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# SITUATIONAL PREVENTION OF PUBLIC DISORDER AT THE AUSTRALIAN MOTORCYCLE GRAND PRIX

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by

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**Abstract-** *Situational analysis of chronic violence occurring between police and spectators at the Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix led to formulation of hypotheses about the causes of the violence. These hypotheses proposed a relationship between the violence and: (1) police tactics, (2) spectator and police frustration, (3) facilities at the event and its organization, and (4) media sensationalism. Working with the Victoria Police, the authors developed and implemented a situational crime prevention plan to both prevent violence and maintain large crowd numbers attending the event. The plan's effectiveness is assessed by comparing pre- and post-intervention arrests, spectators' satisfaction with police, and residents' satisfaction with the event. These comparisons demonstrate that violence is preventable at some public events using consensus management techniques, and that the result is greater public satisfaction with police. Through use of these techniques, alienation of the public can be minimized, thus avoiding unintended consequences of a more authoritarian approach.*

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## INTRODUCTION

"Hell on the Mountain" and "Bikie Mob in Drunken Riot Orgy" were the banner headlines run by the *Daily Telegraph* (April 8, 1985), while *The Australian* headline read, "The Night Mad Max Came to Bathurst" (April 8, 1985). These were the ways that Australian newspapers described the riot between spectators and police at the 1985 Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix, held in the small country town of Bathurst, New South Wales. The authors were involved in an observational study of this 1985 riot, and partly as an extension of this research, they developed and initiated a situational crime prevention plan (e.g., Clarke, 1992; Clarke and Mayhew, 1980) to prevent violence at the new venue for the Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix—Phillip Island, Victoria.

### Goals of the Study

The effective management of situations requires flexibility and diversity in approach. A punitive or authoritarian approach may be effective in one situation and not another (e.g., Fiedler, 1981). Conversely, a more consensual and collaborative solution to conflict may work in some situations and not others. Given this, one of our study goals was to illustrate how a situation that police attempted to manage by force and repression—ineffectively, as measured by non-cessation of the undesired behavior, i.e., riot—might be better managed through the use of consensus and collaboration. Our second goal was to describe the intervention as a model for situational crime prevention of similar disorder.

### Public Order Literature

There is a significant literature on the control of public order; however, these studies suffer from methodological weaknesses, as they are largely post hoc and retrospective. Typically, such studies use data on arrested persons to generate broad-spectrum demographic information about the attending crowds' composition. In recent years, some attempts have been made to vary conditions at events where disorder is common, and to systematically (if not objectively) collect data regarding the impact of these varied conditions on the measures chosen. This procedure allows for the employment of a scientific method in the analysis of public order. Studies of this more scientific and formal type are very few. We have found two such studies prior to ours.

One of these studies (Bjor et al., 1992) reports an attempt to systematically measure and subsequently control collective disorder at

the Midsummer Eve celebration in a small Swedish Baltic Sea town-Participant observation data were collected in the year prior to and the year of implementing a set of intervention tactics. These tactics involved having police: (1) prevent persons who conformed with a certain demographic profile from coming to the celebrations, and (2) close parking lots near the city centre. Bjor et al. found that the intervention drastically reduced the amount of rowdiness and the number of police arrests during the celebrations, compared to near riotous conditions the previous year. The limited nature of the measures used by Bjor et al. (1992) did not allow for a complete analysis of the impact of the intervention employed (e.g., no measure of citizen response to the intervention was collected, nor was any estimate made of the effect of the intervention on attendance at the event). These limitations are serious if one intends to build an event that is satisfying to the public and subsequently draws large numbers of people. Police interventions may stop the public disorder; however, will people still attend the event and will the public support the measure taken?

The issue of public acceptability was more adequately dealt with in the second study (Ramsay, 1991), which evaluated the effects of a bylaw passed by the local Coventry City Council in the U.K. prohibiting the drinking of alcohol in public places. The targets of the bylaw were "winos, drunks and alcoholics" who tended to gather in a few areas close to the center of Coventry. Targeted for reduction were both nuisance behavior by the offenders (name-calling, aggressive begging, etc.) and citizens' fear of crime. The bylaw allowed police to issue warnings and citations, empty the contents of alcoholic drinks, and/or escort offenders out of the area. Both the fear of crime and the targeted behaviors were positively affected by the measures taken.

