Shaping the Thin Blue Line

American Police Reform from the London Model to Community Policing

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Introduction

American interpretations of the police officer's role in our society span the distance between two distinct and opposite poles. On the one hand, many Americans, especially those living in middle or upper class, non-urban, predominantly white areas, believe that a police officer is a hero, "a courageous public servant [and] a defender of life and property." If they are victimized in some way, they believe they can call the police, and that the police will come to their aid. There is however, a considerable segment of our society, often those living in poor, urban, non-white areas, that understands police officers purely as agents of oppression; as thugs who harass, abuse, and sometimes kill innocent civilians because of personal racial and class biases.

This discrepancy of opinion is particularly remarkable in light of the immense amount of physical and legal authority granted to police officers by the American legal system. Generally, a person is prohibited from using physical force to detain or harm another. Police officers, however, are expected to detain, interrogate, and in certain instances use deadly force, supposedly for the purpose of crime prevention. This authority is further problematized by the larger police institution, which has, over the past century and a half, cultivated a number of fairly substantial, functional contradictions.

For example, in order to exert some control over the police officers' authority, mandatory training has been provided by police academies. Police officer culture, on the other hand, impresses upon new recruits that the only worthwhile training is that which is obtained on the streets. For most officers, police tradition is the primary guideline, so while police administrators expect officers to follow a set of procedural codes, the actual

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determination of officer practice lies almost exclusively in the hands of veteran officers, with little in the way of administrative supervision. Since the establishment of modern police forces, reformers and administrators have stressed that police work requires constant interaction and cooperation between officers and members of the community. Police culture has developed in such a way that officers are conditioned to distrust, and believe themselves to be distrusted by the public.\(^2\)

These problems are not necessarily inherent in police work. Since the colonial era, police departments have gone through numerous transformations for the purpose of eliminating various undesirable trends in police work. But these transformations have created a different set of problems for the institution. The first section of this paper will consist of an overview of what I believe to be the three most critical reform movements in American police history. I believe that it is necessary to have a firm understanding of the history of police reform in order to address the issues confronting the contemporary police, and especially contemporary prospects for police reform.

The first of these three historical developments is the establishment of a full-time police force in the early 19th century. Beginning in the 1830s, day and night watches, as well as constables and sheriffs, were combined to form a single, public, supposedly preventative police force, closely modeled after the newly formed London Metropolitan Police.

Professionalism, the second substantial American police reform movement, emerged not long after the establishment of preventative forces, and continued as the

\(^2\) Skolnick and Fyfe. *Above the Law*, p.138
principle thrust of American police reform through the mid-1960s. Reformers such as August Vollmer and O.W. Wilson were convinced that in order to operate in an efficient and equitable manner, police work had to be routinized, training had to be standardized, administration had to be centralized, and most importantly, the institution as a whole had to be cut free from the influence of local politics. Many of these reformers also attempted to narrow the police role to include only crime control, instead of the range of social services provided by earlier policing institutions.

We currently find ourselves in the midst of a third reform movement that could potentially bring about significant changes in the American police role. In response to increasing public awareness of officers’ use of excessive force and racially prejudicial law enforcement, many police departments have implemented community policing programs in an attempt to build a cooperative relationship between police officers and members of the communities they patrol.

Although their immediate goals for police reform differed greatly, all three of these movements adhered to one basic assumption regarding the purpose of police work: that the police exist to protect society at large from a specific criminal element. It is essential to recognize that this notion has not been universally accepted. Marxist interpreters hold that the police exist purely as a tool of class oppression, owned by the upper class, and used to control the poor. Throughout this paper, I will attempt to interpret the extent to which class control has played a role in shaping the American police function.

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3 The onset of police professionalism coincides with the professionalizing of many occupational fields, including medicine and law.
For instance, significant evidence exists to support the assertion that the modern police were, to some extent, created in order to reinforce existing class structures. While the police were expected to preserve order, they were also expected to uphold "public morality", and in doing so, reinforced a particularly middle-class value system. For this reason, working class pastimes such as gambling, drinking, and prostitution were among the principal targets of the first police administrations.

I will argue that it was not until the professional era that class control could be effectively enacted by the police. The working-class background of most police officers during the pre-professional era limited their interest in property protection for the wealthy, or the suppression the recreational activities in which officers themselves were likely to engage. But as police work and training became standardized and bureaucratized in the wake of the professional movement, the relationship between police the officer and community members eroded to such an extent that the officer could become an effective tool of class oppression. Without a sense of community connecting the police and the population, officers' interests realigned to conform to the interests of their employers; the owning class.

Within this framework, the community policing movement can be understood as an attempt to undo the conflict between the police and the public, which were created by the professional movement. If community needs could once again be tied to police goals and protocols, crime control might be possible without infringement upon civil rights.

The second section of the paper will focus on the implementation and results of community policing in the Untied States. I will examine the extent to which police work has been reformed by this movement, as well as whether it could feasibly be reformed,
under the auspices of community policing, in order to prevent their participation in class control, racial discrimination, political patronage, or any of the various aforementioned functional contradictions.

The London Police as a Model for Early American Policing

The development of the modern American police force in the United States is traditionally linked to Robert Peel and the 1829 establishment of the London Metropolitan Police. An understanding of the British model is thus advantageous when examining the origins of the American Police.

Through the first quarter of the 19th century, violent crime was becoming a major concern among London’s elites. Fears of victimization among the public at large were supported by published statistics indicating a rise in the city’s crime rate. We must question the reliability of these statistics, however, as it is unclear whether they truly reflected an increase in violent crime or an increased rate of prosecution that lent visibility to a relatively static crime rate. In either case, concerns triggered by these crime reports were exacerbated by a widespread lack of faith in the city’s policing institutions, especially the night watch, which was London’s primary policing agency at the time. The watch was a parochially organized institution, which was constantly ridiculed in the press. But reports of the watch’s incompetence should be examined skeptically.

The force’s recruitment process involved consideration of the candidate’s moral character, physical fitness, and age. Although these terms are certainly vague, they
suggest that all watchmen must have met some minimum set of standards. Also, in order
to counteract the potentially disorganizing effects of a decentralized administration,
watches engaged in a system inter-parish cooperation. The image of the bumbling night
watchman that fueled the fear of victimization among London’s elites was, to some
extent, manufactured in an attempt to justify the institution’s replacement. David Taylor
suggests that Robert Peel, the principle proponent of the 1829 London Metropolitan
Police Act, presented an image of the watch that was, “of a highly partisan nature, [and] chosen for the express purpose of facilitating the passage of [his] reform proposals.”
Taylor also accuses Peel of exploiting crime statistics in order to increase Londoners’
fear of crime.

Concerns regarding crime and the reliability of the watchmen were not the sole
catalysts for the period’s police reform movement. Egon Bittner, for example, attributes
the development of the modern British police to England’s advancement “along the path of development as an urban-industrial society.” He believes that the development of a modern policing agency is, “the last of the basic building blocks in the structure of modern executive government.”

Instead of arising independently of other bureaucratic structures, the modern
police force can be interpreted as one in a series of developments signaling the broader
transition from direct to indirect systems of government coercion in Western nations.
Other evidence of this transformation includes the replacement of corporal punishment

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6 Ibid. p.16
8 Ibid.
with imprisonment, and the rationalization of the court system. Fundamentally, the establishment of systems of indirect coercion signified that the criminal justice system would no longer revolve, explicitly at any rate, around the "systematic mortification of defendants." Instead, persons who violated laws, having proved themselves unable to adhere to societal codes, would be removed from society through incarceration. This system of punishment effectively removed physical violence from the governmental public sphere, a trend that carried over into the cultural sphere as well, where weapons were no longer an expected part of male attire, and physical violence ceased to be a generally acceptable method of defending one's honor. As physical violence was no longer an expected element in citizens' everyday lives, the level of crime deemed acceptable by British society decreased dramatically. It is possible then, that it was neither a rise in crime nor increased visibility of crime, but rather a decreased tolerance for the pre-existing criminal element that lead Londoners' to believe that a more effective policing institution was necessary.

Of course, these were mores developed by the upper and middle classes; those who did not have to struggle for food. For London's poor, the call for social order was not a guarantee of crime prevention, but a crackdown on collective action. Rioters demanding human rights had become "a well-established and accepted part of eighteenth-century social and political life," but toward the beginning of the nineteenth century, British elites were becoming much less tolerant of social disorder. Evidence can be found in the harsh response to riots as early as the 1780 Gordon Riots.

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9 Ibid. p.18
10 Bittner points out that these specific cultural transitions took effect much later in the American West. see p.19
11 Taylor. p.17
In reaction to the passage of the Catholic Relief Act, anti-Catholic rioters attacked prisons, banks, and the houses of many prominent citizens. Local magistrates called in the military to suppress the disorder. In the end, 285 rioters were killed, 173 were wounded, 25 were later hanged for their participation in the violence, and 12 were imprisoned. In a society seeking to distance itself from public violence, this type of government repression was nearly as distasteful as the riots themselves, and “contributed to a general sense of crisis regarding crime and punishment in the last decades of the eighteenth century.”

Unfortunately, prior to the development of the modern police force, British authorities were limited to methods such as swearing in citizens as special deputies, calling in the militia, or utilizing the yeomanry if they wished to quell a civil disturbance. These methods, as well as being administratively cumbersome and completely reactive, were heavily biased against the lower classes. Officers in the militia were ranked according to the size of their real-estate holdings, and the yeomanry was primarily comprised of local land owners. Thus, both institutions had an overshadowing interest in the protection of their personal property; property that was at risk during civil disturbances. Clashes with armed land-holders often resulted in the massacre of peasant protesters. While the elites were clearly interested in suppressing riots, they were certainly not looking for bloody melees in the streets of London. Bittner explains:

The corrupt and brutal thief-catcher extorting a pound of flesh from the wretch he accused of crimes and the yeomanry massacring mobs of hungry protesters in front of St. Peter’s Cathedral harked back to a dark and despised past, and offended the sensibilities

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13 Ibid.
14 Ibid. p.9
of people who were at the threshold of a period of their national history they defined as the acme of civilization.\textsuperscript{15}

Thus, the combination of the elite's growing concern over crime, their lack of confidence in the night watch, a growing intolerance for social disorder, and a distaste for the brutality of contemporary social control methods, brought about support for the establishment of the London Metropolitan Police. This new institution was "an organized and uniformed force for the prevention and detection of crime and the suppression of civil disorder."\textsuperscript{16} The question posed by Bittner is: why is it the modern police developed so late in the game? Why would a society which has already developed methods of conscription, taxation, mass education, and numerous other administrative functions, not have developed a modern policing institution? Bittner notes:

\ldots the absolute monarchies of the seventeenth and eighteenth century had ample reasons for creating the kind of institution that would furnish them with the means for the continuous and detailed surveillance of citizens.\textsuperscript{17}

He attributes the delay to widespread concern over government repression, which many suspected would be the principle result of this perceived super-empowerment of the executive branch of government. The expectation that the new police could more efficiently suppress civil disorder through preventative patrol may have been the driving force behind Robert Peel’s recommendations to Parliament, but it was also a seriously threatening notion for those concerned with the preservation of civil rights, especially in terms of political dissent.

