IMMIGRANT PERCEPTIONS OF THE POLICE:
ROSE-TINTED BIFOCALS IN THE RECIEVING STATE

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ABSTRACT

This is one of the first Canadian empirical studies to explore immigrant effects on perceptions of police at a national level. Using the 2009 General Social Survey on Victimization, this paper explores the effects of immigrant status on evaluations of the police. Findings support and contradict current theory, showing that recent immigrants arriving from non-democratic states are associated with stronger positive views of the police. Findings also suggest that visible minority status and community disorder are associated with a higher tendency toward negative perceptions of the police. Recommendations include increased diversity of representation in the police ranks and a continued commitment to decreasing visible signs of crime at the community level.

Key words:

Immigrants; perceptions of police; crime; community disorder; Canada; visible minorities

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INTRODUCTION

There is an overwhelmingly positive view of police in most democratic states, but is not

monolithic (Cao and Dai 2006; Roberts 2007; Zhao, Schneider, and Thurman 2002). Five to 10

percent of Canadians are generally unhappy with their local police (Statistics Canada 2011). This

paper will explore the reasons behind this small pocket of scepticism in local police authority

with a focus on whether immigrants are more likely to share it. The data will serve as an

empirical test of the theory that new immigrants are more likely to distrust their police

(Menjivar and Bejarano 2004).

Simply put, a lack of faith in the police speaks not only to the efficacy of their role in

enforcing the law and maintaining order, but it can also undermine trust in the entire criminal

justice system or even government as a whole (Wu 2010: 925). In more measurable terms,

confidence in police has been shown in various studies to be correlated with willingness to

report crime and general law-abiding (Chow 2002; Brown and Benedict 2002). This importance

is even greater with the immigrant population in Canada. Acculturation and the broader

concept of belonging are essential to a positive working immigration system – rejection of the

police may imply rejection of the host society at large. The police are one of Canada's most

visible representatives and as such, a positive perception of the police is integral to a positive

immigration experience. Yet studies on immigrant perceptions of the police are relatively rare

amid the vast amount written regarding these perceptions more generally or as it relates to

race. There are decades of research illustrating the relationship between age, gender, or

minority status and views of the police, but few broad empirical studies that explore immigration status to the same degree.

Visible minority status has recently been linked to a higher likelihood to hold negative perceptions of police in Canada (Cao 2011), and immigrant status has long been similarly linked in the United States (See, for example, Correia 2010; Wu 2010). This paper, however, provides empirical evidence that new immigrants in Canada from non-democratic states are dramatically more likely to hold a positive view of their local police. Further, this paper will show that this tendency toward positive evaluations of the police is not a distinction between first and second generation immigrants but is instead a distinction between those who have been in Canada for ten years or less and those who have been here longer.

How immigrants feel about the police and whether that sentiment is in any way measurable or homogenous is a question of growing relevance in Canada, where, as of the 2006 census, approximately one in five residents are foreign-born. Close to sixty percent of those who arrived between 2001 and 2006 were from Asia (including the Middle East), while another twenty percent of those arriving during that period from were born in Central America, South America, the Caribbean, and Africa – regions where democratic states are not the norm and the police often represent something less benevolent (Chui, Tran, and Maheux 2007). This population will only become more significant in the future, with a projected 25 to 28 percentage of those in Canada to be foreign-born by 2031, higher than any other time since the beginning of the twentieth century (Malenfant, Label, and Martel 2010).

Although the intent of this paper is to explore immigrant perceptions of the police in Canada, it also will explore Canadian's perceptions of the police more generally - what elements are the most predictive of either negative or positive views. There are already several recent studies which deal with this more general question, and three excellent studies in the past four years have begun to fill the void in Canadian empirical literature concerning minority perceptions of the police (O'Connor 2008; Sprott and Doob 2009; Cao 2011), but considerations of immigrant status are either cursory or absent altogether.

This paper is an attempt to begin filling that lacuna. It will begin in Section I with a review of the current research on citizen perceptions of the police, first by considering most of the myriad of influences, both experiential and socio-demographic, thought to affect such perceptions aside from immigrant status, and second by looking at immigrant status itself. After exploring the background of this area of research, Section II will introduce the main contribution of this paper – a fourfold binary regression using data from the 2009 General Social Survey on Victimization. The choices made in coding these regressions will then be discussed with reference back to the previous research. In Section III, each model will be tested and discussed individually before a final analysis of the findings that cut across all models in Section IV. The focus throughout is on the immigrant demographic.

In general, the immigrant relationship with the police or other representations of the state has been tied to acculturation and belonging affected by time spent in the new state. Using a multi-dimensional variable which classifies immigrants based both on region of origin as well as time spent in Canada, this paper will address the issue of acculturation but will also test

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the 'bifocal lens' theory first put forward by Mejivar and Bejarano in 2004. Perhaps the most salient distinguishing feature of the immigrant experience beyond the length of time spent in Canada is their relationship with their country of origin and the bifocal lens theory or 'bifocalism' is a succinct, direct acknowledgement of that fact. Here, the important aspect of that relationship is the immigrants' view of the police in their country of origin. Bifocalism is simply the idea that immigrants will view their new country in comparative relation to their old one. This theory suggests that those who come from states where police are corrupt or associated with an authoritarian government are more likely to have highly negative perceptions of the police in the new country, their distrust having immigrated with their person. Conversely, individuals arriving from states without oppression will be more open to being positive toward the police in the receiving state (Menjivar and Bejarano 2004, pp. 123; Correia 2010, pp. 100). Immigrants, in essence, whether engaging in transnational activity or not, view their receiving state through bifocal lenses. This can manifest itself in a variety of ways, from post-traumatic stress disorder for those who arrive as refugees (Beiser 2009), to a tendency to not report crime having prejudged the police as ineffective (Menjivar and Bejarano 2004, pp. 130).

While this analogy helps explain immigrant views of the police, I believe that an incorrect conclusion is derived from the right premise. Immigrants arriving from states with repressive governments will be affected in their relationship with authority, the legal system and the police, but that effect may not be negative. Instead, immigrants may be charitable in their views of the receiving state's police, evaluating the new police more positively; contrasting them with the police they already know (Correia 2010: 106). In this view,

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immigrants are expected not to simply evaluate the receiving state's police more positively than their state of origin (something even Menjivar and Bajarano found in their analysis), but also to evaluate the new state's police more positively than those who are native born. This inversion of the original theory is what this research proposes and tests. If correct, immigrants from non-democratic states should be more likely to be favourable toward the police than those who come from countries more similar to Canada.