One difference between the two studies cited above is that the Coventry project attempted to control incivilities without alienating the public, while the Swedish study imposed a solution to incivilities that was certainly alienating to offenders and possibly also to citizens. Other research (e.g., Wiatrowski and Vardalis, 1990) has supported the contention that policing solutions to incivilities can be effective without being alienating, as long as a commitment to consultation and negotiation are dominant values in the process.

Two other studies that did not use a pre- and post-intervention approach, but whose methods were sophisticated enough to produce apparently valid results, were conducted by Shellow (1970) and Shellow and Roemer (1969). These studies report two public order interventions in American settings where situational factors were manipulated to prevent violence. These authors cited comparative archival data from

the years prior to and after the interventions. Their findings indicate that situational policing tactics were effective in curtailing public disorder in the specific cultural context of the U.S. In Shellow and Roemer (1969), the situational prevention tactics were used to prevent a riot by motorcyclists at a rally.

### **Situational Crime Prevention Model**

Consistent with Lewin's (1942) specification of the action research model, Clarke (1992) suggests five stages of a situational crime prevention project. These stages will be used to frame this article; accordingly, headings follow the five stages presented below:

1. collection of data about the nature and dimensions of the specific crime problem;
2. analysis of the situational conditions that permit or facilitate the commission of crimes in question;
3. systematic study of possible means of blocking opportunities for these particular crimes, including analysis of costs;
4. implementation of the most promising, feasible and economic measures; and,
5. monitoring of results and dissemination of experience.

### **THE PROBLEM**

Motorcycle races began at the small country town of Bathurst in 1939. Until 1960 there were no reported public order or other serious crime problems occurring in Bathurst. Since 1960, nine violent clashes defined as riots occurred between police and spectators attending the event. In 1975, a police station was located in the central public camping area (MacPhillamy Park). Subsequently, the violence has been concentrated at the camping ground, with the police station serving as the focus for the riot. Since the construction of this station, the frequency of rioting has increased (see Table 1).

Since 1975, the police response to the violence has been to increase the presence of uniformed officers, invest heavily in police hardware, construct a police operations center, and impose severe alcohol and movement restrictions on the crowd. As can be seen from Table 1, these attempts to situationally control the violence by target hardening, controlling facilitators, entry/exit screening, rule setting and access control produced little effect, with the exception of reducing crowd numbers coming to the event. The dramatic drop in crowd numbers in 1986 may have been due to the introduction of aggressive and high profile 16-man squads, the declaration of a "no-man's land" (access

control, entry/exit screening) and severe alcohol restrictions (controlling facilitators).<sup>4</sup> Entertainment events depend upon attracting customers who are willing to attend and in most cases pay for the entertainment. Shearing and Stenning's (1992) brilliant analysis of Disneyland's behavioral control; studies of soccer hooliganism in the U.K. (e.g., Clarke, 1983; March et al, 1978); Bjar et al. 's (1992) study of the Midsummer's Night celebration; and studies of public order at pubs (e.g., Victorian Community Council Against Violence, 1992) are all examples of attempts to situationally analyze and/or police crime at such public entertainment venues. As noted previously, situational crime prevention measures at public entertainment sites should not be seen by the paying public as restricting or curtailing the acceptable standards of the day for civil liberties or the public will be alienated and not support the endeavor (Ramsay, 1991). The control goals must, therefore, be balanced with fun or entertainment goals in order for the event to continue to be successful. The authors' understanding of the Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix situation was that with the arrival of the heavy-handed tactics (described to us as "police-state tactics" by non-rioting persons who

**Table 1: Bathurst Public Disorder Statistics 1976 – 1987**

Year	(1) Defined Anti-police as riot	(2) Anti-police activity	(3) Vandalism	(4) Number arrested	(5) Number police	(6) Weather	(7) Number attending
1976	Yes	Yes	Yes	250	110	Fine/24	13,171
1977	No	Yes	Yes	138	140	Rain/17	11,528
1978	No	Yes	No	118	392	Rain/18	10,194
1979	No	Yes	No	75	242	Fine/20	12,001
1980	Yes	Yes	Yes	91	300	Fine/26	13,776
1981	Yes	Yes	Yes	167	150	Fine/26	13,591
1982	No	Yes	Yes	53	340	Fine/21	13,920
1983	Yes	Yes	Yes	163	300	Fine/22	14,972
1984	No	No	No	20	300	Rain/NA	12,734
1985	Yes	Yes	Yes	164	300	Rain/22	13,701
1986	No	No	No	106	400	Fine/24	8,200
1987	No	No	No	23	300	Fine/23	4,360

Category 1: confrontations defined by the media as riot.