Thus, while the fear of social unrest encouraged the development of a modern policing agency, fear of government repression resulted in significant delays in the

\textsuperscript{15} Bittner, p. 16
evolution of the police. Despite this friction, the desire for social order among London’s elites provided the necessary momentum for Peel’s reform proposal. Taylor explains:

Fears about the political dangers that might follow from bureaucratic expansion never disappeared but there are signs in and after the late eighteenth century of a new attitude towards administration and administrators. Impersonal public service and efficiency were the hallmarks of the new public service model of administration...In this climate the idea of some form of ‘bureaucratic police system...was likely to be prominent among the alternatives [to the contemporary policing institutions].’

The institution Peel formulated was organized in a quasi-military fashion, with a framework of ranked officers. Officers were assigned specific beats, determined by police commissioners, who reported back to a single home office. They also wore uniforms in hopes that crime prevention could be achieved, “through a continuous, visible presence [of police officers]...throughout the community.” Uniforms were intended not only as a deterrent criminal behavior, but also to provide a system by which officers could be more easily observed by supervisors. While police officers surveilling the community would be more visible, the officers themselves could be more easily surveilled. Peel’s method of policing spread quickly across England, as legislation was enacted to refine the operations of the new police institutions. By the early 1840’s, the number of police departments has increased to 130, from the twenty that had existed in 1834.

Traditionally, the emergence of modern police departments in the United States is thought to follow the British model, both in terms of the social trends that catalyzed the desire for reform, and in the actual model for the new institution. While the LMP

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17 Bittner. p.15
18 Taylor. p.18
20 Taylor. p.? (close after 44)
certainly provided a blueprint for American police reformers, there are numerous organizational differences that have made the American police fundamentally different from their British counterparts. Also, while the decline of elite tolerance for disorder may have progressed similarly in England and the United States, the racial, religious, and socio-economic diversity of the United States brought up issues that British reformers were not forced to address.

The Adoption of London-Style Policing in America

As preventative policing spread throughout England, the United States still relied on a series of interconnected, reactive institutions. For instance, Massachusetts' policing network included a sheriff, constables, and a night watch. The sheriff, who was employed by the county to serve warrants for both criminal and civil proceedings, and was free to choose which he cases he pursued. As civil cases tended to offer greater rewards and present less physical danger for officers, apprehending criminals was often a neglected aspect of the position. Constables had duties similar to those of the sheriff, but were employed by a town or parish, and were often hired "for protection on potentially riotous occasions."\(^21\) Finally, the night watch, which generally drafted its recruits, served to "see that all disturbances and disorders in the night shall be prevented and suppressed."\(^22\)

Just as in London, the development of American preventative police forces was supposedly a reaction to waves of civil disorder that afflicted American cities during the early 19\(^{th}\) century. While David Taylor asserts that the London Metropolitan Police came

\(^{21}\) Lane, Roger. Policing the City: Boston 1822-1885. London: Oxford University Press. 1967 p.9
\(^{22}\) Ibid. p.10
about due to a shift in cultural mores, rather than an actual rise in crime, it is more
difficult to discount the traditional, causal argument in the case of the United States.

First, Taylor's argument relies on the idea that the upper class maintained a
unified desire for order, despite the need for social change among the working class.
While the class struggle may have been the principal, overwhelming social issue in
London at the time, American cities were suffering from a much broader spectrum of
conflicts. Besides class conflict, America was also divided between Catholics and
Protestants, immigrants and native-born citizens, whites and Blacks, and those on either
side of the prohibition debate. Rich and poor alike were involved in rioting over ethnic,
religious, and moral conflicts. Thus, a shift in mores among the upper class cannot have
been the sole catalyst for American police reform. We must also take into account, in the
case of the United States, an actual rise in civil disorder, which was the result of
numerous social conflicts, amplified by immigration and urbanization.

Riots did not, however, produce immediate changes in law enforcement
structures. For example, it was not until 1844, a full decade after a series of major riots,
that New York City adopted Mayor Robert A. Morris' police reform proposal, which
eliminated all previous policing institutions, with the exception of the constables. In its
place, an 800-man force called the Day and Night Police was established. Officers were
to be appointed by the mayor for one-year terms. The mayor would also appoint a chief
of police, who would have limited authority over the officers' activities. The
organizational plans for this institution were, to some extent, modeled after the London
Metropolitan Police, as delegates from the city had earlier been sent to London in order to
report on the nature of the institution.
The transition to the Day and Night Police was scheduled to take effect in 1845, but in the interval the Native American Party, whose politics revolved around an anti-immigrant platform, won control of city government. The Native American Party strongly disapproved of the Democrats' use of the Irish population for political support. As Morris was a Democrat, his police reform strategy was immediately rejected by the new city council. In place of the Day and Night Police, the Native Americans and created Harper's Police, named after the newly elected Native Party mayor, James Harper.

Harper's police, a uniformed force that supplemented New York's pre-existing police institutions, were often criticized as a standing army of political lackeys. While this charge was not reserved solely for Harper's Police, they do appear to be a particularly unpopular institution. Fortunately for the Democrats, the Native Americans quickly lost their grasp on city government. In 1845, the Democrats regained political dominance, Morris' reforms were re-adopted, and Harper's Police were dissolved. The brief existence of Harper's Police is probably insignificant in the long-term structural development of modern American police forces, but they do serve to foreshadow the role partisan politics would play in American policing for the next hundred years.

This is not to say that the formation of early American policing institutions was contested for partisan motivations alone. Before the widespread acceptance of the British model, several cities experimented with alternative police structures. For example, in 1801 ordinance in Boston delegated the mayor as "Supintendent of Police." The position required that the mayor, "make trips through the streets, supervising the work of

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23 Further use of the term "Native Americans" will be solely in reference to members of this political party.
the departments.”24 As superintendent, he was to enforce ordinances, either by warning, or if necessary by arrest. Not surprisingly, the position quickly became overwhelming, due to the size of the city and the numerous other duties to which the mayor was acquired to attend.25

In 1823 Boston devoted a full-time position to law-enforcement by abolishing the superintendent position and appointing a Marshal of the City. The new position was initially that of a chief constable, who was required to, “enforce corporation ordinances,” mainly in an effort to protect the public health.26 The marshal had the power to arrest, but rarely prosecuted offenders, generally relying on verbal warnings. On the other hand, the official boundaries of the marshal’s authority were vague, and there was little review of his actions. As he was given a great deal of leeway in his interpretation of established ordinances, the marshal became something of a legislator, as well as a policing agent.27 By today’s standards, the lack of checks on the marshal’s coercive power seems like an invitation for corruption, but complaints regarding abuse of power were rare, as the marshal’s resources were too limited to allow for any significant surveillance of the community.

Due to such limited resources, the marshal’s wide array of responsibilities, and a crime rate that was “increasing at a ratio faster than that of the population,” Boston’s policing institutions were, according to Roger Lane, “adapted to circumstances [much] as they [had been] half a century [earlier].”28 In 1938, to deal with increasingly frequent

24 Lane. p.16
25 At the time, Boston had approximately 15,000 residents. See: Lane p.16
26 Richardson. p. 25?
27 Lane. p.17
28 Ibid. p.34
instances of public disorder, Boston appointed several policemen, organized somewhat along the lines of the London Metropolitan Police, who would focus on crime prevention. Through the 1840’s and 50’s, many American cities, such as Philadelphia, Milwaukee, Chicago, and Cleveland, instituted forces similar to those in New York and Boston in order to combat crime and maintain public morality. While the London Metropolitan Police did provide some inspiration for the development of these forces, American reformers did not replicate with any accuracy, the structure of the London model.

**Early-Modern Police Organization and Function**

The new American police force concentrated exclusively on policing matters, rather than civil and public health functions. Also,

...unlike the constables, they would not be expected to pay for themselves through fees and other concessions but would be given regular wages...unlike the watch, they would work in the daytime, full time. And most important, although less clear, they would be a 'preventative' force.\(^{29}\)

The crime prevention initiative distinguished new police forces from the sheriffs and constables in that they would not wait to receive complaints, nor would they restrict themselves to responding to “overt disturbances” such as fires and fights.\(^{30}\) Instead, the new police would seek out *potentially* dangerous situations, in order to diffuse them before a crime or injury occurred, an idea directly inherited from the London Metropolitan Police.\(^{31}\) While a preventative element had certainly been present in earlier

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\(^{29}\) Ibid. p.35. Regarding fees, also see Richardson p.32

\(^{30}\) Ibid.

\(^{31}\) Note that at the same time the preventative aspect of modern policing drastically alters the way in which the police relate to crime, it also must greatly affect interactions between police and citizens. Police now must assess not only whether a person has committed a crime, but also
American police forces, this was the first time that crime prevention was the primary goal.

American forces also adopted, “the strategy of visible patrol over fixed beats, and some elements of the quasi-military organizational structure,” from the London model. But, while London had a centralized force, organized around a home office, police departments in most large American cities were highly decentralized. Each ward of the city was a separate patrolling district, and all officers were required to live in the district they served. Due to this organization, American police forces, unlike their British counterparts, were completely entrenched in local politics:

Whereas the London police were under the central authority of the Home Secretary, the New York City police force [as well as other early American departments] answered to politicians in the individual wards they served. Local aldermen selected the officers (with approval from the mayor), which meant that the jobs of the officers were secure only as long as the alderman who hired them remained in office.

At the onset, officers were to carry badges, but most were not required to wear uniforms. Many Americans understood occupational uniforms as, “signs of class degradation more fitting to the class consciousness of Europe than to the egalitarian democracy of the United States.” By the early 1860s, however, most departments required uniforms in order to allow supervisors to better observe the activities of beat officers.

