

The Pursuit



“You are to appoint judges and officers for all your gates [in the cities] your G-d is giving you, tribe by tribe; and they are to judge the people with righteous judgment. You are not to distort justice or show favoritism, and you are not to accept a bribe, for a gift blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of even the upright. Justice, only justice, you must pursue; so that you will live and inherit the land your G-d is giving you.”

Deuteronomy 16:18 – 16:20



About *The Pursuit* Journal

The Pursuit, a publication of the Criminal Justice Association of Georgia (CJAG) is a peer-reviewed journal that focuses on the broad field criminal justice. *The Pursuit* publishes scholarly articles relevant to crime, law enforcement, law, corrections, juvenile justice, comparative criminal justice systems and cross-cultural research. Articles in *The Pursuit* include theoretical and empirically-based analyses of practice and policy, utilizing a broad range of methodologies. Topics cross the spectrum of policing, criminal law and procedure, sentencing and corrections, ethics, juvenile justice and more, both in the United States and abroad.

Authors interested in submitting manuscripts for consideration should use the link on the CJAG website (<http://cjag.us>) or email the Editor of *The Pursuit* at cjagjournal@gmail.com

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About the Criminal Justice Association of Georgia

The Criminal Justice Association of Georgia is a not-for-profit organization of criminal justice faculty, students and professionals. It exists to promote professionalism and academic advancement in all areas of inquiry related to the Criminal Justice field.

The Association holds its annual meeting in October. Those interested in presenting at the conference should contact Professor Lorna Alvarez-Rivera (llalvarezrivera@valdosta.edu).

Readers are encouraged to follow us on Twitter (https://twitter.com/cjag_of) and “like” us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/CriminalJusticeAssociationofGeorgia/>) and visit our website (<http://cjag.us>).

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The CJ Conundrum

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Not unlike other career aspirations, criminal justice students may find themselves in the conundrum of not having the required experience to gain entry level employment for many positions. Although many criminal justice career paths are grossly understaffed, especial law enforcement officers, the person who has some basic experience will undoubtedly have the upper hand over the countless number of applicants with a degree and perhaps some student organizational experience.¹

Experience not related to criminal justice is better than no experience. Knowing how to interact with the public, process a credit card or even work at fast food establishment shows potential employers that you will do what it takes to succeed in the workplace. For some future employers, showing that you were willing to help pay for your own education shows a level of maturity and dedication that is admirable.

What about gaining experience in a future career interest? Two obvious ways come to mind:

- Volunteering
- Skills and Training via Internships and Part-time Jobs

But, you may ask yourself, doesn't everyone seek those kinds of experiences? No, everyone doesn't take advantage of these kinds of opportunities. There are countless benefits of all three, including garnering a better understanding of the profession, gaining real-life experience, resume enhancement, and getting to know people in the field that may serve as references, or at a minimum, provide you with beneficial mentoring. Perhaps the only thing more frustrating than the constant struggle between required experience and needing experience is the old adage of

¹ While not presented as a typical journal article, the authors suggest this may be an effort worth sharing with students and internship coordinators.

“you got to know someone” to get the job. Some may argue that knowing someone doesn’t necessarily help get your foot in the door, but ask people in the field what they think, and at a minimum, expect them to say, “it doesn’t hurt.” What can you do to gain experience?

Volunteering

No one ever has enough time; yet, if the learner can carve out 2-hours a week, they gain 30-hours of volunteering each semester. Volunteering at criminal justice agencies is obviously an easy way to learn. All the agencies appreciate someone offering to help. While law enforcement agencies may quickly come to mind, the prosecuting attorney offices and indigent defense agencies will welcome the learner. Volunteering in the judicial realm may be a bit tougher to land, but it can be done. And non-profit organizations always need help. Boys and Girls Clubs, Salvation Army, local food banks, homeless shelters, and Meals on Wheels will view the student volunteer as a hero! And don’t forget about the elderly. Long-term care facilities would welcome the student who just comes to visit and talk to the residents. And while these opportunities may not seem glamorous, the notation on a resume or application will garner the attention of a reviewer. Listing a point of contact where one has volunteered tells the reviewer, “Check me out. I have helped and I am proud of it!”

Skills and Training

Learning skills and getting training that future employers are seeking is impressive. Be prepared to see “Minimum Qualifications” and “Preferred Qualifications” on position announcements and let those qualifications be a guide to seeking skills and training.

Skills come in two forms: **Soft and Hard.**

Soft Skills: According to Indeed's Career Guide (<https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/resumes-cover-letters/soft-skills>), soft skills are abilities that relate to how you work and interact with other people. Commonly noted soft skills include communication, teamwork, and other interpersonal skills. Also there are short videos at this site that discuss soft versus hard skills. Typical soft skills include communication, collaboration, dependability, integrity, flexibility, etc. Will this make you more marketable, honestly, doubtful. But, if you really do have soft skills be prepared to back it up during an interview. Saying you having leadership skills not only begs the interviewer to ask you to elaborate, but you must be prepared for even tougher questions like, "what, and who, have you led?" Other soft skills that stand out, but again must be backed up with examples, include "grit".

One soft skill that many miss is research. You will need to know as much about the agency, company, and job tasks as the interviewer. By way of example, a student goes to interview for an internship with the local U.S. Marshal's office. The student will be asked numerous questions to ascertain what they know about the agency. First of all, the student should know how to spell Marshal with one "L" for the agency. The student should know the tasks for the agency: what do they do, how do they do it, and what are the expectations. The student will be asked historical questions too: "Who was the first U.S. Marshal killed in the line of duty?" Simply put, the interview will be an oral test to determine how motivated the student has been to learn about the agency. Acronyms used in the agency may be used by the interviewers with the expectation that the interviewee knows the acronyms and if the student has studied the agency closely, they will know the acronyms and their meaning.