Category 2: police and court records suggesting direct challenge to police.

Category 3: complaints of vandalism—from Western Advocate Newspaper.

Category 4: number of arrests—from Western Advocate Newspaper.

Category 5: number of police—from Western Advocate Newspaper.

Category 6: weather conditions—from Bureau of Meteorology.

Category 7: number of adults attending—from Bathurst City Council.

normally go to such events), people voted with their feet and decided not to attend.

In early 1988, the State of New South Wales passed legislation devolving decision making about the holding of motorcycle races to the local Bathurst City Council. In spite of significant economic loss, the city council cancelled all motorcycle races, including the Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix until further notice.<sup>2</sup> The council stated that the cancellation was due to "the violence associated with the bike races in recent years." In late 1988, the Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix was relocated to Phillip Island, Victoria.

### **Situational Factors Contributing to the Violence**

#### *Preliminary Investigations*

After: (1) reviewing media reports and relevant literature, (2) conducting preliminary interviews with police and other emergency service workers, spectators, townspeople and merchants, (3) observing the Bathurst venue of the Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix 1984-1987, and (4) attending seven other motorcyclist recreational events throughout eastern Australia in 1986, the antecedent conditions identified as contributing to the violence at Bathurst were specified as follows:<sup>3</sup>

- (1) a policing style that relied upon coercion and required no responsibility by the participants for the management of their own behavior,
- (2) frustration on the part of spectators and police at the event,
- (3) poor facilities and entertainment, and
- (4) media provocation and institutionalization of the violence.

Manipulation of these variables was seen as the means by which violence could be reduced. This conceptualization was consistent with a situational crime prevention approach in as much as the situation was defined in much broader terms than the night and place (when and where) the riot occurred. The situation, then, was defined as the events leading up to and directly related to the riots occurring between the parties both within and outside the riot setting.

#### *Policing Style*

Since 1960, the policing style used to control spectator behavior at the event had been confrontational and aggressive (Cunneen et al., 1986; 1989; Veno and Vena, 1989). The special public order unit of the New South Wales Police (Tactical Response Group) had been formed with the specific charter of quelling the disorder occurring at Bathurst in 1980

(Cunneen, 1985a). Table 1 reveals this to have had little impact; violence was particularly focused at the police station in Bathurst. We reasoned that a shift in philosophy toward consensus and negotiation, and a reduction in aggressive police presence, were necessary to effectively manage the event at the new venue (Veno et al., 1987). This view was substantiated by two analyses of violence prevention at motorcyclists' events (Hammond, 1987; Shellow and Roemer, 1969). Hammond (1987) reports that such tactics are used at Oliver's Mount, a similar annual British public event held in Scarborough, attended by 5,000-10,000 bikers. Bikers organize and self-police the event with marshals. Police numbers are restricted to between six and 12 persons (Hammond, 1987). The event is trouble-free year after year due to the consultation and negotiation between police and bikers. The police reportedly regard the event as a traffic operation rather than a public order problem. Similarly, Shellow and Roemer (1969) reported that low-key police tactics, police non-intervention and an effective police-community communication structure combined (along with good luck) to produce a trouble-free rally of motorcyclists in the U.S.

The reduction of high-profile policing and the removal of the police station were called for by the authors (Veno et al., 1987) as the principal means of reducing violence at Bathurst. This strategy was tacitly unacceptable to New South Wales Police and the hard-line politicians of that state, but it was acceptable to police at the Phillip Island venue.

### *Frustration*

The nexus between frustration and aggression is widely reported and described in the literature (e.g., Berkowitz, 1969; Brown, 1986; Dollard et al., 1939). The sources of frustration for spectators at the Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix were identified in the earlier observational studies as frequent searches by police and a generally heavy-handed police presence (Cunneen, 1985a; Veno et al., 1987). Of particular concern was the fact that by 1985 New South Wales Police had adopted the tactic of searching each traveler to the event, ostensibly to minimize the presence of weapons (Cunneen, 1985b; Graham, 1985). A "letter-of-the-law" enforcement approach was taken, for example, by issuing citations for such offenses as dirty licence plates. The average (modal) number of times that a motorcyclist was stopped during the journey to Bathurst was three (Veno et al., 1987). Each time an individual was stopped, all belongings were required to be unpacked and a search made. Cunneen describes these searches as follows: "When a bike rider was pulled over, up to five police would surround the rider with their long

batons drawn. Riders were poked with batons and told to remove their leathers, jackets and luggage" (Cunneen, 1985b).