While crime prevention was the focus of the new American police, it was not their only duty. Officers were also charged with the preservation of public morality.

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whether they are a potential criminal. This distinction will be essential to later discussions of police-community interactions.


Although the social disorder that prompted the inception of the modern police in America could not be divided solely along class lines, the social divide in regards to vice was quite clear. Pastimes such as drinking, gambling, and visiting prostitutes, popular among the working class, were considered distasteful by the upper classes. The police were expected to act not only as crime-stoppers, but also as “moral missionaries,” who would help preserve Sabbath regulations, which prohibited sale of liquor on Sundays.35

Needless to say, laborers were not interested in having the pubs closed on the one day of the week they did not have to work. This conflict demonstrates one of the principal contradictions inherent in the multi-faceted American police role: At times, law-enforcement will conflict with the maintenance of public order.

Such a contradiction begs us to ask what the primary function of the police should be. Furthermore, it undermines the causal explanation for the development of the modern police set forth by traditional police literature. If the existence of the police is solely a response to increased social disorder, the duties of the police should not include the suppression of widely popular activities, as such a duty would inevitably increase the frequency of civil disorder. The police cannot, therefore, be understood purely as agents of social order. They must also be enforcers of a specific set of social norms, namely those of the ruling class.

Class Control and the New Police

The enforcement of vice laws is perhaps the best place to begin an examination of police officers’ role in the American class structure. As previously mentioned, the police

34 Richardson. p.28
35 Richardson. p.30
were expected to suppress distasteful behaviors, supposedly practiced only by the rougher elements of society. Most prominent among these behaviors, the consumption of alcohol, was subject to a number a laws which were, in themselves class-biased. Lane posits that it was the enforcement of these laws that started the erosion of police-community relations:

[T]he existence of a strengthened instrument of police created demands for its exercise. And during the 1830's and 1840's changes in public attitude and habits, as well as the needs of a growing city, suggested new uses for the force as well as new reactions to old uses. ... The first source of trouble between police and the public grew out of an important shift of emphasis within the temperance movement...[towards the restriction of] the private use of alcohol. 36

Sabbath laws forbade businesses, including saloons, to remain open on Sundays. For citizens with a fair amount of leisure time during the other six days of the week, this sort of legislation would not have been particularly oppressive. But for the working class, Sunday was the only day when there was time for leisure activities. In 1838, Massachusetts established the Fifteen Gallon Law, which forbade the sale of alcohol in volumes smaller than fifteen gallons. The Fifteen Gallon law clearly targeted the working class, who would likely be unable to purchase alcohol in such a quantity. These laws were generally enacted by state legislatures with "majorities who lacked both knowledge of and sympathy for urban conditions." 37 Ward politicians on the other hand were not only opposed to temperance laws, but often directly involved in the liquor business. So, the police were stuck in the middle of two government bodies with conflicting interests, and while state legislators clearly had more official political power, the ward politicians were immediately present, and had direct influence of officers' continued employment.

36 Lane. p.39
It remains unclear which group had the upper hand in the struggle for temperance enforcement. Arrest records do show dramatic increases in alcohol-related arrests between 1840 and 1850, which Richardson attributes to the, “American desire to use police and criminal law in a punitive manner.” Unlike the English police, who limited sabbatarian legislation in order to develop a “moral consensus” between police and the community, police in New York “enforced the law to the point where the number of arrests encompassed more than ten percent of the population.”

Even so, one would be hard-pressed to say that temperance legislation was successfully enforced during the 19th century. The closing of saloons sometimes led to serious rioting, which the police would have clearly rather avoided. Furthermore, as political patronage often allowed “lower-class immigrant groups to secure a substantial representation on police forces,” officers were just as likely to patronize saloons as the citizens they were intended to supervise. As a result, saloons more than often stayed open on Sundays, and houses of prostitution continued functioning undisturbed by the police. Richardson explains: “The expectation that the police would be disinterested public servants, dedicated to the moral imperatives of middle-class Protestantism, ran afoot of the realities of urban social and political life.”

The police were clearly not agents of the temperance movement alone. Crime prevention and the prevention of disorder were still the primary objectives for the new police, and were subject to similar political influences. The wealthy often found that the

37 Richardson. p.29
38 Ibid. p.30
39 Ibid.
41 Richardson. p.33
police were unwilling or unable to retrieve stolen property or apprehend a criminal. Much as officers relied on political connections for employment, wealthy citizens need to know the right people in order to receive any help from the police. Also, despite the adoption of a steady salary, many American police officers continued to retrieve stolen property in exchange for a fee.

One could certainly argue that the protection of private property, clearly one of the formal responsibilities of the police, could be understood as a device for maintaining class dominance, but the willingness of the police to carry out this task was completely conditional on the property-holder’s ability to provide a fee, and the possibility that by retrieving the property, the officer would ensure his own employment by ingratiating himself to officials with political influence. Furthermore, while this meant that one had to be either wealthy, or politically influential in order to obtain the services of the police, the upper class was forced to support the economic interests of working class police officers if they were to ensure the protection of their property. Thus, the class bias of this particular police institution was somewhat diluted.

Due to the unreliability of the public police, the wealthy often turned to private policing institutions, such as the Pinkertons, to protect their economic interests. The Pinkertons described themselves as, “an individual and private enterprise...not in any way connected with, or controlled by, any Municipal Corporation, or Governmental Authority.” As the Pinkertons had no political affiliations, it was money alone that ensured the return of property, or the apprehension of a criminal. Meeting financial requirements proved much easier for many wealthy citizens than obtaining political connections. If a person had neither the money to procure the services of a private
policing agency, nor the money or political connections to deal with the public police, it was not uncommon for that person to advertise in the newspaper, in an attempt to “deal with the thief directly.”

In terms of riot control, the new police were no more capable of preventing riots than the purely reactive institutions that had come before them. Racial and ethnic conflicts, as well as labor conflicts, continued to bring about civil disorder and violence well into the 20th century. Walker describes this continued impotence as the, “profound irony...at the heart of American police history.” Although the modern police were, according to traditional literature, developed as a direct response to social disorder, they have never been able to achieve this objective.

The question is, if we consider the corruption, and/or inefficiency of the police in terms of property protection, riot control, and the preservation of public morality, what conclusions can we reach concerning the role of the police in terms of class control? Walker, for one, discredits the revisionist view of the police role, which describes the police solely in terms of class-control agents. He explains:

The more extreme radical view that the police were tools of a ruling class is belied by the fact that the wealthy and powerful in nineteenth-century America continually turned to alternative means to accomplish their ends.

It is essential that we again make the distinction between the actual work of the police, and the intentions of those who brought the institution into being. The goal of police reformers and moralists may very well have been to enact a form of forceful social control, which would provide comfort and safety for the ruling class, either by repressing

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42 Morris and Vila. p.40-1
43 Richardson. p.33
44 Walker. 1977 p.5
45 Ibid. p.29
or refining the behaviors of the "dangerous classes." But it seems unlikely that an institution as disorganized and decentralized as 19th century American police forces could have gained sufficient legitimacy to act as a significant force of class control within the communities they patrolled. In order to successfully control the behavior of any community the police would either have to conform more closely to the values of that community, or sever its local ties and become a more standardized, bureaucratic institution.

Introducing the Professional Model

By the mid-1800's reformers had achieved little more than nominal success in the development of a new American policing institution. True, many cities now had full-time, preventative police forces, but inefficiency, patronage, and brutality were widespread. In response, the focus of police reform was shifted from crime prevention and the preservation of public order to efficiency and depolitization. The new outlook came to be known as professionalism, and it remained the major thrust of American police reform well into the twentieth century.

Jay Stuart Berman describes the basic goals of the professional movement in this way:

...the professional movement was born from the reformer's recognition of the need for a coherent theory of policing and a practical agenda for change. They sought an alternative to the conventional assumptions that the police force was essentially a component of city politics and that its function, structure, and personnel should be viewed accordingly. The reformers held that the police should be seen as a disinterested, nonpartisan agency of government, responsible for the most efficient delivery of services by the most qualified personnel available.46
These goals were to be achieved through a series of drastic administrative and organizational changes. First, police departments had to be removed from the control of ward politics. This would involve hiring competent police administrators, and ensuring that they could not be displaced simply for displeasing local political figures. These administrators would have to aid departments in the redefinition of the police role, concentrating on public service and crime fighting.

Reformers recognized, however, that administrators could do little to affect the role officers played in the community if the police force continued to be staffed by unqualified personnel, appointed on the basis of political connections. New standards for recruitment had to be developed to ensure that officers would, "meet minimum standards of intelligence, health, and moral character." Once recruits of this caliber were obtained, administrators would have to reform the management of the force itself. The new system of management would include a centralized command, officer supervision through new forms of technology, and military-style discipline. Finally, in order to increase departmental efficiency, specialized police units would be established to deal with issues such as traffic, vice, and juvenile justice.

Attempts at professionalization began as early as the 1850s in certain cities. For example, in 1853, New York City's City Reform Party convinced state legislators to establish a board of commissioners to oversee the NYPD. The board had authority to hire, fire, and discipline officers, and more importantly, they would be required to give

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47 I am using the general structure for the professional movement presented in Samuel Walker's The Police in America: An Introduction. On page 13, he lays out a seven-item reform agenda, which I believe accurately represent the major objectives of the movement.

justifications for their actions. Although several other cities adopted this model of administration, it was not terribly successful at reducing political influence over the police. Partisan disputes arose between advocates of commission control over police and those who favored state control, which simply created a new political venue for patronage. William Tweed, a powerful figure in the Tammany Hall political machine, was rumored to have spent $600,000 to ensure the passage of an 1869 charter that arranged for the police to remain under the control of city officials.49

In 1895, Theodore Roosevelt became police commissioner of New York City, and instituted a new series of professional reforms, which more successfully altered the functioning of the city’s police. Roosevelt began to recruit police officers from upstate New York in order to eliminate the possibility that personal loyalties to certain citizens would limit the possibility of detached, objective policing. This practice had long been employed by London police commanders, who held fast to the belief that “familiarity breeds contempt.”50

American police departments, however, were deeply entrenched in the tradition of “local boys for local jobs,” and NYPD officers, as well as Tammany Hall operatives, were largely resentful of the “bushwhackers” Roosevelt had imported.51 Until that point, officers rarely transferred between departments, or became officers after having worked in other bureaucracies, such as educational or legal institutions. As such, tradition and legacy became the strongest forces in the determination of police decision-making. As

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49 Richardson. p.48
50 Ibid.
51 Ibid.
Richardson puts it, “Innovation [in police practice] was frowned upon.” As such, it isn’t surprising that the vast majority of early professional reform initiatives did little to effect the day-to-day effectiveness of the police.

