that upon hearing the metaphor used by the Director, each candidate referred back to some personal, preconceived notion of what it meant. That is, those candidates who had an interpretation far from the literal definition — such as those who interpreted the Executive Development Course to mean a requirement for career advancement — probably already had this perception of the course, and thus the metaphor, upon arrival at the college. This is a good example of candidates arriving with their home culture firmly entrenched, because it is clear that for those candidates looking for promotion, particularly in Ontario, the course was an important prerequisite. Two of the candidates who made this comment, in fact, came from small Ontario municipal forces. Finally, as has already been pointed out, it is most interesting the certainty with which the candidates reported their markedly different interpretations.

9.1.2 Jimmy Swaggart

By a few weeks into the course, the mere mention of the name "Jimmy Swaggart" was enough to elicit laughter and the feeling of a shared joke. At the outset of the course, it had been learned that the evangelist preacher Jimmy Swaggart had been found with a prostitute, and charged with a number of criminal acts.

9.1.2.1 Incidents of the Jimmy Swaggert Metaphor

The candidates referred frequently to Jimmy Swaggart, beginning in the first week of the course. The first record in the observation notes occurred the Friday of the first week, during the Media Relations session, in which each candidate on the elective was interviewed by a local television personality. During the feedback session, the television personality said that VB appeared "very believable and very trustworthy." Another candidate quickly said: "He's our Jimmy Swaggart," which was followed by laughter.

During the next session, on Monday, the group was discussing values. When the resource person asked: "Who are people who meet these criteria for strong conviction of

values?" one of the candidates called out: "Jimmy Swaggart" and this response elicited laughter.

Next, during the leadership session, the fourth week of the course, the candidates were asked to come up with examples of people who have charisma. This question led to a brief discussion of Jimmy Swaggart, who, in the words of the resource person, "has an aura around him, a magnetic field when he is performing."

Finally, on the Tuesday of the fifth week, LJ made a syndicate presentation which was the focus of much attention and laughter, and, in fact, resulted in a standing ovation, when the usual reaction would have just been perfunctory clapping. It appeared that many of the candidates were finding the session long and dry, and when LJ did his syndicate presentation, he became extremely agitated, using his hands and arms for emphasis, banging his fist on the table, speaking in a strong, loud voice, making eye contact and walking back and forth before the audience. The presentation lasted about twelve minutes, and during this time he seemed to get more and more involved in the delivery, speaking more quickly and loudly as the presentation progressed.

Near the end of the presentation, about four people began motioning to each other with their hands (signalling to stand up and clap) and whispering. I later learned that they were whispering comments such as "This deserves a standing ovation" and "Another Jimmy Swaggart" to each other. As well, I learned that two of the candidates had planned to stand and say: "And now, for the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor in a Dramatic Role..." to emphasize that LJ was acting and doing an overly dramatic presentation. When LJ completed his presentation, most of the group, except about four or five people, stood and clapped, shouting "Bravo" and "Encore" amidst much laughter.

9.1.2.2 Candidates' responses

Because the Jimmy Swaggart metaphor appeared to have been constructed by the group, and because it was used repeatedly throughout the course, I had the candidates focus on it during the semi-structured interviews. The responses to "what does Jimmy Swaggart mean?" are classified below into eight different categories, depending on the emphasis of a candidate's response. The categories are: Dishonest; Phoney; Form of justice; Hypocrite; Sexual deviant; Immoral; Communicator; and Human. In the next section these categories will be examined, and then the significance of the metaphor when it was used in the course session will be discussed. The number in parentheses represents the number of candidates whose response fit into that category.

1. Hypocrite (5)

Related to the ideas of phoneyness and that it was a form of justice to see him caught was the interpretation of Jimmy Swaggart as a hypocrite, which was the most commonly mentioned interpretation of the metaphor. To five of the candidates, Jimmy Swaggart symbolized a hypocrite, and they felt that he had made moral demands on people and then had not lived up to them. In the words

of one of the candidates, "Jimmy Swaggart was telling people to live to a certain moral standard and then sneaking out and doing something different himself" — an action, this candidate said, that the group did not like.

Another candidate metaphorically defined Jimmy Swaggart as follows: "Hypocrisy, total hypocrisy. A lie. You look in the dictionary under a lie and you should have a picture of him there." A third candidate put it simply as "what he's preaching is not what he's practising."

2. Immoral: (3)

Three candidates described Jimmy Swaggart as immoral, saying that he symbolized immorality, and "not because he boinked that girl, you know, that's perfectly normal, but don't stand in your pulpit and say something different the next day, that's immoral" (MJ). In other words, this candidate felt that it was acceptable to have sex with prostitutes, but that it was immoral (or hypocritical) to decry it the next day.

Another candidate agreed with MJ, saying that Jimmy Swaggart symbolized the "morally corrupt" because he "purports to have such high levels of morals, when in actuality he has probably very low morals." Again, the doing of immoral sexual acts was less the focus for this candidate than the fact that he spoke against those very acts. The interpretations of these candidates, then, were similar to those candidates who described Jimmy Swaggart as symbolising a hypocrite, although they used a different symbol to describe their interpretation.

The other candidate, however, did not emphasize the hypocritical immorality of Jimmy Swaggart, but instead described Jimmy Swaggart metaphorically as an "immoral leach" particularly "when it comes to extracting the last dollars out of the elderly and people who aren't necessarily that strong-willed." Thus, rather than his sexual deviance or his hypocritical behaviours, this candidate simply pointed out that what he did was wrong.

3. Phoney: (2)

In a related category, two candidates emphasized, like PS, that Jimmy Swaggart purported to be something other than what he really was, and these candidates labelled him a phoney. HE, for one, said: "I think he's the ultimate conman, and I feel sorry for the people that he's done what he has to, and he's a complete and utter phoney." Thus, the point for these two was that Jimmy Swaggart was a fake and yet people supported him. Jimmy Swaggart, to these candidates, symbolized all that is fake and phoney.

4. Form of justice: (2)

Along with talking about the phoneyness of Jimmy Swaggart, HE and another candidate explained that the reason the group found it funny to bring up Jimmy Swaggart was because he got caught while trying to pretend that he was godly. In HE's words, "...he's such a phoney and he got caught, and that is a form of justice, to the cynics in the class like myself, it was nice to see." Another candidate, HA, also described the pleasure derived from seeing Jimmy Swaggart caught:

> "as police officers we tend to see these people on a pedestal who claim to be good and pure and we know otherwise, and we know from factual encounters be it investigating fraud or moral crimes against these people, I mean priests, politicians, you name it, as police officers we have seen the whole gamut of people failing morally, we've seen our own police officers fail, so I would see it as haha, here's another moral hypocrisy, and we see it all the time."

From HA's explanation, that police officers see many so-called honest people fail morally when they have presented themselves as pure and right, one could infer that this metaphor would be especially humorous to this group. It is likely that people who do not know, with the certainty that police officers do, of the moral failings of apparently honest people — priests, politicians and the like — would not appreciate the humour of this metaphor.

5. Dishonest: (1)

One candidate focused on the fact that Jimmy Swaggart had conned people into sending money and then had used it dishonestly and illegally. Specifically, PS said: "He's a carpet-bagger, a person with a message, yet at the same time he's not being truthful, — dishonesty, nontruthfulness." Thus, the symbolism for this candidate, as described by another metaphor — "carpet-bagger" — was a dishonest person who pretended to be honest. Interestingly, the metaphor that PS selected, "carpet-bagger," is defined as "an unscrupulous opportunist" according to the *Oxford Concise Dictionary* and it could be assumed that this was, in fact, what PS meant.

6. Sexual Deviant: (1)

One candidate took a very different approach than the others, focusing not so much on Jimmy Swaggart's character to define the metaphor, but more at what he had done. Specifically, this candidate described Jimmy Swaggart as "a deviant of some sort, he's got some sort of sexual deviation problem because he's obviously an evangelist, a very wealthy one, who's done very good." This candidate, furthermore, explained that in the context of the course, when people used the metaphor they were implying that "you give a connotation, either a sexual one or a deviant one, to that person." This is a very different interpretation of the symbolism of the metaphor, particularly when considered in light of the presentation by LJ, when someone said: "Another Jimmy Swaggart," referring to his charismatic presentation. That is, it is very unlikely that the use of the metaphor to describe LJ's presentation was supposed to symbolize a sexual deviant.

7. Communicator: (3)

In contrast to those who emphasized his negative traits were three candidates who interpreted the metaphor as symbolically representing a great

communicator. These candidates referred to his ease at public speaking, and his ability to make an audience respond as he wished. One candidate described his interpretation as follows:

> I'm not a natural teacher, so one of the things I do before I teach is I always make sure I catch a couple of his talks. Because, if you can loosen up like him, if you can pick up just one percent of his ability to communicate, then you're laughing. This guy can communicate. Whether he's honest and sincere, doesn't matter, this guy communicates (BB).

Thus of lesser importance was whether he was immoral, dishonest or phoney, to these candidates, what did stand out was his ability to work an audience. Clearly, this charismatic communicator symbolism was the root of the previously discussed standing ovation metaphor. That is, by saying "another Jimmy Swaggart" the implied meaning was that LJ was performing, and doing it well, even evangelically, but that the message was perhaps less than truthful, or that he did not really mean what he was saying. This point, that he may not have been as motivated about his topic as he appeared to be was brought up by one candidate during his interview. Specifically, the candidate pointed out that the topic of LJ's presentation was "program evaluation" and that it was difficult to imagine anyone getting as worked up about it as LJ seemed to be.

8. Human: (2)

In an even more sympathetic interpretation of the Jimmy Swaggart metaphor, two candidates said that Jimmy Swaggart symbolized to them someone who is human, someone who did the same thing that many other people do, but who was punished for it because of what he preaches. One of these candidates put it this way: "Here's a person that was just human and is going to pay a big price because he judged others." The other agreed with these words and then metaphorically asked me, "I think we've all fallen off the plank, right?"

9.1.2.3 Analysis of the Jimmy Swaggert Metaphor

Clearly, there is more than one way to define the symbolism behind the metaphor "Jimmy Swaggart." Some of the interpretations seemed similar, for example those who defined the metaphor as "Jimmy Swaggart as a hypocrite" and those who described it as "Jimmy Swaggart as immoral because he is a hypocrite." However, despite these apparent symbolic similarities, the meanings that the candidates attached to them were rather different. Within the "immoral" category, for example, where much agreement seemed to lie, were a number of definitions of the word "immoral," as well as what it symbolized. Simple reliance, therefore, on the candidates' word choices could well have lead to erroneous conclusions. That is, the interpretations of many candidates seemed similar, yet on closer inspection it became obvious that there were slight, and sometimes more than slight, differences of interpretation.

9.1.2.4 The Standing Ovation incident

The candidates' responses during interviews to the meaning of the "standing ovation" and cries of "another Jimmy Swaggert," for example, show that there were a variety of interpretations of the incident, and of the Jimmy Swaggart metaphor.

During interviews, I asked the candidates to explain what had happened and to discuss the reason for the standing ovation. Generally, the people who had initiated the ovation explained that they thought that LJ was going too far with the theatrical and dramatic presentation, and that, in the words of several interviewees, "it was inappropriate for this setting." That is, given that no one, including LJ himself, had ever made a syndicate presentation which appeared to be so prepared and so dramatic, these candidates felt that LJ was overdoing it and that this should be recognized with a standing ovation. Of those candidates who made this observation, there were mixed responses to the question of whether the ovation was meant to put LJ down, or whether it was just to have fun. In

response to the question: "What was the message the standing ovation was meant to convey?" some of those who said the presentation was out of place responded with comments such as "Cut the crap" (MM); "Sit down and shut the fuck up" (MJ); "Don't be such an ass" (VC); "who are you trying to impress?" (CR); and "Hey, you overdid it, we're going to overdo it" (DK). These candidates seemed to view the presentation negatively, with a tone of irritation.

In contrast to these candidates who reported negative interpretations of the episode, four respondents reported that they thought LJ had done a good job and that they were clapping in appreciation. The following comments is representative of this view: "It was meant as a positive thing, at least that's how I took it, to say "you did a good job" (MT).

Thus, these respondents reported, at least, that they were impressed with LJ's performance, and that they thought he had done a good job. It is difficult to discern whether these candidates were offering more "public" responses than "private", or real ones, but a few clues in their responses show that they were responding with public selves more than the other candidates who appeared to be more frank. For example, MT, as well as saying that LJ had done a good job concluded by saying that the group was "poking fun" at him, not to offend him but to just gently have a laugh. This would indicate that MT at least realized that other candidates thought he had gone overboard, but he also reiterated his own position, saying "He takes up the challenge, very well. He was given a task, and he prepared it very well, and he was very enthusiastic and serious about it, and he presented a very serious, enthusiastic presentation... I know I thought he did a good job." It would appear, therefore, that MT did admire LJ's presentation, himself, but that he realized others did not.

Of interest is LJ's own interpretation of the episode. Although the majority of candidates had applauded to make fun of John's overly dramatic

presentation, LJ seemed to feel that the ovation was only partly in fun, and that the real meaning was: "Well done, LJ, worthy of a standing ovation." Specifically, when interviewed, LJ responded by discussing his skill as an instructor, his ability to motivate a group, and his love of making presentations. The following comments are representative of his response:

> I love instructing. I get into it, I like the dynamics that I can create in the class ... when I got into it I was really preaching. And I can do that fairly well. Big groups or small groups don't upset me at all, up front, I can do pretty well. When I put my heart into it I can put a pretty interesting presentation together (LJ).

Furthermore, when asked what he thought the message was from the rest of the group, LJ responded:

> They were trying to say, "thanks for keeping us awake." I felt a little bit embarrassed, but not overly, I've instructed enough that that kind of stuff doesn't bother me. I was dynamic, and I know I can do that because, you know, there's nothing more boring than..