In the original theory, the bifocal lens effect was thought to part of a trio of effects on new immigrant perceptions – the remaining two being the effects of contact with immigration officials and influence of social networks. The first of these two is not applicable to legal immigrants in Canada. The rhetoric against "illegals" in the United States is so pervasive that it may make even legal residents who are immigrants feel disassociated from the state, in a socially maligned position if not a legally precarious one. Although anti-refugee sentiment has grown in Canada, the language of "illegals," and the social burden it places on all immigrants, has not yet found a home in Canadian dialect. Many legal immigrants in the United States arrive into a culture that may then breed animosity toward immigration officials (Menjivar and Bejarano 2004). Canadian immigration does not currently engender the same level of acrimony. Additionally, actual illegal immigrants and stateless individuals are unfortunately not part of the 2009 Social Survey on Victimization, the survey that this analysis is based on. The fear of deportation for undocumented immigrants in the United States may also explain why Menjivar and Bejarano treat the bifocal lens as a necessarily negative thing. Many of those who were interviewed for Menjivar and Bejarano's study were undocumented, meaning that their very real fear of the authorities came, at least in part, from a fear of being sent home rather than

mere perceptual association of the authority in the new country with that of the old. The third effect, the social network, is also not part of this study. In this case, it was not the socio-cultural difference between Canada and the US that limited the theoretical application, but was instead the limitation of the dataset being used. Testing the social network's capacity to instil distrust of authority requires use of dataset comprised solely of immigrants. In this research, the aim is to better understand potential differences between native-born Canadians and immigrants in their evaluations of the police, so both groups are analyzed.[1]

In order to determine whether immigrant status does have a measurable effect on perceptions of the police, or whether it is merely a proxy for other factors such as neighbourhood effects, several other socio-demographic and non-demographic variables have been included in the analysis. This allows the paper to test the latest data against current theories of non-demographic factors (neighbourhood conditions, victimization, and police contact) put forward by recent research (Cao 2011; Chu and Song 2008; Sprott and Doob 2009) as well as to address several other socio-demographic features outside immigration that have been linked to influencing police evaluations. Finally, it is hoped that the results help clarify findings from previous studies which either measured confidence using the single confidence variable found in the General Social Surveys or used a combined measure of several perception variables in regressions. It is the author's belief that variables such as confidence in police capability to ensure safety and confidence in police commitment to fair treatment are measuring distinct beliefs that should not be conflated.

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[1] Comparing separate models, ones entirely comprised of immigrants and ones with only non-immigrants, was not possible because the smaller sample size would have rendered everything statistically significant.

SECTION I: RESEARCH AND THEORY

(i) Beyond Immigrant status

There are two things to remember throughout this analysis. First, although many articles have been published on perceptions of the police, only more recent works in the past two decades have begun to develop larger theories explaining findings (Brown 2002, pp. 564) and few, save those mentioned earlier and a handful of others, are Canadian. Second, Canadians are, by and large, confident in their police. The victimization survey used in this paper has been used, with some minor interview changes year to year, in five year cycles since 1988 and all such surveys found overwhelmingly positive attitudes toward the police with individual variables conveying various aspects of confidence never dropping below 90 percent. Canadian confidence in the police is also consistently higher than that placed in Canadian courts, prisons, or parole system (Roberts 2007; Cao 2011).

None of the literature disputes this. What is contested is what causes low confidence or negative perceptions of the police. When studying perceptions of the police, justice system or courts, there are a handful of variables that have regularly been studied, although recent literature has investigated a broader range of factors. The effects of the socio-demographic attributes of gender, race, age, and economic status have been looked at extensively (Correia 2010; Gainey and Payne 2009; Tankebe 2010; Wortley and Owusu-Bempah 2009; Wu 2009). Unsurprisingly, being of a minority race, younger, or female have all been linked to being more likely to hold more negative conceptions of the police. But for each of these attributes the opposite relationship has also been found. For example, Wortley and Owusu-Bempah (2009)

saw no attitudinal difference between genders in Toronto and Correia (2010) found that within

the Latin-American community, males had less positive views of the police than females.

Socio-demographic features such as age or race are not the only things influencing

views of the police. Recent literature has provided evidence that direct contact with police is

equally important. Many earlier studies found that negative contact with the police begat

negative perceptions of the police (More recently, Renauer and Covelli 2010). This was clearly a

flawed theory, as Brown (2002) points out, the studies rely on individuals' perception of

whether contact was negative, leaving it uncertain whether the perception or the contact is the

actual source of negativity (567). Research from the last decade has been more precise on this

front.

In Wortley and Owusu-Bempah's 2009 research, they found that involuntary contact

increased negative perceptions, while voluntary contact increased positive perceptions. Even

more predictably, an American study found that rather than type of contact, satisfaction with

police conduct within that contact was determinative of satisfaction with the police more

generally (Wu 2009), though this again may be a question-begging assertion with no clearly

delineated first cause. Another variable studied more in the past five years is that of

victimization, which can be defined in a variety of ways. Again, findings were mixed, though

only ranging from no effect to a negative effect (Wu 2009; Wu et al. 2010, pp. 752, Wortley,

and Owusu-Bempah 2009). Neighbourhood disorder (sometimes called community disorder)

outside of its influence on perceptions of the police has been written about in many studies for

the past 35 years, but only more recently in this area. In short, neighbourhood disorder

measures the state of a neighbourhood based on things like crime level, graffiti, or even sense of community among neighbours (Sun and Triplett 2008). Most studies have measured neighbourhood effect based on residents' perceptions of the area rather than real crime statistics – the assumption being that fear of crime at some level will reflect actual crime rates or that perception of crime is more substantive than actual crime – while some research has indicated this to be roughly accurate, other research indicates that social "incivilities" is what is actually measured (pp. 438). Dai and Johnson (2009) found in their American study that accounting for neighbourhood conditions actually renders race non-significant as a determinant of negative perceptions toward the police. Other recent literature supports this (Sprott and Doob 2009; Wu et al. 2010), and contradicts this (Cao 2011). One possible explanation for the supporting literature, that race is acting as a proxy for neighbourhood conditions, has clearly negative implications for the state of racial integration in America.

A possible mitigating factor to neighbourhood effects or disorder is actual police presence. In a large cross-analysis of the existing literature on the effects of visible local police presence, Zhao, Schneider, and Thurman (2002) revealed that about two thirds of literature found no appreciable difference in satisfaction or confidence in the police, while the remaining third found a significant increase in satisfaction. It should be noted, though, that most studies referenced were not evaluating mere police presence, but specific patrol policies aimed at increasing police visibility or effectiveness. Police presence in this study only denotes the literal, physical presence of a police building within the neighbourhood.

(ii) Immigrant Status

Immigrant status has generally been treated as synonymous with minority status in empirical literature on perceptions of the police (See, for example, Wu 2010) or not considered at all. This paper risks adding to the confusion by using a blanket, reductive view of immigration. Clearly, immigrants are a heterogeneous group and while the models created for this research are nuanced enough to reflect this to a degree, much of the discussion and analysis simply refers to "immigrants." This is a necessary drawback to large-scale statistical models as other common variables used here and elsewhere are equally reductionist (gender, income, visible minority status, etc.). My hope, as with any author of such work, is to coax out large trends – to create, in effect, a map of broad strokes that others can fill in with more focused and specific follow-up research. Although current macro-level work on perceptions of the police often confuses multi-generational citizens living in ethnic enclaves with *bona fide* immigrants, much of the discussion regarding minority status is still applicable to immigrant status and some recent studies do consider elements unique to the foreign-born population.

Language and culture differences, as well as experiences with the police and authorities in the sending state may affect an immigrant's perception of the police (Wu 2010: 2). What effect these factors have is still unclear, but in all cases, it would then be expected that the difference between the perception of the police among the foreign-born population and that of those born in Canada, would diminish over time. Most studies dealing with minority perceptions in North America have been conducted in the United States, and most of those focus on race (usually the black-white dichotomy but increasingly the Latino experience). In

Canada, O'Connor (2008) used the 1999 General Social Survey on victimization to perform a path analysis showing that being a visible minority had a significant and negative interaction with confidence in the police as was previously seen in American studies. Cao (2011) tested the 2004 General Social Survey on Victimization using an ordinary least square regression and also found that visible minority status was a significant predictor of a negative perception of the police, even with the inclusion of variables testing for police contact, community disorder, and victimization. Yet another study, this one employing a logistic regression model, on data from the 2004 General Social Survey on victimization found that visible minority was not a significant variable, perhaps due to the study's inclusion of neighbourhood effects (Sprott and Doob 2009). The current paper further illuminates the effects of visible minority status by distinguishing it from immigrant status.

