

The Socio-Behavioral Response of Survivors to Campus Active Shooter Events

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Problem

- The U.S. Department of Education 2012 Digest of Educational Statistics shows that more than 21 million students attend more than 4,500 degree-granting institutions that employ nearly 3.7 million faculty and staff (Snyder & Dillow, 2012).
- In general, active shooter events are increasing in frequency and lethality (Blair & Schweit, 2014; Blair, Martaindale, & Nichols, 2014; Blair, Nichols, Burns & Curnutt, 2013; Blair & Martaindale, 2010; Newman & Fox, 2009).
- Muschert (2007) identifies that “to date there is no unified body of knowledge about such events.” (p. 60).

Problem

“Planning will be no better than the assumptions and understandings about human behavior in disaster”
(Dynes, 1993. p. 179).

- Do proposed plans, procedures, and training reflect the actual behavioral response of survivors or do false assumptions inform policy development?
- This research seeks to explore human behavior in response to ASEs to provide empirical evidence to improve plans, training and policy for campus ASEs.

Definitions - Campus

- Degree Granting Institutions

Postsecondary institutions that grant an associate's or higher degree and whose students are eligible to participate in the Title IV federal financial aid programs. Degree-granting institutions include almost all 2- and 4-year colleges and universities; they exclude institutions offering only vocational programs of less than 2 years duration and continuing education programs. (Snyder & Dillow, 2012, p. 279)

- Clery Act defines a campus as:

(I) any building or property owned or controlled by an institution of higher education within the same reasonably contiguous geographic area of the institution and used by the institution in direct support of, or in a manner related to, the institution's educational purposes, including residence halls; and (II) property within the same reasonably contiguous geographic area of the institution that is owned by the institution but controlled by another person, is used by students, and supports institutional purposes (such as a food or other retail vendor).

Definitions - ASE

- An Active Shooter Event (ASE) - “individual(s) actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a populated area; in most cases using firearms(s) and includes attacks that may begin with a specific intended victim, but extend to include others.”

Active Shooter – various conceptions – DHS, FBI, NYPD

Mass Killings - Investigative Assistance for Violent Crimes Act of 2012

Targeted Violence - (Reddy et al.,2001)

Rampage Shootings - (e.g. Newman et al., 2004)

Workplace Violence (e.g. Baron & Neuman, 1998)

Public Mass Shootings (Bjelopera, Bagalman, Caldwell, Finklea, & McCallion, 2013)

Hybrid Targeted Violence (Frazzano & Snyder, 2014)

Active Assailant- (various policy sources)

Definitions – Victims & Survivors

Victims describes those killed by the perpetrator.

Survivors -include those who are present at a campus ASE, may or may not have been injured, and take some type of protective action.

Research Questions

1. What are the processes involved in collectively defining the socio-behavioral response to ASEs?
2. How do social interactions and social organization emerge among survivors in a campus ASE?
3. What type of protective behaviors do survivors of campus ASE exhibit?
4. How do decisions for protective behavior arise among survivors in ASE?

Propositions from the Literature

Literature Review focuses on 14 empirical studies with behavioral findings:

- 5 studies of the 1977 Beverley Hills Nightclub Fire (Johnson, 1988; Johnson & Johnston, 1989; Johnson, Feinberg & Johnston, 1994; Feinberg & Johnson, 2001; Cornwell, 2003).
- 1973 - Summerland Fire - Isle of Man Great Britain (Sime, 1985)
- 1979 - Who Concert Stampede - Cincinnati, OH (Johnson, 1987)
- 1987 - Kings Cross Fire – London – (Donald & Canter, 1992)
- 1992 - Gas Explosion - Guadalajara, Mexico (Aguirre et al., 1995)
- 1993 - WTC Bombing – New York (Aguirre et al., 1998)
- 1994 - Sinking M/V Estonia - Baltic Sea (Cornwell et al., 2001)
- 2001 - WTC Terrorist Attack - New York – (Gershon et al. , 2011)
- 2003 - Station Nightclub Fire - Warwick, RI (Aguirre et al., 2011)
- 2005 - London Bombings (Drury et al., 2009)
- Warning Literature

Propositions from the Literature

1. What are the processes involved in collectively defining the socio-behavioral response to ASEs?
 - P.1.1. The response is social rather than asocial with an absence or isolated incidence of panic behavior.
 - P.1.2. The response includes helping behavior among survivors.