But during the 1890’s a broader social movement was beginning to gain momentum. Progressivism, which targeted urban social issues ranging from crime, to population density, to inadequate sanitation and housing, boosted enthusiasm for the police professional movement, as it conformed to Progressive ideals of efficiency and objectivity in government.

Professional Reform in the Progressive Era

Despite the widespread appeal of progressive social causes, professionalism was not quickly absorbed by the police. As Bruce Berg explains:

To a large extent, police reform seemed to peak and valley over time. In some cases the reforms to police activities was especially distinctive and resulted in investigative commissions. At other times, the changes may have been more subtle and initiated by individual police administrators. At still other times, public pressure forced political reform that resulted in changes in police activities.53

Among the police reformers to whom Berg refers is August Vollmer, one of the most notable professional reformers. Vollmer was appointed Chief of the Berkeley, California Police in 1905, and upon entering office, Vollmer initiated an extensive professionalist reform agenda, which included an extensive program to provide higher education for officers. At the time, only sixty percent of officers had even a secondary education.54 Vollmer not only hired officers who were already college-educated, but also

52 Ibid. p.49
54 Richardson. p.136
organized the first college-level courses in police science, which were offered for the first time in 1916 at the University of California.\textsuperscript{55}

Much like the recruitment of non-local officers, police education and increased training initiatives did not fit with the tradition-based training beliefs of Progressive-era police departments. The opinion among the majority of police officers was that formal training and academic work had no application in the world of police work.

Policemen insisted that only men who had dealt with quarrelsome drunks or who had come upon a robbery in progress could judge whether the use of club or gun was justified in a particular case. Their school was the street, and only men who had attended that school by pounding a beat could evaluate the quality of police service.\textsuperscript{56}

But it was not merely a stubborn adherence to tradition that brought about the resistance of police education. These reforms would supposedly make departments more professional on the whole, but they did nothing to help those who had little education, and were already employed as officers. While reformers raised the bar for administrators and new recruits, the officers themselves were left out. With a new emphasis on education, the system of promotions was biased against older officers, who never had the benefit of formal training programs. While pre-professional departments allowed officers to secure better positions through political contacts, or by making notable arrests, older officers would now be passed over in favor of recruits with previous experience in academic or legal institutions.

The professional movement gained momentum in 1931 when the Herbert Hoover’s National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement, better known as the Wickersham Commission, released reports on police administration and “Lawlessness In Law Enforcement.” The second report, by far the more influential, “shocked the

\textsuperscript{55} Walker. 1992 p.13
country with its expose of police brutality.” The report revealed the practice of “third-degree” interrogation, involving the use of threats, and mental and physical torture to extract information from suspects. In the opinion of many officers, and even administrators, a suspect’s constitutional rights were often obstacles in the fight against crime. As Brooklyn Police Chief W.J. McKelvey said in 1896, “Our mission has been that of peace -- and we’ll have it, too, if we have to club a head off.” The public interest created by this report paved the way for new professional reformers, such as Vollmer protégé O.W. Wilson.

Between 1928 and 1967, Wilson served as police chief in Wichita, Kansas, dean of the University of California School of Criminology, and superintendent of the Chicago police. Wilson’s book, entitled Police Administration, “became the unofficial bible,” for police administrators. The major thrust to Wilson’s reform agenda involved maximized efficiency through a “workload formula that reflected crime and calls for service in each beat.” Furthermore, Wilson stressed the importance of replacing foot patrol with police cars, which should be staffed by no more than one officer, in order to maximize the amount of ground which could be covered by any given department. By the 1950’s, Wilson’s recommendations for efficiency had become standard for American police departments.

56 Richardson. p.133
57 Walker. “Police in America...” p.17
59 Wilson. p.18
60 Ibid.
61 Ibid.
Professionalism and Technology

The implementation of communicative and transportation technologies was essential for the implementation of professional reforms, both before and during the Progressive Era. McKelvey heralds the usefulness of late-19th century technological developments in police work, saying:

How changed is the work of the policeman in these later days of telegraph, telephone, and a thousand and one appliances of that marvelous force, electricity! ...[thirty years ago] the work was vastly different. Nobody dreamed of telephones and patrol wagons then. Posts were three times as long as they are now in the cities and an officer was forced to lug his tipsy prisoner in a wheelbarrow for miles sometimes to the station. Now...a policeman takes his prisoner to the nearest patrol box, a few blocks at the farthest, presses a button, says a word or two through the telephone and in a jiffy the patrol wagon with two men as a crew is there at his service.62

Indeed, the development of the callbox and police wagon had a significant effect on police response time. But perhaps even more revolutionary was the development of the patrol car, which was first utilized in the 1920’s. The patrol car, equipped with a two-way radio, lent a great deal of efficacy to the idea of preventative patrol. Not only did the patrol car increase the possible area of patrols exponentially, it also allowed units to respond to calls significantly faster. With the two-way radio, officers could be summoned to respond to calls. Furthermore, nearly constant supervision of officers became possible, as, “supervisors could maintain continuous communication with patrol officers.”63

The telephone completed yet another line of communication for police officers. Citizens would now be able to contact the police from their homes, after which officers could be summoned on the radio, and arrive at the scene in a patrol car. With these

62 McKelvey, p.28
63 Walker. 1992 p.16
technological developments, the focus of police work was split between routine patrols, and response to citizen requests. Walker explains:

Gradually, citizens became socialized into the habit of “calling the cops” to handle even the smallest problem. Gradually, a new set of citizen expectations arose about the quality of life. Because they could call on someone to handle little problems, citizens became less tolerant of minor disorders. The new system fed on itself, producing an ever-rising demand for police services. The more the police responded to citizen requests, the more the public came to expect it.64

This shift in perspective regarding the police role was not the only major consequence of these technological developments. The combination of motorized patrol and the objective, professional approach to crime-fighting, the officer was alienated from the community on a more profound level.

The Impact of Professionalism

Although it took much longer to apply the professional model in the vast majority of police departments, the ideal of professionalism had been firmly implanted in American police ideology by 1920.65 As reformers strived to remove the police from political influence, however, they also managed to isolate rank and file police officers from the public, as well as police administrators.

The professional style of police administration removed the police, both physically and ideologically, from the communities in which they patrolled. Instead of walking through a neighborhood, the beat officer now drove through the streets in a patrol car. A more explicit form of alienation, the professionals tended to “[equate]
citizen involvement [in police work] with corruption." Administrators did not know where to place the boundary between an officer's familiarity with the community and personal ties that would bring about inequitable enforcement, so they decided the best course of action would be to simply remove the police from the community's social sphere.

In the desire to achieve effective controls over their personnel, administrators often destroyed important contacts with members of the community, stifled initiative, and created a negative, distrustful working environment. And to achieve a high level of efficiency, operating procedures were adopted that, in retrospect, irritated citizens on whose cooperation the police depend and reduced the effectiveness of the police in meeting community expectations (as, for example, in dealing with less serious conduct or with fear).

Additional encouragement for police officers to isolate themselves from the community came in the form of several government commissions that exposed widespread malfunction in numerous American police departments. The 1973 Knapp Commission and the 1974 Pennsylvania Crime Commission portrayed a police system that revolved around payoffs, shakedowns, and general corruption. Not only did these reports damage public faith in the police, they also led police officers to believe that the public a corrupt, inefficient institution. Police officers tended to think of themselves as "a moral force, protecting innocent and productive members of the public against those who would brutalize and victimize ordinary decent citizens." They had no desire to cooperate with a public who thought of them as self-interested thugs. As a result, police

68 Berg. p.363
69 Skolnick and Fyfe. p.92.
officers began to “see themselves as detached from the public [and] at war with the press.”

The professional model made officer-administration relations equally difficult to maintain. The programs put into action by professional reformers focused almost exclusively on police administrators, rather than individual officers. The “preoccupation with control” over officer discretion was evident in initiatives involving centralized command and “objective” exams. Although improved education and training were also essential to the movement, new training programs attempted to standardize police action.

The professional model relied on the assumption that police work could more or less be boiled down to a series of formulaic responses to predetermined situations. The street officer is, theoretically, stripped of his or her agency. Instead of making decisions, the officer merely carries out the policies instituted by his or her superiors. This sort of reasoning is clearly inapplicable to police work, as it assumes that academic training can account for every situation a police officer might encounter in a community. “When administrators are...too far out of touch with the reality of the streets – as when police chiefs pretend that hard and fact rules govern officers’ behavior – they are rejected by officers.”

While reformers might have intended that such a framework might provide a higher standard for the quality of police service, it also transformed police work into a purer form of labor. Instead of the educated public servant with a wide range of responsibilities, as Vollmer imagined the professional police officer, reform initiatives

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70 Ibid. p.138.
71 Kelling and Kliesmet. p.195
72 Skolnick and Fyfe. p.137.
treated police officers as limited functionaries. Police work would involve as little individual discretion as possible, turning police officers into highly replaceable laborers. In response to a more hostile administrative environment, the professional police officer retreated into an isolated sub-culture. This “blue curtain” helped maintain officer opposition to administrative reform initiatives, and “shielded [officers] from public accountability.”

The blue curtain taught police officers that, “any indication of outside influence [i.e. political, community-based] is evidence that management cops have sold out.”

Furthermore, the work done by police administrators has nothing to do with actual policing. Police sub-culture surrounds the off-duty officer as well as the cop on the beat:

Most cops prefer to attend parties with other police, where drinking and carousing can occur without fear of civilian affront or knowledge. Cops don’t trust other people - which is practically everybody who is not a cop. They know the public generally resents their authority...and is fickle in its support of police policy and individual officers. Older officers teach younger ones that it is best to avoid civilians.

Police culture teaches officers that they are the “thin blue line” between functional society and chaos. There is a criminal element that is intent on dragging us into anarchy, and the police are the only ones who can prevent that from happening. Thus, the tightly-knit community of officers relies almost solely on tradition to determine their actions, enforcing a common mentality on its members.

