Negotiation Under Extreme Pressure: The "Mouth Marines" and the Hostage Takers

Jack Cambria, Richard J. DeFilippo, Robert J. Louden, and Hugh McGowan

Editor's Note: The following is an edited transcript of a conversation about the work of police negotiators in hostage situations. The speakers are: Jack Cambria, the current commanding officer of the New York City Police Department's Hostage Negotiation Team; Hugh McGowan, and Robert J. (Bob) Louden, both retired NYPD police commanders who were associated for many years with the Hostage Negotiation Team; and Richard J. DeFilippo, a Crisis Negotiator for the FBI. In addition to the their practical experience, all four have extensive training, teaching, and lecture experience in a wide range of settings. Their "questioners" are Professors Carrie Menkel-Meadow of Georgetown Law School and Wallace Warfield of George Mason University.

Carrie Menkel-Meadow: As an opening question: What is the relationship between theory and practice in your work? Each hostage negotiation, each stressful situation, each human being in front of us is different: So, to what extent do generalizations and categories and theories, and all those things you teach and train with, help in actual negotiations? And to what extent is each negotiation that you do a thing unto itself?

Bob Louden: The easy answer is that theory informs the practice. Theory clarifies confusion, on occasion. For example, a little tale out of school: there were three years in a row of student takeovers (at John Jay/CUNY). Our students had done their homework very well!. . . I helped the administration, through the negotiation process, to get the building back. When it was over, one of the then-vice-presidents who is now deceased — which is the only reason I can tell this story because he swore me to secrecy and secrecy stops at the grave in most cases — asked me, "How would you compare that nego-

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tiation that we just went through with negotiations you used to do in the police department?" I said "Absent physical fear, the process was identical." Talking to an individual, using the most basic (motivating distinctions) — which is "crusader, criminal, crazy" — was just the same as talking to our students and their very able representatives, who had real issues that they wanted to deal with. I then went on to say (which is why I was sworn to secrecy) is that it was most akin to the Corrections setting, the hostage situation when inmates have taken over the institution.

Theory is something that helps the negotiator, whether he or she realizes it originally, to do that which they do. Negotiation of the kind that I used to do and which (my colleagues) still do, is the ultimate "interdisciplinary discipline." You draw from such a wide range of academic and practical experiences and material that the theory of each — psychology, communication, sociology, public administration, science in some cases — the theories of all those things pull together to allow you to move this incrementally forward, so that the safe resolution of the situation for hostages, helpers, and even the criminals is more likely to be arranged.

Richard DeFilippo: The basic concept of hostage negotiation is not that intellectual. We are pretty much all in agreement that time is our ally. With the passage of time, the emotions de-escalate. We are there to give the perpetrators, the subjects, someone to listen to. We are there to establish a conversation with the hostage taker. Some of these people are just trying to get a story out. We have found a number of times when negotiations are going astray, we've tried to get a little too creative, and we've strayed from the basic concepts. At that point, we'll have a brainstorming session, and generally what comes out of that is a return to basics. This negotiation may not be going too well because we strayed from the basic concept of what we are attempting to accomplish. Maybe we are trying to make the situation "too unique." Again, every situation is unique, but there is a common thread through them all. The phrase we use all the time, when we start getting off the route that we want to take, is: return to the basics.

Jack Cambria: I've learned from hostage negotiators around the world that negotiations are pretty much the same everywhere. But you do need to have some theory. What we look to do in New York City is to teach our negotiators what the parameters are. "Never say never" — but also you must live within certain parameters. One quick example is clergy. When dealing with a suicidal individual, we stay away from clergy, at least in New York City. The reason is that the hostage taker may look to give a last will and testament, or rites, and then kill themselves. So we tend to stay away from clergy — it's almost a "never".