Propositions from the Literature

2. How do social interactions and social organization emerge among survivors in a campus ASE?

P.2.1. The survivor response includes information seeking behavior to interpret environmental cues and warning information through interactions with others present and those in other social networks.

P.2.2. The survivors socially organize to deal with a new problem and decide on protective behavior implementation.

P.2.3. The survivors show maintenance and extension of social roles.

Propositions from the Literature

3. What type of protective behaviors do survivors of campus ASE exhibit?

P.3.1. The survivors exhibit a range of behaviors appropriate to the situation, which include evacuation, shelter, and information seeking behavior.

Propositions from the Literature

4. How do decisions for protective behavior arise among survivors in ASE?

P4.1. The survivors show interaction for social confirmation of environmental cues.

P4.2. The social interaction between survivors leads to decisions and division of labor for implementation of protective behaviors.

Methods

- Qualitative Inductive Design
- Grounded Theory Approach
- Multiple-Case Study Strategy
- Non-reactive measures
- Approved by Oklahoma State IRB

Case Study I: Case Western Reserve University Shooting – May 9, 2003



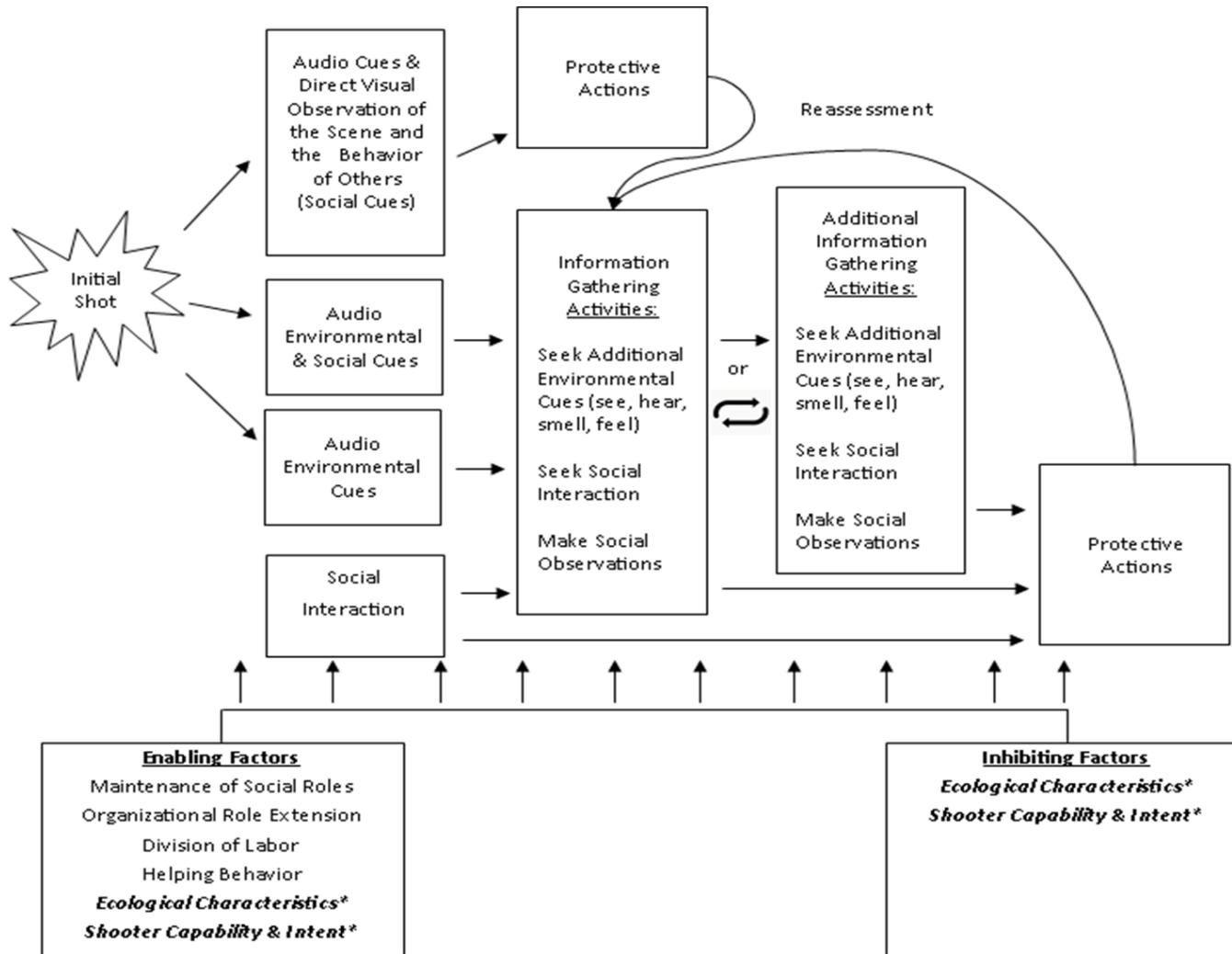
Case Study II: Louisiana Technical College – February 8, 2008