It could be suggested that LJ was simply presenting a public self to me, protecting his ego because he did not want to appear hurt or insulted by the incident. However, upon examination of LJ's perceptions of the incident taken from his interview, it appears that LJ was sincere in his interpretation, and that his response was very candid. Specifically, if LJ thought that the group had been making fun of him, even jokingly, then he would not have spent so much time discussing his teaching ability and so on. Rather, one would assume that he would have admitted that he had gotten carried away, and that the group was just letting him know, particularly since he knew that I was interviewing all of the other course candidates.

To conclude, it is clear that though the responses were varied, there is a great deal of similarity in the gist of the Jimmy Swaggert standing ovation metaphor. That is, although a few candidates perceived the metaphor quite differently than others, for example those who perceived the standing ovation

literally — that it would be considered an honour by LJ — most of the candidates agreed that a standing ovation is the response of a group to an exceptionally well done performance, and that LJ's dramatic presentation was just that, a performance, and thus should be given a standing ovation. The candidates disagreed, however, on whether the standing ovation was just meant in good fun, or whether it was meant to really say "cut the crap."

Regardless of the individual interpretations, however, the standing ovation metaphor did have an influence on the group's dynamics. A feeling of camaraderie certainly seemed to rise out of the incident, whereby the group members who had signalled to each other, held up notes saying "got a gun?", made faces, and then finally shared the action of standing, clapping, shouting "bravo" and "encore" and laughing felt united in a common action. Like Willis' (1977) working class group of "lads," the EDC candidates took great pleasure from "pisstaking" (Willis, 1977), or from joining together to enact a cooperative humorous response against one of their members. The individual interpretations, then, were secondary to the sharing of a laugh.

Despite the differences of interpretation that have been shown in this section, the mention of the name "Jimmy Swaggart" always elicited laughter among the group members. Without having to explain what was meant, for example when it was said during LJ's presentation to describe his flamboyant performance, group members each seemed to find some sort of humour in the metaphor, and were able to laugh and share the joke. Whether all group members interpreted the metaphor in the same way, then, was inconsequential to their being able to share the humour.

Furthermore, this was a metaphor which was ambiguous enough to allow for multiple meanings depending on the context. When used in reference to "values" it denoted hypocrisy and lack of values, generally, and was thus

humorous, as a paradox. When referring to trustworthyness and believability the symbol elicited laughter, and when used in reference to the standing ovation the symbol implied "great communicator." Despite their differences of interpretations, then, the candidates were able to differentiate, firstly, the appropriate interpretation for the different occasions of its use, and secondly, to share the recognition that the symbol was used with sarcasm to create humour. This shared recognition of the humour in the symbol enabled the candidates to share a laugh, and thus enhanced the group development process.

9.2 Jokes as metaphors

Along with actions and verbal expressions, jokes were frequently metaphorical in nature, and in fact their humour often lay in their potential for multiple meanings. A number of the jokes and humorous incidents were discussed in the previous humour chapter, so in this section one particular one will be examined.

9.2.1 Three male pigs

During the leadership session the fourth week of the course the candidates did role plays in the front of the class to act out different leadership styles. RP and BD acted out a scene in which a female officer (RP) had complained about sexual harassment from the three male officers she had been assigned to work with. Her supervisor (BD) had told her that he was going to assign her to a woman officer to see how that would work out. RP then said: "I'd happily work with a woman and get away from that male pig," to which BD responded: "Three different male pigs, I might add." This comment resulted in an uproar of laughter by the audience.

Because of the symbolic nature of this incident, as well as the strong response that it elicited, I asked the candidates to comment on it during their semi-structured interviews. Based on the results of these interviews, I have classified

the responses into three categories, according to common elements of the responses. The candidates focused on the following symbolic representations of the "Three different male pigs" metaphor: pigs as male chauvinists; pigs as police officers; and pigs as the "three little pigs." As well, there were a number of people who either did not understand the metaphor but who laughed anyway, who did not understand the metaphor and did not find it funny, or who did understand it but did not find it funny. The number in parentheses represents the number of candidates whose response fit into the category.

1. Pigs as male chauvinists: (11)

Although a total of eleven candidates referred to the notion of male chauvinist pigs as a definition for the metaphor involved in the incident, there were a variety of specific interpretations of the male chauvinist pig metaphor. Therefore, in this section the category has been broken down into three sub-elements, all of which will be discussed below, following the discussion of the general heading.

The expression "male chauvinist pig" is not new. Although it does not seem to be as much a part of the common vernacular as it once was, it nonetheless is meaningful to most people. The metaphor underlying the expression is that a man who perceives and treats women as lesser beings, or who treats a woman with disrespect or sexism is a pig. Thus, the insult is metaphorical, given that male chauvinists really do little that pigs do, and thus are not really pig-like.

a. Man calling men pigs/Insulted self: (7)

Seven candidates explained that the metaphor "three different male pigs" symbolized male chauvinist pigs, and that the humour lay in the fact that BD, as a man, was referring to men as male chauvinist pigs, and that it was paradoxical for him to do so. One candidate explained his reasoning as follows:

"there's a lot of Vaudeville comedy which goes along that kind of line, where one person says something and the other person parrots it, but has just insulted himself, or just been caught up in it, you know, the old saying that somebody told me you weren't fit to live with pigs and I said you were" (MJ).

Thus, by calling the other male officers pigs, BD was, in effect insulting himself, something which was perceived as highly humorous by this group. It is interesting to consider the previous section's discussion of the central role of put-down humour in the group's culture. That is, as was discussed earlier, the group particularly appreciated put-downs, and a putdown of oneself or of one's own group — especially if it was perceived as unintentional — was a very successful approach.

This contrasts sharply with Duncan et al.'s (1990) earlier cited discussion, in which they argued that "jokes perceived as disparaging to members of one sex are not enjoyed by its members (261), and, that males especially are offended when a friend is the focus of a putdown joke. Thus, the opposite appears to be the case with the Executive Development Course members, whereby it was perceived as highly humorous to put down a fellow candidate, without offending the person. It was mentioned be one candidate that by putting each other down, and taking it, reinforced the sense of camaraderie and closeness that existed by saying, in essence: "we are close enough that I can say anything about you, in terms of a friendly putdown, and you can say anything about me." Thus, rather than splintering the group, putdowns of one's self and one's friends was something of a bonding agent.

b. Used same vernacular (2)

Although related to the previous category, in that the two candidates explained that the humour lay in BD's unintentional putdown of himself, this category focused more specifically on BD's repetition of RP's speech pattern. In the words of one of these candidates:

It kind of put the shoe on the other foot, because RP was talking about pigs, and BD just kind of threw that in because he wouldn't normally call them pigs, of course, because they're his own people. (LR).

c. Sucked into argument (3)

Related to the previous categories, this category focused more specifically on the communication between BD and RP. Three candidates explained that they had perceived RP as leading BD to insult men, and thus himself, and that RP had succeeded in doing so. BD, himself, in fact explained that he had not intended to say "three different male pigs, I might add" but that it "was a slip of my tongue.. He'd gotten me into a little bit of a bind, and I went along with his way of saying things. RP was taking it as male chauvinist pigs..." Thus, the humour to BD of the male chauvinist metaphor was that RP had gotten him to refer to the men as such. In fact, during the role play, BD and RP both laughed after BD made his retort, and then BD, seeming flustered, said: "O.K., let's get back to business, here" indicating that he felt the situation was getting out of his control.

2. Pigs as police officers: (9)

Almost as many candidates interpreted the metaphor as implying pigs as police officers as interpreted it as pigs as male chauvinists. In fact, nine candidates referred to the slang term for police officers as an explanation of the metaphor. The emphasis for a few of these candidates was BD's correction of RP's insult, that it was not just one male pig but three of them, and thus that all of the male police officers were pigs. Although police officers do refer to themselves as "cops," it is extremely unlikely that they would refer to themselves with the derogatory term "pigs," and thus this contradiction elicited laughter.

3. Not funny: (4)

Interestingly, of the nine candidates who interpreted the metaphor as symbolizing police officers, four reported that they had not found the exchange funny. Specifically, these candidates said that they had interpreted both BD and RP as referring to police officers as pigs, and that they had not liked it. This is noteworthy, because, in contrast, of the eleven candidates who reported that they had interpreted pigs as men, all of them found the exchange humorous. In other words, it was not offensive to anyone to call men "pigs" as in male chauvinist pigs, but it was offensive to four of the nine candidates who interpreted the metaphor as referring to police officers.

4. Did not get it: (3)

In contrast to the candidates who did not find the episode funny were two candidates who did find it funny but who did not know what it was about. In other words, these candidates reported laughing at the time, but said that they had not understood where the humour lay, and still did not really see any humour in it. One additional candidate reported that he had neither understood it nor found it funny.

It is possible that these candidates did not hear the exchange clearly, or simply were not paying attention, but it is noteworthy that out of the 22 candidates who responded in interviews to this question, only three reported not having understood it at the time.

5. Three little pigs (3)

Strangely, because there was nothing about the "three little pigs" story in the role play, three people mentioned the three little pigs as significant, and as being symbolized by the metaphor. One of the candidates explained the metaphor, and the humour inherent in it, as follows:

> "It was funny because he was relating three male chauvinist pigs with the three little pigs, the story, so to me that was quick on his part" (UJ).

Thus, the male chauvinist pig aspect of the metaphor was secondary to the witty connection made between the three males and the three little pigs.

9.2.1.1 Analysis of the Three Male Pigs Metaphor

As has been shown above, there are numerous interpretations, some similar, some seemingly similar while actually being variations of a theme. For example, while there were many people who agreed on the "male chauvinist pig" theme as an interpretation for the "three male pigs" metaphor, there were four different explanations for why this use of the male chauvinist pig metaphor was humorous. Interestingly, although it is recorded in the observation notes that the group erupted into an uproar of laughter, the reported reasons of individual members of the group for laughter were quite varied, with five candidates denying that the incident was even funny at all. Thus, what appear to be shared reactions — and thus shared interpretations — to an event really are not so shared, under the surface.

9.3 Objects as metaphors

The last category of metaphors to be discussed in this section is objects which took on a symbolic meaning, or which became metaphors in and of themselves. Unlike the previous category, jokes as metaphors, which were developed during the course, it is difficult to say if these symbols were constructed during the course, or whether some or all of the candidates arrived at the Canadian Police College already aware of them. However, their enactment was certainly observed, and thus justifies further discussion. The metaphor to be examined in this section is the "turban issue."

9.3.1 The turban issue

The turban issue was a recurrent theme which appeared rather significant, given the intensity with which people discussed it and the frequency with which it came up. The turban issue relates to a ruling in Alberta which allowed a Sikh

member of the RCMP to wear a turban on duty, rather than the regulation-issue hat. Since that time, other Sikh's in Canadian police forces have been allowed to wear their turbans, and other groups have requested special rights, such as aboriginal Canadians, who have asked to wear their braids with their uniforms. The turban issue, however, signifies more than just the one RCMP Sikh who was granted the right to wear his turban, it also symbolizes the growing pressure from minority groups, interest groups and the government to both increase the numbers of minority groups in police forces and to allow them to continue their traditional practices. Whether EDC members agreed with allowing minority group to practice their traditions or not, the issue certainly created a great deal of intense discussion throughout the course.

To exemplify, the most notable discussion of the turban issue will be presented here. This incident was most notable because it stirred up a very heated discussion as a result of its relevance to employment equity (a pressure on all police forces), because of telling comments made by a few candidates, and because it was brought up later by at least one candidate. As well, the discussion highlighted the challenge to solidarity that the turban issue has created, by virtue of de-standardizing the uniform, and thus the behaviours of the quasi-military police organizations.

During the Adaptive Organization session on the Friday of the third week. The turban issue had come up and most members of the group were attacking the notion of allowing any minority group to continue its traditional practices and clothing in a police force. The comments of most of the group were along the lines of the following:

HE: The Scots founded the country and we're not wearing kilts [as police officers].

PS: We're talking about a symbol, an arbitrary force that this country needs.

These two group members were focusing on the fact that more established ethnic groups in Canada, "the founders," did not have to force their practices on the rest of the country, and that the changing of important symbols was somehow damaging to the country as a whole, not just to police forces. Without making judgments about the viewpoints of the group members, it is clear that the majority of the candidates held a conservative and traditional view of the turban issue. One candidate, SA, had spoken very few words up until that point, at all, and he even piped in with the strong and resounding: "The RCMP took our identity away from us!" This comment attracted attention, because of the infrequency with which SA said anything, and because it exemplified the strength of people's convictions on this issue.

In contrast to these candidates was LJ, who practically stood up and said: "That's a crock of garbage" (meaning that the changing of the uniforms did not affect the forces, the culture, nor the identity). As if to lighten up the discussion, two other members responded sarcastically with "Could you state that a little more clearly?" and "Don't sugar coat it, LJ." LJ then spent several minutes stating his views, saying that it was important for police organizations to change with the times and to represent the population of Canada, no matter their colour or ethnic origins. Certainly, this response is the politically and socially correct one, but it was not a popular one with the rest of the class, and therefore was not a politically correct attitude to hold in this group. To espouse this perspective was certainly to draw attention to oneself, and, most likely, to alienate some of the people. Interestingly, according to the sociogram, however, LJ was well-liked and well respected by a number of the candidates, and thus many of them must have either not been negatively influenced by his embracing of an unpopular view, or else were impressed positively by it.

However, as was discussed by one candidate during his interview at the end of the session, this incident was one which influenced at least some of the candidates' impression of LJ in a negative manner.

> ... probably one of the fundamental things he did wrong at the start was the defending with such vigour the Commissioner's decision to allow turbans, as though he's so far up the Commissioner's ass he's looking out the same set of glasses...and that caused guys to kind of raise an eyebrow at him (MJ).