These tactics were frustrating to the motorcyclists' goal-directed behavior of getting to the event and having a good time. This frustration may have then led to increased aggression. We saw this minimization of spectator frustration in terms of "removing inducements" (Clarke, 1992). Police actions were frustrating and therefore induced violence. Removal of this frustration was consistent with a situational crime prevention approach. It was reasoned that minimization of spectator frustration associated with transit to and at the event was important in preventing violence at the new venue of the Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix.

We also believed that the reactive tactics used by police at Bathurst were frustrating for police. They either waited inside the police station for trouble or patrolled the area around the station in large patrol units. This procedure, known as "garrison policing" (Cunneen, 1985b), has been described as "deleterious to (police) members' health...as it creates a state of tension waiting for the action to begin" (Anderson, 1984). Lynch (1986) described police overreaction to games that the motorcyclists were playing at their camping grounds and suggested that this overreaction was due, in part, to police frustration. We reasoned that police frustration served as another facilitator of violence at Bathurst, and the task facing us was to minimize this facilitator to eliminate violence at the new venue of the event.

### *Facilities and Organization*

Camping facilities at Bathurst consisted of a toilet block and a few water outlets in a public camping area operated by the Bathurst City Council. Food and firewood were sold by agreement with local providers. There were no facilities for showers and no hot water. Damaged premises and facilities were left unrepaired and invited further attack (e.g., Sloan-Howitt and Kelling, 1990). We reasoned that these poor facilities served to act as "inducements" to crime (Clarke, 1992). Further, these factors did not foster a sense of need for care to be taken in the area. Shellow and Roemer (1969) noted the importance of providing reasonable facilities in preventing a riot at the motorcycle rally they studied in the U.S. We reasoned that the provision of good services would be an important factor in minimizing the risk of violence at the new venue.

Unlike almost every other motorcyclist event, there was no motorcycle riders' group identified as being in charge of the camping area and

associated gymkana (motorcycle games). This lack of a responsible party designated as "in charge" created an atmosphere of "anything goes." As Lynch (1986) noted, games became rougher and rougher throughout the day of the 1985 riot, and it was difficult to tell when the riot began and the games stopped. We regarded the designation of a group as responsible for the event to be important in the prevention of violence at the new venue. This procedure was likened to the situational crime prevention technique of rule setting (Clarke, 1992). However, the procedure is different in that the key to the process is devolving a sense of ownership of the problem to the motorcyclist community, or at least an identifiable and respected part of the community.

#### *Media Provocation and Institutionalization of the Violence*

Violence between police and bikers at Easter was good for selling newspapers and for attracting listeners and viewers. Tupper (1986) noted that the press had a vested interest in trouble occurring at the Bathurst motorcycle races. Both the Cunneen et al. (1986) and Veno et al. (1987) studies reported that during the height of the 1985 riot at Bathurst a television news car drove through a riotous assembly of some 10,000 persons with the driver honking its horn and flashing its lights. The car was about 20 meters from the police station, and the occupants proceeded to gather all the equipment from the car and go inside the high-wire fence of the police station. The car was burned during the night, presumably by the rioters, with the television journalists filming the proceedings.

While the events described above make for good press, they are also likely to amplify the actions of disorder, thus creating a "moral panic" in the public (Cohen, 1980) and drawing persons to the event who come for the conflict rather than the formal entertainment. Thus, the press was seen as intimately associated with the institutionalization of the violence at Bathurst. We reasoned that the press would need to be discouraged from sensationalist reporting to prevent violence at the new venue. In the terminology of situational crime prevention, this desired tactic was seen as controlling the facilitators of the violence, in as much as the media contributed to the violence occurring.