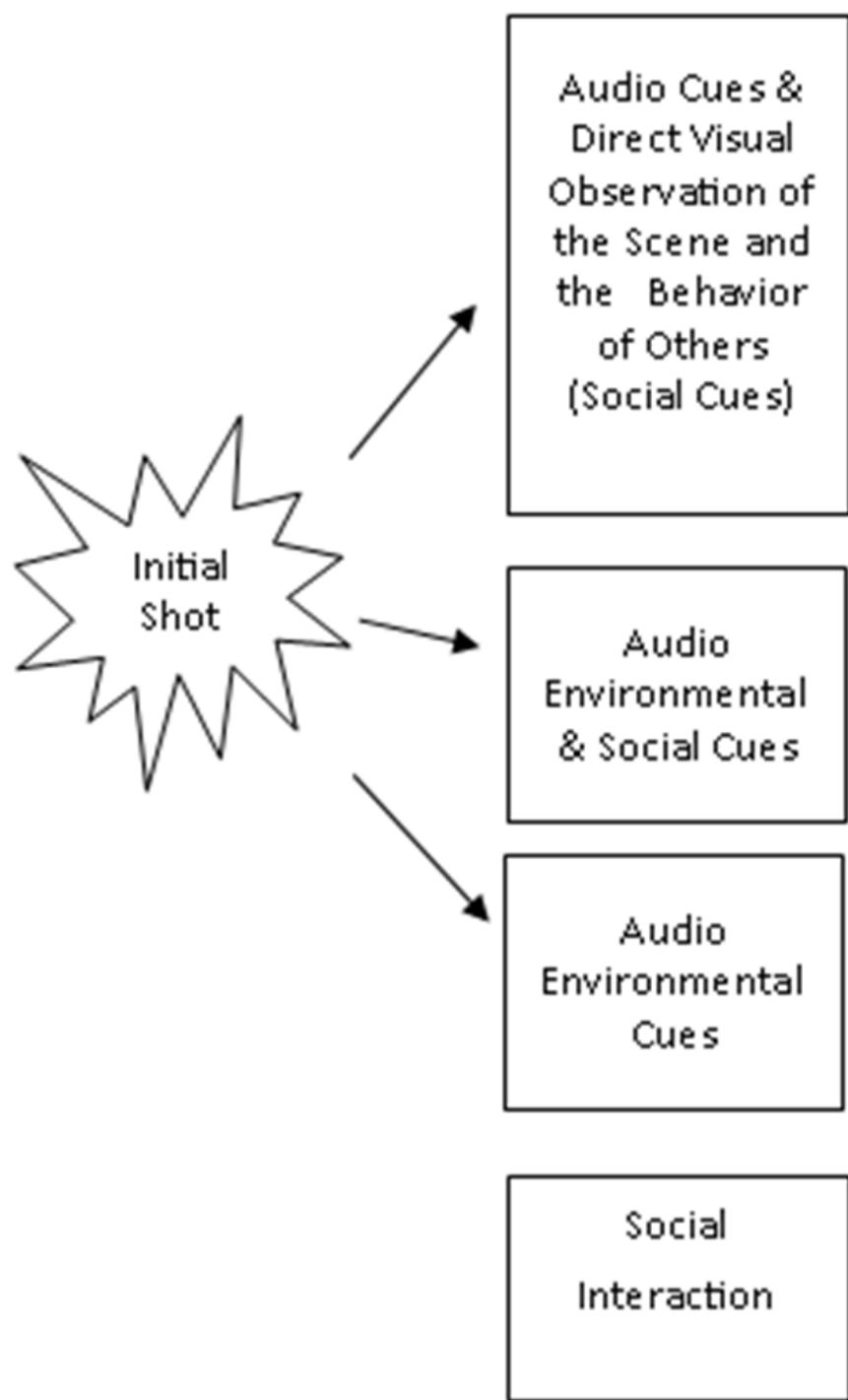


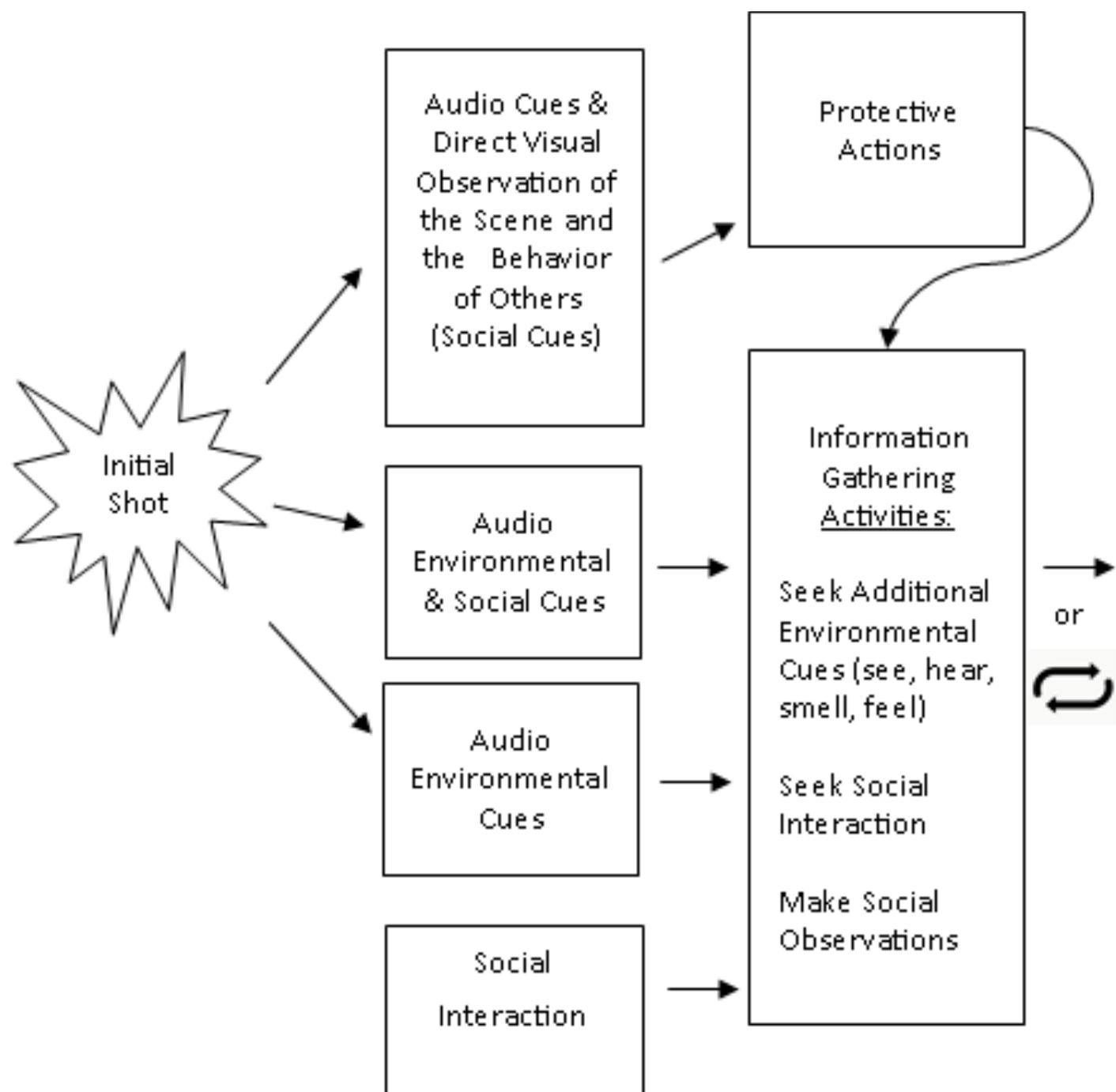
Data Sources

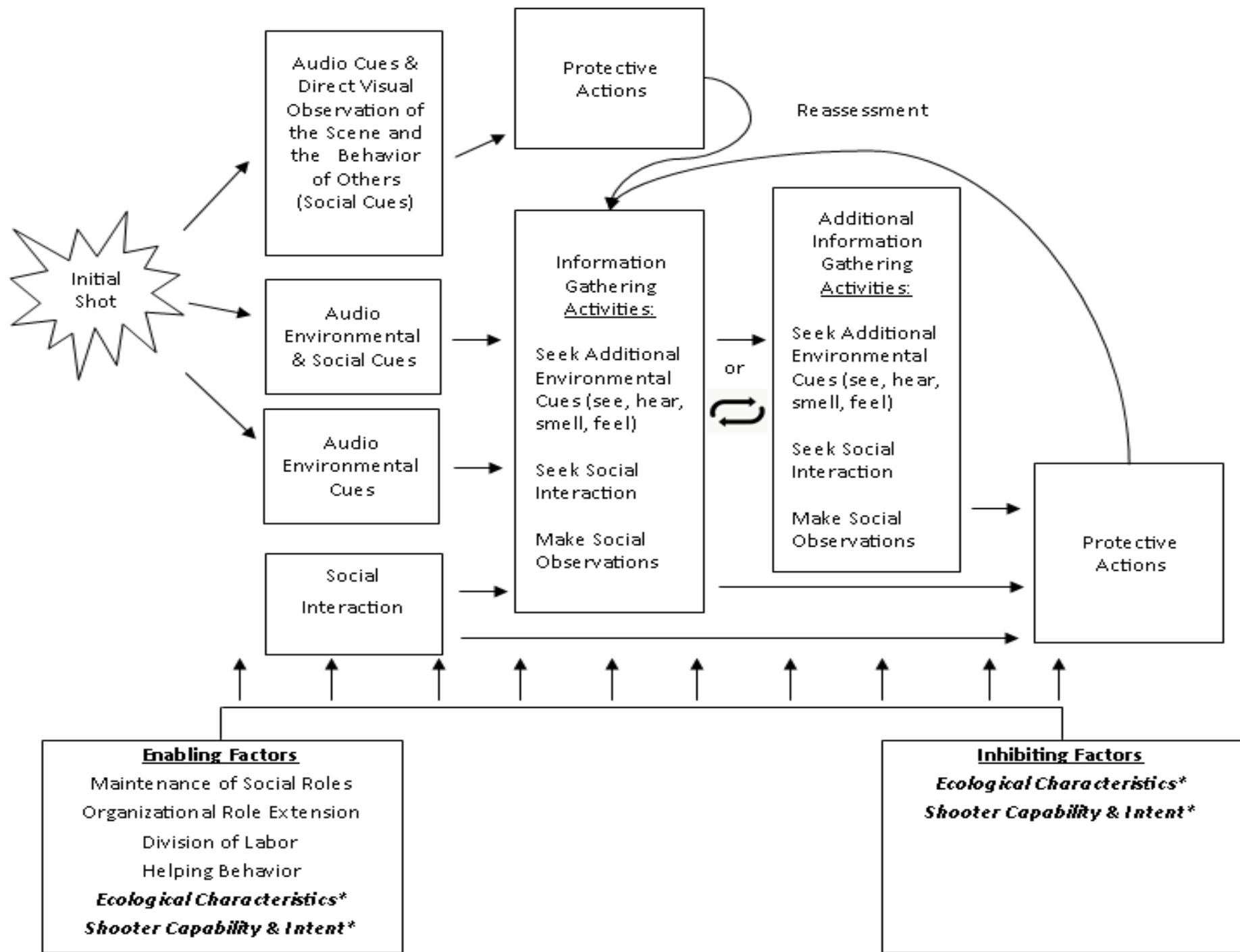
Table 3.2 <i>Case Study Data Sources</i>		
Data Source	Case Western Reserve University	Louisiana Technical College
Police Reports	356 pages	183 pages
911 Call Recordings	55 minutes 33 seconds of 911 call recordings	12 minutes 21 seconds of 911 call recordings
Witness Statements	103 Witness (both reports by detectives and written statements)	4 hours 03 minutes 19 seconds of recorded witness interviews
Site Observations & Photographs	On-site walkthrough, observations and 24 photos	Onsite walkthrough, observations and 36 photos
Police Radio Recordings	Unavailable	10:12 of radio transmissions
Media Reports	25 media reports	30 media reports

Active Shooter Behavioral Response Model









Findings

- **Finding 1. The survivor response to campus active shooter events is social rather than asocial and includes helping behavior between survivors consistent with research findings in other disaster event types.**

