

Understanding Policing and the Police

U3A Study Group Session 1

Menu for today

- The aims of the study group.
- Procedures or methods.
- Content.
- Preliminary matters.
- The police and policing 1800-2013.

The Study Group aims to critically assess:

- The historical emergence of the modern police.
- The structure and organisation of the police and other policing organisations.
- Police decision-making and its influences including 'cop culture.'

The Study Group aims to critically assess:

- Key issues relating to the police: effectiveness (crime prevention; crime detection); human rights and the police (arrest, interrogation and detention); police accountability; the police and equal opportunity (employees, victims and suspects); police misconduct; new (and old) ways of policing (multi-agency working; privatisation).
- The Coalition Government and the Police; the future of policing and the police.

Study Group: methods.

- Short 'stimulus' presentations;
- group discussions;
- in situ interviews conducted using Skype;
- the U3A website as a source of Study Group notes and questions.

Contents

- 1: Introduction and the emergence of the 'new' police.
- 2: The current structure and organisation of the police
- 3: Police decision-making and its influences.
- 4: Police effectiveness

Contents

- 5: Human rights and the police (1): stop and search and arrest and interrogation.
- 6: Human rights and the police (2): detention in police custody.
- 7: Police accountability and police misconduct.
- 8: The police and equal opportunity.

Contents

- 9: New and old ways of policing.
- 10: The Coalition Government and police reform.

Preliminary matters: we need to

- 1. clearly separate the policing function from the police to avoid what Reiner calls 'police fetishism';
- 2. recognise the part that policing and the police play in the criminal justice system;
- 3. take cognizance of the social circumstances of both the need for policing and policing itself.

Preliminary matters: we need to

- be aware of the nature of fundamental nature of police work.
- This has two aspects:
- 1. What are the essential aims of police work?
- 2. What distinguishes police work from other related roles?

Preliminary matters: we need to

- finally, recognise just as there are different police aims and targets, so there are different policing styles.
- Some of these are: crime - foot/mobile patrols, detective work, community policing, problem orientated policing, fire brigade policing, saturation policing, zero tolerance policing, service-based and policing by objectives, crime prevention,

Policing before the police: amateur, voluntary and ineffective?

- **Constables**
- **Watchmen:**
- **Justices of the Peace [JP's]**

The emergence of the uniformed police model in England and Wales.

Crime and disorder

Problems of initial response – the thieving ‘thief takers’.

Political ineptitude and the attempts to introduce a paid police force.

Peelian machinations and 4 select committees

Moral panic over the Wapping murders

The ‘need’ to deal with public disorder without recourse to the army

The spread of the uniformed police model to the provinces up to 1856.

- Factors pushing for change: growing unrest and disorder in early 19th century (economic, political, cultural, penal).
- Inhibitions to change: cost, perceived loss of liberty, lack of police effectiveness

The police, policing and the Victorian consensus; the emergence of the 'Bobby'.

- The County Borough and Police Act of 1856.
- The emergence of the 'Bobby' – reduced use of army, greater order for the MC, use as domestic missionaries, WC police protection
- A divided response on the part of the working class: opposition and new respectability?
- Changes to the police- CID, Special branch, from prevention to detection, centralisation of control.

The institutionalisation of 'the Bobby' in the 20th century *The heyday of policing?*

- Bureaucratic organisation - presented as a disciplined, meritocratic formal organisation.
- Rule of law - seen to adhere on a day to day basis to legalistic procedures.
- The use of minimum force - eschewal of arms!!!
- Non-partisanship - eschewal of being on any ones side except that of the law.

The institutionalisation of 'the Bobby' in the 20th century *The heyday of policing?*

- Accountability - seen as accountable to the people.
- The police service not force - primary role to serve and protect not to use force or violence 'If you want to know the time ask a police officer.'
- Preventive policing - the uniformed officer is seen to epitomise police work.
- Police effectiveness -the cultivation of the appearance of effectiveness. 'The police officer gets his man.'

