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## Police Leadership and Police Culture

Despite the wealth of literature focusing on police culture, there is little sense of an ‘established’ position on how this concept relates to the issue of police leadership – either in the traditional sense of qualities associated with the senior ranks or of qualities associated with all ranks. In respect of the former, this is because, as Reiner (1992) noted, the growth in research surrounding policing mainly concentrated on explaining the values and behaviours of the lower ranks of the organisation. Indeed, whilst some literature touches upon the nature of this relationship between police culture and leadership (see, for example, Marks, 2007 on the relationship between police culture, leadership and unionism), or explores a particular aspect of it (see, for example, Cockcroft, 2014, on the relationship between police culture and transformational leadership), the relationship has not been more fully articulated. To date, therefore, there has been insufficient attention paid to the identification of a broad explanatory context to facilitate our understanding of this area.

### Introduction

It is important to understand that, despite the recent trend for police culture to become entwined with issues of police leadership through numerous academic papers (e.g. Mastrofski, 2004, Rowe, 2006), policy documents (e.g. Sheehy Report, 1993, Home Office, 2004) and other documents (e.g. Bevir and Krupicka, 2007, Dodd and Stratton, 2011), the relationship is not particularly linear. Police culture was traditionally an area of study that was of interest to academics and largely irrelevant to the consideration of senior police officers. Primarily, this was because of the sociological orientation of early work into police culture (e.g. Banton, 1964, Reiner, 1978). For much of the early period of sociological research on police culture, the 1960s and 1970s, British

sociology was a politicised endeavour aligned to the British labour movement (Cockcroft, 2017). And whilst this relationship led to the creation of some excellent sociological accounts of police culture (see, e.g. Banton, 1964, and Manning 1977), much of this research would fail to attract the attentions of police leaders focused upon the contemporary challenges of police work. It is only recently that police culture has become an acceptable concept to draw on in professional practice circles. This, arguably, has been driven by two related factors, a) the growing relationship between the academy and police organisations, and b) a shift in the way that many academics engage with the concept of police culture. For the first of these, Bryant et al (2014) note how, over recent decades, relationships between police organisations and HE institutions have developed both in terms of research and knowledge transfer collaboration and in the provision of educational programmes aimed at police officers. Such collaborations have facilitated a growing sense of reciprocity driven by new and challenging financial arrangements and an increasingly entrepreneurial spirit, underscored by a, “strategically-driven impetus” (Goode and Lum, 2018, p.76). Simultaneously, there appears, to be a general lessening of the ‘condemnatory’ nature of research into policing (see Waddington, 1999) through which academic research was used to critique policing per se. Indeed, Sklansky (2007) has drawn attention to the ‘cognitive burn-in’ of ideas and assumptions about police culture and the ways in which this has led to unhelpful representations of police officers and their work. Increasingly, therefore, it is possible to detect a more collaborative spirit between academic and police institutions.

In 2015 the College of Policing published its Leadership Review. The introduction to this report was very direct in setting out its rationale, noting that the twin threats of, “financial constraint and declining legitimacy” (2015, p. 5) were two key issues that threatened the future success of the

police. Likewise, “new social, economic and political realities” (2015, p. 5) suggested that fundamental change was required at the structural and cultural levels of police organizations to ensure that they were fully able to meet these emerging demands. More subtly, there was an acknowledgement of the police professionalization agenda and the growing influence of Evidence Based Policing, not least how these could be used to engineer a reconceptualization of policing as a profession rather than a craft. The review noted six key areas where new practices needed to be promoted - “improving culture; addressing unintended consequences of hierarchy; increasing diversity and valuing difference; giving attention to both management and leadership development; recognising lateral development; and achieving greater consistency of practice across forces” (College of Policing, 2015, p. 17). One aspect of note here is that culture not only appears on this list but that it can be argued that it plays a substantial role across the other five listed dimensions. Undoubtedly, therefore, our understanding of police leadership requires an acknowledgement of police organisational culture and vice-versa. Whilst this chapter will focus on issues largely derived from the UK context, it should be noted that similar processes have been identified, beyond the UK, in the USA, Australia and Canada (Fleming and Lafferty, 2000, O’Malley and Hutchinson, 2007). This chapter will seek to explore the complexities of the relationship between police culture and police leadership in a way that recognizes leadership as a quality associated with the higher police ranks but which also acknowledges a more contemporary position that views leadership as an essential element of policing roles *per se*. It will do so in three ways. First, by investigating the extent to which police leaders can be conceptualised as having a particular cultural orientation. Second, by explaining the conceptual tensions in the relationship and, finally, by briefly exploring the assumption that police culture leads to barriers to effective

police leadership. In doing so, it will recognise the challenges of attempting to transpose homogeneous models of police culture to such complex concepts.