Hard Skills: In other words, what can you do, and although it helps to be somewhat related to criminal justice, other hard skills can still be a benefit to a future employer, or interview panel. For example, listing that you have carpentry skills will show people that you're undoubtedly a hard worker not afraid of getting your hands dirty, but that you can also help with other projects that will pop up from time to time on the CJ job. Other, and perhaps more relevant hard skills, include:

- Firearms – not everyone needs, or wants, to know how to shoot a firearm, but if law enforcement is the direction for criminal justice students, they'll need to be proficient. It is a fact that most people that fail the mandatory police training is because of the failed firearms qualifications. Did you know that more police officer candidates fail the firearms certification, which means they are dismissed from the academy, than anything else? Learning to shoot the right way now will not only help those become more proficient for a future firearms certification but will likely provide a future hiring authority more confidence that you would pass this requirement. A word of caution: If you are going to learn how to shoot, it is imperative that you seek a professional certified firearms instructor. Do not depend on Uncle Joe to teach the correct the skills in shooting; Uncle Joe may have developed some “wrong habits” and teach his way. It is hard to “unlearn” bad shooting techniques.
- Driving – Everyone knows how to drive, right? No, the authors have had many students from large urban areas that have never driven. You must have a driver's license for the majority of criminal justice careers. Hint: maybe some volunteering at a driver's training academy is in order. Similar to the firearms

requirement, there is a high rate of people who fail the driver's portion of the law enforcement academy. Get the right training from the right professional. Even if you're not planning on being a law enforcement officer, many other criminal justice professionals will drive an official vehicle, and having such training will likely provide the hiring agency with a higher level of confidence in your ability.

- Writing – all criminal justice professions require a significant amount of writing (proposals, reports, grants, etc.). Criminal justice leaders want employees who know grammar, sentence structure and how to convey a meaningful and understandable document. Showing up for an oral interview with a writing example revealing written skills has served many a student well. One Georgia Bureau of Investigation interviewer once commented to one of the authors, “Your student got the internship because they were prepared and handed me a writing example. I surprised the student when I stopped and read the entire report...which by the way, was excellent.”
- Project Management – Students have completed many projects over the course of their college trek, but they do not realize how to present or discuss their efforts. By way of example, a student is a part of 5-person team conducting research on one of five hypotheses of who killed President John F. Kennedy. As a part of the project, the student completes an in-depth analysis of the available data, prepares a PowerPoint presentation for the team's oral presentation, writes a research paper explaining the application of the scientific method to case evidence, and is a presenter during the team's oral presentation. Students have done the work in

project management, the task is to articulate what they have completed and how they met the tasks, conditions, and standards required.

- Technology – As fast as technology changes, it is difficult to present detailed guidelines here; however, the student that takes advantage of all technology learning provided at their university will impress many. The key here is showing initiatives for self-improvement.
- Photography – Not every job will depend on someone to have photography skills beyond the reach of an iPhone, but good photographers know how to tell a story that comes in handy in many facets of criminal justice. Many local technical schools offer courses in basic photography. Hint: volunteering to assist a photographer at the university school paper might be an idea. Basic investigator photography tasks are a part of a criminal investigations course (or should be). Articulating the basic photography tasks in a death investigation could be very impressive to an interviewer.
- Drone – Just passing the Remote Pilot exam is an accomplishment, and nearly all first responding departments have drones. Knowing how to operate a drone, and having your license will stand you apart from your peers.
- Statistics – one could argue that is more of an academic learning trait, but in today's world statistics are more important than ever when developing staffing plans, budgets, and reports. Again, articulating the basics of statistics and the application to the internship or career path is key. Analytics is a part of everything it seems...even baseball, so the basic understanding of the application to the criminal justice arena is vital.

Training

Both soft and hard skills can be obtained through training, but there's more training that will help with the experience game, including:

- Incident Command System. Nearly everyone jumping into the CJ profession must complete IS-100.C: Introduction to Incident Command System, ICS 100. This course describes the history, features and principles, and organizational structure of the Incident Command System. <https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-100.c&lang=en> Knocking this out now will save you time later, and it will show an employer that you're eager to learn and you're already dedicated to the profession.
- Other FEMA Independent classes. The Emergency Management Institute (EMI) offers over 200 self-paced courses free-of-charge. <https://training.fema.gov/is/> Most courses take a couple of hours, and the learner can pick from a variety based on their interest. Word of warning – seldom does an employer like to see a laundry list of training listed on a resume, so perhaps just complete a few at this point in your career.
- Any first aid-type certifications, including CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) /AED (Automated External Defibrillator), Stop the Bleed, Basic First Aid, and Life Guarding, indicate initiative on the part of the student. New criminal justice employees will likely get this training, but having it beforehand demonstrates motivation and dedication to learning, and shows that your proficiency will only get better with more experience. The local Red Cross offers many courses in a variety of formats (does volunteering at the Red Cross come to mind).
- Citizens Emergency Response Team. The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program educates volunteers about disaster preparedness for the hazards that

may occur where they live. CERT trains volunteers in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. Contact your local county emergency management agency to find out when they offer this training.

- **Military.** Perhaps not for everyone (only one percent of the population serves), but the training offered from all the branches of the U.S. military is outstanding. But the applicant must beware: you must know the job and training you want. Military recruiters are tasked to recruit for high priority openings, so the applicant must be unyielding in their selected job or career path. Career fields from drone operators to legal assistants provide learning easily carried over to the “civilian” world. By way of example, a student decision to join the Georgia Air National Guard resulted in selection for security forces career path (also known as military police). After basic military training, the student received security forces training for many weeks. Upon return to traditional National Guard duty and home, the student applied with a local law enforcement agency highlighting her military training and experience. Hired, trained, and certified as a peace officer in Georgia, she is now a police officer with Marietta Police Department.