#### **Identification of the Most Effective Ways to Block the Crime Opportunities**

The general rationale for the situational crime prevention plan was that the antecedent conditions noted above could be manipulated to create a management plan to prevent violence at the new venue. A precondition

was that the plan should still allow for spectator and participant enjoyment. In outline, the plan was a combination of:

1. implementation of a policing style that increased participants' sense of responsibility for, and control over, the event;
2. reduction of the frustration levels experienced by police and participants;
3. provision of good facilities for spectators at the event;
4. specification of someone from the motorcyclist subculture to organize the social and gymkana aspects of the event; and
5. portrayal of the gathering by the media as a family event, specifically in a nonviolent and non-threatening manner.

Based upon the above rationale, and consistent with Clarke's (1992) procedure for developing a situational policing strategy, the authors searched for the most effective and cost-efficient solutions to the chronic riots. This process is described in the next section.

### **Implementation of the Most Promising, Feasible and Economic Measures**

Working with the Major Incident Planning Unit (MIPU) of the Victorian Police, we prepared a management strategy to prevent violence at the 1989 Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix. This "Social Impact Study," sponsored by the Health Promotions Unit of the Health Department, Victoria, had the twin goals of promoting peace at the event and evaluating the preventive measures adopted.

We had achieved some notoriety during the Bathurst study due to our analysis of New South Wales Police and media actions that clearly implicated these groups in causing the riots. We reasoned, however, that the only effective way to design an intervention to promote peace was to work closely with the police and all other vested interest groups in designing a peaceful event. Accordingly, one role of the senior author during this planning period was as consultant to the police. The official consultation with police was made possible by several discussions with senior Victorian Police officers.

#### *Redefining the Event to Include Families and Non-Bikers*

The violence at Bathurst had become institutionalized because of the several years of recurring conflict between two subcultures—the police and the bikers. Broadening of the Phillip Island event to draw families and middle-class persons was seen as part of the resolution of the conflict between these two subcultures. A planning workshop recommended that the Grand Prix should be promoted as a world-class event as it is in

Europe and the U.S. Consequently the Phillip Island Grand Prix was conceptualized as a much bigger event linked to the international circuit. A well-known promoter of the Australian Formula One (Automobile) Grand Prix, Bob Barnard, was invited by the Victorian government to promote this event.

This strategy was consistent with a theoretical point made by Dunning et al. (1987) about the development of hooliganism at soccer events in England. They note that with the advent of television, attendant crowds changed from broadly mixed and varied family groups to predominantly young males. This created conditions promoting violence. Thus, one element of our approach was to draw demographically mixed crowds, in the broadest sense of the term, to the Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix.

### *Traffic Plan*

At its worst, the aggressive policing strategy adopted by the New South Wales Police at Bathurst was exemplified by the prolific issuing of traffic citations for minor traffic infringements and by the erection of multiple road blocks to be negotiated before entry into the camping areas. As part of the prevention plan, the Victorian Police were advised to facilitate the traffic flow to and from and on Phillip Island. The plan was developed and widely publicized in local and state newspapers.

Because of the large crowds expected and the potential for creating alienation, it was not thought possible to exclude certain demographic types (15 to 25-year-old working class males) from the Grand Prix, despite the apparent success of this procedure in controlling violence at a Midsummer's Night Festival in Sweden (Bjor et al., 1992).

The policy of frequent searches of persons in transit to Bathurst was replaced by a facilitative role for the Victorian police. A central component of this policy was a motorcycle rally, the Grand Prix Rally, which was organized to begin in central Melbourne and terminate at each Phillip Island camping area. It provided the opportunity for police to demonstrate a genuinely cooperative approach toward the motorcyclists. When the 10,000 motorcycle riders assembled in Melbourne for the rally, they were led by police motorcycles with lights flashing.

The rally served several purposes for the police, who were able to: (1) show they were willing to join in the festival with the motorcyclists, (2) escort the entire group from Melbourne to their camping ground at Phillip Island in a controlled (albeit spectacular) manner, (3) introduce bike riders to the preferred traffic plan on the Island, (4) minimize clashes with other road users during the entry phase of the event, (5)

establish (further) mutual trust and respect between bike riders and police, (6) make a public demonstration of good will towards the event at the start, and (7) minimize frustration associated with spectator transit to the island.

Police assisted by blocking off intersections to give rally bikers the right of way for the entire 100-kilometer journey. We saw this aspect of the intervention partly as an attempt at rule setting in the terminology of the techniques of situational prevention (Clarke, 1992).