### Police Officers, Leaders and Culture

This section will seek to explore, by focusing on two pieces of work, the different cultural drivers of police orientation, working style and behavior that are seen to operate on chief constables and, what Skolnick described as, the, ‘cop on the beat’ (1994, p. 42). The models provided by these authors are helpful in that they provide scope with which to identify and explain the different cultural elements that impact on police officers working at either the strategic or the operational level. In doing so, they help us to begin to explain the traditional binary distinction between ‘leadership’ and ‘street’ police cultures.

Central to any understanding of leadership and culture is an appreciation of Reiner’s (1992) work on chief constables. Reiner’s work, essentially a piece of occupational sociology, drew heavily on the notion that the worldview of police leaders was driven by distinct factors. His analysis, arguably, echoes Skolnick’s (1994) idea of the police ‘working personality’ as he identifies elements that explain chief constables’ orientation to their work. For example;

“At one level each individual chief constable is completely unique. However, the common experiences and problems which they encounter tend to generate a common set of responses, which constitute the dominant culture of chief constables” (Reiner, 1992, p.303)

In particular, Reiner views the elements that shape the chief constable culture as being ‘period’; ‘problems’; ‘place’ and ‘pedigree’. Every period had a specific set of influences, ideas and policing approaches that influenced how police leaders undertake the role assigned to them. It is also true that chief constables’ working styles are substantially influenced by the problems facing them, regardless of the source of these issues. Likewise, every policing environment or jurisdiction has a particular demographic mix or historical residue which impacts on the challenges. Finally, Reiner introduces the concept of pedigree which refers to the social background of chief constables. Together these variables interact to deliver one of four ideal types of chief constable - ‘baron’, ‘bobby’, ‘boss’ and ‘bureaucrat’.

The work of Skolnick (1994) and Reiner (1992) is helpful in that both authors seek to explore those variables which influence the culture of, respectively, street officers and chief constables. Comparison of these two sets of factors allow us to make some tentative assumptions regarding the cultural worlds of the two types of officer. In doing so, we have to be careful to add the caveat that this approach may lead to assumptions that leadership is the factor that differentiates these two explanatory models. Increasingly, literature (e.g. Grint and Thornton, 2015) identifies leadership as an element of all roles of policing rather than just those with an explicit leadership component, an issue that will be returned to later in the chapter. Returning to the comparison of Skolnick’s (1994) ‘working personality’ and Reiner’s (1992) work, some interesting elements emerge. The drivers behind Skolnick’s (1994) ‘working personality’ are essentially integral to the role and do not explicitly address environmental factors. In this sense, Skolnick’s (1994) model provides us with an approach that makes no account of variation in officer orientation and which provides a template for understanding police culture in a variety of national and historical contexts.

Reiner's model differs significantly in that only one of the dimensions ('problems') pertains to the immediate impacts of the challenges of the chief constable's role. Instead, we see a model that focuses on variation in environment and societal context ('place' and 'period') and, importantly, one that addresses a range of more individual factors such as, "Social origin, education, work experience, training, specialization...and many other personal and career factors" (p. 305). This is interesting on two levels. First, that the issue of personal biography which can be implied in the latter has traditionally had very little impact on work in the area of police culture. Second, Skolnick's work only allows for the impact of the police role and provides no typologies based on variations within and between these dimensions. This is important as it might reinforce the assumption that, for many officers, there is no palette of styles of policing from which to choose. In doing so, it reminds us that traditionally the transactional relationships that underpin the police hierarchy may leave little scope for interpretation or variation for those working in the lower ranks. The implication of this, for police leadership roles, is that the orientations identified by Reiner allow for a variety of cultural responses or styles to co-exist. These can be viewed as The Baron (a traditional form of leadership, driven by deference within a hierarchical organisational structure); The Bobby (leadership founded upon the norms and values of street level police officers); The Boss (a more cynical version of the bobby shaped by the specific challenges of metropolitan environments), and The Bureaucrat (leadership which combines an appreciation of modern management with an acknowledgement of traditional 'cop' values). The work of Reiner and Skolnick is helpful as both accounts provide us with frameworks which allow us to understand that rank and file officers and police leaders have quite different factors driving their cultural orientation. Furthermore, it appears that whilst immediate operational roles, contexts and

expectations of lower level police roles drive the cultural reference points for most officers, police leaders have more opportunity to be influenced by a mixture of wider social and biographic factors.

