Procedural Justice and Police Legitimacy
Understanding Neutrality, Race and Implicit Bias

Slow Traps
When Identities Matter
Slow Traps

Slow traps can happen when:

1. Our identity is salient or important in a particular situation, and

2. Our abilities to manage other people’s perceptions of ourselves are low, and

3. Failure to validate our identity could lead to changes in behavior which might have negative consequences
Slow Traps

We’re more likely to fall into a slow trap when we are:

• Being mentally taxed
• In a bad mood
• Feeling threatened
• Being a novice
• Making quick decisions
• Multitasking
Slow Traps

• Slow traps can be adaptive, too

• If someone is mouthing off to you, what happens to your ability to control a small group?

• If you demonstrate that there will be consequences for disrespect, you are often safer in your immediate environment
Slow Trap: White men can’t dance.

Awareness of stereotype about your group may influence your behavior.
Stereotype Threat

Stereotype threat is the sense of threat that can arise when one knows that he or she can possibly be judged or treated negatively on the basis of a negative stereotype about one’s group.

Requires:

• An individual to feel strongly identified with a group
• The individual believes s/he is being evaluated
• Self-concept is connected to that evaluation
Small Group Exercise: Examples of Slow Traps

• Which identities are important to you?

• In which situations might those be threatened?

• How could that impact your behavior?
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Dave Chappelle

Dave Chappelle - Why black people hang out with white dudes.mp4
Authority Threat
“Contempt of Cop”

What Types of Authority do cops have?

- Legitimate - Formal
- Expert – Proficiency
- Referent - Influence
- Coercive - Power
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Sandra Bland

Sandra Bland Short.wmv
Myth: I am not biased! I have diverse friends and I believe in equal treatment.

Busted: Actually we all have implicit bias.

Research shows that all individuals are susceptible to harnessing implicit associations about others based on characteristics like race, skin tone, income, sex and even attributes like weight.

• They can affect our behavior toward others, even if we want to treat all people equally
Defusing Traps
What we are NOT asking:

1. Stop using your instincts

2. Stop using your experience

3. Stop using your knowledge

4. Put yourself at risk to spare someone’s feelings
What we ARE asking:

Engage in self reflection **when** appropriate **and** prepare for the trap

1. What are the factors that lead me to think of someone as a suspect?
2. Are there any stereotypes that could inform that decision?
“If implicit biases are unconscious then there’s nothing I can do about them.”

Awareness has been shown to actually reduce the impact of implicit bias on behavior

**Slow down**: reduce the situational factors
What are our professional goals in policing?

- Maintain social order.
- Prevent crime, stop crime. In fair and impartial way.
- Ensure constitutional rights are protected.
- Secure safety, effectiveness, and support.
- Serve and protect the public.
- Generate and hold public trust.
What are our personal goals in policing?

- Go home safe
- Limit or get no complaints
- Don’t get sued
- Have fun every day at work
- Get promoted
- Don’t get fired
- Retire
- Live long and prosper
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How do traps interfere with all of these goals?

- **Go home safe**
  - Traps lead to **Errors in Identifying Danger**

- **Limit or no complaints**
  - Traps lead to **Increased Complaints**

- **Don’t get sued**
  - Traps lead to **Increased Risk for Law Suits**

- **Have fun every day at work**
  - Traps lead to **Negative interactions and negative self-concept**

- **Get promoted**
  - Traps can **Get in the way of good police work**

- **Don’t get fired**
  - Traps lead to **Community anger and reduce officer satisfaction**
Reducing the Influence of Identity Traps

• Change the situation

• Slow down

• Get help from outside the situation

• Actively seek out counter stereotypes
Interventions

• Awareness

• Stereotype Replacement
  • Be mindful of stereotypes
  • Actively locate counter-stereotypes

• See the individual

• Increase opportunities for interactions with other races, cultures, ethnicities, etc.
  • What groups of people are you the least exposed to?
  • How can you find ways to meaningfully interact with those groups that is mutually beneficial?
Interventions

- Slow things down (when practical)
- Practice procedural justice
  - Listen
  - Neutrality, be fair
  - Be respectful
  - Be transparent, develop trust
- Look for chances to de-escalate
- Fight cynicism
  - Don’t take it personal
- Intervene
- Accountability – hold each other accountable
Neutrality: What does it look like?

- Decision-making that is neutral
  - The officer exhibits neutral feelings toward the person
- Unbiased decision-making
  - Decision is not based on personal biases e.g. race, gender, community, sexual orientation
- Consistency
  - Decision is applied equally to all
- Transparency
  - Explains the process
Myth: Miller is not as handsome as he says.

Busted: Actually he is more handsome than he says. He’s quite the modest individual.
Group Exercise

• Provide one non-policing scenario where there are fast and slow traps:
  • identify traps, state how to defuse them for someone else

• Provide one different non-policing scenarios where there are fast and slow traps:
  • identify traps, state how to defuse them for yourself

• Last, provide one policing-specific scenarios with fast and slow traps:
  • identify traps and how to defuse them for a partner and how to disarm them for themselves
When can you defuse?

• Where are there opportunities to defuse traps in law enforcement?

• Where does it fit in your day?
Fast Traps and Slow Traps Together
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Thank You