Thus, at least a few of the other candidates were negatively impressed by LJ's support of the turban issue. The earlier discussion of the standing ovation metaphor is relevant here. This turban issue discussion occurred before the standing ovation episode, and it is likely that the incident lead to people such as MJ deciding to give LJ a standing ovation in order to say "sit down and shut the fuck up." That is, because of the negative impression of LJ that his defense of the turban issue created, other candidates seemed to feel that he deserved a sarcastic standing ovation.

After a few more heated minutes of discussion the resource person said: "Let's talk about something other than the uniform, a less controversial topic." Clearly, he felt that the candidates were getting off of the issue that he wanted to discuss, which was learning adaptive behaviours in order to manage organizations in changing times.

9.3.2 Symbolism and turbans

The turban issue represents symbolically another important symbol. That is, it replaces a highly symbolic aspect of the RCMP uniform, the stetson. Furthermore, it replaces it with a highly visual and symbolic article, a turban, and, finally, it represents the way of the future, where multiculturalism will have a greater and greater influence on police forces, thanks to employment equity legislation.

The RCMP stetson is highly symbolic because it represents, for RCMP members and for Canadians, and in fact for the world, the Canadian national police force. It is with great pride that many Canadians think of the red serge uniform, the brown stetson, and the slogan, "the mounties always get their man." It is the whole package — the tall, white male mountie in his red serge — that most Canadians have traditionally pictured as the true RCMP officer, and it is with difficulty that many people change this picture.

Further, the turban itself is a very visual symbol of a very different culture from the cultures that have made up the Canadian mosaic up until the 1980s. That is, for the candidates in the Executive Development Course, their classrooms and neighbourhoods, their police recruit classes and their friends were made up of an extremely homogeneous group, whether in Alberta or Toronto. Thus, the 38 to 54 year olds in the classroom have not had the opportunity to learn and work with a large variety of students and friends from varied ethnic backgrounds and cultures. Their experience is much more limited, therefore, and the idea of the turban symbolizes all that is foreign to them, and represents changes that they do not feel ready for.

These changes that the EDC candidates do not feel ready for are another aspect of the turban issue metaphor. That is, as employment equity legislation becomes more and more of a reality, the candidates find themselves — in their real daily work — faced with pressures to change the makeup, and quickly, of their police forces. There is pressure from the government, and thus from the police services commissions which govern police forces, to hire and promote more people of colour, women, and people with disabilities.

While this pressure continues from the outside, there is also pressure from inside police forces to not change too quickly. That is, police officers generally seem to feel extremely negatively toward the hiring and promotion of unqualified

people simply to fulfil employment equity quotas. This topic came up numerous times throughout the course, and was discussed with resistance, and many examples of failed attempts, every time. For example, one candidate described the case of a black woman who had applied to the police force, who had failed the examination five times, but who had been allowed to keep writing it until she successfully passed it. The implication was that if a police force employs less than qualified people, it endangers the reputation of the police force, the service that is offered, and, most importantly, the officers with whom the less qualified officer works.

To conclude, there are multiple meanings associated with the turban issue, as well as multiple implications of it. The group members felt very strongly about this symbol and defended their views with commitment, because, whether an RCMP officer or not, the issue, and all that it symbolized, influenced every EDC candidate in the room.

9.4 Conclusion

It is clear from this discussion on metaphors that there are multiple meanings for every example drawn from the data, based on what the candidates reported as their interpretations. Not surprisingly, interpretations for metaphors such as "Jimmy Swaggart" or the "The turban issue" were much less shared than interpretations for "flagship course," most likely because of the ambiguity of the former and the clarity and familiarity of the latter. Furthermore, because there was no opportunity, nor in fact necessity, to define the Jimmy Swaggart and Turban issue metaphors, each candidate was able to foster his or her own interpretation, comfortable in assuming that everyone else had defined it in pretty much the same way. As was shown in this section, however, despite these multiple interpretations the candidates were able to interact and communicate, confident in their own interpretations, assuming that others shared them, and forming a close-

knit group of seemingly like-minded individuals. That is, despite the differences of interpretations, communication went on smoothly, feelings were not hurt, and a sense of camaraderie was enacted.

In the next chapter the findings reported in these last three chapters will be discussed.

CHAPTER 10:   DISCUSSION

This field study examined the meanings for symbolic language forms such as humorous incidents, jokes, metaphors and implicit rules held by the members of a six week Executive Development Course. The goal of the study was to identify the symbolic language forms constructed and used by the candidates, and then to catalogue individual members' interpretations of the symbols for comparison and contrast. The previous four chapters presented the research findings, and this chapter contains a discussion of the theoretical implications of the major findings.

The major findings of the study, all of which will be discussed in detail below, were that firstly, shared actions are more necessary for organizing than shared meanings, but that the *appearance of sharedness* is crucial. Secondly, this appearance of sharedness, which is created in large part by ambiguous language forms, results in a sense of community, an important aspect of the process of organizing. Thirdly, this study found that humour was the main communication mechanism influencing this appearance of sharedness. As well, as an ambiguous communication mechanism it was found that humour was in fact shared, and that it served a number of important functions. Fourthly, a number of social rules were shared by the course candidates, and these also played an important part in the enactment of a sense of community. Finally, a clear pattern of humour development, notably putdown humour, was identified, the implications of which will be discussed. The final section of this chapter will be a discussion of the impact of Weick's (1979) Means Convergence Model on the development of the group.

10.1 Shared actions rather than shared meanings

An important finding of this study was that shared actions were more prevalent than shared meanings, and more necessary for the members of the EDC group to enact their environment and their sense of community. This finding

supports the work of Weick (1979), Eisenberg (1984), and Donnellon, Gray, and Bougon (1986) who all argue that group members share meanings to varying degrees, and that limited overlap is beneficial to the enactment of organization. In this study group members were able to coordinate their activities and thus enact their organization with little overlap of meaning.

The findings of the current study also support Eisenberg's (1990) notion of jamming, which he defined as "instances of fluid behavioral coordination without detailed knowledge of personality" which "celebrate the closeness that can arise through coordinated action" (139). Furthermore, the findings elaborate on Eisenberg's (1990) definition of jamming by demonstrating that it is not simply without detailed knowledge of *personality* that individuals can come together and coordinate their actions, but with varying and conflicting knowledge of both others' personalities and their meanings. That is, regardless of their understandings of each other's personalities, the members of this group interacted on the basis of varied, and often conflicting, definitions of the situation. This finding is crucial because it demonstrates that without shared meanings group members are able to interact, and that it is not just without shared meanings of each others' personalities and meanings, but without shared meanings about the situation and the action itself.

For example, in the standing ovation episode, the group members came together, without planning and explicit discussion, in a communal act — in an example of jamming. As was demonstrated by the interview data, the candidates' interpretations of the meanings of the standing ovation were diverse and conflicting, yet the coordinated action resulted in an almost joyous sense of sharedness. Furthermore, the candidates reported that they perceived that others shared their interpretations, and thus the episode was characterized by shared action and the appearance of sharedness of meaning.

10.1.1 The appearance of sharedness meaning

Related to the first finding, that shared actions are more necessary to organizational enactment than shared meanings is another, more unique finding. As was demonstrated in the previous chapter, though there was frequently little similarity of meanings, group members enacted their organization *as if* they shared meanings, firstly, and with great certainty that their interpretations were "correct" and the same as everyone else's. Thus, it was shown that the perception that meanings were shared was more necessary to organizing than whether they really were shared, as long as the action which resulted from the apparently shared meanings was the same.

This finding extends the work of Weick, 1979; Eisenberg, 1984; 1990; and Donnellon et al., 1986, because it demonstrates not only that meanings do not have to be shared for enactment to take place, but also that organization is enacted effectively even if meanings are only partly shared but are perceived as shared. That is, rather than spend time negotiating meanings, the group members were able to coordinate their actions and enact their organization on the basis of the perception that their interpretations were pretty much the same as everyone else's, and that these shared interpretations were the "correct" ones. For example, as was shown earlier, during syndicate discussions, when there was a great deal of material to cover in a short time, the candidates implicitly agreed to accept others' definitions of reality in order to manage the amount of information they had to deal with, rather than argue over details of the definitions.

This finding shows that the candidates of the Executive Development Course tended to be "satisficers" (March & Simon, 1958) who accepted adequate interpretations and decisions, rather than "optimizers" who would have continued communication until they had reached the absolute best possible decision (March & Simon, 1958). In fact, the findings show that in order to enact

organization it was *crucial* for group members to be "satisficers" — and thus assume that others shared their interpretations — because if they were not it would have been difficult to enact any organization because all time and energy would have been spent coming to agreement on explicit meanings. Thus, the implicit agreement evidenced in the EDC group's communications to leave definitions ambiguous and undefined resulted in the appearance of a shared reality.

The candidates' assumption that everyone more or less perceived and interpreted things in the same way was demonstrated numerous times in candidate interviews. For example, candidates would say "We all knew..." or "Everybody had the same thought..." or "I think everybody felt the same way..." to indicate their belief that their own perceptions were shared by the rest of the candidates. When describing how they all knew to stand for the standing ovation incident, for example, all candidates who had stood explained their own versions of the impetus to stand, and appeared to be completely certain that the other candidates had stood for the same reasons. Although some of the candidates reported that they had whispered to each other to stand, others did not know that this was the "real" impetus. These candidates explained, instead, that the group had simply risen, en masse, without any pre-planning. Still others reported that they had sent each other non-verbal signals, which had been passed all the way around the room. Thus, despite widely divergent meanings about the action, the group members coordinated their activity and constructed a shared action. Then, when they viewed their interlocked behaviour, they could retrospectively interpret that all of the group had acted communally with the same meaning in mind, as Weick (1979) has suggested.

This finding, that the appearance of sharedness is more important to organizational enactment than real sharedness, contradicts Morgan (1986), when

he argues that "cohesive groups are those that arise around shared understandings, while fragmented groups tend to be those characterized by multiple meanings" (133). Specifically, it was clear that this group of police executives was cohesive, in that they exhibited a great deal of shared laughter, shared rituals (such as the telling of a joke before each class session began), and other shared behaviours. However, the group members also reported diverse interpretations, and thus multiple realities. Again, it was the appearance of shared interpretations which resulted in the shared activities, and thus the cohesiveness, not the actual shared .meanings.

10.2 The role of ambiguity in creating the appearance of shared meanings

Another important area of the findings demonstrated that the ambiguity inherent in the group members' communication allowed them to interact *as if* they shared meanings, and thus to create the *perception* of sharedness. The ambiguity in the organizational symbols used by the candidates allowed for multiple meanings to exist, and to go undetected, for the most part. As was seen earlier, ambiguity allowed the candidates to communicate as if they agreed on the meanings of the symbols they used (they tended not to verify, unless a breach occured, that they were talking about the exact same things as the people with whom they communicated). Ambiguity thus ensured that multiple meanings existed. In other words, group members maintained conversations while holding different, and sometimes contrasting meanings, yet these multiple meanings did not prevent them from communicating. The opposite, in fact, may have been true, whereby the ambiguity allowed for multiple meanings (with the appearance of sharedness) which enhanced communication as candidates conversed while believing they were seeing the world of symbols in the same ways. The ambiguity of linguistic symbols, then, allowed the group members to maintain a

"veneer of consensus" (Goffman, 1959) or surface of agreement which masked exact details of the meanings of the symbols.

This appearance of sharedness was evident to both the researcher and to the participants themselves. In the standing ovation incident, for example, as the participants observed themselves standing together, clapping, laughing and calling out, their

observations reinforced the sense of community, and thus the sense of "being on the inside." That reality reveals itself in this way to the participants who constructed it was suggested by Weick (1979) in his discussion of consensually validated grammars, which was presented in Chapter One. Weick (1979) argues that through their communication people come to "agreements about what is real and what is illusory" (3) and that these consensually validated grammars take on the appearance of objective truths. In the current research, however, the consensually validated grammars about the standing ovation were nonverbally communicated, and thus were left up to each participant to define for him or herself. In other words, though Weick (1979) suggests that individuals construct a consensually validated grammar through their communication, he implies that it is through discussion and verification, rather than implicit and tacit agreement (by virtue of unclarified ambiguity) which is interpreted in a number of different ways by the participants. When the candidates observed themselves standing and clapping, each one constructed an account of the meaning of the situation, assuming that others shared the interpretation. By not verifying the interpretations of the other candidates (at which point they would have noticed, and had to deal with, the divergent meanings), the candidates were able to maintain this consensually validated grammar, and thus create a sense of community.

10.2.1 Filling in as a response to ambiguity

Eisenberg (1984) has suggested that when people confront these ambiguous messages they undergo a process of interpretation. Specifically, he argues that people attending to a message "fill in what they believe to be the appropriate context and meaning [and that] the more ambiguous the message, the greater the room for projection" (Eisenberg, 1984, 233). This phenomenon was observed throughout the course of the research. For example, in the discussion of the "three male pigs metaphor," a few of the candidates reasoned that the metaphor symbolized the "three little pigs" story, and that this was a witticism on the part of BD. However, in the original instance, the three little pigs had nothing to do with the role play, with the conversation inside the role play, nor with the humour. It would indicate, then, that in retrospect these candidates came up with "the three little pigs" to fill in the meaning of the humour, given that they could not think of any other plausible reason for having laughed.

As was shown in the previous chapter, Kahneman and Tversky (1973) have argued that people may be influenced by an "illusion of validity" when they make judgments, such that they "behave as though information is to be trusted regardless of its source, and make equally strong or confident inferences, regardless of the information's predictive value" (Cited in Fiske & Taylor, 1984, 269). In other words, based on their own observations, people assume that their perceptions and interpretations are correct, unless there is solid evidence to show them otherwise.

In the current research it was seen on numerous occasions that group members acted on the basis of this illusion of validity (Kahneman & Tversky, 1973) and that this false sense of security did not inhibit their communication. For example, when the candidates described their interpretations of the LR Heaven joke, there were widely divergent interpretations of the meaning and

humour in the joke, and yet the observed behaviour was of a shared action which had the appearance of a shared reality. In other words, although there were different reasons reported for laughing, it appeared that all group members were in agreement as to the humour in the joke.

