

POLICE CULTURE, POLICE GOVERNANCE, & IDEAS FOR MOVING FORWARD IN CANADIAN POLICING

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POLICE CULTURE: WHY IT MATTERS

- **Hypothesis:** police workplace culture impacts public service
- Culture based on conservative, traditionally white, European, heterosexual masculine norms
- Culture a closed society that promotes loyalty, silence, secrecy – hard to combat
- Reproduced through training, peers, and the informal culture – official policies as window dressing
- Changes to legislation, policies, training good, but not effective without cultural ‘buy-in’ and oversight to enforce
- Police the “gateway” to the criminal justice system – sets the tone
- **POWER** to alter lives

METHODOLOGY: ONGOING NATIONWIDE STUDY

- 85 officers from 25 services across Canada – all levels of policing
- 21 men, 64 women
- Rank ranges from constable to senior management
- Time on from 1 to 35 years, some retired (within last 5 years)
- Various units
- Mostly white, heterosexual – several racial minority & LGBTQ officers

EMERGING THEMES: SEVERITY RANGES DEPENDING ON POLICE SERVICE/EXPERIENCES

- Sexism, racism, homophobia
- Sexual violence and harassment of policewomen
- Consequences to reporting
- Corruption
- Social Status
- Reputation above all else – silence, secrecy, and loyalty
- Mental Health
- Overworked and Overwhelmed
- Disconnect between “street” and “brass”

POLICE REFORMS IN GENERAL

- Diverse Hiring Practices needed: Approximately 20 % women, 14 % POC's
- Improved Training, Collection of Data, Expert Assistance/Oversight (recommendations in both carding and unfounded sexual assault cases)
- Accountability/Transparency: Justice Tulloch recommendations a good start
- **Community Policing/Public Engagement**
 - Upfront costs – long term cost effective
 - Less corruption/abuse of force
 - Innovation & community partnerships
 - Increased public confidence = legitimacy

WHY PUBLIC CONFIDENCE MATTERS

- Public Confidence in Canada:
 - Stats Can (2013/14) reports 77% Canadians have confidence – broken down = 37% (great deal) & 40% (some). Older, white, educated, & wealthier Canadians have more confidence.
 - Those with contact in past 12 mths (ANY reason, incl. victims) rated performance lower
 - Recent immigrants rate higher confidence, after 10 years lower levels
- Legitimacy
- Co-operation with police
- Safety of police & public

LEGITIMACY

- Increasing public confidence increases police legitimacy
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- Lack of trust, poor response to the public's concerns, inadequate communication with public, and a perception that decisions/actions are not fair - reduce legitimacy
 - Result: people less willing to report crimes, are more suspicious of police, more likely to believe will be treated differently depending on: wealth, social standing, gender, sexual orientation or ethnicity.
 - To enhance police integrity (and, by extension, legitimacy) research suggests:
 - integrity should be central to the organisation's culture;
 - rules should be established governing misconduct; officers and staff trained in application of these rules; misconduct should be detected, investigated, and punished to show seriousness of misconduct
 - all officers and staff should be required to report misconduct.

(<https://www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/professional-standards/governance/>)

POLICE SERVICE BOARD IMPROVEMENTS

- 1. Increased diversity on Boards
 - London, ON and Thunder Bay as examples
- 2. Standardized and required training
 - Removed from police training mechanisms
- 3. Public Consultations
 - Improved methods that reach vulnerable communities

“OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES” THE BOARD’S ROLE IN IMPROVING POLICE CULTURE IN SERVICES

- **#1 objective and priority must be public confidence/trust**
- **PSA 31.** (1) A board is responsible for the provision of adequate and effective police services in the municipality and shall, (b) generally determine, after consultation with the chief of police, **objectives and priorities with respect to police services in the municipality.**
- ****** I acknowledge the limitations of PSA 31.1 (4): *The board shall not direct the chief of police with respect to **specific** operational decisions or with respect to the **day-to-day** operation of the police force.*

JUSTICE MORDEN REPORT: THE INDEPENDENT CIVILIAN REVIEW INTO MATTERS RELATING TO THE G20 SUMMIT

- *“In establishing objectives and priorities for the police service, a police board must be mindful of only one, albeit one very specific prohibition: not to direct the chief of police with respect to **specific** operational decisions or with respect to the **day-to-day operation** of the police service. Unfortunately, despite the clear wording of the Police Services Act, the Board has defined its responsibilities in terms of a separation between matters of policy and operational matters. The Board has limited its consultative mandate and has viewed it as improper to ask questions about, comment on, or make recommendations concerning operational matters. **The Board’s approach in this regard has been wrong.**”*

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Carding/Street Checks as an example of the grey areas:
 - Historical purpose of the operations/policy divide
 - The Supreme Court (*Odhavji Estate v Woodhouse* 2003 SCC 69, para 66):

“circumstances might arise in which the Board is required to address a particular problem in order to discharge its statutory obligation to provide adequate and effective police services. If there was evidence, for example, of a widespread problem in respect of the excessive use of force in the detention of visible minorities, the Board arguably is under a positive obligation to combat racism and the resultant use of excessive force.”

POLICE CULTURE IMPROVEMENTS THROUGH BOARD POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- * **Boards in collaboration with Provinces and Police Chiefs/Associations**
- 1. Transparency and Accountability
 - Justice Tulloch Report “Independent Police Oversight Review”
 - College of Policing
- 2. Hiring of Police Chief/Deputies – Civilian Considerations
 - Top of the department sets the tone
- 3. Outsourcing duties to private security companies or field experts
 - Budget reduction
 - Overworked and overwhelmed police officers

POLICE CULTURE IMPROVEMENTS CONTINUED...

- 4. Mental Health and Policing
 - Wellbeing reviews, policies
 - Combatting stigma
 - Healthy officers paramount to effective/professional public service
- 5. Internal Investigations/Promotional Practices/Whistleblower Protections
 - Board recommendations/policy key – services not likely to self-implement
 - All 3 are significant sources of cultural reproduction – key to change

COLLEGE OF POLICING – UK EST. 2012

Does:

- set standards of professional practice
- identify, develop and promote good practice based on evidence
- support the professional development of those working in policing
- support police forces and other organisations to work together to protect the public and prevent crime
- identify, develop and promote ethics, values and standards of integrity.

Does not:

- duplicate the roles of other bodies such as public oversight bodies
- investigate complaints or allegations of misconduct against police officers and staff - this remains within the relevant police force

(<http://www.college.police.uk>)

A COLLEGE FOR INCREASED PUBLIC CONFIDENCE

- KNOWLEDGE – EDUCATION - STANDARDS
- police officers adhere to a code of professional policing practice and receive professional development throughout their careers
- a rigorous system of vetting is applied to everyone joining the police & seeking promotion
- each local police force encourages internal challenge of wrongdoing
- officers who have been dismissed from the service for misconduct will be prevented from working as a officers in other forces

(<http://www.college.police.uk>)

CONCLUSIONS

- Police Legitimacy is of paramount importance – power of the police comes from public trust
- Police culture impacts public service
- Lack of action by police administrations/gov't/ oversight bodies maintains status quo – increased public oversight, policies that encourage officer well being, enhanced training, and new policies for internal investigations/promotions/whistleblower protection key.
- Canadian model for College of Policing
- Boards have the power to inquire about operations, recommend policies, review performance of the service, and hire/end the contract of the Chief.
- Solidarity amongst police service boards – one success in one jurisdiction can be used in another