One more, and perhaps a bit sensitive, is an attribute that may not or may not help you stand out among your peers, but may definitely have an opposite effect. For criminal justice students seeking a career in law enforcement, it’s important to “look” the part. Being in physical shape is part of the job, and it helps with the stamina and stress that goes along with the job. Physical fitness testing and requirements are listed in agency applications. Applicants for internships and careers must set aside what is “cool” and look like professionals. One of the authors received this call from a Georgia Bureau of Investigation Special Agent in Charge of a

regional office: “Stan, I want to share how some interviews for internships have gone lately, but I am happy to report none of them were your students. Applicant one showed up in a t-shirt and cut-off blue jeans; that interview lasted about 5-minutes. Applicant two showed up looking like she just got off work at a strip-joint. That interview lasted about 5-minutes. Applicant three rescheduled his interview twice and when he called to reschedule for a third time, I told him he would not receive an interview.” Simply put, if you want the internship, you have to dress to impress. One last thing: be clear on the policy of the agency or company about tattoos and piercings.

In-Addition

While our review here has focused on criminal justice agencies, the guidance here may apply in other arenas students may be consider: loss prevention for major retailers, 911 emergency operators, or administrative positions with Clerk of the Court offices.

Take-Aways

The student must take the initiative when looking at and overcoming the conundrum they face. Sitting around complaining about “no experience” accomplishes nothing. Getting to work does. Here we have presented seeds for initiative. The student must have a mindset of professionalism and excellence. Which of our ideas may ignite the fires of “getting the job” is as individual as the seeds we have offered. If you are waiting for someone to offer you a job or internship, you might grow old waiting.

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Frazzled, Beleaguered, Impregnable

Stan Crowder

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Abstract

Gathering data for case study research can be a daunting task and depending on government reports and support can be frustrating. With the imbroglios surrounding murder investigations, reporting, and suspect identification, case study research presents challenges other research methods may not encounter when attempting to garner facts from the criminal justice system. This examination of the challenges in one case study indicates the tenacity required for researchers.

Keywords: case study research, government reports, FBI

Case study research is difficult. Research that focuses on the “how” and “why” questions use case study methods to elucidate historical events using the strength of evidence. Evidence may be in the form of documents, artifacts, observation, and interviews (Yin, 2009). And case study is what criminal justice practitioners do. Having no control over a set of events, the case study researcher can report and offer some analysis possibly, but no experimentation (in accordance with the Scientific Method) is possible. And while testimonial evidence is powerful, the researcher conducting interviews may formulate arguments based on anecdotal evidence (what others tell us) which may be weak or false (Bassham et al., 2013). Further, “nobody is going to take your views seriously if you cannot support them,” (Miller, 1992, p. 3). While the examination of a murder and the combative instinct in a person (Hollander, 1923) is noted in this effort, it is not the purpose of the work. The purpose of this work is to reveal the difficulty and challenges in case study research when garnering facts controlled by the criminal justice system and especially by a federal law enforcement agency, here the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI). The goal of researching the following case is comparing and contrasting the facts with another murder case which reveals two brothers were both murderers.

On August 3rd, 2021, a police officer was murdered. Officer George Gonzalez with the Pentagon’s Force Protection Agency was killed by Austin William Lanz at the Pentagon and the FBI was in charge of the investigation. Lanz, from Acworth, Georgia, was raised within miles of Kennesaw State University where I teach. Because Lanz was from the local area, I took a keen interest in the case. After all, what is a guy from Acworth doing in Washington, D.C. killing cops?

My initial case review began with local news accounts of the incident. Reports revealed that Austin Lanz was out on bond from numerous charges in Cobb County, Georgia. So the

starting point for research on the offender began with Open Records requests to local law enforcement agencies. Cobb County (GA) Police Department provided three incident reports involving Austin Lanz.

Cobb Police case number 20-044691, reported by Officer J.C. Schweitzer, began with a complaint of suspicious activity at 5059 Verbena Drive, Acworth, Georgia on July 19, 2020, at 2:44 p.m. The complainants, Phillip Brent and Eliza Wells reported finding pornographic pictures, messages, and other odd items in their mailbox and by their garage. A prior report had been made by the complainants and the post office had been contacted. Video camera evidence viewed by Officer Schweitzer showed a man leaving items at the garage door at 1:30 a.m. Officer Schweitzer went to the Lanz home next door and met with him and his parents. Austin Lanz admitted to Officer Schweitzer it was him. The incident was closed by Officer Schweitzer when Lanz's parents assured the complainants that Austin's behavior would not continue, and they would seek counseling for him.

A supplemental report was filed to case number 20-044691 by Cobb Police Investigator P.A. Henry on February 16, 2021, seven-months after Officer Schweitzer's report. Ms. Eliza Wells reported continuing harassment from her neighbor, Austin Lanz. She reported a letter was mailed to her residence with a picture of a female with mouth covered using a black marker and inscribed, "It's me." Investigator Henry advised Ms. Wells how to obtain a Temporary Protective Order and took no further action.

Cobb Police Officer S. N. Millsap filed report 21-024792 on April 1, 2021, on suspicious activity at 4063 Bells Ferry Road at Interstate 575 in Kennesaw, Georgia. While looking for a burglary and theft suspect, Officer Millsap found Lanz walking under the interstate bridge on Bells Ferry Road. Lanz gave Officer Millsap a false name, Lance Lanz. Officer Millsap

determined his true name and found a warrant was outstanding in a similar name, but further investigation revealed the warrant was not Austin William Lanz and Lanz was not charged with providing a false name and date of birth. Interestingly, during the encounter Lanz attempted to leave the scene and hide in nearby woods.

Returning to 5059 Verbena Drive in Acworth, Georgia on April 18, 2021, Officer B.L. Welch filed another report for complainant Phillip Brent on Austin Lanz. Mr. Brent reported Lanz was walking around Brent's home and placing something in Mr. Brent's mailbox and this activity was recorded on video. Officer Welch contacted Austin Lanz and warned him not to go on Brent's property or place anything in the Brent mailbox.

During the three incidents noted here, Austin Lanz is twenty-six to twenty-seven years old. He did not have any violent encounters with complainants or police officers. Lanz's parents were in their sixties, and it appears he lived with them and did not have a job. But something happened to incite the violent nature of Austin Lanz on April 24, 2021, which would result in seven felony charges and two misdemeanor charges.