Examples From the Data

- “I was scared to death, the projector’s gone crazy, finally I saw people getting down on the floor and I was kind of in shock . . . and someone pulled me down to the floor” (BRPD Interview, 2008).
- “I hurried and got under the table with them and (student name) covered me and (student name) up” (BRPD Interview, 2008)
- “I don’t know who it was, but someone grabbed me and pulled me into a closet” (CPD Report, 2003).
- “(Name) ran into (name’s) office and said, ‘He’s on the bridge. He’s on the second floor. He might be on the way to the third floor’ He told everyone to go in their office and turn the lights off” (CPD Report, 2003)

Findings

- **Finding 2: Survivors of active shooter events will process environmental cues, social cues, and engage in social interaction to define the situation, gather information and implement and reassess protective behavior choices within a framework that maintains and extends social and organizational roles.**

Examples From the Data - Recognition

- “He was in the basement when he heard shots. He thought that they were tables falling over, then he saw two people running and both looked terrified” (CPD Report, 2003).
- “I was in my office which is (second floor room #), when I heard the shots ring out. It sounded like they came from the Atrium because of the way they reverberated through the building. They sounded like gunshots, but I could not believe I was hearing that. I thought I had better look into this. I looked out the window...I saw a police car heading toward the Lewis building on the sidewalk. There were emergency vehicles on Ford Road (CPD Report, 2003).
- “I saw a number of students in the Audio Visual room. I knocked on the window, and they let me in the door. I told them what was happening. We switched off the lights and hid behind computer servers for five hours” (CPD Report, 2003).

Examples From the Data - Recognition

- “I was facing forward and all I can kind of remember was that I heard this loud bang...and my ears started ringing and I looked back, . . . [the professor] had always said about our old . . . projectors that we had and I thought that the projector . . . something had blown or busted in the projector . . . when I saw smoke rising, from the angle that I was at it looked as if it was coming up from the projector and then I heard it again (BRPD Interview, 2008).
- “I didn’t know what it was, I looked at the roof, because I guess the ceiling tile shattered, sprinkling and then it happened again and again. The third time I could smell it and I knew exactly what it was” (BRPD Interview, 2008).
- “I felt and heard around me people getting up to run; I thought to myself, it must be safe to run” (BRPD Interview, 2008).
- “I felt and heard around me people getting up to run; I thought to myself, it must be safe to run” (BRPD Interview, 2008).

Examples From the Data - Roles

- “I started to see people ducking, getting down, and that’s when it dawned on me . . . a gun . . . and I went, “Get the hell down!” or “Get down!” . . .something like that to the students. I can remember I screamed it, and I hit the ground and that stopped. . . . So I kind of looked up like this and as I’m looking up, she’s spinning that thing on the gun. She was either trying to put a bullet in or doing something. Well, I didn’t play around then. I just grabbed the front door, opened up the door, and I said, “Get out!” and so that way everybody would kind of be able to get out of the room (BRPD Interview, 2008).
- “I (Nursing Program Director) gathered them all up and took them and put them in my office behind closed doors, to protect them” (BRPD Interview, 2008) .
- “I heard (maintenance staff member) sound excited over the radio, just talking loud. I heard (facility supervisor) say ‘where are you?’ and then I heard (facility supervisor) later call to me and said . . . ‘there is a lockdown, call a lockdown’” (BRPD Interview, 2008).

Examples From the Data - Roles

- “(Name) reports an E-MAIL came over informing individuals to ‘GET IN OFFICE...GUNFIRE.’ He stated he went directly to his office and locked the door” (CPD Report, 2003).
- “A female professor came to the room he was in, and he followed her to a 5th floor room where they locked themselves in until the police came” (CPD Report, 2003).
- “I arrived at Dively...where we met (female employee). (male employee) asked (female employee) if it would be okay to use one of the computers to make e-mail contact with those who remained in the Lewis building, (female employee) granted permission. (female employee) worked the phones into the Lewis building while (male employee) typed a request for information to all persons inside Lewis. Within a matter of minutes the information began to flow (CPD Report, 2003).

Example From the Data - Roles

CALLER: Now I don't see him, he was on the second floor we are on the third floor now calling you. I can see the front door entrance. I see the man down in front of the café he is about 100 yards in from the front entrance. I think there is more, I think the person up front at the secretary desk possibly got shot and is possibly down. Yep, I'll be right back; standby . . . all right I am back. We need somebody in here.