10.2.2 Ambiguity and the enactment of community

It was suggested by numerous authors (Becher, 1981; Smircich, 1983; Carbaugh, 1985; Morgan, 1986; Eisenberg, 1986) that the sense of community created by the communication of group members is integral to the group development process, because this sense of community facilitates coordinated actions. The findings of this study support these assertions, demonstrating that a sense of community was created, and that it was mainly the result of ambiguous communication which created the appearance of a shared reality.

As Eisenberg (1986) points out, when group members share a restricted code, or a joke, this helps to construct a sense of community. The current study extends this further, however, by arguing that it is more likely that when members *perceive* that they share a restricted code (and there is no obvious breakdown to indicate otherwise), they experience a sense of belonging and thus community. A major finding of this study, then, is that the appearance of sharedness was crucial not only to enactment of organization, but to the construction of a sense of community in the EDC group.

Furthermore, the sense of community was enhanced by the use of ambiguous language forms which were used *as if* shared whether they were in fact shared or not. That is, when group members thought that they were in agreement with the interpretations of other group members, they felt a sense of belonging — by virtue of "sharing" the perspectives of others — which was enhanced by the ambiguity of the symbols. This ambiguity enabled group members to interact as if they were in agreement, because each was able to hold

his or her meaning intact while assuming that everyone else shared more or less the same meaning.

The data also supported the notion that a sense of community developed out of incidents in which little shared meanings existed but in which a great deal of shared activity occurred. For example, as was discussed earlier, although the standing ovation incident and the symbolism underlying it were interpreted differently by the individual candidates, the whispering, passing notes, laughter, clapping, calling "bravo" and standing at the end were shared, and this resulted in a sense of groupness, or community, in the classroom. The interpretations of the incident ranged from those who explained that the group was sending a message to "Sit down and shut the fuck up" to those who reported that they meant: "you did a damn fine job and we're proud of you," while the candidate himself reported that the standing ovation was meant in fun, but that it was a show of appreciation from the audience. Thus, despite their differences of interpretation, the group members participated in a collective action, and enjoyed the sense of being in on a joke, which helped to create a feeling of solidarity.

If the negative message being sent by many members of the group had been transmitted more explicitly, however, then it is more likely that this would have had the opposite effect on the group's sense of community. That is, if it was obvious that the group was putting down the candidate in a serious manner, as some of the instigators of the episode claimed in their interviews, then this would have hurt and offended the candidate. As a result, it could be expected that other candidates would have felt uncomfortable, would have perhaps defended the candidate, and would have negatively perceived the entire incident. These expectations are based on the implicit social rules that a number of candidates explained during interviews, whereby if a group member, no matter whether he or

she is well-liked, is explicitly put down in an offensive manner, then the person making the putdown, and the whole situation, will be perceived negatively.

The overall effect, then, of the standing ovation incident was to create a sense of community based on the shared actions, the shared interpretations of some of the candidates, and the *perception* of shared interpretations of other candidates. As described above, the shared actions created a bond in the group.

Furthermore, the interpretation of the standing ovation incident which was shared by many of the candidates (as revealed in interviews) was that LJ was obviously trying to impress someone, the group did not like it, and they would put him back in his place by doing a mock standing ovation. Given that a number of people reported this interpretation, it could be assumed that these candidates shared the perception. The sharing of this interpretation, along with the sharing of the action, then, resulted in a sense of community.

Finally, those candidates who interpreted the metaphor differently, including LJ himself, also appeared to share the sense of community by *assuming* that the other candidates shared their positive point of view (that LJ had done a presentation that was worthy of a literal standing ovation). Thus, although these candidates were not, in a sense, part of the community that was making fun of LJ's presentation, they did nevertheless perceive themselves to be part of the group (they believed that everyone was standing and clapping, as they did, to say "a job well done"). Thus, the shared action, along with the shared or apparently shared interpretation combined to create a sense of belonging, of groupness, of community.

10.2.3 Dealing with breakdowns of meaning

Thus it appears that group members interlock their behaviours on the basis of little overlap of meaning with the assumption that they do, in fact, share meanings, which results in the appearance of sharedness. This finding supports

Weick's (1979) assertion that it is only necessary for organizational meanings to overlap among members to the degree that sense can be made and organization enacted. For example, at no time was it observed that group members went to great lengths to ensure that they had interpreted, or been interpreted, correctly. When, on occasion, it became obvious that a misinterpretation had occurred the situation was quickly rectified until it *appeared* that there was again agreement. As Goffman (1959) has proposed, when breakdowns were noticed, the group members were able to reorganize their symbols and interpretations in order to achieve apparent harmony of meanings. Also, as Goffman has (1959) asserted, there is a "working consensus," or appearance of sharedness, which allows the group members to communicate as if they share their meanings. However, to extend Goffman's (1959) work further, the working consensus is achieved in this group through the use of ambiguous symbolic language forms, most notably humour.

10.3 Humour as a means to achieve the appearance of sharedness

Although metaphor was examined in the communication patterns of the EDC group members, it did not play as important a role in the group's communication, and thus development of an apparently shared symbol system, as humour did. Furthermore, given that metaphor has previously been identified as an important communication mechanism in the construction of culture (cf. Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Smircich, 1983; Morgan, 1986) and equifinal meanings (Donnellon et al., 1986) it was deemed more important to focus on a more unique finding of this study, namely the role of humour in achieving equifinal meanings and the appearance of sharedness.

Humour was the main communication mechanism by which the candidates were able to bridge divergent meanings and create this appearance of a shared reality, thus constructing a working consensus. In support of the work of

Donnellon et al. (1986), it was found in the current study that, although group members did not necessarily share meanings, they did seem to share a particular repertoire of communication mechanisms. The findings of the current study extend the work of Donnellon et al. (1986) by identifying other shared communication mechanisms, and these mechanisms played an important role in the group development process. Though it was not mentioned in the work of Donnellon et al. (1986), humour was central in the communication patterns of the group members, and appeared to be shared by virtue of the shared action of laughing. That is, whether the particular interpretation of a joke was shared by the group members or not, the humour itself — with differing interpretations for different group members — was shared.

10.3.1 Humour and ambiguity

This paper supported Eisenberg's (1984) assertion that ambiguity is necessary in group communication because it bridges differences and covers up potential areas of conflict. Specifically, the current study identified humour as the most important and most utilized device for communicating ambiguously. It was found that what was shared, often, was the recognition and enjoyment of a joke, as Powell and Paton (1988) suggested, but not the specific interpretation of the joke. Further, the varying interpretations were rarely, if ever, verbalized, thus leaving the individual interpretations comfortably ambiguous. Thus, by identifying humour as a central communication device, this study has taken the work of Weick (1979) and Eisenberg (1984) a step further, supporting their assertion that ambiguous linguistic devices allow a variety of potential interpretations, and thus enhance group communication.

The findings of this study supported the work of Duncan et al. (1990), in which they proposed that it is the ambiguity, or incongruity, and its resolution in humour which results in a response of laughter. Many of the candidates

responded during interviews that it was the unexpected twist at the end of a joke, or the sudden switch, that they found funny, thus supporting Duncan et al. (1990). However, the current research also extends their work, by demonstrating that it is not simply the "meaningful resolution of the incongruity" (Duncan et al., 1990, 258) which is humorous, but that each listener's interpretation of both the incongruity and the resolution is also humorous. Specifically, as was seen in the findings, different people laughed for different reasons, while explaining that it was the sudden twist at the end of the joke. Though they claimed to be laughing for the same reason — the sudden twist, or resolution of incongruity — the *interpretations* of the sudden twist were varied, and thus the reasons for laughing were in fact different. However, because the action of laughing was the same, the discrepancies in meaning did not matter, and thus, again, the shared action was more necessary for the enactment of the humorous situation than whether the meaning was shared.

10.4 Functions of humour

As an ambiguous shared communication mechanism which allows for multiple interpretations and shared action, humour serves a number of important functions in a group setting. This section explores the functions of humour as a definer of reality; as a bridging mechanism; as a coping mechanism to avoid conflict; as a facilitator in the enactment of community; and as producer of social roles.

10.4.1 Humour as a definer of reality

As Linstead (1988) and Fox (1990) suggested, the candidates in the EDC seemed to use humour to define reality by turning potentially ambiguous situations into episodes of laughter. For example, at one point in the course a resource person asked PD to describe his police force's strategic plan in response to a particular emergency, to which PD responded "No." During interviews,

three different candidates mentioned this incident to describe PD's witty comment, and explained that they had found it humorous. However, because the incident was not meant to be humorous at all, it is likely that these candidates defined it as humorous in order to deal with the ambiguity of the situation (it is unusual, and thus ambiguous, for a candidate to refuse to answer a question).

10.4.2 Humour as a bridging mechanism

Along with using humour to define reality, the candidates also used humour to bridge chasms in meanings when it became obvious that these chasms existed. On occasion a divergence of meaning became too obvious to be ignored and thus had to be dealt with, often by a joke or, simply, laughter. For example, during the course the resource person asked a candidate a question about him writing a letter to his daughter. The candidate responded: "That would never happen," and then, before he could continue, another candidate called out: "Just send the cheque." Both comments elicited laughter, but an analysis of the exchange shows that there was a misunderstanding which was covered by the candidates' use of humour. The misunderstanding was that the candidate who called out: "Just send the cheque" was referring to what the daughter would write to her father, whereas the conversation had been about the father writing to his daughter, and thus the comment would have been inappropriate and unlikely for a father to make to his daughter. Despite this discrepancy, the candidates and the resource person chose to ignore it and simply treat it as a humorous comment, rather than acknowledge the misunderstanding and then have to deal with it.

10.4.3 Humour as a coping mechanism to avoid conflict

In the culture of this group of police executives, it appeared to be unacceptable to engage in outright conflict, whether verbal or physical, judging from the lack of displays of either form of conflict. It appeared that this group had an implicit agreement, or social rule, to not verbally attack each other, and thus a

mechanism was required to deal with potentially conflictual situations. Humour served the purpose of diffusing hostile situations so that the candidates could discuss hot topics in a cool and collected manner. An example was presented in the previous chapter whereby a candidate was defending himself from the rest of the class during a discussion about his performance in a role play. When the situation became quite heated, another candidate said "DK, that's not what we're saying" which resulted in laughter by most of the class, and in turn, a calming effect. However, it seemed odd that people laughed at this comment, because there did not appear to be any humour in it.

Later, in an interview, the candidate who had made the comment said that, in fact, he had not meant the comment to be funny, but rather to calm down the other candidate, but that the rest of the candidates nonetheless took his comments as humorous and laughed, thus constructing a humorous interpretation of the situation. Certainly, the incident could have resulted in a more heated argument, but it appeared that the candidates preferred to define the situation as humorous, and thus move forward in their communication rather than deal with the conflict.

As discussed earlier, Goffman (1959) has proposed that while group members may not agree on the meanings of all the symbols they use, there may be agreement among the participants on a definition of reality and, furthermore, "real agreement will ... exist concerning the desirability of avoiding an open conflict of definitions of the situation" (10). In other words, group members constructed and shared a working consensus to avoid conflict, and the means by which they did avoid conflict were, primarily, their use of humour.

10.4.4 Humour as a facilitator in the enactment of community

In contrast to Duncan et al.'s (1990) argument that putdown humour generally has a negative impact on group development, it was found in this study

that putdown humour helped the group to develop a sense of camaraderie and community by creating a shared activity — laughter — and a restricted code of meanings. As they observed themselves laughing together, the group members observed that they were united in their appreciation of jokes that only a member of the group really could appreciate, and thus they felt a sense of belonging and camaraderie.

Furthermore, the findings of this study supported Holdaway (1988), who found that members used their relationships and sense of community as the material for their jokes and stories, and this in turn served to enhance the sense of community, of being on the inside. It is not until the group has developed a history and social relationships, though, that the group itself and the relationships, roles, and historical events can be used for jokes. Thus, it is partly the recognition that the group *has* a history — and thus can make jokes about itself — and partly the restricted nature of a group's history (one has to have been there to be able to appreciate the incident which becomes the source of humour) that results in group members' experiencing a sense of community.

10.4.5 Humour as producer of social roles

The humour that was created by the candidates also constructed and demonstrated the roles of many of the class members. That is, by virtue of either delivering or receiving a putdown, candidates took on different roles which stayed with them throughout the course. For example, when commenting on the selection of LR as the focus of the putdown cited in an earlier chapter, many of the candidates commented that he would not have been selected had he not been attractive and popular, and "smooth with the women." That is, LR was already perceived as having these qualities before the joke (because otherwise RP would not have selected him as the target, fearing that the group would have pitied him, rather than laughing) but by being the focus of such a putdown he was perceived

as even more popular and handsome, because only a popular and attractive person would be selected for the joke, if it was to be funny.

10.5 Patterns of humour development

Another of the major findings of this study was that putdown humour, as the most prevalent form of joking behaviour, followed a distinct pattern of development, as was described in Chapter 8. What was most interesting about the pattern of putdown humour evolution was that it was such a clear pattern — there was little or no deviation from the progression from putdowns of self through putdowns of shared activities and careers to putdowns of outsiders to putdowns of each other. Thus, from the first day of the course the candidates recognized and enacted a particular structure which no one would consider breaching. It appeared, therefore, that there were not only a set of implicit social rules about interaction and putdowns, but that there was a higher order social rule regarding the appropriate evolution of putdown jokes over the course of the six weeks.

10.6 Implicit social rules

Although this study found that group members shared little of the meanings of ambiguous symbolic language forms such as humour and metaphors, there was sharedness of the implicit social rules constructed and used by the group members. This finding supports Weick (1979) who proposed that "organizing is like a grammar in the sense that it is a systematic account of some rules and conventions by which sets of interlocked behaviours are assembled to form social processes that are intelligible to actors" (3). As well, this finding supports Douglas (1971), Stroud (1983), Reuss-Ianni and Ianni (1983), and Ericson (1982) all of whom have suggested that police officers follow an implicit "cop's code" of social rules of behaviour (Reuss-Ianni & Ianni, 1983), which is understood by all members of the organization.