Cobb County (GA) Sheriff's Arrest and Booking Report show Austin Lanz arrested for Burglary First Degree (felony) and Criminal Trespass Entering the Premise of Another (misdemeanor) on April 24, 2021, at 4:48 a.m. and his book-in process started at 9:41 a.m. The report notes Warrant Number 21-W-3472. Written by Judge Perez the Warrant Docket Report has a notation under bond conditions: "Do not return to 5059 Verbena Drive, Acworth, GA 30102," and Lanz's bond was set at \$8,500. There was no police report provided by Cobb County Police in my original Open Records Request to document this incident. I attempted to query again Cobb Police for the Incident Report. I was refused this report for the burglary and

criminal trespass “as a restricted report” with no other explanation other than a notation quoting Official Code of Georgia Annotated (O.C.G.A.) 35-3-37.

I filed an Open Records request with the Cobb County District Attorney’s Office for the file on Austin William Lanz. In discussions with Mr. Michael Bloodsworth, the legal administrative specialist responsible for open records requests for the office, I learned the file on Austin William Lanz was classified as restricted on August 4, 2023, the day after Lanz died after killing Officer Gonzalez. The assistant DA may restrict the file and no actions can be taken to have the restriction lifted. O.C.G.A. 35-3-37 a. 6. follows.

“Restrict,” “restricted,” or “restriction” means that the criminal history record information of an individual relating to a particular offense shall be available only to judicial officials and criminal justice agencies for law enforcement or criminal investigative purposes or to criminal justice agencies for purposes of employment in accordance with procedures established by the center and shall not be disclosed or other made available to any private persons or businesses pursuant to Code Section 35-3-34 or to governmental agencies or licensing and regulating agencies pursuant to Code Section 35-3-35.

But some clarity on the April 24 burglary and criminal trespass incident was found. An August 4, 2021, article published by the Associated Press written by Eric Tucker, Michael Balsamo, and Michael Biesecker revealed the following.

One episode of likely interest to investigators is an April arrest in Cobb County, Georgia, in which Lanz was accused of breaking into Brent’s home in the Atlanta suburb of Acworth in the middle of the night with what police said appeared to be a crowbar.

He was recorded on video by the security system roaming the house for 13 minutes and turned on all the lights, which police said indicated that he'd been "searching through the residence for something or someone." He left without taking anything, according to arrest reports and court filings.

Lanz was arrested and booked on charges of burglary and trespassing charges. When informed he was being charged, Lanz objected, saying, "but I didn't take anything," the arrest report said. He then made statements to a police officer about how planes had been flying over the neighborhood and tracking his cellphone.

During the book-in process on April 24, 2021, Austin Lanz became very violent. Cobb County Sheriff's Office Report Number 21-04234, dated May 3, 2021, reveals the following. While Lanz was being booked-in at the Intake desk, Lanz got into a fight with another arrestee. During the fight, "Inmate Lanz also bit a large chunk out of his own arm the left wrist, so he was taken to the hospital for treatment" (p.5). After release from the hospital, Lanz completed the book-in process. Due to Lanz's self-injury, the supervisor ordered him housed in a special area called T-Pad One. When the deputy escorting Lanz to the T-Pad realized the unit needed cleaning, he asked Lanz to sit and wait while another inmate worker cleaned the cell. "Inmate Lanz suddenly – and without provocation – physically attacked Deputy Cramer by throwing punches at Deputy Cramer's head and torso. Deputy Cramer was pinned against the door while being pummeled with punches," (p.5). When a Deputy Sergeant nearby drew her Taser, Lanz charged her. She was knocked to the ground; and Lanz began punching her. Deputy Cramer again tried to restrain Lanz. "Inmate Lanz grabbed Deputy Cramer by the waist, lifted him up and slammed him to the ground. Deputy Cramer struck the back of his head on the floor went

(sic) he was thrown down,” (p.6). Verbally combative, Deputy Dees noted, “He was telling everyone he was going to kick their ass and give me a chance one on one I will kick your ass,” (p.9). More deputies responded and eventually he was restrained. Lanz’s self-inflicted wound opened up during the affray and many deputies got his blood on them. The nurse at the jail determined Lanz would need to go back to the hospital to have the wound examined. Emergency medical personnel arrived, gave Lanz a sedation by injection to calm him and transported him to the hospital. Deputy Cramer and Sergeant Mosley also went to the hospital.

Deputy Cramer had a dislocated thumb, a torn ligament in his right arm, a sprained left ankle, and a head injury. Sergeant Mosley had a chipped bone and torn ACL (anterior cruciate ligament) in her right leg as well as soreness from the head punches inflicted by Lanz.

The recorded video of the incident corroborated the interviews conducted by the internal affairs investigators with the deputies involved. Cobb County Magistrate Warrant Number 21-W-3498 was secured against Lanz for Aggravated Battery Against Law Enforcement (2-counts), Willful Obstruction of a Law Enforcement Officer, Riot in a Penal Institution, Criminal Damage to Property, and Terroristic Threats and Acts, all felonies with an addition misdemeanor charge of Terroristic Threats and Acts. But all of this was a waste of time and effort; on August 4, 2021, Assistant District Attorney Kristen L. Judd dismissed the case (Docket Report on warrant 21-W-3498) which was the day after Lanz killed Pentagon Police Officer George Gonzalez and died. As Lanz's Georgia charges were not adjudicated prior to his death, Georgia law precludes the release of his arrest record for that event.

I queried the Acworth Police Department, Kennesaw (GA) Police Department, Marietta (GA) Police Department, Smyrna (GA) Police Department, Cherokee County (GA) Sheriff’s

Office, and Bartow County (GA) Sheriff's Office for any reports on Lanz. The agencies had no reports on Austin William Lanz.