Another example of a general rule might be family — it's something you have to really look at, before you bring a family member on. Hugh McGowan

tells a great story about a situation that happened years ago, where there was a teenage girl who was suicidal. The father came and kept asking to talk to her, stating how much he loved her and could talk to her and help her. After some time, Hugh decided to let him come on. As soon as the father was allowed to talk, he said, "Maria what are you doing, you're embarrassing us!" And Hugh said "Whoa, let's get out of here quick!" and got him off the line. So you have to know what the parameters are. That's where theory comes in; you have to have the basics before you can practice your trade properly.

Hugh McGowan: In teaching, you have to know what it is that you are going to be doing, and you have to know how to do it. One thing that goes without saying is that we work for somebody. In our case, it might be the Chief or commander at the scene. They might not understand exactly how the negotiation process works, or they might understand the process incorrectly, and it falls upon us as chief negotiator to explain. When I first got the position after Bob, I thought being chief negotiator meant I could pick any negotiation I wanted. I was told that's not what it means: It means you get to negotiate *with the chief*. Don't forget, that's the most dangerous person you have to deal with! Learning how to negotiate with the Chief — there's no class for hostage negotiators, you either have it or you don't have it. We learn it quickly when our rear end gets burned on a certain situation and somebody says, "What do you mean you don't know what's going on?" or "What do you mean you don't know when this situation will be over?" Having been burned once with that, when I didn't know exactly when a situation would be over — I fell upon something that I used to get past puberty — lying, then to my parents and now to the Chief. When asked how long a situation would last, I would take the Chief to the side and tell him that the FBI says the average situation lasts ten-twelve hours. He'd say "Ten–twelve hours?" This meant somebody would relieve him (on duty, before the crisis was reached) — so he didn't have to really worry about it, and he could go home and tell the Mrs. to take the meatloaf out of the oven! It was amazing how in most situations it would last two-to-three hours. One Chief came over and said "You did a great job; you beat the FBI by five hours." After that, I learned that it is possible to work with these chiefs, and over time, that by consoling them and comforting them, we could get through these situations.

Wallace Warfield: There's probably a theory there somewhere!

Hugh McGowan: The theory I was going to talk about is survival.

Wallace Warfield: A basic human needs theory. . . .It's interesting that both Jack and Dick spoke about getting back to the basics. One of the basics in this field was popularized by Fisher and Ury, circa 1981: the business of getting to the interests beyond positions. In other words, if you determine the parties' interests, you can expand the pie and that sort of thing. What are the

interests you see in a hostage negotiating situation? Are there interests beyond positions? What are the techniques you use to get parties to recognize their interests?

Hugh McGowan: One of the most amazing things I found in my thirteen years as the hostage coordinator was arriving at a situation and finding that what we thought was going on, and what the hostage-taker thought, were oftentimes very different things. One of the things we adopted early on was the motto "Talk to Me" – it's not "Listen to Me, I know better than you do" — it's "*Talk* to me." Oftentimes by setting up this dialogue, and allowing this person to tell us what was wrong, we found out that many of the things that we thought were problems just weren't. The idea that I developed over time and incorporated into my academic work, was that we were looking at these situations incorrectly, in particular if we want to predict the outcome. Traditionally, the model or theory that we use is the motivational model — *why* is that person in there — are they a crazy, a criminal, a crusader? But that's never really worked for us as practical police officers, and especially for advising the commander on how the situation will be resolved. The theory I *moved over to* involves context. It helps us as practitioners to be able to predict the outcome. I have identified certain hypotheses and areas I think can be tested. Along with my context, goes the idea of conversation and containment. I'm advocating, if you will, to replace the "old 3c" model with the "new 3c" model that involves the "context, conversation, and containment." This enables us to be able to at least test what it is we have worked on for 25-plus years now. I know the FBI is now doing this on a nationwide and even worldwide basis. We have a lot of data, but haven't really put it to the test. Just knowing or not knowing the motive, knowing why that person is in there, or what we think we know as to why the person is in there — only in establishing that communication do we find out that what we thought we knew was in many cases really wrong.