As described in Chapters 8 and 9, the numerous social rules that were constructed by the candidates influenced both their behaviour and their interpretations of the reality they had constructed. Specifically, the rules or cues for what was considered appropriate, in both humour and other symbolic communication forms, were shared. Social rules about joking behaviour, for example, (such as when it would be too early in the course to initiate a direct putdown) were more shared than interpretations of why the joke was funny.

There were breaches of the rules, which demonstrated that the rules were not isomorphically shared. However, because of the tangible and empirical nature of social rules it was necessary for the group members to understand and accept the rules in similar ways to avoid awkward breaches. That is, one's understanding and interpretation of a rule is clearly evident to others if it is breached — either one does not understand the rule, or one chooses to ignore it, which is itself a breach. For example, it would have been awkward for all of the group members if anyone had explicitly put down someone else on the first day of the course, because at that point it was too early in the group's development for that type of humour. If someone had, he or she would most likely have been perceived as something of a deviant, and would have had trouble being accepted by the others.

Because social rules are inherently less ambiguous than meanings — it is easily observed whether group members share a similar interpretation of the rule because they must demonstrate their understanding of the rule through their behaviours — it was not surprising that these were more shared than the meanings for the ambiguous symbolic language forms used by the candidates. This finding extends the work of Weick (1979); Eisenberg (1984); and Donnellon et al. (1986), all of whom did suggest that certain meanings would be more shared

than others, but who did not include social rules as one of the areas which would be shared.

10.6.1 Shared rules and the enactment of community

The construction and use of implicit rules served to enact a sense of community, in that group members could observe themselves and the others acting within a structure of recognized norms for behaviour, and this lead to a sense of sharedness. The findings demonstrated that people who did not seem to know and follow the implicit rules were not well accepted, and thus were not included in the community. For example, DK, who missed the first week of the course, and thus was not part of the important early socialization process, did not fit in well, judging by comments made about him by other candidates during the research interviews, and by the selection of him by many of the other candidates for the negative questions of the sociogram. He had not had a chance to participate in the enactment of the social rules, and thus was observed breaching them, for example when he demonstrated loss of control and verged on a verbal conflict, as described earlier.

Others who were not well-liked according to the sociogram, such as RH and HE, also demonstrated non-adherence to the implicit social rules. RH did not attend coffee breaks and often sat alone at meals, did not participate in the putting down or being put down jokes, and seemed to be aloof. Thus, he showed the other candidates, through his actions, that he was separate from them and not a committed member of the group. These behaviours broke the social rules of laughing at oneself, not participating in putdowns, and not being part of the group. Finally, HE, who became intoxicated and violently sick on the last night, broke the social rules by drinking too much, and by disgracing his own force. As was discussed earlier, this action resulted in HE being selected for many of the

negative sociogram questions. The repercussions, then, of breaking these social rules were clearly ostracism and dislike.

10.6.2 Public versus private rules

Although it appeared that most of the candidates adhered rather strictly to the implicit rules, some rules were clearly public rules, as Goffman (1959) suggested, because in the research interviews the candidates readily broke them, and it appeared that they were not uneasy about the repercussions. For example, although there were implicit social rules to not talk behind someone else's back, and to not give more information than needed, candidates freely spoke negatively about other candidates, told stories about each other and reported things that others had said. Perhaps because during the interviews the candidates were no longer enacting the group — in the privacy of their own rooms with me, an outsider, they were enacting a different reality — they could refer to a different set of rules. It appeared that the set of rules for private discussions includes talking about other people, both negatively and positively.

10.7 Weick's Model

At the outset of this research it was suggested that Weick's (1979) Means Convergence Model could provide an interesting and useful starting point. Furthermore, it was pointed out that no researcher, including Weick himself, had tested the model in any empirical research. On completion of the research, it is evident that the model cannot be used explicitly, given the difficulty of pinpointing group members individual goals and meanings, but that it is useful as a generative model, particularly the notion that interlocked behaviours are more important than shared meanings, because organizational enactment depends on shared action but not on shared meanings.

Further, Weick's (1979) idea that sharedness of meaning is a cyclical process in group development is relevant to this study. Specifically, the findings

of the study support Weick's (1979) assertion that at certain points in the group's evolution the interpretations of the members will overlap to greater degrees than at other times. In particular, the degree of overlap depended on a number of factors such as individual members' orientation (how individuals felt, physically and psychologically, at a given moment), the history of the symbol to be interpreted (for example, the Jimmy Swaggart metaphor was used throughout the course, so each time it was re-enacted the previous enactments of it influenced the members' interpretations of it. Thus, as time went on and it was used again and again, and the candidates had more opportunities to test out their definitions, the candidates' meanings for it may have become closer), and the complexity/ambiguity of the symbol to be interpreted (as was evidenced, the more ambiguous the symbol, the less the meanings overlapped and vice versa).

Though the four stages of the model may be not be testable, the model nonetheless offers important and useful insights into group dynamics, and certainly influenced the understandings and interpretations made in this study. Specifically, the model is useful for describing the group development process of the Executive Development Course members. At the outset of the course, as Weick's (1979) model suggests, each person arrived at the College with individual aspirations — break from usual routine, attainment of knowledge, networking with colleagues — along with some shared goals, because of their common background as police executives — job requirement and career advancement, for example.

Then, as the group members worked together, over the first few days, they began to share some ways of doing things and some understandings, as Weick's second phase of the model suggests. As was discussed above, for example, a clear pattern of putdown humour evolved over the first few weeks of the course, and given that no class member broke the pattern, it appears that the understandings

about and commitment to this pattern were demonstrated by everyone. As Weick (1979) points out, this phase is crucial to the social construction of organizational structure, where the actions of the group members results in a recognizable structure — in this case a structured pattern of putdown humour — which influences the further development of group dynamics.

Next, as an entire group, the EDC candidates came to share some common goals, in accordance with Weick's third phase. For example, a common goal of all the candidates was to make it through the rest of the course, after it was seen what the class sessions were like. That is, given that many of the class sessions were rather dry and long, it became a goal of the candidates to make comments, crack jokes, ask questions and participate in the session, in order to make the time pass more quickly and with more interest.

The fourth stage, and probably the longest lasting, was when the group members found kindred spirits with whom they tended to spend most of their time and with whom, as a subgroup, they began to accomplish their daily activities separately from other subgroups. Weick (1979) describes this fourth stage, where group members pursue different means, as the division of labour, but it could also be, in a temporary group, as the members develop subgroups of more like-minded group members. That is, in this particular group there was not the real division of labour, as Weick (1979) would have it, but there was differentiation, as the members found themselves separating into subgroups of people with whom they were closer and more comfortable. These kinships were based on a shared activity (for example, the smokers, or the volleyball players or the runners) or a shared attitude (when group members found that they perceived things similarly, for example a dislike of another candidate), or a shared location, as discussed in Chapter 6, whereby people tended to prefer those candidates whose rooms were in close proximity to their own. Thus, the move toward diverse means, in this

phase, was conducted in small kinship groups, rather than individually, as Weick's (1979) model seems to suggest.

Finally, as the group members neared their separation, and began to realize that they would have to break apart from their temporary tightly-knit subgroups, their individual goals and values began to resurface, resulting in individuals with diverse goals, in a return to the first phase. It is likely that at the end of an intensive and rigorous course, where group members have spent more time with each other over a six week period than they normally would with anyone, they feel a need to distance themselves from each other, in order to not experience a traumatic separation.

At the outset of the course, many of the candidates spoke of the upcoming experience as a chance to get in touch with themselves, to make connections (and, it was implied, friendships) with each other, to get back into shape, to step outside of their usual daily lives and thus enhance their own perspectives. Clearly, because they viewed the course as a major influence in their lives, there would be both eagerness and trepidation as the end neared. Eagerness to return to home and family, sadness and regret that it was all over.

To deal with the anxiety of the anticipated separation, therefore, the candidates distanced themselves by referring more often to their departures, to their work at home, to their families, and so on. As well, they purchased gifts for families, packed their bags, and prepared themselves to leave throughout the final week. In fact, as discussed earlier, one candidate became intoxicated and violently ill on the second last night, missing the photos, graduation, and final party, in a what appeared to be a conspicuous and vulgar attempt to distance himself. This interpretation is supported by Weick (1979), who argues that this move toward diverse goals may be the result of the "increased pressure to reestablish and assert uniqueness... to demonstrate dissimilarity from the

associates with whom one has become interdependent" (94). In a temporary group, where there is such an intense involvement and interdependence, it is even more necessary for the group members to distance themselves and demonstrate dissimilarity, in order to deal with the "culture shock" of returning home to their jobs and families.

Thus, with the variations suggested above, Weick's (1979) model has proved to be a useful and insightful contribution to the field of communication. In fact, it has been suggested by Littlejohn (1989) that Weick's theory of organizing is the only truly organizational communication theory because "it uses communication as a basis for human organizing and because it provides a rationale for understanding how people organize" (240). The generative power of Weick's work (1969; 1979) in the field of organizational communication is evidenced by the vast numbers of authors who cite him as a genesis for research.

This chapter has demonstrated how the research findings support and extend the work of a number of major theorists in the field of organizational communication. The chapter was organized to systematically demonstrate the means by which group members enacted their organization through their use of ambiguous language forms, particularly humour. Ambiguity, in fact, was found to be crucial to the enactment of the group, because it allowed group members to interact as if they shared meanings, and thus create a sense of community while maintaining their individual interpretations. Rather than a system of shared meanings, the group members constructed and used a set of symbols which appeared to be shared, and it was this appearance of sharedness which was crucial to the interlocking of behaviours, or shared actions, of the candidates. These shared actions, interlocked on the basis of a "veneer of consensus" (Goffman, 1959), enabled the candidates to construct a consensually validated grammar (Weick, 1979) which contained a set of implicit social rules and to

construct and follow a pattern of putdown humour. Finally, the major model guiding the research, Weick's Means Convergence Model, was shown to be generative, in that it provided an important representation of the group development process.

The discussion of the findings of this study have focused on the understandings gained about this particular group of police executives participating in a six week Executive Development Course. Throughout this discussion chapter reference has been made to theorists whose work is supported, extended, or contradicted by the findings, and in this way the findings have been generalized to populations other than this particular case. It is certain that the major finding, that ambiguity is crucial to the enactment of a group — whether husband and wife, a family, or a small group within an organization of small groups — and thus organization, because it allows individuals with different meanings and perspectives to appear to share a view of reality, and thus to experience a sense of community, which in turn enables shared action. It is shared action, finally, which is critical to the enactment and existence of organization.

The next chapter will examine limitations of the research study which may have influenced the findings, along with a summary of the key findings and a discussion of future research considerations.

CHAPTER 11:   CONCLUSION

11.1 Summary of the dissertation

This dissertation has shown that the meanings for a variety of symbolic language forms held by the members of a seemingly cohesive group are actually quite diverse. This major finding contrasts with accepted assumptions about organizational meanings, which are assumed to be shared by members of the organization in the form of beliefs, values, stories, myths and symbols. Furthermore, this study has shown that while the group members only share meanings to varying and limited degrees, they nonetheless interlock their behaviours and enact their organization. Further, this study found that organizations are systems of *apparently* shared meanings in which organizational members interact *as if* they share meanings, adapting their behaviours and their communication in response to perceived discrepancies. Finally, as suggested by Donnellon et al. (1986), the members of this group shared a repertoire of communication mechanisms, most notably humour and metaphor and a system of implicit rules.

Chapter One of this dissertation provided a framework for the study by mapping out the founding assumptions — the phenomenological perspective — as well as the impetus for the study. That is, the widely held assumption that organizations are systems of shared meanings was discussed, along with the few contrasting viewpoints. The problem was then outlined, describing the research as an attempt to identify the meanings held by the members of a small, tightly knit organization for the symbolic language forms that they constructed and used throughout their six week training course. The goal of the study was to compare and contrast the individual members' meanings to look for similarities and differences, in order to determine the degree of overlap that existed between

members. It was expected that there would be minimal overlap, but that this would not inhibit the ongoing communications of the group members.

Chapter Two was a literature review of the relevant communication research into the area of shared meanings and symbols, particularly in organizational life. A discussion of Weick's (1979) Means Convergence Model was included, to provide theoretical support for the notion that group members may interlock their behaviours and thus enact their organization while maintaining little overlap of meanings. The impact of ambiguity on organizational meanings, and the role that it plays in creating the appearance of sharedness was next examined. This discussion lead to the argument that the sense of community which was created through the apparently shared meanings was more important to the group development process than whether the meanings were in fact shared.

Chapter Three was a review of the literature on two particularly ambiguous symbolic language forms, humour and metaphors, and implicit social rules which influenced the construction and use of these symbolic language forms. This examination also contained a discussion of the likelihood of multiple meaning systems.

Chapter Four was a literature review of the research on policing. Because of the idiosyncratic nature of policing and police officers, it was deemed important to provide a thorough analysis of the work done in this area, in order to better understand the subjects in the current study. Because the subjects were a group of police executives, it was expected that there would be particular cultural influences which would have to be considered.

Chapter Five provided a complete description of the Canadian Police College. Then, more specifically, the chapter gave an overview of the Executive Development Unit. Curriculum, staff, candidate selection, and evaluation were

discussed. The information contained in this chapter was based on the researcher's observations and interpretations, which were supported by information brochures and articles about the Canadian Police College, as well as conversations with staff from the Canadian Police College.

Chapter Six described and justified the methodological approach to the research, namely ethnographic fieldwork of a six week Executive Development training course. As well, the questionnaires, sociometric analysis and semi-structured interview methods used in the study were discussed. As well, this chapter provided a discussion of two methodological concerns, the presentation of public and private selves by the candidates (Goffman, 1959) and my impact as a researcher on the data.