While the literature that does address the foreign-born experience has often shown that immigrant status affects perceptions of the police, whether it affects them positively or negatively is still contested. Canadian research has pointed to various minority groups as having a more negative perception of the police or justice system because of discrimination and cultural barriers (Schmidt 2003; Martell 2003). However, the sparse literature specifically regarding foreign-born perceptions of the police has ranged from citing immigrants as more negative to more positive or simply as insubstantially differing from the Canadian-born (Correia 2010; Wu, Sun, and Smith 2010; Wortley and Owusu-Bempah 2009 respectively). This research is an attempt to clarify these contradictions by controlling not only for immigrant status but for type of immigrant classified by date of arrival and region of sending state.

Regarding factors specific to immigrants, the most salient theory was introduced earlier, the bifocal lens. Regardless of whether the effect of the proverbial lens is to strengthen or weaken confidence in the police, the strength of the lens, to extend the analogy further, is dependent on the time one has spent in Canada. The longer someone has lived in Canada, the weaker the lens is imagined to be. Other factors, such as minority status or discrimination may actually negatively push immigrants farther from the median perspective of the police, but immigrant status itself should not. Wu (2010), on the other hand, contends that there is evidence to suggest that acculturation has a positive effect on foreign-born attitudes. That is to say, the more assimilated an immigrant becomes, the more positively they will feel about police (929). Although most theorists are agreed that time spent in a state will necessarily change the perceptions of an immigrant, whether that change is a positive or a negative one is contentious.

Here, there has been considerably more research done in Canada, all in Toronto. Wortley and Owusu found that when all other variables are controlled for, amount of time spent in Canada had no effect. Two other studies, both of Chinese immigrants in Toronto, found that time spent in Canada is important, though with entirely different results. Chow (2002) found that the longer respondents had been in Toronto, the more negative they were toward police, while Chu and Song (2008) found the exact opposite.

A possible explanation for the latter results could be that of national belonging. Lower levels of confidence in the police and the Canadian justice system are generally thought to be correlated with lower levels of belonging in Canada (Roberts 2007: 155). Although the possible causal nature of this relationship is not clear, with both sentiments as reasonable candidates to

cause the other, there is the possibility that new immigrants, who have lower levels of belonging to Canada (Reitz and Banerjee 2007), may therefore have lower levels of confidence in the justice system.

A higher level of belonging, though, does not necessarily translate into a higher confidence in the police – this depends entirely on what narrative of Canada and its institutions an immigrant is consuming. Kenneth Dowler and Valerie Zawilski (2007), for example, found that media exposure has a measurable negative effect on perceptions of the police. They found that those who consumed large amounts of network news were more likely to believe that police misconduct was frequent, and that this relationship was even stronger for minority viewers. Although this was an American study, the media emphasis on crime attributed with creating this effect exists on Canadian televisions as well (Dowler, Fleming and Muzzatti 2007). This could, in part, explain a less positive view of police by immigrants who have been in Canada for longer periods. Simply put, the longer exposure they have to Canadian media, the less favourable they may become to Canadian police. Although it may seem that media exposure to crime would only create a negative image of the criminals, excess crime indicates inadequate police, as seen with neighbourhood disorder effect. Media exposure, though, is only one part of the larger issue of acculturation's effect on immigrant police perception.

The results in previous studies on language skills, an essential element to acculturation, are, again, mixed. While Skogan et al. (2002) found that higher English proficiency among American Latino immigrants did yield more positive evaluations of local police, Correia (2010) came to the opposite conclusion. The explanation for the latter result was not explored in the

study and it is difficult to assess why greater language proficiency would engender less positive police assessments. One possible answer that is supported by the findings of this paper is that language proficiency here is merely acting as a proxy for degree of acculturation. As immigrants become more acculturated, their initially more positive feelings toward the police may begin to align with the very slightly more negative consensus of the native-born population.

Finally there are the issues of conflicting cultural values which can manifest in a variety of ways from unwillingness to report crime to simple misunderstanding of procedural norms (Wu 2010: 930). Although this may in fact be a significant source of variation in perception of police, it is not one that is easily testable in a quantitative study. At best, it is hoped that if culture is significant, it would appear indirectly through a more general immigrant variable. One variable related to culture that was available was that of religiosity. In Correia's 2010 study, religiosity, as measured by frequency of Church attendance, was found to be predictive of more negative perceptions of the police among immigrants and not among non-immigrants. It was speculated that the reason for that was the Church's often dominant role as a social institution for new immigrants. Through the Church as a socializing agent, the new immigrants may learn more about economic inequalities and racism in America (105). Correia's theory was built on American immigration information, specifically that of Latin-Americans. In Canada, the Church plays a dominant role in many new immigrants' lives as well. The Church serves both as a gateway to the host society and a co-ethnic social hub, simultaneously integrating and isolating an immigrant group (Beattie 1998). In Vancouver, for example, current Chinese and Korean Christians attend Churches which fuel insular immigrant bonding along co-ethnic divisions, just as German Christians did decades earlier (Ley 2008). In this analysis, however, church

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attendance will apply to all respondents, rather than immigrants alone and therefore will likely yield different results.

Although immigrant perceptions of the police have been largely unstudied in Canada, the immigrant connection to crime has been (See Wortley 2009). Most earlier research began with the proposition that a particular group of immigrants was more likely to be involved with crime (usually violent crime), then sought to explain the reasons for that tendency. More recent research has challenged the assumption that there is any connection at all and several studies have now not only provided evidence against such a link but have also suggested that new immigrants are less likely to be involved in violent crime or crime generally (see Hagan, Levi and Dinovitzer 2008; Yeager 1996). Although there are an abundance of theories to explain the earlier proposition that immigrants bring crime – that it derives from cultural gaps, from deliberate attempts to export crime, or that it is a result of the perilous living standards many immigrants find themselves in – there are less theories to explain why immigrants may be associated with lower than normal crime rates. One possible explanation is offered here – if negative perceptions of the police can be predictive of criminal behaviour (Brown and Benedict 2002),[2] it is reasonable to believe that a positive view of the police would be associated with a lack of criminality. Just as time in Canada appears to erode confidence in the police for immigrants, time in Canada also appears to erode the immigrant "resilience to criminal behaviour" (Wortley 2009, pp. 350).

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[2] The causal relationship is obviously somewhat problematic – does a lack of faith in police lead to criminal behaviour or does involvement in crime create negative perceptions of the police. There is clearly truth in both of these propositions.

SECTION II: METHODS

(i) Sample

The dataset used for this paper is the fifth cycle on victimization from the General Social Survey. The General Social Survey, Cycle 23, 2009, Victimization is part of an annual survey conducted by the Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division of Statistics Canada. The intention of the surveyors is to gauge "how Canadians perceive crime and the justice system and their experiences of victimization" (Statistics Canada 2011). The survey includes Canadians who were 15 or older at the time the survey was conducted using the telephone. This means that those without phones, and those who have only cellular phones were excluded – a group which accounts for close to ten percent of all Canadian households (Statistics Canada 2011). The full number of people surveyed was 19,422 but for the purpose of this analysis the number ranges from 17,660 to 19,074. The telephone survey includes all provinces, but excludes the territories and institutional residents. This cycle was published in early 2011 with the data collected from February to November of 2009 in five waves. The non-response rate for the survey was 38 percent, a 13 percent increase over the 2004 victimization survey. The reason for this increase is unknown. This was the fifth time the victimization survey was undertaken, the third time the variable visible minority was included, and the second time region of birth outside Canada was included (Statistics Canada 2011).