Richard DeFilippo: The type of incident that most of the public perceives as the common hostage situation — that being the 7-11, bank, or shoe store robbery that goes awry, because of either good or lucky police work — those are really few and far between. Those types of incidents resolve quickly. Those are just criminals who want to minimize their losses, don't want to get hurt and don't want to go to jail forever. . .

The vast majority of incidents that we encounter are not "crimes that have been interrupted" but "people with problems." It may be a suicidal person, an emotionally disturbed individual who is not taking medication, or someone in a domestic situation that has escalated into a hostage situation, where usually the "significant other" is the hostage. Those statistically are far more prevalent than an interrupted crime.

When we are dealing with people with problems, we do not become problem-solvers. If someone has lost their job, the house is being foreclosed upon, their car was repossessed the week before — there is not much we can do in solving that person's problems. That is really the cause of why they are drunk, behind the door, or caught up in their own adrenaline. What we do not *become* is someone who can resolve their problems. What we can become is: someone who will listen to their problems. We can tell a suicidal person that suicide is a culmination, that maybe they can turn the corner and things will get better. We can listen to the estranged husband, who is still making mortgage payments but who knows that when he retires half of his pension still goes to his ex-wife, just because a Family Court judge has decreed it. What we have to do is to wait for him to sober up. We are not going to be able to change those legal issues. What we want to do, over time, is to make things safe for everybody, particularly for the hostages. We want these individuals, who can be rather dangerous, to surrender to us, rather than us going in to get them, because that is a dangerous situation for everybody.

Statistically, the most dangerous time is when the hostages are taken. The second most dangerous time is when there is a tactical resolution — when the fellows that Jack mentioned, with machine guns, have to make an entry. One of the major concerns of the hostages is that the police are good shots. They want to be saved.

The surrender ritual is what we want to look forward to. We can sense a surrender is on the horizon. We get the question, if he's at the threshold, how longer until he comes out? You can't tell, but once we sense the *surrender ritual* is commencing, we know that usually it will only be a matter of time before he comes out. Again, we are not going to become problem-solvers. But we can listen. We can reinforce the fact that as bad as things seem, it's not the end of the world, that we can work it out. Again, the passage of time matters — whether it's alcohol, drugs, or adrenalin, the only thing that can sober up these individuals is time.

Bob Louden: Here we talk about the model as "Talk to Me." The flip side of that is that we *must listen*. We look at the motivating factors, but we don't get too caught up in them. I have told many classes in negotiation, "Don't worry early on about why this is happening." There will be plenty of time to sort out why it is happening. What is happening, who are the players, what are the dynamics that we can get a handle on?. . .We have to look at demands in at least three ways. This is where the interests really come in. The stated demands (which are seldom what they really want but have to be dealt with) have to be recognized, they have to be validated. Then there is the between-the-lines demands — what can you pick up as a subcurrent of what is happening. Then, if we are fairly good at what we do, there are the creative demands.

Unlike many situations you folks might be involved in, we sometimes want to create a thought process in a person's mind that we know that we can convince the authorities to go along with; and therefore we are creating a demand *for* them, without telling them what it is. Because the psychologists and psychiatrists tell us we have to keep them in problem-solving, even though we can't solve their problems. It's a little bit like a medical model, if you look at the continuum. Some cases require first aid or band-aids, and some cases require major surgery. We just keep going back and forth with that kind of ping-pong of: "If we listen, what are they saying?" "Maybe. Did they really mean X?" "How can we get them to see things the way we know we can deliver this short term solution?"

We are only giving them a short-term solution. Somebody else has to take care of the problems that brought this about later on. That's not a negotiator's role, it's not a police role. Police have a lot of roles — but that is not one of them.

Carrie Menkel-Meadow: Some concrete theories derive from the movies, and TV. One of the movies that attempted to depict the work you do was "The Negotiator." As a negotiation theorist, I didn't just go with a bunch of popcorn, I took my pen with me. One of the lines in the movie is "Never say no," which is another way to say "getting to yes." As an example of theory that is quite practical — how accurate a depiction is that particular rule? And how helpful are rules like that?