#### *Reduction of Police Frustration*

Central to the frustration-reduction principles underlying the violence prevention program, was consideration of ways to reduce operational police stress (for example, better facilities or effective shift rostering). To this end, an appropriately briefed civilian from the Health Department Study was stationed with operational police. This person's duties were to advise and report on ways that the operation might be handled so as to reduce police frustration and stress, and therefore minimize potential overreaction.

#### *Privatization of Camping Areas*

Rather than providing a single large public camping area offering poorly-equipped facilities, as was the case at Bathurst, five camping areas were designated by the Phillip Island Shire Council. These camping areas were privatized to encourage competition among camping area operators. Camp operators were required to assume responsibility for policing public order in their own camps. Operators were advised about effective self-policing techniques and situational crime prevention practices for bikers. Entertainment and alcohol were available at these camping grounds, but the provision of licenses (e.g., liquor, health permits) was dependent upon establishing appropriate health and crowd control procedures. The social impact team provided clear guidelines to the camp operators for the procedures and standards necessary to obtain licences.

#### *Establishment of a Marshal System*

Police agreed to rely upon a marshal system developed in consultation with the representatives of the motorcycle riders who were operating camping sites. This was done to increase the perception on the part of camping site operators that they were "in charge" of the proceedings and needed to develop strategies and techniques of their own to control proceedings.

It was agreed that motorcyclist camp operators or their representatives should contact the command post daily and, if required, police would take action. The marshals were mature people who were properly briefed and dedicated to their task (Bannon, 1989). Camp operators and marshals developed common rules within the camping ground to govern antisocial behavior and alcohol usage. This tactic served to set rules and increased formal surveillance in the parlance of situational prevention. However, it also helped a powerful faction of the motorcyclists to take significant responsibility for control of the problem.

### *Media Watch*

Sensationalist reporting by the media had been identified as a major source of crime generation at Bathurst.<sup>4</sup> The violence prevention plan therefore included the training of volunteers from the Health Department and members of the motorcycle riders' community in ways to minimize the impact of the media on the crowd. These volunteers were encouraged to confront members of the media attempting to provoke spectators into aggressive acts such as vandalism, rocking automobiles and throwing objects. Twelve people were trained and provided with Health Department identification. They were present in areas where the media were likely to come looking for a sensational story.

Further elements of the plan to control the media included the use of the Victoria police public relations section to portray the event as a peaceful and good for business, and the writing of several articles for motorcyclist magazines setting out citizens' (i.e., motorcyclists) responsibilities for the control of misbehavior at the Grand Prix. These tactics can be regarded as a further attempt to control the facilitators that produced the violence at Bathurst.

## **Monitoring of Results**

### *Arrests*

In order to evaluate the violence prevention program adopted at Phillip Island in 1989, arrest statistics and numbers attending the event were obtained from police sources. As can be seen from Table 2, there was a significant reduction in the number of arrests at Phillip Island in 1989, relative to the number of people in attendance, compared to 1985-1987, when the event was held at Bathurst.

**Table 2: Arrests at the Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix 1985—1987 (Bathurst) and 1989 (Phillip Island) in Relation to Numbers Attending**

Year	Number arrested	Number in attendance
1985	164	13,701
1986	106	8,203
1987	23	4,297
<b>Intervention</b>		
1989	36	240,999

$X^2(3, N=267,200) = 2485.18, p < .00000001$

### *Spectator Ratings of Police*

To ascertain if the policing style employed at Phillip Island would be reflected in relatively better spectator ratings of police when compared to Bathurst, a five-point rating scale asking spectators to indicate "how good a job you think the police are doing in their policing of the Grand Prix" was administered to random samples attending the 1986 and 1989 Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix. Table 3 presents the ratings of police by the sample of attenders for the 1986 and 1989 Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix. These data indicate that a collaborative policing style using low-key situational policing tactics was much more acceptable and popular with the consumers than the coercive policing style employed at Bathurst.

### *Resident Interviews*

Data were collected to indicate local residents' attitudes towards having another Grand Prix at Phillip Island. Interviewers were sent to

**Table 3: Comparative Ratings of Police by Crowds at the 1986 (Bathurst) and 1989 (Phillip Island) Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix**

Rating	1986	1989
	Bathurst	Phillip Island
Very Good	16	224
Good	36	96
Average	104	64
Bad	192	4
Very Bad	52	12

$X^2(4, N=797) = 27.16, p < .00001$

350 randomly selected home addresses to speak to adult residents of Phillip Island who had not attended the 1989 Grand Prix.<sup>6</sup> One of the questions asked during the interview was "Do you want another Grand Prix at Phillip Island in 1990?" Of the 350 residents interviewed, 322 (92%) said "yes," 21 (6%) said "no" and 7 (2%) said "did not know."