Prior to coding, all data was weighted at the person level using the supplied weight variable that was then divided by the mean of itself, providing the relative weight.

(ii) Dependent Variables

Four dependent variables were used in this analysis. These were likert scale questions measuring perceptions of the local police force on four related but separate criteria: ensuring the safety of citizens, being approachable and easy to talk to, and treating citizens fairly. The possible answers for these questions were 'good job,' 'average job,' or 'poor job.' For this analysis, these scales have been transformed into dichotomous variables that group good and average together (1) and left poor apart (0). This allowed more precise focus on negative perceptions as the distinction between good and average was not explained by the interviewer (Statistics Canada 2011) and studies show that condensing attitudinal likert scales into binary variables should not reduce the quality of information (Percy 1976). The final dependent variable was that of overall confidence in the local police with a likert scale of 'no confidence' to 'a great deal of confidence.' This was also coded into a binary variable with 'quite a lot' and 'a great deal' grouped and 'not very much' and 'none' also grouped.

Three additional questions on local police performance were not included in the analysis. The first two were evaluative questions regarding police promptness in responding to calls and enforcement of the law. They were not included both because they did not provide substantially different answers than those included and because it was hypothesized that the distinction between enforcement of the law and ensuring people's safety was nebulous and may speak to an individual's perception of the morality of the law more than to his or her perception of the police themselves. The third question that was omitted concerned whether the police were adequately supplying information to the public on crime reduction. This

question had the lowest amount of responses and further spoke more to specific policy support rather than diffuse support for the police. Finally, the overall confidence scale which was included was the last question asked in the module, making it likely that the answer given was informed by both the three variables included in this analysis as well as those which were not.

The choice to leave these variables as distinct dependent variables rather than grouping them into a single rating as has been done in other papers using the victimization surveys was informed by the results of the logistic regression. Although experiential and community-based variables remained significant through all regressions, there is a notable difference regarding demographic variables that would otherwise go unremarked. For example, being female may make an individual more likely to find the police unapproachable, but it does not appear to likewise reduce their belief in the ability of the police to enforce the law. The dependent variables appear to be measuring distinct attitudes that should not be conflated, or these nuances risk being lost.

The non-response rate ranged from only two percent for overall confidence in the police to nine percent regarding the approachability of the police. As with previous studies, cross-tabulations performed on a dummy variable representing those who did not respond showed a larger number of females, visible minorities, recent non-Western immigrants, and younger respondents failed to answer. This is consistent with the results from the regressions that showed these variables as being highly significant concerning approachability in particular. Still, given that non-response rates were higher than negative response rates for two of the four dependent variables, non-response were left as missing.

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(iii) Independent Variables

Socio-demographic variables on visible minority status, gender, household language, and marriage were included coded as dummy variables. Visible minority status as defined by the Canadian government was coded as 1 for identifying as a visible minority and otherwise as 0. Similarly females were coded as 1 with males as 0. Household language groups English and French as 1 and all others as 0. This variable is at best an approximation of language facility with the official languages, given that an individual may be more than capable with English and still not use it as the predominant language at home. Unfortunately it was the only variable available concerning language. Marriage was coded as 1 for those who were either currently married or living with a partner. Those who were widowed, divorced, or single were coded as 0. This was in contrast to some previous studies (See Cao 2011) that grouped legally married alone. The reason for this was because I believe that the positive effect on perceptions of the police associated with having a partner is more related to social stability than the legal distinction of marriage proper. Regressions using both versions of the variable, when compared, supported this argument.

Age and income were both coded as continuous variables. Age consists of ten-year periods, mean-centered from 15 to 75+. Income measured is household income rather than personal income, and is also in groups of 10 thousand from 4,999 to 150,000. Outliers at both ends of the scale were recoded as missing. Education, originally a scale of ten categories, was recoded into three binary variables. Finally, church attendance was measured using a scale

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response recoded into a binary variable where 1 represents attendance of once a month or more and 0 represents less once a month.

A binary variable depicting whether a respondent lives in an urban area was also included (urban =1, rural =0). Beyond the potential differences in interaction with local police in an urban versus a rural area, this was included because of the high concentration of new immigrants in urban areas. Including this variable was a means to ensure that the immigrant variables were not, in part, measuring urban versus rural dwelling by proxy.

Experiential or neighbourhood influences on perceptions of police were also included. Change in neighbourhood crime in the last five years was measured using a binary variable where 1 represents a belief that crime has risen in the past five years and 0 represents the belief that it has either decreased or stayed the same. This variable was related to the more intricate variable measuring neighbourhood disorder (See Cao 2011; Dai and Johnson 2009; Schafer 2003). This variable was a scale that measures the degree to which several items (noisy neighbours, loitering, people sleeping on the streets, litter, vandalism or graffiti, attacks or harassment, drug use or dealing, public drunkenness, and prostitution) are considered a problem. The more items considered a problem by the respondent, the higher their score. A third variable measuring perceived level of neighbourhood crime compared to other communities was originally included but was removed because of its similarity (despite not being highly collinear).

Victimization in the last 12 months is another dichotomous variable (1 = has been victimized one or more times in the past 12 months; 0 = has not been victimized).

Victimizations were classified as sexual assault, robbery, break and enter, theft of several kinds, vandalism - either successful or merely attempted; domestic incidents were not included. Cross-tabulations showed that all experiences of victimization were correlated with more negative perceptions of the police on all dependent variables and increases in the number of victimizations (reasonably) increased that negativity. However, because of the low number of individuals that were victimized multiple times in the past 12 months, all numbers of victimization were grouped together. Likewise, lifetime victimization was not used because of the probability that the victimization happened when the individual was living somewhere other than where they currently reside. For native-born Canadians, this is unimportant but, in the case of immigrants, this could yield the opposite effect on perceptions of current local police.

Local police presence, positive contact with police and negative contact with police complete this area of variables. The first of these is a binary variable where 1 represents the presence of a "police station, community policing centre or RCMP detachment" in the respondent's neighbourhood (0 = absence). Positive contact with police is represented as having attended a public seminar hosted by police (1) or not having done so (0). Although this number is small, at approximately 8% of respondents having attended such a seminar, it is included in the regression. Negative contact entails contact through arrest, being a victim of crime, or being a witness to crime. Although these may appear to be measuring events too different to group, individual cross-tabulations confirmed that all three encounters with the police had similarly negative correlations with perceptions of local police.

Finally, immigrant status was included using two methods. First, separate regressions using the preceding variables were run for a smaller sample consisting only of immigrants. The results were not significantly different than the results for the larger sample and were therefore excluded from this analysis. They will be briefly discussed later in this paper, however. The reason for the minimal difference may have been, in part, because of the large degree of variance measured by a single immigrant variable. To rectify this, a set of binary immigration variables were constructed. The literature discussed earlier suggests that both the time spent in Canada and the nature of the sending country may impact perceptions of the police. Four dummy variables were created: recent Western immigrant, recent non-Western immigrant, non-recent Western immigrant, and non-recent non-Western immigrant, where 0 for each of these denoted being an immigrant of another type or being Canadian-born.