Bob Louden: Hugh was able to arrange for Kevin Spacey to come to the College after the movie was out and speak to all of his negotiators. We politely informed him that he could use different technical advisors next time around. (Spacey still posed for a picture with me.)

Actually, "never say *never*" is the way we look at it. There are only a few variations on that, which again are related to a public administration theory, where there is an elected official, a mayor or governor, who appoints a police official, who appoints certain people to do certain jobs. You know these things are going to happen. So you plan ahead for that which you know you will never deliver, what we call *nonnegotiable* items or concepts or aspects. "Never say never" is a very solid, very true part of what Kevin Spacey and Samuel Jackson did in that movie, notwithstanding some of the other glitches. It is built on the fact that there are rules and parameters. Everybody has to know what the rules are, going in, so that when you are faced with one of these endeavors, you know that you need to change the way you talk, or maybe change the person who is talking or the approach you are using. It could be something as simple as the old TV "good cop / bad cop" routine. Sometimes it is more sophisticated, using some other kind of support people. "Never say never" is an excellent encapsulation of some of the things we have been involved with.

Hugh McGowan: I think (the movie negotiator) actually says "never say no" and we say "never say never." But we say no all the time. One of the things we do, or try to do, when we have a dialogue, is to start off by asking a simple question. That is "Do you want me to lie to you?" That is what the negotiator *starts off with*, after giving his name. As crazy as hostage takers can be (and they can be very, very crazy), I've never had any of them ever say "yes, please lie to me." So one of the things we do early on is to make a contract with them — we are not going to lie to them; they understand that by our not lying to them, we might say some things to them that may upset them, but we are going to work our way through that. There is an agreement on both sides: "you are not going to lie to me, I may get upset by some of the things you are going to say, and you will be with me the whole time and we will work this out."

It becomes very basic. You are trying to establish a relationship with somebody that's more intimate than with many of the people you work with. You are trying to be on target, to be articulate and to use the correct words. Words are so powerful. Some of the things we are saying here we would never say in a situation or incident. "Surrender" — we never talk about "surrender." We talk about "coming out." We never talk about "wasting time." We say "I'm here with you and I have been here with you for a long, long time."

The men and women we have selected over the years are able to rise to the occasion, very quickly establishing the confidence in themselves and the confidence they have in the person on the other end of the line to get through this situation. It's not like when you go to buy a car, where the dealer has a high price and you have a low price. That's not what our negotiations are about at all. Our negotiations are more like an ocean liner trying to come into New York harbor after a trip across the Atlantic. The captain is now in the dangerous part of the trip and picks up the harbor pilot, who guides them, and advises them through rocks, piers, bad currents, safely to the port, with directions to steer a few degrees one way or another. The negotiator wants to get the ship into safe docking so everybody goes home.

Richard DeFilippo: You say you are not going to lie; but demands we run into periodically are for drugs, alcohol, or weapons. We are not going to give someone who is already high on that emotional scale *anything* that is going to screw them further through the ceiling, and we are certainly not going to give them anything to raise the risk factor, like a weapon. That is where our honesty comes in. We earn their respect by being honest. We don't want to lie to them; but there are lots of ways to say no without being final. For instance, say "I can't do that" or "My people won't let us do that" or "That's a tall order, we probably cannot accomplish that." There are other demands that we *would* talk about — that we won't say no to, even though we have no intention of meeting it.

Hugh McGowan: We usually say "the FBI won't let us do that."

Jack Cambria: In New York City, we have identified three types of hostage situations. There's the criminal, which Rich touched on earlier. That's where a crime in a store setting is interrupted and the perpetrator takes hostages. There's the emotionally disturbed or mentally ill, which is probably the most common that we deal with. Then there's the terrorist, probably the most dangerous individual to deal with. What we seek to do is to find that individual where they are, psychologically speaking, and try to bring them to us, to our rationale, to the way we thinking. And we seek to *empower the hostage taker to resolve* the situation.