DISPATCH: We have got police and EMS on the way, can you stay on the phone with me for a while?

CALLER: I'll try, but I am like a sitting duck here

DISPATCH: Okay, then I want to you to lay down on the floor, hang up the phone and get down on the floor.

CALLER: All right, I will get on the floor.

DISPATCH: Get down on the floor try and protect yourself, you can hang up the phone.

CALLER: I am going to keep it open just in case.

DISPATCH: Okay, get on the floor, let me know if you hear anything.

CALLER: Another shot fired

DISPATCH: Another shot fired

CALLER: Sounds like he is he is still on the second floor . . . don't lay in front of that door (to another person). I see two people down now I moved up to a higher perch. A student is down

CALLER: (to someone else in the room) Call on the walkie-talkie tell them to stay down and tell him to lock themselves in. . . (to Dispatch) you got it?

DISPATCH: Can you get on that walkie-talkie and tell everyone to lock themselves down?

CALLER: We just did. (CPD 9-1-1 Recording, 2003)

Findings

- **Finding 3: Survivors gather additional information and process environmental cues, social observations, and social interactions to determine protective action behaviors that include taking cover on the floor, running to evacuate, running to shelter, hiding, using available resources to barricade themselves, locking door, turning off lights, and barricading doors.**

Examples From the Data

- (Name) next reports it was at this time he slightly looked back and saw the shooter come up behind him and shoot at him. He reports this shot missed him and hit the window and into the closet...he pretended to be struck by the fired gunshot, by lying limp in his wheel chair. After the shooter walked away from him, (name) wheeled himself into his office and locked the door. Once inside his office he indicated he wanted to get out of the shooter's line of fire and crawled underneath his desk to hide until the police came (CPD Report, 2003).
- Then immediately (student name) and I took the table we had and flipped it forward. We kind of backed it up towards the wall to provide protection for the both of us. We realized the gunman was right in front of us, and we flipped the table vertically to better protect us and backed toward the wall again...(student name) ran out the out along the edge of the wall and started heading down the stairs. He was using the half-wall to protect him. I stayed under the table for what seemed 10 to 15 seconds more. I followed along the same way and headed down the same stairs (CPD Report, 2003).

Findings

- **Finding 4. Survivors show group level interaction for confirmation of environmental cues and processing of additional incident cues that lead to implementation and reassessment of protective actions many times with a division of tasks amongst the group. (Emergent Social Structure)**

Example From the Data

DISPATCHER: We don't know how many people were shooting we don't know if we have all of them, so if you guys figure out a safer room that you can go to call us back. To let us know where you are at.

CALLER: Okay, I will relay the information. Wait a minute, let me ask...(voices in the background) (to others) Do you want to go next door? It's safer; it's bigger; we can get away from the glass door (voices in the background).

DISPATCHER: Okay, there is no glass door on that room?