Whether an immigrant was a recent arrival was measured by calculating the difference between the date of arrival of the immigrant and the date of the survey. All those who arrived within the last ten years were classified as recent. The use of Western versus non-Western was a very loosely approximated value for likelihood that the individual came from a state where the police represented an undemocratic government. Individual region of immigration was not available in the dataset. Western then includes North America outside Canada, Greenland, the United Kingdom, Ireland, and other European states including the USSR. This meant the regrettable inclusion of several democratic states in the "non-Western" category, notably the Oceania region along with several other democracies. The full non-Western category includes South and Central America, the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia. Although this conflation is unfortunate, the results imply that it did not too seriously contaminant the outcome. The

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reason the effect of the inexact nature of the non-Western category was contained is likely because many of the democratic states in this region contribute a markedly smaller percentage of immigrants such as the Oceania, itself an immigrant-receiving state.

SECTION III: RESULTS

Four binary logistic regressions make up the final model. Included in the tables of results is the range for a 95 percent confidence interval as well as indications for significance at P < 0.05 and P 0.01.

(i) Perceptions of Police and Safety

The local police do a good or average job of ensuring people's safety. N = 18,694 Nagelkerke R^2 = 0.121	Odds Ratio	Confidence Interval (95%)	
		Lower	Upper
Visible Minority	0.994	0.591	1.673
Unofficial Language	0.847	0.557	1.288
Married	0.941	0.780	1.135
Female	0.846	0.715	1.000
Age	0.995	0.989	1.001
Income	0.994	0.956	1.033
Less than high school			
High School	0.908	0.703	1.174
Technical or trade college	0.960	0.741	1.245
Undergraduate or greater	1.200	0.899	1.601
Church Attendance	1.220*	1.001	1.487
Canadian Born			
Recent Western immigrant	1.213	0.371	3.969
Recent non-Western immigrant	2.475	0.784	7.821
Non-recent Western immigrant	0.964	0.535	1.737
Non-recent non-Western immigrant	1.054	0.748	1.484
Lives in Urban Area	1.202	0.991	1.457
Change in neighbourhood crime 5yrs	0.401**	0.338	0.475
Community disorder	0.392**	0.337	0.455
Was Victimized in last 12 months	0.558**	0.465	0.670
Has a local police presence	1.267**	1.071	1.499
Positive contact with police	0.995	0.757	1.309
Negative contact with police	0.649**	0.541	0.779

Note: *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01

This model measures whether respondents believed that the police do an adequate job of ensuring their safety. This was a question that respondents appeared more comfortable answering and has a higher response level than the others. More notably, it is the only model for which none of the socio-demographic variables were significant. Perhaps unsurprisingly, all of the experiential and neighbourhood level variables are significant at $P < 0.01$. The strongest effects are neighbourhood disorder (0.392) and change in neighbourhood crime in the past five years (0.401), both accounting for substantial negative deviations from the norm. Also significant are negative contact with the police (0.649) and victimization (0.558). The model is statistically significant and explains approximately 12 percent of the variation of response.

It may be expected that the model which deals specifically with safety would find variables related to actual experience with and perceptions of criminal activity to be significant rather than demographic features. However, it is still notable that variables that are otherwise consistently predictive of negative evaluations of the police are not significant regarding perceptions of safety. There is little in the literature to explain this deviation; it may simply mean that while various groups may feel marginalized by the police, they stop short of questioning the police's ability to keep them safe (unless they have experience such an inability firsthand). Perhaps unsurprisingly, all of the experiential and neighbourhood level variables are significant at $P < 0.01$.

The recent non-Western immigrant variable was also non-significant. In all four models, the immigrant variables were non-significant save for the recent non-Western immigrant which, in the other three models, was significant at $P < 0.05$ to $P < 0.01$. The other models fit

expectations with the bifocal lens theory, but this one does not. At first blush, this model would appear to be the one model that should align itself most closely with the bifocal lens theory. The premise that this work is based upon is, loosely, that the police in Canada are markedly different than the police in non-democratic states. The police in a non-democratic sending state are more likely to be corrupt or inadequate and may otherwise not only be representations of state oppression but also the government's method of exacting this oppression. The bifocal comparison of the Canadian police who represent a new haven and safety to the sending-state police should show a strong endorsement for Canada's ability to keep people safe. It does not.

The use of the word safety may be acting as a trigger for earlier questions. This is only the third of seven questions asked in the survey about the police directly, but it comes after several earlier questions regarding safety, three of which directly concern feelings of general safety. It is possible that the respondents are, at this point, answering the question about the police while thinking back to their previous responses on safety. A quick analysis was performed using one of these questions. Respondents were asked their general level of personal safety from crime on a likert scale of satisfaction. After dividing this question in a binary response between negative and positive, a regression was run using this new variable as the independent. As with the police response, being a recent non-Western immigrant was non-significant. Still, this only serves to shift the question to why a new immigrant from a potentially dangerous area of the world would not necessarily have a positive outlook on the comparative safety of Canada. One possible reason is that of migratory stress. Migration is a stressful, life-altering event – even for immigrants arriving through the points system or family reunification. This stress is even greater for those who arrive as refugees, many of whom may suffer from

Post-traumatic stress disorder (Beiser 2009, pp. 555). In short, some immigrants' general unease about their safety already expressed earlier in the survey, is manifest here in their view of the police. Police who they otherwise tend to evaluate very favourably.

Although these explanations may explain the deviation, it is even more likely that the root cause is community disorder. Perceived change in neighbourhood crime over the past five years and community disorder (as well as having been victimized in the past 12 months) are significant throughout all four models, but their impact is strongest in this model. Many previous studies have shown that there is a significant link between perceptions of community safety and evaluations of the police (Lai and Zhao 2010, pp. 687; Renauer and Covelli 2011; Dowler and Sparks 2008, pp. 398). People hold the police responsible for ensuring their safety and if they've been victimized or live in a neighbourhood they see as increasingly dangerous, they view the police as responsible for it (Hinds 2007, pp. 55). All the socio-demographic variables that are normally significant and negative here range in confidence interval from negative to highly positive again confirming that it is experience with crime rather than personal features that inform this evaluation of the police.

The local police do a good or average job of treating people fairly. N = 17,776 Nagelkerke R² = 0.086	Odds Ratio	Confidence Interval (95%)	
		Lower	Upper
Visible Minority	0.540**	0.369	0.790
Unofficial Language	1.183	0.817	1.714
Married	1.217*	1.034	1.433
Female	0.883	0.761	1.024
Age	1.010**	1.005	1.015
Income	1.039*	1.004	1.075
Less than high school			
High School	0.856	0.679	1.078
Technical or trade college	0.877	0.694	1.109
Undergraduate or greater	0.880	0.684	1.132
Church Attendance	1.286**	1.075	1.537
Canadian Born			
Recent Western immigrant	1.699	0.524	5.513
Recent non-Western immigrant	1.950*	1.006	4.197
Non-recent Western immigrant	0.902	0.573	1.418
Non-recent non-Western immigrant	0.840	0.619	1.139
Lives in Urban Area	1.135	0.954	1.351
Change in neighbourhood crime 5yrs	0.623**	0.534	0.726
Community disorder	0.531**	0.461	0.613
Was Victimized in last 12 months	0.585**	0.497	0.687
Has a local police presence	1.225**	1.056	1.423
Positive contact with police	1.146	0.887	1.480
Negative contact with police	0.662**	0.563	0.779

Note: *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01

Several of the socio-demographic variables are significant predictors of whether respondents felt that police were treating citizens with fairness. Only gender, education, and language are non-significant. While experiential variables are again generally stronger predictors of how fair police were perceived to be, visible minority status has an equally strong negative effect on this perception. Finally, the strongest effect by far is that of being a recent immigrant from a non-Western region. At 1.950 this positive effect was much greater than that of the two closest negative variables of visible minority status (0.540) and neighbourhood disorder (0.531). It is worth noting, however, that the confidence range is much broader. This model explains 8.6 percent of the response variation and is statistically significant.