Bob Louden has a story I like so much I now use it in training. Several years back, he was negotiating a rather difficult, very long and ongoing hostage situation. The chief of detectives said, "Hey Louden, seems like you aren't having any success here." Bob said, "I think we are." The chief says "What's your definition of success then?" Bob says "Lack of failure." That's it in a nutshell. As long as you haven't failed, the implication is that you are succeeding. Time is on our side, we take all the time we need. A few years back I did a job with Hugh McGowan which lasted 50 hours. I was there for 20 of those 50 hours, and Hugh was there for 49 of those 50 hours. It takes as long as necessary to do it.

Bob Louden: That's only because my longest was 48 hours, and they had to beat it.

Wallace Warfield: Hugh said something about intimacy, and it reminds me of another theory or concept that is important in negotiations: that negotiations are really about *interdependence and relationships*. How do you establish interdependence? How do you build or develop mutual dependence, where the hostage taker has a sense of dependence with you and you have a sense of dependence upon the hostage taker?

Bob Louden: In trying to being as honest as possible you will often hear within the perimeter, in the "frozen zone" where this conversation is taking place, "We are in this together." Now some people scoff at that and say you are not in this together. But you are! The hostage taker is there for a reason that we are still trying to fathom. I go back to my list to see what they said, and I read between the lines, and figure out what we are going to do with them. But we have decided this is the approach that we will take: that we are in it together. I'm not a shrink. But it may be something that psychologists and psychiatrists develop all the time, where there is an identification with one other, a dependence of a sort. It's an identification that: "right now you are in a place both physically and emotionally that you cannot get out of by yourself, so you and I are going to get out of this thing together."

Richard DeFilippo: The key word is empathy. A negotiator must display an empathetic posture. The negotiator, who is representative of all the law enforcement power that is on the outside, has become a very significant person to the subject. He may be a negotiator, but he is also carrying a gun and wearing a badge. He's got the ability to help or to hurt this person. You are very obviously trying to show him that you want to help, you want to resolve it peacefully with no one getting hurt.

Hugh McGowan: I mentioned the idea of containment. You might think of containment in the physical sense, where there is someone locked in their apartment and we want to keep it locked so they can't come out. That's the physical containment. But we also isolate them in the sense that we might take over their telephone so they cannot call out and can only talk to us. That containment becomes not only physical but also psychological. So *the only person they are dealing with is the negotiator*. We do this on purpose, so they are not talking to a wider audience or playing to the crowd, as they often can do, which makes the situation more volatile or raises the anxiety level of the police. If we can isolate and contain them, we feel that is how we can bring about resolution.

The dependency, if you will, the "we-are-in-this-together" idea, sometimes can cause problems for negotiators. Our brothers and sisters on the tactical team have a different way of resolving many of these situations. They see what the negotiators are doing as at least siding with the bad guy, and maybe even being "part of the family," if you will. Negotiators get it from both sides. We've been called coddling, sympathetic, social workers, sob sisters.

Probably one of the best descriptions I ever heard, that was actually a compliment, was when a detective saw the negotiators show up and said, "Here's the Mouth Marines" — he meant it in a good way. He joked that most people can talk for five or ten minutes, but the Mouth Marines go on forever and ever and ever. I'm proud to say that the Mouth Marines, sometimes, are really what you are looking for.

Carrie Menkel-Meadow: How do you guys feel when it's over? You've been accused of being too sympathetic, or being a social worker. You do develop a relationship with these people, in order to bring them out. How do you feel afterwards?

Jack Cambria: One of the reasons we won't allow Emergency Medical or the SWAT team to be negotiators is because there has to be a separation. You can't have a tactician negotiating, because at the drop of a hat, he may have to turn and shoot that individual — particularly in "suicide by police" scenarios. This is where an individual doesn't have the courage to shoot himself, so he points the gun at the police officer and is then shot by the police. We won't do that to our tactical people.

When the job is over and you are successful, you are on a natural high, in all honesty. It's the greatest feeling in the world. The other end of the spectrum is that when you don't succeed, you are equally down, and disappointed. It is a wonderful experience when you do succeed at what you do.

