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RESEARCH ON POLICE USE OF FORCE NEEDS TO MOVE BEYOND ESTIMATES OF FORCE INCIDENTS AND FOCUS ON *EXCESSIVE* FORCE.

TALLAHASSEE, Fla—In a series of studies published in the new issue of *Criminology & Public Policy* (CPP), researchers found that police use of force, while infrequent, was more likely to vary based on suspect behavior.

Professors Matthew J. Hickman, Seattle University, and Alex R. Piquero, University of Maryland, College Park, along with Joel H. Garner at the Joint Centers for Justice Studies, combined data on police use of force from two surveys—the Police-Public Contact Survey and the Survey of Inmates in Local Jails. They found that reports of the use of force varied based on the respondent age, gender, and race; the most variation, however, was explained by suspect behavior at first contact. The authors concede that police use of force is difficult to measure with the currently available data and recommend the creation of a national police use of force database.

David A. Klinger, University of Missouri, St. Louis, questions the validity of a citizen survey and an inmate survey for this topic. He argues that both sources were likely to be so biased as to be almost unreliable. He also cautions that until such data sources can be shown to be valid, all results stemming from their use should be viewed with a cynical eye.

Michael R. Smith, University of South Carolina, and Robin S. Engel, University of Cincinnati, took a different, but just as critical, position. They observed that a national database of police use of force incidents will likely fail to aid researchers in addressing the larger issues of harm reduction or bias on the part of police officers.

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