The continued influence of experiential factors is supported by most previous studies that show that victimization and neighbourhood disorder will affect not only perceptions of safety but also perceptions of the police more generally – their primary role being to ensure the safety of citizens. The broad confidence range found in the still significantly positive non-Western immigrant variable is likely explained, in part, by the equally broad group it captures. There are, necessarily, some respondents from democratic states that are included here. Still, it serves to further endorse the bifocal lens theory, showing that the group generally has a positive view of the police that eventually diminishes enough to be non-significant as a whole after ten years in the state.

There is another more troubling explanation for the high level of positivity among recent non-Western immigrants as well as negative results from visible minorities. It has been argued that the measurement of police evaluations can be understood as roughly analogous to client

evaluations of any other service – in short, that policing is best understood as a service industry, with the citizenry as its clients (Maguire and Johnson 2010). Using that framework, it is implied that both visible minorities and immigrants who have been here for a longer period have been unsatisfied with their direct police encounters. Describing a body with the unique position of having legitimized punitive force as a service industry is reductive however. The service industry analogy is closely aligned with more robust theories of procedural justice. Procedural justice theories essentially state that experience with a legal body (the courts, police, etc.) will inform compliance and acceptance with that body (Woolard et al. 2008, pp. 207). Woolard et al. found that increased experience with the justice system, specifically American courts, increased expectations of unfair treatment. Anticipations of unfair treatment were stronger for minorities implying less fair treatment was perceived. In short, visible minorities are more likely to expect discrimination and that expectation is likely based on experience.

(ii) Perceptions of the Approachability of Police

The local police do a good or average job of being approachable. N = 17,660 Nagelkerke R^2 = 0.087			
	Odds Ratio	**Confidence Interval (95%)**	
		Lower	**Upper**
Visible Minority	0.424**	0.286	0.629
Unofficial Language	0.890	0.603	1.314
Married	1.489**	1.236	1.794
Female	0.683**	0.576	0.810
Age	1.016**	1.010	1.021
Income	1.017	0.978	1.057
Less than high school			
High School	0.678**	0.518	0.888
Technical or trade college	0.792	0.599	1.048
Undergraduate or greater	0.803	0.597	1.081
Church Attendance	1.211	0.987	1.486
Canadian Born			
Recent Western immigrant	1.406	0.432	4.576
Recent non-Western immigrant	2.379*	1.089	5.199
Non-recent Western immigrant	1.622	0.958	2.744
Non-recent non-Western immigrant	0.770	0.551	1.075
Lives in Urban Area	0.896	0.727	1.104
Change in neighbourhood crime 5yrs	0.572**	0.480	0.682
Community disorder	0.631**	0.534	0.745
Was Victimized in last 12 months	0.622**	0.518	0.748
Has a local police presence	1.282**	1.082	1.518
Positive contact with police	1.182	0.879	1.590
Negative contact with police	0.742**	0.616	0.894

Note: *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01

Once again, most of the socio-demographic variables are significant predictors for this model. As is to be expected, the experiential and neighbourhood variables had slightly less negative effect in this model than the others. Also consistent with the theories, the two variables with the strongest effect are visible minority status (0.424) and the remarkably high recent non-Western immigrant variable number of 2.379, significant at $P < 0.05$. This model was also statistically significant in explaining 8.7 percent of variation.

The General Social Survey on victimization is designed with the intention to be useful to both academics and government bodies such as the police (Statistics Canada 2011). The inclusion of the approachability question, then, is likely intended for use by the latter body, as it is a term more associated with police policy than academic work (See Bird 1993). In Canada, the Toronto Police Service began the Toronto Anti-Violence Intervention Strategy as a means to decrease violent crime by increasing police visibility and approachability. Essentially the program places police in the neighbourhood on foot and on bike rather than in cars (Wingrove 2009). The success of this program is unknown and may not adequately address the underlying problems causing the police to seem distant or inapproachable to many respondents. If the issue were merely police visibility then one would expect to see that living in an urban area would significantly decrease approachability, but no such relationship was found. Further, direct negative contact with the police although significant, has less of an effect on respondents' perceptions of police approachability than it did on their other views of the police.

Finally it fails to address the fact that socio-demographic variables such as gender and visible minority status are significant negative contributions to views of police approachability.

Although visible minority status is generally agreed to be predictive of negative sentiment toward the police, it is notably stronger in this model. This is also the only one of the first three models where gender is a significant negative predictor. Several previous studies have found the opposite result – showing that males are more likely to have negative attitudes toward the police than females (O'Connor 2008, pp. 590; Nofziger 2005). This implies that the model is measuring something different than mere satisfaction with the police. Approachability, then, may be gauged by respondents by the level that they see themselves represented in the police.

The percentage of female constables in Canada has risen 15 percent since 1986, but still only accounts for just over 20 percent of all Canadian constables (Beattie and Mole 2007: 19). Similarly, only six percent of Canadian police officers are visible minorities (Li 2008), despite awareness of the gap for over twenty five years (Jain 1988). Many academic papers in this area in Canada begin with the assumption that minority representation is the primary means to improving relations with the police. A recent study by Hickman and Piquero (2009) suggests that some of the emphasis on minority representation as a means for improving policing (in this case complaints from minorities) may be misplaced. In the empirical study, they found that the level of minority representation had no significant bearing on the level of complaints directed at the police from minorities. Whether increasing minority representation would have a direct impact on the perceived approachability of the police is impossible to discern from the data here without having two levels of representation to compare, but it remains that both minority representation as well as female representation are very low and that both groups are less likely to find the police approachable. Regardless, representation is an inherent good beyond its utility for police relations.

(iv) Overall Confidence in Police

'Quite a lot' or 'A great deal' of confidence in the local police. N = 19,074 Nagelkerke R^2 = 0.105			
	Odds Ratio	Confidence Interval (95%)	
		Lower	Upper
Visible Minority	0.493**	0.370	0.656
Unofficial Language	0.755*	0.596	0.955
Married	1.074	0.958	1.205
Female	0.768**	0.692	0.852
Age	1.005*	1.001	1.008
Income	1.052**	1.027	1.078
Less than high school			
High School	0.950	0.813	1.111
Technical or trade college	0.926	0.791	1.084
Undergraduate or greater	1.221*	1.023	1.456
Church Attendance	1.233**	1.093	1.391
Canadian Born			
Recent Western immigrant	0.994	0.513	1.923
Recent non-Western immigrant	2.681**	1.534	4.685
Non-recent Western immigrant	0.912	0.656	1.268
Non-recent non-Western immigrant	0.830	0.677	1.018
Lives in Urban Area	1.379**	1.225	1.551
Change in neighbourhood crime 5yrs	0.514**	0.462	0.573
Community disorder	0.564**	0.505	0.630
Was Victimized in last 12 months	0.527**	0.469	0.591
Has a local police presence	1.279**	1.153	1.420
Positive contact with police	1.194	0.987	1.445
Negative contact with police	0.853**	0.757	0.963

Note: *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$

The final model in this analysis is also the final interview question in the Perceptions: Local Police module. The full question asked was "How much confidence do you have in the police?" which respondents could answer on a sliding scale of confidence. No additional explanation or clarification was provided. The general ambiguity of the question as well as its placement as the last question means that it can properly be understood to represent positive or negative perception of the police at its most basic and diffuse level, rather than perception of one aspect of police performance. One caveat, however, is that the response given to the question that came directly prior – fair treatment – may have had undue influence on responses given to this more nebulous question.