Images of change

	'Cop-sided'	Revisionist	Reiner 1992
1. What drove the change to the new police?	Ineffectiveness of the old system in the face of industrialisation	The need to conform civil society to the emergent capitalist system.	Industrialisation and capitalism.
2. What was wrong with the old policing arrangements?	Severe, capricious, ineffective and corrupt.	The old system worked but was abandoned because: too close to those policed, depended on the army and did not create distance between WC and new capitalists.	Old system more effective than cop-sided view but less effective than revisionists suggest.
3. What were the motives for the reform?	Reduction in social dislocation caused by rapid social change.	The need for a force that could more efficiently, 'humanely' and consensually conform civil society to the economic structure.	Dislocation was important but so too were the reformers and the role of local government.
4. Who were opposed to the police?	Cannot explain the broad opposition to the new police.	Opposition both widespread and rational.	Cop-sided accounts do not do justice to the extent and long-lived nature of opposition.

Images of change

	'Cop-sided'	Revisionist	Reiner 1992
5. How long did opposition last?	Opposition rapidly evaporated.	There is a line of intermittent hostility down to the street riots of 2010.	Revisionists ignore the growing acceptance of the new police even as early as the 1850's.
6. What was new about the 'new' police?	Novel in terms of efficiency and integrity.	Not more efficient nor honest, but more 'humane'.	Not new in some areas, nor of notably higher calibre, efficiency or honesty.
7. What was the impact of the new police?	Solving the problem of order and checking lawlessness.	'The policed society': exercises violent supervision over the whole population.	More limited than either of the other two accounts admit.
8. Who gained from the new police?	Everyone, equally.	The primary beneficiaries were capitalist groups. And the police themselves.	WC benefited (protection) and lost by increased supervision.

Images of change

	'Cop-sided'	Revisionist	Reiner 1992
9. Who controlled the new police?	Mystified relation but seen as democratic.	Not the people.	New police less susceptible to local control. Police gained increasing autonomy of any control.
10. What model of historical explanation underlies the approaches?	Teleological (assumed fit between police and industrial society)	Teleological (assumed fit between the police and capitalist society).	Product of class interests but not foreordained, but once created gained its own autonomy.
11. Exponents	Brogden 1982 Critchley 1978 Midwinter 1968 Phillips 1980, 1983 Reith 1943	Cohen 1979 Hay 1975 Hobsbaum 1959 Silver 1967 Storch 1980 Thompson 1971, 1975, 1992	Reiner 1992, 1996m

The post SWW fortunes of the police: from 'bobby' to 'pig'? : social circumstances of change

- Economic
- Political
- Cultural
- Penal

How have the police changed?

- 'Policing like many activities has been transformed in the last 30 years' (Morgan and Newburn 1997:11).
- It is important to recognise that:
- (1) the changes noted below can be seen both as precipitating a loss of confidence and a response to it;
- (2) even in these circumstances some continuity is evident.

'Pigs'

- Bueaucratic organisation
- Rule of law
- Use of minimum force
- Non-partisanship
- Accountability
- Police service not police force
- Preventive policing
- Police effectiveness

Images of change

	Reiner 1992	Revisionists
1. When was police legitimacy established?	By the 1950's	Never established.
2. How is police legitimacy understood?	Mixture of consensus and hegemony	Hegemony.
3. Bureaucratic organisation	Increasing difficulty of appearing disciplined, meritocratic and honest.	The history of the police has been dogged by indiscipline, bias and corruption.
4. Rule of law	Growth in miscarriages of justice challenge legalistic stance.	Rule of law ideological. Police always act out of legal authority when processing the underclass.
5. Use of minimum force	Routine deployment of armed squads and stockpiling of CS gas etc..	Eschewal of force always more apparent than real.

Images of change

	Reiner 1992	Revisionists
6. Non-partisanship	Police trapped on one side by changing social conditions.	Police always partisan – it has just become more obvious.
7. Accountability	Changing social conditions have led to questions about the effectiveness of police committees.	Changing social conditions have just revealed that it is difficult to control the constable.
8. Police force/service	Dock Green image being replaced by tough 'real policing'.	The police is nothing more than a force that ensures that civil society conforms to the economic structure.
9. Preventive policing.	Shift from uniformed policing to intelligence-led policing.	Intelligence-led policing has been important since the late 19 th century.
10. Police effectiveness	All forms of police work seem to fail to the same considerable extent.	The police may not get their 'man' but they do function to ensure conformity to the dominant order.

Conclusion: Key points

- ‘New’ police emerged in the 19th century and slowly entrenched themselves, portraying what they do as the ‘bobby.’
- The change resulted from a combination of the general demands of industrialisation and the specific demands of capitalism.
- This comfortable accommodation broke down in the latter half of the 20th century, precipitating a police and policing crisis.