The above literature allow us to identify a discrete set of differences between the cultural worlds of chief constables and lower ranking officers. It is possible, therefore, that a substantive difference between the two exists – with a more general police culture being directed by the demands of the role and the elite police culture directed to a greater extent by the personal biography and particular challenges faced by those leaders. And whilst Newburn (2011) quite rightly sounds a note of caution in reminding us of the need to recognise the overall sense of *continuity* over time in matters of policing it is equally important not to lose sight of the fact that the policing field has transformed substantially since both pieces of work were written. We must, therefore, be cautious not to underestimate the changes to the police field over the last quarter of a century and their potential to have ramifications at many levels, including the cultural.

### Changing Contexts of Leadership and Culture

Police leadership cannot be understood without an appreciation of changes to its context over recent years. Long (2003) provides such a contextualisation and suggests how these changes are entwined with broader transformation to the configuration of the public sector. The pivotal shift away from what might be termed Keynesian policing came in 1983 with Home Office Circular 114/83 ‘Manpower, Effectiveness and Efficiency in the Police Service’ (Cockcroft, 2013). Its importance lay in its introduction of the concept of value for money to the policing arena and the part it played in establishing conditions through which a wholly new ideology would supplant traditional ways of measuring, rewarding and understanding police performance. It also heralded



the end of the post-war consensus surrounding the 'social contract' (Garland, 2001). According to Caless (2011), the introduction of New Public Management (NPM) in 1992 has led to a raft of new measures that seek to quantify what the police do and how well this is received by the public.

These changes have led to developments in the leadership styles of senior officers and have meant that the relevance of Reiner's work, whilst a classic of its time, has been superseded by new forms of police management. Increasingly, Long (2003) argues, bureaucratic leadership has come to prominence over the other forms identified by Reiner (1992). However, it is debatable whether contemporary interpretations of bureaucratic police leadership as an ideal type strictly parallel that identified by Reiner (1992). Reiner himself identified the bureaucratic police chief as merging, "a mastery of modern managerial approaches with the charismatic image of a traditional bobby or detective" (p. 308). The work of Caless (2011) suggests, however, that past and present notions of bureaucratic types may differ substantially with only 4% of his sample identifying with Reiner's concept of the 'Bureaucrat' (and 26% rejecting the idea of a typology altogether). This apparent shift to bureaucratic forms of leadership needs to be understood against the backdrop of target driven policing and its impact on traditional forms of police leadership. In other words, the last 15 years have arguably seen a new position articulated through which changes to policing, and the sector it exists in, have resulted in a gradual narrowing of the culture and styles available to those senior officers. Perhaps the most substantial piece of work focusing on this development is that of Caless (2011) who rightly notes that a generation of police chief constables have passed through the ranks of the police in the period between Reiner's and his own work being published. Given this amount of time, some degree of change to the ways in which police leadership is conceived and practiced should be considered inevitable. Similarly, the tone and reach of Caless' work is

substantively different to that of Reiner (1992). As Caless notes, the pressures and challenges facing the contemporary chief constable are far removed from those encountered by Reiner. Furthermore, Caless is forthright in his decision not to address the ‘socio-political’ context of chief officer origins (2011, p. xiv), focusing less on senior officers’ perception of, for example, the post-Scarman policing landscape<sup>1</sup> and focusing more on the working culture and personal sacrifice of those police leaders he interviewed. In doing so, nonetheless, he provides an account that complements Reiner’s work. A number of striking elements emerge from Caless’ account. First, that there is a remarkable degree of ambivalence about leadership amongst those officers interviewed. Somewhat ironically, chief constables were unclear about what constituted leadership in a general sense, let alone within the police context. In particular, many appeared sceptical of the idea that one could identify particular styles or cultures of leadership as was suggested in the work of Reiner (1992). Those senior officers interviewed by Caless suggested that whilst the professionalism of police organisations had increased over recent years, the “structure and process” (2011, p.102) of such workplaces made it difficult to deliver transformational leadership, a style of leadership that has become very popular in police circles over recent years (see Cockcroft, 2014, for a fuller account of the rhetoric and impact of transformational leadership). At the same time, Caless’ work is important in that it suggests that the adoption of a typological approach to understanding styles of police leadership is unlikely to work with the same degree of success when applied to 21st century police leaders. Over half of Caless’ sample suggested that they switched between of leadership styles (i.e. ‘Baron’, ‘Bobby’, ‘Boss’ and ‘Bureaucrat’) depending on the situation being addressed. In conclusion, Caless starkly notes that, “There seems