Most variables were significant predictors in this final model. Negative contact with police is a somewhat weaker predictor of confidence of police than it is of other more specific perceptions. Also of note is that this is the only model where living in an urban area becomes significant (1.379). Visible minority status and recent non-Western immigrant status remain the strongest negative and positive effects, respectively. Just over 10 percent of response variation is explained by this statistically significant model.

Much of the analysis that applies to this model has been covered in the previous models, but notable deviations were found. For most socio-demographic variables, responses to the questions of fair treatment and approachability were predictive of responses to the general confidence question. This was also true of recent non-Western immigrants. Marriage, loosely defined here as any form of long-term cohabitation with a romantic partner, was also a significant positive determinant for perceptions of both the approachability and the fairness of

the police, but here is non-significant. Similarly, Cao (2011) found in his two step analysis of the 2004 General Social Survey on Victimization that marriage was only a significant determinant of attitude when crime experiences and neighbourhood effects were excluded from the model (Cao 2011, pp.14). This supports the current mapping of marriage based on any long-term partner rather than merely legal marriage, as it suggests that marriage is a placeholder for social stability rather than conservatism – though both qualities are tied to higher positivity toward the police. An earlier study by Cao (2004) did find that marriage enhanced confidence in the police but he appears to attribute this to the greater conservatism of married couples (pp. 148). However, understanding it as an indication of social stability appears more consistent with the data both here and in Cao's later analysis.

Social stability is related to but distinct from financial stability (which itself denotes conservatism), which are more accurately captured by the variables of age, income, and education. All three of which are statistically significant in this model as is supported by almost all similar studies done in the past (See for example, Lai and Zhao 2010; Wu 2010). The model shows that the older an individual is the more likely they are to be positive toward the police – the same can be said for their increase in income. Education at the university level is also a strong determinant of confidence in the police with those at an undergraduate level or higher. This final variable may be viewed both as an indication of financial stability and therefore possible higher rates of conservatism (with age), but it may also be an indirect endorsement of the positive image of the Canadian police. In a similar analysis on public perceptions of the police in Ghana, Tankebe (2010) found that those with higher education were less positive toward the police and more likely to anticipate corruption in their interactions with the police.

The more educated people are the greater their awareness of the police's failure to perform its normative obligations (pp.305). If we accept this premise then higher education as a positive determinant implies that this greater awareness not only fails to lower confidence in Canadian police but may actually enhance it.

Another variable tied to conservatism is that of religiosity or church attendance. This variable was included, in large part, to mitigate the possibility that immigrant status was acting as a proxy for higher church involvement and was significant at $P < 0.01$. Correia (2010) found in his model that Church attendance was a significant determinant of negative evaluations of the police. His model consisted entirely of Latino immigrants so it was further speculated that the source of the negativity was acculturation, the source of which was the Church. In other words, those that attended church regularly were thought to have acculturated more quickly and therefore learned the injustices of the criminal system before those who did not regularly attend. More instructive to a measure of church attendance that cuts across immigrants and native-born citizens is Cao's 2004 model that found that respondents with higher levels of religiosity in both Japan and the United States were more likely to positively evaluate the police (pp. 148). Again, it appears that both in that model and the current model, Church attendance signifies conservatism or an association with the status quo. Church attendance has been an absent variable from almost all Canadian and American studies on police evaluations. This model suggests that has been an oversight.

Finally, this model once again finds all immigrant-related variables save recent non-Western immigrant status to be non-significant. That variable is significant at $P < 0.01$ and is the

strongest single determinant found throughout all the models. This provides further support for the hypothesis introduced at the beginning of this research.

SECTION IV: CROSS-MODEL DISCUSSION

(i) Socio-Demographic Variables

Outside of visible minority status, socio-demographic attributes have generally weaker correlations with perceptions of police performance than experiential and neighbourhood perceptions. They remain significant variables, however. The exception to this is found in the first model concerning the police ability to ensure safety. This finding suggests that overall confidence in police, as measured in the final model, is not significantly informed by perceptions of police ability to ensure safety. It may be that this is a minimum standard to which police are held or it may be that direct experience with crime and disorder has strong enough influence on perception of safety that it supersedes values informed by other personal features.

Gainey and Payne (2009) suggest that gender alone is not a significant predictor of perceptions of police performance but that being female has an exacerbating effect when paired with experiences of victimization of neighbourhood disorder. Interaction models to test this theory were performed but the results were non-significant. Instead gender, along with the other socio-demographic variables had a predictable result. It was non-significant except in regards to approachability and overall confidence. This is likely explained by the weak representation of females within the Canadian police force and possibly experiences of discrimination.

As expected, the older an individual is and the higher their income, the more positive their opinion of the police is likely to be. This was true across all models except for that of safety. The effect of these variables was small both because the number of gradations within the continuous variables and because the effect of age and income is likely often a proxy for neighbourhood conditions (the underlying assumption being that with age and wealth come the greater likelihood of living in a more stable and safe neighbourhood).

(ii) Neighbourhood and Experiential Effects

Neighbourhood disorder, experiences of victimization and negative contact with the police are consistently strong predictors of negative views of the police in all four models. This suggests that individuals hold the police responsible for disorder and crime (Cao 2011). It should perhaps be unsurprising that perceived levels of disorder and crime would be directly tied to the positivity of evaluations of the police. It is possible that in at least some of these responses, the causal nature is not as it seems. Wu (2009) argued that it was problematic to declare that self-evaluated negative contact with the police is predictor of negative evaluations of the police. It is possible that the same causal confusion is taking place with self-evaluations of neighbourhood disorder. The perception of a poor police force may lead to exaggerations of a negative neighbourhood. This is a problem that requires further research mixing actual crime data with police evaluations but without that, it is a reasonable assumption that crime, real or perceived, leads to poor evaluations of the police. This means that the most effective mechanism for improving police relations with citizens may simply be reduce visible signs of crime and disorder. That is to say, reducing crime levels and crime visibility will improve the

perceptions of the police, both directly and by reducing victimization and negative contact with the police.

There are two limitations associated with this straight-forward analysis. First, that the level of crime and disorder is measured, not by actual incidents, but by perception of respondents is again a sticking point. Reduction of crime alone may not be sufficient. Reduction of the appearance of crime, in contrast to the media's emphasis on crime (Dowler, Fleming and Muzzatti 2007) as well as the Harper Government's spotlight on crime, should also improve perceptions of the police. The key method to improving, according to the model, appears to be visibility. Having a local police presence is correlated with more positive perceptions and other research suggests the merits of visibility extend to visibility on patrol rather than mere presence of a building (Zhao et al. 2002). Positive contact through seminar suggests a positive relationship as well, but remained non-significant throughout – this may be due to the diversity of outreach programs. The second limitation on police ability to counteract negative perceptions born of neighbourhood disorder is simply that several elements of disorder (namely, sleeping on streets, graffiti, etc.) may be outside the purview of the police.