Chapter Seven presented the general findings, in order to make clear for the reader what the constraints, influences and problems associated with the research were, as well as to describe the enacted culture. Specifically, the first section examined the impact of the course coordinators, the second was a discussion of the development of the group and the candidates themselves, the third was an analysis of critical incidents which influenced both the group's development and the research findings, and the final section was an examination of the results of the sociometric analysis.

Chapter Eight examined and analyzed the research findings in terms of the evolution of humour patterns throughout the six week course. Then, the candidates' interpretations and understandings of the humour, based on observations and the interview data, were discussed and compared. There was some overlap between candidates' interpretations, but generally a variety of interpretations were reported for the meaning of each humorous incident. In other words, multiple meanings definitely existed, although a shared understanding about the pattern of putdown humour was exhibited. Finally, the

implicit social rules constructed and used by the candidates to influence and control their humour were discussed. The overlap of meaning regarding these rules was thoroughly examined, with the conclusion that, unlike in the case of humour and metaphors, there was more overlap of meanings about both what the rules were and how they were to be enacted.

In Chapter Nine an analysis of a sample of the metaphors which were constructed and used throughout the course by the group members was presented. The candidates' interpretations of these metaphors, based on observations and the interview data, were discussed and compared. It was shown that the candidates reported a wide variety of interpretations for the metaphors they used, and sometimes even admitted that they did not know the meaning of a metaphor that had been used by one of the other candidates. There was limited overlap of interpretations and meanings.

Chapter Ten was a discussion of these findings, analyzing them in terms of the question of shared meanings. The conclusion was that there was little overlap of meanings, but that nonetheless candidates communicated and interacted without any perceived difficulty. As for the implicit rules, it was clear that these were more shared than either humour or metaphor, and thus it was concluded that they were a communication mechanism which must have greater overlap, in large part because the failure to understand and correctly interpret the rules would have resulted in obvious breaches of appropriate behaviour.

11.2 Key Conclusions

- Ambiguity was essential to organizing, for this group of police executives, in that it allowed group members to communicate as if they shared meanings, thus creating an appearance of sharedness, when in fact they did not share meanings. This finding extended the work of Weick, 1979; Eisenberg, 1984; 1990; and Donnellon et al., 1986.

- The meanings for ambiguous symbols *appeared* to be shared, when they were not, because group members used the symbols *as if* they shared the meanings. Furthermore, in response to these ambiguous meanings, group members "filled in" appropriate interpretations, supporting Eisenberg (1984).

- The appearance of sharedness, along with shared activities, resulted in a feeling of "we're all in the same boat," which enhanced the sense of community. This finding contradicted Morgan (1986), who argued that cohesive groups are characterized by shared understandings.

- This sense of community was critical to the process of group development because it allowed members to coordinate their activities while assuming that they shared meanings — whether they did or not — and thus to enact their organization rather than endlessly negotiating the meanings for the symbols they used. This finding extended the work of Weick (1979); Becher, (1981); Smircich (1983); Eisenberg, (1984); Carbaugh (1985); and Morgan (1986).

- Group members interacted on the basis of shared meanings, assuming that their meaning for a symbol was the same as everyone else's. To enable communication to continue, group members had to implicitly agree to *not* define too explicitly their symbols. The ambiguity of the symbols allowed the group members to maintain this "veneer of consensus" (Goffman, 1959).

- Candidates also interacted on the assumption that their interpretations and understandings were correct — they did not question the accuracy of their meanings. This certainty, an "illusion of validity" (Kahneman & Tversky, 1973), was necessary to enable the candidates to enact their organization without endless discussion and negotiation.

- Sharedness for implicit social rules was greater than that for more ambiguous symbols such as humour or metaphors. This finding supported Reuss-Ianni and Ianni (1983) and Ericson (1982), among others, who have suggested that police officers construct and follow an implicit "cop's code."

- Some social rules were public, in that they were adhered to when candidates were enacting the EDC group, but were different from the private rules, which were enacted during individual research interviews.

- Humour played a number of important roles in the communication patterns of this group, including defining reality, bridging discrepancies of meaning, avoiding conflict, enacting community, and producing social roles.

- Putdown humour, as the most prevalent form of humour, followed a distinct pattern of development, from which there was little or no deviation by the candidates. Putdown humour progressed from putdowns of self to

putdowns of shared activities and careers to putdowns of outsiders to, finally, putdowns of each other. This pattern of putdown humour progressed as the levels of trust and knowledge about each other grew, thus establishing a climate of mutual support in which putdowns were not perceived as offensive.

- The homogeneity (white male) of the group helped to explain the pattern of putdown humour which developed. Specifically, as Tannen (1990) has argued, males tend to use and appreciate putdown humour more than women do, as the EDC candidates demonstrated.

- Lack of sharedness of meanings did not inhibit group interaction, unless the discrepancy was too obvious to ignore, or a candidate felt strongly about the symbol. When discrepancies of meaning were perceived by a candidate, he or she had the option of either ignoring the discrepancy, or of correcting it. Depending on the level of the discrepancy and the level of vested interest, the candidate would choose to either ignore or correct the discrepancy. If a candidate chose to correct the discrepancy of meaning, there would be a temporary breakdown while the candidates corrected the discrepancies.

- Weick's Means Convergence Model (1979), while not explicitly tested, provided important and useful insights into the process of group development, as group members moved through the cycle from diverse goals to shared means, through shared goals, to diverse means, and then back again to diverse goals.

- Multiple meanings existed for even the simplest of symbols.

11.3 Limitations of the research

Like any research project, there were some factors which may have influenced the results and which should be mentioned. In Chapter 6 a thorough examination of my influence as researcher and the influence of the coordinators was presented, in order to dispose of these potential areas of concern. These topics will not be reiterated here, but the main point was that I seemed to have created enough trust in myself that I was able to get very close to the private meanings of many of the candidates, and thus was able to identify and compare a level of meanings that was not simply a superficial public level.

There were, however, other areas of concern, and these will be examined in this next section.

11.3.1 The impact of the context

The context plays an extremely significant role in any subject's interpretation of reality and meanings, and frequently can confound research findings. For example, in this study when I asked the candidates about the "three male pigs" metaphor, a number of them (three) described the children's "three little pigs" story, saying that the intended metaphor was to symbolize this story. However, if asked immediately following the episode what their interpretations of the metaphor had been, it would be unlikely that any candidate would make a connection to the "three little pigs" because there was absolutely nothing in the context to suggest that metaphor. However, when asked, out of context, to report a retrospective interpretation, candidates may have performed an association exercise, or a "filling in" (Eisenberg, 1984) and come up with something unrelated to the original episode. In this example, hearing the words "three different male pigs" may have lead the candidates to associate the children's story with the role play incident and then conclude that this was their original interpretation all along. It is difficult to know, therefore, whether the candidates' reported interpretations are those which they internalized at the moment of the incident, or whether they are just interpretations created at the moment of the research interview.

11.3.2 The impact of memory

Similarly, when candidates report that they did not find an incident funny, it is quite possible that because they must recollect the incident out of context they are unable to recall what was funny about it, do not see the humour in its re-telling (again, out of context), and therefore conclude that they did not find it funny in the first place. In the "three male pigs" metaphor, there was already hearty laughter occurring when the exchange happened. However, when BD responded to RP's comment of "I'd happily work with a woman and get away

from that male pig" with the statement "Three different male pigs, I might add," the group erupted into an uproar, according to the observation notes. Thus, it would seem unlikely that a candidate would not have laughed at all, or seen any humour whatsoever in the exchange, although two people reported that they had not found the incident funny and had not laughed.

If, in an ideal situation, each candidate could record his or her interpretations closer to their actual occurrence then this might increase validity in this regard. It would be difficult, however, to ask each candidate for impressions at the end of every day or two, because of at least two factors. First, it would be extremely time consuming, for both the candidates and the researcher, and this time and energy demand would have quite likely sapped much of the interest and cooperation offered by the candidates. That is, throughout the research I tried to not pressure or demand too much, always wary of "overstaying my welcome." It is a fine line, indeed, between gathering all necessary information and not disturbing the subjects too much, because to create an atmosphere of excessive demand may result in a less enthusiastic, and thus less giving, group of subjects.

The second barrier to asking for interpretations on a frequent basis would be the influence that this request would have on the candidate's ongoing interpretations of their reality. That is, by continually asking for interpretations, the candidates would have become sensitized to the kinds of things I was interested in, and this would most likely have influenced their behaviour and their interpretations. In fact, I noticed, after having conducted most of the research interviews, that the candidates were more self-conscious about their jokes, and would make comments to me such as "Did you get that joke down?" or "What did that joke mean to you?" to poke fun at my obvious research interests.

11.3.3 The impact of Ambiguity

Although it has been concluded in this research that ambiguity is an important part of organizational communication in that it allows members to communicate as if they share meanings and allows for multiple meanings to exist, it also created a potential problem in the research. Specifically, candidate's responses, because of the nature of human communication, were inherently ambiguous. That is, just as people communicate with ambiguity, and, as has been shown, must accept this ambiguity and the appearance of sharedness, so I had to accept, at some point, the candidate's responses. In order to cover a number of topics to provide enough data to come to valid conclusions, it was necessary to limit the probing. That is, to conduct an even more indepth analysis of each response I would have had to question further and further: "What do you mean by that?" and "What does that mean?" but this would have greatly limited the number of questions examined, because of the time and energy required for this kind of probing. Therefore, when I felt satisfied that I had probed meanings far enough to compare them to other candidate's responses, I moved on to the next question.

Interestingly, however, if the candidates had been given just a questionnaire, on which so much of social science research is based, they would have had much higher agreement on the meanings of the jokes, metaphors and rules, because on the surface they did seem to agree. In the research interviews, though, it became clear that even when they used the same words they were not always in agreement on their meanings. For example, when discussing the Jimmy Swaggart metaphor, a number of candidates mentioned that Jimmy Swaggart was immoral. Therefore, there seemed to be agreement, and many researchers would have been satisfied to say "this is a shared meaning." However, on closer inspection, by having candidates provide definitions, examples and clarification, it

became clear that there were numerous definitions for the seemingly shared symbols. Therefore, by combining interviews with the questionnaire data, even without the completely in-depth probing discussed in the previous paragraph, I was able to discern much more than I would otherwise have.

11.3.4 The impact of time

As was discussed earlier, the temporary nature of this group most likely had an impact on the reality and meanings which emerged, as well as the level of sharedness. That is, as Miles (1964) argues, temporary groups such as those participating in training sessions (like the Executive Development Course) have unique characteristics and outcomes, mainly because of the known closure of the group after a specified time period. That is, because candidates knew that they would leave the Police College after six weeks, that they would never work with the other candidates again, that their supervisors were not there watching and that they were relatively isolated at the college during the six weeks, their behaviour, the roles that they took on, and the relationships that developed were all influenced (Miles, 1964).

Because of these factors, in fact, Miles (1964) argues that the members of temporary groups undergo an intense bonding process, a sense of "being apart together" (Miles, 1964, 456). This bonding process in turn, increases "mutual support, cohesiveness, and the feeling of being engaged in a shared enterprise" (Miles, 1964, 456). T. feeling of being involved in a shared activity would be transferred, furthermore, to a sense of shared meanings whereby group members would have the impression of 'being on the same wavelength' as their colleagues, perhaps more than would be observed in a permanent group. Thus, this setting, a temporary, short-lived and very intensive training course, would seem conducive to the enactment of a seemingly shared reality. In a more permanent structure it is possible that there would be greater real sharing of meanings, rather than

apparent sharedness, because the group members would have had more time, as well as more reason (misinterpretations would perhaps be more obvious), to ensure sharedness.

The potential problems that have been raised here are not threats to the validity of the study, but do lead to more research questions which, in the future should be addressed. Specifically, it would be important to examine the generalizability of the current research to permanent organizations where status and goal-orientation play an important role.

11.4 Future research

Throughout any research project there are numerous occasions in which the researcher thinks of a variety of other studies — some of which would be even more interesting than the one currently being undertaken. In the following section the studies which were suggested by the current research will be examined.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the temporary nature of the group may have influenced the findings and thus future research should conduct the same study in a permanent group — where there would also be much greater heterogeneity — to determine whether the conclusions are generalizable. A study of a group of police officers from one precinct would be of theoretical and methodological interest.

The issue of gender differences in symbol production, interpretation, and appreciation was discussed thoroughly in Chapter 8. In the current study it was difficult to compare gender differences, because there was only one woman, although there are examples in the data where these differences were evidenced. Given the pressure on police forces to increase their numbers of women, it would be of theoretical and practical interest to study a group in which there was more

equal representation of both sexes in order to better understand the differences between men and woman in terms of humour, metaphors and implicit rules.

There is also pressure on police forces to increase their numbers of visible minorities and aboriginal people, and thus it would be of interest to examine and compare the interpretations and understandings of symbolic language forms held by members of these groups and by the majority of members of police forces. Clearly, as long as the langauge, humour, and implicit rule system is dominated by white males, it will be difficult for the members of other cultural groups to become part of the community and thus enact the organization.

Finally, it would be of methodological and theoretical interest to attempt to probe even further into the multiple levels of meanings held by the members of an organizational group by selecting one or two symbols only. As was discussed in the previous section, because of the desire to examine a number of different symbolic language forms in three different categories, there was a practical limit to the depth with which the meanings could be probed.

11.5 Conclusion

The current study has, it is hoped, advanced knowledge in the field of human communication. Specifically, the accepted assumption that organizations are systems of shared meanings where the members communicate on the basis of a shared set of meanings for symbols, values and beliefs was challenged. It was shown that this assumption, central to organizational communication theory, is one held not only by researchers and practitioners, but also by the members of organizations, who communicate *as if* they share meanings, whether they do share them or not. It was shown that this appearance of sharedness is critical to the enactment of organization, and that the ambiguity in symbol c language forms, most notably humour, enabled the group members to communicate on this basis of apparently shared symbols. It is important for scholarship, in general, to challenge

the assumed meanings of concepts and theories which are accepted, but which could be ambiguous enough to harbour multiple meanings.