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<sup>1</sup> The post-Scarman policing landscape refers to police organisations’ growing acknowledgement of diversity issues that have emerged over the last 30 years and the subsequent impact of identity politics on the work of the police (see Loftus, 2009)

to be considerable pessimism among chief officers about the nature of leadership in the police and about what its constituents should be...there is little unity on what constitutes a successful police leader and even less on whether such attributes can be taught” (2011, p.117).

Whilst the concept of police leadership has been subject to change over recent decades it is also possible to suggest that police culture, at a conceptual level, has both begun to be applied in different ways and to be used to describe different processes. For example, early work (such as Banton, 1964) was very much rooted in the sociology of organisations. Later work, also sociological, tended to be more politicised and drew attention to unprofessional or inappropriate police behaviour (e.g. Van Maanen, 1978 and Punch, 1985). More recent years have seen a coming together of the academy and police organisations and this has perhaps allowed for a reading of police culture that works for both academic and police audiences. Where this presents a development on previous work is that it allows for a more appreciative understanding of policework informed by a more nuanced awareness of the challenging work context experienced by police officers. More fundamentally, police culture has evolved from a linear concept, that somewhat deterministically tried to impose simplistic categories upon police officers with a diverse array of personal characteristics. Instead, contemporary research has identified variations in police behaviour and explored the cultural impact of changes in the policing field. Taking the example of gender discrimination as an example of ‘cultural change’ it is possible to highlight some of these complexities. Whilst recent years have seen a number of female officers appointed to the senior positions of police constabularies it could be tempting to suggest that gender discrimination within the police was no longer a barrier to female career progression. However, as powerfully argued by Silvestri (2003, 2017), such developments need to be treated cautiously. She

suggests that one of the key issues here is that gender discrimination has been approached by police organisations in ways that appear more concerned with the *appearance* of fairness than the *reality* of it. To Silvestri (2017), the standard recourse of using the concept of the ‘cult of masculinity’ to explain gendered experiences of policework represents an oversimplification of the gendered elements of police culture. Such work highlights the limited ability of traditional conceptions of police culture to explain the more fluid social world of contemporary policing. In doing so, they remind police scholars of the need to avoid what Sklansky (2007) referred to as ‘cognitive burn-in’ of ideas about policing and the challenge of traditional ways of conceiving of police culture struggle to remain relevant within the transformed field of policing.

#### Cultural Differentiation between Police Leaders and Non-Leaders

Police culture has been seen by many as potentially antagonistic to, and in conflict with, leadership (Niederhoffer, 1969, Reuss-Ianni and Ianni, 1983 and Marks, 2007). From the outset, a problematic is set by the implicit assumption that culture is something that ‘happens’ in the lower ranks (the work of, amongst others, Van Maanen, 1978, for example, provides an explicit focus on lower level ranks). Given, in a UK context at least, the traditional position that police leaders had passed through the lower ranks, such a distinction can be considered unhelpful. Likewise, it goes against the prevailing orthodoxy that police cultures are fluid, changeable and co-exist as flotillas of cultural knowledge which, whilst prone to variation, fundamentally point the same way. In this sense, it is appropriate to assume a position that police leaders may have differing cultural orientations rather than belong to different cultures. This, however, does not appear to be a view that is expressed at the level of policy. For example, the College of Policing (2015, p. 17) appeared to reinforce a linear representation of police culture when it referred to:

“...negative aspects of policing culture that may impede change, prevent internal challenge, restrict innovation and, at worst, damage individual and institutional legitimacy. The nature of police work, including the presence of personal risk, can encourage a tendency to stick together in the face of threats and at worst, result in insular attitudes that inhibit change”