I reached out to the complainant in the Cobb County cases, Phillip Brent. I tracked down Mr. Brent via an internet search and found that he was a local real estate agent and photographer. I emailed him and never got a response.

With no other records found with the local law enforcement agencies, it was time to move on to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). News articles had noted, the FBI issued a statement the day after the incident (the killing of Officer Gonzalez) saying Lanz shot himself with Gonzalez's gun.

FBI Records are available through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). The Freedom of Information Act allows researchers to request information about investigations and incidents. In December 2022, I requested the file and information on Austin William Lanz via the FBI eFOIPA portal. This electronic system can be used for requesting files and provides a method for electronic responses to the request. A fee is charged to request the FOIA documents. During the enrollment for the Lanz information, I completed a Proof of Affiliation for Fee Waiver that included the following:

I am applying for a fee waiver for my request and have reviewed the FOIA reference guide. I am a college professor conducting research on Austin William Lanz for a publishable paper in the criminal justice arena. I am attaching a publishing proof. I attached a book proof (jpg) of the book I published with Kendall Hunt, Forensic Criminologist Meets Career Criminal. Having worked for the federal government, I did not expect any response soon given my submission in December.

On January 10, 2023, I received a memorandum from the FBI via email attachment acknowledging receipt of my request and note: “Your request for a public interest fee waiver is under consideration and you will be advised of the decision if fees are applicable. If your fee waiver is not granted, you will be responsible for applicable fees per your designated requester fee category below.” Followed by: “As an educational institution, noncommercial scientific institution or representative of the news media requester, you will be charged applicable duplication fees in accordance with 5 USC § 552 (a)(4)(A)(ii)(III).” Most important was the FOIPA Request Number: 1577660-000 which would assist in tracking my request.

Another memorandum² was received noting “unusual circumstances” applied to my request including, “There is a need to search for, collect, and examine a voluminous amount of separate and distinct records.” The memo included guidance for reducing the scope of my request. I did not view either of the January memoranda as unexpected or unusual. Nothing would be forthcoming until March 30, 2023.

In response to my request for a fee waiver, I received disappointing news. My request was denied, as noted, “You failed to demonstrate that the requested information is in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations and activities of the government.” The memo also gave instructions on appealing the decision. Here I made a mistake; I should have appealed the decision. I thought I had made it clear in my previous contacts with the FBI that my effort was case study research on the murder of Officer George Gonzalez and that I was a college professor conducting academic research. I am not sure how I could have made it clearer, but I should have appealed (maybe an academic bamboozle would have helped).

² All memoranda from the FBI were received via an attachment to email.

A second memorandum, also dated March 30, 2023, provided insight and some frustration. The FBI located 30,190 pages of records responsive to my request. “Wow,” I thought, “I’m in business.” But wait...

If all potentially responsive pages are released on CD or through the eFOIPA³ system, it is estimated that you will owe \$910.00 in duplication fees (61 releases at \$15.00 each, less \$5.00 for the first release). Each release contains approximately 500 reviewed pages. The 500-page estimate is based on our business practice of processing complex cases in interim monthly releases. Should you request that the release be made in paper, it is estimated that you will owe \$1,504.50 based on a duplication fee of five cents per page. See 28 CFR § 16.10 and 16.49.

The FBI’s eFOIPA cannot transmit digital media files, and they will need to be released on CD. The FBI located audio and video files that are potentially responsive to the subject of your request. If all of the potentially responsive media is released, it is estimated that you will owe \$15.00 (1 CDs at \$15.00 each, less \$5.00 credit for the first CD). The estimated number of CDs is based off of our business practice of processing media associated with complex cases in interim monthly releases and is not synonymous with the number of potentially responsive digital media files.

The estimated total cost for processing your request is \$925.00 for CD/eFOIPA releases or \$1,519.50 for paper/media release(s).

³ The FBI’s eFOIPA system allows for electronic receipt of Freedom of Information/Privacy Act (FOIPA) requests as well as electronic responses to those requests when possible.

More information and instructions were included in the memo, but clearly this information caused me to rethink my effort.

Research funding comes in various forms. Although I had financed all of my past efforts, I decided to see if my department chair had any suggestions. In an email sent on March 31, 2023, I explained my imbroglio. Her response on April 3rd was more bad news. She quickly pointed out that all departmental money she controlled had to be spent or earmarked by March 31st...talk about near misses. Further, she pointed out that I had missed research support grants from the dean of the college and the dean's budget expired on March 31st also. When I explained my four-month trek through the red tape of the FBI, she suggested I try again when the fiscal year 2024 funds became available. I shared with the chair my request for an academic exception for case study research costs apparently did not impress any bureaucrats at the FBI.

With spring finals and my Maymester class looming large, I stalled. But the FBI (to their credit) reached out via memorandum on June 2, 2023. Reemphasizing past costs a new wrinkle was added in this memorandum. "The current average time to complete your extra-large request is at least 77 months." In sum, I was looking at a cost of \$925 (least costly option) and a wait of 77 months. No wonder no one can figure out who really killed JFK; the research would break a lottery winner and the request would have to be made by an infant in hopes of finally getting something from the Bureau. Exchanging emails with the FBI, I explained my research funding failure as well as my failure to gain an academic research fee waiver, and I agreed to close my request. I suppose I saved someone 77-months' worth of work.

But I have not retreated or surrendered from the effort. The brother of Austin William Lanz is Matthew Scott Lanz, the accused killer of a firefighter and his wife in Acworth, Georgia on November 18, 2021, and the stabbing of a Sandy Springs Police Officer the next day. I have

gathered open records on this case and will be attending the Matthew Lanz trial when scheduled. As the case for Matthew Lanz proceeds, I am hoping to garner some insight, interviews, and documents about Austin William Lanz. Two brothers from Acworth, Georgia accused of killing a police officer and a firefighter. You can't make this stuff up.