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73 Ibid. p.194
74 Goldstein. p.9.
75 Kelling and Kiesmet. p.203.
76 Skolnick and Fyfe. p.92
Re-evaluating Professionalism

The mixed results of police professionalization could lead one to several conclusions about the movement's nature. Bruce Berg describes the supposed attempt to professionalize the police as "Shadow-Box Professionalism," which, "refers to the idea that some occupations attempt to professionalize by imitating attributes of more traditional professions. But rather than successfully replicating various necessary characteristics, shadows, or near replications occur." 77

The elements of professionalism, as laid out in the 1930s by the International Association of Chiefs of Police were, "quite noble and altruistic," however the actual implementation of professionalism did not adhere to these elements. 78 Instead, "the principal impetus to professionalize law enforcement has long been tangled with the attempt to increase the financial compensation for police work." 79 Berg believes that the IACP's guidelines were merely for show, and had little to do with actual professionalist initiatives. Instead, the motives behind professionalism involved the acquisition of social status, which would supposedly lead to more money for both officers and administrators.

Berg also points out that there is little theoretical material that lies exclusively within the boundaries of police science. Instead, police theory is an amalgamation of other fields, such as psychology and sociology. In support of the professional status of police work, it does require a significant amount of training and education, but the questionable professional nature of police officers is apparent in its social status. 80

Although police offices are generally considered "professionals" by the public, they have

77 Berg. p.413.
78 Ibid.
79 Ibid.
never achieved the level of status enjoyed by the medical and legal professions.

Nevertheless, the police undoubtedly exhibit certain professional traits that affirm their belief in their own professional status:

We have read and heard boundless and unresolvable arguments over whether, like doctoring, lawyering, or ministering, policing qualifies as a 'profession.' However that argument might be resolved, there is no question that policing is a defining identity. "The day the new recruit walks through the doors of the police academy," the late New Haven Police Chief James Ahern wrote, 'he leaves society behind to enter a profession that does more than give him a job, it defines who he is.' 'For all the years he remains,' Ahern added, 'he will always be a cop."

Jerome Skolnick and James Fyfe offer a more class-conscious view of professionalism in light of a drastic re-evaluation of the Progressive ideal. They believe that:

The Progressive goal was clear: to instill middle-class values into all Americans and American institutions. 'Everyone,' the historian David Rothman observes, 'was to become hard-working, to abandon Old World Vices, to respect and accumulate private property.'

Skolnick and Fyfe recognize that professional ideals did little to influence the practice of "rank-and-file cops." But the Progressive ideal effected the police institution to the extent that police officers were instilled with distinctly middle-class values, which they then attempted to force onto the lower- and working-class communities they patrolled.

The values police are expected to enforce today are almost identical to those faced by 19th century police officers. Alcohol, drugs, prostitution, and gambling, distasteful to

80 Berg differentiates between training and education, using "training" in reference to the acquisition of technical skill, and "education" in reference to more theoretical learning.
81 Skolnick and Fyfe. p.91
82 Ibid. p.47
83 Ibid.
the upper classes, are still popular pastimes. While these activities are by no means exclusive to poor communities, they are generally ascribed to the poor, who serve as scapegoats for perceived moral decay. The difference between the moral missionary function of 19th century police and that of today’s police is the fact that police officers can no longer be considered true members of the community. Instead they are imported, supposedly objective agents of a biased legal/moral code. The class ties, which once created a bond between the police and the community, now serve mainly to reinforce pre-existing cultural misunderstandings between police officers and members of poor communities.

The Decline of Professionalism

A century after the inception of modern American police departments, the police once again became the center of a conflict between those Americans who were upset by what they perceived as a sharply increasing crime rate, and those who felt the effects of government oppression. Many conservatives believed that the criminal justice system suffered two major injustices with the Supreme Court’s decisions in Mapp v. Ohio (1957) and Miranda v. Arizona (1966). In Mapp, the Court upheld that evidence obtained in unconstitutional searches was inadmissible in court. Effectively, this decision extended the Bill of rights to suspects in local and state criminal cases.85 The Miranda case then required police officers to advise suspects of their rights upon arrest. Many

84 Although Skolnicmik and Fyfe attribute this class-based enforcement of values to the Progressive Era, it is the same situation faced by 19th century police who were expected to enforce liquor laws.
85 Walker. 1998. p.182
conservatives were of the opinion that these decisions, made at a time when crime was already on the rise, "threatened the very foundations of civilized society." 86

But at the same time that rising crime rates and a potentially impotent criminal justice system were receiving national attention, the Civil Rights and Anti-War movements were challenging the basic function of the system. Charging the police with racism and corruption, liberals believed the *Mapp* and *Miranda* decisions to be signals of progressive change in the criminal justice system.

The police, like the conservatives, believed that the court decisions endangered their ability to remove the criminal element from society. Even after an arrest had been made, there was the possibility that a conviction would be lost due to an error in procedure. Police administrators reacted by attempting to ensure convictions through improved training in regards to "Standard Operating Procedure". As Walker explains, however, *Mapp* and *Miranda* had less effect on the police than either the liberals or the conservatives had suspected:

Both liberals and conservatives...misunderstood the true nature of the Court's impact on policing. Liberals believed it had ushered in a new era of justice and equality. They soon found, however, that compliance with Court decisions was uneven at best. Police officers found it easy to go through the motions of *Miranda* and still get suspects to confess, while the exclusionary rule proved to be a weak instrument for policing the police. Conservatives were equally wrong in blaming the Court for the rise in crime. A number of studies found that very few cases were "lost" because of the exclusionary rule or failure to give the *Miranda* warning. Serious crime increased dramatically in the 1960s, but not because of the Supreme Court. 87

The Court's decisions did, however, reflect a new awareness of the bureaucratic isolation enjoyed by the police. For many Americans, the violence perpetrated by police officers during civil rights and anti-war demonstrations served as a symbol of a

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86 Ibid. p.180
87 Ibid. p.182-3
repressive government that was, at least to some extent, beyond public accountability. It was this environment that nurtured the development of a radical new school of police reform. Reformers began to question the basic premises of professional policing.

"Various studies [on the police] began to raise questions that had never been raised in the past – about their function, their accountability, and their relationship to the community."\(^{88}\) The movement that arose from these inquiries, community policing, could potentially change the role of the police in American society to a degree far surpassing that of the professionalism. And as much as professionalism became the single driving ethos of police reform during the first half of the twentieth century, community-oriented police strategies have accounted for the vast majority of police reform movements in the past twenty years.

**Assessing the Need for Community Policing**

One of the major beliefs of community policing proponents is that:

Many of the problems of police accountability are exacerbated, if not caused, by the cultural and social distance that often exists between police and the (urban) communities that they serve.\(^{89}\)

Conflicts between the police and the public seem much more likely to arise in neighborhoods with a high concentration of poor people, which in the United States often implies a high concentration of people of color. These neighborhoods, often because of reduced access to a legitimate economy, tend to have much higher crime rates than middle or upper class neighborhoods. But it shouldn’t necessarily seem logical that a community with more crime would necessarily have more conflict-ridden relations with

\(^{88}\) Goldstein, p.9

police officers. After all, most residents should feel relieved by the presence of an institution that would remove a dangerous criminal element from their community. So, there must be community characteristics, other than the crime rate, that create friction with police officers.

One aspect, perhaps the most obvious in light of recent accounts of police violence, is the racial composition of the community. Racial prejudice on the part of police officers is often cited as a key element in police officers’ abuse of power. According to a 1995 study by the NAACP:

Racism critically influences how the police perform their law-enforcement functions. The use of sweeps through minority areas in the name of crime fighting, the targeting of young black males for “stop and frisks,” the targeting of young black males for humiliating strip searches, even in public, and the creation of criminal profiles that inevitably focus on African Americans and Latinos have become standard police practice in urban America.\(^9^0\)

In this case, the crime prevention aspect of policing, perhaps the most important aspect of the professional model, has proven to be not only the principle venue for discriminatory practices on the part of police officers, but also a force that encourages and fosters these practices. In order to prevent crime, police officers are expected to predict which individual are likely to perpetrate a criminal act. Due to the aforementioned socio-economic circumstances, police officers find that it is young Black men who are most often involved in criminal activity. In order to effectively prevent crime, therefore police officers are implicitly expected to treat all young Black men as potential criminals. This is the system which perpetuates practices such as “stop and frisks,” or “Driving While Black” offenses, when African Americans are pulled over for

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supposedly suspicious behaviors such as driving an expensive car, or driving in a predominantly white neighborhood.

These biases are then amplified by administrative programs, such as the war on drugs, which among other initiatives, targets poor urban neighborhoods for aggressive "crackdowns" such as New York City's Operation Pressure Point and Los Angeles' Operation Hammer. As a result, African Americans represented 13 percent of all drug users (according to the National Household Survey) but accounted for 35 percent of all drug arrests, 55 percent of drug convictions, and 74 percent of all prison admissions for drug offenses. At the same time, the proportion of Hispanics in state and federal prisons doubled between 1980 and 1993 (from 7.7 to 14.4 percent), mainly because of the war on drugs.

Drug arrests are clearly not the only result of racial bias among police officers. As we have learned from countless violent incidents, such as the beating of Rodney King, and the fatal shooting of Amadou Diallo, "physical abuse (against people of color) by police officers is not unusual or aberrational." Citizens charge police with numerous types of unwarranted physical force, including beatings, the use of police dogs, choke holds, and shootings. Often times, the NAACP charges, police will use physical force while apprehending a suspect who is showing no signs of resistance, or even against a person who has not committed crime, but challenges the actions or authority of a police officer. While these acts of violence are not acted out solely against people of color, the frequency with which minorities are victimized of such attacks makes clear the degree of racial prejudice among police officers.