Bob Louden: I totally agree with Jack. There are a lot of great philosophers on hostage negotiation and Yogi Berra was one of them. He said, "It's not over till it's over." We have to separate out the "over" of the instant crisis, and what might be continuing. Many years ago, we had a job at the (housing) projects in Brooklyn, where a couple of guys took shots at cops, got away, and were located a few days later. They were barricaded and were concerned about being booked in *Brooklyn* because they shot at the police officer there. The basic negotiation became about where they would get booked. Normally, you are booked in the borough where you are arrested. We told them we'd book them in Manhattan. We worked it out so that we would take them over the Brooklyn Bridge to *Manhattan* for booking. When it was all over, the duty officer who was making the arrangements said, "You're not really going to make me do that, are you?" I said, "I would like you to, because this is what we promised them." The "when is it over" question — when is the physical danger over, is one thing. When is any agreement that might be arrived at "over" is another.

I'm not saying that every agreement is cast in stone and delivered exactly. In North Carolina a few years ago, there was a prison situation. The deal was to move a prisoner from Prison A to Prison B. They drove him to the gate of Prison B but then went back to A. They said they'd never told him they would let him *stay* there, just that they would take him there. Talk about theory to practice: that's dangerous precedent-setting — because it makes it harder the next time to convince somebody that you aren't that kind of negotiator (whose word cannot be trusted).

The other part of "it's not over till it's over" is that you are on an emotional high or perhaps an emotional low, depending upon the circumstances. You need to individually or collectively debrief to get the adrenalin safely out of *your* system.

Carrie Menkel-Meadow: In terms of what you just said about maintaining your credibility — and you talk in a language many of us understand about establishing precedents and trust — to what extent do you have to worry about hostage takers who may understand you, who may be negotiating from the perspective of trying to outplay, outdo you? To what extent are there the one-shot players who don't know have a clue about any of this? Even crazies, criminals and crusaders watch TV and movies. To what extent are they negotiating with you in a sophisticated way, and playing *you*?

Hugh McGowan: I think that's where the honesty comes in. In many of the prison settings, you are really dealing with a negotiating team on the other side. We see ourselves in the mirror, if you will. They have their specific limits on negotiation, the person they are dealing with must go back to their boss, we must go back to our boss, there are certain things are not negotiable. Prison settings are very difficult. One of the things we try to be is empathetic with our brothers and sisters who work in the correctional field, but we advise them that we hope they never have a "situation." *We* can afford to have a situation, whether it's an individual who is going to hold himself or his family for an hour or so. But a prison setting is so volatile, and oftentimes they go on for days and weeks. There may be loss of life from the beginning. Many times, it calls for assault, and the inmates know that, so it makes it dangerous for the officers doing the assaulting. In that sense, we almost have it easy, compared to our brothers and sisters in Corrections.

I did a training session with the New York State Department of Corrections and gave them a history of the NYPD and discussed some of the case studies over the years. They always kid me about how easy it is with quick situations in New York City. I'd say to them, "You never know, you may have some situation that is not a full-blown Attica-type situation." Two weeks later, Sante and Kenneth Kimes, the mother and son team who were accused of killing a socialite, the son was being interviewed by a reporter in prison and had somehow gotten a sharpened pen and held it to her face. For quite a few hours, (the prison negotiators and Kimes) went into this dialogue. This was more of a typical New York City job. It was not a typical Corrections job that they train for. They teased me that I had told Kenny to do this, just to give them a short New York City hostage job.

Richard DeFilippo: The Corrections setting is different from what those of us out in the street encounter. Most correctional problems involve demands such as better food, four hours in the day room to watch television, etc. "Escape" is never discussed, contrary to what the public may think. *Immunity* is something they want. There is a lot of destruction, criminal mischief, and assaults, for which they want immunity. This can be a stumbling block. The most recent one that the Bureau got involved in were at detainment centers, not even prisons. There were individuals being detained as they waited to be expelled from the country for being here illegally. We as negotiators don't have a lot of say when a judge and the laws indicate they must be deported. The negotiating point was that they wanted to *stay in* what looks like a prison, but is actually a detainment center, in the U.S. — rather than return to Cuba. Those are problems that are not easily solved.