This reading can be viewed as a means of isolating the issue of police culture into a tangible and discrete phenomenon to be addressed by police leaders as a definable ‘problem’. In doing so, it serves to simplify and render a-cultural a complex social phenomenon by driving us towards a discourse founded upon the supposition that those in the mid to higher ranks are leaders and those in the lower ranks are not. This sits uneasily with the contemporary view of leadership as an integral part of every police role (as identified, by e.g., Grint and Thornton, 2015). The tone of the discourse being set by the College of Policing, however, is perhaps unsurprising. The recent history of the transformation of public sector occupations into ‘professions’, has been characterised by what Fournier (1999, p. 288) saw as the imposition of a form of ‘disciplinary logic’ upon lower level operatives aimed at limiting practitioner discretion. In this sense, ‘modern’ professions (like policing) are characterised by an inversion of the autonomy enjoyed by ‘traditional’ professions which, in effect, creates a distinction within that profession between leaders and practitioners. This notion of cultural distinction, whereby we can perceive both implicit and explicit distinctions between police officers does appear disingenuous. Not least, because Giddens conceived of the ‘double hermeneutic’ (1984: 20) where, by applying it to this example, police leaders cannot aim to understand police culture with the detached objectivity of the natural scientist. They themselves

are part of the sphere of influence of that term and can themselves influence what shape the meaning of police culture takes.

This tendency to differentiate, culturally, between police leaders and lower ranking police officers is a logical response to the limitations of earlier work in police culture. Traditionally, police culture was viewed in terms which depicted those who worked for police organisations as homogeneous in terms of outlook. Little or no differentiation was ascribed to them regardless of role or seniority. Reuss-Ianni and Ianni (1983), for example, note that officers prior to 1970, the New York City Police department represented, “a cohesive organizational home for a commonly shared ethos...mutually binding on all officers from the top down to the newest recruits” (p. 256)<sup>2</sup>. At that time, such ideas were adequate, representing, as they did, the early foundations of social scientific explanations of police work. Similarly, policing was characterised by less complexity and variation than is the case in the 21st century. In short, the relatively straightforward and uncontested conceptions of ‘police’ and ‘policing’ of the 1960s and 1970s had done little to promote more sophisticated ideas of the cultural dynamics of police work.

However, over time, academics started to explore why police officers exhibit different forms of behaviour and values than might be predicted by more deterministic accounts of police culture. One area which attracted such commentary was that of the differences in cultural orientation between police officers and their managers (see, for example, Manning, 1978, and Reuss-Ianni and Ianni, 1983) and this tended to embed the implicit assumption that police leaders hold a different set of cultural reference points to those of the lower ranks. The roots of this cultural

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<sup>2</sup> A similar point is made by Fleming and Lafferty (2000).

division can be traced back to Niederhoffer's (1969) research into police work which identified an organisational schism within policing drawn from the tension between middle-class professionalism and working-class unionism which he saw as, "verging on internecine class conflict between the lower-class conservatives and the upwardly mobile middle-class radicals" (1969, p.18). Similarly, to Reuss-Ianni and Ianni, a substantive difference began to emerge in the cultures of street and management officers. For street officers, the cultural locus is the police precinct (or station) which represents, "...a distinctive and distinct social system, contrived by a particular occupational culture, responsive to sociocultural change and organised and controlled through its own set of rules and procedures" (1983, p. 252). For management officers, external social and political networks provide the cultural push. What we might consider of importance here is the idea that this cultural divergence is seen as a relatively new phenomenon. Formerly, officers described a sense of 'mutuality' (p. 254) which characterised relations between street and management cops against a backdrop of an accepting public, a lack of external scrutiny and supportive management. The result was a set of working relations that were, "organizationally positive and socially negative" (p. 255). Central to this argument, however, is the need to understand the nature of the relationship between these two cultures, not least in respect to the degree of congruence between them. This is not immediately apparent from Reuss-Ianni and Ianni's work. For example, whilst suggesting that the two cultures "co-exist" (p. 256) and represent "incongruent value systems" (p. 272), there is scope for a degree of overlap. Importantly, these value systems, as suggested by Niederhoffer (1969), were partially class based with the street culture viewed essentially working class whilst the managerial culture was seen as middle class and better educated. This, they suggest, means that working class officers experience a greater degree of loyalty to the street culture. Whilst an undoubtedly helpful means of providing a

foundation for a more sophisticated and non-deterministic view of police culture, a large challenge remains around the extent to which the two cultures remain distinct, separate and incongruous. Reuss-Ianni and Ianni's (1983) writing does suggest that these cultures share little scope for compatibility although they do acknowledge that street officer values are shared to an extent by all officers but vary in intensity dependent on seniority and role.