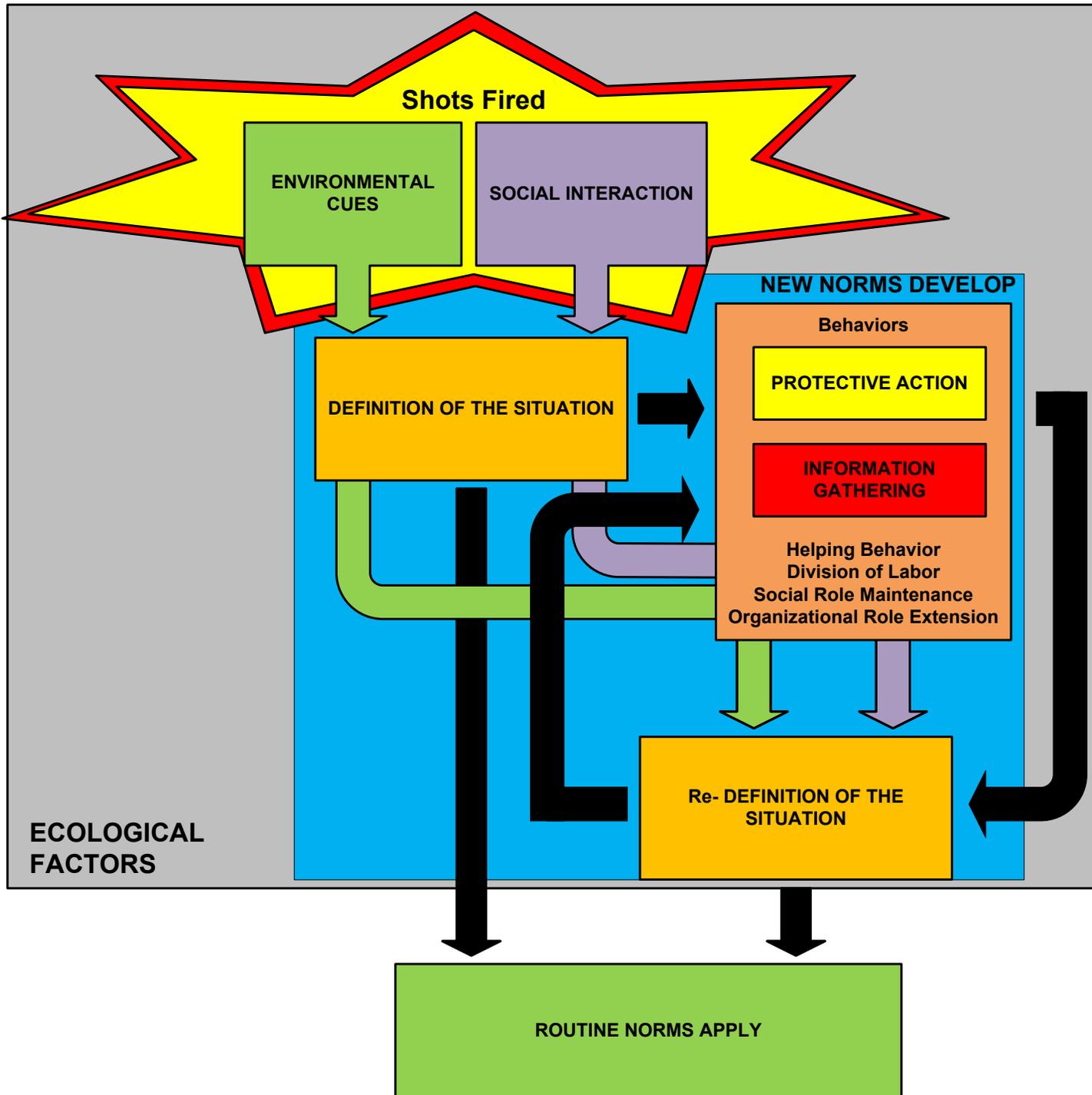
CALLER: There is, but we can get further away from it, right now we are in a little room that no matter what happens with this glass door someone is going to...get hurt.

CALLER: It is right next door

DISPATCHER: okay, I want to stay on the phone while you transfer over there...

CALLER: Okay we are going to send someone out to unlock the doors...(talking in background) be careful...he is going to... so he can unlock the door...All right...we are going now...

CALLER: ...and we are all in and the door is shut... (CPD 9-1-1 Recording, 2003)



Implications for Practice

Incident Management

“...Disaster Research has two goals: to advance knowledge in those social sciences pertinent to disasters and to draw conclusions useful for controlling behavior in times of emergency”
(Chapman, 1964, p. 305).

Command & Control vs. Collaborative approaches to incident management.

Form and Nosow (1958) find that “an examination of the activities of the organizations that arrived on the scene soon after the impact reveals that they were successful to the degree to which they fitted themselves into the rescue pattern already established by local groups” (p. 112).

Also Applies to Campus Active Shooter Events Train to Integrate!

Implications for Practice

Campus Facilities

- The understanding of active threats should be as institutionalized as discussions about fire exits and fire egress.
- Students, faculty, and staff should have a general idea about their protective options in the common places that they work, learn, teach, and attend class.
- The shootings at libraries at Santa Monica College (2013) and Florida State University (2014) show the classroom is not the only vulnerable higher education facility. Tough questions for higher education settings include how many students know where they can shelter in libraries, student unions, and other public spaces in addition to classrooms? Are classroom and other facilities adequate for shelter during ASEs?

Implications for Research

- How can we close the incident recognition gap for campus ASEs? How do demographics and personal experiences factor into the recognition process?
- Are there reliable and cost effective technologies that can identify a noise as shots fired and alert building occupants? If, so can they be as minimally effective as a fire alarm in alerting potential victims to the hazard?
- The potential inclusion of survivor initiated mitigation measures is worthy of future study. If the measures are effective, it creates larger construction and building code policy issues. What is the potential content of building codes that would require active shooter mitigation measures?