91 For a description see Walker 1998 p. 229
92 Walker 1998. p. 230
93 Ogletree. p. 36
94 Ibid. p. 29-39
Fundamentally intertwined with race issues are issues of class. The lack of jobs in poor communities lead not only to an increased crime rate, but also to the type of social disorder which tends to put police officers on edge. William Julius Wilson explains:

The most fundamental change is that many poor black neighborhoods today are no longer organized around work. A majority of adults in inner-city ghettos are either unemployed or have dropped out of the labor force. Consequently, their everyday lives are divorced from the rhythm and reality of the American mainstream.95

In a community where sources of employment are not present to create a system of responsibility and self-regulation, the police are expected to proxy. Officers act to contain a threat against a middle-class value system, which demands the delegation of time and responsibility through employment. The combination of aggressive, professional administrative policies, and the racial and class biases of both the police institution and individual police officers, creates an extremely volatile situation, especially in poor urban neighborhoods. James Baldwin describes the scenario:

[The] only way to police a ghetto is to be oppressive. None of the Police Commissioner’s men, even with the best will in the world, have any way of understanding the lives led by the people they swagger about in twos and threes controlling. Their very presence is an insult, and it would be, even if they spent their entire day feeding gumdrops to children...The badge, the gun in the holster, and the swinging club make vivid what will happen should his rebellion become overt. Rare indeed is the Harlem citizen...who does not have a long tale to tell of police incompetence, injustice, or brutality...It is hard, on the other hand, to blame the policeman, blank, good-natured, thoughtless, and insuperably innocent, for being such a perfect representative of the people he serves. He, too, believes in good intentions and is astounded and offended when they are not taken for the deed. He has never, himself, done anything for which to be hated – which of us has? – and yet he is facing, daily and nightly, people who would gladly see him dead, and he knows it...He moves through Harlem, therefore, like an occupying soldier in a bitterly hostile country; which is precisely what, and where, he is, and is the reason he walks in twos and threes.96

95 Found in Skolnick and Fyfe. p. xv
Baldwin's lucid interpretation of ghetto policing brings up one of the most essential issues for the community policing movement: It is not only the actions of individual officers or specific administrative policies that lead to discrimination and violence in policing. Rather, there are fundamental aspects of the police role that are incompatible with a fair and equitable system of policing in the United States. Chief among these aspects are police officers' capacity to use coercive physical force, and their ability to enforce the law with some amount of personal discretion.

The fact that officers are granted the power to use coercive physical force, against other citizens is perhaps the single most unique aspect of the police role. It is a power denied to nearly all other occupations, professional or not. Police officers are routinely expected to detain, interrogate, and in certain instances use deadly force against persons suspected of breaking the law. Even more unusual is the fact that an officer is granted this extreme degree of coercive power as soon as he or she completes the training period. In most occupations, an entry-level employee is entrusted with smaller responsibilities until it has been established that he or she is capable of coping with more advanced tasks. A police officer, on the other hand is expected to make life and death decisions on the very first day he or she goes on patrol.

In order to direct the power given to police officers, academies have been developed to provide officers with extensive training. But as we have discovered, the professional model has lead to a police sub-culture that undermines this training. Experienced officers impress upon new recruits that the only worthwhile training is that which is obtained on patrol; that officer tradition is the fundamental guideline. If police officers are to act in an equitable manner toward the community, their principle
guidelines must be determined by interpreting the law in light of the community’s needs, not through the regurgitation of police tradition.

Police discretion is another severely problematic aspect of the contemporary police role. Even in an official capacity, procedural codes alone do not govern police actions. Rather, these procedures are a means of enforcing the law, which is the more fundamental code of the professional police. If police officers’ primary responsibility is to prevent people from breaking the law, and arrest those who do, there should be relatively little decision-making involved in police work. This theory, as the reader may recall, is key to the professional model of policing. Individual discretion is, however, an indispensable part of police work.

How [police officers] are to carry out their various responsibilities is a difficult, if not impossible, task to specify in advance, so varied and complex are the situations to which they are called to respond. And so we grant them some discretion in these matters.97

Officers usually must determine on their own whether a certain matter warrants police involvement. If the answer is yes, the officer then makes a series of other decisions regarding how exactly what sort of intervention would be most appropriate. These decisions are clearly more difficult to make if an officer has little or no knowledge of the community in which he or she works. An officer who is familiar with the community will know whether it is abnormal for a certain office building to be occupied late at night, or whether or not a group of people on the corner is engaged in illicit activity. Not only would this sort of personal familiarity with a neighborhood make police officers more apt to notice irregular, potentially criminal behavior, it would also decrease the chance that an officer will falsely suspect a person of illegal activities.

97 Kleinig, p. 85-6
It seems fairly probable that a community-oriented approach to policing has the potential to lead to a more equitable police system. The question is how exactly the police can be de-alienated from the public.

**Hypotheses**

Theorists such as David Taylor have criticized purely causal explanations for police reform movements, claiming that these theories assume the existence of a general societal consensus that does not actually exist. Even if we adopt a conflict model of history, however, it should be possible to point out reasons, be they benevolent or repressive, for the evolution of new policing systems.

To review, the modern, preventative police model in American society was adopted in reaction to waves of civil disorder, in addition to the declining acceptance of violence in the public sphere. The institution that followed was highly decentralized and largely controlled by local politics. Professional reforms were implemented largely in response to such corruption. Reformers believed that standardized procedures, higher education, and most importantly, improved management techniques would lead to a more efficient, more respectable police force. While some of these reforms were effective, the professional model also led to two of the most serious and widespread problems in contemporary policing. First, the centrality of standard procedure and objectivity within the professional model has led to the alienation of police officers from the general public. Second, professional reformers’ focus on management-based reform, and the subsequent disregard for the needs of beat officers led to the alienation of officers from police administrators.
Community policing can therefore be understood as a direct response to the problems created by the professional model. Where the professionals sought to remove the police from the potentially corrupting influences of the surrounding community, the community policing movement attempts to bridge the gap between officers and citizens. The assumption is that if the community and the police are able to cooperate, the police will be better able to address the precise needs of that community in an equitable manner.

To evaluate the efficacy of the community policing movement, we must ask three questions. First, is it possible to overcome the obstacles of officer culture in order to facilitate community involvement? As community policing relies completely on cooperation between police officers and community members, the culture of distrust between the two groups presents a significant barrier to reform. It is essential then, that community policing creates a forum in which community members can express their needs, concerns, and complaints regarding the police in their community. Furthermore, these forums will only be effective if community input actually affects police policy and behavior. In order for this to happen, officers will have to disconnect themselves from that part of professionalism which assumes that only police officers have the requisite knowledge with which to determine how policing should be carried out. In order for community policing to be implemented in any valid form, lines of communication and cooperation between the police and the public must be rebuilt. Thus, we might expect community policing initiatives that focus on interaction between the two groups, such as community meetings or citizen watch programs, to be more successful in the
improvement of police community relations, as well as the prevention of crime within the community.

As the professional movement alienated officers from the administration as well as the public, the top-down implementation of police reform has become an institutional barrier for the community policing movement. In order to carry out community policing, administrators must take a vested interest in the opinions and concerns of rank-and-file officers. Unlike the professional model, which focused on administration as the key to reform, community policing must involve all members of the institution, as well as community members in the planning and implementation of reforms. The second question we must ask is whether community policing efforts can effectively establish cooperation between police administrators hoping to implement reforms, and rank and file officers who are highly dependant on tradition. Bridging the officer-administrator gap should be possible if programs are implemented to deconstruct the knowledge and decision-making hierarchies within the department. Thus, departments that train their officers in community policing theory and ethics should observe a lower rate of resistance among rank and file officers.

Third, we must determine whether police departments will be willing to implement such reforms with the broad scope necessary for their success. If community policing seeks to address the problems created by the professional model, it must be implemented in the same manner as the professional model. That is, community policing will not succeed as a crime prevention strategy if it merely involves a series of programs that supplement "traditional" or "real" police work. Professional policing executed major structural and philosophical changes within American policing institutions, and in order
to react to these all-encompassing reforms, community policing must be implemented with a similar scope. In other words, community policing can only be a valid method of crime prevention if it replaces pure professional policing as the model by which all police work is carried out. Therefore, we should find that community policing measures which are purely supplementary will not have a dramatic effect on crime within a given community, nor will they greatly improve police-community relations.

If a police department were to require all its officers to participate in training sessions that emphasized community relations, communications skills, and cultural diversity, and if all officers in a given department participated in programs involving cooperation with community members and organizations, the impact of community policing on police-community relations, as well as local crime rates would be more substantial.

Community Policing Theory and Implementation

Stated simply, the theory behind community policing is that a partnership between police officers and the policed community is absolutely necessary for the existence of a fair, efficient policing institution. It is important to recognize that this is not a new idea. Central to Robert Peel's modern police was the notion that the police must "manage public order nonviolently, with the application of violence viewed as an ultimate means of coercing compliance; to minimize and indeed reduce, if at all possible, the schism between police and public."^{98}

Despite Peel’s intentions, the idea of community policing must be understood as a radical concept today, as the desire for a police-community cooperation among police
reformers and administrators was rejected upon the adoption of the professional model. Thus, the first step of community-oriented police reform is to create a forum in which police officers and community members can engage in dialogue. Only after this forum is achieved can community policing initiatives regarding the alleviation of crime be developed and implemented with equal input from both groups.

Laying the foundation for a cooperative relationship between the police and the public will surely be the most difficult part of the reform process, as it involves convincing the public to trust an institution that has a monopoly on coercive power, and a history of using that power in a cruel and prejudicial manner. At the same time, police officers must unlearn what years of police culture and many experienced co-workers have taught them about the world outside the station house. They must abandon the professionalist mindset, wherein all civilians are potential criminals and the police are the thin blue line that keeps an otherwise chaotic society from destroying itself.

Community policing has attempted to address these antagonistic attitudes by training officers on topics such as community organization, communication skills, police ethics, and cultural diversity. While training officers to implement community-related policing measures (such as community organizing) seems entirely valid, training officers to be more sensitive to the community (though cultural diversity or ethics training) may be problematic. The task of changing an individual’s beliefs and loyalties is difficult enough, and when we consider the influence of officer sub-culture, which is generally

98 Manning, Peter K. Police Work, as found in Skolnick and Fyfe, p.126
hostile towards administrative efforts to alter traditional modes of policing, the idea of cultural diversity training rings a bit hollow.

Community policing, if carried out properly, would involve increased opportunity for scrutiny of police officers from both the administration, and the community at large. Subjecting officers to citizen review clearly undermines their authority. In Sampson Annan’s 1995 national study on community policing strategies, more than half of police chief executives interviewed expressed concern that rank and file officers would resist community policing initiatives. In order to dismantle officer opposition to administrators in general, and community-based reform in particular, it will be necessary to undo the administration-centered decision making hierarchy established by the professional movement. Specifically, rank and file officers (as well as community members) must be included in discussions of how and why community policing will be implemented.

To some extent, the breakdown of the administrative hierarchy may be underway. 78.4 percent of community policing officers receive training in community policing philosophy. Thus, they are privy to the reasoning behind community policing reforms. This sort of training does not, however, represent actual decentralization of institutional decision-making. In many community policing programs, officers have minimal involvement in the development of the program. Predictably, the exclusion of rank and file officers from program planning led to a high level of officer resistance. “[There was a common perception among officers] that community policing was being ‘shoved down the throats’ of patrol officers without their input into the process.”