What has emerged, therefore, is a very defined difference in the way we describe police leaders and lower ranking officers in terms of their culture. This may be viewed as a direct consequence of the way we apply the concept of police leadership. As identified above, the work of scholars like Reuss-Ianni and Ianni attempted to resolve a limitation of earlier work in the area in respect of its failure to differentiate between variations in culture, values and behaviour. In doing so, in solving one issue another may have inadvertently been created. This is common to a number of dimensions of our understanding of police culture and occurs where discussions of police culture adopt mutually exclusive categories. Whilst such categorical distinctions can impede our understanding, what stands out here is Reuss-Ianni and Ianni's conception of what drives this apparent cultural divide. The central discrepancy appears to be between what the authors view as the cultural and occupational homogeneity of the street officers contrasted with a managerial culture that is subject to externally driven social, economic and political considerations. Whilst street officer values may partially permeate the managerial culture, street and managerial cultures remain, according to Reuss-Ianni and Ianni, sufficiently separate to represent conflicting and contrasting entities.



Charman (2017), in a study charting the socialisation of new recruits into a UK police force, shows however that this situation might be changing. Referring to ‘#newbreed’ officers, she describes a changing cultural orientation amongst lower ranking police officers away from values and attitudes associated with traditional depictions of police culture. In particular, she identifies changing attitudes towards what constitutes appropriate practice and to the appreciation of new skill sets and how they relate to contemporary policework. One of the officers told her:

“[W]e’re a totally different breed...[]...and they’re [older officers] still locked into the old-school policing where the social worker element doesn’t matter and we’re not expected to go and sort people’s domestic situations out and everything else” (p.275)

Likewise, the study found that welfare and service oriented police roles were gradually becoming seen as generic, rather than gendered, facets of the police. As a result, Charman (2018) surmises that contemporary police officers are more likely to focus upon vulnerable populations and safeguarding than enforcing the law and that this tendency becomes more entrenched as new police officers proceed through their training. A degree of caution does need to be struck, however, in respect of such findings. Antagonism between young and old officers is a historical feature of the police (see Weinberger, 1995). Likewise, Hendriks and van Hulst (2016) suggest that rather than being taken as evidence of substantive cultural change, apparent transformations within the cultural world of the police should be viewed as, “an enlargement of the cultural repertoires” (p. 173) rather than a metaphorical rewriting of the script. Notwithstanding these issues, it may be possible to suggest that the cultural dimensions of police work are changing. Cochran and Bromley (2003), using questionnaire research, identified a ‘nouveau police sub-culture’ (p. 108) which

highly valued community service and was substantially different to the traditional police culture. As with Charman's work, these pieces of research highlight, if not cultural change, then a broadening of the cultural palette of policework.

Charman's work (2017), along with that of Cochran and Bromley (2003), therefore suggest that welfare and service oriented police roles were becoming increasingly more likely to become viewed as generic, rather than gendered, facets of the police. As a result, Charman (2018) notes that contemporary police officers are more likely to recognize the importance of protecting vulnerable populations and safeguarding than to follow a strict law enforcement remit. Likewise, she suggests that skills of empathy and communication are increasingly seen as core to the police officer role. This can be considered significant in that it might provide grounds to suggest that the values and behaviours hitherto associated with lower ranking police officers no longer have the same degree of purchase as previously suggested. Indeed, such values appear to prompt a reconsideration of some of our preconceptions about police officers and police work. The work of Manning (2007) presents similar concerns when he notes that much of our knowledge about police culture is overly simplistic and draws on inaccurate conceptions of both the nature of police work and the culture that exists to support it. In terms of the former, there is a perception that the work is "crime-focused and crime-punctuated" (p. 60). With regard to the latter, it is assumed that the culture is, "derived from working class ideas about manhood, sex and gender, and social relationships in general" (p. 60). Contrast this with the following participant extracts from Charman (2018);

“One officer told me: “I can’t tell you the last time I went to a crime,” while another said “it’s 30% crime, 70% social work” (p.2)

Overall, Charman’s research suggests the growing acceptance of new ways of doing policing at the lower levels, amongst both male and female officers, highlights the growing expectation of police officers to be “problem-solving communicators” (2017, p. 272). Whilst much has been made of the ways in which police officers draw on images and languages of crime fighting in their storytelling (Shearing and Ericson, 1991, van Hulst, 2014), the officers in Charman’s work seemed comfortable to use different sets of tropes in their narratives, which reflected these more contemporary values.

