

BOOK REVIEW

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A Review of Human Relations: Law Enforcement in a Changing Community

REFERENCE: Coffey, A., Eldefonso, E., and Hartinger, W., *Human Relations: Law Enforcement in a Changing Community*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 285 pages, \$19.95.

This text is not for a person interested in obtaining a thorough understanding of police in the community. Rather it would best be utilized as a source of discussion material for police cadets. The authors raise questions on police action and reaction in the context of dealing with nonpolice citizens, generally members of minority groups. The viewpoint taken is that of the minority, rather than the police. With the exception of the book's third section, the text does the job of a trained group leader in police-minority relations.

By setting up the now-classic complaints of the citizenry against the police with an explanation as to the basis of those complaints, a discussion topic is set forth. The book rarely, and then only slightly, gives other than sociologically accepted arguments on topics such as ghetto residents, treatment of minorities, and the anti-police mentality. The authors have not examined the subject in depth from an objective viewpoint. The result is a work by which an instructor can challenge a group of police trainees in an effort to give an insight into a viewpoint other than their own. Each chapter sets forth discussion topics that could lead the student to a realization that nonpolice citizens have a sometimes radically different opinion and act in a radically different way than police do. As the book points out, a new officer learns his lesson "on the streets and goes through a form of culture shock" upon the realization that people exist with different perceived morals and goals than his. This text serves a purpose in preparing the new officer for this occurrence but does nothing to give him an awareness of what to expect or an understanding of some of the differences he will notice. It says "beware" and "do not overreact" but does not give the student any further guidance.

The third section of this book deals with general social unrest situations and gives a historical perspective of riot and campus disorders in this country. It appears to be written by a different author than the first two sections as it informs, teaches, and gives the reader a look into the how, what, and why of such disorders. Rather than tell the student to mend his ways, it lets the police officer know what to look for and the psychology of the group he will be facing.

As a text for police trainees, this book serves as a replacement for a competent, trained discussion leader but does not stand by itself. It does not teach but rather acts to goad the reader to react to its accusations and suppositions. Most of Parts 1 and 2 have already been learned by most big-city police officers shortly after working the street and do not present anything new or unique. Part 3 is interesting from a historical as well as practical perspective.

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