## DISCUSSION

The implementation of situational policing tactics significantly reduced violence at the Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix in 1989. In addition, spectator ratings of police appeared to be favorably affected by the intervention strategy. This is a key point, since it was reasoned that if the police were favorably regarded, then violence involving the police was less likely to occur. An authoritarian or heavy-handed approach to policing public order seems to increase public hostility toward the police, whereas a more collaborative approach creates a strong positive regard for the police. Consistent with Shellow's (1970) findings and Rappaport's (1977) formulations, this aspect of our research has important implications for understanding the effect of devolving responsibility to the community for the control of behavior rather than attempting to impose a paramilitary model to obtain compliance. In this context, police administrators should move from coercive policing forms to a consensual, preventive form when the situation permits. On a practical operational level, this may sometimes require the introduction of specialist police or para-police units, similar to the MIPU, to mobilize the community in the prevention of crime and violence.

It is interesting to consider what effect the relatively harsh tactics used to control public order in a Swedish setting might have had on the public views towards police (Bjor et al., 1992). It is possible that such relatively punitive approaches may have the unintended consequence of creating more assaults on police and more "fear" reactions to routine police activities. Consistent with Ramsay's (1991) and Wiatrowski and Vardalis's (1990) findings that incivilities can be controlled without producing alienation, our results suggest that these negative consequences might be avoided if a more consultative approach is taken to the problem group.

We found that 92% of our sample of island residents wished to have another Grand Prix at Phillip Island in 1990. These positive responses stand in stark contrast to the banning of motorcycle races at Bathurst by the City Council in 1988. The Victorian police must be commended for both their willingness to implement experimental policy and their ability

to effectively police an event which caused so much trouble over the years at Bathurst.

A further important component leading to the success of the intervention was the utilization of a process that gave the apparent ownership to the solutions of the crime problem to the community of concern. This suggests that situational prevention measures must be complimented with the development of a sense of ownership for particular vested interest groups if such measures are to be successful. This process needs to be more closely addressed in situational prevention programs.



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#### NOTES

1. The state's response to the increased rioting occurring at Bathurst after the construction of the police compound was an attempt to enforce control over the crowd by the imposition of harsher measures and greater ecological structuring (Cunneen, 1985a; Veno and Vena, 1989). This, in turn, led to calls for a boycott by spectators and service personnel (called "black-bans" in Australia) by the Motorcycle Riders Association in New South Wales and other influential motorcyclist groups. The black-ban tactic resulted in enormous gate revenue losses when spectator attendance decreased by 66% from 1985 to 1986.
2. Bathurst City Council estimated race revenue to be in the vicinity of A\$6 million (1986).
3. For a thorough review of this earlier work on the causes of violence at the Bathurst venue of the Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix, see Cunneen et al. (1986, 1989); Veno et al. (1987); Veno and Veno (1989).
4. We acknowledge a large and significant literature suggesting that there is little relationship between media reporting and crime. However, our analysis of the actions of members of the media at Bathurst left little doubt that their actions contributed directly to drawing people to the event who were not part of the biker world and who were coming to participate in the riot. As well, there were at least three reported occasions, verified by members of the research team, where a member of the media overtly attempted to get spectators to throw missiles at police or the police station for filming. In one case, a television crew actually offered to pay for such actions.

5. Spectator ratings were obtained by the researchers or by confederates of the researchers requesting every seventh adult through the gate on the fourth (last) day of each event to fill out the questionnaire. No pay was offered. Refusal meant that the next person through the gate was asked to complete the questionnaire. This procedure was carried-out until 400 questionnaires had been completed at both the 1986 and 1989 Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix. No significant differences were found between the demographics of the two samples as measured by chi-square tests.

6. A refusal or an empty house resulted in the interviewer selecting an adjacent residence. At houses with more than one adult present, the interviewer questioned only one adult and, where possible, alternated between males and females. No pay was offered. Interviews were conducted after 6 p.m. to ensure maximum occupancy. This procedure resulted in a 55% female and 45% male sample ranging in age from 18 to 78.

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