Wallace Warfield: What was your proudest moment, and your worst moment?

Richard DeFilippo: A barricaded individual in Westchester County had chased his relatives out of the apartment, firing a shotgun. The police had responded and he shot at them. Thirteen hours later, he surrendered. His uncle came out and thanked us for saving (the nephew's) life.

Jack Cambria: My proudest moment just happened six or seven weeks ago. We had an on-duty detective who was interviewing an individual for a potential crime. It was a cross-complaint that his estranged wife had made against him. While in the interrogation room, this individual produced a firearm he had secreted in his pants. For four hours, he put the gun to the officer's head in this little room, with the gun cocked the whole time. It took four hours to successfully negotiate his release. This was my proudest moment in my current position.

My worst moment was many years ago where an individual held his two children hostage throughout most of the day. We broke the door, and saw these two very young children throughout the day. At the end of the day, the negotiations broke down and the individual shot and killed his two children with a shotgun. That was my worst time.

Hugh McGowan: My worst moment was Tuesday morning. I got a call at 4 a.m. — they had lost Jack's number and called me. My wife Marie and my dog both woke up. I knew the officer, Tom, and I told him, "Tom, this is Lt. McGowan." He said, "I know." I said, "But I retired in July." He said, "Oh, does that mean you aren't going to the job?" I said, "Let me check with Marie." I looked at her, and then said "No, I'm not going to the job."

Seriously, the best moments I can identify are an awful lot of little situations — like when my neighbor said that I must not be working anymore, because I hadn't been on TV or in the newspaper. Those cases at 2 or 4 a.m. when you went to Brooklyn or up to Harlem or to midtown Manhattan and for one moment, you were able to come into a situation that was so dangerous. When you are part of a process that brings someone back from the edge, whether they are holding a hostage or barricaded by themselves and suicidal. You get such a high you don't normally get in police work. Most police work, you enter someone's life here and you leave their life there, but have you made a difference? Most of the time we were locking them up and issuing summons. Yes, you've made a difference — but it's not a great moment they will remember. To be the police who come and resolve a bad situation: I don't know how to measure that. I had thirteen really great years with that, and five in Emergency Service. I don't know how to put a value on that.

The bad moments — probably giving up the job. (Don't tell Marie I said that.) Passing it on (through retirement) is inevitable, and that becomes a bad thing. The loss of life — one of the things we always told our negotiators

— within the limits we have, that are humanly possible, we will try to resolve these situations.

We are not supermen or superwomen. We cannot resolve every situation, we cannot save everyone. This is what I tell negotiators when a situation went bad, and I had to tell myself the same thing and believe it. . .

Bob Louden: The situation that was best and worst was the same situation actually, in 1984. You may remember here in the city there was a women named Eleanor Bumpers who was shot and killed by a police officer who was subsequently arrested, indicted, and tried and found not quilty. About a month after that incident, a young woman named Renee Green killed two babies, had a third in her arms. When we arrived, we negotiated with her from a fire escape. We couldn't get through to her because it had a fire gate on it. The entire time we were on the fire escape we could see the two dead infants, one on the floor and one in the bassinet. She was standing there with the third baby in her arms and a very large knife and was moving around. We did a whole variety of things to make this whole thing come together. The negotiation was a combination of distraction, thought interruption, praying — I know the 23rd Psalm very well, better than the nuns and brothers tried to teach me for years — and allowing the tactical team to rappel down the side of the building, to the only window that didn't have a gate (and therefore didn't have a fire escape) — to get in next to her, and separate her and the knife from the baby. It was terrible standing for those hours, watching those babies, but wonderful to watch the one live one be taken to the hospital in good shape, and this woman go in to mental health care. (I don't know where she is today.) It was quite a day.