100 Ibid.
101 Ibid.
102 Skolnick and Fyfe. p.40
Community members find themselves left out of police policy discussions much more often than police officers. Despite the fact that community policing supposedly revolves around police-citizen cooperation, barely half of police departments have implemented or plan to implement citizen advisory councils, and less than a third have or plan to involve citizens in police policy discussions. Less than a quarter of departments plan to involve citizens in officer evaluation or complaint review.\textsuperscript{103} Again and again, it is the policy and practice end of community policing that gets implemented, while the actual decentralization of decision-making is left undone.

Thus, the role of community members in community policing initiatives is left nearly identical to their role in traditional policing. Under both policing strategies, the community helps the police by providing information about criminal activity. Even when community-policing measures are implemented, citizens are not asked for advice or assistance in dealing with crime, once it has been discovered.\textsuperscript{104} Though some programs do include the development of “citizens academies” that educate the public in community policing, the actual implementation of policing is “too often...defined and implemented as a police initiative,” rather than a cooperative effort between the police and the community.\textsuperscript{105} As they are given little agency within community policing programs, citizens have little reason to participate, and little reason to invest more trust in the police.

Instead of implementing measures that might encourage cooperation between the police and the public, departments often develop supplementary policing programs which focus on the way patrols are carried out. More than three quarters of police departments have implemented or plan to implement drug-free zones around schools, police-youth

\textsuperscript{103} Anan.
\textsuperscript{104} Skolnick and Fyfe. p.49
programs, drug education in schools, crime and drug hotlines, and neighborhood watch programs. While all of these programs serve valid ends, they can only be marginally effective without an established cooperative relationship between the police and the community. These programs are implemented because they are straightforward. Establishing a drug-free zone seems easy when compared to creating trust between two hostile groups. Administrators seem to implement these programs in hopes that they will result in police-citizen cooperation. But programs such as drug-free zones and police-youth programs cannot succeed without a previously-established system of cooperation. If these programs are ineffective, it is unlikely that they will improve police-community relations.

Even after these programs are established, however, community police officers listed door to door contacts, motorized patrolling and crime investigation, all traditional forms of police work, as their most common activities. Many community policing officers rarely or never engage in specifically community-oriented programs, such as enforce drug-free zones, assist youth recreation programs, work with schools in education programs, or help form community groups. In fact, more than half of community policing officers report spending 50% or less of their time on community-related work. Oddly, it seems that community police work most often resembles traditional, professional police work.

105 Ibid.
106 Annan.
108 Ibid.
109 Ibid.
For instance, a community policing program funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance’s Innovative Neighborhood-Oriented Policing (INOP) program, entitled “Operation Siege,” attempted to combat drug dealing and prostitution in two Houston neighborhoods, with strategies such as community meetings to identify problems and crime prevention surveys, as well as “heavy enforcement activity,” “saturation patrol” and “zero tolerance” policies. The goal of the program was to “improve the quality of life by preventing crime at the neighborhood level.”

Introduced as an innovative community policing program, Operation Siege does not seem to address the connection between the police and the community in any significant way. While community members are involved with the program, in the sense that they identify the neighborhood’s problems for the police, they do not seem to involved in the development of strategies to address these problems. Instead, the police respond to the community’s problems by pouring more officers into the area and making as many arrests as possible. As should be completely obvious from the program’s name, Operation Siege is not community policing. Rather, it is an intense, localized professional policing program that in no way addresses the problems of community alienation or discriminatory police practices.

Fortunately, Operation Siege is not representative of the vast majority of community policing programs. For example, other INOP programs involved various genuinely community-oriented initiatives, including drug-free zone enforcement around schools and community-specific beats. Many officers also contact community groups,


11 Ibid.
make security checks on homes, patrol on foot, or work with local schools on a daily or weekly basis.

Furthermore, traditional police work (meaning crime prevention and detection) can be an important part of community police work, if it is molded to fit the specific needs of the community. John Kleinig refers to the revival of the beat cop as a possible path towards the elimination of the us/them distinction between the police and the public:

In certain respects, the move toward community policing revives an old, somewhat idealized stereotype – that of the local beat cop, knowing and known by his community, something of a neighborhood advisor and troubleshooter...But it is rather more than that. It also characterizes a philosophy...in which police consider themselves...as generally responsible for the neighborhood...in coordination with its residents and other bodies that have a stake in the community’s well-being.\footnote{Kleinig. p.230}

For example, a community policing program in Santa Barbara involves a six-officer team of “beat coordinators,” who focus on problem-solving in specific regions of the city. Las Vegas’ Line Solution Policing program follows a similar format, designating teams of officers to various districts.\footnote{Weisel, Deborah Lamm and Eck, John. “Toward a Practical Approach to Organizational Change: Community Policing Initiatives in Six Cities”. In Rosenbaum. p.58} Along with geographic specialization, Philadelphia has designated specialized “Five Squads,” which focus on certain community issues, such as victims assistance, community relations, and sanitation.\footnote{Weisel, Deborah Lamm and Eck, John. “Toward a Practical Approach to Organizational Change: Community Policing Initiatives in Six Cities”. In Rosenbaum. p.58} While these initiatives may fall within the realm of traditional policing modes, they can also be considered community policing, as they address the problems of a specific geographical area within the city.

While these new programs are implemented with relative ease, community policing must involve more than supplementary initiatives in order to be successful. That is, these programs require not only a preexisting cooperative relationship (brought about

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\footnote{Kleinig. p.230}
\footnote{Weisel, Deborah Lamm and Eck, John. “Toward a Practical Approach to Organizational Change: Community Policing Initiatives in Six Cities”. In Rosenbaum. p.58}
through decentralized decision-making), but also the broad implementation of community policing philosophy. Community policing programs and community police officers cannot achieve a significant effect within departments which are not actually community-policing institutions.

Unfortunately, many police departments find radical reform measures impractical. In Annan’s study, nearly 95% of chief executives felt that community policing was worth pursuing, yet only 37.5% believed that major policy changes were required for its implementation, and only 45.8% felt major training changes were necessary.\textsuperscript{115}

With community policing emerging as the single most prominent strategy in contemporary police reform, ineffective policy changes threaten to turn the movement into a “public relations panacea that exists on paper but is not seriously implemented in reality.”\textsuperscript{116} Regardless of the level of difficulty, radical changes in police attitudes are precisely what is necessary for real reform. Keeping in mind the nature of police subculture, and the individual discretion available to officers on daily basis, it is clear that policy changes alone cannot produce the desired effects of community policing. Community policing, though it is implemented top-down, is absolutely dependant on patrol officer support, as it is the patrol officers which interact with the community on a daily basis.\textsuperscript{117} It is not enough for a few specially designated “community police officers” to be sensitive to the needs of the community. As all officers act within the community, all officers must recognize community needs. However, community policing remains relegated to a few officers acting within supplementary programs.

\textsuperscript{114} Ibid. p.62
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{116} Kleinig. P.231
\textsuperscript{117} Sadd and Grinc. p.35
The lack of an all-encompassing approach to community policing is evident in community officer attitudes. The majority of designated community-policing officers feel that they are somehow different than traditional beat officers.\textsuperscript{118} Furthermore, while most community policing officers feel supported by their immediate supervisors and administrators, fewer feel supported by the agency in general. This data suggests that beat officers do not believe community-based initiatives constitute “real police work”.\textsuperscript{119}

The difficulty in establishing validity for community policing among beat officers may stem from the fact that in a occupational group with prizes its professional knowledge, community policing seems to require little additional expertise. More than one third of police departments require no additional training for community policing officers. More than 4 out of 5 departments require fifty hours or less.\textsuperscript{120} While most officers do receive more than the minimum mandatory training, the lack of specific knowledge attached to community policing by administrators, in combination with the fact that the majority of community policing officers spend half or less of their time working on community policing initiatives, must undermine the movement’s validity.

Because most of the INOP projects were conceived of as experimental units within patrol, and because so little effort was made to educate non-project officers...[there was] fertile ground for the growth of resentment between traditional patrol officers and INOP officers.\textsuperscript{121}

As community policing efforts have not, as of yet, involved initiatives which alter they way traditional, professional police work is carried out; and as they have not yet familiarized all rank and file officers with community policing theory; most community-based policing initiatives have had less than dramatic results.

\textsuperscript{118} Langston and Richardson.
\textsuperscript{119} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{120} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{121} Ibid.
The Results of Community Policing

While community policing measures have experienced varied results, there are a few trends that deserve attention. First, while community policing efforts have been largely unsuccessful in terms of crime prevention, they are often fairly effective at improving police-community relations. Almost all of the INOP sites reported improved relations, from the perspective of community members, as well as police officers and administrators. However, these results were often limited to community relations between certain officers and certain community segments. Clearly, the fact that community policing theory and techniques were only imparted on certain police officers has limited the potential for improving community relations:

95% of community police officers surveyed in Langston and Richardson’s 1995 study sensed that community policing had improved public attitudes toward police in their community, but the effect of community policing measures on actual police-citizen conflict varied greatly depending on whether certain types of programs were implemented. Programs that seemed to succeed in resolving police-community conflicts often involved the facilitation of communication between police officers and community members, or the involvement of community members in police work.