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APPENDIX I: COURSE OFFERINGS AT THE CANADIAN POLICE COLLEGE

DEPT/AGENCY:_____   PAGE: 1

Date: 91-02-07   CANADIAN POLICE COLLEGE

SCHEDULE OF COURSES

1991

(NOTE: F=FRENCH)

NUMB	CAPACITY	LOCATION	PROJECT	D A T E S		LENGTH ALLOTMEN (DAYS)

COURSE: ADVANCED COLLISION ANALYSIS COURSE
       (CODE: AK4003)   (COLL: S2833)

91-3	24	FREDERICTO		91-04-29	91-05-17	15
91-1	24	C	S92029	91-06-03	91-06-21	15
91-2	24	C	S92050	91-09-09	91-09-27	15

COURSE: ADVANCED VEHICLE THEFT INVESTIGATIVE TECHNIQUES COURSE
       (CODE: AL8065)   (COLL: S2896)

| 91-1 | 24 | C | S92020 | 91-05-06 | 91-05-17 | 10 |

COURSE: COMMANDERS COURSE/HOSTAGE BARRICADED PERSONS
       (CODE: AL4510)   (COLL: S2676)

91-1	30	C	S91119	91-03-25	91-03-28	4
91-2	30	C	S92021	91-05-21	91-05-24	4
91-3	30	C	S92037	91-08-06	91-08-09	4
91-4	30	C	S92074	91-11-12	91-11-15	4

COURSE: COMMUNITY PROBLEM ANALYSIS AND PROGRAM MANAGEMENT COURSE
       (CODE: AL8007)   (COLL: S2751)

| 91-1 | 24 | C | S91104 | 91-02-11 | 91-02-22 | 10 |

COURSE: COMPREHENSIVE AUDITING FOR POLICE COURSE
       (CODE: AB3014)   (COLL: S3053)

| 91-1 | 24 | C | S92046 | 91-09-04 | 91-09-12 | 7 |

COURSE: COMPUTER CRIME INVESTIGATIVE TECHNIQUES COURSE
       (CODE: AM0030)   (COLL: S2765)

91-1	16	D	S91111	91-01-28	91-02-22	20
91-2	16	D	S92019	91-05-06	91-05-31	20
91-3	16	D	S92063	91-10-07	91-11-01	20
91-4	16	D	S92078	91-11-18	91-12-13	20

COURSE: COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY FOR POLICE MANAGERS COURSE
       (CODE: AN4510)   (COLL: S3032)

91-1	12	D	S91095	91-01-07	91-01-25	15
91-2	12	D	S91109	91-02-25	91-03-15	15
91-3F	12	D	S92004	91-04-08	91-04-26	15
91-4	12	D	S92051	91-09-09	91-09-27	15

(NOTE: F=FRENCH)

NUMB	CAPACITY	LOCATION	PROJECT	D A T E S		LENGTH (DAYS)	ALLOTMEN

COURSE: COUNTERFEIT INVESTIGATIVE TECHNIQUES COURSE
        (CODE: CITC) (COLL: S2627)

| 91-1 | 24 | C | S91117 | 91-03-18 | 91-03-22 | 5 |

COURSE: CRIMINAL INTELLIGENCE COURSE
        (CODE: AM1500) (COLL: S2634)

91-1	30	C	S91102	91-02-04	91-02-15	10
91-2F	30	C	S92005	91-04-08	91-04-19	10
91-3	30	C	S92041	91-08-12	91-08-23	10
91-4	30	C	S92079	91-11-18	91-11-29	10

COURSE: DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION TRAINING OFFICERS' COURSE
        (CODE: DAPTOC) (COLL: S2456)

91-1F	24	MONTREAL	S91112	91-03-04	91-03-15	10
91-2	24	C	S92013	91-04-22	91-05-03	10
91-3F	24	C	S92028	91-06-03	91-06-14	10
91-4	24	C	S92082	91-12-02	91-12-13	10

COURSE: DRUG INVESTIGATIVE TECHNIQUES COURSE
        (CODE: AL1000) (COLL: S2594)

91-1F	30	C	S91090	91-01-07	91-01-18	10
91-2	30	C	S91099	91-01-21	91-02-01	10
91-3	30	C	S91107	91-02-18	91-03-01	10
91-4	30	VANCOUVER	S91113	91-03-04	91-03-15	10
91-5	30	FREDERICTO	S92012	91-06-16	91-06-28	10
91-6	30	C	S92053	91-09-16	91-09-27	10
91-7F	30	C	S92069	91-10-21	91-11-01	10
91-8	30	C	S92083	91-12-02	91-12-13	10

COURSE: EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT COURSE
        (CODE: AA1500) (COLL: S2573)

91-1	28	C	S91091	91-01-07	91-02-15	30
91-2	28	C	S92001	91-03-11	91-04-19	30
91-3	28	C	S92015	91-04-29	91-06-07	30
91-4F	28	C	S92048	91-09-09	91-10-18	30
91-5	28	C	S92071	91-10-28	91-12-06	30

COURSE: FORENSIC IDENTIFICATION COURSE
        (CODE: AM4505) (COLL: S2606)

91-1	16	C	S91097	91-01-07	91-03-08	43
91-2F	16	C	S92002	91-03-11	91-05-10	43
91-3	16	C	S92017	91-04-29	91-06-28	44
91-4	16	C	S92042	91-08-12	91-10-11	43
91-5	16	C	S92065	91-10-14	91-12-13	42

SCHEDULE OF COURSES

1991

(NOTE: F=FRENCH)

NUMB CAPACITY LOCATION   PROJECT   D   A   T   E   S   LENGTH ALLOTMENT
                                                            (DAYS)

COURSE: GAMBLING INVESTIGATIVE TECHNIQUES COURSE
        (CODE: AL8500)   (COLL: S2641)
  91-1   24   WINNIPEG S92054   91-09-16 91-09-27   10

COURSE: HENRY FINGERPRINT CLASSIFICATION COURSE
        (CODE: AM4518)   (COLL: S3273)
  91-1   4   C   S91092   91-01-07 91-01-18   10
  91-2F   4   C   S91114   91-03-11 91-03-22   10   .
  91-3   4   C   S92016   91-04-29 91-05-10   1(
  91-4   4   C   S92038   91-08-12 91-08-23   10
  91-5   4   C   S92064   91-10-14 91-10-25   10

COURSE: INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES COURSE
        (CODE: AB1000)   (COLL: S2613)
  91-1   20   C   S91098   91-01-21 91-02-01   10
  91-2F 20   C   S91105   91-02-11 91-02-22   10
  91-3   20   C   S92018   91-05-06 91-05-17   10   .
  91-4   20   C   S92031   91-06-17 91-06-28   10
  91-5   20   C   S92060   91-09-30 91-10-11   10
  91-6   20   C   S92080   91-11-18 91-11-29   10

COURSE: INTELLIGENCE ANALYSIS COURSE
        (CODE: AM1506)   (COLL: S2662)
  91-1   16   C-D   S91115   91-03-18 91-03-28   9
  91-2F 16   C   S92009   91-04-22 91-05-03   10
  91-3   16   C   S92026   91-05-27 91-06-07   1(
  91-4   16   C   S92032   91-06-17 91-06-28   10
  91-5F 16   C   S92039   91-08-12 91-08-23   10
  91-6   16   C   S92055   91-09-23 91-10-04   10

COURSE: MAJOR CRIME INVESTIGATIVE TECHNIQUES COURSE
        (CODE: AM0005)   (COLL: S2805)
  91-1   24   C   S91096   91-01-07 91-01-18   10
  91-2   24   VANCOUVER S91116   91-03-11 91-03-22   10
  91-3F 30   C   S92027   91-05-27 91-06-07   10 ·
  91-4   24   C   S92030   91-06-10 91-06-21   10
  91-5   24   VANCOUVER S92056   91-09-23 91-10-04   10
  91-6F 30   C   S92068   91-10-21 91-11-01   10
  91-7   24   C   S92084   91-12-02 91-12-13   10

SCHEDULE OF COURSES

1991

(NOTE: F=FRENCH)

NUMB	CAPACITY	LOCATION	PROJECT	D A T E S		LENGTH (DAYS)	ALLOTMEN'

COURSE: MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS COURSE
(CODE: AA2562)   (COLL: S2854)

NUMB	CAPACITY	LOCATION	PROJECT	DATE 1	DATE 2	LENGTH
91-1	12	C	S91089	91-01-02	91-01-11	8
91-2F	12	C	S91118	91-03-19	91-03-28	8
91-3	12	C	S92003	91-04-03	91-04-12	8
91-4	12	C	S92025	91-05-22	91-05-31	8
91-5F	12	C	S92047	91-09-04	91-09-13	8
91-6	12	C	S92067	91-10-16	91-10-25	8
91-7F	12	C	S92077	91-11-13	91-11-22	8

COURSE: MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION TRAINERS' COURSE
(CODE: AL2515)   (COLL: S2812)

NUMB	CAPACITY	LOCATION	PROJECT	DATE 1	DATE 2	LENGTH
91-1	24	C	S91100	91-01-28	91-02-08	10
91-2	24	C	S92070	91-10-28	91-11-08	10

COURSE: NEGOTIATORS COURSE/HOSTAGE BARRICADED PERSONS
(CODE: AL4515)   (COLL: S2683)

NUMB	CAPACITY	LOCATION	PROJECT	DATE 1	DATE 2	LENGTH
91-1	24	C	S91103	91-02-11	91-02-15	5
91-2	24	C	S92010	91-04-22	91-04-26	5
91-3	24	C	S92035	91-06-24	91-06-28	5
91-4	24	C	S92072	91-11-04	91-11-08	5
91-5F	24	C	S92086	91-12-09	91-12-13	5

COURSE: POLICE EXPLOSIVES TECHNICIANS COURSE
(CODE: AM2000)   (COLL: S2655)

NUMB	CAPACITY	LOCATION	PROJECT	DATE 1	DATE 2	LENGTH
91-1	12	TRAILER	S91108	91-02-21	91-04-12	34
91-2	12	TRAILER	S92014	91-04-25	91-06-13	34
91-3	12	TRAILER	S92061	91-10-02	91-11-21	34

COURSE: POLICE EXPLOSIVES TECHNICIANS VALIDATION COURSE
(CODE: AM2001)   (COLL: S2503)

NUMB	CAPACITY	LOCATION	PROJECT	DATE 1	DATE 2	LENGTH
91-6	8	TRAILER		91-01-01	91-01-16	10
91-1	12	TRAILER	S92007	91-04-15	91-04-26	10
91-2	12	TRAILER	S92034	91-06-17	91-06-28	10
91-3	12	TRAILER	S92040	91-08-12	91-08-23	10
91-4	12	TRAILER	S92052	91-09-09	91-09-20	10
91-5	12	TRAILER	S92058	91-09-23	91-10-04	10

COURSE: POLICE LABOUR RELATIONS COURSE
(CODE: AD1603)   (COLL: S3046)

NUMB	CAPACITY	LOCATION	PROJECT	DATE 1	DATE 2	LENGTH
91-1	28	C	S92024	91-05-21	91-05-30	8
91-2F	28	C	S92081	91-11-19	91-11-28	8

Date: 91-02-07   CANADIAN POLICE COLLEGE   PAGE: 5
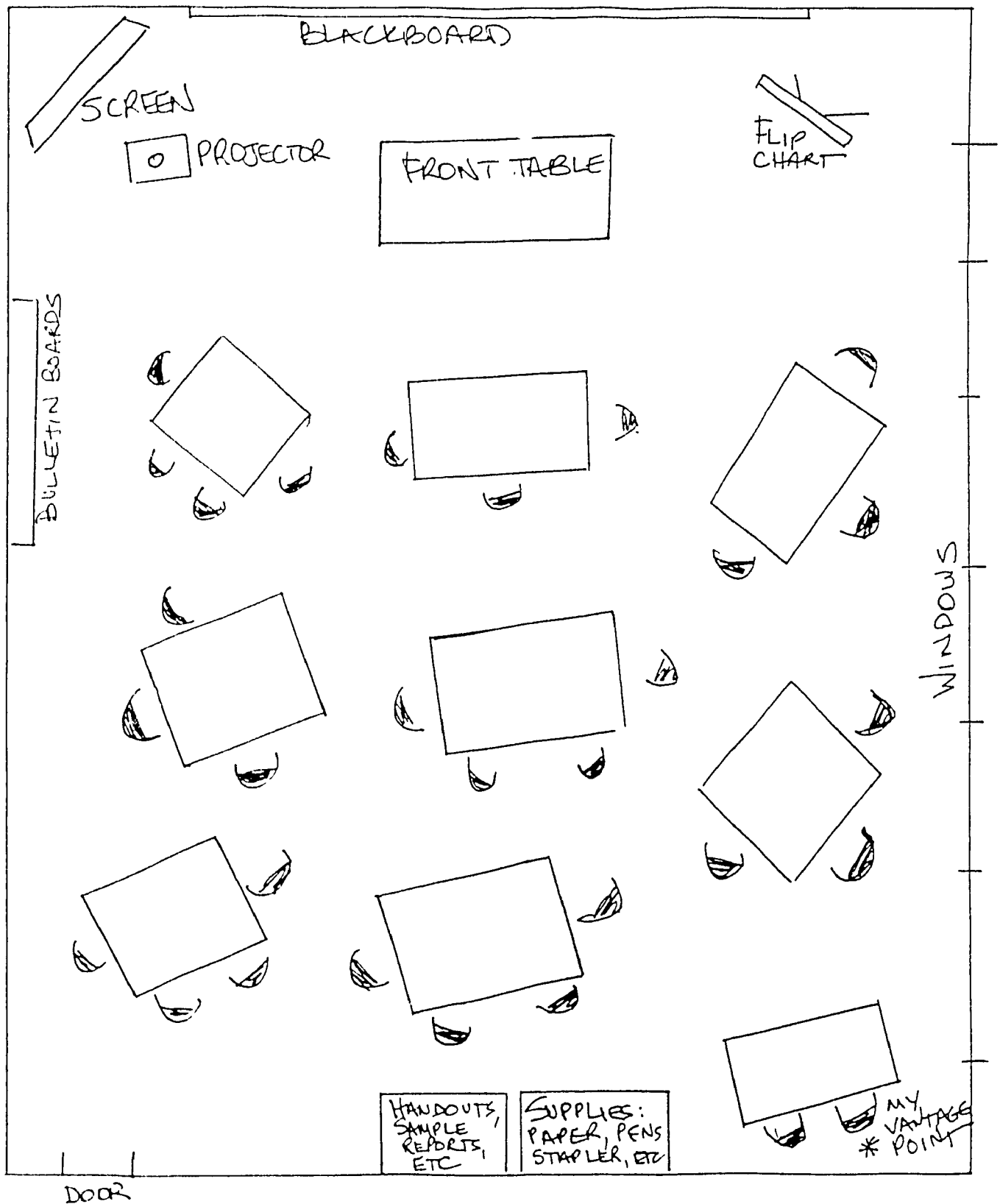
SCHEDULE OF COURSES