The long-range objective of a book on the murdering brothers from Acworth, Georgia will certainly be that – long range. Clearly, the limitations and challenges of case study research present many disadvantages to other research methods; however, the detailed and critical examination of incidents involved in case study research for this author is interesting, but can leave one frazzled and beleaguered.

As I close this rather informal scholarly work, I am preparing an open records/Freedom of Information request to the Pentagon Force Protection Agency. “Once more into the breach...” Shakespeare’s Henry V, Act III, 1598.

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Who Are the Legal Gun Carriers on College Campuses?

An Exploratory Analysis of the Characteristics, Motivations, and Gun-Carrying Behaviors of Concealed Carriers on College Campuses

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Abstract

Arguments made by proponents and opponents of campus carry policies make assertions about the characteristics of gun carriers on college campuses. Proponents of these policies claim that these individuals are responsible gun owners with the skills and intent to protect themselves and others. In contrast, opponents argue that even legally carried guns on campus will increase fear, risk of gun violence, and accidental shootings. Although gun carriers are central to both arguments, no prior research has explored the characteristics and motivations of those who have carried guns on campuses. This exploratory study of a sample of 156 individuals who reported campus carrying aims to fill this gap in the research. Findings indicate that the majority of gun carriers were motivated to carry for individual and public protection, used safe gun practices, and expressed confidence and likelihood to use their gun to intervene in instances of threatened and real gun violence.

Keywords: guns, campus carry, criminal justice policy

Introduction

By the end of 2022, thirteen states required that certain individuals be allowed to carry concealed handguns on public college campuses (Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, 2023). The expansion of legalized gun carrying to institutions of higher education – in addition to many similar policies proposed in other states – has sparked much debate about the impact of guns on college campuses (Beggan, 2019). Proponents of campus carry argue that legal gun carriers are responsible gun handlers that can reduce crime by acting as a deterrent to crime or engaging in both self-protection and the protection of others facing deadly violence (e.g., Students for Concealed Carry, 2023). The proponents’ perspective asserts the “good guy with a gun” argument which states that when allowed to carry concealed weapons, legal gun carriers will be appropriately equipped to stop a “bad guy with a gun” in the event of a violent crime or active shooter scenario.

On the other hand, opponents to campus carry argue that this hypothesis is a myth as there is little to no empirical evidence to indicate that legal gun carriers have the ability to successfully intervene to prevent crime/violence (e.g., Webster et al., 2016) and that allowing individuals to carry guns on campus will increase campus violence and fear of crime in places that are relatively safe. Additionally, those opposed to campus carry emphasize that these policies are often implemented without gun training requirements so there is no way to guarantee that people who choose to carry guns will handle guns safely and will not be prone to accidental discharges and shootings. Although the characteristics, motivations, skills, and safety practices of gun carriers are central to both of these divergent positions, much is left unknown about the legal gun carrier on college and university campuses in the U.S. and thus a critical component of arguments in support or opposition of campus carry policies has remained unstudied. This study

aims to address this gap in the research by conducting an exploratory analysis of a sample of faculty, staff, and students who reported carrying guns on campus in two states that have recently implemented campus carry policies.

Background

Due to these policy debates, many researchers have recently turned their attention to studying campus carry legislation and the crime, safety, and educational impacts of guns on campus. To date, however, most of the research on campus carry focuses on three broad issues: 1) the support for or opposition to campus carry policies among various campus stakeholder groups such as faculty, staff, and students (e.g., Hassett et al., 2020; McMahon-Howard et al., 2020); 2) the perceived impacts, benefits, and disadvantages of guns on campus (e.g., Scherer et al., 2021, Noga-Styron & Britto, 2022); and 3) investigations into the behavioral and crime-related impacts on campus populations and campuses due to the introduction of mandatory campus carry laws (e.g., Gius, 2019; Hayter et al., 2014; McMahon-Howard et al., 2021; Scherer et al., 2022).

Despite the increased empirical attention to a wide range of campus carry-related areas of research, the legal gun carriers themselves have remained an overlooked facet of the legalization of guns on campus as no research has examined the characteristics and motivations of campus members who legally carry concealed weapons on campus. While little is known about campus populations in the context of carrying on campus, a recent study by Kruis et al. (2020) provides some valuable insights into general gun ownership measures among college students. From their study of gun ownership among a sample of university students in the Northeast and Midwest, they report that 42% of the student respondents reported owning a gun, but only 40% of these

gun owners reported owning a handgun; most of the guns owned by students would not qualify for campus (concealed) carry (e.g., rifles and shotguns). Kruis and colleagues also found that a notable proportion of student gun owners had reported taking a gun safety course (86%) or a gun training course (46%). While the results from this study are important for providing new knowledge of gun socialization measures among the campus population, it cannot speak specifically to the characteristics of campus members who are carrying guns on campuses.

Proponents of campus carry suggest that those who choose to conceal carry on campus do so to exercise their Second Amendment rights and for self-protection, yet due to the lack of prior research of legal gun carriers on campuses, these claims have not yet been examined. However, past research on non-campus specific samples of gun owners do provide some insights into the attitudes and motivations for gun ownership, in general, that may inform our understanding of campus carriers. What is known about the motivation to carry from this body of research strongly indicates that the primary motivation for owning a handgun among the majority of gun owners is for the protection of self or family (Boine et al., 2022; Logan & Lynch, 2021; Siegel and Boine, 2020; Warner et al., 2022; Warner & Thrash, 2019). Additionally, this body of research also provides evidence that gun owners supported measures and practices related to gun control and prevention such as requiring gun safety training/courses prior to gun purchase or licensing (Barry et al., 2020; Dixon et al., 2020; Siegel and Boine, 2020), and that the majority of both male and female handgun owners felt confident using their gun to protect themselves at home or in public (Logan & Lynch, 2021). If the findings from prior research on gun owners can be generalized to the campus setting, there is reason to hypothesize that the majority of individuals who chose to legally carry a concealed guns on campus may do so with the primary

purpose of self-protection, are confident in their ability to use their gun to protect themselves and support safe gun carrying practices.

