

Jenny Flatt, Sociology and Psychology

Year in School: Senior
Faculty Mentor: Dr. John Galliher, Sociology
Funding Source: McNair Scholars Program

Fourth generation explanations of American police behavior

This study examined the nature of published research on American police behavior from 1994 through 2004, and is a replication and extension of work done by Galliher (1971), Sherman (1980), and Riksheim and Chermak (1993). Thirty-six social science journal articles were examined for their explanations of police behavior. These results were coded into four categories: individual, situational, community, and organizational level explanations. Much of the work during this decade involved research on situational and organizational levels. Race and racism are significant issues found at the situational, organizational, and community levels. This omnipresence reflects the role of law enforcement in an increasingly racially divided society, in spite of educational increases, affirmative action initiatives and internal affairs departments.

This project was completed as part of a Capstone requirement.