1991

(NOTE: F=FRENCH)
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NUMB  CAPACITY LOCATION    PROJECT        D    A    T    E    S    LENGTH ALLOTMEN
                                                                   (DAYS)
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------


COURSE: POLYGRAPH EXAMINERS COURSE
        (CODE: DM0035)  (COLL: S3067)
  91-1    12     SCHOOL      S91093          91-01-07  91-04-05     65

COURSE: POST BLAST TECHNICIANS COURSE
        (CODE: BLAST )  (COLL: S2503)
  91-1    28       C         S92044          91-08-19  91-08-29      9

COURSE: RADIOGRAPHY COURSE
        (CODE: AM2045)  (COLL: S2882)
  91-1    12     TRAILER     S91106          91-02-12  91-02-20      7
  91-5    12       C                         91-02-26  91-03-06      7
  91-2    12       C         S92008          91-04-16  91-04-24      7
  91-3    12       C         S92057          91-09-23  91-10-01      7
  91-4    12     TRAILER     S92085          91-12-03  91-12-11      7

COURSE: SENIOR FORENSIC IDENTIFICATION COURSE
        (CODE: AM4523)  (COLL: S2716)
  91-1F   24       C         S92043          91-08-13  91-08-22      8

COURSE: SENIOR POLICE ADMINISTRATION COURSE
        (CODE: AA1000)  (COLL: S2587)
  91-1    28       C         S91094          91-01-07  91-02-08     25
  91-2    28       C         S91101          91-02-04  91-03-08     25
  91-3F   28       C         S91110          91-02-25  91-03-28     24
  91-4    28       C         S92006          91-04-08  91-05-10     25
  91-5    28       C         S92023          91-05-21  91-06-21     24
  91-6    28       C         S92045          91-09-03  91-10-04     24
  91-7F   28       C         S92059          91-09-23  91-10-25     25
  91-8    28       C         S92062          91-10-07  91-11-08     25
  91-9    28       C         S92076          91-11-12  91-12-13     24

COURSE: SYSTEMS APPROACH TO TRAINING, DESIGN AND DELIVERY
        (CODE: AG1505)  (COLL: S2861)
  91-1    24       C         S92011          91-04-22  91-05-03     10
  91-2    24       C         S92049          91-09-09  91-09-20     10

COURSE: UNK - CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF POLICE POLYGRAPHISTS SEMINAR
        (CODE: AM0039)  (COLL:        )
  91-1    70       C         S92036          91-06-24  91-06-28      5 .
```

APPENDIX II: EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT COURSE SCHEDULE

EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT COURSE 91-5

Course Co-ordinators: Sgt. R.P.
Sgt. S.P.
Course Manager: S/Sgt. E.R.

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
OCTOBER **WEEK I**	28 ORIENTATION	29 ADULT LEARNING Carol Dillon	30 WRITTEN COMMUNICATION Carol Dillon RESEARCH METHODS	31 EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATION Ian Henderson	1 ELECTIVE 1) COMPUTER 2) MEDIA 3) SECURITY
NOVEMBER **WEEK II**	4 LIFE STYLES	5 VALUES Jacques Marquis	6 P O L I C E I N S O C I E T Y Rick Linden	7	8 POLICING ISSUES John Lindsay
WEEK III	11 STAT HOLIDAY	12	13 ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION Ray Adamson	14 ADAPTIVE ORGANISATION Gene Jessica	15
WEEK IV	18 STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT J.L. Schaan	19 LEADERSHIP Ray Adamson	20	21	22 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT André de Carufel
WEEK V	25 PROGRAM EVALUATION J.L. Schaan	26 PROGRAM PLANNING Arie Oosthoek	27 PLANNING RESEARCH	28	29 PROGRAM BUDGETING Dwight Edmonds
DECEMBER **WEEK VI**	2 PERSONNEL SELECTION Larry Coutts RESEARCH/ELECTIVE	3	4 ELECTIVES 1) Social Protocol 2) Computers 3) Journal	5 RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS	6 GRADUATION

APPENDIX III: MAP OF EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT COURSE CLASSROOM

APPENDIX IV: FITNESS SCHEDULE

EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT COURSE #91-2

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
WEEK I MAR 11-15	Introduction and Fitness Evaluation (Classroom & Gym) 12:30 - 16:30 hrs	C Interpretation of test in classroom 15:45 - 16:30 hrs	C Light warm-up 10 min. cardio-vascular work (Target heart rate explained and footwear)	P Introduction to water resistance exercises in shallow end	Optional
WEEK II 18-22	C Warm-up - 10 min. Aerobic - Floor Exercises - Stretching - Volleyball	P Use of paddles - Whirlpool - Resistance exercises on side of pool - Waterpolo	C Warm-up - Aerobic workout - Intro to elastic - Volleyball game	P Paddles - Take & walk across - Few lengths - Stretching - Waterpolo game	Optional
WEEK III 25-29	C Warm-up - 10 min. Aerobic - Intro to weight training - Volleyball	P - Jump off diving board - Swim a few lengths - Stretching - Waterpolo	C - Aerobic work - Medicine ball routine - Stretching & back exercises - Volleyball	P - Lengths - Resistance edge of pool - Games	
WEEK IV APR 1-5	HOLIDAY (EASTER MONDAY)	P Paddles - Jog - Lengths - Games	C Warm-up - Aerobic workout - Parachute exercises - Stretch & back exercises - Floor hockey	P Jog - Bicycle race - Stretch - Waterpolo	Optional
WEEK V 8-12	C Warm-up - Elastic - Use of stairs as aerobic alternative - Volleyball	P Paddles - More lengths - Waterpolo	C Warm-up - Aerobic outdoors - Cross-country skiing - Snow shoeing	P Boards - Lengths - Waterpolo	Optional
WEEK VI 15-19	C Fitness Re-Evaluation	C Fitness Re-Evaluation	P Lengths Variety	C Variety	

THURSDAY HOLIDAY (GOOD FRIDAY)

APPENDIX V: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

The following topics were the focus of the semi-structured interviews. For each topic, I described the occurrence of the incident, and then asked the candidate if he or she recalled the incident. Next I asked the candidate to describe his or her reaction to it and his or her interpretation of it, as well as its significance and humour, if applicable.

1. **"Flagship course"** (Metaphor). Used by College Director during orientation to describe the Executive Development Course.

2. **"Jimmy Swaggert"** (Metaphor). Used throughout the course by the candidates as a humorous comment.

3. **"RP's Heaven Joke"** (Humour). Joke told by one candidate which put down another candidate. Described the candidate as so ugly that a beautiful woman had to spend her life with him in heaven to pay her penance.

4. **"Honey I just won $5 million Joke"** (Humour). A joke which was told by one of the resource people. Went as follows: A man calls up his wife at home and says "Honey, I just won 5 million dollars! Start packing!" "Summer or winter?" "I don't give a shit, just be out of the house by the time I get home."

5. **"Three different male pigs, I might add"** (Humour). During a role play one of the candidates was describing being sexually harassed by her male partners. "Her" supervisor reminded "her" that "she" had been harassed by "three different male pigs."

6. **"Leadership Putdown"** (Humour). During leadership discussion one candidate said that he had not changed his leadership style for the last five jobs he had. Another candidate called out: "That's why they moved you."

7. **"The wood joke"** (Humour). BD told a joke where a blind man was smelling pieces of wood and identifying them. Smelled a secretary and said: "That's the 45 year old shithouse door of a tunaboat."

8. **"Standing Ovation"** (Metaphor and Humour). During a syndicate presentation one candidate overly dramatized his performance. The other candidates stood and applauded, shouting "Bravo" and "Encore."

APPENDIX VI: QUESTIONNAIRE 1: DEMOGRAPHICS AND BACKGROUND

Candidate Questionnaire: Executive Development Course

Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions. Your answers will be confidential and will only be used only by the researcher. Please place the completed questionnaire sheet in the envelope, seal it and return it to Jenepher.

1. Have you taken any other courses at the Canadian Police College?
            yes _____   no_____

Please list them:

----

2. What is your rank and years of service?

----

3. What are your personal reasons for taking the Executive Development Course?

----

4. What do you think are the goals of EDC?

----

5. What are the characteristics of an EDC candidate?

----

6. Do you already know any of the other EDC candidates (did you know any of the other candidates before arriving on the course?)

----

7. What do you think is (are) the most important thing(s) you should get out of your experience on EDC?

THANKS FOR YOUR HELP!

APPENDIX VII: QUESTIONNAIRE 2: COURSE ANALYSIS

Candidate Questionnaire 2: Executive Development Course

Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions. Your answers will be completely confidential and will be read and used only by Jenepher. THANKS FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

1. What were your personal reasons for taking the Executive Development Course?

----

2. What do you think were the goals of EDC?

----

3. How would you describe the group with which you have spent the last six weeks?

----

4. What do you think is (are) the most important thing(s) you got out of your experience on EDC?

----

5. What would you say was the best thing you did during EDC?

----

6. What was the worst thing you did during EDC?

----

7. Please describe your experience on EDC as you would to your friends/family when you go back to your home:

----

8. How would you say having me in the class (as a researcher) influenced the group dynamics and/or your learning experience?

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

To help me understand the communication networks that developed in the couise, it would be useful to look at differences and similarities in your organizations and your work. Please answer the following as honestly as you can. If a question is not applicable to you, please include that information. Again, I emphasize the confidentialit\ of your answers.

1. Name of organization:_____

2. Your position:_____

3. Please describe your department: _____
_____

4. Number of people in your organization: _____

5. Number of subordinates directly under your supervision: _____

6. Number of supervisors to whom you directly report: _____

7. How would you describe the way you spend your time on a *typical day at work?*
_____
_____

8. How would you describe the way you spend your time on a *typical weekend?*
_____
_____

9. How would you describe the community in which you work? (Number of people, socio-economic status, demographics of population, type of housing, industries, crime patterns, and so on):
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

PERSONAL PROFILE

Birthplace: _____
Your age: _____
Number of years to retirement? _____
Marital status: _____
Kids? _____ How many? _____
Languages spoken _____
Religion _____
Ethnic Origin _____

APPENDIX VIII: QUESTIONNAIRE 3: SOCIOGRAM ᴀND DEMOGRAPHICS

SOCIOGRAM   **NAME:** _____

For the following questionnaire, please be as honest as you can be, and be assured of the confidentiality of your answers. When I analyze the data, each of you will be assigned a number, rather than your name, and so if I include any of the information in the dissertation your name will never be connected to the data. Please consider the entire group of course candidates from EDC 91-5, excluding yourself, from which to choose for the following questions. I've included a list of course candidates on the next page to help you.

If you had to choose, whom would you choose for each of the following?

1. For a boss: _____

2. To work with in a syndicate group on EDC:

     _____
     _____
     _____

3. To be marooned with on a small tropical island:

     _____

4. To tell something very personal to: _____

5. To discuss a new idea with: _____

6. *Not* to work with in a syndicate group on EDC:

     _____
     _____
     _____

7. Most intelligent: _____

8. To see as a friend after EDC was over:

     _____

9. To kick out of a life-raft for safety reasons:

     _____

10. To ask for help on some personal problem: _____

11. To invite to a party:

     _____
     _____
     _____

12. *Not* to invite to a party:

     _____
     _____
     _____

9. What would you do differently if you were the officer in charge of the Executive Development Course? (Do this in point form, if you prefer).

Please return the questionnare sealed in the envelope to me, or leave it in the "mail" tray in the classroom.

Thanks for all of your help, on the questionnaires, in the interviews, and in the friendly and warm ways you all treated me and made me feel welcome. I have certainly enjoyed my experience on EDC 91-5, and I really appreciated the chance to know all of you. I consider it an honour and a privilege to have spent this time with you all.

Jenepher Lennox

APPENDIX IX: SOCIOMETRIC ANALYSIS RESULTS

Person Selected

AC BD BB CA DK DS FJ HE ED WA LJ LA LR MT FLS MZ MM PD PS RW RJ SA ST VS VB VC WS

Person Selecting

AC, BD, BB, CR, DK, DS, FJ, HE, ED, HA, LJ, LA, LR, MT, MZ, MB, HM, PD, PS, RH, RD, SA, SP, UJ, VB, VC, WC

1. As a Boss
2. To work with in a Syndicate Group
3. Be marooned with
4. Tell something personal to
5. Discuss a new idea with
6. *Not* to work with in a Syndicate Group
7. Most intelligent
8. As a friend
9. To kick out of a life raft
10. For help on a problem
11. To invite to a party
12. *Not* to invite to a party