Current Study

Given that the gun carrying motivations and behaviors of legal gun carriers are central to proponents' and opponents' positions on campus carry policies, we aim to contribute insights into this understudied population by examining the characteristics of 156 campus members who reported carrying handguns on college campus in Georgia and Tennessee, two states that had recently passed a campus carry policy. Specifically, to examine if legal gun carriers' motivations and likelihood to intervene are consistent with or contrary to arguments made by those supporting or opposing the policies, we focus our research on the following four questions:

1. What factors motivate individuals to carry guns on campus?
2. Do gun carriers engage in safe gun practices and/or have they ever participated in gun safety training?
3. Do gun carriers report having confidence in using their gun for their protection and/or the protection of others?
4. Do gun carriers report a willingness or perceived likelihood to draw their gun in instances that could threaten their safety or the safety of others?

Methods

Data for this study came from an online survey that was administered in Spring 2021 to campus members at four public university campuses in Georgia (n = 2) and Tennessee (n = 2) that varied in settings, size, and Carnegie Classification. Using employee contact information at each institution, we sent personalized email invitations to participate in our study to faculty, staff, and administrators at all four universities. Next, using the faculty contact information, we

sent a request to faculty and asked that they share an invitation to participate in our study with their classes/students. A link to a Qualtrics survey was included with the invitation to participate in our study. From the 12,405 employee survey invitations, a total of 2,460 surveys were received from campus members (19.83% employee response rate) and 661 surveys were received from students (response rate unknown due to the convenience sampling method used for student respondents). Once missing data and current university law enforcement/public safety officers were removed, our sample consisted of 2,315 respondents. Of those respondents, 156 reported that they had carried a gun on campus (7%). Therefore, for the purposes of this paper, our subsample consists of these 156 respondents who have carried a gun on campus. Analysis of demographic characteristics among these 156 individuals indicated that the subsample was comprised of a larger proportion of Whites (83%; n = 130), males (64%; n = 96), and those with conservative (68%; n = 103) or moderate (21%; n = 31) political ideologies. These demographics resemble the demographics of gun owners in the general US population (e.g., Dixon et al., 2020; Siegel and Boine, 2020).

Any individual who reported carrying a gun on campus received an additional question block in the survey that requested supplementary information on their gun carrying. This survey block of questions included Likert-scaled items measuring motivations for carrying a concealed gun on campus (5-point scale; 0 = strongly disagree and 4 = strongly agree), items gauging the use of gun safety and training (0 = no; 1 = yes), Likert-scaled items measuring confidence in using guns to intervene to protect self and others (5-point scale; 0 = extremely unconfident and 4 = extremely confident), and Likert-scaled items measuring gauging the perceived likelihood to draw their gun in three different scenarios that include gun violence (5-point scale; 0 = extremely

unlikely and 4 = extremely likely). To analyze these data, univariate and descriptive statistics were conducted and reported in the tables.

Results

Table 1 presents the results for the questions designed to gauge gun carriers' motivations for carrying a gun on campus. Consistent with prior research on gun ownership, the vast majority of the sample reported the strongest level of agreement that they carried guns on campus for self-protection (69% agreement) and for the protection for others (75% agreement). Although a slightly smaller percent of the subsample expressed agreement, almost 70% of respondents also agreed that they carried guns on campus to exercise their 2nd Amendment rights and because they always carried their guns. Next, we investigated gun safety and gun carrying behaviors among the subsample of gun carriers (see Table 2). When asked about their safe practices of carrying their concealed weapon on campus, the majority of respondents reported using a retention holster (70%), while about one-third reported storing their weapon in a specially designed concealed carry case (38%) and/or a vehicle gun safe⁴ (33%). In addition, the vast majority of the subsample reported that they participated in an official gun safety training or course (91%) and carried their guns loaded on campus (89%). Less than 2% of the sample reported leaving their gun unsecured or displaying their firearm on campus, indicating that very few respondents engaged in unsafe gun practices.

Table 3 presents the results for the survey items gauging respondents' levels of confidence in using their gun on campus. To examine this item, we asked respondents to rate

⁴ Georgia law prohibits gun carrying in certain places on campus, such as faculty offices, dormitory buildings, and sports venues. Tennessee law prohibits gun carrying in places such as sports venues, hospitals, and meeting spaces where the focus of the meeting centers on employee discipline. Therefore, some gun carriers may choose to secure their guns in their vehicle prior to entering these prohibited spaces.

their level of agreement to two statements. The first statement asked them to rate their confidence in their ability to use their concealed firearm to *defend themselves* on campus and the second statement asked them to rate their ability to use their concealed guns to *defend others* on campus. Results for these survey items provide evidence of high levels of confidence among respondents. In particular, almost 99% of all gun carriers reported being confident that they could use their gun to protect themselves on campus, while 88% reported being confident in their ability to use their gun to protect others.

In our final set of questions, we asked gun carriers about their likelihood to draw their gun on campus for three different hypothetical scenarios (see Table 4). In the first scenario, individuals were asked their likelihood to draw their weapon if they witnessed an armed robbery of a student on campus. For this scenario, 60% of the subsample reported being likely to draw their gun. In the second scenario, individuals were asked their likelihood to draw their weapon if they were directly threatened with a gun by a student. An even larger percent of the subsample, 70%, reported being likely to draw their gun to protect themselves. In the final scenario, individuals were asked to rate their likelihood to draw their weapon when overhearing multiple gun shots and witnessing someone firing a weapon in a hall (i.e., an active shooter scenario). For this item, there was the largest percent of individuals who reported that they would be likely to draw their guns in this situation (88%).