For example, 66% of those officers whose duties included receiving direct citizen complaints on a daily basis felt that community policing had helped decrease police-citizen conflicts. On the other hand, only one-third of those who “seldom” received direct complains, and none of the officers who never received direct complains felt that

121 Sadd and Grinc. P.38
122 Sadd and Grinc.
community policing had impacted police-citizen conflicts. 124 100% of officers who provided citizens with daily crime reports witnessed a decrease in conflict, as opposed to 58.3% who provided monthly reports, and 45.9% of those who never provided citizens with crime reports. All surveyed officers who participated in the establishment and operation of citizen watch groups (programs that directly involve community members in crime prevention) on a daily basis recognized a decrease in conflict. Less than half of officers who never participated in watch programs noticed such improvements. 125

In contrast to programs that encouraged community participation, programs that maintained officer exclusivity in crime prevention were not clearly effective in reducing police-citizen conflict. Officers who attended community meetings on a daily basis were slightly more likely to report decreases in conflict than officers who never attended such meetings. But officers who attended meetings on a weekly, or monthly basis were more likely to perceive decreased conflict than either of the previous groups. Similarly, officers who counseled citizens on crime prevention on a weekly basis were significantly more likely to notice decreased conflict than those who participated in the same sort of program either more or less often. Considering this data, it seems unlikely that either of these programs are inherently effective in the repair of police-community relations. 126

Efforts to train police in cultural diversity and community policing theory do not seem to have had any tangible effect on their interactions with the community. Police officers who have received these types of training are no more likely to sense decreased conflict between the police and citizens. On the other hand, over 60% of officers trained

123 Langston and Richardson
124 Ibid.
125 Ibid.
126 Ibid.
programs that are most effective are those that encourage citizen involvement in crime prevention. All surveyed officers who solicited help from local businesses on a daily basis perceived some reduction of police-related problems within the community. Less than 60% of those who were not involved in this type of program felt community problems had been significantly relieved. Similarly, every officer surveyed who participated in citizen watch groups on a daily basis noticed decreased community problems, compared to 57.9% of those who were not involved with watch groups.130

Despite less than impressive results in terms of crime prevention, community-based policing programs do appear to successfully assuage fear of crime in many communities. Skogan’s study reports that fear of crime decreased significantly in half of the areas studied. While INOP programs in Houston in New York did not significant effect fear of crime, several other INOP areas reported significant decreases. Though only about one third of the officers interviewed by Langston and Richardson perceived an actual drop in crime, more than half perceived decreased fear of crime among community members.

If crime is not significantly less prevalent in these neighborhoods, why is it that people are feeling safer? Perhaps we can attribute decreased fear of crime to the more accessible types of police presence brought about by community policing. According to Skogan, “[if community members] see more police officers walking on foot or working out of a local substation, they feel less fearful.”131 Unfortunately, Langston and Richardson’s data contradicts this assertion. Officers’ perceptions regarding the community’s fear of crime do not seem to be affected by the frequency of foot patrol.

130 Ibid.
131 Skogan. p.180
in communication skills perceived a decreased level of police-citizen conflict, while less than 45% of officers who had not received comparable training perceived this change.\textsuperscript{127} Again, it is training that encourages interaction between police and community which improves relations, rather than training which embellishes exclusive police knowledge.

In terms of actual crime prevention, most community policing efforts have been fairly ineffective. Some respondents in INOP neighborhoods perceived decreases in outdoor drug-dealing, but these effects were often judged to be temporary. Furthermore, many respondents believed that trafficking had simply been displaced to other neighborhoods. INOP programs in New York and Houston had no significant effect on drug-dealing.

While some respondents believed that INOP programs had led to a drop in drug-related crime, most were unsure about the programs' effects in this area. A study of fourteen community policing programs in six cities, conducted by Wesley Skogan, found that few community-oriented initiatives (3 of 14) led to a significant drop in victimization of residents.\textsuperscript{128} In Langston and Richardson's study, more than half community police officers reported a robbery and burglary, but other types of crime (including drug-dealing, assault, vandalism, and gang activity) remained largely unaffected, and almost two-thirds of respondents couldn't tell whether prostitution had been reduced in their area.\textsuperscript{129}

There are some community policing programs that have proven more effective than others in the prevention of crime. Much as in the case of citizen-police conflict, the

\textsuperscript{127}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{128}Skogan, Wesley G. "The Impact of Community Policing on Neighborhood Residents: A Cross-Site Analysis." In Rosenbaum 1994
\textsuperscript{129}Langston and Richardson.
While 48.6% of officers who have daily foot patrols perceived decreased fear of crime, 60% of those who never patrol on foot felt that fear of crime had waned.  

The presence of community substations has a slightly more tangible effect on fear of crime. 61.3% of officers who work in community substations on a daily basis perceived a decreased in the community’s fear of crime, as compared to 44.7% of those who never work in community substations. Maybe it is the knowledge that police officers are present in a fixed location nearby, rather than roaming around, that helps community members feel safer.

There are, however, other community policing programs that may produce more dramatic drops in fear of crime. For example, 100% of officers who work with education programs in schools on daily basis witnessed decreased fear of crime among citizens. Among officers who never participate in such programs, only fifty percent perceived a decrease. Officers who participated in citizen watch programs were also more likely to report decreased fear of crime. Interestingly, of those officers who had daily meetings with community members, a full 25% were neutral, or did not know how community policing had affected fear of crime. No more than 5.3% of officers who participated in these meetings on a less frequent basis or not at all did not know whether fear of crime had decreased.

The discrepancy between the effects of community policing on crime and its effects on fear of crime within the community does not signify that the police are

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132 Langston and Richardson. While it is possible that other officers in a given department engage in foot patrol, community policing offices seem the most likely to perform this duty. Therefore, I will assume that the responding officer’s participation is a fair indicator of his or her department’s engagement in foot patrol, or any other community policing strategy.
133 Ibid.
134 Ibid.
somehow tricking community members into believing they are safer than they actually are. Just as perceptions regarding crime in London immediately prior to the establishment of Peel’s modern police were effected by factors other than the actual crime rate, fear of crime in contemporary American cities does not always accurately reflect the level of crime. Eck and Rosenbaum point out that fear of crime “is often associated with the presence of racially or ethnically dissimilar groups within the community,” presenting police with the difficult responsibility of “simultaneously [reducing] fear, respond[ing] to divergent community desires, and provid[ing] equitable services.” Regardless, reduced fear of crime within a community does represent a tangible improvement in quality of life for the residents of that community. Thus, the contribution community policing has made towards the reduction of fear can be counted among its successes.

Conclusions

Despite its popularity, community policing has yet to be been proven an effective method of crime prevention. It has, in some instances, improved relations between the community and the police. It is also a fairly effective method of reducing citizens’ fear of crime. But, in order for community policing to be considered truly effective as a policing strategy, it must also be useful in the actual prevention of crime. It is, I believe, possible to alter current community policing initiatives in such a way that crime can be effectively addressed while community involvement and cooperation remain at the forefront of police strategy. In order for community policing reforms to succeed, it will

135 Eck, John D. and Rosenbaum, Dennis P. “The New Police Order: Effectiveness, Equity, and Efficiency
be necessary to deconstruct the organizational structures and schools of knowledge created by the professionalist movement.

First, police department hierarchies will have to be altered in order to create what Roy Roberg refers to as an "organic organizational design," which involves a less rigid, non-authoritarian structure. The new structure will have to be accompanied by a "participatory management style," that "empowers line personnel." Such a structure runs directly in contradiction to the professional police model, which relies on the dissemination of knowledge and policy through a strict paramilitary hierarchy. Difficulties will no doubt arise in the implementation of an organic design, as it will require not only the abandonment of traditional police knowledge, but also the abdication of decision-making power from administrators to rank and file officers, as well as from officers to community members.

The view that community policing is a system through which, "police can represent an infusion of knowledge and energy [into a community] that is able to reverse the course of urban decay and demoralization," must be abandoned, as it supports the notion that police administrators and officers are privy to an exclusive body of professional knowledge, and are therefore exclusively capable of redeeming the community. Instead of imagining themselves the thin blue line between social structure and anarchy, police officers and administrators must accept community members as willing and able partners in law-enforcement. In other words, community policing must not exclusively be a police effort. Certainly, the effort of the community is


137 Koenig. p.231
necessary, but reform initiatives must also receive support from social agencies, political leaders, and the media in order to be effectively implemented.\textsuperscript{138}

Of course, in order for this sort of large-scale reform to take place, it must be implemented throughout a department. Community policing cannot be effective unless all personnel are affected by reform initiatives. The existence of “community police officers” represents a fundamental misunderstanding of effective police reform. When modern preventative police departments were created, both in London and the United States, the implementation of the new policing structures necessitated the dismantling existing institutions (the night watch, city marshals, etc.). When the professional movement attempted to tear policing away from the influence of political machines, the structure of the police department was changed to facilitate more authoritarian, “objective”, and standardized decision-making. Though we may not find the results of these two reform movements particularly agreeable, they were certainly effective in bringing about reform. If community policing is implemented through supplementary programs run by a few specialized officers, widespread change to policing structures simply will not occur. Again, in order to respond to the problems created by the broadly implemented professional movement, it will be necessary for \textit{all officers} to be community police officers and \textit{all police work} to be community policing.

Once community policing has the support of the entire police agency, as well as the community (and any other necessary groups), it will be necessary to allow time for adjustment and adaptation of community policing initiatives within any given community. That is, if community-policing measures are implemented, and are then unsuccessful, the measures must be altered and re-implemented, rather than abandoned.

Community policing, by its very nature, is site specific. Measures that are completely effective in one community may be ineffective in another. Police administrators must recognize this fact, and not assume that one failed attempt at community policing signals its ineffectiveness.

Ultimately, the implementation of community policing may necessitate the redefinition of “successful” police work. Within a professional framework, a policing initiative that prevents more crime is more successful. Within community policing, however, police are not working solely toward the prevention of crime. Indeed, a more intimate knowledge of a community on the part of police should involve a new familiarity with the socio-economic roots of crime within that community. With this knowledge, the impossible goal of preventing all crime should be replaced by a more reasonable goal: fostering social stability within the community in order to improve economic conditions, and bring about an environment where fewer people have to rely on illegitimate income.

Of course, this does not sound much like police work. Traditionally, police are expected to people from committing crimes, and if they do commit a crime, the police are expected to find and arrest that person. Community policing, in nothing else, represents a break with traditional understandings of police work. Crime prevention can include more than deterrence through fear of incarceration. It can also occur by improving socio-economic conditions within a community, so that the motivation to commit crime is removed. Obviously, this is not a simple, straightforward plan. In some ways, the process of community policing must at some point involve the redistribution of wealth, in
order to eliminate class boundaries that perpetuate illegitimate economies. It helps, however, to visualize these efforts on a micro-level.

Within a community, the police can attempt to solve local problems through a combination of traditional police work and community-specific programs. The police department as a whole, with the real cooperation and input of community members, can establish neighborhood watch programs and community substations to deter crimes such as robbery and drug sales; they can be involved in the establishment of drug rehabilitation resources in order to eliminate the market for illegal drugs; they can work with schools to provide a safer educational environment, enforce drug-free zones, ensure that students actually attend classes, and provide assistance with safe after-school activities. In short, the community lets the police know what it needs, and the police work with the community to meet those goals.

Obviously, none of these programs will lead to the elimination of all crime from any neighborhood. But, with a real and complex partnership between the police and the public, community policing can be a valid path toward equitable and non-class-biased policing.
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