Of interest here is that the traditional (and negative) depiction of police culture within the College of Policing Leadership Review (2015) fails to reflect the nature and breadth of the contemporary dimensions identified by Charman. What is striking here is the apparent cultural alignment of ‘#newbreed’ officers with the ‘behavioural’ competencies (‘Respect for Diversity’; ‘Team Working’; ‘Community and Customer Focus’; ‘Effective Communication’; ‘Problem Solving’; ‘Personal Responsibility’, and ‘Resilience’) identified by Skills for Justice in 2003 (see Caless, 2011, p. 83). These seven competencies, notes Caless (2011), are included within the 12 competencies by which senior officers are assessed. At face value, this could be taken as hinting at a possible convergence of the cultural orientation of lower ranking officers with those of senior officers. There are several possible explanations for this and three will be outlined briefly here. To Cochran and Bromley (2003) such apparent shifts towards ‘service-oriented’ (p. 109) policing may be due to increasing accountability to, and scrutiny by, the public. Another possible factor is that

of changes to the concept of class. Young (2007) outlines the ways in which the old and accepted definitions of class have been redefined in the post-modern era where we can see a growing focus on the politics of identity rather than social position. For those depictions of police culture which seek to position it as a derivation of working class culture (see Manning, 2007), it appears increasingly difficult to maintain such a position. Finally, Sklansky (2007) suggests that police organisations draw their recruits from a considerably more diverse set of classes and social groups than was previously the case.

We appear, therefore, to be witnessing evidence that might point towards a greater convergence of values between the positions of lower and higher ranking police officers. Furthermore, whilst it was suggested by Reuss-Ianni and Ianni that the ‘mutuality’ that formerly characterised relations between patrol officers and managers in police organisations was eroded through a combination of factors (including an increasing concern for the rights of minorities, a decrease in solidarity and a broad shift in the demographics of those recruited), it may be the case that similar factors account for a convergence of the cultural values of officers from across a broad spectrum of the rank structure. In this respect, the work of Charman (2017) and Cochran and Bromley (2003) may point towards the potential for us to conceive management and leadership cultures as occupying the same cultural spectrum as those related to the lower ranks.

Correspondingly, it may be possible to locate a shift in the cultural orientation of, and distinction between, cultural positions associated with street and leadership officers. This might be explained through four propositions. First, that leadership is decreasingly viewed as solely a facet of leadership roles and is imbued in positions and roles throughout the organisation. Furthermore,

that this leads to an erosion of the traditional insular culture and infuses lower ranks with values traditionally associated with higher managerial or leadership ranks. Secondly, and as a result, traditional street officer values are being challenged. This does not mean that traditional values are necessarily being rejected but that the formerly identified incongruence between cultural types has been replaced by greater fluidity and potential for exchange. Thirdly, police culture is largely now informed by external (social, political and wider cultural factors) as service-oriented policing establishes itself, both operationally and culturally, as a legitimate activity (see Charman, 2017, 2018) and, in contrast to the cultural values associated with the mid-late 20th Century, engenders an appreciation of exclusion and minority groups. Fourthly, the cultural change associated with the erosion of the insular (and working class) street culture is supported by the growing diversity (in terms of class, race and gender) of recruitment to the police.

#### Police Culture as a Barrier to Reform?

Sociological and criminological accounts of policing have traditionally sought to position the organisational culture as a source of negative behaviours (see Brown, 1981, Cohen and Feldberg, 1991). Over time, the rise of New Public Management (NPM) paved the way for management discourses that viewed police cultures as a source of resistance to organisational change. Notwithstanding the fact that academic and managerial commentary on police culture may in turn reflect different sets of biases, there remains a fundamental issue concerning the sheer breadth of behaviours (positive and negative) that are supported by the culture (HMIC, 1999).