Discussion

This exploratory analysis analyzed data on an unstudied population to provide new insights about gun carriers on college and university campuses and to better understand their motivations, safety behaviors, and confidence and likelihood to use their gun for protection of

themselves and others. The results presented here are consistent with both the assertions made by campus carry proponents in support of campus carry policies (Students for Concealed Carry, 2023), as well as prior research (e.g., Logan & Lynch, 2021; Siegel and Boine, 2020) on gun carriers. Specially, the findings from this analysis indicate that gun carriers in our sample were practicing safe gun handling and storage, rarely if ever displayed or left their firearm unattended, and that they were motivated to carry their weapon for the protection of themselves and others. Further, there was evidence that these individuals did not just express agreement that they were carrying for protection purposes, but also that they were confident with their skills and likely to draw their firearm in situations where gun violence was threatened. Of particular note, the largest likelihood to intervene was reported not just for the scenario in which they were protecting themselves, but also in the scenario where they were intervening on behalf of others during a violent event such as an active shooter scenario.

While these findings provide new insights into gun carriers on campus, it is important to note that many of the measures included in this study involve gun carriers' *perceptions* of their confidence levels or what they would do in certain hypothetical situations and therefore cannot speak to how these individuals would act in real situations that involve threats or actual gun violence on campus. Although we found evidence that lends supports to some of the specific claims made by campus carry proponents about "good guys with a gun" being present on college campuses, we strongly caution generalizing these findings beyond this study's current research questions as these results are not able to examine any actual deterrent effect of the campus carry policy or draw conclusions regarding whether or to what extent these gun carriers could prevent violence on their campus if the opportunity would presents itself. While some individuals on college campuses may find comfort with knowing that gun carriers are present and willing to

intervene in instance of violence, intervention with guns by non-law enforcement personnel has the potential to harm law enforcement efforts to respond to gun threats on campus by leading to confusion identifying the threats and perpetrators. It is also important to note that this study is not able to evaluate claims related to the effectiveness of campus carry policies or the deterrent effect of gun carriers, but instead provides an investigation into the characteristics of the legal gun carriers on campus, who, as previously discussed, are at the heart of arguments both in favor of and opposition to campus carry policies. Future studies examining gun carrying behaviors and attitudes among of individuals who carry concealed guns on campus would be valuable for exploring if these findings would be observed among different samples of campus members.

Like all studies, particularly those that involve survey methodology on sensitive or hot topics, this study has some limitations worth noting. First, this survey was fielded during the COVID-19 pandemic, which likely impacted response rates as campus members' email inboxes were unusually busy due to the move of campus activities to virtual settings. Further, due to changes in policies at the institutions regarding access to student data for sampling frames, we had to rely on a convenience sampling techniques to survey students and therefore cannot estimate the student response rate. Additionally, due to the smaller size of the subsample and extreme scores for many of the items/scales, we were precluded from conducting a more rigorous statistical analysis on this data.

To our knowledge, no study has yet examined legal gun carriers to specifically investigate their motivations, perceptions, and safety practices while carrying guns on campus. Therefore, despite potential limitations in the study, given the lack of research among this population, this exploratory study can still make some valuable contributions to understanding individuals who chose to carry a gun on campus and help to move the needle on gun carrier

research forward for others to improve upon through more rigorous methodologies and analyses. Future research examining campus gun carriers' motivations and behaviors will be valuable not only to inform researchers' and policymakers' understanding of a significant population related to campus carry policies and discussions on support/opposition of the policies (i.e., legal gun carriers), but also for campus administrators who are implementing these policies on campuses across the U.S. and working to addressing questions/concerns related to them.

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Table 1: Motivations for Carrying a Concealed Gun on Campus

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	%	%	%	%	%
	(n)	(n)	(n)	(n)	(n)
Exercise 2nd Amendment Right	45.51 (71)	23.08 (36)	18.59 (29)	5.13 (8)	7.69 (12)
Self-Protection	83.33 (130)	14.10 (22)	1.28 (2)	0.64 (1)	0.64 (1)
Protection of Others	55.48 (86)	20.65 (32)	12.90 (20)	3.23 (5)	7.74 (12)
Always Carry Gun	45.51 (71)	23.08 (36)	18.59 (29)	5.77 (9)	7.05 (11)

Table 2: Use of Gun Safety Devices and Behaviors

	% (n)
Used Retention Holster	70.27 (104)
Used Specially Designed Concealed Carry Backpack/Purse/Briefcase	38.03 (54)
Used Car/Vehicle Gun Safe	32.87 (47)
Have Left Gun Unsecured	1.94 (3)
Participated in an Official Gun Safety Training or Course	91.03 (142)
Carried Gun Loaded	89.10 (139)
Displayed Firearm	1.92 (3)

Table 3: Confidence in Using Gun to Protect Self and Others

	Extremely Confident	Somewhat Confident	Neither Confident nor Unconfident	Somewhat Unconfident	Extremely Unconfident	Mean (SD)
	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	
<i>I feel confident in my ability to use my concealed firearm to defend myself on campus</i>	85.26 (133)	13.46 (21)	1.28 (2)	--	--	3.84 (0.41)
<i>I feel confident in my ability to use my concealed firearm to defend others on campus</i>	71.15 (111)	17.31 (27)	8.97 (14)	1.92 (3)	0.64 (1)	3.56 (0.79)

Table 4: Perceived Likelihood to Draw Gun: Scenarios 1-3

	Extremely Likely	Slightly Likely	Neither Likely nor Unlikely	Slightly Unlikely	Extremely Unlikely	Mean (SD)
	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	
<i>Scenario #1: You are walking on campus and see two men, one who is holding a gun, stop a student and demand that the student give them money</i>	26.45 (41)	34.19 (53)	20.00 (31)	12.90 (20)	6.45 (10)	2.61 (1.19)
<i>Scenario #2: You are sitting in your office/class and a student, who is holding a gun, threatens you</i>	44.81 (69)	25.32 (39)	16.23 (25)	7.79 (12)	5.84 (9)	2.95 (1.21)
<i>Scenario #3: You are sitting in your office/class and you hear multiple gun shots. You see the person shooting the gun walking down the hall.</i>	73.55 (114)	14.19 (22)	7.10 (11)	1.94 (3)	3.23 (5)	3.53 (0.95)

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