(iii) Immigrant Status

Although the intention of this project was to probe the effect of immigration status on police evaluations, special attention was also given in the model analysis to the area of visible minorities. Most visible minorities are Canadian-born, but many immigrants are also visible minorities – this is particularly true of the immigrants who come from the majority of the countries that have been classified as "non-Western" for the purpose of this study. While being

such an immigrant may be a strong determinant of a positive perception of the police, being a visible minority, in most models, appears to be almost equally predictive of a negative perception of the police. After living in this country for ten years, immigrants cease to be classified as "recent" for the purposes of this analysis, but many remain visible minorities. The initial positive assessment of the local police by immigrants is one that can be largely explained by their dual focus on both Canada and their sending state – the bifocal lens; this means that it is a positive phenomenon but not one that can be capitalized upon for other segments of society. It does tell us that, outside visible minority status, being an immigrant does not, in itself, appear to create a substantial barrier to a positive relationship with the police. This is contrary to several studies previously mentioned, but I believe this is explained by the persistent conflation of minority status and immigrant status in literature in this area of study.

In addition to the immigrant variables included in the models, secondary models were run which included only immigrants for each model (the immigrant variables were omitted from these models). These models were not included because of lack of variation compared to the primary models. The sole notable differences were seen in the variables for age and church attendance. The church attendance variable was used specifically because other studies found this to be a significant variable for immigrant perceptions, but not for native-born residents (Correia 2010). These models showed the opposite finding. This may only be because the influence of the Church as a socializing agent dissipates after the initial arrival of an immigrant. Its positive effect among non-immigrants may be explained, like marriage, as a force that provides stability in respondents' lives, providing social cohesion as an antidote of sorts to the negative effects of community disorder and fear (Correia 2010: 104).

The more pertinent of these findings was that age was significant in the same models as the original, but with an opposite effect. Rather than seeing a slight increase in positive association with each increasing increment, more negative perceptions of police were tied to older ages. It is likely that age here is actually measuring time spent in Canada – although obviously a rough approximation, the older an individual is, the longer their time in Canada likely has been. This finding runs counter to the theory of Wu (2010) that posits that the longer an immigrant is in a host country, the more positive perceptions of police they will hold (92). It again supports the findings of Chow (2002) as well as an inverse interpretation of bifocalism (Menjivar and Bejarano 2004), as anticipated.

Throughout the models, the recent non-Western immigrant variable was the only immigrant variable that was significant. It was also one of the strongest affects among all of the variables across the models. The range for the confidence interval for this variable was larger than any other variables – a phenomenon that is likely explained by the diversity of experience captured by this variable and the large group of cultures and sending states it captures. Although this finding is significant in its contribution to burgeoning literature by helping to clarify a contended point (the effect on perception of new immigrants), it is not a positive effect that can be capitalized on the police given its probable cause. In fact, paired with the negative effect of visible minority status and the inconclusive effect of non-recent non-Western immigrant status, it appears likely that the initial predisposition toward positive perception of police begins to erode as soon as immigrants are settled.

Unfortunately, these models failed to tell us more about other types of newcomers. The smaller sample size of immigrants and the lack of more detailed information on country of origin account for this failure. Likewise, the limitations of the dataset made it impossible to compare immigrants by entrance class (e.g. refugee, Canadian Experience, points system, or family reunification) let alone by sub-classifications.[3] Further, household language was non-significant, but the simple inclusion of a question regarding self-assessed language proficiency in future cycles of this survey could add a wealth of information for future studies using this data.

SECTION V: CONCLUSION

At its outset, this study was hampered by imprecise data on immigrants. A survey such as this also necessarily omits individuals illegally residing in Canada. Even those who arrived through legal means may be more transient upon their arrival and therefore less likely to have an established residence with a landline phone. Further, although this has not been established in existing literature, it is possible that surveys regarding faith in a public institution such as the police may be somewhat skewed toward positivity. Lower regard toward the police may be related to lower confidence in authority generally, which may in turn make an individual less likely to answer a survey, particularly one by an arm of the government.

Significant results were found though. In many areas, neighbourhood effects and experiential factors appeared to subsume most socio-demographic variables outside visible minority status and recent non-Western immigrant status. The notable exception to this was

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[3] For example, are state-sponsored refugees more likely to have positive views of local police than other types of refugees?

regarding perceptions of police approachability. In this model, socio-demographic variables actually had a greater effect than other types of variables suggesting that respondents gauge approachability by the level that they see themselves represented in the police. The difference in age between youth and constables is obviously unavoidable – the stark lack of visible minority and female representation within the police is not. These findings suggest that a more inclusive police force would have direct positive influence on their ability to serve the community. As for immigrants, it can be inferred from this theory that they too share the desire to see themselves represented within the force, although findings from the fair treatment model coupled with procedural justice theory suggest that representation alone cannot solve the problem. Representation without continued efforts to decrease discrimination would likely be ineffective for all groups. While the recent non-Western immigrant variable continues to have a positive interaction with approachability, it is significantly less than in the other models, signifying that the overwhelmingly positive influence of new immigrant status is probably likewise lowered by issues of representation.

The ultimate goal of the police force is the reduction of crime. It is therefore with some level of irony that it this study should recommend the reduction of the appearance of crime as an area for improvement. While any police force will always strive toward crime reduction, the distinction here is that the appearance of crime is as important as the reality of crime. Reduction of crime alone will not yield a proportional decrease of fear of crime or increase of satisfaction with personal safety (Reese 2009; Weinrath et al. 2007). One of the consistent findings in all four models of this study is that community disorder and perceived increases in neighbourhood crime both impact negatively on perceptions of the police. Working to

eliminate signs of neighbourhood disorder will increase confidence in the police, whether they are issues such as graffiti, public drunkenness, or prostitution, or they are community issues outside the direct purview of the police such as litter or homelessness. This increased confidence will ultimately yield more cooperative citizenry and therefore a more effective police force. It is therefore a cyclical shift in either direction. Positive perceptions feed the ability to reduce crime, both real and imagined, which then improves perceptions further. Likewise, negative perceptions hamper police ability to work effectively, further deteriorating their image.

Earlier studies had mixed results with overall immigrant status. One study found that overall immigrant status was not a significant predictor of perceptions of police in Canada (See Cao 2011), while another study found that it had a negative effect through the lens of bifocalism in the United States (See Menjivar and Bejarano 2004). It has been clearly illustrated here that new immigrants *do* differ from other groups in ways beyond visible minority status. The bifocal lens theory has real merit, but the imagined lens are an inversion of what was first proposed by Menjivar and Bajarano. In short, while the vast majority of Canadians tend to view the police positively, new immigrants from non-Western states are even more likely to be affirmative because of their probable tendency to evaluate comparatively against the state they left. Ultimately, the exact nature of bifocalism remains unclear outside the context of this study. Future studies should explore the effect that transnational activity, level of social inclusion in the host state, as well as differences of entry class have on this comparative positivity. This is the next step in developing a better understanding and a more robust theory

explaining how immigrants and native-born Canadians differ in their relationship with Canadian police.

Future studies can also explore this finding at a sending-state-specific level or by using qualitative studies with recent immigrants from non-democratic states. Until that work is done, there is little policy that can be extracted from the immigrant-variable findings. The phenomenon, although a positive one, is a natural one borne of the transition from sending state to host country. It is not an indication of good immigration policy or even strong policing – it is merely a fact of migration. At best, knowing that there is this surplus of goodwill toward police among new arrivals may be the impetus for better integration of the police with new immigrants, either through seminar involvement with citizenship classes or visits with ESL students. Reinforcement of positive police evaluations through this sort of community involvement could prolong the initial tendency toward positivity.

A certain level of normalization in perspective for new immigrants is also a given – the glasses for many will always be bifocals, but the prescription will dull over time and the image will slowly lose its rosy tint – but this initial positivity does give an opportunity for the police to get it right. As stated at the outset, most Canadians have a positive perception of their police; ensuring that positive view means improving relations with visible minorities – a category of people that will only continue to grow in the future.

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