The diversity of police behaviours and attitudes makes it particularly difficult to use generalisations when discussing culture. There is no one cultural response to a particular stimulus

and, increasingly, it is cultural variation, rather than uniformity, which should demand police scholars' attention. Accounts which fail to account for variation, fluidity and shift are liable to fail in fully reflecting the complexity of the police world and the cultural dynamics working upon, and created by, its practitioners. To fail to engage with what Janet Chan (1997) depicted as a plurality of cultures is to adopt an essentially a-cultural position. This is not an attempt to duck the question of cultural resistance to reform nor to render it meaningless through caveat, but to assert a position based on logic. If culture is essentially 'fluid' as identified by Janet Chan (1998), or even 'fluid' with elements of stability as suggested by Bethan Loftus (2009), it becomes increasingly difficult to speak of an immutable cultural position.

To fully engage with police resistance to reform, therefore, requires an appreciation not just of police culture but also of wider related factors. One such example is police unionism. This concept is helpful for a number of reasons in respect of the arguments being made. Police unionism has been a subject of interest to academics for at least 40 years with Reiner's (1978) 'The Blue-Coated Worker' being a key early work providing insight into the development of police unionism and the apparent contradictions inherent to it. It is, however, the corporatization of policing, and its links to organizational culture, that provide the impetus for the work of O'Malley and Hutchinson (2007) and which will be drawn upon here. The authors make a strong case for the study of police unionism to be central to our understanding of the changing field of policework given its links to culture, police plurality and NPM from which contemporary leadership ideas emerged. The work of Monique Marks (2007), similarly, addresses the link between unionism and police culture, noting that the unions act as, "repositories and transmitters of policing culture...[and]...have the potential to preserve or refashion police culture" (p. 247). Whilst this remains an under-researched

area, the work of O'Malley and Hutchinson (2007) and Marks (2007) suggest that there is a direct link between police unionism and police culture. In particular, Marks notes how police unionism is symbolically tied to traditional depictions of policing, ideas that resonate strongly with many police culture accounts. Likewise, O'Malley and Hutchinson (2007) identify the way in which one of the impacts of police managerialism has been to invigorate support for police unionism. At one level, therefore, it can be tempting to assume that police culture is largely synonymous with police unionism. However, the authors stress that, in some sectors, managerialism has actually led to improved relations between management and labour. Therefore, whilst there is undoubtedly a relationship between police culture and police unionism, it is substantially complex. This is helpful in that it reminds us, again, of the intricate nature of police culture and warns us against assuming that a straightforward cultural divide exists between low rank and high rank officers. Furthermore, as the work of Charman (2017) suggests, we may be witnessing a new generation of street police officers who have not internalised the same traditional cultural reference points as their predecessors and this may have a substantial impact on the degree of receptivity to top down reforms within the organisation. Finally, it is worth noting the views of O'Malley and Hutchinson (2007, p.170) who suggest;

“New generations entering the police ‘service’ may no longer regard the managerial principles, and the competitive market structures associated with it, as alien or out of place. For better or worse, this environment has been becoming part of everyday life for two decades, reaching into many institutions—long enough for it to become fairly ‘normal’ rather than ‘new.’ “

## Conclusion

This chapter has sought to understand the relationship between police culture and police leadership. Both are terms that, superficially at least, appear relatively straightforward. Under closer scrutiny, however, they become more complex and problematic. Policing, and how police officers relate to it through the prism of culture, has been subject to substantial change over recent years. Likewise, whilst police leadership has become more bureaucratically articulated, in reality police officers find leadership as difficult an entity to define or operationalise as academics do the notion of culture. The work of both Reiner (1992) and Caless (2011) suggest that, culturally, police leaders might be more directed by external and biographic drivers than lower ranking peers. However, much as culture ebbs and flows so leaders find the concept of leadership increasingly fluid. There is an increasing sense that the notion of a bifurcation of cultures, between senior and lower level officers, is becoming less relevant to some officers and that traditional cultural tropes derived from the crime fighting role of the lower police ranks are being replaced by those which emphasise the more service oriented roles. At the same time, these processes are integral to, and simultaneously mapped against, a period of sustained and ongoing societal change that in turn has transformed the field of policing. The arguments presented in this chapter allows us to consider the possibility of an alternative cultural world within policing that, rather than presenting cultural bifurcation based on rank, sees a more unified spectrum of cultural reference points or values that engage and inform officers throughout the police hierarchy.



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